

REMEMBER EAST INDIA
COMPANY....?
DYNAMICS OF URBAN
DEVELOPMENT IN KARACHI

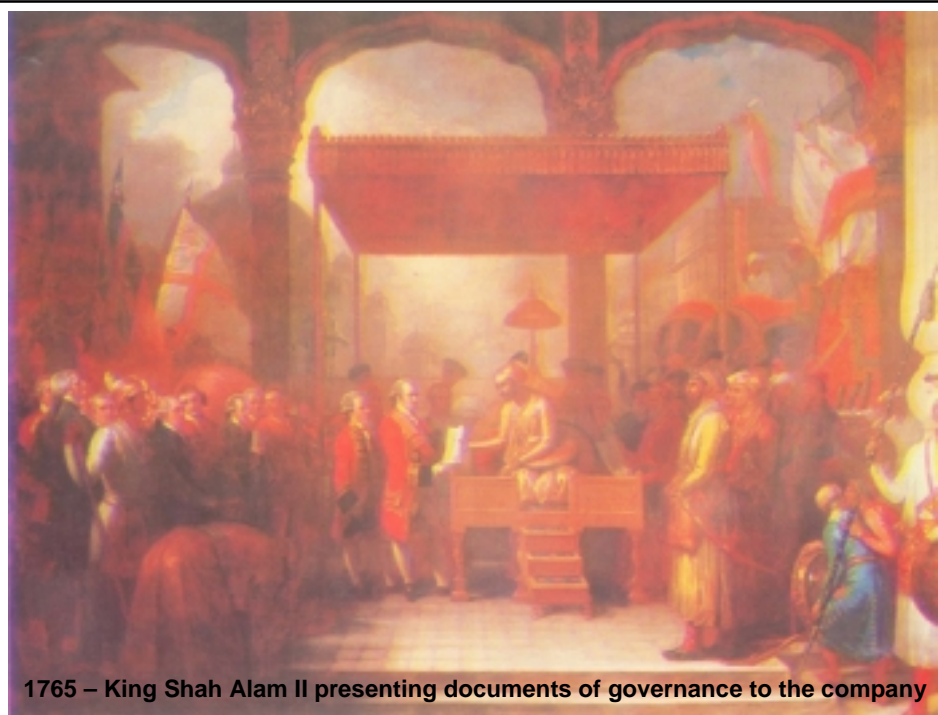
By

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From the Retrospect

- Many 'East India Companies', launched by entrepreneurs of European nations, landed in the Indo-Pakistan sub continent during 16th century and after.
- Most prominent of them – the British East India Company – influenced the sub continent for over 250 years, eventually becoming rulers and establishing the Raj.

- The path adopted for this grand success was unique. Grabbing all available economic and political opportunities, most without any moral, legal or ethical basis; corrupt practices for private power and pelf; hatching conspiracies and fomenting unrest; ruthless destruction and suppression of opposition; maintaining hypocritical conduct throughout the course of events and shrewd dealing with regimes and men in power were some trade marks.

