

Marginalized Groups and Social Transformation in India: A Review of Slum Development Policies in India

by
Prof. V. Rama Krishna^[a], **Mrs. D. Smitha**^[b] & **R. Shashidhar**^[c]

Abstract

Governance of urban services depends on many actors – municipalities, public officials, politicians, service users, ministries and agencies of restraint (regulators). If basic services do exist in slums (inadequate or temporary) it is often due to the grace of political representatives who offer piece meal benefits to keep the people happy. And even though these services (like drinking water taps, community toilets and small drains) maybe (sometimes) attainable through pressurising the local councillor or the MLA, it is the officers (of the level of commissioner) that take the critical decisions or call the shots at the municipal level. The paper tries to explore the urban slums scenario as nearly a third of the State's population lives below the poverty line. In urban areas, the growth of employment in the informal sector has not been accompanied by corresponding rise in the availability of housing; as a result large numbers of people now live in slums, without adequate access to education, health or sanitation. Further the paper evaluates the growing population in urban slums and migration from rural to urban has been discussed in this paper. The government of India and States governments has been tremendously spending the funds for urban development from infrastructure to housing for slums areas with health improvements with the slums population. Finally the paper concludes the challenges which are there before the government for eradication of poverty of slums and to develop the urban slums with socio-economic development of weaker sections in India.

Key Words: Slums, Poverty, Policies & Programmes, Weaker Sections, Basic Facilities, Challenges

^[a] Prof. V. Rama Krishna , Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Tumkur University, Tumkur -572103, Karnataka, INDIA. E-mail: rahul_rk2004@yahoo.co.in	^[b] Mrs. D. Smitha , Assistant Professor, Lecturer in Political Science, Sri Basaveswara P U College, Sondekoppa Road, Nelamangala, Bangalore Rural District. E mail: dsmitha10@gmail.com	^[c] R. Shashidhar Assistant Professor, P. G. Department of Studies and Research in Business Administration, Tumkur University, Tumkur – 572 103. E mail: shashi.hbl@gmail.com Mob: +91 9008666889
---	--	---

1. Introduction

The term 'slum' signifies a host of negatives – squalor, poor human living conditions, neglect, unhealthy, dirty, criminal, illegal, and encroachers- terms that signify and communicate what represents a slum as seen through the eyes of government agents and those that have their basic needs fulfilled. Government agents often club the arguments pertaining to lack of space and rapidly expanding slum population, further emphasizing their belief that illegal; encroachers on public/private land can not be provided for (or do not deserve services). However, numerous policies and programmes related to basic services have been announced that call attention to needs of slum dwellers for basic services.

The economically weaker section (EWS), lower income group (LIG), lower middle income group (LMIG) and middle income group (MIG) make vital contributions to the growth of a city; hence, an inclusive city is essential to ensure healthy urbanization (Government of Odisha; 2012). The rising land and construction costs have made affordable housing a far cry for the EWS, LIG, LMIG and MIG households in the urban areas; and their requirements can only be met if the state (through appropriate policy instruments and supporting legal framework), municipal bodies (through proactive partnership and support), development authorities and the state housing board (through obligatory provisions in development control regulations, proper spatial planning and affordable housing schemes), housing finance institutions (through adequate lending to both developers and end-use borrowers at affordable lending rates) and private developers (through focus on affordable housing sector) join hands to make it possible.

High Level Committee on Financing Infrastructure (2012) India is undergoing a transition from rural to semi-urban society. A little over 31% of population is now living in urban areas. Details presented in *Table 1* below illustrate the growing trend of urbanization. It is evident from the urbanization pattern that the rate of development is clearly related to the rate of urbanization. States with higher gross domestic product have higher levels of population living in urban areas. Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka are significantly more urbanized than Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa. Between Census 2001 and Census 2011, the number of towns has increased from 5161 to 7935. The number of urban local bodies, which was 3,799 in 2001, is likely to be 4,041 in 2011. The number of cities with population higher than 1 million, which was 35 in the year 2001, is now expected to be 53.

