

Meerut is a city in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh.¹¹² It is an ancient city with settlements dating back to the Indus Valley Civilization having been found in and around the area. The city lies 70km (43ml) northeast of the national capital New Delhi and 453km (281ml) northwest of the state capital Lucknow.¹¹³ It is the second largest city in the National Capital Region of India, the sixteenth largest metropolitan area and twenty-fifth largest city in India.¹¹⁴ It ranked 292 in 2006 and 242 in 2010 in the list of largest cities and urban areas in the world.¹¹⁵ The city covers an area of about 172square km while the total area is 198square km, third largest in Uttar Pradesh after Kanpur and Lucknow. It has second largest largest army cantonment in the country. The city is one of the largest producers of sports goods and the largest producer of musical instruments in India. It is also the largest producers of bicycle rickshaw in world. The city is also an education hub in western Uttar Pradesh.

The city may have derived its name from Mayarashtra, the capital of the kingdom of Mayasura, Mandodari's father and Ravana's father-in-law. This name may have mutated to Mairashtra, Mai-dant-ka-khera, Mairaath and eventually Meerut.¹¹⁶

According to another version, Maya, a distinguished architect, got from King Yudhishtira the land on which the city of Meerut now stands

¹¹² *“Chapter 3-Findings:Metro cities of India”*, Central Pollution Control Board, p.-63.

¹¹³ *“Consultancy Services for preparation of the City Development Plan (CDP) For Meerut in the state of Uttar Pradesh under JNNURM”*, Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, Ministry of Urban Development, Government of India, p.-209.

¹¹⁴ http://www.citymayors.com/gratis/indian_cities.html

¹¹⁵ http://www.citymayors.com/statistics/urban_az3mr.html

¹¹⁶ Uma Verma, Uttar Pradesh (India), Department of District Gazetteers, Uttar Pradesh State Gazetteer: Social Services, culture, places of interest, Uttar Pradesh State Gazetteer. 5, Government of Uttar Pradesh, Department of District Gazetteer, p.-359.

and he called this place Mayarashtra, a name which in course of time became shortened to Meerut. Tradition has it that the district formed part of the dominions of Mahipal and the word Meerut is associated with his name.

In the Ramayana, Shrawan Kumar carried his feeble parents on his shoulders to all the pilgrimage sites in India, but it is believed that when he passed through Meerut, he put down his parents for a while to get rest and water. It was here that Lord Rama's father Dashratha, mistook Shrawan Kumar for a deer and shot him with an arrow by accident. Shrawan kumar's father cursed him that King's own first son would abandon him when he needed him most.

Meerut lies between 28 57' to 29⁰⁰2'N latitude and 77 40' to 77⁰⁰45'E longitude in the Indo-Gangetic plains of India.¹¹⁷ It is bound on the north by Muzaffarnagar, in the south by Bulandshahr while Ghaziabad and Baghpat districts from the southern and western limits. The river Ganga forms the eastern boundary and separates the district from Moradabad and Bijnore. The Hindon forms the western boundary and separates the district from Baghpat.¹¹⁸ The ground is not rocky and there are no mountains. The soil is composed of Pleistocene and sub-recent alluvial sediments transported and deposited by river action from the Himalayan regions. These alluvial deposits are unconsolidated. Lithologically, sediments consists of clay, silt and fine to coarse sand. Land is very fertile for growing crops, especially wheat, sugarcane and vegetables. The city lies between the plains of Ganga and Yamuna.¹¹⁹ Meerut has a monsoon influenced humid sub-tropical climate characterized by very hot summers and cool winters. Summers last from

¹¹⁷ Op. Cit.

¹¹⁸ Op. Cit.

¹¹⁹ Op. Cit.

early April to late June and are extremely hot, with temperatures reaching 43 C (109°F). The monsoon arrives in late June and continues till the middle of September. Temperatures drop slightly, with plenty of cloud cover but with higher humidity. Temperatures rise again in October and the city then has a mild, dry winter season from late October to the middle of March. Lowest temperature recorded is 0.5 C (32.9°F). Rainfall is about 80cm to 100cm per annum, which is suitable for growing crops. Most of the rainfall is received during the monsoon. Humidity varies from 30 to 100%. The city receives no snowfall.¹²⁰

