

Urbanization and Environment
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Module - 03

Urban (environmental) trajectories in India: Plans, policies, visions and missions

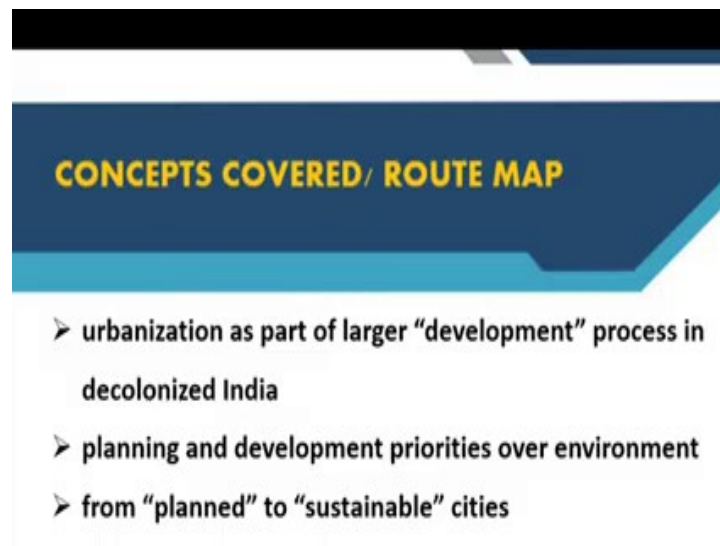
Lecture - 14

The Post – Independence Scenario: “Planned Cities” and Renewal Missions

Alright, so, good afternoon everyone and today we will be covering lecture 14 which is also part of this 3rd module on Urban environmental trajectories in India: Plans Policies, Visions and Missions. So, this lecture 14 would be focusing on the Post - Independence Urban Scenario.

So, the urban trajectory that India followed and pursued during the immediate post independent phase and how you know this era or this phase is also dotted with assurance and emergence of planned cities. And also, we will discuss, you know some of the renewal missions which were floated during this time most importantly the JNNURM.

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So, the concepts are mainly the route map which will follow in this lecture would be first would be focusing you know, we would be focusing on urbanization as part of the larger development process in decolonized India. This is a very very important point

which I will be making that why and how do we need to contextualize urbanization within the larger context of the development discourse which was kind of imposed upon us and how we were almost compelled to adhere to the global development discourse.

And why our urban development should be understood as part and parcel of this development discourse you know, imposed on decolonized countries of the global south like India. Then we will be talking about how planning and development priorities were more important. So, how planning and development priorities surpassed environmental needs during 1950's, 60's and also the first half of the 70's.

And then how you know from planned cities there was a transition to the sustainable cities because then sustainability became an important, it became an important notion, with a notion of sustainability gaining ground, how Indian planners also had to think about the incorporation of environment in urban planning and development.

And we will also be focusing on JNNURM which is Jawaharlal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission. So, and also talking about we will be talking about the technicalities involved in JNNURM, but also we will be talking about the inadequacies and the discrepancies and exclusions that were part of you know, this renewal mission called JNNURM..

And then finally, how you know India made a move from JNNURM to the smart city mission or the smart city initiative will be covering this smart city as smart cities in India or the smart city mission in India in our next presentation that is lecture 15.

But here I will just mention that how JNNURM was finally, replaced I mean the second phase, it absolutely got replaced through this smart city mission with the change in the political you know in the political regime of the Indian subcontinent.

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So, yes as I mentioned that it is important for us to understand Indian urbanization during the immediate, you know decolonized period during the when India immediately got independence. So, what happened is that like several other countries of the global south, there was this imposition of an adherence to the development discourse.

There are many books many works you know on this and Arturo Escobar is one of my favorites along with Andre Gunder Frank, Carlos de Castro and others, but Arturo Escobar you must go through you know this particular book this which is on my right hand side; this is Encountering Development; The Making and Unmaking of the Third World.

