



Challenges in Slum Redevelopment

For Prelims: [Right to shelter](#), [Article 21](#), [Slum Rehabilitation Authority \(SRA\)](#), [Floor Space Index \(FSI\)](#).

For Mains: [Efficacy of slum rehabilitation laws](#), [Judicial activism](#), Conflict between real estate interests and [slum dwellers' rights](#).

Source: [IE](#)

Why in News?

Following a [Supreme Court \(SC\)](#) directive, the Bombay [High Court \(HC\)](#) has initiated a first-of-its-kind review of the **Maharashtra Slum Areas Act, 1971**.

- The review **aims to address systemic gaps** causing delays in slum redevelopment projects, which **violate slum dwellers' [right to shelter \(Article 21\)](#)** and livelihood.

What is the Maharashtra Slum Areas (Improvement, Clearance and Redevelopment) Act, 1971?

- **About:** The SC directed the **Bombay HC to initiate *suo motu*** proceedings and conduct a [performance audit](#) of the **Act to identify legislative gaps**.
 - The court expanded its role to **facilitate access to justice** and ensure the effective functioning of constitutional bodies, setting a precedent for reviewing legislation without a direct cause of action.
- **Key Lacunas Identified by SC:**
 - The **intervention of builders** casts doubts on the independence and integrity in the decision-making process.
 - The **identification of slum dwellers** is a complicated process and **gives rise to competing claims** among the slum population, leading to litigation.
 - The law leaves the selection of a developer to **slum dwellers' cooperative societies**, who are often manipulated.
 - Developers seek to **increase the proportion of saleable area**, leading to contestation by the slum dwellers lacking under the law.
 - **Developers do not provide transit accommodation** within time or inadequate alternatives.
 - There is a **lack of independence and objectivity** in the functioning of statutory authorities.
- **Key Provisions of the Act:**
 - Empowers the Maharashtra government to declare an area as a "[slum area](#)" and can acquire (if needed).
 - Establishes the **Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA)** to oversee redevelopment via

private developers.

Maharashtra Slum Rehabilitation Scheme 1995

- Under it, private developers (in agreement with the slum dwellers) **fund redevelopment** and provide finished tenements free of cost.
- In exchange, they receive **some additional area** for construction and selling in the open market.
- Developers receive incentives like higher **Floor Space Index (FSI)** and saleable areas in exchange for free housing for slum dwellers.

What are Slums?

- **About:** According to the **United Nations**, a slum is a **run-down area** of a city characterized by **substandard housing and poverty** and lacking in tenure security.
 - **Slums are chaotic, overcrowded**, and neglected areas that have emerged as unplanned and unintended settlements due to urban development processes.
 - The **total number of slum dwellers** has risen to an **estimated 1.1 billion (2020)** due to increasing urbanization.
- **Reasons for Growth of Slums:**
 - **Population growth and poverty** drive the urban poor into expanding slums, with **40%** of the population **expected to live in urban areas by 2026**, creating high land demand.
 - **Regional development imbalances drive rural-to-urban migration** from less developed (Bihar and Odisha) to prosperous states like Maharashtra and Gujarat.
 - **Inefficient urban local bodies**, unplanned city management, and a lack of political will to develop slums contribute to the worsening of slum conditions.

What are the Issues Due to the Neglecting of Slum Development?

- **Illusion of Urban Opportunity:** Slums may lure the rural poor with the promise of better opportunities, but they often **mask the harsh realities** and challenges of life in urban slums.
- **Health Risks in Slum Areas:** Residents in slum areas **face significant health risks**, particularly from **waterborne diseases** like typhoid and cholera.
- **Exploitation of Vulnerable:** Women and children in slums are often victims of **prostitution, begging**, and **child trafficking** by local politicians and local goons.
- **Crime and Social Neglect:** The slums are commonly believed to have **high incidences of crime** due to **inadequate government attention** to education, law enforcement, and public services.
 - This contributes to issues like **hunger, malnutrition**, and limited **access to education**.

What are the Challenges in Slum Rehabilitation?

- **Land and Legal Issues:** Land acquisition and legal clearances often hindered by **bureaucratic processes, and regulatory authorities** are major bottlenecks in slum redevelopment projects.
- **Financial Constraints:** Securing substantial financial investment for slum rehabilitation projects is challenging, as private developers are often reluctant due to low returns on investment.
- **Social and Cultural Barriers:** Rehabilitation in slum communities can face resistance as **slum dwellers fear losing their strong social and cultural ties**.
- **Environmental Considerations:** Environmental challenges in slum rehabilitation include **limited green spaces and waste accumulation**, as slums often lack proper **waste management systems**, leading to environmental degradation.
- **Implementation and Governance Issues:** Developers **delaying projects to inflate land costs hinder slum rehabilitation**, as seen in **Mumbai's SRA model**, criticized for slow execution and lack of transparency.

Way Forward

- **Clear Legal Frameworks:** Implementing streamlined legal frameworks for land acquisition, like the **Delhi Development Authority's (DDA)** land pooling policies, ensures fair compensation and legal clarity.
- **Innovative Financial Models:** Utilizing **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)**, such as the Mumbai Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA) model, **attracts private investment while ensuring social impact.**
- **Community Engagement:** Engaging communities in planning, as seen in the Participatory Slum Upgrading Program of UN-Habitat, **mitigates resistance and respects residents' social and cultural needs.**
- **Environmental Integration:** Incorporating green practices, like in **Delhi's Kathputli Colony project**, improves environmental conditions in slum rehabilitation.
- **Effective Governance & Transparency:** Strengthening governance and transparency, exemplified by **Ahmedabad's Slum Networking Project (SNP)**, enhances the effectiveness of slum rehabilitation projects.

Drishti Mains Question:

“Slum rehabilitation in India remains caught between welfare objectives and real estate interests.” Critically analyse.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Mains:

Q. Does urbanization lead to more segregation and/or marginalization of the poor in Indian metropolises? **(2023)**

Q. Discuss the various social problems which originated out of the speedy process of urbanization in India. **(2013)**

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtiias.com/printpdf/challenges-in-slum-redevelopment>