

# Villes en développement

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*Building a new town to the south of Delhi*

*Ruchir Joshi - D.R.*

## Urban India

India, until even recently, seemed permanently set in its intemporality. Mere mention of its name made us think of an interior world, an idealized landscape of multicolored icons and traditions, intermingled with fatalism and nonchalance, manifestations of impenetrable oriental wisdom. Although this cliché is still current, it is impossible today to conceal the dynamism of this country which is a world leader in the pharmaceutical industry, telecommunications and outsourced computing services and which is growing at a rate of 7 %.

When asked, French investors generally say how satisfied they are with their activities in the country but that one of their main concerns is the upgrading of infrastructure. When asked, those who use public services say how proud they are of their city but how they dream of an improved urban service.

Infrastructure and urban development are priority action areas for municipalities and local authorities. To become the world's third economic power and attract foreign capital, India must acquire modern facilities that overcome present-day deficiencies, in particular as regards urban services and electricity. Businessmen from both India and abroad are optimistic about the opportunities created by policies that have recently been introduced by the public authorities: modernization/

privatization of Bombay and Delhi airports, financing of the Bangalore metro with a loan from the JBIC or clarification of the rules for public-private partnerships.

Many infrastructure or urban transport projects are already at the design stage in all parts of India, not only in the large megapolises but also in medium-sized or smaller cities or in rural areas. Indian decision-makers are frequently aware of the know-how and technologies of French companies and understand that they will give them a competitive advantage. This issue of "Villes en développement" will allow readers to discover the presence of our companies, whether in the digital mapping of Bangalore or the construction of the Delhi metro.

India is a country where France's presence should be reinforced by increased exchanges of know-how, technology and training which will generate a shared view of sustainable development. The institutional process is already well under way thanks to several Franco-Indian working groups, one of which deals with urban development. Other approaches are to be explored in a decentralized manner and in this connection several French local authorities are engaged in preparatory work or have already entered into commitments with their Indian counterparts

**H.E. Dominique Girard**  
*French Ambassador to India*

# The challenges of urban development in India —

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*Urban development in India is taking place in a country which is predominantly rural in which cities however play a fundamental role in the national economy: they are home to less than one third of the total population but generate three quarters of the gross domestic product. India's huge urban population, which currently stands at 320 million, is the second largest in the world. Although the rate of urban growth slowed after the 1970s, demographic pressure is contributing to the deterioration in the quality of services.*

Indian cities – like other developing cities – are currently facing many challenges with regard to their day-to-day management and coping with growth. While the challenges facing the megapolises are the most spectacular (from large slums to overloaded buses and suburban trains), the lack of infrastructure in smaller cities, with a weak economic base, provides just as much reason for concern.

## **The housing issue**

The first challenge facing Indian cities, particularly the largest, is meeting housing demand from the growing population. The shortage of adequate housing is responsible for overcrowding and a lack of comfort in the dwelling units and the large-scale creation of precarious and illegal settlements. In the 2001 census, 37 % of urban households had only one room in which to live, with this percentage rising to 65% in Mumbai, for an average household size of almost 5 individuals. Only half of the dwellings have running water and 26% have no toilet (53% in Mumbai). Moreover, 23 %

of the urban population lives in slums – squatter settlements and hovels - and this percentage is even higher in the largest municipalities: a quarter of the population of Chennai rising to almost half in Mumbai. In response to the size and persistence of the slums, the public authorities have brought in measures of various types which do not however tackle the root of the problem: demolition with relocation, provision of basic services, in-situ rehabilitation.

## **The inadequacy of urban infrastructure and the deterioration in the quality of services<sup>1</sup>**

There has been a marked improvement in the cover of Indian cities by basic infrastructure – for access to telecommunications, electricity, water and sanitation, etc, but with the exception of telecommunications, the quality of the services has deteriorated. Moreover, large inequalities between States, between cities (with a deterioration in the level of services in smaller cities) and between households in the same city with different income levels persist or are becoming more accentuated leading to a segmentation of

urban space, or even exclusion.

With regard to water supply, while 90% of the urban population had access to drinking water in 2001, municipal supplies were limited to a few hours a day on average, with the situation deteriorating during the summer months so households must find their own storage solutions. With regard to drainage systems, three hundred cities (out of India's total of about 3,800) have partial facilities, and only 70 have a wastewater treatment system. Even in the metropolises, barely a quarter of wastewater is treated. The collection of solid waste, another essential basic service for public health – as we are reminded by the 1996 Saurat plague epidemic – remains one of the areas most neglected by municipalities. Only between 50 and 90% of the volume generated is collected in the major cities, but much of the waste that is collected goes untreated.

