**Urbanisation and Industrialisation in Asian Countries: The Spectre of Premature Deindustrialisation**

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1. **Introduction**

An overview of the contemporary developmet literature in Asian countries suggests that despite widely different trends and patterns, alternate policy frameworks and varying ideological dispositions of the policy makers and researchers, the dominant perspective is that the region is currently experiencing rapid urbanisation and migration and that this would continue in future years. The past decade and a half has been considered to be a period of a progressive shift of the epicentre of urbanisation from “the predominantly northern latitudes of developed countries to the southern ones of developing countries” and that “the mean latitude of global urban population has been steadily moving to south.” Several countries in Asia are noted to be experiencing acceleration in the growth in the number of migrants and urban population since the late seventies and as a result the continent currently accounts for about half of the world‟s urban population.

The World Bank Report (2015b) entitled “[Leveraging Urbanization in South Asia: Managing Spatial Transformation for Prosperity and Livability](https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/22549)”, however, postulates that the process of urbanization has been “messy and hidden” due to “widespread existence of slums and sprawl.... particularly on the peripheries of major cities, which is not captured by official statistics. This is symptomatic of the failure to adequately address congestion constraints. Following the trail, Annette Dixon, the Vice President for the South Asia Region of the World Bank argues that the region must rethink its strategy and undertake reforms to tap into the unrealized potential of the cities. He argues that if managed well, “city based urbanisation can lead to sustainable growth by increasing productivity, meeting the deficits in provisioning of basic amenities and, at the same time, reducing resource consumption and carbon emissions.” One would thus note that despite the problems of messy urbanisation and slums, the dominant paradigm in the developing countries has been rapid urbanisation based on large cities and the solutions prescribed for the problems are higher infrastructural investment in select cities and through them to link their economies to global market.

This perspective and the proposed package of solutions, however, have not gone unchallenged. United Nations (2007) had predicted that urban population would double between 2007 and 2050. This apparently “impressive urban scenario”, however, implies growth rate of only 1.6 per cent per annum, which is not very high as per the historical records. It has been argued that the pace of migration and urban development in Asia is associated with accentuation of regional and interpersonal inequality, resulting in increased poverty. Furthermore, employment generation in the formal urban economy is not high due to capital intensive nature of industrialisation which impltes growth of population in cities would be associated with increased informalisation of abour and mushroomimg of slum settlements.

In the context of the alternate perspectives, the present paper overviews urbanisation and migration process in Asian countries at macro level since 1950s. It analyses the projected scenario of urbanization till 2050 and questions the thesis of southward shift of urbanisation and that of urban explosion in Asia. The second section, following the present Introduction, presents the alternate perspectives on urban development in Asian context. **Trends and pattern of urbanisation and urban growth across major regions of the world is analysed with a view to exploring the thesis of sluggish and exclusionary urban growth in Asia in the following section.** Based on the latest data available from national and international sources, it questions the thesis of rapid and accelerated urban growth in Asian countries. It argues that the UN agencies have become conservative in projecting urban scenario for the coming decades as they got informed about more recent trends from sources at country level. The fourth section It posits the thesis of premature deindustrialization and builds the ground for the apprehension that Asian countries may fall in this trap. The overview of the trend and pattern suggests that the pace of urbanization would be reasonably high but much below the level projected by UNPD in the coming decades. They may experience sluggish urbanization and a decline in the share of value added from manufacturing sector, unless urban development strategy becomes broad based and promotes sustainable growth of small and medium towns and rural urban continuum, as proposed in SDG 11. The changing structure of urban population across different size categories reveals a shift of growth dynamics from large to second order cities and stagnation of small towns, which has been analysed in the next section.

**2. The Thesis of Urban Explosion and Top Heavy Urbanisation in Asia: Recent Trends and An Alternate Perspecive**

This perspective of urban explosion in Asia posits that “the fulcrum of urban growth” would shift dramatically towards this continent - away from Africa and Latin America. South Asia has been considered a major contributor to the incremental urban population in coming decades because of both its large demographic weight as well as its high rate of urbanisation. Stylised facts —such as the increase in the number of mega cities (with ten million plus population) in Asia going up from 18, in the global total of 33, to 24 in 2030 against the global figure of 41— are noted as evidence of “unprecedented urban growth”, confirming the perspective of city linked urbanisation.

