

Urban Update

Volume V, Issue XI

MARCH 2020

**SPECIAL
EDITION**

Why is achieving SDGs important for cities?

Varying ideas, facades of cities

    **5th South Asian Cities Summit**
10 Years to SDGs

Enabling linkages between SDGs and city development to build better urban future
March 5-6, 2020 | Cidade de Goa | Goa, India



European Union



AILSG

KNOWLEDGE LAB FOR LOCAL GOVERNANCE



ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

No. 6, F-Block, Bandra Kurla Complex, TPS Road-12, Bandra-East, Mumbai-400051, Maharashtra
Tel.No.: +91-22-26571713, 26571714, 61805600, Fax: +91-22-26572115, Email: contact@aiilsg.org



Quality is just one of our strengths

AIILSG has begun skill development programmes in Rajasthan and Jharkhand. The institute with its 90 years of experience in the field of capacity building would impart training to youth living in rural areas of these two states to make them employable in various emerging sectors-

Apparel, Beauty & Wellness, Electronics, Healthcare, IT-ITEs, and Renewable Energy.

As per Mou signed, AIILSG will train 16,000 youngsters.

AIILSG IS COMMITTED TO BUILD EMPOWERED INDIA WITH SKILLED HUMAN WORKFORCE

For Details, email at delhi@aiilsg.org

UrbanUpdate

A monthly magazine published by the AILSG — a project funded by European Union's 'Equi-City' programme for India.

Ranjit Chavan
President-AIILSG

Rajiv Agarwal
Editor-In-Chief
Director General-AIILSG

Ashok Wankhade
Managing Editor

Abhishek Pandey
Editor

Ravi Ranjan Guru
Executive Editor

Kumar Dhananjay
Consulting Editor

Ashley Paul
Reporter

Shania James
Akshit Pushkarna
Editorial Assistants

Prateek Singh
Digital Marketing Associate

Meenakshi Rajput
Rajesh Singh
Senior Graphic Designers

Volume V - Issue XI

Printed and published by Ranjit Chavan on behalf of All India Institute of Local Self-Government.
Printed at Artz & Printz, 208, DSIDC Shed, Okhla Industrial Area Phase-I New Delhi-110020
Published at Sardar Patel Bhavan, 22-23, Institutional Area D-Block Pankha Road, Janakpuri, Delhi-110058

Note: Subscriptions are only invited from municipal corporations, government bodies, academic & research institutions, etc. working in the domain of urban development. We only charge courier and handling charges. We may fully wave-off the charges for municipalities and academic institutions upon receiving such request and approval from our management.

Despite careful selection of sources, no responsibility can be taken for accuracy of the contents. The magazine assumes no liability or responsibility of any kind in connection with the information thereof. The views expressed in the articles are the personal opinions of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the All India Institute of Local Self-Government. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part is strictly prohibited without written permission from the publisher.



Mail Box

Readers' comments, criticism and suggestions are welcome. Letters to the Editor can be sent by e-mail, or regular mail. They should include name, address, phone number(s), and e-mail address, if available. The subject of the communication should be clearly mentioned, and we reserve the right to edit for sense, style, and space.

Address

Urban Update (All India Institute of Local Self-Government)
Sardar Patel Bhavan, 22-23, Institutional Area, D Block
Pankha Road, Janakpuri, Delhi-110058

FOR SUBSCRIPTION AND ADVERTISING RELATED ASSISTANCE, CONTACT

Phone: 011 - 2852 1783/ 5473 (Extn. 37)
E-mail: contacturbanupdate@gmail.com



Join Urban Update Community Online to read our previous issues, regular posts and news updates.



urbanupdate.in



[urbanupdatemag](https://www.facebook.com/urbanupdatemag)



[urbanupdatemgzn](https://twitter.com/urbanupdatemgzn)



European Union

The project is funded by the European Union.



AIILSG

The project is implemented by the AIILSG.

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission.

DECADE OF ACTION



Rajiv Agarwal
Editor-In-Chief
dg@aailsg.org

A

ll India Institute of Local Self-Government (AAILSG) is pleased to host the fifth edition of the South Asian Cities (SAC) Summit on March 5th & 6th in Goa.

As in the past, this Summit will bring together government functionaries, local body officials and elected representatives, urban planners, and other stakeholders from about 35 countries who are working to build a just, equitable and sustainable future for cities around the globe. In some ways, this Summit has a sense of urgency around it. The theme of the Summit is ‘10 years to SDGs’ – conveying that we have just ten years left to achieve the SDGs, i.e., by the year 2030. While ten years may seem a long time in some contexts, one may have to look at it in terms of what the targets are, what has been achieved and what is yet to be achieved. The challenges are several, and, to many, may sound significant. However, experience tells us that human ingenuity and technological advancements together can help us leapfrog several steps in a process and bring us closer to our goals.

This will require among others, close coordination and cooperation between governments, academicians, civil society and citizens. Global forums such as the SAC Summit will forge partnerships among nations and citizens in our quest for timely realisation of the SDGs. While several challenges are country or region specific, such as poverty and its extent, education, the economy, and healthcare; a number of very significant challenges are common and call for concerted joint action by the global community acting in unison. Challenges such as climate change, economic disparity, and chronic epidemics are some. The current coronavirus outbreak, which has already claimed over 2000 lives, is a stark reminder of the vulnerability of humans to little known health dangers. It reminds us that despite all that has been achieved in science and healthcare, a lot remains to be done. It is also a pointer to the need for global collaboration and cooperation in addressing such issues which could strike mankind without warning.

Innovation and technology, notably Artificial Intelligence, Big Data, and IoT are likely to play a big role in our race towards meeting the SDGs. These could be the tools to provide transformational changes and breakthroughs in our journey, whether it be in the area of clean mobility, public healthcare, or environmental issues. Let us pledge to use these tools to their fullest potential.

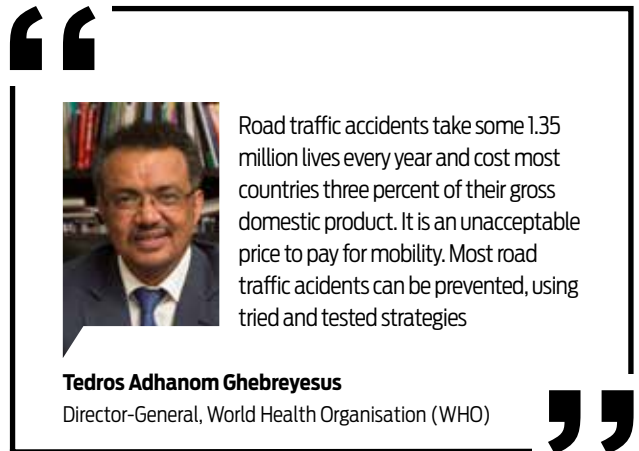
Cities will remain the focal point of the Summit. Here the challenges for many of the countries in the region could be common – housing, clean mobility and waste management, among others. In these areas several cities and countries have made notable progress. The experience of these could offer valuable learnings to the international community. One is confident that the Summit will be a platform for meaningful exchange of views and learnings to enable and encourage accelerated progress in our march towards a more just, safe, equitable and sustainable future for the world.

These 10 years to SDGs – let’s make this the decade of action. ■



The reality is that climate change will make it harder for many people to get the nutrition they need which will make them more susceptible to disease. The best thing we can do to help people in poor countries adapt to it is make sure they're healthy enough to survive it

Bill Gates
Co-founder, Microsoft



Road traffic accidents take some 1.35 million lives every year and cost most countries three percent of their gross domestic product. It is an unacceptable price to pay for mobility. Most road traffic accidents can be prevented, using tried and tested strategies

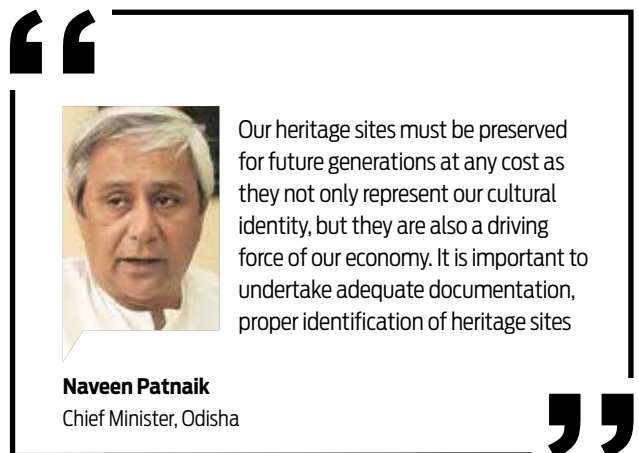
Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
Director-General, World Health Organisation (WHO)

PIN POINT



Environment needs to be made into a mass movement in which every individual is a contributor. We will hold meetings with various departments to come up with a long-term action plan on how we can create this movement and involve the people

Gopal Rai
Environment Minister, Government of Delhi



Our heritage sites must be preserved for future generations at any cost as they not only represent our cultural identity, but they are also a driving force of our economy. It is important to undertake adequate documentation, proper identification of heritage sites

Naveen Patnaik
Chief Minister, Odisha

BUZZ



Narendra Modi
Prime Minister, India
@PMOIndia

My Government firmly believes in the path of sustainable development. We are ensuring that development happens without harming the environment



Dr Pramod Sawant
Chief Minister, Government of Goa
@DrPramodPSawant

Micro, small, village, cottage and rural enterprises has emerged as a highly vibrant and dynamic sector of the Indian economy and plays a crucial role in providing employment opportunities at comparatively lower capital cost than large industries



European Commission
@EU_Commission

Better and safer mobility, thanks to interactions between cars and road infrastructures. We will support the development of smart systems to reduce traffic congestion and improve mobility



NITI Aayog
@NITIAayog

Through monitoring tools & community sensitization, Guna witnessed an increase in the number of children admitted to the Nutrition Rehabilitation Centre in January 2020 as compared to the previous month

Inside

Volume 5, Issue 11

March 2020

6 Pin Point
8 Equi-City

11 Newscan
46 Urban Agenda

LEADERSPEAK

24 Why is achieving SDGs important for cities?
Cities need urgent solutions to address poverty, climate crisis, sanitation, and other critical issues. AILSG understood this urgency and decided to invite all concerned stakeholders under one roof to draw a strategic plan with collaboration and knowledge sharing to achieve all the objectives under SDGs within the timeline in the next 10 years



COVER STORY

26 Varying ideas, facades of cities
Only 32 per cent people in India live in cities today. India's urban population will cross the half-way mark by 2045, in the next 25 years. If the cities of the future need to become sustainable and inclusive, the preparation has to start now

40 Healthy and free-flowing rivers are essential to meet the SDGs

42 The Road to 2030 Some SDG success stories from India

ARTICLES

28 India and Goal 11 of SDGs Sustainable cities & communities

30 Clean Energy: Biggest Challenge in Modern times

32 A battle that we cannot afford to lose

36 Cry out for housing and sanitation

38 How close are we to the SDGs



VELO-CITY

44 From a hamlet of pearl divers to the pearl of Middle East

ENCAPSULATING SOME ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE EQUI-CITY

The Equi-City Project, funded by EU (European Union), is being implemented by All India Institute of Local Self-Government (AIILSG) and the Nagpur Municipal Corporation (NMC). The main objective of this Project is to promote equity in delivery of municipal services and diversity in Local Authority Organizations in India. Detailed below are some of the highlights of the team's work in Nagpur

TEAM EQUI-CITY

Equi-City project had been conceived to promote inclusive, sustainable growth of Indian cities through a collaborative, multi-stakeholder approach using participatory governance between local authorities and stakeholders to ensure an equitable provision of municipal services, to promote diversity within municipalities and capacity development of local government organizations. The project aims to improve the skills of municipal employees through capacity building and also by promoting diversity within the local authorities. It addresses all actions required to mobilise resources, accountability, and knowledge sharing and best practices.

CITY DEVELOPMENT FORUM

One of the main objectives of the project was to engage stakeholders in finding collaborative solutions for the city through a common platform. Working in this direction, Equi-City organised the City Development Forum. Streamlining participatory forums like City Development Forum

and Intercity Forum is crucial as it provides a platform to citizens as well as stakeholders to become a part of the governance structure of the city. Utilising the already functioning CDF, the Nagpur Municipal Corporation organised a CDF Meeting on 2nd June, 2018 to discuss the Disaster Management Plan for Nagpur City. Feedback and suggestions from various stakeholders and CDF Members were taken into account. The action has helped Nagpur Municipal Corporation to mobilise resources in a participatory manner using an innovative City Development Forum (CDF) which comprised of various key stakeholders.

THE INTERCITY FORUM

An Intercity Forum has also been formed to promote coordinated development in the region around Nagpur. The Intercity Forum was first introduced under the Equi-City project on 27th October, 2018 at the Annual Mayor's Conclave in Nagpur. The conclave saw participation from mayors of almost 20 cities, along with several ward members and elected representatives from municipal corporations across the state of Maharashtra. The Equi-City team, in the presence of Nanda Jichkar, Mayor, Nagpur and Ranjit Chavan, President, AIILSG, gave a short presentation on the Intercity Forum and further

introduced its concept. The Intercity Forum is the premier participatory platform establishing coordination, communication and linkages between various cities, along with Nagpur. The forum also acts as an overall advisory forum to share best practices, knowledge and problem solving sounding board between and among local authorities for diversity and efficiency in provision of civic services. The learnings of the Intercity Forum will help develop efficient service delivery centric city governments and local authorities.

SERVICE LEVEL BENCHMARKS

In the earlier years of the project, a brief report was made on the topic "Service Level Benchmarks" to identify the regional, national and international standards and norms, methodologies, techniques and figures on the level of access to services. All relevant sectors



Sensitisation program in Nagpur



NMC officials in a meeting with the members of the City Development Forum

were covered in order to capture the citizen perception on service delivery as a key milestone towards equitable provision of services. The Citizen Report Card (CRC) and Community Score Card (CSC) for Municipal Rating System was developed by conducting the household survey and the Focus Group Discussion, the former being done quantitatively and the latter qualitatively.

Recognising the growing importance of improving efficiency in delivery of basic services in our cities, the Equi-City project has developed monitoring

and evaluation tools which will allow both stakeholders and local authorities to ensure transparent and accountable delivery of municipal services. Municipal Rating System of the services has been done on the basis of their performance among the different zones in Nagpur and data regarding their performance has been collected.

The information is generated through Citizen Feedback Survey by an onfield assessment of service delivery conducted in four zones of Nagpur in June 2018. The citizens are also empowered in the process and are encouraged to give their the feedback on the gaps in service delivery to demand for qualitative improvement in services. Further, the Equi-City project has a core element of capacity building wherein officials are sensitised and trained to become leaders and tackle specialised issues faced by the target cities to ensure equitable service delivery. The capacity building programme has been developed by engaging with the stakeholders through interactive participatory sessions, like the ones highlighted above, and strengthened by research. The elected representatives were sensitised on both organisational and citizen needs. The training programme equips the municipal officials and elected representatives to translate their learnings into action and pave way for

the equitable and efficient municipal services.