Table 1: Shift of Population from Rural to Urban

Sl. No.	Year	Total Population (in million)	Decadal Growth Rate (%)*	Urban Population (in million)	Rural Population (in million)	% of Urban Population to Total Population	% of Rural Population to Total Population
1	1951	361.1	13.31	62.4	298.7	17.3	82.7
2	1961	439.2	21.64	78.9	360.3	18.0	82.0
3	1971	548.2	24.80	109.1	439.1	19.9	80.1
4	1981	683.3	24.66	159.4	523.9	23.3	76.7
5	1991	846.3	23.86	217.6	628.7	25.7	74.3
6	2001	1028.0	21.54	287.6	740.4	28.0	72.0
7	2011	1210.1	17.6%	377.1	833.0	31.2%	68.8%

Source: Census of India.

Archana Prasad (2011) reveals in her article regarding the indicators of distress census of India's population in urban areas that the provisional population figures for Census 2011 released this week show an alarming growth in urban population. After 1921 this is the first census in which the growth of urban population has outstripped the decadal population increase in rural areas. The decadal growth of the urban population was projected at 31.08 per cent, which was much higher

than the overall decadal population growth of 17.64 per cent. This indicates an abnormal degree of urbanisation and movement of population from rural to urban areas. The increasing rate of the urbanisation process is also indicated by the alarming increase in the number of towns from 5161 in 2001 to 7935 in 2011, i.e., a decadal growth of 53.7 per cent. Interpretation of these initial trends may be manifold. In conventional wisdom, urbanisation has often been equated with economic growth and progress. This argument may also be used by the advocates of neo-liberalism to advocate the view that economic reforms are leading to greater prosperity and employment opportunities for the people. But such an interpretation of these trends is far from the reality that faces us today and hides the real picture of distress that can emerge from a more detailed analysis of these trends.

A closer look at regional patterns in the census figures reveals a link between the pattern of urban population growth, corporate investments and rural distress. In several states like Karnataka, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh the number of census villages has declined and the number of settlements classified as towns has increased at an alarming rate. For example in Maharashtra the number of census towns increased from 378 to 535 in a period of ten years, in Karnataka they increased from 270 to 347 settlements and in Andhra from 210 to 353. Most of the increase was in semi-urban settlements which have not yet been classified as ‘towns’ in revenue records (Chandrasekhar; 2005). The second factor that points towards the link between rural distress and the growth of the urban population is the percentage of urban population growth in states facing rural distress. The point is made by a comparison between the rates of urbanisation of some selected states which are known to have high rates of corporate investments like Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh and all India. In these states, the rate of growth of urban population is much higher than the all India rate of growth. Thus while India has an overall decadal urban population growth of 31.80 per cent, in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka the urban population grew at 33.49 and 38.57 per cent respectively and where as in Gujarat and Maharashtra it increased to 42.58 and 45.23 per cent respectively. Here it is important to record the percentage increase of the decadal growth rate was highest in Gujarat (increase of 5.2 per cent) and Andhra Pradesh (increase of 6.19 per cent). This high rate of growth is also significant because three of these states i.e., Andhra, Karnataka and Maharashtra are also known to be regions that have been the hub of agrarian distress in the country. Hence a more detailed analysis of the census findings can be used to gauge the different forms of corporate capital exploitation and its links to the movement of labour from rural to urban areas.

2. The Indian Scenario

The UN points out that one in every three city dwellers in the world today- nearly one billion people- lives in a slum; ninety percent of whom are in the developing world. Back in India, slums are a common sight in the cities and form what the development circuits euphemistically call the other side of development. Development, urbanization and growth are terms that have been in currency for many years now. While the relationship between urbanization and the proliferation of slums is taken for granted, the intricacies are yet to be explored. It is estimated that India would become 50% urban by 2020. The subsequent censuses have been showing a steady rate of growth. The percentage of urban population in the country shot up from 25.7% in 1991 to 27.8% in 2001. Following the neo-liberal cities of the West, India has adopted the modernist notion of a city with a liberal market and deregularized systems. The cities are today the sprawling hubs of economic growth and attract millions from the rural hinterlands. The limited resources and amenities of the cities however fail to accommodate them. These wherewithals gradually turn to commodities available only for a price. The poor thus get pushed aside to congregations called slums.

