

Full Length Research Paper

Retrospect of post-colonial metropolitan planning in India: Critical appraisal

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Metropolitan planning after the six decades has evolved so much. Planning issues are not deviated from that much. Early urban planning was guided by their master plans. Four major metropolises of India namely Kolkata, Mumbai, Delhi and Chennai have formulated their master plans between mid sixties to late seventies. The paper tried to find out the evolution of the urban planning ideas from 1960s onward with respect to four Indian metropolises, to examine their planning strategy and understand if it is enough to solve the problem of the metropolises and lastly how neoliberal paradigm has shaped their strategy. It is apparent that each city masters plan failed to solve the problem. Population growth, land use strategy and housing problem remain the major issue. In the Early 90's India steps in neoliberal approach and urban development organizations shifting their planning strategy from strategic to entrepreneurial deregulates the housing and real estate market.

Key words: Strategic planning, entrepreneurial planning, neoliberalism.

INTRODUCTION

Urban development policy in third world with specific reference to Asia has been transformed for fifty years. In the early 1960 an effort was made on slowing down the rate of urbanization through control of the growth of large metropolitan cities. It was the 1980s when policy makers realized the inevitability of the growth of the largest city in the urban system. They started to begin stress for more diffused pattern of urban growth around the metropolitan area and stimulating the growth of secondary cities and smaller towns (Shaw, 1999). In India such policy shifts occurred earlier in late 1960s. West Bengal and

Maharashtra were the pioneers in the implementation of the diffusing urban growth strategy.

Urbanization policy is significant in Third World countries as the location of new economic activities and the migration of population have an influence on national economic efficiency and the stability of political systems. The rapid growth of urbanization especially of large cities generates imbalances in the socio-economic systems, bringing out maladies such as slums, urban poverty, environmental deterioration and excessive pressure on infrastructure. In countries like India where the state plays

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a dominant role in the progress, the need for urbanization policy is still more important to eliminate unintended and unwanted spatial effects of the macro-economic policies and to promote effective internal management of cities and inter-regional integration (Gnaneshwar, 1995).

Objective

This paper tried to find out the evolution of the urban planning ideas from 1960s onward with respect to four Indian metropolises. It is to be noted that the four metropolises have more than 200 years long colonial past. Therefore it is interesting to understand how these metropolises have truly evolved from 1960s onward with respect to their planning policy and implementation strategy.

METHODOLOGY

The paper deals with in-depth analysis of urban planning policy and program that have evolved in the post colonial and neoliberal period. The analysis is carried out in two different sections. The first section of the analysis undertakes thorough literature review of the selected plan documents of Indian Metropolitan cities and urban planning policy of the planning commission during 1960 to 1990. The key aspects covered are major urban planning policy and program took to arrest the crisis of the metropolitan areas and contextualize the policy and planning as 'strategic' in nature. In the second section, urban policy and planning program of 1990s onward were examined through the lens of entrepreneurial planning. The secondary data sources used to carry out analysis are listed below: Census reports, planning statistics, Annual reports of Government agencies, Technical and Master plan reports. Books, Journals, Conference proceedings, Study reports, and Internet based information.

FINDINGS

Early initiatives of metropolitan plan making

After independence centralization approach was taken to manage the emerging new form of urbanization both administratively, economically and demographically. Evident of this trend is revealed in rapid growth of metropolitan cities and stagnating small towns (Gnaneshwar, 1995). The four super-metros (Calcutta, Mumbai, Delhi and Chennai) constituted 52.7% of the total million-plus cities' population in sixties. However, two decades later government realizes that comprehensive attention should be given to urban planning and land policy because urban area is the engine of the economic growth (Gnaneshwar, 1995).

In 1954 Central Council of Local self-government was established and started to take the urban community development programs. After a decade in 1963 the Central Council of Local Self-Government and state

ministers for town and country planning took some policy measure to solve the prevailing urban problems. The measures are as follows.

