

# **National Workshop on 'Realizing the Right to City in India'**

## **16th & 17th April 2018**

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**Day 1: Monday April 16, 2018**

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### **Session 1: Keynote Address and Introduction**

#### **Mr. Anant Maringanti (Director, Hyderabad Urban Lab, Hyderabad)**

Mr. Maringanti conceptualized "City" as power and therefore the city was powerful. Right was not a statutory right but a moral claim. How do you move from the particular and local to something universal, larger and an ambitious claim for it to have any meaning. Between this lies a world of politics. We have public sphere and citizenship that is unmarked. Groups that are different – but need to be brought together. We need to identify contradictions and find the single contradiction and then start organising. But how do we identify that contradiction?

Post Fordist, Henri Lefebvre, envisioned a post-industrial radical base. Cities are cities of consumption. Cities were then an image of capital, it produced the city's built form such that capital could take any form. What do workers need to do? How to create cities in the image of the working human being? How do we reconstruct the city? Right to the city is a process to remake ourselves to remake the city. Can we use that idea to organise ourselves?

R2C as a placeholder. It can contain anything, many things. Need an aspiration. Our entire planet is affected by capital. Not just the city.

1. The urban is a circulatory system, not a defined location – what are these circulatory systems that need to be identified. Can't think of R2C unless we think of how people, products, capital is circulating.
2. Surface of earth as a product of labour – city is made and worked upon by people. Hence cannot be owned by few alone.
3. What is the existing politics among people – how are people making life viable? Housing as an act of property in that sense.
4. Right to housing, right to water, we are constantly struggling within viability – but not thinking of sustainability. Compulsions of viability make it difficult to question sustainability
5. What kind of dignity are we pushing for? We should push ourselves to ask this question within the right to the city.

#### **Q&A**

The relationship between the Indian state and people have changed. With people constantly moving - How then do you imagine a territory? therefore technology is being used to pin down people. This is creating humiliating/demeaning systems. At the same time we need these identifications to access services. We need to acknowledge this as a complex battle.

Dignity, viability and sustainability – We have not thought of dignity as a source of politics. The real politics is through story telling – that's how we build political movement.

R2C gives us a reminder to dream again – how we dream is a challenge we need to work on.

#### **Mr. Aravind Unni (Thematic Lead, IGSSS, New Delhi):**

Mr. Unni began his speech Quoting Right to City as fashionable these days. What can Right to City not be – we need to do a close reading of this "war cry" that was the Right to City. This was a less developed of this slogan for people to radically take over the state.

The New Urban Agenda dilutes Right t and other progressive terms, in such a situation - how do we employ right to the city in a state where rights that people fought for are being diluted. Capital digs its own grave said Marx – radicalism has died down and subsided. Log frames are a threat for CSO intervention. We work in silos and compartments, there is a need to come together to act.

#### **Q&A**

How do we inch towards what we want – the demands we are setting are compromised in itself.

## Session 2: Housing and Land

### **Prof. Amita Bhide (Dean, School of Habitat Studies, TISS, Mumbai)**

Prof. Bhide discussed land rights and housing rights and how they are situated, based on case studies. How is the land right or housing right framed – some of the earliest urban struggles framed as land and housing struggles.

Housing is central to central and state government schemes being offered since 2000. The same is true for shelter for the homeless. It is in this context that we need to think what does right to land and right to housing mean? These 2 are the basis – but cannot be the base for Right to City. Housing is part of the reproduction and divorced from production. Land rights incorporates a fusion of production of worker identity.

Various states have a patta act, Maharashtra has cases but there is a trend to undermine the patta acts. What is the promise for the quality of life of these settlements that have common property rights? Study of Chamdawala colony in Mumbai (Kherwadi) showed that it gave 1 generation a positive life. Tenants however started their own movement against those whom the right was given to. In other cases its individual pattas. There is a lot more faith in pattas as people have invested in homes and community – this is an aspect of land rights.

Housing rights on the other hand have conditions attached to it 1) shifts the discourse to housing, not land 2) attached to it is relocation 3) Eligibility criteria is a detriment 4) No thought about further models of providing housing models infrastructure and maintenance 5) No accountability of what the state commits itself to. Extremely localized models but within each city they are the worst. What are the minimum norms for this? Final, property rights for whom and to him is it given individual? Joint family titles - what do they do to the family itself, what happens if there are more than one son? Property right is limited. 2 BHK scheme in Andhra is linked to loan – what are the implications of this?

