UNIT 3 EVOLUTION OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT: GLOBAL OVERVIEW

Structure

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This unit will introduce you to how urbanization developed in the European and American countries (Northern Hemisphere) and how it developed in the global South(less developed countries who largely fall in the Southern Hemisphere).The patterns of urbanization in these two parts of the globe are extremely distinct, producing distinct realities, as reflected in the nature of the cities and the problems faced. We therefore try to understand these historical differences in the paths to urbanization. This unit will also acquaint you with the current scenario of urbanization in the world and how globalization creates links between different cities of the world. All of these factors together create distinct challenges for policy makers and planners. An appreciation of this history and current status is necessary for developing a perspective on realities of Indian urbanization which will be discussed in the next unit.

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- describe the distinct historical paths of urbanization in the North and the South of the Globe;

- explain these distinct paths of urbanization to the current urban realities in cities in the global South; and

- discuss the current status of urbanization in the world and its implications for India.

3.2 URBANIZATION IN THE NORTH

In the more developed countries of the world, urbanization in the modern sense emerged during the sixteenth century. Three factors were crucial in this experience of urbanization:

a) Renaissance, b) Development of Modernity and c) Industrialization.

Renaissance refers to a period around the fifteenth to the sixteenth century, where Europe in particular experienced the emergence of several new ideas. These

ideas spanned several fields- in arts such as sculpture, and painting, literature, architecture, and science. The distinctive feature of these new ideas was that they represented a movement away from traditional thinking which was derived from religion (the Church) and expressed aspirations for liberation and democracy. Renaissance paved the way for the revolutions in France, Italy which expressed these new ideas and even forged a contract for a new kind of State which derived from all the citizens and which was therefore, obligated to extend liberation and rights to all its citizens. This was a tremendous departure from earlier ideas of society where the State represented by religion and the kings was seen as the ultimate authority, never to be questioned. The renaissance thus, laid the foundation of the development of modern thinking, science and technology and new political and thinking in Europe.

Development of modernity was an evolution from the foundations of renaissance. Modernity involved an emphasis on rationality as against earlier explanations deriving from God, Magic or fate. It involves the seeking of scientific explanations. It also involves an emphasis on materialism i.e. seeking of opportunities for betterment within this life rather than deferring it to an afterlife. It gave an emphasis to the individual as the basis of society as opposed to earlier emphasis on communities. This meant that social relationships and family structures underwent a change. It also meant that new knowledge was generated. This was paralleled by the development of modern systems and institutions of education, health care, social welfare and most importantly institutions of governance. These institutions of governance were more democratic in nature, and sought to give opportunities for all its citizens. It is evident that renaissance and development of modernity were linked. These two factors unfolded themselves over a century to unleash a third, most directly related factor to urbanization in Europe i.e. industrialization.

The most important and immediate factor which led to urbanization was industrialization. New scientific inventions fueled the way for more organized production in factories. The factory was a centralized unit of mass production of goods; this was different from earlier local and low scale sites of production that involved specific work skills. Now the machines helped to produce at a large scale. Production in factories required labour and this paved the way for people from the countryside to come to these factory sites for work. As industrial revolution increased in its pace, urbanization emerged as a counterpart. Cities were thus sites of production, of mass settlement. They were important territories for administration and necessitated new ways to think about how to provide for these mass collectivities- in terms of housing, services, recreation, and government etc. The basis for this had been laid down by the renaissance and the development of modernity. Urbanization in the North was thus an organic process as it emerged as a natural progression of economic, social, technological fields in society. The pace of these developments was gradual. It was accompanied by the formation of institutions that also followed this path.

The development of factories and cities was accompanied by a thirst for more raw materials and for food for the burgeoning work force in cities. Colonization played an important role in fulfilling these needs. Colonization began as an exploration of new territories for trade and rapidly progressed from mercantile to imperial objectives. Different European nations thus established themselves in colonies in Africa, Latin America, and Asia. These colonies fulfilled different

needs. Colonies like South Africa, Australia provided food while others such as India, Malaysia provided raw materials. They also paved the way for new commodities like rubber which further gave rise to new industries. Colonies of the European countries in the other continents thus proved to be shock absorbers for tiding over issues that accompanied urbanization such as food and raw materials.

