



Theme 2

URBANISATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The population movement has rapidly increased with the growth in the number of people living in towns and cities. Urbanisation is an integral part of the economic development process, and the relation between economic growth rate and the degree of urbanisation is mutually reinforcing, as higher economic growth results in high incomes that influence the rate of urbanisation. World Bank projected that every seven of 10 people will be living in urban cities by 2050. This indicates the unprecedented rise in urban population that inevitably would have an impact on the growth of the cities and can deteriorate the urban environment, leading to poverty, inequality, insecurity and exploitation.

As per the 2011 Census, India's population living in urban areas increased from 27.8% in 2002 to 31.1% in 2011. The trend suggests that urbanisation would have grown to 35.4 per cent in 2021. The number of towns has increased by 2,774 since the last Census (2011). More than nine million were added to urban India every year between 2001 and 2011.

There is inequality in the pace of growth of urbanisation across states. The data shows that Goa is the most urbanised state, with 62.17% of the population living in urban areas. In Kerala, 47.72% of people live in urban areas, whereas in Maharashtra, 45.23% live in towns and cities. Among the Union Territories, the National Capital of Delhi and Chandigarh are the most urbanised population, with 97 per cent of the people. The states lagging in urbanisation are Himachal Pradesh (10 percent), Bihar (11 percent), Assam (14 percent) and Odisha (17 percent).

This urbanisation is likely to continue, and it is estimated that 590 million people will start living in the cities by 2030, going up to 820 million by 2050. In addition, a large number of towns has increased by 2,774 since the last Census (2011). Urbanisation is the natural course of development, and it is estimated that Indian cities contribute to about 2/3 of the economic output. Indeed, urbanisation poses unprecedented challenges to growing cities and towns in providing essential services (water, sewerage, transportation, etc.) and addressing slums.

The Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD) and the Ministry of Housing and

Urban Poverty Alleviation (MoHUPA) have played a direct role in formulating policies and programs to support state governments in addressing urban issues. Their objective is to create economically productive, efficient, inclusive, and responsive Urban Local Bodies (ULBs). The focus is on achieving universal access to basic services, establishing city-wide planning and governance frameworks, ensuring financial sustainability for ULBs, promoting e-governance, and delivering transparent and accountable urban services. Various initiatives like the Smart Cities Mission, AMRUT, PMAY (Urban), HRIDAY, and SBM have been launched to boost urban infrastructure development and improve the quality of life in urban areas. The goal is to transform 100 major cities into smart cities, while also revitalising small and medium towns through the AMRUT program for balanced spatial growth.

All this would have huge implications for the nature of economic activities, livelihoods, and the well-being of the population, access to essential services and the overall pattern of urbanisation. Given that India has a low level of urbanisation, this offers huge opportunities for launching an inclusive and sustainable urban development strategy. This is necessary to reap the benefits of the 'demographic dividend'. Launching the strategy would require meticulous planning regarding physical infrastructure, transport, housing, access to health facilities and sanitation, and employment creation to ensure an inclusive urban development process. Finally, the environment has been a highly neglected issue in urban development which needs to be kept at the centre, given the growing recognition of the strong ecological footprints in large cities.

There are several issues of challenges and concerns in managing urbanisation and development that can be considered for paper writers on this theme.

- ❖ Emerging patterns of urbanisation in India
- ❖ Mobility and migration
- ❖ Challenge of employment and skills
- ❖ Urban poverty and the growth of slums and squatter settlements
- ❖ Degradation of environmental quality
- ❖ Urban inequalities and social segregation
- ❖ Rural-urban linkages and growth of small and medium towns
- ❖ Crimes and violence
- ❖ Urban health and ageing
- ❖ Sustainable habitat
- ❖ Urban resilience and disaster management
- ❖ Urban cultural heritage preservation and revitalisation
- ❖ Urban design and place making
- ❖ Innovations in urban governance and policymaking

- ❖ Sustainable cities and communities
- ❖ Affordable housing and inclusive urban development
- ❖ Sustainable transportation and infrastructure
- ❖ Urban food security and sustainable agriculture
- ❖ Public spaces and community development in urban areas
- ❖ Climate change adaptation in urban settings
- ❖ Institutions and regulatory framework