

Developing CRZ, Ports and Connecting Rivers:-A Untimely Death for Coastal Ecosystem, totally Uncalled For

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Abstract

It's not age old fight between Environment and Development that has taken much of the 19th and 20th century, where the difference between the Capitalist and Socialist have grown wider with every issue. Not that it only has its print in developing countries or in under developed ones, but if one go through the records will be amazed to note that the real fight of two different school of thoughts regarding the need and degree of use of our natural resources is still under debate in the developed one also. With every new generation taking of the place, the nature and degree is changing but when one look at the result, there is hardly any change in the overall pattern from the day this debate is on floor.

Keywords: *Developing CRZ, Ports, Connecting Rivers,Untimely Death for Coastal Ecosystem.*

First it was dire need that drive the civilization to use its natural resources but with use on a regular basis made them addicted to facilities that save money, time and most importantly man hours which has made them slave literally.

In such a situation when our lavishness has started telling upon our environment, which is the ultimate cause for our safety and security and in a way can tell upon our survivality, this present study needs a serious thought to put on before taking the giant leap which may not again will be ever possible to change or avert.

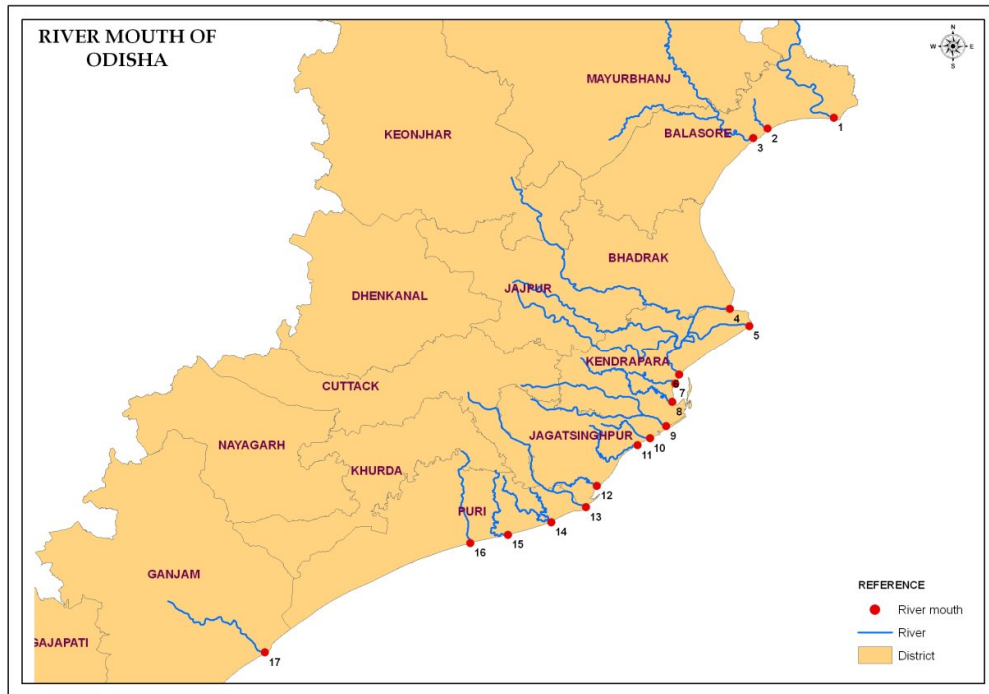
Case Study

The place taken for the present case study is Odisha, which is bestowed with many nature miracles but due to unsystematic and unsustainable practices, there has hardly been any real benefit been reached to the people of the area or to the state on a larger basis, as the record of being second poorest state has further deteriorate to made us the poorest of all and interestingly all the natural endowed areas have found their place in the Lowest Human Development Index districts of the Nation. As such the mining and its implication is showing its color to the whole nation, where it is apprehended that more than 1, 00,000 crores have been siphoned and in exchange the loss of forest cover and shortage of drinking water is becoming a real problem which is yet to be addressed properly. But looking at the populist demand, a idea which is there in the mind of central govt. for more than 5 years now has been on a roll in the state. Instead looking at the loop holes of their faulty planning in addressing the need that have evolved in due course of time like water scarcity, high temperature and all

extreme climatic conditions due to rampant Mining and industries in traditionally drier areas of the state.

