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Urbanisation



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URBANIZATION

Student Notes:

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1. Introduction

Urbanization (or the growth of urban settlement), is the process of becoming urban, moving to cities, changing from agriculture to other pursuits common to cities, such as trade, manufacturing, industry and management, and corresponding changes of behavior patterns

An increase in the size of towns and cities leading to growth of urban population is the most significant dimension of urbanization. In ancient times there have been great many cities such as Rome or Baghdad, but ever since industrialization and increasing industrial production, cities have grown phenomenally and now urbanization is very much part of our contemporary life.

Urbanization in India was mainly a post-independence phenomenon, due to adoption of mixed system of economy by the country, which gave rise to the development of private sector. It has been taking place at an increasingly fast rate in India. The following table shows the increase in urban population from Pre independence till date:

Census year	1901	1951	2001	2011	2018
Percentage of population residing in urban centres	11.4	17.29	28.53	31.16	34

According to a survey done by UN state of World Population Report, by 2030, 41% of the Indian population will reside in urban areas and also as per “World Cities Report 2016 – Urbanisation and Development: Emerging Futures”, India’s urban population is expected to become 55 percent of the total population by 2050.

GLOBAL URBAN POPULATION

As per World Urbanization Prospects, 2018 revised : The urban population of the world has grown rapidly from 751 million in 1950 to 4.2 billion in 2018. The report notes that future increase in the size of World’s urban population is expected to be highly concentrated in just a few countries. India, China and Nigeria will account for 35% of the projected growth of world’s urban population between 2018 and 2050. Today, the most urbanized regions include Northern America (with 82% of its population living in urban areas in 2018), Latin America and the Caribbean (81%), Europe (74%) and Oceania (68%). The level of urbanization in Asia is now approximating 50%. In contrast, Africa remains mostly rural, with 43% of its population living in urban areas.

2. Urbanization and Associated phenomenon

There is no common definition of what constitutes an urban settlement. As a result, the definition employed by national statistical offices varies widely across countries, and in some cases has changed over time within a country. The criteria for classifying an area as urban may be based on one or a combination of characteristics, such as: a minimum population threshold; population density; proportion employed in non-agricultural sectors; the presence of infrastructure such as paved roads, electricity, piped water or sewers; and the presence of education or health services.

In this section, we will discuss different definitions and phenomenon associated with the urban areas. It includes Census definition of urban areas, Urban Agglomeration, Over-Urbanization, Sub Urbanization, Counter Urbanization and Census towns.

In 1961 census, 'town' was defined and determined on the basis of number of empirical tests:

- a minimum population of 5000
- a density of not less than 1,000 per square mile,
- three-fourth of the occupations of the working population should be outside of agriculture.
- the place should have a few characteristics and amenities such as newly founded industrial areas, large housing settlements and places of tourist importance and civic amenities.

2.1. Urban Agglomeration

This term was introduced in 1971 census. Often large railway colonies, university campuses, port areas, military camps etc come up outside the statutory limits of the city or town but adjoining it. Such areas may not themselves qualify to be treated as towns but if they form a continuous spread with the adjoining town, it would be realistic to treat them as urban. Such settlement has been termed as outgrowths, and may cover a whole village, or part of a village. Such towns together with their outgrowths have been treated as one urban unit and called 'urban agglomeration'.

According to Census of India, 2001, 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 should not be less than 20,000 as per the 2001 Census.

2.2. Outgrowth

According to Census 2001, an Out Growth (OG) is has been defined as 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.

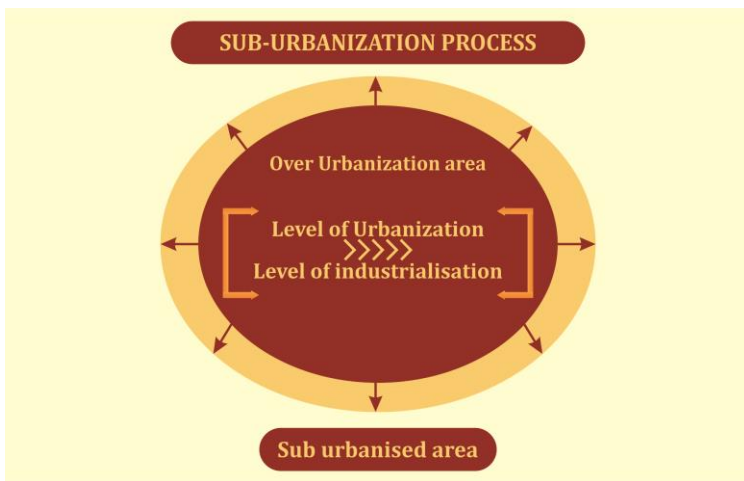
An outgrowth possesses urban features like infrastructure and amenities such as pucca roads, electricity, taps, drainage system for disposal of waste water etc. educational institutions, post offices, medical facilities, banks etc. and is physically contiguous with the core town of the Urban Agglomeration. In the 2011 Census, 475 places with 981 outgrowths have been identified as Urban Agglomerations as against 384 Urban Agglomerations with 962 outgrowths in 2001 Census.

2.3. Over-Urbanization

Over-urbanization is a phenomenon wherein the level of urbanization surpasses the level of industrialization. In an over urbanized area, population growth outstrips its job market and the capacity of its infrastructure. This phenomenon can also be referred as Urbanisation without Industrialisation. E.g. Mumbai, Kolkata, Delhi are some of the over urbanized cities.

2.4. Sub-Urbanization

It is closely related to over-urbanization of a city. Over a period of time, people from the Over-Urbanized area start moving towards the fringe area around the cities. Such areas around the cities gradually start developing as an urban area. This phenomenon is known as Sub Urbanisation.



