

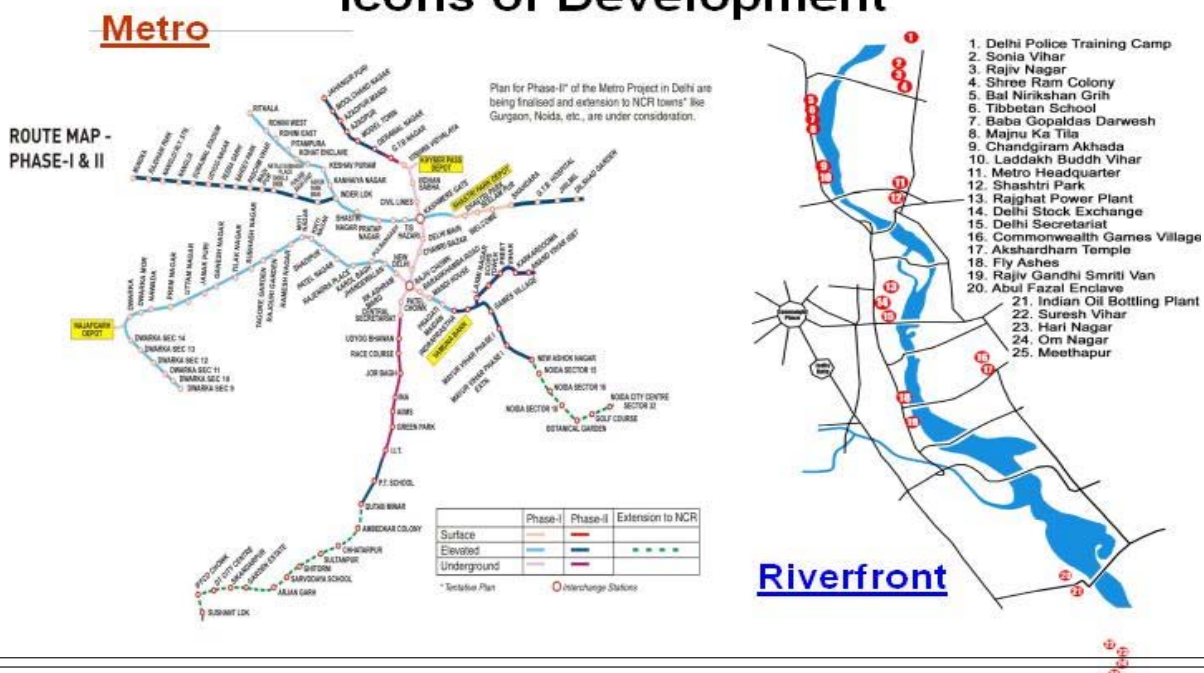
# Delhi Master Plan 2021: What is to be done?

## The City by Night

Dream of the future



## Icons of Development



## Hazards Centre

a unit of Sanchal Foundation

January 2007

## **Delhi Master Plan 2021: What is to be done?**

### **A critique and Alternatives proposed January 2007**

#### **What is wrong with planning?**

1. **Planning:** The 1962 Master Plan (MPD-62) was prepared by the newly set up Delhi Development Authority (DDA) in 1962, through a team of planners specially set up for the purpose under the guidance of experts from the Ford Foundation, and it ended in 1981. The 1982 Master Plan (DMP-2001) was to begin in 1982, was notified in 1990, and the land-use map was published in 1996. The delay was because of the 1982 Asian Games, which took over urban planning by default in the intervening period. The 2010 Commonwealth Games is repeating history as the 2002 Master Plan (DMP-2021) is delayed, and the approach to the Commonwealth Games is already exhibiting the same symptoms of ad-hoc planning that the period of the Asian Games displayed. The Metro, flyovers, malls, commercial complexes, high-rises, and encroachments on the Ridge and the river bed are examples of development activities that were not in the Master Plan (some of them are even prohibited by Plan) but were cleared by the authorities as being in the public interest. In other words, non-Plan activities routinely get priority over Master Plan activities by virtue of political pulls and pushes. Such ad-hoc violations are not legitimate and must be prevented by law.
2. **Norms:** The basis for any Plan has to be extensive research in different sectors that gives a substantive picture of how the city is actually functioning and what are the people's requirements. It is these Work Studies that yield the norms for the use of different resources, including land, houses, roads, water, power etc. MPD-62 had earlier published two volumes of Work Studies for computing the norms in 1962. DMP-2001, on the other hand, was merely supposed to be a modification of MPD-62, and so no studies were conducted for that Plan but many of the 1962 norms were accepted or arbitrarily modified as being valid for the situation three decades later. DMP-2021 does mention "studies" in the text, but gives no references, and arbitrarily changes the norms. Even an application filed with DDA under the Right to Information Act has elicited the somewhat frivolous (and false) reply that the studies are already there in the Plan document. Without such Work Studies being conducted and placed in the public domain, no Plan can claim to be realistic or scientific. Since DDA has obviously not conducted these studies, other studies and secondary literature can be used for the purpose of indicating what the Master Plan should encompass.