Housing along with livelihood and participation is the demand. However, patta has never meant better services as it has been given at random. One cannot talk about housing and land in themselves – what are those things that need to be asserted. All these histories are localised.

### **Mr. Anand Lakhan (Founder DBSS, Indore):**

He spoke of an eviction drive just began in Indore, this is the state of cities across. PMAY, SBM, other state sponsored schemes have been the cause of forced evictions. In the name of beautification, development, schemes, evictions and threat of evictions is high. This is a threat not just to slums but the middle class too. Rights have been reduced to a beneficiaries. Pattas are of 2 types – temporary and permanent – there is a clause that in public interest you can be removed and Mohalla Samitis have to be consulted during evictions. These are safeguards but remain on paper. Same with reservations. We should not just talking about housing, land and livelihood – R2C should encompass right to resources. Same with shelters for homeless. Shelter homes have been made the central focus of the homeless – we are not thinking beyond them.

### **Anil Wasnik (Convenor SVM, Nagpur):**

He explained that land & housing – can't have one without the other but due to urbanisation the question of these two are becoming more serious. This was not the case earlier. Post the implementation of the ULC Act in 1976 people were still willing to part with land, but now it's become a question of the state. There used to be 2 schemes 1) EWS under which people were give land, and they developed homes. Now plots are only given to the rich. JNNURM recommended repeal of the ULCRA – it was promised that because of this flats would become cheaper. 2) There are also undeveloped layouts in Nagpur. Since 2002 there are a total of – slums of which – are notified. Most have enough services.

We had made a demand for pattas in the 2004 elections – once this gained steam in 2009 this was accepted by BJP. Nitin Gadkari and Devendra Fadnavis in 2014 too created a vote bank around this. In 2016 3 GRs came out specifically with Nagpur in mind. The 16 July 2016 GR in fact accepts that SRA is not possible in Nagpur and hence patta and financial support is proposed. There is strength in people coming together and demanding rights. The GR

comes with riders too. Of 52 slums of 28 have been selected, 8 have started patta distribution, 7 will begin soon. PMAY flats are under construction – but people want more plots and services.

### **Q&A**

There is a need to discuss the cultural implications of housing provision

Giving land to everyone runs the risk of commodifying land – how do you respond to inclusion in the 4<sup>th</sup> vertical.

2 BHK scheme in AP is built under the AHP. In Telegana only 69 applicants for AHP. In Telangana local MLA decides which slum gets 2 BHK. The G+4 and G+9 removes livelihood links. Homes can't be homogenised.

How do we articulate Right to housing in cities that are increasingly intolerant? Will this be part of the campaigns movement.

Cut off dates are a challenge. Right to Land is articulated though discrimination – this is a contradiction we work within. Land is thought of only for housing and not basic amenities; Housing and land grabbing is well known. Strategy of throwing people to peripheries, there is commodification of land not just through ULRA. We need to see if it's good or bad. Free housing is not what people want. Representatives of people are with builders.

We are going back on decisions the campaign took on PMAY.

What are the new consumers produced through these housing schemes. Singapore has produced a kind of citizen through its housing programme, though there is a 100% housing and its successful in that sense.

Are we one group like farmers with 1 demand? How can this be 1 demand when our needs city wise are so different?

Land – Housing – Services – people produced – cultures produced – politics of provision – the totality of this needs to be seen.

Housing struggles have been broken by housing schemes. Housing & land has always been a powerful instrument. ULC implementation is 0.03% - was there ever a welfare state in housing provision?

