

## **Brief report on ITPI Conference held at Bhubaneswar on the theme 'Challenges of Urban and Regional Planning towards Sustainable Development' from 24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> February, 2023.**

The 71<sup>st</sup> National Town and Country Planners Conference of Institute of Town Planners, India (ITPI) was held at Bhubaneswar from 24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> February, 2023 on the theme '**Challenges of Urban and Regional Planning towards Sustainable Development**', with Sub-themes:

- a) Small and Medium Towns: New drivers of Development
- b) Reforms in Urban Governance
- c) Innovative Approaches to Planning Education

Local Sub-Theme – Experiences of Smart Cities Mission in Odisha.

AMDA officials who attended the conference included Shri. P. Selvadurai, Director cum Secretary, Shri. Totak Acharya, Assistant Director (Planning), Shri. Gaurav Jain, Administrative Officer and Shri. Vaibhav Badola, Technical Assistant.

The conference organized at Mayfair Convention, Bhubaneswar was attended by town planners of various states and Governing Council Members of ITPI, educationists, researchers and experts across the nation. Around 300 officials across the country attended the conference.

### **Day 1 (24<sup>th</sup> February, 2023)**

#### **Inaugural Function**

Shri. Naveen Patnaik, Hon. Chief Minister, Odisha inaugurated the conference online. In his inaugural address he emphasized upon the necessity of Urban and Regional Planning in Odisha. He urged the planners to develop the cities and towns with sustainable infrastructure that will help in accommodating future population growth. He shared that the country is striving for a higher economic growth, a large population is shifting from rural to urban areas while several urban poor continue to reside in slum areas. This is putting enormous pressure on urban public services and infrastructural facilities. Further, he mentioned that the urban planners should come up with suggestions and recommendations on new age



*Figure 1- Inaugural Session*

urban planning to address such issues. The other officials who were on the dais during inaugural function included Smt. Sulochana Das, Hon. Mayor, Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation, Shri. G. MathiVathanan, IAS, Principal Secretary, Housing and Urban

Development Department, Govt. of Odisha, Prof. Dr. D.S. Meshram, President ITPI; Dr. L.P. Patnaik; Vice-President, ITPI, Shri. S.B. Khodankar, Former Secretary General, ITPI. During the function a Souvenir on “*Challenges for Urban and Regional Planning towards Sustainable Development*” was also released.

### **Exhibition**

An exhibition on the theme ‘Challenges for Urban and Regional Planning to Achieve Sustainable Development’ was organized by ITPI at the same venue. It provided an opportunity to various stakeholders to showcase their efforts and success stories specifically of smart cities.

### **Plenary Session**

The chief guest for the session was Shri. G. MathiVathanan, IAS, Principal Secretary, Housing and Urban Development Department, Govt. of Odisha. The plenary session on “Challenges for Urban and Regional Planning towards Sustainable Development” included presentations from Ms. Anumita Roy Chowdhury, Centre for Science and Environment; Prof. Dr. Meenakshi Dhote, School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi and Prof. Dr. Ashok Kumar, School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi (joined online).

Shri. G. MathiVathanan, IAS mentioned about Jaga Mission which is a participatory slum upgradation program being undertaken in Odisha. For entitlement of security and a better quality of life, the program is a step towards transforming its slums into livable habitats with an objective of creating a slum free Odisha. Odisha slums consist of 25% of its urban population consisting of 4,12,000 slum households. The program was launched in 2018 based on ‘Odisha land rights to slum dwellers act’. To over 60,000 slum dwellers, land rights have already been granted. Because of such initiatives the state has been recognized at the global level. The main objective of this mission is to upgrade the slums by addressing primary inequalities prevalent in urban areas and integrating the informal settlements into the mainstream city fabric so that delisting of slums may be done accordingly. It is a participatory process with an active involvement of slum dwellers associations and ward officers. Shri. G. MathiVathanan, IAS further emphasized that the bylaws prepared for the towns should be prepared after assessing the needs of people from all sections of the society.