3. **Participation:** Thus, DMP-2021, without doing any studies or providing any justification for the argument, promotes private (corporate) sector participation in virtually all sectors. However, the data from other sources reveals that, because of the non-implementation of Master Plan activities, there has been extensive *community*, *collective*, and *individual* participation in the making of the city and sustaining its economy:
  - The Economic Survey of Delhi 2001-2002 enumerated 129,000 industries in Delhi. Of these, the Delhi Urban Environment and Infrastructure Improvement Project (DUEIIP) estimated that only 25,000-30,000 units were located in planned industrial areas, the others were all a result of “private” enterprise.
  - The 2002 Economic Survey also enumerated 2.3 lakh private retail enterprises. The Survey in 1997 had estimated that the total number of “unorganised” trading enterprises was 2 lakhs.
  - The Census of 2001 enumerated that of 25.5 lakh families in Delhi, 24.5 lakh had houses, of which only 3 lakh were kaccha constructions. DMP-2021 mentions that only 13 lakh houses have been built by public agencies, which means that the remaining 11.5 lakh have been constructed through “private” initiatives.
  - According to various studies on labour in the informal sector in Delhi: 5 lakh cycle-rickshaws compete for 99,000 licenses; only 20,000 licenses are issued to 5 lakh vendors and hawkers; over 40,000 Registered Medical Practitioners have been declared illegal, as have 70,000 wastepickers. These may all be classified as “private” initiatives.

It is evident, therefore, that any realistic Master Plan will have to address the issues of regularisation and legalisation of these initiatives in extensive participation by the people of the city – subject to regulation according to realistic norms.

4. **Accountability:** All the Master Plans have provided for a public hearing process and a monitoring mechanism, but there is no mandated protocol and so they have rarely been carried out. Thus, MPD-62 received 600 objections and comments, while DMP-2001 got 2000. DMP-2021 has already officially acknowledged 7000 objections (although there are other sources that indicate that the number may be twice as much). In other words, there is growing public concern and awareness about the planning process, but there is no established procedure for addressing the concerns of the public. MDP-62 laid down the principles of “review and revision” and a monitoring frame for the implementation of the Plan. DMP-2001 urged that “a monitoring unit with modern data processing facilities should be created”. DMP-2021 has taken this further by proposing the setting up of 10 management action groups. But, in all of them, the monitoring and review process is internal to DDA and the decisions are taken purely at the discretion of the technocrats and bureaucrats. This must be replaced with a transparent and independent process in which the *participation* of citizens becomes mandatory through the formation of Mohalla Sabhas and Samitis, as opposed to the present Ward Committees, in line with the provisions of the 74<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution.

## **What may be set right?**

It requires much more extensive work to critique DMP-2021 in detail and specify an alternative plan, but some propositions are given here, based on research studies carried out by citizens' groups since 1998. These proposals are only indicative and require more time, personnel, and budgets to be worked out in greater detail – a task that DDA should have done, but has not, and therefore, the initiatives taken by civil society are necessarily limited because of lack of resources. The essential framework around which these proposals are presented is as follows:

- Include the backlog of incomplete development activities and shortfalls in previous Master Plans in the present one.
- Until this shortfall is completed, regularise all 'illegal' activities that have been undertaken by citizens to maintain the city's economy.
- Prepare a new set of norms, based on extensive field studies, to regulate present and future development activities.

## **Population and Employment**

DMP-2001 had projected a population of 149 lakhs by 2001. The actual Census figure of 138 lakhs was *less* by 14%, but 8% *more* than the targeted population of 128 lakhs. The excess population of 10 lakhs can be attributed to unplanned migration connected with the labour requirement for the 1982 Asian Games. Similarly, DMP-2021 plans for a target population of 230 lakhs, but this calculation is likely to be again upset because of the 2010 Commonwealth Games.

