



General Studies-1; Topic: Poverty and developmental issues, Urbanization, their problems and their remedies

Urban Poverty in India

Introduction

- Over the years, due to high migration, the poverty in the country is transiting largely from rural to urban.
- To make rapid economic progress, India needs to improve the well-being of the workforce that migrates to cities in the hope of a better life.

Present Status

- India lifted about 415 million people out of multidimensional poverty between 2005-06 and 2019-21, according to the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI).
- Urban poverty dropped from 9% to 5.5%.
- The Atmanirbhar Health Infrastructure Yojana has prioritised strengthening urban health centres and the creation of frontline health teams.

Causes for urban poverty

- High vulnerability
 - Indian cities are vulnerable to multiple disasters like urban floods, urban heat islands, air pollution, inaccessibility of potable water etc.
- Proliferation of slums
 - land to people ratio in cities has been exacerbated.
 - there is lack of hygienic and sanitation in slums
- Development at the cost of poor
 - The peri-urban areas where tribes live are being occupied for establishments of industries without proper compensation and rehabilitation.

Plight of Migrants

- Half of India is expected to urbanise by 2030 and at least half of that population could be migrants.
- Loss of jobs and incomes after the pandemic has driven a large section of the urban poor to move back to their villages.
- Healthcare costs have gone up and the cost of essential commodities has also increased.
- Access to public services is the biggest challenge for migrants.
- The arrival process of migrants to cities in search of work has to be made less traumatic. For this, we need to establish Migration Support Centres.

Implications

- People living in slum areas are also prone to suffer from waterborne diseases such as typhoid and cholera.
- Women and children living in slums are prone to become victims of social evils like prostitution, beggary and child trafficking.
- **Hunger, malnourishment, lack of quality education, high infant mortality, child marriage, child labour** are some of the social problems prevalent for urban poor.
- Urban commons like lake, urban forests, green areas in Cities are adversely affected due to the need for development.

Way Forward

- To make rapid economic progress, India needs to improve the well-being of the workforce that migrates to cities.
- The focus on urban employment generation programmes should be in coordination with local governments.
- **A labour- intensive approach to building municipal infrastructure can be a cost-effective alternative to capital intensive-approach as wage rates are low.**
- Construction of low-cost housing can be carried out using labour-intensive methods, while yielding substantial benefits for urban dwellers.
- There is need for an **urban employment scheme** oriented toward building large-scale medical, health and sanitation infrastructure in cities and towns across India.
- Skilling, upskilling, and re-skilling opportunities must be readily available for poor households in ways that enable them to combine work with skill upgradation.
- Focusing on rural development and to enhance services like education, health, electricity and water and sanitation services are effective means to **control rural to urban migration.**