The speakers emphasized that India is on the cusp of becoming global powerhouse. The turning point for the country is premised on the twin towers of India’s continually rising level of urbanization accompanied by sustained high economic growth over the last few decades. The State Governments and Municipalities are critical players in making Indian cities and towns as global economic nodes serving all of humanity through innovation and technology. However, the economic growth of the towns has led to air and water pollution, loss of bio diversity due to increasingly enhanced human impact mainly because of an increase in the rural-urban migration. This has also resulted in building of new towns and corridors, increase in usage of fossil fuels in unsustainable modes of transport, disappearing water bodies and polluted rivers, urban flooding as well as water insecurity among others. Therefore, Indian spatial planners and policy makers have to strike a balance between sustained economic growth and protection of natural environment. This can only be done when there is a synergy between National, State, district, towns and local level plans. Further, it was also conveyed that the spatial planners need to devise climate change adaptation strategies to tackle compound, cascading and trans-boundary complex risks impacting water security, health, livelihoods and infrastructure.

### **Technical Session I: Small and Medium Towns: New Drivers of Development**

The chief guest for the session was Shri. Ashok Chandra Panda, Hon. Minister, Science and Technology, Public Enterprises, Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disability, Odisha. The guest of honor for the session was Shri. Pradeep Kumar Jena, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary and Development Commissioner, Govt. of Odisha. The key speakers for the session included Dr. S.K. Kulshrestha, Chairman, Technical Committee, ITPI; Shri. R. Srinivas, Former Senior Planner, TCPO, New Delhi; Shri. P.P. Singh, Chief Town Planner, TCP Department, Haryana.

During the session it was mentioned that the small and medium towns constitute 40% of the total urban population of the country. These towns certainly will have to have focused attention in terms of planned development. While preparing the metropolitan region plan/regional plan, the small and medium towns need to be developed as counter magnets/satellite towns to absorb the pressure on million plus and capital cities. Under AMRUT 2.0 formulation of GIS based Master Plans for towns with 50,000 to one lakh population has been approved by MoHUA. It is expected that GIS based Master Plan will get completed in a short period and also periodic updating of data would become much easier, thereby ensuring an effective monitoring of implementation of Master Plans. Further, it was informed during the session that most of the towns in Odisha will be having 24x7 water supply by 2024. To mitigate sanitation issues, a participatory approach to address it has been mentioned in order to improve the sector in city core. In terms of electricity it was shared that optimum utilization of all the resources should be done to meet the existing demand. Focus should be on usage of renewable energy. In education sector, the government schools should be equipped with smart classes, e library, e laboratory etc. Metro connectivity should be made available to connect the small and medium towns with the class 1 cities in order to reduce the rate of out-migration for employment purpose from the small and medium towns. Decentralization of economic activities in small and medium towns based on their potential should be looked into.



*Figure 2- Deliberations during Technical Session- I*

After the completion of the first technical session, commercial presentations related to GIS was shared. This was followed by EGM meeting of ITPI where a presentation on National Education Policy 2020 was shared by Prof. Dr. Ashwani Luthra, HoD, GNDU, Amritsar. The program of Day 1 ended with cultural program followed by dinner organized at another hotel venue.

## **Day 2 (25<sup>th</sup> February, 2023)**

### **Technical session II: Reforms in Urban Governance**

Day 2 started with technical session II. The speakers for the session included Prof. B. Misra, former professor, SPA Delhi; Dr. Ramanath Jha, IAS (Retired) and Prof. Dr. K.K. Pandey, Professor, IIPA, New Delhi.