DMP-2001 had estimated that there would be a working population of 49 lakhs. The 2001 Census gave an actual figure of 44 lakhs, 80% in the informal sector, and 6 lakhs unemployed. DMP-2021 provides for a workforce of 79 lakhs by 2021, but stipulates that there will be no "generation of large-scale employment". If 80% of this workforce continues to remain in the informal sector, then DMP-2021 should provide for at least 63 lakh workers in that sector. But the norms for the informal sector remain what they were in 1962. It may thus be predicted that *illegalisation* will inevitably increase in the coming years. These norms must, therefore, be changed on the basis of detailed Work Studies. Some examples of the kind of norms required are given below:

A Hazards Centre survey in non-conforming areas highlights that small-scale units require about 20 sq.m (as contrasted with the minimum 100 sq.m plots being currently provided at Bawana). A study of bus stops by Lokayan-Action India-TRIPP reveals that there are 10 cycle-rickshaws and 8 vendors per bus stop, as against the DMP-2021 norm of 1 unit per two bus bays. A study by Chintan of 1000 waste workers indicates that 215 pickers, 320 sorters, and 6 kabaris are required for every 1 lakh population – with no provisions in the Master Plan. An UNDP-GoI study of 3000 households in six resettlement colonies indicates that self-employment suffers because of lack of credit (44%) and

opportunity (35%), for which there are no plans. If these norms are officially integrated into the planning process, then there should be ample *legal* opportunities for employment in the city.

On the other hand, significant work force expansion has been projected in DMP-2021 in trade and commerce, from 9.76 to 23.93 lakh. But, according to current norms, the projected workers will be 9.63 lakh in 4.15 lakh retail shops, 2.85 lakh in 66,000 wholesale units; and 4.52 lakh in informal trade units; or a total of 17 lakh workers in trade and commerce. This still leaves a balance of 6.93 workers unaccounted for. Even the provision of workplaces is completely unbalanced. 23 of the 46 district centers are missing, as are 5 of the 23 markets. The land actually allotted as per norms for commercial activity is 3680 hectares, as against the normative requirement of 5451 hectares.

Similarly, for industry, DMP-2021 proposes to modernise, upgrade, and redevelop industrial areas of Anand Parbat, Shahdara, Samaipur Badli with a mere 30,000 units; while 100,000 non-conforming units will be relocated to Bawana, Narela, Rohtak Road, and the National Capital Region, although there is no specific allocation of the 4600 hectares required for this relocation. In addition, there will be no ad-hoc licensing and only high technology, low volume, high value added, and low labour enterprises will be promoted. But since Manufacturing too is supposed to accommodate an additional 5.47 lakh workers by 2021 (from 11.10 lakh workers in 2001), there is no explanation of where these workers will work.

Even for the government and quasi government bodies, 12.71 lakh additional employees have been proposed in DMP-2021, but mention made of only 4 more district courts and 4 office complexes where they can find employment. Thus, the provisions are in contradiction with each other and only support the argument that the non-implementation of Master Plan provisions in previous years, as well as the incorrect normative assumptions underlying the Plans, will continue and further exacerbate the rampant illegalisation of work.

In such a context, the following generic changes are suggested in DMP-2021 with regard to employment:

- *Increase job opportunities in formal organised sector on the basis that livelihood is a fundamental right.*
- *Pass law for informal sector incorporating livelihoods, social security, and adequate wages.*
- *Minimum monthly wage in Delhi should be Rs 5000 with annual increases in line with inflation.*
- *Implementation by tripartite Board of workers, employers, and government.*
- *All employers to deposit at least 1% of their annual turnover with the Board.*
- *If there is no specific employer, then the responsibility for depositing charges shall vest with either the other employers or with the State.*
- *Provide formal space and facilities for all present and future informal sector workers according to their numbers and requirements.*
- *State must provide free education and health facilities to all working families.*

