



## For Peri-urban transformation

---

[sanskritias.com/current-affairs/for-peri-urban-transformation](https://sanskritias.com/current-affairs/for-peri-urban-transformation)



**(MainsGS1: Urbanization, their problems and their remedies.)**

### **Context:**

The rapid urbanisation of peri-urban areas across India requires targeted and planned intervention to allow cities to grow in a sustainable manner.

### **Rural characteristics:**

- Peri-urban areas (PUAs) are areas at the periphery of cities having different forms of settlement structures such as hamlets, villages, urban villages, slums, unauthorised colonies, and census towns.
- Recently, numerous planned housing colonies and townships have come up in PUAs due to availability of vacant land.
- The rural characteristics of many PUAs adjoining large cities are undergoing a transformation with in-migration of population as people who are unable to live in cities due to high living costs or non-availability of houses reside here.
- Thus, PUAs are inhabited by the native population that is engaged in agro-based activities, as well as migrants, who pursue non-farm interests.

### **Transformation occurring:**

- The transformation occurring in PUAs is seen in the form of increasing population densities, changes in land use and occupational patterns, reduced farmlands, and growth of built structures (residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial).

- Many people living in PUAs benefit from this transformation as there is exchange of knowledge and ideas and new income generating activities come up.
- However, when an ecosystem's carrying capacity is pushed to the limits, it is bound to be affected and this is exactly what is happening in several peri-urban areas of India.

### **Adverse impacts:**

- Peri-urban areas are under tremendous stress due to pressures created by urbanisation.
- **Conversion of land:** Open spaces, green areas, and farmlands are reducing, with the coming up of built structures and non-farm economic activities. The changes are negatively impacting the lives and livelihoods of the farming community, who end up looking for work in non-farm sectors.
- **Unregulated development:** There is haphazard growth of built structures due to high demand which do not meet safety norms. Furthermore, there are instances of PUAs being colonised by private builders by convincing villagers to sell their land by offering attractive prices, and then acquire and carry out illegal sub-division of agricultural land and its disposal when land values rise.
- **Unplanned structures:** Near planned residential or work areas, several informal/unplanned structures emerged in PUAs, such as slums and unauthorised colonies. People living here are unable to buy or rent houses in planned areas as many of them offer services of domestic help to the residents of neighboring planned colonies.
- **Native population affected:** In view of their illegal status, slums and unauthorised colonies remain uncovered by formal service delivery systems, such as water and sanitation. For this reason, people illegally extract groundwater to meet their needs and with increasing demand for water, the requirements of the native population, their crops, and livestock are affected.
- **Drainage concerns:** While there is uncontrolled construction of built structures, no provision is made for drainage which leads to waterlogging, especially during the monsoon season, when the areas become breeding grounds for mosquitoes, leading to outbreaks of mosquito-borne diseases.
- **Population displacement:** At times, the so called 'unauthorised occupants' living in slums and unauthorised colonies are evicted due to implementation of government infrastructure projects, such as regional road/rail corridors.
- **Public transport:** Access to good and reliable public transport services is an equally important issue as due to their peripheral location, many PUAs are not served properly by public transport. This has led to a steep rise in private vehicle ownership. Further, where PUAs lie between two cities, such as Delhi and Gurugram, the motorists commuting in either direction use PUA roads as a shortcut, which causes heavy congestion and air pollution.

### **Orderly growth:**

- With India urbanising rapidly and with the scarcity of land in cities, the pressure on PUAs will continue to grow.
- Metropolitan Planning Committees (MPCs) proposed under the Constitution (74th Amendment Act) are required to look into matters of common interest between municipalities and panchayats, including coordinated spatial plans of the metropolitan area, which includes PUAs.
- The social, economic, and environmental adversities visible in many PUAs are an indication of the deficiencies in legislation, planning, and governance.
- Thus, efforts must be made to protect the traditional character of PUAs and guide future growth in an orderly manner.

### **Way forward:**

- Existing reform initiatives at local/regional/state/national level should be scaled up and rural-urban cooperation possibilities or partnerships should be explored.
- Statutory participatory plans should be prepared and implemented efficiently in peri-urban areas and intangible contribution, especially the ecological role, of PUAs in making cities resilient must be taken into account during policy and plan formulation.
- Non-farm employment opportunities should be promoted amongst women in PUAs; gender-responsive interventions, such as dark spots, safety audits, awareness programmes, should be introduced.

### **Conclusion:**

The many reasons responsible for occurrence of problems in PUAs, or the root causes, should be addressed which includes land monitoring, enforcement, data, land use maps, development controls, building bye laws, funds, and technologies.