**Post Colonial Cities and Accumulation through Policies – The Example of Jawaharlal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM)**

**1. Introduction**

Cities have to the focus of research for a significant time now. This focus is mostly related to the shifts in the economic structure of developing Third World countries like India. Henceforth, state embracing ideologies of liberalization and globalization for these countries. Consequently, cities came to the fore for providing the required urban spaces and infrastructures pertinent for multinational corporations to carry out their day to day business activities. This definitely has played a role in changing urban landscape and therefore urban land use. Therefore, turning cities into ‘agents for generator of economic growth'(GEMs). (Bannerjee- Guha 2010). Nevertheless, this further has led to contestation over the use of urban land by various stakeholders. Forces of economic power relation and political, social power relations have come to play in such circumstances.

Therefore, cities are being studied by various schools belonging to different discipline backgrounds like urban sociology, urban economics and urban geography. The world cities school of thought belonging to Peter Taylor and paul Knox(1995), Saskia Sassen(2001) and John Friedman(1986) have always linked Third world cities to their western counterpart. Therefore, arguing at a core-periphery relation and creating hierarchies of cities with regard to London, Tokyo and New York. However, this kind of hierarchy and this kind of interrelation has been challenged by the post colonial school. According to them it is important to analyze Third world cities from the perspective of it being at the centre of urban studies, without interpreting the hierarchical relation to western cities at this juncture(McEwan 2009). Although the economic exchange relation of Third world countries with European counterparts cannot be ignored. Third world cities need to be looked at from their colonial past. These cities and the decision making bodies like the state hold on to their colonial legacy in their development process. This relation needs to be analysed further.

Infact, post colonial approach has been rightly taken forward by radical school studying cities like Harvey(2009),Soja(1980) who belong to the post modern school and aim to look deep into social issues like social justice and the city, socio-spatial praxis, socio-spatial dialectic and further. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to look at cities from a post colonial perspectives and looking at policies as agents in accumulation. Capitalist accumulation in the post colonial cities has emerged as crucial area of research in social science and is being debated in the academia. Interestingly, it needs to be focussed that the process and pattern of accumulation in post colonial cities in the global south has been extensively related to the path of globalization. Bardhan (2009) refers to the changes in the economic structure and the social pattern of India as tortuous transition of the Indian economy. Therefore, the study of post colonial urbanism in general and post colonial cities in particular have received lot of scholarship in urban studies in the recent years and therefore deemed necessary.

**2. Defining the City: Initial Frameworks of Understanding the City**

Globalization has become one such element which is being manifested in global south and more prolifically in cities. Therefore, a very important feature of post colonial urbanization is no doubt globalization and with that to maintain the status quo the cities have come to the foreplay. The term globalization has seen a meteoric rise since mid 1980s and in the subsequent decades it has been immensely related to defining the post colonial urbanism and the city. The city has been defined in various ways. The structural school has always looked at the Third world city from a modern and non-modern perspective. Therefore, Third world cities were regarded as deficient in infrastructure with weak standard of living and quality of life, location of urban poverty. Further, Third world cities were identified as consisting a dualistic framework with the formal sector and the presence of the illegal, informal sector. The formal sector was positioned in research as the modern sector with high standard of quality in living, services and working conditions in the city. The informal sector was looked down as the non-modern sector with outdated features also belonging to the city.

The Chicago school people like Wirth’s (1938) in his seminal essay ‘urbanism as a way of life’ treated cities of Third world countries (which are now referred as cities of global south) as deficient in the standards related to their western counterparts . These countries lacked the 'blasee attitude' found in the urban culture of western cities. Therefore, the western cities were always presented as a normative model and Third world cities failed in catching up with them. Third world urbanization and cities were identified with problems of over urbanization, infrastructural deficiency, slums and urban poverty. These concepts were dealt in detail in the works of Gilbert and Gugler(1982) and others like Drakakis Smith (1987). These problems were related to high migration from rural areas and to the presence of dual economies with a small formal sector and large informal sector in the Third world economies.

