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India's Urban Scene and Its Future Implications

THE urban population of 217.2 million as of 1st March, 1991 is just a little over a quarter (25.7 per cent) of the country's population. The absolute size of urban population, however, is much larger than the total population of any country in the world except China, USSR, and the USA. The 1981-91 decadal increase of 57.7 million in the urban population itself is much bigger than the total population of most countries of Africa, Latin America, Europe or even in Asia. One may also say that, during the last decade, India has added to its *urban* population, an Iraq, or a Turkey, or a Thailand. This was also India's urban population at the time of Independence.

This paper examines the urbanisation trend in the country, specially from 1961 onward, the growth of cities and metropolises. The contribution of different factors in urban growth, and the future implications of the observed urbanisation pattern from the view-point of industrialisation, and quality of life, etc.

Trend in Urbanisation

The urban population of the Indian Republic of 25.9 million in 1901—just 10.8 per cent of the total population—has increased monotonically over time to 217.2 million in 1991 accounting for 25.7 per cent of the total population of 844.3 million (Table 1). The observed change in the total and urban populations over the past ninety years is a resultant of various historical, economic and demographic factors—famines, epidemics, industrial growth, country's partition into India and Pakistan in 1947, and the decline in crude death rate especially since the beginning of the planning process in the country.

The urban population figures prior to 1961 and since 1961 are not strictly comparable as, on the eve of the 1961 census, the definition of urban settlements was substantially modified and made more restrictive which resulted in the declassification of 810 towns of 1951 census in 1961. Consequently, it is preferable to concentrate more on the past 30 years. The urban growth was fastest during 1971-81 decade with a decadal growth rate of 46 per cent in the whole 90-year period. It declined to 36 per cent during 1981-91 which is lower than the 1961-71 growth rate as well. The proportion urban in 1981 increased to 23.3 per cent from 19.9 per cent in 1971 making an increase of 3.4 percentage points during 1971-81 decade. In contrast, the proportion urban increased to 25.8 per cent in 1991, that is, only by 2.4 percentage points during the past decade.

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TABLE 1 : TREND OF URBANISATION IN INDIA, 1901-91

Census Year	Population (in million)		Urbanization rate	Decennial growth rate of urban population (per cent)
	Total	Urban		
1901	238.40	25.85	10.84	-
1911	252.09	25.94	10.29	0.35
1921	251.32	28.09	11.18	8.27
1931	278.98	33.46	11.99	19.12
1941	318.66	44.15	13.86	31.97
1951	361.09	62.44	17.29	41.42
1961	439.23	78.94	17.97	26.41
1971	548.16	109.11	19.91	38.23
1981	683.33	159.46	23.34	46.14
1991	844.32	217.18	25.72	36.19

Note : i. As the 1981 Census was not conducted in Assam, the 1981 population figures for India include interpolated figures for Assam.

2. The 1991 Census has not been held in Jammu and Kashmir. The 1991 population figures for India include projected figures for that state as projected by the Standing Committee of Experts on Population Projections (October, 1989).

SOURCE : Census of India 1991, Series I, India, Paper 2 of 1991, *Provisional Population Totals : Rural-Urban Distribution*, New Delhi: Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India. 1991.

There can be several factors to explain this slowing down of urbanisation during the 1980s like reduction in net rural-to-urban migration, differential contribution of new towns, or different role of urban natural increase. This issue would, however, be examined in a latter section.

Growth of Cities

The Indian Census classifies the urban settlements into the following six size classes :

Population	Size Class
100,000+	I
50,000-99,999	II
20,000-49,999	III
10,000-19,999	IV
5,000-9,999	V
Less than 5,000	VI

Settlements with population of 100,000 and above are termed as 'cities' in contrast to 'towns' which have population of less than 100,000. At the beginning of this century there were just 24 cities with population of 100,000 or more when Assam and Jammu and Kashmir are excluded to make the

data comparable, and none of them had a population of one million or more. By 1951, their number had increased to 76, a little over three times, and, by 1991, they had become 296 (Table 2). If we include the four cities of Assam and at least two cities of Jammu and Kashmir (Jammu and Srinagar), the total number of cities rises to 302. Similarly, if Srinagar, a city in 1901, is included, the number of cities at the beginning of the century becomes 25.