- *Workers should have access to all state owned media to air their grievances as well as be able to peacefully demonstrate at central places within the city*
- *Mixed land use is necessary for maintaining the relationship between livelihoods and shelter.*
- *All industries in conformity with pollution regulations should be allowed to operate where they are, those not in conformity should either be compelled to take mitigation measures or, if unable or unwilling to do so, to close down.*
- *All trade and commerce units should be allowed to operate where they are and necessary provisions made for appropriate transport and parking facilities to avoid congestion.*
- *Immediate cessation of privatisation of all basic services.*
- *Transfer of sick public sector units to worker cooperatives with adequate finances and support for revival.*

### **Land and Shelter**

DMP-2001 provided for 16.2 lakh additional Domestic Units (DUs), but estimates reveal that only about 5.6 lakhs were built by public agencies. (DDA's claim of 10 lakh includes those built before 1981.) This explains why, in 2001, there were 7 lakh families in *unauthorised* colonies and 6 lakh families in *jhuggi jhonpris*. This also represents a huge loss in revenue (about 60%) from house taxes. DMP-2021 sets an equally unreal target of 24 lakh DUs, even after assuming that 24.5 lakh families of the current 25.5 lakh have houses, of which only 3 lakh are kaccha.

Of these additional houses, 50% are earmarked for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS), 25 sq.m. flats in vertical housing, and at cost, with common bath and WC facilities for every 10/20 families. DDA shall not acquire the land for such housing and the initiative will be left to the private sector, which will have to acquire a minimum of 4 hectares of land for cluster planning and development. For this, the private sector will be rewarded with high Floor Area Ratio (FAR) norms for commercial use of the land.

These provisions ignore the fact that, in previous years, the performance has been dismal, as illustrated by the secondary data and various independent studies. Thus, 75% of Delhi's population lives in inadequate and temporary shelter. The density of population in the slums has increased 6 times in the last 25 years because there has been no provision of legal land and housing. Government housing has been mainly occupied by the middle and high income groups. The monthly income of the working population is about Rs 2000 per month and it commutes to work by walking, cycle, or bus. Instead of providing housing near work, the administration has been ruthlessly displacing and relocating people to the periphery, in spite of the fact that relocation is a more expensive strategy and destroys the life of working people. Experience all over the world conclusively demonstrates that high rise housing is costly to maintain and beyond the reach of the urban poor.

Over 200 consultations with residents of unauthorised colonies, slum clusters, and planned resettlement colonies by different civil society groups under the banner of the Sajha Manch indicate that most households consider 50 sq.m to be adequate for a family of 5 persons. If this is taken as the norm, then the land required for housing a population of 230 lakhs in double-storied housing by 2021 would be about 22,000 ha, which would leave a *surplus* of 13,000 ha from the residential land already available by Plan in urbanised Delhi. Hence, the following modifications must be made in DMP-2021:

- *Squatter and unauthorised settlements must be regularised where they are and the families given tenure, unless the land is completely unfit for human habitation.*
- *Shelter must be treated as a fundamental right and its construction as a public purpose that is pre-eminent amongst other uses.*
- *Land should be made available within 1 km of existing settlements for appropriate shelter.*
- *Every family should be provided 50 sq.m. of land at a maximum price of Rs 10,000.*
- *Basic urban services must be provided at every plot at affordable rates.*
- *All basic services should be provided by government departments and there should be no role for contractors.*
- *Appropriate monthly charges may be levied for water, electricity, and sanitation.*
- *Housing loans of a minimum of Rs 50,000 on easy terms may be available to all families for constructing houses.*
- *Surplus land may be made available on the periphery for those wealthier families who wish to purchase additional land at higher prices on a sliding scale.*

## **Transport**

The Work Studies of MPD-62 had enumerated almost 60% of trips by bicycle and MPD-62 had provided for 5 cycle paths, which were never constructed. DMP-2001 specified 9% trips for bicycles and 12% for private vehicles, but in 2001 the share of personal vehicles had actually gone up to 36%. DMP-2021 has completely ignored the cycle but is now claiming, without any substantive evidence, that there will be 280 lakh trips by 2021, of which 257 lakh will be motorised, but personal modes will decrease to 20% while public modes will increase to 80%. For this purpose, 7 urban relief roads, several bridges across the Yamuna, 4 Inter-State Bus Terminals, 5 Freight Complexes, and 6 Metro routes have been proposed.