However, the next school of World city paradigm looked at it from a post structural format. They believed that cities are related and the underlying relation need to be exposed. The core cities had exchanges with the Third world city, which was affecting their development. Therefore, the school was extending the core- periphery model in the analysis of the city.

Further, in the 1990s with the rising popularity of the conceptual category of globalization, there emerged the world city paradigm formulated by Friedman (1986) and which was sharpened analytically by Saskia Sassen (2001) through her ideas about the global city. The crux of these theories are that due to the impact of globalization and the informational technology revolution, the metropolitan cities across the globe are now deeply connected due to the flow of finance, goods, ideas and people. These metropolitan cities which are the centres of growth and capitalist accumulation can be arranged hierarchically with New York, London and Tokyo at the top and the rest of the cities ranked by criteria such as location of headquarters of transnational companies of key sectors such as manufacturing, finance, information technology and advanced business and producer services. This idea has caught the imagination of all governments of countries of the global south and with a neo liberal regime setting in huge investments both national and international (through World Bank, DFID) investments are being pumped into metropolitan cities to make them global. Therefore, megalopolises of India are continuously aiming towards becoming world class.

**3.Defining the Post Colonial City**

The post colonial studies have critiqued the idea of world cities framework. According to them world cities hypothesis present the role of cities in the wider networks and circulations associated with globalization. Although some cities of the so called Third world have got incorporated in the hierarchies of the world city network, there are many who would remain off the map. So developmentalism continues to pervade the global city narrative and what is most worrying for a post colonial urban studies is that world cities approached by placing cities in hierarchical relation to one another, implicitly establishes some cities as exemplars and others as imitators. On the contrary the importance of the phenomena of globalization to post colonial studies comes firstly from its demostrations of the structure of world power relations which stands firm in the 20th century as a legacy of the western imperialism. Secondly, the ways in which local communities engage the forces of globalization bear some resemblance to the ways in which colonized societies have historically engaged and appropriated the forces of imperial domination (Sanyal 2007). Therefore post colonial urban studies scholarship have critiqued that the interpretation of the cities of global south which have also been based on Euro centric idea and rigid western definitions of the city and the urban.

However there is a recent line of thinking among researchers on post colonial urban theory that Third world cities are no longer to be defined as the same. They should be recongized as global south cities who organized themselves amidst the changing economy and the social structure of the cities. The changing economy of the country also entails the change in the character of the capital and the way the surplus is accumulated. In post colonial studies a major part that is emphasized is to understand how accumulating classes are able to exploit others and to induce other classes to accept it as their interest which is the requirements for continued capital accumulation. Globalization also relates to the decreasing agency (though not the status) of the nation state in the world political order and the increasing influence of structures and movements of corporate capital in the city. Therefore the role of the state in the accumulation process in the current phase of globalization has been that of a facilitator. The state is an important agent in making the process of accumulation for big corporates national and international very smooth and easy (Ashcroft, Griffiths, Tiffin 2007) .

**4. Reviewing Policies in the Post Colonial Cities Framework**

The current paper intends to explore the significance of policies of the state as an important instrument which facilitates capitalist accumulation specifically in the post colonial cities. Although majority of the policies are supposedly for the benefit of the masses, a deeper analysis of the policies reveals a completely different story. The case of urban reform policies have been of central significance in the last decade. It is interesting to relate the significant emergence of reform agendas for the mega cities at this time period of globalization. The paper wants to argue that the urban reform agenda has been a crucial aspect for accumulation in the cities. Jawaharlal Nehru Urban renewal Mission (henceforth JNNURM) is an example of the reform process which can see the state behaving as a capitalist intending to make the process of accumulation a smooth process in the city. Analysing the policies underline a few of the strategies in the reform process and subsequently its implementation which lay bare the pro-capitalist tendency of the state.

Two aspects of urban policies need mention here. First urban policies have become increasingly significant now. Earlier its initiation can be found only from the third plan. Before that it was dealt in a tentative way by the authorities of the Government and therefore only few bodies were created like Housing Boards. Therefore one finds a lackadaisical approach to urban nationalist planning. However in the current phase urban policies have taken a centre stage. These policies make sure that megalopolises like Delhi, Mumbai receive funds for investment to a continuous scale. The policies target in turning cities into world class and investment friendly.

