PURA

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"**Knowledge Powered PURA**" aptly captures the need for and approach to the development of rural India. The soul of PURA is the vision as stated by our ex-President of India, Honorable Shri A.P.J. Abdul Kalam - "The vision of transformation to a 'developed' India can only be realised if we launch a mega mission for empowering the rural people. Creation of physical, electronic and knowledge connectivity leading to economic connectivity in villages" - the three pillars of development - is a challenge and opportunity.

The PPP model provides a privileged opportunity to various business houses to become associated with the development and also provide credibility to the project.

In order to actualise this vision one needs to understand the backdrop and needs of stakeholder of rural India. Rural India is a mix of people; one can easily see a range of sections, with one end consisting of people in abject poverty and the other of rich landed gentry; however, all sections are subjected to inadequate infrastructure.

It is therefore important to understand the profile of the population, and the needs and expectations, which should be integrated for successful achievement of outcomes as envisioned in PURA.

We have attempted to capture the aspirations of different sections of people in rural India, which need to be integrated into PURA (Refer Table 1).

For materialising "Knowledge powered PURA" infrastructure needs to deliver the outcome, i.e. the people participating in the development through bank of skills and quality education. Quality education is the core energy, which will generate inclusive development. It is a reality that in rural India getting *competent teachers* may be difficult, but we can surely bring *quality content through technology to children in rural India.* Quality content - that enables the children to compete at par with their counterpart in urban India.

Technology supported education will help available teachers to become facilitators in learning, and there by overcoming the handicap. To support technology, one needs energy - Power that should support the technology. Thus in reality we need to promote different modes of power supply to drive the technology. It is therefore important to also integrate with Ministry of Renewable Energy specifically with solar mission.

In conclusion, to re-emphasise, the actualisation of "Knowledge powered PURA" will be when the following points are woven into the fabric of the project-

- *Inclusiveness of the expectation of all segments of society*
- *Adequately integrating various ministries, particularly solar mission to provide sustainable power.*
- *Broadband connectivity and technology supported quality education.*

Table I
Rural Aspiration Matrix

Rating	Landless & Migrant Labour	Small Land Farmers	Petty Business	Large Land Owners	Salaried/Service Employees	PURA Prioritization
10	Basic Survival	Increase in Land Yield/Accessibility to Grazing Land	Connectivity to Market	Connectivity to Market	Economic Connectivity (banks, commercial organisations, industries etc.)	Physical Connectivity (roads, transport facilities, etc.)
9	Relief from Debt	Physical Connectivity (roads, transport facilities, etc.)	Physical Connectivity (roads, transport facilities, etc.)	Physical Connectivity (roads, transport facilities, etc.)	Physical Connectivity (roads, transport facilities, etc.)	Electronic Connectivity (phone, Internet, cable, etc.)
8	Physical Connectivity (roads, transport facilities, etc.)	Connectivity to Market	Economic Connectivity (banks, commercial organisations, etc.)	Economic Connectivity (banks, commercial organisations, Industries etc.)	Societal Connectivity (hospital, recreational facilities, place of worship, etc.)	Knowledge Connectivity (school, colleges, vocational education, etc.)
7	Societal Connectivity (hospital, recreational facilities, place of worship, etc.)	Societal Connectivity (hospital, recreational facilities, place of worship, etc.)	Electronic Connectivity (phone, Internet, cable, etc.)	Increase in Land Yield/Accessibility to Grazing Land	Connectivity to Market	Connectivity to Market
6	Connectivity to Market	Economic Connectivity (banks, commercial organisations, etc.)	Societal Connectivity (hospital, recreational facilities, place of worship, etc.)	Societal Connectivity (hospital, recreational facilities, place of worship, etc.)	Electronic Connectivity (phone, Internet, cable, etc.)	Societal Connectivity (hospital, recreational facilities, place of worship, etc.)
5	Economic Connectivity (banks, commercial organisations, etc.)	Relief from Debt	Relief from Debt	Electronic Connectivity (phone, Internet, cable, etc.)	Knowledge Connectivity (school, colleges, vocational education, etc.)	Integrated Rural Hub
4	Political Power	Electronic Connectivity (phone, Internet, cable, etc.)	Knowledge Connectivity (school, colleges, vocational education, etc.)	Knowledge Connectivity (school, colleges, vocational education, etc.)	Relief from Debt	Solid Waste Management
3	Electronic Connectivity (phone, Internet, cable, etc.)	Knowledge Connectivity (school, colleges, vocational education, etc.)	Political Power	Political Power	Increase in Land Yield/Accessibility to Grazing Land	
2	Knowledge Connectivity (school, colleges, vocational education, etc.)	Political Power	Increase in Land Yield/Accessibility to Grazing Land	Relief from Debt	Political Power	
1	Increase in Land Yield/Accessibility to Grazing Land	Basic Survival	Basic Survival	Basic Survival	Basic Survival	

Author's Profile

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