

Urbanization: A Developmental Challenge For The Third World Countries And Governance

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ABSTRACT

Urbanization is a common concept of modern civilization of the World. Tonnies (1957) Urbanization has differentiated between rural and urban communities in terms of social relationship and values. Each and every region is directly or indirectly associated with urbanization. India is projected to add 404 million people to its urban population between 2014 and 2050. The annual growth in urban population in India between 2010 and 2015 was 1.1% – the highest among the major economies, according to the UN World Urbanisation Prospects report 2014. Indian cities already contribute more than 62% to our national GDP.

1. INTRODUCTION

At a time when the idea of a ‘smart city’ dominates policy discourse, India is faced with a very real urbanization challenge. The socio-spatial hierarchy in the country’s ever-expanding cities is growing deeper, even as inequalities of income, access and opportunities remain un-arrested. Marginalization and ghettoization remains appallingly commonplace in Indian cities, particularly in Tier I cities where rural-to-urban distress migrants end up in large numbers. As François Bourguignon, emeritus professor of economics at the Paris School of Economics, said recently in an interview, inequality in urban India is rising much faster than in rural India. The consequences are large. According to a 2014 research paper presented at a Population Association of America conference, “...poor health and inequality in urban India reduces human capital attainment and productivity, increases social fragmentation, and threatens sustainable development.” Presently urbanization is a worldwide phenomenon. The cities of the third world countries are growing rapidly than the growth of urban population in comparison to European growth of urbanization. The world is passing through an urban Revolution for establishing the “world City” as observed by Toynbee. The causative factors behind urbanization varied from time to time leading to not one but several urbanization processes at different periods of time.

Assam is an important state of north-east India bounded by Bhutan and Arunachal on the north; Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Manipur in the east; Mizoram and Meghalaya on the south; and Bangladesh and West Bengal on the west. The state has a narrow corridor of 35 Km. wide between Bangladesh and Nepal which is the link with the rest of the country. Total geographical area of the state is 78,523 sq. Km.

Assam’s physiographic is characterized by diverse features such as flood plains, marshes and beels, scattered hillocks, folded hill range and old plateaus. The total population of Assam was 32.9 lakh in 1901 which increased to 146.25 lakh in 1971 and 266.38 lakh in 2001.

The growth of urban population is found at a meager percentage in Assam. The population of urban population in Assam remains substantially low as compared to national average. In 1901 the urban population in Assam was 2.34% as against 10.85% of all India average. In 1951, the percentage of urban population was increased to 4.3 % in 1951 and further to 12.72% in 2001 as against the all India level of 17.29% and 27.78% respectively for the period. In 2011 urban rate of population was 14.08 percent with decadal growth rate 27.61 percent. The urbanization process in Assam is very slower both in hills and plains of Assam.

Modernization and urbanization are closely co-related and modernization is marked by increasing urbanization which in turn resulted in the spread of literacy and employment opportunities. Most of the nations of the world have energized their efforts for industrial rapid development and it has the power of attract more money, men and materials for urban centers. Both the heavy industries and the small and medium sized industries in urban areas attract the people from agricultural activities to industrial activities.

However, urbanization is a natural outgrowth of socio-economic development for proper urban development in the backward states of India and the urban governance has to work sincerely. Urban governments today is characterized by fragmentation of responsibility, inadequate devolution of functions to the elected bodies, lack of a clear line of financial resources to them, adherent to outmoded methods in property taxation and hesitance in the matter of every user changes . Municipal bodies are to be given all support and legislative and administrative measures of make them into institutions of local governance, capacity building for resources rising and provision of services are important with the strong urban government. The proper development can be ascertained of the urban areas of Assam.

It is clear that urban policy in India and north-eastern states remains in its nature unconscious, partial, uncoordinated and negative. The national or regional urban policy speaks of a balanced welfare, environmental protection in the growth centers of urban areas. In this, the administrative, technical, managerial and financial capacity of ULBS should be strengthened.

ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT

Among many conflicting ideas generated by tradition and modernization, three basic issues stand out prominently. First, there is a fundamental issue of desirability or otherwise of urbanization on large scale. Secondly, there is a choice between an idealized and highly decentralized settlement system with the self-sufficient villages as the basis and opposite of a highly centralized urban system. Thirdly, in federal political system, urbanization is state subject.