Cities in Europe and the global North represented an evolution of society to a distinct stage of development where all these developments found full expression. Urbanization in the global North was a process that was linked to the accumulation of wealth and the emergence of this part of the world as economic and political powers. Cities thus were the centers of prosperity and places of opportunity.

Thus the critical features of urbanization in the North were:

- It was an organic and gradual process of evolution of society which happened over nearly hundred years or so.

- It was accompanied by the development of modern thinking and the development of new institutions of governance.

- The presence of colonies helped to reduce or offset some of the problems in urbanization such as large scale needs of food and raw materials.

3.2.1 An Illustration of Urbanization in the North: Tracing the Development of London

The City of London is a small area within Greater London, England. It is the historic core of London around which the modern conurbation grew and has held city status since time immemorial. London traces its history to the beginnings of the 2nd century. The city has witnessed several surges and declines appropriate to its status as a historical city. The most critical period for the development of modern London was the sixteenth and the seventeenth century. During this period, London's population grew tenfold, but that increase was more than matched by an expansion in the range of skills practiced by its inhabitants, in both manufacturing and services. This was the period during which the traditional pattern of built form, in which shop, counting-house, warehouse, and residence were intermixed was replaced by one in which new types of large-scale building, including exchanges and office blocks, were dominant. The city centre ceased to be a place where people dwelled. This was also accompanied by family and household transformations. After the Great Fire of London in 1666, a number of plans were drawn up to remodel the City and its street pattern into a renaissance-style city with planned urban blocks, squares and boulevards. Simultaneously, the city was also learning to cope with its food, sanitation and health needs.

The 18th century was a period of rapid growth for London, reflecting an increasing national population, the early stirrings of the Industrial Revolution, and London's role at the centre of the evolving British Empire. The urban area expanded beyond the borders of the City of London, most notably during this period towards the West End and Westminster. During this period London emerged as the world centre for financial, insurance, and commodity markets. Throughout the 19th century, the City served as the world's primary business centre, and continues to be a major meeting point for businesses to this day.

The development of London as a modern city thus happened over a three centuries from the 16th to the 19th century. The city faced several crises during this period form fires to the Second World War which devastated London. The descriptions of Engels of the some of the worker settlements in London in the nineteenth century are not very different from the slums in developing countries today. The tremendous prosperity generated through the process of industrialization and colonization, however acted as strong shock absorbers which helped the city to tide over these crises and emerge as a premier city in the world.

Reflection

What would have been the nature of urbanization in the North, if it was not accompanied by colonization?

To what extent is the current pattern of development and urban development, reflective of the pattern set by colonization ?

3.3 URBANIZATION IN THE SOUTH

3.3.1 Experience of Urbanization under Colonization

Many countries in the South, including India had their own settlement system developed over centuries of history, which also included cities. The degree of sophistication differed across countries. Thus countries like India and China had an elaborately developed settlement system while African countries, Latin America, Canada, and Australia were less populous and had sparse and distinct settlements. Some of the countries had traditional societies structured around subsistence agriculture and others had substantial urban settlements of varying degrees of economic and political complexity.

From the sixteenth century onwards, several of these countries experienced colonization by the countries in the North, for lesser or greater periods. The colonizers were distinct in their approach to colonization and settlement. Yet, the development of urbanization in several of these countries is marked by the influence of the colonial period, though not in a uniform way. The creation of cities that profoundly changed the traditional settlement trajectory was an important part of the colonial strategy. These new cities were distinct in their built form and performed very different functions as compared to their traditional form. Some cities were privileged and became part of the colonizers' regime of control. The colonizers also introduced distinct systems of planning, governance and service provision. All cities played different roles as part of the colonial regime.