TABLE 2: NUMBER OF CITIES AND URBAN AGGLOMERATIONS WITH POPULATION OF 100,000 AND ABOVE, THEIR POPULATION AND GROWTH RATE, INDIA*, 1901-1991

Census Year	No. of UAs and (in '000)	Population cities	As percentage of		Decadal growth rate (per cent)
			Urban population	Total population	
1901	24	6,661	26.0	2.8	—
1911	23	7,030	27.5	2.8	5.5
1921	29	8,225	29.7	3.3	17.0
1931	35	10,290	31.2	3.7	25.1
1941	49	16,652	38.2	5.4	61.8
1951	76	27,507	44.6	7.8	65.2
1961	102	39,883	51.4	9.3	45.0
1971	148	61,226	57.2	11.4	53.5
1981	216	94,504	60.4	14.3	54.4
1991	296	138,802	65.2	17.0	46.9

Note : * Figures exclude Assam and Jammu and Kashmir. SOURCE C; Census of India 1991, Series I, India, Paper 2 of 1991, *Provisional Population Totals : Rural-Urban Distribution*. New Delhi: Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India, 1991, pp. 30-32.

The proportion of cities' population in total urban population increased slowly upto 1931 but, thereafter, there was a sudden spurt in the number of cities and their population. The 102 urban agglomerations and cities of 1961 accounted for half the urban population in the country at that time (Table 2).

There has been an addition of 80 cities (excluding Assam and Jammu and Kashmir) during the 1980s, a number which is larger than the total number of cities in the country in 1951.

1 Prior to 1951, each urban settlement was counted as a separate unit. In 1951 the Census Organisation introduced the concept of "town group" which was defined as a group of towns adjoining each other so closely as to form a single inhabited urban locality for demographic purposes (Srivastav 1983). This concept remained unchanged in the 1961 Census. In the 1971 Census, the concept was replaced by that of an 'urban agglomeration' and has been followed in latter censuses. An urban agglomeration comprises one or more towns including in some cases villages or parts of a village which can be considered as urbanised and continuous either to the core town or the other towns. Thus, an "urban agglomerations" is a continuous spread consisting of a core town and its adjoining urban outgrowths which may be either urban in their own right or rural. Occasionally none of the constituent units may have a population of 100,000 but if the population of all the constituent units taken together become 100,000 or more, the UA is classified as a city. Some of the UAs have 50 or more constituent units; for example, in 1991 Calcutta UA comprises 129 urban settlements of which 30 are considered as such for the first time.

Similarly, the addition of 44.3 million to the population of class I urban agglomerations and cities during 1981-91 is much higher than the population of 39.9 million of 102 cities in 1961. Although there has been substantial increase in the population of class I urban agglomerations and cities, during the 1980s, the decadal growth rate has been lower than that of 1961-71 or 1971-81.

The almost 300 cities and urban agglomerations of 1991 contain one-sixth (17 per cent) of the country's population and almost two-thirds of the urban population pointing towards the fact that greater and greater numbers of people huddle themselves in a small number of large cities and urban agglomerations.

Metropolises and Mega Cities

The number of metropolises with population of one million or more increased from 12 in 1981 to 23 in 1991. Bombay urban agglomeration with a population of 12.57 million is the biggest among