Future plan that may become cause of concern

First it was mass mining that is the output of ambitious plan for economic liberalization and then cases of mass ore theft came in to notice, which made the govt. to find out suitable alternative, so to avoid Road as well as Rail transport and so various companies in the name of major rivers of the state as Brahmani/Baitarani Pellet Limited have started their ground



work,



where millions of liter of water will be used on a daily basis to make slurry of different ores and will pass in closed pipes under pressure to their destinations and presently all are towards Paradip Port as it is the one doing the loading and unloading business. The real difficult part is yet to be understood is why to use so much of fresh water for this purpose and on the other hand to overcome the shortage, such a ambitious yet most unsustainable method is planned to be implemented.

The most recent plan to start working on the plan of having a port at Astaranga is a bead in the garland of devastation to delta area of our 482 kms coast and will have a deep impact on our coastal ecology.

The Coastal Ecology both from Environment and Economical Perspectives

It is a common phenomenon for all rivers and springs, which generally comes in areas where there is deposits of ores and dense forest, which otherwise known as catchment area and after travelling the land mass finally falls in to sea and it is universal scenario. In most of the cases the place where River confluences with the Sea, which is commonly called as Delta region, the condition as Estuarine and the mangal as Mangroves forest.

Mangroves forest is unique and has its importance more than ever before in the current scenario of Global Warming and Climate Change. It has its potential par excellence in terms of coastal ecology and revenue. According to Kandesamy Kathiresan, a well known Marine Biologist from CAS, Parangapettai, although the total composition of Mangroves is around 0.7% of the Total Forest area of Globe, but it supports around 1.6 billion dollars, which is about 20% of the total maritime business and more importantly about 20% of the Carbon sink is found to be these mangroves. With two different Tsunami like conditions in Chennai and in Puri sea beach last year, a comprehensive plan has already been developed by the IITs to make a sea wall to bring down the ferocity of the tidal waves in all types of sea borne calamities. But age old prof. Amalesh Choudhury, who has been working in the Sunderbans for more than 40 years opined that “ a Kilometer stretch of mangrove in the delta area, not only brings down the the ferocity of the tidal wave in case of any sea borne natural disaster but also it helps in increase production of both fish and crab population as traditionally mangroves are the bed for production. Where as a concrete wall would cost many fold higher and other than safe guarding the erosion, it will not have any other use.

Even a recent report made by joint collaboration of OSDMA, Dept. of Geography and UNDP to study the history and trend of Natural calamities and its effect on Orissa between 1970 and 2007 has really worked as a eye opener for us. On basis of the study it has been found that on an average 1300 people dies in a year due to various calamities with health being the major cause with around 700 deaths per year followed by lightning and heat wave and fire with a exception of super cyclone in 1999 and cyclone in 1971. Looking at the annual loss of 2,300 million dollar per annum flood, fire and cyclone are the major causes for such huge losses. In such a situation a coastal shield in the form of Mangroves is quite significant as it looks.

Development vis a vis nature needs a good Management

Now with a coastline of about 482 kilometers, and majority of the river systems falling in to Bay of Bengal, a condition ideal for mangrove is already in the offering by nature. But with a continuous pressure from the multi-national companies and open market ideology, there are already 3 ports in operation and a couple of more are in pipe line. And as there were severe resentment among public and non government organizations in the past against Dhamra port and much of the debate was around the effects of its activity on estuary and olive ridley, probably it is a plan with a long term interest, where it was the restriction on water River Brahmani by Rengali Dam and now ,a plan to join all major river systems and thereby avoiding the Formation and maintenance of Delta. But a Order from the Defense has come as a blessing, where for nation's security, it has been requested not to divert a area of about 115 kms as it is of security interest.

But the continuous pressure from various sector to have River Linking a reality , is fast becoming a nightmare for all those for whom the Mother Nature matters. It may solve the immediate problem of scarcity of water in some part of the nation, but when one looks at the long term effect, it will have a catastrophic effect on the Coastal Ecology without a trace of doubt.

So just to make our apprehension clear and to see that it reaches to the mass, so that there will be a debate on the issue and we hope a comprehensive and sustainable plan will be made before dabbling with the nature as the loss with any mismanagement can be huge and a condition under present changing environment can bring a catastrophic result which the mankind may not be able to resist in the current situation.