URBAN AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

Further, Equi-City project has envisaged sensitising 2,00,000 citizens and 50,000 urban poor under its objectives on the themes of water and sanitation. For accomplishing this objective, city wide campaigns were conducted by Equi-City team. A total of 37 Urban Awareness Campaigns were conducted on relevant themes at various locations in Nagpur in 2018 and 2019.

Under these campaigns, Equi-City team sensitised households in the slums and students from various schools and colleges by conducting workshops, distributing pamphlets and educating them around the designated location on the themes of Water & Sanitation, Cleanliness, Rejuvenation of Water Bodies and No Tobacco Spitting Campaign. Also, four focus group discussions in four divisions of Nagpur were conducted on similar themes under the exercise of developing Municipal Rating System.

The activities conducted towards the objectives of the Equi-City project provide useful insights into citizen's views and concerns, which will be valuable for the Municipal Corporation to undertake service improvements and reforms in the future. ■





Vijaya Rahatkar, National President of BJP Mahila Morcha, former mayor Aurangabad, visits AILSG Delhi Center to discuss new projects for the welfare of marginalized communities in Aurangabad



Elected representatives of Jammu visited a waste management facility in Indore as part of their integrated sensitization workshop



AILSG team meets Abhijeet Kumar, Mayor, Bharatpur Municipal Corporation for GIS Drone survey

Novel Coronavirus turns into an epidemic!

NEW DELHI: The recent outbreak of Coronavirus has claimed more than 2000 lives so far. Governments around the world have launched emergency response services to deal with the crisis. Thousands of people have died due to the disease outbreak which has its epicenter in Wuhan, the capital city of the Chinese province Hubei.

According to scientists, the disease was caused by a member of the coronavirus family. The virus may have originated in bats and then spread to humans via a snake or pangolin. Most of the people who were initially affected by the virus were noted to be active

As of February 26, 2,715 deaths have been confirmed due to the outbreak in China with 80,997 people being tested positive for the disease. Since the disease falls under the category of viral pneumonia, it cannot be treated using antibiotics

consumers of seafood. Once affected, the disease may cause pneumonia. Early symptoms of the disease include severe coughs, high fever and difficulty in breathing. The disease can ultimately lead to organ failure and if immediate medical attention is not dispensed, death. Since the disease falls under the category of viral pneumonia, it cannot be treated using antibiotics. Recovery from the disease depends strictly on the strength of the affected person's immune system. Notably, a majority of the people who died due to the covid-19 were already suffering from poor health.

As of February 26, 2,715 deaths have been confirmed due to the outbreak in China with 80,997 people being tested positive for the disease. However, over 12,000 people who have been tested positive have fully recovered from the disease. From China, the disease has spread to 29 other countries including the United States of America, Japan, France, Iran and United Kingdom. Japan has 844 confirmed cases of the disease out of which, 542 affected people are quarantined on the Diamond Princess cruise ship docked in Yokohama. The

decision to quarantine the ship was taken by the Government of Japan two days after it was confirmed that a passenger who disembarked from the cruise ship in Hong Kong had tested positive. Three confirmed cases of coronavirus were reported from Kerala, in India. However, according to government officials, all three were quarantined, treated and have now fully recovered from the disease. In the United Kingdom, there have been nine confirmed cases but no fatalities due to the disease. 4,501 people have been tested for the disease in UK and 4,492 have been confirmed negative. Deaths due to the disease have also been confirmed in Hong Kong, Taiwan, France, Iran and the Philippines.

Mortality rate in Hubei province is nearly 2 per cent. This is the highest mortality rate of the disease anywhere in the world. If we make a comparison, seasonal flu typically has a mortality rate below one per cent while SARS had a death rate of more than 10 per cent. Since there is no vaccine for the coronavirus yet, doctors says that the severity of the disease is still unclear. Doctors around the world are urging people to regularly wash hands and avoid contact with people suffering from symptoms of the disease, particularly if they reside in an area which has confirmed cases of the disease.

Coronavirus has also caused the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and the Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), both of which have killed more than 1,600 people, out of more than 10,000 people, who were tested positive. World Health Organisation (WHO) has said that the disease is not spreading in countries other than China as the total number of affected people in these countries is either remaining stagnant or reduced due to the strict quarantine measures by the governments. So far, a majority of the people affected by the disease outside of China are travelers.



Punjab gov to rejuvenate Buddha Nullah in a budget of ₹650 crores



Punjab state cabinet has approved the rejuvenation project for Buddha Nullah, a highly polluted water body passing through Ludhiana. The first phase of the project will be completed in a budget of ₹650 crores. Brahm Mohindra, Local Bodies Minister, Punjab Government, said that the project would be awarded by March 31, 2020 and is expected to clean out the polluted tributary of Sutlej by 2022. The National Green Tribunal (NGT) had noted that the high levels of pollution in the Buddha Nullah is a great threat to public health and the environment and had directed the state government to take adequate measures to ensure clean water in the tributary.

DTC to procure 400 low floor, AC buses by June

Kailash Gahlot, Transport Minister, Delhi government, held a meeting with officials of several agencies to discuss the implementation of a modernised transportation infrastructure and free travel facility for students. The meeting was conducted on February 18 and the newly reelected transport minister of Delhi pressed on improving the safety as well as infrastructure of public transport in the city. The meeting also deliberated upon the bus procurement process for improving the transport system in the national capital. Bus procurement is the biggest task at hand for the authorities in the strengthening of DTC.

49 per cent of all trips will be on green modes of transport by 2030

NEW DELHI: Green and sustainable transport like cycling will overtake car usage in some of the world's biggest cities by 2030, says a report published by Kantar, a United Kingdom based research organisation. In the report, Kantar claimed that journeys undertaken in motor vehicles will reduce by about 10 per cent over the next decade. Manchester will undergo the biggest change, followed by Moscow and Sao Paulo as 36.7 million urban residents change their transportation preferences.

Researchers from Kantar surveyed more than 20,000 people from 3 cities around the world. Some of the questions that were asked by the surveyors revolved around the current travel experiences and future modes of transport. In its report, Kantar noted that the rise of the sharing

economy, uptake of autonomous vehicles and an ageing global population will reduce the need for direct car ownership. This change will be compensated by a shift to greener modes of transportation like cycling and walking. By 2030, the report's authors predicted, 49 per cent of all trips undertaken within cities would be completed via these "greener" methods, while car trips would account for 46 per cent of all urban journeys — down from 51 per cent in 2020. Journeys made by cab services like Uber and Ola will make up the remaining five per cent.

The report also noted that cycling was on track to become the fastest-growing method of transport, with a predicted journey increase of 18 per cent between 2020 and 2030.

Nepal to learn sustainable urban development from India

NEW DELHI: In order to learn more about the participatory process for sustainable urban development and livelihood integration, 21 representatives from the 2015-earthquake-hit Nuwakot District of Nepal were on an exposure trip to India. The group includes mayors, chairpersons and vice-chairpersons from eight rural municipalities and an official from the Federation of Nepalese Journalists. The exposure-trip began on February 10 and lasted for five days. According to a statement released by the Embassy of India in Nepal, the trip is part of India's post-earthquake reconstruction efforts in Nepal in collaboration with the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). "To complement the Nepal's owner driven reconstruction approach, UNOPS is providing socio-technical facilitation to home owners to rebuild their resilient homes," the statement said. During the trip, the group visited the Central Building Research Institute (CBRI), Roorkee to observe the Shake Table Testing Facility. Along with this, the group also visited different laboratories in CBRI like the Structural Engineering Lab, Fire Lab, Technology Demonstration Lab and the Rural Park. In order to learn



the participatory process for sustainable urban development and livelihood integration, the group visited the Centre for Urban and Regional Excellence, New Delhi.

Post this, the delegation visited the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) and was given a presentation on post-earthquake conservation and restoration works.

COPENHILL: World's first urban mountaineering-cum-WTE plant

CopenHill, or AMAGER BAKKE IN DANISH, is a unique waste-to-energy plant located in Copenhagen, Denmark. The WTE plant is set up

in a 462, 848-square-foot area and is touted as the cleanest waste-to-energy plant of the world. The roof of the structure is converted

into a ski slope, making it an urban mountaineering spot. The structure is also the world's tallest climbing building.



Mohali MC ropes in students for waste segregation at source

In a bid to spread awareness about waste segregation in the city, the Mohali Municipal Corporation (MMC) will involve students for segregation of waste at the source. MMC house passed the resolution under which they will use students to spread awareness on waste segregation at schools and homes, amongst other places. Kulwant Singh, Mayor, Mohali, announced that students who will participate in the scheme would be given cash prizes and commendation certificates. The corporation will be constituting teams to identify students working actively and will also be hosting competitions centered around composting at home and segregation in schools.

ASI to restore Aurangzeb's coronation site



The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has identified a key Mughal monument in Delhi for restoration. The Sheesh Mahal, located in Delhi's Shalimar Bagh, is a 17th century monument and was the coronation site of Aurangzeb in 1658. ASI has estimated that a fund of ₹2-5 crores could be used in the project. Restoration would be carried out by a mini-circle team of ASI Delhi and will include a six-month detailed brick work. ASI had also undertaken conservation work of the monument back in 2006 but the project was abandoned as Delhi High Court retracted the conservation body due to poor maintenance of the structure.

Dal Lake to be declared as eco-sensitive zone

SRINAGAR: A Committee of Experts (CoE) on Dal and Nageen lakes submitted a proposal to the Housing and Urban Development Department (HUDD), Government of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) to declare the Dal Lake and its surrounding areas as eco-sensitive zones (ESZ). According to an assessment by the Dredging Corporation of India (DCI) in 2017, the world-famous Dal Lake had shrunken to less than half of its original size, from 22 square kilometres to about 10 square kilometres, with its capacity down to 40 per cent due to pollution and encroachment. The assessment also revealed that discharge of untreated sewage and solid waste, encroachments of water channels and clogging has diminished the circulation and inflows

into the lake. This has led to an extensive growth of weed water hyacinth which has now become a health hazard. It was also found that the depth of the lake had reduced at many places due to siltation and that continuing night soil discharge from houseboats causes extreme pollution in the water body. The CoE was set up by the Government of J&K in November last year owing to the shrinking of the river due to pollution and illegal encroachment and consists of 10 members. The CoE comprises of Dr Nivedita P, former Additional Chief Secretary, Government of Kerala; Dr Mangu Singh, Managing Director, Delhi Metro Rail Corporation Ltd (DMRC); Advocate M C Mehta and Dr E Sreedharan, environmentalist, consultant and former Managing Director, DMRC, besides top officials from the J&K administration. The recommendations of the committee will be sent to the Central Government by February 29, 2020.

The J&K administration had earlier also sought the help of the Indian Navy and other experts to tackle the issues faced by the Dal Lake.



India ranked 77th on Sustainability Index; 131st on Flourishing Index

GENEVA: A report, compiled by more than 40 child and adolescent health experts from various countries and commissioned by the World Health Organisation (WHO), UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and The Lancet medical journal, ranked India 77th on the sustainability index and 131st on the Flourishing Index, which ranked the survivability of children in a nation. The index ranked countries on the basis of the per capita carbon emissions and the ability of children to lead healthy lives in the country. A total of 180 countries were assessed in the report. The Sustainability Index ranks nation on the amount of carbon emissions they generated over the 2030 target. This allowed the surveyors to develop a convenient and available proxy for a country's contribution to sustainability in future. Regarding the set emission levels to be achieved by 2030, only a handful of countries are doing enough. These countries include Albania, Armenia, Grenada, Jordan, Moldova, Sri Lanka, Tunisia, Uruguay and Vietnam.

For the Thriving Index, the researchers analysed domains like educational achievement, growth and nutrition, reproductive freedom, and protection from violence. Another interesting observation that the report made was the increase in the number of obese children and adolescents, which went up from 11 million in 1975 to 124 million in 2016 - an 11-fold increase. The lowest emitters are Burundi, Chad and Somalia. The report commented that the survival of the world depends upon children being able to flourish, but no country is doing enough to give them a sustainable future.

High air pollution trims global GDP sharply

Air pollution does not only harm your physical health but also dents your finances, a report released by a prominent NGO suggests. The report, which analysed the health effects of three major pollutants and their rehabilitary costs, presents a disturbing image and brings forth the urgency which is required to deal with the pollution problem at a global level

SEOUL: According to a report released by Greenpeace Southeast Asia and Center for Research on Energy and Clean Air, India bears a total economic loss of \$150 billion per year due to the high levels of air pollution in the country. The report estimates that approximately 3.3 per cent of the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP), amounting to \$2.9 trillion per year,

are lost to the menace globally. The report uses a global dataset to deduce an accurate concentration of the three main pollutants analysed, that are PM 2.5, ozone and nitrogen dioxide, and then calculated health and cost impacts for 2018. The US and China bear the highest losses per year, amounting to \$900 billion and \$600 billion. “Every year, air pollution from fossil fuels

takes millions of lives, increases our risk of stroke, lung cancer and asthma, and costs us trillions of dollars,” said Minwoo Son, clean air campaigner at Greenpeace East Asia. “But this is a problem that we know how to solve, by transitioning to renewable energy sources, phasing out diesel and petrol cars, and building public transport,” she added. The financial losses come out of dealing with the physical damages that the polluted air causes, often resulting respiratory and non-communicable diseases. The economic valuation was also effected due to the number of premature deaths of young people that happens due to air pollution, the report said. Burning of fossil fuels creates major health issues for a large chunk of the population. This leads to approximately 4.5 million premature deaths around the world annually, with 40,000 children dying before their fifth birthday due to the exposure to fine-dust particles known as PM 2.5. The biggest health damage, and thus the financial impact, is dealt by PM 2.5, overtaking other pollutants such as ozone and nitrogen dioxide. The health impact leads to work absences and thus low efficiency of the population.

The year 2019 saw about 91 per cent of the world’s population living in places with pollution higher than the guidelines set by the World Health Organization. Greenpeace commented that phasing out the dependence on the non-renewable energy resources like coal, oil etc. is essential to avoid the worst effects of the ongoing climate change. Without replacing non-renewable with renewable energy, the global temperatures could go up by 2 degree Celsius by 2050. This will further cut the GDP by 2.5-7.5 per cent, a report by Oxford Economics said.



Regulate water pollution levels or pay ₹10 lakhs monthly: CPCC to CMC

The Chandigarh Pollution Control Committee (CPCC) has directed the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation (CMC) to regulate pollutants in the water discharged from the sewage treatment plants (STPs) operating within the city. Failure to comply with the direction would attract an environmental compensation of ₹10 lakhs every month from April 1. The decision comes after the CPCC reported that the Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) levels of several STPs exceeded the limit of 30 milligrams per liter (mg/l) exponentially. The report further said that despite previous directions from both the National Green Tribunal (NGT) and CPCC, STPs in Chandigarh fail to meet norms.

Noida to develop road infra to decongest roads



Noida authorities have initiated construction of a flyover at Parthala Chowk and a skywalk between Botanical Garden Metro station and Noida Sector-18. Along with the development of the new infrastructure, the city authorities are also planning to restart work on four underpasses on the Noida-Greater Noida Expressway. A spokesperson of the authority said the steps will possibly allow the authority to decongest roads. The decisions were taken after the city authority reviewed the ongoing and upcoming projects under Ritu Maheshwari, CEO, Noida Authority.