TABLE 3 : URBAN AGGLOMERATIONS HAVING MORE THAN ONE MILLION PERSONS. 1901-1991

<i>Census Year</i>	<i>No. of urban agglomerations</i>	<i>Population (in '000)</i>	<i>Population of UAs as percent of</i>		<i>Decadal growth rate (per cent)</i>
			<i>Urban population</i>	<i>Total population</i>	
1901	1	1,510	5.8	0.6	—
1911	2	2,764	10.6	1.1	83.0
1921	2	3,130	11.1	1.2	13.2
1931	2	3,407	10.2	1.2	8.9
1941	2	5,308	12.0	1.7	55.8
1951	5	11,747	18.8	3.2	121.:
1961	7	18,102	22.9	4.1	54.
1971	9	27,831	25.5	5.1	53.1
1981	12	42,122	26.4	6.2	51.4
1991	23	70,661	32.5	8.4	67.8

SOURCE : Census of India 1991, Series I, India, *Provisional Population Totals: Rural-Urban Distribution*. Paper 2 of 1991. New Delhi: Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India.

them while Ludhiana (population 1.01 million) is the smallest. There is yet another metropolitan city—Kalyan—which has been made part of Bombay agglomeration and, hence, has not been counted separately. The new metropolitan cities are Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh), Patna (Bihar), Surat and Vadodara (Gujarat), Kochi (Kerala), Indore and Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh), Ludhiana (Punjab), Coimbatore and Madurai (Tamil Nadu), and Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh).

The metropolitan cities remained at two—Calcutta and Bombay—upto 1941, their population together at that time being 5.3 million (Table 3). Delhi, Madras, and Hyderabad

emerged as the new metropolitan cities for the first time in 1951. During the 1940s, especially after the creation of Pakistan in 1947, Delhi got a very substantial population of migrants while Madras and Hyderabad attracted migrants largely through their industrial development

The twenty three metropolitan cities of 1991 account for 70.7 million persons forming half the population of class I cities, or one-third (32.5 percent) of the total urban population, and one-twelfth of the country's total population. This indicates the manner in which India's population, particularly, urban population, is concentrated in just 23 urban agglomerations which, however are constituted by 369 cities and towns of all size classes.

The number and population of the metropolitan cities has grown over time. The population increase of 28.5 million during the 1980s was greater than the population of all the nine metropolises in 1971. The major share of this increase was contributed by the newly graduating metropolitan cities, followed by natural increase and in-migration.

The decadal growth rate of the metropolitan cities was more than 50 per cent during 1931-41 even though the number of metropolitan cities remained just two. It rose to 121 per cent in the next decade, mainly because of the addition of three more cities in this category. Although, thereafter, the number of metropolises has increased in every census, the share of population of these new metropolises has not been very substantial, and the growth rate was just a little above 50 per cent during 1951-61, 1961-71, and 1971-81 decades. It is only in 1981-91 that the growth rate shot up to 68 per cent mainly because of the addition of 11 new cities in this category.

A comparison of the population of 23 metropolitan cities of 1991 with their respective population in 1981, gives a decennial growth rate of 36.5 per cent and the annual exponential growth rate of 3.11 per cent. These rates are lower than observed for the 1971-81 decade. Consequently, one may say that the growth rate of the metropolitan cities has somewhat declined during the 1980s as compared to the earlier decades.

Hyderabad, Visakhapatnam, and Ludhiana, however, experienced fast population growth rate (more than 5 per cent per annum) during the 1980s mainly due to substantial immigration. In contrast, Calcutta, Patna, and Madurai had growth rates of less than 2 per cent per annum (Table 4).

Mega cities—The urban agglomerations of Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi and Madras, have all crossed the five million population mark in 1991 and have, therefore, been called megacities. Together they contain 37.2 million people, a little over half the total population of the 23 million plus cities, or one-fourth of the population of class I cities or one-sixth of the total urban population. These are the major cities which, to a great extent, decide the pattern of the Indian economy and policies.