Projections have been made that the pace of urbanisation would go up in the next few decades which would double Asia‟s urban population during 2000-30, its share in global urban population going up from 48 per cent to 54 per cent. The proponents of “market with governance‟ oriented perspective believe that the strategy of globalisation and structural reform would bring about an acceleration of rural urban (RU) migration, giving boost to the pace of urbanisation and economic transformation. This rapid pace of urbanisation is promoted by the scale of production in large cities, particularly in manufacturing, information asymmetries contributing to agglomeration economies, technological developments in transport and building sectors and substitution of capital for land. Even when the industrial units get located in inland rural settlements or virgin coastal areas, in a few years, the latter acquires urban status.

Projections by UN system as also global development cum banking agencies suggest that South Asia, along with China, will lead the world economic recovery in the next couple of decades. Countries like India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka etc. will register growth rates around 7 percent per annum in GDP in real terms. A critical assumption underlying the models giving these projections is that these countries will experience accelerated urban growth. Many of the policy documents of the World Bank as also the Asian Development Bank claim that an urban avalanche would hit the Asian continent. This assumption is in the core of the dominant perspective.

The process of urbanization has, thus, implicitly or explicitly been linked to metropolitan (population above a million) and mega cities, that account for much of the urban population in the Asian countries. Planners and researchers have looked at urban processes here mostly through a prism of large cities. Urban structure is envisioned through or in comparison with a set of global cities. More recently, these countries are trying to promote a few smart cities that can compete with the iconic megalopolises of New York, London, Paris and Shanghai. The key concern has been how to design infrastructure and public services supported by modern technology in select cities so as to attract capital from within and outside the country for realizing agglomeration economies and transforming them into engines of growth (Kundu et al 2001). Several international agencies explicitly and implicitly proposed that the success of globalisation and livelihood strategy in Asia would depend on the speed with which modem production, trading and banking institutions in these urban centres can be linked with world capital market and global values injected into the business behavior of the former. The urban world has, thus, been analysed through the perspective of a few metropolitan cities, envisaged in competition with each other[[1]](#footnote-1).

As the dynamics of urban industrial development has been associated with globalisation, the small and medium towns, located away from the emerging global centres of growth, particularly those in backward regions, failed to attract adequate private investment and even academic research. They found it difficult to finance any development project through internal resources or borrowing from capital markets. The fiscal discipline imposed by the Government, banking and credit rating agencies made it impossible for them to undertake infrastructural investment of any kind (High Powered Expert Committee 2011). The resultant deficiency in basic amenities became a serious handicap for them in attracting private investment from within or outside the country (Kundu 2006). The declining governmental investment in infrastructure and basic amenities in these towns over the years contributed to increasing socio-economic disparities within the settlement structure.

Importantly, there has been a shift from this dominant paradigm in recent years.

One would recall that the Population Division of the United Nations (UNPD) had alerted that the global urban population will touch 50 percent level by 2006-07. With some hiccups, this was finally achieved but only in 2009. The delay was due to the actual growth of urban population in the developing world, particularly Asia, turning out to be less than what was projected[[2]](#footnote-2). This is due to Euro-zone crisis and global economic slowdown, dampening the momentum of metropolis based urbanization in Asia. Addressing the Bretton Woods Committee, the Managing Director of the World Bank, MulyaniIndrawati (World Bank 2015) shared this concern while arguing that the “Developing and emerging economies that were engines of growth during the last decade, continue to underperform.....Commodity-exporting emerging market and developing economies, many of them home to millions of poor people, have been hit very hard”.

Understandably, the growth rates of Class I cities and metro (million plus) cities have gone down in many Asian countries, including India. The impetus to urban dynamics has come from the lowest level, with an increase in the number of new towns. What is sustaining the overall urban growth is *rurbanisation and suburbanisation*, a process of rural and peripheral settlements acquiring urban characteristics while retaining their rural socio-economic base. These question the theory of ‘urban explosion’ or ‘over-urbanisation’ through the large cities and casts serious doubts on the prospect for rapid urbanisation in future years.

It would be important to rescue urban studies in Asia from the framework of metropolis based urbanisation, a paradigm which envisions urban processes in developing world responding passively to compulsions of global capital. A large part of contemporary urban growth is occurring outside of the hegemonic power structure of globalisation. Therefore, instead of confining urban research to global and national market, state level institutions, formal programmes, missions, it is important to build a "history of urbanisation from below". It would be a new narrative, constructed through an analysis of situations and processes that have been considered insignificant within the framework of metro centric urbanisation. There is an urgent need to build an alternate macro-economic framework for understanding the Economic Geography in Asia by recognizing the process of *rurbanisation* and massive informal expansion in the peripheries of large cities.