So, at least please go through the introduction of this book. And you will be able to understand that how you know this development discourse was kind of transplanted you know on these, on the countries which achieved independence after you know a long bondage from the colonial rule.

So, I have quoted from Arturo Escobar and I think these quotes these two quotes you know are so, I mean they are very very powerful. So, let us concentrate you know on the first quote. So, our Escobar says 'the history of development is relatively recent', right. Yes, because you know historically it dates back to the period of the post second world war period, that is post 1945.

So, the history of development is relatively recent it goes back only as far as the early post-World War II period, when the apparatuses of knowledge this is very very important. The apparatuses of knowledge production and intervention. So, who are the major actors in the game? The world bank, the united nations and bilateral development agencies planning offices in the Third World, etcetera were established and when a whole new political economy of truth different from that of the colonial or pre-war period was set into place.

And this is this particular political economy of growth which kind of you know it bifurcated or divided the world into two major halves the developed countries and the underdeveloped. So, initially underdeveloped was used, but later you know it became little sophisticated. So, underdeveloped was replaced with developing.

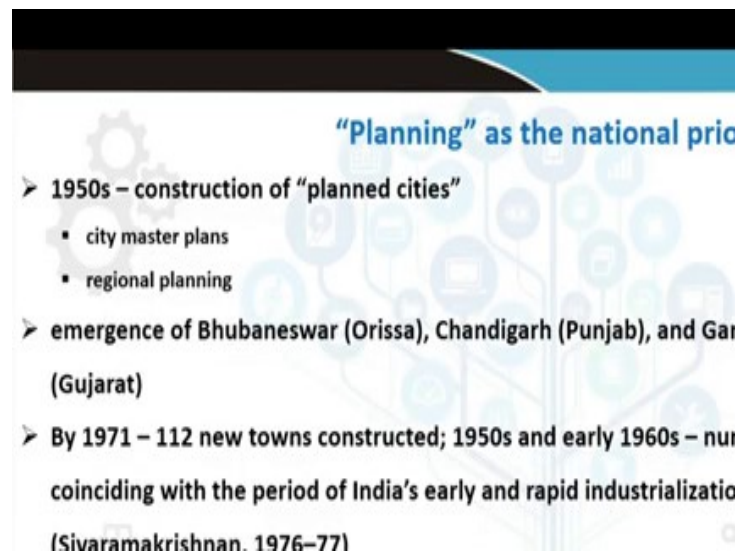
So, if you also see words by Samir Amin, you will you know get to know about how the world was parcel you know between or among first world, second world and third world countries and how the first world or the western world was projected as quote unquote developed nations or developed world and the third world was kind of castigated and stigmatized at underdeveloped.

The second quote here Arturo Escobar says, 'development is about paving the way for the achievement of those conditions that characterize rich society.' So, this is again very very important that you know how the different characteristics which kind of shaped rich societies.

So, the rich societies made the claim proclaim that why those characteristics and attributes should also be encountered by the third world or the so called under developed nations. So, what are the conditions that characterize this rich societies; Industrialization, agricultural modernization.

So, if you remember in India also we had green revolution you know as part of our national development and urbanization. So, urbanization also was one of the major conditions that actually characterize these societies. So, the underdeveloped countries the countries which became independent from the shackles of imperialist rule they also strove for you know for getting urbanized.

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So, yes 1950's is an important period because here planning became one of the major priorities, you know one of the major national agendas. So, the idea was to come up with to kind of you know construct, what is came to be known as quote unquote planned cities..

And 1950's, it is a era which saw the construction and emergence of these planned cities. City master plans were floated lot of emphasis was given on regional planning and we find during this time very important cities like Bhubaneswar in the state of Orissa, Chandigarh (Punjab), Gandhinagar (Gujarat); these cities were constructed as planned cities and this was the first phase of the construction of planned cities when all these cities actually emerged.