Urban Growth and Urbanisation Pattern at the State Level

Among the 15 major states of the country, Maharashtra stands the most urbanised state with an urbanisation rate of 38.7 per cent. It is followed by Gujarat with one-third of its population living in urban areas (Table 5). Thus, the western zone has become the most urbanised zone in the country while eastern zone (comprising Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Orissa, Sikkim, West Bengal and the union territory of

TABLE 4 : METROPOLITAN CITIES IN INDIA, THEIR POPULATION AND 1981-91 GROWTH RATE

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Population in '000)</i>	<i>Decennial growth rate (per cent.)</i>	<i>Annual exponential growth rate (per cent.)</i>
1.	Bombay U.A.	12,572	33.4	2.88
2.	Calcutta U.A.	10,916	18.7	1.72
3.	Delhi U.A.	8,375	46.1	3.79
4.	Madras U.A.	5,361	25.0	2.23
5.	Hyderabad U.A.	4,280	67.0	5.13
6.	Bangalore U.A.	4,087	39.9	3.36
7.	Ahmedabad U.A.	3,298	28.9	2.54
8.	Pune U.A.	2,485	47.4	3.88
9.	Kanpur U.A.	2,111	28.8	2.53
10.	Lucknow U.A.	1,661	63.0	4.88
11.	Nagpur U.A.	1,642	36.2	3.09
12.	Surat U.A.	1,517	64.2	4.96
13.	Jaipur U.A.	1,514	49.2	4.00
14.	Coimbatore U.A.	1,140	23.4	2.10
15.	Kochi U.A.	1,136	38.1	3.23
16.	Vadodara U.A.	1,115	42.5	3.54
17.	Indore U.A.	1,104	33.1	2.86
18.	Patna U.A.	1,099	19.6	1.79
19.	Madurai U.A.	1,094	20.5	1.86
20.	Bhopal M.C.	1,064	58.5	4.61
21.	Vishakapatnam U.A.	1,052	74.3	5.55
22.	Varanasi U.A.	1,026	28.8	2.53
23.	Ludhiana M.C.	1,012	66.7	5.11
	Total	70,661	36.5	3.11

SOURCE : Census of India (99), Series, India, Provisional Population Totals: Rural-Urban Distribution. New Delhi: Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India. 1991. p.407.

Andaman and Nicobar Islands) remains the least urbanised at 17.8 per cent. The urbanisation level in the north, south and central zone is 30.4 per cent, 30.0 per cent, and 21.0 per cent respectively (Table 5).

TABLE 5 : URBAN POPULATION, URBANISATION RATE, AND DECADAL GROWTH RATES, STATES AND UNION TERRITORIES, 1991

State/Union Territory	Population ('000)		Urbanisation rate (per cent)	Decadal Growth rate, 1981-91 (per cent)	
	Total	Urban		Total	Urban
INDIA	844,324	217,178	25.7	23.6	36.2
Northern zone	103,231	31,372	30.4	27.6	39.7
Haryana	16,318	4,045	24.8	26.3	43.1
Himachal Pradesh	5,111	445	8.7	19.4	36.5
Jammu & Kashmir*	7,719	1,839	23.8	28.9	45.9
Punjab	20,191	6,001	29.7	20.3	29.1
Rajasthan	43,881	10,040	22.9	28.1	39.2
Chandigarh (UT)	641	575	89.7	41.9	35.9
Delhi (UT)	9,370	8,427	89.9	50.6	46.1
Eastern zone	217,907	38,692	17.8	23.7	32.1
Arunachal Pradesh	858	105	12.2	35.9	153.0
Assam	22,295	2,471	11.1	23.6@	38.6@
Bihar	86,339	11,369	13.2	23.5	30.4
Manipur	1,827	506	27.7	28.6	34.7
Meghalaya	1,761	329	18.7	31.8	36.4
Mizoram	686	317	46.2	39.0	160.3
Nagaland	1,216	210	17.3	56.9	74.7
Onssa	31,512	4,232	13.4	19.5	36.1
Sikkim	406	37	9.1	28.2	-27.6
Tripura	2,745	419	15.3	33.7	85.8
W Bengal	67,983	18,622	27.4	24.6	28.9
Andaman & Nicobar Islands (UT)	279	75	26.8	47.9	50.7
Central zone	205,167	43,001	21.0	25.8	41.1
Madhya Pradesh	66,136	15,348	23.2	26.8	45.0
Uttar Pradesh	139,031	27,653	19.9	25.4	39.0
Western zone	121,330	45,199	37.3	23.7	37.2
Goa	1,169	479	41.0	16.0	48.5
Gujarat	41,174	14,164	34.4	20.8	33.6
Maharashtra	78,748	30,496	38.7	25.4	38.7
Dadra & Nagar haveli(UT)	138	12	8.5	33.5	69.5
Daman & Diu (UT)	101	48	46.9	28.4	63.8
Southern zone	196,690	58,913	30.0	19.1	33.1
Andhra Pradesh	66,354	17,813	26.8	23.9	42.6
Karnataka	44,806	13,851	30.9	20.7	29.1
Kerala	29,033	7,676	26.4	14.1	60.9
Tamil Nadu	55,638	19,027	34.2	14.9	19.3
Laksha dweep (UT)	52	29	56.3	28.4	56.2
Pondicherry(UT)	807	517	64.0	33.5	63.6