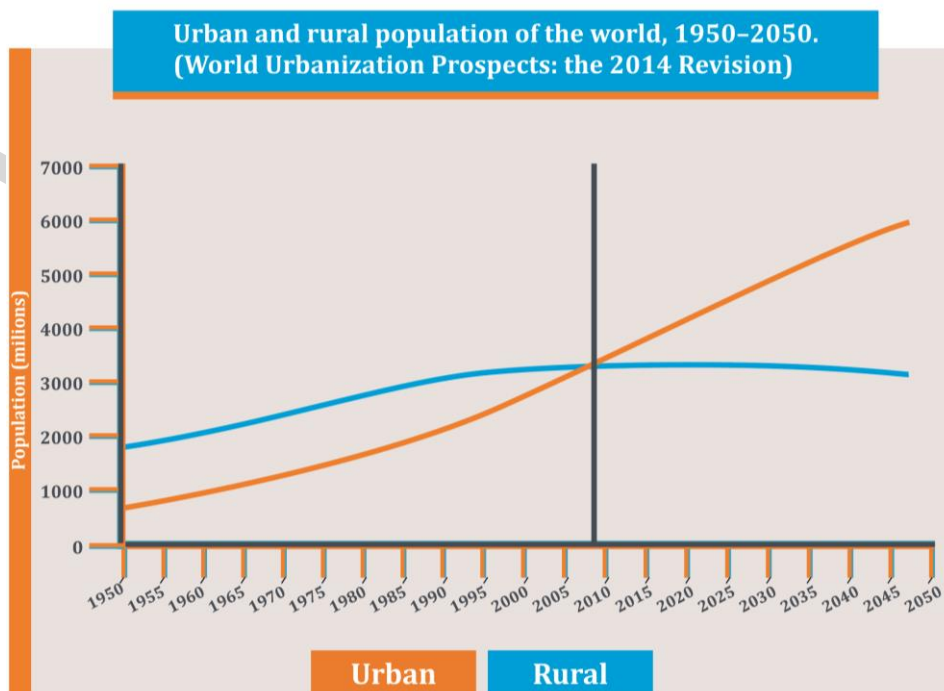
There are several factors which leads to the process of Sub-urbanisation such as :

1. High cost of living in over urbanized area,
2. Development of transport facility around the horizons of over urbanized area,
3. New Work culture that does not necessitate the physical presence on every day.
4. inclusion of surrounding areas of towns within its municipal limits

Delhi is a typical example; wherein the all the above mentioned factors have led to the development of sub urbanized area. E.g. Ghaziabad, Faridabad, Meerut etc.

GLOBAL TRENDS IN URBANIZATION

Globally, more people live in urban areas than in rural areas. In 2007, for the first time in history, the global urban population exceeded the global rural population, and the world population has remained predominantly urban thereafter. The planet has gone through a process of rapid urbanization over the past six decades. The urban population is expected to continue to grow, so that by 2050, the world will be one third rural (34 per cent) and two-thirds urban (66 per cent).



2.5. Counter-Urbanization

It is a demographic and social process whereby people move from urban areas to rural areas. It first took place as a reaction to inner-city deprivation and overcrowding. Counter urbanization occurs when some large cities reach a point where they stop growing further or actually begin to decrease in size as their population start moving into suburban areas or smaller cities thereby leapfrogging the rural-urban fringe. There are instances which show that the phenomenon of counter urbanization is occurring in India.

2.6. Census Towns

In 2011, a new definition of census town has been developed. This urban classification of 'census towns' helps differentiate between India's small farming communities and the larger market town-type settlements that are experiencing rapid and haphazard growth.

To be classified as a census town, a village must fulfil three criteria;

- it need at least 5,000 inhabitants,
- a density of 400 people per sq. km, and

at least three quarters of its male working population must be "engaged in non-agricultural pursuits".

3. Process of Urbanization

Urbanization as a structural process of change is generally related to industrialization but it is not always the result of industrialization. Urbanization results due to the concentration of large-scale and small scale industrial ,commercial, financial and administrative set up in the cities; technological development in transport and communication, cultural and recreational activities. The excess of urbanization over industrialization that makes it possible to provide employment for all persons coming to urban areas is, in fact, what sometimes leads to over urbanization.

In India, a peculiar phenomenon is seen: industrial growth without a significant shift of population from agriculture to industry and growth of urban population without a significant rise in the ratio of the urban to the total population. While in terms of ratio, there may not be a great shift from rural to urban activities, but there is still a large migration of population from rural areas to urban areas. This makes urban areas choked; while at the same time there is lack of infrastructural facilities to cope with this rising population.

In context of India, the process of urbanization is seen as a socio-cultural process, economic process and a geographical process.

- As a **socio-cultural phenomenon**, it is a melting pot of people with diverse ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds.
- As an **economic process**, the city is a focal point of productive activities. It exists and grows on the strength of the economic activities existing within itself.
- Under the **geographical process**, it deals with migration or change of location of residence of people and involves the movement of people from one place to another.

The process of urbanization has thus been associated with important economic and social transformations, which have brought greater geographic mobility, lower fertility, longer life expectancy and population ageing.

4. Social effects of Urbanization

Urbanization has far reaching effects on larger societal process and structures. Following are some of the sections-

4.1. Family and kinship

Urbanization affects not only the family structure but also intra and inter-family relations, as well as the functions the family performs. With urbanization, there is a disruption of the bonds of community and the migrant faces the problem to replace old relationships with new ones. The relationships of community living tend to become impersonal, formal and goal oriented.

I.P. Desai (1964) showed that though the structure of urban family is changing, the spirit of individualism is not growing in the families. He found that 74 percent families were residentially nuclear but functionally and in property joint, and 21 percent were joint in residence and functioning as well as in property and 5 percent families were nuclear.

Aileen Ross (1962) in her study of 157 Hindu families belonging to middle and upper classes in Bangalore found that

- about 60 percent of the families are nuclear
- the trend today is towards a break with the traditional joint family form into the nuclear family form into the nuclear family unit.
- Small joint family is now the most typical form of family life in urban India.
- Relations with one's distant kin are weakening or breaking.