Worryingly, 65.3% of the total slum population of the country is accounted by just five states- Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu. Maharashtra has the highest percentage of slums to urban population- 27.3%. It is confusing when we see that Maharashtra was given the second rank in Human Development Index in 2002. Surely the index, which takes into account literacy, life expectancy and income, could not grasp the details of the state's vast slums. The spread of the issue is palpable if we notice that apart from the above states, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, Gujarat and Haryana have above a million slum dwellers each. The numbers can only be a guide to the actual problem (Umbrajkar; 2012). With the liberty to move freely and settle in almost all parts of the country, migration and slums will continue, unless due intervention is made, to be persisting problems of the cities. Take Mumbai for instance. The financial capital of the country has 15.2% of its population in slums and accounts for 36.6% of the slum population in million-plus cities. The report from other cities is not pleasant either. Just notice the fact that 41.6% people of the largest 27 cities live in slums. The cities are the face of the country's modernization and magnets that attract lumps of foreign investment. To actualize its development dreams, each city exploits the cheap labour offered by the slum dwellers. The transaction, however, becomes one of loss for the slum dwellers as they get neither a quality life nor security in return and live in deplorable environments. Further we can find out the slums in Bangalore metropolitan city about the development of slums and providing basic facilities in Karnataka.

3. Distribution of Slums

Mumbai has shown a definite pattern in the growth of slums beginning with the southern areas and moving up gradually to the northern suburbs (Desai, 1995). Bangalore, on the other hand, shows no such pattern since most of the suburbs record the same range of slums irrespective of proximity to a water-body or railway line (Table 2). The suburbs with the highest number of slums, Malleswaram, Jayanagar, Uttarahalli are located in three different corners of the city. The earliest notified slums are in Gandhinagar (Gous Land-1977), Binnypete (Kanakanagar slum-1974), Jayamahall (K G Bydarhalli- 1974) and Bharatinagar (Nagappa garden- 1974). The date of notification, however, cannot be taken as the right indicator of the age of the slums. Many of these slums were present either in the present form or as squatter settlements even before notification. The fact that complicates this statistical analysis is the lack of information on the history of inhabitation of these slums. It is not clear how much of this population have been living since the date of notification and how many are just seasonal migrants (UDPK; 2009). We can observe suburb-wise distribution of slums in Bangalore metropolitan city from the table no. 5. It can be said from the table that most of the slums in and around Bangalore city are increasing tremendously. The comparison of number of slums and population reveals that the number of huts is not on par with the total population even though there are many government schemes particularly in providing basic facilities and amenities.

Table 2: Suburb-wise distribution of Slums in Bangalore

Suburb	No. of Slums	No. of Huts	Population
Gandhinagar	12	1901	9925
Chikkapete	6	1343	6956
Binnypete	13	1533	9105
Chamarajpete	22	5034	26439
Shantinagar	6	1233	6795
Basavanagadi	7	1276	5985
Yelahanka	13	3297	18696
Jayamahall	16	2096	13111
Malleswaram	24	4401	25233
Bharatinagar	20	1794	11166
Shivajinagar	1	60	350
Jayanagar	24	7302	42426
Rajajinagar	10	1866	13677
Varthur	23	5916	24468
Uttarahalli	34	14758	83020
Total	231	53810	297352

Source: Karnataka Slum Clearance Board, 2008

4. Ownership of Slums

Slums and squatter settlements often come up on privately owned less, making the settlers prone to demolitions and evictions. Out of the above 231 slums for which data are available, 139 or 60.2% are standing on private lands (*Table 3*). Devoid of land titles or formalised tenures, most of the slums are easily liable to be termed illegal and encroached. The situation worsens when the private parties themselves lack proper documents on land registration and titles making the process of resettlement even more cumbersome.

