

Preparing Engineers for the Contemporary Urban Set Up A Socio Philosophical Approach

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Abstract

The Urban doesn't just relate to the city, people, and industries. The paper draws special attention to urbanisation from the philosophical and spiritual lines. Historical documents reveal that urbanisation has paved the way for the initial manifestation of the complete form of human life. Most of the human thoughts and philosophies were shaped in the urban areas. While planning towards urbanisation, considering human race alone will not suffice. A holistic approach needed to cover the whole planet and eco-system and beyond. The author favours engineers introspecting with socio-philosophical orientation during urban planning. This is more relevant now in India where development and urbanisation are shaping the long time future of the country. The author attempts to explore the queries that arise in the process of urbanisation - Do a regular controlling mechanism needed to prevent deviations? Is there a way to set a well-regulated process? Does the human, with intellect and philosophical thinking, act freely or the actions are determined under the influence of urban factors? Does he/she the only existent who, due to his/her own divine virtues like intellect, free will, and freedom, with the central role of society, can control or change the process of urban effects? In this thematic paper, by emphasizing on philosophical thought on urban life, the author tries to articulate and blossom the innate values and to show the role of humans in urbanisation process. The author articulates the need to foresee the impact of urban development on the wellbeing of human race and on ecology balance.

Keywords: Freedom, Philosophy, Smart Cities, Sociology, Urban, Urbanism, Urbanisation

I. INTRODUCTION

The process of urban transformation is a necessary condition for the development of any country. It is not enough to look at the affairs of the world even in terms of national interest, or for that matter, in terms of humanity. The time has come to be *far* more inclusive, taking into consideration not only all living beings, but planet Earth and its eco-system as a whole. We are in a global society. Whilst we have the intelligence and the ability to create a healthy environment, we lack wisdom; we have knowledge about human development but we are unable to understand human deterioration; we understand human rights but we do not know the art of living in harmony. We have a profound impact on human well-being but we fail to take responsibility for our actions. Once swami Vivekananda went around the country as a Parivrajaka and saw on one side the lofty ideals lived by the people and on the other he saw the material poverty, and he cried out for them. That means our saints have thought for a change in standard of living. Cities have always been playing the role of administrative, military, socio-cultural and economic centers of the state.

In contemporary times, the term *Urban* can be defined both from demographic and administrative perspectives. All places with a municipality, corporation, cantonment or notified town area are designated as *urban* in the census of India. Demographically definition of *Urban* is associated with a minimum population of 5,000, at least 75% of the male working population was non-agricultural and density of population of at least 400 per sq. Km. The word *Urban*, literally means relating to or concerned with a city or densely populated area. Urban lifestyle, also, is more like living in a town, and very different from living in rural areas or suburban area. Much revolves around city life and means of getting around as well as the types of homes you will live in. Based on this definition, urban life varies greatly depending upon many factors that shape the urban area being described. Urban life frequently includes dealing with the results of large numbers of people living close together. These results may include systems of public transportation and other services; opportunities for employment, entertainment and/or education; environmental pollution of various types; and a wide variety of types of housing for the people who live in the urban area. The lifestyle of people living in an urban area is frequently stereotyped as being more hectic or at a faster pace than that of residents living in a less populated center or in a rural setting.

Urbanisation is a process by which rural areas transform into urban areas. It refers to the changes in the proportion of the population of a nation living in urban areas and to the process of people moving to cities or other densely settled areas. *Urbanisation*, as defined by the United Nations, is the *movement of people from rural to urban areas with population growth equating to urban migration*. The term is used to describe the changes in a social organization that occur as a consequence of population concentration in urban areas. The exact definition and population size of urbanized areas vary among different countries. The concept of *Urbanisation* is related to modernization and development. It not only relates to rural areas changing in size and density but also to the changes in way of life. *Urbanism* refers to social patterns and behaviors associated with living in

cities. It is seen as one of the consequences of urbanisation with its changes in values, mores, customs and behaviors of population. Since long there has been clear evidence that urban life provides necessary conditions to shape human thoughts.

