Urbanisation in India

Urbanization in India began to accelerate after, due to the country's adoption of a mixed economy, which gave rise to the development of the private sector. Urbanisation is taking place at a faster rate in India. Population residing in urban areas in India, according to 1901 census, was 11.4%. This count increased to 28.53% according to 2001 census, and crossing 30% as per 2011 census, standing at 31.16%. In 2017, the numbers increased to 34%, according to The World Bank. According to a survey by UN State of the World Population report in 2007, by 2030, 40.76% of country's population is expected to reside in urban areas. As per World Bank, India, along with China, Indonesia, Nigeria, and the United States, will lead the world's urban population surge by 2050.

Mumbai saw large scale rural-urban migration in the 20th century.[see main] Mumbai, in 2018, accommodates 22.1 million people, and is the largest metropolis by population in India, followed by Delhi with 28 million inhabitants. Witnessing the fastest rate of urbanisation in the world, as per 2011 census, Delhi's population rises by 4.1%, Mumbai's by 3.1% and Kolkata's by 2% as per 2011 census compared to 2001 census.

The transition period:

After independence, India faced poverty, unemployment, and economic backwardness. The first Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, focused on the domain of science and technology. The mixed economy system was adopted, resulting in the growth of the Public sector in India, crippling down the development of Indian economy leading to what is popularly known as Hindu rate of growth.

Causes:

The main causes of urbanisation in India are:

- Expansion in government services, as a result of the Second World War.
- Migration of people during the partition of India.
- The Industrial Revolution.
- Eleventh five-year plan that aimed at urbanisation for the economic development of India.
- Economic opportunities are just one reason people move into cities
- Infrastructure facilities in the urban areas.
- Growth of private sector after 1990.
- Growth of employment in cities is attracting people from rural areas as well as smaller cities to large towns. According to Mckinsey, India's urban population will grow from 340 million in 2008 to 590 million in 2030.
- Therefore, it is being driven by economic compulsions, where people move out for economic advancements to areas offering better job opportunities.
- It is also driven by land fragmentations, villages being erased due to roads and highway constructions, dam constructions and other activities.

- Agriculture is the primary source of livelihood, but it's no more profitable: Indian rural economy is primarily based on agriculture. Indian agriculture sector accounts for 18 percent of India's gross domestic product (GDP) and it is estimated that it provides employment to 50% of the countries workforce, but ground reality differs. Many farmers in different states of India are leaving farming, primarily because of high input cost and low income from agriculture. Also on the other hand with usage of fertilizers, chemicals and hybrid seeds, land fertility is declining. This encourages many farmers to commit suicide. In 2014, the National Crime Records Bureau of India reported 5,650 farmer suicides. As per the figures given by central government in 2015, there were 12602 farmer suicides. This includes 8,007 farmers-cultivators and 4,595 agricultural labourers. The farmer's suicide rate in India has ranged between 1.4 and 1.8 per 100,000 total populations, over a 10-year period through 2005. Thus, people (including farmers) are migrating to cities.

Impacts / Consequences:

- Crowded housing and polluted waterway in Mumbai.
- Rapid rise in urban population, in India, is leading to many problems like increasing slums, decrease in standard of living in urban areas, also causing environmental damage.
- The Industrial Revolution of the 18th century caused countries like the United States and the United Kingdom to become superpowers, but conditions elsewhere are worsening. India's urban growth rate is 2.07%; seemingly insignificant compared to Rwanda, with 7.6%. India has around 300 million people living in metropolitan areas. This has greatly increased housing issues: with overcrowded cities, many people are forced to live in unsafe conditions, such as illegal buildings. Water lines, roads and electricity are lacking in quality, resulting in a decline of living standards. It is also contributing to the issues presented by pollution.
- Urbanization also results in a disparity in the market, owing to the large demands of the growing population and the primary sector struggling to cope.
- Allan Chirare, 15 August 2015 quotes: "Urbanization is just becoming a disaster to the city of Mumbai in India."
- It could be argued that urbanization impacts the migrants themselves on multiple levels. Networks of friends and family become support systems during the initial transformation phase and the struggle to find work in a fast-paced environment. Their struggles may take months, or even years, to adjust to the new surrounds in order to find a stable job. Migrants are responsible for supporting both themselves in the city and the family left at home.
- Some of the positive effects resulting from rural to urban migration occur in the agrarian communities from which migrants came. Family members left at home, usually the elderly and young, are eased out of financial pressures as their relatives work to provide higher standards of living for their dependants. Their quality of life is often additionally improved by the provisions that the migrant sends back.
- On the other hand, rural to urban migration poses a big challenge for the developing cities due to migrant populations flocking in. How will cities support it in terms of resources, land and space?

- Cities offer solutions in terms of high rise buildings (affordable housing), metros (affordable transport), affordable schooling, established local clinics, water. ATMs and many new initiatives. However, the problems include:

  (1)   National Institution for Transforming India [NITI Ayog], has released report 'Composite Water Management Index' in June 2018 and stated that 21 cities (including Delhi, Mumbai, and Bangalore) in India would run out of groundwater by 2020.

  (2)   The latest database of Numbeo lists three Indian cities among the top 10 cities of the world for having worst traffic conditions. These cities include Mumbai, Pune and Kolkata.

  (3)   Population growth and rapid urbanization are combining to create huge challenges for Indian cities. According to McKinsey, the country's cities are expected to grow from 340 million people in 2008 to a whopping 590 million in 2030 and this growth will be very rapid. Meeting demand for urban services in these cities will require US$ 1.1 trillion in capital investment over the next 20 years. Without the right design and planning, this massive urban growth could exacerbate existing problems of congestion, pollution, and traffic safety.

  (4)   Delhi is now considered the most polluted city in the world, according to the Brookings Institute, while at least two-and-a-half million premature deaths are blamed on poor air quality across the country as a whole.

  (5)   The Economic Survey Report of India 2017-18 estimated that percentage of agricultural workers of total work force would drop to 25.7% by 2050 from 58.2% in 2001. What is the cause of this decline? People migrating to cities and adding to the unemployment in cities. It is interesting to know that because of migration from rural pockets to urban (cities), unemployment in cities is increasing and in rural pockets it's decreasing. As per Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) overall unemployment rate of India as on 18th Oct 2018 is 6.9%, whereas for urban India its 7.5% and for rural India its 6.6%.