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## India's Urban Population to Reach 600 Million by 2036: Primus Partners Report



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### **Article Content:**

India's rapid urbanization is creating significant challenges, from infrastructure gaps, increase in pollution levels to rising affordable housing demands and the growing effects of climate change. By 2036 (/topic/2036), urban areas are expected to contribute 75% to the country's GDP, highlighting the need for effective solutions. In its new report, 'Reviving Ancient Wisdom: Lessons from the Indus Valley Civilization for Modern Urban Planning in India', Primus Partners looks back at the urban planning practices of the Indus Valley Civilization (IVC) to address these modern-day town planning and infrastructure development issues.

The IVC cities, like Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro utilized grid-based for planning of layouts, advanced water management systems, multifunctional public spaces and climate-conscious building practices. These strategies could help solve current urban challenges, and the report recommends integrating them into today's urban planning. The authors urge a shift in policy to create more sustainable and liveable urban spaces, inspired by these time-tested methods.

Key insights of the report include:

1. **Historical Urban Planning:** The Indus Valley Civilization (IVC) featured cities like Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa, which were organized into grid layouts covering approximately 3.5 km (2), housing tens of thousands of residents, demonstrating effective urban planning and management.
2. **Water Management Systems:** The IVC had advanced water management systems, with a significant number of common wells for each cluster of houses while connecting each house with underground drainage network channelling drainage to trunk network, emphasizing the need for modern infrastructure to meet Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6, which aims for universal access to clean water and sanitation.
3. **Standardization in Development:** Implementing standardized benchmarks can improve urban governance; for instance, cities with clear regulatory frameworks have shown a 30% increase in compliance with urban planning standards.
4. **Climate Resilience:** According to the Global Climate Risk Index, India ranks 7th among countries most affected by climate change, underscoring the urgency for cities to adopt climate-resilient strategies to mitigate risks.
5. **Lessons for Future Growth:** With India's urban population projected to reach 600 million by 2036 (/topic/2036), effective urban planning inspired by the IVC could help manage this growth sustainably, potentially reducing urban sprawl by 25% through integrated planning approaches.

Despite India's urban growth, its cities still face major hurdles. No Indian city ranks in the top 100 of the Global Liveability Index, and even Bangalore, India's top city, scored only 66.7 on the Ease of Living Index developed by Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, emphasises the need to revisit how we plan, develop and manage our cities. The IVC's approach--focusing on planned layouts, sustainability, advanced infrastructure, climate resiliency and public spaces--offers valuable lessons for overcoming today's challenges.

Practical recommendations from the IVC include adopting well planned layouts for better traffic flow, upgrading sewer systems for improved sanitation, increasing green spaces to enhance quality of life, and using climate-appropriate approaches and materials to reduce energy consumption. These strategies can help cities become more resilient and prepared for future needs.

Aarti Harbhajanka, Co-author of the study, emphasized, "To truly move forward, we need to take a moment and look back. The urban planning practices of the Indus Valley Civilization offer insights that are relevant today. By understanding how these ancient cities were built, we can create more sustainable, liveable urban spaces that meet the needs of our growing population." Sandeep Reddy, Co-author of this report, commented, "Believe it or not, the key to building smarter, more sustainable cities today might lie in ancient history. The Indus Valley Civilization's urban planning--thought to be centuries ahead of its time--holds lessons that still apply. By

revisiting how these cities were structured, we can uncover innovative solutions to the urban challenges we face now and in the future."

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