

# The Urban World

Quarterly Publication



**RCUES**  
Mumbai

**Regional Centre for Urban and Environmental Studies  
All India Institute of Local Self-Government, Mumbai**





## **Regional Centre for Urban & Environmental Studies (RCUES), Mumbai** (Supported by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India)

Established in 1926, the All India Institute of Local Self Government (AIIILSG), India is a premier autonomous research and training institution in India. The Institute was recognized as an Educational Institution by Government of Maharashtra in the year 1971. The Institute offers several regular training courses in urban development management and municipal administration, which are recognized by the Government of India and several State Governments in India.

In the year 1968, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), earlier Ministry of Urban Development), Government of India (GoI) established the Regional Centre for Urban & Environmental Studies (RCUES) at AIIILSG, Mumbai to undertake urban policy research, technical advisory services, and building work capabilities of municipal officials and elected members from the States of Goa, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and UTs of Diu, Daman, Dadra & Nagar Haveli. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Government of India added States of Assam and Tripura from February, 2012 and Lakshadweep from August 2017 to the domain of RCUES of AIIILSG, Mumbai. The RCUES is supported by the MoHUA, Government of India. The MoHUA, Government of India has formed National Review and Monitoring Committee for RCUES under the chairmanship of the Secretary, MoHUA, Government of India. The Principal Secretary, Urban Development Department, Government of Maharashtra is the ex-officio Chairman of the Advisory Committee of the RCUES, Mumbai, which is constituted by MoHUA, Government of India.

The RCUES was recognized by the MoHUA, Government of India as a National Training Institute (NTI) to undertake capacity building of project functionary, municipal officials, and municipal elected members under the earlier urban poverty alleviation programme-UBSP. The RCUES was also recognized as a Nodal Resource Centre on SJSRY (NRCS) and Nodal Resource Centre (NRC) for RAY by then the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, Government of India.

The then Ministry of Urban Employment and Poverty Alleviation (MoUE&PA), GoI and UNDP have set up the 'National Resource Centre for Urban Poverty' (NRCUP), which is anchored by RCUES at AIIILSG, Mumbai.

AIIILSG, Mumbai is empaneled by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, for providing technical support to the ULBs in the field of water supply, sanitation, sewerage and drainage systems. RCUES, Mumbai is also identified as a technical service provider in Municipal Solid Waste Management projects under Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) launched by the MoHUA, GoI.

Over the years, RCUES of AIIILSG Mumbai has been working in close coordination with state and local Governments to provide strategic, advisory, technical and capacity building support for assessment and improvement in infrastructure service delivery in cities.

Maharashtra Urban WASH and Environmental Coalition (Maha UWES-C) is a joint initiative of the RCUES of AIIILSG, Mumbai, and UNICEF Maharashtra. The Coalition brings together local organisations, thought institutions and sector experts to strengthen municipal capacities and encourage collaborative action to enhance service delivery in WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) in urban Maharashtra. The Secretariat of the Maha UWES-C is anchored at RCUES of AIIILSG Mumbai. In 2022, MoU is signed with the Directorate of Swachh Maharashtra Mission, Urban Development Department, Government of Maharashtra for building capacities, facilitating partnerships, and supporting innovations under Swachh Maharashtra Abhiyan - Urban 2.0 under Maha UWES-C.

Along with ULBs, it is also engaging with multiple stakeholders like NGOs/CBOs, SHGs, private sector organisations, financial institutions at city level for providing technical and strategic support focusing on preparing action plans/strategies, technical assessment reports, CSPs/CDPs/DPRs as well as on-ground support by engaging with communities for improvement in various urban sectors to ensure improved quality of life to the citizens. AIIILSG, Mumbai is also working at the grass root level in cities through field visits, guiding ULB officials, conducting situation assessments with the objective of bridging the gap between the cities and state for sustainable sanitation solutions under Swachh Bharat Mission Urban.

In February 2016, the then Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, Government of India empaneled the RCUES of AIIILSG, Mumbai for conducting training and capacity building programme for experts of SMMU, CMMUs, COs, Key Officials and other stakeholders of the states and ULBs under Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY – NULM).

In 2017, AIIILSG was empaneled among one of the 35 agencies in India for conducting Integrated Capacity Building Programmes (ICBP). AIIILSG Mumbai is supporting the states of Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Goa for the same.

Through all these activities, RCUES of AIIILSG Mumbai is striving to transform the notion of capacity building by not limiting itself to trainings / workshops but engaging with the state and local governments at multiple levels. With a small but enthusiastic team, RCUES, Mumbai will continue to strive towards improving the capabilities of municipal officials with a broader objective towards developing able governments thereby enabling better cities.

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## RCUES Key Publications

1. Urban Development.
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3. Solid Waste Management - Resource Material.
4. Hospital Medical Waste Management.
5. Planning for Urban Informal Sector in Highly Dense Cities.
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10. Gender Equality in Local Government - Comparative Study of Four States in Western Region in India.
11. Mapping of Basic Services in Urban Slums.
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13. Health.
14. Security of Tenure.
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16. Mumbai Human Development Report, 2009.  
(UNDP / MOH & UPA, GOI / MCGM).
17. Resource Material on Urban Poverty Alleviation.
18. Laws of Meetings.
19. Resource Material on Preparation of City Sanitation Plan (CSP) & Capacity Building for Urban Local Bodies.
20. Implementation of 74th CAA, 1992 in Urban Local Bodies and Impact Assessment of Training of Women Elected Members.



# Editorial

The urban India is facing multifaceted challenges. By 2050, sixty percent of the population of India will turn 'urban'. The metropolis and cities are considered to be the engines of economic growth. How to put in place, the national strategies to overcome the challenges of climate change and social inequity has become a greatest concern for urban planners, policymakers, and politicians. The budgetary allocations are also geared in this direction.

Making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable is the aim of The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 11). To make efficient public infrastructure, environmental governance, and sustainable cities, the urban local self-government bodies have initiated capacity-building workshops with inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary perspectives. Expert engineers, scientists, urban planners, social scientists and management wizards, veteran IT professionals are associated with the Smart City Mission and Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation of India. When multiple stakeholders execute a development plan that is data-driven and technologically advanced, the results are encouraging for social infrastructure such as health, education, sanitation, environmental safety as well as physical infrastructure such as roads, railways, bridges, tunnels, scarcity of water supply, sewers, electrical grids, telecommunications, and internet connectivity. Announcements of Climate Action Plans by several tier I, II, III cities over the last 5 years, are leading urban India towards transformative changes in terms of becoming net-zero, promoters of urban forests and natural heritage, thereby enhancing their aesthetic appeal along with liveability quotients.

At the same time, we need to accept that many cities continue to struggle with insufficient basic infrastructure and a lack of affordable transport services and high-quality healthcare facilities, affordable housing for the migrant workforce, primitive solid waste management, worsening traffic congestion, and air-water-soil pollution. These cities are also prone to devastating climate change-related risks from extreme weather events such as floods, extreme heat, or extreme cold. The land reclamation has resulted in the coastal cities facing the brunt of the rising sea level. There needs to be gender inclusive perspective on urban development that includes the safety and accessibility of all services to women, children, gender minorities, the elderly, and people with disabilities in cities that remain unaddressed. The urban planning and governance discourse needs to be extended to civil society organizations, community-based associations, residential societies, colleges, and schools. This is a mandate to generate a responsible citizenry committed to safe and smart cities.

# Cities & Interim Union Budget 2024-25 towards Viksit Bharat: Opportunities & Challenges for Urban Development

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## **Abstract**

*The Interim Budget 2024 has intended to address some of the longstanding urban challenges through budgetary reallocations across different urban sector schemes. The benefits to be accrued out of these schemes depend not just on the budgetary allocations but on the nature of institutional structures through which the policies are being implemented. The budget underscores the government's commitment to improve the lives of urban citizens. This necessitates appropriate institutional reforms with greater scope for people's participation in the formulation and implementation of urban plans and policies.*

## **Introduction**

India is urbanizing and projections are that by 2047, India will have half of its population in cities. The policymakers are thus facing a challenging task of addressing two conflicting objectives - one relates to serving the city population's needs for basic services and the other one relates to infrastructural needs for making cities engines of economic growth. Climate change-induced developments have only made the task of managing the cities more challenging.

The reality is that the fast-growing cities in India often have the fewest resources to maintain pace with the growth as they are constrained by stagnant

economies, weak institutions, and low capacity. The Central flagship programs including Smart Cities Mission (SCM), Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT), Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0 (SBM-U 2.0), Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U), and so on, coupled with many infrastructural development have attempted to address the urban problems through promotion of sustainable infrastructure development and efficiency enhancement of Indian cities.

The Union Budget of India holds immense significance as it outlines the financial roadmap for the nation, guiding its economic trajectory and development priorities. As the annual financial statement presented by the government, it serves as a comprehensive document detailing revenue and expenditure allocations across various sectors, reflecting the administration's policy direction and priorities.

Against this background, the finer budgetary details of the resource allocation in urban programs under the Interim Budget 2024-25 entail crucial implications for the scope and nature of urban policy-making in India. Importantly, this budget is a vote-on-account with the government provision approved essential expenditures for the limited period before the full budget to be announced in



July post the establishment of the new government. The new budget is expected to drive the vision of

Viksit Bharat (Developed India) by 2047 with cities being one of its important fulcrums.