There is little mention of the bus system that currently carries 23.40 lakh passengers per day, as compared to the Metro's 1.25 lakh passengers per day. Cycle tracks have been referred to in passing and generally proposed "wherever feasible", but the cycle has also been declared to be unsafe. The cycle rickshaw is acknowledged to be non-polluting but dismissed by the planners on the ground that the "unlimited and unrestricted use of rickshaws has a direct relationship with migration into the city and the phenomenon of JJ Clusters/Slums". In other words, there are several assumptions about transport modes in the Plan, which are not validated by any data.

On the other hand, a Sajha Manch study over 3000 households in slum clusters, resettlement colonies, and unauthorised colonies indicates that 44% of trips are by cycle, 26% by bus, and 20% by walking. The UNDP-Gol study in another 3000 households in resettlement colonies shows that 14% are using the cycle, 45% are using the bus, while 35% are walking. If these norms are incorporated into transport planning, the provision of comprehensive bus services and protected cycle paths and walkways would not require additional land for roads and parking, while significantly easing congestion, pollution, and accidents.

Thus, the following are recommended for incorporation into the 2021 Master Plan:

- *Roads to be designed according to the needs of non-motorised vehicles.*
- *Separate 2.5m wide cycle lanes on roads wider than 30m.*
- *Separate footpaths on all roads.*
- *Minimum 3m wide lanes for motorised vehicles.*
- *Separate bus lanes, 3.3m wide, on busy routes.*
- *No free left turns for motorised vehicles.*
- *Rationalise traffic lights at intersections to give priority to non-motorised traffic.*
- *Rapidly increase the number of public transport vehicles.*
- *Bus bays should be 8.5m long for 24 waiting passengers, 12.25m for 36 passengers, and 17m for 48 passengers.*
- *There should be 10 sq.m. space for vendors and hawkers at 1 bus bay, 40 sq.m. at 2 bus-bays, and 80 sq.m. at 3 bus bays.*
- *Ring rail should be linked to para-transit and bus modes.*
- *Adequate parking spaces, particularly for cycles and rickshaws, at offices, bus stops, educational institutions, residential areas, hospitals, markets, airports etc.*
- *Parking for three wheelers and rickshaws near bus stops; high parking fees in commercial centres and institutional areas.*
- *Areas of significant public gatherings such as India Gate, Pragati Maidan, Scope Complex, Red Fort etc must have adequate parking space.*
- *Registration of cycle-rickshaws should replace licensing and they should be promoted as an eco-friendly and employment-generating mode of transport.*
- *Bus transport should be under the aegis of a single agency.*
- *Transport department should simplify its procedures for licensing and inspection of three-wheeled scooter rickshaws.*
- *Ban on private vehicles in commercial centres, markets, and congested areas during the day.*
- *Increase the charges and fees on private vehicles to dissuade private ownership.*



## **Social Infrastructure**

### ***Health***

According to the norms set out in DMP-2001, the city should have had 331 hospitals, 920 dispensaries, and 307 maternity and child welfare centres by 2001. Instead, the Delhi Statistical Handbook of 1998 reveals that there were only 86 hospitals, 490 dispensaries, and 193 maternity and child welfare centres. Instead of addressing this shortfall directly, DMP-2021 proposes merely to enhance the FAR, while rebuilding existing health facilities. It also advocates the shifting out of the contagious disease hospitals and using this space for general hospitals. There is also no reference to the diseases and epidemics affecting the population and what remedies are possible.

In contrast, a study done by the Janwadi Mahila Samiti in a sample population of about 5000 people in slums and resettlement colonies, reveals that 17% were suffering from diarrhoea, 6% had malaria, and 3% were afflicted with jaundice. Only 28% could go to government hospitals because of the lack of such facilities, and 75% were spending over Rs 600 per month on treatment by private doctors. But DMP-2021 ignores these linkages of health with water, sanitation, housing, and transport. There is no attempt to rectify the inadequate provision for Primary Health Care, and no regional integration, nor any coordination between the Local Urban Bodies, the Delhi Government, the Central Health Services, and the State Employees Insurance. Neither are there any disease control programmes.