The factors in the urban environment that influenced the thought process of sociologists and philosophers, could include: the changes in family cultures, economic conditions, social groups and associations, work affiliations, political influences and geological and ecological conditions. Better conditions, elements and facilities in urban environment made sociologists broaden their knowledge and vision so that any thought and action towards improving the living conditions, with holistic approach, became standards that navigate the next generations to carry on further. The changes happen so fast in urban environment in multiple directions that the contemporary leaders, philosophers and sociologists have a quick task of making or providing conditions to adapt to the change without deviating drastically from social and cultural fabric. Often freedom of expression and action were limited due to resistance to change either from people or from the rulers. They often found it tough to convince either or both of them. Some even succumb to the resistance and hence, their theories were only could be understood much later than their existence.

Sociologists have debated a lot about the nature of its distinctiveness of a city. Social thinkers, studying the city in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, had proposed their own observations and predictions. It is required to understand the concept of industrial city considering all the factors which are expected to affect the balance between ecology and expected growth. While doing so, ways to achieve the harmony within cultural and political factors needs to be addressed. So *the rural and urban sociology* lesson cannot be directly taught with definite binary framework. Rather, it requires unraveling the relationship between the *gemeinschaft* and the *gesellschaft* in the context of the city. [3]. UNDP has generated a sustainable urbanisation strategy [2] to support sustainable, inclusive and resilient cities in the development world.

II. OUTCOME OF UNPLANNED URBANISATION

More than half of the humanity lives in cities and world is becoming even more urbanized. Accompanied by the rapid expansion of cities and the sprawling growth of metropolitan regions over the world, transformation of a natural landscape is happening still more rapidly. The following are the typical anomalies raised out of unplanned urbanisation.

- Urbanism and urbanisation will always go hand in hand. The following are the usual two possible scenarios in typical urban set up.
 - A low level of urbanism (urban behaviours) and a high degree of urbanisation (population concentration) can be present. For example, large cities in the developing world where the city is filled with immigrants who reside in an urban place but remain basically rural in outlook.
 - Less commonly found is a low level of urbanisation and a high level of urbanism, for example, decentralization in the US where there is decline in urbanisation but urban lifestyles are prevalent with city people living on edges of suburban areas.
- Endangering the Natural Balance of Life: human population has increased to such an extent that man is leaving little space for animals and even plants. Forests have been decimated, leaving no space for animals that once roamed free. Inevitably, the population of wild animals is decreasing, with umpteen numbers of species becoming extinct. Even coral reefs are threatened with sewage and junk littered on the beaches and in the oceans. Many villagers migrate to cities, even though jobs there are scarce.
- Challenges of Urban Transformation in India: India is one of the fastest growing economies in the world. The pattern of urbanisation in India is characterized by continuous concentration of population and activities in large cities. But, this growth is not accompanied by the expansion of manufacturing sector. Urban development has so far received scanty attention in the planning process of the country. The limited urban growth that has occurred has been largely unplanned and informal, resulting in mushrooming of squatters and slum settlements. Furthermore, small and medium towns hardly received any attention in terms of planning and provision of infrastructure.
- The Industrial Revolution led to a rapid growth in cities, and thereby to a phenomenon referred to as urbanisation. Basically, it refers to the growth of various facilities that city dwellers need, like highways, airports, hotels, shopping malls, places of entertainment including gambling casinos, etc., all of which have lately become super-sized. No doubt these facilities provide many services, but the flip side is the following:
 - They take away precious land and greenery.
 - They contribute a lot to pollution, including noise pollution.
 - They guzzle a lot of energy.
 - They are heavy on water consumption.
 - finally, they also lead to a lot of social tension in many different ways.

This is not to deny that a certain minimum amount of urbanisation is necessary and also unavoidable. But why allow it grow exponentially? Is the game worth the candle?