Notes : * The 1991 census has not been held in Jammu and Kashmir. Total population and urban population for that state are as projected by the Standing Committee of Experts on Population Projections (October, 1989).

@ The 1981 census could not be held in Assam. To compute 1981-91 growth rates, the total and urban population of that state for 1981 have been estimated by interpolation.

The states with still low urbanisation levels are Himachal Pradesh (8.7 per cent), Sikkim (9.1 per cent), Assam (11.1 per cent), and Arunachal Pradesh (12.2 per cent). Large areas of these states are mountainous and have limited transport and communication facilities.

Establishment of industries in a big way has not been feasible due to lack of infrastructure and most of the towns in these states are 'service' towns.

The two union territories of Delhi and Chandigarh, which are basically urban, have almost 90 per cent of their population in their urban agglomerations. The decadal growth rate of the total population of these territories has been higher than their own urban growth rate indicating that a major part of intercensal migration has been absorbed by their rural areas. The other two union territories with more than half their population in urban areas are Lakshadweep and Pondicherry.

Components of Urban Growth

The change in the urban population in a given geographical area over a period of time is the result of (1) natural increase, (2) net rural-to-urban migration, (3) population of new towns added during the decade minus the population of the declassified towns, and (4) population of areas added by the expansion of municipal boundaries. While one needs more detailed data to assess the contribution of each of these four factors, it is feasible to have some rough estimates of their contribution.

Although no reliable data are available from the civil registration system to indicate the yearly natural increase rate of urban population but the same can be estimated quite reliably from the Sample Registration System, being 1.93 per cent per annum during 1971-81 and 1.96 per cent during 1981-90 (Census of India 1991, 1991, 52) indicating absolutely no decline in urban natural increase rate during the past two decades.

While the data on the population of new towns as of the 1991 census have become available recently, no data are yet available on the population of declassified or merged towns. Non-adjustment for the latter would over-estimate the contribution of the new towns in the urban growth. At the national level, this effect would, however, be small.

TABLE 6: BREAK DOWN OF URBAN GROWTH INTO ITS COMPONENTS, INDIA, 1961-71, 1971-81 AND 1981-91

<i>Components of urban growth</i>	<i>Population (millions)</i>			<i>Per cent distribution</i>		
	<i>1961-71</i>	<i>1971-81</i>	<i>1981-91</i>	<i>1961-71</i>	<i>1971-81</i>	<i>1981-91</i>
1. Total increase	30.18	49.45	56.45	100.0	100.0	100.0
2. Natural increase	18.54	22.56	33.87	61.4	45.6	60.0
3. Population of new towns	5.73	10.29	10.61	19.0	20.8	18.8
4. Net rural-to-urban migration	5.65	9.28	11.97	18.7	18.8	21.2
5. Increase due to expansion of municipal boundaries	0.26	7.32	0.9	0.9	14.8	

It is noteworthy that the share of natural increase in the urban growth has fluctuated very substantially from one decade to the other (Table 6). The share of the population of new towns seems to have remained constant at around 18 to 20 per cent during the past three decades. Further, whereas the share of net rural-to-urban migration during the 1960s and the 1970s was almost the same, it seems to have declined substantially during the 1980s.

