Slum Demolitions in Delhi since the 1990s : An Appraisal

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The redevelopment and beautification of the capital for the making of a "world-class city" have entailed a heavy cost in terms of slum demolitions. A survey documenting the change of land use that has taken place on the sites of demolished slum clusters highlights the emerging processes and trends. Some of its findings question the stated principle of the Delhi slum policy, namely, the removal and relocation of squatter settlements only when the land is required to implement projects in the "larger public interest". The preparation for the 2010 Commonwealth Games further provides the urban authorities with an opportune context to "clean up" the city from its slums.

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Slum demolitions in Delhi and the new land use on the evacuated sites have been contributing to the restructuring of the urban space in the capital. This article focuses on the period starting in the beginning of the 1990s, marked by the opening and liberalisation of the Indian economy, till 2007. This context of globalisation and the aspiration of the capital city to become "a global metropolis and a world-class city" [DDA 2007: Introduction] had a decisive impact on the direction followed to transform the land use and reshape the urban landscape. It was in 1990 that the government of Delhi adopted a "new" Delhi slum policy, which remains the general reference frame, reiterated in the Master Plan for Delhi 2021, although the resettlement strategy for the evicted slum dwellers was challenged by recent court orders.
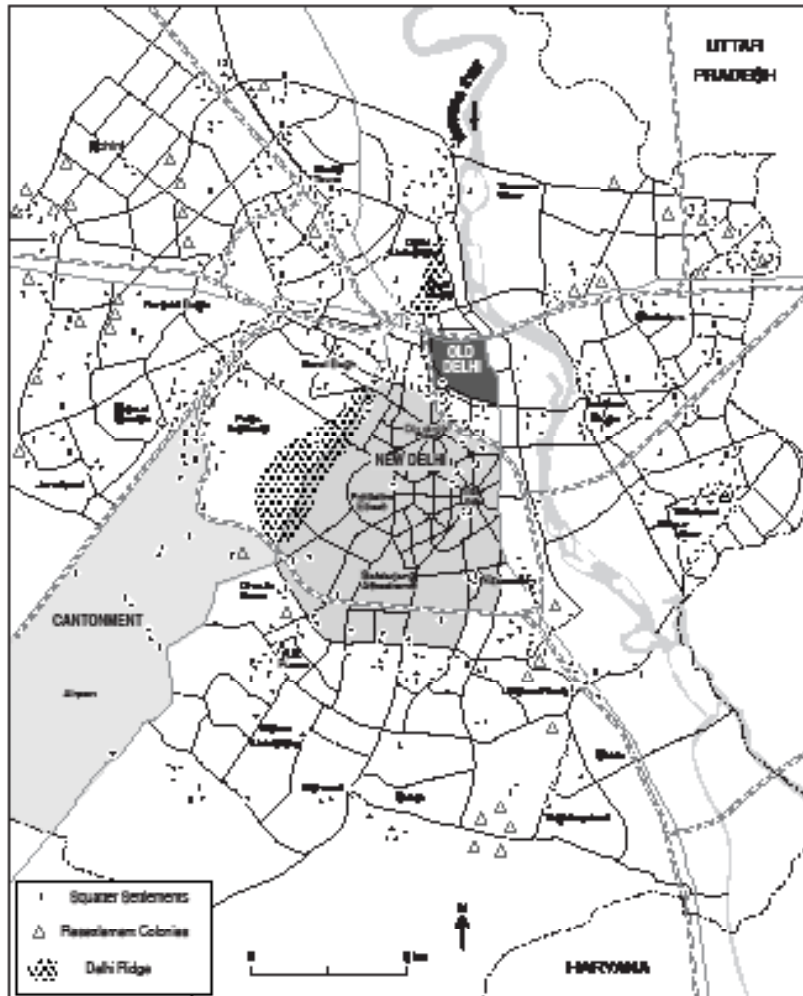
In this context, significant features of the slum policy will be recalled in the first section. Our research aims at analysing the change of land use that has taken place on the sites of demolished slum settlements, and to find out whether any pattern may emerge. This will allow us to better appraise which sections of the population have benefited – or may benefit – from the "redevelopment" projects of the concerned areas, which sections have been excluded and which zones of the city were involved. Although one can find a few papers, which deal with slum demolitions and highlight revealing examples of new land use [Batra and Mehra 2006; Baviskar 2006], we did not find any systematic analysis of the land use patterns on demolished sites. Thus, our contribution is based on first-hand data collected through a methodical field survey, preceded by a critical assessment and analysis of the data available on slum settlements and their demolition.

The term "slum" refers in this article to the locally called 'jhuggi-jhompri' (JJ) clusters, where the physical precariousness of housing and informal layout are combined to the precariousness of the occupancy status – or, in juridical terms, to the illegality of the occupation of the land. For the planning authorities and the judiciary this signifies squatter settlements, i e, lands occupied and built upon without the permission of the landowning agency.

1 Slum and Urban Policies

Despite its initial stated good intention to integrate people with low incomes into the urban fabric [DDA 1957, 1962], the public policy of urban planning and housing implemented by the Delhi Development Authorities (DDA) failed to meet the demand of the poorest section of the population. Thus, the latter resorted to informal habitat, and had no option but to occupy vacant lands, essentially public land,[1] where they self-constructed makeshift housing – or JJs. We have analysed elsewhere the discrepancy

Map 1: Squatter Settlements and Resettlement Colonies in Delhi Urban Agglomeration (1990)

Source: Slum and Jhuggi Jhompri Department, Municipal Corporation of Delhi.
Sabir Ali 'Slums within Slums: A Study of Resettlement Colonies in Delhi', Council for Social Development, New Delhi ,1990.