III. URBANISATION IN INDIA: IMMINENT CHALLENGES

In 2001, when the last census was taken, only 28% of the Indian population—about 285 million people—lived in urban settings. Using a conservative assumption that India's historically slow rate of urban increase will not change dramatically, the widely accepted projection is an urbanisation level of around 40% in 2030. This, it should be noted, would be below the current global

level of 50% and far below the 80%-plus level of Europe and North America. By 2030, India's total population will be around 1.5 billion—the largest in the world—therefore, the urban population will be around 600 million, more than twice as much as in 2001. Let us consider five questions with far-reaching implications:

- Where will these additional 300 million people live? Where will urban growth likely take place?
- What type of settlements are likely to absorb such a large population growth: new or existing ones?
- How large can a metropolis become?
- How will people get into and around a city that has grown to a population of, let's say, 30 million by 2030?
- Where will the poor live in this city?

Each of these questions, as well as many others not mentioned here, is complicated. The difficulty is compounded by the fact that, there does not exist an institutional framework to approach the questions comprehensively. India is going to have an urban growth of at least 250 million people in the next two decades. India does not have trained urban professionals, the data that do exist are fragmented, rules are made on the land transactions are opaque, and there is no clear strategy or vision, nor a way to get to one. Indian cities face challenges in terms of deficits in infrastructure, governance and sustainability. With rapid urbanisation, these problems are going to aggravate, and can cumulatively pose a challenge to India's growth trajectory. Whenever we analyze trend in urbanisation it is important to ask whether the definition of urban population has remained unchanged.

Causes of growth of urban population: There are five major causes of growth of urban population: 1. Natural growth in urban areas (i.e., the difference between births and deaths) 2. International and internal migration (mostly rural to urban migration within the country) 3. Absorption of peripheral rural localities in city limits 4. Graduation of small villages to small towns 5. Reclassification of urban and rural localities.

Causes of rural-urban migration: Now the issue is: why do people move from rural to urban areas? Migration is a complex issue and the answer to this question is not simple. One major problem in studying the causes of migration empirically is that it is difficult to measure migration. The volume of migration depends heavily on the definition of migration. Overall, the pattern of migration depends on a number of factors:

- Whether the definition is based on place of birth criterion, last residence criterion, duration of residence, residence at a fixed prior date or any other criteria
- Whether the level of analysis is national, state, district, locality or urban-rural residence • Whether the interest is in long distance or short distance migration
- Whether the interest is in total migration or male migration
- Whether the interest is in the development induced migration or migration in general Yet, researches on the theme of migration show that several factors are important:
- Factors operating at the place of origin because of which people have to think of migrating to other places
- Factors operating at the possible destination because of which people at other places feel attracted to migrate
- Awareness and evaluation of the factors of migration
- Economic and psychological costs of migration
- Possibility of assimilation at the place of migration determining whether the migrants continue to stay there or must consider to return back or move to some other places
- Individual level factors – some people at some stage of life are by nature (personality) more mobile than others. Among the individual level factors, the three most important factors are: psychological factors, demographic factors and family background.

A. Acknowledging the New Face of Urban India

For a settlement to be declared a census town, it has to satisfy three criteria: Its population has to be 5,000 or more; its population density has to be of 400 persons per sq. km or more; and at least 75% of its male workforce has to be employed in the non-farm sector. India is the only country in the world that has such a three-tiered framework of prerequisites, each of which sets a fairly high benchmark for urban qualification. Consequently, many scholars have argued that India is actually a lot more urban than official data suggests—contrary to the oft-repeated criticism that the country is not urbanizing quickly enough. It is worth revisiting incentives and policies that disproportionately benefit rural areas so that they do not become reasons for residents to resist conversion from rural local bodies to urban local bodies.

Keeping in mind the above challenges, the government has launched towards harnessing the agglomeration economies of the urban centres and making cities engines of growth and to emphasize on creating infrastructure, improving service delivery, making cities smarter for improved livelihood and providing for faster and integrated mobility. National urban policy (NUP) is an instrument for applying a coherent set of interventions in relation to the future growth of cities, in partnership with all stakeholders. Globally, around one-third of countries have a NUP in place. The urbanisation in India has given way to exploitation of nature as well as the properties of others. Many lakes and reserve areas have been occupied by greedy builders in multiple cities by getting approvals through corrupt approving authorities. Government mutely kept quiet for so long time that the exploitation land has considered a norm in India. As a result, many well-known personalities have ventured into buying and investing in such properties. Few examples being, construction of luxury apartments at the bank of back waters at Cochin which were demolished recently and many properties encroachment into lakes in Bangalore.