4.2. Urbanization and Caste

- It is generally held that caste is a rural phenomenon whereas class is urban and that with urbanization, caste transforms itself into class. But it is necessary to note that the caste system exists in cities as much as it does in villages although there are significant organizational differences.
- Caste identity tends to diminish with urbanization, education and the development of an orientation towards individual achievement and modern status symbols. **It has been pointed out that among the westernized elite, class ties are much more important than caste ties.**
- However, caste system continues to persist and exert its influence in some sectors of urban social life while it has changed its form in some other sectors. Caste solidarity is not as strong in urban areas as in the rural areas. Caste panchayats are very weak in cities. There exists a dichotomy between workplace and domestic situation and both caste and class situations co-exist.

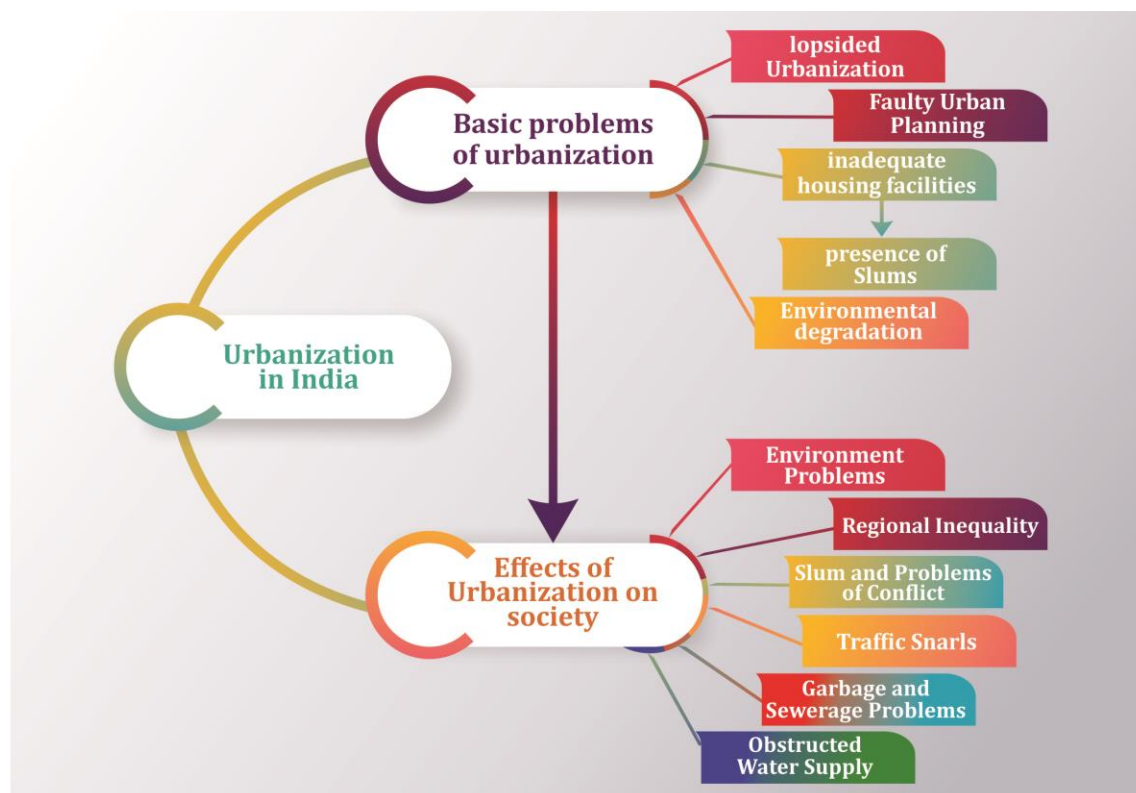
4.3. Urbanization and the Status of Women

- Women constitute an important section of rural urban migrants. They migrate at the time of marriage and also when they are potential workers in the place of destination. While middle class women get employed in white collar jobs and professions, lower class women find jobs in the informal sector. Women are also found in the formal sector as industrial workers.
- Many positive developments took place in the socio economic lives of women as a result of increasing urbanization. Increasing number of women have taken to white-collar jobs and entered different professions. These professions were instrumental in enhancing the social and economic status of women, thereby meaning increased and rigorous hours of work, professional loyalty along with increased autonomy. Average age of marriage of girls is higher in urban areas.
- However, the traditional and cultural institutions remaining the same, crises of values and a confusion of norms have finally resulted. The personally and socially enlightened woman is forced to perform dual roles - social and professional. Also, Urbanisation has not brought about any radical change in the traditional pattern of arranged marriage with dowry. Urban women want new opportunities but old securities as well.

- The status of urban women, because of being comparatively educated and liberal, is higher than that of rural women. However in the labour market, women continue to be in a disadvantaged situation.

5. Problems of Urbanization in India

The patterns of urbanization in India has been marked by regional and interstate diversities, large scale rural to urban migration, insufficient infrastructural facilities, growth of slums and other allied problems. Some of the major problems of urbanization faced in different parts of India are as follows:



5.1. Unplanned urbanization

Various factors responsible for the process of urbanization like migration, better economic opportunities led to settling down of people either in already densely populated cities or the fringe areas around the cities. This rapid urbanization leads to the development of cities without any urban planning and eventually that becomes unsuitable for living. It poses a serious threat to the development in terms of delivery of services and living conditions. Also, rapid urbanization forces government to build cities which actually lacks proper infrastructure, public facilities and employment opportunities.

5.2. Housing and Inflated Land Prices

It is one of the most intense problems which have emerged due to increased urbanization. Overpopulation puts a lot of pressure on limited urban land area. This problem is particularly more severe in those urban areas where there is large invasion of jobless or underemployed immigrants. The major factors for housing problems are lack of building materials and financial resources, insufficient expansion of public utilities into sub-urban areas, and lack of enough transportation to sub-urban areas where most of the available land for new construction is to be found.

5.3. Creation of Slums

There is acute shortage of housing in urban areas and much of the available accommodation is of sub-standard quality. This problem has worsened over the years due to rapid increase in population, fast rate of urbanization and proportionately inadequate addition to the housing stock.

