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Towards Rurban Development: Evolving Parameters for Defining Rurban Areas in Kerala

'Rurban' is comparatively a new concept for Kerala, which was discussed after the launch of Shyamaprasad Mukharjee Rurban Mission" (SPMRM) which is also known as The National Rurban Mission (NRuM), in 2015 by the Prime Minister. NRuM follows the vision of "Development of a cluster of villages that preserve and nurture the essence of rural community life with focus on equity and inclusiveness without compromising with the facilities perceived to be essentially urban in nature, thus creating a cluster of "Rurban Villages" (Ministry of Rural Development, 2015). It has a detailed framework of the process to be followed by the central, state and local level administrative bodies in India. The first step towards the development of rural clusters is the identification of such areas of development potential using certain criteria recommended by the mission. The mission has given powers to the state to add more criteria for the selection of clusters. Kerala has a unique settlement pattern, termed as Urban-Rural Continuum by different scholars, the given criteria may not be sufficient for appropriate selection of such clusters. This study is an attempt to understand the concept of rurban in detail and evolving parameters to identify rurban areas in Kerala.

Keywords: *Rurban, Kerala context, Rurban area, Parameters*