1. To make urban local bodies in urban areas where they do not exist.
2. Promotion of the town area committees and Notified Area committees into full-fledged municipalities.
3. Out spreading the limits of bigger municipalities (Das, 1981).

In the early seventies it was realized that spatial disparity was growing very fast. John P. Lewis during the time discussing regional development pointed out that if appropriate measures are not taken then the situation would be worse (John, 1983). Soon in 1975 government of India constituted the Task force to study the problems of small and medium towns (Gnaneshwar, 1995). The committee noted that problem could be solved through manifold approaches which involve social, economic and spatial approach. Two important recommendations were to formulate the national urbanization policy and urban land policy. Although it is to be noted that third plan (1961-1965) already recognized the need of comprehensive urbanization policy for country. Third plan may be called a watershed for urban policy making because it took financial and legislative measure to facilitate the urban development.

Recognizing metropolitan identity

In 1970 with the appearance of the development authorities recognition of metropolitan identity came. Almost at the same time metropolitan scale was created in all the four regions. In 1971 a conference organized by housing and urban development ministry at Delhi determined that an authority should be set up for the coordination of plans and projects. With this a major shift of functional domain occurred from the municipalities to parastatals as well as the government department. This in turn decreases the role of corporations. Here the questions whether the creation of these development authorities helped to develop an awareness of a metropolitan identity in the public mind (Sivaramakrishnan, 2015).

In the early 1970's three major metropolises constituted their development authority to formulate master plans. Following are some of the details of these "Development Authority" (Table 1).

For the first time these planning authority prepared their master plans to solve the problem regionally. In 1966 Basic development plan was formulated for Kolkata Metropolitan District with a perspective of twenty years and for Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai metropolis it was 1962, 1964 and 1976 respectively.

Table 1. Development authorities of Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata and Chennai.

Name of the development authority	Year of establishment	Area in sq. km 2011	Population 2011 '000
DDA (Delhi Development Authority)	1957	1696	167.53
KMDA (Kolkata Metropolitan Development Authority)	1970	1886.67	141.12
CMDA (Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority)	1974	1189	86.96
MMRD (Mumbai Metropolitan Development Authority)	1975	4354.50	209.98

Source: City Development plans of Kolkata, Mumbai, Delhi and Chennai.

Table 2. Publications of series of master plan.

Name of Metropolitan Area	First Publication of Master / Perspective Plan	Second Perspective/ Master Plan	Third Perspective/ Master Plan	Fourth Perspective/ Master Plan	Fifth Perspective/ Master Plan
DDA	1962-1982	1981-2001	Vision 2021	-----	-----
MMRD	1964-1981	1981-2001	2001-2021	-----	-----
KMDA	1966-1986	1976-1980	1981-2001	1990-2015	Vision 2025
CMDA	1976-1988	1995-2011	2012-2026	-----	-----

Source: City Development plan of Kolkata, Mumbai, Delhi and Chennai.

Third plan prepared a guideline to frame the master plan. Master plan should prepare state government or concerned local authorities but before that concerned states will have to enact the town and country planning legislation (Shaw, 1996). To supply funds for housing and urban development projects to metropolitan authorities, state housing boards, Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) was established in the Fourth Plan (1969-74) (Shaw, 1996). The main objective of the HUDCO was "promotion of housing for the persons belonging to low income groups and economically weaker sections" (Table 2) (Routray, 1993).

Delhi followed by Mumbai and Calcutta prepared their first master plan for their respective Metropolitan area during the early sixties while decade later Chennai prepared their first master plans. Although, Bombay's first master plan was devoted to problem of urban Bombay not the entire metropolitan region. In fact first master plan of Mumbai Metropolitan Region was sanctioned in 1973 and next master plan for metropolitan region was published in 1999 for the period of 1996-2011. So Mumbai's comprehensive metropolitan regional planning came much later than Delhi and Kolkata. These perspective/ Master plan mainly dealt with distribution of future population in various parts of their metropolitan area, policies for economic growth and future location of economic activities, future physical developments, circulation pattern, programmes for Traffic and Transportation, developments of land use zoning, requirements of urban infrastructures for the future population, policies

and programmes for sectoral developments and development control regulations.