Urban transport, a critical factor for ensuring the viability of the spatial expan-

sion and economic efficiency of major cities, requires planning which is integrated with land use plans. Most Indian cities lack this, but it is one of the main objectives of the new National Urban Transport Policy proposed in 2005. Some metropolises have a genuine public transport network which although used extensively (buses, suburban trains in Mumbai, metro in Kolkata and Delhi) is nevertheless inadequate and congested. The under-development of public transport leads to road congestion, and makes traffic control more complex as a result of the variety of modes operating at very different speeds on the same roads. The rise of the private car and motorized two-wheelers, boosted by the opening up of this sector to multinational companies, is impressive, with adverse effects on air pollution and the number of accidents.

Economic and demographic growth in urban areas has led to increasing pressure on the environment and threats to public health: deterioration in air quality, piling up of garbage, untreated wastewater contaminating rivers, depletion of groundwater resources and the encroachment of buildings onto green areas.

## **Financial resources and governance in question**

The situation described above reflects the fact that the public authorities lack

the financial resources required to cope with growing demographic pressure, but it also reflects inefficient management, rampant corruption and inadequate and flouted planning – large areas of cities are developed without respecting urban planning.

In order to promote the development of urban infrastructure and better respond to housing demand, at the end of the 1980s, the Indian Government adopted a new urban strategy centred around decentralization, deregulation and public-private partnerships. A constitutional amendment promulgated in 1992 awarded greater autonomy to municipalities with regard to implementing their own planning policies and seeking private funding. The repeal of the Urban Land Ceiling Act in 1999 aimed to stimulate the land market. Various urban programmes, funded by central government, target development in certain categories of cities (small and medium-sized



*A slum in a southern district of Delhi: consolidation and densification of a spontaneous settlement on squatter land with no drainage network and illegal electrical connections.*

D.R.

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cities or large metropolises) or certain sectors (housing including slums, or transportation). The various reforms and initiatives have, however, not borne the anticipated fruits. The most recent major programme, launched in December 2005, the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, which targets major cities, is origi-

nal in that it makes access to subsidies dependent on the introduction of a number of reforms and the production of city development plans, encouraging municipalities to project themselves into the future and improve the economic productivity and efficiency of cities, while at the same time ensuring that they are trying to make their

cities equitable and inclusive. ■

1. Data source: *India Infrastructure Report 2006 - Urban Infrastructure*, 3iNetwork, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2006, 257 p.

Ref.: DUPONT V., *Le monde des villes*, in SAGLIO-YATZIMIRSKY M.-C. (dir.), *Population et développement en Inde*, Paris, Ellipses, (Collection: Carrefour de géographie. Les dossiers) 2002, pp. 55-84.

## The Bangalore “Metropolitan Spatial Data Infrastructure”

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*One moment a retirement paradise, another a green city, the South Asian Silicon Valley or a planetary hub for delocalization, Bangalore oscillates between nostalgia and a cybercity. It is the fifth largest Indian city and the State capital of Karnataka and has an ambition to become one of the major cities in Asia. SCE and the FIT Group have been present in India since 1999 and been involved in several urban projects, including the recent revision of the Bangalore Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP)..*

The Metropolitan Spatial Data Infrastructure (MSDI) project was developed, negotiated and set up by SCT, a Nates-based consultancy involved in engineering, spatial planning and environmental services. Several French and Indian partners were involved in the project, the most im-

portant being Groupe Huit, Apur, Iaurif, the Institut de Géographie at the University of Paris IV and the Alternative Law Forum.

### The birth and context of the project

After three years of local presence, SCE was on the point of completing a major

project that involved mapping and the implementation of GIS tools for the operational, administrative and financial management of the city's water and drainage networks for the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board. As a result, it had acquired, in addition to detailed knowledge of the city, an overall view of the development issues facing it. In addition, the company's technical capacities were appreciated by the local authorities in the State.

It was in this context that in January 2002 the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) – a State body that acts as an urban planning agency, a financial authority and the city's principal developer – requested assistance from SCE with regard to revising the Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP). This plan was introduced in 1961 and is both a strategic planning document that deals with the development of the conurbation, incidentally based on an outdated approach to the city, and rigid land use zoning. The scale of the urban transformations that had taken place in Bangalore since the previous urban development plan in 1963 reveals that urban development is out of control. Several levels of issues became apparent at the same time:

- . political issues in the run-up to local and presidential elections,
- . pressure from the new information and communications technology (NICT) sector
- . a lack of resources locally to produce the basic tools (digital mapping, UDB, GIS, etc.) and policy, regulatory and operational documents in general.