Consequently, some recommendations for including health-related issues in the Master Plan are:

- *Increase budgets for and revive the public health system.*
- *Improve related sectors of safe water, sanitation, waste removal, drainage etc.*
- *Adequate hospitals, dispensaries with adequate doctors, medicines, and equipment distributed proportionally all over the city.*
- *Participatory studies to determine the extent and cause of diseases.*
- *Proper training and regulation of Registered Medical Practitioners and traditional practitioners for public health.*
- *Protect services from profit-making commercial private hospitals, nursing homes, and clinics.*
- *Special provisions for health, nutrition, and education of weaker and vulnerable sections of children and handicapped.*
- *Mass popularisation of cheap and simpler forms of treatment as opposed to costly drugs and high technology.*
- *Due recognition for the informal sector of waste management.*
- *Strict regulation and control of hazardous and polluting industries.*

## Education

Unlike the health sector, the provisions of DMP-2001 had been almost achieved to the extent of 85% availability of primary and higher secondary schools. However, what was of concern was that, according to its own Economic Survey, for the entire 20 year period of DMP-2001, the Delhi Government had been unable to spend more than 12% of the Five-Year Plan budgets allocated for education. At the same time, the average enrolment per primary school had climbed from 387 to 607 during this period, while 53% of the 11 to 14 years age group remained out of school. The number of teachers actually declined by 16% between 1991 and 1996. This was in spite of the Supreme Court's directive that the Right to Education was a Fundamental Right that was binding on the State.

Instead of remedying the deficit, DMP-2021 recommends the optimisation of school land through two-shift utilisation and the integration of primary and secondary schools. Educational activities have been proposed after school hours, and residential areas opened up indiscriminately for private nurseries and coaching classes and computer centres. Even the norms for secondary schools have been diluted from 1 school for every 7,500 population to 1 school for 10,000 people. There is no study offered to justify this change, while sufficient evidence have been offered of late by groups like Social Jurist of the miserable conditions in both private and government schools and the huge difficulties faced by disadvantaged families in getting their children admitted into these schools.

An alternative perspective, therefore, would comprise of the following elements:

- *Increase the budgetary allocation on education by an additional 0.6% as per the recommendations of the Tapas Majumdar Committee.*
- *Complete construction of all schools as per Master Plan norms.*
- *Enforce compulsory education of 0-14 year age group as a fundamental right according to the ruling of J Unnikrishnan.*
- *Fill all vacant posts for teachers and stop contract, temporary appointments.*
- *Enrol all school dropouts in Delhi through a special campaign.*
- *Assure computer and technical education in government schools.*
- *Adequate furniture, toilets, drinking water, electricity in all schools.*
- *Arrangements for copies, books, pens, pencils, uniforms, and mid-day meals at all schools.*
- *No caste-based, religious, or ethnic discrimination against children.*
- *Textbooks should be simple, attractive, and well illustrated.*
- *No gender or religious discrimination in courses and syllabi.*
- *No corporal punishment in educational institutions.*
- *Teachers should lead the way in keeping the school clean instead of getting the students to do dirty and menial chores.*
- *Teachers not to be unnecessarily involved in census, identity card, pulse polio, election etc campaigns.*
- *All schools must provide cultural and sports opportunities to students.*
- *Environmental studies must be part of the school syllabus.*

- *Provide reservations for admission of all graduating schoolchildren from Delhi in Delhi colleges.*
- *College fees to be the same as 12<sup>th</sup> standard fees.*
- *Slums should not be evicted and resettlement colonies must have all facilities so as to ensure uninterrupted schooling.*
- *Regular inspection and supervision of schools by PTAs.*

## **Physical Infrastructure**

### ***Water***

The water supply in Delhi mainly comes from the river (26%) and the two canals (32%) from the Ganga and Yamuna. However, the dependence on ground water has grown substantially (42%) as these surface waters have proved to be inadequate. The presumed shortage of water in Delhi has dropped sharply from 60% in 1951 to 36% in 2001, while the per capita consumption has increased from 28 to 47 gallons per capita per day (gpcd). However, the sources have not increased in proportion to demand, nor has the availability of water treatment plants. Also the distribution remains highly skewed with the Cantonment getting about 17 times more water per person than Outer Delhi, and the wealthy using 12 times the water available to the poor.

DMP-2001 specified a water consumption norm of 80 gpcd for the entire city. In DMP-2021, the inequality in distribution has been legitimised since the norm for weaker sections has been slashed to 30 gallons per capita per day (gpcd), but the projected requirement of 1840 mgd for a population of 230 lakhs remains on the basis of 80 gpcd. No data has been offered for this differential treatment. On the other hand, the total capacity of water augmentation projects at Dwarka, Sonia Vihar, Bawana, Okhla, Palla is only 919 mgd. It is therefore, vaguely proposed that “new water treatment plants may be identified for potable water requirement”, but there is no information on where this water will come from.

