

Executive Summary

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UGC Minor Research Project on: Economic Impact of land acquisition consequent of the establishment of Cochin airport and rehabilitation of affected families- A case study of Cochin international Airport Limited

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Cochin International Airport Limited is one of the country's latest and advanced airports with modern facilities and conveniences. This is the first airport in India that was constructed with private participation, outside the ambit of Airport Authority of India. All the other airports and other infrastructural facilities are owned, managed and operated by the government. Currently, it ranks as the third largest airport in India in terms of international passenger traffic after Mumbai and Delhi and the seventh largest airport in terms of domestic passenger traffic. An Airport built with an unbelievably low cost of Rs. 300 crores; the project started with a paltry amount of Rs. 20,000/- as its initial capital and with furniture and office equipments donated by various organizations, became a reality within a period of five years with an overall investment of Rs. 300 crores after acquiring about 1300 acres of land belonging to more than 2600 land owners. A rehabilitation package was also worked out for rehabilitating 822 families. The process entailed one of the biggest ever land acquisition process in the district. The study is useful in understanding the exact state of condition of persons displaced due to the setting up of the Cochin airport.

Objectives of the study

The present study is conducted with the following specific objectives of analyzing the socio-economic dimensions of displaced persons.

1. To understand living conditions of the evictees before and after relocation.
2. To examine the economic impact of land acquisition consequent on the establishment of CIAL

Methodology

Selection of Project and study area

To study the socio-economic impact of displacement due to the development of Airport, a project of Cochin International Airport Limited is selected. The present study includes the analysis of the socio-economic condition of the persons affected by this project. The project is situated at Nedumbassery and 65 percent of project area is a paddy land, which covers two Panchayat Nedumbassery and Kanjoor, in Ernakulam district of Kerala.

Present study is based on both primary and secondary data. The sampling technique that was adopted for the study was convenience sampling a type of non-probability sampling. Primary data has been collected with the help of structured interview schedule. Structured schedules are used to collect information on the families socio-economic condition before and after resettlement, infrastructural facilities after

displacement, rehabilitation measures, utilization of compensation money etc. Other methods like interview and focus group discussion (FGD) are used based according to the need of the situation. For base line information, personal visits to the affected places were also made. Hundred and fifty households are chosen at random basis from Kanjoor and Nedumbasery Gram Panchayath which is the largest resettlement area. Researcher also had interactions with officers of the various departments of CIAL.. The data so collected were analysed with the help of statistical techniques, which included percentages and averages.

The secondary data for the study was collected from the developmental report of Nedumbasery Grama panchayath, records on land ownership, housing and other properties maintained by village level revenue officials and land acquisition and compensation data maintained by land acquisition officers, annual reports of CIAL, Tourist Statistics published by Government of Kerala and Economic Review. Moreover, to substantiate study data were collected from books, journals, magazines, newspapers, CIAL records, websites of airports etc.

Findings of the study

Evictees were from the panchayat of Nedumbassery and Kanjoor which is the largest resettlement area and 84.66 percent of the respondents are in the age group of 20-49 years. In all the age groups males outnumbered the females. 53.3 percent of the respondents are Hindus. Though the evictees are selected at random thirty six respondents are backward groups. Out of fifty christian respondents, forty evictee are concentrated in Kanjoor panchayat. Thus it is clear that Kanjoor area is a Christian dominated area, while the Muslims constitute the least.

Another major finding is that out of 150 evictees four respondents are illiterates, twenty seven respondents know how to read and write. Eighteen percent have only primary and upper education, thirty one percent of the respondents have SSLC, 17.33 percent plus two, nine percent have degree and only three percent have post graduate qualification. This clearly shows that

absence of higher, technical institutions is a handicap in the development of manpower in these areas. Displacement had effected separation of family member of the respondents. The number of nuclear families was increased after displacement as compared to the pre-displacement period.