5 per cent in 1951 and 18 per cent in 1991 – but occupying only less than 6 per cent of the city land.[2] (The estimates of the slum population in the more recent years are discussed later.)

All these figures underline the inadequacy of the various slum clearance programmes implemented since the 1950s as well as the inability of the DDA to provide affordable housing for the poor. In the next sub-section, we shall refer only to the "three-pronged strategy" implemented since 1990, and which in fact integrates several elements that were already implemented in the previous schemes.

1.1 The Delhi Slum Policy since 1990

In 1990-91, the government of Delhi adopted a "three-pronged strategy" for dealing with squatter settlements, which was approved by the DDA in 1992, and included the following [MCD 2000]:[3]
– in situ upgradation for the clusters whose "encroached land pockets are not required by the concerned landowning agencies for another 15 to 20 years for any project implementation";
– relocation of jhuggi-jhompri clusters that are located on land required to implement projects in the *"larger public interest"* [MCD 2000 – emphasis added];
– environmental improvement of urban slums, based on the provision of basic amenities for community use, in other clusters irrespective of the status of the encroached land.

Putting apart the last dimension of the policy, which can be considered as an interim and complementary measure at minima, the strategy of in situ upgradation was implemented only in a very few cases,[4] and the prevalent strategy in Delhi has been the removal of squatter settlements and their relocation – or rather conditional relocation (as explained later). The same three-pronged strategy is restated in the *Master Plan for Delhi 2021*:

> Insofar as the existing squatter settlements are concerned, the present threefold strategy of relocation from areas required for public purpose, in situ upgradation at other sites to be selected on the basis of specific parameters and environmental upgradation to basic minimum standards shall be allowed as an interim measure. Rest of the clusters, till they are covered by either of the first two components of the strategy, should be continued [DDA 2007, Section 4.2.3.1].

For the purpose of this article, we shall underline only a couple of relevant features of the Delhi JJ resettlement scheme, which does not involve rehousing but simple relocation on developed plots in "resettlement colonies". An essential element of this policy stated clearly that residents would not be removed without alternatives –

> On one hand, no fresh encroachment shall be permitted on public land, and on the other hand, past encroachment which had been in existence prior to 31.01.1990 *would not be removed without providing alternatives* [MCD 2000 – emphasis added].

between the declared social objective of the initial DDA policy and its achievements as well as the reasons for this failure [Dupont and Ramanathan forthcoming]. To emphasise this point, it suffices to mention the startling findings of a study commissioned in 2003 by the DDA to the association of urban management and development authorities in order to assess its track record.

> For low-income housing, the DDA was to develop 27,487 hectares of land in the 20-year period of the first master plan. Of this, only 15,540 was acquired. Similarly, in 1962, the total existing urban residential land was 4,694 hectares. The plan proposed to add another 14,479 hectares by 1981. But the land actually developed was only 7,316 hectares. Roughly half the projected residential land was not developed [Bhan 2006].

It is therefore not surprising to observe a continuous increase of the population of the JJ clusters – or squatter settlements – from the 1950s till the 1990s, notwithstanding the notable exception of the 1975-77 Emergency period (Table 1, p 81)). In 1998, the population living in squatter settlements was estimated at around three million people, scattered in around 1,100 clusters of varied sizes throughout the urban area (see Map 1 for the situation in 1990), and accounting for about 27 per cent of the total urban population – as against

In 2000, the cut-off date and eligibility criterion for resettlement was extended from January 1990 to December 1998 (on the basis of the ration card), while introducing a differentiation in the size of the allocated plot: 18 sq m to pre-1990 squatter families, and 12.5 sq m to families possessing ration cards post-January 1990 up to December 1998. This differential criterion has important consequences that will be evoked in the next section.

An additional point that deserves mention is the consideration of the "larger public interest" to justify the removal of squatter settlements and the implementation of projects on the land cleared thus. Our survey of the demolished JJ sites will question this stated rationale.

Table 1: Evolution in the Number and the Population of JJ Clusters – Squatter Settlements – in Delhi from 1951 to 1998

	JJ Clusters (1)					Delhi Urban Agglomeration(2)		Population of
Year	No of JJ Clusters	No of Housing Units (or Households)	Estimated Population (No of Households X 5)	Annual Average Growth Rate of the Population (%)	Ten-Year Growth Rate of the Population (%)	Population	Ten-Year Growth Rate of the Population (%)	JJ Clusters/ Total Urban Population (%)
1951	199	12,749	63,745			14,37,134	106.6	4.4
1956		22,415	1,12,075	11.95				
1961		42,815	2,14,075	13.82	235	23,59,408	64.2	9.1
1966		42,668	2,13,340	-0.07				
1971		62,594	3,12,970	7.97	46	36,47,023	54.6	8.6
1973	1,373	98,483	4,92,415	25.43				
1977		20,000	1,00,000	-32.87				
1981		98,709	4,93,545	49.05	130	57,29,283	57.1	8.6
1983		113,386	5,66,930	7.18				
1985	400	1,50,000	7,50,000	15.02				
1986		2,00,000	10,00,000	33.33				
1987		2,25,000	11,25,000	12.50				
1990	929	2,59,929	1,299,645	4.93				
1991			15,51,776*	16.63	214	84,19,084	46.9	18.4
1994	1,080	4,80,929	24,04,645	16.63				
1998	1,100	6,00,000	30,00,000	5.69		1,12,82,000*		27

* Own estimation.
Source: Compiled from the data of – (1) Slum and jhuggi-jhompri department and food and civil supplies department, Municipal Corporation of Delhi; 1990 (January) and 1994 (March): based on direct surveys; (2) Census of the Population 1951, 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991.