After the excavations at Vidur-Ka-Tila, a collection of several mounds named after Vidura, in 1950-1952, a site 37km north-east of Meerut, it was concluded to be remains of the ancient city of Hastinapur, the capital of Kauravas and Pandavas of Mahabharatha, which was washed away by Ganga flood.¹²¹

Meerut also contained a Harappan settlement known as Alamgir. It was also the easternmost settlement of the Indus Valley Civilization. Meerut has been a centre of Buddhism in the period of Mauryan Emperor Ashoka (r. 273 to 232 BC), and remains of Buddhist structures were found near the Jama Masjid in the present day city.¹²² The Ashokan Pillar, at Delhi ridge, next to the 'Bara Hindu Rao Hospital', near Delhi University, was carried to Delhi from Meerut by Firuz Shah Tughlaq (r. 1351 to 1388 BC), it was later damaged in a 1713 explosion and restored in 1867.¹²³

¹²⁰ Op. Cit.

¹²¹ "*Major attractions*", Meerut Development Authority.

¹²² "*The Hindu Temples on the plains near Meerut*", British Library.

¹²³ Meerut District-History, The Imperial Gazetteer of India, 1909, Vol. 17, p.-254-255.

In the eleventh century A, the south-west part of the district was ruled by Har Dat, the Dor Raja of Bulandshahr who built a fort, which was long known for its strength and finds mention in Ain-e-Akbari.¹²⁴ He was later defeated by Mahmud Ghazni in 1018. A prominent local trademark, the Jama Masjid, dates from this period and is said to have been built by Mahmud's Wazir. Shortly, after its capture, the city was regained by the local Hindu Raja and part of its fortifications built for the city's defence, survived till recent times. The first big invasion on the city came later in 1192 AD from Mohammad Ghori, when his general Qutub-din Aibak attacked the city and a much worse fate lay ahead for the district which came with the invasion of Timur in 1398 during which the Rajputs offered a tough resistance at the fort of Loni, where he fought the Sultan of Delhi Muhammad Tughlaq. But, eventually they were all defeated and all the one lakh prisoners his army had taken in since his invasion of India were massacred, according to Timur's own accounts in Tuzak-e-Taimuri.¹²⁵ Thereafter he went on to attack Delhi, where he again massacred the local population and returned to attack Meerut town, then ruled by an Afghan chief, Ilias and took the city in two days leading to widespread devastation before heading north once again.

After that Meerut was ruled by Jats and then by Marathas from whom it was taken by the British. During the rule of Mughal Emperor Akbar (r. 1556 to 1605 AD), there was a mint for copper coins here.¹²⁶

Meerut is famously associated with the Indian Rebellion of 1857 against the British East India Company. The famous slogan 'Delhi Chalo'

¹²⁴ Meerut City, The Imperial Gazetteer of India, 1909, vol. 17, p.-264.

¹²⁵ Preparation for the conquest of Delhi, Malfuzat-i-Timuri or Tuzak-e-Taimuri (Autobiography of Timur), by Amir Timur-e-lang, "*The History of India, as told by its own historians. The Muhammadan Period*", by Sir H. M. Eliot, edited by John Dowson; London, Trubner Company, 1867-1877.

¹²⁶ Op. Cit.

was first raised here. Meerut Cantonment is the place where the rebellion started after the greased cartridges incidence.¹²⁷ During this incidence, Meerut leapt into international prominence, when on 24th April 1857 eighty five of the ninety troopers of the 3rd Cavalry refused to touch the cartridges and after court-martial were sentenced to ten years imprisonment. On Sunday, 10th May 1857, Kotwal Dhan Singh Gurjar, opened the gates of the prison. These soldiers, along with other imprisoned soldiers escaped prison and declared themselves free, revolted, attacked and killed several of the British authorities to take the city in their control. This marked the beginning of a widespread revolt across northern India as these soldiers marched towards Delhi. 10th May is still celebrated as a local holiday in Meerut.

Meerut was also the venue of the controversial Meerut Conspiracy Case in March 1929 in which several trade unionists including three Englishmen were arrested for organizing Indian-rail strike. This immediately caught attention back in England, inspired the 1932 play titled 'Meerut Prisoners', by Manchester street theatre group, the 'Red Megaphones', highlighting the detrimental effects of colonization and industrialization.¹²⁸ In the 1940s, Meerut cinemas had a 'Don't Move' policy during playing of the British National Anthem.

The city and district also suffered from communal riots in 1982, 1984 and 1987 and a tragedy in 2006 when fire in consumer electronics "Brand India" fair in Victoria Park Stadium killed over 100 people.