The speakers deliberated that there is a need for strengthening urban governance with sound institutions, mechanisms and reforms so that cities are able to efficiently and effectively perform their new roles in nation building. It was mentioned that there is a need to revisit urban governance including structure, functions, inter-agency

coordination/cooperation, resource mobilization, capacity building with focus on provision, maintenance and delivery of utilities, facilities and services. Cities need to leverage the funds made available through the flagship programs like SCM, AMRUT, HFA-U, SBM etc. Further such programs need to be integrated in the process of preparation and implementation of Development Plans/Master Plans. In these missions, the capacity building aspect focused upon the improvement of the capability of cities to deliver the citizen services and to improve the health of ULBs. A strong interface of GIS and Integrated Command and Control Centre would facilitate effective monitoring, implementation and governance of urban areas. Further it was conveyed that introduction of E Governance has led to re-engineering of functioning of ULBs, thereby bringing transparency in governance. However, governance reforms for integrated development of municipal areas and urban periphery “rurban” areas, revamping ULB financing, ensuring adequate number of trained urban planners and supporting manpower should be one of the top agenda in urban governance reforms.

### **Technical Session III: Innovative approaches to Planning Education**

The chief guest for the session was Prof. Dr. Bibhuti Bhusan Biswal, Vice Chancellor, Odisha University of Technology and Research, Bhubaneswar. The speakers of the session included Prof. Dr. Darshini Mahadevia, Associate Dean, Ahmedabad University, Prof. Dr. Nikhil Ranjan Mandal, Professor, SPA, Bhopal, Shri. Arpan Paul, XIM University, Bhubaneswar.

The speakers mentioned that National Education Policy-2020 envisions a complete overhaul and re-engineering of the higher education system to overcome the present challenges like severely fragmented higher educational system, a rigid separation of disciplines etc., and aims at moving towards multidisciplinary mode with multiple exit options, with appropriate certification. The NEP-2020 provides greater autonomy to higher educational institutions and promotes collaboration with foreign universities. It also attempts to combat and stop commercialization of higher education. Further, it was conveyed that the policy recommends to take a lead in preparing professionals in cutting edge areas. The policy also proposes that the technical education should be inter-disciplinary and innovative, incorporating technical advancements in the field and other disciplines such as GIS, block chain, big data, satellite imagery, aerial photography, artificial intelligence, spatial data infrastructure etc.

Accordingly, it was concluded that academicians need to take a relook at western theories as well as Indian urban planning theories and re-invent models suited to Indian culture and socio-economic eco-system in tune with National Education Policy 2020

### **Technical Session IV: Experiences of Smart Cities Mission in Odisha**

Prof. B. Misra, former professor, SPA Delhi chaired the session. The speakers of this session included Prof. Dr. Kajri Misra, Dean (Planning), XIM University, Bhubaneswar, Prof. Tathagata Chatterji, Head, Human Settlement, XIM University, Prof. Dr. Jayant Routray, Professor Emeritus, AITs, Odisha.

It was presented that Bhubaneswar has been a pro-active city in terms of Smart City Mission. The city was selected as smart city out of the Pan India competition and stood first in national ranking. The experiences of implementation of smart city project of Bhubaneswar with respect to (i) Functioning of Integrated Command and Control Centre, (ii) Smart Streets; (iii) Area based Strategy: Formulation of Local Area Plans (LAPs), Town Planning Schemes (TPs), (iv) integration of green and blue infrastructure; (v) Climate Smart Action Plan; and (vi) Smart and Intelligent Traffic Management System was shared during the session.



## Valedictory function

Shri. Rohit Pujari, Hon. Minister (Higher Education), Odisha joined online and delivered the valedictory address. Shri. Vijay Amruta Kulagne, IAS, Commissioner, Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) was guest of honour for the session. The other officials who were on the dais included Dr. L.P. Patnaik, Chairman, Odisha Chapter; Shri. Milind B. Patil, Former Vice President, ITPI; Prof. Dr. D.S. Meshram, President, ITPI.

