
URBANISATION AND ITS ISSUES

Although the population of India is still predominantly rural, the progress of urbanisation in the last decade has been fairly rapid. Population residing in urban areas in India according to 2001 census was 102.9 corers which increased to 121.0 in 2011.

Population (in Crore)

	2001	2011	Difference
India	120.9	121.0	18.1
Rural	74.3	83.3	9.0
Urban	28.6	37.7	9.1

(Source: Census India-www.censusindia.gov)

Growth Rate of Population (in %)

	1991-2001	2001-2011	Difference
India	21.5	17.6	-3.9
Rural	18.1	12.2	-5.9
Urban	31.5	31.8	+0.3

(Source: Census India-www.censusindia.gov)

The above tables show the rising trends in urbanisation in India

- For the first time since Independence, the absolute increase in population is more in urban areas than in rural areas
- Rural – Urban distribution: 68.84% & 31.16%
- Level of urbanization increased from 27.81% in 2001 Census to 31.16% in 2011 Census
- The proportion of rural population declined from 72.19% to 68.84% •

This rise in urban population growth rate is due to rural to urban migration rather than natural growth of the population.

The pace of urbanisation has been particularly rapid in the Southern and western states-Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala,

Maharashtra and Gujarat, all have more than 35% of population in urban areas. India census 2011 shows that one in every three Indian now lives in an urban habitat and the move towards town and cities has happened mostly in South India.

Presently approximately 31.6% of India's population lives in urban cities. By 2025 it is estimated that about 630 million people will live close to 40 megacities around the world. Japan's capital Tokyo will still be the largest of them all, followed by Delhi and Shanghai in India and China respectively. More than half of the world's population is living in towns and cities.

16.8 MEGA CITIES IN INDIA

Megacity is usually defined as a metropolitan area with total population in excess of 10 million people. A megacity can be a single metropolitan area or two or more metropolitan area that converge. As per the data released by census 2011 the Greater Mumbai with a population of 18,414,288 continues to be India's biggest city followed by Delhi with the population of 16,314,838 and Kolkata with population of 14,112,536. Hyderabad, Chennai, Ahmedabad, Bangalore stand out as incept megacities with population ranging from 5 to 7 million. The population of Hyderabad is expected to cross ten million by 2015, where as that of the other cities will cross eight million mark.

In developing countries such as India, megacities such as Delhi and Mumbai hold an irresistible attraction—a promise of work and a better standard of living, food and energy. Most of the population is made up of unskilled and skilled workers migrating from the rural areas in search of better life.

Megacities are more than just large cities. They host intense and complex interactions between demographic, social, political, economic and ecological processes.

Megacities contain a rich mix of co-existing people with their distinctive ethnic, community, culture, lifestyle values.

Megacities undergoing economic boom times often generate considerable opportunities as well as strong pressures for change accompanied by environmental degradation.

Megacities allow convenience and good opportunities to find work, but they are fraught with complicated problems. As the city's population swell these megacities are struggling to cope. The megacities in India are struggling to keep up with their increasing size. They are developing at an incredible rate and are facing many challenges.

16.8.1 Major problems of mega cities in India

1. **Slums:** Due to the rising population, the absolute number of slum dweller is rising. This is due to massive migration from rural areas and from semi urban areas to these megacities. These settlements often have minimal or no access to pure drinking water, sanitation, healthcare facilities, education or the urban economy. Acute shortage of affordable housing is the cause of such legal and illegal slums in megacities. These slum areas unfortunately form the repositories of urban rimes.
2. **Homelessness:** Megacities often have significant numbers of homeless people. In a city like Mumbai and its suburbs we observe people living on railway stations, footpaths or under the flyovers. Many slum dwellers are not protected with tenant's rights, so they can be easily evicted or forced out and become homeless.
3. **Illegal Construction:** The rapid growth of the city like Mumbai has led to the illegally constructed buildings with poor quality of sanitation, drinking water and other facilities on government as well as on private lands.
4. **Traffic congestion:** Traffic congestion is a condition on road network that occurs as use increase and is characterised by slower speeds, longer trip times and increased vehicular queuing.
5. **Pollution:** The air quality in the megacities has deteriorated due to heavy traffic on the roads. More cars and more congestion have led to increasingly poor air quality. Also residential heating and cooking leads to air pollution. Toxic chemicals spread in to the atmosphere have triggered acute respiratory illness. Water contamination and frequent outbreak of epidemics has become the feature of megacities.
6. **Social-economic disparities:** In megacities we can recognise a wide range of social standards and social fragmentation, sociocultural conflicts because of the different background of the migrants.