IV. PREPARING INDIA MOVE TOWARDS URBANISATION

Until recently, the urban development in India has been limited to established cities and their further growth as hubs for creation of jobs, trade, administration and personal growth. They also worked as areas where educational, professional and occupational aims and/or desires to move beyond the country are fulfilled.

In Indian context using the Parsons' terms of *traditional and modern societies* in place of *rural and urban* would be more appropriate. This will enable us to use his pattern variables and distinguish between the two societies.

- *Traditional society (mechanical solidarity)* is marked by Ascription (status given by birth), role diffuseness (broad relationship), particularism (each person treating others in a personal way), affectivity (satisfaction of emotions), and collective orientation (shared interests).
- *Modern society (organic solidarity)* is characterized by achievement (status acquired through one's own efforts), role specificity (relationships developed for specific purposes), universalism (same rules applying to everybody equally), affective neutrality (controlled emotions) and self-orientation (individual interest being important).

It makes sense to think in terms of a graded rural-urban continuum of which above-mentioned pattern variables are the extremes. In India, these characteristics appear together in various 'mixes' both in rural and urban areas. Since the rural communities have urban characteristics too and urban societies have rural characteristics also, it will be illogical to hold that Indian society is moving from rural to urban.

There have been significant changes in the trends and patterns of the urbanisation process in India in recent years which have been accompanied by a large decline in agricultural employment and an increase in the non-agricultural employment even within the rural areas. It is widely believed that this process of diversification of the workforce from agriculture would continue as India is likely to experience a high rate of economic growth, coupled with the 'youth bulge' which is set to continue during the next couple of decades.

The current emphasis of the Government of India on manufacturing, as manifested in the slogan "Make in India", is likely to give a further impetus to it. There has also been a distinct change in the policy regime. This includes a mega mission to transform 100 big cities into 'Smart Cities'. Many of them would be in the proximity of large cities while others would be lower order towns.

Government of India has taken up Major urban infrastructure development programmes in India towards spreading the benefits to the people well distributed to wide areas. India has the second largest urban population in the world and by 2050, around 50% of India's population i.e., 814 million is expected to live in urban areas. Given this scenario, the present infrastructure and amenities in cities and towns are not adequate to address the expanding urbanisation process. Several initiatives were launched by the government to promote urban infrastructure in the country. Major initiative is the twin effort of Smart Cities Mission and the AMRUT scheme.

A. The Smart Cities Mission

The Smart Cities Mission is a major urban renewal program launched by the Government to develop and upgrade living conditions and infrastructure in selected 100 cities all over the country. Objective of the programme is to modernize cities by providing core infrastructure and give a decent quality of life to its citizens, a clean and sustainable environment and application of 'Smart' Solutions. The programme was officially launched on 25th of June 2016 and in two phases, 100 cities will get funding for converting them into smart cities. Ministry of Urban Development is the anchoring agency for the implementation of the project.

The main focus of the project is the *area based development* of cities by transforming existing areas through retrofitting and redevelopment. Another component of the smart cities project is the development of new areas or greenfield areas. Similarly, adoption of Smart Solutions with the use technology, information and data are expected to improve infrastructure and services under the project. Financing of the mission will be collaboratively done by the Centre, state and local bodies. Fund from the private sector will be invited and Public Private Partnerships will support the project financially. Engineers have major role in this mission to create harmony among humans, other living beings, machines and environment. Government of India has undertaken various projects and missions for urban transformation.