With large scale migration to urban areas many find that the only option they have is substandard conditions of slums. Slums are characterized by sub-standard housing, overcrowding, lack of electrification, ventilation, sanitation, roads and drinking water facilities. They have been the breeding ground of diseases, environmental pollution, demoralization and many social tensions.

As per the census 2011, 17% of the urban population in India lives in slum which is expected to increase rapidly considering the huge migration from rural to urban area. Notably, this percentage is even higher in some of the cities. For e.g., the ratio is more than 50% in Greater Mumbai.

5.4. Over Crowding

In major cities in India like Mumbai, Kolkata, Pune and Kanpur, somewhere between 85% and 90% of households live in one or two rooms. In some households, five to six persons live in one room. Over-crowding encourages deviant behavior, spreads diseases and creates conditions for mental illness, alcoholism etc. One effect of dense urban living is people's apathy and indifference.

5.5. Water supply, Drainage and Sanitation

No city has round the clock water supply in India. Intermittent supply results in a vacuum being created in empty water lines which often suck in pollutants through leaking joints. Many small towns have no main water supply at all and are dependent on the wells. Drainage situation is equally bad. Because of the non-existence of a drainage system, large pools of stagnant water can be seen in city even in summer months.

Removing garbage, cleaning drains and unclogging sewers are the main jobs of municipalities and municipal corporations in Indian cities. There is a total lack of motivation to tackle the basic sanitation needs of the cities. The spread of slums in congested urban areas and lack of civic sense among the settlers in these slums further adds to the growing mound of filth and diseases. Diseases like dengue, malaria, typhoid, flu and respiratory ailments are on the rise in most of the urban centres.

5.6. Transportation and Traffic

Absence of planned and adequate arrangements for traffic and transport is another problem in urban centres in India. Majority of people use buses and tempos, while a few use rail as transit system. The increasing number of two-wheelers and cars make the traffic problem worse. They cause air pollution as well. Moreover, the number of buses plying the metropolitan cities is not adequate and commuters have to spend long hours to travel.

The design and maintenance of city roads is a major challenge in Indian cities. The roads are notorious for being pedestrian-unfriendly, poorly surfaced, congested, and constantly dug up. An important and urgent transformational reform is to draw up national design standards and contracting standards for city roads to address these challenges.

The flow of traffic also needs special attention in Indian cities. Unlike western cities, motorized vehicles in India change lanes with high frequency and in unpredictable ways. This creates unnecessary traffic jams and delays.

Metro rails can be an efficient source of public transportation in many cities. The success of some initial metro projects has led to demands for the same in other cities.

5.7. Pollution

Our towns and cities are major polluters of the environment. Several cities discharge 40 to 60 percent of their entire sewage and industrial effluents untreated into the nearby rivers. Urban industry pollutes the atmosphere with smoke and toxic gases from its chimneys. All these, increase the chances of disease among the people living in the urban centres. According to UNICEF, lakhs of urban children die or suffer from diarrhoea, tetanus, measles etc. because of poor sanitary conditions and water contamination. As a long-term remedy, what is needed is using new techniques of waste collection, new technology for garbage-disposal and fundamental change in the municipal infrastructure and land-use planning.

5.8. Decreased Group Solidarity

Residential areas in cities all over the world are segregated on the basis of primordial identities. This segregation causes tension and gives rise to spatial pattern of communal violence. Cities have seen increased incidences of crime due to inadequate social infrastructure like education, employment, skill development etc.

Unplanned urbanization has led to rise of slums which are socially isolated from the society and as a result there are increased incidences of pathological behavior. This isolation impacts the cognitive development of children. Feeling of relative deprivation in the absence of basic amenities increases the crime rates.

Also, resource rich states attract more migrants and eventually this gives rise to regionalism. In recent times this has become a major reason of social conflicts.

5.9. Rural urban divide

As skilled population move to cities and considering the trend of the increased urbanization, government focus has also shifted from rural to urban area. Consequently, rural areas have started witnessing social changes like transformation of workforce (feminization), changes in land relations, absence of leadership etc.

The above is not an exhaustive list of the problems of urbanization. A whole lot of other problems including increasing rate of crime in the cities, increasing old age population and absence of social security for them, enhanced role and sphere of market has led to the poor and marginalized suffering the most. Studies have also shown that stress levels are found high in cities, which in turn has deleterious impact on the health of the people.

5.10. Urban Crimes

Urbanization in India has not only been fast but also unplanned. This leads to an imbalance in resource availability that manifests itself in dearth of space, shelter, food and basic amenities for the rising population leading to competition, rivalry, insecurity and crimes. As per National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), in 19 selected Metropolitan cities with population more than 2 million, the Crimes under IPC (Indian Penal Code) and SLL (Special and Local Laws), witnessed an increase of 7.3% and 5.2% respectively in 2016 over 2015. These include heinous crimes such as murder, rape, kidnapping and abduction, and robbery.

5.11. Waste Generation & Waste Management Issues

Urbanization directly leads to waste generation, and its unscientific waste handling causes health hazards and urban environment degradation. Increase in urbanization, changing lifestyles and consumerism is going to further complicate Solid Waste Management which is already a mammoth task in India. Financial constraints, institutional weaknesses, improper choice of technology and public apathy towards Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) have made this situation worse.

