World Town Planning Day (World Urbanism Day) – 8 November 2026

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News

World Town Planning Day (World Urbanism Day) is observed every 8 November to raise awareness among the public and decision-makers about the value of planning. It was started in 1949 by Professor Carlos María della Paolera of the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina. It is now observed in more than 30 countries and promoted by the International Society of City and Regional Planners (ISOCARP), headquartered in The Hague, Netherlands. Early concerns were regenerating run-down areas, reducing overcrowding, building parks and cleaning up air and water. No global official theme for 2026 was confirmed; the American Planning Association held a virtual conference on 6 November titled 'Great Communities are Built on Planning'. It is distinct from the UN's World Cities Day on 31 October.

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Date	8 November (annual)
Founder	Prof. Carlos María della Paolera
Year / place	1949, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Emblem	Blue top (air), green bottom (land), gold sun in centre

Point	Details
Promoted by	ISOCARP – The Hague, Netherlands
Countries	30+
Constitution	74th Amendment (1992) – 12th Schedule, 18 subjects
TN law	Tamil Nadu Town and Country Planning Act, 1971
CMDA	Ad hoc body 1972; statutory 1974

Background

- History of planning: Ebenezer Howard proposed the 'Garden City' in 1898 – self-contained small towns ringed by a green belt. Scotland's Patrick Geddes was invited to Madras in 1914 and worked in India for about ten years; seeing Madras Presidency towns he coined the term 'temple city' (Modern Review, 1919). Chandigarh was designed by Le Corbusier.
- Constitution: the 74th Amendment (1992) added Part IXA (Municipalities) and the 12th Schedule. The first of its 18 subjects is 'urban planning including town planning'; the second, 'regulation of land use and construction of buildings'. Article 243ZE provides for the Metropolitan Planning Committee.
- Geography/economy: planning coordinates land-use zoning, road networks, public transport, open space and flood drainage. Unplanned growth leads to congestion, flooding, slums and pollution; good planning raises investment and quality of life.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu: under the Town and Country Planning Act, 1971, the Directorate of Town and Country Planning (DTCP) handles planning across the State; for the Chennai Metropolitan Area, the Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority (CMDA) – set up as an ad hoc body in 1972 and made statutory under this Act in 1974 – prepares the Master Plan, Detailed Development Plans and new-town plans. Patrick Geddes urged Madurai to revive its car (chariot) streets and to link temple authorities with municipal planning; he admired Srirangam's concentric walls.

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

World Town Planning Day (World Urbanism Day) is observed every 8 November to raise awareness among the public and decision-makers about the value of planning. It was started in 1949 by Professor Carlos María della Paolera of the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina.

What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Date: 8 November (annual); Founder: Prof. Carlos María della Paolera; Year / place: 1949, Buenos Aires, Argentina; Emblem: Blue top (air), green bottom (land), gold sun in centre.

What is the background to this news?

History of planning: Ebenezer Howard proposed the 'Garden City' in 1898 – self-contained small towns ringed by a green belt.

Practice questions (with answers)

1. Professor Carlos María della Paolera, who started World Town Planning Day in 1949, belonged to which country?

A) Brazil

B) Chile

C) Spain

D) Argentina

Answer: D – Explanation: Argentina – University of Buenos Aires. His emblem: blue above (air), green below (land), a sun in the centre.

2. Which Scottish planner, invited to Madras in 1914, coined the term 'temple city' after seeing towns of the Madras Presidency?

A) Le Corbusier

B) Patrick Geddes

C) Edwin Lutyens

D) Otto Koenigsberger

Answer: B – Explanation: Patrick Geddes – he urged Madurai to revive its chariot streets. Le Corbusier – Chandigarh; Lutyens – New Delhi.

3. 'Urban planning including town planning' is listed in which Schedule of the Constitution?

A) Seventh Schedule

B) Eleventh Schedule

C) Twelfth Schedule

D) Tenth Schedule

Answer: C – Explanation: Twelfth Schedule (74th Amendment, 1992) – first of its 18 subjects. The Eleventh Schedule covers panchayats (29 subjects).

4. Who proposed the 'Garden City' idea of self-contained towns ringed by a green belt in 1898?

A) Ebenezer Howard

B) Frank Lloyd Wright

C) Daniel Burnham

D) Lewis Mumford

Answer: A – Explanation: Ebenezer Howard (Britain) – 'To-morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform' (1898); Letchworth and Welwyn garden cities followed.

5. The Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority (CMDA) is a statutory body under which Tamil Nadu Act?

A) TN Town & Country Planning Act

B) Chennai City Corporation Act

C) TN District Municipalities Act

D) TN Housing Board Act

Answer: A – Explanation: Tamil Nadu Town and Country Planning Act, 1971 – CMDA began as an ad hoc body in 1972 and became statutory in 1974; it prepares Master Plans.

Sources: Canadian Institute of Planners; ISOCARP; IDB blog; ThePrint/Sahapedia; CMDA; APA. © Shanmugam IAS Academy.