- *Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) Project* is planned to transform urban living conditions in 500 cities and towns through infrastructure upgradation over a period of five years. Mission is to ensure assured supply of water and a sewerage connection to every house, greenery and well-maintained open spaces and facilities for non-motorized transport (e.g. walking and cycling).
- *Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban)* for providing urban slum rehabilitation and affordable housing to economically weaker sections by end of 2022.
- *Heritage City Development and Augmentation Yojana (HRIDAY)* is launched for the holistic development and to preserve and revitalize the unique character of heritage cities.
- *Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM)* was launched to support for basic services for the urban poor, urban transportation with Intelligent Transport System, integrated housing and slum development and Metro Rail Projects.
- *Swachh Bharat Mission* is associated with urban development to make India's cities clean for 100 per cent scientific management of municipal solid waste in 4041 statutory towns/ cities.

Besides the above initiatives, several associated development programmes like industrial corridors, NHDP, Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, National Urban Livelihood Mission etc., aims to add infrastructure and other amenities to the

urban areas. While implementing Urbanisation schemes, government has introduced *Real Estate Regulation Act (RERA)* to protect the buyers of land in the form of a site, house or a flat from the unlawful acts of builders and developers.

V. URBANISATION-PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVE

We have seen the sincere attempts put up by government and other responsible agencies in bringing up the change and developing urban setup on par with the vision envisaged. Here author attempts to bring another dimension, with a philosophical perspective, in the attempt towards urbanisation. Apart from schemes planned and implemented by government, the regulation act, RERA will help in moderating the urbanizing process with legal aspects covered. This will help the process to happen with no major real estate related issues. However, the urbanisation needs to grow beyond this. All the limbs of a body work in sync to provide both mental and physical fitness. Similar way all the components of the society need to work in tandem to create harmony and peace in the society. Competition with the rest of the firms in a city is required only to grow collectively which in turn shall pave way to intercity cooperation.

The objective of Higher learning is to see divinity in society and nature, and to render service to the society. Today, we fail to realize this important truth. There are many questions and the reservations in the minds of people about the thought of urbanisation. Once in a group discussion in the class, a few questions were posed students about urban life. It was observed that a couple of students were very argumentative in presenting their views in support of village/rural life in comparison with urban life. Argument may be due to fatigue the present generation experiences nowadays in the urban setup due to stress or the combination of various reasons. Perhaps some of us also may have the similar opinions. Definitely we may have to give some space for such thoughts in urban plan and trends. Let us see Indian urbanisation with different perspective. Nature of the urban in the context of developing nations required special attention. In India, the majority of its people are involved in service and small industry, making this very different from the heavy-industry based urban setup. First, we will trace the origin and development of the city in history in order to show the history of the city prior to the advent of industrial capitalism. Though just like the discipline of sociology, modern cities also arose in the nineteenth century. It seems there are some different definitions of the city and urban life from various approaches. We can define the city from geographical, economic, political, military, religious, sociological, philosophical, systematic and anthropological approaches. Some of them are given in Table 1 in Annexure I.

Table – 1
Definition of City

<i>Geographical approach</i>	<i>City is the result of relation between human and nature, so that, we can consider the city as a society which is made by human in order to take his/her natural needs</i>
<i>Economical approach</i>	<i>City is linked to rich and wealth sources, then, it is said the city is formed by taking economic circumstances. Hence, the city as the main manifestation of urban life is appeared as a center for storing wealth which it can make relations to political and legal constitutions</i>
<i>Political perspective</i>	<i>City is the axis of political power, order and relations between governors and peoples. Cities are the centers for classifying political power and forming political groups and functions.</i>
<i>Sociological approach</i>	<i>City is as a social fact and the result of relations among social players, then, there are some factors, atmospheres and relations which are formed and play role in the city and urban life</i>
<i>Anthropological perspective</i>	<i>City is defined as a human fact in order to take possibilities for humans to live and continue their life</i>
<i>Systematic perspective</i>	<i>City is composition of atmosphere and systematic relations that can make a special opportunity for them in order to take humans needs. According to systematic approach, the city not only has relations with internal factors, but also is under influence of many economic, political, scientific and social factors</i>

Annexure I

By considering mentioned definitions of the city, it can be said, the urban life is made through gathering many people having different requirements and desires, as if, continuing social life and reaching material and spiritual evolutions is possible only in the light of the city and urban life.

