A photograph of a building with four exhaust pipes on the roof and a sign that reads "Gurgaon Glossaries". The building is white and has a flat roof. The sign is orange and yellow with a black outline. The sky is overcast and grey.

**Gurgaon
Glossaries**

GURGAON GLOSSARIES

BY

PRASAD SHETTY, RUPALI GUPTA & PRASAD KHANOLKAR
CRIT STUDIO

When a city settles, new terms emerge. Terms; not only as new words and phrases, but also new ways of doing things, new things, new relations and new practices. 'Gurgaon Glossaries' is a compilation of such terms by which the city of Gurgaon has been settling. 'Settling' here is not necessarily a resolution of city forces, nor is it a peaceful coexistence of different people and practices. It is rather a set of processes by which things get worked out - the elaborate mechanics, which keeps the city in a perpetual state of becoming.

Like many other Indian cities, discussions about Gurgaon, a city on the outskirts of Delhi, have been dominated by meta narratives of deficient infrastructure, shoddy governance, degrading environment, developer-driven planning, growing consumerism, neo-liberal civil society, etc. These meta-narratives identify clear problems and create a context for immediate interventions, which create further problems. For example, in many cities, the narrative about poor infrastructure has made way for large infrastructure projects, which in turn causes displacement of people, which in turn causes creation of rehabilitation policy, which in turn causes environmental and cultural damage, and so on. At the same time, Gurgaon's speedy financial growth, driven by a large number of corporate enterprises has created a promise of prosperity. People come from all over India to take part in the opportunities available. Perspectives on Gurgaon oscillate between a critique of its awkward urbanity and a celebration of its tremendous promise.

The form of the glossary allows multiple imaginations of Gurgaon. It emerges as a city with a unique urbanity where modern city planning and development ideas overlap with pastoral sensibilities, where new kinds of entrepreneurs flourish, new civil society is configured, new negotiations take place, new legislations are experimented with and new cultures are formed. These micro-narratives have the capacity to complicate the easy meta-narratives, to get out of the problem-intervention-problem rat-race, to generate and sustain an interest in living-in and loving the city. It moreover offers a nuanced readings of the city where many more creative ways of engaging with the city could be found.

While making this Glossary, attempts to find a beginning or an end, to categorize or formulate a grand narrative and to follow a singular method to collect terms seemed impossible. Every new term reconfigured the beginnings, endings, categories, methods and grand narratives. While the form of the Glossary allows for categories and grand narratives to be made, it also simultaneously has elements that dismantle them to be reconfigured in yet newer ways. The Glossary reiterated that cities get worked out beyond plans, conspiracies, policies, activisms, concepts, discourses and interventions.

The glossary in many ways is unbounded with unending possibilities; incoherent providing multiple imaginations; and unstable where positions cannot be easily articulated.

THE GLOSSARY



Aabadi Areas: As if circumscribed by a red line, the old villages in Gurgaon are divided into two areas by the planning authority: the Aabadi Areas (populated) and the Non-Aabadi Areas. The prime difference between these two categories is based on the type of land-use and the corresponding amount of development permitted under the Hariyana Town and Country planning regulations. The Aabadi areas are primarily marked as residential land-uses while the Non-Aabadi areas as agricultural. Thus any form of development in the Non-Aabadi areas requires a Change in Land-use under the planning regulations (CLU, Refer to CLU). The process of urbanization and the changing market of labour, businesses, land, and housing in Gurgaon has put immense pressure as well as provided possibilities for the villages. Today in the villages of Gurgaon one sees a clear division between the Aabadi areas, whereby the land owners have broken down the two-storied old houses and kothis and redeveloped them into three to five storied rental and commercial apartment buildings, and the Non-Aabadi areas, which are occupied by large single storied kothis and small businesses such as a grocery shop, hair salon, mobile phone services.



Active Stock: Several kinds of differences arose between DLF and their clients in Gurgaon - particularly the buyers of the flats and the residents' associations. Non-compliance of agreed promises relating to facilities, change in plans, abrupt hike in prices after signing of agreement, abrupt cancellation of agreements, etc. have generally been the complaints of the clients. DLF has been dragged into legal battles on several instances. The primary allegation against DLF has been that it has used its dominant position in the real-estate scene of Gurgaon to arm-twist its clients and force upon them an unfair and one-sided set of conditions. As the legality of this battle was around the monopolistic business dominance of DLF and the malpractices related to it, the case proceedings were conducted by the Competition Commission of India. The lawyers of DLF were able to steer the proceedings into a discussion of whether DLF has had the most dominant position in Gurgaon's real-estate market or not. DLF then hired JLL, their trusted lieutenants in making financial arguments to prepare a report on the market position of DLF. JLL has helped DLF to sell and manage many of its properties. JLL came up with the idea of using the concept of 'Active Stock' to assess current market position instead of market share of real-estate production. Under this concept, market position of the real-estate developer is established based on the number of un-sold properties they have, which are called active stock. And since DLF had already sold most of the properties, its active stock was lesser than other developers. Based on this reasoning, the lawyers of DLF pleaded that DLF should not be considered as the most dominant player in the real-estate scene of Gurgaon. After intense discussions and considerations, however, the Competition Commission was able to see through the twisted arguments of JLL and DLF and ruled in favour of the clients.



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Advantage Card: The owners of new gated communities have been able to organize themselves in Gurgaon rather quickly not only to maintain and take care of the common areas and facilities, but also to fight against the ill-doings of the developer. Gurgaon also has a conducive mass of elderly retired government employees and young urban professionals - both with a heightened sense of civic life and aspiring for a clean- green environment and transparent-accountable governance. It is not unusual to find ex-servicemen from the defense forces heading the residents' association. While the elders provide the untiring follow-ups and necessary contacts, the younger ones offer networking technology and international ideas. There are residents' associations, councils, clubs, federations of associations, forums, informal groups, and many different kinds of organized entities. Many residents' associations also perpetuate a sense of pride and exclusivity to their members, where the gated feeling is further extended to daily life. Identity cards, Parking slips, etc. are common practices to establish not only a brotherhood, but also exceptionality. One association has distributed an 'Advantage Card' to its members, which is not only a photo-id, but also provides many offers and discounts at various malls of Gurgaon.

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"Avashyakta Hai" (Wanted): Every morning on their heavy iron gates factory supervisors rewrite the labor demand of the factories in Udyog Vihar for that day. Housed in small plots with barbed wired high walls and security gates, the garment factories, auto and machine part factories, and printing presses run their factories in an assembly line system. Black boards, white boards, printouts, and shabbily written handouts stuck with cello tape are put up on most of the iron gates. The frivolity of today's handwriting and the badly wiped out writing of the past reflect also the frivolous attitude towards the workers. Cleaners, tailors, loaders, checkers, sweepers, cutters are in demand for the day. Their salaries are written next to it. Everyday workers walk around Udyog Vihar trying to find a job for the day. Spend time at the back gates of these factories where the security guards' wives run a small tea and cigarette stall. This is also the time they get information from the supervisor of these factories about when the next order will come through and when they can find work. Gurgaon is one of the largest apparel exporters in India, employing about 2,00,000 workers. The industry is run on an assembly line where 20-25 workers work on each garment that passes through different mechanized machines. The salary of these workers is just above the minimum wage in Haryana. In recent years the garment workers have attempted to organize protests in partnership with the Maruti Workers Union to increase their wages.



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Big Landowners in Gurgaon villages: Umesh Singh was one of the five biggest landowners in the Sikanderpur village of Gurgaon. During the early 1990s he sold off a major part of his land in the Non-Aabadi areas to DLF. Today DLF Phase I for the economically weaker section stands on this land. On the land in the Aabadi area of Sikanderpur, Umesh Singh converted many old houses and kothis into commercial complexes that house construction related businesses. Along the metro line, four storied rental apartments are rented out to new migrants, and one small kothi to an NGO. A large piece of land on the northern side of the metro line was developed in partnership with DLF into the City Court Mall. The partnership is a new business model of development where, the big landowners rather than selling off the land to the developer hold thirty percent of the shares in the development. Construction and dealing with planning authority is the responsibility of the developer. Furthermore, Umesh Singh owns a private tube well as well as bore well in Sikanderpur, which he uses to run a business for providing water supply to houses in Sikanderpur and shops along the metro corridor. Lastly, he owns a wholesale shop in Sikanderpur, which provides grocery items to most of the shops rented out by him. Umesh Singh lives in DLF Phase III.



