



World Habitat day in Sri Lanka was celebrated with the Participation from the Ministry of Housing and Construction, Ministry of Urban Development and Water Supply, National Housing Development Authority, UN Habitat, Local Authorities, International and Local NGO's, School prize winners and their teachers and parents.

The main function was held at BMICH with the participation of Minister of Housing and Construction Mrs Ferial Ashraff, Secretary Mrs Mallika Karunaratna, Chairman National Housing Development Authority, and Mr Conrad DeTissra UN Habitat Programme Manager.



Extracted from HPM's Message

Mr. Conrad Detissra HPM UN-HABITAT was invited to share the Key note in addition to the theme on Cities Magnets of Hope Mr. Conrad Detissra HPM explained the UN Habitat has pioneered innovative approaches for neighborhoods upgrading through community participation in the country. Projects adopting the above approach aim to improve small-scale infrastructure at neighborhood level through the involvement of communities in selection, planning and implementation of the infrastructure works. The consolidation of these settlements for longer term sustainability not only involves livelihood, but also community self-governance, sustainable environment management and building, partnerships with local authorities and external support agencies. By involving the communities in the planning, implementation and monitoring of the project activities and the process of joint decision-making will give the people ownership to the process and bring back the communities together again. It will restore trust and human dignity which are also integral parts of the peace building process.

Minister Mrs Ferial Ashraff from Ministry of Housing and Construction, in her address stressed the importance of citizen to be pro-active in finding solutions to the housing problems in the country with regard to finding land, condominium management and Migration to cities to keep the cities a loveable and a livable place to live.

Prizes were distributed to the winner of the Island wide Art and Easy competitions. Environmental friendly models for main cities by members of the environmental societies of the schools were also presented for the competition.



Environmental friendly models for main Cities by members of the environmental Societies of the schools



All island Art Exhibition and Competition



UN Habitat sponsored trophies with the UN Habitat Logo.

Press Conference

Thereafter in the afternoon a press conference was organized at the United Nations Conference Room with Mrs Mallika Karunaratna Secretary Ministry of Housing and Construction shared on Sri Lanka's housing policy, Mr Laxshman Peara Additional Secretary Ministry of Urban Development and Water Supply shared on urban sector policy and on Slum Upgrading Project in Sri Lanka, Mr Conrad DeTissra UN Habitat Programme Manager shared on UN Habitat's programme in Sri Lanka, Mr Disa Weerapan UN Habitat Regional Adviser shared on the Theme Cities Magnet of Hope and UN Habitat's Global Programmes and Mr Tim MacNair UN Habitat Housing Adviser – on Donor relationships and our projects in Sri Lanka.

Further to the press conference UN Habitat's executive director **Mrs Anna Tibaijuka's Message** was shared at the conference.



From 25th September – 2nd October 2006 , was declared a Habitat Week to celebrate the World Habitat Day in collaboration with the Ministry of Housing and Construction, National Housing Development Authority and UN Habitat.

- 26.09.2006 Awareness programme for local correspondence of Habitat day / week Activities and, current district housing programme – by National Housing Development Authority
- 27.09.2006 School awareness Programme on Condominium Housing Schemes – by Ministry of Education
- 28.09.2006 Environment day and Habitat, preparation of environmental friendly models for main cities by members of the environmental societies of the schools - Condominium Management authority and other Local Authorities.
- 28.09.2006 Inauguration of development activities in the Plantation housing sector – Ministry of Estate infrastructure and Livestock Development.
- 29.09.2006 Technical Officers, training Programme on guidelines for Housing development in Sri Lanka – by NHDA, UN –Habitat, GTZ
- 30.09.2006 Settlements Development day. Community action programme in Urban housing schemes – by Local authorities and CBO'S
- 02.10.2006 World Habitat Day celebrations and distribution of art & easy Competition awards at BMICH – by Ministry of Housing & UN- Habitat
- 02.10.2006 Press Conference with Ministry of Urban Development & Water Supply, Ministry of Housing & UN Habitat.
- 04.10.2006 Documentary Programme on UN Habitat Tsunami settlement in Sri Lanka with the participation from Ministry of Housing.
- 05.10.2006 Awareness programme on Slum Upgrading Facility and the work plan For the 2006/2007 in Moratuwa.- Moatuwa Municipal Council with UN Habitat.