'Compare value of green cover with development'

NEW DELHI: While hearing a matter regarding the cutting of trees for construction of a foot bridge in West Bengal, the Supreme Court observed that if deforestation is not kept in check, it could take a huge toll on our world. The observation was made by SA Bobde, Chief Justice of India (CJI). The Government of West Bengal, the defendant in the case, said that around 800 people die every year near the railways lines where the project was planned. The state government stated that this was mainly due to the absence of a proper crossing point. The Supreme Court, while hearing the case, had directed the setting up of a separate

committee to suggest a sustainable idea which would ensure all interests are taken care of. The bench, also comprising Justices B R Gavai and Surya Kant, noted that such conflicts keep cropping up from time to time. While saying this, the CJI referred to a metro shed project and the Bombay coastal road project in this regard while asking if the value of green cover should not also be factored in while planning a project.

The bench also expressed concern over the depletion of water bodies due to unscientific development. While explaining this, he referred to three lakes in Nagpur which had been contaminated due to blocking of channels of the lake with concrete.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan, who was representing the NGO which filed the case, said that the environment may take a turn for the worst if deforestation and environmental degradation was not kept in check.



₹3,100 crore allocated for Phase II of Chennai Metro Rail project

CHENNAI: The Government of Tamil Nadu has allotted ₹3,100 crore in its Budget 2020-21 for the construction of the second phase of the Chennai Metro Rail project. The phase spans across 11839 kilometres. The State government has also asked the Central government to approve funding for the project and provide 50 per cent equity share capital in line with Phase I of the Chennai Metro Rail project.

The State government had, in the Budget 2019-20, allocated ₹2,681 crore for Phase II of the project as share capital and debt. The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is also providing funds of ₹20,196 crore for the construction of the 52.01-kilometre-long stretch from Madhavaram to Sholiganallur and from Madhavaram to Chennai Mofussil Bus Terminal (CMBT). Apart from this, the Government of Tamil Nadu has also signed loan agreements with international financial institutions like the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the New Development Bank. Funds from these loans will be utilised for the construction of the remaining stretches of Phase II of the Chennai Metro Rail project from CMBT to Sholinganallur, Sholinganallur to SIPCOT, Siruseri and from the Light House to Poonamallee bypass. O Panneerselvam, Deputy Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, said Chennai now has a fully functional metro rail system but in order to derive the benefits of a mass transit system, it is essential that the reach of these modes of public transport is extended. He said that because of this reason, the government accords high priority to the speedy construction of three metro rail corridors, identified in Phase II of the project.



SUBSCRIBE TO UrbanUpdate

A magazine dedicated to Urban
Infrastructure, Governance & Sustainability

For 3 Years
(36 Issues)
Rs 2520

For 2 Years
(24 Issues)
Rs 1920

For 1 Year
(12 Issues)
Rs 1080

Yes, I want to subscribe to Urban Update

Tick	Year	Monthly Courier & Handling Charges	Issue/Year	Charges/Annum	You pay	Discount
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	100	12	1200	1080	10%
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	100	24	2400	1920	20%
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	100	36	3600	2520	30%

Please fill this form in CAPITAL LETTERS

Name

Organisation

Designation Mobile

Address

City Pin Code State

E-mail

Cheque/DD/MO No Drawn on (specify bank)

For Rupees Dated

In favour of 'ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT' is enclosed.

Mail this form along with your Cheque/DD to the following address
All India Institute of Local Self-Government
Sardar Patel Bhavan, 22-23, Institutional Area, D Block, Pankha Road, Janakpuri, Delhi-110058

You can pay Subscription charges through National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT). Details for NEFT transfer are:

Axis Bank Limited
A/C Name: All India Institute of Local Self-Government
A/C No: 207010100182768
IFSC: UTIB0000207

Please e-mail your details (Name, Address, duration of subscription, transaction no.) to contacturbanupdate@gmail.com for initiating subscription after the NEFT transfer.

For any query, please contact our Subscription Department
Phone No.: 011-2852 1783 / 5473 (Extn. 37)
Or e-mail at contacturbanupdate@gmail.com

Terms and Conditions

• Subscriptions are only invited from municipal corporations, government bodies, academic & research institutions, etc. working in the domain of urban development. We only charge courier and handling charges. We may fully wave-off the charges for municipalities and academic institutions upon receiving such request and approval from our management. • Allow one week for processing of your subscription • All disputes shall be subject to Delhi jurisdiction only

DDA will not be able to form a separate Yamuna monitoring committee

Delhi Development Authority (DDA) has informed the National Green Tribunal (NGT) that it won't be able to set up a water front management authority to clean the river Yamuna. The setting up of the authority is not possible as it requires legislative provision, the authority said. The authority was requested to set up a separate Yamuna cleaning authority under it by the Yamuna Monitoring Committee (YMC). The NGT, however, has reserved its order on the issue after going through DDA's report.

Punjab intensifies its efforts to curb stubble burning



To devise plausible solutions for the paddy burning issue in Punjab, a committee, led by Justice Mehtab Singh Gill, met with various farmer unions at Kisan Bhawan in Chandigarh on February 18. It was decided that farmer unions would be sending proposals to put forth their solutions in ending the problem in an eco-friendly manner. With the inclusion of the unions, a more permanent solution for the issue is sought. In addition to this, KS Pannu, Agriculture Secretary, Punjab has said that the government has distributed over 51,000 agricultural machines to Punjabi farmers with subsidy components of ₹489 crore during the previous two paddy seasons.

TMF launches CATCH challenge to improve Kuala Lumpur City Infra



KUALA LUMPUR: In a bid to better develop the city of Kuala Lumpur, the Toyota Mobility Foundation, in partnership with Malaysia Digital Economy Corporate (MDEC), has launched the City Architecture for Tomorrow Challenge (CATCH). The region's first global challenge will bring forth innovators from around the world to present solutions that can leverage data and technology in such way that they can improve the future city infrastructure of Kuala Lumpur. This challenge is designed in such a way that it ultimately raises the efficiency of urban planning in the city and keeps mobility as the focal point for future development. Start-ups, academic and research institutions, corporates, or even the general public can participate in the eight-month challenge via registering on the competition's official website.

Several partners from the private and public sectors like Kuala Lumpur City Hall, the Royal Malaysia Police, Land Public Transport Agency (APAC), Grab, MapIT MSC, MRT Corp and Prasarana Malaysia have agreed to share valuable data points to provide technical advices to the participants.

The participants would be granted a total of US\$1.5 million along each step of the competition. The finalists of the competition would be required to develop their Minimum Viable Product (MVP) concept and incubation programmer, which would then be trial runned in the city between the months of June and September. Following the trial period, results would be announced by the month of September and the winner would be awarded US\$500,000 to scale up their solution in Kuala Lumpur.

Patna sewage treatment system to be revamped

PATNA: Seeing that the growing population of Patna is increasingly contributing to the deteriorating condition of the River Ganga, the authorities are revamping the sewage treatment process of the city. The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), which comes under the Namami Gange programme, will be developing multiple new sewage treatment plants (STPs) along with upgrading the existing sewage treatment plants of the city. The sewage lines of the capital city of Bihar, which are reportedly choked and allow untreated water to flow in Ganga, would also be upgraded under the revamp. The NMCG has approved a total of 11 projects worth over ₹3500 crores.

With this project, the authorities expect to significantly reduce the sewage flowing in the holy river. The project would involve the installation of 1,140 km of sewage lines across the city. Further, the city has been divided into 6 zones and STPs would be installed in each zone. With the installation of the new treatment plants, the sewage treatment capacity of the city will get augmented to 320 million liters per day (MLD). STPs located in Beur and Karmalichak will now be able to treat 80 MLD combined.

Sewage infrastructure projects for 18 towns of Bihar have been approved in recent times. These projects combined will cost over ₹5000 crores. The present sewage treatment capacity of the towns set besides the river is only 64 MLD. This number is now being amplified almost 10 times to 643 MLD through the Namami Gange projects.

Jeff Bezos to contribute US\$10 billion to fight climate change

NEW YORK: Jeff Bezos, CEO of Amazon and the richest man of the world, has donated \$10 billion to a new fund which is combating the effects of climate change across the world. The Bezos Earth Fund would be working towards providing financial support to scientists, activists, NGOs etc. working in the field and promising possibilities, “help preserve and protect the natural world.”

The business tycoon, in his announcement on February 18, expressed that the threat of climate change is the biggest issue the world is facing currently. He further added that he wishes to work with people both to amplify the effect of the current climate mitigating technologies and explore new methodologies that can create an impact on the climate change the planet faces as of now. Rather than make investments that the business guru might profit from, the fund would allocate grant money to projects, The New York Times said, quoting unnamed sources familiar with the initiative. The Bezos Earth foundation, which has been described as the billionaire’s biggest philanthropic commitment till date, will begin issuance of funds by the latter part of the year. The New York Times has estimated that even if Bezos spent the full US\$10 billion immediately, he would still be the world’s richest person. Amazon has been criticised in the past for allegedly generating large amounts of waste from the material that it uses for packaging doorstep deliveries, along with the greenhouse gas emissions released from its vast number of delivery vehicles. Since then, the company has pledged to achieve climate neutrality by the year 2040. The first step in the direction was the procurement of 1 lakh electric delivery trucks.



Adulterating groundwater in UP will now entail heavy fines

LUCKNOW: In a bid to maintain the depleting water table, a cabinet meeting of the Uttar Pradesh Government has passed the draft of Groundwater Act, 2020. The new act makes the installation of submersible pumps compulsory. The installation of rainwater harvesting systems will now be mandatory for all government, college and private school buildings of Uttar Pradesh.

Sidharth Nath Singh, Minister and spokesperson, Uttar Pradesh government also said that people living in buildings covering more than 300 sq meters area in urban areas will also have to install submersible pumps and rainwater harvesting system. Committees will be formed from gram panchayat level to state level to ensure the implementation of the new act, Singh added. Companies

who are already using boring systems will have to register with the aforementioned committees and provide information to the government within one year. Further, building plans of government and private buildings won’t be passed without adequate provisions of rainwater harvesting. Charges won’t be applicable for domestic and farming use of the submersible pumps, and e-registration facility will be made available. A provision of penalty for adulterating groundwater has also been approved by the government. For first time offense, a penalty of ₹2-5 lakh may be levied along with imprisonment of up to one year. For repeat offense, the jail time will increase to 2-5 years along with the same financial penalty. Third violation would attract a penalty of ₹10-20 lakh along with 5-7 years in jail.

MNRE to build two ‘mega renewable energy parks’



Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) is planning to build two ‘ultra mega renewable energy parks’ in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan and Khavada, Gujarat. According to developers, the proposed parks would be able to generate 25 GW capacity. These power plants fall under the Indian Government’s Solar Park Scheme. Various public sector undertakings (PSUs) including the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) and the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) have also proposed the construction of similar renewable energy parks in multiple states with capacities as high as 42 GW.

PMPML encourages students to use bus for commuting

To boost the daily ridership of the bus service, the Pune Mahanagar Parivahan Mahamandal Limited (PMPML) will be launching a new student bus pass which is expected to encourage the students of the city to commute more on the city buses. The monthly cost of the pass is set at ₹750. PMPML has also included several new air conditioned electric buses in their fleet. The bus corporation has also included special women buses called Tejaswini in their fleet to improve security. PMPML will also soon be installing information boards about bus routes and concessions in schools and colleges in Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad.

Maharashtra will end single use plastic by May 1

Aaditya Thackeray, Environment and Tourism Minister, Maharashtra Government held a meeting with and directed the authorities to stop single use plastic. In a meeting held by the minister with various high level officials of the Environment Department and Maharashtra Pollution Control Board, Thackeray asked all municipal corporations and councils of the state to develop plans in this direction and submit them for future deliberations, which are to be held in the month of March. Based on the outcome of the meeting in March, plans would be made to make the state single use plastic free. He also requested the meeting to envision the ban as a mass movement by involving social sectors such as schools, colleges, clubs and NGOs in it.

DPCC to present fresh report on illegal e-waste plants before NGT

The Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) and Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board (UPPCB) are to submit a fresh report to the National Green Tribunal (NGT) regarding the 5,000 illegal e-waste processing units operational in Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR). The report, which has to be filled against a plea before the tribunal, needs to be submitted before April 23 by the DPCC in coordination with District Magistrates of East and North East Delhi, UPPCB and Ghaziabad District. The green bench's order came after findings from a study carried out by Toxics Link, an environmental NGO in Delhi, showed that 5,000 illegal e-waste processing units are operating in and around Delhi.

India can generate 280 GW solar energy from its reservoir surface

NEW DELHI: 'Floating Solar Photovoltaic (FSPV): A Third Pillar to Solar PV Sector?', a report published by The Energy Research Institute (TERI), has marked that India's reservoir, with a total surface area of about 18,000 square kilometers, has a potential to generate 280 GW of solar energy by employing floating solar photovoltaic technology. The report was published by the Delhi based institute as part of Energy Transmission Commission (ETC), which works as a research platform. The report was published during the World Sustainable Development Summit held in India Habitat Center recently. The finding can help India better plan strategies that can help the country achieve its overall capacity addition in the solar power sector. The report calculates the potential for floating solar photovoltaics by using 30 per cent of the water surface area of the medium and large reservoirs. It also provides a state wise divide for the solar potential, which is available online. Of the various states Maharashtra has the highest floating solar potential of all the states. The state can generate 57,891 MW of electricity from its 3,173 sq km water surface.

The report further estimates that global annual capacity can be augmented by 4.6 GWn by the year 2022 by properly implementing floating solar photovoltaic technology. Currently, China is the leading international market followed by Japan and South Korea for floating solar.

India championing climate action: Modi

GANDHINAGAR: Narendra Modi, Prime Minister, Government of India, addressed the inaugural ceremony of the 13th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS COP13) held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. In his address, which was delivered via video-conference, the leader announced that India is looking forward to the launch of its Marine Turtle Policy and Marine Stranding Management Policy. This policy will effectively reduce the damage dealt by micro-plastics, the Prime Minister said. Modi asserted that India is one of the few countries whose actions are in accordance with the Paris Agreement goal which is centered around minimising the global temperature rise. He attributed

this to the country's rich biological diversity and recent efforts towards conservation of ecology.

On India's efforts in fighting climate change, Modi said, "India has been championing climate action based on the values of conservation, sustainable lifestyle and green development model. The range of our initiatives include ambitious target of 450 MW in renewable energy, push towards electric vehicles, smart cities, conservation of water, etc... India is one of the few countries whose actions are compliant with the Paris Agreement goal of keeping rise in temperature to below 2 degrees Celsius."

The convention aims to deduce policies for better conservation of migratory species and is hosted by India for the first time. Around 3,250 people have registered for the event. Prakash Javadekar, Union Minister of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEF&CC), Babul Supriyo, Vijay Rupani, Chief Minister, Gujarat, and Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of the Convention were among those present.