The other aspect of urban policies is the continuous increase in an urban informality instead of planning and policy concentration in these regions. The question is what is the problem with these policies and why is it so? Roy looks deep into analysing and understanding urban policies. Roy (2005) states that informality has to be understood in the case India as an idiom of urbanization, a logic through which differential spatial value is produced and managed. Urban informality is not restricted to the bounded space of the slum or deproletarianized/entrepreneurial labour. Instead it is a mode of production of space that connects seeming separated geographies of slum and suburbs. So the notion of informality does not signify a sphere of unregulated activity. But instead a realm of regulation where ownership and user rights are established, maintained and overturned through elaborate extra-legal systems.

Further the policies of Indian cities cannot be understood as the forecasting and management of growth. Instead, urban policies in India have to be understood as the management of resources, particularly land through dynamic processes of informality. By informality it means a state of deregulation where the ownership, use and purpose of land cannot be fixed according to any prescribed set of regulation or law. Here the law itself is rendered fluid and open ended, and therefore subject to multiple interpretations and interests. Informality is inscribed in the ever shifting relationship between what is legal and illegal, legitimate and illegitimate; this relationship is both arbitrary and fickle and yet is the site of state power and violence (Roy 2009).

**4.1 Accumulation Through Policies : The Policy of the Post Colonial State.**

Accumulation is a process which is associated with capitalist system ever since its initiation. Infact, the survival of the system itself is based on the process of capitalist accumulation in the societies. Although when referring to accumulation one has to understand the various forms of accumulation that have emerged ever since the episode of capitalism. It refers to primitive accumulation at one extreme which has land grab, resource extraction and labour controls strategies and on the other hand it has the new forms of accumualtion from financial instruments to strategies which are part of the current accumulation process. The question of cities when associated to the process of accumulation has a intertwined relation to resource extraction and land grab as integral to the process of capitalist accumulation. Therefore, Harvey(2010) referes to the accumulation process shift in cities as 'sites of capital surplus' to 'sites of capital accumulation' by dispossessing social groups as important in the cities of the global south.

The aim of this paper is to understand the role of post colonial state in this process of accumulation. The paper argues that state uses policy as an instrument in making accumulation as a legitimate process in the city which happens at the cost of the dispossessed in the city. Further, accumulation and the development project are interlinked and witnessing different trends in the current context. Therefore, in the case of the post colonial state, it is important to recognize that policy of the state is not the outcome of simple welfare or development considerations, but it is a key instrument in the process of modernization. Further, policies are developed and evolved under the current political economy context which is always an important consideration when understanding policies in the post colonial state. In essence policies or the web of social and economic policies, schemes and institutions that are concerned with the social conditions of economic activity reflects the broad social contract between capital and labour. In global south it referes to the social contract between capital and labour specifically for the management of the modernization and development project. The post colonial state is an important agency in the process of the development of the global south (Ghosh 2002). Therefore, to understand policy as an instrument to understand the questions of basic equity and minimal standards of living which is important part of the social and economic rights of the citizens is a minimal understanding of policy. Infact, policy can play a major role in the capitalist development project at significant levels. First, policies of different types are crucial to the state's capcacity to manage modernization and along with it huge economic and social shocks that are necessarily generated in the process of modernization and developement. The case of Jawaharlal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) amply explains this aspect of policy in the post colonial state. Second, policies legitmize the development project of the state.

**5. The Case of JNNURM**

The mission statement of JNNURM states that the aim of the mission is to encourage reforms and fast track planned development of identified cities. The focus points of the mission are efficiency in urban infrastructure and service delivery mechanisms, community participation and accountability of urban local bodies towards citizens. The paper argues that a project of the scale of JNNURN would require huge track of land. However the mission leaves aside the question of arranging sufficient land. A convenient option of the concerned authorities is to make land available by cleaning up slum lands which have been the home to pauperized rural populace who migrate to cities. Therefore, one witnesses an increase in demolitions and evictions of the urban poor households and properties. The objectives of the mission also fail to comprehend that land is a very important resource with regard to the economy of the urban poor and utmost for their survival. This puts a heavy strain on urban land and other resources which are increasingly freed from less productive usage such as small scale manufacturing or housing for the poor and deployed for the purpose of profiteering.

