KANPUR SLUMS

2.1 DEMOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION

Urban growth in the Third World countries has been increasing at an alarmingly high rate, unprecedented in the developed countries. Larger cities have been expanding at a faster rate. The main causes of rapid growth of such cities as Kanpur are two fold- natural growths of urban population and rural urban migration. The impact of the ever increasing urban population has been an increasingly acute shortage of housing, employment, resulting in poverty which in turn results in undernourishment, inadequate physical and civic amenities and the mushrooming expansion of slums and squatter settlements. The slums and squatter settlements punctuate almost every city of the world. These settlements have become a universal and an inevitable phenomenon accompanying urban growth in all countries of the world. Charles Abrams, while elaborating the chaotic nature and unavoidability of the slums in the world, states "They (Slums) can be found in the Qasba of Tunis or the desert countries of Havana and Bermudas. In some places, a whole city may be a slum. Types of slums vary from place to place as does the definition. They include the rural and metropolitan slums, and
handmade and prefabricated slums. Some are in shack towns, others are found in the back mansions. Some are made of scrap, others are put together with mud, adobe, thatch or wood findings. Many are one storey high while others are six storeyed slums. Even caves are in use in parts of Europe and Africa\textsuperscript{1}.

Coming to Uttar Pradesh which is the largest state of India in terms of population and where our universe Kanpur is located which has the state’s largest concentration of slum population, we find in terms of its pattern and trends of urbanization that the state boasted of 41 cities with more than 1 lakh population in 1991 accounting for a population of 14,419,509 as against 30 such cities in 1981. Such a gradual increase in the number of cities of size class I in the state is going on since 1961. At the 1991 census, there were, in all, 753 towns accommodating a population of 27,605,915. Also highest proportion of the total urban population in the state is living in class I cities followed by 15.77 per cent in the towns of size class III, 13.32 per cent in class IV, 12.02 per cent in class II and 6.09 per cent in class V while only 0.57 per cent of the total urban population was located in class VI towns.

Kanpur city ($80^\circ\,23'\,4''\,E$ and $Naqvi\,et\,al.,\,1991,^0\,28\,15''\,N$) is the largest urban agglomeration of U.P. and is the industrial
metropolis of north India. It is traditionally believed that Kanpur derived its name from Kanhaiyapur, the town of Kanhaiya. By another tradition, Kanpur is supposed to have derived its name from Karnpur and is associated with Karna, one of the greatest heroes of the epic Mahabharata. During the British period it was also known and spelt as Cawnpore².

Kanpur owes its position to the rapid industrialization which it underwent during the period 1919-50 and although the pace of growth slowed down in the succeeding two decades, concentration of industries in the areas of urban agglomeration continued to grow. The industrial base of Kanpur was laid in mid-18th century with the location of the British Army Camp and establishment of woolen and cotton textile mills. World war II caused tremendous increase in the demands of Kanpur's products and its population doubled in the period between 1931-47.

During the post war and post independence period, its industrial growth declined and industrial employment decreased from a peak of 1,16,000 factory workers in 1945 to less than 62,000 in 1955. Between 1955 and 1965, industries grew rapidly, especially small scale ones, light engineering, re-rolling, casting, manufacture of agricultural implements, chemicals, paints etc.
History of Ahtas can be traced back to the inflow of British Merchants in the city during the days of East India Company which resulted in large scale employment opportunities, but the actual growth of Ahtas started since 1931 because maximum number of industrial units have come up in succeeding years. The profile of Kanpur slums that follows it based on a socio-economic survey of this city’s slums, conducted by Kanpur Development Authority (KDA).

Out of a total slum population of 4,19,859 inhabiting 390 slum clusters, 77,578 or 46.43 per cent were comprised of females. Total number of families was 98,208. The slum population constituted 20 per cent of the total Kanpur population.