In short, the city and urban life is the result of relations among six factors,

- 1) Economical constitutions,
- 2) Social constitutions,
- 3) Physical and natural constitutions,
- 4) Geographical situations,
- 5) Legal structures, and
- 6) Political and religious life

A. The Significance of Philosophy and Philosophical Thought development in Urban life

Philosophy and philosophical thought has a history as long as human life, since human always have fundamental questions about him/herself, the world and God which philosophy is one of the best methods for answering them. Philosophers like Plato and Aristotle considered all sciences and knowledge as a part of philosophy, and they placed philosophers as the most pretense people for political governing due to their knowledge of authentic reality and truth. They believed that philosophers can recognize real happiness of people from their adversity and they are free from material benefits. We can see the role of philosophy in modernity, since this was modern philosophy that taught and mentioned the priority of human and mundane life to other things. In fact, one

of the most important virtues of great urbanisation was their role in forming philosophical schools and training philosophers that they also have effective role in urban developments. Philosophical thoughts were formed in urban communities and urbanisation. This can be seen in some ancient civilizations like Greece and Rome with big cities such as Athens, Rome, etc. Philosophers like Plato and Aristotle, extended their philosophies with Athens city providing their background of philosophical meditations. In Plato's viewpoints, it is in urban life and urban living that all ethical and philosophical virtues can be actualized, that is, urban life and its factors and structures take backgrounds of forming philosophical thoughts We can see that philosophers like Plato, Aristotle and Socrates are those who were trained in the urban background and urban life-state, and could present great philosophical thoughts. We can consider family, political state, economy, classes and groups, culture and moral values, religion, movements and revolutions, and organizations as the social and urban factors. Culture is the result of material and immaterial factors of urban life and it can impress on human life more in the urban society.

India taught that a small group can never command the inexhaustible resources of the world. For the effective functioning of the community it is necessary to divide the work of the community among sections of the people and allot each the task of contributing its share to the common good. We must recognize other such inner barrages, and then we can start asking more pronounced questions such as:

- What must we do for the villagers being impacted today in this part of the world?
- What is our role for other such similar societal projects that might be underway in our own neighborhoods, counties, provinces, states, countries?
- We can accelerate our inner growth by recognizing that there are numerous types of inner barrages we must fight (Figure 2):
- Person vs. Self is where a person's character is at odds against their own will, confusion, or fears. Person vs. Self can also be where a character tries to find out who they are or comes to a realization or a change in character.
- Although the struggle is internal, the character can be influenced by external forces. The struggle of the human being to come to an integrity based decision is the basis of Person vs. Self-barrage.
- Person vs. Person is when there is a conflict of two forms of like beings. An example is the hero's conflicts with the central villain of a work, which may play a large role in the plot and contribute to the development of both characters. There are usually several confrontations between them before some kind of duel. The conflict is external.
- Person vs. Society is the conflict in social traditions or concepts. In this sense, the two parties are: a) the protagonist(s); b) the society in which the protagonist(s) are part of. Society itself is often looked at as a single character, just as an opposing party would be looked at in a *Person vs. Person* conflict.



Fig. 1: Inner Barrages –Person-Society-Nature [2]

- Person vs. Nature/Environment is the theme in where an individual is against nature and forces of nature. Many films focus on this theme, which is predominant within many survival stories. It is also strong in stories about struggling for survival in remote locales and man-made disasters.
- Person vs. Higher-self is where a person is struggling to find answers about the Divinity, the *Atma*, the Universal Source, the Super Conscious, or we can say God.
- On the surface, the story of Farakka barrage may seem only to be of Person vs. Nature conflict. Is it? It can be argued that it is much more. It actually encompasses all of the above types of inner conflicts.

As human beings we pride ourselves in being 'doers', and our lives are often wasted every day in a continuous pyramid of senseless projects. When do we get a chance to control our mind, the source of all the noise that prevents us to see God everywhere? First let go, to free our minds from continuous concentration on things at the outer edge of our life; where there is little hope for true realization and liberation [2]. What is the inner meaning of man-made disasters? What is our role?