One must enquire if the local economic forces and institutional structure are able to do a functional stage-setting for the global capital, partially outside the dependency framework? Do the diverse territories, constituted through complex web of rural, peri-urban and urban settlements reflect some form of resilience or robustness of local economic system and, more importantly, can that be strengthened through inclusive and participatory planning, as envisioned by SDG 11? Indeed, simple dualistic formulations, postulating categories such as rural and urban, small and big cities etc. are inappropriate to understand the dynamics of urban development. The spatial pattern of development today is continuously blurring their distinctions and one must focus on the relationships emerging across settlements in different categories.

1. **Trends and Pattern of Urbanisation in Asian Countries: Exploring the thesis of Exclusionary Urban Growth in Asia**

Tables 1 and 2 presents the annual growth rate of urban population for quenquennial periods starting from 1950 till 2059, given by Revision 2009 and Revision 2018 of World Urbanisation Prospect. It may be observed that the speed of urbanisation in Latin America including Caribbean during the second half of the present century was spectacular which led the percentage of urban population going up from 41 per cent to 75 per cent. Africa, too, registered similar urban growth during 1950-70, the rate slowing down after this period. Sub Saharan Africa has recorded even higher urban rural growth differential (URGD) (which has continued throughout the half century) as is the case of South America - a region within Latin America. It is argued that Asia now “will replicate the experience of these continents”.

The growth rate in urban population and URGD in Asia have been reasonably high but fluctuated over the past decades. The rates were above that of the world average, both when China is included or excluded in the calculations, during the entire second half of the last century. Understandably, these were higher than that of Europe and North America, mainly because, in the latter two regions, the rural population base, from where migrants come to cities and towns, is very low due to the high percentage of urban population.

The Asian rates have, nonetheless, been consistently below that of South America and Sub Saharan Africa. The rates have decelerated since the late sixties. The real acceleration in urban growth and URGD came during the second half of the seventies, the rates being higher than that of Africa and about the same as Latin America during 1975-90. These have come down once again during nineties. The URGD declined from 2.35 percent during 1970-90 to 2.28 per cent during 1990-00, the latter being less than that of Latin America and has remained so during the entire period 1990-2005.

The proposition of deceleration in urban growth and rural-urban migration gets empirical support from the country level data compiled by the Population Division of the United Nations (UNPD) and released through *World Urbanization Prospects (WUP)* since the early nineties. UNPD has generally revised the predictions of urban population, its share in the total population as also its growth rate made in the early nineties, in the subsequent revisions of WUP. Table 1 gives the a**verage annual growth rates of urban population for world’s major regions and India, 1950-2050 based on WUP 2009 Revision. Similar figures provided by WUP 2018 Revision figure are presented in Table 2. Table 3 and 4 give the percentage of urban population and urban–rural growth differential for world’s major regions and Asia for the period 1950-2050 based on W P 2009 and 2018 Revisions respectively.**

It may be noted that the prediction of the level and pace of urbanisation predicted for the first three decades of the 21st century in 1995 Revision of WUP were gross overestimations in the context of the revised estimates in Revision 2009. Furthermore, the 2018 Revision of WUP gives much lower figures that those in Revision 2009. The urban growth rate and URGD predicted for 2045-50 were 1.06 and 2.49 respectively in the Revision of 2009 (Table 1 & 3). The figures given in Revision 2018 are much lower 0.84 and 2.0 only (Table 2 & 4). In essence, the UNPD admits that the growth rate of urban population in Asia is decelerating at a much faster rate than anticipated earlier, not only because of decline in natural growth in urban population but also migration to large cities (Kundu 2019). In fact, urban growth rate and URGD predicted in the latest Revision of 2018 for the thirties and later years are much less than those predicted in Revision 2009, as may be seen in Graph 1 and Graph 2. All this underlines the limitations of a city centric perspective of urbanisation and not looking at the urban system as a whole in the context of regional economy.