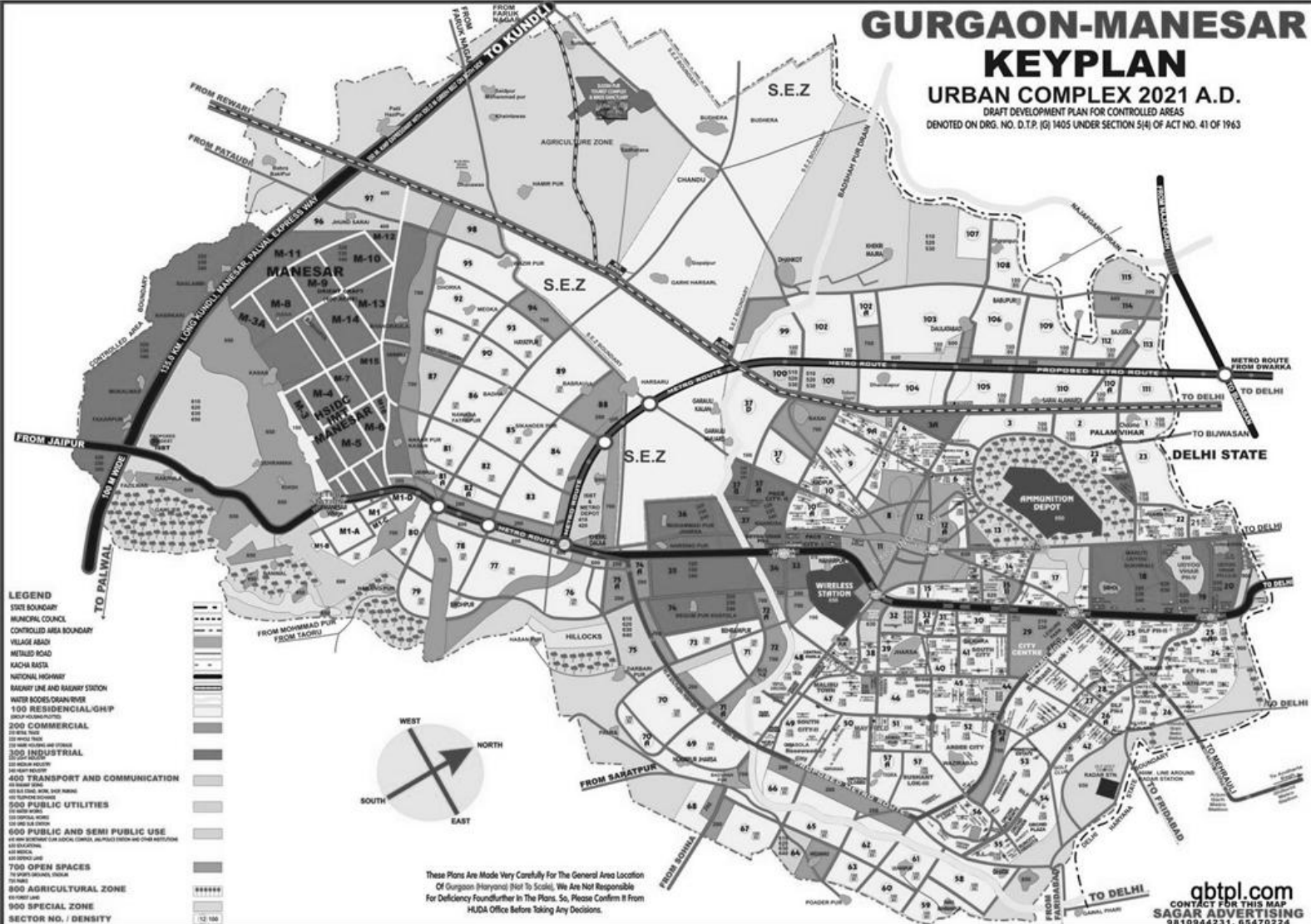
CAF: The 'Common Areas and Facilities' have remained one of the most contested issues in the gated communities of Gurgaon with both; the residents' association and the developer staking claims on it. In numerous developments of Gurgaon, properties are transferred from the developer to the buyer under the Transfer of Property Act, 1882 in which property is considered to be only the house that is sold. The resident's association on the other hand is registered under the Society's Act, which defines the Society simply as a group of people coming together for a certain cause. As the developer does not transfer the ownership of the CAF to the apartment owners; the maintenance, controls and rights on use, and the development potential remains with the developer. In Maharashtra, the state government had enacted the Maharashtra Apartment Ownership Act in 1970, specifically oriented towards the interests of the apartment owners. In this case, the property is considered to include not only the house, but also a share of all the CAF, to be collectively owned, maintained and used by the society of residents. Many other states enacted such acts later. Haryana enacted the Haryana Apartment Ownership Act in 1983. Today, many residents in Gurgaon are struggling to get the transactions of properties registered under the Haryana Apartment Ownership Act.

GURGAON-MANESAR KEYPLAN

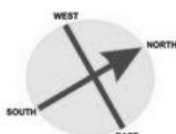
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 - - - MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
 - - - CONTROLLED AREA BOUNDARY
 - ▨ VILLAGE ABAD
 - ▨ METRO ROAD
 - ▨ KACHA ROAD
 - ▨ NATIONAL HIGHWAY
 - ▨ BAKERY LINE AND BAKERY STATION
 - ▨ WATER BODIES/DRAIN/PIPER
 - ▨ 100 RESIDENTIAL/GHP
 - ▨ 200 COMMERCIAL
 - ▨ 300 INDUSTRIAL
 - ▨ 400 TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION
 - ▨ 500 PUBLIC UTILITIES
 - ▨ 600 PUBLIC AND SEMI PUBLIC USE
 - ▨ 700 OPEN SPACES
 - ▨ 800 AGRICULTURAL ZONE
 - ▨ 900 SPECIAL ZONE
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City boundaries: The idea of the city boundary sets up a jurisdiction for planning and governance - the planner and the municipal commissioner know exactly what he/she is not responsible for. In case of many cities, the boundaries are expanded to include edging villages. This is largely done when planning projections show an increase in population in the next years. In many cases, if there are many cities (each with different plans and municipalities) in close proximity to each other interspersed with villages, then a plan is made of all of them together, without merging the municipalities. Such plans only govern large infrastructure projects and broad policies for industrialization, resource management, etc. There are also cases when two or more cities or many villages are merged together to form one large municipality. When the Gurgaon-Manesar Urban Complex plan 2031 was announced in 2012 by the state government, it showed the intention of the government to convert more agricultural lands into commercial, residential and industrial uses. Moreover, the plan was announced only a year after the announcement of the Gurgaon master-plan. Many NGOs and planners complained that the projections were unreasonable and alleged that the urban extensions were proposed to suit the interests of the real estate developers.



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S.No. PARTICULARS

S. No. OF SITES AREA IN SQ. MTRS.

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4. SHOPPING MALL	C-5A 7820 EACH
5. 2 BAY HOTEL SITE CORNER 3 STOREY WITH BASEMENT	C-9 COR. & C-10 COR. 556.325 EACH
6. 2 BAY HOTEL (MIDDLE) 3 STOREY WITH BASEMENT	RAY 353-54 550.00 EACH
7. 3 BAY HOTEL (MIDDLE) 3 STOREY WITH BASEMENT	BAY 358-59 825.00 EACH
8. SHOP-CUM-OFFICE 2 STOREY WITH BASEMENT (ETHNIC FOOD CENTRE)	BAY 335-57 27 TO 30 275 EACH
9. SHOP-CUM-OFFICE 3 STOREY WITH BASEMENT	305 COR 281 EACH
10. SHOP-CUM-OFFICE 3 STOREY WITH BASEMENT	315 318 TO 321 275 EACH
11. BOOTH SITE SINGLE STOREY WITHOUT BASEMENT	8, 10 & 12, 13 22.68 EACH
12. SHOPPING MALL	Near. LEISURE VALLEY 16500-00



CLU: 'Change of Land Use' is a town planning provision that is generally a part of town planning acts of various states across India. This provision allows land use changes in the statutory plan. This provision is made to allow governments to respond to unforeseen requirements of the future, where some lands need to be used differently from the planned use. For example, if during the plan making process, the city appears to be growing as an industrial place, then the planners would demarcate a substantial amount of land as 'industrial use'. However, if there is a decline in the industry some years later, the lands need to be used differently. The provision of Change of Land Use allows for changing the use of land from industrial to another use in such cases. In Gurgaon, this term seems to be very popular and has been used in its acronym form - CLU. It is used almost as a part of the routine approval process. The familiarity and frequency of use of the term 'CLU' not only indicates the rate of unforeseen activities, but also the malleability of the plan and high number of actors involved in the planning process. In a strange way, Gurgaon's planning seems to be most participatory, with most owners, developers, architects, contractors, and others using the CLU to shape the plan as they want it. In fact, the copy of the statutory master-plan is circulated mostly through real-estate agents and photo-copy vendors reinstating the participatory nature of the planning process.

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Contractors: During the early 2000s when the call centers were just settling in Gurgaon, workers were lured from Delhi to work in Gurgaon. They had to be ferried between their workplaces and homes and also provided with food, emergency medical aid, security etc. The villagers who had sold off their lands to the developers of Gurgaon provided these services. They became food contractors, security contractors, transport contractors, etc. With more kinds of businesses settling in Gurgaon and with the growth of the city, newer and different kinds of services were required. For example, the requirement of transporting people from Delhi decreased and requirements of services such as pest-control, generator repairs, building maintenance etc. shot up. The older contractors also transformed their occupations and responded to the new needs.

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Communication Agents: Ram Kumar came from Bihar some six years ago and settled at Sikandarpur village of Gurgaon. When he came, he lived with his brother-in-law for a few days. The brother-in-law was himself sharing a room with five others. He worked as an office aid for Airtel, one of the mobile phone companies and made friends with all kinds of agents connected with Airtel. After a month of working he rented a room nearby. The owner had extended his house and had rented different parts to different tenants. While living at Sikandarpur, he noticed that there were a large number of migrants who had come from different places and each one carried a mobile phone. There was a high demand for small-sum prepaid mobile phone cards that were actually quite expensive. But the migrant workers preferred these as they could mobilize small amounts on a daily basis as required and not a large amount every month. Moreover, the prepaid connections came with no documentation hassles. Ram started retailing the prepaid cards. Everyday after work, he would sit near the chai shop below his room and sell prepaid cards. Working at Airtel, he knew how to become a retail agent for prepaid cards. Later, with his owner's permission he put up a sign board 'R K Communications' on one of the walls of the chai-shop. RK - as he is now called - started another business - of money transfer - transferring money for migrants to their native places. The State Bank of India had centralized its information system so that transactions could be made from anywhere in the country and they started special services for migrant workers through intermediary agents who would use their accounts to transfer funds at a small commission. Coupled with mobile phones, this service has become extremely popular in Gurgaon.



Enhancement charges: The Haryana State Industrial & Infrastructure Development Corporation (HSIIDC) acquired about 1500 acres of land in 1994 to build the Industrial Model Township at Manesar. HSIIDC paid around rupees 4 lakhs per acre to the land owners as compensation for the acquisition. The farmers went to court with a plea that they were underpaid and demanded higher value. Meanwhile, HSIIDC developed the small plots over 900 acres of land and allotted it to different industries at an average price of rupees 90 lakhs per acre over several years. The remaining 600 acres were used to develop roads, amenities and utilities. The courts ruled that HSIIDC should pay an interim compensation at the rate of rupees 10 lakhs per acre to the farmers along with interest since 1994. HSIIDC maintains that the money that was earned by selling the plots was spent on developing infrastructure. HSIIDC reasons that since it has spent all the money earned from the land, and the final beneficiaries are the industries occupying the land currently, they should be made to pay the enhanced compensation to the farmers. These were called enhancement charges. HSIIDC sent notices to the industries to pay the enhancement charges. Now the industries have joined forces with the anti-corruption protestors to fight against HSIIDC.



