

RAMANJIT KAUR JOHAL AND SHAVETA BEGRA

GLOBALIZATION AND urbanization, the world over, have brought rapid and drastic transformations in cities; thus urban governance has assumed greater significance. *Globalization* has impressed upon the restructuring of the cities, so as to create powerful economic centres that dominate the global system of transactions. *Urbanization* has brought about both demographic and morphological changes in the urban areas and has also brought about development in social, economic and cultural life.

The Second Administrative Reforms Commission quoted the current and projected world urban population and the need to prepare for the future.

"...in 2008, the world reaches an invisible but momentous milestone: for the first time in history, more than half its human population, people, will be living in urban areas. By 2030, this is expected to rise to almost 5 billion. Many of the new urbanites will be poor. Their future of cities in developing countries, the future of humanity, depends very much on decisions made now in preparation for the future growth."

The *UN Habitat* Report noted that cities have turned into terrains where spatial inequalities are pronounced. Access to urban services and housing and participation in the "formal sector of the economy" have not been the same for everyone in a city. Spread of slums, lack of sanitation, rising deficit in housing stock for the poor are both the constant manifestations of these inequalities. Therefore, building "harmonious cities" requires the adoption of strategies inclusive of urban planning and institutional reforms.

The National Commission on Urbanization dwelt upon the poor spatial planning in the country noting that not much heed had been paid to the spatial aspect of social and economic development whereas every development decision has a physical manifestation and a geographical location. It is essential that social and economic project decisions should be based on a sound spatial structure.

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This article, attempting to highlight the issues of urban governance in the current scenario, is presented in five sections. Section I gives an overview of urbanization in India. Section II discusses the concepts of urban planning and management. Section III presents the organizational set-up for urban planning and management in SAS Nagar, Punjab. Section IV identifies the major concerns in urban planning and management in SAS Nagar. Finally, Section V summarizes recommendations made by committees and commissions with regard to integrated urban planning and management.

I

URBANIZATION IN INDIA

India, a developing country, is witnessing an exponential urban growth. However, the pace of urbanization has been slower in India as compared to other countries in the world. Of its 1.02 billion population, 285 million (27.8 %) is urban. While the total population increased by 21.34 per cent in 1991-2001, urban population grew by 31.36 per cent during the same period. According to UN estimates, the degree of urbanization in the world increased from 30 per cent in 1950 to 47 per cent in 2000. In India, it increased from 17.3 per cent in 1951 to 27.8 per cent in 2001. China and Indonesia, which had lower levels of urbanization in 1950, have now overtaken India with the percentage of urban population being 32.1 and 40.9 respectively. Nevertheless, by 2050, over half of India's population is expected to be urban dwellers. The declining decadal growth of urban population from 46.1 per cent in 1971-81 to 36.4 per cent in 1981-91 and 31.2 in 1991-2001 can partly explain the lower urbanization level. Correspondingly, the average annual exponential growth in urban agglomeration/towns has also dropped from 3.8 per cent in 1971-81 to 3.1 per cent in 1981-91 to 2.7 per cent in 1991-2001. (Table 1) This, to some extent reflects a declining trend in total urban population growth; the fact is that urbanization in India is proceeding at a fairly modest pace, though some states and cities are reporting exponential growth.

Among the cities, the metropolitan cities or the larger towns have experienced rapid urbanization. This process can be described as 'metropolitanization'. With the increasing metropolitanization, the cities are experiencing booming internal growth and migration. However, the weaknesses of urban infrastructure have been exposed in the past three decades.

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TABLE 1: GROWTH OF URBAN POPULATION IN INDIA

Year	Percentage of Urban to Total Population	Decadal Urban Population Growth
1981	23.34	46.14
1991	25.71	36.46
2001	27.78	31.36

SOURCE: Eleventh Five-Year Plan (2007-12).