New immigrants continued to be attracted towards this metropolis in spite of an apparent deceleration in the pace of industrialization in Kanpur during the last decade. They have found it difficult to land in gainful employment and have, thus, started living in localities of cheap accommodation i.e. in "ahatas' in turn, further deteriorating the already sub-human level of living. An overview of the existing organizational structure in the housing sector reveals that this is hardly taking into consideration the demand pattern and the affordability of this section of the
urban population. Rather, many of the agencies in the housing sector by their administrative and financial stipulations have excluded this section from the purview of their activities.

As regarding the caste composition of the slum population, it was found that out of a total families of 98,208 about 19,172 or 19.53 per cent were constituted by people belonging to General Caste (not belonging to Backward, Minorities and Scheduled castes). Scheduled caste people, a good part of whom comprised ex-untouchables constituted 35,646 families, which in percentage terms was 36.29. Scheduled tribe comprise a very low percent of population. 27,930 families constituting 28.44 per cent comprised Backwards. Minorities constituted the rest 15,460 families or 15.74 per cent. These people are generally amongst the poorest of their respective caste groups who are at the bottom of the socio-economic scale and lead a disgruntled life in the burgeoning cities. Old tin and asbestos sheets, bites of tarpaulin, polythene sheets, gunny bags and dead wood are widely used for the construction of dwellings in the Ahatas. However, one very permanent though somewhat strange looking fact needs to be emphasized here. The existence of such shanty localities has long been attributed to urban poverty. But there are strong indications that the relationship between slums and urban
poverty is becoming tenuous and complex. Most socio-economic surveys of slums during 1950s and 1960s found that slums represented the locational characteristics of urban poverty as there was in them a preponderance of the urban poor. They were also identified as the segregated habitat of socially and economically disadvantaged (SCs and STs) and of distinct occupational groups. Slums and squatter settlements offered shelter to migrants, 80-90 per cent of whom were found to be poor, coming to the city to earn livelihood. But there are strong indications that the growth of slums and squatter settlements during 1980s became more or less autonomous and urban poverty is no longer an extension of rural poverty. Nor are the urban slums synonymous with urban poverty.

Regarding age configuration, almost half (48.84 per cent) of the "Ahata" population comprised of those representing the active productive stage of life i.e., 18-60 years. About 5.33 per cent or 22,360 belonged to age group of 60 plus. Those who belonged to 0-5 age group constituted 67,026 or 15.97 per cent. The largest category was represented by those belonging to 5-18 age group which constituted 29.86 per cent or 1,25,395 people. Thus, we can observe that there is a preponderance of children and young people in the "Ahatas" of Kanpur and this fact makes
it all the more important to address the scourge of slum in all its dimensions as this segment of a society has the potential to either mar or make the society. Also, from the analysis of the patterns of deviant behaviour that exist in these "ahatas", one is bound to think that the high incidence of crime, delinquency, prostitution, drunkenness, drug abuse, mental disorder, suicide, illegitimacy, family maladjustment, are associated with slum living.

Regarding their educational background, an overwhelming majority was found to be illiterate (64.17 per cent constituting 2,69,427 persons). Only 35.83 per cent or 150,432 were found to be literate. This is in complete contrast to the general situation prevailing in our country. The literacy rate among males was 58.38 per cent and among females was 41.6 per cent. This trend is reflective of the situation prevailing in the general population where we have more literate males than females. On an analysis of the level of educational attainments among the males and females separately, the following picture emerges.

**Educational Profile of the Slum Dwellers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>29,851 (33.98)</td>
<td>23,587 (37.75)</td>
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We can see that more than 70 per cent of the literate males are in the possession of low educational standards which is adequately demonstrated by their low paid unskilled type of occupations with which they are engaged for their livelihood. Only a meagre 3.89 per cent of the educated males are graduates. The slum dweller’s nil or low educational background is a major factor which explains a preponderance of deviant behaviour in such localities in comparison to non-slum localities.