B. Relationship between man and society

Just as the hands, ears, eyes and legs are all angas (limbs or organs) of individual human body, the bodies of all human beings are the limbs of society. Again, society itself is a limb of mankind. And humanity is a limb of Prakrithi (Nature) and Nature is a limb of Divinity. One should understand this Anga-Angee-Bhaava (intimate limb) relationship between Divinity and human beings, in the proper perspective. A key performs both the functions of locking and unlocking. When it is turned left, the lock gets locked; when it is turned right, the lock is opened. In man, the heart is the lock; mind is the key. When the mind is turned God ward, the heart develops detachment. When the mind is turned towards the world, the heart develops attachment. Thus both detachment and attachment result from the way the mind functions. When the mind is directed towards Prakruthi (Nature or the phenomenal world), bondage ensues. One has to turn mind towards Divinity to experience Ananda (bliss).

Ganga is part of our nature, and for many of us, it is Divinity, the Godhead. If we are a 'limb' of our society' and society is the limb of mankind, and nature, and divinity are One, we may be able to come up with the answers easily to such questions and inquiry. "All the limbs of the body are carrying out their respective duties without any concern for their reward. Look at the way the heart functions; the impure blood comes through one channel, it is purified and pumped to all parts of the body through another channel. This is the process by which the body is kept hale and healthy. This is how the Divine works." [5]

As long as one is governed by the mind, one continues to be human. Once one goes beyond the mind, one can enjoy the vastness of the limitless expanse of Cosmic Consciousness. Here is an example: Suppose you construct a spacious house with a number of bed rooms, living rooms, dining room and bath room. The house appears divided into a number of small rooms. This is because of the walls put up for partitioning into rooms. If the walls are pulled down, the house will be one vast mansion. Similarly, the body is the Upadhi (wall) which limits one's perception to the narrow confines of the body. Once you get rid of this body consciousness, you will experience the vast expanse of the Universal Cosmic Consciousness which is all-pervasive. Love and Compassion are inherent in every person. Each one has to share their love with others. Failure to share one's love is gross ingratitude to society, to which one owes everything. One should give one's love freely to others and receive love in return. This is the deep significance of human life. Is it possible that we don't feel the unity consciousness because we have created these narrow 'body walls'? It might be easier, first to simply break down these walls in our own home with our own family members first. When we have achieved mastery in home, we might have the courage and confidence to view the world with Love and Compassion outside into society.

The Fourth World Water Forum (4WWF) was held in Mexico City from 16th - 22nd March 2006 on the theme of "Local Actions for a Global Challenge". The World Water Forum is the flagship summit of the World Water Council which was established in 1996 on the initiative of renowned water specialists and international organizations. Its mission is "to promote awareness, build political commitment and trigger action on critical water issues at all levels, including the highest decision-making level, to facilitate the efficient conservation, protection, development, planning, management and use of water in all its dimensions on an environmentally sustainable basis for the benefit of all life on earth."

The Sri Sathya Sai Anantapur Drinking Water Project is a living example of how with inspired leadership and proper public-private partnership stupendous objectives can be achieved. In the case study prepared by the World Water Council on Swami's Anantapur Project available on their website (www.worldwatercouncil.org), the last paragraph states, "The uniqueness of the (Anantapur) project lies in every aspect of the Project Management right from its Design, Planning, Engineering, Implementation, Cost effectiveness, Service delivery, Operation & Maintenance, Time & cost management, its replicability and finally achieving the end goal of supplying fluoride free safe drinking water to a million inhabitants of the district and thereby improving their health conditions and ensure better quality of life. A non-governmental organization, led the way in showing that the success of the entire endeavor depends on Unity, Purity and Divinity." [6]

The time has come to be *far more inclusive*, taking into consideration not only all living beings, but planet Earth and its ecosystem as a whole. People tend to compartmentalize, seeing everything around them through the narrow prism of self-interest. Sometimes it is purely personal interest, sometimes it is purely family interest, and others it is community interest, and so on. It is not enough to look at the affairs of the world even in terms of national interest, or for that matter, in terms of humanity.