Media Publicity on WHD

Electronic Media

02nd October at 9.20am

- Live Interview on Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation on World Habitat day Mr Sumith Kannangara Director Housing Sector from Ministry of Housing and Mr Kapila Fernando Project Manager UN Habitat participated the interview.
- T.V News Item on WHD and UN Press conference on Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation
- T.V News Item on WHD and UN Press conference on Independent Television Network
- Radio News Item on WHD and UN Press conference on Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation

09th October 2006

- T.V. Documentary on UN Habitat's Tsunami Settlements in Sri Lanka on Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation.

Print Media

- Press report on Daily Mirror on 03rd October 06
- Press report on Daily News on 03rd October 06
- Press article on cities Magnets of hope, Daily News 02nd October 06
- Press release by the President of Sri Lanka, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka and the Minister of Housing for World Habitat day - Daily News 02nd October 2006.

(Articles as per attachment)



An art exhibition of school children was organized by the Ministry of Housing and Construction to mark the World Habitat Day recently. Minister of Housing and Construction Ferial Ashraff is seen here looking at a painting while talking to the child. (Pic by Gayan Amerasekera)

Govt, UN to uplift tsunami affected

Mohammed Naalir

COLOMBO: The Government has drawn several projects to help tsunami victims and raise the living standards of the people below the poverty line.

Addressing the media Housing Ministry Secretary Malacca Karunaratne pointed out that the projects will function as short term, and long term plans.

Under the short term plan, measures would be taken to improve the condition of the houses and also construct new houses. Loans would be given at low interest through Sanasa, rural banks and the Samurdhi Authority. The long term development projects would be launched at provincial council level, she said.

At the press conference at the UN Conference Room on Monday she said assistance of Local Authorities was vital in launching development projects specially in tsunami-affected areas.

"The Government has launched resettlement programmes with the assistance of donor countries. They are progressing," she added.

According to statistics tabled at the press conference, out of the Moneragala district population is about 296,351 more than 30.75 per cent live below the poverty line. The percentage of poverty in the Colombo district is six per cent. In 30 years most people will be living in the urban areas and urbanisation is the way for development. More than 60 per cent in the rural areas live below the poverty line. Cities are the places where the poverty percentage is less, UN-Habitat Regional Advisor Disa Weerapana said.

The Regional Advisor pointed out that the world was witnessing great immigration into towns and cities. "One third of the world will live in cities and it will be doubled in the future".

The Master Plan for Colombo (1978-1983), assisting the million Houses Programme (1984-1988), Million and a half Houses Programme (1989-1993) and the Sustainable Cities Programme (1990) are still in operation. The Community Infrastructure and Shelter Rebuilding in tsunami-affected areas are among them, it was revealed.

UN Habit Programme Manager for Sri Lanka, Conrad De Tissera and Urban Development Ministry Secretary Lakshmar Perera were also present.



World Habitat Day

Cities, Magnets of Hope

National Housing Development Authority



My Greetings to the World Human Settlements Day

In the year 1950 one third of the world population lived in urban areas. Since about the year 2000 half of the world population live in towns.

In keeping with the present growth of population in about 2005 two thirds of the population have migrated to urban areas.

This situation is a challenge to countries like Sri Lanka and other countries similar to it.

It has to be researched what steps have to be taken to remedy this situation and to what extent the steps which have been taken were successful.

According to the national policy our government has given priority to housing development.

Special attention has been drawn to the development of urban areas conforming to a systematic town plan and provision of houses to people living in the town and areas around it.

In addition to that the government has focused attention on the task of developing human settlements in rural areas and coastal areas where fisher families live and also in the plantation areas where estate workers live.

Priority has been given to this task by establishing a Ministry and government institutions to handle these activities.

In an era where many activities are launched in the field of housing development in Sri Lanka, I feel that it is very important to celebrate this Day which



Ratnasiri Wickramanayake
Prime Minister

falls on Monday 2nd October 2006 on the theme "Cities, Magnets of Hope". This activity is handled systematically by the Ministry of Housing and Construction and various other institutions of the Ministry which implement these development activities properly and the contribution of the private sector should also be utilized more effectively in this effort.