II

URBAN PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Urban Planning

The concept of spatial (physical) planning emanates from the need for optimum location of various human activities over available space. This process of appropriate location of activities is termed as "spatial planning". Spatial Planning includes country, regional and town planning. Bhoré Committee (1946) had made following observations on the importance of spatial planning:

"Most of the populated rural and urban centres in the country have grown up in the past without due regard to the principles of planning. In the post-war period new large scale industrial developments, the execution of large public works and other activities will, in all probability, help to create new townships and settlements and thus, further the process of urbanization. It is, therefore, essential to regulate the growth of the town in accordance with the principle of sound town planning, to make a determined effort to eradicate existing slums and to prevent conditions in which they can again grow and thrive."

The objectives of urban planning are both economic and social. Economically, it aims at efficient operation and management of business activities by influencing location of people, commerce and industry. Socially, it tends to understand human and social values and gratify them through planned community development. Thus, an urban plan tries to comprehend the interrelationship between various factors that affect the urban community. Urban planning is essential to;

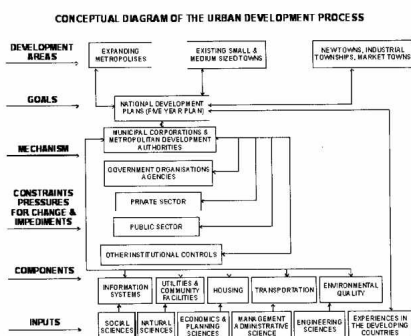
- (i) Serve as a basis for comprehensive development policies and programmes that relate goals to resources and define options for decision-making.

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- (ii) Broaden the options for urban development through better utilization of resources.
- (iii) Undertake temporal dimensions so as to integrate current projects with medium and long range forecasts.
- (iv) Provide innovative approaches and solutions to urban problems by developing effective systems of information, improved technical skills and by establishing new structures of urban regional administration.

Therefore, urban planning is an instrument that calls for public intervention in the allocation of resources in order to rectify the prevailing market imperfections. Each urban system consists of a number of 'sub-systems' – transportation network, educational and cultural activities, infrastructure facilities etc. Further, each sub-system is a complex of sub-systemic components. Such intricacies determine the complexion of the urban development process.

Figure 1 illustrates that urban planning is a complex process that involves numerous administrative departments/agencies such as Public Works



SOURCE: J.K. Sridhar & Ajit. K. Gupta (1981)

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Department, Planning Department, Forest Department, Electricity Board, Pollution Control Board etc. Thus, integration of these agencies is essential for effective plan formulation and implementation. The Riggsian theoretical formulation of "integration" and "differentiation" supports the need to adopt an integrated approach to urban planning.

Urban Planning in India: In India, modern spatial planning began in the late 19th Century; following the outbreak of plague in 1896 the Bombay Improvement Trust Act was enacted in 1898. In 1894, to regulate the developmental activities, Land Acquisition Act was enacted. However, it was the visit of *Petric Geddes*, a pioneer in the field of town planning, to India in 1915 that gave impetus to spatial planning activities. Consequently, first town planning Acts were enacted i.e. Bombay Town Planning Act 1915 and Madras Town Planning Act in 1920.

In the post-independence era, the Third Five-Year Plan paid serious attention to undertaking planned urban development. The Plan considered urbanization as "an important aspect of the process of economic and social development" and envisaged linking up of urban planning with the broader goals of economic development. During the Third Five-year Plan, the Union Government provided full funding to the states to set up Town and Country Planning Departments which took up the task of preparing Master Plans. Thus, from the conceptual point of view, the Third Plan marked a watershed in urban planning thought. Further, it emphasised strengthening of multi-purpose municipal government to lend institutional support to the concept of comprehensive and integrative planning. The subsequent Five Year Plans, from time-to-time, made provisions for promoting planned and regulated urban development. Most recently, the *Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012)* averred that the existing status of Master Plans, an important instrument for urban planning and development, should be critically reviewed. It suggested that Master Plans should have built-in flexibility and dynamism to incorporate the changing situations.