1.2 Intervention of the Judiciary

Despite the fact that the Delhi slum policy evinced some concern in protecting squatters' interests – or at least introduced some conditions to their eviction – the intervention by the judiciary in the last decade or so has undermined the policy to a large extent. As shown elsewhere [Ramanathan 2005, 2006; Dupont and Ramanathan forthcoming] some key judgments, in the Almitra Patel case (2000)[5] and the Okhla Factory Owners' Association case (2002),[6] deny the obligation of the state to provide resettlement alternatives to the evicted families.

In many cases the intervention of the courts was a response to petitioners representing the interests of industrialists or welfare resident associations, or, more generally of upper and middle income groups, who put forward environmental and sanitation considerations through public interest litigation (PIL), thus exacerbating the antagonism between the housing needs for the poor and the aspiration for a "clean and green" Delhi. The displayed slogan "Clean Delhi-Green Delhi"[7] is a reminder of the precedence of the "green agenda" over the "brown agenda"[8] in the capital, since "cleaning" the city also involves "slum clearance" and thus "cleaning up" the city from its slums and from slum-dwellers.[9] The massive evictions along the banks of the Yamuna river (the Yamuna Pushta slum clusters), where the argument of polluting the river was utilised by the Delhi High Court to justify the removal of all slum clusters (last order of March 3, 2003),[10] exemplify this antagonism. As underlined by a joint urgent action appeal by the Habitat International Coalition-Housing and Land Rights Network (HIC-HLRC) and the World Organisation against Torture (OMCT), this "ignored available evidence from a report on pollution by Hazard Centre,[11] which pointed out that the total discharge from the 3,00,000 residents of Yamuna Pushta accounted only for 0.33 per cent of the total sewage released into the river".[12] Whilst these figures would need further scrutinising, there is clearly a lack of reliable data to inform the debates and the court's decisions.

The rise of the environmentalists on the scene of urban governance involves activism and discourses, which are neither class neutral nor politically neutral. Thus, Baviskar (2002: 41) denounces "the increasing powerful presence of bourgeois environmentalism as an ideology shaping the landscapes" – especially, the urban ones, while Williams and Mawdsley (2006) question the postcolonial environmental justice in India and Mawdsley (2006) further highlights from a broader perspective the parallels between the discourses of the Hindu right and those of "neo-traditionalist environmentalists" in contemporary India.

1.3 The Economic Rationale

Practically all the resettlement colonies that were developed since the 1960s for relocating the inhabitants of the old city slums and demolished squatter settlements were situated, at the time of the installation of the initial group of occupants, on the periphery of the urban agglomeration (Map 1). Most resettlement colonies developed in the last 10 years are located even further away than the previous resettlement sites, in the rural-urban fringe of Delhi, up to 30 kms from the city centre (Map 2, p 82). The economic rationale for the demolition of slums and their relocation in distant peripheral zones is that the value of the land occupied by the JJ clusters in the city is much higher than that in the relocation sites. In the making of Delhi into a world-class city, especially with the perspective of the 2010 edition of the Commonwealth Games to be hosted by Delhi,[13] even unclaimed spaces that were squatted by the poor have become prime land, "ripe for development" [Baviskar 2006]. This is, for instance, the case of the Yamuna Pushta slums clusters settled in the floodplain area of the riverbed.

A study by the Centre for Urban and Regional Excellence [Khosla and Jha 2005] has undertaken a benefit-cost analysis to question the economic rationale of demolition and relocation of the poor informal settlements. The main arguments and factors taken into account in this revealing analysis are as follows:

> The major benefit of resettlement to the local government and city economy is the economic value of evacuated land. Evacuated land can be used for development projects such as hospitals, industrial units, etc, which in turn, generate employment and value addition to the city

Map 2: Location of Resettlement Colonies in the National Capital Territory of Delhi (2007)

Source: Slum and Jhuggi Jhompri Department, Municipal Corporation of Delhi.
Sabir Ali Slums within Slums: A Study of Resettlement Colonies in Delhi, Council for Social Development, New Delhi, 1990.

economy. Even if theses lands are maintained for parks, the economic value could be high since the environmental services in terms of clean air and recreational facilities push the property rates upwards and also provide increased earnings to the commercial activities.

Three major benefits have been estimated and incorporated to the benefit cost analysis of resettlement with relocation of households in far away places. These are (1) land value of evacuated site for commercial/development use, (2) revenue flow in terms of net taxes and charges [for the civic amenities] to the city managers, (3) employment generation from the development projects in the evacuated sites [Khosla and Jha 2005: 132].

From the costs' side, the authors have noticed that:

The cost of resettlement is often underestimated by city managers since several indirect and invisible costs do not find place in the benefit cost analysis. (…) The decision of resettlement appears to be financially viable if the evacuated land is utilised to generate substantial inflow of revenues to the city. However, a different picture begins to emerge in the economic analysis when social costs are taken to account while analysing benefits and costs [Khosla and Jha 2005: 135].