### Urban India's Budget at a Glance

| Centre's Expenditure<br>(in INR crores)   | Actual 2022-<br>2023<br>Total | Budget<br>Estimate<br>2023-2024<br>Total | Revised<br>Estimate<br>2023-2024<br>Total | Interim<br>Budget<br>2024-2025<br>Total |
|---|-------------------------------|--|---|---|
| <b>Gross Recoveries Receipts Net</b>  | 77310                         | 76431                                    | 69270                                     | 77523                                   |
| <b>Total MRTS and Metro<br/>Projects</b>  | 23603                         | 23175                                    | 23104                                     | 24931                                   |
| <b>PMAY (U) - 1. Credit Linked<br/>Subsidy Scheme (CLSS) - I for<br/>Economically Weaker<br/>Section (EWS)/Lower Income<br/>Group (LIG)</b> | 10820                         | 0.01                                     | 0   | 0                                       |
| <b>Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana<br/>Urban (Total)</b>   | 28652                         | 25103                                    | 22103                                     | 26170                                   |
| <b>Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-<br/>National Urban Livelihood Mission<br/>DAY- NULM</b>  | 547                           | 0.01                                     | 523                                       | 0.02                                    |
| <b>Pradhan Mantri's Street<br/>Vendors's Atmanirbhar Nidhi<br/>(PM - SVANIDHI)</b>  | 405                           | 468                                      | 468                                       | 326                                     |
| <b>AMRUT (Atal Mission for<br/>Rejuvenation and Urban<br/>Transformation)</b>   | 6499                          | 8000                                     | 5200                                      | 8000                                    |
| <b>Smart Cities Mission - Mission<br/>for Development of 100 Smart<br/>Cities</b>   | 8479                          | 7665                                     | 7718                                      | 2237                                    |
| <b>Smart City Mission - City<br/>Investment to Innovate, Integrate<br/>and Sustain (CITIES)</b>   | 233                           | 334                                      | 281                                       | 163                                     |
| <b>Total- Smart City Mission</b>  | 8652                          | 8000                                     | 8000                                      | 2400                                    |
| <b>Swachh Bharat Mission - Urban</b>  | 1926                          | 5000                                     | 2550                                      | 5000                                    |

Source: <https://www.indiabudget.gov.in/doc/eb/sbe60.pdf>

## **Deciphering the Budgetary Allocations**

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) Budget Estimate (BE) for urban development has increased by 12% from FY 2023-24 Revised Estimate (RE) of budget of INR 69.3 thousand crore and now stands at INR 77.5 thousand crore. In last year's budget, the ministry was allotted BE of INR 76.4 thousand crores.

### ***Smart Cities Mission (SCM) and the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT)***

The Smart Cities Mission and the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation under MoHUA's flagship schemes- have received a lower budget allocation of INR 10.4 thousand crores (BE) in FY 2024-25, compared to INR 16 thousand crore (BE) and INR 13.2 thousand crores (RE) in FY 2023-24. In the previous fiscal year, the actual for FY 2022-23 was INR 15.1 thousand crore. A significant dip in budgetary allocations for the Smart Cities Mission from INR 7.6 thousand crores in the revised budget of 2023-24 to an outlay of INR 2.3 thousand crores in 2024-25 is strategic in nature with SCM's forthcoming expiration in June 2024.

The Smart Cities Mission, to provide core infrastructure, a clean and sustainable environment through the application of 'smart solutions' has encountered its share of challenges, as revealed in the recent report presented in the Lok Sabha this session. Despite significant progress, the mission faces hurdles, with 400 projects, valued at Rs 22.8 thousand crores, anticipated to extend beyond the revised deadline of December 2024.

On 1<sup>st</sup> December, 2023 out of 7,970 projects across 100 cities, 6,419 projects worth Rs 1.2 lakh crores have been completed, demonstrating substantial advancement. Nevertheless, 1,551 projects, valued at Rs 45.2 thousand crores, are currently in progress. The disparity in progress is also evident across cities, with certain regions lagging.

Particularly, North-Eastern and Himalayan cities, along with small Union Territories, face notable delays. Among the cities, Madurai stands out, having accomplished 100% of its smart city projects by December 2024. Contrastingly, cities like Gangtok, Atal Nagar, Shillong, and others have completed only a fraction of their projects, showcasing progress rates ranging from 16% to 39%. Delays stem from various factors, including complexities in the resettlement of local populations, legal intricacies like land procurement, and administrative issues such as frequent transfers of smart cities' CEOs. Additionally, projects requiring coordination with multiple government ministries or agencies contribute to the slow progress.

The budget estimate for the AMRUT scheme remained the same as the previous year in FY 2024-25 at 8 thousand crores, recording a slight increase from actual estimates of INR 6.5 thousand crores in 2022-23. The City Investment to Innovate, Integrate, and Sustain (CITIES) was allocated INR 163 crore, a dip from last year's INR 334 crore. Allocation of funds to the tune of INR 1.4 thousand crores under the National Urban Digital Mission can potentially improve the delivery of basic urban services and strengthen the capacity of the urban ecosystem.

### ***Housing for All***

One of the key takeaways of the Interim Budget 2024-25 is the thrust on launching “a scheme to help deserving sections of the middle class living in rented houses, or slums, or chawls and unauthorized colonies to buy or build their own houses”. The Government of India has placed affordable housing at the forefront of its agenda, recognizing it as a crucial priority as reaffirmed by the Prime Minister on 15th August 2023, and further solidified by the FM's subsequent announcement in the Interim Budget. The aim is to ensure an adequate supply of affordable housing options in the cities.



The PMAY-U, flagship central scheme for urban housing, has been allocated INR 26,170 crores in the Interim Budget, equivalent to an increase of 18 percent over the budgetary figure of INR 22,103 crores (revised estimates) of the last financial year (BE for FY 2023-24 was INR 225.1 thousand crores). Although the budget for PMAY-U decreased in FY 2023-24 after achieving Housing for All by 2022, it has seen a slight increase in this year's budget.

This push towards urban housing is a timely intervention against the backdrop of increasing urban housing shortages of 54 percent amounting to 29 million in 2018 as reported in the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) Report of 2020 (Roy and Meera, 2020). Increasing budgetary allocation for PMAY-U, seems to be based on better performance of the PMAY-U scheme as compared to the previous centrally sponsored housing schemes. On 29th January 2024 around 118.63 lakh houses were sanctioned, of which 114.01 lakh houses were grounded for construction and 80.02 lakh houses were completed. Since the inception of PMAY-U in 2015, a total of 1.19 crores houses have been sanctioned.

The PMAY comprises four verticals: In Situ Re-Development of Slums (ISSR); Credit-Linked Subsidy for Housing (CLSS); Affordable Housing in Partnership (AHP), and; Enhancement, Construction of Beneficiary Led Construction of houses (BLC). Out of the total 118.63 lakh houses sanctioned, among the PMAY-U program verticals, the composition of sanctioned houses was 2.96, 74.64, 15.98, and 25.05 lakhs for ISSR, BLC, AHP, and CLSS respectively. The total interest subsidy released under CLSS was INR 58.8 thousand crores, out of which INR 45.9 thousand crores was for EWS/LIG and INR 12.8 thousand crores for MIG.

However, despite the physical progress of the PMAY-U, its potential to achieve the goal of housing is constrained by disparate factors that

include legislative hindrances and bureaucratic delays in easing the supply of land, inadequate subsidy under the ISSR vertical, inconvenient location of housing units with lack of access to basic urban services, absence of participatory avenues to know about the nature of housing needs and absence of proper planning to facilitate private sector involvement (Kumar and Chattopadhyay, 2022). There is an urgent need for renewed thrust from all the stakeholders to address the complexities about the redevelopment of slums and unplanned settlement and planned supply of affordable housing.

### ***Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0***

The Swachh Bharat Mission Urban received a substantial increase in allocations of INR 5 thousand crores, which is the same as the BE for FY 2023-24 but almost double that of the revised estimate for of INR 2.5 thousand crores. The inability of the government to spend the entirety of the allocation reflects the need for increased vigour in the implementation of the scheme. However, an increase in allocation does point to a positive commitment to a cleaner India, with support for the scientific management of dry and wet waste, mechanized desludging of septic tanks and sewers, and sanitation.

### ***Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihood Mission & PM-SVANIDHI***

A meager budgetary allocation under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihood Mission (DAY-NULM) is a serious policy concern. Street Vendors Scheme (PM-SVANIDHI) with a budgetary allocation of INR 326 crores is expected to counterbalance the dip in allocation for the DAY-NULM although it sees a slight decrease in its allocation from INR 468 crores (BE 2023-24). PM-SVANIDHI is a micro-credit scheme that provides collateral-free working capital loans of up to INR 50 thousand to street

vendors. It has provided credit assistance to 78 lakh street vendors, out of which 2.3 lakh have received credit for the third time.

### ***Development of Urban Transport & Mobility***

The Metros and MRTS scheme saw a slight increase in BE for FY 2024-25 at INR 24.9 thousand crores compared to FY 2022-23 at INR 23.1 thousand crore. This has the potential for improving interconnectivity across larger and smaller towns in turn facilitating speedy and cost-effective access to jobs, contributing to economic efficiency enhancement of the cities. The National Capital Region Transport Corporation received BE of INR 3.5 thousand crores for FY 2024-25 which was the same as the BE & RE for FY 2023-24. The actuals for FY 2022-23 were INR 4.7 thousand crores.

With the expansion of metro rail and the introduction of the Namo Bharat project, which includes the Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS), the government aims to address the pressing needs of urban and regional connectivity. Metro rail services have already become a lifeline for commuters in several cities, offering efficient and rapid transit options. Additionally, the impending completion of the RRTS project, particularly the corridor linking Delhi with Meerut, underscores the commitment to enhancing connectivity across regions.

The focus on Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) is particularly noteworthy, as it emphasizes creating integrated communities around transit hubs, thereby reducing reliance on personal vehicles and alleviating issues like traffic congestion and emissions. By investing in metro/rapid rail projects and electric bus services, the government aims to bridge the existing gaps in intra-urban and regional connectivity.

The allocation of Rs 1.3 thousand crores to procure electric buses under the PM-eBus Sewa scheme is another significant step towards promoting

sustainable urban mobility. With plans to provide 10,000 electric buses to 169 cities through public-private partnerships, the scheme not only aims to modernize public transportation but also mitigate the environmental impact of traditional fossil fuel-powered vehicles.

Moreover, the long-term vision of the scheme, extending till 2037, will have an outlay of Rs 57.6 thousand crores, of which Rs 20 thousand crore will be provided by the Centre, and the rest will be borne by the states.