The urban renewal mission document has certain conditionality for disbursement of funds. First, funds accessed for JNNURM cannot be used to create wage employment. JNNURM assistance is also not available for health and education issues in cities of urban India. Second, land costs for the project specified in the scheme cannot be financed under the JNNURM. This has to be externally funded. Thirdly, housing to the poor are not provided free of cost under the mission. Fourthly, privatisation or public private partnership model is the preferred mode of implementation of the project. Finally a reasonable user fee is to be charged from the urban poor for basic services. The idea is to recover twenty five percent of the project cost. The above mentioned aspects reveal at the agenda of JNNURM. Scholars working on analysing various aspects of reforms in the country have firmly emphasized from the above facts that the mission sets in motion a completely market driven urban development process. The question of land is not attended. The urban renewal mission accrues and consents to the concept of modernization originating from euro centric perspective. The idea behind the urban renewal have city beautification and cleaning (by removing unclean objects like slums) which ultimately attract foreign investors to the city for investing in the city and generating economic surplus from such investments. This ultimately leads to the growth to the 'brand globalized India' (Mahadevia 2006)

**5.1 The Land Question**

The land question undoubtedly needs to be central for any urban renewal scheme of Government of India. First, urban renewal incorporates restructuring of the usage of land. Second, a huge proportion of the population of the country is still dependent on this finite resource for livelihood and various other essential and survival activities of human beings depends on the availability of sufficient land. Land is a fixed commodity. This makes it easy for speculation and consequently for profiteering from it. Similarly the result of such speculation is quite in depth. The inequality in India can be traced to the factor of the land owner versus the dispossessed. Initially the Government had functioned as the regulator of inequality resulting from transaction relating to land. This was through the subsidies to the urban poor, higher taxes to industrialists purchasing land, providing land to urban poor at subsidized interest rates of loan. In the current times the Government agendas clearly point at profiteering from commercializing the urban land. Therefore, the Government functions more like a speculator than a facilitator. This is being accomplished through hundred percent Foreign Direct Investment in real estate. An urban reform of the scale of JNNURM is functional by spatially restructuring the cities and therefore the built up areas. This kind of spatial restructuring of cities would mould the use, availability of the resource of land. JNNURM deals with the issue of land in such a way that it will benefit only the richer segment of the society.

**5.2 ULCRA**

Land is a very important resource with regard to the economy of the urban poor. It is the base resource which helps them to construct their own dwelling even outside the formal market. It helps them to earn by generating their meagre income from small home base enterprises at the individual level. JNNURM neglects these aspects associated to the land. Its various reform measures aim at commercializing and profiteering from the land which is such a crucial resource for a major segment of the population. One of the mandatory reforms is the repeal of Urban Land Ceiling Regulation Act (henceforth ULCRA) which gives free hand to the builder lobby to capture vast and huge tracts of lands in the metropolitan cities for building commercial and residential complexes. These will drive the poor out of the usage of the land market. Anyways they are excluded from such a formal usage of land. The Government has also agreed on Foreign Direct Investment in real estate. With concomitant ULCRA being repealed the stage is clear for the entry of giant multinational real estate firms to exploit land in Indian cities for business purposes.

Further with the repeal of ULCRA there is no other Government measure through which affordable land can be made available to the urban poor. Initially when ULCRA was applied, it raised the price of land in cities like Mumbai because a lot of land had got stuck in litigation. This made people from various fields to demand its repeal. However currently people’s movement for housing rights have now begun asking for the strengthening of ULCRA rather than its repeal. One should also note that repeal of ULCRA has been implemented at a very fast pace in the states of Jharkhand and Odisha where the tribal population is high(Government of India 2012).