Subsequently, the analysis included the following costs: (1) cost of procurement of land for relocation, (2) civic amenities in the site and cost of bus service, (3) costs for the households – house and shifting costs, income loss, additional travel cost, additional

expenses for health, loss of saving. The final results of the benefit-cost analysis conducted on a sample of sites in Delhi show that "the option of relocation is not economically worthwhile" (ibid: 132). Other studies conducted in resettlement colonies have also highlighted the high economic and social costs borne by the relocated households, the poor quality of civic amenities and social infrastructure in the relocation sites, and the subsequent process of impoverishment that follows the demolition of the squatters' dwellings and their displacement.[14]

If the economic calculations for the city economy and development prospects of the capital seem yet to favour the option of slum demolition and relocation, this is definitely because "these calculations (…) fail to take into consideration the significant contribution of the poor in the informal sector and the latter's input to the city/national economic growth and the long-term impact of displacement on vulnerability of the poor" [Khosla and Jha 2005: Abstract]. In other terms, they consider the cost-benefit balance only for the civic authorities while externalising the social and economic costs born by the affected families. De facto, this is also because the relocation costs for the landowning agency and town planners are minimised by the insufficient civic amenities

provided at the relocation sites, and most of all by the fact that the obligation of providing an alternative site to the evicted families was already limited in the Delhi slum policy by an eligibility criterion, and furthermore refuted by recent courts' orders. Thus, the interests – and rights – of the evicted families appear to count very little in the consideration of the "larger public interest" evoked initially to justify slum clearance.

2 Jhuggi-Jhompri Population and Demolitions

2.1 Lack of Updated Population Data

The extent of slum demolitions in Delhi is difficult to assess with accuracy as no updating of the numbers of JJ clusters and JJ families has been provided by the slum and JJ department of the municipal corporation of Delhi (MCD), which results in inconsistency in the official data published. The last comprehensive enumeration of JJ clusters conducted by the slum and JJ department (on the basis of field assessment and in consultation with area members of the legislative assembly), and whose results were made available as a detailed list providing for each zone of the city the number of jhuggi families in each cluster, dates back

Figure: Demolished Sites and Relocated Families Per Year: 1990-2007

No of sites
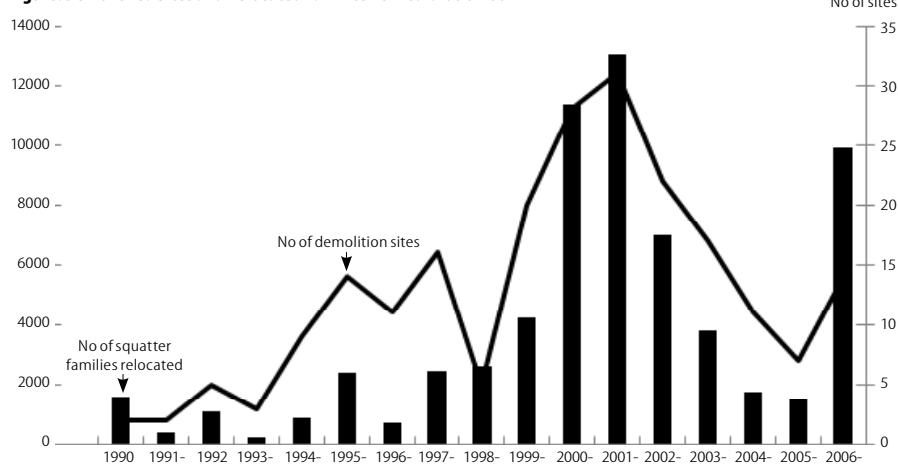
Source: Slum and Jhuggi-jhompri department, Municipal Corporation of Delhi. The year is from April 1 to March 31.

from three million to 1.2 million, which is attributed to "large-scale relocation of JJ clusters since 1999". These figures, however, seem to greatly overestimate the impact of the slum clearance policy (notwithstanding the extent of evictions) and underestimate the effect of natural growth and in-migration on the slum population. Furthermore, they do not match with the figures on the number of demolition operations provided by the same slum and JJ department: less than 111 evacuated sites from 1997 to 2001 (Table 3), as against 372 according to the *City Development Plan* – unless one assumes that during this period as many as 247 JJ clusters were evacuated without any relocation, and that the number of relocated squatter families (Table 3) accounts only for about 12 per cent of the total evicted families – or, in other words, that 88 per cent of the evicted squatter families were not eligible for resettlement. Yet, in the same chapter of the *City Development Plan of Delhi* (pp 6-13), another comment on the eligibility criteria for resettlement invalidates such an assumption: "Because of the cut-off date [December 31, 1998 as evidenced by ration card], up to 40-45 per cent families of JJ clusters are ineligible for relocation. Hence, it has become very difficult to get encroached pockets completely vacated." To conclude, the figures quoted in the *City Development Plan of Delhi* prove to be not reliable, and therefore, question the validity of the planning exercise that they are supposed to inform.[16]

to 1994. Thereafter, till 1998, estimates were provided on the basis of the 1994 data and projected growth. In fact, until 2007, no new figures for the last few years were made available by the slum and JJ department. In post-1998 official documents published by the planning department of the Government of the National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCTD), including in the most recent ones such as the *Economic Survey of Delhi, 2005-06*, the *Socio Economic Profile of Delhi 2006-07*, the *Delhi Tenth Five-Year Plan (2002-07)* or the *Delhi Annual Plan (2006-07)*, the same broad estimate of 6,00,000 households or three million population in 1,100 JJ clusters (already provided for the year 1998) can be found. But each time referring to the "present" situation in Delhi, which indicates clearly that figures were not updated.[15]

Surprisingly then, the *City Development Plan of Delhi*, released in 2007 under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, provides a different set of figures for 2001, quoted as data from the 'slum department, Municipal Corporation of Delhi (Table 2). The 2001 figures would indicate a sharp decline in the number of JJ clusters, from 1,100 in 1997 to 728 in 2001, and a subsequent decrease of the population in squatter settlements,

Table 2: Evolution in the Number and the Population of JJ Clusters from 1997 to 2001

Year	No of JJ Clusters	No of Households (HHD)	Estimated Population (HHD x 5)	Area (ha)
1997	1,100	6,00,000	30,00,000	902.1
2001	728	4,29,662	21,48,310	650.2
Chanage between 1997 and 2001	-372	-1,70,338	- 8,51,690	- 251.9

Source: *City Development Plan -Delhi*, IL and FS Ecosmart, 2007, Chapter – 6, Urban Poor and Slum, Table 6.4 – quoted as data from slum department, Municipal Corporation of Delhi.