### ***Other Infrastructural Schemes***

Under the National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) project the government announced an 11.1 percent increase in infrastructure spending focusing on the energy, metros, railway, and capital goods sectors. The government has also in recent years increased its focus on multimodal interconnectivity between various economic zones through PM Gati Shakti. The announcement of three major railway economic corridors namely, energy, mineral, and cement corridors, port connectivity corridors, and high traffic density corridors is aimed at boosting the GDP and reducing logistic costs. Under the National Industrial Corridor Programme the government has started the development of 11 industrial corridors across the country, with the establishment of the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor at the forefront. The focus on smooth connectivity also extends at an international level with the India-Middle East Economic Corridor highlighted as an economic and strategic game-changer in the Finance Minister's speech. Although targeted at trade enhancement, the incidental benefits of these schemes can be expected to impact the urban sphere, with greater and faster infrastructure development.

### **Challenges Ahead**

Through yearly budgetary reallocations across different schemes, the government has intended to



address some of the long standing urban challenges. However, the benefits to be accrued out of these schemes depend not just on the budgetary allocations but on the nature of institutional structures through which the policies are being implemented and have an impact on the lives of urban citizens. Low utilization of program funds is a serious problem. JNNURM and SCM recorded only 50 percent utilization rates. Another flagship scheme, AMRUT recorded scheme utilization figures of 51 percent and 30 percent respectively for water supply and sewerage projects.

Another defining challenge of cities is the lack of reliable data. Cities cannot solve problems that are poorly understood, and many cities have only limited information on the needs of their residents. For example, in the case of urban housing, neither the developers possess knowledge about the needs of low-income households nor do these households find opportunities to get involved in different stages of housing projects. Such large information gaps lead to misinformed, incomplete policy responses.

City governments are expected to play a crucial role in designing and implementing urban policies. The 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act (CAA) has provision for devolution of decentralized powers and essential functions related to city planning, poverty alleviation, and provision of basic services to the city governments and citizen participation in city governance.

Even after 30 years of the 74<sup>th</sup> CAA, not a single city government in India has control over all 18 functions as specified in the 12th Schedule. State governments have created parastatal agencies and Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) that perform some of the specified municipal functions. The presence of multiple agencies creates fragmentation in the decision-making structure and coordination problems, leading to duplication of work and poor service delivery. The dominance of state institutions and SPVs at the expense of the near

absence of local planners and locally elected representatives in designing the city development plans has increased the risk of making those plans more elitist. The scope of peoples' participation in urban governance has remained elusive as the Ward Committees have hardly been formed or functional in the majority of the Indian cities.

The cities face revenue shortfalls as municipal revenue continues to account for a small share of GDP in India. The majority of our cities are unable to exploit the full potential of property tax owing to the problems of under-assessment of properties, poor collection, and widespread exemptions. User charges, on average, even failed to cover 50 percent of the operation and maintenance cost of basic urban services. Some cities adhere to 'piggybacking' of user charges on property tax which itself has unidentified bases and suffers from the problem of improper valuation. Alarming, cities tend to spend more on a per capita basis on general administration and salaries and wages. So, little funds are left for development purposes and this limits the city governments' capacity to provide urban infrastructure and basic services. Essentially, the cities often get entangled in a vicious circle where the paucity of resources causes poor service delivery, leading to poor revenue generation. The poor financial health of the cities makes them unattractive to private investors, further constraining the scope of public-private partnerships and municipal bonds.

Unlike the other two Fs – functions and finances, there is far less emphasis on the functionaries and institutional capacity of city government. While the 74<sup>th</sup> CAA has created a platform for local action, effective utilization of that platform depends upon institutional capacity to carry out the devolved responsibilities. The city governments face acute shortages of staff in general and technical staff in particular, with such shortages being severe for the smaller cities. The city governments even do not have flexibility in deploying municipal cadres as

per local needs. This restricts the city governments' capacity to respond to local changes. In 2022, the FM announced the constitution of a high-level committee of reputed urban planners, urban economists, and institutions and designated five institutions as centers of excellence with an allocation of Rs 250 crore each for "India-specific urban knowledge". Concerted follow-up of this initiative would directly address the capacity issues as well as the governance deficits.

Overall, while the budget is a good step forward, it needs to be backed by appropriate institutional

reforms with greater scope for people's participation in the formulation and implementation of urban plans and policies. The budgetary provisions and initiatives, particularly within the sphere of urban development, underscore the government's commitment to nurturing inclusive urban development and elevating the standard of living for its citizens. It is thus, important to reflect on the learning from the past exercises of urban policy-making and understanding ways in which such learning can be integrated into existing urban policies.

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# Women Reservation Act, 2023

## Participation of Women in the Electoral Politics of India

**Dr. Vibhuti Patel,**  
Distinguished Visiting Professor,  
IMPRI, New Delhi.

### Introduction

With the passing of the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam (NSVA) 2023 (128<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Bill) i.e. Women Reservation Act, 2023 that promises women's reservation in the Parliament of India. Indian women have entered an era of stronger representation and agenda-setting power at a national level. On 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2023, the bill became an Act of the Parliament of India. The NSVA ensures 33% reservation of seats in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies for women. The Act reserves one-third of the seats in Lok Sabha, State legislative assemblies, and the Delhi assembly. This will also apply to the seats reserved for SCs (Scheduled Castes) and STs (Scheduled Tribes) in Lok Sabha and State Legislatures. In the seats reserved for SCs/STs, the act provides one-third of the seats to be reserved for women on a rotational basis. The NSVA introduced Article 332A, which mandates the reservation of seats for women in every state Legislative Assembly (Thakur, 2004).

### From Toehold to Foothold: Indian Women's Journey in the Electoral Politics

Currently, There are 82 women members of Parliaments in LS (15.2%) and 31 women in Rs. (13%). While the number has increased significantly since the 1st Lok Sabha (5%) but is still far lower than in many countries. Women

candidates find it very difficult to win the legislative Assembly and Parliamentary elections due to onslaught of money power, muscle power and misogyny. It can be countered only by affirmative action of women's quota. According to Sweden-based International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), besides 40 countries the countries which have mandated quota for women, major political parties in more than 50 countries have voluntarily set out quota provisions in their own statutes. According to recent UN Women data, Rwanda in Africa (61%), Cuba (53%) and Nicaragua (52%) in Latin America are the top three countries in women representation in the parliament. Bangladesh (21%) and Pakistan (20%) as well are ahead of India in case of representation of women in the National Assembly. According to the report of the Election Commission of India (ECI), women represent 10.5% of all Members of Parliament as of October 2021 and for all the state assemblies, women MLAs' representation stands at an average of 9%.

### Reservation for Women in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)

Since 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments in 1994 that granted 33% and over last 30 years more than 18 states have granted 50 % reservation of seats for women in the urban and rural local self-



government bodies, women have become a political constituency both as voters and as candidates (Patel, 2002). Reduction of voting age to 18 has brought a huge number of young educated women in the voters list. Voters education programmes conducted by NGOs and Election Commissioner's office also make them aware about importance of voting to nurture democratic governance of India. Political parties have recognised women voters but when it comes to selection of candidates they ignore dedicated, sincere women party workers who have devoted the best years of their life for work of their respective parties. Till now, selection of candidates is based on lineage, muscle power and money bag (Heredia, 2012).

Lack of gender perspective is a marked feature of the Party Manifestos of major political parties. For past two decades, While every National Level Party has been offering lip services to promote women's agenda due to pressure from National Alliance of Women's Organisations and united efforts of 8 all India Women's organizations such as All India Women's Conference (AIWC), National Federation of Women (NFIW), All India Democratic Women's Association (AIDWA), Mahila Daxata Samiti

(MDS), Joint Women's Programmes (JWP), Forum for Child Care Services (FORCES), Centre for Women's Development Studies (CWDS) and Young Women Christian Association (YWCA), in actual reality all political parties have betrayed women's cause. Its glaring example is absence of concerted effort to pass the bill for 33% reservation for women in the parliament that got introduced in the Parliament of India after 14 failed attempts between 1996 and 2011.

Since the year 2000 women's groups have been giving memorandum to all political parties to fulfill their charter of demand and not to give tickets to man with criminal records and past history of violence against women in their personal or public life. But none of them have included this demand in their election manifesto or political practice.

## Historic Legacy of Lobbying for the Women's Reservation in India

The Women's Reservation Bill was first introduced in the Lok Sabha as the 81st Amendment Bill in September 1996 by the Deve Gowda-led United Front government. Though the bill was introduced in Parliament several times, it was not taken up for consideration and put to vote. Successive

| Women's Reservation Bill: A Timeline  | Why Women in Legislation Matter   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ First introduced in Parliament in 1996 under Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda; no government has passed the bill yet</li> <li>◆ In its current version, called the 108th Constitution Amendment Bill, it reserves one-third (33%) of all seats for women in the Lok Sabha and the State legislative assemblies</li> <li>◆ Reserves 1/3rd of total number of seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes for women of those groups</li> <li>◆ In the Lok Sabha, 1/3rd of all constituencies will be reserved for women on rotation basis</li> <li>◆ Reservation will cease to exist 15 years after the commencement of the Amendment Act</li> <li>◆ The Rajya Sabha passed this bill on March 9, 2010, but the Lok Sabha never voted on it</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Better Economic Performance:</b> Women legislators raise economic performance by about 1.8 percentage points per year</li> <li>◆ <b>Fewer Criminal Charges:</b> Women are only one-third as likely as men to be carrying pending criminal charges while entering office</li> <li>◆ <b>Less Corrupt:</b> Their material assets grow by 10 percentage points lesser than male counterparts, indicating that women are less likely to be corrupt</li> <li>◆ <b>Get Work Done:</b> Share of incomplete road infrastructure projects is 22 percentage points lower for women than male legislators</li> <li>◆ <b>Conscientious:</b> Women are more efficacious and less vulnerable to political opportunism</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>SOURCE</b> 'Women legislators and economic performance' paper by the United Nations (UN) University World Institute for Development Economics Research, 2018</p>  |   |

governments had shelved it on the pretext of what they call 'lack of political consensus'. India taking presidentship in G20 and raising the lead slogan of 'women-led development' and 27 years of hard work and dedication by the women's rights movement have finally materialized into a historic win in the parliament of India. This opens the way ahead for our enduring struggle to achieve political equality (Jain, 2000).