Given the absence of comparable data on internal migration across countries, researchers have attempted to estimate the number of rural to urban (RU) migrants through indirect methods, using population figures from their Population Census. Based on a simple identity, the incremental urban population during a decade has been decomposed into four segments: (a) natural increase, (b) new towns less declassified towns, (c) merging of towns and jurisdictional changes in agglomerations and (d) RU migration. It has been argued that there is serious underreporting of the migrants due to hostile environment in the places of destination and other factors. Consequently, the number can be estimated also as a residual component. In the Indian case, the contribution of RU migration in total incremental urban population through this residual approach has been estimated to be 21 per cent during the nineties which has declined to 18 per cent in the following decade. It should be possible to use this framework for working out the figures for all countries for which the migration data are suspects.

The decline in the rate of growth in urban population in most of the Asian countries understandably is due to decline in natural growth. One can, however, isolate the impact of population growth by focusing on URGD, assuming that the decline in rural and urban areas are similar in magnitude. Now, it may be seen in Table 2 that URGD has gone down for Asia as also in 36 out of 50 countries during nineties compared to the preceding two decades. The deceleration in urban growth must, therefore, be explained in terms of factors other than natural increase in population. Can the deceleration in the pace of urbanisation be attributed to the second factor - growth dynamics becoming week at lower category of settlements slowing down the process of RU transformation. It is possible to hypothesise that since globalization tends to promote growth in large cities, not many new towns would come up on the scene and several existing towns would get declassified. The regional strategies followed in several Asian countries to contain metropolitan expansion include development of satellite towns that would partly explain sluggish growth in metropolitan cites and deceleration in the pace of urbanisation.

**Graph 1: Urban Growth Rates for quinqennal periods as given in 2009 and 2018 revision of WUP**

**Graph 2: URGD for quinqennal periods as given in 2009 and 2018 revision of WUP**

1. **Changing Structure of Urbanisation and Percentage Share of Urban Population across Size Class of Urban Centres**

The cities and towns in different size categories have been growing at different rates, altering the size composition of urban population in Asian countries. The share of urban centres with population below half a million (BHM) has remained stable at fifty percent in Asia over the past 30 years while the global figure has come down from a much higher to this level during this period. The variation in the figure across continents and regions, however, works out to be high. The developed regions like North America, Central America, Australia and New Zealand, for example, record figures much below fifty per cent. Contrastingly, all the regions in Europe report figures between 60 and 70 per cent (Kundu 2009). One would stipulate that in countries where the process of urban industrial development has a long history, urban structure tends to be more balanced and broad based as compared to the new continents where the process has taken roots in recent times. In case of the latter, development impulses get concentrated in and around a few large cities.

UN-Habitat (2008) reports that the “L(l)arge cities in the developing world, with populations of more than 5 million people …... did not experience such high growth rates in the 1990s; the average annual growth rate of large cities was 1.8 per cent, with the exception of those in China” This can be explained in terms of the rapid growth in the number and population in large cities in China occurring as a result of the government's emphasis on urban development at higher end after 1949 and the reform measures adopted since mid seventies. Understandably, the 22 most populous cities had a total of 47.5 million people or about 12 percent of the country’s total urban population in 1985. There has been, however, a change in the strategy of urban industrial development and a policy shift in favour of middle level cities, explaining the slowing down of population growth in large cities.

The degree of population concentration in large cities in Asia emerges clearly from the fact that the percentage of people living in cities with five million plus population is 18 as compared to the figure of 15 at the global level (Table 5). This is a manifestation of top heavy urbanisation. The ten-million plus Asian cities, however, have recorded no increase in their number and barely 1.7 per cent population growth per annum which is much below that of cities between 5 and 10 million people during 2000-07. And yet, the growth rates of the latter - both in number as also population during 1990-05 are much below that of the previous decades (Table 6). The growth dynamics seems to have shifted to cities between 1 and 5 million. These second level cities are projected to grow faster than the ten million and five million plus cities during 2005-25. These cities are likely to attract much of financial as also industrial capital in future years, resulting in their rapid population growth. Interestingly, the number of million plus cities has increased from 143 in 1990 to 192 in 2000 and further to 246 in 2005. The number of these cities in China has gone up from 63 in 1990 to 87 in 2000 and 94 in 2005. The other country to record increase in the number of these cities is India, the figure going up from 23 to 32 and then to 40. The importance of the BHM cities and towns in the urban system and their population shares vary significantly across regions within Asia as in no other continent, despite their percentage share remaining stable at 50 per cent (Table 6). East Asia, for example, has less than 40 per cent urbanites living here while the corresponding figure for South Eastern Asia is over 70 per cent. The shares of South Central Asia and Western Asia lie in between the two limits - at 53 per cent and 49 per cent respectively.