## **Session 3: Economy, Opportunity and Livelihoods**

### **Prof. Vijaybhaskar (Professor, MIDS, Chennai):**

He highlighted that rural-urban transition is imperative as a corollary of structural transformation. Even among political movements the urban is always seen as the site of power and freedom. Hence in both policy and politics there is valorisation of the Urban. But at present, the urban is not able to fulfill its modernist promise and India is not alone in this regard. The urban today has become unsustainable. The question is how do we reconcile these two competing narratives? Can they be reconciled at all? If the urban is increasingly exclusive and unviable then what kind of a transformational politics do we imagine? The lack of employment is as much as the creation of capital through rural dispossession, as is creation of jobs. So what is the political scale to imagine the right to city? We need to go back to Lefebvre's conceptualization of the right to city as a right to re-imagine the urban as opposed to the liberal democratic conceptualisations and hence reimagine a politics of rural-urban relationships.

The policy response should look at two broad set of measures, on the supply side the emphasis should be on skills and institutions for skill development. This would involve the Ministry to create new institutions of higher learning as one step. On the demand side -labour laws reforms.

### **Truncated Transitions and Livelihoods in the urban**

Cannot see the city in isolation – must include the rural to think of rights to or of the city

1. Decline in income from agriculture (17.4% -2017 economic survey) but workforce dependant on agriculture is high(48.9% - 2015)
2. Low employment generation – 20 million entered job market and 15 million have jobs including self-employment
3. Share in agriculture has dropped, services increased but marginally same. Construction has increased drastically. Self-employed have increased.

4. 44% self-employed in urban areas
5. Construction has generated the highest % of jobs post liberalisation  
There is an urban paradox in India – need an alternate politics around rights to livelihoods.  
2 pics taken on phone

**Mr. Aashim Roy (General Secretary, NTUI):**

He mentioned that we must rethink core concepts. First of 3 constructs: 1. I do not believe in the urban. Urbanism is a subterranean idea. Slums are an outdated concept. Slums were created when people moved to cities. Bonded tenancy has been the current creation. Land is not the idea on which we enter the city. 2. Rights discourse was great in 70s and 80s. Rights has no meaning to us – the real task is how you ground it to the political economy. Rights discourse inflates what the state can do that an assumption that state can do more than what it can do. 3. If the urban question needs to be discussed – what is the urban economy – this needs to be discussed.

Wage – How was minimum wage calculated? There is no standard on minimum wage – rental needs to be incorporated. Wage should compensate for moving around the city – transport costs should be included. What is the main income of the city? Wage should demand survival costs – How do you reproduce an urbanism. 70s and 80s saw housing societies build by trade unions – this has not happened. How much can state provide for it. The urban as power – minimum wage is defined by cities – cities define. There is a gap between union movement and social movement that can be bridged by integrating political economy.

**Mr. Mackenzy Dabre (National Hawkers Federation, Maharashtra):**

He raised the question -what are the opportunities for workers?

About 2.5% of the city are hawkers. Profits made by hawkers amount to 15 lakh crore – Economic rights should be awarded to them. Minimum wages have not been revised. 127 sectors of work have been outlined. Rights are outlined for Street Vendors through the Act and there is scope for representation of street vendors through TVC.

When we need Street Vendors, we don't oppose but when don't need them, we evict. Citizen vs. citizen is an ongoing battle.

We need new terms and new ways of seeing informal work. Job security and housing security goes hand in hand

**Q&A**

Ashim Roy: There is a landlord system in Gurgaon, caste is an important part on Indian feudalism. Land ownership is determined by dominant caste.

The urban area is a liberating area – Still trying to learn from different sectors. Commons are needed. How can needs be reorganised? How to make that convergence.

All workers are providing some sort of subsidy to the city: This cannot be a way of reorganising people

Caste as a question of mobilisation

Dignity becomes so important as an outcome of caste – Survival in urban is more enticing than lack of dignity in rural

40% of the urban are self-employed – but this form of self-employed is varied.

**Session 4: 'Public' Streets and Transport**

**Mr. Hussain Indorewala (KRVIA, Mumbai)**

Privatisation of BEST as an example. The revolution is not the factory but the city, the city is not as it exists today – there is a need to remake ourselves.

Public goods – goods that can be enjoyed by anybody. Public transport is a common good where we define our mutual rights – urban vision is inherently discriminatory – income defines access to transport.

“We are working with terms set by them “with respect to transport – constraint our imagination – efficiency, affordability, are terms use – he proposed this to be “experiential political” politics of space, dignity.

**Mr. Rajendra Ravi (Sadak Network Group)**

Dignity as central to organising – undignified work is there in rural and urban.