Geeta Mukherjee (8 January 1924-4 March 2000) a veteran political activist, social worker and a four times MLA from Panskura Purba constituency in West Bengal, from 1967 to 1977. As a Member of Parliament, she was elected seven times from the Panskura constituency, from 1980 to 2000; who led the demand for the legislature of 1/3rd reservation for women in parliamentary elections in India. She

also Chaired Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) which had examined the 1996 Bill and made seven recommendations.

As the then Government lacked a majority, the Bill could not have been approved.

Earlier Attempts at Reserving Seats for Women:

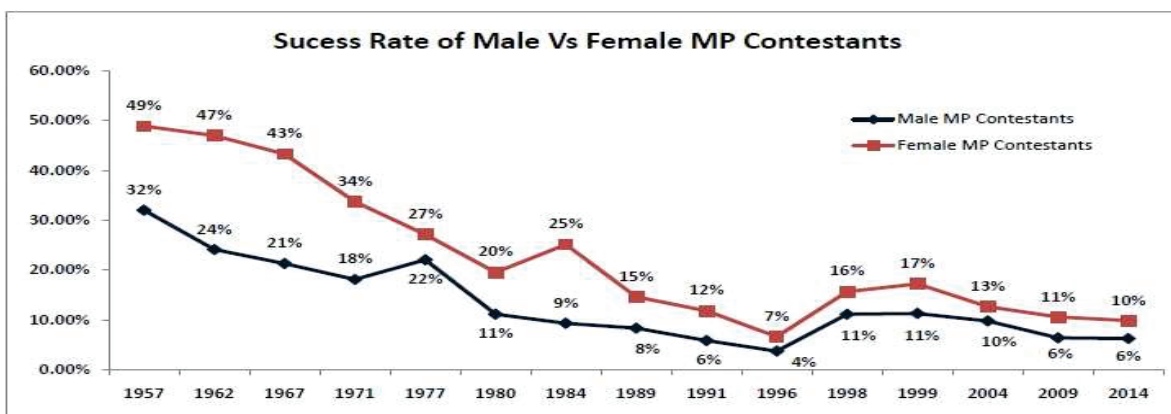
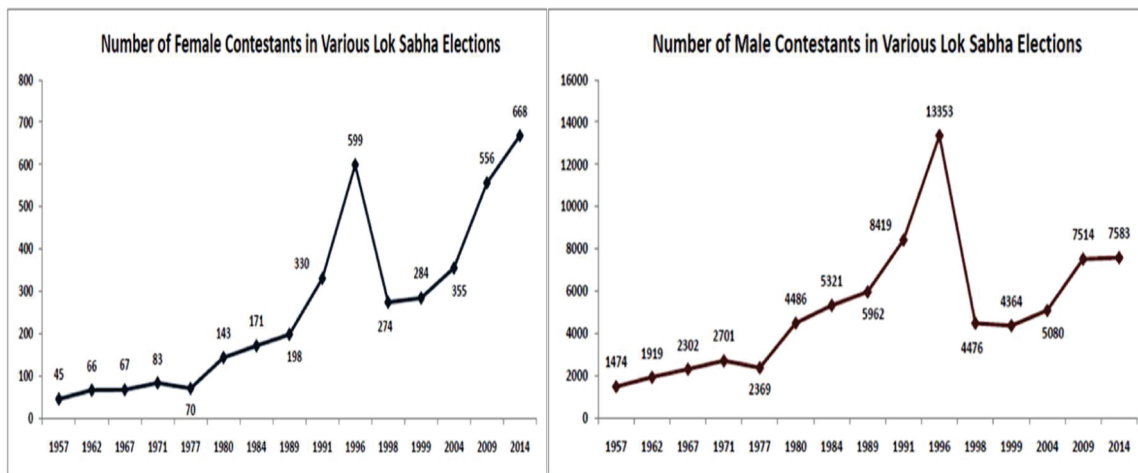
**1996:** First Women Reservation Bill was introduced in the Parliament.

**1998 – 2003:** The government tabled the Bill on 4 occasions but failed.

**2009:** The government tabled the bill amid protests.

**2010:** The Union Cabinet passed the Bill and Rajya Sabha passed it.

**2014:** The Bill was expected to be tabled in Lok Sabha which did not happen.



Source: Source: Bhanupriya Rao <https://factly.in/women-mps-in-lok-sabha-how-have-the-numbers-changed>. Accessed on 6-12-2023

## What were the Hurdles?

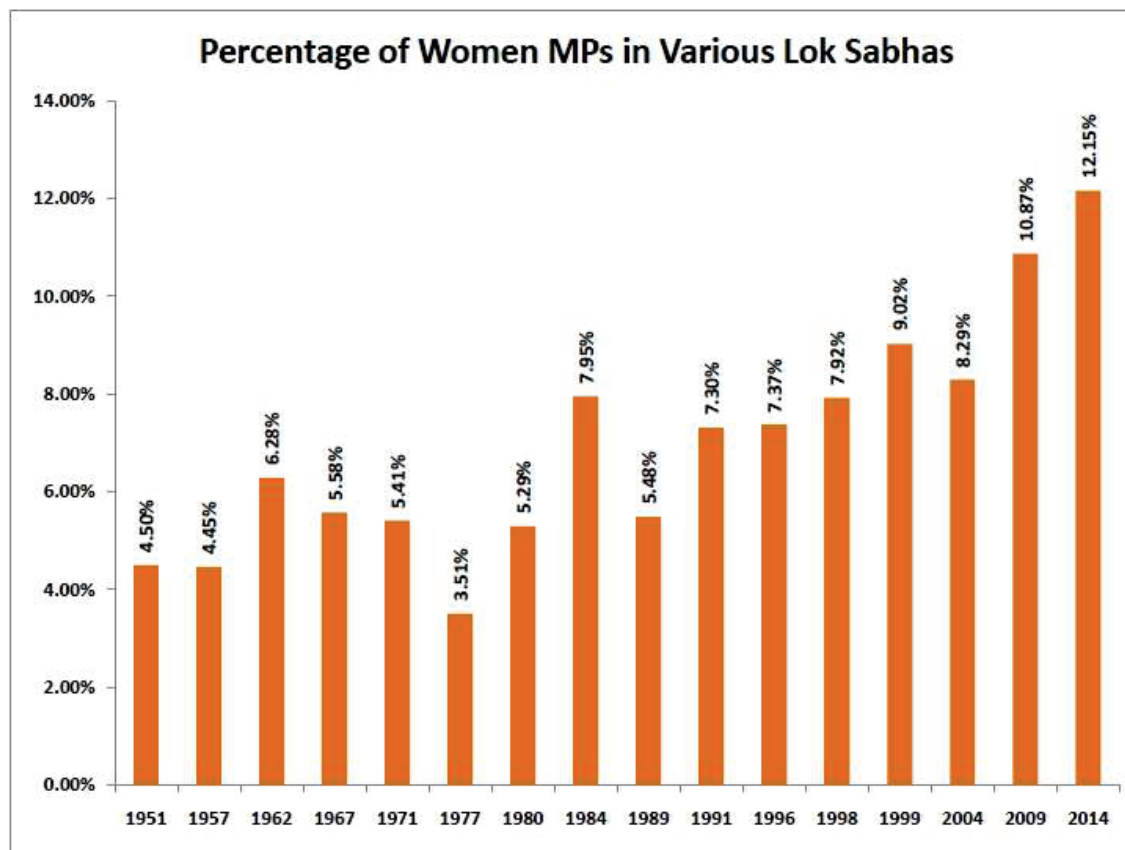
### Presumption of "Win-ability"

All political parties ignore women foot-soldiers who have dedicated 20-30-40 best years of their lives for party work- mobilisation on the issues of regional or national importance, door-to-door campaigning for party rallies, public meetings, demonstrations, jail bhara, picketing, day-to-day activities of organization, community work, networking, writing press releases-leaflets-pamphlets- circulars, in short from writing to fighting; when selection of candidates for Legislative Assemblies or parliamentary seats is done. What women party workers lack is not 'win-ability' but the backing of money and muscle power! (Patel, 1987).

Women politicians of all national parties were jubilant when the Bill on 33% reservation of seats in the parliament was introduced on 9-3-2010 in Rajya Sabha and also got passed. But Lok Sabha did not pass it. Not only that, but their own political parties, even when headed by women did not give party tickets to veteran/seasoned women political workers for the 16<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha Election in 2014. For the 17<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha election, only All India Trinamul Congress and Biju Janata Dal has given more than 1/3<sup>rd</sup> tickets to their women candidates. The major national parties have not kept their promise as the table below reveals.

### Toxic Patriarchy and Criminalisation of Politics

Women Activists of Social Movements are politically articulate, have courage of conviction to



Source: Bhanupriya Rao <https://factly.in/women-mps-in-lok-sabha-how-have-the-numbers-changed>. Accessed on 6-12-2023.

**Distribution of Party Candidature to Men and Women by Political Parties in India  
for the Lok Sabha Election in 2019**

| Name of Political Party                                  | Number of Men Candidates | Number of Women Candidates | % of women candidates |
|--|--------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| All India Trinamul Congress                              | 42                       | 17                         | 40.47 %               |
| Biju Janata Dal  | 19                       | 7                          | 36.84 %               |
| Rashtriya Janata Dal                                     | 17                       | 3                          | 17.64 %               |
| Samajwadi Party  | 29                       | 5                          | 17.24 %               |
| Indian National Congress                                 | 344                      | 47                         | 13.66 %               |
| Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam                            | 23                       | 3                          | 13.04 %               |
| Bharatiya Janata Party                                   | 374                      | 45                         | 12.03 %               |
| Telangana Rashtra Samithy                                | 17                       | 2                          | 11.76 %               |
| Nationalist Congress Party                               | 18                       | 2                          | 11.11 %               |
| <i>Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam</i>                         | 20                       | 2                          | 10.00 %               |
| Praja Socialist Party                                    | 35                       | 3                          | 08.57 %               |
| Bahujan Samaj Party                                      | 12                       | 1                          | 08.33 %               |
| Janata Dal (United)                                      | 17                       | 1                          | 05.88 %               |
| <i>All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)</i> | 21                       | 1                          | 04.76 %               |
| Shiv Sena  | 22                       | 1                          | 04.54 %               |

Source: Compiled from the press releases of the above mentioned political parties

fight for their agenda. They command credibility and social respectability for their sincerely, Spartan lifestyle and solidarity towards the marginalised sections. But most of them shun electoral politics as they find it too murky and under the control of toxic and misogynistic patriarchs (Dhanmanjari Sathe, Stephen Klasen, Jan Priebe, Mithila Biniwale, 2013). Enormous use of money and muscle power to win elections also makes political life difficult for women. It is in this context that the demand of 33% reservation of seats for women in the Parliament and State Assemblies becomes extremely important for the deepening of democracy for which passage of Women's Reservation Bill by Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies and at least 1/3rd of reserved seats for women in all internal committees of political parties are imperative (Patel, 1988).