Table 6: Ownership of Notified Slums in Bangalore

Owner	Percentage of Slums
Government	22.1
Private	60.2
Railways	4.3
Bangalore Development Authority	7.8
Others	5.6

Source: Karnataka Slum Clearance Board, 2008

Twenty Point Programme – 2006

The Twenty Point Programme -1986 has been restructured in conformity with the priorities of the Government as contained in the National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of the United Nations and the SAARC Social Charter. The restructured Programme, called Twenty Point Programme – 2006 (TPP-2006), was approved by the Cabinet on 5th October, 2006 and operated w.e.f 1.4.2007. The Twenty Point Programme (TPP) was launched by the Government of India in 1975. The Programme was first revised in 1982 and again in 1986. Over the years, the need for restructuring the Programme has been felt in the light of achievements and experiences, as well as the introduction of several new policies and programmes by the Government of India. The programmes and schemes under the TPP-2006 are in harmony with the priorities contained in the National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP). It renews the nation's commitment to eradicating poverty, raising productivity, reducing income inequalities and removing social and economic disparities. The Ministry in consultation with the States/UTs fixes the physical targets in respect of the points mentioned below and monitors the progress made by them. The States/UTs are required to furnish Progress Report to this Ministry. The performance is rated on the basis of norms set by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation – 90% and above as very good – 80% to 90% good and less than 80% - poor.

The Twenty Point Programme – 2006 consists of 20 points and 66 monitorable items. Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (HUPA) is the nodal Ministry for the following three points:-

- 1) **GARIBI HATAO (POVERTY ERADICATION)-URBAN AREAS** - The eradication of poverty has been an integral component of the strategy for economic development in India. High poverty levels are synonymous with poor quality of life, deprivation of basic needs, poor health, malnutrition, illiteracy and low human resource development. Providing employment is the most important method of eradicating poverty. To deal with urban poverty “Swaran-jayanti Sehhari Rojgar Yojana” has been identified.

- 2) SUBKE LIYE AWAS (HOUSING FOR ALL) - EWS/LIG Houses in Urban Areas - The Government is committed to a comprehensive programme for Urban renewal and to massive expansion of housing in towns and cities and also housing for weaker sections in rural areas. The Point Subke Liya Aawas has the item - EWS/LIG Houses in Urban areas. To deal with the problem of houses for economically weaker sections and low income groups in urban areas, the item "EWS/LIG Houses in Urban areas" has been included.
- 3) BASTI SUDHAR (IMPROVEMENT OF SLUMS) - Number of Urban poor families assisted under seven point charter viz. land tenure, housing at affordable cost, water, sanitation, health, education, and social security. Urban slums, particularly in the big cities of our country, are the picture of human misery and degradation, Urbanization is an inevitable phenomenon of modernization and economic development. Slums grow as a result of structural inequities in the development of the urban sector. Due to the high price of land and housing and low purchasing power, the urban poor are forced to join the existing slums for cheap shelter or to occupy any vacant land/areas wherever available in the city. With a view to paying particular attention to the needs of slum dwellers the Point titled Basti Sudhar will monitor number of Urban poor families assisted under the seven point charter viz. land tenure, housing at affordable cost, water, sanitation, health, education and social security.

5. Administration of Slum Programmes

The programs reviewed here are not administratively simple. This is underlined by the fact that in recent years both the NSDP and VAMBAY programs are only able to disburse about 70 percent of their allocated funds. Each year the funds budgeted for the programs are not fully drawn down. Although comparable figures for the Indira Awas Yojana (IAY) were not available, it is not clear that this program is simpler in implementation than the other national programs. In addition, there are significant delays in the release of funds to implementing authorities. The state level programs of Urban Ashraya and Mythri appear marginally simpler, if only because they are at the state level. The Bhavanashree program appears administratively the least complex in comparison because it takes advantage of the existing network of self-help groups to target and select beneficiaries. The success of the Kudumbashree program in other areas like thrift and micro enterprise programs allow potential beneficiaries to use existing channels of information distribution to take advantage of these programs. The Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan rates poorly on administrative simplicity. As its parent program, VAMBAY, some states often do not take advantage of central government funds available for housing construction or sanitation projects. This under usage of funds earmarked for a crucial developmental objective is a symptom of administrative complexity.