Demolition Drives towards the perfect city: Often HUDA is considered the weak offspring of the power center at Chandigarh. Nothing is said to move in Gurgaon without remote operations from the center. However one of HUDA's administrators changed this by taking up decisions himself. To prove his point, to the Residents Welfare Associations, the administrator went on a demolition drive, clearing all encroachments and paying no heed to court orders staying the demolition. Properties more than 30 years old were flattened overnight towards the dream of a 'perfect millennium city'. His resolve was to also rehabilitate those who had been displaced, but somewhere in the future, where the mistakes made by the current planning would be rectified. A PPP model according to him would need to ensure that apartments were reserved for the economically weaker sections. But he had no immediate plans for those affected by his encroachments. Anokhelal, a migrant from UP's Bareilly district, who, with his eight children had to face the cold Gurgaon nights, thought there was no place for the poor in Gurgaon.



BEST TIME TO BUY
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NOVELTY

Donkey Shelter: On the outskirts of Gurgaon, at Kerki Majra lies a Donkey Shelter run by a British couple in their late sixties. Donkeys are a common sight in Gurgaon. They have practically helped build the city. They are frequently used on construction sites to do the hard labour of carrying heavy goods around. Often the weight they carry far exceeds the limit stipulated by the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act. These animals succumb to the labour and are abandoned when they cannot do the work any more. The British couple has procured 35 acres of land from the Gurgaon Municipal Corporation to start this unique project of rehabilitating the donkeys. Most donkeys on their land are badly injured. One of them, used to be a dancer at weddings. Made to dance on his hind legs, the donkey now has a protruding hip. The couple believes that Indian society is ready to take care of its other animals for religious and other reasons, however the donkey is often ridiculed and shown no mercy. They hope their project finds enough takers in the future.



PG FOR BOYS

PG

PG

Chhoti Si Khatron
Amitabh Bachchan
Amitabh Bachchan
Amitabh Bachchan

PG. RAJINDER SINGH
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EWS: In the 1960s, under the socialist orientation, the central government and many state governments started building houses for its people. People were categorized into HIG (Higher Income Groups), MIG (Middle Income Groups), LIG (Lower Income Groups) and EWS (Economic Weaker Section) and houses were built differently for each of these classes. While the HIG people got the largest houses, EWS got the smallest. Subsequently as the various governments withdrew themselves from building houses, they concentrated at only making housing accessible to the poor. They made policies and regulations to facilitate production of houses by the private sector. In Haryana, the Town and Country Planning Department framed rules where 20% of land in plotted development and 25% of houses in group-housing schemes had to be reserved for EWS housing. The prescribed house sizes were small of about 200 square feet. The rule also specified that 10% of the 25% reserved in group-housing will be kept for people who provide services to the housing colonies. While such housing has been developed in most of the housing projects in Gurgaon, the developers played mischief and these houses weren't allotted to the EWS. In many cases, after approvals and sanctions, two or more such houses were combined to make one large house to be sold in the market. The residents' associations of Gurgaon have been in constant battle with the developers over the rights of allotment of EWS housing. Their argument has been that since 10% of the EWS housing have been reserved for people that will serve the colonies, the allotment rights of such houses should be with the residents' association. The residents' associations aspired to have a set of slaves to serve their colonies, and the rules promoted such aspirations. The only aspect opposing these aspirations was the corrupt practices of the developer.

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Federation of Apartment Owners Association (FAOA): Gurgaon is trying to set an example for other cities by forming the Federation of Apartment Owners Association. Gurgaon has hundreds of GHS (Group Housing societies and CGHS (Co-operative Group Housing Societies). Some estimates show that 62 percent of Gurgaon's residential stock lies vacant however builders are still building new apartments in new sectors in Gurgaon II. The Federation is proposed by several disgruntled residents, who realize that according to planning standards the builders are supposed to provide a range of amenities to the housing societies including schools, colleges, crèches, hospitals, health centers, welfare centers, post-offices, telephone exchanges, fire stations police stations etc for certain densities of population. Residents claim that often amenity plots are kept vacant and later sold off for commercial purposes. The proposed FAOA will also lobby against the increase of Floor Area Ratios in Gurgaon, which increases built-up space in Gurgaon at the cost of common areas. It is alleged that several Residents Welfare Associations (RWAs) are set up by builders and are puppet associations. The proposed FAOA attempts to remedy this by allowing individual residents to also obtain membership by bypassing their errant RWAs.



From Panchayats to Wards: The process of urbanization that engulfs villages involves not just the encompassing of village land and its economy but also its governance related power structures. This shift brings with it new contradictions and opportunities. In 2010, Gurgaon saw its first municipal elections. This involved dividing Gurgaon into 35 wards and drawing new ward lines based on population density rather than maintaining the village boundaries. Today, a ward might include a village as well as the new private and HUDA developments. The earlier panchayat system was changed to khap-panchayats, which are now defunct but still exist in principal. The decisions relating to development and basic necessities now lie with the elected municipal councilors and Voter-IDs have gained a new importance (Refer to Voter-IDs). Most village sarpanchs stood for municipal elections but only a few of them won. One still sees the sight of a panchayat sabha being held by men in a few villages but this time for the purpose of playing cards. While the development responsibility has moved from panchayats to elected municipal councilors, issues of caste and gender, particularly inter-caste marriages and disciplining deviant women have now moved to the domestic sphere of the home.



Funeral: When Venkat moved into the 13th floor of the Meredian, he was one of the happiest persons. Coming from Mumbai, it was the first time his was living in a four bedroom apartment. Though his housing complex was three years old, it was not completely occupied. Nobody lived in Venkat's floor or the floor above or below his house. He had shifted with his wife Devika and his mother. He had found this place through a friend's friend who was a broker. His firm had 9 people and these were all the people he knew in the city since he had come a month ago. His mother died on the 40th day after their moving into Gurgaon. Her death was sudden and happened after midnight. Venkat and Devika were shocked and did not know what to do. They tried calling their office friends but being a weekend, most of them were travelling. The ones in Gurgaon had switched off their mobile phones to avoid weekend office calls. They called their relatives in Mumbai, but they could come only at dawn. After two hours of struggling to get through someone known in Gurgaon, Venkat and Devika gave up. They sent messages to their friends and decided to sleep with the dead body in the house until the sun rises.



Gardens and Gardeners: The desire for the green is not unusual in the contemporary urban realm. This desire gets worked out in many forms - as water-harvesting and recycling policies and practices, as energy efficient and conservation technologies, alternative energy technologies, as organic food, as terrace gardens, as vertical gardens, as kitchen gardens, as interior gardens, as plantation for pollution control, as bonsai and herbal gardens, as practices of urban farming and greening, as forestation measures, as plantation of fuel weeds on barren lands, as green building certification practices and also as intense discussions on global warming and climate change. This desire has also produced several kinds of enterprises, experts, consultants, clubs, green groups, bird and tree lovers, activists, researchers, and gardeners. With a whole range of such practices, Gurgaon is easily a city of gardens and gardeners.



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Gates and Temples: Like in many other cities, the RWAs (The Residents' Welfare Associations) are increasingly making their voices heard. From matters concerning their immediate neighborhood, the RWAs are now trying to move on the civic front. Many RWAs have managed to lobby to get funds from Haryana Urban Development Authority (HUDA) to build community centers, parks and other facilities catering to senior citizens and children in their vicinity. They form smaller subgroups to ensure the upkeep of these places. Sometimes their efforts are frustrated as these facilities get used by people they do not approve of. The RWAs then try to push HUDA to set up security gates at few critical locations in their vicinity to make many of these facilities exclusive for their residential premises. This is done in the name of security and maintenance. One particular RWA recently approached HUDA to build a temple in their vicinity, "to ensure that life beyond is also taken care of". They were also ready to pay for the temple themselves. But HUDA refused to pay any heed to these requests on the grounds that all such RWAs want to have a temple in their vicinity and it is impossible to pander to all their wishes.



मन्दिर

सैक्टर-46, गुडगांव



GDA: The multiplicity amongst the state agencies has largely worked to balance power equations of the state machinery in India. As many agencies are involved in managing cities, the possibility of authoritative and monopolistic behavior of a single agency is not possible. As lives in the cities are not always lived within boundaries of formality and legality, the multiplicity of state agencies supports lives of many urban actors. If one agency threatens the living condition of a set of people, then there is always another agency to provide support. In many ways, such a power distribution is itself an instance of decentralization. Gurgaon itself is being managed by a variety of agencies - HUDA (Haryana Urban Development Authority), MCG (Municipal Corporation of Gurgaon), HSIIDC (Haryana State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation), PWD (The Public Works Department), NHAI (National Highway Authority of India), etc. Moreover, each of these agencies has tens of departments within them that function almost autonomously. Further there are also many more service delivery agencies that provide electricity, water-supply, telecommunication, etc. In city discussions, the residents of the new, gated enclaves often attribute Gurgaon's pathetic infrastructure condition to the multiplicity of state agencies. There has been a talk about forming the GDA (Gurgaon Development Authority) that will be an all-powerful umbrella organization to manage the city. The new residents of Gurgaon have been highly hopeful about the GDA. In many ways, they seem to aspire for a centralization of power.



NAVY FRIEND



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Gifting Solutions: Several enterprises divide the remunerations they pay to their employees into many parts for several reasons - to save taxes, for promoting certain products and services, under pressure from other agencies, etc. While the salary is paid as a straight-forward fund transfer, the other types of remunerations include gift vouchers, special discount cards, insurances, travel arrangements, access to exclusive clubs and theme parks, fuel, newspaper, books, hardware and medicine reimbursements and a variety of other gifts. Saurabh Verma, an IIT graduate specializing in derivative finance saw an opportunity in this practice and started an enterprise to provide 'gifting solutions'. His company provides consultations on gifts to be provided as well as organizes gifts from various vendors. Recently he has started a new section called 'Personal Gifts', which provides specialized gifting solutions to individuals who want to gift other special individuals - partners, relatives, friends, children and others. He also has a section called 'Proactive Gifts' specially for companies and individuals who want to gift people who are not directly their employees, but clients and other people involved in the business. His consultation also extends to identifying persons who need to be gifted for keeping the business in good relations. Some of his famous gifting strategies include organization of foreign study tours for technocrats and bureaucrats, or inviting people for seminars, conferences or evaluations and paying a very high remuneration - sometimes almost twice their salary, or even simple distribution of gold coins or i-phones during festivals amongst senior officials. He always tells his clients that gifting should be done in small parts and much before the expected outcome - this helps in maintaining good relations for the future.