From their policy objective it was apparent that the objective of the planning at the end of sixties or the beginning of seventies was mainly to manage the existing urban change. It is to be noted that implementation of these plans within their time period was one of the crucial issue. One of the important aspects of these master plan was that it was formulated not only for the urban areas but the surrounding rural areas of the concerned metropolis. So there is clash of interest as well as spatial bias regarding the planning and programme between rural and urban areas.

Major issues of the First Master/ Perspective plans of four Metropolitan Areas:

More or less each of the four master/ perspective plan concerning five basic areas namely

1. Regional population growth.
2. Physical constraints which include land form and densities, sewage and drainage.
3. Economic Problems which include the economic growth considerations and employment.
4. Deficits and future need of urban services which include water supply, housing, transportation, education and health facilities.
5. Administrative and Fiscal policy.

Table 3. Comparative population growths of four major urban agglomerations in India.

Name of Metropolis	Population in lakhs				
	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Delhi	36.47	57.29 (5.708)	83.75 (4.618)	127.91 (5.272)	167.53 (3.090)
Mumbai	65.92	94.22 (4.293)	125.72 (3.343)	163.68 (3.019)	209.98 (2.828)
Kolkata	74.20	91.94 (2.390)	109.10 (1.866)	132.17 (2.114)	141.12 (0.677)
Chennai	31.70	42.89 (3.529)	53.61 (2.5)	64.24 (1.982)	86.96 (3.536)

Source: Census report of 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001. Parentheses figures are decadal growth rate of population.

Population growths in the main cities were one of the important problems to all the metropolitan area and almost every plan failed to make correct projection of population growth for next two decades. Growth of the population in the core area of the metropolis was due to migration from the rural hinterland almost by passing the medium and large towns. Practically each plan has failed to accommodate the growing population within the metropolitan region. Planners tried to develop Calcutta as a bi polar growth¹; for Delhi it was poly-centric balanced development through seven “ring towns” namely Loni and Ghaziabad, Faridabad, Ballabgarh, Bahadurgarh, Gurgaon and Narela.² While Bombay and Madras follow the polycentric new town development around the main city. Navi Mumbai was developed as new town in early eighties to solve the over congestion of Mumbai.³ One of the important facets of the land use planning is the process of urban land cover changes or the pace at which non-urban land is converted into urban land. It is to be mentioned that absolute growth of the Mumbai and Kolkata was nearly at the same level during 1970’s while Delhi’s growth was much higher at the same period of time (Taubenböck and Wegmann, 2008)⁴. Therefore land use planning was one of the main challenges that every master plan dealt with rigorously.

Apart from land use planning and population growth, the other important aspect of the planning policy was to make the city a long term viable growth Centre. Calcutta, Delhi and Bombay master plan categorically mentioned that industry should be located outside of the main city. However, Bombay was successful in relocating the industry and Delhi failed to relocate their industry outside the main city according to the recommendation of the master plan (Table 3).

One of the important aspects of any functional region is the strong connectivity. The first master plan of all the four metropolis addressed the traffic and transportation issue of the metropolitan region. It is worthwhile to

mention that alone Calcutta made a separate Comprehensive Traffic and Transportation Plan for CMD in 1966. Late 1970s was the period when four metropolises tried to reconnect with global capital and international financial agencies gave loans in different phases for the development of roads and other infrastructure. However there was absence of any national policy for transportation. In 2006 first National Transport policy was introduced. Objective of the transport policy was to support the required level of economic activity, provide road networks for easy and sustainable flow of goods and people. Unfortunately, however, such flow of goods and people has been facing several problems. Accessing jobs, education, recreation and similar activities is becoming increasingly time consuming. Billions of man hours are lost with people “stuck in traffic”. The primary reason for this has been the explosive growth in the number of motor vehicles.⁴ The other aspect is that the transport sector is the second largest consumer of energy in India. The growth of transport not only increases pressure on the limited non-renewable energy resources and increase in foreign exchange outgo but also considerably increases environmental pollution. Increasing car dependence in India especially in the urban areas is most visible at the local level – vehicular emissions causing air pollution, noise pollution, and corresponding health effects. Increasing energy consumption, operational pollution, land intrusion and congestion are some of the areas of concern.⁵