Anthony King (1990) suggests the following lines of inquiry for understanding this urbanization led by colonization:

- The city's built environment, form and functions- How does this reflect the colonial past? For example, the colonial imprint is very clear in several parts of Bombay(now, Mumbai) island or in hill stations like Shimla

- The role of the city in its immediate geographical region – How did the development of the city impact the local production, transport system? Were new modes of transport created? How did it influence the settlement pattern of the region? Were labour movements affected and how?

- The role of the city in the colonial territory – Was the city conceived as an administrative territory? What was its role in exploitation of raw material, food, etc? How did it impact the traditional hierarchy of settlements? What role did it play in indigenous- colonial conflicts?

- The role of the city in the empire- Was it a defensive battalion like Singapore? Was it a gateway like Bombay (now, Mumbai)? Or was it a transport node like Eden?

- The role of the city in the world economic system – how did the city facilitate the expansion of industry or transfer of resources to another part of the world? How did this change over time?

These questions point us towards the fact that colonization had a deep reaching influence on cities in the Southern Hemisphere. This influence is directly seen in the built forms and buildings in cities but the more deeper influences have to do with the changes in the hierarchy of cities and settlement patterns, the introduction of systems that changed an entire way of life, the changes in connectivity and most importantly through the changes in the political economic systems of the colonized countries.

The introduction of urbanization through colonization has meant that urbanization in the countries in the South developed a few distinct patterns:

- Urbanization is not a result of organic processes produced through internal societal and technological changes but imposed by the colonizers on a society which was not prepared for it

- The imposition of form and function meant that cities reflect a segmented form – a colonial part and an indigenous part. The colonial part was orderly, planned while the indigenous parts were poor, overcrowded and unplanned.

- The cities are often characterized by economic systems that also have this divided character. Thus, there were segments of the city that benefited from the growth of industries while there were many who came to the city due to distress but did not find equal opportunities.

- The systems of urban governance also reflect a foreign character as they have not developed in synch with the local realities. They were oriented to serving the planned parts of the city and stressed much more on control than development.

3.3.2 An Illustration of a Colonial City: Tracing the Development of Metro Manila

The Philippines were claimed for Spain by Magellan in 1521 and by the 1570s, the role of Manila as the primary economic and political focus for this multiple-island state was firmly established. The subsequent colonial transfer to the United States in 1899 and to independence some 50 years later have only served to emphasize this pre-eminence, especially since the creation of the National Capital Region in the mid- 70s. At present Metro Manila has a population of almost thirteen million people, or more than one quarter of the country's urban population.

Metro Manila is a divided city. Its beaches, infrastructure, film center, hotels stand in sharp contrast to the dwellings on Smokey Mountain and other areas which house one-third of its urban population.

As rapid population growth continues, prospects for abundant employment and education opportunities become increasingly inaccessible. About 50% of the city residents are working in the informal sector, the proportion of in formalization has been growing in the last decade. Officially, only 5% of Manila's population is poor but according to recent year's findings, two thirds of poor households have a parent whose educational attainment level of only elementary grade. As most families have six or more family members, too often the eldest child is given the burden of foregoing school in order to take care of the house and take care of their siblings. Often times, they end up as secondary or even primary breadwinners

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Activity:

You can exercise by the following activities in order to enhance your knowledge and understanding regarding urbanisation.

- Trace the history of a town or city known to you.

- When was the town created? By whom? For what purpose?

- Who were its dwellers?

- What was its economic base?

- What was its geographical size and features?

- What were the key features of the built form of the town?

- Then try to answer these questions as per the different historical milestones in the town.

- Finally answer all the above questions in relation to current status.

- Reflect on and analyze- Which forces and factors have shaped the urban development of this town or city? How?

