



Talk & Discussion on
"Why are Indian Cities Such a Mess? A Long Road to Fixing Urban Governance Challenges"

With

Dr. Pushpa Pathak

Organised by

The Centre for Public Policy & Governance
Goa Institute of Management

Date & time: Monday, 25th August 2025, 4.00 pm to 5.15 pm IST

Venue: CR 12, GIM Campus* and online on Zoom

Zoom link:

<https://zoom.us/j/97422346031?pwd=XMgTVR3kOWtuguycPE0sfChGuvz8Zd.1>

Meeting ID: 974 2234 6031

Passcode: 064943

Keynote speaker

Dr. Pushpa Pathak



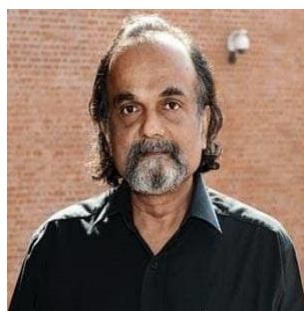
[Dr. Pushpa Pathak](#) is a Senior Visiting Fellow at the Centre for Policy Research. Dr. Pathak has over 4 decades of extensive experience of working in the field of urban development in India, and in other developing and post-conflict countries. She has worked with premier institutions including, the National Institute of Urban Affairs, New Delhi; World Bank (Water and Sanitation Program – South Asia), New Delhi; UN-HABITAT (Afghanistan); and School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi. Her current policy research interests include: (i) Addressing multi-scalar challenges pertaining to urban governance, planning, finance and management; (ii) Analysing growth dynamics and urban-regional transformation potential of cities of various sizes, especially small towns; (iii) Understanding women's participation in the urban informal sector and poverty reduction. She has published a number of papers in reputed Indian and international journals as well as in edited volumes. Dr. Pathak has a PhD in Regional Development from the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. She has spent

two years at the Banaras Hindu University, India, and one year at Cambridge University, UK, doing postgraduate research. She was a Ford Fellow at the Special Program in Urban and Regional Studies (SPURS) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA in the academic year 1989-90.

Brief abstract of the talk

Though the state of urban services has improved in the recent years, India is far from meeting all the Service Level Benchmarks that are necessary to offer a good quality of life to the citizens. Since late 1980s, there has been significant global advocacy and agreements for achieving the goals of inclusive and sustainable urban development. But Indian cities are still faced with devastating climate risks such as frequent flooding and urban heat islands. Also, even after a series of urban poverty reduction programmes being implemented, inclusive cities remains yet a distant dream. This is largely because post-independent India started with a deep rooted anti-urban bias which later tuned into reluctant urbanism. Only recently has this mindset changed. The government has now accepted urbanisation as a necessary condition for national development. However, the Indian urban governance system is too complex and fraught with a number of challenges that are difficult to fix. Dr. Pathak's talk will highlight these challenges and explore a way forward.

Discussant



[Prof. Sebastian Morris](#) is Senior Professor and Chair of the Centre for Public Policy and Governance at the Goa Institute of Management. He retired from the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad after over 25 years of teaching, research and consultation. His principal interests are the Indian economy, infrastructure development and regulation, the public sector and governance, international trade and investments, macroeconomics, and small industry. His recent books have been: *Macroeconomic Policy in India since the Global Financial Crisis - Trends, Policies and Challenges in Economic Revival Post COVID* (Springer Nature, 2022); (ed.) *The Difficulty of Being Gajendra Haldea - Reflections on His Life and Legacy* (Bloomsbury, 2023) and (ed.) *The India Infrastructure Report 2023 – Urban Planning and Development* (Bloomsbury, 2023).

Moderator



[Prof. Kingshuk Sarkar](#) is Professor and Chair of the General Management and Public Policy Area at the Goa Institute of Management. He is also a member of the CPPG. He had earlier served as labour administrator for more than two decades with the Govt. of West Bengal. His interests include labour & industrial economics, development economics, business economics, labour administration and labour laws, plantation economics and labour, labour laws and labour administration, employment relations and informal labour. In the past, he has worked as a faculty at the V.V. Giri National Labour Institute, Noida specializing in labour laws and labour administration. He has also worked as Assistant Professor in the

National Institute of Rural Development, Hyderabad, in connection with works related to BPL Census 2011.

Schedule of the event

4.00 pm to 4.05 pm	Welcome (Ms. Bernice de Souza)
4.05 pm to 4.10 pm	Setting the context by Prof. Sebastian Morris (Chair, CPPG, GIM)
4.10 pm to 4.40 pm	Talk by Dr. Pushpa Pathak (Senior Visiting Fellow, Centre for Policy Research)
4.40 pm to 5.00 pm	Open session, discussion and Q&A facilitated by Profs. Sebastian Morris and Kingshuk Sarkar

5:00 pm to 5.10 pm	Concluding remarks
5.10 pm to 5.15 pm	Vote of Thanks

For any queries kindly contact:

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