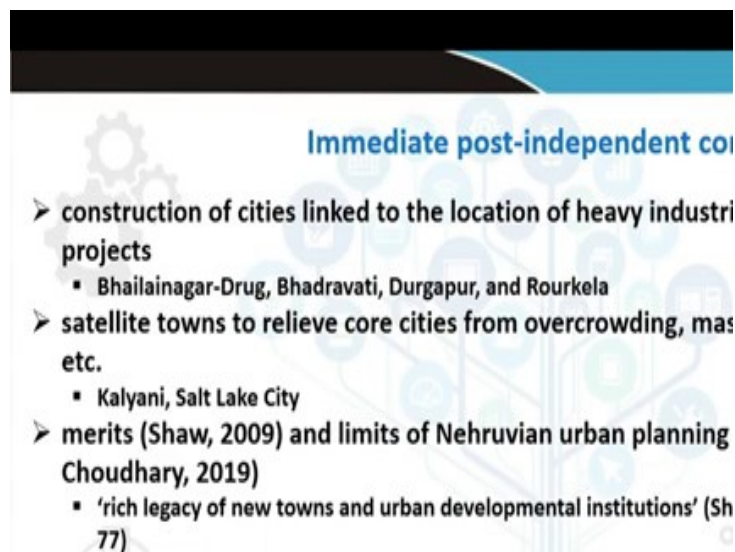
And by 1971 almost 112 new towns were constructed. So, 1950's and early 1960's very important because during this time and I am, you know I am actually kind of citing this from K C Sivaramakrishnan, who is, who was actually, he is he died 2, 3 years back. So, K C Sivaramakrishnan has done a good deal of work on urban governance and urban planning.

So, he says that is in 1960's and 50's saw the birth of numerous towns, which also coincided with the period of India's early and rapid industrialization. So, everything has to be contextualized within the development discourse imposed on us which I

mentioned earlier in this presentation. And these planned cities emerged as symbols of modern India and icons of India's freedom.

So, like dams, like you know all several other development interventions which were glorified. So, urban the cities the planned cities were also glorified to a great extent and they emerged as symbols of modern India icons of India's freedom unfettered by traditions of the past. So, it defined Indian modernity India was becoming modern through the development of our planned cities.

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One major thing which also we need to understand or you know we, we have to keep this in mind that you know during this time that is in, 1950's and 60's environment was still not incorporated it was not very prominent, it was the environmental concern was not a very prominent concern for the urban planners because they had several other immediate post independent concerns.

And what were these concerns? So, for example, I mean there was a huge influx of refugees or migrant population and also many people vulnerable people losing land, becoming homeless in the rural areas they were migrating from the hinterland to the cities in search of employment opportunities.

So, what we find during this time is the construction of cities linked to the location of heavy industries and power projects like for example, we have this kind of cities the

examples remain Bhilai Nagar-Drug, Bhadravati, Durgapur and Rourkela. So, all of us know that how these you know townships it actually grew you know as they were also linked or associated to the location of heavy industries.

Similarly, like for example, satellite towns were planned and satellite towns were constructed to relieve a pressure from a core cities, to relieve core cities from overcrowding, mass migration, etcetera because I already talked about influx of the refugee population. And these cities for example, in West Bengal like Kalyani, Salt Lake City, these were actually constructed to relief the core cities like Kolkata for example, from overcrowding.

Now, if you go through the various works by urban scholars. So, for example, Annapurna Shaw, who is an urban scholar and you know she has written an article in urban geography which came out in 2009 and she has mainly focused she has reexamined Chandigarh, but she provides a overview or a background about, you know the, this different townships or the you know urbanization process during the immediate post-independence period.

And she says you know she actually kind of sees the merits of post independent urban planning. And she says you know this post independent urban planning phase is quite noteworthy, because it left behind a rich legacy of new towns and urban developmental institutions. But, on the other hand, if you go through for example, Das and Choudhary. So, they wrote a chapter in 2019, just this is 10 years after Annapurna Shaw, is talking about the merits of you know post independent urban planning.