3.3.3   Urbanization In The Post Colonial Era

The colonial influence on urbanization in the less developed countries has been perpetuated through the pattern of development in the post colonial era in several of the less developed countries. This has produced several distinctive features, which were earlier not observed in the urbanization experienced of more developed countries. Some of the important features are :

- In some of these countries, a phenomenon called urban primacy is observed. This means that one city dominates over all others in a settlement system in terms of population, economy, and socio- political dominance and geographical concentration. For example, 80% of the population of Thailand is rural. Out of the 20% urban population, 60% stays in a single city i.e. Bangkok. About two thirds of the migrants from the less developed north east parts of the country prefer to move 600-900 km to Bangkok than any other regional urban center. This is because the city has a disproportionately high share of economic and other social opportunities. The city thus becomes an island of opportunity amidst a sea of widespread poverty. Urban primacy is considered to be problematic because of the imbalance in the settlement

pattern and because the impact of development is not spread to the rest of the country.

- Urbanization in the Northern Hemisphere was characterized and accompanied by changes in overall economy which required fewer people in agriculture, changes in education, other aspects of society, formation of institutions etc. Thus it was not just a process of population growth in urban areas but was associated with economic, social and political change. However, the urbanization in the less developed countries is often seen to be in variation with a rise in education, agriculture- industry shift, scientific thinking and institution formation. Some of the countries are thus said to be characterized by 'over urbanization' which means urbanization that is not in consonance with other social, economic and political indicators.

- As a result of such over urbanization, the cities are characterized by high presence of migrants who are not prepared for 'urban' in terms of education, skills etc and in rates disproportionate to the rate of economic opportunities available in the cities. Thus, cities come to be characterized by a division. There are those who are part of the city's formal economy and services while others are compelled to resort to obtaining opportunities and services in the informal market. The active presence of an informal economy which often, parallels the formal economy is a key characteristic of cities in the less developed world. The informal economy is seen to have active links with the formal. It provides services (maids, drivers, security guards, ironing, laundering), goods (vending, recycled goods). It is actively engaged with the collection and recycling of waste and it creates at least few opportunities for housing, education, health etc for the poor migrants who come to the cities. This also translates into significant proportions of urban poverty.

Till now you have read about urbanization in the global north and urbanization in the global south. Now, answer the following questions given in *Check Your Progress 1*.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: a) Write your answer in about 50 words.

b) Check your answer with possible answers given at the end of the unit

1) Distinguish between evolution of urbanization in the North and the South?

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2) What is meant by Urban Primacy? Give an example.

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3.4 CURRENT SCENARIO OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN THE WORLD

The world has become predominantly urban in the last decade. In 1990, the World Bank recorded for the first time that there were as many people living in cities as in rural areas with the global rate of growth of urban population being 4.5 percent per annum. By now, this urban world is a pronounced reality. The axis of this urbanization is tilted towards the less developed countries. For e.g. Urban population in East Asia is expected to rise by 450 million over the next two decades. In South and Central Asia, the increase is expected to be almost 350 million and in Sub Saharan Africa, the urban population could rise by 250 million. Between 1985-2005, the urban population in developing countries grew by more than 8.3 million a year, almost three times the annual increase of 3 million experienced in countries of the global North in the period 1880-1900.

The less developed countries have demonstrated a propensity for urbanization at much faster rates than were seen in the North countries. To give an example, the urban growth in Europe throughout the nineteenth century amounted to some 45 million people – a total exceeded by China in the 1980s. Another example may be a comparison between United Sates which was 40 % urbanized in 1900,70% urbanized in 1960 and 75%urbanized in 1990 as against North Korea which was 405 urbanized in 1870 and 78% urbanized in 1990.Between 1950-75,the urban population of the less developed world increased by 400 million and it rose by another billion in 2000. What these examples illustrate is that these countries are urbanizing at much faster rates than the developed countries.

As urbanization becomes a prominent phenomenon in the world, the size of cities has expanded phenomenally. The average size of the world's largest cities has grown to almost 10 times their size in 1900. Such agglomerations pose another serious challenge to policy. The sheer scale of urban size in some of the cities is astounding. These increasing city sizes have led to several new terms- mega cities, agglomerations, city regions etc. Mega city refers to a city size in terms of population while agglomeration brings in the idea of both population and geographical size; city region refers to several connected cities which are like nuclei in a particular region. To give an example, in Vietnam, between one-third to one-half of the population of the entire country lives in Ho Chi Minh City. It is estimated that currently, about 15 of the world's biggest cities are located in the less developed parts of the world.