A systematic programme has been launched in housing development under the guidance of Hon. Ferial Ashraff, Minister of Housing and Construction, Hon. H.M. Gunaratne Weerakoon, Deputy Minister of Housing and Construction and various institutions relating to this field have also contributed to this effort.

I wish all the proposed development tasks to be implemented to remember 2006 World Human Settlements Day be successful in every respect.

Ratnasiri Wickramanayake
Prime Minister

Message from the President

World Population keeps a close contact with towns due to the benefit of getting their day to day requirements fulfilled in a more fruitful and easy way. When emphasizing these important facts, it is timely that the theme "Cities, Magnets of Hope" in celebrating the World Habitat Day.

As for the other countries of the world, the need for urbanisation is a problem for Sri Lanka too and to find ways and means for the purpose, several programs have been launched during the past several years.

A more productive program, 'Janasevana' housing project has been launched to cater to the need by the present government under the Mahinda Chinthana. It is admirable that a program is launched as a 'Habitat Week' by the Ministry of Housing and Construction to coincide with the World Habitat Day when such programs are being fruitful.

The prime objective of the 'Janasevana' housing



project is to provide ownership of a house of their own in fulfilling the housing need of the urban population, who are severely troubled by the housing problem and for the rural masses who actively contribute a lot to build up their own houses and for the estate workers as well, who contribute a lot in strengthening the national economy.

The active assistance of government and private organisations should be utilized and the active participation of those masses in need of proper housing should be contributed in order to achieve the goals of the 2006 Habitat Day Program.

It is essential to plan a post research project to evaluate the benefits of these housing development program. I like to convey my gratitude to Housing and Construction Minister Ferial Ashraff for her pioneering effort in implementing the Habitat Day Program and to Regional Development Minister and Housing and Construction Deputy Minister H.M. Gunaratne for his immense contribution for the success of the project.

Mahinda Rajapaksa

Commemoration of world Habitat day

International Institutions world over have given priority in their Agenda to proclaim International Days on diverse themes for the betterment of the human community. As I observe, the launching of different activities on these days to achieve the said objectives is a notable achievement by nations.

Sri Lanka, going in the same line, has been commemorating the World Habitat Day continuously for the last two decades. When we look back, it is seen that many an activity was confined only to the relevant commemoration day itself. This year, World Habitat Day is being commemorated for the 21st time. We have taken a different trend in planning the programme and appropriate measures have been taken to retain the feelings of habitat and continue with the activities throughout the year. This is a remarkable difference in the organization of the habitat day activities. I should humbly mention here that the foresight and guidance of the Hon. Minister of Housing and Construction was a great strength towards this.

Moving away from the traditional programmes, this year we have implemented a number of programmes throughout a week with the active partic-

ipation of different community groups and institutions with special responsibilities towards human habitats. A special feature was the declaration of a "School Day" aiming the school children and school communities throughout the island and I wish to thankfully acknowledge the support extended by the Ministry of Education for the implementation of the school oriented programmes. The efforts taken by the NHDA to involve the school children, Local Authorities and various Community Organizations are commendable. Their contribution will ensure healthy human settlements for all of us.

I am confident that through these efforts we will be able to lay a strong foundation to develop pleasant human settlements and neighbourhoods for us. The involvement of school children in these programmes will strengthen the community responsibility. I hope that the ripple effect of these changes will flow from village to town, town to the country and to the whole community and make the earth a better place for the human beings to live.

(Mrs) Mallika Karunaratne
Secretary
Ministry of Housing & Construction

Message from the Minister

I am very much pleased to issue this message on the occasion of the World Habitat Day 2006 on the theme of "Cities, Magnets of Hope". A "Settlement" is not a mere cluster of houses. People living in it, its environment, vegetation and other living beings associated with it are parts of a settlement. Hence, we are confronted with the question whether it is adequate to pay attention merely to houses and basic facilities necessary for them in planning human settlements.

Especially in the present context where the congestion of people into urban areas has focused attention only on housing leaving other requisites of a settlement apart has given rise to sustainability issues in many cities of the world. The theme for World Habitat Day this year is to create cities attractive enough to fulfill the aspirations of their inhabitants.