These three priorities led the State of Karnataka to

request technical and financial assistance from the French development agency in order to carry out its urban planning task. In this connection, a financial agreement was signed in February 2003 in Bangalore between the chief minister of the State of Karnataka and the French Prime Minister, Jean-Pierre Raffarin. This was followed by a commercial contract with a total value of 4.6 million euros.

### The scale of the tasks

The title "Metropolitan Spatial Data Infrastructure" can lead to confusion as the project did not only involve making an inventory and collecting digital spatial data using advanced technologies. It led local decision-makers to refocus the debate around the city and its major functions, and also to promote GIS technologies for developing new urban development strategy, breaking with the tradition of concentric "onion skin" development.

The specification and the implementation of the tools required the creation and updating of the reference map (1: 4000) for the 1306 km<sup>2</sup> in the Bangalore urban district and large-scale field surveys were conducted to supplement the high definition satellite images.

The challenge was to develop, at the same time, databases for understanding urban dynamics (Inventory of the Land Use Mode (MOS) created by Iaurif for an area of 1500 km<sup>2</sup>), modeling and creating a durable multi-purpose 2 urban database (developed by SCE and Apur and used for the implementation of the CDP) and finally, in addition to the interactive terminals and the website, to provide all the departments involved with consultable GIS tools

for the management of land usage.

Groupe Huit was responsible for overseeing the revision of the CDP and employed a forty-strong team, ten of them French, for a two-year period. The principal problem was to develop an anticipatory type of urban planning which integrated new development projects and took account of the conurbation's parameters of growth (it had to be realistic and flexible: recognition of urban diversity, integration of different economic sectors and promotion of social equity; and operational: stimulating the housing sector, spatially regulating functions, developing new districts). It was also necessary to train staff in the administrations involved and provide day-to-day assistance to the BDA for the completion of the urban planning documents (planning permits, housing developments, industrial estates, etc.).

### Lessons and food for thought

In spite of the scale of the task and the constraints that were present, this project was successfully completed. After approval of its conclusions and recommendations by the Chief Minister, public consultation was organized during the summer of 2005 for the first time since 1964. This was extremely successful (with more than one thousand visitors on some days) and provided the opportunity to explain the work and encourage collective discussions and constructive debate about Bangalore's urban development. Above all, this consultation emphasized the huge need for information on the part of a population seeking greater involvement in the decision-making process.

The project benefited from effective partnership between two urban planning

agencies (Iaurif and Apur), two university faculties (Institut de géographie at Paris IV Sorbonne and the Bangalore Institute of Social Sciences), consultants (SCE and Groupe Huit) and varied human resources (doctoral students at the ENMP, MIT, Institut des Sciences Politiques, etc.). This collective work brought into being the first Franco-Indian consultancy (with a staff of one hundred and ten) specialized in spatial planning, urban composition, mapping and GIS tools.

While computing technology has an indisputable role to play in improving methods and modes of operation, we must not fall prey to the technological illusion and ignore the content, the local context and the preliminaries which are necessary for any urban planning activity.

Finally, the Bangalore experience has shown that cities need multidisciplinary resources, particularly with regard to professional training. This represents a profound change in approach and mentality which, without completely abandoning the importance given to villages by Gandhi, should refocus on the city and not simply designate rural zones as representing the future of the Indian nation. ■

1. *This sum took the form of soft aid loans organized by the Ministry of the Economy (DGT-PE) from the "emerging countries reserve" .. This reserve is part of French development aid and as such intended for projects which assist the economic development of the borrower countries.*

2. *Twelve spatial databases have been set up. These cover administrative boundaries, censuses, transport, the environment, mapping, networks, etc.*

# Urban transport, the environmental challenge posed by the growth of Indian cities

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*The depletion and deterioration of water resources and pollutant emissions are without doubt the two most urgent environmental challenges posed by the rapid growth of Indian cities. This article will examine the processes of spatial structuring at play in Indian cities and how these affect the energy consumption and pollutant emissions of the urban transportation sector.*



Transport is a major source of energy consumption and will inevitably increase considerably with economic development. This article will consider the case of Delhi, which is emblematic of Indian megacities, to show that purely technological solutions are unable to meet the challenge of sustainability. It is necessary to modify the very structure of urban space in order to reduce travel demand, particularly in relation to private cars.