Spatial Planning is a state subject. With the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992, the function of urban planning was assigned to urban local bodies. The Act stipulated establishment of District Planning Committee and Metropolitan Planning Committee for integrating spatial and economic development as well as rural and urban planning. This aimed at undertaking integrated regional planning with due attention to regional and local infrastructure, environmental planning and investment planning. Consequently, Urban Development Plan Formulation and Implementation Guidelines (UDPF) were laid down by the Ministry of Urban Development.

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Urban Management

Urban management means developing, managing and coordinating resources to achieve objectives of urban development. Stern, however, opined that urban management is an 'elusive concept which escapes definition'. He stressed that "urban management is an integrating concept. It implies an integrated approach to the major issues of cities in emerging economies." Therefore, there has been the need to shift our loci from "physical planning" to "comprehensive urban management."

An organizational framework conceived for urban management is concerned with the geographical patterns, functions, powers, responsibilities, legislative bodies and informal measures relating to all levels of government. The dynamics of urban management is a logical outgrowth of the commitment to balanced economic growth, to environmental quality and to rational resource allocation.

An ideal urban management system should possess certain essential characteristics that facilitate result-oriented and change-oriented urban management. These are:

A Comprehensive Approach: "Comprehensiveness" refers to the physical, social and economic characteristics of an urban area and implies creation of such a physical unit of government whose boundaries correspond closely to its pattern of activity.

Vertical Integration: The success of urban management largely calls for the reconciliation of the group and personal motivations of all levels of government. Sufficient opportunities must exist for proper interface between various levels. Coordination between different levels of government through highly developed communication channels is essential for policy determination, resource allocation (physical and financial), information exchange and conflict resolution.

Horizontal Relationship: The complex physical, social and economic problems of an urban area demand coordination of decision-making at each level of government. Detailed legal prescriptions explicitly defining individual institutional mandates, to a large extent, resolve the problem of coordination, duplication, conflict and overlapping generally faced by departments at each level of government.

Sound Financial Arrangements: In reality, public bodies are set up with big mandates and are finally constrained in performing on account of inadequate financial resources. A rational organizational structure should observe the principles of providing for financial autonomy commensurate

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with plan-making power, clearly enunciating financial relationships and encouraging self-financing projects.

Responsiveness and Relevance: Responsiveness implies the ability of the government to adapt its policies to the needs of the society. Relevance implies the formulation of policies based on a shared perception between the government and the society in terms of needs and priorities. This is possible through citizen participation, political will to respond to current problems and built-in flexibility in an organization.

Adaptability: It refers to the changes, small and large, that an organization can make to its structures where necessary to deal with new situations as they arise. While "ad-hoc" changes can be made, however, too much of "ad-hocracy" also has negative implications; this can compound problems or create new ones. Built-in flexibility should be a feature of an organization and both long-term and short-term goals should be determined in view of current changes in society.

Thus, an efficient and effective urban management is essential for creating liveable and sustainable cities.

III

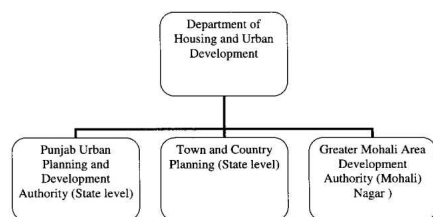
URBAN PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION IN SAS NAGAR (MOHALI)

Sahibzada Ajit Singh (SAS) Nagar, named after the son of the Sikh Tenth Guru Gobind Singh ji, was declared as the 18th district of Punjab on April 14, 2006. Mohali, as the township is popularly known, is the satellite town of Chandigarh and has been developed contiguously and on the same pattern as Chandigarh and with a view to reducing the population pressure on Chandigarh. It forms part of the Chandigarh tricity area along with Panchkula. As per the 2001 Census Mohali had a population of 1,23,284. In 2007 this had grown to 6,98,317 of which the urban population was 38.8 per cent. In the wake of rapid population increase, the township of Mohali too aspires to undertake planned and systematic urban development.