Regarding their occupational structure about 1,02763 persons or 24.47 per cent are unemployed and only 15.91 per cent or 66,835 persons are employed. Further if we analyze the break-up of the employed people by the nature of their occupations, we find that about 13,113 (19.61 per
cent) are in government jobs. 10,134 (15.16 per cent), are involved in semi-Govt. jobs whereas 17,361 (25.98 per cent) are associated with jobs lying in non-governmental sector. However a great part of the occupationally engaged persons are self-employed. This last category is accounted for by 26,227 persons or 39.25 per cent. An overwhelming majority of the government servants, semi-government employees and those in the private sector are involved in low paid and unskilled class IV jobs which leads to a perpetuation of their poverty and deprivation. Also those who are self-employed are mostly cart-pullers, rikshaw pullers, hawkers etc and the income that such activities fetches is hardly sufficient to lead an enriched and humane quality of life. Fortunately there has been a gradual recognition that these people face social exclusion on the grounds of class, gender, ethnicity, caste and age. Also, nations that cities are filled with backward peasants cu workers who are responsible for their own poverty and deprivation have been replaced with new perspective about the needs and interests of urban poor.

Regarding monthly income per family, almost 90,000 families out of total of 98,208 slum families earn less than
Rs. 2000 per month. A very meagre percentage of the "Ahata" families earn more than Rs. 3000 per month. This fact amply explains their utter deprivation and a sub-human existence. One of the major factors that has impeded the salvaging of such a depressed urban situation is directly related with the meagre and tremendously inadequate income of the slum dwellers. A viable and sustainable credit system geared to the needs of the informal sector should be developed for improving their incomes and housing states in particular and for alleviating urban poverty in general.

Almost half of the Ahata families viz; 49,648 families or 50.55 per cent are without the facility of electricity. This segment depends upon kerosene oil for lighting purposes. Only 39.72 per cent or 39,012 families have the facility of electricity. The rest 9,548 families or 9.73 per cent the total depend upon other sources.

54,099 families or 58.08 per cent depend upon public source of water. Only 18.58 per cent have the facility of tap water whose supply is very erratic 14,943 families or 15.20 per cent have personal handpumps. The rest 10,902 other unspecified sources of water.
21,010 families or 21.30 per cent are fortunate to be in the possession of concrete viz-pucca residence. 22,803 or 23.21 per cent of the total families live in dwellings designated as semi-pucca in official parlance. Kutcha dwellings account for 38.65 per cent of the total. 12,446 families or 12.68 per cent live in hutments. 3990 or 4.67 per cent of the families live in unspecified other types of dwellings. Thus we can see that among all the forms of dwelling structure, it is the Kutcha type which is preponderant. As regarding their conditions, the following observation in the report of the Integrated City Development Plan for Kanpur Metropolis, 1975-81 provides an insight into the deteriorated and wretched conditions- "Slum are chaotically occupied, unsystematically developed, and generally neglected area which is overcrowded by persons with ill-repaired and neglected miserable structures."

46,208 Ahata families were owners of their dwellings and in percentage terms, they constituted 41.41 per cent or 40,665 families. The rest 11,335 families or 11.54 per cent of the total were living in illegally and unauthorisedly occupied dwellings. However, in case we observe the
particular slum locality separately, we can find an overwhelming preponderance of those dwellers who on their dwellings depending upon the slum in observation.

Finally, regarding the slum dwellers' toilet description, about 31,545 families or 32.12 per cent were using public toilet facilities, which in majority of the cases were constructed and managed by an NGO, Sulabh Shauchalaya and this service was not free of cost. About 23.63 per cent of the families which constituted twenty three thousand two hundred and eight families were enjoying the facility of personal flush. A substantial part constituting 24.76 per cent or twenty four thousand three hundred five families were without any source of toilet and were thus compelled to resort to such methods like open defecation etc. About nineteen thousand one hundred fifty families accounting for 19.49per cent of the total slum families were having personal "Sokhta" toilets.

In the conclusion, we can say that the inhabitants of Kanpur slum/Ahata tenements are generally among the economically, socially, educationally culturally, occupationally and psychologically most disadvantaged, wretched and marginalized segment of the urban dwellers in our country.
2.2 Settlement Pattern.