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Gurgaon chapter of The All India Kitchen Garden Association: Many of Gurgaon's resident have ancestral homes in places of lush green landscapes. Most of them were compelled to leave behind these settings for economic opportunities in Gurgaon. Soon Gurgaon's concrete jungle grew as more and more people started migrating for jobs. But as this concrete jungle grew so did the desires of people for lush green settings. In desperate attempts, people started landscaping their balconies and terraces, many in an attempt to cool their houses. Some started growing vegetables on their terraces. These attempts became institutionalized as people who practiced urban agriculture came together to share their experiences and encourage each other. Soon the Gurgaon chapter of the Al India Kitchen Garden Association was formed. The AIKGA now hosts exhibitions of vegetables grown in the kitchen and awards people who grow unusual varieties of vegetables. The AIKGA now has more than 100 members in Gurgaon.



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Dr. C.K. BISWAS
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विश्वास क्लीनिक
+

Gurgaon Chawls: Gurgaon's call centers, offices, malls and apartments provide opportunities for large numbers of people to provide different kinds of services and support - security guards, office assistants, drivers, helpers, cooks, food suppliers, etc. These are generally migrants from different parts of the country who come to the city and settle here through their kinship and friendship networks. They live in the villages of Gurgaon. Their housing is provided by local villagers who build small rooms either as extensions to their houses or as one or two storied chawl-like structures (like Mumbai) with small rooms, common corridors and toilets, and sometimes courtyards. The rooms in the Gurgaon chawls, like in early twentieth century Mumbai, are predominantly occupied by a group of men. Sometimes, a large corporate office or institution like a hospital hires an entire chawl of about twenty to thirty rooms for its employees.

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23P
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Gurgaon Dream: Gurgaon in the 1990s had become the harbor for black money from Delhi. Many people, who had accumulated money invested in small and large plots of land that were being sold in the colonies of Gurgaon. These people also built expensive houses on these plots to be used as farmhouses. But as the outsourcing industry settled, and finance and commercial sectors grew, younger professionals started making it their home. Retired folk from Delhi saw Gurgaon as a new city close to Delhi but having a clean and green environment. They also bought houses. Families liked to settle here to have a good living condition for the children and the old. Like the American Dream, Gurgaon also produced a dream of a city. While the Gurgaon dream assured a clean atmosphere, green environment, safe life, sophisticated culture and a high-tech living; it also promised cheap labour for maintaining property and assets.

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Gurgayya: Every issue of Friday Gurgaon, a weekly newsletter runs a column on commonly used words and phrases in Haryanvi called 'Haryanvi made easy - get a taste of the local lingo'. The high amount of transaction between the corporate migrants and the natives is evident in this column. In Bombay, a new language emerged when people from different parts of the country settled - it was called as Bombayya. Perhaps Gurgaon will develop a Gurgayya where the Bengali, Marathi and Tamil speaking people will mix their words and accents to Haryanvi making it their own.

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IDhobi: IDhobi, Dhobi Ghat and Dhobi Xpress are some of the new laundry services that have come up in Gurgaon responding to the emerging lifestyles of the young professionals in Gurgaon, who either have no time to do their laundry or chose not to do it or cannot trust a servant to do it while they are away for work. Typically these agencies pick up laundry from the house and deliver it as well. All of these are styled corporate-like: While IDhobi was started by a young graduate in business administration, Dhobi Xpress announces its company mission as - "To be the best Laundry Service Provider by offering quality product with world class service experience and value for money". Dhobi Xpress also prides itself in announcing, "Our Dhobi Xpress team brings professionally managed laundry care to the unorganized laundry sector. Our directors have 20 years of experience in customer service and in the apparel industry. We know how to sort and code your garments for the best quality results. Our staff is highly trained to recognise different types of fabric and the correct techniques for washing and pressing them. We employ local people and do all we can to help the environment and sustainability. We employ the latest dry cleaning and laundry techniques and training methods thus ensuring our customers get the very best dry cleaning services available. Our aim is a very simple one - to provide you the customer with the very latest dry cleaning and laundry services and to deliver that service in a professional, ethical and responsible manner. Our equipment is the latest available ensuring our results are the best you can get in the Midlands. We do everything to get our service right first time - we want our customers to be happy"!



Landlord shops: After selling their lands to large corporate companies, most landlord farmers bought property in the new developments of Gurgaon. Many have also developed their unsold property (usually within the village settlement) as accommodation for migrant workers. Rents from these new properties have become the main income of the older farming communities. While the younger generation spends time acting as brokers and other agents in the new city, the older ones do not have much to do. One sees a group of such older people sitting outside a village shop, playing cards and smoking hukka. The shop generally belongs to one of them and is run by a younger relative. Not much effort is made to sell things from the shop as their money comes from somewhere else. Such landlord shops seem to be just fronts to play cards and run some kind of brokering service. While the village streets are generally intense with activities, such landlord shops are found in frequent intervals.



Leap: They say that Gurgaon's economy has leaped. It is no longer a city of call centers, but a city of Mercedes, Dell, Nokia, Wipro, Ranbaxy, and hundreds of large corporate companies. The emerging work-scapes of China, Taiwan and other Asian and African countries will not affect it any more. Moreover Gurgaon is also a place where everything looks possible, gets executed fast, and gets ready to take off very soon. Businesses from large cities like Mumbai and Delhi are relocating themselves in Gurgaon. Gurgaon will not fall soon.

MAK LIZARDS
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Lizards and Jaipur Nets: Rudra is an air conditioning engineer and had to move to Gurgaon from Mumbai after his company decided to relocate their business to Gurgaon. After staying for a week at the company guest house he rented a three bed room apartment at Paradise Phase I, one of the posh neighborhoods with the exclusive one-button service, where he could push a button from his home and ask for anything. Like a genie, someone would always fulfill his demands. Coming from Mumbai, the lavish three bed-room apartment felt like a palace. He wanted to get his wife and children as soon as possible. But there was one problem - lizards. While no one was allowed into Paradise without the permission of the occupants, the lizards entered everywhere, every floor, every room. Rudra would come home from work in the evening and find his walls full of lizards - large brown, black and grey ones. Twice he went back to his company's guest house and slept there. Later he gathered courage and waged a war on the lizards. He would drive them away with brooms, shoes, sticks and sometimes even manage to kill a few. He resorted to keeping all his windows closed and used artificial ventilation through air conditioning. But the lizards never stopped, they seeped in through the cracks between the windows and the walls. Rudra started taping all the cracks. The spaces under the doors were filled with newspapers. The lizards had taken over his life and he discussed every detail of his adventures with them with his friends and relatives. He also used the services of a pest controller who came and applied some chemicals on the doors and windows. The lizards did not turn up for a couple of days, but after that they returned. There was one pest control service that advertised themselves as specialists in lizard control. They came to Rudra's place and measured his windows. They were to get nets cut to size from Jaipur. The nets came after a week and Rudra was getting impatient. But when they came, one of them was a little shorter. After lambasting the pest control guys, Rudra decided to live with the shorter net and not to reorder it, as it would mean another week with the lizards. The portion where the net was short, he completed with a newspaper extension.



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Local Councilors: More than 90% of the councilors elected to the newly formed Gurgaon Municipal Corporation are locals from the villages of Gurgaon. This is despite of the large presence of young urban professionals from all over the country. Moreover, these professionals are also well organized into residents' welfare associations, the federations of gated communities, and numerous other cultural groups. When there is a large discussion around the corporate takeover of Gurgaon, this is probably an indication of the political presence of non-gated and non-professional communities. Gurgaon will soon see the day when these communities realize their power.



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Lungs of the city: The discussions around environmental degradation have led to development of two large parks in Gurgaon - the 70 acre Tau Devi Lal Park and the 160 acre Aravalli Park. Both of them are called 'biodiversity parks' to underline the environmental importance of them. The new communities have aggressively guarded these parks and participated in their development and use - trees of various kinds are being planted, walks are carried out, picnics are held, poems are written, bird watching programs are conducted, and many more ways of spending time in these parks are found. Many call them the lungs of the city.



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Millennium City: There is no clarity on who started calling Gurgaon the Millennium city or why exactly it is called the Millennium city. Probably it had to do with the timing when Gurgaon started attracting large investments - the period coincided with the inauguration of the new millennium in the English calendar. Today, everyone including the businesses, the residents' associations, the media and even the government use the term. More interesting however is the expectation created by the term 'Millennium city': it is generally used to discuss the level of infrastructure in the city. Somehow, there is an assumption that if a city is called a Millennium city, it has to have good infrastructure and provide good living conditions to its people. Often one reads the headlines: "Has Gurgaon failed as a Millennium City", "India's Millennium City, a slum for the rich", "Is Gurgaon really a Millennium City", "House-hunt, a nightmare in the Millennium City", "Contradictions of the Millennium City", etc.



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Monkey Catchers: The secure gated communities of Gurgaon could not keep the Aravali monkeys from entering into them. They would come as solitary wanderers or in groups and enter houses through windows and balconies. There have been reports of them biting people, snatching toys and food, opening refrigerators and kitchen cabinets, tearing clothes, and create havoc inside the houses. Occasionally, the forest department used to handle the monkey menace by catching the monkeys and sending them back to the forests. After the Municipal Corporation came into existence, the citizens started complaining to it. Like other activities, the Municipal Corporation decided to outsource this activity and wrote a detailed tender to deal with the problem. Agencies were hired at a cost of Rs. 700 per monkey, the highest price per monkey catch in the country. As the monkeys kept on returning from the forests, the work of monkey catching was ever-growing. A few agencies have developed innovative methods to catch monkeys and have become experts in the field. They are now invited by several other cities to catch monkeys.

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Municipal Stamp Duty: In 2008, the Haryana state government reduced stamp duty from 6% to 5% across the state. This was done under the national urban renewal mission, where states had to undertake such 'reforms', if they took money from the central government. However, the Municipal Corporation of Gurgaon made an unusual request to the state government - to permit the Corporation to levy an additional 2% stamp duty on registration of property transfers in Gurgaon. The Corporation argued that this was necessary to improve the financial condition of the newly formed Municipal Corporation. The state government agreed to this. This stamp-duty contributes to about 75% of the Municipal revenue today.