A comprehensive administrative structure has been created for carrying out planned urban management. The **state level** agencies consist of Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Department of Town and Country Planning (TCP), Punjab Urban Planning and Development Authority (PUDA) and Punjab Infrastructure Development Board (PIDB). At the **Local level**, urban planning and management is undertaken by Greater Mohali Area Development Authority (GMADA) and Municipal Council, SAS Nagar (Figure 2). The activities of all these agencies are closely interlinked.

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FIG. 2. ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCIES OF SAS NAGAR



Administrative Agencies for Urban Planning & Development

State Level Agencies

- **Department of Housing and Urban Development, Punjab (HUD)**

The Department of Housing and Urban Development, Punjab (HUD) is the nodal agency for formulating policies, sponsoring and supporting programmes, coordinating the activities of various urban authorities and monitoring the programmes concerning all the issues of urban development and housing in the State. It has further delegated these functions to Department of Town and Country Planning (TCP), Punjab Urban Planning and Development Authority (PUDA) and Greater Mohali Area Development Authority, created for SAS Nagar. (Figure 2)

- **Department of Town And Country Planning**

The Department of Town and Country Planning, Punjab is a state level department which is engaged in physical planning of urban centers and rural areas in the State. The department prepares schemes and projects of different agencies so as to create better environment and provide planned and developed sites to the people for residential, commercial, industrial purposes. The Department is headed by a Chief Town Planner. Senior Town Planners, District Town Planners and Deputy District Town Planners constitute the subsequent hierarchical levels.

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The main activities of the Town & Country Planning Department are as follows:

- (i) Formulation of Regional and Urban Development Strategy.
- (ii) Preparation of Regional Plans & Master Plans for the orderly growth and the development of towns and cities under the Punjab Regional & Town Planning and Development Act & Rules, 1995.
- (iii) Surveying and mapping of Regional Planning Areas, cities and towns including aerial photography by remote sensing techniques.
- (iv) Planning of residential urban estates and commercial schemes of the Punjab Urban Planning & Development Authority (PUDA).
- (v) Providing technical assistance to the Department of Industries, Punjab Small Scale Industries and Export Corporation (PSIEC), Punjab Pollution Control Board and the Department of Science, Technology and Environment regarding setting up of Industrial Focal Points, scrutiny of cases involving establishment of industrial units from the environmental angle.

• Punjab Infrastructure Development Board (PIDB)

The Government of Punjab created Punjab Infrastructure Development Board (PIDB) by enacting the Punjab Infrastructure (Development & Regulation) Act, 2002. Punjab Infrastructure Development Board was established under the Public Works Department (Bridges & Road).

PIDB provides funds for urban infrastructure projects to PUDA. The PIDB is funded by the Punjab Infrastructure Development Fund which is formed by the collection of Re. 1 per litre fee on petrol and one per cent fee on all agricultural produce except fruit, vegetables and pulses; this amount to approximately Rs. 170 crore per annum. The Punjab Infrastructure Initiative Fund (PIIF) has been established out of this fund. The fund is spent on augmentation of existing infrastructure and Punjab Government's contribution to equity in priority infrastructure projects.

• Punjab Urban Planning And Development Authority (PUDA)

PUDA is the parent urban development authority. It was constituted under the Punjab Regional and Town Planning and Development Act, 1995. The Authority was constituted for the execution of urban development plans and programmes under the Act and works under the directions of Punjab Regional and Town Planning and Development Board.

The Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Government of Punjab, is the ex-officio Chairman of the Authority and the Secretary, Housing and

Urban Development is the ex-officio Vice Chairman. The Chief Administrator is the executive head and reports to the Chairman. The Chief Administrator is an IAS Officer of the level of Secretary to the Government of Punjab.

PUDA has its town and country planning wing and architectural wing headed by a Senior Town Planner and Senior Architect respectively. The five zonal offices at Ludhiana, Bhatinda, Jalandhar, Patiala and Mohali are the basic operations units of PUDA, wherein each zone operates as a 'mini-PUDA'. Each zone is headed by an Additional Chief Administrator (an IAS officer). PUDA exercises control over all the districts of the state through its zonal offices. The zonal offices perform the functions of land acquisition; urban planning through enforcement of town planning and urban development regulations; urban estate development and infrastructure development (roads, bridges).

