THINK B · THINK BEYOND

A Unified Urbanisation Plan

One issue. 4 GS papers. 3 dimensions. 1 settlement reality test.

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CURRENT AFFAIRS → MULTIDIMENSIONAL THINKING

⚡THE ISSUE IN 30 SECONDS

FACT	WHY IT MATTERS
Census 2027 keeps 2011 urban definitions	A town is urban if notified or if it meets three criteria
Satellite data put India 63% urban	The Economic Survey 2026 says India is more urban than its definitions admit
52% of statutory towns lack a master plan	The figure is 76% for census towns
Municipal revenue is about 1% of GDP	Brazil is at 7.4% and South Africa at 6%

CORE IDEA: India is urbanising along a rural-urban continuum but is still counted and governed in binaries, so a National Urbanisation Policy built on shared principles, functional planning units and predictable finance can bridge the gap without replacing existing institutions.

🌍THINK BEYOND

Growth spills beyond city limits → **Census counts only classified towns** → **Peri-urban areas miss services** → **Planning and finance stay fragmented** →
Policy shifts to functional regions → **Shared principles align institutions**

Can India plan for how cities actually grow, not where they are drawn?

📎UPSC CONNECT

🌍 GS1 · SOCIETY
Urbanisation, peri-urban growth and settlement patterns
Use in: Urbanisation • Settlements

🏛 GS2 · GOVERNANCE
Municipal governance, 74th Amendment and coordination
Use in: Local bodies • Federalism

⚡ GS3 · ECONOMY
Urban finance, infrastructure and city economic regions
Use in: Urban finance • Growth

⚖ GS4 · ETHICS
Equity, accountability and inclusive service delivery
Use in: Equity • Delivery

🎯OPTIONAL CONNECT

PUB ADMIN	GEOGRAPHY	SOCIOLOGY	ECONOMICS
Urban local bodies and **coordination**	Peri-urban **growth** and settlements	Urban **inequality** and service access	Municipal **finance** and city growth

✏HOW CAN I USE THIS IN MAINS?

ESSAY *"Cities are defined by how people live, not by lines on a map."*
GS3 *Use this to discuss urban finance, infrastructure and city economic regions.*
GS2 *Use it to discuss municipal governance, the 74th Amendment and coordination.*
GS4 *Use it to discuss equity, accountability and inclusive service delivery.*

👤THINK LIKE AN OFFICER

★ KEY SECTION

CASE: You are a Municipal Commissioner of a fast-growing city. Peri-urban villages beyond your limits lack water, waste and air quality planning, and you must coordinate across jurisdictions.

YOU HAVE 60 SECONDS: WHAT DO YOU DO?

☐ Limit work to city boundaries ☐ Ignore peri-urban areas
☐ Plan with neighbours at regional level ☐ Wait for new notification

MODEL ADMINISTRATIVE APPROACH

1 · MAP THE REGION
Use satellite data to track built-up growth

2 · JOIN PLANNING BODIES
Work through metropolitan or district planning committees

3 · FIX FINANCE
Strengthen own-source revenue and property tax

4 · SHARE SERVICES
Coordinate water, waste and air quality across limits

🔑3 THINGS TO REMEMBER

01 · CONNECT
Plan by function, not boundary

02 · THINK
Finance follows planning

03 · APPLY
Apply this across GS1-4, Essay and optionals