CHAPTER IX

PATTERN OF URBAN GROWTH

Trend of Urbanization in India

Urbanization is the process by which villages turn into towns and towns develop into cities. It is a positive index of rapid economic growth in a country.

India, the second largest populous country of the world, has very small proportion of urban population as compared to other countries of the world. In India whereas total population increased from 238 million in 1901 to 547 million in 1971, the urban population rose from 20 million, i.e., 10.8% of the total population to 120 million, i.e., 19.9% of the total population during the period of 70 years. In England, the urban population is 80% of the total population. In Japan, it is 64%, while in India the percentage is only 20. Talking a bit differently, 2 out of 10 persons in India live in urban areas while 8 out of 10 and 6 out of 10 persons in England and Japan respectively live in urban areas. But in terms of total urban population, India's (120 m) position is third - after the U.S.A. with 180 million urban population followed by the U.S.S.R. with 135 million people in urban areas. The trend is still on the increase.
The present trend means one metropolitan complex like Delhi every year.

Definition of Urban

Criteria of defining urbanization vary from country to country. Indian census authorities have adopted a strict definition of what may be called "urban". Under this definition, fulfilment of the following criteria is necessary for a place to be designated as urban:

1. Places having urban local bodies, such as municipality, municipal corporation, a cantonment board or a notified town area committee,

2. Other places which have: (a) a minimum population of 5,000; (b) at least 75% of male working population is non-agricultural; and (c) a density of population of 1000 per sq. mile,

3. Any place which possesses pronounced urban criteria and amenities.

Trend of Urbanization

It is only after 1921 that a clear trend of urbanization emerges, and urban population has been increasing at a fast rate. The accelerated growth continued during the four succeeding decades. Despite rapid growth of the last 30 years the urban population has advanced from 11.2% in 1921 to 17.3% in 1951.
It was only during the Second Five Year Plan that industry received sufficient importance. Therefore, with the development of industrial complex in urban areas, there was some increase in the urban population. As the country further industrialized there will be a greater shift of population from rural to urban areas. The development of the secondary and tertiary sectors of the economy will attract more population to the cities. With this modern industrial-urban setting, the civilization is changing. In the historical past, the cities and towns of India had their origin as trade and administrative centres. Today, major urban centres are industrial with a powerful magnetic attraction for a large number of people, to leave saturated village economies in order to find new opportunities and success in the glamorous metropolitan areas.

In 1961-71, the total urban population in India has increased from 78.9 million in 1961 to 120 million in 1971. This indicates an increase of 38.7% while urban places increased from 2700 in 1961 to 2921 in 1971 showing an increase of 8%.

It is interesting to note that India's urban population exceeds the total population of most countries of the world including the highly urbanized U.K., Canada, France and Japan. India's top 142 cities today have more
population than U.S.A.'s 156. It is also significant that the share of India's cities with population of 1 lakh or over has been going up claiming more than 52% of the total urban population, while in U.S.A. there has been a reverse trend.

Urbanization is heavily concentrated in the regions which are highly industrialized such as the Western Region covering Ahmedabad, Bombay and Poona, the Southern Region covering Bangalore and Madras, the Eastern Region in and around Calcutta and the Northern Region between Delhi and Kanpur. Some of the States such as Assam, Orissa, Bihar and Kerala remain very low in the scale and rate of urbanization.

According to 1971 census, the total population of India has increased by 24.80%. The urban population grew by 38.21%. The population in towns with more than 1 lakh increased phenomenally in the decade by 40.02%. The urban areas are experiencing a faster demographic growth compared to rural areas.

Classification of Towns and Cities

The Indian census has adopted a six-fold classification of cities and towns on the basis of the size of population:-
The number of urban places has been steadily increasing over the census decades. Evidently, it is the bigger cities Class I that account for the major proportion of the urban population, whereas all the towns and cities belonging to Classes II to VI together account for nearly 48% of the urban population. The cities in Class I alone contain the remaining 52%. Progressively, the smaller towns belonging to Class IV and below have been gradually accounting for lesser and lesser proportion of the total urban population.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Class I</th>
<th>Class II</th>
<th>Class III</th>
<th>Class IV</th>
<th>Class V</th>
<th>Class VI</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>763</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>1885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>737</td>
<td>536</td>
<td>1872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>760</td>
<td>617</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>2142</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Table 1 (Contd)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Class I</th>
<th>Class II</th>
<th>Class III</th>
<th>Class IV</th>
<th>Class V</th>
<th>Class VI</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>2326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>1158</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>2924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>484</td>
<td>784</td>
<td>761</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>2462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>617</td>
<td>931</td>
<td>756</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>2921</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled from the Census of India.