This phenomenon of massive rise in quantum of urban population is not matched by an equal rise in economic growth. Thus substantive proportions of both urban and rural populations of these countries live amidst poverty. Urbanization with poverty is a phenomenon which the world that has not been experienced by the world so far. Knowledge of urban planning and governance as it has emerged in the North is located in a starkly different context from the one being experienced in the South. It thus calls for developing new knowledge about urban planning and governance.

3.5 GLOBALIZATION AND CITIES

The context within which this rapid urbanization is taking place is that of a world which is globalizing. Globalization represents an intensification of linkages

between the nations of the world. These links have been fostered by the development of technology, transport and communication. However there are many other dimensions to globalisation. First is the driving force of economic integration as transnational operations draw capital, human resources and physical resources from around the world into a global network of production and marketing. Second, there is an accompanied rescaling of national entities. Thirdly there is a convergence of local and international cultures into a lumpy but largely homogenous hybrid.

There are several debates about globalization. Some scholars view it as a process by which capitalist forces are being deeply entrenched into global South geographies. There are others who view it as a more multilateral process. However, one feature of globalization is increasingly becoming clear; it is that it is extremely uneven and creates some pockets which enhance in value while others get undermined. It is this feature that has particular relevance for cities. Cities across the world are emerging as the loci of globalization.

Under the influence of globalization, cities across the world increasingly get connected to a world system of cities. In this system, some cities appear as command and strategic control centers, these are called the 'world cities' (Friedman, 1982) or global cities(Sassen,1994). Then there are other cities which play the role of regional command centers, there are cities which play more specialist roles such as production centers for particular sectors or financial centers etc. Locating this economic niche has become an increasingly important challenge for cities as they have to compete with each other for resources and investment. Mumbai thus has to compete with other financial centers of the world or Bangalore (now, Bengalaru) has to compete with Chennai and Singapore for location of IT industries.

The implication of this competitiveness is that cities now have to develop entrepreneurial capacities and economic strategies; it calls for a sea change in orientations of local governments of cities, which till now were oriented towards their internal issues and services. These external orientations necessitate a lot of need for reform in local government role and capacity. Increased importance to the local government is part of this change.

The external orientations of cities causes fragmentation within cities, thus while some parts of the city are benefited and get linked to these external processes, there are others who get neglected. Some population segments also get neglected. The process of global unevenness thus gets recreated within cities. City governments also need to manage this unevenness and the discontent arising from it.

On the other hand globalization has also meant sharing of knowledge across borders. It has meant availability of resource support across these boundaries too. This makes it possible to create new linkages and learn from each other. We can thus learn how Porto Allegre in Brazil created a participatory budgeting process which led the path for more inclusive and accountable governance of the city or how Bogota brought about a change in its transportation system towards creating a public bus transport system. Such lateral learning, (whether across national borders or within them) has a tremendous potential for generating the need for new knowledge required for meeting current challenges of urbanization.

Globalization thus acts as a contrast filled backdrop on which the phenomenon of urbanization is unfolding. It presents opportunities as well as creates new challenges for urban governance and planning.

Till now you have read about current scenario of urban development in the World and globalisation and cities. Now, answer the following questions given in *Check Your Progress 2*.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: a) Write your answer in about 50 words.

b) Check your answer with possible answers given at the end of the unit

1) Explain the meaning of over urbanization?

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2) What is the linkage between globalization and urbanization?

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3.6   LET US SUM UP

In the more developed countries of the world, urbanization in the modern sense emerged during the sixteenth century. Three factors were crucial in this experience of urbanization-a) renaissance b) development of modernity and c) industrialization .Urbanization in the North as an organic and gradual process of evolution of society which happened over nearly hundred years or so. It was accompanied by the development of modern thinking and the development of new institutions of governance. Also the presence of colonies helped to reduce or offset some of the problems in urbanization such as large scale needs of food and raw materials.