However, our Governments have been adopting various types of direct and indirect measures to develop the process of urbanization. These processes include industrialization, formation of new administrative settlements, establishment of new trade and commerce centers etc. modern governments have immense roles for urban development. Modern governments are welfare governments with decentralization and democratic set up. Hence, the people's welfare is the main concern for modern democratic set up. The performance of the government is highly reflected in the development of the cities and towns of modern India. It is true that urbanization is the most powerful socio-economic component of modernity. In India urbanization has come

to occupy an important place in economic development of different regions. In India the highest urbanization

has been found in the metropolitan areas of Delhi besides Chandigarh, Lakshadweep, Pondicherry and Daman and Diu. In these areas 90 percent to 45 percent live in urban areas. In West Bengal about 27 percent people, in Tamilnadu 34 percent, in Punjab 30 percentage, in Kerala 26 percent, in Maharashtra 38 percent, in Gujarat 35 percent people live in the urban areas.

When compared the rest of the World, the level of urbanization is very low in India. The World as a whole had a level of 45 percent in 1990 and the highest level being 85-90 percent in Australia. It has been estimated that by the early part of 21st century half of World population will reside in India.

Water supply and sanitation facilities are crucial to the sustenance of urban life, regardless of income status. As of today, piped water, which is anyway available to only about half of the urban population, is never distributed for more than a few hours per day. The amount of Non-Revenue Water, which basically means water unaccounted for (i.e. leakages, stealing, unauthorised connections, collection inefficiencies, etc.), is incredibly large, at anywhere between to 40% to 70%. One is only reminded of the same situation with power transmission and distribution losses in urban India (estimated at 27% by ICRA). Only about 18% of slum areas have precarious access to piped water. Non-notified slums (which amount to 60% of all slums) are completely deprived of water supply.

The diversified roles of the Governments can be mentioned as firstly, the Government plays the role of moderator of urban development. Secondly, the Government plays the role of growing agency for modern large and strategic industries. Thirdly, government plays the role of controlling agency of ill and defective activities occurred inside the urban areas. Fourthly, both cooperation and competition should be introduced for better development of urban areas. Fifthly, the environmental balance should be properly utilized in urban areas for sustainable and holistic urban development. However, the development of commerce and trade gives a new dynamism to rapid urban development.

Sustainable city planning should aim at achieving social and environmental equity while improving the lives of the people. For that to happen we need to have a sustainable city form as well as provision and proper management of the services. Thus, in order for a city or urban area to be sustainable it needs to produce and manage basic services like water, waste, energy, and transportation in a way that it conforms to the principles of sustainable development. In other words, the city should be able to produce and distribute the services in an economic, environment friendly and equitable way. Cities in the developing countries are deficient in the provision of basic services that pollute the environment. It is to be noted that though there are some differences between cities and between rich and poor nations, in general urban infrastructure systems are designed without much attention to environmental and social impacts. Mostly the delivery of the services-like water, energy, waste, transportation, is based on non-renewable energy sources (Pinderhughes, 2008). Moreover, the inequality in the provision of these services is very high. Indian cities are characterized by high density of population, deficiency in services and air pollution.

India has witnessed multi-dimensional changes during the reform era. In the influence of L.P.G. under the name of NER (New economic Reform) India economy and government are made more competitive as well as cooperative.

It is true that at this strategic period of global competitiveness India has to maintain the qualitative development of the government activities with ethical views for inclusive development. The Ethical views must be considered in each and every development project because of the growing tendency of mismanagement has become more vibrant to escape the actual path of development. Presently we can consider the dangerous Socio-economic monsters of our country which have been creating lots of maladies in our entire human life. The paper will highlight on the issues relating to sustainable urban development and the ethical views of the Government with special reference to North East India and Assam.

2. SUGGESTIVE MEASURES

Though the problems are increasing with the growth of urbanization, yet urban areas are increasingly attractive centers for the modern people. Therefore, some measures have to be adopted if we want to remove the urban problems. Some of the suggestive measures are as follows:

- Systematic development of the fast growing urban centers and planning programme for creation of job opportunities should be started by the government with a goal of sustainable urban development.
- Regional planning along with city planning should be started very carefully for proper growth and development of our towns and cities.
- To remove the overcrowding problem of the urban areas and to reduce the high pressure on land the industries the concerned agencies should be encouraged to move to backward areas or districts.
- The financial resources of the urban bodies should be generated through well developed infrastructures in the urban areas so that the people in the urban areas may be benefitted by improved services.
- Private transport along with Government Transportation should be developed properly for the people.
- Pragmatic housing policy should be developed in the urban centers for proper housing facilities.
- Structural decentralization policy should be adopted by the urban government for proper community development through 'neighborhood-action groups'.
- Corruption inside the urban government bodies should be minimized for proper development of the urban areas.

Through these measures, we can expect the development and desirable pace of the urban areas.

To conclude, it can be said that the problems of urbanization can never be solved until and unless the strong urban planning and policies are adopted. In this era of developed technology, the urban facilities should be developed and they should be ensured for the all classes of people. Modern people's increasing eagerness for the urban life is a good sign but the approach for sustainable urban development should be started everywhere. It is the need of the hour.

3.REFERENCES

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