### **Reservation for Women in Lower House:**

It is in this context, that we need to reflect on NSVA.

- **The NSVA has provided for inserting Article 330A into the constitution:** It is borrowed from the provisions of Article 330, which provides for the reservation of seats to SCs/STs in the Lok Sabha. The NSVA provided that reserved seats for women may be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in states or Union Territories. In the seats reserved for SCs/STs, the Bill sought to provide one-third of the seats to be reserved for women on a rotational basis.
- **Reservation for Women in State Legislative Assemblies:** The NSVA introduces Article



332A, which mandates the reservation of seats for women in every state Legislative Assembly. Additionally, one-third of the seats reserved for SCs and STs must be allocated for women, and one-third of the total seats filled through direct elections to the Legislative Assemblies shall also be reserved for women.

- **Reservation for Women in NCT of Delhi (New clause in 239AA):** Article 239AA to the constitution grants special status to the Union Territory of Delhi as the national capital concerning its administrative and legislative functioning. Article 239AA (2) (b) was amended by the NSVA accordingly to add that the laws framed by Parliament shall apply to the National Capital Territory of Delhi.

### Commencement of Reservation (New Article – 334A):

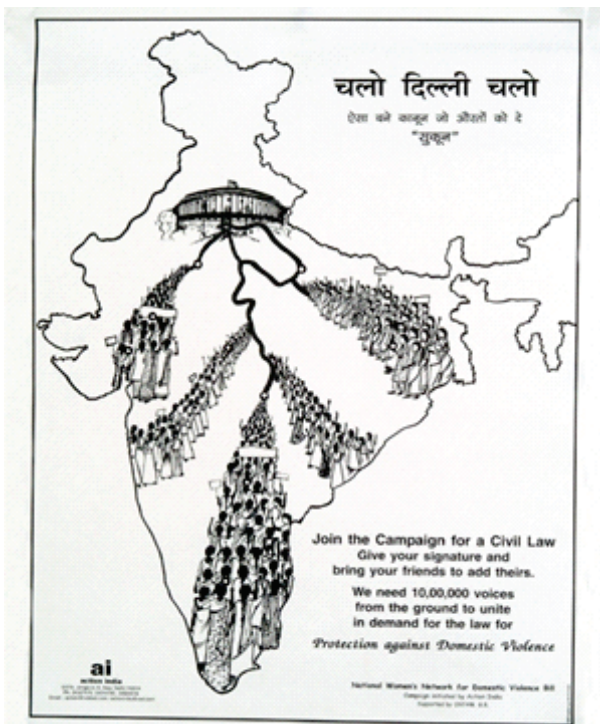
The reservation will be effective after the census conducted after the commencement of this Act is published. Based on the census, delimitation will

be undertaken to reserve seats for women. The reservation will be provided for 15 years. However, it shall continue till such date as determined by a law made by Parliament.

**Rotation of Seats:** Seats reserved for women will be rotated after each delimitation, as determined by a law made by Parliament.

### Criticism of the Women’s Movement

The women’s rights movement is unhappy about the fact that NSVA merely reads that it shall come into effect after an exercise of delimitation is undertaken for this purpose after the relevant figures for the first Census taken after the commencement of the NSVA is undertaken. It doesn’t specify the cycle of elections from which women will get their due share. Another, contestation comes from the feature of the NSVA that does not provide women’s reservation in the Rajya Sabha and State Legislative Councils. The Rajya Sabha currently has the lower representation of women than the Lok Sabha. Women’s



### Contribution of Women in Political Decision Making and Governance



organizations aver that representation is an ideal that must be reflected in both the Lower and Upper Houses. They pointed out that NSVA also borrowed from the provisions of Article 334 of the Constitution of India which mandated the parliament to review the provisions of reservation after 70 years of the laws coming into existence. But in the case of the women's reservation, the NSVA provided for the sunset clause of 15 years for the reservation provisions for the women to get reviewed by the parliament.

Women's Leadership in political governance prioritises human development action agenda, with quota of 33% seats in the parliament and legislative assembly, women's weight in the decision making will be critical minimum (ICRW, 2012). Experiences of elected women representatives in the rural and urban local self-government bodies since 1994 have revealed that given the opportunity for collective efforts, they have nurtured their constituencies with efficiency and honesty of purpose (Ghosh, 2002). Their record for executing pulse polio campaign, provisioning of water-electricity- road construction, school, health centre, minor irrigation have been recognised in a national level study by NIRD-UNDP (2002).

To translate constitutional guarantee of equality into substantive equality, the nation needs to ensure equality of opportunity, equality of treatment, equality of space in public life for nation building, and, women's quota as an affirmative action is a measure in this direction. It is also a win-win formula for the community, region and the nation (IAWS, 2002).

Nurturing women's leadership to compensate for a historical neglect and channelising talented and motivated women's ability for community development and human development efforts with focus on education, skill building, health and combating gender based violence is the urgent need for gender inclusive nation building efforts. Elected

women with mandated power as a result of 1/3 quota, will also bring transformative change in the cultural milieu in the public life (ISST, 2001). It will encourage more participants of women not only in politics but also in the economic, educational, diplomatic, trade and commerce, governance and criminal justice system (Moghe, 2004). On the whole, 33% women in the upper echelons of political structures will result in more humane policies for children, elderly, persons with disabilities and official recognition of unpaid and paid care work performed for the care of children, elderly and sick members of the family and society (John, 2000). Researches by UNDP and NIRD have shown that, women elected representatives have been judicious in implementing gender Responsive Budgeting that is directed at reduction of gender gap in health, education, skill, employment, and at promotion of women's decision making power through capacity building (Panchayati Raj Update, 2004). Women's Leadership also results in instituting structures and systems to reduce gender based violence (Raunak Jahan, 1987).

Given the opportunity, as a collective, women decision makers have promoted policy of transformative finances for gender equality. e.g. Campaign started by elected women in Gram Panchayats "Alcohol free villages in Maharashtra"; forcing political leaders to stop diversion of wheat for production of beer in Punjab and distribution of the same wheat through PDS among the poverty groups; using Panchayat funds for installation of gohar gas plant, Kanya shala, piped water in the homes, toilet blocks for women in the rural and urban community, building of schools-shelter homes, hostels and health centres for the community (Patel, 1993).

Experiences of Rwanda (65% parliamentarians are women), European Parliament (40% parliamentarians are women) have proved that 'critical minimum' representation of women in the public institutions brings professionalism, use of

decent language, improved time management and check on corrupt practices and criminal activities.

## Conclusion

Women political workers of all political parties have a mind of their own, but the political bosses, while allocating seats to contest elections, do not promote veteran women political activists of their own party. Most of the political parties have used their women workers only as foot soldiers (Patel, 2002). Women's reservation in the parliament and legislative Assembly and legislative Councils of the state governments as an affirmative action for the historical injustices faced by women is the only way to ensure level playing field for women in the electoral politics which is dominated by money-mafia-misogyny and muscle power (Thakkar & Gawankar, 2004).

Keeping all these factors into consideration, the women's rights movement arrives at a conclusion that while there is a rider in the NSVA regarding the implementation time-frame, it's essential to recognize that this is a significant step forward. Now, as we look ahead, political parties have no more excuses. The 2024 elections provide a golden opportunity to take decisive action and allocate the seats to contest election to aspiring women candidates as needed.

Let's continue this journey with hope and determination, knowing that our collective efforts have brought us closer to a more inclusive and equitable political landscape and due share in representative democracy. The gender justice proposed by the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam in the legislative domain will provide impetus to balanced policy formulation.

**Defying police degradation,  
Tossing aside tradition,  
We have come!  
Dalit, Battered woman, worker, farmer  
In an army together,  
We have come!  
To end dowry, rape, misused authority,  
To stop wife-beating and cruelty,  
We have come!  
To wipe women's suppression,  
To remove class oppression,  
To free this humanity-  
In a Morcha we have come!  
From Hill, Dock and Railway Shed,  
In spite of owner's threat and dread  
We have come!  
Look! Look! You blind exploiter tyrant-  
Our army has come!  
To destroy Injustice, our army has come!**

*(Originally written in Hindi by Vibhuti Patel for 8-3-1980, translated into English by Dr. Joy Deshmukh.)*

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# Climate Resilient Inclusive Cities

**Mr. Sameer Unhale,**  
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The 21<sup>st</sup> century will undoubtedly be an urban century. More than 50 percent of humanity lives in urban habitats contributing to almost two-thirds of global Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and 70 percent of Green House Gases (GHGs). Thus cities will be the main protagonists in any global efforts to tackle global challenges like mitigation and adaptation efforts for climate change and attaining SDGs. In the phase of the continuous urban poly crisis, we are expected to confront and surmount, with more frequent black swan events like extreme weather events, huge city regions facing mountains of solid waste, untreated used water, pollution, biodiversity destruction along with social and economic challenges of widespread inequality, reducing employment opportunities and education and health challenges. The battle of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be fought and will have to be won in cities. That too when various city regions, megacities, and towns in developed countries, as well as in emerging economies and least developed countries with ever contracting economic resources at the disposal of cities and general acute fiscal imbalance.