Najafgarh Jheel: Most people of Gurgaon get water from thousands of borewells that are dug across the city. Most of the gated communities have their own water treatment plants and provide their residents with good quality filtered water. But resident environmentalists are doubtful about the sustenance of this source as the water requirement of Gurgaon has been ever increasing in exponential proportions. Many environmentalists also talk about the Najafgarh Jheel(lake) - a low lying area in the north-west of Gurgaon which held flood water from Delhi and the Yamuna. The environmentalists say that the channels opening up into the lake have been blocked due to haphazard construction in Gurgaon. The INTACH (Indian National Trust for Art Culture and Heritage) has recently called for the revival of the Najafgarh Jheel to address the water problem. However, in the absence of a good sewerage and drainage system in Gurgaon, most water that is pulled from the ground and used by the people goes back into the ground as it is left into low lying areas. So as far as the sewage and drainage systems are absent in the city, its water supply do not seem to be under great threat.



Music Farmaish and Migration: 'Gurgaon Ki Awaaz' is a Samudayik Radio Station broadcasting its programs on 107.8 MHz since November 2009. The station records and airs music in different languages and dialects of Hariyanvi, Bhojpuri, Hindi, Rajasthani, and even Oriya on their program Farmaish. Its listeners are primarily migrant workers, drivers, security guards, street vendors, women and the children in Gurgaon villages. They call and request songs. Often, the station receives calls from Hariyanvis in the villages demanding them to stop playing songs in other dialects. "Why are you playing Bihari songs for the migrants when you are in Hariyana?" "Its Gurgaon ki Awaaz not Hariyana ki Awaz". The radio station intends to use music as a way of not only binding different communities, but also developing a dialog on regional politics between the natives and the migrants through music. Their weekly program Sara Aasman Hamara brings personal stories of migrant workers and issues concerning migration to the radio. Besides music programs, the radio station is also involved in vocational training programs, career development, connecting individual businesses, health care, and women empowerment through microfinance. The recent hike in the annual costs of broadcasting from 19,000 Rs to Rs 90,000 is the primary concern for this community radio station.



BUY & SELL

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Nine Steps to buy a plot in HUDA sectors of Gurgaon: By Umeed Singh; a 60-year-old man from Gurgaon who worked as a Colonel in the Indian Army and runs a real estate agency called Shivam Properties on Plot No. 456 in Sector 46 of Gurgaon.

1. Choose one of the numerous real estate agents located in Sector 45 and 46.
2. Choose a plot in one of the HUDA sectors, where the cost of land is cheaper than in private sectors.
3. Bring an ID-proof and have a face-to-face meeting with the land owner.
4. Apply for TP i.e. Transfer permission to HUDA. Pay Rs. 5000 as formal fees and Rs. 50,000 to 70,000 to HUDA officials. Acquire an agreement of sale.
5. Pay registry 7 percent of circle rate for individuals, 6 percent of circle rate for family, and 5 percent for ladies. The circle rate is Rs. 30,000 / sq.yds, while the property rate varies from Rs. 75,000 to Rs. 1.5 lac per sq.yds. In case of Transfer cases, you do not have to pay registry or taxes since the plot hasn't been transferred more than five times yet. Thus look for a plot, which is a transfer case. But in these cases the amount of black goes up to 80 percent of the total cost. If you are an NRI looking to park black money this is a better option.
6. Apply for a loan if necessary through the bank agents whose cards are lying under the glass tables of the real estate agents. Avail a loan of up to 80 percent of the circle rate.
7. Pay the plot owner the circle rate in white and the rest in black.
8. Pay the broker 1 percent of the cost of land.
9. Hire a caretaker or a security guard to avoid encroachment or other illegal occupation of the plot by humans or animals. Build a wall along the boundary of the plot if possible.
10. Contact Shankar at 9999567582 to avail real estate maps of Gurgaon titled Gurgaon at a Glance.



NMT Cell: *Nisha Singh, Municipal Councilor at a Conference in Mumbai (16 March 2013) organized by Embarq India (an NGO working on sustainable transportation):* "Everyone need to walk, but I cannot let my children walk even hundred meters. We had a comprehensive mobility plan by UMTC in early 2000s, but nobody seems to have read it. But since this a document where government spent money, we can hold the government accountable and then make them implement the recommendation. We started an NMT (Non-Motorized Transportation) Cell at Gurgaon. There is a community of people who have taken up cycling, walking and running as hobby. We strive to protect the rights of pedestrians, and claim the footpath. We are calling it a movement, we are building a brand, and we are making it an aspiration and a responsibility. We started a programme called walk to work. We do cycle rallies. Cyclovia is an event when we'll block certain roads on a Sunday and drive cycle. There is also a question of pollution. We use all kinds of social media - facebook is very important to connect. "Burn Fat and not Oil"



Off-Roading: Neelanjan came to Gurgaon to work with a multinational company as a marketing manager. But the excitement of a high salary, large house, huge car and comfortable living exhausted within a year - there was nothing much to do. He was passionate about large cars and had bought an expensive SUV to go on long drives. But after a couple of such drives over weekends, even that became boring. He had a couple of other friends from Kolkatta, who were also living in Gurgaon and had a similar passion for large cars but without much to do in Gurgaon. One day all three of them gathered and decided to race their cars on the highway. But after that experience they all felt that it was too dangerous. Neelanjan then floated the idea of 'off-roading' - to drive over lands without roads. He had seen this adventure on TV and Gurgaon's outskirts provided the right terrain to test the capabilities of the vehicles. On the next weekend itself they went on their first off-roading adventure on the foothills of the Aravallis at the Gurgaon ridge. It was like a real-life video game with real thrills. The three friends liked it and made it their weekend event. Soon they started taking other friends for the off-roading adventure. These friends also went ahead and bought SUVs for themselves. More people joined and a club was forming. The three friends decided to name it. Being true Bengalis, they decided to call themselves Terrain Tigers after the Bengal Tiger. The only condition to join the Terrain Tigers' club was to own a 4X4 jeep!



Of Pigs and Cows: The mismanagement of solid waste is often attributed to the proliferation of pigs and cows in the city, who scavenge on them. Pigs and Cows have become a part of the public space of Gurgaon today along with garbage and parking lots. The expensive high-rises only provide a backdrop to them. The residents show utter dislike to this phenomenon as the urban space not only appears dirty and unorganized in the presence of pigs and cows, but they also create traffic issues - particularly the cows.



Other uses of parking lots in Gurgaon: The lack of any commercial spaces, street pavements, and interstitial spaces in the tightly planned and clearly propertied space of Udyog Vihar has resulted in various uses of parking lots.

- As an 'open space' that is mandatory under the planning regulations.
- A collection and distribution center by a courier service, which specializes in banking, insurance, taxes, etc. and employs young migrants with second-hand motorbikes and helmets.
- To house a small teashop or food stall which is run by a migrant couple (commonly referred to as "Amma", "Tai", "Dada") and caters to the workers in multinational corporations as well as daily-wage laborers hunting for jobs.
- A space for playing cards, cricket, sleeping, chatting, and complaining by school bus, private rental car, and family drivers.
- Grazing land for pigs and sometimes cows.
- Meeting point for sweepers to negotiate and set up day-to-day tasks with private-contractors that are appointed by the municipality.
- Meeting point for income-tax agents, insurance agents, lawyers, job contractors, etc.
- A stopover period for landowners to control land demand and wait out the increase in land prices.

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Pahalwan Broker: With large number of businesses locating themselves in Gurgaon, there is a constant need of staff at all levels, which come to Gurgaon for work. The higher-level staff generally come from metropolitan areas of the country. They are paid quite well and rent apartments in the exclusive apartments of Gurgaon. The apartments however are owned by either local farmers who have made their money by selling lands to the developers or investors from Delhi or other metropolitan cities. A breed of young brokers has grown to facilitate the meeting of the owners and the tenants. The higher-level staff, familiar with legal processes in their own cities, try to get well-drafted agreements made between them and the owners. These agreements however do not seem to have much meaning in Gurgaon and disputes generally get resolved through *pahalwans* (musclemen), who specialize in 'conflict management'. While the owners hire some local goons, the only support for the tenant during such disputes is the broker who had arranged his/her accommodation. In Gurgaon, these brokers are either *pahalwans* themselves, or have access to other musclemen who then provide a counter to the goons of the owner and help the tenant out. The lower-level staff on the other hand, do not live in the exclusive apartments. They rent rooms in the villages. The connections with the potential landlord are made through friends and relatives who have settled earlier. Here there are no agreements, nor the security of the *pahalwan* brokers - the landlord dominates. In the event of a dispute, the youngsters of the village are called. In most cases they simply throw the tenant out.



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Project: Contradictions arise when the condition of absent centralized infrastructure and governance collide with aspirations, desires and fears of the young professionals who come to work for the big companies located in Gurgaon. These contradictions are resolved through the idea of the 'project' taking care. Developers promise a 'project' instead of a house. Effort is made to provide all facilities that are available in any first world condition within these gated projects. Clubs, gardens, parking, security systems, 24X7 water and electricity are provided by the project along with one-button services - an exclusive service where one has to simply push a button on the intercom system and ask for any service. One has access to plumbers, cable TV guys, electricians, pest control services, etc. And some projects also provide services like day-care, drivers on hire, laundry, food from different restaurants.

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Premier Segment: The real estate sector seems to be consolidating into two distinct brackets in Gurgaon. The first is where a mass of small rooms are produced for the migrants. These are enough to provide basic accommodation to its occupants, where nothing much can be done other than sleeping in the night. Toilets are generally shared and elaborate cooking is prohibited. Things become more difficult when such rooms are further shared amongst many persons. The house builder makes his/her money by maximizing the number of rooms that can be produced on the plot. The second one is a superrich multi-facility lavish house - with sprawling private gardens, individual swimming pools, gymnasiums, spas, servants' quarters, power backups and totally secure for a complete private living. These are made for the exclusive buyers and come with access to Gurgaon's posh clubs and other such places. These are called the premier segment houses. Money is made here by making a few large houses, but making them expensive.

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Remote Surveillance: The security industry of Gurgaon has been substantially proliferating with numerous enterprises selling CCTVs, access control systems, attendance recorders, automated gates and doors, mobile jammers, conversation recorders, video door phones, alarms, etc. One finds all kinds of cameras installed everywhere in Gurgaon - there are cameras inside and outside the boundary walls of the gated enclaves, on lobbies, staircases, doors of houses, lifts, restaurants, shops, malls, gardens and even within houses sometimes. The most recent practice is to install cameras inside the houses and monitor them via internet - these cameras relay their recordings live to the owners of the house twenty-four hours via the internet. This kind of remote surveillance is becoming increasingly popular not only with people going on long holidays, but also with people who spend most of their times outside their houses. More than the fear of burglars, these people feel the need to watch on the servants working in their house - and they can watch them on their cell phones.



