**World Town Planning Day 2020**

[**Khurram Farid**](https://nation.com.pk/Columnist/khurram-farid)

November 08, 2020

Year 2020 advances towards its end and with that, it brings about the 71st anniversary of World Town Planning Day. The concept of world urban planning day has been reformed from a day to a week in which every day, a new aspect of urbanisation is marked and pondered upon. One of those days is known as “World Urbanism Day”.

The history of this day goes back to over half a century. The notion was presented in 1949, by late Professor Carlos Merla Della Paolera at University of Buenos Aires, Argentina. At present, it has grown into an annual celebration in more than 30 countries on 4 continents, on November 8. Enthusiasm for celebrating this day is to congregate professional planners as well as local people for ideal community planning which is the very basis in order to achieve a better quality of life for every individual.

Acknowledgment of this event will provide worldwide exposure to the principles of town planning for not only planners but also among the general public. In different eras of Pakistan’s planning history, different policies and planning strategies are followed according to communal requirements.

[Israel to build new settlement near Gaza](https://nation.com.pk/09-Nov-2020/israel-to-build-new-settlement-near-gaza)

Town planning, like other communal needs, is also a consumable commodity. It could not be devoid of its prerequisites and also have an expiry date.

In the pre-colonial era, Mughal Emperors developed a new version of planning and development for their cities and British developed their own planning mechanisms and addressed urban governance issues such as, space control, water provision, sewerage system, roads, street lights and police etc. Canal system (Irrigation system) was established in all of Punjab to get water for cultivation from the rain-fed area. Proper nomenclature was given to villages by providing them names corresponding to their irrigation circle chak numbers. In 1855, the railway transportation system was installed for the provision of easy access all over the country. Garden City and City beautiful movements were followed while planning Delhi as the capital city. Moreover, the Punjab Municipal Act, 1911 was enacted in Punjab to regulate land use and ensure infrastructure provision.

[Global coronavirus cases top 50 million](https://nation.com.pk/09-Nov-2020/global-coronavirus-cases-top-50-million)

After partition, it was observed that Pakistan faced a higher urbanisation rate and its associated issues as compared to India. Currently, according to UNDP statistics, 32.8 percent and 37.6 percent are the percentages of urbanisation in India and Pakistan respectively, which are massive considering the land size and resources available in both countries. Since 1947, Pakistani governments over the years endeavoured to control population growth and the urbanisation rate. Five-year plans were formulated with the first Pakistan Five Year National Development Plan in 1955-60. Till year 2020, twelve five-year plans have been presented. But these five-year plans did not provide any worthwhile solution to urban planning problems such as slum formation, irregular and haphazard development, no up-gradation of infrastructure, a constant rise in poverty, crime and injustice, democracy’s perpetual uncertainties, poor administration and deceitful behaviour of authorised bodies.

To overcome present planning issues, town planning as a profession should be given its due regard, planners as professionals should be respected at every platform and should be required at every policy and planning making forum. Furthermore, planners themselves need to show unity and be honest and loyal towards their profession to ensure professional town planner’s appointments for community planning authorised positions. This will automatically help in achieving sustainability in both planning profession and human settlements.

[Can’t shake hands with those who bring country into trouble: Ali Muhammad](https://nation.com.pk/08-Nov-2020/can-t-shake-hands-with-those-who-bring-the-country-into-trouble-ali-muhammad)

In an attempt to improve the overall situation policy wise, a policy named the “National Urban Policy Document”, a joint initiative of Iqbal Institute of Policy Studies (IIPS) and Institute of Planners Pakistan (IPP), is developed through support and assistance from various institutions. It is expected to be launched on this world urbanism day. In addition, Both IIPS and IPP together are also preparing the Town Planning Act. Alongside, National Urban Planning Regulatory Authority is on the verge of completion which will be useful in mitigation of hurdles coming in the process of policy making and thus, will help in formulation of rule and regulation for land use planning.

The world is expeditious in making an allowance for modern planning strategies, the concept of smart cities is widely adopted but we are a bit behind in this as the first smart city of Pakistan is still in the planning phase while our neighbour India already has multiple smart cities. This concept presents new practices and strategies which are efficient in policy making. Smart cities contribute to overall town planning.

[PM Imran Khan presents real concept of state of Madinah: Speaker NA](https://nation.com.pk/08-Nov-2020/pm-imran-khan-presents-real-concept-of-state-of-madinah-speaker-na)

The development of integrated policies, planning strategies, development practices, new initiatives and smart cities with sustainable development and an environment-friendly approach incorporated in all is the need of the hour. Gradual steps towards that are being taken but the process needs to be accelerated before it is too late.