Climate challenges for cities, around the globe, irrespective of differing national definitions of urban areas, would get accentuated because of the urban characteristics of high density, climate-vulnerable infrastructure like urban mobility, water stress, energy, affordable housing, and hyper interdependent urban economy and shrinking carbon inventory. The sensitivity of the community,

the municipal staff, and local leadership to any climate change-related urban phenomenon is the crux of the entire discussion on cities and climate challenges, despite the availability of technology and Finance. This further involves the social and economic dimension of inclusion as, despite the wealth that resides in the cities, the high inequality and poverty make different individuals differentially vulnerable to the adverse impact of climate challenges, depending on the socioeconomic status, education, poverty, gender, migration status, etc.

“Resilience” as defined in the documents of under is the ability of a system, community, or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate, adapt to, transform, and recover from the effects of hazards in a timely and efficient manner, including through preservation and restoration of its basic structures and functions...” Thus in the case of cities, resilience would mean the ability of the city to continue function as normal, despite the climate-induced shocks, that may emerge from frequent and higher intensity extreme weather events, and on a longer time horizon, sure and steady changes that are taking place like changing weather patterns leading to either water scarcity or frequent flooding, cyclones, rising water levels for coastal cities, temperature variations leading to high temperature due to urban heat island effects and its impact on health, livelihood and quality of living of the citizens and impact on the economy of the city.

Resilience measures, relevant to cities are often divided into long-term measures and short-term measures, along with the traditional break up of mitigation and adaptation measures. Steps like progressive general reduction of greenhouse gas emission by changing over from fossil fuel to renewable energy-led electrification, bringing energy efficiency into commercial as well as residential buildings, shifting over from fossil fuel-based private transport to renewable energy-led public transport, emphasizing walkability and cycling, protecting wetlands and water bodies, etc. City infrastructure and civic services provided by the city government also need to be planned and maintained that withstand the increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events by factoring higher than normal safety margins. The example of stormwater drainage systems in cities often are planned for carrying over 50 mm of rainfall per hour. But as the intensity is increasing, we may have to factor this and make changes in the design parameters while giving the technical sanctions. The use of nature-based solutions is now being suggested yet is to be fully factored in the traditional project conceptualizing cycle at the city level. At short-term measures, city-level work in the disaster management paradigm of preparedness, use of data and technology, and community participation in planning and community volunteering, along with the government agency and ensuring proper SOPs in place and its dissemination in citizens also finds a place.

The dimension of inclusion at the city level is left behind in climate change-related paradigms as infrastructure, technology, and finance take precedence. Cities of former colonies, or as we now call them least developed countries or global south, have aggravated overall poverty concerns vulnerable urbanites, as well as the municipal governments are always short of funds for climate action-related measures. The climate actions at the city level tend to be generalized and aggregated as city-level initiatives, granular data often goes below

the least count of the system. Inequality in the city is manifested by residents in low-quality insecure tenured slums, casual low-skilled service industries with poor educational and health services, inadequate provisioning of city services like water supply, sanitation, used water disposal and treatment, recreational spaces, etc. The adverse impact of extreme weather events is bound to be felt most severely in slums due to risky locations, and extreme density. Along with poverty, discrimination based on gender, social status, age, migrant status can only aggravate challenges.

The policy and program levers available to city government to overcome inclusion challenges in climate resilience measures have the limitation of mandate, finance, skills, and manpower. Though the Municipalities have the primacy as the elected city government, coordination challenges amongst various city-level agencies like development authorities, smart cities, state parastatals in the water and electricity sector, urban mobility buses, and metro companies are real. Mechanisms to ensure their coordination by committee form of administrative structure and cross-membership in the decision-making apparatus could be used fully. Municipalities are run by municipal engineers, municipal clerks, and municipal accountants and their skill and decision-making empowerment are crucial to make any actions executed in cities. And so also the local political leadership which is left in the techno managerial paradigm. The engagement with citizens, if not voters or taxpayers, is also a crucial dimension for any measures to be accepted and acted upon by the citizens. The vocabulary of climate and adaptation and resilience is still perceived as alien and snobbish and elitism has to make way for concrete actions in municipal functioning by translating them into the municipal language for the million-plus municipal workers and local political leadership to seek crucial connections with ground realities. So also with the social capital of the city.

# Harmony In The Concrete Jungle: Creating Inclusive and Equitable Cities<sup>1</sup>

## Book Review

Reviewed by Dr. Disari Roy,  
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Department of Women's Studies,  
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### Introduction

The monograph, *Harmony in the Concrete Jungle: Creating Inclusive and Equitable Cities*, edited by Dhaval D. Desai, was published by Observer Research Foundation in the year 2024. The volume emphasizes that globalization has driven countries to advance urban communities utilizing a solitary development layout. Urban communities or cities are being imagined as spaces with private gated townships and booming business regions, with open and green public spaces that end up catering to the top levels of the social and financial strata. Cities represent the future of global living. These metropolitan townships are energy-concentrated; they regularly exploit natural resources and pave way for unreasonable unsustainable utilization patterns thereby prompting huge financial incongruities and expanding environment degradation. This elitist pattern has dislodged the metropolitan poor and augmented financial discrepancies between the rich and the poor. The redevelopment of the mill lands in Central Mumbai throughout the 1990s is a case in point. Statistics would demonstrate this unsettling fact globally: roughly 1.2 billion of the urban populaces live in ghettos; their number is probably going to two-fold by 2050. Almost 50% of India's absolute metropolitan populace live in informal settlements. The situation is not any better in the majority of Asia's and Africa's developing nations, indicating a striking similarity between their political and

cultural systems across continents. Metropolitan urban communities have generally ignored the particular requirements of women, children, individuals with incapacities, and the older populaces. The UN-Habitat's World Cities Report 2022 suitably catches the real factors. Perceiving the importance of urbanization in the planet, the New Urban Agenda takes on a hopeful vision of urban areas for all and articulates rules for comprehensive metropolitan prospects. The monograph consists of twelve illuminating chapters where the contributors have highlighted their thoughts and insights about sustaining comprehensive urban communities.

### Chapter 1: Urbanisation 2.0 and the Lessons of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Cities by Srinath Sridharan and Dhaval Desai

The world population has grown significantly and our economies have become more industrialized over the past few hundred years. As a result, many more people have moved into cities. This process is known as urbanization. Over the course of the past hundred years, urban communities have developed dramatically, and today the world is dominantly metropolitan with more than half of the populace dwelling in urban communities. The reasons behind this phenomenon include better economic opportunities and improved quality of life. However, metropolitan urban communities have

generally ignored the particular requirements of women, children, individuals with incapacities, and the older populaces. The UN Sustainable Development Goal 11, which aims to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable by 2030, has still not been adequately met by India. Making cities safe and sustainable means warranting access to safe and affordable housing, and upgrading slum areas. It also incorporates investment in public transport, creating green public spaces, and improving urban development and administration in a way that is both participatory and all-encompassing. Cities are known to play multi-layered roles in all societies. They are the core of the mechanical turn of events and monetary development of numerous countries, while simultaneously filling in as a favourable place for destitution, inequality, natural disasters, and transmittable sicknesses. At the point when huge quantities of individuals assemble in urban areas, numerous issues result, especially for poor people. Governments must collaborate with civil society organizations, academicians, and researchers, to collect data to come up with urban planning as well as gender-responsive policy design. These discussions form the crux of this chapter.

### **Chapter 2: Promoting Inclusive Cities by Sulakshana Mahajan**

In this chapter, the author has mentioned the case of Mumbai (formerly Bombay) as a city where people belonging to diverse communities and social backgrounds harmoniously co-existed. Notwithstanding, during the 1950s, after India acquired freedom and turned into a republic, exclusionary and provincial components started to invade the political field. In Bombay, this prompted the Marathi language to be weaponized to make divisions, denoting the beginning of exclusionary developments in the city. Migrants from other Indian states, who had by and large added to Bombay's development, were presently marked as outsiders and faulted for the deterioration of the

city. Gradually, Mumbai started to lose its inclusive status. The need of the hour is to consider the nurturing of inclusive cities as a fundamental task for urban planners, policymakers, and the residents themselves. This would ensure the creation of a just and equitable society.

### **Chapter 3: Pathways to Inclusion and Climate Resilience: Can They Converge? By Amita Bhide**

This chapter deals with the challenges faced by urban cities owing to escalating population and rising demand for amenities. The fact that the majority of city governance systems prioritize the exploitation of natural resources and serve the interests of wealthy citizens over the rights of those who work for the city has been aptly reflected in this chapter. The author opines that the policy makers need to address urgently the issues of socially inclusive economic growth and sustainable development.

### **Chapter 4: Putting People before Place to Ensure Inclusivity and Empowerment by Oormi Kapadia and Jasmine Saluja**

The chapter scrutinizes the change of public spaces into comprehensive, open, utilitarian, and safe places. Since the 1990s, discussions about redeveloping Dharavi, which is known as one of the largest slums in Asia and is located in north-central Mumbai, have failed for a variety of reasons. An essential blunder was not having involved occupants in imagining the region's future. The author discusses the vital role played by PLURAL (a group of multidisciplinary professionals in India) during 2014 - 15 in hierarchical policymaking, keeping in mind the aspirations of women, children, and disabled population. PLURAL has also advocated for incorporating placemaking into Mumbai's formal urban development process at every neighbourhood level using a tripartite governance model that involves professionals, community representatives, and local government.



## **Chapter 5: Unlocking India's Urban Potential: The Role of Open and Green Spaces by Suryaprabha Sadasivan and Akhil NR**

Projections from the United Nations Habitat's World Cities Report 2022 demonstrate that India's urban population will probably reach 675 million by 2035, second just to China. The author has deliberated upon both the positive and negative impacts of urbanization. While the positive impact includes better employment opportunities and financial growth, the negative aspects entail population explosion, pollution, and poverty. Indian cities are susceptible to environmental change, and a key push region to fabricate their versatility against the adverse consequences of urbanization is to make available open and green spaces. Such spaces advance healthy living and facilitate climate change alleviation and pollution reduction. Notwithstanding their significance, open public spaces are frequently neglected in conversations about India's urban development. Hence, it may be concluded that an organized structure is fundamental for urban regions to upgrade their per capita open space and advance a more reasonably green future.