Table 3: Distribution of the Demolished Jhuggi-Jhompri Sites and Number of Relocated Squatter Families Per Cluster Size

Cluster's Size (No of Relocated Families)	All Sites (MCD List)			Survey (May-June 2007)			
	Demolition Sites	Relocated Families		Demolition Sites	Sampling Rate	Relocated Families	Sampling Rate
	No	No	%	No	%	No	%
< 100	108	4,550	7.0	19	17.6	1,051	23.1
100–249	48	7,482	11.6	21	43.8	3,519	47.0
250–499	24	7,992	12.4	6	25.0	2,152	26.9
500–999	18	12,349	19.1	2	11.1	1,361	11.0
1,000	19	32,246	49.9	19	100.0	32,246	100.0
Total	217	64,619	100.0	67	30.9	40,329	62.4

Source: Slum and jhuggi-jhompri department, Municipal Corporation of Delhi and own survey (May-June 2007).

2.2 Demolished JJ Clusters and Relocated Families

The slum and JJ department of the MCD has established a list entitled "Status of relocated/resettled jhuggi families cluster-wise/yearwise since the inception of the scheme, i e, April 1, 1990", that provides a good picture of the evolution of demolitions from 1990 to 2007, along with the relocation sites (see the figure and Map 2). A few words of caution are however necessary in order to interpret these data.

According to this list, 217 JJ clusters were demolished – where families had been officially relocated – between 1990 and 2007. Demolished clusters with no resettlement are hence not recorded. Sometimes, the same cluster's name appears two or three times from one year to the other, or after a gap of several years. The first cases correspond to large squatter settlements, which were demolished in two or three phases. The second cases correspond to demolished JJ clusters, where the site was left vacant, then squatted by jhuggis that formed a new cluster over the years and were again demolished. Therefore, the list of 217 JJ clusters corresponds more precisely to 217 demolition-cum-relocation operations.

Some villages – and villagers – are included under the labels "JJ cluster" and "squatter families" of the list. For example, the village of Nangla Dewat (near the international airport), whose land was acquired by the airport authorities to build a new runway, witnessed its original inhabitants being converted into

Map 3: Main Demolished Squatter Settlements and Resettlements Colonies in the National Capital Territory of Delhi since 1990
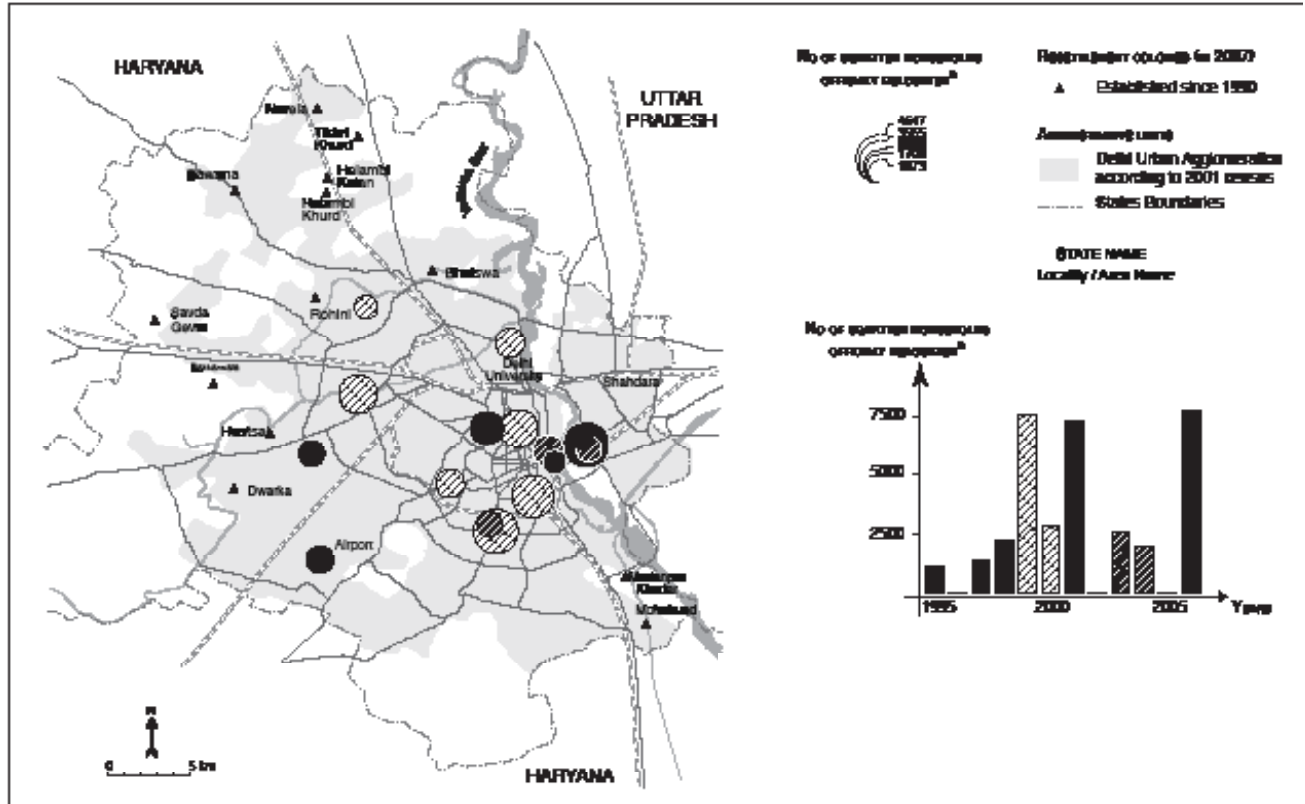
*From main demolished squatter settlements, i e, clusters with more than 1,000 families relocated.
Source: Slum and jhuggi jhompri department, Municipal Corporation of Delhi.

squatters on their ancestral land. In the riverbed of the Yamuna, some old village settlements were also considered as "encroachment" and hence bulldozed in 2004 [Jamwal 2004].