• Local Level Agencies

Separate urban development authorities have been set up in each district to provide for balanced urban development of every district. **Greater Mohali Area Development Authority (GMADA)** was created For SAS Nagar (Mohali) district. GMADA, together with Municipal Council, Mohali undertake urban planning and its management in the city.

• Greater Mohali Area Development Authority

Greater Mohali Area Development Authority (GMADA) was constituted on August 14, 2006 under Section 29 (1) of the Punjab Regional and Town Planning and Development Act, 1995. Its basic objective is to achieve balanced development of the city through perspective plans, strengthening of infrastructure facilities and promotion of growth centres. The authority is headed by Chief Minister of Punjab and has eight ex-officio members and three non-official nominated members. (Table 2).

TABLE 2. MEMBERSHIP OF GREATER MOHALI AREA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

1. Chief Minister, Punjab	Chairman
2. Housing & Urban Development Minister	Member
3. Chief Secretary	Member
4. Principal Secretary to Chief Minister	Member
5. Principal Secretary Finance	Member
6. Secretary, Housing & Urban Development	Member
7. Secretary, Local Government	Member
8. Chief Town Planner, Punjab	Member
9. Chief Administrator, GMADA	Member
10. Three non-officials nominated by the Chief Minister	Members

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All the powers and functions of the Punjab Urban Planning and Development Authority relating to development of Sahibzada Ajit Singh Nagar District and adjoining areas falling in other districts, forming part of Greater Mohali Area are exercised by the Greater Mohali Area Development Authority.

- **Municipal Council, SAS Nagar**

The Municipal Council, SAS Nagar has been set up under Section 4 of the Punjab Municipal Act 1911. "The State Government may, having regard to population of the area, the density of the population therein, the revenue generated for local administration, the percentage of employment in non-agricultural activities, the economic importance or such other factors, as it may deem fit, specify, by notification in the Official Gazette, any area to be a smaller urban area for the purposes of this Act".

The Act under **Section 50-B** has endowed the Council with the following functions pertaining to urban management.

1. Urban planning including town planning.
2. Regulation of land use and construction of buildings.
3. Water supply for domestic, industrial and commercial purposes.
4. Urban forestry, protection of the environment and promotion of ecological aspects.
5. Slum improvement and upgradation.
6. Provision of urban amenities and facilities such as parks, gardens and playgrounds.
7. Provision of public amenities including street lighting, parking lots, bus stops and public conveniences.

The Council consists of 31 wards and the elected members comprise members with or without party affiliations. The main departments of the Council are Engineering, Electricity, Sanitation and Birth and Death Registration. The Council is headed by a President and Vice-President. The Executive Officer (from the State civil service) is the administrative head of the Council.

IV

MAJOR CONCERNS REGARDING URBAN PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION IN SAS NAGAR (MOHALI)

The institutional arrangements outlined in the section above show a multiplicity of agencies existing for urban planning and management. However,

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major concerns emerge from the study of primary and secondary sources on the actual working of these arrangements. There exists a large chasm between theory and practice. One of the most obvious gaps in the development of the urban planning machinery has been the absence of the adoption of the much talked about *integrated approach to urban planning*. There are a large number of other issues as well. Some of the glaring issues constraining urban planning and its administration in Mohali are discussed. These include lack of political will; absence of a well-knit institutional framework; exclusion of the environmental context in planning; lack of people's participation.

- **Lack Of Political Will**

Effective urban planning requires both political will and support for its success. This is essential both for the socio-economic development of the city as well as for satisfying the fundamental human rights of a citizen, i.e. every citizen has the right of equal access to public service in his country (Article 25, UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights).