Who is left to organise? Youth, researchers, experienced people need to come together

We are not contesting caste and hence unable to bring different groups together. Have moved forward in the campaign but we need to deepen our understanding.

**Mr. Himanshu Burte (Professor, TISS, Mumbai):**

What is the city and its space within right to the city. A street, a house, we should recognise that space in the city is built by networks. The urban creates space through roads, can we make claim to networks – not just a street. The city as a circulation system of various kinds of mobility.

The European city was a walled town, the capitalist city is not local. There is no boundary to the city. We should have a right to the practice network.

**Q&A**

Can transport be a measure to assess a city? Mass Rapid Transport as a framework for the urban – a network of things.

Networks are created but the control mechanism needs to be discussed as it is discriminatory – there is an angle of caste.

Where the water network starts, ends, is controlled.

Large systems like the railway connect large networks but not smaller stops – there is thus inherent exclusion. There is a diversity of networks that emerges and is possible. Network as a site of struggle, not just places.

The road was a site of caste discrimination earlier, now it's the same with cycles, rickshaws

Roads are common property but used by 5% cars

Transport planning - product of public transport infrastructure

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**DAY 2: 17th April, 2018**

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#### **Session 4: Urban Commons and Ecological Services**

**Moderator: Mr. Pranjal Dixit (Professor, TISS, Mumbai)**

The session started with Mr. Dixit opening the house expressing his views on the right to water and sanitation with the broader framework of right to city. He emphasized his views on the totalitarian and capitalist approach which is promoted by the modern cities. He also stated that *'in the present context, an alternate arena is being explored on the issue of Right to Water and Sanitation'*.

**Speaker: Mr. Sachin Tiwale (Professor, TISS, Mumbai)**

The discussion was carried forward by Mr. Sachin Tiwale, he critically placed the right to water and sanitation perspective within right to city framework. He mentioned that this right is not being fulfilled due to the failure of the state. The challenge in the present context is how to hold the state accountable. The Quality, Quantity, Reliability of supply of water are the factors to be considered. According to him *'The network of water distribution is controlled by the Engineers'*. He said that the current water networks are quite invisible to the citizens, and this should be brought to the table of discussion. These invisible networks shall be brought on surface level, with significant transparency. He also emphasized that communities do not require 24\*7 water supplies, for example the slum dwellers in the communities of Mumbai just require one hour of assured water supply. There is also a difference in the quantities of water supplied as well like Navi Mumbai water supply is around 250 LPCD (Litres per capita per day), while in Ahmedabad, they are around 100 LPCD. He also mentioned about the centralized and decentralized systems of water distribution. He emphasized on the fact that cities have their perennial sources of water as groundwater, local water bodies like lakes, ponds, river or distant water bodies, or sometimes a combination of all these sources. He raised a question of whether the cities hold a right on the distant water bodies or not? And in this context, should it be pronounced as Right to City, or Right of the City?

Mr. Pranjal Dixit further added to Mr. Tiwale's point that the distribution of water is a complex process, and has many levels. Thus the "Right" shouldn't be confined to drinking water only. There are many small scale occupations which find an inseparable link with water bodies. He mentioned about the Water ATMs and buying bulk amount of water from municipalities and judiciously distributing it as the community level models.

**Speaker: Ms. Poornima Chikermane (KKPKP, Pune)**

Ms. Chikermane's focus was on the solid waste management and recycling. She focused on the paradigm of her work on two cities of Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad. While working on such issues, one should consider the socio political and ecological aspects of a city. She put forth the linear model of waste disposition as Collection -> Transport-> Disposal, and as she claimed it, '*Disposing your waste on somebody else's ground.*' The recyclable aspect in the waste domain has a real time private sector monopoly. In Pune this was realised in a converging aspect. In Pune, the waste pickers and the citizens collaboratively started this model. Citizens paid the workers within capacity of their income and the nature of job of the recyclers. The model continues to be followed since 12 years, integrating around 3000 waste pickers and involving 6 lakh houses. It has resulted in fewer working hours for the waste pickers, who are now getting their incomes banked. They are also getting minor pension benefits, health services and scholarships. She emphasized that ignorance among the citizens has reduced over the period of time, sorting spaces have been found and that all of this is in a "Work in Progress" situation. She also claimed that under this model, civilians have a raised consciousness; they pay the waste pickers only when they are satisfied with their work.