This may, therefore, be the main factor in the slowing down of urbanisation during this period.

Concentrated versus Dispersed Urbanisation

If the new towns that appear as part of urban agglomerations of metropolises and Class I cities and their population form the bulk of the new towns and their total population, there is concentrated urban growth. In contrast, if most of the new towns are spread all over the country away from the Class I cities, it implies dispersed urbanisation. Of the 866 new towns appearing on the eve of the 1991 census, 229 appeared as part of UAs of Class I cities and they accounted for 41 per cent of the population of new towns. Another 4 per cent of the new towns' population was in UAs of large towns with population between 50,000 and 100,000. Thus, there seems to be substantial concentration of the new towns' population in the Class I cities. This concentration is more predominant in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Manipur, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Delhi and Pondicherry.

Components of Urban Growth—Major States

An analysis of the components of urban growth of the major states (for which 1981-90 natural growth rates of urban population are considered more stable and reliable) indicates wide fluctuations in both—the share of natural increase and the share of new towns (Table 7). It is noteworthy that in Bihar, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, the two together exceed 100 per cent. These data imply very substantial emigration from urban areas, the inter-state urban outmigration and/or intrastate net urban-to-rural migration. For example, there was substantial emigration from the cities and towns of Kerala to Gulf countries during the 1970s. It would have been quite high during the 1980s also but for the Gulf war of 1990-91 during which hundreds of thousands of Indians returned back home from Kuwait and Iraq.

An important issue here, particularly in relation to Bihar and Tamil Nadu, is: has there been substantial intrastate net urban-to-rural migration due to stagnation of employment opportunities, or the interstate outmigration/emigration has helped the economy by the transfer of employment seekers to other states and other countries, who, in turn, have provided inputs to the local economy through remittances? Any definite statement in this respect would require more detailed data on migration.

The low component of net migration in Punjab is largely due to development of infrastructure facilities in the villages in the form of water supply and electricity, road connectivity, etc. This has helped in bringing the industries to rural areas and provide non-agricultural employment there itself. The infrastructural facilities have also led to greater commutation than heretofore. Further, the disturbed conditions in Punjab have made capital shy of investment in that state which has restricted interstate migration to the cities and towns. Ludhiana, however, has grown at a faster rate largely through migration. This dimension of rural development and its impact on migration needs greater attention in our future studies.

TABLE 7: SHARE OF NATURAL INCREASE AND OF POPULATION OF NEW TOWNS IN THE STATES' URBAN GROWTH, 1981-91

(Figures in'000)

State	Urban growth	Natural increase	Population of new towns	Percent share of		
				natural increase	new towns	other components
1. Andhra Pradesh	5,325	2,887	1,044	54.2	19.6	26.2
2. Bihar	2,650	2,255	677	85.1	25.6	-10.7
S.Gujarat	3,563	2,491	352	69.9	9.9	20.2
4. Haryana	1,218	756	155	62.1	12.8	25.1
S.Kamataka	3,121	2,336	607	74.9	19.4	6.7
6. Kerala	2,905	862	2,146	29.7	73.9	-3.6
7. Madhya Pradesh	4,762	2,684	1,381	56.4	29.0	14.6
8. Maharashtra	8,503	5,031	1,142	59.2	13.4	27.4
9. Orissa	1,122	681	169	60.7	15.1	24.2
10. Punjab	1,353	1,103	55	81.5	4.0	14.5
11. Rajasthan	2,830	1,838	269	64.9	9.5	25.6
12. Tamil Nadu	3,075	2,805	365	91.2	11.9	-3.1
13. Uttar Pradesh	7,754	4,897	789	63.2	10.2	26.6
14. West Bengal	4,175	2,055	855	49.2	20.5	30.3

While the share of new towns in the national urban growth has remained almost one-fifth, it has fluctuated widely from state to state. For example, among the 14 major states, new towns in Kerala accounted for four-fifths of the urban growth during 1971-81 decade and three-fourths during 1981-91 decade. The new towns in Uttar Pradesh explained 43 per cent of the 1971-81 urban growth but only 10.2 per cent during 1981-91. Accordingly, one should expect wide state-wise variations in net migration to urban areas. Moreover, the pattern of emergence of new towns—whether part of urban agglomerations, or as independent towns— is important in the context of infrastructure development, and requires detailed study.