A special feature in this year's Habitat Day celebration is that a Habitat Week has been declared and many programmes on maintenance of existing settlements, creating of new settlements, transferring ownership of houses in settlements, awareness creation among children on life in settlements, impart knowledge through electronic and print media, and conservation of living environment have been organized. Following the Mahinda Chinthana National Policy to achieve the targets of a virtuous citizen, an affectionate family, a prosperous village, a



Ferial Ismail Ashraff
Minister of Housing & Construction

healthy nation, an agricultural renaissance and an undivided country, we will be able to make the whole country a magnets of hope for the entire Sri Lankan Nation. The Programme line up of this year's World Habitat Day can be termed as the stepping stone of this journey. Action has been taken to expand this programme to the peripheral areas without confining it to urban areas and it is important to provide urban opportunities and facilities to these places in order to minimize the pressure on urban areas. Accordingly I am confident that the World Habitat Day - 2006 will be of significant importance to our country.

I believe that the cooperation of all Sri Lankans will be extended to make this programme a success. At the same time I wish to thank Hon. Gunaratne Weerakoon, Deputy Minister of Housing & Construction, Secretary of the Ministry and the staff, Chairman of the NHDA and the staff and all who extended their support in many ways.



"I firmly believe that every family in Sri Lanka should have a house of their own. In order to achieve this objective, 65,000 new houses will be constructed in the coming years for the people living in shanties and other improper houses within the city of Colombo."

Mahinda Rajapakse
President of Sri Lanka



"We are moving towards the theme of the world Habitat Day, 'Cities, magnets of hope.' With the establishment of towns having all facilities and providing the less privileged community including the shanty dwellers with houses, water, sanitation facilities and infrastructure facilities, this objective could be fulfilled. This would enable them to increase their living standards."

I believe that, with the guidance of His Excellency, the President, Mahinda Rajapakse, our country would be able to achieve the expected goals of the world Habitat Programme quickly. We have successfully carried out the task assigned to the Ministry of Urban Development & Water Supply in this connection.

Dinesh Gunawardena

Minister of Urban Development & Water Supply



I send my greetings to the Housing project of slum dwellers under the auspices of the Ministry of Urban Development & Water Supply.

Ferial Ashraff
Minister of Housing & Construction



A memorandum of Understanding to establish a fund to construct houses for the shanty dwellers within the town limits of Moratuwa was signed by Mr. Joachim Iyathurai, Chairman of the International Association for the Upliftment of Shanty Dwellers, with Minister Dinesh Gunawardena and the Chairman of the Moratuwa Municipal Council, Mr. Samanthal Fernando in Colombo on the 05th June 2006.



The occasion where His Excellency the President, Mahinda Rajapakse inaugurated the construction work of the Sinhapura Housing Project, Borella, under the 'Palin Mandira' Housing Programme for the construction of housing for Shanty dwellers.



New fund raiser for the Housing Project "Palin Mandira"

By a gazette notification the Hon. Dinesh Gunawardena, Minister of Urban Development & Water Supply has announced and obtained Cabinet approval for a levy of 5% form of all new construction projects over 5000 sq ft., the proceeds of which will be utilised for the proposed fund of the housing project for slum dwellers, "Palin Mandira"

A Memorandum of Understanding to raise the living standards of urban shanty dwellers was signed by Mrs. Anna Tsiagka, Under-Secretary General of the World Habitat Programme and Minister Dinesh Gunawardena at the third session of the World Urban Forum held in Vancouver, Canada on the 21st of June 2006.



Fulfilling the sanitary requirements of Colombo shanty dwellers by providing drinking water facilities.

MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT & WATER SUPPLY
URBAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
REAL ESTATE EXCHANGE (PVT) LTD
URBAN SETTLEMENTS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

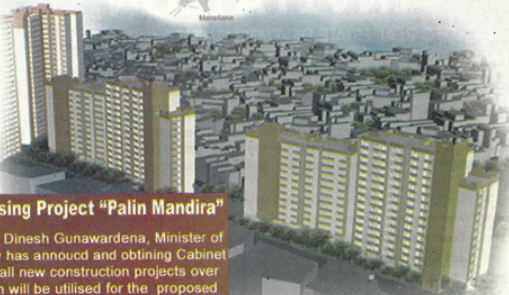


WORLD HABITAT DAY

The Project for the Construction of
2300 Houses
in the Panchikawatte Triangle
under the

"Palin Mandira"
Housing Program

to construct 65,000 houses
for Shanty Dwellers.