Scientists develop device that can generate electricity from thin air

AMHERST: A new device that can generate electricity from air has been developed by a group of scientists based out of University of Massachusetts Amherst in the United States of America. The “Air-gen” or air-powered generator device synthesizes natural protein from the moisture present in air to generate electricity. The findings of their research, which has been published in the journal Nature, can contribute significantly to the future of renewable energy, climate change and medicine. The device uses electrically conductive protein to nanowires produced by the microbe Geobacter to generate power.

The power generated by the device is non-polluting, renewable and comparatively cheaper than the conventional electricity generating sources. Another positive of the device is that it can operate even in atmospheres where humidity is extremely low. It can operate indoors, too and does not require sunlight, wind etc. to operate. Jun Yao, electrical engineer behind the development of the device, said, ““We are literally making electricity out of thin air. The Air-gen generates clean energy 24/7.” The device is constructed by using a film at the bottom, which rests on top of an electrode. Another smaller electrode that covers only part of the nanowire film sits on top.

This thin film adsorbs water vapor from the atmosphere and a combination of the electrical conductivity and surface chemistry of the protein nanowires, coupled with the fine pores between the nanowires, generates an electrical current between the two electrodes.

SBM II aims to make all states ODF+

NEW DELHI: The Central Government, on February 19, has given the nod to the second phase of Swachh Bharat Mission (Rural). The project, which is the government’s flagship project to promote sanitation and waste management across the nation, has been allocated an estimated budget of ₹52, 497 crores, the Jal Shakti Ministry said. The mission is to be implemented between 2020-21 and 2024-25. The primary goal of the second phase of the SBM will focus on achieving a pan- India ODF+ status, which includes ensuring sustainability of ODF achieved in the first phase of the mission and improve the solid and liquid waste management system of India, the ministry said in a statement. The ODF+ program will be incorporate with Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and complement the Jal Jeevan Mission. Centre and States will be sharing the funds in the ratio of 90:10 for North-Eastern States, Himalayan States, the Union Territory of J&K and 60:40 for the rest of the States.



The Centre would be solely responsible to implement the mission in the rest of the Union Territories. Along with this a proposal by the 15th Finance Commission has designated a fund of Rs 30,375 crores for rural water supply and sanitation. This will be implemented by rural local bodies for the upcoming financial year.

Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS) under the ministry has, however, requested each state to assure that each household in rural India has toilet access before going forward with the ODF+ campaign, the statement read. Identifying such households would reinforce the idea behind the Swachh Bharat Mission and ensure that no person is left behind.

Cleanliness drive in Baddi removes 203 tonnes garbage from the streets



The local authorities of Baddi, a town situated in Himachal Pradesh, launched a cleanliness drive on February 19. The drive was able to collect 203 tonnes of garbage littered across the town. Paramjeet Singh, MLA, Baddi, inaugurated the one-day drive which was organised by officials of various departments including the Himachal Pradesh State Pollution Control Board (HPSPCB) and the Municipal Committee of Baddi. 148 volunteers and 13 industrial unites participated in the event which used seven JCB machines, 12 tractor-trailers and four tippers to dispose of waste collected from around the town.

India needs \$2.64 trillion to meet SDGs by 2030

‘Opportunity 2030’, a report, released by Standard Chartered SDG Investment Map, points out that India, in order to meet the UN’s sustainable development goals (SDGs), needs an investment of \$2.64 trillion. Out of the total \$2,633.9 billion, \$1,558.8 billion investment is needed for clean energy, \$505.5 billion for transport infrastructure, \$377.4 billion for digital access and \$192.2 billion for clean water and sanitation. The report also mentions that India needs to offer an investment opportunity of over \$1.12 trillion by 2030 to the private sector.

Cities of Opportunities

The theme of the Tenth Session of the World Urban Forum was 'Cities of Opportunities: Connecting Culture and Innovation'. This edition of the Forum focused on harnessing culture and innovation as drivers of sustainable urban development. Over 15000 participants from more than 150 countries participated in one-week event

Abhishek Pandey
Editor

ABU DHABI: Maimunah Mohd Sharif, undersecretary-general and executive director of UN Habitat; Ashraf Ghani, President of Afghanistan; Frank Bainimarama, Prime Minister of Fiji; Falah Mohamed Al Ahbabi,

Chairman of the UAE, Department of Municipalities and Transport; Sheikh Theyab bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, member of the Abu Dhabi Executive Council and chairman of the Abu Dhabi Crown Prince's Court; Ernesto Ottone R, UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Culture along with other dignitaries inaugurated the

10th Edition of World Mayor Forum on February 8, 2020 at Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre in Abu Dhabi.

UN chief António Guterres in his video message to delegates said that cities and towns were crucial to deliver sustainable development across the globe during the next decade. He noted that urbanisation is one of the megatrends of our times and steering it well will help address prominent global challenges such as climate change. "As we embark on a Decade of Action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals, the world's cities, towns and communities will be at the heart of this work", said the UN chief.



As we embark on a Decade of Action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals, the world's cities, towns and communities will be at the heart of this work. Urbanisation is one of the megatrends of our times and if we are able to steer it well, we can address prominent global challenges such as climate change

António Guterres, UN Chief

Maimunah Mohd Sharif said sustainable cities is the way forward. “We need urban planners, architects and other experts to cooperate with policymakers and steer urban sustainable development,” said Sharif, adding that nations need to use their diverse cultures to include everyone in developing modern and sustainable cities. “Involving everyone, including women and the youth, in the culture of modernizing our cities is important. By interweaving culture and innovations, we can make our cities sustainable, safe, clean and a better place to live in.”

Mohamed Al Khadar Al Ahmed, Abu Dhabi Department of Municipal Affairs and Transport, welcomed participants to Abu Dhabi, opened the Forum and encouraged participants to engage in “masterpiecing” through an exchange of views and experiences. Ottone R stated “Culture is the transversal bridge

that binds three key dimensions of any effective urban development: People, Places, and Policies.”

Falah Al Ahbabi said: “It is a great honour to open this event today with Sheikh Theyab bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. This event is important for our nation, as it coincides with this year's theme, ‘2020: Towards the next 50’, involving UAE citizens and residents to shape life in the country for the next 50 years. It also comes ahead of the Golden Jubilee celebrations of 2021.

“The World Urban Forum has a strong link to the future growth of the UAE as it will lay the foundations for new collaborations with the voice of Arab urbanism being one of the sources of inspiration,” he added.

“Urgent, systematic and global action is required”, said President Ghani. “We have the tools and repertoire of techniques to solve the problem”, he added, noting that the world needed a State-level change of culture, as well as a fresh approach to the culture of global organisations.

Bainimarama said the Forum offered an opportunity to discuss the role of cities in averting crises by making urban living synonymous with sustainability. He said living standards in cities had grown remarkably, but that progress has come at the cost of a warming world. “The old model of development is untenable; if we continue to urbanise on carbon-intensive industries, the world's cities will crumble into hotbeds of inequality and extreme vulnerability”, he warned

The opening ceremony of WUF10 featured Wonho Chung, comedian and TV star, showcasing Abu Dhabi's most iconic landmarks, alongside a series of cultural shows including, a live orchestra and traditional Emirati performance.

Following the Opening Session, delegates attended the various assemblies taking place concurrently in the Forum. The importance of working with all levels of government was emphasised at the World Assembly on Local and Regional Governments.

Thembisile Nkadimeng, Mayor of

Polokwane, and also the President of the South African Local Government Association referred to the WUF10 theme, Cities of Opportunities Connecting Culture and Creativity, by saying “culture plays an important part in influencing creativity around the world and contributes to inclusive and sustainable development...Local and regional authorities are well placed. Johannesburg has used culture as a key for reversing urban decay.”

‘Youth have a huge role’

The Youth Assembly heard from Ms. Joyce Msuya, Deputy Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), who said: “Youth have a huge role in driving political will. It is time for us to trust the youth. They are ready to listen, link, learn and lead.”

Isaac Muasa, a Young Kenyan community leader told the Youth Assembly that the biggest challenge was unemployment and lack of opportunities.

Juan Ramón Lazcano de la Concha, Vice Mayor of the City of Santa Cruz de Tenerife, in the Canary Islands, Spain, said flexibility would be needed going forward: “We need to generate the ability to resist, change, reform and adapt to everything ahead. There will be new jobs, relationships and ways of inhabiting the planet and these will be future challenges,” he stated.

All India Institute of Local Self-Government (AIILSG) also had a side event under ‘Voices from Cities’. The event was titled ‘Global Launch of Circular Cities’ and was organised in collaboration with UCLG-ASPAC and NIUA.

The 10th session of the World Urban Forum concluded with the adoption of the ‘Abu Dhabi Declared Actions’, which acknowledged that “culture is an integral part of the solution to the challenges of urbanization and achieving the New Urban Agenda”, while “culture is a core component of local identity including heritage, creativity and diversity and urbanisation needs to be planned, designed and managed to enhance this.”

All India Institute of Local Self-Government is hosting the 5th South Asian Cities Summit in the coastal state of Goa. Goa has been chosen very judiciously. We have had earlier editions of the Summit in the national capital Delhi to highlight the emerging urban issues at Asia level. But this time, we have chosen Goa to highlight the issues of coastal cities, climate change; and keep shifting the venue to cover different parts of India and South Asia. The state has been a dream destination for Indian and foreign tourists alike. It is also known as “Rome of East” or “Pearl of the Orient”. Goa has the amalgam of Indian and Portuguese culture because it had been a Portuguese colony till 1961. It has a rich heritage and is famous for its culture, cuisines, cartoons, cashew, and fun-filled nightlife.

Gradually, the city-state has grown considerably in size and population over the years. The city is attracting many outsiders to come and settle here because of calm and serene environment or say, comfortable urban lifestyle in a natural setting. Despite this, with increasing urban population and more inflow of floating population, the city is also glaring at similar urban challenges like any other city. Goa, being a coastal city-state, will also need to address the issues emanating from the climate change such as sea-level rise.

This year the theme of the Summit is ‘10 Years to SDGs’. Our objective is to strategise our time-bound commitments to achieve the desired results. I am very hopeful that we would come out with a concrete plan of action.

Many people have asked why has this theme been chosen? What is the relevance? What is the urgency? Are these goals relevant for every city or just

WHY IS ACHIEVING SDGs IMPORTANT FOR CITIES?

Cities need urgent solutions to address poverty, climate crisis, sanitation, and other critical issues. ALLSG understood this urgency and decided to invite all concerned stakeholders under one roof to draw a strategic plan with collaboration and knowledge sharing to achieve all the objectives under SDGs within the timeline in the next 10 years

the poorest ones? The answer is simple. This Summit has been designed to bring together all urban stakeholders, irrespective of their work and experience in a big or small city, to sit together and chart out their problems and find out solutions collectively. This summit is going to help every city in the region and beyond.

The Summit is a distinctive opportunity to deliberate on techniques, solutions and innovative means to reduce the burden of cities and make them lighthouses by optimizing the usage of natural and existing urban infrastructure resources. This Summit is also the right platform to discuss the timeline of urban action plans and set a strict deadline for each target for cities. National governments have set their targets and timeline. Now, each city has to come forward and align its programs for achieving the prioritised targets and customized goals in line with the SDGs.

This is also to be noted that Poverty and Urbanisation is the topmost priority in the Strategic Priority Areas, as mentioned in the Sustainable Development Framework jointly prepared by the Government of India and the United Nations.

Sustainable Development Goals

address a variety of issues ranging from poverty, gender discrimination to sanitation and climate emergency. All of us know that a majority of the world population now lives in cities. That’s why cities need to take lead in achieving the targets under each of the SDGs. The targets set under them are humongous and need exhaustive planning and efficient implementation. Sustainable Development Goal-11: ‘Sustainable Cities And Communities’ aims for “Making Cities and Human Settlements Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable”. SDG 11 specifically deals with the issues of the urban areas which in itself seem limitless.

In any city of South Asia, you will find problems of urban poverty, unemployment, housing, sanitation, civic services, and these issues are being handled by municipalities which largely do not have capacity and resources. Yet, people are moving to urban areas because of access to better economic and social facilities in the city set up. People will keep moving to cities and the problem is going to get bigger, if not handled properly. India itself is projected to add 416 million urban dwellers between 2018 and 2050. By 2030, India is expected to be home to seven mega-cities with populations





RANJIT S CHAVAN
President, AIILSG

IN ANY CITY OF SOUTH ASIA, YOU WILL FIND PROBLEMS OF URBAN POVERTY, UNEMPLOYMENT, HOUSING, SANITATION, CIVIC SERVICES, AND THESE ISSUES ARE BEING HANDLED BY MUNICIPALITIES WHICH LARGELY DO NOT HAVE CAPACITY AND RESOURCES. YET, PEOPLE ARE MOVING TO URBAN AREAS BECAUSE OF ACCESS TO BETTER ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL FACILITIES IN THE CITY SET UP. PEOPLE WILL KEEP MOVING TO CITIES AND THE PROBLEM IS GOING TO GET BIGGER, IF NOT HANDLED PROPERLY. INDIA ITSELF IS PROJECTED TO ADD 416 MILLION URBAN DWELLERS BETWEEN 2018 AND 2050. BY 2030, INDIA IS EXPECTED TO BE HOME TO SEVEN MEGA-CITIES WITH POPULATIONS ABOVE 10 MILLION. THE POPULATION RISE IS GOING TO HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND LIVABILITY IN CITIES. ARE THE CITIES IN INDIA OR ELSEWHERE READY WITH INFRA AND SOLUTIONS?

above 10 million. The population rise is going to have an impact on the environment and livability in cities. Are the cities in India or elsewhere ready with infra and solutions?

According to the most recent IPCC report, restricting climate change to 1.5°C would need “rapid and far-reaching” changes around energy use, industry, and buildings design,

as well as the wider planning of cities and infrastructure. According to the International Resource Panel’s recent publication “Weight of Cities”, the integration of urban infrastructure can achieve significantly higher resource savings than taking siloed sectoral approaches; savings are in the order of 30 to 60 per cent by leveraging connections, interactions, and resource sharing across multiple urban systems.

I am grateful to all the honorable ministers, esteemed delegates, mayors and city officials who have accepted our invitation and agreed to be part of our endeavor. We are also organising the South Asian Mayors Forum which will emphasise on the changed leadership role of mayors in the new era of urban development. This year, we are also going to elect the two Co-Presidents of SAMF. The election for these posts will be held biennially and AIILSG will take the responsibility of running its secretariat. We will be announcing other details in our Forum.

Welcome to SAC Summit. Welcome to India. ■





VARYING IDEAS, FACADES OF CITIES

Only 32 per cent people in India live in cities today. India's urban population will cross the half-way mark by 2045, in the next 25 years. If the cities of the future need to become sustainable and inclusive, the preparation has to start now



ABHISHEK PANDEY
Editor

Urban trends and data tell interesting stories. Sometimes, these stories are different from what we observe and experience. If you move out in cities in India and many other cities in less urbanized nations, we find cities to be very dense. As soon

as they become prosperous, they prefer to go vertical. Vertical cities appeared to be accommodating more people in less space. And, this is not a very old phenomenon. It has picked up pace in the last twenty years. A news report suggests, "all of the world's 73 residential towers over 250 metres high were built after the year 2000. Another 64 are under construction."

