

RETHINKING URBAN SPACES DHAKA AND BEYOND



DHAKA THURSDAY
FEBRUARY 22, 2018
FALGUN 10, 1424 BS

26



Transport is the life of a city and choices on public transit options are fundamental decisions about a city's future growth and development.

PHOTO: STAR

Urbanisation trends and sustainable transport



MD SAIDUR RAHMAN

Our future is destined to be urban as urbanisation in developing countries is a defining feature of the 21st century. It is the most significant demographic transformation in our century because it restructures national economies and reshapes the lives of billions of people. Today, about 55 percent of the population globally live in urban areas and about 1.5 million people are being added to the global urban population every week. Each year, urban areas are growing by an average of more than 75 million people—greater than the population of the world's 85 smallest countries combined. This trend is expected to continue—by 2045, the number of people living in cities will increase by 1.5 times to 6 billion,

adding 2 billion more urban residents. It is forecasted that the world's population will reach 8.6 billion in 2030 and 9.8 billion in 2050 from the 7.0 billion of 2010 living more than two-thirds of the population will be living in cities in 2050 compared to about half of the population in 2010 (UN, 2017 and WEC, 2011). It is projected that the entire built-up urban area in developing countries will triple between 2000 and 2030 from 200,000 sq km to 600,000 sq km. The additional 400,000 sq km of newly urban built-up area that will be constructed within only 30 years equal the total built-up urban area throughout the world as of 2000. The number of megacities is also projected to increase to between 60 to 100 in 2050 from 22 in 2010, and these will be mostly in developing countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America (WEC, 2011). These cities will face high levels of social, economic and environmental challenges due to increased road traffic congestion for augmented demand of transport, alongside both economic progress and enhanced living standards.

Today cities are the powerhouse of economic growth and centre of all innovation and empowerment; they contribute over 80 percent of the global gross domestic product (GDP), play a critical role in people's everyday

life and are the key to attain the sustainable development goals (SDGs). However, the speed and scale of urbanisation brings challenges, including meeting accelerated demands for affordable housing, sustainable and inclusive transport systems and other infrastructure, basic services and jobs, particularly for the nearly 1 billion urban poor who live in informal settlements to be near opportunities. Global climate change and its current and potential consequences for life, property and prosperity are now accepted as the major challenge for human society in the next 100 years. By 2030, without significant investment to improve the resilience of cities around the world, climate change may push up to 77 million urban residents into poverty (UN, 2017). Cities globally consume about two-thirds of the world's energy and 75 percent of natural resources, and account for about 80 percent of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (WEC, 2011). Once a city is built, its physical form and land use patterns can be locked in for generations. Unplanned development leads to unsustainable sprawl and obstructs achieving development objectives. So, developing a sustainable city along with its basic infrastructure is of utmost important to ensure future sustainability.

Building cities that “work”—are inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable—requires intensive policy coordination and investment choices. Therefore, city-level actions will be a central part of sustainable development initiatives, where the world needs inclusive and sustainable urbanisation as a milestone in the path towards socio-economic development, as recognised by SDG Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities.

Each year, urban areas are growing by an average of more than 75 million people—greater than the population of the world's 85 smallest countries combined.

Transport is the life of a city and choices on public transit options are fundamental decisions about a city's future growth and development. It is a key infrastructure sector that acts as a stimulus to economic growth and development, and an important element of strategies for poverty reduction, regional integration and national development including the environmental objective of limiting GHG emissions. As transport is one of the major contributors to global warming through burning fossil fuels, this sector could be one of the prime sectors where policies aiming to reduce GHG emissions will be most important. Sustainable transport that emphasises the use of public transport, bicycles and walking, and discourages the use of individual motorised vehicles like cars and motorcycles is essential to achieve many of the proposed SDGs and the 2030 agenda for sustainable development and it is, therefore, mainstreamed across several SDGs and targets, especially those related to food security, health, energy, infrastructure, cities, and human settlements (UN, 2017). There is a pressing need to improve the sustainability of transport in order to reduce its impact on climate change, better support economic growth,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27



TRUSTED
FOR
40 YEARS
BONDED
FOR A LIFETIME

Your faith in us not only inspired us but encouraged us to spread the belief from doorstep to doorstep. Over the years, a lot has modernized and so have we. Presenting an all new look of Harpic to cherish our bond with you.