Are we ready to make our cities the magnet of hopes?

Aspirations are always beautiful. This is simply because there is an unfulfilled residue of hopes enshrined within each aspiration.

In those hopes that are already fulfilled there is a kind of dreamy happiness which tells you that what has not been achieved can still be won.

The theme of the world habitat day 2006 also embodies a feeling of that kind.

The theme is "The cities are the magnet of hope". It is quite proper to say that Sri Lanka's capital Colombo remains even to day a magnet of expectation for the most part. One of the primary reasons for this is that up to now we have not been able to convert our capital city Colombo to the status of city of our own adored a proud with those urban characteristics that would reflect the environment allure of our "Resplendent Island". Anyone who analyses the realities of Sri Lanka will tend to wonder whether the city of Colombo is our own.

That reflects our cultural nobility and our special heritage. It should not be a city that should be merely described as our city. It should be a meticulously planned one providing facilities and happiness to the people of our country. It should be a haven for the so-called common man. This tremendous responsibility is now assigned to the ministry of Urban Development & water Supply.

A shelter, or a home could be a rented out place. It could be fully owned or leased. These shelters have a monetary value. The Habitat Day should be an occasion to make a real difference to the place where one lives. We must make an effort to provide a permanent shelter to those who live in temporary shelters, at least by the next Habitat day. A helping hand should be extended to those who plan to transform the disorganized capital city into an attractive city.

Currently, the ministry of Urban Development is engaged in a giant effort, with the blessings of the President, to convert the city of Colombo into a well-organized capital city that conforms to the urgent urban development standards. Survey has revealed that around 65,000 people live in the city of Colombo alone, in shelters that are shabby and disorganized.

In reality they do not live in "houses" as such. They live in places, they do not have any legal ownership for. Such shabby shelters have burgeoned due to the haphazard shelter habits of those who settled down even in swampy regions. They put up shanty-dwellings slums wherever they could.

Under such circumstances, the hope of converting this city into an "attractive magnet for aspirations" is just an illusion. Such International days become a mere burden, if they are become a mere burden, if they are not fully utilized. This is a major challenge to the Ministry of urban development, specifically. This is simply because it is essential to provide permanent homes, to these currently living in temporary shelters. Adequate land and infrastructure facilities have to be found, for this permanent shelter projects.

Among the challenges facing this ministry priority status is assumed by the need to make this city the urban centre that will fulfill the aspirations of the whole nation as the magnet of hope. Besides, the Ministry has the city, both drought and in rainy days, to wet the thirsty lips of the citizens.

To achieve this an initiative to be taken, to convert the temporary haphazard shelters of 650000 slum dwellers, into homes fully equipped with essential infrastructure facilities.

Already, the Ministry of Urban Development has taken several giant steps to achieve this. This is a tremendous human service. The theme of this magnificent program is from "From slum to Mansion". The Development of Panchikawatte Triangle is a project that has already been launched, under this project.

Presently, a great effort is being made. Anyone who contemplates this region in the first rays of the dawn or in the moonlight at night, will inevitably be saddened by the fate that has reduced this area into a pathetic sight.

The aim of the project is to provide permanent houses to all who live their under haphazard conditions. This will transform the Panchikawatte Triangle into an Urban sector that can add a new and wholesome interpretation to the attractiveness of the city of Colombo.

Dharma S. Samarasinghe
Senior Manager - Media
Thirasa Pura Housing Development Program

CITIES MAGNETS OF HOPE

2006 WORLD HABITAT DAY

National Conference

and

**Awards Ceremony of
School Art and Essay Competition**

organized by the

National Housing Development Authority

will be inaugurated by

Hon. Ferial Ismail Ashraff, MP

Leader of National Unity Alliance

and

Minister of Housing & Construction

in Committee Room A,

Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall,

Colombo 07

on Monday, 02nd October 2006 at 9.30 a.m.

with the participation of

Hon. H.M. Gunaratne Weerakoon, MP

Minister of Regional Development and

Deputy Minister of Housing & Construction.



