



ISSN: 2319-5967

ISO 9001:2008 Certified

International Journal of Engineering Science and Innovative Technology (IJESIT)
Volume 2, Issue 2, March 2013

Indian Urban Development Planning Approach: Quench For New Paradigm

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Abstract: In India it is estimated that in next 20 years around 40-45% of population of the country shall be residing in urban areas, so Architects and Urban Planners have to bring out innovative methodology to practically understand & improve the system and process of urbanization. Indian Urban Development Planning is based on Master Plans, Zonal Plans, Zoning Regulation, Bye Laws and related guidelines approved by the State Government. The system is very rigid, inflexible and insensitive towards the fast dynamic socio-economic-political and technological changes in cities, hence there is a dire need for change and modification in existing system of Urban Development Planning Process: a call for new paradigm. A strong change is required through legislation at State as well as Central level. This paper focuses on bringing out the deficiencies in existing system and an effort has been made to suggest modifications.

I. INTRODUCTION

Urban development planning is primarily manifestation of people's expectations and aspirations regarding spatio- economic development in the existing socio- politico- administrative frame work of the country. By the turn of this century, the towns and cities all around the world shall be fighting with an unprecedented challenge especially in urban areas, caused by urbanization on an exorbitant scale, finally leading in to grim picture of cities. In India it is estimated that in next 20 years around 40-45% of population of the country shall be residing in urban centers, thus making the job of Architects, and Urban Planners much more tedious and intricate, and dealing with challenges of multidimensional problems of high magnitude, so Architects and Urban Planners have bring out innovative methodology to practically understand the system and process of urbanization and accordingly prepare spatial planning proposals which should be adaptive enough to make pace with the present dynamic and fast changing social ,technological, economic realms. In India the urban areas have a peculiar characteristics & culture of having contrasts and conflicts of cultures and traditions, so in India planners have to evolve indigenous methodology in addressing to the problems of urban development. In India basically the planning issues, aims, strategies objectives at national and state level are evolved and framed through national and state five year plans but these are more of economic and social in characteristics. Seventh schedule of our constitution in its items no 20 defines that aforesaid economic and social planning is a combined responsibility of State and Central Government, but as far as spatial and physical development is concerned, land, and land use planning vests with State Government, as land is a state subject.

II. EXISTING SYSTEM OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

In India Urban Development Planning is based on Master Plans, Zonal Plans, Zoning Regulation, Bye Laws and related guidelines approved by the State Government. Master Plans of various town and urban areas in different States are inspiration of Delhi Master Plan which was the first Master Plan prepared under Delhi development Act 1957. This act was more or less on the lines of Town & Country Planning Act 1947 of Britain. Delhi Development Act 1957 is a major land mark in the present town planning system in India as it was the first attempt in which there is a provision of creating a separate agency/ authority and entrusting on it, the responsibilities of spatial development of a city in India. Delhi Development Act 1957 explains the constitution of Delhi Development Authority, Its aim, objectives & various bodies and their function. Delhi Development Act. 1957 confers the power of land acquisition, holding and disposing the properties to Delhi Development Authority. Delhi Development Act 1957 recommends the preparation of Master Plans, contents of the Master Plan, which shall defined the various zones into which Delhi may be divided for the purpose of development and indicate the manner in which the land in each zones is proposed or to be used and the stages in which such development shall be carried out, also it prepares the basic frame in which zonal development plan & zoning regulation are to be prepared.

Uttar Pradesh Urban Planning and Development Act. 1973;

In the State of Uttar Pradesh the Urban Development Planning is regulated by state act called Uttar Pradesh Urban Planning and development act 1973. Under this act there is clear direction regarding planning of development of urban areas, and implementation of its proposals. As per the Uttar Pradesh Urban Planning and Development Act 1973, the selected towns after the approval of the Govt, were notified for preparation of



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Master Plans, & creation of development authorities. In U.P. the work of preparing Master Plan is entrusted to State Town and Country Planning Deptt. and the Master Plan is implemented through development authorities, autonomous organization under State Govt.