Many public and private redevelopment projects, including that of projects being implemented in New Delhi by the government where low-rise residential quarters of government employees are being razed to build multi-storied apartments, have been designed with this idea in mind that going vertical will ensure optimal utilisation of resources. This is still to be concluded whether going

vertical is the solution because many modern cities, including New York, have a mass of wealthy citizens who have moved out of their cramped city residences to sparsely populated suburban areas.

According to a research done by Professor Shlomo Angel of New York University on urban expansion, high-rise cities like Seoul and Tokyo are less densely populated than Dhaka of Bangladesh, where most people live in low-rise residential buildings or slums. He also underlined that cities can become dense in multiple ways. He adds that Hong Kong is pictured in our mind as a city where the cost of living is very high. The city is known for stacking people on top of each other. All of us must have seen the pictures of 5-10 people living in a 10x10 feet studio apartment. Angel's research on urban



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



experience the problem of snarling traffic, crowded market places and business centers, lack of parking spaces, and various other civic service issues. Now, head-out to posh South Mumbai, you will find the difference. The roads are cleaner, pedestrian pathways are not encroached and public amenities are in order. In telling the story of two neighborhoods of Mumbai, I am not singling out Mumbai for having such disparity but just using the city as an example. This story holds true for any big city, especially in the Asia Pacific. Delhi also has Laxmi Nagar and Lutyens Delhi. Other cities would also have their examples.

What does this tell us? This is not just about the equal distribution of municipal resources. It is more than that to me. There is no arguing that the urban population is growing. But the interesting fact is urban areas are expanding faster than the urban population. According to the progress report on Sustainable Development Goal-11, between 2000 and 2014, areas occupied by cities grew 1.28 times faster than their populations. It indicates that urban densities of cities have been declining, creating profound repercussions for environmental sustainability at the local, regional and global scale.

This data presents the overall picture of a city but the story lies in the details. The poor areas in cities are getting cramped up, not the whole city. More people are getting accommodated in less space because low-income colonies, of which most are not recognised, are low-rise and affordable. Since a majority of these colonies do not come under the jurisdiction of urban local bodies, they

remain out of focus hence their problems keep compounding. On the other hand, most of the posh colonies in a prosperous city are either high-rise dense or low-rise sprawl with adequate and efficient civic services.

Better management of urban growth is very crucial to plan sustainable urbanisation in countries where fewer people live in cities. 60 per cent of Asia's population lives in cities. Many countries of the continent, including India, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Lao, Thailand, are still predominantly rural but this acts in their favour and gives them a chance to learn from others' mistakes and not repeat the mistakes committed by other urbanised nations and thus make better plans for adopting sustainable development models.

The estimates suggest that more than 60 per cent of the area projected to be urban in 2030 has yet to be built. And, most of these expansion activities will occur in areas of low economic and human capacity, which will constrain the protection of biodiversity and management of ecosystem services. The urban ecosystem and agriculture land parcels, wetlands, green belts, forest cover, mountainous ranges will be under threat in case of expansion of industrial, business and other urban activities.

This tells that all cities will require better, well-informed urban leadership and bureaucracy that is well-equipped with knowledge and technology to take the challenges head-on. This makes the role of networking, bilateral, and multilateral organisations more important in this decade of action if cities have to achieve all the objectives under Sustainable Development Goal-11 and other goals concerning the needs of urban residents. ■

expansion tells us that the reason for this is Hong Kong's built-up area is occupied by roads, pavements, offices, hotels, parks and mandatory spaces between buildings. The footprints of residential buildings account for less than 4 per cent of it. In Dhaka, by contrast, homes cover nearly 20 per cent of the land. In a poor city like Kinshasa, the capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo, population density comes mostly from squeezing more people into each room.

URBAN DIVIDE

Go out to any middle-income and low-income suburb of Mumbai, you will

THE POOR AREAS IN CITIES ARE GETTING CRAMPED UP, NOT THE WHOLE CITY. MORE PEOPLE ARE GETTING ACCOMMODATED IN LESS SPACE BECAUSE LOW-INCOME COLONIES OF WHICH MOST ARE NOT RECOGNIZED ARE LOW-RISE AND AFFORDABLE. SINCE A MAJORITY OF THESE COLONIES DO NOT COME UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF URBAN LOCAL BODIES, THEY REMAIN OUT OF FOCUS HENCE THEIR PROBLEMS KEEP COMPOUNDING. ON THE OTHER HAND, MOST OF THE POSH COLONIES IN A PROSPEROUS CITY ARE EITHER HIGH-RISE DENSE OR LOW-RISE SPRAWL WITH ADEQUATE AND EFFICIENT CIVIC SERVICES

CRY OUT FOR HOUSING AND SANITATION

In India, the 2012 report of the Technical Group on Urban Housing Shortage for the 12th Plan (TG-12)—set up by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation to estimate the urban housing shortage in the country for 2012-2017—highlighted the total number of households without “decent” housing in cities



SANJAY KUMAR
Social Policy Expert

Over the period of past decade, the pace of urbanisation has picked up steadily. Currently, more than half of the world’s population of 3.9 billion people, or nearly 54 per cent, live in towns, cities and mega-cities. This number is expected to grow to 68 per cent by 2050. India is a part of this global trend towards increasing urbanisation in which more than half of world’s population is living in cities and towns.

INDIA’S CHANGING URBAN LANDSCAPE

If we look at the last census data, it is first time in the history of Indian census that the rate of urban population growth has outpaced the growth of rural population. Indian population has in India out of the total population of 1210.2 million as on 1st March, 2011, about 377.1 million were residing in urban areas. The net addition of population in urban areas over the last

decade is 91.0 million. 31.16 per cent of India’s population 377 million live in urban areas as per 2011 Census. For the first time since Independence, the absolute increase in population is more in urban areas than in rural areas.

The provisional results of Census 2011 reveal that there is an increase of 2774 towns, comprising 242 Statutory and 2532 census towns, over the decade. Growth rate of population in urban areas was 31.8%. Further the number of million plus cities/urban agglomeration (UA) has increased from 35 in Census 2001 to 53 in Census 2011.

As urbanisation is a must for economic growth, the rate of people’s migration to cities is now happening at a breakneck speed, in the process putting enormous pressure on the ability of cities to provide adequate infrastructure to support the burgeoning population. This also brings a new set of challenges.

URBAN SANITATION SCENARIO

According to estimates released by UN Habitat, ‘more than one-third of the developing world’s urban population of over 863 million people lives in slums. As city infrastructure starts to crumble under pressure, availability of adequate sanitation facilities becomes the first casualty’. Due to an acute shortage of adequate toilets, nearly 100 million people globally are being left with no other option but to practice open defecation. The remaining 600 million

people rely on toilets that do not fulfil minimum requirements of hygiene, safety or privacy — including dirty and crowded communal toilets. In fact, it is estimated that almost one-fifth of all urbanites — that is nearly 700 million people — live without a decent toilet. To put that into perspective, the queue for people waiting for toilets globally would stretch around the world 29 times! This severely compromised sanitary conditions are not only damaging the environment but also posing a real-time health risk to the people in the form of communicable diseases, such as cholera and more.

A report by WaterAid —The State of World’s Toilets 2016, put India at the number one position for having the largest number of urbanites living without sanitation. Close on the heels of India is China. The instances of huge populations migrating constantly to urban areas that are most ill equipped to handle the rush, is exceedingly resulting in an ever-increasing gap between economic development and urban planning for both the countries.

One of the major challenges for the Government is to elevate India to the international levels of urban sanitation that can be found in developed countries. As a step towards this, India along with other member states of the UN committed to the new Global Goals for Sustainable Development, which included in Goal 6, targets to ensure everyone, everywhere, has access to



basic toilets by 2030.

But for this to be achieved, India must first concentrate on establishing the infrastructure needed to set up the required number of toilet facilities, refurbish and build efficient sewage networks. It must also ramp up the waste treatment facilities so that water bodies are not polluted by effluent discharge. The attempt in this direction started way back in 1996.

THE LATE SURGE

In August, 1996, the Central Government guidelines entitled 'Urban Development Plans Formulation Implementation UDPFI' were circulated to all State Governments for adoption. These guidelines, apart from other issues, suggest innovative approaches for fiscal resource mobilisation. In the backdrop of the New Economic Policy in the nineteen nineties, it was suggested that the traditional system of funding based on Plan budgetary allocations be reduced ultimately withdrawn due to fiscal deficit. Subsidies need to be rationalised urban development plans projects need to be placed on a commercial format by designing commercially viable urban infrastructure services area development projects. This was sought to be achieved by restoring a proper match between functions source of revenue by giving additional tax measures. Other innovative resource mobilisation measures include using people as a resource increase in the non-property taxes using Public-Private partnership in service delivery.

According to the High Powered Expert Committee HPEC appointed by the Ministry of Urban Development, which gave its recommendations to the Government in the year 2011, there is a requirement of investment in urban infrastructure to the tune of ₹39 Billion ₹39.2 lakh crore at 2009-2010 prices over the next 20 years.

As per estimates of the HPEC, water, sewerage, solid waste management, storm water drains etc. would require another 20 per cent of investment. Among others, urban renewal including

redevelopment of slums would require 10.5 per cent of investment and capacity building for better urban governance 2.5 per cent of investment. But a real attempt towards this only started with the launch of Jawahar Lal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission (JnNURM) in 2005.

In all these years urban sanitation has never enjoyed the kind of attention it has deserved. An intense engagement with the urban sanitation on the governmental level has been missing unlike rural sanitation which has seen continuous attempt made in that direction for the last thirty years or more. A concerted effort towards development of Urban infrastructure, including sanitation, was witnessed when government of India launched Jawahar Lal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission (JnNURM). With this launch urban sanitation first time received the attention it deserved.

In the next five years, the allocation of budget for urban sanitation witnessed a steep increase. In its first five years, the investment in sanitation was almost equal to half the amount which was invested in the first 55 years of independence. Although it was better late than never but by that time the required quantum of investment has risen multi fold. When the JnNURM was launched, in 2005, according to one of the estimates, Urban sanitation required anything between US \$ 40,000 million to US \$ 58,000 million which was anything between 10 to 15 times of what was allocated for urban sanitation, a mere US \$3,800 million. By now, the need of investment in this sector would have risen in a substantial way. This requires immediate relooking at the financial need and ensure that it is being provided in an optimum way. But all these would come to naught if the population of the urban centre, particularly metropolis, are not controlled.

Considering the huge estimated requirement of investment, sums of these magnitudes cannot be located only from within the budgetary resources of Central, State and Local Governments. A compulsion has,

therefore, arisen to access financial resources from the market, and induce the private sector to participate in urban development programmes as a policy.

But it is easier said than done. The experiment of PPP in India has not witnessed very encouraging results. Indian highways are a very good example of how things may go wrong in this model. But, looking at the enormity of the problem, we need to be doubly sure that this partnership should operate smoothly. Private partnership in public infrastructure is challenging to say the least. The progress of smart cities is also not very encouraging. To pull up the laggards government has come up with the idea of dovetailing of worst performing cities with best performing cities. For example Varanasi has been paired with another holy city Amritsar. Now, Varanasi will help Amritsar to improve its performance under the smart cities mission.

Similarly, Surat and Visakhapatnam will help Saharanpur and Diu to improve their performance respectively. What is required is to come up with the model which is deliverable as well as sustainable. In PPP models we, more often than not, set unachievable targets which create myriads of problem in future. We need to carry out due diligence in a very intense and transparent manner so that all the parties involved in the exercise that what they are getting in to. But all these models would need to be put together with an urban housing scheme. These severely compromised sanitary conditions are not only damaging the environment but also posing a real-time health risk to the people in the form of communicable diseases, such as cholera and more.



INDIA AND GOAL 11 OF SDGs SUSTAINABLE CITIES & COMMUNITIES



DR M RAMACHANDRAN

Former Secretary, Urban Development to Government of India

India has taken various proactive steps to ensure achievement of all the 17 SDGs and a national monitoring system is in position. Some of the positives about the SDG agenda in general are:

- ◆ It is acknowledged that these represent an elaborate agenda for the governments that necessitate achieving progress simultaneously across social, economic and environmental pillars
- ◆ India with the world's 17 percent population holds the key to global SDG achievement

- ◆ India's progress is contingent on the performance of our states and union territories
- ◆ States become essential stakeholders because seventy percent more than the central government's spending happens in the states.

Having said this, it needs to be highlighted that SDG India Index 2018 was the first effort by the Government of India and perhaps anywhere globally to rank sub national governments by computing the composite index on all SDGs. Now, we also have the Index 2019, which is more refined and



comprehensive compared to the first one. The states are now in the process of having SDG aligned vision documents and action plans so as to realize the agenda by 2030. Suitable target value has been set for each indicator.

- ◆ For 62 indicators, targets set by the UN at the global level have been adopted
- ◆ For 22 indicators, targets set by the Government of India are used
- ◆ For 5 indicators benchmarks set by international development organizations or international standards have been adopted
- ◆ For remaining 5 indicators (Goal 14) targets have not been set because for most of them their ideal value is not fixed
- ◆ From 62 indicators which were taken into account while preparing the SDG India Index 2018, indicators for Index 2019-20 are higher at one hundred.

WHAT IT MEANS TO HAVE AN INDEX LIKE THIS

It has helped raise awareness on SDG within government, media, researchers and civil society organisations. In some states, SDG localisation has been pushed to the next level, where district level monitoring has been initiated.

RANKING STATES AND UNION TERRITORIES

There is now a competitive spirit among states as they are ranked every year according to their performance and this gives an opportunity to take stock as to what needs to be done better. Though no state has reached the highest category of 'achievers', there are 8 states which figure in the next category of 'front runners' as per the latest Index. Remaining 20 states figure in the next category of 'performers'. The state of Kerala retained its rank as the top state among states whereas Chandigarh tops the list of union territories.

GOAL 11- SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Among states and union territories, Himachal Pradesh, Goa and

Chandigarh top the list with regard to implementation of this goal. What is India's approach regarding sustainable cities? We all know the urban agenda in India is huge and there are various missions and programs initiated by the central government and the states to take these forward proactively though there are issues regarding capacity, generation of additional resources, time bound implementation, etc.

The focus areas identified in the context of this goal are:

- ◆ Reforms in the real estate sector. A Real Estate Regulator is in position in each of the states which attempts to better serve the home buyer's interests
- ◆ Urban transformation and housing for all. The major program launched by the central government in this regard is that of providing houses to all homeless persons by the year 2022 under the Prime Minister's Housing Scheme covering 4318 cities and towns. In 500 cities, basic civic amenities like water, sewerage are being provided under another central program, AMRUT
- ◆ Sustainable urbanisation - The smart cities mission launched in 2015 aims at building sustainable and inclusive cities. City improvement through retrofitting, city renewal through redevelopment, city extension through greenfield development and bringing in various smart facilities like smart water, smart energy are being undertaken under this Mission covering 100 smart cities.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES?