Among the Class I cities, there are a few giant urban complexes that dominate the Indian urban scene. There are 9 such areas with population ranging between 1 to 7 million. Together they make up nearly 27 million urban population which is about one-fourth of the total urban population of India.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urban Agglomerations</th>
<th>Population in million</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Calcutta</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Greater Bombay</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Delhi</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Madras</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Hyderabad</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Bangalore</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Ahmedabad</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Kanpur</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Poona</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 27.0
In a sense, India presents the best example of "over-urbanization" which means that the Indian cities are growing more rapidly than the capacity of the economy as a whole to achieve substantial net gains of self-generating type which would allow sufficient margin for "social investment". The over-urbanization is evident in various ways: One is underdevelopment by which certain type of urban technology necessary for modernization is scarce or unavailable or not used; secondly, urban forms, city governments and economic planning are archaic, British-oriented and western-derived with little relevance to the conditions and problems in the Indian setting; thirdly, urban social structure reflects institutions, attitudes, values, determining policies and influencing developments which conflict with the building of a healthy and progressive urban society; and finally, the continuous accentuation of the urban-rural dichotomy has led to the parasitic relationship between the city and the hinterland, by which, because of the disadvantageous relationship of the latter, much of its vitality is drained away and is concentrated in the urban areas for the benefit of the limited number of people.

**Metropolitan Concept in India**

The census of India defined urban areas on the basis of numerical and occupational criteria. There was no effort to define metropolitan cities or metropolitan
regions. In a predominantly agricultural territory, especially when the inhabitants are largely influenced by religious and orthodox social institutions, it is difficult to define urban as well as metropolitan areas; and if the other factors like sociological status of people, religious influence and physical environment are also considered, the officially declared urban areas will have very little that can be called as urban.

Therefore, relying on greater areas of metropolitan regions (Turner 1962) which are easier to recognize and organize will be much more reasonable and useful. For this, the settlements having 100,000 and more population can be called as metropolitan cities and their influence regions can be delineated on the basis of some simple criteria like density, continuity and supply of perishable goods. These cities enjoy great influence on surrounding areas. This definition could be nearer to the definition of Standard Metropolitan Area (S.M.A.) of the U.S.A. and will give good basis for collecting data concerning many fields.

Therefore, the metropolitan areas in India as spatial framework for population concentration and decentralisation should be defined in the following manner:-

(1) a central city with a population of 250,000 as focal point of social and economic integration of the surrounding areas;
(2) two cities having contiguous or near contiguous boundaries and having close social and economic relationship with a combined population of at least 250,000, the smaller of which should have a population of at least 50,000 plus;

(3) any contiguous or adjacent administrative unit like taluk, tehsil or village, etc., with at least 65 to 75 per cent of labour force in non-agricultural activity; and

(4) such administrative units having 25% of the workers living in this area but working in the central city.

Million Cities of India (Fig 1)

Indian census, however, does not use the words "metropolitan area" or "metropolitan region". It has so far preferred the term "urban agglomeration" to refer to the core city and the continuous urban unit attached to it. Thus the census figures give the population figures of Calcutta, Bombay, Delhi, Madras, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Kanpur and Poona urban agglomerations as also those of their core cities which are also shown as municipal corporations. In fact, it is the total population of the constituent urban units and town groups in the agglomeration which gives the figure of 1 million plus to designate a metropolis. A metropolitan district or a metropolitan area may include a larger demarcated area and population than the urban agglomerated area. This is
because of the fact that the boundaries of a metropolitan
district or a metropolitan area or even a metropolitan
region include also the non-urban areas based on conven­
tional geographical or planning criteria. The area and
population of Calcutta Metropolitan District (C.M.D.), a
planning demarcation by C.M.P.O., for example, are greater
than those of Calcutta urban.agglomeration (Census defi­
nition).

