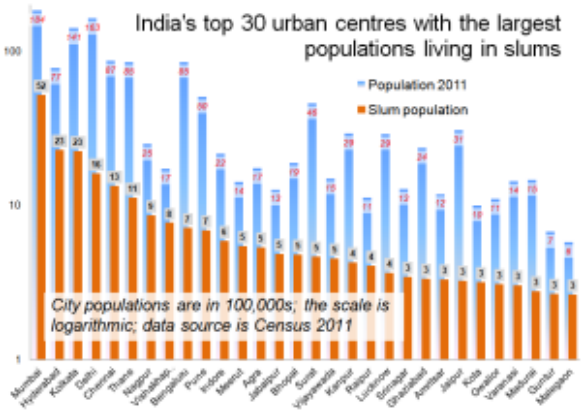
Sanjeev Sanyal – Why India Needs To Slum It Out



Graphic: makanaka.wordpress.com

indiatoday.intoday.in. September 2014. Indian policymakers have at last accepted that urbanisation is an essential part of economic development. Indeed, current trends suggest that India will be an urban-ma-jority country by 2040. If Prime Minister Narendra Modi succeeds in implementing his plan for rapid industrialisation, the country would hit the milestone even sooner. The implication of this shift is that 300-350 million additional people will have to be accommodated in urban centres within a generation. The Prime Minister clearly appreciates the issue and his plan to create a hundred smart cities should be seen as an attempt to create urban infra-structure in anticipation of the deluge.

While it is good that policymakers are paying more attention to cities, it is important to recognise that urbanisation is a dynamic process. In particular, we need to think about how millions of people will get matched to jobs, homes and amenities, according to their needs and abilities. India's predicament was faced by today's developed countries when they urbanised in the 19th and early 20th centuries. So what was the mechanism that sucked in millions of people and slotted them into the urban landscape of Europe, North America and Japan?

Read more at: http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/up-front/1/382421.html