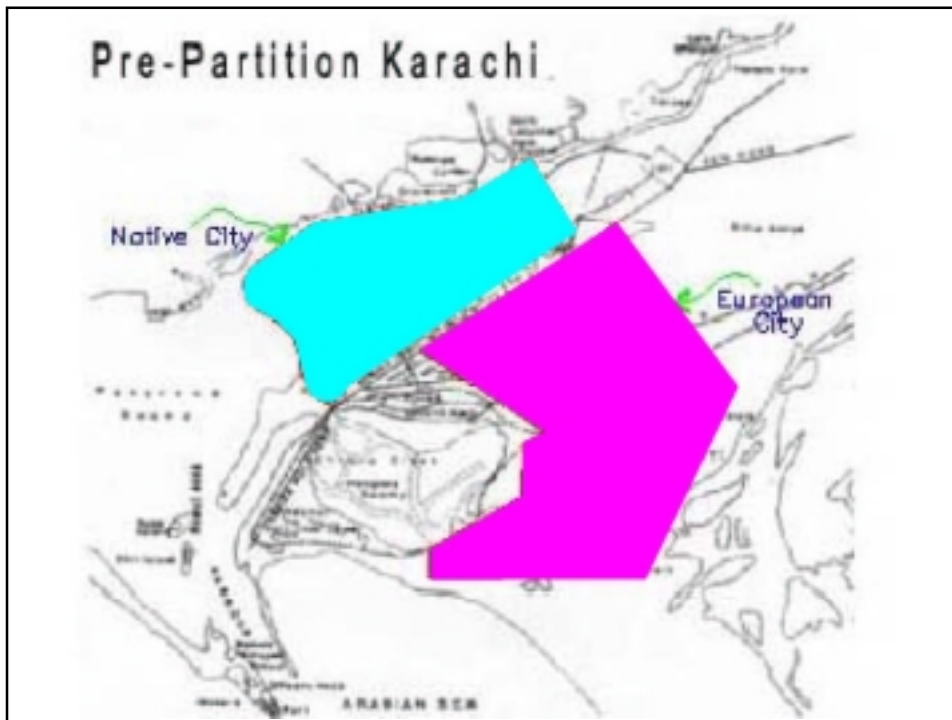


1765 – King Shah Alam II presenting documents of governance to the company





- In result, land, territory, state, resources and people were colonised against will. Vices of loot and plunder helped perpetuate unabated anarchy in that vast country.
- An apartheid of 'natives' and 'masters' in the social and economic fabric evolved all across the country, including prime urban centres.
- Urban spaces divided into 'native city' and 'European city'.



And now

- We, in Pakistan, face a menace similar to East India Company syndrome of yester years.
- Opportunists, black money barons and front men of various types of entrepreneurs (some even drug barons!) are shaking the foundations of our key cities and attractive hinterlands in the name of 'DEVELOPMENT' and 'INVESTMENT'.

- Their lucrative influence has put up any thing and every thing for sale – urban beaches of Karachi and Balochistan, forest laden hills of Margalla and Murree, serene coastal environments and the ecological assets are all up for sale in this big barter house.
- Karachi is now under siege – many opportunists from the Middle East, Far East and South Asia have connived with the ‘Moghuls’ of present times to evolve grand projects in real-estate, transportation, recreation and infrastructure.





Some Glossy Presentations



Some Glossy Presentations



- The approach is totally fascistic; all who favour are made collaborators. Those who stay 'quiet' are left aside while dissenters are ruthlessly dealt with. Life and limb of many civil minded individuals is lost in attempts to safe guard this unethical stride.
- This phenomenon has a deep rooted presence, which is evident from the study of planning and development perspective of the city.

BACKGROUND

- Major port, industrial and commercial city of Pakistan.
- Experienced rapid growth phases.
- Currently possesses a population of over 16 million.
- Primacy of the city has remained intact.
- It provides 25% of federal revenue; 50% of the total bank deposits and 72 percent of all the issued capital in Pakistan.