The elected representatives are no longer ignoring the presence of waste pickers. She concluded with a story of a man from Azad nagar, who collected waste from the area where he previously used to live, despite this he was seen and dealt with respect by the people of his community.

**Speaker: Dr. Abhijeet More (Sathi CEHAT)**

Mr. More shared detailed scenario of the Indian Healthcare system as one of the most Privatized systems of work, due to which nearly 6 crore people annually are pushed below poverty line. The Indian state spends 20% on per person healthcare, the rest 80% is from the pocket expenditure by the individuals. He stated that 80% doctors, 100% medical equipment, 98% medicines, 80% OPDs and 60% IPDs are the parts of Private sector. A profit earning approach is followed in the Indian healthcare sector. He said that the urban development departments of the government do not entitle much of their focus on the healthcare sector. The Non-profitable hospitals were given subsidies on land, and they in turn had to allocate 20% of their beds to the poor. This quota system does not work in reality. He mentioned that 75% of the general diseases can be completely treated on primary level, but a study carried out on 80 doctors showed that they suggested 60 different treatments for a single ailment, for which the WHO has prescribed only one prescription. There is no functional public healthcare system for the urban areas.

**Q & A**

1. Why in the case of water, there seems to be some gaps in the responsibilities and structuring, and how can these gaps be filled?
2. What is the distribution pattern in slums, buildings and companies?
3. What were the ecological boundaries on water, and how does the 3Rs system applicable in context of water.
4. Whether Swachh Bharat mission would take away the livelihoods of waste pickers?
5. Whether there should be some emphasis on the other living beings residing and dependent on waters.

The panel jointly address most of the questions. The environmental health is considered an important factor. Technology as a judicious tool need to be brought into the broader framework of urban commons and ecological services. The aspiration of development needs to be balanced with equitable technological models. One needs to develop a comprehensive perspective in imagining the right to city. Dialogues with local municipal governments are required. Also there should be some basin level analysis, it should also be brought in consideration that there are many small towns which depend on the waters of the basin region, and hence the city development plans needs to consider them. One should note that water is a political issue.

### **Session 5: Open House on Local Governance and Participation**

#### **Speaker: Mr. Rajendra Bhise (Social Activist)**

Mr. Rajendra Bhise introduced the open house session. He started with his views on tokenism and technoism, and participation has been located between both of these concepts. In this context, the things that are being talked about, nothing being done to ensure the implementation bit. The Right to city is not about Individual Rights. It is more about participation space for creation of space. It requires change in behavior of the policy makers (specifically the ones in power) and systematic mobilization and activism are required for the universalization. How can the bundle of rights be brought together, what is to be done for the democracy, what could be done for the lacunae of institutional mechanisms or frameworks of governance, how could the conflict between people driven and capitalist agenda be resolved and what can be the way forward from it, and the quality of politics in the cities -what can be done about all of these. Do the house feel that the social activists today have political aspirations?

#### **Speaker: Mr. Avinash More (CEE, Pune)**

Mr. Avinash commented on the ladder of participation, on the electoral participation, saying that the residents, the enrolling voters make a very small part of the whole scenario. The government often constituted of high class/caste, the management is occupied by the bureaucrats. A lot of issues has become political issues with no focus on implementation. Who should be considered as the partners, and how can a collaborative be built with them, namely the bureaucrats, ward officers etc. While Politicians, elected representatives have a clear idea of what they want.

Budget in the cities is allocated on the basis of location as well as it has a thematic basis. Participation of citizens in the formal city budget can be ensured. What is the role of the citizens in formulation of acts and legislations? What are the requirements and demands regarding participation, he emphasized that the people shared their experiences and raised awareness amongst the community members through *Mohalla Sabhas*. These sabhas has helped in building capacity and empowered the people in understanding their rights.

