



PROBLEMS OF SLUMS IN ARA: A GEOGRAPHICAL INTERPRETATION AND URBAN RENEWAL

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ABSTRACT:

In this age of rapid urbanization, cities are facing many challenges, of which the problem of slums is alarming that is caused by the migration of the poor people to urban areas seeking economic opportunities and are forced to live in places without proper housing and basic facilities. The situation is more miserable in small cities because they are badly affected by over population and poor sanitization. However, few works have been done exclusively on slums as such: rather they tend to examine the issue as part of larger urban studies. But over the decades, the government has been taking initiatives to improve socio- economic conditions of the people living in slums of small cities.

KEYWORDS:

SLUMS, URBANIZATION, SOCIO- ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, MIGRATION ETC.

INTRODUCTION:

The development and reconstruction of slums have become a very significant problem in India and abroad. The poor people cannot afford accommodations in the cities therefore, they are forced to live in the areas which are in close proximity of any economic prosperity. Lack of urban amenities, insufficient of health services, lack of administrative amenities, no proper treatment of sewage water disposal and the increasing number of vehicles in cities are making the situation worse. The problem of slums in Ara town appears like a sick urban centre, unable to develop a vibrant urban culture. The present article aims to analysing the geographical interpretation of Ara town and the various processes of slum development and urban renewal and reconstruction.

A SPATIO- TEMPORAL INTERPRETATION OF ARA CITY:-

The city is very old and is the most important urban centre of Bihar west of river sone. The growth of the city has followed the well-known models of urban growth. Presently it is divided into 45 wards.

The city of are extends over an area of 31 Km² hectares and has a population of 261430 according to 2011 census figures. In 1991 there were 1,57,082 persons. The population has increased rapidly and so has increased the density of population from 50 persons per hectare in 1991 to 65 person per hectare in 2011. There is high concentration of population in the central area, while the peripheral areas are sparsely populated. The average level of literacy is 78.02 percent, while 85.80 percent of the male and 68.8 percent of the females are literate. Main workers constitute 19.87 percent, marginal workers 1.61

percent and non-workers 78.52 percent of the total population. Among the workers, cultivators constitute 2.44 percent, agricultural labours 7.93 percent, household industrial workers .33 percent and other workers 84.29 percent of the total workers. Secondary and tertiary workers were highly concentrated in central part of the city.

The city may be divided into three morphological zones. The inner zone is situated in the central part. It has very high density of population, density of houses and accommodation density. The houses are generally old and dilapidated. The area lacks in proper light, fresh air, ventilation, proper drainage and sewerage disposal. The availability of civic amenities and public utility services is poor. The intermediate zone is comparatively open, having moderate densities of population and houses. It has better living conditions. The outer zone includes open land agricultural land, where the densities of population and houses are the lost. Roads are comparatively wide but in most cases unpaved. Rural dwellings are to be found in this zone.

IDENTIFICATION OF SLUMS:

The slums of our have been identified on the basis of certain criteria. These include density of houses, density of population, accommodation density (persons per houses), types of houses, shortage of houses, per room occupancy, age of the buildings, etc. Physical condition of the area has been given primary importance in the identification of slums. On the basis of these parameters, twenty slums pockets have been identified in Ara. These have been classified into four categories.

First category of slums has three slums namely Khatira Mohalla, Moti Tola and Waliganj. In these mohallas civic amenities like tap water, street light, drainage system, etc.

are in bad conditions. The second category of slums includes Chandwa, Dharahara, Mirganj, Nawada, Shivganj, Singhi and Tarimohalla. These are spread over 39 hectares, covering 27.08 percent of the slums of Ara. The third category of slums has 7 slums, namely Abarpur-chik Toli, Anait, Bahiro, Balbatra, Bhaluhipur and Maulabagh. These cover about 47 percent slum area of Ara. Ahirpur, Pakri and Sital Tola are included in the fourth category of slums.

FACTORS OF GROWTH OF SLUMS:

The slums of Our have grown because of extreme overcrowding and poor physical condition of buildings in the older parts of the city and lack of planning in all parts. Apart from over-crowding, other problems are also associated with the slums of the city. These are unplanned and haphazard growth, lack of public utility services, and inclusion of rural pockets within the municipal limits and poverty and cultural backwardness. A special problem relating to the whole of Ara is the encroachment of open land and roads by beggars, vagrants and destitute. The existing problem of congestion, traffic bottlenecks and poor utility services are likely to multiply rapidly with the growth or population.

URBAN RENEWAL AND RECONSTRUCTION:

A programme of urban renewal and reconstruction is necessary to tackle the problems of slums in Ara. Urban renewal is a process to improve the city's sub-standard localities and dwelling units in order to prevent deterioration of good residential areas and neighbourhoods. The approach to urban renewal needs to be varied according to the location of the slums, its rural and urban character and the category of the slum.

The structures of the city of are changing dynamically. The urban land consumption pattern needs proper development so that future aspirations may be met satisfactorily. With this background, the Town and country Planning Organization has undertaken to prepare Integrated Urban Development Plan (IUDP) for all the cities of India including Ara. It a long-term strategy (20 years) for the urban development of Ara. It includes both

the redevelopment of the existing urban area and reclaiming of the surrounding areas and their development. It is, in fact, a multi-dimensional approach towards urban development. The town and Country Planning Organization have also prepared the Master Plan for Ara for 20 years (1981-2001). But it has miserably failed to solve the problems of slums in the city.

CONCLUSION:

About 32 percent of the total population of Ara lives in slums, which occupy only 144 hectares of land. It is 4.65 percent of the total area of the city. The suggestion of Kutch lanes into metalled lanes, repairing and remodelling of existing deteriorated roads, provision of street lights, conversion of Kutch drainage into Pucca, construction of public latrines and bathrooms and provision of loans at easy instalment to the poor people for the improving the structural conditions and service conditions of their houses. The strategy also includes not allowing the existing slum areas to make further expansion and to minimize the slum influence quantitatively as well as qualitatively over the entire urban system.

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