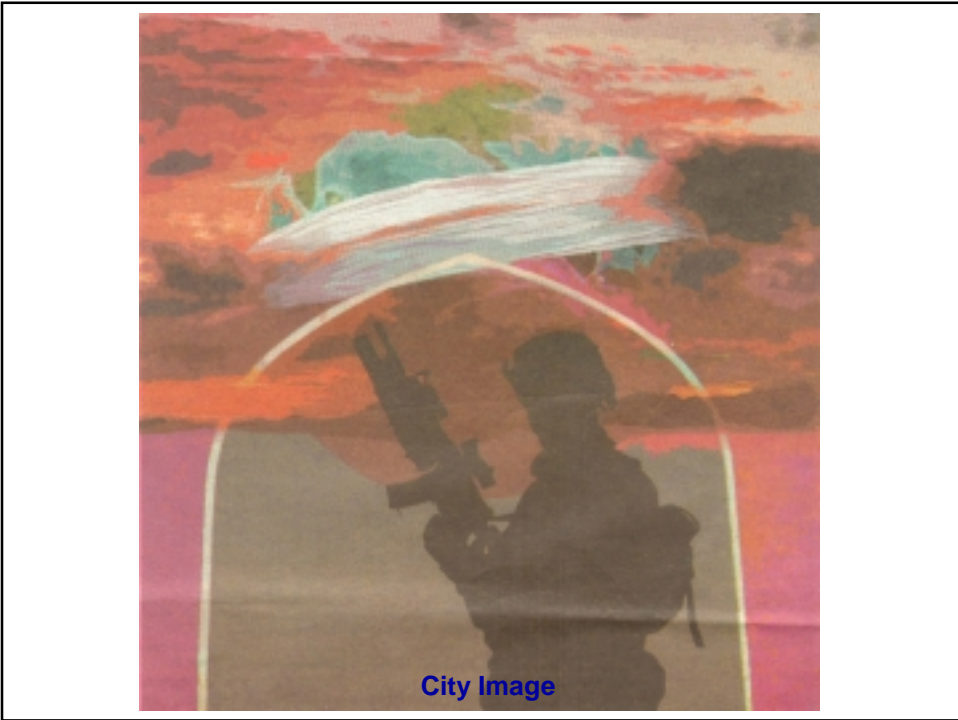
TODAY'S KARACHI

Image of the city

- Karachi is portrayed as a troubled city with recurring incidences of unrest and agitation.
- Media images often focus on the negative side of urban life.
- Foreigners receive cautious travel advices while visiting the city.

Social Structure

- Fully aware urban young generation (different from migrants and their culture)
- Fast increasing nuclear families due to young population
- Increasing frustration due to absence of adequate recreational and cultural outlets

