

Next yr, slum population to touch 93 m

23% Increase Since 2001: Panel

Mahendra Kumar Singh | TNN

New Delhi: Despite the country's robust economic growth, around 93.06 million people will live in slums in cities by next year, an increase of around 23% since 2001, forced by a lack of space and means.

According to an expert committee set up to estimate "reliable" urban slum population, there has been a growth of 17.8 million across the country in the last decade.

Defending the increase in slum population figures, minister for housing and urban poverty alleviation Kumari

Bengal (85.46 lakh) and Andhra Pradesh (81.88 lakh).

The ministry appointed the committee to come out with reliable slum data to ensure better implementation of Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) that aims to eradicate slums in India.

Selja said there was "paucity of correct data earlier" as small towns were left out, and the new definition put forth by the committee would serve as a guideline for Slum Census 2011 and state governments.

A major reason for the total slum population being under-reported was due to the fact that the Census 2001 took into

Selja said this trend is along expected lines due to a spurt in urbanization. However, she assured that the percentage would come down, with the efforts of the UPA 2 towards slum development and rehabilitation.

The committee, headed by Pranab Sen, principal adviser to the Planning Commission and former chief statistician, pointed out that the projected slum population in 2011 would be go up to 93.06 million from 75.26 million that was estimated in 2001 as per the new methodology. The 2001 Census figures peg the slum population at 52.4 million.

By next year, 31.63 lakh people will be living in slums in Delhi as compared to 23.18 lakh in 2001, going by the panel's methodology.

Among the states, Maharashtra tops the chart where around 1.815 crore will be living in slums in 2011, followed by Uttar Pradesh (1.087 crore), Tamil Nadu (86.44 lakh), West

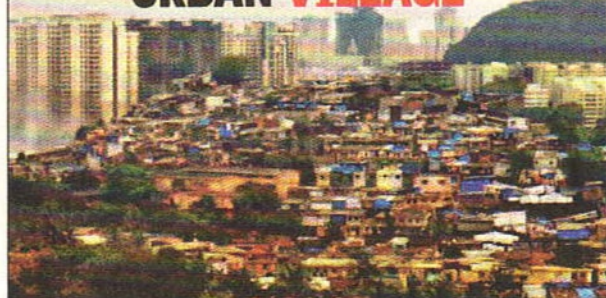
account only notified slums in 1,764 towns across the country.

Officials attributed the rise in slum figures to wider definition of slum and expanding the coverage as the committee has factored in all 5,161 towns, including 3,799 statutory towns, and has also modified the definition of slum as followed by the Registrar General of India (RGI), which conducts the Census.

Selja said the target of achieving a slum-free India in five years, as outlined by President Pratibha Patil, was not unachievable if states co-operate fully. Admitting that urban population is growing and there are many challenges to realize the goal, the minister said, "UPA government has committed itself to RAY and money should not be a constraint".

The committee recommended to adopt a normative definition based on appropriate indicators and checklists for the purpose of identification of slum areas.

URBAN VILLAGE



► **Maharashtra** tops the chart where around **1.815 crore** will be living in slums in 2011

► **Uttar Pradesh** comes second with **1.087 crore**

slumdwellers followed by **Tamil Nadu (86.44 lakh)**, West Bengal (**85.46 lakh**) and Andhra Pradesh (**81.88 lakh**)