

Filth, stench and poverty

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Thursday, 17 September 2009
Last Updated Thursday, 24 September 2009

When you hear that the dynamically growing India and become the economic superpower, it is expected that the visitor will see the new face of the subcontinent. Meanwhile, the appearance of the capital can be described in three words: filth, stench and poverty. Even worse is the situation in Mumbai and Calcutta.

In New Delhi for the first time was in 1983. I went there as an ambitious reporter at the annual conference of IATA, the airline organization. Thanks to a clever substitution of the ticket with Japanese airlines JAL first experienced the pleasure of traveling on a long route in comfortable armchairs. The flight is "Silk Road" - remember the stops in Europe and the Middle East - and had plenty of time to imagine what I see in India. I prepared a small enclave of enormous wealth among the enormity of dirt and poverty. It turned out that it is much worse. With heavenly luxuries JAL descended into the reality of the shocking and shameful: pervasive poverty exceeds all imagination. In Delhi 25 years ago there was a crush and chaos. The city's infrastructure fell into disrepair. On roads with holes the size of a basketball ball crowded cattle cars and bicycles. It seemed that there are no traffic rules, not counting the trumpeting when overtaking. Scarred cars fought for space with motorized rickshaws black smoke. On both sides of the road, on the bare ground, in ditches, under bridges, in the ruins of the crumbling buildings, people camped in rags and bare children. At every traffic light in the car and ran beggars knocked at the window securely closed. It was awful. Few remember the conference - except that he was in India much longer than I intended. Not only I was not able to leave the country, but I could not leave the hotel. I do not really go out even to the bathroom. It was a house arrest due to diarrhea, which I developed from the local food. When I finally crawled to a plane flying to London, five days later than was planned, I swore to myself that I will return to India much later. Words kept until now, when I came back full of curiosity in Delhi. In the years that have passed since my previous visit, the Berlin Wall fell, the Chinese Communists chose capitalism, and even the British Labor Party has become for voters to digest. Against the background of these great changes in India is becoming an economic power. With an annual growth rate of around nine percent, only slightly lower than the Chinese, India began to tighten the newly acquired financial muscle. Lakshmi Mittal is the world's largest steel magnate, Vijay Mallya is the owner of whiskey producer Whyte & Mackay, a father, an industrial group, which bought the company Corus (formerly British Steel), you may have on these days will buy the Land Rover and Jaguar from Ford Just browse the columns devoted to investments to come to the conclusion that India were pressing relentlessly forward. In a country with over one billion inhabitants of the prevalence of credit cards, motor vehicles and Internet connections is negligible in comparison with Europe and America. Scope for it is enormous. India has the "ideal" demographic composition, because 60 percent of the population is under the age of 30 years, and thirsty branded goods to the middle class by 2025 to count 125 million. Engineers and computer scientists produced there, such as screws in an automated factory. A Bollywood film industry competes with Hollywood. When Sir Richard Branson to start Virgin Mobile India, said, "Indian market is growing like no other in the world." Getting off the plane Air India, I wanted to see the success in practice. I flew from Dubai, who in 15 years transformed itself from a desert in a veritable Las Vegas on the Gulf. And even though I knew that Delhi would be totally different, I expected that the changes will prove there is not less clear. I could not be more wrong.

In Delhi, the most surprising is that it has changed very little. Yes, it is a few more five-star hotels are a bit shoddy shopping arcades and there is more foreign limousines, but the dominant impression that poverty continues to choke the city the garbage everywhere, and rabies is widespread. Six or seven children begging on the streets, holding the hands of infants. Millions of people live near the sewage. If this city is booming, these unfortunates are the Boomtown Rats (name of the British band, literally, "the thriving town of rats cattle wandering freely, mixing with vehicles standing in traffic jams. Motor rickshaws are still there, as ambulatory, first home production cars that appear to be relics of the 50s the Government of India promised to allocate 450 billion pounds to improve the country's infrastructure. what will give every penny of this amount. Airport in Delhi - total mess - is renewed, but looking at them, it is difficult imagine that could ever match the best in Asia, such as those in Hong Kong and Singapore. As a guest Diageo, an alcoholic group, I was eating dinner with unions participating in the tournament sponsored by Johnnie Walker. These people travel a lot around the world. Every year the sport responsibilities throwing them in places that are far beyond the comfort zone, China, Russia and Africa. But few of them as admitted that the misery never seen and no longer wish to watch. As he wrote, "Golfweek": "Culture shock is far too weak to determine the reaction of European players." When I mentioned that a certain Indian businessman now conducting business in Amsterdam, he smiled. - If you think that Delhi is bad, please do not go to Bombay (no, did not use the new name "Mumbai"). This city is falling apart. And when it comes to Calcutta, then there is the worst - he said. In Delhi, I spent only four days, and is enough for me. Given the glaring disparities of wealth, it is not a particularly dangerous city. But very depressing.