Business leaders should shun the materialistic meaning of 'growth' and adopt 'sustainable growth'. They should look at growth in multi-dimensional way while emphasizing on the need to grow but not at the cost of others.

C. Urban Continuum – Tradition and Simple Living Among Nature's Gifts

In every part of the world, villages, with all their limitations, *still* represent a bit of olden times when life was calm, quiet, peaceful and far away from stress. Life then might have lacked many of the conveniences we now take for granted, but people were more humane and lived surrounded by nature. Today, most of the beautiful jungles of nature have been replaced by concrete jungles as they are called, together with all the problems of modernity. Village life is facing severe disruption. Let us draw our attention to the virtues of tradition, simple living, and the gifts that God bestows on us via the land, food, and forests. To destroy them or simply misuse them, knowingly or unknowingly, is a crime against humanity and God. Just think for a minute what would happen if there were *no* villages and farms at all *anywhere in the world*, and only factories, offices, skyscrapers, discos, highways, shopping malls, and hotels. Would life be satisfying? Would it be healthy? Would it even be possible? It is time we, the human race, learned to be grateful for all the gifts from God we take so much for granted. Urban continuum has to be attempted keeping village serenity intact. Spirituality helps in overcoming rabid selfishness and rapacious greed.

VI. MODERN SOCIETY – DESIGN OF FUTURE CITIES

Figure 1 shows a schematic of the various functional systems that make up a modern society today. The list is not exhaustive and merely representative.

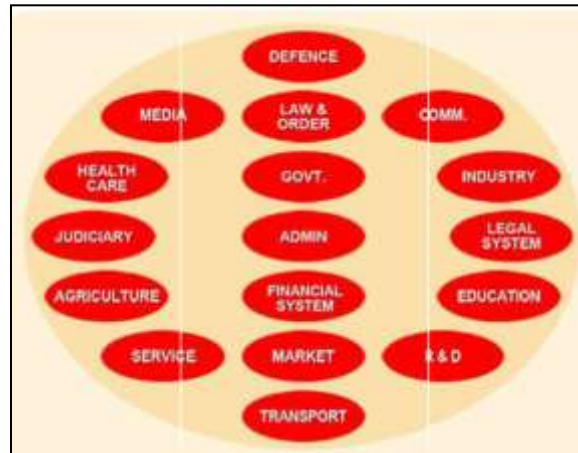


Fig. 2: Schematic of the various systems that make up a modern society [1]

According to Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev [4] the design of future cities need to focus on fundamental action plan:

- Policy level right decisions
- Harnessing Solar Energy with a goal: *power must be generated where it is used*
- Reducing dependency on Power Grid for civilian requirements
- *City with single building concept:*
- It shall be based on *one building self-sustained city* surrounded by vast open forest area with a principle: Those work here - must live here.
- The building shall house all the facilities for large population for self-sustained living and working.
- *Sustainable Waste management*

VII. CONCLUSION

This paper proposes that urbanization needs to imbibe the wisdom and teachings all around us every day – from every corner of our life – near and far. Urban development has to be taken up, through commitment and with a ‘spiritual eye’. All scriptures have given us an entire ‘playbook’, on how to live every moment of our lives with perfect joy and happiness. Author stresses that we need to use intelligence to develop wisdom and ability to create a healthy environment in the global society. Human development factors have to be regularly verified to avoid human deterioration and the human rights should match with the concept of living in harmony. Both government and individuals need to work for human well-being take responsibility for all the actions. All the limbs of a body work in sync to provide both mental and physical fitness. Similar way all the components of the society need to work in tandem to create harmony and peace in the society. Competition with the rest of the firms in a city is required only to grow collectively which in turn shall pave way to intercity cooperation. All the manmade conflicts and complications in present urban setup can be resolved through spiritual approach with right policy, right living and all-inclusive approach.

VIII. DISCUSSION

Author’s views on philosophical thoughts may require action plan and extensive work by various stakeholders in realizing future urban development projects. Thorough understanding and sustainable action plan should embrace Individuals, society and their relationships. A more inclusive approach will contribute enormously the high level of urbanization.

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