However, the political dimension is governed by vested interests, political-criminal nexus and narrow party politics. Political elements have contributed towards consolidation of networks of illegalities, i.e. encouraging illegal construction and unauthorized occupation of public land. A corrupt coalition of elements from politics, bureaucracy and the citizenry has led to the creation of moral chaos and confusion in the cities. A self-serving network of land and building mafias – the landlord of the property, the buyer of additional space, the tenant who rents the space and the political element – have gained a strong foothold in the cities. Even the officials of local bodies are roped in by way of influence and/or bribes or threats. The cycle of mushrooming of large number of illegal constructions and encroachments and court ordered demolitions from time-to-time explicitly highlights how the permanent and political executive remain unmindful of the continuous proliferation of such activities in the cities. (All political parties follow the same approach in this case as no one wants to be labeled anti-poor).

In SAS Nagar, Greater Mohali Area Development Authority (GMADA) has failed to check continuous violation of building bylaws in the town. As per the rules, residents are not allowed to open gates along the main road and use them for commercial purposes. However, it was observed that most of the houses in Phase IV were being utilized for commercial purposes and such construction and land use permission was absent from the building plans which the owners got approved from GMADA. According to the officials such violations could not be controlled because many residents enjoyed political patronage; in case any action was initiated against such people political pressure was mounted on the Authority to abort the process.

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Further, the Municipal Council has failed to check massive encroachments by vegetable/fruit sellers and shopkeepers in different parts of the town. The *verandas* in market areas have been occupied by the shopkeepers. The footpaths in Phase IX, VIII and VII have been turned into permanent fruit/vegetable markets. This has created traffic congestion along the main roads. However, the civic body has failed to remove these encroachments as fruit sellers bribe *tehbazari* employees. Hence large-scale violation of urban plans, rules and regulations were in evidence.

• Absence of Integrated Institutional Framework

Multiple agencies for urban planning and management exist in SAS Nagar, i.e. Department of Town and Country Planning (TCP), Punjab Urban Planning and Development Authority (PUDA), Greater Mohali Area Development Authority (GMADA) and Municipal Council (MC), Mohali. In the process the town has been transformed into a "contested territory". At the state level, TCP has been set up for the preparation of regional plans, master plans and urban development strategy. However, Punjab Regional and Town Planning and Development Act was enacted in 1995 to create PUDA, a state-wide authority, to deal with land use. Further, Punjab Regional and Town Planning and Development Board, the apex decision-making body for regional and town planning, was set up under the same Act of 1995. In addition to this, for undertaking urban development in SAS Nagar, GMADA was set up in 2006 under the same Act of 1995. This multiplicity of agencies has resulted in delays, overlapping jurisdiction and duplication of tasks. The unresponsive character of the agencies and their insensitivity towards general public interest has been a common observation.

The development authorities have consolidated their position in urban areas due to their independent character. While working in a local area, this character makes them unaccountable to the Municipal bodies. Consequently, the significance of urban local bodies has been undermined and their scope has been relegated to routine functions only.

Lack of synchronization and poor integration of various agencies has resulted in neglect of certain parts and development of others at the cost of the unrepresented. Due to absence of clear demarcation of functional responsibilities between GMADA and the MC a number of villages like Madanpura, Matore and Sahi Majra have been suffering from poor sanitation conditions, massive illegal constructions and inadequate infrastructure facilities. The outbreak of diarrhea in January 2009 in Madanpura village with each agency, including the health department, washing its hands off its responsibility for civic infrastructure is a glaring example of lack of responsibility in the face of absence of clarity of jurisdiction. Further, a set-up of this nature makes the job of fixing responsibility extremely difficult.

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• Expropriation of Constitutional Jurisdiction of Municipal Council

It is important to note that constitutionally it is the Municipal Council, under the Department of Local Government, that is responsible for urban planning and management. Not only have its functions been hijacked, its rightful earnings have also been appropriated by other agencies. A recent deadlock between the Municipal Council and GMADA was on account of *malba* fee being collected by GMADA at the time of approval of building plans. Whereas, the MC claimed that as *malba* removal was done by the MC this fee should be transferred to it.

Further, the urban local bodies, i.e. the Municipal Council have also been deprived of their constitutional right pertaining to urban planning under the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992. Urban planning is a state subject; urban governance is through local bodies. However, the local bodies have failed to discharge their functions due to various reasons. A municipal councillor remarked that it was only occasionally that the urban local body got the opportunity to perform its constitutional duties. Their functioning has been reduced only to the maintenance of public facilities and amenities that have been set up by the specialized urban development agencies.