But Das and Choudhary they are critical about mainly this Nehruvian modernism or this Nehruvian quote unquote urban modernity and they say that you know this Nehruvian urban modernity was actually not being capable enough it was not adept to a tackle social economic and environmental complexities, that the nation was actually facing and hence, it also I mean what could easily identify lack of planning ideas, infrastructure improvements and development of more planned cities you know during this particular point of time.

So, they are quite critical about you know the about this particular phase of Indian urbanization. And they also say that, you know it was this city centric plans they were also problematic because in terms of you know the in terms of deteriorating conditions

of already existing cities and there was an ascending number of slums and squatters. So, mushrooming of the squatter population what we find during this particular time.

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So, high modernism, the focus on high modernism continued, till 70's at least and by 1988 – 320 cities were identified by the National Commission on Urbanization as generators of economic momentum. And what we find during this time gradually 1980's and 90's, there was and also like 60's , 70's there was the transplantation of technocratic designs and transnational capital.

So, India was also very very interested to attract and draw Foreign Direct Investments, FDI. So, for example, in my book called Blue Infrastructures there is a chapter on a Polymix of Urban Planning Development and Environment. And here, I have talked about you know how during the 1990's the Indian city centric economy got hooked to global visions.

So, because the global context always remains very very crucial, if we need to understand something that why you know particular country is actually taking a particular pathway is actually making a particular move, how that move is largely connected to the global you know, to the global scene to the global scenario that discussions becomes very very important.

So, the historical and political context remain extremely crucial if we need to understand the relationship between urbanization and environment and for that matter several other you know interesting facets, through which we need to actually understand India's urban sojourn.

So, I have talked about this and I talk about how you know since 1990's, Indian city centric economy got absolutely hooked you know to global visions and initiatives and enterprises with neoliberal economic reforms and cultural agendas, empowering cities ostensibly facilitating an influx of technocratic designs and transnational capital. And not only this book, but there are several other works you know hinting the same thing.

So, for example, you can go through Pablo Bose and also if I am thinking in terms of eastern cities like Kolkata for example, you can go through works by Pablo Bose and there are you know people like Dutta and all who also have talked about the transplantation of technocratic designs and transnational capital, you know flooding the Indian urban scene during the 1990's.

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But another major development which was taking place in the 1990's as we already know by now, is that you know the notion of sustainability was gradually gaining a lot of ground and this sustainable development, Brundtland report all of us know that how you know there was now the major challenge of striking a balance between rapid economic growth and ecological considerations.

So, the cities had to be planned in a particular way. So, that all these various components like social equity, just see the diagram on the right hand side. So, all these components social equity, economic efficiency and environmental sustainability all these three components had to be addressed together. So, this was a major challenge for this for cities.

So, what we see in India is that in 1990's you know this, it was actually the era of SAPs which is structural adjustment programs which mean means that in the urban infrastructures started becoming privatized. So, there was this privatization of urban infrastructures and cities started attracting and also competing competition became very important.

So, city restarted competing for global investments and 1993 Mumbai Pune expressway, late 1990's Hyderabad it became Cyberabad. So, all these developments you know are part of this larger story. And India also you know the sustainable cities program, Indian cities became part of this SCP or Sustainable Cities Program.