Mode of Preparation of Master Plans

As per Uttar Pradesh Urban Planning and development Act. 1973 the development boundary/ Area in notified and State Town & Country Planning Department is instructed by the state government to prepare the Master Plan. State Town planning department prepares a draft Master Plan after conducting surveys, analysis of existing situation, after anticipating future economic & social growth. This draft Master Plan is subjected to public opinions; Public objections and opinion are invited. These objections/ opinions are thrashed out through personal hearing after incorporating modification; finally draft plan is finalized and sent to state govt for approval. The Master Plan after the consent of govt is notified and date of publication is generally the date of implementation of plan. Development Authority are the custodian of Master Plans and are entrusted the responsibilities of implementing the proposals of Master Plan. Basic structure of development authority has primarily an Engineering section, Architecture and planning section, Property wing, Legal section, Account section and building control section. Architecture & planning wing and building control section are the departments which directly control the implementation of Master Plan. As per the act, development authorities have to make zonal development plans on the basis of basic frame work provided under Master Plan. Building bylaws are more or less common with other towns of U.P., other guidelines are also common for all towns and are finalized by government. Land use change of any area if required are to be recommended by development authority board and endorsed by Town and Country planning department and further approved by the state govt.. Building control department enforces the provision of Master Plan at individual building level through sanctioning the plans of proposed buildings as per the zoning regulation and Master Plan. Entire city is generally divided into planning zones and building inspectors posted in particular zones check the development process and ensure and all construction works happens as per the Master Plan. Proposals

III. DEFICIENCIES IN THE EXISTING URBAN DEVELOPMENT PLANNING APPROACH.

1. Present urban development planning system is based on Master Plan, which are conceptualized just to cater requirement of the act. having objectives very general in nature, and almost all cities have same objectives regardless of nature of town.
2. Master Plans are very rigid in nature and they categorically prepare an end product or a hard picture of town after plan period ignoring the social, economic, & technological dynamism, priorities of society keep changing very fast. Master Plan decides frame of a city after 10-20 year which is a very long period ultimately the recommendations of Master Plan become redundant.
3. Lack of expert manpower involved in preparing the Master Plan. To prepare a Master Plan a complete team of town planners, architects engineers, sociologists, economists, geographers, geologists, landscape & environment expert are required due to lack of these professionals the documents is half-baked.
4. Preparation of Master Plan takes 4 to 5 year even more than that by the time the plan is implemented; the survey data on which the plan is based become obsolete and worthless, there by leading to fruitless and unidirectional plan. For example Master Plan Meerut 1971-91 actually could be implemented in 1978, in the same way Master Plan Meerut 2001, actually could be implemented in 2004. and Meerut Master Plan 2002-2021 could be implemented in October 2007
5. Proposals of Master Plan are generally not integrated with financial component and so most of the proposals are not executed because of lack of finance or are far away from govt. priorities.
6. There is no provision of regular monitoring, evaluation and management of Master Plans.
7. Lack of departmental interest in preparing draft Master Plan, so it is completed just as a constitutional obligation.
8. Excessive delays are caused at the level of public notification, inviting public opinion and granting of approvals at govt. level
9. In Indian urban development planning process generally Master Plans are prepared by town planning deptts but implementation is done by Development Authorities, Municipal Corporation etc and because of lack of coordination in these agencies the provision of Master Plans are generally not accepted.
11. During the plan period due to certain drastic changes in govt. policies or some time there are strong socio-economic changes or with certain emergencies, there happens a dire need for change of plan but change in plan is a very cumbersome process which taken huge time creating problematic situations.
12. In Master Plans conservation of historical monuments sites are generally neglected.



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13. There is no consideration of urban form: the third dimension of the plan resulting into an uninteresting picture of towns.
14. Present Indian urban development planning is more a controlling or restraining mechanism instead of regulating, promoting or enhancing the development. Landscape component, interests of pedestrians and informal sectors are generally neglected.
- 15 Mass scale political interventions in the development planning process aggravate the problem further.
- 16 Components like disaster management to check natural and man made disaster are missing in existing India urban development planning process.
- 17 Attempt to improve environment and ecologically balanced sustainable development also takes back seat in the process.
18. Public participation is missing in India urban planning process.
19. Only one draft Master Plan is prepared which is ultimately finalized and there is no scope for comparisons with alternative solutions/ plans to find out the most suitable and efficient solution.

IV. PRESENTATION OF PLANS

Urban development plans are generally presented through,

- Reports containing background and intention of govt. in preparing plans, broad objectives.
- Broad studies regarding existing land uses conditions and problems and analysis.
- Broad policies and future projections in terms of land and population and uses.
- Future proposals in report as well as in plans indicating various land uses, transport network, physical and community infrastructure.
- Zoning regulation building byelaws and subdivision regulation.

V. EVALUATION OF INDIAN URBAN DEVELOPMENT PLANNING PROCESS IN CONTEXT TO U.K. AND OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES

Though Indian urban development planning process is evolved from British town planning act, but Britishers have been regularly updating the concept, procedure and legal framework where as there has been no substantial change in Indian system.

