



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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**India's cities are not poised to handle urbanization well. Janaagraha's Annual Survey of India's City-Systems (ASICS) 2016 reveals several systemic inadequacies in urban governance that could affect public service delivery.**

Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy (Janaagraha) released results of its Annual Survey of India's City-Systems (ASICS) for 2016. The survey, which looks at 83 governance parameters based on the City-Systems framework, shows that Indian cities score between 2.1 and 4.4 on 10, as against the global benchmarks of London and New York, which score 9.3 and 9.8 respectively. As was reinforced in the recently released Economic Survey using ASICS 2015 data, there is a strong correlation between urban governance and quality of service delivery. These low scores imply that Indian cities need to strengthen their city-systems i.e. quality of laws, policies and institutions significantly to improve service delivery and thereby, deliver a high quality of life to citizens.

Thiruvananthapuram retained its number one position in 2016. Pune came in at second, up two ranks over 2015 and Kolkata, third, same as 2015. The biggest gainer in 2016 was Bhubaneswar, which jumped eight ranks over 2015 to the 10<sup>th</sup> spot. This was on the back of a slew of reforms such as instituting Municipal cadres, tiered spatial planning including ward level plans and instituting a single window clearance process for development projects that are in conformity with plans. On the other hand, Bengaluru dropped four places to rank 16 due to better performance by some of the smaller cities. Jaipur improved its scores on the back of passage of the Rajasthan Urban Land (Certification of Titles) Bill that enabled better urban land utilisation while Chennai slipped due to Tamil Nadu's legislation to elect Mayors through indirect elections.

Speaking at the release of the scores Srikanth Viswanathan, CEO – Janaagraha said "ASICS aims to serve as an annual health check-up of the quality of laws, policies, institutions and institutional processes underlying quality of life in our cities. It aims to push the envelope on city governance reforms in India through data and insights. We believe ASICS can provide the common frame of reference for political and administrative leaders, business and academia, media and civil society, in different cities to converge on their agenda for transformative reforms in their respective cities."

India's cities have continued to score low over the last four editions of ASICS. This indicates that progress on fixing City-Systems has been slow. This is particularly worrisome, given the pace at which India is urbanising and the already poor state of public service delivery in urban India. **The ASICS report is designed to help city leaders pin point issues in urban governance in their cities and help them chart out a reform roadmap to make their more liveable.**

**The major issues plaguing our cities are similar across cities and include:**

**Urban Planning:**

1. Absence of tiered and participatory Spatial Development Plans (SDPs) – Regional, Municipal and Ward Level, with Delhi being an exception
2. Lack of institutional capacities to effectively implement SDPs – number of competent personnel for development and no policies to deter violations
3. Absence of design standards to guide execution of city projects

**Urban Capacities & Resources:**

1. No access over buoyant revenue streams such as stamp duties, professional tax etc.,
2. Absence of audited balance sheets
3. Outdated Cadre & Recruitment rules resulting in ineffective staffing and
4. No real time works management to track lifecycle of all civic works, except Bengaluru

Empowered & Legitimate Political Representation:

1. Weak mayoral systems - many cities grant a one year term to the Mayor and many have indirectly elected Mayors
2. Weak devolution of power to the Council with regards to core governance aspects – urban planning, socio-economic planning and key services like water and transport

Transparency, Accountability & Participation:

1. Absence of institutional public participation platforms such as Area Sabhas
2. Inadequate complaint management systems such as Ombudsman

**ASICS 2016 – Scores and Overall Rank**

City	UPD	UCR	ELPR	TAP	Average Score	Rank	Rank 2015
Thiruvananthapuram	2.4	2.6	6.4	6.2	4.4	1	1
Pune	1.9	4.6	5.1	5.1	4.2	2	4
Kolkata	3	3.4	6	4.1	4.1	3	3
Mumbai	2.5	5.2	4.6	3.9	4.1	4	2
Hyderabad	2.9	3.2	3.3	6.2	3.9	5	6
Bhopal	2.4	2.4	4.7	5	3.7	6	5
Kanpur	2.6	2.5	4.4	5	3.6	7	9
Chennai	2.9	3.4	4.8	3.3	3.6	8	8
Delhi	3.7	4.5	3.7	2.4	3.6	9	7
Bhubaneswar	3.1	3.2	3.6	4	3.5	10	18
Patna	2.2	3.3	4.6	3.4	3.4	11	11
Lucknow	2.4	2.2	4.4	4.4	3.4	12	10
Ranchi	1.8	3.4	5.5	2.6	3.3	13	14
Ahmedabad	2.4	3.8	4	3.1	3.3	14	16
Raipur	1.8	1.4	5.9	4.2	3.3	15	13
Bengaluru	2.7	2.4	2.6	5.4	3.3	16	12
Surat	2.4	4.1	3.8	2.7	3.2	17	15
Dehradun	2.6	1.6	5	3	3.1	18	17
Ludhiana	2.2	1.6	4.1	4.1	3	19	19
Jaipur	2.9	1.9	3.7	2.2	2.7	20	20
Chandigarh	0.6	2.4	3	2.5	2.1	21	21
London	9.6	9.7	10	8.2	9.3		
New York	9.9	9.8	10	9.6	9.8		

