CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

In Chapter I the subject has been introduced and various sources have been surveyed.

In Chapter II geographical base of urbanisation has been discussed. Mughal empire stretched from mountainous regions of Kabul and Kashmir to deserts of Sindh and Ajmer, it included low levelled and water-ridden Bengal and coast lines of Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea, besides these covered the entire Indogangetic plain from Lahore to Banaras. Healthy climate, fertile soil, rich hinterland and easier life factors enabled the territory to make steady advance in urbanisation/growth of innumerable urban centres.

Mughals developed irrigational and transport facilities which supplemented agricultural and industrial growth and accelerated the pace of urbanisation. Rice, wheat, millets, pulses and gram, oilseeds, rapeseeds and mustard were the chief agricultural products beside the commercial crops the sugarcane, cotton, indigo, tobacco, coffee, pepper and saffron. Apart from these betel leaf, flowers, vegetables and fruits were grown and various
self-employment facilities were generated thereby, some crafts and export and import trade developed especially in the activities of sericulture, hides and skins and animal products like wool. This led to urbanisation.

Mining of minerals and metals and minting of coins contributed significantly to the rapid urbanisation process during the Mughal period. People migrated from far and wide to take up employment in such places. These centres of mining and minting were established a new or strengthened the older towns resulting in tremendous growth of urban centres.

Mughal rulers had a craving for precious stones to be used for jewellery, red, yellow stone and white marble for building forts and places of worship. Activities pertaining to these added to the process of urban development.

Forests were of great value for the urban economy of the Mughal Empire. Forests provided timber material for building edifices, ship and boat building. India enjoyed monopoly in ship-building trade among all littoral nations of Indian Ocean.

In Chapter III economic base of urbanisation has been reviewed. Mughal regime witnessed political peace and developing village agricultural economy which gave an
unabated economic and industrial base to urbanisation. Industries that prospered include textiles, sugar, metalware, paper and salt. Industrial production being in surplus gave rise to trade, transport, commerce and growth of towns.

Cotton textile industry was omnipresent and exercised a direct impact on the economy of the region. Clothing is the basic need of mankind, cotton being a necessity and silk or wool a luxury in the tropical Hindustan. It developed with the developing demand from the rising population; it proved to a source of foreign exchange earning. It attracted the royal patronage and gave rise to the urban centres like Lahore, Sialkot and Gujarat with varieties differing from each other.

Towns like Sirhind, Samana, Sultanpur along with the capital city of Delhi specialised in piece goods and chintz. Panipat, Agra, Najibabad, Shahjahanpur, Saharanpur and many others developed as principal centres of cotton fabrics and attracted foreign traders both English and Dutch. They bought coarse cloth from Awadh, Mercools and Daryabadis from Lucknow. Some of these products were exported to Persia, Europe, Southeast Asia through Calcutta port. Nawagaon, Akbarpur, Jalalpur, Jaunpur, Jalalabad,
Mau, Mirzapur specialised in their own varieties. Banaras and Patna turned rich by the weaving of cotton fabrics which were in great demand abroad. The rise and fall of the towns was corresponding to the growth and decline of their industry.

The growth of cotton textile industry was a direct result of four factors during the Mughal Period viz.,

i) continual peace and stability for a longer period,
ii) extension of cotton crop cultivation, iii) freedom of commercial intercourse, liberal facilities to foreign merchants and iv) relative safety and convenience of the main commercial highways.

Town after town was being added to the existing centres of cotton piece goods production. After cultivation of crop, cleaning the produce by separating cotton from its seeds and remove dirt and knots before ginning and spinning of yarn gave employment to the women folk all over the realm. Weaving centres developed around coastal regions of Bengal, Gujarat, Lucknow, Bihar etc.

Bleaching, dyeing, printing and painting were in vogue from prehistoric days in India. Towns developed with specialised mordanting techniques in the territory.
Cotton, silken or woollen carpets were woven under the royal patronage at Agra specially and at Patna, Daudnagar etc. generally. Delhi too had its share of carpet manufacturing.