## **Alarming contemporary trends**

Despite the country's long urban tradition, Indian urban development is subjected to little control. The spontaneous spatial growth

of Indian cities is characterized by an expansion of urban areas towards satellite cities, by conurbanization or generalized urban sprawl. This increase in size is accompanied by a process of urban polycentralization of cities in secondary centres or expansion along transport infrastructures.

These models of urban growth are increasingly favourable to personal transport modes. In Delhi, the number of vehicles, and therefore the amount of pollutant emissions, is increasing exponentially: 2.24 million in 1994, 4.18 million in 2004, i.e. an annual rate of increase of 6.5 %. This explosion is mainly generated by increasing motor vehicle

ownership among wealthy social groups: the number of cars and two-wheelers has increased by 150 % and 78 % respectively (Delhi Planning Department, 2005).

## **Improvement in the environmental efficiency of vehicles**

The growth and polycentralization of urban areas combined with soaring vehicle ownership is increasing energy consumption and pollution levels. In the last ten years, in response to pressure from environmental lobbies, Indian cities have introduced programmes to improve the environmental efficiency of existing and future vehicles (the "end of pipe" approach).

The resulting natural gas conversion (NCG) programme for Delhi's fleet of buses, taxis and rickshaws (tricycles) is an exemplary success. In spite of strong opposition from operators and lukewarm support from local authorities, the expansion of the NCG programme from 2002 has been impressive: 45,000 rickshaws, 4000 minibuses, all the 7400 bus, i.e. a total of more than 75,000 vehicles have been converted to natural gas, supplied by more than one hundred natural gas stations. The same success has been repeated in most Indian cities (GTZ, 2005). But the inability to bring modal split – and more seriously, travel demand – under

control means that measures to improve the environmental efficiency of vehicles are not equal to the challenge posed by urban dynamics. Measures of this type are indispensable, but not sufficient. A study conducted for the GTZ shows that their effectiveness with regard to combating the greenhouse effect is limited, even with high petrol prices.

### Promoting Mass Rapid Transport (MRT)

Until now, the strategy adopted by Indian municipalities has essentially been limited to increasing the capacity of the road network. This headlong rush is particularly dangerous in that it creates an urban structure which is increasingly dependent on the car. In Delhi, scenarios forecast an increase in the number of daily trips per person from 0.8 to 1.2 between now and 2021 and a 50% increase in

average journey length (by both car and bus). To meet this demand, the number of vehicles would increase to 8 million. It is therefore indispensable to provide effective alternatives.

Fortunately, Indian urban structures are still compatible with transport systems based on transport corridors. Urban development has been channelled by major infrastructures (road or rail) and not spread over the entire urban area. As a consequence, the cities which are highly congested are those which are saturated by cars. They are not (yet) cities which are morphologically dependent on the car (where activities and residential locations are highly dispersed). This context provides an opportunity for large passenger flows and the development of Mass Rapid Transport (MRT) systems<sup>1</sup>.

Many Indian cities have placed the construction of

a Mass Rapid Transport (MRT) system on their political agenda. Delhi opened its third metro line in September 2005. The construction of the first metro lines will get underway shortly in Bangalore, Hyderabad and Mumbai. Pune and Ahmedabad are discussing introducing Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). Chennai is considering constructing a light metro. It is urgent for these projects to materialize.

### Integrated transportation and urban planning

Mass rapid transport systems provide high accessibility and can therefore influence urban development. This is doubtless their major long term benefit. The construction of an MRT system therefore provides the municipality with an opportunity of influencing urban structure and combatting urban sprawl and dispersion, which are sources of car dependency.

For this opportunity to become a reality, it is essential to coordinate urban planning and transportation policies. Land use plans and floor area ratios should be modified to facilitate the concentration of private investment in zones of high accessibility. However, in practice, urban and transport plans are usually drawn up without considering the interactions between them.

We do not as yet possess sufficient understanding of the links between the construction of transport infrastructure and changes in land use and the same applies to the links between changes in the land use plan and floor area ratio and travel demand. This area of research is of primary importance if we wish to create sustainable cities. ■

1. Generally a distinction is made between 4 types of MRT system: Heavy Metro, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), Commuter Rail (CR) and light rail transit (LRT).