6. Major Programmes Currently in the Area of Urban Development

- **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana** - Housing for All (HFA) (Urban Mission) was launched in June 2015 to provide housing to all in urban areas by 2022.
- **Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT)**- launched with the objective to provide hard infrastructure for universal coverage of piped drinking water, sewerage and green spaces and parks. AMRUT also incentivizes governance reforms in the cities.
- **Developing Smart Cities**-Launched in June 2015, Smart Cities Mission aims at driving economic growth and improving the quality of life through area based development and city-level smart solutions. The mission would convert 100 existing cities into smart cities
- **Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban)**-Launched on 2nd October 2014, Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) (Urban) is the key mission driving the campaign to make our cities clean. The mission aims to eliminate open defecation in all statutory towns by 2nd October 2019. It also proposes to eradicate manual scavenging, introduce modern and scientific solid waste management, induce behavioural change with respect to healthy sanitation practices and generate awareness for sanitation and its link to public health, augment the capacity of ULBs and create an enabling environment for the private sector in waste management.
- **Deen Dayal Antodaya Yojana– National Urban Livelihood Mission (DAY – NULM)**-aims at creating opportunities for skill development leading to market based employment and helping the poor to set up self-employment ventures. This Mission's interventions are implemented through five key components:
 1. Social Mobilization and Institutional Development (SMID);
 2. Self-Employment Programmes (SEPs);
 3. Employment through Skill, Training & Placement (EST&P);
 4. Shelter for Urban Homeless (SUH); and
 5. Support to Urban Street Vendors (SUSV).
- **National Heritage City Development & Augmentation Yojana (HRIDAY) Mission** was launched in January 2015 with an aim to rejuvenate the heritage cities, with special attention to others issues such as sanitation, tourism, and livelihood. The Mission is targeted for completion by November 2018. The HRIDAY mission will be concluded in 12 heritage cities as per the Detailed Project Reports.
- **Urban transport** - All the interventions in the urban transport by the Ministry of Urban Development such as Bus Rapid Transit System (BRTS), urban transit infrastructure or financing of metro rail projects etc, are carried out as per the provisions of National Urban Transport Policy, 2006.
- **Pooled Finance Development Fund Scheme:** The Central Government launched the Pooled Finance Development Fund (PFDF) Scheme to provide credit enhancement to ULBs to access market borrowings based on their credit worthiness through State-Level-Pooled Finance Mechanism. The broad objectives of this scheme are to facilitate development of bankable urban infrastructure projects; to facilitate Urban Local Bodies to access capital and financial markets for investment in critical municipal infrastructure , to reduce the cost of borrowing to local bodies and to facilitate development of Municipal Bond Market.
- **North Eastern Region Urban Development Programme (NERUDP)** - The North Eastern Region Urban Development Programme (NERUDP) Phase-I is being implemented by the Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD) with the financial assistance from Asian Development Bank (ADB). It covers capital cities of 5 North Eastern States viz. Agartala (Tripura), Aizawl (Mizoram), Gangtok (Sikkim), and Kohima (Nagaland). The project covers priority urban services viz.
 - (a) Water Supply,
 - (b) Sewerage and Sanitation, and
 - (c) Solid Waste Management.

7. Way Forward

India needs to work on several areas to manage its unplanned urbanization: Inclusive cities, funding, planning, capacity building and low-income housing. A political process must also be started where the urban issues are debated with evolution of meaningful solutions:

7.1. Improved Governance

Governance forms an integral part of Urbanization. Governance is the weakest and most crucial link which needs to be repaired to bring about the urban transformation so urgently needed in India. Financing the large sums required to meet the investment needs of urban infrastructure is crucially dependent on the reform of institutions and the capacity of those who run the institutions for service delivery and revenue generation. It is seen that large expenditures on Indian cities and towns have to be combined with better governance structures, strong political and administrative will to collect taxes and user charges, and improved capacity to deliver. Cities must be empowered, financially strengthened, and efficiently governed to respond to the needs of their citizens and to contribute to the growth momentum. Following are the areas where governance needs to be improved further:

- 1. Strengthening Municipalities:** The municipal entities need to be strengthened as local governments with 'own' sources of revenue, predictable formula-based transfers from state governments, and other transfers from the Government of India and state governments to help them discharge the larger responsibilities assigned to them by the 74th Constitutional Amendment. Improved tax revenues combined with rational user charges will enable cities to leverage their own resources to incur debt and also access new forms of financing through public private partnership (PPP). NITI Aayog's suggestions are also on the same line, A well-run ULBs should have the power to raise financial resources including through municipal bonds. Indian cities also need to overhaul their municipal staffing and introduce appropriate skills to achieve administrative efficiency
- 2. Creation of Waste to Energy plants:** To speed up the process of cleaning up municipal solid waste, NITI Aayog suggests the creation of an authority at the Centre to spread the use of Waste to Energy plants. Such an authority may be called Waste to Energy Corporation of India (WECI) and placed under the Ministry of Urban Development. WECI may set up world class Waste to Energy plants through PPP across the country. It can play a key role in fast-tracking coverage of waste to energy plants across 100 smart cities by 2019.
- 3. Strict enforcement of traffic rules:** It can be done through fines in case of violations. It will induce behavioural change and could greatly reduce both the travel time and pollution. Facilitating new age technology cab aggregators: Incentives may be created to encourage vehicle-sharing systems such as Ola and Uber. This will reduce the number of vehicles on the road reducing both congestion and pollution.
- 4. National metro rail policy:** It will ensure that metro projects are not considered in isolation, but as part of a comprehensive plan of overall public transportation. Further, the policy should provide clear guidelines on various aspects of metro projects, such as planning, financing, PPP, etc.

7.2. Inclusive Cities

The poor and lower income groups must be brought into the mainstream in cities. Regulations intended to manage densities and discourage migration both limit the supply of land **and** require many households to consume more land than they would choose. This drives urban sprawl and pushes up the price of land and the cost of service delivery for all. High standards for parking, coverage limits, setbacks, elevators, road widths, reservations for health centres, schools etc. (often not used) prevent the poor from choosing how much to consume of the costliest resource (urban land) to put a roof over their heads, and comply with legal requirements.

7.3. Financing

Devolution has to be supported by more reforms in urban financing that will reduce cities' dependence on the Centre and the states and unleash internal revenue sources. Consistent with most international examples, there are several sources of funding that Indian cities could tap into, to a far greater extent than today: Monetizing land assets; higher collection of property taxes, user charges that reflect costs; debt and public-private partnerships (PPPs); and central/state government funding. However, internal funding alone will not be enough, even in large cities. A portion has to come from the central and state governments.

7.4. Planning

India needs to make urban planning a central, respected function, investing in skilled people, rigorous fact base and innovative urban form. This can be done through a "cascaded" planning structure in which large cities have 40-year and 20-year plans at the metropolitan level that are binding on municipal development plans. Central to planning in any city is the optimal allocation of space, especially land use and Floor Area Ratio (FAR) planning. Both should focus on linking public transportation with zoning for affordable houses for low-income groups. These plans need to be detailed, comprehensive, and enforceable.

