

# Impact of rented accommodation on house forms in Lucknow

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**Abstract-** Lucknow has various types of house types and forms developed over various stages of its history. Residences are invariably occupied by the owners. Lucknow being the state capital, more people migrate to Lucknow owing to the diverse employment opportunities and state of the art educational infrastructure. This study is intended towards making a compilation of reasons for the development / addition of rented accommodation in contemporary house forms in Lucknow. The focus of this study is on documenting and describing the various social needs, cultural contexts, security, economics, utilization of spaces, government policies, increasing urbanization, housing shortage, end user and their occupations, tenure patterns responsible for the transformation of house forms in Lucknow. The bye-laws permit only one dwelling unit per plot up to 300 sq. m., however multiple families are residing in even lower plot sizes. The study will address the present housing condition and the status of prevalent bye-laws in Lucknow.

**Keywords-** rented accommodation, house forms, bye laws, socio-cultural, economics.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Urban Lucknow primarily consists of a large population of migrants from neighboring districts and rural areas, who came here in search of jobs and settled. Main source of livelihood in Lucknow is the 'Service Sector', apart from few industrial establishments, etc. Since Lucknow being the Capital of U. P., nearly every Government, and Semi-government department has head office here. Many Public sector and Corporate organizations serving in State are running their main offices from Lucknow. Today, in the Lucknow as in other State Capitals populated largely by immigrants, the rented accommodation is required to provide shelter. Availability of proper infrastructure further lures people from adjacent cities to live in Lucknow.

## 2. NEED OF RENTED ACCOMMODATION OWING TO EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Establishments like banks, government offices, and corporate offices have taken houses on rent to accommodate their officers, executives and employees in various colonies of Lucknow. Employees keep on transferring on a regular basis after stipulated tenures; few retain their families for proper education of their

children as at Lucknow these facilities are much better compared to other cities of the State. Large numbers of students are studying in city in various schools, colleges and universities and owing to unaffordable hostel fees and other personal reasons they are residing in houses on rent. They reside for limited tenure but discipline of the colony is at stake as some do not maintain the coming in and going out time. Apart from students there are trainees who have come for limited tenure and are in search of economical rental spaces to live in better locations at fewer prices to pay.

## 3. RENTED ACCOMMODATION VERSUS LOCAL BYELAWS

Some owners have constructed flexible spaces and let out their houses to banks, offices, shops and coaching centres. It is against the byelaws to change land use but it seems that money is the prime concern for them. It creates parking problems and various socio-cultural issues. Since planners design the colony keeping in mind one dwelling unit of 5 persons per house but spaces are let out and number of dwelling units increase resulting in overloading of infrastructure as first assumptions on which planning is based are made to go wrong, leading to generation of new planning related issues.

As local bye laws permit only one dwelling unit per house and all norms are fixed accordingly but owing to creation of rental spaces parking problems are generated as tenants have vehicles too which are parked on roads outside the house. Few persons buy the adjoining plots and create a large open land or building to give it on rent for different land uses which is also not permitted by local bye laws. Some house owners are constructing their houses on columns and beams to create wall less flexible spaces to be sub divided later by timber partitions as per the needs of the tenant.

Banquet halls and community centres are functioning in houses with utter disregard to local bye laws, as minimum 1500 sq. m. plot area is required for these types of buildings to perform properly but owing to the social needs of the neighbourhood, financial viability of the project and the economics of the owner these are created to function. This phenomenon is more prominent in underdeveloped and undeveloped colonies in Lucknow. Alarming examples are the functioning of many corner plots of higher income classes in Nirala Nagar as banquet halls. Nearly in every less developed colony banquet halls can be seen functioning in houses. Sometimes the

approach road is also encroached to accommodate other utilities. Few are taking the large houses on rent just to run banquet halls only. In times of marriages and parties the noise level exceeds the permissible limit and disturbs the environment of the colony, especially the school going children and patients. Likewise hotels are also registering their presence in colonies.