**National Housing Development Authority
Ministry of Housing & Construction**

Cities as magnets of hope

TODAY IS WORLD HABITAT DAY:

Prof. Ashley LS PERERA



URBANIZATION: The World Habitat Day is celebrated worldwide on the first Monday in the month of October each year.

The main objective of the deliberations is to highlight a particular aspect impacting the state of human settlements and to focus on the need to recognise adequate shelter as a fundamental right for all.



Urbanization making rapid inroads

The theme chosen by United Nations for deliberations in the current year is 'Cities, magnets of hope'. It is observed that the United Nations has chosen the theme as a reminder that the world is witnessing the greatest trends, ever, in migration of people to towns and cities.

Urbanisation and its impact currently is therefore of critical significance to both developed and developing countries.

It would be pertinent to examine some thoughts on the phenomenon of urbanisation in retrospect, perhaps to get an insight in terms of historical facts and lessons of experience.

The process of urbanisation which commenced with the industrial revolution in Britain led to the creation of urban settlements throughout the developed world. These urban settlements or cities were described by Max Weber (1958) as 'tightly' knit, well individualised urban communities'.

The growth of cities of urban agglomerations proceeded so rapidly needing a new vocabulary to describe and deal with it. Patrick Geddes coined the term conurbations to describe urban agglomerations in Britain.

The term 'metropolitan area' stemming from the Greek 'metropolis' (meaning the mother city that spawns other cities) came into general international usage subsequently.

Some scholars in the 1950s, however, felt that the concept of the city as described by Weber has become a phenomenon of the past.

Martindale in fact questioned whether the city was not dissolved in a new system, much wider geographically, where the new community framework would embrace the nation as a whole in the future.

These views, however, remained less significant until about the 1970 s where the central problem concerning cities in the developed world was of trying to find out how best to manage urbanisation.

The world trend towards urbanisation i.e. the concentration of people in urbanised regions, seems to have been fully accepted. Since then, however, it has often been questioned whether cities were a permanent or a passing phenomenon.

The mid 1970s witnessed a counter -urbanisation debate based on some statistical indices which were considered to be complex and debatable. These indices purported to indicate a settlement scattered and dissolved in the country side.

This model attempted to depict a trend basically described as the dissolution of the city and its apparent replacement by what was assumed to be a dispersed habitat. These views were nevertheless short lived.

In the 1980s there emerged a new concept of urban renaissance which connotes a rebirth of the city. This clearly contradicted the prospect of a decline of the city but did not necessarily mean that the suburban dispersal has come to an end.

It was argued that urban renaissance could mean an exercise in planning, repair and maintenance. It could perhaps be an effort to conserve the cityscape. Such propositions however, were in contrast to what generally has been witnessed in the past decades in most cities.

The reality is that there has been indiscriminate large scale demolition of all buildings block by block in what has been described as a 'massive surgical renewal' to build in new style for new uses.

More significantly some basic changes in the functions of cities over the years are discernible. The industrial revolution filled cities and towns with manufacturing plants and workers.

These manufacturing plants and the workers presently are being moved out from compact and congested cities and out of old buildings unsuitable to modern equipment and activities.

Many of the blue collar occupations, it is observed are gradually becoming redundant due to automation. Additionally the pressure of population growth, in migration and rising economic standards inevitably lead to a general spatial extension and the flow into the country side of urban land uses.

This spatial extension has been facilitated by the improvement of road and rail transportation networks. The result has been a growing separation between the places where people work and transact business, which is still linked to the central cities, and the places where people live i.e. sleep and relax which sprawl around the country side.

It would seem therefore, that the basic changes in the functions of cities inter-alia have been accompanied by significant increases in their functional magnitude. The rise of skylines is a manifestation of cities as distinct entities effecting changes in the urban way of life.

The next phase in this evolutionary process is the emergence of the 'transactional city' (Corey-1983) based on what is described as transactional forces where employment is shifting from labour force dominated by workers who produce and handle tangible goods to a labour force with a majority of its members engaged in the generation, processing and management of such intangibles as information, knowledge and decisions.

It would be observed that there is a transformation of economies and societies revolving around hardware to one concerned increasingly with software.

Similar trends observed in the developed world comprise the increased competition among cities in an international division of labour described as globalisation and a shift towards an information mode of production where information becomes the basic input resulting in a new division of labour not by product but by process (Peter Hall - 1991) To a considerable extent economic

activity over the last couple of decades has shifted from production places to centres of finance and highly specialised services.

