General Studies-1; Topic: Urbanization, their problems and their remedies.

Urbanisation in India

1) **Introduction**
   - Urbanization in India began to accelerate after independence, due to the country's adoption of a mixed economy, which gave rise to the development of the private sector.
   - Urbanisation is taking place at a faster rate in India.
   - As per World Bank, India, along with China, Indonesia, Nigeria, and the United States, will lead the world's urban population surge by 2050.
   - The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has formed a committee to draft India’s National Urban Policy.

2) **Growing Urban Population**
   - About 34% of India’s population now lives in urban areas, the U.N. World Urbanization Prospects 2018 report has said.
   - This is an increase of about three percentage points since the 2011 Census.
   - Over the next 12 years, 18 Bangalores or 180 Bhubaneswars need to be built, to accommodate 145 million additional city dwellers between 2018 and 2030.
   - By 2030, India’s urban population is projected to increase to 600 million.
   - 14 Indian cities are being ranked amongst the world’s 20 most polluted by a WHO report.
   - Delhi is projected to become the most populous city in the world by 2028, according to the United Nations.
   - In India the urban population contributes over 60% to the GDP and is projected to contribute around 75% in the next few years.

3) **Drawbacks of Current model of urbanisation**
   - The new Indian urban landscape is being designed around grand concepts such as smart cities and export-oriented industrial corridors.
   - Cities are built mostly on economic terms without considering or less importance to cultural and recreational aspects of human beings.
   - The cities do not cater for environmental disasters.
   - Currently, India’s ongoing urbanisation offers little opportunity for inclusion of its disadvantaged populations.
   - There is a growing phenomenon of ‘sons of soil’ or ‘outsider’ based abuse.
   - Politicisation of India’s urban spaces — often for so-called ‘vote-bank populism’ — is creating exclusionary barriers for new migrants.
   - Multiple jurisdictions, weak revenue base and human resource capacity deficit.

4) **Urbanisation and Economic Growth**
   - There are strong correlations between urbanisation and economic growth.
   - Urbanisation could generate millions of jobs for the growing youth population.
   - Productivity increases when rural farmers become urban factory workers, as has happened most spectacularly in China.
   - Between 1978 and 2018, China’s urbanisation rate jumped up from 18% to 58%.
• In the process, over 500 million people were lifted out of poverty and the country attained middle-income status.
• India’s present level of urbanisation (34%) is far lower than China (58%) or even Indonesia (55%).
• Naturally, there is huge scope for growth.

5) Centre-State Coordination
• Since majority of city-related issues are state subjects, states must take the lead in order to make cities vibrant economic centres.
• Sustainable urban development needs to be led by the central government working closely with state and local governments.
• For effective implementation of the urbanisation roadmap, the Centre should take the lead to sensitise states and encourage them to frame their own urban policies.
• The state policies could then be plugged into the overarching national framework.

6) Negative Impacts
• Urban population explosion has come with its own set of evils.
• Metros like Bengaluru, once known for its expansive lakes, are set to face extreme water stress in the future.
• Lakes are encroached for illegal buildings like high rise apartments, commercial building, and slum.
• Cities are flooded during monsoon and after that we see a period of drought.
• The environment has been the casualty.
• Noise Pollution, Air Pollution and Water Scarcity.
• Environmental pollution caused by daily hour-long traffic jams on a 10-km stretch causes more harm to the environment.
• Long term exposure to fine particulate matter (PM2.5) contributed to 42 lakh premature deaths in 2015 in the whole world out of which India and China together shared 52%.
• Water scarcity has often led to riots among common people in slums and undeveloped colonies where population density is very high.
• Recent study found that adults living in urban areas, as well as those with a higher household wealth or education, tended to have a higher Cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) risk.

7) Concerns / Challenges
• In Indian cities, there is lack of basic infrastructure and a deteriorating quality of life.
• India spends about $17 per capita annually on urban infrastructure projects, against a global benchmark of $100 and China’s $116.
• Indian cities face challenges in terms of governance and sustainability.
• The poverty and social isolation of minority groups in cities.
• With rapid urbanization, these problems are going to aggravate, and can cumulatively pose a challenge to India’s growth trajectory.
• Urban institutions also suffer from shortage of skilled people.
• Poor collection of property taxes. Jaipur and Bengaluru collect only 5-20% of their potential property tax.

8) Creating Urban Infrastructure
• Not creating essential urban infrastructure will lead to a deteriorating quality of life.
• With large-scale migration to the cities, we must focus on making our cities economically viable and environmentally sustainable.
• Investing in our urban infrastructure will lead to enhanced economic activity.
• It will result in large-scale employment generation and an improved quality of life.
• This is a much-desired socioeconomic outcome in a young nation where the majority of urban migrants are youth.
• We also need to work hard to ensure that our urban infrastructure causes least harm to the environment.