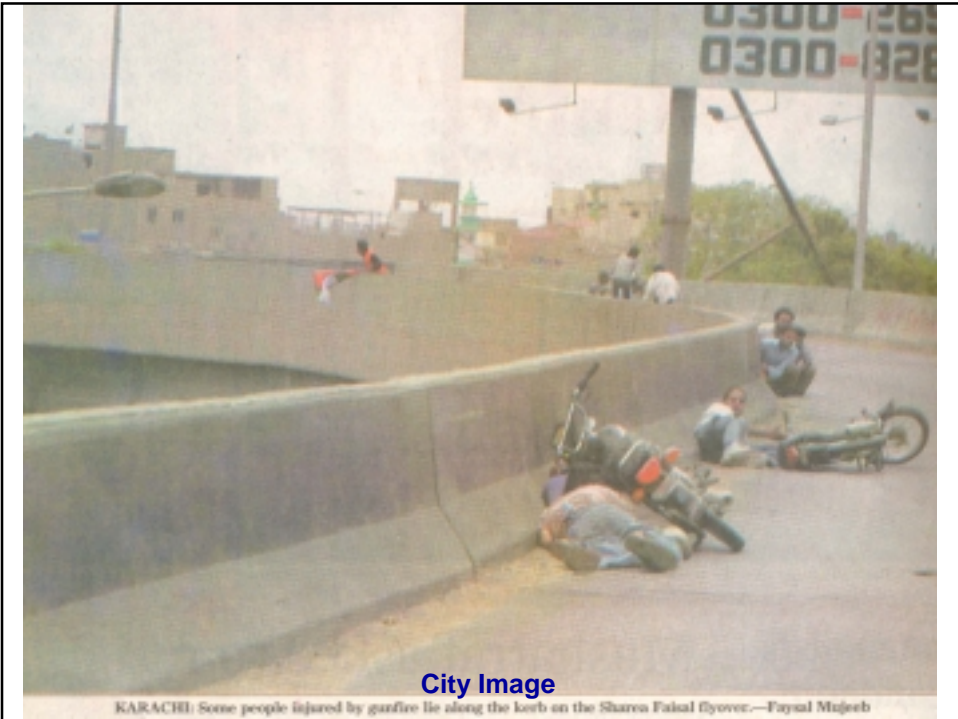


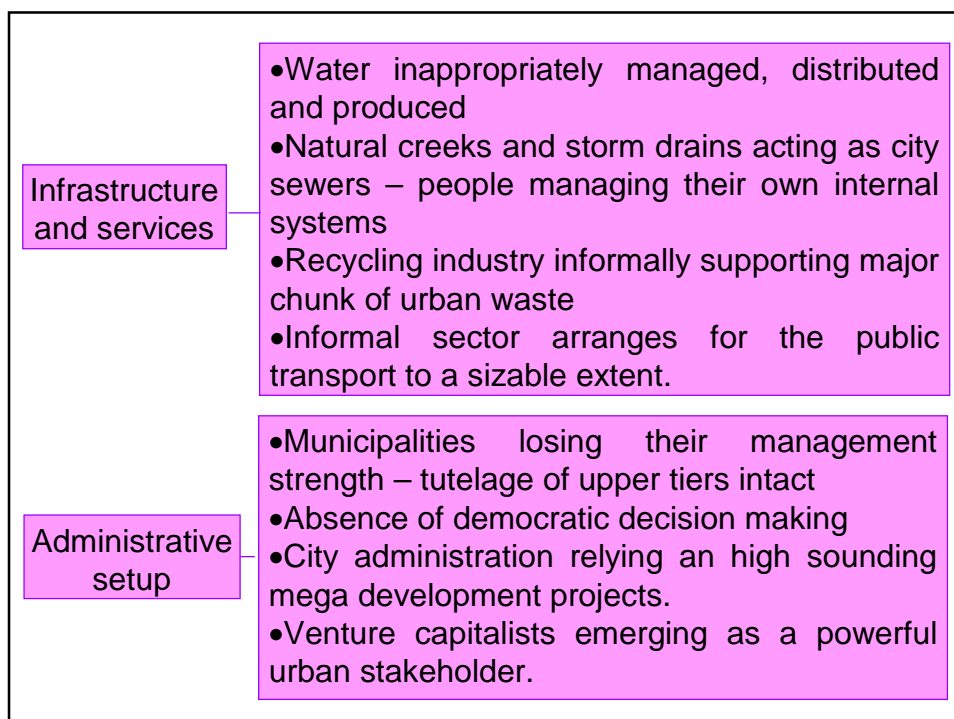
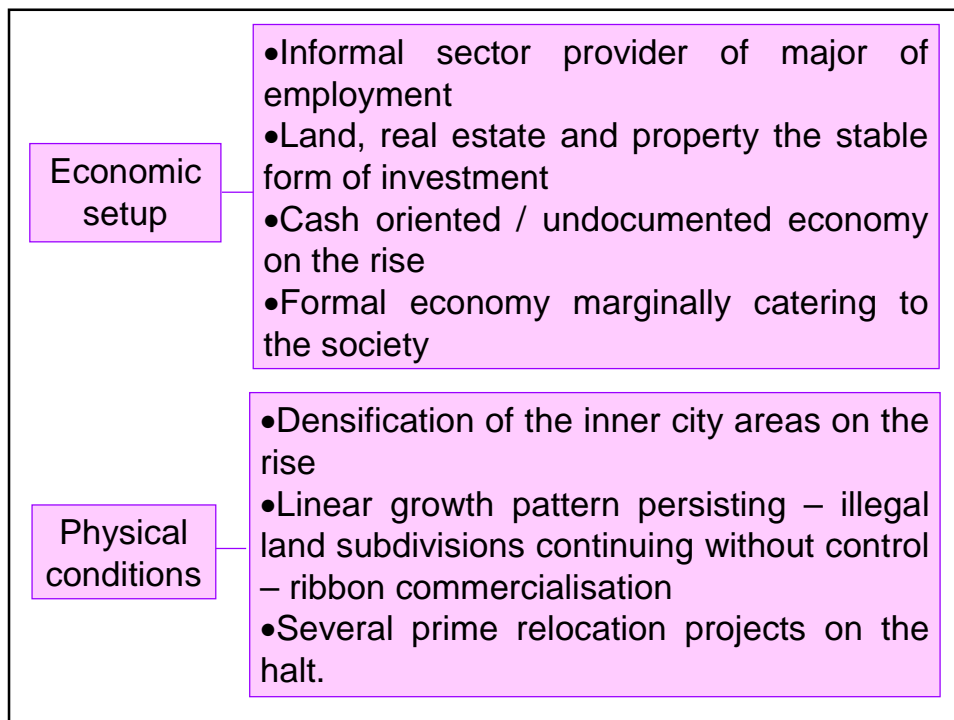
City Image



City Image

KARACHI: A policeman passes by burning vehicles during clashes between government and opposition supporters.—AFP



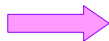


REVIEW OF PLANNING PROCESS

- Six master plans prepared for the city ever since 1947.
- Most of the plans prepared during the post independence period contained useful proposals. They were never notified.
- An adhoc “package” or project based approach was followed. Instead of integration, it gave rise to fragmentation and chaos.
- Present approach is also based on the same faulty premise. A packaged set of documents and outputs shall emerge from the ongoing Karachi 2020 assignment.
- Planning and development control have been separated by law.