Behind the figures of the column "No of squatter families relocated", presented by the slum and JJ department as its resettlement achievements in the annual plans of the planning department of the government of Delhi, one should also read the considerably higher number of families which were evicted from their living place and whose houses, however precarious, were demolished. The principle of a cut-off date of arrival in the slum cluster as an eligibility criterion for resettlement necessarily excludes a large number of "non-eligible" families, and divides the community of a same slum into two groups with divergent future prospects and thus interests. During our survey of demolition sites, testimonies of local residents or shopkeepers revealed numbers of evicted jhuggi families always much higher than the numbers of relocated ones as per the official list – although the figures quoted cannot be used as reliable estimates. Since the last cut-off date is December 31, 1998, the proportion of non-relocated families is likely to be higher during the demolition operations of the most recent years.[17]

From 1990 to 2007, according to the slum and JJ department data, around 65,000 squatter families were relocated, with two peaks of demolitions-relocations, in the years 2000-02, and in 2006-07 (see the figure). The intensification of evictions at the end of the 1990s and beginning of the present decade bears the influence of an actor who played already a major role in the large-scale slum clearance and resettlement operations during

the Emergency (1975-77) as the vice-chairman of the DDA – Jagmohan [Jagmohan 1978]. He was the union minister of urban development (with the DDA under his purview) from 1999 to 2001, before his transfer to the ministry of tourism and culture (until the change of government in May 2004) where he promoted

Table 4: Land Use Pattern in 2007 in the Sample of 67 Demolition Sites

Land Use in May-June 2007	No of Sites
Vacant (entirely or partially)	33
Entirely vacant	27
Partially vacant with jhuggis and/or irregular shops	6
Park, green areas	13.5
Park alone	8
Park and parking	2
Reserved forest area	2
Green area around protected monument	1
Park (and dhobi ghat)	0.5
Under construction	9
Under construction of building	5
Part under construction + jhuggis	1
Under construction of road	3
Built (including road infrastructure)	9.5
Building	4
Building and park	1
Building with jhuggis	0.5
Building + other project planned	3
Road	1
Total	65
Unknown (sites not located)	2

Source: Own survey (May-June 2007).

his grand plan of development and beautification of the Yamuna river front, whose prerequisite was the clearance of the area from its "encroachments". As for the second demolition peak in 2006-07, it also affected the slum clusters in the Yamuna embankment area (Map 3, p 84) and corresponds to a momentum in the preparation of the capital for the 2010 Commonwealth Games, including the construction of the Games Village in the Yamuna riverbed, despite vehement protests from the environmentalists,[18] as the riverbed is a floodplain area and groundwater recharge zone.

Although demolitions of slums occurred in the entire urban area, as shown in Map 3, the larger demolition operations – in addition to the embankments of the Yamuna river – affected especially the central and southern zones of the urban agglomeration as well as the airport vicinity, where the reconstruction of the capital has been more conspicuous. The map further evidences the long distances between the demolished clusters and the resettlement sites.

3 The Survey of Demolished Jhuggi-Jhompri Sites

3.1 Methodology

The list of demolished JJ clusters, established by the slum and JJ department of MCD, was used as the sampling frame for our survey, which was conducted in May and June 2007. All the sites of the larger demolished clusters according to this list (i e, with above 1,000 families officially relocated) were covered by the survey, and are shown in Map 3. These 19 sites, out of 217 in the list, account for half of the total number of relocated families over the period 1990-2007. Then, the sites of a sample of demolished clusters of between 250 and 1,000 relocated families were surveyed. In order to improve the representativeness of the sample, and optimise the fieldwork visits and moves, the sites of the smaller clusters in the vicinity of the larger ones were also covered. The findings of this article rely on data collected on a total sample of 67 sites, that represents 31 per cent of all sites and accounts for 62 per cent of the total number of relocated families (Table 3).

3.2 Preliminary Findings

The survey of 67 demolition sites, although not rigorously representative – statistically – of the 217 JJ clusters/sub-clusters demolished from 1990 to 2007, provides revealing insights on the change in land use (Table 4, p 84), and points out emerging processes and trends.

The first striking point is the number of vacant sites, where no development project has been undertaken till mid-2007. This may be expected when the demolitions occurred recently; in such cases a follow-up survey of the concerned sites would be required. Nonetheless, if we exclude the sites evacuated during the last three years, we still found 26 vacant sites in the sample of 56 sites where JJ clusters were demolished between 1990 and March 2004.

When the site is not redeveloped for several years, it is no surprise to find that it has attracted new hutments, sometimes expanding into new JJ clusters which were again demolished during new clearance operations,[19] or sometimes irregular shops, unless it has become a dumping ground with rubbles from the demolished structures or a junkyard. As reported by local informants near the previous JJ clusters, and verified in a few cases by direct observations, evicted families who were not eligible for resettlement have scattered in other JJ clusters, formed new squatter settlements in the vicinity, or may come back after some time on the same site. A survey on spatial mobility conducted in different zones of Delhi in 1995, including in several slums, evidenced a process of repeated forced mobility endured by groups of slum-dwellers from one squatter settlement to the other [Dupont and Sidhu 2000]. This shows how the destruction of slums without adequate rehabilitation leads to the creation of new squatter settlements or the densification of existing nearby slum clusters.