**5.3 Property Title Certification**

Property title certification and computerization of land and property is a reform mentioned at the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM). This strikes at the very root of the process through which the poor have so far staked their living, working and claim on the city. The land has been used by them for residential and occupational purposes through a variety of informal networks and cleavages. Property title certification is a clause which is mentioned under the optional reforms and is common at the state level and at the Urban Local Body (ULB) level (Government of India 2005). With standardization, classification and computerization of land titles, the consequences expected is that while a number of informal forms of title are going to be excluded from the classificatory scheme of the state, the large player with interest in land will have all the information about urban land at their disposal with the help of technology, thus making property transactions easier and cost effective (Sami 2011). The urban poor have always used discarded, unused, less sophisticated and environmentally fragile lands that have not been abandoned by the superior class. They have used those kind of areas which are vacant parts of land near railway stations, drainage lines, near industrial areas, near garbage grounds for their residential and livelihood generation purposes. Information about the availability of this kind of vacant, unused land is usually passed on to them by their acquaintances by word of mouth. With the knowledge of such kind of land , they turn discarded land in usable and advantageous form which are used by many poor people for livelihood generation and residential purposes. Once computerization of information of every vacant land of the city is finalized with the help of Geographic Information System (GIS), the land would be under government and private sector purview even before it comes to the knowledge of the urban poor. Further, with the trend of using land for surplus generation in the era of globalization, the usage of land for informal housing by the weaker segment of the society would seem futile and very unprofitable by the government agencies. The private sector would therefore eye on any such kind of land for surplusgeneration and with the motive of earning profit (Mahadevia 2006).

**6. Conclusion**

Needless to say the reform agenda of Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) is in line with policies of liberalization, privatization and globalization initiated in the early 90s. The politics of globalization depends among other things on refashioning and reforming cities in order to make them investment friendly. Major cities of the global south are thus sought to be delinked from real domestic priorities and positioned as nodes in the global circulation of finance and services ((Kundu and Samanta , 2011). This puts a heavy strain on urban land and other resources which are increasingly freed from less productive uses such as small scale manufacturing or housing for the poor and deployed for high tech modes of accumulation and consumption. The entire urban space becomes critical for the exploitation for the purpose of profiteering. Land to be used for low productive uses seems futile for this case, when the same land can generate more surplus profit (Mahadevia 2006).

JNNURM is the work of a technically savvy, internationally exposed, reform-oriented policy network that has come into existence in the last 20 years and have very little exposure to the real condition of Indian cities. The vision of Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) targets only a minor population of the country who would be benefited from Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM). This urban renewal process takes on a narrow framework and understanding of policy making, ignoring the majority of the country and promoting a very exclusionary ideology. Mostly, Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) has been significant in a particular kind of spatial restructuring of cities which includes the urban higher class and middle class but excludes the urban poor from the usage of an important resource like land and overall the city. Further, it changes the way the cities are to be managed and looked.

One must realize that land is a state subject and under the jurisdiction of the state, however, policy decisions at the central level have impact on state subjects like land. There is need to understand the use value of land as put forward by famous scholar David Harvey(1982). He takes on from Karl Marx’s Capital and states that land together with labour constitute the original sources of all wealth. In its virgin state, the land is the universal subject of human labour, the original condition of all production and the repository of a seemingly infinite variety of potential use values spontaneously provided by nature. Nonetheless, private persons under the laws of private property can acquire monopoly powers over definite portions of the globe (Harvey 1982). JNNURM is not clear on how this finite resource which cannot be significantly augmented or diminished through human agency will be utilized positively for the urban poor by the reform process. However, the reform process would demand land for its projects but it would not finance land cost. The government therefore turns a blind eye to the question of access and availability of land for the urban poor.

The rationale for JNNURM was stated in the National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP) of the then Government of India. The National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP) attaches the highest priority to the growth and development, expansion of physical infrastructure (Government of India,2005). The proposal of comprehensive programme of urban renewal and paying attention to the needs of the slum dwellers was put forward in the form of JNNURM. However, the project ignores the plight of the slum dwellers who are the vulnerable dwellers. The government is also committed to meet the Millennium Development Goals, and aims to augment investment in the urban sector. But the urban reform which does not take into consideration fundamental issue of land to urban poor cannot expect to succeed and sustain and therefore turn cities into world class.

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