Table 5: Percentage of Population in Cities with Population over 5 million in Total Urban Population



The directions of change in the size composition of urban population, too, differ considerably across the regions. South Central and Western Asia report a decline in the share of BHM urban centres, the percentage figure going down from 65 and 62 in 1975 to 53 and 49 in 2005 respectively. This declining trend is projected to continue in the next couple of decades. One would argue that the thrust of migration would shift from mega cities to the middle and lower order cities. Unfortunately, the towns below a hundred thousand population do not seem to be receiving many migrants. Also, emergence of new towns through rural urban transformation is not adding to the demographic weight of this category at the global. As opposed to this, East Asia and South East Asia have registered an increase in their shares of BHM urban centres from 34 per cent to 40 per cent and from 60 per cent to 70 per cent respectively during this period (Table 6). It is projected that five-million plus cities would not claim larger share in urban population.

South East Asia shows a rise in the share of the BHM towns in the eighties and nineties. It, subsequently, got stabilized possibly because of economic crisis of the nineties that had slowed down migration towards large metroplises. One may argue that the urban structure here has become less top heavy over time which may have a healthy impact on urban system in the long run. The maximum top heaviness in the urban structure is noted in South Central Asia which has over 22 per cent of urban population in five million plus cities, followed by East Asia for which the figure is 18 per cent (Table 6). The latter has 42 per cent of urban population in cities between half million to 5 million, compared to 25 per cent in SC Asia, which is responsible for a somewhat broader urban base in the former. Furthermore, the increase in the population share of half million plus cities has been dramatic in the SC Asia, from 35 per cent to 47 per cent during 1975-2005. A similar increase has been recorded in West Asia as well. The only difference is that in the latter, one to five million cities predominate as opposed to ten million plus cities in the former. The SC Asia may, therefore, be considered to be a bit more unbalanced compared to even West Asia. It is a matter of anxiety that the cities at the third level, with population between half to a million, that had witnessed acceleration in growth during 1990-05, would report low growth in future years.

The towns at the lowest end of urban hierarchy, that have in general recorded low population growth all throughout the period under consideration, experienced demographic growth much below the million plus cities. One would argue that not only the population growth in these towns has been low, there has not been any reasonable increase in their number through RU transformation until very recently, as mentioned in an earlier section. Emergence of a large number or small towns in and around large cities, along development corridors connecting two mega cites and transformation of administrative centres, opens up possibilities of balanced and sustainable regional development.

4 **Challenge of Premature Deindustrialisation**

The ADB report Asia 2030 and Asia 2050 tend to suggest that the twenty-first Century belongs to Asia. These predict that Asian economy will grow by more than 6% per annum in real terms against the global growth rate of less than 3%.

**Graph 3. Percentage Share of Asia in the Global GDP**

Source: Maddison 2010

Graph 1 prepared by Angus Maddison (2010) in his celebrated work in three volumes presents the historical data on world economy shows the share of Asia in the global economy which was as high as 58% of global GDP. Sadly, this declined almost continuously to hit the bottom at about 12% during the fifties and sixties. Based on the demographic and other structural parameters, the study predicts that it would now rise sharply to claim about 52% of GDP, slightly above the share in population, by another three decades. Brookings Institution (Kharas 2011) has made a similar prediction suggesting that Asian share in global middle class demand of consumer durables will go up from the present level of about 18% to 60% in 2050.

**Graph 4. Percentage Share of Different Countries in the Global Middle Class Consumptions of Durable Goods**

graph_new.wmf

Source: Kharas 2011

A review of relevant development literature brings forth three major challenges that the Asian countries will have to tackle for the materialization of the predicted development scenario. The first is that of premature deindustrialization and middle-income trap. Dani Rodrik (2015) of the JF Kennedy School of Government, Harvard, has argued that the nature of dependency of the developing countries and market failures at global level are resulting in a decline in the share of GDP in countries that have not realized their basic potential of industrial growth. Consequently, their share of industrial value added has started falling at a low level of industrialisation. Citing the cases of a large number of countries in Africa and Latin America wherein the manufacturing share in income has shown persistent decline before this coming to even 30 to 40% level. Although South Asian economies do not appear to be immediately sunk into this crisis, it is speculated that it may not be able to escape this trap for long. During the past one-and-a-half decades, the World Bank data reveals that the share of manufacturing in national GDP for countries such as Afghanistan, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka has stabilized at different levels or even declined marginally, with the significant exception of Bangladesh (Graph 5). India is having problem of pushing forth industrial growth and its share in income has gone down from 34% to 30% during the past decade, creating a crisis in job market. Bangladesh emerges here as an exception as it records a steady increase in its share of industial sector including construction in national income over the past six decades (Graph 6)