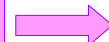
FEW PROMINENT DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

Growth pattern



- Sprawl along major arterial roads and link roads
- Western and eastern sites major locations of urban expansion

Squatter settlement



- Increasing in number
- Inner city squatters densifying
- Consolidating and attempting to improve
- People moving into squatters from planned areas that have become slums

Infrastructure



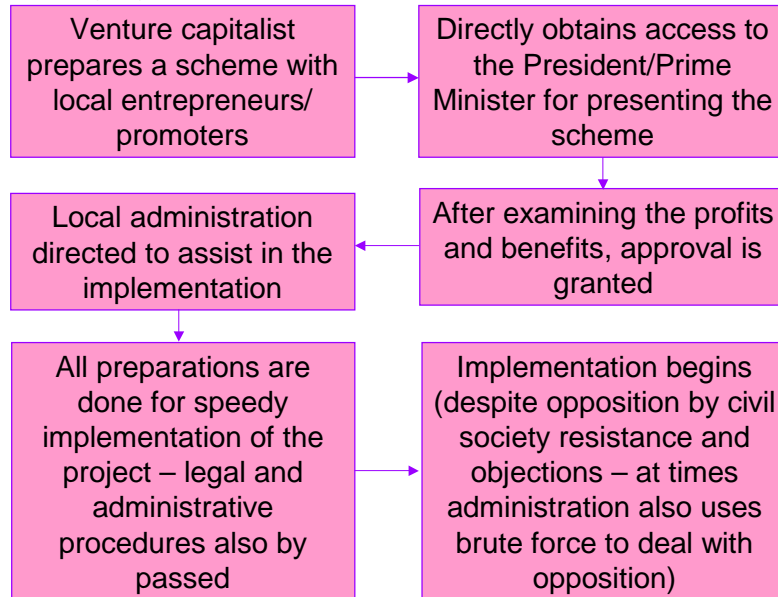
- Institutional capacities shrinking
- People resorting to alternatives (power generation through generators)
- Transport service on a total break down