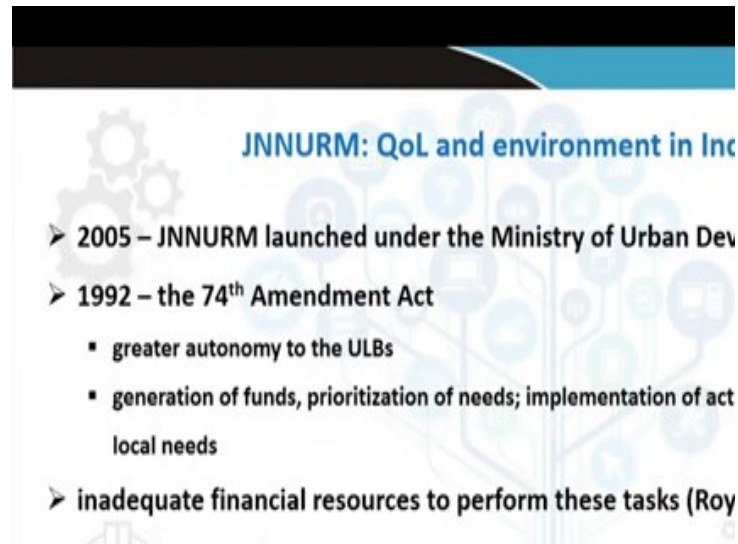
So, for example, Chennai, Hyderabad Bengaluru, Delhi, Kolkata is all these you know became part and parcel of the sustainable cities programme which was implemented in the Indian subcontinent during 1990's. And there I am quoting here again from NIUA, which is National Institute of Urban Affairs and they say that this era of the 1990's in the era of economic reforms, liberalization, globalization, cities and towns are emerging a centers of domestic and international investment.

So, investment becomes a key thing right. So, within this framework urban development policy calls for an approach that aims to optimize the productive advantages of cities and towns while at the same time minimize or mitigate the negative impacts of urbanization. So, the fundamental idea of the 1990's was that that yes urbanization is imperative, cities would keep growing and urbanization you know is very very important.

Because cities are the engines, of economic growth, but at the same time you have to plan cities in such a way or you have to plan infrastructures in such a way within cities that you know it should not compromise with environmental sustainability. So, that is the key or the fundamental idea that we you know that was imposed all along the

globe and also India kind of Indian urbanization also to a great extent, it if it fell in tune to this larger gauss spell or the larger saga of Sustainable Urbanization.

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So, yes JNNURM. So, this mission was launched in 2005, because this is a landmark mission which attempted which targeted to kind of you know to provide a good quality of life to the citizens of India and it was launched under the ministry of Urban Development during the UPA regime.

So, there is a little bit of a context. So, in 1992 the 74th amendment act of the Indian constitution was passed which provided greater autonomy to the ULBs, which is this Urban Local Bodies, right. So, 1992 is important because the 74th amendment act was enacted and which provided whole lot of scope towards a kind of a decentralized structure to decentralization.

So, greater autonomy was provided to the Urban Local Bodies which now were quite independent to generate funds prioritize their own needs, local needs and also implement actions on the basis of local needs and priorities. So, the ULBs now, had the right to you know do all these, or to perform all these various tasks, but the major challenge for these ULBs was that, there was inadequate financial resources for the ULBs to perform this task.

So, though they were given the right in the 74th Amendment Act, but then at the same time they lacked adequate financial resources to execute you know this task. So, within this context JNNURM was actually launched to provide financial support to the ULBs. So, that they could actually execute their plans the urban plans into actions.

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So, JNNURM actually had two submissions and what are these submissions, one major submission was Urban Infrastructure and Governance which was to be administered by the Ministry of Urban Development leading to water sanitation, solid waste management, road network, urban transportation, etcetera.

So, it would cater to all these needs, right. So, this urban infrastructure government component looked after or administered by Ministry of Urban Development had to cater to all these various needs you know, at the city level. And the second major submission was BSUP which means Basic Services to the Urban Poor.

Now, these component had to be administered by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation and this would cater to integrated development of slums. So, this is also very very important you know submission within the JNNURM that there was one major component, catering to the integrated development of slums urban slums.

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So, what is successful? Yes, to a great extent you know JNNURM could fulfill some important urban needs and urban environmental needs, but at the same time you know there are lot of criticisms about this particular mission because there are urban experts who say that you know JNNURM was actually an instrument to promote a completely market driven urban development process.