6. Policy Measure and Strategies

JNNURM is the single largest initiative ever launched by the GoI to address the problems of urban housing, infrastructure, and basic services to the poor in 63 cities and towns in a holistic manner. JNNURM comprises two broad segments, namely (i) the Sub-Mission on Urban Infrastructure and Governance and (ii) the Sub-Mission on Basic Services to the Urban Poor (BSUP) covering 63 identified cities. The non-Mission cities and towns are covered under the UIDSSMT and Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme (IHSDP). The MoHUPA is the nodal ministry for BSUP and IHSDP programmes which cater to housing and basic amenities to urban poor, especially slum dwellers. These schemes/programmes will, in addition to improved housing, also cater to other basic services such as sanitation, water supply, sewerage, solid waste disposal, etc. Interest subsidy scheme for housing the urban poor has been proposed during the Eleventh Plan

so as to provide an interest subsidy of 5% per annum, for a period of five years only, to commercial lenders for lending to EWS/LIG segments of the urban areas. Interest subsidy is expected to leverage markets funds to flow into housing for poor. The scheme is expected to add 15 lakh houses to the housing stock during the Eleventh Plan.

Rural urban migration has often been considered the major factor for growth of slums in urban areas. United Nations has warned that rapid urbanization and migration would lead to tripling of slum population by 2050, hindering the attainment of the MDG target, noted above. One must however point out that the technological shift from cheap labour based modes of mass production to knowledge based system is likely to bring down the demand for migrant workers, particularly of unskilled labour force and decelerate urbanization. Given this emerging scenario, one would ask “Is indeed the scale of migration and urbanization very high and alarming?” The rates of urbanization have already declined in many parts of the world, much more than what can be attributed to decline in natural growth in population. While it is true that the share of natural growth in incremental urban population would decline even the rate of RU migration is likely to decelerate in future years. UNFPA (2007) most of the mega cities have grown at a rate much below what was projected by UN organizations. Migrants are often noted to be better off and relatively skilled than those left behind implying that the unskilled peasantry is finding it increasingly difficult to put a foothold in the urban centres in the present globalising environment. Migration to the large cities that have global linkages has become relatively more difficult as persons need access to information, market friendly skills and “some sort of bank roll”. The implications of the deceleration in the rates of migration and urbanization need to be analysed in the context of both sending and receiving regions.

7. The Challenges

The challenges of urbanisation in the State may be understood through different lenses - the spatial distribution of urban areas and their emerging demographic trends, the infrastructure shortfall on several fronts, the challenge of ensuring the basic welfare of the poor in urban areas, and the need for strengthening their governance, planning and administration.

Spatial distribution - During the last two decades, the size and economic role of Bangalore have both become disproportionately high within the state. This has created a self-fulfilling cycle by which even more new investment and migrants are attracted to the Bangalore Metropolitan Region. Even the second largest urban conglomeration (Hubli- Dharwad) is much smaller its population is only 1/6th of that of Bangalore. Any plan for the future therefore, has to redress this imbalance, but given the importance of Bangalore to the economy of the state, this should be done carefully, without sacrificing the interests of the capital.

Welfare of the poor - The migration of large numbers of people to cities has been accompanied by one unfortunate trend - the rate of urban poverty in Karnataka is now higher than that in rural areas. It is also, regrettably, higher than the urban poverty rate of several other states as well as the all-India average. Although only a small portion of the urban population in the state lives in slums, the monthly per-capita expenditure by poor families in Karnataka is lower than in many other large states. Therefore, it has become imperative to develop policies and programs by which the welfare of the urban poor is protected better. Of particular concern, in this regard, are the shortfalls in adequate housing for the poor, their sanitary conditions, and their opportunities to education and jobs. This challenge is made harder to overcome by the fact that the problems of the poor are now tackled by a number of different government departments acting independently, rather than a single body with responsibility for their welfare.

Infrastructure shortfall - The growth of urban areas has vastly outpaced the State's efforts to develop infrastructure to serve the growing needs of cities. There is now a substantial deficit of infrastructure in several key areas - roads and transport (both within cities and between important cities in the State), housing, drinking water supply, domestic sanitation, sewage treatment systems, solid waste collection and management, storm water drains, lakes in urban areas, and domestic energy. In all these cases, the gap between demand and supply is very large, affecting millions of families, with consequences for the quality of life in urban areas across many measures.

