





tra bureaucrats and politicians.

- The landowners who had pooled in were not only promised a high capital return on the value of land they had thrown in, but were also given new-age entrepreneurial options arising from the plethora of on-site opportunities. So, farmer families became excavation contractors, concrete-block makers, restauranteers, taxi and truck operators, grill and cabinet makers. Many became civil contractors too, taking on pockets of in-situ development.

So, can the Magarpatta experience be replicated as a model of 'farmer-led' inclusive development across the length and breadth of the country? Yes and No. Yes:

- If there is existing cohesion and social harmony in the area, as was the case here.

- If local communities throw up well-educated, visionary and well-connected entrepreneurs like Satish Magar who, by virtue of their landholdings and social status, are readily accepted and trusted as opinion leaders as well as business anchors.

- If the agglomerated land is within the fringes of large well-connected commercial towns and cities that anyway have a real-estate boom waiting to happen from sunrise sectors and require little 'destination-marketing' per se.

- If, across the development process, the natural leader (a *la* Satish Magar) is perceived to be fair, and is seen to be distributing the gains to all the pool members in a transparent manner.

- If the Magarpatta model is replicated by other rural communities who may not have their own Satish Magar but invite entrepreneurs like him who enjoy the trust of the community to take similar 'sharing' models forward. (Already, the model is being tried out in two similar patches outside Pune where the Magarpatta Company has been invited by the local community to play the prime 'developer' role.)

Obviously No, if the above conditions do not hold. Also no:

- In areas where land holdings are so fragmented that collecting 500 acres could well involve thousands of family members.

- Where the issue gets highly politicised, a *la* Nandigram.

In most cases where land is required for large format infrastructure projects, there will still be no substitute for pro-active external interventions in resettlement and rehabilitation efforts. This is because it does seem unlikely that most parts of rural India can throw up the enriching and heady cocktail of circumstances that can make a Magarpatta happen. But let us celebrate the fact that in one city in India, it did.

Cheers!

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