## **Chapter 6: Tackling Gender (Non) Inclusion in Urban Public Spaces by Vahida Nainar**

The chapter investigates that the preparation of framework, transport, and public spaces of urban communities are a long way from being gender comprehensive. Urban women have liabilities in both the home and the working environment and add to the thriving of urban areas through paid and unpaid labour. They normally utilize public spaces to get to their work areas, homes, markets, schools, medical clinics, offices etc. As a result, an inclusive city must have infrastructure and public spaces that are secure, easily accessible, and reasonably priced. Among the essential contemplations for the utilization of public spaces is the accessibility of clean and sterile public latrines. According to a

2022 study, only 25% of Mumbai's public restrooms are designated for women. Ideal public places must pay heed to the needs of all people, irrespective of class, gender, and race.

## **Chapter 7: The Role of Gender Budgeting in Creating Gender Inclusive Cities by Vibhuti Patel**

The author is of the opinion that gender crimes in cities can be ascribed to gender gaps in five pivotal areas of human development—to be specific, education, health, employment and skillsets, safety, and decision-making. Herein comes the role of gender-responsive budgeting; such policies are essential to promote girl child education and reduce school dropout rates among girls as well as to address mortality, morbidity, malnutrition, safety, and security among women, children, persons with disabilities, transsexual persons, and the older adult population. In other words, gender budgeting is a powerful tool for achieving gender mainstreaming so that women and men alike can benefit from development. Gender budgeting allows governments to advance equality through financial policies by laying out objectives for equality and apportioning funds to help achieve those goals. The Government of India introduced gender budgeting in 2005-06. A shift from reporting gender allocations to purposive planning with more women involved is needed. Creating gender-friendly cities should turn into an essential objective of urban planners, policymakers, and practitioners. Another important point that has been highlighted is the valuable utilization of the right to information (RTI) as it can guarantee transparency and responsibility in public expenditures.

## **Chapter 8: Advancing Women to Leadership Roles: An Economic Imperative for the Private Sector by Naghma Mulla**

The author states that cultural and social norms prevent women from realizing their full economic potential and gender inequities in the workplace

make it more difficult for women to actively participate in the labour market. Women's ability to balance professional and family responsibilities is significantly hindered by the prevalent societal view, which frequently portrays women as primarily caregivers. Women are seldom allowed to rise to leadership roles; moreover, under representation of women in higher official positions results in gender disparity in corporate leadership. It has been argued that the presence of women in leadership roles is proven to be highly beneficial for business outcomes. Advancing women's authority in professional life, especially in India, requires a complex methodology that addresses different fundamental obstructions. Measures like paid leaves, reasonable childcare, and adaptable working hours are fundamental in ensuring increased female labour force participation.

### **Chapter 9: The Digital Pulse of Smart Cities by Sauradeep Bag**

The author reiterates that the growth of 'smart' cities is turning out to be progressively vital as urban areas grapple with challenges such as ageing infrastructure, traffic congestion, and financial exclusion. Cultivating smart cities takes time and complexity. In India, the Smart Cities Mission introduced in 2015 aims to execute monetary development and improve the general prosperity of metropolitan inhabitants by catering to different social, financial, physical, and institutional angles. This underscores the development of computerized economic payment in India. In this regard, the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) has transfigured digital payments in the country, allowing for rapid and protected transactions and benefiting millions of users.

### **Chapter 10: Inclusive, Sustainable Cities: Too Much Talk, Too Little Progress by Smruti Koppikar**

The chapter defines inclusive cities as those that esteem all individuals and their requirements

similarly. Sadly, in the curve of India's urbanization, urban communities became focuses of profound disparity and ecological corruption. Today cities are increasingly being developed to be more exclusive rather than inclusive. A valid example is the 'Vision Mumbai' record drawn up during the 1990s to transform the city into a mega monetary center point in the Global South in which the city's ecology and necessities of the common populace were not taken into consideration. The author argues that India's cities lack diversity in many ways and are hovering close to ecological crises. To combat the existing challenges surrounding city planning, it is imperative to make the planning process autonomous and participatory. At the same time, utmost importance ought to be given to the interest of the common people.

### **Chapter 11: Data-Driven, Community-Centric Approach for Inclusive Cities by Pratima Joshi and Geetanjali Deshmukh**

The chapter begins with the information that India is supposed to encounter an undeniably quick speed of urbanization in the approaching years, and by 2050, over 50% of the country's populace will be living in urban areas. As urban areas extend, India should guarantee that metropolitan development turns out to be more equitable and comprehensive in line with Sustainable Development Goal 11. Throughout the course of many years, Indian urban communities have gone through an enormous change, with different central and state missions being embraced to improve urban framework and administrations. Be that as it may, this improvement still cannot seem to infiltrate the slums; hence, urban planning must prioritize slum development. Lack of reliable data is a handicap. Exact on-ground datasets on slums and slum dwellers can assist better with understanding local area issues. The work being done in this regard by Shelter Associates is indeed praiseworthy because they have already mapped 650 slums across seven urban areas in Maharashtra in particular Pune,

Pimpri-Chinchwad, Thane, Navi Mumbai, Kolhapur, Sangli, and Panvel. The fact that civil society organizations (CSOs) have played a crucial role in enhancing the quality of life of slum dwellers, even as urban policies have attempted to improve their living conditions, has been precisely stated in this chapter.

## **Chapter 12: Incorporating Traditional Koli Knowledge into Mumbai's Urban Planning by Marika Vicziany and Anusha Kesarkar Gavankar**

The article focuses on Koli, one of the indigenous communities of Mumbai, who are primarily into fishing and to some extent, farming. The writers of this paper have counted around 39 Koli towns, utilizing different sources and declarations from Koli witnesses. Kolis experience the ill effects of inconsiderate city planning. Their occupations are declining, and they keep on encountering different types of social inequalities. After the Worli Koliwada was proclaimed to be the city's first 'containment zone', Kolis and different minorities were singled out as 'virus transporters'. From this it can be derived that discrimination against Kolis reached its peak during the Coronavirus pandemic thereby exposing their vulnerable social status. The study discusses the means by which Mumbai can support social unity and integrity in the midst of its various difficulties, including those connected with the prosperity of the Koli population and slum

residents. Another interesting point raised in this article is how Koli people's customary knowledge about the indigenous habitat of the Mumbai estuary can add to the metropolitan's urban planning that must aim at lessening the dangers from the cataclysmic events that regularly visit the city of Mumbai.

## **Conclusion**

Sustainable Development Goal 11 titled "Sustainable Cities and Communities", is one of 17 Sustainable Development Goals established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015. The official mission of SDG 11 is to "Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable". SDG 11 addresses slums, human settlement management and planning, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and urban economies. The significance of SDG 11 is that it is aimed at planning cities and slum settlements in a way that offers opportunities for all, with access to basic services, energy, housing, transportation, and green public spaces, while plummeting resource use and environmental impact. The idea is to promote inclusiveness and sustainable urbanization so that the cities can be accessible places that attract talent, encourage innovation, and create economic growth. This monograph is a timely intervention dealing with the requirements and challenges of urban planning for the development of sustainable and resilient cities.



# ROUND & ABOUT

**Mr. Fazalahmed Khan**  
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## Return to the old malaise!

### Civic bodies in Maharashtra without an elected government

The 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 has been a watershed development in the history of municipal bodies as it brought about various fundamental reforms in respect of the urban local bodies. One of the areas of reforms was that it was provided through a constitutional provision that the elections of the ULBs are not delayed beyond their term. Section 3 (a) of article 243U provided as under:

“(3) An election to constitute a Municipality shall be completed, -

(a) before the expiry of its duration specified in clause (1) [i.e. five years]”

This provision has been inserted into all municipal Acts, but this constitutional mandate has proved to be ineffective, as for one reason or the other all the municipal bodies are without any elected body and there is no indication how long this predicament will continue. This situation also raises a fundamental question of whether the courts are strong enough to override a constitutional mandate to stop the election. Why there is no debate on this? This is a return to the old malaise when elections to the municipalities could be delayed at the will of the government.



## Sprawling Mumbai Metropolitan Region

### Third Mumbai Coming Up

Just a couple of years ago it was an important news of the setting up of a new city in the Mumbai Metropolitan

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| Mumbai   | 603 sq. km  |
| Navi Mumbai                                      | 344 sq. kms |
| New Airport Influence Notified Area (NAINA) city | 371 sq. kms |
| New Town Dev Authority city                      | 334 sq. km  |

Region with a lyrical acronym of NAINA. With the Mumbai Trans-harbour Link (MTHL) bridge having been opened recently, another news of setting up a new city has come. Presently, it is called New Town Development Authority City with an area of 334 sq. km. The press has called it 3rd Mumbai. It will encompass Uran (78 sq. km), Panvel (27 sq. km), Pen (217 sq. km), other (12 sq. km) including 124 villages.





Great innovations have been made in the field of city planning. Every new city is developed as a designer city. As regards this new city, MMRDA has envisioned developing this new city into a model smart growth center. In this respect, an MoU is signed between MMRDA and the World Smart Cities Forum, U.K. to facilitate collaboration to develop a tech-oriented, inclusive Smart City.

The inset graphic from the Times of India, Mumbai dated 11 January 2024 sets out the aim and effect of the new city.

[Reference: The Times of India, Mumbai, 11 and 21 January 2024]

### Inside India's Largest Dumpsite

Throwing, rather than dumping, all the waste of the city at a place or selected places has been an age-old practice in India. A lady scientist in Bangalore had found that heaps of waste near the city were expanding with all the nuisance attached to such things. It came to her mind why not there could be a scientific approach to this universal nuisance of dumping. Why not a scientific solution is used in the management of waste? She filed a PIL in the Supreme Court. It proved to be a path-breaking effort as the



Supreme Court judgment led the Government to make the first of its kind Municipal Solid Wastes (Management and Handling) Rules, 2000. These rules are now replaced by the Solid Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 2016.