Many cities in India have experienced the tensions between the different communities during religious festivals.

7. **Internal Security Threat:** Internal security threat is India's biggest cities are emerging as the greatest challenge for the security managers. Some cities in India had witnessed the ethnic and communal tensions in the past. Riots of the kind that happened in Ahmedabad, Delhi, and Mumbai between the communities were the main law and order challenges

faced by the Indian Police. But serial bomb blast in Mumbai in 1993, Jaipur, Surat, Bengaluru Pune, Delhi cities have witnessed the terrorists attacks. Terrorism is therefore a clear and present day challenge for Indian megacities.

There is no doubt that India's future is in the cities. What is happening in India is a part of worldwide challenge. Mega cities are sprouting around the globe. But in India it seems that the urban local governments have failed to cope with the problems of people living in cities, as these cities are growing without any proper planning.

16.8.2 Issues of water, housing, waste management

Affordable housing in Indian Cities:

A shortage of affordable housing in Indian cities has led to rampant illegal construction by developers using cheap materials and shoddy methods in order to offer low cost homes to low paid workers. Despite several promises by the government to build homes for India's poor in densely populated cities, the country's urban housing shortage is estimated at nearly 19 million households. That lack of affordable housing is especially acute in Mumbai, India's financial capital and home to some of worlds costliest real estate, where an estimated six out of ten people lives in slums.

Availability of water:

Large number of households in cities does not have access to one of the most basic human needs –a safe and reliable supply of drinking water. Rural areas contain the largest number of people without access to safe drinking water, but like in many developing countries, even urban and semi urban areas also face the problem of adequate and safe drinking water. The average availability of water is reducing steadily with growing population and it is estimated that by 2020 India will become a water stress nation.

The urban water supply and sanitation sector in the country is suffering from inadequate levels of service, an increasing demand-supply gap, poor sanitary conditions and deteriorating financial and technical performance.

Some 35 Indian cities with more than a million residents provide water distribution only a few hours a day

Waterborne diseases cause an estimated 90 million days of lost productivity annually

Diarrhoea was on of the top causes of death among the 1.7 million India children under 5 who died in 2012.

Solid waste management:

Solid waste management is one of the major environmental problems in Indian cities. Improper methods of solid and liquid waste management in many urban areas pose a great threat to urban ecology and environment. Average waste generation ranges from 1000-2500 metric tons/day in the urban area. Various studies have revealed that 40% of waste is disposed of unscientifically in open dumps, landfills creating problems to public health and environment. The suitable facilities to treat and dispose of the waste are absent in all most all mega cities. Lack of financial resources leads to low quality of service provision which leads to fewer people willing to provide for such services. Due to the expansion of cities disposal sites have now come amidst the thick population thereby posing threat to health of the residents.

Social Tension and urban India:

At present 20.33% of the urban population lives without basic facilities. The employment crisis precipitated by increasing urbanisation and migration is expected to be a major problem in near future.

Some of the issues related with social tension are

- Language and ethnic difference
- Rising slums
- Unequitable access to resources like drinking water, sanitation, education facilities etc.
- Problem of security of women and senior citizens.
- Rising number of crimes.
- Periodic sectarian violence between Hindus and Muslims, Hindus and Christians, upper caste and lower castes.
- Outbreak of periodic epidemics and poor health care facilities.
- Malnutrition in slum areas.
- Rising crimes in cities.
- Slow improvement in infrastructure facilities like transport, power, and housing for poor.
- Illegal constructions

The big Indian cities like Mumbai have huge slums like Dharavi, which is to be replaced by modern metropolis, but there is no plan for re housing of the slum this slum dweller.

There is also tension between industry v/s agriculture, e.g. in Bengal it Tata Nano v/s farmers, in Maharashtra it is between Reliance SEZ and farmers in Konkan area.