## Publications



### India Infrastructure Report 2006

- . The Infrastructure Sector in India, 2005.
- . Trends and Patterns of Urbanization and their Economic Implications.
- . Governance Framework for Delivery of Urban Services.
- . Planning for Urban Infrastructure.
- . Urban Finance.
- . Urban Transport.
- . Urban Water and Wastewater.
- . Solid Waste Management.
- . Urban Energy Management.
- . Urban Environment
- . Social Infrastructure: Urban Health and Education.

[www.3inetwork.org/reports/IIR2006/ii2006.html](http://www.3inetwork.org/reports/IIR2006/ii2006.html)

- India Infrastructure Report 2006
- L'économie de l'Inde
- L'Inde, côté villes



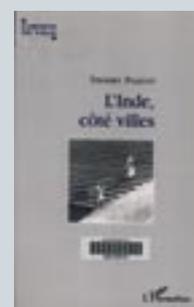
### L'économie de l'Inde

Jean-Joseph Boillot, 2006, Ed. La Découverte, Coll. Repères/Economie. 128 p.

India's take-off is occurring at a key moment in the globalization of services for which this country has recognized relative advantages and a qualified and abundant workforce. But how is India going to cope with its internal challenges, in particular those of poverty and environmental sustainability which are already in a critical state in all the country's major cities?

Price : 8.25 Euros

[m.straub@editions-ladecouverte.fr](mailto:m.straub@editions-ladecouverte.fr)



### L'Inde, côté villes

Thierry Paquot, 2005, Carnets de ville, Ed. l'Harmattan. 116 p.

Over a fifteen year period, during repeated visits to several Indian cities (Pune, Mumbai/Bombay, New Delhi, Chandigarh, Bangalore, Panaji) the author has observed both physical urbanization – the geographical growth of cities, transformations in architecture and urbanism – and the urbanization of behaviours and values (editions-harmattan.fr)

Price : 11.80 Euros

[www.editions-harmattan.fr](http://www.editions-harmattan.fr)

# The urbanization of customs is at work in India —

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*Urbanization is the other name given to the globalized modernization which is at work in India, as it is everywhere else in the world.. It is transforming cities and contaminating the countryside, and takes many forms one of which being the urbanization of customs.*

For many experts on India and Indian human and social scientists, the village and agriculture remain the foundations of the Indian Union. They are convinced they are right and brandish statistics about the so-called “rural” population (72%) and countless surveys which confirm the importance of rural areas to support their belief. In the same way that a rate of growth does not provide a good measure of happiness, census results do not express a phenomenon which is somewhat resistant to quantified measurement and which I shall term, for want of a better expression, “the urbanization of customs”. By this I mean the spread of the “spirit of the city” so well described by Georg Simmel<sup>2</sup>, throughout the entire population but in extremely contrasting ways and on very different time-scales. This “spirit of the city” - or rather of the metropolis - demands the affirmation of the “I”, which, in a caste system where the family plays a major role, involves a long tension-laden process. Urbanization is the other name given to the globalized modernization which is at work in India, as it is everywhere else in the world. It is profoundly changing the old cities and

contaminating rural areas with specific values. Television, the press, school, new information and telecommunication technologies, incessant migrations between the village of birth and the shanty town constitutes a cultural environment which, to a greater or lesser degree, shapes “homo urbanus”. Novels and films frequently express this urbanization of customs better than the work of sociologists and geographers. Salman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh, Raj Kamal Jha, Rohinton Mistry, Tarun Tejpal and many other novelists use the city not as a setting for their fictional intrigues but as one of the principal characters. Their heroes become what they are through, with and in the city. While it is true that the city provides a context, it is active and reactive. Of course, the history of India (incidentally being revised), the weight of myths and beliefs, rootedness to a place and respect for rituals play an important role in this individualization of behaviour. The citizen does not appear suddenly, devoid of traditions, ancestral practices and cultural reflexes learnt from early childhood, but emerges as the product of a complex process in which the values of the individual’s community inter-

mingle with his/her localized caste-based village origins. One just needs to look at the incredible diversity of urbanization situations, as regards diet, clothing, interrelationships, intergenerational behaviours, festive or religious practices etc. as well as architectural and urban factors.. Discrepancies, mixtures, resistances, refusals and rejections, co-existences between cultural practices occur and colour the urbanization phenomenon. Thus, for example, the increase in car ownership is occurring more rapidly than the recognition of the rights of women, but, with urbanization, it is all the parts of this patchwork society which are repositioning themselves and undergoing metamorphosis, for better or for worse, both in cities and in rural areas. This “urbanization of customs” directly affects individuals, their identity and their relationships with others<sup>3</sup>. It has considerable effects on psyches and the hierarchy of existential concerns. At the same time, the economy is becoming global and new standards of consumption which target the middle class are becoming widespread and cultural references from elsewhere are asserting themselves, for example as regards the or-