Bed sheet, bed covers, upper covering of quilts, loi, razai, lahaif, balaposh etc. and pillows of different types were manufactured at several centres. Mosquito-nets too were produced at Bahadurpur near Banaras. Cotton fabrics were needed for furnishings, tents, camps for mobile shelters and public functions and fairs. Coarse cotton fabrics were needed for packing goods for export and inland transportation. Inter Subah and intra subah trade flourished, exporting ports developed and with all this industrial activity there grew or established towns and cities in the north India of medieval period.

In Chapter IV urbanisation has been viewed as an outcome of administrative and revenue reforms. Akbar's new principles to control, raising revenue and govern accelerated growth and establishment of towns and administrative centres in the long run. Obviously, these royal townships developed trade, commerce, transport and communication and brought about tremendous prosperity. Revenue reforms mobilised resources for the state and raised income to imperial exchequer. As a consequence to this more
developmental activities were taken by the rulers leading to economic development and urbanisation. Construction of trunk and feeder roads, control of natural calamities and disaster management contributed to urbanisation. Mass migration of rural folk to relief centres, who were victims of disease, famine, flood resulted in the growth of towns and seats of administration.

Radical changes of revenue jurisdiction by redividing subahs into sarkars and sarkars into Mahals or Parganas gradually added more towns which were seats of administrators at those levels and brought about rapid urbanisation. Again, the Akbar's entire empire was divided into 182 purely artificial areas yielding a crore of tankas (Rs.2,50,000) under a Karori (or Amil). The seat of Karori later on developed into an administrative town with rising trade, commerce and craft activities. This gave rise in the revenue earnings of the state as revenue was levied on all such activities. This period witnessed mass migration of people from remote villages to the various seats of administration. This led to hectic urbanisation, economic development and tremendous rise in state revenue.

In Chapter V Medieval Indian towns have been examined from their functional aspects as centres either of
administration, military activity, industry, commerce, maritime trade, religion or education. Though a rigid classification is neither possible nor very authentic data to support is available yet it is an established fact that stability of empire, geographical and economic imperatives and socio-political activities and reforms created conditions conducive to rapid urbanisation in the northern India in particular and the whole state in general.

In Chapter VI some important medieval towns have been discussed which highlight the rapid growth of urbanisation either by the process of altogether new emergence or revival of older ones. Expansion of royal cities of Delhi, Agra, Fatehpur Sikri and Lahore have been examined with reference to such factors as land revenue system, industrial activity, trade, administrative reforms, cultural and religious activities, political peace, mobilisation of state resources and creative urge of kings.

The morphology of cities was found to have been governed by multiple factors ranging from geographical, historical, economic to political.

Agra flourished being situated on the bank of Yamuna and triple confluence of three distinct geographical regions, four specific cultural areas and several trade routes. Medieval rulers were attracted by its unique strategic
and political position. Agra was, therefore, chosen as the seat/royal residence and imperial capital.

Fatehpur Sikri, as a capital of Akbar, though for a short period, did attract traders, craftsmen, royal employees and foreign travellers for sometime and thereby creating a new administrative urban centre 23 miles in the southwest of Agra.

Delhi as a planned urban centre rich in magnificent buildings, roads, streets, gardens, canals etc., attracted every foreign conquering muslim dynasty. It comprises of seven or more cities established and developed by them. Humayun selected its site on the bank of Yamuna and paved way for its urbanisation in the real sense of the term. Barring a few exceptions it always got the royal patronage through the ages.

Lahore, patronised by Jahangir, developed as an erstwhile capital of lodging merchants from far and wide. It had good roads, streets and gardens.

Banaras, situated on the bank of Ganga, developed as a seat of learning and a place of pilgrimage for Hindus.

Allahabad, situated on the confluence of Yamuna and Ganga, known as prayag in those days, developed as a seat of government. Akbar built a fort.
Burhanpur developed as a large city and was known for its military centre, gardens, sandal wood and fine buildings.

Most of the towns and cities were interconnected by trunk and feeder shady roads and communication facilities. Besides roads were made provision of lodging and boarding facilities in sarais and water arrangements. Safety of travellers was also fairly ensured by the authorities which accelerated the process of urbanisation by convenient mobility of rural masses.