And it was an official carrier of the neoliberal agenda and it had mainly provisions laid out for the rich to invest. So, the same old argument of you know making the rich more powerful and comfortable at the cost of the vulnerable or marginalized urban population of the society.

And so, private investments and just concentrate on this particular quote; 'the private investments and real estate market received a fresh lease of life with the 2005', this is very very important, SEZ Special Economic Zone ,SEZ special economic zone policy, that made large tracts of land available for real estate projects by providing considerable incentives to both developers and industry; I will read this quote once more and please concentrate on all I mean on all these words.

“Private investments and real estate market received a fresh lease of life with the 2005 special economic zone policy”, which is the SEZ policy, that made large tracks of land available for real estate projects, by providing considerable incentives to both developers and industry and do you know what these SEZs are? So, very briefly I

would talk about SEZ, but I would definitely expect all of you to go through you know what SEZ is all about we will get lot of information and data on SEZ.

So, and the JNNURM is important because during in 2005 only this SEZ policy was actually undertaken. So, this SEZ is a kind of a geographical unit on or an area. So, it is basically a duty free enclave which had, has its own economic laws. So, the economic laws that are prevalent for this particular geographical unit or kind of this SEZ can be considered also as a foreign territory.

So, the economic laws that are functional in SEZ are can be very different from the overall economic laws of a particular country. So, you know it is quite dangerous in that sense. So, it is a kind of a duty free enclave for promoting foreign trade, due, tariff, etcetera and the whole idea is basically to draw investments, foreign direct investments, to attract foreign investments and to make money.

And of course, we can understand you know how it could also promote you know, it could promote this real estate lobbies, developers, promoters, etcetera; at the cost of those people, the marginalized people, the vulnerable people, the economically downtrodden people, fishers and farmers whose lands were actually acquired and seized by the state and finally, converted into SEZ.

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- **same size fits all!**
- **failed to study variations in the existing infrastructure of di**
- **categories identified for land use classification were uniform**

'The assumption that all these cities, located in different geographies, would have the same geographical conditions is preposterous' (Choudhary, 2019: 2).

- **“project-based urbanism” – “exclusionary city” (Choudhary)**

Yes, again another major criticism is that that, JNNURM also followed the same size fits all kind of a solution strategy which was an utter fallacy for the subcontinent because the this, I mean the country has so, many I mean, it is full of diversity. So, the same size fits all solution could not actually make, any could not actually bring any significant positive change for the urban environmental scene.

And this JNNURM not only failed to study variations in the existing infrastructures of different cities, but the categories identified for land use classification were uniform across all cities which were covered under JNNURM. So, the assumption that all the cities located in different geographies would have the same geographical conditions is preposterous.

Yeah. So, Choudhary, Vikram Choudhary talks about you know this particular problematic aspect embedded in JNNURM. And Choudhary also says, you know it paved project based urbanism and led to the creation of exclusionary city because I will give an example.

So, like you know to get or to avail JNNURM grants or fund, ULBs or urban local bodies needed to prepare city development plans and also detailed project reports and then the city development plans and detailed project reports were evaluated and assessed by expert committees and then only the ULBs were eligible to get grants and funds.

But tell me in that how many ULBs you know we have different types of ULBs, there are many small towns, I mean whenever we think about urbanization we think about big cities like Calcutta or Chennai, but there are so, many small towns and several small cities and the ULBs they are not efficient enough, they are not equipped you know to kind of develop, draft and formulate this detailed project reports.

So, that is what actually happened. So, many ULBs could not actually kind of come up with or formulate scientific and systematic detailed project reports and hence they instead of, you know a whole lot of requirement for funding, they could not actually you know avail funding from this renewal mission.

And so, the development that happened through JNNURM can at best , be considered as polarized development. And you know, Kundu, Debolina Kundu who is associated

with NIUA National Institute of Urban Affairs she says that, JNNURM definitely had an inbuilt big city bias in it.