Kanpur, the industrial and commercial metropolis of north India is the largest Urban Agglomeration in the State of Uttar Pradesh and ranks ninth largest urban centre in the country. In its kaleidoscopic urban scenario manifested through smoke and coal ash, belching chimneys of cotton textile mills and iron foundries, homeless squatters, squalid slums, overcrowding, traffic congestion, etc. on the one hand and sprawling new modern suburbs, multi-storeyed flats, universities and technical institutions, magnificent Radha Krishna Temple and spacious zoo, Ganesh Udyan, Nanarao and Brijendra Swaroop parks, on the other. The metropolis epitomizes overwhelming contradictions and incongruities of physical structure, functional morphology and human situation.

Nestling along the high natural levee of river Ganga, Kanpur enjoys a nodal location in the heart of the northern plains of India. Lucknow, the state capital lies at a distance of only 72 km, New Delhi 425 km, Kolkata-1004 km and Mumbai 1342 km. There are seven railway lines radiating from Kanpur i.e., five broad gauge railway lines linking it to Lucknow and Allahabad, Banda, Jhansi and Etawah and two metre-gauge lines to Lucknow and Farrukhabad and then onwards to different
parts of the country. Similarly there are seven major roads including the Grand Trunk connecting Amritsir and Howrah.

Like many major cities of India, Kanpur is also situated on the bank of the Ganges, the largest perennial river of north plains. The north-west to south east elongation of this physiographic feature has restricted the spread of this metropolis towards the east and insulated it from the recurring floods.

The present spatial matrix of Kanpur forms an oblong rectangle with a north-west to south east distance of about 36 km and east-west distance of nearly 15 km. between the Ganges and the Pandu rivers. The city lies in the central part of the humid mesothermal (CWg) climo-statistical region of north India, having a sub-tropical continental climate, transitional between the hot and relatively dry part of western India and warm humid part of lower Ganga.

Broadly speaking, though the pattern of morphological growth of the metropolis reflected the concentric zonation, the later stage of its growth assumed sectoral pattern. During the recent decades, the rapid sprawl of the metropolis has begun to show the signs of multi-nuclei pattern of growth. At present, the oblong rectangular shape of the metropolitan space of Kanpur
with north-west to south-east elongation contains within its limits overwhelming contradictions and incongruities, not only in terms of its physical build, multifarious economic activities and transport linkages but also in density of population, living style he overall quality of life.

"Like the crystallisation of mass around a nucleus, 11,639 inhabited revenue villages and 96 urban centres form the nodal matrix for spatio-functional organization of the urban society of Kanpur region. The colossal dominance of Kanpur metropolis in its region is clearly reflected in its disproportionate population more then half of total urban population growth as it has accomodated more of the region since 1951. Such numerical disfunctionality of urbanization in the region is further indicated by the primacy index of the metropolis". The metropolis had a high degree of primacy as in 1951 it was 8.78 times larger than the second largest centre in the region. This trend was further intensified in the next two decades when in 1961, Kanpur was 10.27 times larger than the second largest centre. In the next two decades, this two city primcary index indicated downward trend as it was 10.19 in 1981 and 10.61 in 1991. Similarly, the metropolis happens to possess 79.62 per cent of the total industrial units and 91.78 per cent of the total industrial workers
of the region. In terms of the provision of socio-economic services and other facilities, Kanpur has emerged as a great regional magnet controlling about 540 central places. This has resulted in poor coordination of the metropolis and other central places of region, aggravating regional inequalities and creating colossal problems of unemployment, poverty and socio-economic stagnation in the greater part of the region on the one hand and traffic congestion, housing shortages, slums, squatter settlements and encroachments, over burdened infrastructure and the overall degeneration in the metropolis on the other hand.