### **Open Discussion**

The panel then opened the house for discussion. One of the participants put forth the discussion of the situation in Jamshedpur, being stated as a *vichitra* place. Not just participation but participation in decision making is necessary. An example of Bhuj, where around 4 ward committees got politicized thus forcing marginalizing of the marginalized, with much lower basic facilities. The services were not found to be cost effective -in this context a question was raised. The situation in Orissa was also highlighted, the major demand is land rights of the urban poor. Conditions of inadequate rehabilitation and transit houses were also talked about. Another participant shared the experiences in Hyderabad, CSO decided to have involvement, while involvement of ward sabhas do not exist. In Indore, training regarding the master plans, details of PMAY and the patta act of M.P. was mentioned. It was also discussed that the citizens need to be aware of their rights as well as their responsibilities of running the city.

The focus should be given on the people's participation, not only on the 74<sup>th</sup> amendment and governance. CSO's should take this seriously. How can the process of governing be carried out in emotions was also a point raised. We people are just one call away from the government services. The gender perspective of how women are not able to participate. A question was raised -whether the citizens today are actually citizens or customers. The relationship of government and citizens is either client based or of a beneficiary. The issues of self-declared pradhans and elected pradhans in the community level were also brought to light. The Mizoram model where local level participation model of municipality being a lower body than ward sabha was put forth. Here the governing was carried out by the village councils.

For the right to the city, people need to be made accountable, and the distance between the stakeholders should be bridged. The house also said that there needs to be visible participation. The open discussion was concluded with the note that there is an essential need of framework and intermediates was also require focus. The roles of CSO were talked about and the need of integrating ground work, policy framing and research was also given emphasis. The emphasis of being dynamic and change friendly was shared in the house. The distance between technological and political processes needs to be addressed. Different participatory models can be developed and adopted, but a perspective is needed to understand these issues from a wider lens.

### **Session 6: Concluding Session**

#### **Speaker: Ms. Lakhi Das (Adarsh Seva Sansthan, Ranchi)**

Ms. Lakhi Das shared her point that discussion on Right to City cannot be concluded as such, the issues of right to city need to be addressed and considered. She brought in the perspective that the smaller cities look towards the bigger cities to adapt a model of development and this models themselves hold gaps. We need to think and rethink whether the small cities want to utilize their local resources and develop a self-suited model, or they should continue to look forward to the tested big city models. The tribal issues need to be raised under Right to the city as well. Expanding cities are constantly bringing in villages in their area, thus these processes need to be considered or the villagers might end up losing significant amount of land. She also commented on the migrating pattern, saying "East India is migrating constantly towards South and West India, this is a challenge. In fact in Jharkhand, Government trained the youth to migrate, integrating the phenomenon with job generation. " She said that tribal issues need to be addressed with dignity, and the concept of inducing pilot projects as experiments should be avoided. During the elections in Jharkhand, no one knew about the 74<sup>th</sup> amendment, thus the gaps need to be understood at the grass root level.

#### **Speaker: Mr. Maju Varghese (CFA, New Delhi)**

Mr. Maju talked about the financial and investment perspective of the cities. The techno centric based model of cities. He said that the industrial corridors uprising is being given the name of development. A private led growth is the talk of the time, where private money is actually the public money. The whole process of change is being changed by the law. To reclaim the citizen's right, one needs to challenge the finance led growth.

#### **Speaker: Ms Marina Joseph (YUVA, Mumbai)**

Ms. Marina Joseph elaborately explained the context of the right to city from 1960s to 2018 through a visual presentation. She explained the 1992 Rio summit which can be regarded as a platform which visualized another world possible. She explained about India's position, where the country is not openly supporting the right to the city, not taking responsibility of migrants and refugees, is supporting the term smart cities inclusion -while people claim their right to city. She emphasized that nothing new is being done in the Indian context, every right is discussed through some act or legislation.

### **Open Discussion**

The house was then opened for discussion. The participants raised their views - Ideas of Lefebvre and Ravidas's works were also brought in discussion as the imagination of an ideal city. It was also brought in light that how one can influence the urban politics. The bundle of rights and the right to city are two opposite ideologies. The concepts need to be defined in a particular manner, fresh concepts are required but subtle reference of literature is needed as the balancing force. Reference of cleanliness workers in Hyderabad was also put forth. The statement of city being 'A City of Illusions' and the challenge of 'How to work there' was highlighted.

**Vote of Thanks -Prof. Amita Bhide**

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