**Graph 5. Percentage Share of Industry (including construction) in GDP**

Source: World Bank (2019): Manufacturing, Value Added (% of GDP), National Accounts Data, and OECD National Accounts Data files, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/nv.ind.manf.zs> Accessed on the 28th March 2019

**Graph 6. Trend in the Share of Industry (including construction) in GDP in Bangladesh contrasting with those of select South Asian countries**

Recent trend and pattern of investment indicate that the South Asian economies may not necessarily get into a real crisis situation. South Asia has managed to get a share of 36% of global investment. Efforts of the BRICS Development Bank and more recently Asian Infrastructural Development Bank have successfully injected funds into the capital market. They are trying to prioritize investments into those sectors that are critical for sustainable and inclusive development and where global capital market has shown conservatism. The most important factor which can rescue Asia from the potential global crisis is the internal demand due to emergence of a strong middle class. It is generally recognised that the middle class in Asian countries, that are politically and economically powerful would emerge strongly, as predicted by the Brookings Institute. This would create massive demand base which can support rapid growth in their own countries and, at the same time, help in resolving the Euro zone crisis and in stabilizing the global economy.

**Summary of Findings and Reflections on the Urbanisation/Migration Experience in Asia**

A large majority of the countries belonging to different geographical regions have recorded deceleration in urban growth and migration in recent years that cannot be fully explained in terms of decline in natural growth, definitional or boundary adjustment factors. Exclusionary urban growth, increased unaffordability of urban space and basic amenities for the rural poor and a negative policy perspective leading to greater restrictions on migration are the key determinants. It is surprising that despite the positive assessment of urbanization and migration dynamics at the conceptual and policy level, many of the national, regional and city governments in Asia are pursuing programmes that tend to decelerate inmigration as also evict and relocate the existing slums, with predominantly migrant population, into city peripheries. Furthermore, The impetus of urban growth has shifted from large metropolises, from five million plus cities, to those having population between 1 to 5 million or even less. Despite this downward shift of urban dynamics, a large number of small and medium towns with less than one hundred thousand population report economic stagnation and deceleration in population growth in majority of Asian countries. The emergence of new towns has, however, opened up new possibilities to counter the top heavy urbanization in South and South East Asia. The pace of urbanization has been high in several countries in Asia not because of their level of economic growth but its composition and labour intensity of rapidly growing informal sectors.

Several countries have launched programmes for improving governance and infrastructural facilities in a few large cities, attracting private investors from within as well as outside the country. Land for them has been made available through the market as also state supported schemes. These have pushed out squatter settlements, informal sector businesses along with a large number of pollutant industries to the city peripheries that have poor quality of micro environment. The income level and quality of basic amenities in these cities, as a result, have gone up but that has been associated with increased intra-city disparity and creation of degenerated periphery. Several of the governments have taken major initiatives to tackle these problems by promoting rural development, creating satellite towns for slowing down RU migration and reducing pressure on infrastructure, particularly in the globalizing cities. These regional development measures, in a sense, have been complementary to the city level interventions that have encouraged only selective migration into central areas and „sanitisation of the cities‟.

All these questions the proposition that the urban dynamics would shift to Asia in the next few decades, not withstanding the magnitude of absolute figures of increment due to pure demographic weight of the region. The pace of urbanization would be reasonably high but much below the level projected by UNPD. The pace of urbanization in the next few decades is likely to be rapid in less urbanized and less developed countries, as the relatively developed and larger countries in the continent are likely to limit migration in order to have more orderly urbanisation and well governed cities. Positive association between the pace of urbanisation and a few indicators of economic growth in recent years would make governments push reform measures in land, capital and labour market, giving greater freedom to market based actors. This would also manifest in policies and programmes adopted by the state and city governments to restrict the entry of poor and unskilled migrants from rural areas and outside the country, especially those coming with their dependents, strengthening the process of exclusionary urban growth.

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2. Kundu (2019) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)