In the Fifth five year plan (1974-1979) National urbanization policy resolution was made by the town and country planning organization. The Main objectives of the urbanization policy were to handle the problem of metropolitan cities in a more comprehensive and regional perspective. To assist the metropolitan development projects due to its national significance.

Due to the huge population growth in the metropolises 6th Plan central government (1980- 1985) addressed the issue of decentralization/dispersion of population through the introduction of a centrally sponsored scheme called

¹ Government of West Bengal (1966) *Basic Development Plan for the Calcutta Metropolitan District 1966-1986*, Calcutta Metropolitan Planning Organization, Development and planning department.

² Government of Delhi (1962), *Delhi Master Plan* Chapter one, Delhi Development Authority

³ http://www.cidco.maharashtra.gov.in/NM_Developmentplan.aspx

⁴ Government of India (2014) National Urban Transport Policy 2014, Ministry of Urban Development, Delhi

⁵ Ibid

the Integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns (IDSMT). Its main objective was to promote growth in towns with less than 100,000 populations through provision of infrastructure and basic services⁶. Seventh five year plan (1985-1990) for the first time allowed private players to be part of the urban development. Plan declared this move as “radical (Re) orientation of all policies related to housing”. In 1988 two major events happened: one is the announcement of the national housing policy and the other is the submission of the report of the National Urbanization Commission (NCU) under the chairmanship of Charles Correa. Report of the National Urbanization Commission pointed out that “instead of forcefully inducing investments in areas which are backward and have little infrastructure and in which the concessions are likely to be misused, the identified existing and potential urban centres at intermediate levels could be developed to attract the migrants as they are located in closely related regions” (Ganeshwar, 1998). NCU highlights a close link between urbanization and economic development (Batra, 2009). So concept of balanced regional development of the third five year plan was proved as incompatible policy prescription in the late eighties.

Therefore, urban planning at this stage was more strategic by nature rather than ‘entrepreneurial’. Healey and Williams have claimed that the pre-occupation of planning in many European countries in the 1980s was ‘typically with projects, not plans...most notably in Britain, Italy and France. ‘But they suggest that in the 1990s there was a shift to plans and more strategic concerns (Farthing, 2004)’. But in case of Indian urban planning specially the metropolitan area planning and urban policy prescription was strategic in nature from the late sixties onwards.

Strategic Character of Indian Metropolitan Planning

Healey and Williams have identified some important characteristics of the strategic planning with respect to urban areas. These characteristics can be contextualizing while elaborating the nature urban planning in Indian metropolises.

Firstly, each of the four Metro cities was preparing their master/ Perspective plan with respect to a larger area or for several Municipal corporations and municipalities and surrounding rural area.

Secondly, every master/ perspective plan was given special emphasis on spatial organization to improve the quality of the metropolis which included strengthening of the transport network.

Thirdly, they had prepared sectoral development

program for the development of the metropolitan areas. Such program includes slum development program, drainage and solid waste management program etc.

Fourthly, all the plans have taken the wider consequences of their strategy. Due to this reason some plan has changed within the very short period of time considering the fact that planning strategy hve failed to make the needed change. For example Kolkata’s Bipolar Growth strategy has changed within a decade realizing the poly-centric nature growth.

Fifth, each of the consecutive plans has analyzed the causes and consequences of a range of trends. Healey and others pointed out that ‘Preparing strategic spatial frameworks... involves interrelating the various dimensions of social, economic and environmental change in an urban region, as these affect space, place and physical development’ (Healey et al., 1997).

Sixth, Each Master / Perspective plans had set forth the objectives, aims or goals of planning so that justification can be given for subsequent decision.