7.5. Local capacity building

A real step-up in the capabilities and expertise of urban local bodies will be critical to devolution and improvement of service delivery. Reforms will have to address the development of professional managers for urban management functions, who are in short supply and will be required in large numbers. New innovative approaches will have to be explored to tap into the expertise available in the private and social sectors.

Over the longer term, India needs to introduce more fundamental changes to turn our cities into 21st century spaces. We need to introduce spatial planning that simultaneously addresses developmental needs of metropolitan, municipal and ward-level areas. We need to genuinely devolve power to urban local bodies and financially empower them.

The outcome of the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, "The future we want", recognized both the plight of the urbanpoor and the need for sustainable cities as matters of great urgency for the United Nations development agenda. Time has come to forge a new model of urban development that integrates all facets of sustainable development, to promote equity, welfare and shared prosperity in an urbanizing world.

9. Previous Year UPSC GS Mains Questions

1. Discuss the various social problems which originated out of the speedy process of urbanization in India. (2013)
2. Smart cities in India cannot sustain without smart vilages. Discuss this statement in the backdrop of rural urban integration. (2015)
3. With a brief background of quality of urban life in India, introduce the objectives and strategy of the 'Smart City Programme.'" (2016)

10. Vision IAS GS Mains Test Series Questions

1. Give an account of the factors driving people to migrate from the countryside to urban areas even if it entails living in slums. Highlight some important facts about slums unique to India. Also discuss some strategies which can be adopted for transforming India's slums.

Approach:

- Introduce upon Rural-Urban migration in India and resultant growth of slums.
- Discuss the factors that drive people to migrate to cities and even live in slums.
- Discuss the important facts about slums unique to India.
- Discuss strategies to transform India's slums.

Answer:

Urbanization accompanied by large scale migration leads to mushrooming slums. India's slum population will constitute roughly 9% of the total projected national population of 1.28 billion in 2017.

Driving factors

- **A Higher and More Stable Income:** Productive employment opportunities in an urban centre likely generate a higher and more consistent personal disposable income than in the place of origin – likely a rural, farming centre.
- **Social Mobility for the Next Generation:** Raising children in an urban environment creates a higher “option value” for the next generation. Typically, cities offers a wider choice of education and employment opportunities.
- **Distress Migration:** Political disturbances and inter-ethnic conflicts forces people away from their homes. People also migrate to urban areas in the aftermath of major natural disasters.
- **No other option except slums:** Poor migrant families are unable to afford decent housing and transportation cost which forces them to settle in slum areas in the city near to their work place.

Unique Facts

- **Unprecedented Scale:** No country has or is facing the issue of slums on the scale at which India is. By 2017, India is expected to have over 100 million people living in slums and another 10 million migrants moving to the cities each year.
- **Political Clout Cuts Both Ways:** India's slum-dwellers are fully enfranchised and actively vote for national and local leaders who they feel will protect their interests. Slum-dwellers' today know they represent a strong and highly influential vote and politicians know that delivering things of value to this constituency plays an important part in their ability to win their vote.
- **No Control:** Some other developing countries have more effective political tools to control urban migration. However, India's democracy which assures the free movement of people throughout the country prevents any such controls from being even remotely feasible.

Strategies for Transformation

A viable solution to transform the slums would have to take a holistic view dealing with India's larger macro challenges. Such a solution should include the following strategies:

- **Rural Re-Visioning and Investment:** There is need to create other cities as counter-magnets so that the migration to major cities like Mumbai can be arrested.

Infrastructure, employment opportunities and the overall quality of life in India's small towns and rural areas should be improved.

- **Industrial Revolution and Continued Development:** The solution to slums is not to reverse industrialisation or to try and contain urbanisation, but indeed to press forward with it more aggressively so that businesses can afford to provide jobs to slum-dwellers and pay them a proper wage.
- **Slum Architecture:** Building high-quality, low-cost, multi-storied, diverse formats in the current slum areas such that these become integrated with the rest of the city.
- **Sustainable Continuous Dynamic Infrastructure Provisioning:** The government needs to create a framework for gradual and continuous upgrading of slum infrastructure.

2. ***Whereas the UN Habitat report calls cities “the highest pinnacles of human creation”, the moot question is what form the cities of developing world should take. In context of this statement, examine the contending strategies of urbanisation, with respect to India.***

Approach:

- In the introduction briefly explain the context in the statement and provide the reason for a careful consideration of the shape cities would take in developing world.
- Further delineate the strategies involving large and small cities as models of urbanisation.
- Conclude by underlining the optimal combination required for future urban growth.

Answer:

Cities have been termed as pinnacles of human creation owing to their historic role and future potential as sites of human collaboration, engines of growth and vehicles of social mobility. The UN habitat estimates that by 2050 2/3rd of the global population would reside in cities. According to the World Bank 90 % of the urban growth would occur in the developing world. Thus, the inevitability of urbanization and concerns of sustainability call for greater attention to cities in the developing world.

In this context cities in India have largely grown organically and in an unplanned manner, this has led to pressure on the resources at disposal. Similarly the tier two cities would be expanding in the future. Thus, India requires strategies suited to both traditional urban centers as well as future ones:

- **Megacities and Concentred Urbanisation:** Cities like Mumbai or Delhi are examples of megacities (10 million or more population) and Concentred Urbanisation. They have attracted large number of immigrants and over the years have proven to be engines of growth. However, these cities have increasingly become dependent on resources from outside and face pressure of density over land resources, housing and public amenities. As such they would require strategies of urban renewal and rejuvenation.
- **Smaller Cities and Distributed Urbanisation:** The growth of a number of tier two cities is a future trend for India. This would require Distributed urbanization where a large number of cities are developed simultaneously. United States which has many medium-sized cities with population in the range 1.5-5 million. These are easily manageable, minus the problems of large cities, and provide services to surrounding countryside as well. By functioning in a typical 'hub-and-spoke' model these cities can complement each other in terms of services and resources. With the right resources, they can provide better services and environment for its

inhabitants. The 12th plan also leaned towards this trend which is reflective of India's federal structure as well.

