



## Urban Oasis: Enhancing Green Spaces in Kerala through the AMRUT Mission

Keerthana K, Research Scholar, Department of Commerce  
Institute of Management in Government, Trivandrum, Kerala, INDIA

### ORIGINAL ARTICLE



#### Author

Keerthana K, Research Scholar

E-mail : keerthanavijayan16@gmail.com

shodhsamagam1@gmail.com

Received on : 02/01/2025  
Revised on : 01/03/2025  
Accepted on : 11/03/2025  
Overall Similarity : 09% on 03/03/2025



#### Plagiarism Checker X - Report

Originality Assessment

9%

Overall Similarity

Date: Mar 3, 2025 (06:14 AM)  
Matches: 183 / 1960 words  
Sources: 11

Remarks: Low similarity detected, consider making necessary changes if needed.

Verify Report:  
Scan this QR Code



### ABSTRACT

Urban green spaces play a pivotal role in enhancing the quality of life in cities by providing recreational areas, improving air quality, and promoting biodiversity. The Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) aims to address the challenges of urbanization by developing and maintaining green spaces in cities across India. The study examines the role of green spaces in promoting sustainable urban development and the outcomes of AMRUT mission in enhancing the green spaces in mission cities of Kerala.

### KEY WORDS

Green Spaces, Green Parks, Development, AMRUT mission.

### INTRODUCTION

Urbanization is showing an increasing trend in many states of India. The positive impact of urbanization in the economic and technological sectors enhances financial robustness and improves the quality of life of citizens. Environmental degradation is one of the most adverse parts of urbanization. Population explosion and population density are deteriorating the quality of environment. Green spaces are inevitable for the sustainable development of cities and towns. Hence, sustainable urbanization is the need of the hour. Realizing this, the Union Government, in coordination with various state Governments, periodically introduces urban development schemes. AMRUT is a flagship urban infrastructure improvement initiative launched by the Government of India in 2015 with special focus on basic amenities to citizens across 500 cities. The major thrust areas covered in AMRUT are water supply, sewerage and septage management,

storm water drainage, urban transport and green spaces and parks. The Government authorities have given special consideration to the development of green spaces and parks. Studies have proved the impact of green spaces in improving the physical and mental health of people. This paper reviews the present scenario of green spaces and parks in Kerala and the effectiveness of AMRUT mission in improving the green spaces and parks in Kerala. Urban parks are considered as an asset of the nation. Green spaces positively impact ecological conservation and community development.

## Statement of the Problem

The present study explores the significance of green spaces in urban areas and evaluates the contribution of the AMRUT mission to the development of green spaces and parks in Kerala.

## Objectives of the study

The core objectives of this study are as follows:

- To assess the significance of green spaces and parks in urban areas.
- To analyse the performance of the AMRUT mission in the development of green spaces and parks in the mission cities of Kerala.

## Scope and Methodology of the study

The current study tries to understand the need of green spaces and parks in urban areas and the role of AMRUT mission in the development of green spaces and parks in Kerala.

This is a secondary data-based study utilizing sources such as books, journal articles, theses, newspaper reports, and websites, etc.

## Review of Literature

An overview of the existing literature related to the importance of green spaces and parks in urban areas are given below:

**Gupta & Malik, (2019)** They examined the causes of the decline in green areas in their study. Maintaining temperature, air quality, flood prevention, water quality, balancing the ecosystem, supporting wildlife, and boosting the local economy are all made possible by green areas. The authors note that the research area's demographics are prone to abrupt changes. The study area's open green spaces have declined as a result of urbanization and haphazard construction. The primary determinant of respondents' utilization of green spaces is their distance from their place of residence. Afforestation, household gardens, increasing green cover to combat air pollution, citizen participation in the creation of green spaces, and a tree data bank were all highlighted by the researchers.

**Mohammad Mehdi Sadeghian and Zhirayr Vardanyan (2013)** explained the importance of urban parks and emphasised its environmental, economic, social, and psychological merits. Urban parks have a significant impact on the quality of life of urban residents. Green spaces promote health of citizens which in turn leads to minimising national health benefits. Urban areas are spaces for social interaction which ensures well-being of communities by limiting the chances of social exclusion. Different age groups have different perceptions regarding the utility of urban parks. Green spaces also have significant impact in improving the tourism potential of cities. Studies have shown that behavioural problems in children, such as attention issues, can be alleviated through exposure to green spaces.