The second emerging trend from the land use typology of the demolished JJ clusters' sites is the significance of conversions into parks and green areas.[20] This provides another illustration of the priority given to a "clean-green-beautiful" vision of the city at the expense of satisfying the right to housing of the poor.

The remaining categories "under construction" and "built" do not represent the majority of the evacuated sites, even after excluding the most recent demolition sites where planned development – if any – may start later (in the sample of sites cleared before April 2004, 16 sites out of 56 were built or under construction). The type of constructions completed or under way highlights some expected results as regards the restructuring of the capital: JJ clusters were demolished to build flats[21] and office complexes,[22] commercial centres/shopping malls,[23] petrol pumps/NCG stations, community or civic centres or new roads;[24] on the other hand, only one case of school construction was found in the sample. An additional factor for the demolition of some JJ clusters is the proximity – and not necessarily the exact site – of new construction projects: near a metro line or a metro station, or a proposed five star hotel.[25]

The change of land use which is taking place in the entire zone along the bank of the Yamuna river deserves a special mention, due to the large-scale evictions that have affected the slum clusters of this area (Map 3) and to the coming up of controversial projects. While, on the one hand, the slums were demolished following a Delhi High Court order on the grounds that, firstly, they constituted encroachment on the riverbed and secondly, were polluting the river (as commented above), on the other, many other unauthorised constructions which should have been also affected by the court order, were protected from demolition. This anti-poor bias and pro-powerful preferential treatment was denounced by several activists and researchers,[26] who listed the illegal structures already built or under construction in the same non-urbanisable zone: the secretariat of the GNCTD, the metro depot by the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC), the metro police station, an IT park at Shastri Park by DMRC-GNCTD, the Akshardham temple, and the Commonwealth Games Village.

Conclusions

Slum clearance for the redevelopment and beautification of the capital has often resulted in pushing further away the unwanted slums, without solving the issues of adequate shelter for the poor. Moreover, since slum demolitions entail the destruction of investments made by the poor for their housing and improving their micro-environment, they systematically impoverish the affected families. When demolitions are recurrent, they jeopardise the

efforts of slum dwellers to improve their conditions, maintain them in a poverty trap and lead to a pauperisation process. They also create a general context that discourages slum-dwellers to invest in their housing, and may result in more and more precarious squatter settlements and increased homelessness.

The sites of JJ clusters, still vacant several years after their demolition, question the stated principle of the Delhi slum clearance policy, namely the removal and relocation of squatter settlements only when the land is required to implement projects in the larger public interest. This could also expose the incapacity of the landowning agency to implement its project, and more generally, a failure of urban redevelopment policy and governance, unless it merely evidences the agenda of "cleaning up" the city from its slums. Furthermore, when rubbles and debris from the demolished settlements are still visible, this contradicts the objective of beautifying the city, as if the priority was the clearance of slum-dwellers, or, in other words, pushing the poor out of sight.

With the preparation of the 2010 Commonwealth Games, a replica of the urban restructuring process that marked the preparation of the 1982 Asian Games [Dupont and Ramanathan 2007] is at work in the capital, including the construction of modern infrastructure and beautification campaigns with similar effects on slum demolitions. "Crusades to clean up the city" [Davis 2006: 104] on the eve of international events seem to be a leitmotiv for urban authorities in other third world cities too, be it – among the most recent sporting examples – the preparation of the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing[27] or the 2010 Soccer World Cup in Johannesburg [Bénit-Gbaffou forthcoming].

Everywhere, the access of the poor to urban space remains the larger issue at stake. The Delhi slum policy implemented since the 1990s has provided only ad hoc and inadequate solutions, which were moreover superseded by the intervention of the judiciary, whereas the lack of updated and reliable data on the slum population does not permit proper planning in order to tackle the problem of housing shortage at its roots.

NOTES

1 On the basis of data compiled from the slum and jhuggi-jhompri department of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), the report of the Delhi Urban Environment and Infrastructure Improvement Project (DUEIIP) provides the following distribution for the year 1994: 83.7 per cent of the land occupied by squatter settlements was owned by DDA, 15.7 per cent by other public landowning agencies, and only 0.6 per cent by private owners [DUEIIP 2001: chapter 6, p 10].

2 We found different estimates regarding the percentage of urban land occupied by the jhuggi-jhompri clusters, but all of them underline the extreme inequity of the land distribution in the capital, at the expenses of the slum-dwellers, in similar disproportions. The DUEIIP report (2001) quotes the following figures for 1994: a population of more than two millions living in jhuggi-jhompri clusters that occupy 902.36 hectares of land, thus representing only 1.45 per cent of the total area of the urban agglomeration of Delhi (62,428 hectares as per the 1991 Census). According to Dewan Verma (2002: 73): "In Delhi […] jhuggis accommodate 20 to 30 lakh people and occupy about 4,000 hectares (almost all of it government land) out of approximately 70,000 hectares meant to be urbanised for a population of 120 lakhs as per the provisions of the 1990 Master Plan". Kundu (2004: 267) proposes another estimate for 2,000: "The total land occupied by the [three million people living in slum] would, however, come to less than 10 km², around 3 per cent of the total residential area in urban Delhi."

3 DDA is under the purview of the union ministry of urban development, but it is the slum and jhuggi-jhompri department in the MCD which is in charge of the implementation of this slum policy.

4 Up to 2006, in situ upgradation was undertaken in three JJ clusters (covering 784 families); another larger project covering 4,800 families is also reported as completed [GNCTD 2006-07: 114].

