Causes for Slum Eviction – With special reference to Chennai Slums

Dr. B. Jishamol

Abstract

Though the slum dwellers enjoy all kind of facilities in spite of their low income status having a residence in the city with decrification, water facilities and so the basic needs enjoyed by them. Hence it becomes a shelter to the large section of the labour force in the city. The labour force if not settled in the city, will not be able to come to the labour work in the city and cannot be made to settle out of the centre. In the process of cities measures including beautification for demolition and eviction become a compulsory action. Not all times the slum dwellers are offered another settlement or rehabilitated. So they become “Urban refugees” in their own land.

Key Words: Slum dwellers, Encroachments, Relocation, Beautification, Metro Transport, Neo Untouchability, Livelihood

Introduction

Though the slum dwellers enjoy all kind of facilities in spite of their low income status having a residence in the city with decrification, water facilities and so the basic needs enjoyed by them. Hence it becomes a shelter to the large section of the labour force in the city. The labour force if not settled in the city, will not be able to come to the labour work in the city and cannot be made to settle out of the centre. In the process of cities measures including beautification for demolition and eviction become a compulsory action. Not all times the slum dwellers are offered another settlement or rehabilitated. So they become “Urban refugees” in their own land. Hence this paper tries to analyse the various reasons for evacuating of the slum population. Why the Government and the officials compel them to be vacated. One of the reasons attributed for the eviction of slums is that on the main bus roads and even on the interior roadways are occupied by the slum households. Hence it creates lot of traffic congestion.

Some of the burial ground in Chennai are also been occupied by the slum dwellers. It is very difficult to go through the ways carrying the coffin. As both the sides are occupied by them, and the burial land are also under encroachment hence, the actual land shrinks. Only on filing certain complaints by the private parties some action is being taken by the government.

The next risky reason for vacation is that the public health which causes the reduction of residual chlorine level, which damages the metro water due to network of slums. Another reason is the population density and also the building that comes up in unauthorized manner and finally results in the overflow of sewage.

Flood is another important factor that compels the residents to vacate. Slum dwellers are mostly surrounded on the water ways of canals and on the river banks. This creates lot of tension during the monsoon time; there are accidents and deaths happening during the Flood. Hence to avoid the risk of flood and eviction becomes compulsory for the slum dwellers on the water ways and river banks.

As part of Integrated Cooum River Eco-Restoration plan may family were evicted by the Tamil Nadu Slum clearance Board which was established in 1970 (September). In the year 2015 March there came an urgent need for relocation when the Madras High Court ordered the State Government to immediately remove the Settle...
ments along the water ways. The Court order stated that because of the settlements much delay was happening with regard to the constructing of storm water drains and also canal desilting on the bank. Hence immediately there was a meeting convened with the chief Secretary of Chennai Corporation, Tamil Nadu Housing Board District Collector, the Police Department, Water Resource Department with an advocate general. Through the canal and the Adayar, Coovum River, this eviction was mainly based on the interest of the public.

As the Court felt that the eviction works very slowly, hence it ordered if needed the Government was to make use of force to evict the dwellers of the slums. The police force was also supposed to assist in the process. Yet there are many Slums that has been away from the canal or the water way and in a condition of well developed. But still were in the lot of slums to be evicted. When we enquired about this it was said that the private owners living behind the slum area was influencing the Government to vacate them. There are similar causes it was to have a broad roadway for the big built apartments or otherwise they felt that it was a hudly to the beautification of those bungalows. May other decided that the slum dwellers were not clean and not fit to be accommodated to be near their areas. Most of the families who claim in such circumstances that they have the land allotment copy issued by the Slum clearance board, during the eviction process there are few families who still try to survive in the dust and rubble of the demolished settlements.

In Chennai the eviction of Slum settlements happened because of the Coovum River Eco Restoration Project. Yet another reason for the removal of encroachment was to construct a road along the North Buckingham Canal. This project was taken up by the Water Resources Department (WRD). This project was part of the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission. The officials also added that but laying a road way to this extent would also reduce the heavy traffic in North Chennai.

The Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority (CMDA) made the proposal for constructing Multi-storied buildings at Perumbakkam for resettlement. And said that the residents were residing at a place marked as ‘Objectionable’ and mainly on the water ways of Cooum, Adayar River and the Buckingham Canal. Nearly 40,000 families are expected to be living in and around the canal and other waterways. Yet others are settled in the Government land, called promboke land, other water backs and the foot paths.

The original purpose of the canal have been forget and now it’s a near drainage carrying canal. The MTP has constructed concrete walls which portrays the canal as a place to dumping the garbage otherwise it has been criticized for parking spao, platform slums. The most important was that lack of awareness among the dwellers along the canal. In spite awareness programmes also they see the garbage floating in front of their dwelling but does not came about all of them. Hence the Government analyse and fix that it is not an ideal place for dwelling and the evicting process.

The evicting is progressing even if the settlement are found in various forms of Turpentine, Bamboo sticks, iron sheets and even thatches determining that they were implementing the beautification of the city, the others include other developments schemes such as elevated corridors and mass rapid transit system and the metro rail. 1970 – during the period of Chief Minister M.Karunanidhi in the time of Dravida Munetra Kazhagam (DMK). Tamil Nadu Slum clearance Board was initiated. The main aim of the board was to clean all the Slums in Chennai within a fixed period. It was aimed to curtail the growth of Slums within the city. Its main aim was to give protection to the dwellers during the time of eviction and relocate them to modern tenements, with all kind of basic amenities of drinking water electricity, water drains, to the slums until they are being cleared.

The first project initiated by the Government of Tamil Nadu was in 1970 at Nochikuppam was declared by the then C.M. M.Karunanidhi on December 23, 1970. This resettlement located in the heart of the city was planned with seven year programme at a cost of Rs. 40 Crore.

The next TNSCB project –II was in 2005 funded by the World Bank to relocate the undeveloped Slum dwellers and also the dwellers of objectionable areas and the others residing on the margins of River, feeder canals roadsides, seashore, and places used by the public for the public purposes.
Reference


https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/slum


Lady