Meerut district is divided into twelve blocks from developmental point of view, namely, Daurala, Hastinapur, Jani-Khurd, Kharkhauda,

¹²⁷ <http://www.english.emory.edu/Babri/Mutiny.html>

¹²⁸ Meerut 1932 play, by Manchester Street theatre group the Red Megaphones, Working Class Movement Library.

Mawana, Machchhra, Meerut, Parikshitgarh, Rajpura, Rohta, Sarurpur-Khurd and Sardhana. The city of Meerut was originally surrounded by a moat and wall with ten gates: Delhi Gate, Chamar Gate, Lisari Gate, Sohrab Gate, Shahpir Gate, Budhana Gate, Khair Nagar Gate, Kamboah Gate, Baghpat Gate and Hapur Gate. Since 1935 and particularly after independence, the city was spread beyond the bounds of old town and many new localities have come into existence. The larger ones being Begum bagh, Thapar Nagar, Gandhi Nagar, Subhash Nagar, Shivpuri, Kailashpuri, Krishnapuri, Brahmपुरi, Shastri Nagar and Medical. At the level of Judicial, it has a court of District Judge.

As regards local administration, Meerut city has three types of administration. In Cantonment area, there is a Cantonment Board and the rest of the city is administered by a Municipal Corporation, rechristened as Meerut Nagar Nigam in 1994. It may be worth mentioning here that it has been raised to the level of Corporation since 1981 only, previously its civic administration was administered by a Municipal Board. Meerut Nagar Nigam is divided into eighty wards. A part of the city lies to the west of main railway line known as Kankerkhara which is Notified Town Area along with Buxarkhara having its own Town Area Committee.

The district contributes one Lok Sabha Constituency of Meerut. The district also contributes the following Assembly Constituencies:

Kithore

- Meerut Cantonment

Meerut

- Meerut South

Siwalkhas

- Sardhana

- Hastinapur

MEERUT CANTONMENT

Meerut Cantonment was established by the British East India Company in 1803 after the battle of Laswari. It is the second largest cantonment of India in land area (3568.06 hectares) and population (90521 people as per 2001 census). The revolt of 1857 was started from “Kali Paltan” in Meerut Cantonment and Indian soldiers stationed here actively participated in rebellion. The cantonment surrounds the city from 3 sides-from Pallavpuram to Sainik Vihar to Ganga Nagar. It is well connected with the rest of country by roads as well as by rail. The Delhi Niti Paas Road (State Highway No. 45) passes through Meerut Cantonment.¹²⁹

Soldiers from the cantonment have actively participated in the Battle of Ypres, both the first and second Battles of El Alamein, France, Burma Campaign, the Indo-Pak Wars, Bangladesh Liberation War and Kargil War. Its battalions and officers have shown great courage and got many honours. It has been the regimental centre of Punjab-Regiment Corps of Signals, Jat Regiment, Sikh Regiment, Dogra Regiment in the past.

TOURIST DESTINATIONS

Jain Temples of Hastinapur

According to Jain tradition, Hastinapur was one of the earliest Indian cities and came into existence during the time of Rishabhadeva (the first Tirthankar) whose grandson, Somaprabha, was the first ruler of

¹²⁹ “Meerut Cantonment Historical Background.”

the place. It is also said to be the birthplace of three Jain Tirthankar's- Shantinath, Kunthunath and Arahamath.¹³⁰

St. John's Church

This church was established by Chaplin Reverend Henry Fisher on behalf of the East India Company in 1819 in the cantonment area and was completed in 1822.¹³¹ It is considered one of the oldest churches of north India. The church was dedicated to the people by Bishop Wilson. It has a seating capacity of 10,000 people. During the war of 1857, this church was the scene of heavy fighting between Indians and British forces.

Augharnath Temple

This temple (also known as Kali Paltan Mandir locally) is located at the site where the soldiers of the war of 1857 planned their operations. The temple also houses a memorial built to honour the martyrs of the revolt of 1857. The old temple has been replaced by a modern version.¹³²

Jama Masjid

The Jama Masjid was built by Hasan Mahdi, Sultan Mahmud Ghaznavi's wazir in 1019 AD. That makes it the first masjid in north India and although restored by Humayun, it is one of the oldest mosques in India.