Planning Implications

All available 1991 data on urban population and their analysis indicate slowing down of urbanisation during the past decade. Further, decomposition of urban growth into its components suggests a reduction in the tempo of net migration to urban areas. There is a possibility of certain net emigration from urban areas particularly to Gulf countries even though a large number of Indians returned back from Kuwait and Iraq during the Gulf War of 1990-91. Whereas the low rate of net rural-to- urban migration, particularly to the large

cities and metropolises, is desirable, it also reflects a certain weakness of the economy in not being able to have faster economic growth.

There is, however, another possibility. It is likely that the new migrants to the cities, instead of finding a residence in the heart of the city, have preferred to live in the nearby villages, for example, the decadal growth rate of rural Delhi has been higher during 1981-91 than that of Delhi metropolis. There are several districts in the country in which the decadal rural growth rate during the last decade was higher than the urban growth rate. There is, therefore, need to develop infrastructural facilities, particularly cheap local transport, to connect the nearby areas with the big cities and metropolises. It is necessary to examine the different possibilities—emigration from urban areas and remittances by the non resident Indians (NRIs), growth of rural areas along with urban areas, or the weakness of the economy in certain states—in order to discern the future course of urbanisation in the country.

The analysis in this paper has also indicated that the number of metropolitan cities in the country increased from 12 in 1981 to 23 in 1991, and the number of class I cities (with population of 100,000 and above) increased from 216 to 296 (excluding those of Assam and Jammu and Kashmir) during the same period. Further, of the 866 new towns, 229 emerged as part of urban agglomerations of class I cities and account for 41 per cent of the population of new towns. These data indicate concentrated urbanisation in the country. This was more visible in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Delhi and Pondicherry. Thus, while major part of the country had dispersed urbanisation during the 1980s the southern zone (comprising Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Lakshadweep and Pondicherry) experienced greater concentration in metropolises and class I cities. It is necessary to understand the factors responsible for the observed pattern in the north and central India versus the southern India. It is quite possible that there has been increased industrialisation in the south zone during this period which is really essential for increasing the population's per capita income. To understand the various processes, it is necessary to correlate urbanisation rate, urban growth rate, and urban-rural growth differentials with various developmental indicators. This would also help in understanding the urbanisation pattern during the 1990s and beyond.

It is understood that the industrial activity in the country picked up substantially during the Seventh Five Year Plan in comparison to the Sixth Plan quinquennium. Consequently, one expected a faster urban growth during the 1980s which has not been borne out by the data at hand. Does it mean that this industrialisation has been more capital intensive which hardly could create extensive employment opportunities? This should be a matter of concern to planners, policy makers, and the economists.

The present national Government in announcing its new industrial policy has decided to abolish most controls and has liberalised its policy towards foreign investments including those of NRIs. If we are able to implement these policies without reverting back to various controls, one may expect highly increased economic activity and employment generation during the 1990s and beyond. Its multiplier effect should result in a much faster urbanisation during the 1990s and one should therefore expect at least 30 per cent of India's population in urban settlements by the turn of the present century, if not more.

During the 1970s several State Governments imposed restrictions on opening of new industries in the big cities and metropolises and gave decent incentives for establishing them

in backward districts of the respective states. The National Commission on Urbanisation, however, identified the "Spatial Planning Urban Regions" and suggested that in future, various industries be located in those regions. The State Governments may have to consider these and other related issues in their future urbanisation strategies.

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