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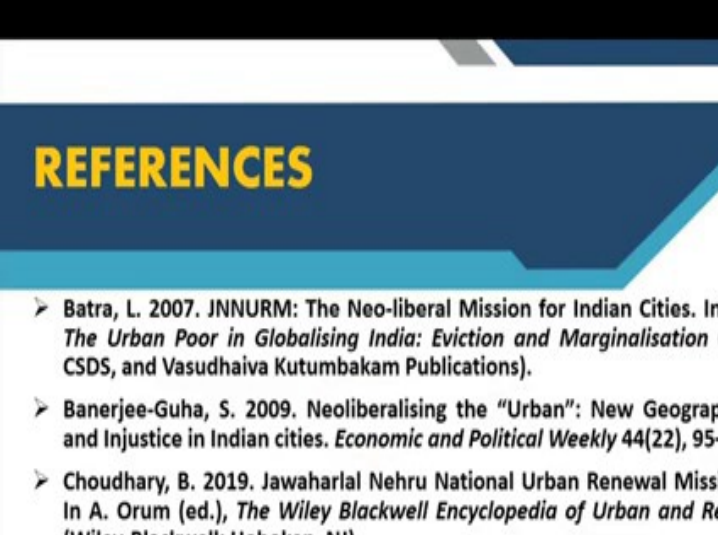


So, finally, like there was this idea that JNNURM Phase II would continue and the government announced in 2012 that the smart cities shall be part of the JNNURM Phase II. But you know , things changed because in 2013, JNNURM actually took a back seat when the NDA regime replaced UPA.

And in 2014 fresh announcement and fresh proclamation was made by the NDA government about the creation of 100 “smart cities” and immediately there was a leap there was a dramatic jump in the budget from budget of union budget of 2014 from 70.6 billion to 480 billion for the creation of smart cities.

And the Smart City Mission also coincided with other programs like Amrut Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation and Housing for All and all these programs together you know it promised or it at least claimed that these programs were dedicated to cater to urban environmental requirements. So, we would learn about the Smart City Mission or the Smart City project in our next lecture, which is lecture 15.

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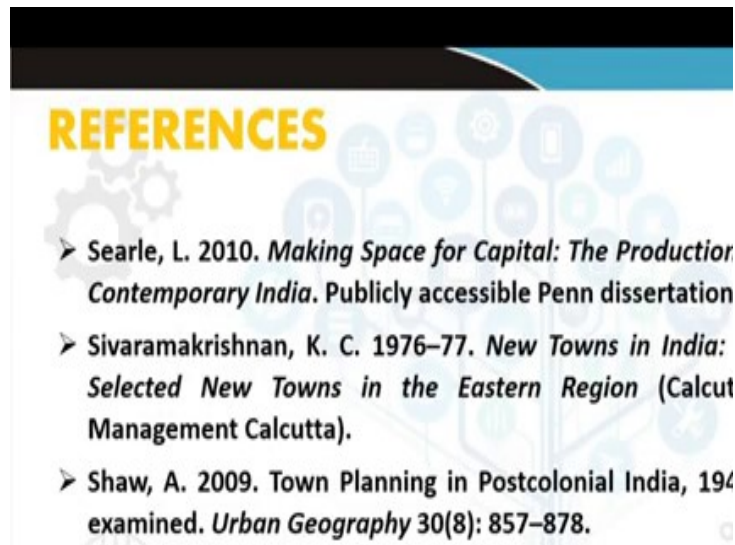
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So, yes I would like to conclude, by covering the key highlights that have been discussed here. So, here we have discussed the emergence of planned cities and the implementation of renewable missions like JNNURM; we are talked about the historical and political economic context which actually shaped the Indian urban sojourn.

And we have particularly focused on JNNURM in details, shedding light on inadequacies, discrepancies and exclusions in this particular program. So, thank you

and for the next lecture that is lecture 15, we would be covering India's Urban Environmental Sojourn when India entered into the phase of quote unquote Smart City Planning.

Thank you.