In sharp contrast to these projections, a study by the Transport Research and Injury Prevention Programme of the Indian Institute of Technology at Delhi of 2800 households in different types of DDA flats, commissioned by DDA, shows that 22 gpcd is considered adequate by almost all the respondents. If this were accepted as the norm, then the total water requirement for 2021 would be about 500 mgd – which would leave a *surplus* of 150 mgd from what is already available. While the Plan also speaks of surplus water detention ponds along the riverbed, in fact the entire riverbed is already earmarked for ‘development’ activities through channelisation of the river.

In order to resolve such conflicting claims, the Plan should take the following steps:

- *Establish a standard and universal norm for per capita water consumption.*
- *Ensure accessibility and availability of water at affordable rates for.*
- *Control misuse and harmful use of water by increasing the rates on a sliding scale.*
- *Regulate demand instead of increasing supply from non-existent sources.*

- *Preserve the Yamuna by controlling effluents and sewage released into it, mainly from the built-up colonies and industrial areas.*
- *Implement existing laws for controlling industrial pollution using public monitoring as an effective watchdog.*
- *Regulate uncontrolled exploitation of ground water.*
- *Channelisation of river to be stopped.*
- *Keep distribution and regulation within the public sector.*

### **Energy**

On the basis of estimates by the government-owned TRANSCO, DMP-2021 gives a further requirement of 6500 MW of power by 2021, but stipulates additional generation capacity of only 2100 MW. The remainder is to come from a list of future hydro-electric power plants to be located in Himachal, Uttar Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, and thermal power plants in Madhya Pradesh (all of which were listed in DMP-2001 too), further increasing Delhi's dependence on (and conflicts with) them. Some of the generation is to be privatised, albeit with regulation by the government, and the improvements in transmission and distribution are also to be performed by private corporations.

The Plan does not at all explore how demand could be reduced through appropriate design of buildings, transport, and land use, and the use of low energy gadgets and non-conventional sources. Nor does it examine the experience with privatisation of distribution in 2002, after which Rs 4816 crores remain outstanding from Delhi Jal Board, and other top defaulters include such notable entities such as the National Thermal Power Corporation, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi, the Railways, and DDA. The collection of charges was to be divided in the ratio of 80:20 between Delhi Government and the private Distribution Companies (Discoms), but the Delhi Government has so far received only Rs 183 crores as reimbursement. During the same period, the rate of power has gone up more than 3 times. In fact, official figures reveal that the Discoms need to spend a total of only Rs 18 crores for supplying energy to all the unauthorised colonies while submitting bills that would extract Rs 12 crores from consumers every month.

At the heart of the argument lies the understanding of how much energy is required and how much would it cost to distribute it. A Sajha Manch study of 2500 households in the unplanned residential areas shows that 5 KW of peak power is adequate for the energy requirements of an average household. This would mean that, extrapolated over the city, the total requirement in 2021 would be *double* what is currently available – and can be easily achieved with a single thermal power plant along with proper conservation measures. Similarly, the recommendations of a High Powered Committee constituted by the Ministry of Urban Development implied that an individual connection for a 25 sq.m plot would cost Rs 2250, as contrasted to the Rs 3000 actually charged by the Discoms for an electricity connection, and the figure of Rs 875 computed from field studies conducted by the Hazards Centre.

Suggestions for planning for energy from a different perspective are:

- *Power should be supplied at equal rates to all colonies and consumers.*
- *Connections should be metered and certified by an independent reliable agency.*
- *Faulty meters should be replaced and the manufacturers black-listed.*
- *Procedures should be simplified and certificates of residence from Mohalla Samitis be accepted.*
- *Electricity theft in industrial, commercial, and affluent areas should be located and penalised heavily and the list of defaulters posted at public places.*
- *Power supply up to 100 units per month should be on no-cost-no-profit basis and thereafter charges should be increased on a sliding scale.*
- *Grievance redressal cells should be placed locally, specially in settlements of the weaker sections.*
- *The relevant officers should be penalised for not providing electricity connections within a stipulated time period.*
- *A consultative committee should be constituted of independent experts, representatives of different categories of consumers and of different trade unions to make recommendations for the solving problems with respect to generation, transmission, and distribution*

## **Environment**

Earlier Master Plans had made substantial references to the need for protecting the Ridge and the Yamuna riverbed, as well as provided for a green belt around Delhi. DMP-2021 merely states that the Ridge shall continue to be designated as a Regional Park as per the provisions of DMP-2001, but only until the delineation of the exact boundary by the Forest Department. The riverbed, on the other hand, is now officially designated for water harvesting, although nothing has been mentioned about the Zonal Plan for Zone O, which converts almost 10,000 hectares in the riverbed to commercial, recreational, and residential uses – the commercial land alone will be 12 times larger than what is available in all District Centres currently. And the green belt has been done away with completely.

