

Minutes/Proceedings of Discussion meetings on Compact Township

Venue: Officers' Club, Kalkini, Madaripur

Date: 22 May 2014, Thursday

Organized by: Compact Township Foundation and Karsa



1. Under the aegis of 'Compact Township Foundation' and 'KARSA', a discussion meeting on compact township was held on 22 May 2014 at the Upazila Officers' Club in Kalkini Upazila. The meeting was presided over by Mrs. Siddiqui – former Head of Political Science Department of Syed Abul Hossain University College. The meeting commenced with the presence of Dr. Abul Hossain, GS, Compact Township Foundation (CTF) and Mr. Muniruzzaman, Director of Karsa and former UP chairman of Alinagar Union Parishad ..
2. The meeting was conducted by Mr. Muniruzzaman, Director Karsa . The meeting was held in the form of a round table in a homely and pleasant environment because of nature of the hall-room (venue) of Upazila Officers' Club.
3. Among the many other participants and people's representatives the meeting started with the presence of a large number of present and former UP chairmen, members and women members from reserved seats, councilors of municipalities, Teachers of different colleges, teachers of various schools and madrashas,

officials from BRDB and Agriculture department, businessmen, president of local press club and the representatives from different electronic and print media.

4. At the very outset, Mr. Muniruzzaman made an introductory speech on the aims and objectives of Compact Township Foundation and Compact Townships in a nutshell. In the speech he mentions, “Houses are being built, roads are being constructed on agricultural lands. In future, where will we get crops from and what to eat? Regarding the population problem/ population booming much has been discussed. Now is regarding the compact townships. We are yet to embed it in our thoughts. Today we will have idea how the compact townships will take place.”
5. Upon Mr. Muniruzzaman’s introductory deliverance, Dr. Abul Hossen, General Secretary of Compact Township Foundation took part in the discussion, he talked about the Compact township and its necessity. Then the house was declared open for opinions and discussion. Amidst the open discussion, Dr. Abul Hossain tried to answer to some questions taking the floor.



6. Open Discussion:

Sarder Abdul Mannan – former chairman first took the floor and took part in the discussion. He emphasized what the negative aspects might be and whether the family members want to live in a combined family or in separate houses. Suppose, how 05 brothers will live within a building, let alone the whole village. We need

to convince the people that you 05 brothers in a problem, so live together. House of each man is located at different place. During the vote, the villagers say, “Make road for us otherwise, we won’t vote for you.” To finish the agricultural land, we don’t need even 50 years. In past, there were ponds, swamps, water-bodies, etc. Water-lilies were there, but now only we see signboard, land filling and houses.

Another Chairman of Shikar Mongal Union Parishad opined, “We are very sensitive towards the ancestral graveyard. We are trying to bring people closer. However, it seems very hard to me to create a compact township within a union parishad. It is possible to implement this idea if we can demonstrate our patriotism.” He also added, there we should have our commitment to the future generation. This is about the commitment towards people and the country.

Professor Kholiquzzaman of Bangla Department viewed, “We need to know what are the suggestive ways for implementing the compact township.” He also stated, in terms of economy, Bangladesh is a country of agro-based economy. The country is a food and agriculture dependent country but when we look towards the industrialization for the economic development, the pollution of Buriganga and agro-lands are being seen due to industrial waste.”

According to the journalist of Iqbal Hossain, in the past people used to run towards the Chairmen and Members for food, but now for the security of their children, education for them (children) and want to fulfill their basic demands. He also opined to create a compact township, at first, schools and colleges are to be shifted and people will definitely go. Men don’t want to live alone; they want to live within the human being. If these facilities are seen, people will go for pursuance to enlist each other name first.

Former Agricultural officer Mr. Nesaruddin Howlader said, if new crops are tried to be introduced, farmers are not willing to accept it. When seeds-29 was tried to be introduced, farmers were unwilling to accept. We need to make the people aware about Compact Townships .

A teacher named Mr. Enamul taking part in the discussion said, “We live in village. People think to live in a better environment. There should be a good environment. Compact Township is a good initiative.”

7. The General Secretary of CT Foundation tried to solve the answers of some questions. He said, “We are here to share the ideas.” He also made a reference to the Koyra locality of Khulna district. As there is no pure drinking water, for everyday about seven-and-a half litre water are being provided to each house.

According to the expert about 7 litre water is required for each person here. After a natural disaster here security problem occurred and pure drinking water crisis was seen. Out of these realities, the necessity of Compact Township comes to the front.

8. At the end of the discussion, the chair of meetings pointed out the necessity of Compact Township and concluded the meeting.

9. The following salient questions emerged out of the discussion:
 - It strikes our mind and feelings how to leave the cemetery of ancestral. Don't know whether it is possible. It seems a hindrance;
 - It's very logical, but how to implement it? The government started to implement the project "a house a farm" first at only 04 unions of one upazila. If even in a lesser number, some places CT needed to be implemented.
 - The CT idea is to introduce to the government plan;
 - The problem in Bangladesh is 80% wealth is dominated by 20% people only.
 - The dignified people may not agree to come to compact township;
 - If we want shift toward the compact township, we need to have facilities first. If schools, colleges and hospitals are established first, people will be happy to move to CT.
 - We may make people aware by setting up a pilot/model compact township;
 - Where the person will go who has no land?

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