The challenges could be broadly listed as follows:

- ◆ Challenge to the institutional capacities for improving access to sound infrastructure
- ◆ Being home to 14 out of the 20 most polluted cities in the world underlines the need for effective measures to check this.
- ◆ Growing number of urban unemployment is another key issue
- ◆ Climate change impacts vulnerability of this

- ◆ Integrated and spatially distributed urbanization with emphasis on small and medium towns and cities, with linkages with rural areas is lacking.

HOW DOES INDIA TARGET TO ACHIEVE THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL RELATING TO CITIES

Five national level indicators have been identified in this regard and these are:

1. Provision of houses to homeless. So far 31% houses stand completed against the target set for cities and towns of the country under the Prime Minister's Housing Scheme
2. Percentage of urban households living in slums- 55% of urban households are presently in this category

These two will contribute to the SDG target of ensuring access to all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic SDR and upgradation of slums.

3. Percentage of wards with hundred percent door to door waste collection- 90.9 per cent wards in municipal areas are reported to have 100 per cent door to door waste collection arrangement
4. Processing of waste- 56 per cent of the total waste generated gets processed now with the state of Chhattisgarh topping the list with 84 per cent so far
5. Installed sewage treatment capacity as proportion of sewage generated. This is an area requiring lot of work as the percentage now is poor.

These three will facilitate achieving the SDG target of reducing the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management. ■

CLEAN ENERGY: BIGGEST CHALLENGE IN MODERN TIMES



RAVI RANJAN GURU
Deputy Director General, AIILSG

The biggest challenge that we face today in 2020 and in the run up to the global ‘Sustainable Developments Goals’ 2030 is to move the world towards clean energy. As the massive urbanisation across the globe is afoot, especially in developing countries, energy needs now are higher than ever. Countries like India, China and many others, have a higher need of energy for their economic progress. At the same time, the replacement of the traditional non-renewable energy with

clean energy is a priority. Clean energy is and shall remain the backbone of a secure and prosperous future. In order to promote cleaner energy across the world, we need to come together as nations rather than try and fix the problem as individual countries.

ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES

Major economies and forward looking countries must facilitate work together to share best practices, promote ecology-friendly practices and put in place policies that would encourage a transition to global clean energy economy. The Clean Ministerial Meeting (CEM) group is a welcome step in this direction as they account for 75 per cent of global greenhouse gas emission and 90 per cent of global clean energy investments. As per the release, “It is the only high level political engagement where ministers gather to establish clean energy priorities, put forward innovative policies and adopt concrete measures

to accelerate the deployment of clean solutions and where the work is carried through year-round CEM initiatives and campaigns. The CEM’s initiatives and campaigns enable low-cost, high impact technical work that amplifies each government’s clean energy deployment efforts. They seek to catalyse public and private actions towards ambitious but realistic targets.” To achieve its goals, the CEM works with partners from the private sector, international organisations and civil society to bring their respective abilities, strengths, and resources to the table.

WE NEED TO WORK IN UNISON

We are still looking for ways to produce and integrate energy that is sustainable and accessible. We need to firmly believe that we can bring about the transformative changes that will produce energy that will be safe for the future generations.

There is a need to put in place a system of clean, affordable and reliable energy systems. We must build a 21st century energy architecture. To begin with, we need to promote certain things.

- 21ST CENTURY POWER PARTNERSHIP**
Deploying low-cost wind and solar energy in all regions of the world
- MULTILATERAL SOLAR AND WIND WORKING GROUP**
Increasing access to clean and affordable electricity
- GLOBAL LIGHTNING AND ENERGY ACCESS PARTNERSHIP**
Having smarter and flexible electricity grids
- INTERNATIONAL SMART GRID ACTION NETWORK**
Having a flexible power system fit for future challenges
- POWER SYSTEM FLEXIBILITY CAMPAIGN**
Amplifying the role of clean and reliable nuclear energy
- NUCLEAR INNOVATION: CLEAN ENERGY FUTURE**
Deploying smaller scale power generation in targeted regions
- ACCELERATING THE ADOPTION OF DISTRIBUTED GENERATION IN STRATEGIC REGIONS**
Integrating power systems across national boundaries
- REGIONAL AND GLOBAL ENERGY INTERCONNECTION INITIATIVE**
Promoting the use of energy planning models and scenarios



I believe having energy efficient equipment, appliances, buildings and vehicles is essential to convert our dream of a clean energy future into reality. SDGs, especially number 7, talk about access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy. A report from Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) says, “Energy supply accounts for around 60 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions. While some 17 per cent of energy consumption is now met with renewables, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warns that this needs to hit around 85 per cent by 2050 to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.”

What we need is to take the challenge head on. We can enable change by saving energy. This can be done by encouraging the use of efficient equipment and appliances; deploying efficient, smart and affordable cooling technologies; maximising the sales and usage of electric vehicles; transforming towns, cities and rural areas into sustainable and greener communities. We must encourage and support sustainable buildings. AIILSG has been doing this across India through its ECBC cells.

We must, at the same time, encourage companies and organisations in using their energy wisely and curb their carbon emissions.

WHAT ARE THE VIABLE SOLUTIONS?

We can completely transform how we generate energy and its daily usage. We need to identify and deploy the most impactful policies, programs and technologies for a clean energy future. The developed world, despite of the economic challenges and domestic concerns, must provide resources, technologies and support on clean energy policies, regulations and financing issues. We need to help countries adopt the best policies to accelerate investments in the clean energy sector.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the UN’s blueprint for a sustainable future for all. Their adoption puts the environmental degradation, sustainability, climate change, and water security under a global spotlight. They aim to leave no one behind and are vital to achieving CDP’s vision for a thriving economy that works for people and planet. SDG 7 urges us to “Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy.”

PROGRESS ON SDG 7 SO FAR

Access to electricity in the poorest countries of the world has begun to accelerate. Energy efficiency continues to improve and renewable energy is making gains in the electricity sector. The fact still remains that, despite this progress, over 800 million people still remain without electricity. In addition, if SDG 7, 13 and related goals are to be met, much higher level of ambition is required with regard to renewable energy, including transportation and heating.

According to a report of the Secretary-General, Special edition: Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals:

- ◆ The global electrification rate rose from 83 per cent in 2010 to 87 per

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



cent in 2015, with the increase accelerating to reach 89 per cent in 2017. However, some 840 million people around the world are still without access to electricity.

- ◆ The global share of the population with access to clean cooking fuels and technologies reached 61 per cent in 2017, up from 57 per cent in 2010. Despite this progress, close to 3 billion people still rely primarily on inefficient and polluting cooking systems.
- ◆ The renewable energy share of total final energy consumption gradually increased from 16.6 per cent in 2010 to 17.5 per cent in 2016, though much faster change is required to meet climate goals. Even though the absolute level of renewable energy consumption has grown by more than 18 per cent since 2010, only since 2012 has the growth of renewables outpaced the growth of total energy consumption.
- ◆ Global primary energy intensity (ratio of energy used per unit of GDP) improved from 5.9 in 2010 to 5.1 in 2016, a rate of improvement of 2.3 per cent, which is still short of the 2.7 per cent annual rate needed to reach target 3 of Sustainable Development Goal 7.
- ◆ International financial flow to developing countries in support of clean and renewable energy reached \$18.6 billion in 2016, almost doubling from \$9.9 billion in 2010.

It is most important that we act fast on clean energy to save the planet. We have made progress on this front, but the target is far from achieved and we need to work faster in order to meet the challenge. ■



HOW CLOSE ARE WE TO THE SDGs

The five Ps, that is, people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership were conceived as the goals and targets under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015. 17 SDGs and 169 targets were announced to demonstrate the scale and ambition of the universal goal—the SDGs, to mitigate the crisis of economic disparity and environmental degradation



TIKENDER SINGH PANWAR
Former Deputy Mayor, Shimla

The fiscal crisis of 2008 struck wounds deep into the system. It shook the pillars of the world capitalist system and the sustainability of such a socio-economic system became a challenge. Compounding it was the crisis of the environment and the sustainability of the planet, which continues to pose a serious challenge. The carbon emissions, if not checked, shall become disastrous to the eco-system itself. In order to prevent such a happening in the future, the world came up with the aforementioned SDGs.

Soon after the adoption of the SDGs, the world leaders met at Quito in the World Habitat III, where once again the question of sustainability came to the fore and the role of cities in mitigating the challenges was discussed thoroughly. Joan Clos, the then Executive Director of Habitat, screamingly kept on reminding that “business, as usual, will not help in ameliorating the problems and we have to go back to the basics.” He quite vociferously pointed out that the three decades of laissez-faire have shown that this model of development of the cities is completely unsustainable and one has to go to the basics of planning. What did he mean by that? We will discuss it a

little later. It is nearly five years that the SDGs were adopted and just a decade left to achieve the targets. It would be prudent to have a cursory look at some of the developments and whether they will lead to the desired results. We cannot go into all the 17 SDGs, rather will focus on those which are linked to the urban world. Describing the first ‘P’, i.e., the people, the desired outcome is to end poverty and hunger and allow people to live with dignity.

The latest Oxfam report that was released at the World Economic Forum in early 2020 shows how far we are from achieving the desired results to ameliorate poverty. To point out just five highlights, it states: World’s richest one per cent have twice as much wealth than 6.9 billion people, and, in the recent period, it has further accentuated. World’s richest 22 men have more wealth than wealth of all women in Africa. Women and girls put in 12.5 billion hours of unpaid work every day. Women’s unpaid work has a value of \$ 10.8 trillion a year and taxing an additional wealth of 0.5 per cent of the richest 1 per cent over the next 10 years is equal to investments needed to create 117 million jobs in education, health and elderly care.

The governments around the world have to intervene in the interests of women, children, youth and its people and not just allow the laissez faire economy to further accentuate the crisis and the gap.

THE INDIAN STORY

The Indian government, which is also a signatory to the SDGs and to the UN-Habitat III, has released a report on the index of the SDGs in India. Along with

the goals and targets, the government has added 306 national indicators to measure and grasp the SDGs in India. The NITI Ayog released its report on the SDGs where Kerala and Himachal ranked in the top two positions. But this did not happen because of any recent active intervention by the government of India; rather the results accrue to the basic structure of planning in both these states since long, where the emphasis was laid out on social infrastructure.

Urban India has an important role to play in the achievement of SDGs. In fact, the policy paradigm in urban India for the last three decades and especially since 2014 since the new government took over is to bring a paradigm shift in urbanisation. This shift in simple terms means to change the nature of urbanisation, from “cities being left to



mere managers to cities turned into entrepreneurs.” This has led to a situation where the cities are turned into tools and instruments to attract investments and to be more competitive. There are various ways to do it, but one of the ways is to monetise land and thus make the city an attractive place for capital investment.

The smart city plan and the 100 smart cities, which are supposed to be the lighthouses of urbanisation and urban governance, are conceived and designed in this manner. The plan is for area-based development and ensures that a particular area attracts a large chunk of investments. That area or patch could even be part of urban commons. The recent period has shown that nearly 90 per cent of the smart city plans have gone for re-development projects and this means just a small portion of the city. This has further accentuated the levels of urban poverty in Indian cities.

Instead of focussing on a more active role of the state and its intervention, the present model is to allow privatisation of the cities. And, this is even complemented with a ‘privatised urban governance model’, i.e., the model of special purpose vehicles (SPVs). The

1 NO POVERTY



5 GENDER EQUALITY



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



SPVs are formed in the smart cities, which have taken over the urban governance from the city councils to a private company model where there is hardly any representation of the politically elected representatives of the cities. This is a highly exclusionary model of urban governance practised, which is being strongly objected by the elected councils in the cities.

So, the Indian cities present a contradictory development trajectory, where after the implementation of the 74th constitutional amendment, there are regular elections to the cities, but the real governance in the cities is either with the parastatal or the company format management-the SPVs. This model has further alienated the people and instead of mitigating the challenges of urban poverty has further widened the gap.

The gap between the top 10 per cent

asset holders and bottom 10 per cent in rural India is 500 times, whereas in urban India it is 50,000 times; and this exhibits the real challenge existing in the cities in order to achieve the tasks of SDGs. Likewise, just 63 people in India have wealth equivalent to the entire budget of the federal Indian government. Instead of taxing the wealth and the wealthy, the government continues to provide tax benefits to the rich and expropriate from the poor. This is a highly unsustainable model. Similarly, the housing challenge is further becoming large. Against the accepted 25 per cent public housing policy, Indian cities have moved from 6 to 3 per cent and this has led to large scale squalors and slums. No wonder that nearly 50 per cent of urban people in India live in slums.

However, some city governments have adopted interesting redistributive models of alleviating urban poverty. One of such models is the Delhi government’s intervention in water, electricity, education and health. To provide free water to 20-kilo litre per household per month and to give free electricity up to 200 units is an interesting intervention. Likewise, in Shimla, where the water and sewage utility were integrated and were able to mitigate the crisis of public health is another achievement of the city government.

Going back to the basic point, and that is to achieve the desired results under the SDGs, it is not the quantitative targets alone that can fetch them; one, and that means the governments, individuals et al, have to think beyond the contours of present socio-economic system for a qualitatively different system so that the 5 Ps can be prioritised! ■

[The views expressed are the author’s own. They do not purport to reflect the views of Urban Update.]





A BATTLE THAT WE CANNOT AFFORD TO LOSE

The biggest challenge that governments across the globe face today is that of the poverty. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has marked it on top priority. It is the biggest challenge that humanity is facing even today. Poverty alleviation programs have shown some results across the globe but the fact remains that too many are still struggling for basic human needs



KUMAR DHANANJAY
Consulting Editor

Rapid progress in developing countries like India and China have lifted millions out of poverty, yet millions and millions survive on less than two dollars a day and

lack sanitation, clean drinking water, and food. South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa are the most affected by this menace. They account for almost eighty per cent of the total population living under poverty. The new challenges like climate change, food security and conflicts have made the task of bringing people out of poverty even bigger.

A United Nations report says that 'SDGs are a bold commitment to finish what we started and end poverty in all forms and dimensions by 2030. This involves targeting the most vulnerable, increasing basic resources and services and supporting communities affected by conflict and



1 NO POVERTY



climate related disasters properly'. The question is how to deal with it?

THE CHALLENGE

The reports are conflicting and we very often do not get the actual figures. But according to a UN report 'the world attained the first Millennium Development Goal target - to cut the 1990 poverty rate in half by 2015 - five years ahead of schedule, in 2010'. A World Bank report of 2015 says that in 2015, one in ten people was living on less than USD 1.90 a day. While in 1990 more than a billion people were living under extreme poverty, the figure in 2015 was 736 million. The WB projections also put an alarmist

situation and show that if we continue down a business-as-usual path, the world will not be able to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030. The biggest sufferers of poverty are children. Nearly 29000 children die every single day from preventable causes such as diarrhoea, malaria, neonatal infection, pneumonia, preterm delivery, or lack of oxygen at birth – which are more often than not highly correlated with poverty.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

This becomes important as on one hand poverty is about lack of income and access to resources, it also manifests

itself in diminished opportunities for education, in social discrimination and the inability to participate in decision-making processes. In developing countries, for instance, children in the poorest households are four times less likely to be in school than those of the richest. Extreme deprivation is not just about lack of well-being and opportunity; it is a question of survival itself. In Latin America and East Asia, the poorest children are three times more likely to die by age 5 than the richest.

ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM

Ending poverty in all its forms is the

736 MILLION

People still live in extreme poverty

10%

of the world's population lives in extreme poverty, down from 36 % in 1990

1.3 BILLION

people live in multidimensional poverty

first goal of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. It calls for “ensuring social protection, enhancing access to basic services, and building resilience against the impacts of natural disasters which can cause severe damage to people’s resources and livelihoods”.

The global community and governments agree that within the Sustainable Development Agenda for 2030, economic growth must be inclusive, as it aims to eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere by 2030.

INDIA AND POVERTY

In the last couple of decades global reduction in extreme poverty was driven mainly by Asia, notably China and India. If we go by official statistics, between 2005-06 and 2015-16, the incidence of multi-dimensional poverty in India was reduced by almost half, climbing down to 27.5 per cent from 54.7 per cent as per the 2018 global Multi-dimensional Poverty Index report. Many disputed this figure as governments change the basis for measurement of poverty from time to time. But going by the official figure, within ten years, the number of

poor people in India fell by more than 271 million (from 635 million to 364 million).

IS INDIA ON TRACK?

On 30th December NITI Aayog released the second edition of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index, which has tried to comprehensively document the progress made by India towards achieving the 2030 SDG targets. This index has been developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), United

SDG TARGETS TO ERADICATE POVERTY

- ◆ BY 2030, ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY FOR ALL PEOPLE EVERYWHERE, CURRENTLY MEASURED AS PEOPLE LIVING ON LESS THAN USD1.25 A DAY.
- ◆ BY 2030, REDUCE AT LEAST BY HALF THE PROPORTION OF MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN OF ALL AGES LIVING IN POVERTY IN ALL ITS DIMENSIONS ACCORDING TO NATIONAL DEFINITIONS.
- ◆ BY 2030, ENSURE THAT ALL MEN AND WOMEN, IN PARTICULAR THE POOR AND THE VULNERABLE, HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS TO ECONOMIC RESOURCES, AS WELL AS ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES, OWNERSHIP AND CONTROL OVER LAND AND OTHER FORMS OF PROPERTY, INHERITANCE, NATURAL RESOURCES, APPROPRIATE NEW TECHNOLOGY AND FINANCIAL SERVICES, INCLUDING MICROFINANCE.
- ◆ BY 2030, BUILD THE RESILIENCE OF THE POOR AND THOSE IN VULNERABLE SITUATIONS AND REDUCE THEIR EXPOSURE AND VULNERABILITY TO CLIMATE- RELATED EXTREME EVENTS AND OTHER ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SHOCKS AND DISASTERS.
- ◆ ENSURE SIGNIFICANT MOBILIZATION OF RESOURCES FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES, INCLUDING THROUGH ENHANCED DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION, IN ORDER TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE AND PREDICTABLE MEANS FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, IN PARTICULAR LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, TO IMPLEMENT PROGRAMMES AND POLICIES TO END POVERTY IN ALL ITS DIMENSIONS.
- ◆ CREATE SOUND POLICY FRAMEWORKS AT THE NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS, BASED ON PRO-POOR AND GENDER-SENSITIVE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES, TO SUPPORT ACCELERATED INVESTMENT IN POVERTY ERADICATION ACTIONS.

50%

Half of all people living in poverty are under 18

1 IN 10

One person in every 10 is extremely poor

80%

of people living on less than \$1.90 are in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa

Nations in India, and Global Green Growth Institute. It was launched by Dr Rajiv Kumar, Vice-Chairman, NITI Aayog. At the launch, he said ‘This government, led by Hon’ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi, will not leave any stone unturned to make sure India achieves Agenda 2030. There is commendable traction and no complacency. NITI Aayog has committed itself to building capacities and monitoring progress at the state level. Close coordination with the states over the next 5 years will further accelerate SDG localization and ensure greater improvement.’

At the launch UN Resident Coordinator Renata Dessallien said “in 2020, the world enters the final decade for achieving the SDGs - the ‘Decade for Action’. And the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change tells us that we have 12 years left to save the planet from the worst effects of climate change. So, the time to act is now. The SDG India Index 2.0 and the dashboard enables India to both track and encourage accelerated progress to meet the SDGs across all its States and Union Territories”.

As the world enters the last ten years to achieve SDGs, India has mirrored its development agenda in the same frame. India plays a crucial role in this global goal as the country is home to about one-sixth of the world’s population.

The SDG India Index 2019 gives us a better picture than the first edition. That is so because of more robust data on account of wider coverage of goals, targets, and indicators with greater alignment with the NIF. As per NITI Aayog, “the Index spans 16 out of 17 SDGs with a qualitative assessment on Goal 17. This marks an improvement over the 2018 Index, which covered only 13 goals”.



While claims are being made by the governments and agencies that we are on course to achieve the set goals by 2030, the picture does not appear to be so rosy. Every continent is under conflict, climate change and social unrest; and on top of that while world

leaders are talking about meeting these challenges, the domestic political urgency takes precedence over the stated goals. Down the line will the conflict become rich versus poor or will the gaps be closed. SDG number 1 is all about that. ■

HEALTHY AND FREE-FLOWING RIVERS ARE ESSENTIAL TO MEET THE SDGS

At a time when the world is facing unprecedented water crisis and is almost in a climate emergency, saving our rivers is of utmost importance. This month two global news about rivers attracted my attention. One, the Colorado River, for dying a slow death due to climate change; and two, 25 Cuban rivers for showing signs of good health due to years of sustainable farming. While the news of despair, of the Colorado River, represents the state of most of our rivers; the news of hope, of the Cuban rivers, is one among the few such good news we come across

We are dependent on the rivers for our freshwater supply, be it for drinking, sanitation, domestic, irrigation and several other needs. Besides these, there are several ecosystem services the rivers provide and without which it is almost impossible to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). About 844 million people in the world still lack even a basic water service. While that's a huge challenge and a difficult task to be met by 2030, especially because the freshwater crisis in the world is growing by the day, another bigger challenge is also to progressively improving the quality of services to 2.1 billion people who lack water accessibility on premises available when needed and free from contamination (safely managed drinking water). The world is also tasked with going beyond household connections and providing access to quality water and sanitation services in schools, health-care facilities and other institutional settings. 2.3 billion people still lack basic sanitation services. Stressed rivers would not only reduce the chance of meeting the SDG targets but also increase the service gaps between the haves and have nots

in a world where income inequality is growing at a highly worrying rate.

COLORADO, THE FACE OF OUR STRESSED RIVERS

Coming to the Colorado River, a latest study has found that a regional temperature increase of 1.4 degrees Celsius over the last century has reduced the annual water flow in the river by more than 11 percent. At least 40 million people are dependent on this river and a dying Colorado may seriously jeopardise their water supplies for agriculture and other needs. Other snow-fed waterways in the world are facing similar fate. Another study had just recently flagged the concern of shrinking freshwater resources because of faster melting of glaciers of Asia's high mountain ranges including the Himalayas. Data analysed show that the overall volume of meltwater rushing down the mountains each year from 2000 to 2016 was 1.6 times as much as it would have been if the system were in balance. According to experts, glaciers do store water for decades or even centuries before releasing the same into rivers. This helps water supply in the rivers even in drought years. However, studies have found that increasing temperatures are making glaciers melt faster than can be replaced by snowfall.

This could affect the water needs of about 221 million people each year by impacting the regional water security just within a few decades.

The rain-fed rivers face similar fate. A study of Indian Peninsular rivers by researchers from the Indian Institutes of Technology at Indore and Guwahati, that looked into the climate resilient abilities of 55 catchment areas of 17 rivers, has found that almost 60 percent of them cannot cope with the changing climate and may dry up soon. In a previous study, researchers from IIT Madras and IIT Bombay had found that some of the so called surplus river basins of the country are experiencing decrease in monsoon rainfall and hence may yield less water than expected. The decrease in water yield in recent periods in major surplus basins has been more than 10 percent in the case of Mahanadi and West Flow River-I. In the case of other surplus basins, the decrease has been within 10 per cent, pointed out the researchers.



The rapidly depleting Colorado river, USA



RANJAN K PANDA

Convenor, Combat Climate Change Network, India



REDESIGNING DEVELOPMENT

In our constant obsession for a two-digit economic growth rate, the kind of development models we have promoted have done much harm to our rivers. Booming urbanisation, unsustainable agriculture, building dams, deforestation and over exploitation of groundwater have not only contributed to global warming, and have impacted the rivers at large, but also have worked like local drivers to dry up rivers and reduced river flow. This has jeopardised both food and water security and has emerged as one of the greatest roadblocks in our way to achieve the SDGs. Our actions to solve some of these crisis must therefore start from redefining the kind of development we have promoted in all these above

2.3 BILLION PEOPLE STILL LACK BASIC SANITATION SERVICES. STRESSED RIVERS WOULD NOT ONLY REDUCE THE CHANCE OF MEETING THE SDG TARGETS BUT ALSO INCREASE THE SERVICE GAPS BETWEEN THE HAVES AND HAVE NOTS IN A WORLD WHERE INCOME INEQUALITY IS GROWING AT A HIGHLY WORRYING RATE



sectors. Here comes the example of Cuban rivers. A major investigation into quality of rivers in Cuba has pointed out, as reported in the Nature, that despite the island’s history of large-scale agriculture, the rivers studied had much lower levels of dissolved nitrogen — an indicator of fertilizer use — than did the Mississippi River Basin in the United States. The researchers speculate that this is due to Cuba’s transition to smaller-scale, more sustainable farming practices since the 1990s.

Agriculture is by far the largest water consumer, accounting for nearly 70 per cent of all withdrawals globally and as much as 90 per cent in some arid countries. Redesigning our agriculture patterns and driving those to low-water intensive cropping patterns and phasing out from chemical induced farming can have a great impact on water flow of our rivers but also on quality of the rivers. Similarly, tackling urban and industrial pollution can also have a major positive impact on our rivers.

Dams do a huge damage to our rivers as well. They obstruct the river flow and give rise to many of the other problems

we have talked about. There is a serious need to assess and understand the impacts of hydropower dam projects. A new research report launched by the WWF and The Nature Conservancy shows that of rivers measuring more than 1,000 kilometres in length just 37 percent remain free flowing.

Obstructed rivers fail to maintain the vital ecosystems that are necessary for survival of riparian communities and other species, but also for ensuring sustainability of the river systems themselves impacting thereby the overall achievement of the SDGs negatively. This report argues that solar and wind power and energy storage technologies can meet the world’s energy needs while preserving the health and connectivity of river systems. The report highlights the scope for renewables to serve developing countries while avoiding construction of hydropower dams on some of the world’s major rivers. Free flowing healthy rivers are, therefore, beneficial in many ways. ■

[The views expressed are the author’s own. They do not purport to reflect the views of Urban Update.]

THE ROAD TO 2030 SOME SDG SUCCESS STORIES FROM INDIA

AKSHIT PUSHKARNA

Editorial Assistant

When the Sustainable Development Goals were envisioned by United Nations General Assembly in September 2015, they were set to transform the world by the year 2030. The 17 goals and 169 targets, which were set after 193 countries deliberated on them, are intended to stimulate universal action on issues critical to humanity and the planet comprehensively. But, for the plans to actually show positive on ground, it is imperative for countries and, in turn, local bodies across the world to work on the SDGs at a local level.

India, being one of the signatory countries of the SDGs in 2015, had embedded the concept behind them in the nation's policy framework. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said about SDGs, "These goals reflect our evolving understanding of the social, economic and environmental linkages that define our lives." Now, the world counts on India, one of the most populous countries of the world, to work diligently towards the achievement of these goals. In view of this, various programs, implemented either by the authorities or independently by people

themselves, and policies have come up in the past five years in the country which are incorporated in such a way that betterment of the population and the environment, in line with the SDGs, is achieved. Highlighted below are a few such stories:

ERADICATING OPEN DEFECATION: SWACHH BHARAT ABHIYAN



Open defecation is a problem that India has been dealing with for centuries. The problem creates multiple public health hazards as it compromises the hygienic and sanitary conditions of open spaces. Diseases like diarrhea, typhoid and cholera are just a few of the diseases that are caused by it. So, with the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (SBA), the government of India had its job cut out. The Mission was implemented back in 2014 and targeted 100 per cent Open Defecation Free (ODF) India by October 2, 2019. At the end of the stipulated 5 years, the world's largest sanitation campaign was hailed as a success as India managed to install over 10.4 crore individual household toilets in all the 5,99,963 villages of the country. The campaign can be called a big victory in the path towards the achievement of SDG 6 for India by 2030.

ANGANDWADI: PROMOTING COMMUNITY WELL-

BEING IN REMOTE PARTS OF INDIA FOR 45 YEARS



The Angandwadi project was implemented across India back in 1975 as a part of the Integrated Child Development Services. Ever since they come up, the Angandwadi centers are working on providing remote areas of the nation with equal developmental opportunities. The project appoints professional volunteers who are sent in the Angandwadi centers to live and work with people of the surrounding areas and play an important role in combating malnutrition especially for children of weaker groups, provide immunization from various diseases, ensure adequate nutrition and preschool education. The government has been heavily focusing on these centers as is evidenced by the allocation of a fund exceeding Rs 20,000 crore in the Union Budget of 2020-21. There are 6,719 operational projects with 1,241,749 operational Angandwadi centers till date.

COMMUNITY ACTION SAVES BIODIVERSITY OF INDIA



India, with its rich biodiversity, has always been a home for rich flora and fauna. But, with the inevitable expansion of urbanisation, many such biodiversity hotspots have been compromised in the recent past. However, many stories of community getting together in an effort to preserve such spots have also surfaced. Some such cases include Bhalu Mondhe and his 'Nature Volunteers' working towards the rapidly degrading quality of the once rich biodiversity Sirpur River. Mondhe said that since the 1970s,

illegal encroachments, dumping of waste and other such activities resulted in degradation of the water quality of the lake. In view of this, he formed Sirpur Bachao Samiti in 2004 which worked out a detailed conservation plan by 2005. The Madhya Pradesh government's environment department got behind the samiti and rehabilitation actions ensued. A barbed wire fence was erected, embankments and pavements built, water quality improved and trees planted. Sirpur lake is today one of the healthiest natural ecosystems of the city with rich local flora and various migratory birds and reptiles residing at the spot.

The Government of India is also taking adequate measures as 243,499 biodiversity management committees (BMC) and 95,525 people's biodiversity registers (PBR) have been established as of January 2020.

CITIES FOR PEOPLE: BULANDSHAHR AND PATIALA



As for the SDG 11, which talks about Sustainable Cities and Communities, two cases of Indian cities where work is being carried out to move the cities in this direction come to mind.

