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Effect of Urbanization on Kankavli, District: Sindhudurg

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Abstract:

Kankavli is a well known town located in District Sindhudurg, Maharashtra. It is an old town known widely as a market place for nearby agricultural places.

Recently Kankavli has started developing into a city. The development has spread to nearby villages. Kankavli is better known as a potential market place rather than agricultural activities. Recently lots of developmental activities are being carried out by the government as well as by the private sector. These developmental activities have beneficial effects like employment generation, as well as harmful effects on this rapidly developing town. It can be developed into a beautiful city if developmental process is channelized in a proper manner, instead of costly transplantation, another suggestion is to adopt the Bihar model. Parida U.K (2017).

Key Words: Kankavli, Urbanization, Konkan, Development, Sindhudurg

Introduction:

Many towns in Konkan region started speedy developmental phase soon after start of Konkan Railway. Kankavli is one of such towns in district Sindhudurg. The town started spreading in nearby villages such as village Kalmath, Janavli, Varavde etc. Urban growth always exerts pressure on the ecological balance of a place Ranade P.S. (2009).

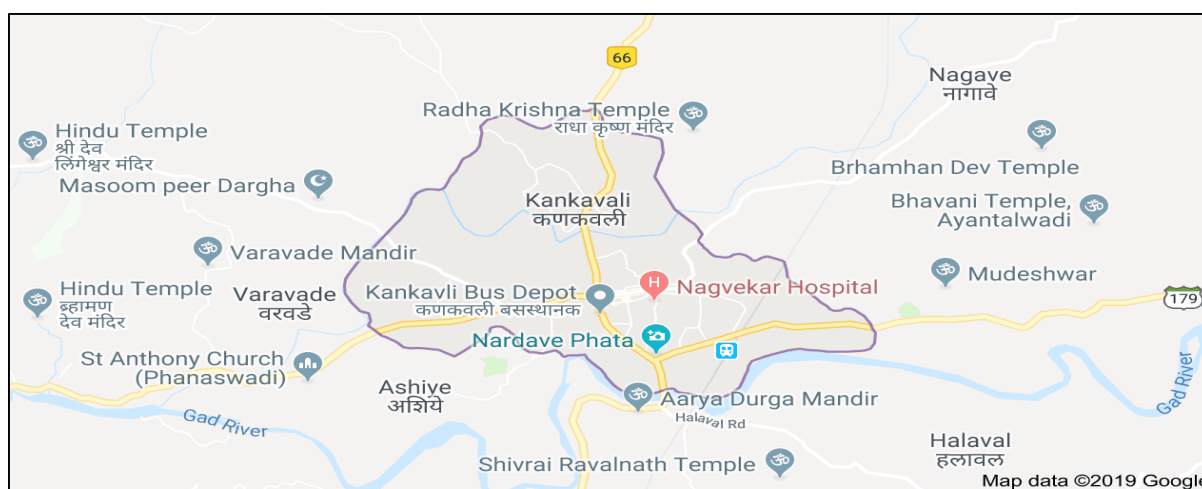


Fig 1: Map of Kankavli and nearby villages. Source: Google Maps

In addition to the urbanization pressure the whole area is undergoing massive road developmental activity. This has further aggravated the problem. The lush green forest cover is the identity of Konkan region. Unfortunately the forest cover is reducing slowly and steadily Vinayak A.J (2018).



Fig 2: Representative images of Mumbai-Goa Highway under development in Sindhudurga district.

Material and Method:

Kankavli is a fast growing town, which is also a taluka place. The town is governed by Kankavli Nagar Panchayat. Kankavli is an old town known more as a market place for nearby agricultural places such as Achra, Devgad, Rajapur, Malvan, Kudal and even farther places like Gaganbawda, Dajipur, Radhanagari etc. It is surrounded with small villages like Kalmath, Varavde, Janavli, Halwal, Vagde etc.

Since olden times Kankavli is better known as a potential market place for the agricultural products such as different varieties of Mangoes, Jackfruit, Cashew, Coconut, many cereals and pulses, number of forest products and folk medicines produced by the surrounding villages. As a result of this, it has attracted many people to this town as new settlers. The town has also attracted people from megacities for buying a second home or for the sake of investment. The combined effect of all these reasons, lot of construction sites can be observed all around the town. Even in surrounding villages like Halwal, Varavde and Janavli many housing and commercial complexes are under development. As a result of this there is a direct pressure on the forest cover in the nearby regions of Kankavli. The housing complexes are mostly being developed on private lands, hence government authorities have no or less control over such forest destructions.

In addition to this, the road widening and upgrading work of NH66 (Mumbai – Goa Highway) is going on in full swing. The proposed six lane (43.6 mtr wide) highway passes through the Kankavli city and market area. The required land has been acquired by the concerned department Parida U.K (2017). As a result of this the commercial activities in the market are greatly hampered. It was decided to build a flyover of about 3.0 km through city to tide through the situation of land acquisition through the main marketplace of Kankavli town. But after the completion of this flyover, the tourist vehicles passing through the Kankavli won't be able to access Kankavli Market. As a result of which Kankavli market will experience financial setback. Before the start of the road developmental activity, there used to be a thick cover of cultivated and naturally growing trees. The land mostly belongs to forest department. The

trees use to provide habitat for many types of birds and animals. Even the area used to host many rare as well as common medicinal plants. The average age of the trees in this adjoining part of the highway is around 50 years. All this treasure is now lost forever. The whole area is in a devastated state. Government has plans to plant even more number of trees in the whole span of 366 kms from Panvel to Zarap. Parida U.K (2017). The estimated number of trees to be cut during this developmental activity is 31,000 for first 91 kms stretch Parida U.K (2017). The estimate is only about large trees but details about plants lost in terms of small trees, shrubs and herbs are not available.

Results and Discussions:

Road and infrastructure development is an essential for the economic growth of the nation, but it cannot be at the cost of environment. The damage caused to the environment cannot be repaired by any kind of remediation. Though government has plans to plant sufficient number of trees in the total span of 366 kms., the success cannot be guaranteed. Not only trees, but also soil and water must be saved. Around 10 tonnes of soil per hectare are eroded due to excessive forest-cutting. There are other issues like threat to wildlife habitats, destruction of rare plant species, and alteration of water currents and shrinkage of the river basin.

Urbanization has multidimensional impact on the surrounding environment. It not only affects forest cover, but also affects ground water level and quality Wakode et al (2018). The Sindhudurg district has satisfactory level of ground water. Mishra(2014). Uncontrolled urbanization may cause permanent damage to ground level of water. Kanagalakshmi, and Nagan (2013)

Conclusion:

Conservation activity cannot be a success unless and until there is a participation of people at grass root level. Transplantation is a major issue given the terrain of the highway. Experts suggest the nursery method, which is to grow tree saplings in a nursery and then plant them there. Few rare trees on the highway-side will be axed. Parida U.K (2017).

The forth coming year after the completion of highway development work will be crucial from the point of view of remediation of the area. Instead of costly transplantation, another suggestion is to adopt the Bihar model. A farmer is paid Rs1.5 lakh for planting and taking care of 50 trees for three years. Also, trees having a girth of up to 30cm will be uprooted and replanted. Parida U.K (2017)

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