Resources – As the demand for infrastructure continues to grow, resources have to be mobilized to make new investments, and to adequately maintain the assets created. It is also important to ensure high standards in quality and design of construction.

Governance issues - The far-sighted and enabling provisions of the 74th constitutional Amendment have not been fully embraced in Karnataka. As a result, Urban Local Bodies suffer from two kinds of shortfalls - one, they do not have the necessary financial strength or autonomy that is necessary to develop their capacity for municipal administration, and must therefore rely on State-level funding for their various programs. Secondly, only a subset of the various responsibilities given to them under the Constitution has been transferred by the State, and citizens' participation in the governance of urban areas remains an unfulfilled promise (unlike rural areas, where panchayati raj institutions have greatly devolved power to local communities).

8. Conclusion

There are three main issues that require attention if health services for the poor are to be improved and made more accessible - while inadequate health facilities maybe partly responsible for the poor health status of slum dwellers the answer does not lie in simply providing more services. Although it is extremely important to invest in more services like reorienting and sensitising doctors/nurses, additional beds in government hospitals, well equipped dispensaries and maternity clinics near slums and settlements inhabited by the poorer sections; focus needs to be on accepting and understanding that although medical facilities for the urban poor are both inadequate and the poor have limited access, the poor can avail of the same in cities that are not available to them in the villages; and a demand for such services must be identified (for it already exists) and this demand must be fulfilled keeping in mind the felt needs of the poor for social transformation of weaker sections in India.

However, in trying to analyze the approaches and policies of the state towards the development of weaker sections in urban areas we can draw few conclusions. Firstly, evictions and demolitions have been seen to be by the state as one of the major solutions to the “problems” of slums. Secondly and simultaneously, the rights of slum dweller to shelter, basic amenities, etc. have also been marginally and occasionally addressed. These, however, are not linear policies but are overlapping all the while. On the positive side, most of the programs studied appear to favor cash grants and loans to in-kind subsidies. This is a big improvement from the days when most developing countries (and even some developed countries) had large and expensive public housing programs. Cash grants increase consumption efficiency because they are more likely than in-kind grants to be valued at the cost of the subsidy. However, the overall picture that emerges when these program are examined is not an optimistic one.

9. References:

- 1) Archana Prasad (2011), *Provisional Census Findings: Indicators of Distress or Prosperity? People's Democracy*, Vol. XXXV, No. 40, October 02, 2011.
- 2) Chandrasekhar (2005) 'Growth of Slums, Availability of Infrastructure and Demographic Outcomes in Slums: Evidence from India,' paper presented during the session on 'Urbanization in Developing Countries at the Population Association of America,' Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, USA.
- 3) High Level Committee on Financing Infrastructure (2012), *Report of the Sub-committee on Financing Urban Infrastructure in the 12th Plan*, Ministry of Urban Development, Government of India, New Delhi.
- 4) Government of Odisha (2012), *Scheme for Affordable Urban Housing in Odisha*, Housing and Urban Development Department, HUD-HU-POLICY-XH-82-2012, Bhubaneswar, Dated 31 August, 2012.
- 5) Manish Umbrajkar, (2012), *Urban population growth on steady path: Report*, TNN Jan 20, 2012.
- 6) Marja C Hoek-Smith and Douglas Diamond (2003) and Stephen K. Mayo (1986), 'World Bank Seminar on Housing Finance,' March 10 – 13, 2003, *Journal of Urban Economics*. PPS. 229-249.
- 7) Suchi Pande (2005), *Background note on health in urban slums in Delhi, Ensuring public accountability through community action 2005*, Institute of Social Studies Trust, New Delhi.
- 8) Swapna Banerjee-Guha, *Neoliberalising the 'Urban': New Geographies of Power and Injustice in Indian Cities*, *Economic and Political Weekly*, May 30- June 5, 2009.
- 9) Swati Ramanathan, 2007, *Ground Rules: Challenges to the Implementation of Security of Land Title in Urban India*, Urban Space Foundation, Bangalore.
- 10) UDPK (2009) *Urban Development Policy for Karnataka*, GOK, Bangalore.
- 11) UNFPA (2007): *State of World Population 2007: Unleashing the Potential of Urban growth*, New York.