

## Urbanization in India: challenges and current Issues

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**Abstract:** Urban areas have been recognized as “engines of inclusive economic growth”. Of the 121 crore Indians, 83.3 crore live in rural areas while 37.7 crore stay in urban areas, i.e approx 32 % of the population. The census of India, 2011 defines urban. All the places which have municipality, corporation, cantonment board or notified town area committee. All the other places which satisfy following criteria :

- a. A minimum population of 5000 persons ;
- b. At least 75 % of male main working population engaged in non-agricultural pursuits ; and
- c. A density of population of at least 400 persons per square kilometer

The first category of urban units are known as **Statutory town**. These town are notified under law by respective State/UT government and have local bodies like municipal corporation, municipality, etc, irrespective of demographic characteristics.

Similarly Census of India defines:-

**Urban Agglomeration (UA):** An urban agglomeration is a continuous urban spread constituting a town and its adjoining outgrowths (OGs), or two or more physically contiguous towns together with or without outgrowths of such towns. An Urban Agglomeration must consist of at least a statutory town and its total population (i.e. all the constituents put together) should not be less than 20,000 as per the 2001 Census. In varying local conditions, there were similar other combinations which have been treated as urban agglomerations satisfying the basic condition of contiguity.

Examples : Greater Mumbai

**Out Growths (OG):** An Out Growth (OG) is a viable unit such as a village or a hamlet or an enumeration block made up of such village or hamlet and clearly identifiable in terms of its boundaries and location. Some of the examples are railway colony, university campus, port area, military camps, etc., which have come up near a statutory town outside its statutory limits but within the revenue limits of a village or villages contiguous to the town. While determining the outgrowth of a town, it has been ensured that it possesses the urban features in terms of infrastructure and amenities such as pucca roads, electricity, taps, drainage system for disposal of waste water etc. educational institutions, post offices, medical facilities, banks etc. and physically contiguous with the core town of the UA. Examples: Central Railway Colony (OG), Triveni

#### **Census 2011 Census are :-**

1. Statutory Towns – 4,041
2. Census Towns – 3,894
3. Urban Agglomerations – 475
4. Out Growths – 981

At the central level, nodal agencies which look after program and policies for urban development are Ministry of housing and urban poverty alleviation (MoHUPA) and Ministry of Urban development. Urban development is a state subject. At state level there are respective ministries, but according to 74th Constitutional Amendment act,1992, it is mandatory for every state to form ULBs and devolve power, conduct regular election, etc. Under 12 schedule of Indian constitution , 18 such functions have been defined which are to be performed by ULBs and for that states should support the ULBs through finances and decentralization of power, for more autonomy. But this is not uniform throughout all the states and still more is need to be done to empower ULBs in India.

Urban areas are managed by urban local bodies(ULBs), who look after the service delivery and grievance redressal of citizens. There are eight type of urban local government in India- municipal corporation municipality, notified area committee,

town area committee, cantonment board, township, port trust and special purpose agencies.

**Migration** is the key process underlying growth of urbanisation; and the process of urbanization is closely related with rural to urban migration of people. In most developing countries of the world where rate of urban growth is relatively higher the urban-ward migration is usually high. **Rural to urban migration is by far the major component of urbanisation** and is the chief mechanism by which urbanisation trends all the world-over has been accomplished

After independence, urbanization in India is increasing at very high pace, but at the same time there are some problems, which are becoming barriers for balance, equitable and inclusive development.

### **History of Urbanization in India:**

In 1687- 88, the first municipal corporation in India was set up at Madras. In 1726, Municipal Corporation were set up in Bombay and Calcutta. In 1882, a resolution was passed and according to which, panchayat were to be formed at village level, district boards, taluq boards and municipalities also came into existence. At that time Lord Ripon was Viceroy of India, and for this Lord Ripon is known as father of local self-government in India. Urbanization since independence has been focused through respective five year plans as follows: First two plan focused on institution and organization building and same was instructed to the states to do. For ex. Delhi development Authority, Town and country planning organization came during this period.

Third plan (1961-66) was turning point in urban planning history, as it emphasized on importance of towns and cities in balanced regional development. So, it advised urban planning to adopt regional approach. It also emphasized the need for urban land regulation, checking of urban land prices, preparation of master plan, etc.

Forth plan (1969-74), continued with the theme of third plan and development plans for 72 urban areas were undertaken. Regional studies in respect of metropolitan regions around Delhi, Mumbai and Calcutta were initiated.

During Eighth plan, the Mega city scheme was introduced in 1993-94 covering five mega cities of Mumbai, Calcutta, Chennai, Bangalore and Hyderabad. Also IDSMT scheme was revamped through its infrastructural development programs for boosting employment generation for diverting migration from big cities to the small and medium towns.

The ninth plan, continued with the schemes of the eighth plan and also emphasized on decentralization and financial autonomy of urban local bodies. A new program called Swarna jayanti Shahari Rozgar yojna (SJSRY) in 1997 with two sub plans— 1. Urban self-employment program and 2. Urban wage employment programme, i.e. targeting for urban poverty reduction and employment. It was decided by central government to revamp SJSRY in 2013 as National urban Livelihood Mission (NULM).

The twelfth five year plan (2012-2017) proposed to consolidate JNNURM and envisaged its wider role in urban reforms. During twelfth plan, the components of JNNURM are :-

- Urban infrastructure governance (UIG)
  - Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY)
  - Slum rehabilitation in cities not covered under RAY
  - Capacity building
- The plan has also highlighted the reasons which are acting as hurdles in the success of the program as:-
- Failure to mainstream the urban planning
  - Incomplete reform and slow progress in project implementation
  - Delay in securing land for projects
  - Delay in getting approval from various regulators.



## Infrastructural challenges

- **Housing**

Housing provision for the growing urban population will be the biggest challenge before the government. The growing cost of houses comparison to the income of the urban middle class, has made it impossible for majority of lower income groups and are residing in congested accommodation and many of those are devoid of proper ventilation, lighting, water supply, sewage system, etc. For instance in Delhi, the current estimate is of a shortage of 5,00,000 dwelling units the coming decades. The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS) introduced the concept of “Housing Poverty” which includes “Individuals and households who lack safe, secure and healthy shelter, with basic infrastructure such as piped water and adequate provision for sanitation, drainage and the removal of household waste”.

- **Safe Drinking Water**

The safe drinking water sources are also found to be contaminated because of water in the cities are inadequate and in the future, the expected population cannot be accommodated without a drastic improvement in the availability of water. The expenses on water treatment and reuse will grow manifold.

- **Sanitation**

The poor sanitation condition is another gloomy feature in urban areas and particularly in slums and unauthorized colonies of urban areas. The drainage system in many unorganized colonies and slums are either not existing and if existing are in a bad shape and in bits resulting in blockage of waste water. This unsanitary conditions lead to many sanitation related diseases

such as diarrhoea and malaria. Unsafe garbage disposal is one of the critical problem in urban areas and garbage management always remained a major challenge.

- **Health conditions**

The National Family Health Survey, 2006-07 has envisaged that a lot of women and children are suffering from nutritional anaemia and diseases like tuberculosis and asthma are occurring in good number. Providing health care services to the growing urban population is a major challenge before the government health care delivery system.

- **Urban public transport**

As high income individuals are buying more private vehicles and use less public transport. Such a huge number of vehicles in cities is causing more traffic jam, which in turn decreases the efficiency of public transport. Also the penetration of public transport is less, which makes people use private vehicles. Public transport.

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