The erosion of the status of local bodies and little attention being paid to constitutional requirements has had the additional fallout of non-establishment of Metropolitan Planning Committee and Ward Committees in many states there by defeating the objective of decentralized planning. District Planning Committees have not been constituted in the state of Punjab inspite of legislation requiring them.

• Exclusion of Environmental Context

Urban plans should be in consonance with the environment of the city. This implies the adoption of a two-fold approach. *First*, plans should aim at optimum utilization of the available natural resources. *Second*, they should possess environmental embeddings and aim at preservation of the natural flora and fauna.

However, most of the urban plans observe this concept more often than not in the breach. The case study revealed that there was absence of proper environment assessment, which amounted to degradation of environment quality and non-integration of natural resources in the plan proposals.

The Nayagoan Master Plan ignored the existing forest acts, i.e. the Punjab Capital Periphery Control Act 1952 and the Punjab Land Preservation Act 1900 (PLPA). The Master plan provided the justification that the planned area had been de-listed from PLPA on the order of Union Ministry of Environment

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and Forest. However, it completely disregarded the detail that the de-listing was conditional allowing only agricultural activities to be undertaken. Even, the Department of Forest stated that "no development activity could take place in areas bound by PLPA."

Another instance is that of an environmentally unsound and allegedly illegal decision of GMADA – cutting down hundreds of trees down a road in Mohali without permission of the Ministry of Environment and Forest – that was challenged in court by an NGO.

Yet another issue is the misuse of green spaces. In Mohali, 88 out of 550 parks are being used as parking lots by residents. In one of the sectors 23 out of 55 parks are being thus misused. Consequently, not only are the parks suffering damage but residents are also being deprived of green spaces. Notwithstanding the public outcry GMADA has not responded to resolve this issue in any way. Thus, it is evident that the urban agencies are reluctant to preserve the available green spaces.

- **Lack of Participative Planning**

The 74th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 institutionalized the practice of public participation for integrated urban development planning. If efficiently utilized, participation is developmental; its practice can have a "cascade effect", which both improves the participatory process and transforms public life into a vibrant entity.

However, the concept of decentralized planning is largely on paper. Urban planning falls mainly in the hands of civil servants who are comfortable maintaining *status quo*, normally dismissing serious participation by the people. Further, the urban development bodies are largely opaque bodies which do not provide any platform for public hearing.

The civic bodies, interestingly, do not participate in the formulation of urban plans. They are left only with the maintenance of the areas developed by the urban authorities. According to a Municipal Councilor the Council did not own any property or land and was only responsible for preserving the planned area handed over to it by the development authority. In the state of Punjab, District Planning Boards have not been constituted inspite of legislation making them mandatory. Hence there was little room or opportunity for citizens' participation in the planning process.

V

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

A number of committees, commissions and conferences have focused on urban planning. A summary of some relevant recommendations is presented

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below.

That there has not been much improvement in the status of urban planning and its management is evident from the fact that the recommendations made by the *National Commission on Urbanization (NCU) (1988)* for upgrading urban planning remain highly relevant even today. These include the disaggregating of development policies, i.e. preparing a General Spatial Plan (GSP) for a period of 10-15 years within which spatial plans for a period of five years coinciding with the Five Years Plans should be prepared; bringing various state departments dealing with urban activities under one umbrella; filing a Spatial Impact Statement; establishing Indian Council for Citizen Action (ICCA) for increasing citizen participation and establishing similar state level bodies; establishment of a state-wide cadre of municipal employees for uniform level and good quality service delivery.

The unpleasant manifestations of rapid urbanization were noted by the *Second Administrative Reform Commission (2005)*. Urban planning, an instrument for streamlining urban resources, in reality begins and ends with the preparation of zoning regulations. Further, these regulations are often violated by the local bodies, other authorities as well as by the citizens. Thus, the Commission believed that the concept of urban planning needed revamping. It proposed that District Planning Committees and Metropolitan Planning Committees at the regional level should prepare the Master plans and Zonal plans whereas Layout plans at the local level should be prepared by the Panchayats and Municipalities.