On the other hand, urbanization is not a result of organic processes produced through internal societal and technological changes but imposed by the colonizers on societies which was not prepared for it. This has produced several distinctive features, which were earlier not observed in the urbanization experienced of more developed countries. Urban forms, functions, economic systems and governance institutions in these societies reflect a segmented and divided character. Presence of large informal sector, urban primacy and over urbanization are some of the phenomena observed in urbanization in the global South.

The world has become predominantly urban in the last decade. The axis of this urbanization is tilted towards the less developed countries. The less developed countries have demonstrated a propensity for urbanization at much faster rates than were seen in the North countries. As urbanization becomes a prominent phenomenon in the world, the size of cities has expanded phenomenally this phenomenon of massive rise in quantum of urban population, however is not matched by an equal rise in economic growth. Thus substantive proportions of both urban and rural populations of these countries live amidst poverty. Urbanization with poverty is a phenomenon which the world that has not been experienced by the world so far.

The context within which this rapid urbanization is taking place is that of a world which is globalizing. Globalization represents an intensification of linkages between the nations of the world. Under the influence of globalization, cities across the world increasingly get connected to a world system of cities. Cities have to compete with each other for resources and investment and thus, locating an economic niche has become an increasingly important challenge for city growth. The implication of this competitiveness is that cities now have to develop entrepreneurial capacities and economic strategies; it calls for a sea change in orientations of local governments of cities, which till now were oriented towards their internal issues and services. These external orientations necessitate a lot of need for reform in local government role and capacity. The external orientation of cities causes fragmentation within cities. On the other hand globalization has also meant sharing of knowledge across borders. Globalization thus acts as a contrast filled backdrop on which the phenomenon of urbanization is unfolding. It presents opportunities as well as creates new challenges for urban governance and planning.

3.7   REFERENCES AND SELECTED READINGS

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3.8 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS - POSSIBLE ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

1) Distinguish between evolution of urbanization in the Global North and the Global South?

   Urbanization in the North was an organic and gradual process of evolution of society which happened over nearly hundred years or so. It was accompanied by the development of modern thinking and the development of new institutions of governance. Further, it was accompanied by colonization; the presence of colonies helped to reduce or offset some of the problems in urbanization such as large scale needs of food and raw materials. On the other hand, urbanization in the Global South was not a result of organic processes produced through internal societal and technological changes but imposed by the colonizers on a society which was not prepared for it. The imposition of form and function meant that cities reflect a segmented form – a colonial part and an indigenous part.

2) What is meant by urban primacy? Give an example.

   Urban primacy means that one city dominates over all others in a settlement system in terms of population, economy, and socio- political dominance and geographical concentration. For example, 80% of the population of Thailand is rural. Out of the 20% urban population, 60% stays in a single city ie Bangkok. About two thirds of the migrants from the less developed north east parts of the country prefer to move 600-900 km to Bangkok than any other regional urban center. This is because the city has a disproportionately high share of economic and other social opportunities.

Check Your Progress 2

1) Explain the meaning of over urbanization?

   'Over urbanization' means urbanization that is not in consonance with other social, economic and political indicators such as shift from primarily agricultural economy to industrial or service based economy, transformations in education, institutions and mechanisms of governance etc. Several developing countries which show the presence of very large cities with overall low levels of socioeconomic development are said to be over urbanized. However over urbanization is a contentious concept as it is west centric.

2) What is the linkage between globalization and urbanization?

   Cities across the world are emerging as the loci of globalization; the urban has become much more prominent. Under the influence of globalization, cities across the world increasingly get connected to a world system of cities in which cities need to compete with each other to attract investment and develop economic niches. The external orientations of cities causes fragmentation between and within cities, thus while some parts of the city are benefited and get linked to these external processes, there are others who get neglected. On the other hand globalization has also meant sharing of knowledge across borders. Globalization thus acts as a contrast filled backdrop on which the phenomenon of urbanization is unfolding. It presents opportunities as well as creates new challenges for urban governance and planning.