**Lee, Y. -C., & Kim, K. -H. (2013)** conducted a survey to understand the attitude of the citizens of Gyeongsan City, Republic of Korea and Informed that walking and relaxation are the primary reasons of park visitors. Distance from home is the main factor influencing the frequency of park visits. Pocket parks nearest to home and parks near river side are preferred by majority of the respondents. Through the survey the citizens also revealed their willingness to park development projects.

**Shariff, Aziz, Malek, and Mariapan, (2010)** evaluated the state of the open green spaces in the neighborhood. The study examined several prior studies that considered factors like user patterns, the requirements and preferences of the public, and the quality of green spaces in residential areas. To create a model for a Quality Neighborhood Park Criteria, it will be necessary to establish relationships between factors such as user patterns, needs, and preferences of citizens, etc. The environmental context of the local parks, including sustainability, environmental quality, and both natural and man-made recreational resources, was also examined by the writers.

## **Importance of Green Spaces and Parks in Urban Areas**

Green spaces and parks are inevitable part of urban infrastructure due to its numerous benefits. Major points related to the importance of green spaces and parks are explained below.

### **Healthiness and Welfare**

Complex life style, pollution, stress, lack of exercise, various diseases are the adverse effects of rapid urbanization. Hence the presence of public green spaces is essential for the mental and physical well-being of human beings. Especially in a rapidly urbanising most populated country like India, human resources are the asset of the nation. Hence safeguarding their health is essential for improving productivity and quality of life. Green spaces, pocket parks, play grounds etc. provide space for stress reduction, community engagement, recreation activities, exercise and so on.

### **Commercial Value**

A well-maintained green space can transform the outlook of a city which strengthens the local economy which can influence the preference of people to choose that city as a place to reside, work or invest. Presence of a green park increases the property values around the area, which in turn leads to investments which aids in the promotion of local businesses and the creation of job opportunities.

### **Sustainable Development**

Rapid urbanization leads to exploitation of natural resources. Safeguarding green spaces is a way to create environmentally friendly cities. Green spaces are an asset to both present and future generations. Lack of green spaces is a threat to climate resilience which leads to unpredictable weather conditions. The green spaces enhance the aesthetic value of a city which is beneficial over the years.

### **Environmental Impact**

Air quality of a city is better with the presence of green parks. Also, these have a considerable role in controlling the urban heat island effect. In addition to this, green areas mitigate the risk of flood by the management of storm water. Water quality gets better with the presence of green areas.

### **Social Cohesion**

In this internet dominated urbanization era the importance of societal interaction is increasing day by day. Green spaces and parks are a place of various recreational activities, social gatherings, community events and so on. It acts as a public space for community development and societal unity.

### **Tourism Potential**

Tourism sector is a major revenue source of Government. Proper creation and maintenance of green parks in urban areas is a boost to the tourism sector. It not only increases the amenity value of cities but also, leads to the creation of employment opportunities, empowering the local economy and promotes sustainable tourism.

### **Data Analysis**

Government of India launched its flagship urban development programme Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2015 the purpose of this mission is to transform urban

amenities and thereby enhance the standard of living for citizens across 500 mission cities. Water supply, sewerage and septage management, storm water drainage, urban transport and green spaces and parks are the infrastructure components covered in AMRUT. In Kerala, state level launch of AMRUT has been done on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015. Nine cities are covered in AMRUT mission from Kerala. These cities include all corporations viz. Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Kochi, Thrissur, Kozhikode & Kannur. Also, three municipalities including Alappuzha, Guruvayur, and Palakkad. In all, 1111 projects with a total outlay of ₹ 2357.69 crore have been sanctioned in Kerala.

Development of green spaces and parks is one of the important agenda of the AMRUT mission. The aim of AMRUT mission is to enhance the utility of cities by improving the green parks and open spaces with special focus to children and senior citizens.