The Commission, with a view to establish an effective system of urban planning and administration, also recommended that : (i) the approved City Development Plan and zoning regulations should be enforced for 10 years without any changes. (ii) the Infrastructure Plans should be integrated with City Development Plans, and (iii) specific provision for Disaster Management should be included in spatial planning.

It is imperative to understand that the organization of urban space in the city determines the physical expression of its economy, environment and equity. *The India Urban Space Conference*, Goa, 2006, emphasizing the adoption of an integrated approach advocated:

"A new paradigm for planning Not one that takes a myopic view of planning as zoning and land use, but a development plan that is informed by the issues of public governance, the need for connectivity, environmental cost of urban expansion, of the impact on depleting resources and vanishing ecological diversity, the requirements of water, power and infrastructure. Of planning that ensures social housing, that fosters the building of communities. One that gives us public realms that are inviting. That allows street vendors to

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earn their living and provide a valuable service and yet is not unreasonable or inconvenient. That allocates space for new industries and businesses to thrive but builds in flexibility for changing economies. That provides and works towards a vision for a city that all its citizens can own"

The need to pay attention to improving urban planning and its governance has been apparent since long. Till now 1200 development plans/master plans have been prepared; however, their implementation leaves much to be desired. The deficiencies of urban planning are fundamental including lack of integration of spatial planning proposals with economic development plans, inadequate legislative support, lack of coordination between multiple development agencies, expropriation of urban local bodies from their constitutional jurisdiction, lack of community participation, poor integration of development activities, inefficient urban services delivery systems and so on.

In the era of globalization the *11th Five Year Plan (2007-2012)* has been highly sensitive towards addressing the urban issues constraining the economic growth of the country. To make urban planning and management a sustainable process, the Plan envisaged —

- (i) Developing inter-linkage between national level spatial strategies, regional level strategy plans, metropolitan region strategy plans and city and ward level land use and development plans.
- (ii) Developing a scheme of inter-related plans at three levels, namely Perspective/Structure Plan (20-25 years), Short-term Integrated Infrastructure Development Plan (5 years) coterminous with the National Five Year Plans and plans of projects and schemes.
- (iii) Preparation of the state spatial plans by taking into account demographic and economic potentials, broad land use configurations, infrastructure requirements, project implementation schedule including mechanism for public-private partnerships.
- (iv) Providing adequate infrastructure and manpower to municipalities for preparing development plans.
- (v) User-friendly and transparent Development Control Norms.

Thus it is apparent that the need for an integrated approach to urban planning has been reiterated by scholars, government planners and administrators but has not found implementation due to the factors identified like the lack of political will, absence of an integrated institutional framework, expropriation of constitutional jurisdiction of Municipal Council, exclusion of environmental context and lack of participative planning.

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CONCLUSION

In the era of globalization the effort to establish "world class cities" calls for more systematic and organized urban development. Hence urban planning and management have a crucial role to play. However, the case-study revealed urban planning and management to be suffering from serious administrative lacunae: lack of political will, absence of well-knit institutional framework, exclusion of environmental context and lack of peoples' participation. These identified issues have been long standing. Further, it was observed that these issues are common to all urban centres irrespective of size. While various Commissions have made recommendations for addressing urban problems and issues from time-to-time these hardly see the light of day. Even, the constitutionalization of urban local bodies has failed to substantiate their role in urban planning and management. The emergence of multiple urban development agencies has made urban areas a "contested territory". The scope for peoples' participation in plan formulation and implementation has remained negligible. Consequently, the plans generally fail to incorporate local needs and aspirations. Hence, it has become essential to move beyond the rhetoric and begin to address the basic underlying causes.

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Written by Administrator

Thursday, 10 September 2009 00:00 - Last Updated Thursday, 30 September 2010 05:00

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