On residential land use numbers of renowned schools are functioning by letting out the property. Primary school, high school, intermediate college, study centres and coaching centres are running in rented houses in almost every colony of Lucknow. Few have even constructed temporary or permanent structures to suit their regular needs. Some are functioning very well due to location advantages. These create traffic congestion, increase noise levels and lead to chaos sometimes which can be observed at opening and closing times. Same is the case with the nursing homes, pathology laboratories, medical shops and hospitals also which are registering their presence in colonies.

Although local bye laws have provisions to change land use on demand, some have got their land use changed while some still do not opt for land use conversion owing to high penalties. These buildings are functioning due to financial viability by evading penalties and taxes. When other than residential land use is functioning in any colony it creates grounds for petty crimes and administration is at tender hooks to control law and order. In developed colonies accommodation cost is soaring owing to high market value and are target of high end customers, resulting in increased commercialization of the surroundings.

#### **4. RENTED ACCOMMODATION AND GOVERNMENT POLICIES**

Rented accommodation is also solving housing shortage by providing those houses without ownership titles. Government by introducing Model Tenancy Bill, 2015 is trying to control the rental value for all locations as soaring rental prices are governed by market values and the demand- supply gap. Model tenancy bill, 2015 has eliminated some archaic rules, would encourage rental housing, a main component of the present government's flagship scheme - 'housing for all by 2022'.

Municipal Corporation charges separate set of taxes for rented accommodations but few owners do not declare their rented space to save on taxes and government is at loss in revenue collection.

Some owners have multiple properties and let out the ones not in their personal use to other land uses like commercial, educational, institutional, industrial, etc.; though it is not permitted by local bye laws, which disturbs the social fabric of the neighbourhood.

Although, nearly one third of the houses are let out, a few without declaring them to evade house taxes, government should regularize them. New set of provisions should be created in bye laws for proposed houses regarding rental accommodations. Proper documentation in this direction is the need of the time to regularize it and increase revenues which can be utilized for their betterment.

On one hand government is supporting rental accommodation as it is providing house rent allowance to its employees and assuming that employees are living on rent, but on the other hand local bye laws permit only one dwelling unit per house seems to be in contrast. This dilemma is costing to both parties. If the local bye laws opt for permitting more than one dwelling unit per house then it can be the source of revenue generation also by levying extra taxes over regular amount.

Some have purchased houses in various localities to let out, although it is restricted to occupy multiple houses in developed areas by authorities. But this is not observed in undeveloped colonies as government has little hold over there and little control also. Further, persons buy the houses in names of their adult family members which cannot be controlled. To check the multiple buying of houses in a city government should reframe laws so that property should be termed as occupied by a family instead of the person/spouse, so that more families could possess or purchase houses.

Legal issues also surface when there is a dispute between landlord and tenant on eviction terms or increasing of rent issues. Landlords are also not maintaining proper legal records. It is a practice to create an agreement on stamp paper for a period of eleven months only for rental spaces and fresh agreement is done after one month gap to discontinue the tenancy rights on record. Details of the tenants are to be reported to the local police by the landlords, some follow while some do not. Identity proof and address proof should be documented as a safe practice. Some ask for guarantors also.

#### **5. SOCIOCULTURAL ISSUES AND RENTED ACCOMMODATION**

Sometimes it is difficult to procure houses on rent for persons with little guarantee of identity.

Property dealers and liasioning agents are facilitating provision of rented accommodation to the needy users and charge some amount equal to one or two months' rent from either of the parties and take guarantee of the tenant also. House owners ask for advance or security deposit from tenants equivalent to two to three months rent as minimum security amount. Few tenants leave without informing or create some maintenance issues and the security deposit is adjusted or forfeited.

In posh localities owners are giving their houses on rent there are not enough family members living together as children have settled near their workplaces away from Lucknow. Owing to no one to talk to, owners are necessitated to give their houses on rent so that at least some other person is available to socialize. Further due to security reasons, when one goes out of station for some purpose, houses cannot be left vacant. Often landlords opt to give their portion of house on rent just because they want their house to be income generator instead of generating expenses. Expenses are generated in the form of periodical maintenance and repair, upgrading furnishings, landscaping, etc. For maintenance and repairs of the house also some owners give a portion of house on rent to others to accumulate the required amount to be spent on periodical maintenance and taxes of the houses. Few construct or buy the house on loan by financial institutions and to deposit loan installments on time let out their houses. Socio-economic status seems to be the guiding force for constructing similar profiled spaces for everyone irrespective of their actual individual needs.

