Abstract

Cities have become increasingly vulnerable towards the natural calamities. The hazards hitting these urban centres have grown fiercer with time, directing the attention of the policymakers towards the surging threat of Climate Change to the cities. The urban sprawl has been mushrooming due to a rapidly growing population. Urban areas generally offer lucrative job opportunities and a better standard of living, leading to rural-urban migration. Rural migrants are poor, and because of the lack of institutional support, they end up being slum dwellers. These urban poor are highly susceptible to adversities stimulated by disasters. Given the grave situation of cities against the wrath of the natural calamities like floods, cyclones and earthquakes, concerns have emerged regarding infusing resilience into a complex structure like city so that it becomes well equipped to face such unpleasant situations.

A major problem with an interdisciplinary approach like resilience is that it is difficult to achieve a genuine resilience in an urban sphere like a city which is already influenced by an engineering intellect. Massive expenditures on building dykes and floodgates reflect how un-prepared a city is to face natural extremes like a flood. Hence a paradigm shift in policy is required. It is very important to accept floods as a part of our lives so that the true meaning of resilience can be realised.

The objective of this paper is to analyse urban flood resilience in a socio-ecological framework. The paper discusses the genuine meaning of flood resilience in a city's context and that how it can actually be infused in a system. It further provides an elaborative framework for the urban flood resilience, a methodology for constructing an urban flood resilience index and finally discusses two important perspectives, the optimistic perspective and the pessimistic perspective, associated with urban flood resilience.