The ‘ahatas’ of Kanpur dot the whole city with only few exceptions in the suburban parts of the metropolis where newly built middle class residential colonies, institutes of national repute, university etc. are coming up. Its the central part of the city with some stretched out areas and the industrial and factory zones that account for almost 40-50 percent of the total slums of Kanpur. Being industrially and commercially focussed and concentrated area, this area exhibits a preponderance of business outlets and wholesale shops, restuarants, banks and places of public entertainment and recreation which are operated on commercial lines like cinema halls and brothels.
Chapter Two Kanpur Slums

It is this zone of Kanpur which was, first of all, inhabited by immigrants to the metropolis. Business and industry acted as magnets to a large number of traders, merchants, artisans, skilled and unskilled workers, mechanics, casual laborers etc. who came and started establishing their abodes there.

As has already been mentioned in the previous section, though, the ahata (slum) formation can be traced back to the inflow of British merchants into the city, their actual growth started since 1931 because maximum number of ahata have come up in the succeeding years. These ahatas were developed by the Mill owners/landlords on private land to provide accommodation as night shelters to the industrial laborers rented at cheaper rates near the industrial locations. The earlier ahatas were having few dwelling units clustered around the open space. Now the situation has become very grave due to vertical expansion being done by the landlords for accommodating newcomers.

Some of the rest of the slums of the city lie adjoining one or the other middle class or posh residential locality, along the railway tracks and on the bank of the Ganga canal which cuts the city into two portions. Planned residential colonies like Govind Nagar, Saket Nagar, Barra, Sarvodaya Nagar, Pandu
Nagar, Ranjeet Nagar, Azad Nagar, Harsha Nagar, Indira Nagar normally incorporate within their vicinity patches of slums.

Apart from such slums, the old compact residential parts of the metropolis forming its main nucleus, comprise a large zone of mohallas like Bhusatoli, Harvansh Mahal, Gwaltoli, Moolganj, Bansmandi etc., some of which have also been categorized as portions resembling slums, particularly their original residential spots as different from later-on-emerging extended parts. As works of renovation or repairing are normally not done, the dwelling structures are dilapidated as well as overcrowded due to the very limited space and continuously increasing family size.

The housing areas of labour colonies either as employer’s colonies like McRobertsganj, Allenganj, Elgin Mill Settlement, Kamala Nagar etc. or Government and Semi-Government labour colonies such as Bapupurwa colony, Govindnagar colony, Benajhawar Road, Vishnupuri colony etc. also account for some of the slum settlements. As neither the employers, be it private or Government or the inhabitants themselves on their own ever made efforts to provide the fundamental physical necessities, other facilities and amenities in these colonies in an adequate measure, and also due to a substantial contraction in the industrial job opportunities and consequent deterioration in the
economic conditions of the inhabitants of these residential areas, they acquired almost all the characteristic features of slums.

There are numerous railway lines in the metropolis which crisscross the city and almost everywhere, there are patches of slums adjoining these tracks. A number of them belong to the category of slums that have recently sprung up. Also, the lower Ganga Canal cuts the city into two halves. The poor people have inhabited the area comprising the bank of this canal.

Summarizing, we can say that slums of Kanpur, among themselves, reflect variations in origin, welling structures etc. The explanations accounting for the emergence of ahatas and the way they have come up are different in case of different slum clusters. However one common thread that run through all of them is the deprivation of the slum inhabitants and their exclusion and separateness from the main urban fabric of the city.
2.3 BASIC PROBLEMS