## Section Scores and Ranks

### Urban Planning and Design

City	Ranks	UPD Scores
Delhi	1	3.7
Bhubaneswar	2	3.1
Kolkata	3	3
Hyderabad	4	2.9
Chennai	5	2.9
Jaipur	6	2.9
Bengaluru	7	2.7
Kanpur	8	2.6
Dehradun	9	2.6
Mumbai	10	2.5
Thiruvananthapuram	11	2.4
Bhopal	12	2.4
Lucknow	13	2.4
Ahmedabad	14	2.4
Surat	15	2.4
Patna	16	2.2
Ludhiana	17	2.2
Pune	18	1.9
Ranchi	19	1.8
Raipur	20	1.8
Chandigarh	21	0.6
London		9.6
New York		9.9

### Urban Capacities and Resources

City	Ranks	UCR Scores
Mumbai	1	5.2
Pune	2	4.6
Delhi	3	4.5
Surat	4	4.1
Ahmedabad	5	3.8
Kolkata	6	3.4
Chennai	7	3.4
Ranchi	8	3.4
Patna	9	3.3
Hyderabad	10	3.2
Bhubaneswar	11	3.2
Thiruvananthapuram	12	2.6
Kanpur	13	2.5
Bhopal	14	2.4
Bengaluru	15	2.4
Chandigarh	16	2.4
Lucknow	17	2.2
Jaipur	18	1.9
Dehradun	19	1.6
Ludhiana	20	1.6
Raipur	21	1.4
London		9.7
New York		9.8

## Empowered and Legitimate Political Representations    Transparency, Accountability and Participation

City	Ranks	ELPR Scores
Thiruvananthapuram	1	6.4
Kolkata	2	6
Raipur	3	5.9
Ranchi	4	5.5
Pune	5	5.1
Dehradun	6	5
Chennai	7	4.8
Bhopal	8	4.7
Mumbai	9	4.6
Patna	10	4.6
Kanpur	11	4.4
Lucknow	12	4.4
Ludhiana	13	4.1
Ahmedabad	14	4
Surat	15	3.8
Delhi	16	3.7
Jaipur	17	3.7
Bhubaneswar	18	3.6
Hyderabad	19	3.3
Chandigarh	20	3
Bengaluru	21	2.6
London		10
New York		10

City	Ranks	TAP Sores
Thiruvananthapuram	1	6.2
Hyderabad	2	6.2
Bengaluru	3	5.4
Pune	4	5.1
Bhopal	5	5
Kanpur	6	5
Lucknow	7	4.4
Raipur	8	4.2
Kolkata	9	4.1
Ludhiana	10	4.1
Bhubaneswar	11	4
Mumbai	12	3.9
Patna	13	3.4
Chennai	14	3.3
Ahmedabad	15	3.1
Dehradun	16	3
Surat	17	2.7
Ranchi	18	2.6
Chandigarh	19	2.5
Delhi	20	2.4
Jaipur	21	2.2
London		8.2
New York		9.6

### About ASICS

ASICS is an objective evaluation of the quality of governance in our cities. Like a thorough health check-up, it highlights the deep systemic flaws that exist in urban governance. ASICS 2016 evaluates 21 major cities from 18 states across the country. Using Janaagraha's City-Systems framework as its basis, the survey evaluates cities across 83 detailed parameters. The better a city scores in the ASICS survey, the more likely that it will be able to deliver better quality of life to citizens over the medium and long-term.

Every year, we see several of our cities' challenges making headlines in newspapers and occupying prime time on news television. The same events recur, just like the monsoons that greet us every year and bring with them the familiar sights of waterlogging, potholes and endless traffic jams. Incidents like the air pollution in Mumbai due to burning garbage, alarming air pollution levels in Delhi and the devastating floods in Chennai all remind us of events from the past, perhaps from the same city. This strongly suggests that the traditional Indian band-aid approach, also known as 'jugaad', to solving these challenges simply do not work. Our cities' challenges are too deep for us to take just tactical stabs at them. The root causes, that lie deep within urban governance systems need to be identified and addressed; we need to move from fixing symptoms to fixing systems.

The systems that underlie urban governance are what we collectively refer to as “City-Systems”. “City-systems” refer to laws, policies, quality of institutions and accountability mechanisms that drive or give rise to the quality of life that we experience in our daily lives. ‘City-Systems’ are interconnected and interdependent and emphasise the systemic nature of our cities, their challenges and solutions. The City-Systems framework, comprises four distinct but inter-related components namely:

- Urban Planning and Design (Spatial Planning, Urban design standards)
- Urban Capacities and Resources (Municipal Finance, Municipal Staffing, IT)
- Empowered and Legitimate Political Representation (powers and functions of city council, their legitimacy) and
- Transparency, Accountability and Participation (public disclosure, accountability for service levels)

The ASICS 2016 report can be accessed here:

Highlights and key takeaways from the report can be accessed here:

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**About Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy (Janaagraha)**

Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy (Janaagraha) is a Bengaluru based not-for-profit institution that is a part of the Jana group. Janaagraha’s mission is to transform quality of life in India’s cities and towns. It defines quality of life as comprising quality of infrastructure and services and quality of citizenship. To achieve its mission, Janaagraha works with citizens to catalyse active citizenship in city neighbourhoods and with governments to institute reforms to City-Systems. You can read more about Janaagraha at [www.janaagraha.org](http://www.janaagraha.org).

**About Jana Urban Space Foundation (Jana USP)**

Jana Urban Space is a Professional Services Social Enterprise (PSSE), delivering transformational, world-class work on the spatial dimension of India’s cities. Jana USP has four inter-disciplinary Studios - Urban Planning Studio; Urban Design Studio; Spatial Mapping and Analytics Studio; and Architecture and Design Studio. The multiple studios reflect Jana USP’s systems-driven approach to addressing urban Spatial challenges. Jana Urban Space is a not-for-profit entity. You can read more about Jana USP at [www.janausp.org](http://www.janausp.org)