This rather sketchy account of the evolutionary process of cities in the developed world may not be totally relevant to developing countries.

For instance the concept of spread effects of economic investments where investments in a region generated economic growth not only in that region but also in neighbouring regions, which was true of developed countries failed to materialise in the developing countries.

However, given the complexities of the world economy some of the past economic remedies may not succeed even in the developed world.

Despite such reservations what appears to matter is that rapid urbanisation is taking place in most developing countries although for quite different reasons. Initially people were attracted to cities because of the availability of industrial jobs consequent to the industrial revolution in Britain.

The current exodus however, from rural areas to cities in the developing world is not because there are adequate jobs on offer but because the prospect of getting employment in the rural areas is almost zero.

While there is absolutely no hope in getting employment in the rural areas in most developing countries the driving force of migrants to cities is the hope of getting some employment some day in the city. Cities in the developing world have therefore, been appropriately described as 'magnets of hope'.

In terms of the present trends the world will become predominantly urban within the next decade. The developing countries may follow suit probably in a couple of decades.

United Nations statistics suggest that two thirds of the population in the world will live in cities by the year 2050. It is inevitable that urbanization in the developing world will also be accompanied by urban sprawl, with the attendant evils of poor and insanitary housing, unemployment, disease and environmental degradation.

Urbanisation in developing countries is also likely to create 'dual cities', wherein a formal city with all the modern features and characteristics will lie along side

what may be described as an 'informal city' with poor infrastructure, housing and other facilities beset with severe environmental problems.

There will, however be innumerable economic linkages between the formal and informal city which will constantly influence each other and bind them economically and socially and will enhance the dependant relationship among them.

The city of Nairobi in Kenya provides an example of a dual city fitting to the above description. While the formal city gives a visitor the impression that he sees things no different to what he would probably see in Oxford Street in London, the informal city depicts all the evils of poverty and underdevelopment.

Nevertheless there is intense economic activity of an informal character taking place in the latter providing employment and shelter for quite a substantial population, perhaps to a much larger labour force than what the formal city could provide for.

The demonstration effect depicted in the concept of consumer behaviour in economics seems to be catching up in cities in the developing world in their modernisation efforts. This is characterised in the sphere of property development and urban land uses.

A case in point is the emergence of luxury apartments replacing old office and factory buildings in Central London reversing the prevailing preferences of the rich for suburban living.

Curiously though, a similar development process is taking place in Colombo where luxury apartments are coming up in prime locations of the city replacing other urban land uses. While there are innumerable dissimilarities in the state of cities in the developed and the developing world there could also be instances of striking similarities as shown above.

Given the impact of globalisation, informationalization and internationalisation it is unrealistic to assume that cities in the developed and developing worlds will tread along different paths in watertight compartments. It is most likely that the latter will catch up with the former in at least some respects.

However, it has to be recognised that each country has a specific development process with a specific socio - economic, political and juridical system which will

be reflected in the state of its cities. There are no universal standard remedies for city problems.

The once successful Keynesian economic remedies have proved to be utterly ineffective in tackling modern day economic problems even in the developed world let alone the developing countries. The failure of macro - economic growth strategies is reflected more severely at the city level.

This is primarily because macro - economic growth strategies are not spatially related. The traditional sectoral approach used by economists considers space as a constant in their growth equation

As the world becomes increasingly urban it is essential that policy makers take adequate note of the spatial dimension and use the city as a catalyst for economic growth and national development.

It is easier and more economical to provide amenities, facilities, utilities and services to a concentrated population rather than a scattered population country wide. Cities ideally should be able to provide inclusive living conditions for their citizens. The poor is an essential component of the city.

They have an important role to play in the upkeep of the city. Besides every one irrespective of whatever differences has a right to the city and a conducive living environment.

The provision of such an environment entailing safety and security, safe drinking water, sewerage systems, electricity, transport, solid waste disposal, houses, schools, playgrounds and a strong economic base that could provide adequate employment inter- alia would be the greatest challenges to be met.

(The writer is the former Head/ Department of Town and Country Planning, University of Moratuwa, Director of Post Graduate Studies and Senior Professor of Town Planning)