In this study, the word "metropolitan" with all
its prefix uses will mean the planning boundary as deli­
neated around a million city. The frequent references to
the Calcutta Metropolitan District will, therefore, have
the same jurisdiction as that defined by the C.M.P.O.
Calcutta, Bombay, Delhi and Madras are the major metrop­
olises and the rest are the minor ones. This study
mainly deals with the major metropolises with occasional
references to Hyderabad, Bangalore and Kanpur.

The Calcutta Metropolitan District (C.M.D.) is
the conurbation formed around the cities and towns which
have grown together in one linear and continuous pattern
of urban.development along both banks of the river Hooghly.
This super metropolis covers an area of about 493 sq. miles
and has a population of about 9,000,000. The metropolitan
region is confined to a narrow belt of about 40 miles
long and hardly 4-6 miles wide and stretches from Kalyani-
Bansberia on the north to Budge Budge-Baruipur in the
The Bombay metropolitan region as notified by the State Government while constituting the Bombay metropolitan regional planning board, lies between the rivers, Tansa and Vaitarna and is bounded by the foothills of Sahyadri in the south-east and by the administrative boundaries of Kalyan and Bhiwandi Tehsils in the north-east. On the west, it is bounded by the Arabian Sea and the southern limit is the Patalganga river. The region covers an area of 3965 sq.kms. and extends to about 83 Kms. in north-south direction and about 70 Kms. in the east-west direction. The total population of the region is estimated to be about 7,000,000.

The Delhi metropolitan area as delimited by the Delhi Development Authority (D.D.A.) covers an area of about 800 sq.miles and embraces the group of towns very close to Delhi whose development is inextricably connected—Loni, Ghaziabad, Faridabad, Babadurgarh, Ballabgarh; Gurgaon, Narela and to an extent Sonipat. The estimated population of Delhi metropolitan area is about 5,000,000.
The Madras metropolitan plan 1971-1991 was brought out in 1970 by the Government of Tamilnadu. The Madras metropolitan area covers an area of 450 sq. miles and has a population of 3.45 million. The authority commenced functioning only in June 1975. It is now engaged in formulating policies and procedures for coordination of the various developmental activities.

All these are, of course, only major guidelines for the delimitation of the metropolitan areas in India with scope for further refinement of methodology before adopting them to Indian condition.

Urbanization in the Year 2000

The future of urbanization in India will be disastrous if not catastrophic. Broadly speaking, the following projections for the year 2000 seem highly probable:

(1) The rate of growth of urbanization will continue at the present rate of 4% a year, but in the last decade it will increase by 5% a year. Thus by the turn of the century there will be approximately 350 million people in urban centres.

(2) The magnetic strength and pull of the present metropolitan areas will continue to grow, leading consequently to selected megalopolitan areas with the concentration of enormous mass of people in ugly agglomerates.
The five major megalopolitan areas with the projected population are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Megalopolitan Areas</th>
<th>Population in the year 2000 (in m.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Bombay-Ahmedabad-Poona</td>
<td>38.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Calcutta</td>
<td>23.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Madras-Bangalore</td>
<td>19.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Delhi</td>
<td>19.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Lucknow-Kampur</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Cicred estimates, 1974

Moreover, there will be about 20 cities with a population of about one million each and at least 600 cities with a population of between 50,000 and 500,000. Smaller towns will decline in number.

According to various trade and industrial policies, at least 100 new towns will emerge in various parts of India.

The total population of India is expected to increase from 548 million persons in 1971 to 668 million in 1981, 801 million in 1991 and approximately 945 million in the year 2001 (Ref: Cicred estimates - 1974). The overall decadal growth rate is expected to come down from 38.2% in 1961-71 to 35.6% in 1991-2001.

Conclusion

Indeed cities and towns of India are in crisis, and the crisis is deepening each day whether we like to believe it or not. The crisis is like cancer which is
eating away the fabric of the total society. Our lack of policies, obsolete form of government, ignorance about the consequences of urban life, excessively fast growth of population, pitifully meagre resources have all led us to the path of oblivion. Like many cities of the world, cities of India are in race with the time. All those who value urban life, its potentialities to explore and build higher and richer civilizations should realise that urban crisis is a challenge and opportunity in the long struggle for survival on this fragile planet.