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DLF City: A tale of civic apathy

Abhishek G Bhaya / TNN / Mar 14, 2003, 01:21 IST



GURGAON: State-of-the-art corporate structures, sprawling villas and residential complexes, multiplexes, upmarket clubs and a golf course.



GURGAON: State-of-the-art corporate structures, sprawling villas and residential complexes, multiplexes, upmarket clubs and a golf course. At the first glance, DLF Qutab Enclave (DLF City) in Gurgaon appears to be an ideal township. Residents, however, have a different story to tell.

"DLF was planned to be a hi-tech city with facilities at par with any developed city in the west.

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Unfortunately, it hasn't lived up to expectations," said I V Singh, former general secretary and president of DLF Qutab Enclave Residents' Welfare Association (QERWA).

Home to nearly 8,000 households, DLF Qutab Enclave is divided in five phases. But even after 15 years of habitation, residents complain about the lack of basic amenities like power, water and transportation. Civic maintenance, as of now, is nobody's baby.

The area being a private colony does not fall under the jurisdiction of Haryana Urban Development Authority. The responsibility for its maintenance rests with the



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builder " DLF Universal Limited. But according to the residents, the company has done little for its development.

"As per terms of contract, DLF Universal Ltd has to maintain the colony for a period of five years after completion. The residents paid security deposit and additional development charges. At present, the area is far from complete and the residents have paid over and above the fees,"said QERWA general secretary T K Satheesan. The matter is pending with the Supreme Court.

The residents put the shortage of power and water on top of their list of grievances. Most areas go without power for days and the residents had to turn to groundwater for water supply.

"The situation gets worse in summers when the load increases,"said Singh. As for water, Satheesan added: "We barely get water for two hours in a day. The pressure is so low that most residents have had to install booster pumps to pull groundwater."

The residents also find themselves toiling over the upkeep of the parks even though DLF is supposed to take care of this aspect. At many places, the residents have pooled in money to hire gardeners.

Remarked Qayoom Siddiqui, a resident of Phase III: "Even the streets are poorly maintained. At many places, there are no streetlights. Also, there is no provision for gathering garbage and filth can be seen piled up in vacant plots. This is certainly not expected of a colony such as this."

Security is another major worry. Construction of several corporate towers within the residential colony has raised security concerns of the residents.

"The presence of these offices in the area opens the colony to outsiders and there is no control over the traffic movement. A dedicated phase could have been developed for corporate complexes,"said Satheesan.

As against promises of being a well connected city, DLF is plagued by lack of transportation facilities. Lack of proper approach roads, absence of autorickshaws and bus service binds the residents and makes them dependent on private transportation.

"Though authorities in Gurgaon maintain that three-wheelers and taxis from Delhi are allowed entry, commuters are inadvertently harassed at the check posts,"complained Singh.

But not all are unhappy. Residents like former foreign secretary J N Dixit, who's been staying in the colony for the last 10 years, have absolutely no regrets whatsoever for moving to DLF City.

He said: "The problems are perhaps due to increase in the population. Interaction between the residential welfare association and other concerned organisations should be more regular to remove the shortcomings."

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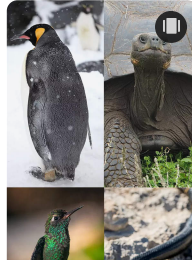


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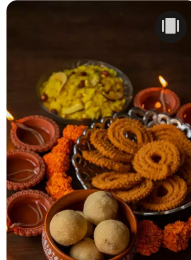
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