ganization of daily time, the rules of civility, the reduction in the size of the family, the nature of attraction or professional ambition etc. Representations of oneself and the world, of the city and modern life, of travel and communications are renewed and feed the urban imagination of each individual, whether living in a gated community (increasingly common), in on-site or company accommodation or in a hut in a shanty town. The main difficulty facing research is the lack of perspective: it is necessary to observe, describe and analyze something which is on-going, whose multi-dimensional nature greatly surpasses our present-day conceptual tools. This makes it a most stimulating task! ■

1. See “*Homo urbanus. Essais sur l’urbanisation des mœurs et du monde*”, by Thierry Paquot, Le Félin, 1990.

2. See “*Sociologie. Étude sur les formes de la socialisation*” by Georg Simmel, translated from the German by Lilyane Deroche-Gurcelandt Sybille Muller, PUF, 1999.

3. See “*Sortir de la sujétion. Essais sur la désurbordination des parias de l’Inde, femmes et intouchables*”, by Guy Poitevin, with a preface by Thierry Paquot, L’Harmattan, 2001.

# News on cooperation

# ISTED

## Franco-Indian bilateral cooperation for urban development

The Franco-Indian working group on urban development was set up in 2001 on the initiative of the Franco-Indian joint economic commission, by a decision on the part of the governments of both countries, in order to encourage the exchange of experience and strengthen bilateral cooperation in this area. It meets twice a year alternately in France and India.

Since it was set up, the group has principally been working on the question of water and has carried out a feasibility study for the creation of a water industry jobs training centre in Delhi. This study, carried out by the International Water Office was delivered in November 2005.

The last meeting of the working group, held on 19 January 2006 in New Delhi, provided the opportunity to take stock of this topic and it was agreed that a project study should be undertaken immediately. In addition to assessing the seminars organized under the auspices of the working group three days earlier at Chandigarh, this meeting presented the opportunities for decentralized cooperation and considered other work topics for the group, around the issues of urban transport and urban planning.

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## The rehabilitation and revitalization of the historical centre of Ahmedabad

In 1997, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Indian independence, the French Government proposed cooperation in the area of the conservation and upgrading of heritage.

After two workshops held in 1998 and 1999 with the participation of the Indian National Trust of Art and Cultural Heritage, which compared know-how in the area of heritage restoration, management and improvement and brought together urban experts from India and France, the Municipal Commissioner proposed that the historical centre of Ahmedabad, which is of remarkable urban and architectural quality, should be used to test French techniques in an Indian context.

In 2000, a cooperation agreement aimed at producing a model project for revitalizing the old centre was signed between France and the Ahmedabad municipal commission. A Franco-Indian team conducted an urban, architectural, legal, technical and financial analysis intended to produce a draft urban revitalization plan.

In 2003, an agreement was signed between the French Government and the Ahmedabad municipal

council to set up the Ahmedabad Heritage Centre. This is co-directed by a French architect and plays an advisory role with regard to architectural, legal and financial matters for all public and private sector projects, acting as a reception, information and training centre.

Its premises, in an old haveli, were the subject of French-funded demonstrative restoration and are due to be open in 2006.

At the end of 2005, 49 restoration projects were completed, 10 others were in progress and 22 were waiting to start. Eight of the completed projects had received low interest loans from HUDCO (the Housing and Urban Development Corporation Limited). The basic principles, which were drawn up in advance of cooperation activities, were complied with: helping the local population to safeguard its heritage and remain in place, modernizing interiors, showing restoration models, reviving life in the pols, training Indian architects in conservation techniques. A workshop should, in 2006, render official the regulations, a first list of buildings and pols for preservation, and the HUDCO loans for Indian cities.

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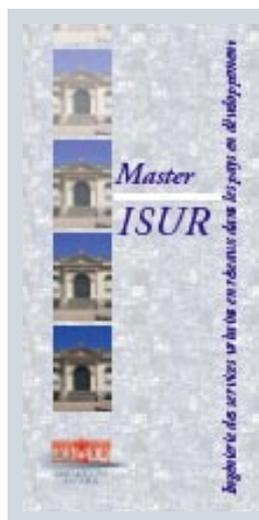
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