1. Agencies involved in formation of plans: In U.K., NGO's representatives of public, experts and govt. agencies equally participate in planning process where as in India it is a govt. deptt.on which the responsibility of preparing the plan has been entrusted.
2. Formulation of objectives: In U.K. and in other western countries, Goals of society are set first by targeted community or group. of people for which the plan has to be prepared and to achieve these goals specific short term objectives are framed where as in India objective are derived from the book of Urban development act and all town plans have broadly similar objectives.
3. Public participation: Right from the inception of plan, people actively participate in preparation, monitoring evaluation and implementation of plan where as in India it is restricted only up to inviting objectives from public on draft plan.
4. Monitoring and Evaluation of Plan:In India Urban Development Planning Process no system of monitoring/ evaluation of plan is there where as in U.K. and in other western countries plan are periodically checked, monitored and evaluated and if required proposals are changed/ rearranged.
5. Manpower & Experts: Beside general public & community participation, there is a mechanism of involving experts from various fields Engineering Town planning architecture, urban design, conservation experts, geographers, environmental planner, transport planners etc, where as in India generally town planner of the level of district town planner prepare the entire proposals and endorsed by senior town planner some time even not conversant with factual ground situations.
6. Use of Modern Techniques: Latest techniques available are used involving private agencies for surveys ,collection of data, analysis of data future projections and study of existing conditions, where as in Indian system age old visual surveys even detailed socio- economic surveys and traffic and transport surveys are not properly conducted before formulation before formulation of plan.
7. Revision and modification in urban development plan in western system is very easy and it is an inherent component of the process where as any change in approved plan is a very tedious in Indian process.
8. In west development plans are flexible in nature and can be adjusted or readjusted as per the dynamic socio-economic-techno-cultural changes in society, where in India Urban Development Plan is very rigid and closed for any improvement. even in drastically changed situations.



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VI. PRESENT CONSIDERATIONS

Besides the short coming of existing urban development planning approach there are other consideration which are also required to be addressed and incorporated .

- Implementation of 73rd and 74th constitutional amendment act of 1992 by constituting Metropolitan Planning Committees, District Planning Committees, Nagar Panchayats have been done but these bodies needs to be made affective for desired results
- Implementation of the person with disabilities act 1995
- (Equal Opportunities Protection of Right and Full Participation) for providing conducive environment and access to urban & public spaces, facilities / activities.
- Implementation of guidelines of Urban Development Planning Formulation & Implementation guidelines prepared by a special team constituted by Govt. of India through proper legislations.
- Incorporation in reforms under Jawahar Nehru National Urban renewal mission, a seven year programme covering 63 urban areas, which addresses issues related to various acts related to urban land, rent control, stamp duties structure of taxes, plan approval process of buildings for statutory bodies byelaw etc.
- Simultaneously incorporating large scale projects with in the urban development plan like Special Economic Zones, Information Technology Parks, Knowledge City, Metro Rail, Golden quadrilateral of highways, north south – east west corridor etc.
- Formulation and efficiently incorporating the provision for accepting consultancy services related to urban planning from professionals of other countries under WTO –GATS agreement.
- Uncontrolled conversion of fertile agricultural land in other uses and putting control on land mafia

VII. CONCLUSION

It is now ample clear that in aforesaid circumstances there is dire need for change and modification is existing system of urban development planning process: a call for new paradigm.

A strong change is required through legislation at state as well as central level for:

- Strengthening of State Town and Country Planning deptts by including experts from the field of Architecture, Town Planning, and Engineering conservation, Urban Design, Environment, Geography, Sociology, Economics, Management and Information Technology etc.
- Strengthening of departments through modern equipment technologically advanced manpower and facilitating to assist plan formulation, implementation monitoring and renewal/ revision.
- New act for Urban Planning & Development is required which should be flexible enough to address and suit problems & priorities of different towns with in the same frame work. Objectives and goals should be town specific and can address to ground problem and should be able to improve it.
- There should be an inherent system of monitoring and evaluation periodically and powers of modification of plan up to certain level should be made possible through local authorities to avoid delays.
- UPDFI team has recommended an efficient model for improving urban planning approach but still needs more deliberations in term of:
 - Regulating urban form of the city.
 - Catering to problems of ecology and environment.
 - Catering to problems of urban governance in present socio-economic framework.
 - Re-appropriation of norms and standards required in byelaws and zoning regulation to suit lower strata of society.
 - Each level of plan recommended needs further detailing of its contents and scope.
 - Ensuring more public participation at level of plan formulation, evaluation, revision and implementation.
- Urban development plan should be made a dynamic phenomenon and should be a process rather than an end product.



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- Development plan should be a techno- financial document which will simultaneously guide regarding, generation, mobilization and distribution of finances.
- Under new act through legislation new institutional/ urban governance arrangement is required to provide better frame work for implementing the development plan proposals.
- Instead of discarding completely the existing frame of traditional planning system, few successful earlier models can be used but with rational approach and promoting sustainable economic growth, social diversity justice and spatial equity.
- Development plan has to be compatible to fast changing technological advancements, modern traffic and transportation frame work worsening environmental issues and crunching energy resources.

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