Road Safety Officers (RSOs): Gurgaon's legendary traffic jams and road safety issues have given rise to a burgeoning breed of RSOs - Road Safety officers. These are ordinary citizens who devote a few hours of the week for traffic management and road safety issues. They regular meet with the traffic department of Gurgaon and strategize traffic management. They are given access to video cameras to record traffic flow, analyse it and suggest remedial measures. Some claim to have eased traffic woes in several places in Gurgaon. The Gurgaon Police, to augment its force is constantly on the lookout for RSOs. RSOs need not be highly qualified. All they need is common sense and some knowledge of basic traffic rules.

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SEZ Capital: When the government proposed the SEZ policy in the middle of 2000s, it pitched it as a move towards intensifying industrial growth in the country. Concessions on taxes, easy planning processes and relaxation of labor laws were proposed within such zones. Under the policy, any private party could propose an SEZ anywhere and get it approved by the national government. After this lands were acquired. The policy also allowed for large amounts of lands being used for real-estate residential developments. While large corporate companies showed enthusiasm and interest, the policy also attracted resistances, which mobilized the narratives of loss (loss of land, occupation, etc. by the farming communities) and speculations of developer-driven inequitable planning and governance within these SEZs. After reconsideration, the government decided not to allow developments that were not connected to the proposed industries within the SEZs. So free real-estate developments were discouraged. But many SEZs were proposed and much land was acquired. Gurgaon was said to be the SEZ capital of the country, where large amounts of lands were proposed for SEZs. Most of companies had acquired lands to develop them as real-estate developments to be sold in the open market. But when the national government changed its orientations, the private parties lost interest. They felt that a normal state developed master-plan was better than planning an SEZ with stringent conditions. Many asked for de-notification of the SEZs. The state government then decided to bring such lands that were earlier proposed for development of SEZs under the purview of a master-plan and facilitate the developers. Hence the Gurgaon-Manesar Urban Complex plan 2031 came into existence that mostly includes such lands.



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Social Entrepreneurs: Running parallel with the corporate landscape are the landscapes of social entrepreneurship, where Gurgaon residents have actively taken up the cause of the environment, social equality etc. in an entrepreneurial mode. In one instance an engineer and an alumnus of an American engineering college started a BPO, whose headquarters were in Gurgaon but had BPO set-ups in the villages of Haryana. They trained semi-literate rural women to perform specific tasks with the help of technology. The same company also started community farming initiatives and micro-credit services. With the trends of selling away their lands many village folk were in need of alternative jobs and social entrepreneurs such as these jumped in to tap this resource. There are others who have taken up greening Gurgaon as a hobby and developed it into an enterprise. Other initiatives involve starting of community radios in the villages, developing solar energy alternatives to the excessive use of diesel, giving mobile phones to poor families whose members work in Gurgaon as maids and drivers, coaxing the well off corporate residents to supply gifts to underprivileged children, providing opportunities for the orphans and the disabled, etc.



Training and Grooming: In the absence of historically settled feudal relationships between 'residents' and their 'domestic labour' (drivers, cooks, maids, guards, etc) in Gurgaon, one sees a certain sense of distrust amongst the people, often surfacing as violent conflicts. For example, there are no maids who have worked for years in the same house and have "become a part of the family", or there are no guards whose family has been staying in the society premises for years and have become part of people's everyday life. Most labour in the domestic sector is sourced through labour contractors operating as housekeeping and security agencies. In the absence of historically settled relationships, low wages and exploitative scope of works, it is understandable if the labour engages in activities that are considered 'uncivilized' by the residents. The responses of the residents have been to employ agencies that train and groom such domestic labour to prepare them for working with the elite and middle-class families. Several such training and grooming agencies have mushroomed in Gurgaon, which provide services to households, NGOs, labour contractors, and multinational companies. "We teach them how to keep themselves clean, how to handle a child and what to be careful of", explains one such training entrepreneur.



Triple duty: Jugnu Kumar came to Gurgaon in 2003 from Basti as a very young man. He found work in one of the newly built high-rise residential complexes as a gardener. The landscape architect who had designed and developed the gardens inside the complex had given clear instructions on watering, applying of fertilizers and pesticides, pruning etc. In fact, the architect had spent a lot of time with Jugnu training him. Over the years Jugnu not only became an expert on plants. But he soon realized that the gardening work in the complex required very little time. His room-mate, who was also from Basti was a driver to a company. Jugnu also decided to learn driving in his spare time and got himself enrolled at a local motor driving school. He was soon able to find a job which required people only during the evenings - it was that of a valet parking attendant in a restaurant that operated in the evening. Later he also found another job where he drove children to school and back to their homes. His day was now fully utilized.



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Underground: Every high-rise apartment, commercial office, mall and call centre has chimneys on their terrace, which keep spewing smoke throughout the day. The smoke comes from diesel generators that run in the basements of these buildings to provide a constant supply of electricity to the controlled environments inside them. Every building also has deep bore wells, which pull water. This is then filtered with reverse osmosis and supplied to the inhabitants. There is still no clarity on where the used water goes - sometimes it is treated within the buildings and then left into the drains, sometimes, the waste water is simply left without treatment. Unlike cities of similar wealth, Gurgaon is not connected / networked with underground systems - it floats and the 'projects' are like floating islands. The inhabitants of these islands move from one island to another. The only connection to the ground, are the people who service these apartments and are called upon to empty the septic tanks.



Urban Consciousness and Village Development: Uday, a student of IIT Chennai and a graduate from IIM Ahmedabad, ran a software company in Gurgaon in the 90s. Four years into the company Uday felt disconnected from the marginalized sections, which do not exist for the politicians or the government. Interested in teaching he started teaching in public schools of Delhi and Gurgaon in its urban villages. He saw a huge potential in a number of students who were hardworking and talented but didn't have the resources to aspire for a career, that people like him from a economically better background could easily achieve. He began a Study Center for these marginalized students. Here they offered free coaching and mentoring for deserving students. In recent years he has been interested in larger issues of development amongst marginalized communities in the villages of Gurgaon. These include microfinance and vocational training for migrants. Alongside, Uday has also developed a keen interest in urban issues. Two issues interest him at the moment. First, the street widening of a road from Shankar Chowk to Golf Course by DLF in partnership with HUDA and second, the coming up of a sewerage pond in-between Sikanderpur and DLF Phase I due to the cutting of a nalla by the rampant development of Cyber City. Uday in partnership with urban planners, RWAs, architects, NGOs, and municipal councilors have been trying to develop alternative designs for both these cases. The village community, particularly the migrants have not been involved since such issues are off their radar. They have other things to worry about such as basic necessities. The futures of these cases aren't their priority.



"UP ke dhet, dhet ke dhet hi rahenge": At a corner tea and matthi stall opposite the huge parking lot of the Delhi Public School (DPS) a group of DPS bus drivers dressed in light blue shirt and dark blue trousers spend their time waiting for the school to ring its final bell. Smoking beedis and drinking chai, the bus drivers joke with each other about how the other is unable to get rid of his migrant village habits in the city. "UP ke dhet, dhet ke dhet hi rahenge. Na kheti kar sakte hai, na bus chala sakte hai. Chale hai dharti par raj karne." Most of them are migrants from UP in their 50s and 60s whose farming back home wasn't profitable enough. Having come to Gurgaon they live together in a flat provided by the bus company at Silver Oaks in DLF Phase I. Silver Oaks, an apartment building for the economically weaker section houses a number of security guards, drivers, peons, and clerks who have been given a small room to stay along with five to six others by the employing company. Amidst the humour, two of the bus drivers are on their mobile phones trying to get insurance for the auto rickshaws that they drive in the evening. The others are trying to convince the younger bus drivers to work with them on their routes that afternoon so that they finish their route faster.



Voter-IDs and empowerment: A conversation with two urban activists, who are also members of NGOs revealed the relevance of voter-ids in the urban villages of Gurgaon. The shift from panchayat to wards (see From Panchayats to Wards) has placed a new importance on voter-ids, since the decision making power on matters relating to basic necessities such as electricity, food, water, sewerage, and waste disposal have moved from panchayats to the elected ward councilors. But this shift has produced a new conflict between the migrants and the natives. The migrants from UP, Nepal, Bihar, and the Northeast states of India do not hold voter-ids nor do they own houses or land in Gurgaon. Although they have been living in Gurgaon for eight to ten years their income levels have not allowed them to own property. Most of them live in rental housing owned by the native landlords in these villages. According to the bureaucratic procedures of acquiring voter-ids the government requires a signature from the landlords to certify their occupation of the rental property. In response, the landlords have refused to certify the occupation of the renters to maintain their power through electoral politics in these wards. In a number of cases the landlords have threatened the renters with eviction. Although, the migrants compose 70 to 90 percent of the population they are unregistered voters.



Waiting Lands: Poor public transport, high individual incomes and availability of easy finance has pushed the amount of private car ownership up in the city. Though considerable amount of parking space has been provided in most offices and residential complexes, there is always a substantial shortage with the ever increasing numbers of cars. On the other hand, several plots of lands continue to remain vacant as their owners are yet to develop buildings on them. The lands and their owners seem to be waiting for a good deal in the highly speculative environment of Gurgaon. These waiting lands have become instant solutions for the parking problems. The owners of many such plots have converted such lands into parking lots. They have installed guards who double as a parking attendants. Gurgaon's landscape is dotted with such instant parking spaces. It is a win-win situation for everyone - the car-owners, the offices and residential complexes get extra parking spaces and the plot owner gets parking charges. The only problem is that the waiting will soon get over.

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THE TABLE



The Mumbai Extension

In Mumbai, the Glossary took the form of a red table with a set of cubes above and below the table surfaces like a mini city erupting. The cubes formed shelves and light boxes housing the glossary. While the back-lit images embedded on the surface of the table, reminded of photographs tucked under glass table tops in cheesy brokers' offices in Gurgaon, the chairs formed a collage of accrued desires. The table produced a setting for debating, discussing and extending the glossary. It simultaneously became a work, a space, a practice, and a method complicating distinctions between producing and reflecting and between work and its audience. Many structured and unstructured conversations took place that flowed into each other about methods of engaging with the city, about exchanging notes with people working on cities, and about sharing experiences of city living.