Living conditions of the inhabitants of Kanpur slums are extremely poor due to inadequate provision of infrastructure, shelter and basic services. Kanpur, being the hub of industrial and modern technological development, has acted as a magnet and its level of industrialisation, employment opportunities, both in the formal and informal sectors of its economy, educational development, amenities and facilities in the field of transportation, electricity and other such concomitant advancements have attracted thousands of immigrants from far and wide. Majority of the inhabitants of the slum localities of Kanpur are the immigrants from the nearby districts like Pratapgarh, Lucknow, Sitapur etc. These people experienced both pull and push pressures simultaneously and the net effect was in terms of their shifting to Kanpur. As the jobs in which most of them landed were hardly income fetching, they started inhabiting the settlements which were already exhibiting almost all features of slum life like, overcrowding, dilapidated dwellings, poverty, unhygienic sanitation, malnourished children and adults, an above average rate of prevalence of infant mortality,
morbidity, poor child delivery services, complete absence of any educational facilities, lack of vocational training opportunities, the squandering away of the most productive phase of life by a majority of the youths, an almost subservient status of women the dwellers' indulgence with immoral, socially despised behavioural patterns, destructive forms of activities like drug abuse, sexual perversion etc. The quality of life of these people is poor due also to their poor health status with a high incidence of water-borne communicable diseases such as gastroenteritis, cholera, hepatitis skin, eye, throat ailments. The processes of technological modernization, urbanization and industrialization in the metropolis injected situations of wide disparity in the levels of living, income and development of human facilities much more so among the rural migrants living in degraded environment forming such slum and squatter colonies without the basic facilities and services. Second World War and influx of refugees as a result of Partition have been regarded as the two major factors accountable for the further deterioration in the situation when in spite of the existence of 1919 Improvement Act, no perceptible change had occurred in the civic amenities. Thereafter breeding of slums developed, Kanpur, being a well-connected city. Such an
inflow of population brought about shortage in housing quantitatively as well as qualitatively. According to an old survey, 32 persons/house in the built up area was reported. On the fringe of the city, several village type settlements in particular on the southern part which were included within the municipal limits did not have any civic amenities. Besides the menace of over-crowding, the insanitation in Ahatas, i.e., the slums grew proverbial in the city. The factories in Kanpur built only slums and did not think of developing the settlements for the labour, consequently the industrial labor was drawn in the laps of private enterprises which developed the institution of "Ahatas" which became a vested interest and produced a crew of small and big exploiting individuals/families to extort high rents along with ghastly or no service facilities for the industrial labour for that matter the slum-dwellers is regulated by the income earned by them but, for casually employed, it is difficult to figure out his real income. The following definition of the "Ahata" will provide some insight into few of the problems encountered by the dwellers of these "ahata". "An ahata is a group of tenements not being less than 9 in number and each of the tenement has 2 or less than 2 rooms which are intended for human habitation.
Again the tenement is defined as a house or building or portion thereof which is let out for residence of four or more families living independently and cooking independently of each other and having a common right in the halls, stair cases, yard or cellar".

The existence of slums on such a vast scale in this metropolis is one of the most evident symbols of the failure of this apparently "progressing" city to uniformly spread the benefits of development that has supposedly taken place. Some economists and industrial experts have hinted at the existence of economic industrial stagnation in Kanpur particularly during the last decade of the last century. Increases in urbanization and a tertiary employment in the absence of economic growth in the city or a growing secondary sector are seen as pathological and are used to explain the apparent marginalization of the large number of slum dwellers who are observed swarming the ahatas and ghettos. Such a skewed urbanization is not without its social cost. It is bringing to the city slums, ever increasing overcrowding, substandard housing, insanitary conditions, diseases and general community disorganization. These "ahatas" have generally been the most neglected settlements of Kanpur,
overcrowded with dilapidated housing, insufficient communications, inadequate amenities, absence of social services, welfare agencies all of which combine to breed many social problems. There is general apathy, lack of cohesion and an indifferent attitude. The cause of housing shortage is found not only in the unequal distribution of income and wealth but also in legal ignorance. As we have already seen in the previous section that a majority of the slum dwellers in this city are illiterate, the acquisition of legal forms of tenure is beyond their reach, not only because they are poor but also because of illiteracy and general ignorance. Most of the ahata dwellers were found to have a diet far below the standard balanced diet. Their dwellings are impermanent and liable to destruction by fire and floods. The lands on which they squatter or erect their shelter belong in most of the cases, to either the Government, Corporation or private individuals. They bristle with severe sociological evils. Juvenile delinquency, gambling, ticketless travelling, tresspassing, bootlegging, theft, pickpocketting etc. are most common.