Indications of what is likely to happen to the Ridge and the Yamuna are already on view, with 20 official violations in the former and 30 in the latter. The recent disputes over the Malls under construction on the Vasant Kunj section of the Southern Ridge and the proposed Commonwealth Games Village near the Akshardham Mandir on the Yamuna, illustrate that the political establishment is determined to bypass all environmental and ecological considerations for planning, and gives priority to the monetary benefits that accrue from landuse changes. Even the green areas within neighbourhoods are being converted into multi-purpose parks that can be used for commercial purposes.

Other recommendations made in DMP-2021 relate to upgrading public transport, controlling polluting industries, relocating non-conforming ones, stopping night shifts, putting up commercial properties

along roads to buffer noise, and changing road materials. As we have seen, these measures have already been adopted to significantly destroy livelihoods in the city and to cater to the needs of motorised traffic and wealthy residents. In the process, there has been large-scale eviction of the urban poor from lands on environmental grounds, although the land has been later designated for extensive commercial exploitation.

Following from the above analysis, the steps recommended for environmental conservation are:

- *Conservative use of natural resources on the basis of identification of basic needs of people and setting effective and appropriate norms.*
- *Environmental Impact Assessment of all proposed development projects by independent agencies before clearance by regulators.*
- *Regular environmental education courses, particularly for policy-makers, planners, and administrators.*
- *Participation in policy-making by those affected by environmental degradation.*
- *Extensive participatory collection of scientific data on resource use, and public debate on appropriate mitigation measures.*
- *Promoting a live relationship between people and natural resources, so that people are not separated from nature and can then take care of their heritage.*

## **Governance**

As will be evident from the issues dealt with above, the Master Plan is essentially an instrument of governance. But DMP-2021 does not have much to say about this aspect of planned development. The entire planning exercise is confined to the Ministries, the DDA, and other Planning Boards. Citizen participation is limited to restricted seminars and conferences and a nominal public hearing process. Even the monitoring the implementation of the Plan is left to a Monitoring Unit within DDA and several High-Powered Groups comprising experts and government agencies. Matters are made considerably more complex by the multiplicity of agencies that exist in Delhi.

Some recommendations in this regard are, therefore, as follows:

- *Reconstitute the 136 Development Zones for zonal planning specified in MPD-62.*
- *Provide for citizen participation in planning and monitoring through the agency of the 74<sup>th</sup> Amendment, and constitution of Mohalla Sabhas instead of Ward Committees.*
- *The citizen should have a Right to be heard by a duly elected independent authority other than DDA, in accordance with the principles of natural justice.*
- *A mechanism for the public accountability of DDA for non-implementation of the Master Plan has to be set up within the Legislature.*
- *The Right to Information should not be diluted any further, a time period should be set for the appellate authority, and specific provision has to be made for according priority to the counter-information provided by people.*

## **Alternative Approach**

To summarise the alternative perspective:

- Adequate resources are available for all provided the norms for resource use are not based on what the wealthy require.
- It is the rich and not the poor who are responsible for depletion and degradation of the city's resources.
- The problem lies with the unequal distribution of resources.
- Illegality and criminality are thus inbuilt into both the design as well as non-implementation of the Plan.
- The unintended (and illegal) city is the result of the failure of government agencies to carry out their mandate.
- Privatisation cannot deliver public goods because it was responsible for the violations of the Plan in the first place.
- Vulnerability born out of exclusion, therefore, has to be the foundation of planning for current and future needs.
- Effective accountability of governance is necessary for democratic planning.
- Informed participation at the *mohalla* level should become mandatory under the 74<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution.
- Investment policy should be directly linked to employment generation programmes.
- Allocation of resources should be based on the principle of constitutional rights and international human rights and not on financial muscle and markets.

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