Martyr Memorial

The memorial is 30 metres (98 feet) high pillar of marble situated at Bhainsali. The memorial complex also houses the Government

¹³⁰ Meerut City Travel Guide.

¹³¹ *"The first War of Independence-UP Tourism."*

¹³² *Cantonment Board Meerut Official Website-Heritage Sites.*

Freedom Struggle Museum which is dedicated to the first war of Indian Independence.¹³³

Shahpur's Mausoleum

This is a Mughal mausoleum erected by the empress Nurjahan in 1620 in honour of a local Hazrat Shahpeer.¹³⁴ It is a red stone structure that was partly built and is incomplete till date. The tomb is adorned by intricate nakashi (stone painting). There is no roof on the main tomb. People say that Shahpeer was the teacher of Mughal Emperor Jahangir. The tomb is listed by the Archaeological Survey of India as a national heritage monument.¹³⁵ Shahpeer gate was built in 1829 by a local Jagirdar "Rajaji".

Shahi Eid Gaah

It was built by Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, the youngest son of Iltutmish and the eighth Sultan of the Delhi Sultanate. It is about 6 hundred years old and has a capacity of about one lakh people to offer prayer. There is nakashi on the walls of Eidgaah which reflects the Sultani Ghulam era.

Parikshit Garh

The place is associated with and derives its name from King Parikshit of Hastinapur (the grandson of Arjuna). The fort was built by Parikshit.

¹³³*"Places of interest-Meerut-UP Tourism."*

¹³⁴JPS Associates, *"Revised Draft Report-Vol. 2 for preparing a Master Plan for Development of Tourism in the UP NCR"*, UP tourism.

¹³⁵*"List of Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains of Agra."* Archaeological Survey of India, p.-1.

Dargah of Baley Miyan

It was built by Qutub-ud-din Aibak in 1194 in the memory of Ghazi Sayyad Salar Masud (known locally as Baley Miyan).¹³⁶ An Urs is organized annually at the Dargah during the Nauchandi Fair.

Other places of interest include Suraj Kund; Mansa Devi Temple; Baleni; Basilica of Our Lady of Graces, Sardhana; Gurudwara of Saifpur, near Hastinapur, built in memory of one of the first five Panch-Pyare BhAI Dharam Singh ji and the Chandi Devi Temple which was built by Holkar queen Devi Ahilyabai Holkar etc.¹³⁷

DEVELOPMENT

Meerut is the 63rd fastest growing urban area in the world.¹³⁸ It is the 14th fastest developing city in India. A report by U. S. financial services firm Morgan Stanley, “Alpha Wise City Vibrancy Index: A Guide to India’s Urbanization” gave Meerut 5th spot on the “Vibrancy”, ahead of Delhi and Mumbai.¹³⁹ Meerut ranked second on both the financial penetration index, which measures things like the presence of ATMs and bank branches and on the consumption index, indicating the city’s transformation into an urban town. While the city ranked in the bottom 10 in job creations, the report suggests that overall there are plenty of “potential for urbanization”, including future employment opportunities. The infrastructure segment of Meerut is currently going through a boom phase with many new projects coming up in and around

¹³⁶ Mohammada, Malika, *“The foundations of the composite culture in India”*, Delhi, Aakar books. p.-219, ISBN978-81-89833-18-3, 2007.

¹³⁷ Op. Cit.

¹³⁸ http://www.citymayors.com/statistics/urban_growth1.html

¹³⁹ *“MORGAN STANLEY Alpha WISE City Vibrancy Index: A Guide to India’s Urbanization”*, Morgan Stanley, June 2011, p.-15.

the city.¹⁴⁰ There are many new buildings, shopping complexes, malls, roads, flyovers and apartments coming up.

Delhi-Meerut expressway is expected to be completed by 2013, although there have been several delays to this plan over the past decade.¹⁴¹ The Upper Ganga Canal Expressway is also under development. GAIL is also establishing its plant in Meerut and Muradnagar to supply cooking gas within the city.

ECONOMY

Industry

Meerut is one of the industrial towns of western U. P. It is a rich agricultural area. Being in the proximity of Delhi, it is ideal for industry. It is famous for handloom works and scissors industry from older age. Meerut is home to 520 micro, small and medium scale industries. As of August 2006, Meerut has about 23,471 industrial units, including 15,510 small-scale units and 7922 cottage industries.