Following are some of the most pressing, difficulties, deficiencies deprivations prevalent in the "ahatas" of Kanpur.
1. There is very inadequate and unsatisfactory drinking water availability. The few public handpumps that have been provided are hardly commensurate to the requirements. In the slum localities where piped water has been provided, it is available for short durations at a low pressure and the supply is often erratic. A large number of persons being dependent on one handpump results in long queues and hours of waiting. The per capita water consumption is, therefore, extremely low in such slum localities. It seems that the problem for them is not of non-affordability of the current (monthly) expenses of having piped water supply but that of the capital cost of installation. Given that public funds available for tackling the problem have gone down over the years the private entrepreneurs are unlikely to find this sector financially lucrative, the deterioration in water situation in recent years is understandable. Further, seepage of sewer water through corroded water pipes is common which results in epidemics.

2. In most of the ahatas, the dwellers are devoid of any personal toilet. They have to depend upon the public toilet which in a number of cases is not free of cost. They seem
to have no other option except open defecation which, of course, is widely prevalent. Even the condition of public latrine, sometimes, becomes bad unbearable due to overcrowding, poor and improper maintenance and also due to the and indifferent attitude and poor hygienic sense of the users themselves. There is problem with the availability of adequate water mugs/cans needed for personal ablution purposes as well as cleanliness in the latrine. The overall problems with the old community latrines are very acute. There appears to be hardly any incentive for the people to use them. Viewed from any consideration namely quality of construction cleanliness, hygiene etc. the conditions of old latrines are most deplorable. Technically these latrines have many poles.

3. Drains, more often than not, develop defects due to which their proper functioning gets affected.

4. The acute problem of unsound condition of lanes, by lanes and streets in the slum localities is hardly to be missed. In most of the cases they are without any lighting facility, brick-paving has been done but it is not universal in the
sense that not all the slums and bastees have been provided this amenity nor all the lanes and bylanes even in an individual basti are fortunate to enjoy this facility. In a number of cases, they have developed mounds which hampers the smooth movement. Occasionally, accidental of the individuals and incurring of minor injuries are also reported.

5. Electricity:– Less than half of the slum households have proper electricity connections (legal and metered) Majority of the dwellers use non-electricity sources for lighting purposes. The supply is also very erratic. Street lighting is virtually non-existent. The factors like location of the toilet complex, capacity of the people to pay for usage of these facilities, level of literacy and civic sense of the people and the capacity of the toilet complex are major determining factors for its usage. There is also the problem of inadequacy of support amenities like water for cleaning and electricity for lighting.

6. Street electric poles (where this facility has been provided) are virtually without any bulbs or tubelights. Even after
making numerous representations and appeals and after receiving numerous assurances. The problem doesn’t disappear as most of the times the assurances prove hollow.

7. Dwelling structures in majority of the cases are unspacious, overcrowded, unventilated, dilapidated, have run down walls and roofs and hardly adequate for a decent human living. There is no security of privacy. Young couples and other members of the family are compelled to sleep in the same room. All such factors combine to give birth to such socially despised behavioural patterns as perverted sex and promiscuity, incest. Such an unnatural sexual perversion gives rise to serious sexual disorders which also explains a relatively high prevalence rate of such diseases in the ahatas as compared to non-slum localities. Moreover, new rural dwellers from the adjoining districts continue to pour into the metropolis due to population pressure and agricultural stagnation in the villages. The almost decelerated and stagnant pace of industrialization in the city itself especially during the last ten years has almost contracted the job opportunities. Consequently job seekers
ultimately enter the informal sector in the form of street vendors, hawkers petty shopkeepers, rikshaw pullers, cart pullers, labourers etc. Being unable to land in jobs fetching more than subsistence income they just crowd these deteriorated and dilapidated "ahatas’ and further degrade the already sub-human existence.