Urban Administration



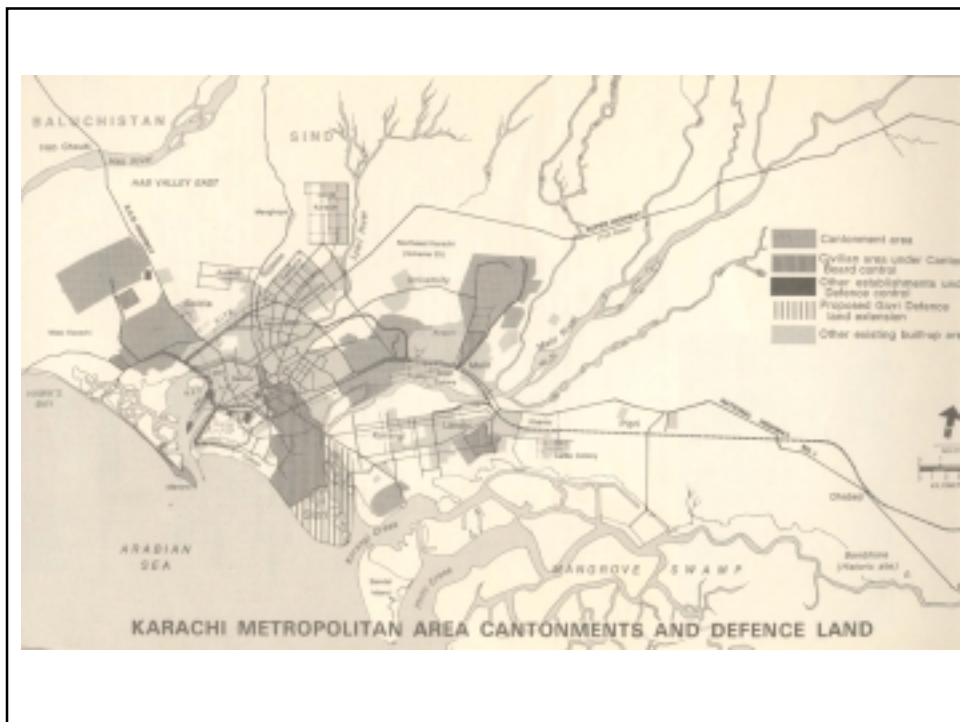
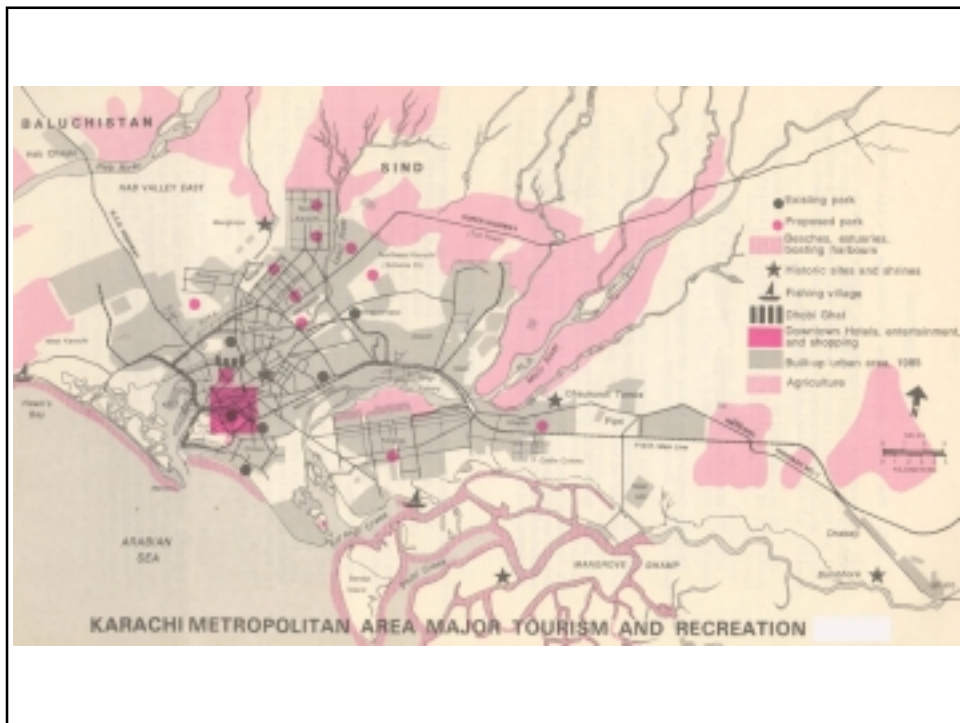
- Not willing to accept ground realities
- Influenced by powerful interest groups
- Centrally governed by provincial and federal governments
- Lured by market forces – adhoc commercialization policy of major roads an example

Emerging scenario of urban development



Stakeholder association/interests/actions

Federal government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political milage – taking credit for development • Revenue gains
Local administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political milage • Extended benefits by virtue of sub-contracts and!
Professionals (architects, urban planners, engineers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juicy contracts and consulting assignments • Additional perks and privileges (paid holidays and!) • Legitimize all kinds of investment ventures



Academia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Opposes this pattern of development as it lacks sanity and possibility of sustainability •Lobbies to restore rule of law •Seek plan based legal development
Civil society groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Intend to restore rule of law •Street and judicial activism
Developers, builders and venture capitalists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Benefit from laissez-faire entrepreneurship •Seek to maximise profits
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Provides information, mostly correct •Presents opposing view points •Lacks ability to articulate and analyse





WAY FORWARD

- Expansion of networks to check the crude capitalist practices pertinent to urban development.
- Lobbying locally and internationally to make regimes accountable.
- Activating and reviving institutional frameworks to develop and promote alternative visions, plans and urban development schemes.