tion is not geared for it and should not be entrusted with this task. It has no experience in any form of housing other than parceling land into small plots and selling them to the public.

This very land then changes hands to private developers and is built only for the profit making ventures. Those who are lucky enough to get an allocation fell delighted at the prospect of an windfall profit at public expense. Those who miss out are left despondent.

This situation must change and an area must within the satellite towns must be pre-planned for development of a particular type of housing with assurances for affordability, accessibility. More than one type of tenure, ranging from tenancy to housing for middle income groups, from low-rise townhouses to walk up apartments, to housing for the poor and lower income groups, the support to market housing, and the high-rise apartments can only be delivered in a comprehensive planning and controlled way. There should be no individual dispensation or allocation s of plots. That is the only way we can make progress in this sector, and through the current policies pursued by Rajuk of individual plots as in Purbachal, etc.

Tenure should range from tenancy in public housing to acquiring middle-income flats through private sector financing. Private developer based housing is not the only form available. My experience with City of Toronto Housing Department and the Saskatchewan Municipal and Urban Affairs as well as my term with Physical Planning and Housing Sector, Planning Commission, in Bangladesh (1972-1973) gives me the confidence to make this statement. This is a sector I would like to elaborate in some future forum.

Satellite Towns and Proposal for a 20-Year Regional Development Plan

Many large and mega cities of the world have depended on planning and developing satellite towns around them, to lessen the pressures on them. Early examples were Milton Keynes and a number of new towns around London. Later in the seventies, eighties, and nineties a number of new towns have been developed around Seoul and Tokyo. But one example that is very close to us is the Navi (New) Mumbai next to Mumbai. Planned and developed from the sixties and seventies, Navi Mumbai on the eastern side of Mumbai Bay has grown from nothing in the seventies to a vibrant new town of 2.6 million people today.

Dhaka City and the Greater Dhaka Area (as in DMDP 1995-2015) is one of the fastest growing urban regions of the world. According to the STP projection the STP (including Naryanganj, Gazipur, Savavar, Manikganj, and Narshindi) region would have a population of 35.93 million in 2024.

With this growth, Dhaka is destined to become one of the densest urban regions of the world. This densification would lead to major problems. In almost all areas of urban environment, rivers will be polluted, wetlands and flood plains and drainage areas will disappear, transportation and movements would become almost impossible, unless we plan with care and implement the plans diligently.

The time is now ripe to think about the decentralisation and diversification of Dhaka through a Long Range Regional Development Plan. A major tool in this will be selection, location, planning, composition, and development of satellite towns around Dhaka. If we can select proper locations for these new satellite towns and plan and implement them properly, then we shall have achieved the twin purpose of lessening the pressures of growth on Dhaka and provide space not only for new housing but of place to work and grow. The location for these towns should be carefully selected for connectivity (road network) and environmental sensitivity.

Like the DMDP Plan 1995-2015 we should start working on a Greater Dhaka Regional Development Plan with a 20-year time horizon as a guide. We should complete this conceptual plan in less than two years and set about the planning of the satellite towns within it and complete the exercise in less than five years.

Let us discuss this further in an open forum and set up a proper planning agency and get on with work If this task is taken in hand with proper diligence and not on ad-hoc basis, by 2021 we could have four or more evolving new satellite towns around Dhaka, helping its decentralisation and by 2031 these combinedly could accommodate in excess of five million people. We could learn from the example of Mumbai and create a number of satellite towns like Navi Mumbai that will cater to the growth needs of the Greater Dhaka Region.

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