Tenants increase the consumption of electricity, water and other infrastructure as they think that they have paid for them and follow arbitrary consumption behavior. This needs to be checked as natural resources are limited. If proper rent is charged then everyone will try to live near its work place and travel time will be decreased resulting in better production and performance output on one hand and decreasing fuel consumption and traffic congestion on the other.

Near educational establishments house owners have converted their houses into hostels for students on rent. Few have even started constructing the hostel rooms with or without furnishing inside their houses on various floors with one floor on top or on ground for owners' residential accommodation. Sometimes tenants opt for changes in houses ranging from minor modifications to major structural alterations or additions with or without the consent of the landlords, creating design and legal issues as dispute.

In posh localities like Gomti Nagar, Niralga Nagar, Maha Nagar and Aliganj owners are allowing persons to live as paying guests instead of providing separate rented accommodation. These paying guests are allotted one furnished bed room and share all other utilities along with family members. It has been observed that social status of the tenants is invariably similar to the owners, if not then various socio-cultural problems are generated.

Few tenants who can afford to own a house are living on rented accommodation to free themselves of all burdens in constructing the house. In their economics, money incurred in paying rent is far less than money spent in constructing and maintaining a house. They deposit their money with financial institutions and pay their rent from

the interest earned and live in choicest locations without any burden of maintenance.

## 6. EFFECTS OF RENTED ACCOMMODATION ON HOUSE FORMS

Rental spaces have been created in the city in numerous permutations and combinations. Starting from single rooms with common toilets, single rooms with space for kitchenette and attached toilet or common toilet, double rooms with small kitchen and attached toilet with or without separate open spaces to triple rooms with kitchen and attached toilet/(s). These have separate entry/exit from side setbacks and are constructed in rear setbacks of the houses without obtaining permission from local authority. In this way the rear setback of the house is encroached and cumulative rear setback which was originally planned for end to end houses is covered with little regard to healthy environment as the rental spaces which are created in rear setback are compact units with lesser open space for light and ventilation. House owners cite security reasons for covering rear setbacks but it can be addressed in other better alternatives.

Some construct the house with two portions; front and rear and either of them is rented on one or more floors with staircase in middle. Some opt for one floor for owner and other floors on rent. Some choose to construct two units per floor with separate staircase in middle for two to three floors. In few houses other staircase in front setback is constructed to provide separate entry/exit to tenants living on upper floors. The plot owners with optimum width of 7.5 to 9.0 m. and above have created two portions side by side with staircase in between for two to three floors, violating the side setback norms.

Near commercial land uses house owners construct basements with separate entry/exit in front setbacks to let out for purposes of stores and godowns, etc. which utilize road for loading and unloading space required for trucks. Few have purchased adjacent plots and constructed multiple rental units for high end customers triggering gentrification. On 12.0 m. and wider roads house owners have constructed shops with temporary and/or permanent roofing and given them on rent. These have their openings on road with no frontal relief and circulation spaces and even put their items on roads and vehicles of customers are parked on roads. Number of medical shops, general provision stores, eating joints and various other types of shops can be seen everywhere in the city. Corner plots serve as boon to owners as multiple options of entry/exit, light and ventilation are available so on both roads shops are created with required entry to the house left.

Moreover in all locations rent for individual residences, rent is not charged on per square meter covered area basis, some charge it on unit or accommodation basis with

extra for other facilities. This needs to control as some are creating small size rooms, violating the minimum size norms just to create more lettable units in their houses. These create unhygienic and unhealthy environments and overload on public infrastructure. It is high time authorities should charging infrastructure taxes on number of users basis instead of on area/unit basis.

## 7. CONCLUSION

When rental spaces are affordable and appropriately located tenants pursue their livelihoods with ease. Since the plot sizes are reducing, density is increasing which is further increased by the generation of the rental units. The actual microclimate witnessed in existing built forms is in contrast to the proposed designs in accordance with the local building bye-laws, affecting the overall environment. The physical design of space can hinder or enhance cultural and climatic requirements as well as improve the security of the community.

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