The Discussions / Conversations

Erasure or Collapse: Is the act of creating a glossary of micro-narratives an insurgent act? Is the modern project over? Does this fetishise the method? What happens next, what is the future of this work? Are these also in the realm of provocations and speculations? Is it about an urban experience? Is the urban experience un-homely? What is the difference between *kholi* and *ghar*? What happens when the material from now takes over the work and the plot? Does this material encapsulate the depths? What happens when the 'now' becomes so thick that one loses oneself in it? Is this a collapse of history? Is collapse different from erasure? Is collapse productive? How does one navigate this thickness of now? Where does one start and can there be an ending?



Work as moment: How does memory reconstruct a city? Does memory complicate the present? Is memory a strategy? What will be a history of the future? What is the difference in imaginations produced in the labor camps of Vasai and Dubai? Who is changed when Subway sells vegetarian food in Ghatkoper - Subway or Ghatkoper or both? How does a city produce a public? How does a city produce a specific 'I' and a specific 'other'? Can the city be dark in some parts at least - Does it need to be? Is city a comprehension or a collection? How does one deal with the collection? Is it about creating a moment at that time, at that place and with those people?

Dream from Here: How many centers does a city have? Does the private sector imagine the city as a set of regulations? How is it possible to legislate cultures? Why does planning refuse to engage with claims? Is New-Bombay a city with antibiotics - waiting to have side-effects? How does one imagine a city periphery - as land ready to be exploited, as a dump-yard, as landscapes creating newer centers, or as places that provide the possibility to have a (another) house? Wasn't a city without a 'home' for a long time? Is the idea of a certain kind of family being projected into the idea of the city to think about house and housing? Does the ease of getting a house outside the city produce the dream of a house? Is the dream highjacked or pushed away? Does the dream have a market - an economy? Where else does a dream get produced? Does the dream have to be responsible?

In Sao-Paulo, the Glossary is a setting for extending the discussions on conceptualizing cities. It is an invitation for a conversation to exchange notes and share experiences of cities.

CLARIFYING CONCEPTUAL ORIENTATIONS

The Three Obsessions

With a growing interest shown by urban studies scholars in city peripheries and second towns, Gurgaon's urbanity will soon be under academic and judicial scrutiny. Gurgaon provides enough opportunities to urban studies scholars to mobilize their three obsessions - to overview, to lament and to intervene. As in most urban studies scholarship, it would be easy for studies on Gurgaon to articulate grand and coherent overviews of environmental degradation, of corporate takeover of planning, of infrastructure collapse, of developer appropriation of land, of growth of an oppressive civil society, of growing consumerism, of gentrification and of capitalistic exploitation in Gurgaon. Such a picture would provide a comprehensible idea of the degraded, failed, appropriated, oppressed, gentrified and exploited urban conditions. This would then create a context for the second obsession - of lament for the environment, the labor, the poor, the public and infrastructure. Finally, the lament in turn would provide for the third obsession - to intervene. Like everywhere else, the obsession for intervention would be mobilized on the one hand through activist movements demanding participation, transparency, accountability, efficiency, rights, etc. and on the other hand, through design and technological pursuits that seeks efficiency and delight in the urban space. This kind of linear and easy mode of urban research, shaped by the three obsessions often obtain academic validations and techno-legal justifications.

The problem with these obsessions is that they not only conceptually close the discussions on the urban condition, but also bring about simplistic readings and cause dangerous implications. For example, a reading that planning has been taken over by the corporate fails to notice various levels of nuances involved in negotiations, transactions and balancing of power that takes place between various urban actors for such a condition to come about. In Gurgaon, most local landowners collaborate with large developers to develop expensive real-estate on their lands, with expensive flats that are then rented to new corporate workers. The rent market in Gurgaon seems to be dominated by the local landowners.

The landowners at the same time also make rental housing for the large number of migrant workers who come to provide services in the city. However, today the numbers of migrants have become so large that they have started showing their political presence in the city. The clear narrative of corporate takeover starts getting blurred when such details open up. In most urban studies, the characterization of the corporate and the other are generalized and often rendered in binaries of gainers and losers. Often the elite corporate workers are considered to be gainers and local landowners and migrant workers as seen as losers. Gurgaon's urbanity also complicates such stories of gains and losses, where the corporate workers, local landowners, and the migrant workers wield enough power to assert themselves in the physical, social and economical landscapes of the city.

A simplistic articulation of gainers and losers forces an intervention towards regulating the gainers further and bringing about justice and protecting rights of the losers. While tighter regulations have often resulted into higher levels of corruption, efforts to get justice and protection of rights, brings the so-called 'losers' within the realms of legality, which results in large-scale erasures. For example, if effort is made to provide clear tenures and apartment housing for the slum dwellers, then it is possible that clear tenures will attract richer people who may buy off the houses. Also, the work and production that was possible in the spatial configuration of the slum will be impossible in an apartment. The obsessive tendency to overview, lament and intervene is not only problematic, but is also impossible and irrelevant.

Like any other city, Gurgaon's urbanity is also full of stories that complicate the easy narratives - a local councilor announces that his dream is to provide every new migrant with a house; an air conditioning employee shifts to his office guest house when his house gets taken over by lizards; an organization specializes in catching monkeys; some people are obsessed with watching their house maids at work on their mobile phones using remote surveillance cameras; master-plan documents are sold at photocopy shops; an enterprise is set up to provide consultation on gifts; new enterprises come up to provide emotional security; Residents' associations issue

discount-shopping cards; about a hundred trucks move around the city sucking shit from every building; more than thousand liters of diesel is burnt everyday to run the air-conditioning plants; the residents undertake an aggressive tree plantation program; new legislative and financial instruments are devised to facilitate the forceful changes in landscape; and many more. These incoherent stories refuse any kind of clear reading and comprehension of the urban condition. They show us that a city is in a constant state of becoming. It settles in ways where there is no easy resolution of urban forces or differences.

It is clear that cities get worked out beyond plans and conspiracies, beyond concepts and categories, beyond activism and policy, and beyond discourses and interventions. At the same time within the nuances of urban life lie many more possibilities of imagining amenable pasts and futures, involving diverse urban actors. The emerging questions for urban studies would be then about rethinking the methods and terms of engagement with the urban.

We want to propose three conceptual strategies to engage with the urban realm - being unbounded, being unstable and being incoherent.

2

Being Unbounded

The impossibility of closure in discussing cities could be explained through the idea of boundaries. Closure is sought in most discussions and gets manifested as an introductory foreword, or keynote to set the tone, a concluding observation, a final contention, or even a direction for 'further research'. The practices of describing conditions, explaining events and making relationships and connections largely tend to make final arguments that will close the description or the analysis. Boundaries here are the edges of the discussion: the conceptual and material limits that are laid clearly before embarking on a discussion. It manifests in many ways - as a common language, as a spatial or a temporal limit, as an ideological orientation, or even a methodological framework.

The media-hyped crime stories are best illustrations to open up the idea of 'closure' and 'boundaries'. Indian TV anchors these days are often found shouting, "when will we get a sense of closure to this episode?". The episode usually being that of a crime where the alleged criminals are not punished. Here, the boundaries of the episode are set quite clearly and do not extend beyond the crime, which includes the criminal, the victim and in some cases the intension of the criminal. Within such boundaries, punishment of the criminal appears to bring about a closure.

But the clarity of the situation diffuses when the boundaries are pushed beyond the crime. For example, if one opens the idea of the criminal and examines contexts - the past conditions, the psychological makeup, the specificities of the episode, the relationship with the victim, the moral and ideological leanings, the cultural backgrounds, etc. then things start becoming complicated. The same extension of the boundary can be made also to the idea of the victim and the idea of the crime. It is not difficult to imagine that with an extension of these boundaries, discussions enter into such complicated realms, that the ideas of 'criminal', 'victim' and 'crime', may themselves disappear. Such extensions of boundaries are usually employed to make required arguments. Since the boundaries could be endlessly changed, the arguments can also be endless. In such a case, there would never be a closure. The ideas of 'boundaries' and 'closure' seem related - every time, the boundary is changed, the discussions open up or the closure ceases.

There was recently the case of the murder of a woman, committed by a man in Mumbai. Things were quite clear: it was reported as a case, where a lustful man forced himself on a woman and killed her. But when the boundaries of the episode were extended, discussions started getting blurred. It emerged that the man was a Kashmiri Muslim and the woman was a Bengali upper-caste Hindu; he had recently run away from his home near the line of control in Jammu to find work and she had studied in a law school in Pune; his father worked as a porter and her father was a senior bureaucrat in the government of India; he did not have an address and she stayed on the sixteenth floor of an exclusive apartment; he found a job as guard with a security agency and she had recently joined one of the media companies as their legal counsel.

They met one night when she woke him up to open the gates for her. She was angry and he was asleep. From that day onwards, she would always be irritated with him. She always felt that he ogled at her. Then one day after shouting at him, she slapped him in front of other guards, drivers and others. She had brought a closure to the event by teaching him a lesson.

But he felt quite offended and did not have the confidence to utter a word in retaliation. Thereafter, whenever she passed, his blood boiled, but he could not do anything. His friends consoled him but he couldn't gather courage to look at anyone. Sleeping in the nights became difficult for him. He required a closure. A week later on one night, he went to her house and killed her. He then called up his friends to say that he had taken revenge. This was his closure. Now the media anchors cried for closure - they accused him of entering her house with an intention to rape her to fulfill his lust - they wanted him to be punished. But will this closure close everything? The media itself added several more dimensions to the incident. One newspaper wrote almost an eyewitness like detail - *'He pounced on the girl to avenge his insult through his demonic Mughal lust but the girl offered remarkable resistance'*. As the neighbors did not respond during the course of the incident, there was also a television discussion on how as an urban society we are becoming increasingly indifferent. Is it possible to set boundaries for such discussions or is it possible to bring closure to all this?

Cities do not allow boundaries to be drawn. Every story seems to have an endless beginning and endless possibilities of continuation. A few years ago, a garbage landfill in Mumbai was hurriedly closed to develop a township of call centers, posh apartments, malls and other office buildings over it. All kinds of policy manipulations and land grab operations were mobilized to build this new township. The township came up and some of the largest businesses of the city located themselves here. Within a couple of years a problem occurred - gases were being emitted from the former garbage dump and were affecting the computers of the call centers and other commercial offices.

