

Winner Of CSC January 2019 Essay Competition

Town planning is the planning and design of all the new buildings, roads, and parks in a place in order to make them attractive and convenient for the people who live there. At a time when the idea of a 'smart city' dominates policy discourse, India is faced with a very real urbanization challenge. Cities play a great role in nation's development and according to a report they contribute more than 65% to our national GDP. They are bar indicators of the country's progress in modernization.

With the increase in population the planning of a sustainable urbanization rarely happens. There are many reasons which could justify the above said statement. One of the reasons is that, initially the cities or the towns start developing from a smaller area and with the subsequent increase of people and with modernization the city grows bigger and bigger by acquiring nearby plots. This creates a problem as the boundary of the city is not justified and it grows on depending on the requirement of the society, so there is a mismanagement problem lies as the construction of the public places can't be planned beforehand and long-term projects can't sustain or make out their places. The economic dimensions of India's urbanization challenge are large, but the social and cultural factors resulting from the sudden urban demographic bulge also present a daunting challenge.

Unplanned cities create lots of buzz in the city and around the city too. Due to improper spacing of houses many people are forced to live in slums. The top metro cities of India-Mumbai and Delhi which are also ranked one of the most attractive places in India to visit by the foreigners accumulate the most slums such as our Dharavi slum area. Affordable housing is at the heart of building inclusive cities. India's ambitious 'Housing for All' project aims at providing a home to every poor urban household by 2022. More than 90% of the housing shortage in urban India is faced by economically weaker sections and low-income groups, according to government data. At the same time, 7.5 lakh apartments remain unsold across the Mumbai Metropolitan Region, the National Capital Region, Bengaluru, Pune, Chennai, Hyderabad and Kolkata, indicating the high demand-supply mismatch. While demand is mostly in the affordable housing segment, the supply is high in the higher-price segments. In addition, McKinsey in 2014 estimated that 33% of existing houses in India are of sub-standard quality.

Water supply and sanitation facilities are crucial to the sustenance of urban life, regardless of income status. In the drought prone areas of Rajasthan and Maharashtra, there is a heavy requirement of water resources. 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, unauthorized 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.

Households who can afford it are often forced to spend on unsafe substitutes (thus inflating bills), while others have to do make do with poor quality water supply and sanitation services. It is the urban poor which suffers the most as the rising costs of inefficiencies in services are passed on to customers. As per 2005-06 National Family Health Survey, only about 47% of the slum population has access to basic sanitation facilities (flush or pit), which means about 35 million people in urban India - akin to the population of Canada - are living in unsanitary and potentially hazardous conditions. Of the total urban population, about 83% have access to sanitation facilities.

Waste management and their disposal in a hygienic way also lay a central problem in the city. Due to absence of planning, the government or municipalities are forced to make any unwanted or barren land as dump yard of the city's daily, weekly or monthly collected wastes. There also is a problem for sewage treatment which leads to over-flooding of drain water into beautiful streets of the city.

In the ancient days, Harappan and Mohenjo-Daro civilization suggest us that they also had good and sustainable planned towns. This could be suggested by their well-developed constructed infrastructure. They

had good sewage treatment plan along with a well-developed and highly sophisticated waste management plan. Their constructions of houses were also a architecture to be appreciated and the underground bathing spaces and well-ventilated houses prove their efficient planning.

A good planned city follows out the plans such as before laying them out an estimation of people who will inhabit it in the future, and also the rate at which population will grow is made out on the basis of which city is planned and its expansion is strategized. A planned city, in most of the cases, have a lot symmetry in lying out of its streets, buildings etc. The facilities such as schools, hospitals, sport complexes, social gathering spots, gardens etc are taken care of such that these are in proximity of every citizen. Also, these cities have sound & fast transport facilities.

Now-a-days, urbanization planning is seen scarcely. During british rule, the Britishers had a great love for well-planned towns or cities. This could be witnessed by imagining and visualizing the city of New Delhi whose foundation stone was laid by George V, Emperor of India during the Delhi Durbar of 1911. It was designed by British architects, Sir Edwin Lutyens and Sir Herbert Baker.

The government and office bearers of the Indian council and parliament should realize the need of urban planning and remember the dream city of our honorable first Prime Minister Shri Jawahar Lal Nehru, which was designed and planned by the famous French architect Le Corbusier. As like the initiation of planned urbanization of smart city Amravati by Capital Region Development Authority of Government of Andhra Pradesh under the leadership of Sri N. Chandrababu Naidu, the honorable Chief Minister and Chairman of CRDA and CA with the cooperation of Sri P. Narayana, the other Indian officials also should make out the planned and sustainable urbanization for the other metro cities who are in a deadly need of it.