

Plethora of Drivers Transforming Colonial Cities: The Case of Allahabad

Authors : Akanksha Gupta, Vishal Dubey

Abstract : In the Neoliberal era, there has been a much-talked discourse about urban issues that arise from a narrow approach of the single rationality of market-driven planning in Indian cities. More to this, India's urban planning is already jeopardized by the capacious shortage of infrastructure, a cluster of incoherent governing bodies and implementation mechanism, leading cities to lie in the plethora of urban challenges. In this context, Allahabad (now known as Prayagraj) a city in North India is not an exception. Once known as the most planned splendid Colonial city of the British regime in India collapsed phenomenally because of the incompetent approach of planning machinery, straightforward market-driven accession and lack of attention on urban equity and sustainability. Particularly Civil Lines a Colonial neighbourhood, reached to the zenith of the glorified legacy of the Colonial era, transformed into filthy and congested urban form. Contextually this study contemplates and assesses the chronological episodes of major changes in land management reforms and policies under the ad hoc approach of political economy and land use planning which radically degraded the living environment in the present context. This study would empirically showcase the selected sample area detailing some of the major consequences in terms of gradual change in urban morphology, land use, and function. Here the method of study is primarily a qualitative study implying oral history and other historical methods to exhibit the idiom of planning conundrum. This subsequently reflects the repercussions translated into major issues like unclear land titles, encroachment, and unauthorized development and mushrooming of informal and squatter settlements. In nutshell, the study seeks to distinct out the limitations of the land reform and land management policies, which impacted the general degradation to the beautiful setting of Colonial neighbourhood. The Colonial legacy of Civil Lines now exists in the traces of history- memories of people, who once took pride in its serenity have now witnessed the transformation bit by bit till neo-liberal market forces completely swallow it.

Keywords : civil lines, land reforms, policies, urban challenges

Conference Title : ICUSPD 2019 : International Conference on Urban Studies, Planning and Development

Conference Location : Dublin, Ireland

Conference Dates : October 24-25, 2019