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CONSEQUENCES OF UNEQUAL URBANIZATION ON DEVELOPMENT

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This eSSay on Urbanization and Migration by Ram Bhagat is part of a series on Maharashtra focusing on major development issues in the state. We are grateful to the author for taking the time and effort to prepare and write the essay for eSS.

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Consequences of Unequal Urbanization on Development

Historically, urbanization has been a great force of economic transformation, modernization and social change in the developed world. On the flip side, migration has been blamed for the woes of modern cities overlooking the fact that urban planning and governance are equally responsible. Indian cities are a result of large scale migration over time-a fact which has often escaped urban planning and governance. Maharashtra is a glaring example of regional disparity and unequal urbanization. The grass root issues concerning these inequalities need to be addressed sincerely.

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Introduction

Migration has played an important role in the growth of cities and towns transforming rural into urban areas. Urbanization of geographies has resulted from both population expansion and migration. Urbanization is related to better access to health care, education, transport and financial resources. It mainly works through higher income arising from better employment opportunities. However, this intrinsic nature of urbanization may not unfold always as negative effects like pollution, congestion, crowding, slums and squatters also come into existence simultaneously.

Since 10th Five Year Plan, the Central Government reemphasized the role of urbanization in India's economic development. Urban development being a state subject in India, the state governments have a great role to play in a just and balanced urban development. It is estimated that about 65 percent of the GDP accrue from urban areas (Planning Commission 2008: 394). The state of Maharashtra assumes special significance as it is one of the most urbanized states of India with 45 percent of its population living in urban areas compared to 31 percent at the all India level. Maharashtra is the second most populous state with a population of 112.3 million as per 2011 Census. Out of this 50.8 million lived in urban areas, but there exists a huge regional disparity in the distribution of urban population in the state. Five out of 35 districts at the time of 2011 Census namely Mumbai, Mumbai Suburban, Thane, Pune and Nashik comprised of nearly 60 percent of urban population of the state.

Mega city of Mumbai with a population of 18.4 million alone harbors about 40 percent urban population of the state and together with Pune and Nashik dominated the urbanization and the economic development of Maharashtra. Mumbai as a leading port terminal, industrial and commercial centre of India has grown from the pre-independence era. Outside Mumbai, Pune, Nashik Nagpur and Aurangabad are the other districts with higher level of urbanization. The district of Gadchiroli records the lowest level of urbanization with just 11 percent population living in urban areas. Nandurbar, Gondiya, Hingoli, Sindhudurg and Ratnagiri, Bid, Osmanabad and Jalna are other noteworthy districts with very low level of urbanization i.e., less than 20 percent compared to 45 percent for Maharashtra as a whole. As cities and towns provide various services for rural development, the low level of urbanization in many districts deprives the rural population of the benefits urbanization is associated with like better educational, health and marketing facilities for the farm produce etc.

Maharashtra is perhaps the most glaring example showing regional disparity in the level of economic and infrastructural development evident in the level of urbanization. Various studies show that urbanization and per capita state domestic product (SDP) is positively correlated which means that rising urbanization is associated with rising income (Bhagat 2001; HPEC 2011). However, the persistence of regional disparity in level of urbanization confirms that benefits of the fruits of development have been spatially concentrated. A huge marginalization of the vast areas of the state falling in Vidarbha, Marathwada and Khandesh shows that successive economic and industrial policies of the state have had very limited impact in reversing the regional disparity in the level of economic development (Sita and Bhagat 2003).

Demographically, urbanization is the result of several factors like natural increase in population (births minus deaths), net urban migration (i.e rural to urban migration minus urban to rural migration), and rural areas getting classified into urban areas along with changes in the municipal boundaries of the existing cities and towns. Sometimes urban population growth in general and population growth of cities are entirely attributed to the migration which is not correct. A decomposition of urban population growth into the above mentioned components throws much light on how our cities are growing.

Maharashtra added 9.7 million populations in its urban areas during 2001-2011- i.e. the urban population of the state increased from 41.1 million in 2001 to 50.8 million in 2011. Out of 9.7 million about 6.1 million was estimated to be the result of natural increase in population. This means that about 62 percent of urban growth has occurred due to natural increase and rest 38 percent (3.6 million) may be attributed to the net urban migration and reclassification of rural into urban areas along with changes in the municipal boundaries.

Table 1: Urbanization and Urban Growth in Maharashtra and India

Year	Maharashtra			India	
	Urban Population (in million)	Level of Urbanization (%)	Decadal Growth Rate (%)	Level of Urbanization (%)	Decadal Growth Rate (%)
1971	15.7	31.1	40.7	19.9	38.23
1981	22.0	35.0	39.9	23.0	46.15
1991	30.5	38.7	38.8	25.4	36.10
2001	41.1	42.7	34.3	27.8	31.74
2011	50.8	45.2	23.6	31.1	31.80

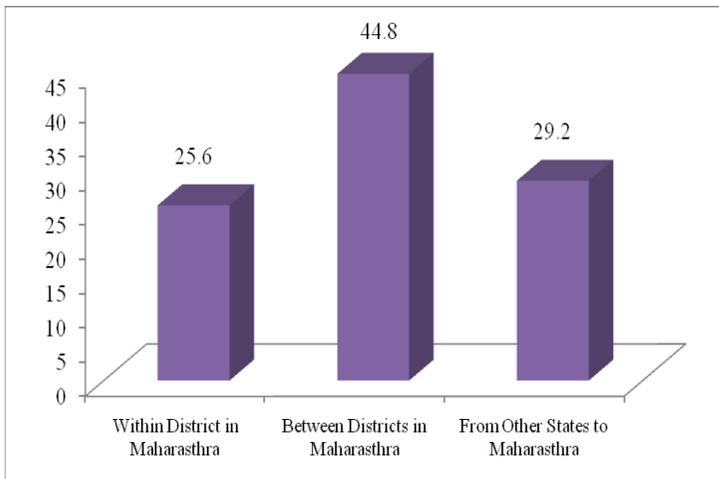
Source: Respective Censuses of India

Earlier studies for the decade 1991-2001 also shows that the contribution of migration in urban growth in Maharashtra is not more than 36 percent compared to 21 percent at the India level (Bhagat and Mohanty 2009). It is noteworthy to mention that urban population growth in Maharashtra has slowed down from 40.7 percent during 1961-71 to 23.6 percent during 2001-2011 (see Table 1).