The progress of AMRUT mission in Kerala is depicted in the following table:

**Table 1: AMRUT1 PROGRESS AS ON 22.12.2024**

Milestone	No. of Projects	Project Cost In Cr.	Expenditure in Cr.
<b>Contract Awarded</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>947.51</b>	<b>751.37</b>
Water Supply	41	616.69	477.46
Sewerage and Septage Management	38	187.78	152.60
Stormwater Drainage	29	64.36	52.13
Urban Transport	19	74.20	65.02
Green Spaces & Parks	4	4.48	4.16
<b>Work Completed</b>	<b>980</b>	<b>1591.23</b>	<b>1385.69</b>
Water Supply	176	941.85	834.95
Sewerage and Septage Management	114	194.09	159.95
Stormwater Drainage	507	292.86	254.52
Urban Transport	109	118.41	99.17
Green Spaces & Parks	74	44.02	37.10
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1111</b>	<b>2538.74</b>	<b>2137.06</b>

(Source: State Mission Management Unit, AMRUT-Kerala)

Table 1 shows the work progress of AMRUT mission across all sectors. Majority of the projects of AMRUT have been completed with around 88% project completion rate. Among the five components of AMRUT, water supply has highest project cost and expenditure while lowest project cost and expenditure is associated with green spaces and parks. In green spaces and parks sector only 4 projects are remaining to be completed.

**Table 2: Project status of green spaces and parks**

City	Total Projects	Completed Projects	Project Cost (Rs. crore)	Expenditure (Rs. crore)	Completion Percentage (%)
Thiruvananthapuram	5	4	6.52	5.64	86.50
Kollam	7	7	3.41	3.1	90.91
Alappuzha	8	8	4.38	3.59	81.96
Kochi	5	5	5.8	3.93	67.76
Thrissur	11	11	4.81	4.59	95.43
Kozhikode	8	8	4.92	3.82	77.64
Kannur	7	7	4.8	4.56	95.00
Guruvayur	6	5	6.47	5.7	88.10
Palakkad	21	19	7.39	6.33	85.66

(Source: State Mission Management Unit, AMRUT-Kerala)

Palakkad has maximum number of projects in green spaces and parks sector. In proportion to this Palakkad has maximum project cost and expenditure. Completion percentage is high in the case of Thrissur. Among all mission cities, all cities have completed their respective projects in green spaces and parks component except Thiruvananthapuram, Guruvayur and Palakkad.

## CONCLUSION

Green spaces and urban parks affect ecological, socio-economic, and psychological aspects which in turn impacts the quality of life of citizens. Green spaces and parks ensure sustainable development and improve the tourism potential of the city. Among all the five components covered in AMRUT, least attention is given to green spaces and parks component in terms of number of projects and project cost. The total project cost allocated for works completed in green spaces and parks is only 2.76% of the total cost and the expenditure incurred for this sector is only 2.67% of total expenditure. Green spaces and parks have significant role in sustainable development of urban infrastructure. Hence more planned missions should be undertaken for the development of this sector.

## REFERENCE

1. Lee, Y.-C.; & Kim, K.-H. (2013) Attitudes of citizens towards urban parks and green spaces for urban sustainability: The case of Gyeongsan City, Republic of Korea, *Sustainability*, 7(7), 8240. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su7078240>, Accessed on 12/12/2024.
2. Malek, N. A.; Mariapan, M.; Shariff, M. M.; & Aziz, A. (2010) Assessing the Quality of Green Open Spaces: A review. *Conference Paper*. doi:10.13140/2.1.3608.6725, Accessed on 14/12/2024.
3. Malik, K. T.; & Gupta, A. (2019) Open Green Spaces in Urban Indian Cities, Its Importance, Rapid Decline and Restoration Strategies. *International Journal of Scientific Research and Review*, 07(04), 178-186. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341766815>, Accessed on 11/12/2024.
4. Sadeghian, M. M.; & Vardanyan, Z. (2013) The benefits of urban parks: A review of urban research. *Journal of Novel Applied Sciences*, 2(8), 231-237, <http://www.jnasci.org>, Accessed on 11/12/2024.
5. World Health Organization. Regional Office for Europe. (2016) Urban green spaces and health, Accessed on 11/12/2024.
6. 918-0-The-economic-value-of-our-green-spaces.pdf, Accessed on 12/12/2024.
7. <https://amrutkerala.org/>, Accessed on 23/12/2024.

\*\*\*\*\*