Before displacement majority of the respondents (48 %) were engaged in agriculture related activities and twenty four percent of the respondents were cultivators, only a minor number is engaged in self employed activities and government jobs. A major shift in the job pattern was identified among the respondents, after the land acquisition majority of the respondents changed their occupation. As a result of land acquisition 65% of the paddy lands vanished, so also the agricultural activities. Number of cultivator class reduced to twelve, while there is a steep increase in the number of persons engaged in non agricultural activities like temporary casual work like loading, cleaning, contractor labourers, taxi drivers, kiosks, and baggage handlers brick kiln workers, unskilled workers in small industrial units etc. The analysis of the income level of the displaces shows a downward mobility. Before displacements majority of the respondents were agricultural labourers .The largest numbers of household, 55.33 percent were in the income class of Rs. below 2000. 33.33 percent of the households had income between 2000-6000.Only one respondents income is above 10000. After displacement there is a sharp increase in number of the respondents having income between 2000-4000.48.66 percent of the households are in this income group while it was only 17.25 percent

before relocation. But there is no improvement in the standard of living of the respondents.

Land area acquired by the Cochin airport varied from below twenty five cent to more than three acres. Majority of the respondents acquired land is below fifty cent. And the main occupations of the respondents are cultivators.

The houses of the land evictees were valued at the rates currently in force and the compensation was paid through the District Collector. Amount of compensation paid for land varies largely depending on the quality of the soil that is wet land, dry land, location etc. Among the one fifty households surveyed one hundred and one households received less than one lakh. Respondents received compensation in two instalments. Eighty percentage of money was disbursed when the land was acquired. Respondents utilized the amount for the repayment of loan, to build a new

house in the resettled area, purchase of new land, meeting emergencies and household consumption.

Before displacement majority of the respondents living in kutcha houses, fifty percent of the respondents have temporary toilet facility and seven percent have no bathroom facility so they use open space, fifty nine percent of the respondents use their own well for drinking sources. The respondents were settled both inside and outside the resettlement colonies. More than half of the respondents stayed back in the same Panchayat even after displacement. After the displacement lot of changes seen in their living conditions from kutcha houses 66.66 percent shift into new concrete houses, eighty three percent use permanent toilet facility but their source of drinking water changed into pipe water.

Before displacement due to availability of land and farm employment, daily substance could have been easily met by them. From the survey it is revealed that deprivation of common assets and loss of access to income generating property assets that used to belong to their communities before relocation results in significant deterioration in income and livelihood.

Another important problem noticed is that the displaced persons were confronted with changes in family structure, change in economic conditions, change in environment and change in relationship. The inability of most families to buy land with the compensation amount and consequently a shift from land based occupation to non land based ones are the problems exposed by the respondents. Seventy two percent of respondents were engaged in agriculture related activities before the land was acquired. As a result of land acquisition 65 percentage of land disappeared, so also agricultural activities.

Congested living condition with limited area of six cents of land is another problem faced by households in the resettled areas. This problem is more acute in Nedumbassery where nearly two hundred and fifty evictees are residing.

Unemployment is the another important effect of displacement. Twenty one respondents revealed that most of them are unemployed for most of the days in a month. Among the one hundred and fifty households surveyed seventy two percent of the respondents were engaged in agriculture related activities. Sixty five percent of agricultural land, two tile companies and more

than thirty brickkilns were acquired for the project. This resulted in reduction in job opportunities.

SUGGESTIONS

The broad suggestions evolved from the detailed analysis of the study are given below

1. Passing of a clear legislation laying down basic obligations of the Government towards the rehabilitation of displaced persons.
2. Use of a method for fixing the monetary compensation which accounts for the potentiality of the price-rise.
3. Compulsory Social Impact Assessment, ensuring that the subsequent problems of loss of employment, social surroundings and emotional trauma are accounted for.
4. Utilization of the system of Panchayat raj as a platform for the opinions and grievances of the affected people and formation of an interest group that cannot go unheard.

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