Learning from international experience, models such as Transport Oriented Development (TOD) with dense core district of high rises such as in Hong Kong can be adopted. Similarly, many argue that the Houston or Atlanta Models i.e. population spreading further away from the core should be avoided.

There are strategies suited for both small and large cities. A rapidly urbanising India needs cities that are planned and inclusive hubs with enough fiscal resources and institutional decentralisation.

3. *Rather than being a transitory phenomenon of fast-growing economies, today's slums pose deeper, persistent structural problems and represent major policy challenges. Discuss in the context of India.*

Approach:

- Discuss how slums have become a persistent issue.
- Enumerate policy challenges in this context.
- Conclude with government efforts, SDG 11 and other recommendations.

Answer:

Slums have often been defined by developmental theories as a transitional phenomenon characteristic of fast-growing economies. But these theories are being proven wrong as slums have become a persistent problem. Millions of households find themselves trapped in slums for generations. According to 2011 census, around 17.4 % urban Indian households live in slums. (Slum population is projected to increase from 93.1 million in 2001 to 104.7 million in 2017).

Today's slums pose a deeper, persistent structural problem caused by multiple market and policy failures, poor governance and management hindering investment, and poor and unsanitary living conditions. Issues include:

- The slum region is marked by lack of adequate living space, insufficient provision of public goods, and the poor quality of basic amenities like clean drinking water and sanitation. All of which lead to extremely poor health and diminishing human capital not only for the slum dwellers but for the vicinity as well.
- Congestion, environmental mismanagement, degradation of natural resources.
- Poor education and opportunities, increased incidence of crime, vulnerability of women, substance abuse, crowding and depersonalisation and other social and humanitarian problems.
- Other issues relate to displacement of population from settlements, unregulated encroachment cases such as Kathputli Colony in Delhi.

Policy challenges

- **Tackling rural urban migration**—It is closely relate to factors like globalisation and lack of income opportunities in rural areas. Experts estimate that by 2050 approx. 60 % of the population shall live in cities. This invariably requires complimentary schemes to develop smart villages on the lines of smart cities.
- **Developing social security nets** for slum dwellers in cities.
- **Sustainable urban development**-Making cities safe and sustainable means ensuring access to safe and affordable housing, upgrading slum settlements, ensuring basic necessities like clean drinking water, health clinics and toilets. It also includes reducing vulnerability of women and elderly.

- **Employment generation**-need to create opportunities for migrants and avenues for skill development.
- **Capacity building in urban local bodies**- This will include devolution of authority, ensuring availability of funds (for example through Municipal bonds, devolving taxes like entertainment tax etc.) and developing human resources.
- **Affordable housing**- With rising cost of land there exist an urgent need to develop affordable housing for slum dwellers. One of the major components of “Housing for All by 2022” is to utilize in-situ slum rehabilitation, through which the government has devised a strategy to incentivize private developers to use land as a resource. The policy also includes a slum upgradation component.

As SDG-11 talks about making cities sustainable, it is imperative that Government initiatives such as AMRUT, SMART cities etc. must extend the benefits of these initiatives to slum dwellers who are currently excluded from the benefits of social and economic security.

4. While suburbanisation is a common phenomenon in most urbanising countries, it is occurring at a relatively early stage of India’s urban development. Enumerating the reasons behind this development, highlight the challenges it is creating for Indian cities.

Approach:

- Give a brief introduction about suburbanisation phenomenon in most urbanising countries.
- Enumerate the reasons as to why it is occurring at a relatively early stage of India’s urban development.
- Highlight the challenges it is creating for Indian cities and ways to tackle them.

Answer:

A 2013 World Bank report, **“Urbanization beyond Municipal Boundaries”**, found that suburban areas are generating higher economic growth and employment than the city. Although “suburbanization” is a worldwide phenomenon, it usually occurs in middle to advanced stages of development. In India, it’s happening much more quickly than expected.

Reasons:

- Suburbs are seen as safer and cheaper place to live and raise a family due to lower population density, lower crime, and a more stable population.
- Increasing land prices and office rents have pushed companies to suburban areas.
- With increased incomes, people have the ability to pay more for travel and commute longer distances to work and back home.
- Indian cities impose quite draconian land use regulations, rent control system and building height restrictions on their cities leading to excessive suburbanization.
- Suburban municipalities offer tax breaks and regulatory incentives to attract industrial land users to their area.
- The development of robust and sophisticated infrastructure is possible only in the peripheries of the city where land is available in plenty and the cost of acquisition is low.

Growth of urban agglomerations poses many **economic, ecological and institutional challenges** which are as follows:

- Access to – and the quality of – water, sanitation, and electricity is much worse in the urban periphery than at the core.

- Access to quality and affordable health and education services.
- With commercialization of agricultural land and encroachment on forest areas ecosystem of the region is threatened.
- Unplanned urbanisation and uncontrolled encroachment of natural water storage and drainage systems has spelt disaster.
- The fiscal deficit grows as a result of suburbanization, mainly because in less densely populated areas, property taxes tend to be lower.
- Proponents of containing suburbanization argue that it leads to urban decay and a concentration of lower income residents in the inner city.

Third and fifth five year plans advised urban planning to adopt regional approach and to create metropolitan planning regions to take care of the growing areas outside administrative city limits.

Way Forward:

- Address the lacunae in the current rural-urban categorization system. This would ensure that new areas come under municipality limits and enjoy municipal services.
- Affordable and modern housing within already developed area with intelligent use of space.
- Provide efficient services and reform governance structures to boost overall economic development.
- Use zoning and other land use regulations to create development patterns that make active transportation, in the form of walking and cycling, practical for shortest of trips.
- Assuring that development is spread out fairly city-wide so that issues of accessibility to housing and work don't arise.
- Ensuring that tax incentives given by one suburb do not penalize other suburbs or the central city.