Shri. Patil read out the recommendations that were mentioned during the above-mentioned sessions. Commissioner, BMC conveyed that the recommendations that were deliberated during the conference would help in framing the future growth of the city.

Hon. Minister mentioned that focus should be laid on integrated development approach instead of focusing on sector specific activities. President, ITPI mentioned that looking at urban planning and development through the lens of western countries is no more advisable and need to devise Indianized solution to planning and development in our country because now we have expertise and experience in urban planning and development.

During the session, Prof. V.N. Prasad National Best Thesis Award was presented to three postgraduate students and Prof. Dr. D.S. Meshram National Best Thesis Award was presented to three undergraduate students. These students were selected on the basis of entries received by ITPI from all over the country.

The conference ended with vote of thanks from Chairman, Odisha Chapter.

The program of Day 2 ended with cultural program followed by dinner held at Golf Club.

On the final day (Sunday), a field visit to Konark temple was organized followed by lunch at Eco Retreat in Konark by ITPI. The trip ended by 4 pm on the same day.

The conference was informative. The recommendations/suggestions envisaged during the conference would help in addressing the issues of planning for sustainable urban and regional development. The experiences shared regarding the implementation strategies adopted under Smart City Mission for Bhubaneswar city is praiseworthy and may be replicated in other cities too by giving due consideration to the local conditions.



*Figure 3- Valedictory Session*

**Snapshots from ITPI Conference held at Bhubaneswar from 24th-26th February, 2023 on the theme 'Challenges of Urban and Regional Planning towards Sustainable Development'**

**Logo and Banner displayed during the conference**



**Snapshots from Day 1 (24<sup>th</sup> February, 2023)**



Fig: AMDA Officials at ITPI Conference on Day 1



Fig: Deliberations during the conference

**Snapshots from Day 2 (25<sup>th</sup> February, 2023)**



Fig: AMDA Officials at ITPI Conference on Day 2



Fig: Mementos presented to Technical Experts

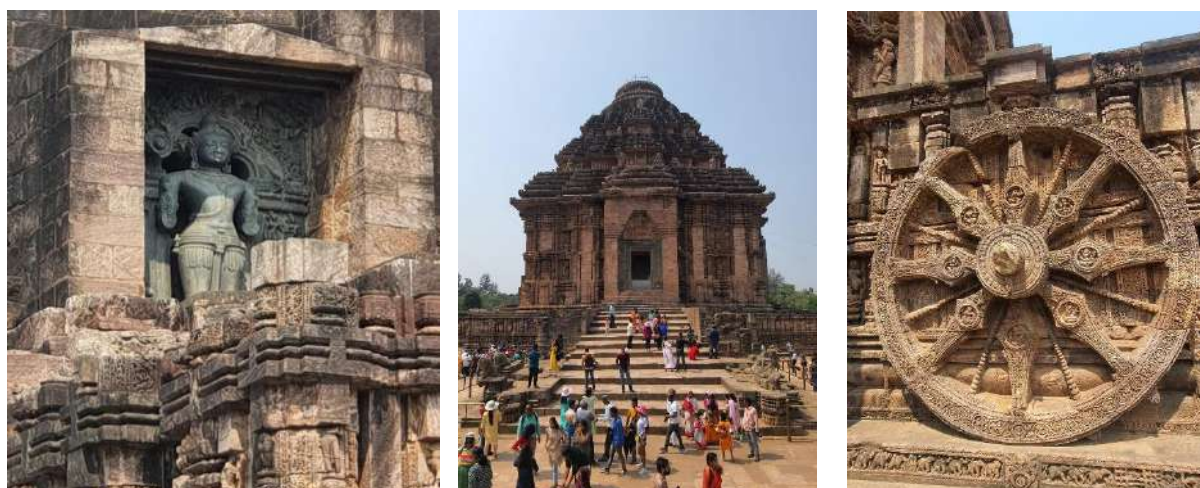


Fig: Field Visit to Konark Temple