

## Smart Nagpur Vision of Gadkari – Hovercrafts, water buses transporting people through Nag Nadi



The first day of the first Annual Nagpur Global conference – a day Nagpurians could truly start dreaming of making their city a global, smart city!



Nagpur.

Speaking at the inaugural and first annual summit of Global Nagpur an initiative of Nagpur First, Mr. Nitin Gadkari wowed the audience with his brain storming of many wonderful projects and possibilities for Nagpur.

He said Nagpur was already unique because of three advantages it enjoys:

1. Country's first 24 \* 7 drinking water supply through OCW
2. Nagpur 'sells' its sewage water to Maharashtra Govt. for 18 crores
3. It has a project to make Bio CNG from waste

Apart from these, Mr. Gadkari ideated about making diesel from Algae, making Nagpur an International Airport where many of the 450 flights flying overhead could land bringing foreign passengers and foreign exchange; a satellite dry port near Wardha; flourishing wood industry that would export wooden tiles to the world, electronically tagging tigers so that each tourist would be ensured 'darshan' of three tigers at least; Serriculture, Bamboo based industries, cotton mills and finally a hospital and a prosthetic unit that would help the 4% blind and physically handicapped population of the country.



There was almost no subject that Gadkari did not touch upon – Sea planes; hovercrafts; organic farming, even toothpaste made from ayurvedic ingredients that would replace the MNC products India spends so much royalty on.

He said that with the coal based methane available near Nagpur we could recover the shortage of chemical fertilizers needed by our farmers and with Thorium we can run Nuclear power plants without having to beg USA



for nuclear fuel.

At the end of his talk, he received a standing ovation from the elite gathering many of whom had congregated to Nagpur specially for the conference.

Speaking before him, our MLA from Katol Dr. Ashish Deshmukh said someone should sell Nagpurians the technology that would make them more active and workoholics. "That is an addiction we need" he said.

Today's session of the global summit was devoted to the subject of a Vision for making Nagpur a smart city.

#### MODEL NAGPUR ON THE LINES OF NEW YORK WHERE PEOPLE LOVE WEARING I LOVE NY Ts -

THE first session was chaired by **Karuna Gopal**, President, Foundation of Futuristic Cities. She said citizen engagement was a must if a city was to progress. Nagpur was poised for growth since the will is there and the timing is perfect. Government has become competitive and there are many examples in the world to learn from.

Other speakers who spoke at this session were **Krishna Kumar Taori**, Group MD, Hasan Juma Corporation and **Akash Bhavsar**, MD, SkyQuest and Member, UN ESCAP Business Advisory Council.

Krishna Taori spoke about the example of Dubai which was one of the best models of a smart city. He said cities like Hong Kong, Singapore and Dubai benefited from the fact that there were many airlines flying tourists to it from all corners of the world at very economical and lucrative air fares. Tourism was the catalyst that propelled these cities forward and if hotels and infrastructure were suitably developed, Nagpur could do it too.

Thakre, retired bureaucrat and Rao also spoke on the subject. The final word was Karuna's when she reiterated that according to our shastras - the middle, or the heart of a house should be bright and shining, so the whole house would benefit. It was time Nagpur became that shining heart of the nation.

#### A HEART THAT COULD ALSO BE A THRIVING HUB

The second post lunch session was devoted to the logistics hub that Nagpur could be developed as.

**Shailendra Jaiswal** an ex officer of the railways outlined how 'containers' had changed the concept of how business could be conducted. "The box that changed the world' was how he described containers. He suggested that the ideal place to have a very modern state-of-the-art Railway station for Nagpur would be Khapri which would be closer to MIHAN and it had the space that such a station would require.

The Railways were already in the process of stream lining rail travel around Nagpur by laying new connections which would connect places like Wardha to Katol directly shaving off about 70 kms from the circuitous route now being taken.

Turning to Nagpur's cultural advantage he said it was an open society, ready for innovations and the kind of place that nurtured polymaths and polyglots like Dr. Shrikant Jichkar and ex PM Narsimha Rao and that could attract contrasting personalities like Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and Dr. Hegdewar at the same time.

#### CITY AT THE HEART WITH A HEART

The last session was devoted to 'Health issues of a smart city'. The main speaker was **Dr. Neelam Agrawal**, a leading physician in public health from USA who has worked on the Clinton initiative for bettering health of Americans. She spoke of engaging patients through sms services that could change their life style and lead to improvement in health for large numbers with innovative communication. She quoted the example of the work she had done with diabetic patients and how after receiving regular sms it was found that their intake of vegetables and fruits had increased and they had begun going for walks and doing other exercise. A similar project could be carried out in Nagpur she suggested.

Dr. Maddiwar , A Nagpuri who had settled in the US and had a stint in the American army too confessed how after an assignment in Saudi Arabia through the army his outlook on life had changed and he had turned to using his medical qualifications solely for the service of needy and underprivileged people of the world. He has worked with NGOs like /Doctors Without Borders (MSF) which treats people where the need is greatest. They are an international medical humanitarian organisation. He later settled in Nagpur and has worked in Hemalkasa with the Amtes too.

The whole day day's session was conducted in the very pleasant and futuristic corporate building of Persistent software, the presence of which is itself a tribute to what Nagpurians can achieve if they set their mind to it.