8. Related with the above mentioned problem is the non-regularization of and non-entitlement to the dwelling land due to which the residents live in a constant fear of eviction. This fear prevents them from undertaking shelter upgradation and improvements programmes.

9. Even in cases where some of the infrastructural amenities have been provided, more often than not, their quality is unsatisfactory. The services start developing problems, in some cases, within the first year of their provision. The difficulties may be related with the design of the plan, the sub-standard quality of the materials used, the use of less than required amount of the materials etc.

10. An overwhelming majority of the migrants who come and find accommodation in the ahatas are generally poor not
only in terms of their current earnings and incomes but also their potential learning capabilities as a preponderant of them are almost illiterate, unskilled or semi-skilled and without any hope of ever enhancing their earning capabilities. Infrastructure and urban basic service deficiencies reflect poverty of the urban bodies and authorities than its people in contributing to the growth of the slum population. Also, almost 50-60 per cent of the earned money would be spent on activities like gambling, movie watching, drinking etc. and ultimately they will be left with little to spend on such constructive activities like school fees for their children, shelter upgradation and acquisition of skills to enhance their earning capabilities.

11. Poor health status of the slum inhabitants also can not be missed, almost all the health indicators like people’s morbidity rate, mother’s and child mortality rate, low birth weight among the new borns, prevalence, of infectious and communicable diseases, nutritional deprivation among the children, pregnant and lactating mothers, a tendency of neglecting the health particularly of the vulnerable sections
like pregnant mothers and infants reveal a depressing picture.

12. In a significant proportion of the slums, the primary and pre-primary educational facilities are either non-existent or the quality of service delivery is very poor. But this does not mean that the dwellers don’t want to set their children educated. In fact, a reasonably good number of slum children attend private schools situated in the vicinity of their cluster.

13. Lack of community cohesiveness, community feeling and brotherhood, community initiative and sense of belongingness are very often associated with the slum life and cited as some of the major impediments in effecting any environmental improvement programme. Policy makers, programmers and implementing personnel generally attribute the failure of the programmes, among others to the uncaring attitude of the slum dwellers towards improving their conditions, lack of traditions of participation in the developmental efforts and other such variables. But the perception of the slum dwellers is that it’s
the government officials who regard them as unwise and uncared for people which makes it difficult for them to participate fully in the programs. Whatever may be the argument, their is no denying of the fact that the slum dwellers are lacking in any sense of community organization. Also, they seem to be much less empowered. Empowerment means people have a proportionate sharing in the fruits of development that their society experiences. This means people are able to realize, articulate and plan ameliorative programmes themselves for the needs deficiencies and deprivations in their whole set up of living. In almost all such fundamental community requirements, the ahati dwellers of Kanpur are utterly lacking. Frequent quarrelling and wrangling will erupt in the most minor of the Basti issues. There is an acute lack of responsible, accountable and dedicated leadership in these communities. Political exploitation of the Basti dwellers on the lines of caste and community is rampant. The local elected political representative’s callous attitude towards the Basti problems is a recurrent complaint.
A number of the above mentioned factors are, more often than not, associated with non-slum communities also but their requirement is felt more severely and their absence is more chilling in slum communities.

14. Poor maintenance of the services provided, irresponsible and callousness use, apathy of the government officials and more importantly the perception among the slum-dwellers that they are destined to live in such wretchedness and misery are also among the constraints and inhibiting factors of slum life. Lack of the integration of the dwellers with the general urban fabric, prevalence of a feeling of being among the city's excluded and marginalized and problems associated with the slum dwellers' socio-psychological dimension are very striking. Lack of empowerment prevents them from approaching the government department regarding their problems. Their accessibility to public institutional establishments is almost negligible or virtually non-existent.

In the conclusion, we can say that the problems which the "ahata dwellers" are facing are multidimensional. The broad
Reference:


3. Socio-economic Survey of Kanpur Slums; conducted by the Kanpur Development Authority in 1997-98.