Existing industries in the city include tyres, textiles, transformer, sugar, distillery, engineering, paper, publishing and sports goods manufacture. Prospective industries include IT and ITES. Meerut is home to some prominent regional pharmaceuticals companies like Perk Pharmaceuticals Limited, Mankind Pharma & Bestochem.¹⁴² Meerut is one of the major manufacturing regions for sports goods in India. The city is essentially famous for the manufacture of cricket goods with SG being the largest Indian cricket goods manufacturer and exporter in

¹⁴⁰ Sahni, Diksha, “*Why Meerut is More Vibrant than Mumbai*”, The Wall Street Journal, 15 June 2011.

¹⁴¹ “*Highway Projects’ clearance in top gear*”, Indian Express, 02/11/2006.

¹⁴² “*Report on Identification of Clusters in and around Meerut City*”, National Manufacturing Competitiveness Council, p.-39.

Meerut. Meerut is also the largest manufacturer of musical instruments in India. It was one of the first cities in northern India where publishing was set up during 19th century. It was a major centre of commercial publishing during 1860s and 1870s.¹⁴³

UP State Industrial Development Corporation (UPSIDC) have two industrial estates in the city, namely Partapur and Udyogpuram. Mokhampur industrial area is a private initiative. Pashchimanchal Vidyut Vitran Nigam Ltd. has unrestricted power at Partapur, Udyogpuram and Mokhampur industrial areas. Bhur Baral industrial area is under development. 1200 hectares of land is available for industrial development. Identified industrial areas are at Shatabdi Nagar, Delhi road, Baghpat road, Roorkee road, Garh road, Mawana road, Parikshitgarh (Kila) road, Garh road Gagol road (identified by UPSIDC) and Hapur road. 2000 hectares of land is being proposed for industrial development near Delhi-Meerut expressway. Nipro glass from Japan has set up a large glass plant for medical use. Investment from outside Meerut has started pouring in as Delhi-Mumbai Freight Corridor and East Freight Corridor will be intersecting very near to Meerut, making it a cost effective destination for setting up industries. GAIL Gas Ltd. is laying infrastructure for piped CNG throughout the city for industrial, domestic and transport use.

Retail

Aside shops' representing a range of well-known brands, car showrooms, hotels, bars and clubs, the city's gold market is one of Asia's largest, employing over 25,000 skilled craftsmen and processing around

¹⁴³ Chakravorty, Swapan; Gupta, Abhijit; Jadavpur University, Department of English (2004), "*Print areas: Book History in India*", Orient Blackswan, ISBN978-81-7824-082-4, 2004.

60 kg of the precious metal per day. The city has over 40 BIS Hallmark showrooms.

The city has a number of shopping malls including PVS Mall in Shastri Nagar, Melange Mall in Pallavpuram and Era Mall on Delhi road.

Revenue Generation

Meerut has shown healthy numbers in terms of revenue generation. In 2005-06, Meerut occupied the fifth slot and contributed Rs. 10,306 crore to the direct tax collection. It slipped to no. 6 in 2006-07 when the revenue collection at Rs. 11,203 crore was 18% lower than the target of Rs. 13,627 crore. According to statistics compiled by the Income Tax Department, Meerut contributed a Rs. 10,089 crore to the national treasury in 2007-08, overall it was ranked 9th outperforming Lucknow, Jaipur, Bhopal, Kochi and Buubaneshwar.¹⁴⁴

CIVIC ADMINISTRATION

Meerut district is divided into three tehsils, namely, Meerut, Mawana and Sardhana. These tehsils are further divided into 12 blocks.

The city is administered by Meerut Municipal Corporation which is responsible for performing civic administrative functions. Infrastructure development of the city is looked after by the Meerut Development Authority (MDA).

Meerut is the headquarter of NCR Zone and UP West Zone A of Police. An ADG and a secretary level IAS officer cover UP West Zone. Both the officers look after the legal and developmental condition and system of Western UP from Meerut for 6 divisions of Western UP, namely, Meerut, Agra, Bareilly, Moradabad, Saharanpur and Aligarh

¹⁴⁴ *“Meerut 9th in top tax paying cities”*, The Times of India (India), 3 July 2011.

under West Zone and Meerut Division with Saharanpur is in NCR Zone. A DIG looks after Meerut for legal condition and law, Commissioner also looks for 6 district of Meerut Division.