Although migration is not a dominant component of urbanization in Maharashtra, it has been a politically sensitive issue particularly with regards to the conditions of Mumbai. Mumbai UA (Urban Agglomeration) is not only the capital city of Maharashtra but is the largest city of India with a population 18.4 million as per 2011 Census. The Mumbai (UA) consists of Greater Mumbai (MCGM), Thane (M.Corp), Navi-Mumbai (M.Corp), Kalyan (M. Corp) and other smaller cities adjoining it such as Mira-Bhayander, Ulhasnagar, Ambernath and Badlapur. There has been a huge decline in population growth in Mumbai (UA) from about 30 percent in the decade 1991-2001 to about 12 percent during 2001-2011. There has been very little population growth in Greater Mumbai (MCGM) i.e. about 5 percent during 2001-2011 and some parts like Island City of Mumbai (MCGM) showed a decline in absolute numbers as per 2011 Census. Thus the emerging evidences show that the force of migration is not as high as popularized in the media and some political circles. On the other hand, migration as a factor in urbanization has shown a definite deceleration in the last decade in Maharashtra.

It is also important to mention that there are various typologies of migration and all of them are not a subject of political debate. People move within district, between districts and between states. It is the inter-state migration which a matter of concern in some political circles.

Table 1: Intra and Inter-state Migration in Urban Areas of Maharashtra, 2007-08 (in %)



Source: NSSO 2010

Fig 1 shows that 70 percent of migration to the urban areas of Maharashtra was within the state, and about 30 percent migrated from other states of the country. There are several states like Punjab (38 percent), Haryana (50 per cent), Goa (49 percent) and Delhi (78 percent) where inter-state migration is much higher than Maharashtra. However hostility to migrants is evident in Maharashtra, although migrants are employed largely in the informal sectors and some of them are even employed to carry out 3D (dirty, dangerous and demeaning) work. The Indian Constitution guarantees its citizen the right to move within the territory of India as a fundamental right under Article 19 of the Constitution. A recent publication of UNESCO (2013) argues for social inclusion of internal migrants in the city. It also showed how lack of identity and residential proofs has turned many of them into a second grade citizen leading to the denial of the access to PDS, education and health care. On the other hand, migrants are blamed for the woes of the city. In fact, there is a huge urban policy and planning failure with multiple agencies conflicting in the governing and planning process for the city.

In Mumbai there are number agencies like Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM), Mumbai Metropolitan Regional Development Authority (MMRDA), Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA), City and Industrial Development Corporation (CIDCO), Mumbai Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA) and others working without any control and command under a single authority. Same situation prevails more or less for other metro cities like Pune, Nashik, Nagpur and Aurangabad as well. The 74th Amendment to the Constitution clearly identified the functions of

local bodies, but state government has not empowered the urban local bodies politically and fiscally. Also the peri urban areas lying outside the administrative cities are hardly taken into consideration in planning. This task was entrusted to the Metropolitan Planning Committee as per 74th Amendment but this committee is either not formed or not effective. It is important to emphasize that urban problems are not confined to the boundaries of the administrative cities alone but lies outside as well. A large number of people live outside the city due to availability of affordable housing and rental accommodation and commute to the city for work and livelihood. Urban development being a state subject, appropriate legislation is necessary for fixing the responsibility of planning and development of urban areas through the empowerment of local institutions at the state level.

Further, due to lack of local democracy, the priority of the cities is determined by the market of real estate and transport sectors. The planning and provision of basic services like safe drinking water, sanitation, cooking fuel, education and health care do not receive as much effort as needed. This is evident in the fact that 17 percent households in urban Maharashtra have no access to treated tap water, 41 percent have no access to sanitation facility within their premises, 46 percent are not covered by closed drainage and 37 percent were using non-clean cooking fuel (other than LPG/PNG) according to 2011 Census. The situation is much worse in case of Mumbai where half of the population lives in slum. About 11.8 million people live in slums in urban Maharashtra out of which 5.2 million live in Mumbai (MCGM) alone. Affordable housing is a big challenge for urban Maharashtra in general and Mumbai in particular. The public-private partnership model of slum rehabilitation under the aegis of Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA) has met with limited success. The issues related to slum rehabilitation and loss of livelihood and sustainable income must be addressed which would not be possible without local participation and involvement of the local body.

In order to address the challenges of urbanization and urban development of Maharashtra, a bottom up planning and urban governance is needed. This requires multi-pronged strategies such as legislation to empower the urban bodies as envisaged in the 74th Amendment to the Constitution. Urban Development Authority and other para state organizations should be brought under the control of the local bodies. This also requires capacity building of local bodies, increased state funding, and promotion of local participation in planning and development at the ward level. Population growth as a result of urban migration is anybody's scapegoat unless grass root issues are not addressed sincerely.

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