Inadequacy of cities to provide affordable and quality options has resulted in suburbanization. We need to improve existing urban amenities while simultaneously addressing the problems of suburban sprawls.

5. ***Magnitude of India's urbanisation is not unusual but the pattern is. In this context, examine the issues in the governance of cities in India. Also suggest the reforms required to make Indian cities dynamos of competitive sub-federalism.***

Approach:

- Briefly, explain the magnitude and pattern of urbanisation in India.
- List the issues in the governance of cities in India and elaborate them.
- Suggest the reformative steps required to make Indian cities dynamos of competitive sub-federalism.
- Conclude your answer.

Answer:

Urbanization defines the trajectory of development. In India, urbanisation is rapidly on the rise as 31.16 percent of population lives in urban areas. According to United Nations report, India is expected to add an extra 300 million new urban residents by 2050. The magnitude of urbanization in India is usual and in line with transition phase seen in a developing country. However, the pattern of urbanization is haphazard and lopsided marked with severe governance deficit.

Issues in governance

- Poor governance capacities
 - The involvement of multiple authorities leading to overlapping of functions.
 - Fragmentation of responsibility and service delivery across a large number of institutions.
 - Lack of uniformity in the implementation of e-governance initiatives leading to unavailability of basic information.
- Infrastructure deficits
 - Productive urbanisation requires efficient public services delivery. But every Indian city lacks basic facilities. For e.g. lack of water and power supply, public transport, education, healthcare etc.
 - Development of infrastructure requires funds but ULB's have a poor record in raising sufficient resources.
- Inadequate finances
 - ULBs are responsible for the development of urban areas, but there is lack of devolution of functional and financial powers. Some states have not even allowed the municipalities to levy property taxes.
 - Due to poor property tax collection, the property tax potential remained unexploited across ULB's.
 - Then there are problems of low coverage, low tax rates, low collection efficiency and lack of indexation of property values, making property tax a non-buoyant source of revenue.
- ULBs in India are not equipped to generate reliable data which will enable monitoring at the micro level — the basis for arriving at relevant macro-level policy choices.
- Lack of accountability measures by which the ULBs can be held accountable for their performance.
- Lack of adequate quantity and quality of capable functionaries available to ULBs.
- Lack of planned development leads to haphazard growth, which in turns leads to proliferation of slums and associated problems.

Suggested reforms

- State government needs to cede power and share resources with local bodies. Here, State Finance Commissions should also play a vital role by allocating more resources.
- Ensure efficient collection of existing tax base by adopting the latest satellite based techniques to map urban properties in order to tap the full potential of property tax.
- Regular and reliable fiscal and economic performance database linked with grants to local bodies could help in ensuring transparency.
- NITI Aayog should also compile actual comparative indices of municipalities' performance annually.
- The ULBs should be provided with capable manpower in adequate numbers, by creating an independent specialised cadre.
- There should be an annual audit of the performance of ULBs, along with regular organisation of Ward Sabhas for increasing accountability.
- Any development plan should include all aspects of infrastructure development to make it viable providing services to every section and sector.
- Initiatives like Swachhta Dashboards: platform that show information on cities across the country based on their cleanliness.
- Promoting financing options like municipality bonds.

Way Forward

The government should devolve more powers and provide sufficient resources to local bodies; also put proper checks and balances to ensure transparency and accountability, thereby, enabling cities to become an effective instrument for competitive federalism and competitive sub-federalism.

6. ***Rapid urbanization not only requires addressing the deficits in urban areas but also addressing those that are created because of it in rural areas. Comment. Also, evaluate the success of government programmes to reduce the stress on rural population because of urbanization.***

Approach:

- Give a brief account of urbanization and its resultant impact.
- Discuss its outcomes for rural areas.
- Mentioning few schemes evaluate the success of these programmes.
- Conclude by briefly mentioning remedial suggestions.

Answer:

As per census data, 31% of Indian population lived in urban areas in 2011. It is expected to reach 50% in the next decade or so. This is the result of both rural push & urban pull factors. But, this has brought along several problems like growth of slums, homelessness, unemployment, poverty, pollution, shortage of resources, crimes, drug trafficking, prostitution, beggary and psychological problems like alcoholism, depression and stress.

While the focus has been to remedy these urban malaises, what is often neglected is the resultant negative impact of urbanization on rural areas. Some of these are:

- Out-migration of youth and consequent decline in economic productivity of these regions.
- Declining investment in agriculture and allied activities, reducing employment avenues and aggravating rural poverty.
- Breakdown of rural families and separation of spouses and children resulting in psychological problems.
- Feminization of agriculture and increase in vulnerability of females to caste based and sexual crimes.
- Increasing urban-rural gap in per capita income and living standards.
- Exacerbation of rural-urban differential due to urban bias of planners & policy makers.
- Decline in traditional arts and crafts of rural areas.
- Adoption of urban culture in rural areas leading to erosion of unique local cultural traits.

To address these deficits, government launched several programmes including:

- RURBAN mission to provide urban facilities and infrastructure in rural areas such as roads, hospitals, electricity and digital infrastructure.
- Schemes to boost agriculture and allied activities like those of irrigation, insurance, institutional credit and agricultural extension.
- Employment schemes like MGNREGA and promoting rural entrepreneurship through PMEGP.
- Promotion of agro industries through Mega Food Parks, Agricultural Export Zone and SAMPADA.

Such programmes are helping in bridging the rural-urban gap and providing for socio-economic betterment of rural masses. For instance, the share of rural 18-year-olds in schools and colleges had gone up to 70% from 25% between 2016 and 2001. Though, rural programmes have been the focus of every government since independence, yet it has not been able to address the problem of poverty, unemployment and poor status of physical and social infrastructure. Even now, a very large proportion of the BPL population of India lives in villages and rural India.

In this regard, the need of the hour is employment decentralization, stemming of migration etc. via suitable industrial policies, strengthening of PRIs and legal frameworks for land titling, farm-based activities' promotion and access to credit and also reliable and affordable energy. These will help bridge the rural-urban deficit.

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