Lastly, as Stoker and Young (1993) suggest that strategic planning is characterized by a continuous process, it is not about producing plans. Or at least if it is about plans there will be many revisions on them over the years as the policy/action feedback process unfolds (Stoker and Young, 1993). It is relevant in the context of Indian Metropolitan city planning. Kolkata Metropolitan Development Authority (KMDA) so far has prepared five master/ Perspective plans after the publication of First Perspective plan. Mumbai, Delhi and Chennai planning authority have also made two subsequent master plans after the publication of the first master plan.

Growing or declining metropolitan populations

The debate between core and periphery once again become center stage in the Indian metropolitan context. Since the publication of census 2011 it has been identified by the scholar that Indian major metropolis (except Delhi core are declining, but periphery growing) facing both declining core and periphery situation. American planners refer to the phenomena of declining core and growing periphery as the “hole in the doughnut” (Table 4).

It is evident from the data that all the metropolitan core are declining while periphery are growing, indicating the failure of planning programmes which include the housing, transport, environment and the overall development. Due to the growth of metropolitan Periphery the case of an unplanned settlement rises and speculation about land value also increases.

One of the important aspects of India’s urban planning since 1960 to prior 1990 was lack of common national program except in housing development and slum improvement. Each of the metropolitan development

⁶GoI (Undated): Various Five Year Plans, Planning Commission, <http://planningcommission.nic.in/plans/planrel/fiveyr/>

Table 4. Growth rate differentials of core periphery of metropolitan cities in India.

	1981-91		1991-2001		2001-2011	
	Core	Periphery	Core	Periphery	Core	Periphery
Kolkata	0.64	1.72	0.40	1.82	-0.19	1.09
Mumbai	1.86	4.22	1.82	2.62	0.41	2.91
Chennai	1.59	2.23	0.93	1.70	0.75	6.12
Delhi	3.59	3.59	3.09	4.18	1.09	5.88

Source Census of India 1981, 1991, 2001, 2011.

authority tried to solve their problem in different way.

However, central government was very much aware of the growing urban problem but did not take any comprehensive step. At the Sixth (1980- 1985) and Seventh Plan (1985-1990) periods government expressed a great concern about urban issues. In 1983 planning commission prepared four reports on housing and urban development through the task force (Mohan, 1992). Indian metropolises at this time suffer from basic services and shortages of infrastructure due to uncontrolled growth of population (Chadchana and Shankar, 2012). So NCU discarded the backward area development policy and identified 329 cities called GEMs (Generator of Economic Momentum) which were further divided into NPCs (National Priority Centres) and SPC (State Priority Centres) (Batra, 2009). This identification was necessary to disperse the population from the metropolises.

Post 1990's urban planning and program for metropolitan area

Early nineties saw two foremost changes i) economic liberalism "which sanctified the market as the best decision-making process", ii) Camouflage decentralization stand, "which included the strengthening of local government" (Newman and Thornley, 1996). Economic liberalization started by welcoming the private sector for urban housing and infrastructure development. Decentralization of urban governance was started through the 74th constitutional amendment act in 1992. Centrally sponsored megacity scheme was launched in five cities to prepare the municipalities to use institutional finance and eventually market instruments like municipal bonds for capital investment requirements. In October 1994, the Ministry of Finance, the government of India, set up an Expert Group on Commercialization of Infrastructure Projects. The group submitted its report in 1996 and it is called 'The India Infrastructure report: Policy imperatives for growth and welfare' (IIR). This report is widely considered as push towards the liberalization or commercialization of infrastructure.

