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Coimbatore set to grow by over 2,600 sq km, cover 2.2 percent of Tamil Nadu

CHENNAI: It's not just Chennai's urban area that is expanding manifold. The planned urban area of the state's second-biggest city, Coimbatore, is set to expand nearly 10 times. The new draft master plan prepared by the state government for Coimbatore covers 2,869 sq km. The last master plan for the city prepared in 1992 covered just 257 sq km.

The new expanded limits account for nearly 2.21 per cent of Tamil Nadu's total area and extend from Mettupalayam town in the north to Pollachi in the south. As many as 186 villages around Coimbatore city are also included and the planned area borders on the Western Ghats and the reserved forest area on the western side of the city. But the master plan that also provides for agricultural zones has left out the agrarian south of Pollachi taluk and the ecologically-sensitive Valparai.

The master plan for the city considered to be the industrial and educational hub of the state focuses on land use proposal based on future population growth. Two major infrastructure projects proposed in the plan are an outer ring road and inner ring road.

The outer ring road would link Avinashi Road and Mettupalayam Road and pass Neelambur, Mailampatti, Vellanipatti, Kalapatti, Sarkarsamakulam and Periyanaickenpalayam villages, among others. The inner ring road linking Mettupalayam Road and Palghat Road would pass Thudiyalur, Pannimadai, Somayampalayam and Kuniyamuthur villages among others.

Over 30 Lakh people under new city plan

Coimbatore is the 16th-largest urban agglomeration in the country as per the 2011 census and is home to about 6.62% of Tamil Nadu's total urban population. The population that will be covered under the new master plan is around 31.15 lakh, of which 13.73 lakh (44%) comprise workers.