The Office of Chief Commissioner, Customs & Central Excise, Meerut Zone, has jurisdiction over 13 districts of Uttarakhnad and 14 districts of U. P. This jurisdiction was carved out of the Lucknow Zone. It comprises the erstwhile Customs & Central Excise Commissionerates of Meerut & Noida. The Meerut Commissionerate was further bifurcated into two Commissionerates, namely, 'Meerut –I and Ghaziabad' and the Noida Commissionerate was bifurcated into 'Noida and Meerut-II'. In addition, jurisdiction of Central Excise Division Bareilly was included in the jurisdiction of Meerut-II Commissionerate.¹⁴⁵

TRANSPORT

Air

The nearest airport is the Indira Gandhi International Airport which is about 100 km away. The Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar airstrip is located at Partapur. It was proposed by the state government that the airstrip be converted into an international airport to reduce pressure on Delhi airport. However, plans to expand airstrip were called off after protests against land acquisition started in other parts of the state.

Roads

By road, Meerut is well-connected to major cities like Delhi, Noida, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, Haridwar etc. A large number of people travel to Delhi, Noida, Greater Noida, Ghaziabad, Gurgaon etc. every day for work. Three National Highways (NH-58, NH-119 &NH-235) pass

¹⁴⁵ “*Customs, Central Excise and Services Tax, Meerut Zone: About Us.*”

through Meerut. Upper Ganga Canal Expressway which passes through outskirts of the city is under development.

There are two main Bus Terminals, namely, Bhainsali Bus Terminal and Sohrab Gate Bus Terminal from where UPSRTC buses ply to cities all over the state and all nearby cities.

As Meerut has been declared a metropolitan city in 2007, JNNURM Scheme has been put in place and many low floor city buses now run on the city roads.¹⁴⁶ Low floor city buses, normal city buses, auto rickshaws and rickshaws are convenient public transport to travel within the city. Many new transport infrastructural projects like inner ring road, outer ring road and construction of new flyovers are proposed.

An 8 lane expressway from Ghaziabad to Meerut is proposed under the NCR Transport Plan 2021 which will decrease travel time to Delhi by 60 minutes

Railways

Meerut has 7 railway stations, namely, Meerut City, Meerut Cantt., Partapur, Sakoti Tanda, Daurala, Mohiuddinpur and Pabli Khas. Meerut City Station is the busiest on the city. Meerut Cantt. was founded in 1865 and serves as a secondary railway station. Meerut lies on the Delhi-Saharanpur railway line. The electrification of the line from Meerut to Ghaziabad has been started.

About 20,000 passengers travel daily to Delhi and back. Around 27 pairs of trains run between Meerut and Delhi and 4 between Meerut and Khurja. Two trains are available for Lucknow daily, namely, Nauchandi Express and Rajya Rani Express. A weekly train goes to Chennai and

¹⁴⁶ Op. Cit.

Kuchuvelli. Ahmedabad mail connects the city to Gujarat Chattisgarh Express to Chattisgarh state.

A Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) has been proposed for operation between Meerut and Anand Vihar.¹⁴⁷ The RRTS is a rail-based mass transit system that would connect distant areas of National Capital Region (NCR) to the capital. Once completed, it will take only 45 minutes to travel between the two places with the train having a peak speed of 150 km per hour. The proposed system is to have dedicated trains between Anand Vihar and Meerut, which will stop nowhere in between and trams which stop at stations to be constructed after a gap of 4-5 km. Anand Vihar, Sahibabad, Mohan Nagar, Modinagar, Ghaziabad, Guldhara, Duhai, Moradnagar, Meerut Centre, Begum Bridge, Meerut North and Pallavpuram are the proposed halts. The high speed rail project under Rapid Rail Transit System in Delhi (NCR) will start with the Delhi-Meerut line. On 14 December 2010, the NCR Planning Board, Meerut Development Authority (MDA) and Nagar Nigam Meerut approved this system.

CULTURE

Most traditional Indian festivals, including, Holi, Dussehra, Diwali and Eid among others are celebrated with fervor in the city. Notably, a fair by the name of Nauchandi Fair is held two weeks after Holi every year. The fair which started in 1672, continues for about 15 days and is attended by lakhs of people. It includes events such as poetry recitations in Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi etc.

¹⁴⁷ DELHI TO MEERUT IN 45 MINUTES, National Real Estate Development Council (NAREDCO), New Delhi. 5 August 2011.