5 A public interest litigation (PIL) dealing initially with solid waste disposal in Delhi, that eventually resulted in Supreme Court orders directed at cleaning up the city not only in terms of its garbage, but also its slums: Almitra Patel vs Union of India, Supreme Court Cases, 2000, Vol 2, pp 679-90; Almitra H Patel vs Union of India, Supreme Court Cases, 2000, Vol 8, pp 19-22.

6 A PIL dealing with the removal and relocation of slum-dwellers squatting on government land, where the court eventually examined "the legality, validity and propriety" of the resettlement policy that was implemented by the Delhi government: Okhla Factory Owners' Association vs Government of NCT of Delhi (Delhi High Court, 2002), Cf, *Delhi Law Times*, 2003, Vol 108, p 517.

7 For instance, on a huge portico – along with the slogan "DDA marches ahead"– on the road to the newly developed peripheral Narela sub-city that houses a large resettlement colony and a new industrial zone where industrial units banned from the Delhi city area were relocated.

8 The "green agenda" refers to those speaking in the name of environment and giving priority to ecological issues in the long term, and the "brown agenda" to those articulating the issues in terms of social justice and satisfying the immediate needs of the poor, in particular in relation to their rights to housing [Bartone et al 1994; McGranahan and Satterthwaite 2000].

9 Cf Almitra Patel vs Union of India and the analysis of this case in Dupont and Ramanathan (2007).

10 The same argument is found again in the recommendations of the committee under secretary (urban development), ministry of urban development, government of India, for Yamuna Action Plan (2004), in its Section 5 on 'Slum Cluster and Yamuna River Bed', which is annexed to the Chapter 9 on 'Environment' of the Delhi Master Plan for 2021: "One of the contributory factors to the flow of untreated sewage into the river Yamuna is the slum clusters that have come up unauthorisedly on both eastern and western banks of river Yamuna. Local bodies have already removed several JJ clusters existing on the western bank. Such clusters need to be cleared from riverbed."

11 'Pollution, Pushta, and Prejudices', Hazard Centre, 2004, http://www.hazardscentre.org/shelter.thlm

12 OMCT/HIC-HLRN, Joint Urgent Action Appeal, "Over 3,00,000 people to be forcefully evicted from Yamuna Pushta in Delhi: 40,000 homes demolished so far", Case IND-FE050504, Delhi, Geneva, Cairo, May 5, 2004.

13 Delhi won the bid to host the 2010 edition of the Commonwealth Games in November 2003.

14 See for example the study conducted by the NGO Jagori in the Bawana resettlement colony (Menon-Sen 2006, and research findings on the web site: http://jagori.org/our-activities/research/presentation-of-our-research-findings), or the survey conducted in 2003 by the National Institute of Urban Affairs in five relocation sites – Narela, Bhalaswa, Holumbikalan, Bakarwala, Molarbund [Dhar 2004].

15 In the *Economic Survey of Delhi – 2005-06*, Table 14.2 on 'Public Land Encroachment by JJ Clusters' (p 358) and Table 14.3 on the 'Break up of J J clusters as per number of households' (p 359), the only tables to provide figures on the number of JJ clusters and their population refer to the situation in 1990 and 1994. We found a word of caution regarding the non-updated estimates of the J J clusters population only in the *Socio Economic Profile of Delhi 2005-06*: "No doubt, a number of clusters have since [1994] been shifted under the scheme of 'Relocation of Squatters', but no fresh survey/assessment to ascertain the number of clusters has since been conducted."
All the above-mentioned documents are available on the official web site of the Planning Department of the GNCTD: http://www.delhiplanning.nic.in

16 In her detailed critique of Chapter 6 – Urban Poor and Slum – of the *City Development Plan (CDP)* of *Delhi*, Khosla (2007: 10) also underlines data inconsistencies: "Data sources for slums and poverty used in the CDP are old, confusing and not well triangulated".

17 For instance, according to some non-governmental organisations' (NGOs) estimates, the demolition of the Yamuna Pushta slum clusters in 2004 is reported to have affected about 27,000 families, of whom "less than 20 per cent" would have been allotted alternative plots (quoted in a paper posted on the web site of India Resource Centre) [Adve 2004].

18 Such as Ravi Aggarwal of *Toxics Link* and Vimalendu Jha of *We for Yamuna* [Sethi 2005].

19 For instance: civic centre–Minto Road JJ cluster demolished in 1992-92 and in 2004-05, Bara Pulla JJ cluster in Nizamuddin demolished in 1995-96 and again in 2001-02.

20 This pattern was also noted by Khosla (2007: 12, referring to the study by Khosla and Jha 2005). Batra and Mehra (2006) mention too a couple of revealing examples of slum clusters cleared "to make way for 'a spiritual park'" in Nehru Place district or, in the west colony of Vikas Puri, "a neighbourhood park for middle class residents of the colony".

21 Raghubir Nagar, Durga basti.

22 DIZ area-Gole Market, Rajiv Gandhi Camp near CGO Complex, Andrews Ganj.

23 Shaheed Arjun Dass Camp.

24 Gautam Nagar behind All-India Institute for Medical Sciences; on the embankments of the Yamuna river.

25 Bannuwal Nagar in north-west Delhi, a case quoted by Batra and Mehra (2006).

26 See, among others: OMCT/HIC-HLRN Joint Urgent Action Appeal (2004), Adve (2004),

Verma (2004a,b), Batra and Mehra (2006), Baviskar (2006), Bhan (2006), Jamwal (2004).

27 Davis quotes news reports from Asian Coalition for Housing Rights and Human Rights Watch to evidence the effects in Beijing; he also provides an edifying worldwide review of slum demolitions to make "the city beautiful" (2006: 104-08).

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