India's largest dumpsite is located in Mumbai, called by its place's name **Deonar Dumpsite**, established in 1927. The inset graphic presents its features and its unique facts. Over the decades, large numbers of slums have come up in Deonar.

**Sanitary landfill system:** Sanitary landfill system has come into vogue in the last few decades. This is an engineered method of disposing of solid waste on land in a manner that protects the environment, by spreading the waste in thin layers, compacting it to the smallest practical volume, and covering it with compacted soil by the end of each working day or at more frequent intervals if necessary. However, Deonar dumpsite pre-dates the landfill system as this is a century-old dumpsite.

The SW rules of 2016 inter alia suggest segregation of wastes at source, and wet waste is supposed to be composted at local sites; the dry waste is to be filtered at recycling centers and the remainder is to be sent to the landfill sites. With the recent attempts to install a waste-to-energy system at Deonar Dumpsite, it is hoped that the stress on this dumpsite will come down.

**Methane and foul odour management:** Huge heaps of waste are bound to generate methane and foul odour. Methane has been a cause of incidents of fire on the dumpsite. The occurrence of fires at one or the other spots of the heaps of waste has been a normal feature. In 2016 a huge fire had erupted in the heaps of waste, which took the fire brigade a week to douse. The residents of Deonar and other nearby places have been at the receiving end of the foul odour. To overcome these two hazards, the BMC has now decided to spread about 1500 liters of enzyme-based bio-culture. They are looking for agencies for the supply of bio-culture which should be able to keep methane gas levels below 100 ppm concentrations in the air to prevent fire hazards.

**Waste to Energy Plant:** The information in this regard is presented in the graphic in the inset.

*[References: (1) The Times of India, Mumbai, dated 6 February 2024 & Mumbai Mirror, 18 February 2024, (2) Wikipedia]*

## **Only 46 out of 485 Cities Supply Clean Drinking Water**

This was a heading in the national daily newspaper in India. Normally, complaints about the deficiency in water supply and its quality are raised by the citizens, press, or NGOs. But this time this stark deficiency in quality water has come from a Government study. An extract from the news:

“New Delhi. A national survey by the government has found that only 46 cities (municipal areas) out of 485 supply clean drinking water to its citizens. The ranking of the cities is based on test results of 25,000 samples taken across these municipal areas, and the response of 5.2 lakh urban households will be announced next week. Union Housing and Urban Affairs Secretary Manoj Joshi said President Droupadi Murmu will confer the Pey Jal Survekshan awards on March 5. He said cities such as Puri, Pune, Nai Mumbai, Nagpur, Surat, and Coimbatore have taken the lead in supplying drinking water 24 x 7 in some wards.....”

*[Reference: The Times of India, Mumbai, 1 March 2024]*

## **A New Perspective on Indian History**

### **Vadnagar excavations reveal climate link to Central Asian invasions of India**

Our history books have recorded a lot of details of invasions in India. Excavations during the 19th and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries have shed new light on ancient civilizations. Climate change researchers in this century are throwing new light on the motive or compelling circumstances behind the rise and fall of civilizations and the momentous events of invasions. The latest in this series is the excavations at Vadnagar in Gujarat. A recent study by researchers from IIT-Kharagpur, Archaeological Survey of India, Physical Research Laboratory, Jawaharlal Nehru University, and Deccan College has attributed the invasions from Central Asia into India to the prevailing climatic conditions. By examining small mollusks and shells, the research team at the excavations at Vadnagar Mehsana has revealed an unbroken climatic record spanning 2,800 years. It says that Central Asia was reeling from a long, dry spell while India was a fertile land with a flourishing economy sustained by regular monsoons. The report further says that this inference is strengthened by the fact that no major invasion happened when India was facing famine and droughts.

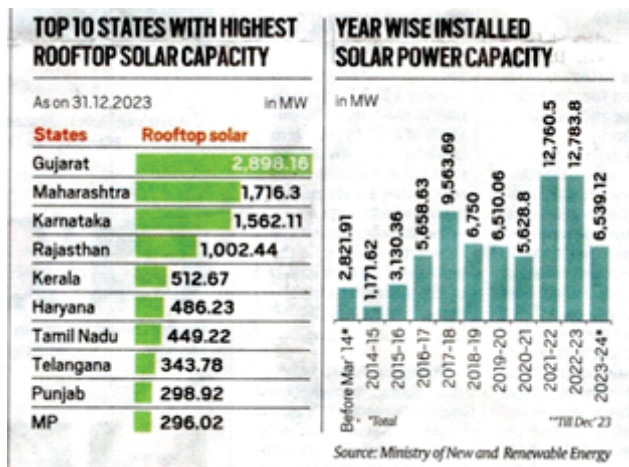
*[Reference: The Times of India, Mumbai, 25 December 2023]*



## The Rooftop Solar Plan

The National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE) has assessed the country's solar potential of about 748 GW assuming 3% of the wasteland area to be covered by Solar PV modules. Solar energy has taken a central place in India's National Action Plan on Climate Change with the National Solar Mission (NSM) as one of the key Missions.

NSM was launched on 11th January 2010. The Mission's objective is to establish India as a global leader in solar energy by creating conducive conditions for solar technology diffusion across the country as quickly as possible. This is in line with India's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) target to achieve about 50 percent cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources and to reduce the emission intensity of its GDP by 45 percent from the 2005 level by 2030. Rooftop solar systems are efficient in this field. The present state of the rooftop solar capacity and year-wise installed solar power capacity in graphically indicated in the inset.



### THE SCHEME WILL GENERATE...

**30** gigawatts (estimated) of additional solar capacity in household sector

**1,000** billion units (estimated) of green electricity

**720** million tonnes' worth of reduction in CO2 equivalent emissions\*  
\*Over 25-year lifetime of rooftop systems

**17** lakh direct jobs in manufacturing, logistics, supply chain, sales, installation, maintenance etc.

a 1kW system generates 4-5 units of electricity on a clear, sunny day, or 120 units a month. A 3kW system can generate 12 units of power daily.

#### What Appliances Can It Support?

A 1kW system can handle loads of up to 800 watts to power a small TV and fridge, a few LED lights, a fan and other basic appliances. Whether these can be run simultaneously depends on their power rating. A 3kW system can handle the entire load of a small household, including air-conditioner/washing machine.

#### What Makes Up A Rooftop System?

Solar panels, solar mounting structure, solar inverter, cables, fuses, MCBs and distribution boxes. Typically, a 1kW system requires up to 130sq.ft of flat, shadow-free area to receive maximum sunlight. A 3kW system needs 300-350sq.ft space.

#### How Does It Work?

Solar panels generate direct current from sunlight, which is then converted into 220-volt alternating current by the solar inverter and fed into the household wiring through the main distribution/junction box.

#### How Much Power Does It Produce?

Location and amount of sunlight received are key. On average,

### Working and expected benefits of the scheme:

Graphics about the scheme inset:

To achieve the above target, the Government of India has launched various schemes to encourage the generation of solar power in the country like Solar Park Schemes, VGF Schemes, CPSU Schemes, Defense Schemes, Canal bank & Canal top Schemes, Bundling Schemes, Grid Connected Solar Rooftop Scheme etc.

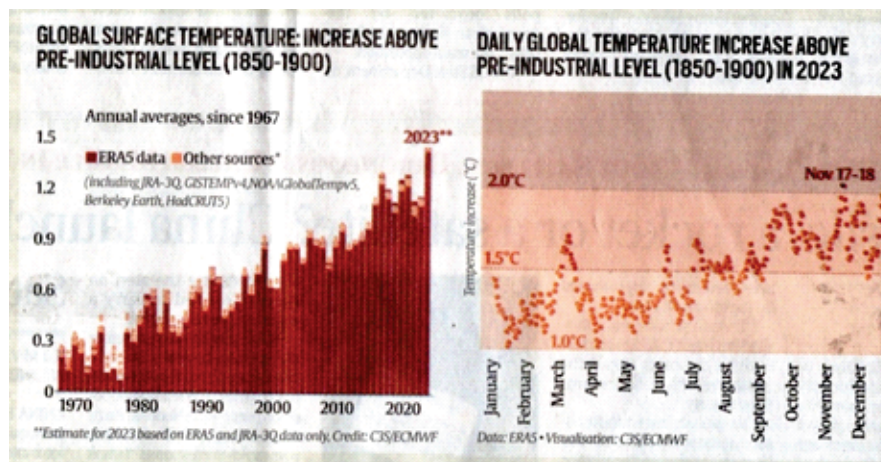
In addition to the existing Rooftop Solar Scheme, on 22 January 2024, right from the प्रण प्रतिष्ठा ceremony, the Prime Minister launched of a new program- प्रधान मंत्री सूर्योदय योजना to install solar systems on 1 crore houses.

[References: (1) Website of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, GoI; (2) The Times of India, Mumbai, 23 January 2024 and 9 March 2024]



## Spectre of 1.5 Degree Celsius Rise Global Average Temperature How Far How Near?

The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change. It was adopted by 196 Parties at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP21) in Paris, France, on 12 December 2015. Its overarching goal is to hold “the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels” and pursue efforts “to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.” However, in recent years, world leaders have stressed the need to limit global



warming to 1.5°C by the end of this century. That's because the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change indicates that crossing the 1.5°C threshold risks unleashing far more severe climate change impacts, including more frequent and severe droughts, heat waves, and rainfall.

According to Europe's Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S), 2023 was the warmest year since records began in 1850, beating the previous record of 2016. The year was 1.48 degrees Celsius warmer than the average of the 1850-1900 pre-industrial level. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) is an authoritative voice of the UN on the matters concerning state of climate in the world. The WMO in its 2023 State of Global Climate Report said that there is 66% chance that at least one of the years between 2023 and 2027 would cross the threshold.

[References: (1) WMO State of Global Climate report of 2023. (2) The Times of India, Mumbai, 10 January, 2024]

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