Meerut is the headquarter of the Roman Catholic Meerut Diocese which covers the districts of Meerut, Muzaffarnagar, Saharanpur, Dehradun, Haridwar, Moradabad, Rampur, Jyotiba Phule Nagar, Ghaziabad, Baghpat and Dhampur tehsil of Bijnore district.¹⁴⁸

FILM & TELEVISION

Meerut is home to a booming film industry, which has a large following in Western UP and Haryana. The films are usually folklore stories or comedies or localized versions of Bollywood hits.

Notable people from Meerut in the film & television industry include Bharat Bhushan, Mandakini, Anchit Kaur, Arun Govil, Kailash Kher, Chitragada Singh, Vishal Bhardwaj and Deepti Bhatnagar. There is also a training college for film and television located in the city.

EDUCATION

Meerut is an education hub of Western UP with 4 Universities, approx. 50 Engineering Colleges, 23 Management Colleges, 7 Pharmacy Colleges, 4 Colleges offering Hotel Management, one College offering Fashion Design, over 150 Academic Colleges and approx. 500 schools. The city is home to Chaudhary Charan Singh University (formerly Meerut University), Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel University of Agriculture and Technology, Swami Vivekananda Subharti University and Shobhit University. The city has one Government –run Engineering College, Sir Chhotu Ram Institute of Engineering and Technology, which is a constituent college of C. C. S. University. Meerut has St. John Sr. Sec. School, which is 130 years old. It was established by Begum Samru of Sardhana. This school is still running in its original place at Bank Street in Meerut Cantt. The city has many Madarsas which provides religious

¹⁴⁸ “*Short History of Meerut Diocese*”, UCAN India, 30 September 2012.

education as well as modern education with Computer learning. The city also has coaching institutions for preparing students for entrance examinations of engineering and medical fields. By the attempts of local jewelers and Zila Udyog Kendra, a Jewel and Gem Training Centre will soon be established in the city.

MEDIA

Meerut is becoming an important media centre as journalists from all over U. P. and other Indian states are working in Meerut. As media centres are situated in Meerut, the city is getting a good amount of publicity on the national platform. The law and order situation has improved a lot in the recent past and media has had an important role to play in it. Radio Stations shared with Delhi are Radio City 91.1 MHz, Big FM 92.7 MHz, Red FM 93.5MHz, Radio One 94.3MHz, Hit 95 (95MHz), Radio Mirchi 98.3 MHz, AIR FM Rainbow 102.6MHz, Meow FM 104.8 MHz and AIR FM Gold 106.4 MHz. Radio IIMT 90.4 MHz is the only radio station located in the city. The Hindi language daily newspapers like Dainik Jagran, Amar Ujala, Dainik Hindustan, Janwani, DLA, I-Next and Compact and English language daily entertainment and lifestyle supplement HT City, Meerut with Hindustan Times are published from the city. A fortnightly English tabloid lifestyle newspaper Pulse of Markets promoting local business is also published here.

DEMOGRAPHY

Meerut is headquarter of Meerut district which according to the 2011 census has a population around 3.4 million i.e. 3,447,405, roughly equal to the nation of Panama or the US state of Connecticut. This gives it a ranking of 94th in India (out of a total of 640). Males constitute 53.06%. The percentage decadal growth in 2001-2011 stands at 15.92%.

The sex ratio in Meerut is 885, lower than the state average of 908, while the child sex ratio is 850, lower than the state average of 899. 14.16% of the population is under 6 years of age. The district has a density of 1347 persons/square km. The overall literacy rate is 74.80%, higher than the state average of 69.72%.

As of 2009, Meerut has a crime rate of 208.6%, higher than the state average of 88.4% and the national average of 181.4%.

TABLE-5.1

DISTRICT INFORMATION (2011 CENSUS)

DISTRICT	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
URBAN	932,736	829,837	1,762,573
RURAL	896,456	788,376	1,684,832
TOTAL	1,829,192	1,618,213	3,447,405
LITERACY	82.91%	65.69%	74.80%

TABLE-5.2

DISTRICT POPULATION AND GROWTH RATE

YEAR	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	GROWTH
2001	16,01,578	13,95,783	29,97,361	24.16%
2011	18,29,192	16,18,213	34,47,405	15.92

TABLE-5.3

LITERACY RATE (%)

YEAR	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
2001	75.00	53.12	64.79
2011	82.91 (+7.91)	65.69 (+12.57)	74.80 (+10.01)