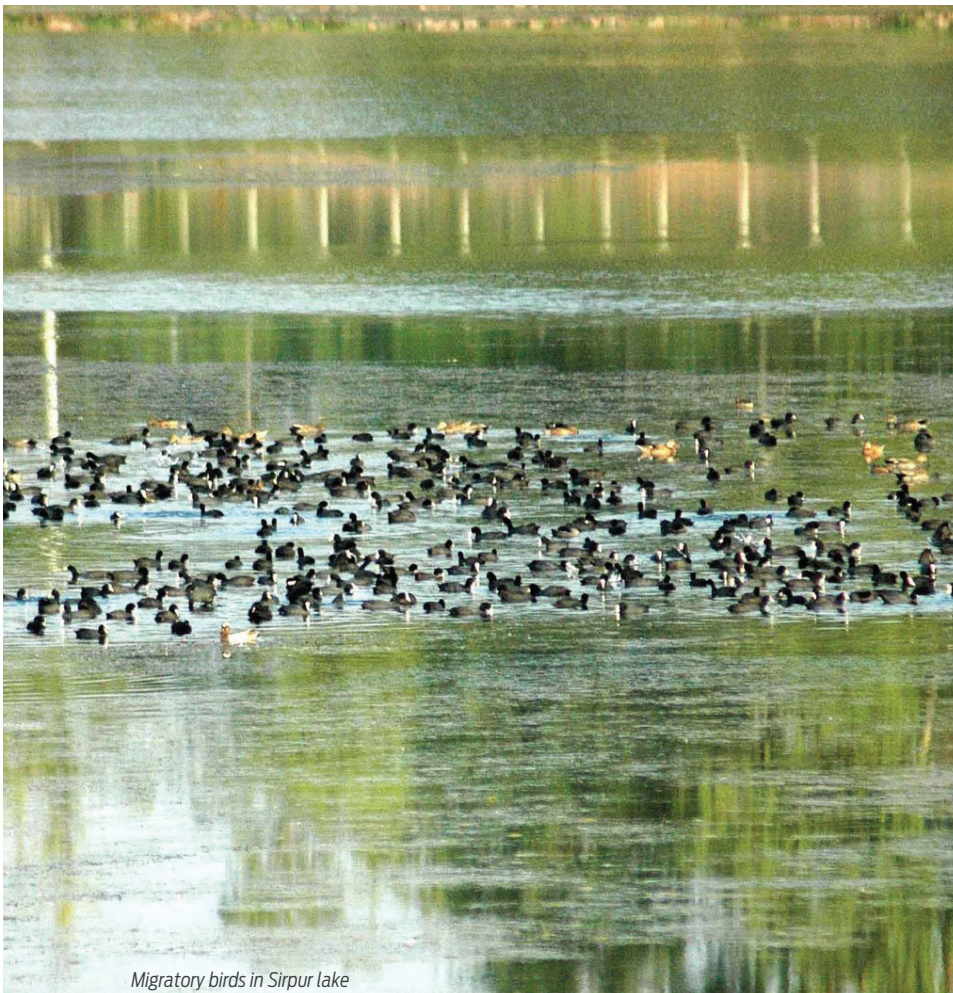
In the city of Patiala, a city roads and infrastructure has been reoriented in such a way that the roads serve the community better. 'New Urban Accessibility' (NUA) is a prototype intervention in the city of Patiala which redesigns one of the major and prominent intersection called 'Fountain Chowk' from a high conflict zone to a city wide public space that promotes accessibility and walkability, safe realm for cyclists, and resolves traffic conflicts through a pedestrian



first approach. Fountain Chowk is part of a 2 km pilot corridor on one of the prime streets of the city lined with prominent public spaces, government institutions and important buildings. NUA aligns itself to the principles of SDG to leave no one behind thereby promoting safety, inclusion and long term sustainability.

The second case comes from Bulandshahr, a small town in the vicinity of the National Capital Region and having a population of approximately 2.5 lakh inhabitants. 'Reclaim Kala Aam Intersection' is a prototype to deliver a SDG oriented approach to planning and design in the city. The chowk is one of the most symbolic landmarks of the city and sees heavy footfalls on the daily basis. Given that more than half of the city commutes via non-motorised mode of transport, the chowk also witnesses a great share of traffic fatalities involving this vulnerable group.

Addressing this, the Office of District Administration in Bulandshahr District and Bulandshahr Development Authority (BDA), Transportation Research and Injury Prevention Programme (TRIPP) introduced an intervention to develop a safer Kala Aam Chowk for pedestrians and cyclists that is currently non-existent, traffic calming for high speed motorists, freight vehicles and two wheelers, safe lighting to increase visibility at crossings that reduces accidents at night. The project is part of a city wide engagement to accelerate SDG oriented planning and design and a 2 km long pilot corridor that not only increases safety of pedestrians, cyclists, enhances walkability but also face lifts the street and intersection as a prime public space. ■



Migratory birds in Sirpur lake



SHANEER NUSRAT SIDDIQUI

Project Coordinator, Al Thuraya Astronomy Center, Dubai

Before we discuss the rise of Dubai as a trading powerhouse and a world class urban center, let's go back in time and analyse how the Emirate's name itself symbolises its potential and its core values. There are several accounts, but the most widely shared are three. One is that

Dubai is a combination of Farsi words for two brothers. Then some people associate it with a souk, while some say it came from a word meaning money.

The short of it is that since the last 12,000 years, when civilisation first started here, the Emirate has symbolised family and trade, a unique combination in the globalised world of today.

City of Dreams

Dubai is not just a country but a dream of every person living in any part of the world, who wants to see how the dreams are converted into reality... Welcome to Dubai!!!

UAE, known as the Gateway of East and West, is also called the fastest growing country in the world.

Dubai's high-rise buildings not only make us feel high and amazed but also give the viewer the inspiration to move

forward in the race of life. If you want to reach above all, Burj Khalifa's platforms are waiting for you; to see the beauty of the world from that height and it's an extraordinary experience.

Now let's go to the Burj Al Arab; the building that says that if there is any competition for the beauty of a building, I am the winner every time. There is no comparison for the interior designing and the tennis court built on the top of this building.

The beautiful beaches of Dubai give every tourist a feeling of peace and beauty that he would like to imagine every moment in his life. Visiting Palm Island seems like the sea is saying that you are in my lap and for those who are looking for fun, these beaches are a world that has no end ... Jetski, Deep Sea Fishing, Cruise, scuba diving, skydive and much more.

The shopping mall of Dubai not only

FROM A HAMLET OF PEARL DIVERS TO THE PEARL OF MIDDLE EAST



gives a unique shopping experience but also takes you in a different world of imagination, where you can enjoy activities like skiing, visit the aquarium and musical fountain as well as go shopping for the famous brands of the world. Gold, diamonds, and jewelry to spices, clothes, and electronic items... everything that is made in the world goes as far as you think. The Dubai market is a world in itself. The mystic and beautiful night of the desert is a lifetime experience. Deserts here will not make you feel dry, rather they communicate a unique energy. Desert safari is a lesson to make way in the sand, then Arabic music and belly dance.

Who can think of greenery in a desert; but Dubai is a city which is always green and fresh. You must have heard the story of the fairyland. If you want to see it, come to the miracle garden. After visiting the miracle garden, life has become fragrant and colorful like flowers.

A city where people of more than 200 nationalities live together happily, peacefully and in harmony. A city where crime rate is almost zero. Tourists always remember the police, taxi drivers and other public servants, not for their services, but for their generosity and good behavior.

Dubai's Culture

Dubai culture is an amazing mix of tradition and cosmopolitan. Increasing globalisation and the settling of various immigrant groups has transformed the city into a melting pot of different nationalities and have given rise to a cosmopolitan culture that is in sync with other global cities. Dubai's core culture mainly revolves around the religion of Islam and traditional Arab culture. The influence of Islamic and Arab culture on its architecture, music, attire, cuisine, and lifestyle are very prominent as well. The city's cultural imprint as a small, ethnically homogenous pearling community was changed with the arrival of other ethnic groups and nationals—first by the Iranians in the early 1900s, and later by Indians and Pakistanis in the 1960s.

Capitalisation and Futuristic approach of city

The process of urbanizing Dubai

with futuristic architecture has led to derivative terms iconizing Dubai as the world center of pioneering, ultramodern and cutting-edge buildings. This design has been described by some publishers as a blueprint of state-of-the-art aesthetic contours along with record-breaking ornamental features and technology, which is a model to be followed by other nations.

Dubai came to be symbolised as a sprawling mix of concrete and glass in the middle of the Arabian Desert, which boasts one of the densest collections of skyscrapers and services from banking to baking. Sustainability is not quite the word one would associate with the Emirate. Yet, in the past few years the government here is working on creating a blueprint to become a city with a smaller carbon footprint, a feat which could again make history repeat itself — how Dubai rose from a small fishing hamlet and trading village to one of the biggest centers of commerce globally.

Due to its carbon emissions, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) in its Living Planet Report in 2010 revealed that UAE residents have the biggest ecological footprint globally. But, all that is about to change as His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum has embarked on an ambitious journey where Dubai will be the city drawing three-fourths of its energy requirements through clean sources.

Although it's easier said than done, the government is serious in its endeavors and will leverage cutting edge technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Internet of Things (IoT), among others. Low-carbon projects such as Dubai's Sustainable City are just the beginning.

The Fifty-Year Charter declared by H H Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai is going to set an example of development, urbanisation and smart city approach.

Capitalisation from expansion to happiness and smartness

Dubai has experienced tremendous recent urban growth; its developed area grew from 149 square kilometers

in 1993 to 4114 square kilometers with 3.331 million population. By 2027, Dubai is expected to jump to more than five million, a city whose population that has grown 1,000 per cent in the last 40 years, making it one of the fastest growing cities on the planet. Dubai's infrastructure is not only used by the residents living in Dubai but also by another 1.1 million people who live outside of the Emirate and commute to work in the city every day.

Dubai is taking this growth as a challenge to provide all the amenities and world class infrastructure. To ensure the achievement, many amazing projects are taking shape in Dubai; Expo 2020, hyper loop, future museum, 3D building and offices, green buildings, self-sustainable buildings, etc.

Dubai launched a strategy to transform Dubai into a smart city. Under the strategy, all the government services are turned to smart government. The purpose of the project was primarily to provide seamless services to the public. People would have access to high-speed wireless internet connections to get government services from their smart devices. The project also aimed to provide bespoke and enhanced services in the fields of education, healthcare, utilities, environment and vehicular traffic and related areas.

Dubai isn't leaving the happiness of its citizens to chance. To facilitate this, a government led happiness initiative was introduced, which was an important aspect of the country's National Agenda. The happiness initiative in Dubai and the rest of the UAE aims to make the country one of the top five happiest in the world by 2021. The UAE has made history by becoming the first country to formally include happiness as one of the key goals of the government. By instituting such a department, the government has shown its dedication to promoting positivity and looking after the well-being of residents. UAE also announced key elements of its strategy – a welcoming destination for developing AI products, new education programs and championing good governance. ■

[The views expressed are the author's own. They do not purport to reflect the views of Urban Update.]

‘SDGs’ roadmap to achieve common good for all’



ASHOK WANKHADE
Managing Editor

As we approach to the 5th South Asian Cities Summit to discuss how to speed-up the process of achieving SDGs, We realise that we are running against the time. Given the damage that human expansion has done to the planet, it has become highly imperative for the nations around the world to collectively address issues like global warming, economic disparity, chronic epidemics and climate change amongst other social issues

Acting upon this, the United Nations member states framed 17 integrated global goals in 2015 which, if prioritised, would effectively check the universal problems and serve as a “universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030.” These are the Sustainable Development Goals.

In a recent conference, Eric Falt, Director and UNESCO Representative for Delhi cluster, perfectly summarised the intended purpose of these universally adapted goals in his address, “Humanity has developed a roadmap for the common good of the planet. These are the Sustainable Development Goals.”

Each goal, although multifaceted, is basically seeking to reform one problem by itself and can be phrased as ending poverty and world hunger, improving the health and well-being of each citizen, ensuring quality education to every child, achieving global equality, that is, no discrimination on race, gender etc., developing stable industry, infrastructure and implement better innovations to ensure stable economic growth and prosperity, developing sustainable cities and urban communities, instating renewable and cleaner energy alternatives and taking urgent action to address climate change.

Over 170 countries have agreed to fast track work towards achieving these goals and set up infrastructure under the guidance

of United Nations Development Program (UNDP). India is one of these countries. India promises to accelerate economic growth beyond seven per cent over the next five years while ensuring there is no compromise between the attainability of sustainability and development, as top UN officials expressed “awe” over the country’s remarkable progress in moving towards achieving SDGs.

India’s Experience in Localising the SDGs’ held at the UN Headquarters in Geneva, highlighted that in the coming five years, India would witness an accelerated growth beyond the seven per cent that we have achieved till now.

It is evident that India, in unison with the world, is striving to achieve these goals and leave the Earth suitable for future generations to thrive. However, NITI Aayog’s Sustainable Development Goals India Index 2019 (SDG II 2019), which was released in December has put forth mixed results. Although we have been able to make significant progress in multiple fields like health, water and sanitation, much more is needed to be done to mend problems like poverty, hunger and gender disparity, issues which have plagued the nation for decades.

Hopefully with the Union Budget of 2020, which was tabled as the first budget in the “decade to deliver” on the SDGs, a reinvigorated approach towards the goals is adopted. It is high time to act as, at this stage, the country requires an estimated \$2.64 trillion investment to reach the SDGs before the deadline. ■

UrbanUpdate

Setting The Agenda For Tomorrow's Cities



Urban Update Weekly Digest
NEWSLETTER

Top News



Check in on the
latest in urban
news by Jan. 10
JG BAI 2018



No. 1000 of the
City of the
Association
of May 2018



How can a
city be a
green in
the
city



1,000 Citizens
are not
enough
to
change the



1,000 Citizens
are not
enough
to
change the



1,000 Citizens
are not
enough
to
change the

WEEKLY

E-NEWSLETTER

Urban Update is a leading magazine on sustainable development of cities brought out by All India Institute of Local Self-Government (AIILSG). Bringing together the experience of the multilateral sector with that of the private sector and the local governments themselves, the magazine focuses on the challenges and solutions for city leaders and local governments.

Urban Update plays a special role – that of a primary, indispensable link among stakeholders that nurtures community. A wellspring of writing and imagery reinforces our vision of evangelizing Urban Infrastructure, Governance, Culture and Sustainability.

To get the weekly dose of Urban News

[SUBSCRIBE NOW
www.urbanupdate.in](http://www.urbanupdate.in)



urbanupdatemag



urbanupdatemgzn



urbanupdatemag

For any query, please contact our Subscription Department
e-mail at contacturbanupdate@gmail.com



5th South Asian Cities Summit

10 Years to SDGs

Enabling linkages between SDGs and city development to build better urban future

March 5-6, 2020
Cidade de Goa, India



Organiser



Supported By

30+

Countries

100+

Cities

500+

Attendees

50+

Speakers



sacsummit@aiilsg.org



@sacsaiilsg



sacsummit2020



www.sacsummit.in



@sacsummit2020



#sacsummit2020

Co Organiser



Partners



Knowledge Partners



Institutional Partners



Host City Partner



City Partners



Media Partners



Print Media



Electronic Media



Digital Media Partner



Outreach Partner



Digital Outreach Partners



Mobility Partner



Beverage Partner