This description of the dumpsite has many possibilities of beginnings and continuations. One can find several to move behind or ahead from here - What happened then? Why was such a land grabbed? Why was the dump yard allowed to close so abruptly? What did the call centers do? Can the gases be stopped? Did new enterprises set up to deal with the gases? If these gases could harm the computers, what was their effect on humans? Will this have an effect on land markets?

So if city stories are endless in their beginnings and endings allowing for simultaneous closing and openings, then it is necessary to think about ways and forms of discussing cities in unending limitless ways, breaking all disciplinary boundaries, mixing methods and folding facts and fictions. Almost like the stories from the Arabian Nights - continuous and endless - inwards and outwards.

3

Being Unstable

The cartographic map of a neighborhood would include points, lines and polygons denoting buildings, plots, street, sidewalks, water edges, terrain features and sometimes also locations of trees, street lights, and other street furniture. It will also have a legend describing all the lines, colors and symbols in the map. A geographic information system will have all of this and in addition will also have a list attached to the map describing more characteristics about each point, line and polygon - name of the owner of the plot, name of a water tank, area of a plot, land value, use of the plot, condition of the road, etc. On the other hand, the cognitive imaginations could take a variety of forms - it could be a text describing the physical form of the neighborhood or a even a street or a building, a diagram showing specific relationships between different communities, a blog on changes in the uses of land or changes in land tenure, an installation opening up the politics of development, an animation showing the power structure in the neighborhood, a drawing identifying the different kinds of institutional/organizational arrangements, etc. The cartographic and the cognitive imaginations may relate to each other in many ways - in some cases they may complement each other and in others they may contradict.

The critiques of mapping practices have been extensive. While cartographic maps, plans and geographic information systems are considered to be distanced, overarching, being able to only provide a generalized idea, used by the powerful, and unable to record softer aspects; the cognitive imaginations that take the form of many kinds of alternative mappings are criticized for being myopic, not having an ability to make relations and connections, being focused on only certain aspects and not having a wider perspective. The essential difference between both, the cartographic maps and the cognitive imaginations is the critical distance between the map-maker and what is being mapped - the object of mapping. In the case of the cartographic maps the critical distance is large, such that it allows all aspects of the object of mapping to be seen together and in case of the cognitive imaginations, the critical distance is almost absent and the map-maker is usually inside the object of mapping.

But cities operate and can be seen at both levels - cartographic as well as cognitive - and also in many more levels between and beyond these two. To look at an example: large industries of Mumbai got dismantled in the late 1980s and the 1990s. The cartographic and cognitive imaginations created many versions of the story depending upon the critical distance between the observer and the field of study. Large cartographic imaginations read the phenomenon as a deindustrialization process, as a new opportunity for creating open space and cultural infrastructure in the lands emptied by the industries for the city, break down of organized labour and growth of informality, takeover by corporate capitalism, etc. Cognitive readings on the other hand were largely stories about the loss to / of the working class and appropriation of land and resources by the owners of industries. But when the distance between the observer and the field were varied, new readings were made - about the production getting reconfigured in space and scale, about the growth of new entrepreneurs in the city and about a landscape where lives of many people beyond the workers and owners changed in different ways. Seeing the field with a varying position from the field meant reading the large scale transformation in the overall landscape as well as examining the mechanics of this transformation. The stories of deindustrialization and opportunity, of loss and appropriation became complicated and blurred - they became stories of reconfiguration and enterprise.

The shifting of positions is in no manner to demean the practice of the cartographic and the cognitive and the binaries created by them. The binaries are important and are extremely effective in mobilization of people, creation of mass movements, etc. However, people and mass are not homogenous entities and are full of contradictions. The binary may have a very short life - useful only for ignition of an intense activity. In the case of the industrial lands above, the binary of loss (of workers) and opportunity (for owners) could mobilize workers to agitate and go on a strike. But then the binary could not go beyond the agitation - it did not provide strategy to engage with the reconfigurations of production and space. In one case, shut-down industries were broken into, machines were started and the industry was occupied for some time. But then there was no follow-up plan. The binary does not produce such a follow-up plan.

4

Being Incoherent

In urban studies, in the name of 'writing local histories', 'asserting identity and social existence', 'getting rights and entitlements', 'mobilizing resistances' and more generally 'mapping', there seems to be an increasing obsession to voyeuristically engage with practices that exist in the crevices of formality and legality. The nature of this engagement is extremely dangerous to the practices as, firstly, it exposes them and, secondly, makes their mechanics legible to all kinds of scrutiny, putting them further at risk of erasure. For example, studies that engage with street-food enterprises typically record spaces, actors and transactions that form the enterprises and establish clear and coherent relationships between them. Through exposing the mechanics of making and vending food on the street they also make arguments about exploitation of labour, harassment by authorities etc. Unintentionally, such recording does another thing - it exposes many aspects of the enterprises that characterize them as 'informal / illegal' - the manner of sourcing and storing water, disposing waste, cooking and storing cooked food, mobilizing gas cylinders for cooking, cleaning vessels and cutlery, etc.

These recordings could easily be read as a compromise in cleanliness, safety and health issues. The readings would then force an intervention that would either promote removing of the enterprises or formalizing them. If formality is sought, then cleanliness and safety standards will be followed and new infrastructure will have to be created. The enterprises will then become unviable for the vendors there, as cost of production will increase, leading to an erasure of those enterprises. A harmless work of urban studies (which must have sought to uplift the lives of people), will end up facilitating their removal.

The contention here is that the problem comes into existence specifically because the language of urban studies either directly coincides with the languages used for scrutiny or could be easily appropriated by the systems of scrutiny - and this is the language of coherence. Often, this language is based on techno-legal frameworks that establish clear relationships through empirical evidences, statistical reasoning, scientific rationality and legal logic. Most urban studies discussions today get moderated by the judiciary, which is considered to be an ombudsman for universal justice. And so most works end up emulating the techno-legal language for satisfying some unknown desire for legal validity. Many works have ended up becoming annexures to public interest litigations, affidavits, policy notes and other techno-legal documents. It is as if legal/juridical acceptance has become the sole validity for these works.

On the other hand, urban studies works that do not necessarily conform to the techno-legal frameworks - documentary films, blogs, websites, social-art projects, etc - do not overtly allow a direct appropriation by the systems of scrutiny. However, voyeuristic obsession continues and the language of coherence remains operative. Perhaps even at a higher intensity. These works are driven by the urge of being put in the public realm. The act of making records persists - records that will uncover the hidden, expose the truth, be archived and circulated and be put together to make arguments. There seems to be some fascination to create such records using 'real' material from the 'ground'. The desire and the act of seeking 'legibility' in the language of these works propel their language towards coherence.

Being coherent is not only a problem, it is also difficult - almost impossible. In an edited volume on mapping urban violence in Latin American cities, most authors exposed actors, networks, spaces and interactions to sketch an environment of violence. They established links between forces of globalization, migration, informalisation, illegality and slum creation that results in a context of violence and 'exclusion' in these cities. And as if almost by default, what got highlighted was the fragility of governance. This will probably be a clear direction to a policy maker to focus on tightening the systems of governance. But another thing happened in the book. For a person not familiar with the Latin American context, its cities came across as dark, disturbed and anarchic, its people without morals and ethics - obviously a limited and problematic understanding. While the language of coherence was able to build a clear story about the failure of governance, it also built up an extremely problematic story alongside.

Urban contexts get shaped in complex ways. They are influenced by multiple and complicated things that sometimes seem absurd and therefore interesting to an urban studies observer. The authors of the volume seemed enamoured by scenes of crime, which may otherwise be commonplace. Once enamoured, they sought to find reasons and solutions for them, and in doing so sketched a clear and transparent story, completely missing out the intriguing opacity of living. Languages of coherence seem incapable of being able to conceptualize cities. How can it be possible to be coherent and claim to see things clearly, except by being blind to them?

To uncover the hidden, to make clear the connections, to tell the truth - when engagement moves beyond this obsession, innumerable possibilities to talk about the urban realm open out. This provides for a different engagement. In their inability to devise interventions, engagements can become far more generous. In many ways, these engagements become part of the very material of urban life itself. Crucially, such engagements do not allow appropriation, as their languages are too mature for the systems of scrutiny. Incoherence then does not remain simply a manner of engagement; it becomes a politic.



Gurgaon Glossaries is produced by CRIT-Studio and the team includes Rupali Gupte, Prasad Shetty & Prasad Khanolkar, all urbanists based in Mumbai.

CRIT is a network of individuals interested in developing critical understandings of, and responses to the rapidly changing urban realm. CRIT's methods are multidisciplinary in approach, tactical in orientation, and steeped in a rigorous engagement with the everyday. Since 2003, the group has been involved in research, pedagogy and intervention on/in the urban realm. The main areas of work include housing, urban peripheries, public spaces and emerging urban conditions. CRIT-Studio is a constituent part of CRIT.

The participants in the Mumbai discussions included Aishwarya Padmanadhan, Akshai Wilkinson, Ankita Nalawade, Anuradha Panigrahi, Apoorva Iyengar, Ashutosh Singhal, Benafshaw Dashti, Chetan Kulkarni, Deepali Modi, Divya Shetty, Duhita Musale, Gautam Thakkar, George Jacob, Glenda Dias, Gyan Prakash, Himesh Kadakia, Isaac Mathew, Janki Sanghvi, Kaiwan Mehta, Kanchan Ghadge, Kanika Gulani, Karan Daisaria, Keya Kunte, Lalita Kamat, Lubaina Rangwala, Makarand Salunke, Namrata Kapoor, Naveeda Naik, Neera Adarkar, Neha Goel, Noopur Sejpal, Paresh Kamdar, Prasad Shetty, Pratima Dhaiphule, Purva Dewoolkar, Radhika Mathur, Rajeev Thakker, Ramu Ramanathan, Rujuta Narangekar, Rupali Gupte, Saanchi Jhunjhunwala, Sahil Latif, Saileel Bhandarkar, Sangeeta Banerjee, Shahbaz Shamsi, Shaurya Dedhia, Shirin Chaudhari, Shirish Joshi, Shriya Bhatia, Sonal Shah, Sumitra Kadam, Surabhi Sharma, Susan Hapgood, Uttara Ramakrishnan, Vaishanvi Nevrekar, and Zubin Parekh

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