The IIR pointed out that India requires rupees 2803.5 billion in the next ten years of 1994 prices to meet the

infrastructure needs of the cities. India was unable to meet such huge expenses for infrastructure. Therefore the IIR expert group suggested "necessitated opening up urban infrastructure to private capital and exploring 'innovative' forms of financing such as municipal bonds because it was assumed to be beyond the capacity of the government to mobilize those kinds of resources for the urban sector. It was also argued that to make cities better prepared for attracting private investment in infrastructure and service delivery it is crucial to bring about a major overhauling of the governance, legislative and administrative framework of cities. The IIR considers privatization and deregulation of infrastructure sectors as "bold new approaches (that) promote improvement in efficiency and service quality" (Expert Group on the Commercialization of Infrastructure Projects, 1996). It is believed that Ninth five year plan have highly influenced by the India Infrastructure Report. It was the beginning of the entrepreneurial urban planning characterized by dominance of the private sector in the work of city governance.

Urban development projects main focus was shelter development program including house and township building- use 100 percent FDI, urban employment generation program.

To give a big push in favour of the entrepreneurial planning central government prepared Urban Reform Incentive Fund (URIF) which sought to incentivize urban reforms in the following areas: a) repeal of Urban Land Ceiling Acts and reform of Rent Control Acts; b) reduction in stamp duty; c) revision of bylaws to streamline the approval process for construction of buildings, development of sites etc.; d) levy of realistic user charges and resource mobilization by urban local bodies; e) public-private partnership in the provision of civic services; f) revision of municipal laws in line with the model legislation prepared by Ministry of Urban Development and Poverty Alleviation; and g) simplification of legal and procedural framework for the conversion of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes. Urban reforms get at its high points when The Prime Minister launched the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban renewal Mission (JNNURM). The JNNURM is basically a reform linked incentive scheme for providing assistance to state

governments and urban local bodies (ULBs) in selected 63 cities, comprising all cities with over one million population, state capitals and a few other cities of religious and tourist importance for the purpose of reforming urban governance, facilitating urban infrastructure and providing basic services to the urban poor.

Report of the steering committee on urbanization (2012-2017) has prescribed some way to manage the urbanization of a metropolis or city in such a scale. Out of the four "necessary enablers" strengthening of the local governance system and financial empowerment of the ULB are truly important for 'revival of the cities'. The idea of 'revival of the metropolises or cities' is entrepreneurial by nature. Following strategy has taken to implement the revival of the metropolises or cities' approach.

Indian metropolises have acknowledged the neoliberal principles in infrastructure and housing development. Cities are viewed as nodes in international networks of interactions, especially in the case of so called world or global cities like Mumbai, Delhi and Kolkata. Cities are claimed to compete in inter-urban and inter-regional competition; due to rising revenues.

The largest cities emerge as actors on an international scale, often bypassing the state altogether in processes. Changes in national governments' policies vis-à-vis this city towards decentralization of economic regulation and organizational changes related to the city governance. Above all cities are seen as growth engines which constitute the key to economic prosperity, suggesting that cities have to apply the strategies associated with the entrepreneurial city in order to 'survive' and prosper as vital entities (Dannestam, 2012)

Conclusion

Urban policy and planning during the immediate post colonial period was basically focused on the physical constraints, population growth of the metropolises. Perspective plans were the main centre for attention. It was prepared after the comprehensive survey of the present condition and future growth prospect which direct the physical growth of the city. After the decade of the publication of master plan it was realized by the planners that master plans are not able to solve the problems of the metropolitan areas. Short term action was introduced to handle ever-changing situation of the metropolises. Master plan's balanced regional development of the third five year plan was proved as incompatible policy prescription in the late eighties. United Nations economic and social commission for Asia and Pacific entitled "Guidelines: sub-national area planning and sustainable area development of secondary cities in countries of Asia and Pacific- methodological approach" also noted the following drawbacks of master planning.

a) This plan is static in nature and takes long time to

prepare. b) This plans do not point out methods of financing for development. c) Master plans are based on unrealistic appraisal of the economic potential of the planning area. d) Master plans seldom provide the regulation measures. Decade of late eighties and early nineties saw major change in urban policy framework. Urban Planning become the tool for market oriented economy where financing for the development programme (housing, infrastructure) is deregulated for private participation. So urban planning in India changed its courses from strategic to entrepreneurial.

Conflict of Interests

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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