
UNIT 4 URBAN PARADOXES

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4.1 INTRODUCTION

While India is one of the most densely populated countries in the world, it is a paradox that it is also one of the least urbanised. Research shows that an increase in urbanisation rate has positive association with the real per capita income. The law of development is that 'growth' is directly associated with the re-allocation of labour and capital away from traditional (rural) sectors to modern (urban) sectors. Spatial transformations that give rise to urbanisation, accelerate growth because households and firms benefit from scale economies, mobility, and specialisation. Increased urbanisation contributes to growth, job creation and poverty reduction, which can become a virtuous circle. The present unit deals with urban paradoxes. After reading this unit, we will be able to:

- Explain the concept and meaning of urban paradoxes
- Identify shortcomings of rapidly growing urban India
- Discuss the challenges of sustainable and inclusive cities

4.2 URBANISATION PARADOX: CONCEPT AND MEANING

Despite rapid economic growth, it is a paradox that the urbanisation rate in India remains low at less than 30 percent compared to 40 percent in China. What are the causes of this slow pace of urbanisation? Is it the geography, institutions, or peculiar growth patterns? Different factors affect the pace of spatial transformations in different ways. Countries that provide strong incentives for development of towns to be re-classified as urban may be characterised by urbanisation above the predicted level (e.g. Bangladesh). Whereas, geographically isolated and mountainous regions are likely to have a lower level of urbanisation than what would be predicted, solely based on the level of per capita income (Nepal).

Some industries and services are more prone to clustering. It contributes more to urbanisation than industries and services which benefit relatively less from agglomeration economies. It is found that services tend to cluster more into larger

cities, while manufacturing into smaller cities or newer towns. In India, more people live in the largest cities than in small towns when compared to China. Nearly 6 percent of the urban population lives in the largest cities in India, which is double in comparison to China. This is explained by a bigger and more dynamic service sector in India. Service industries, which are less land intensive and more skill intensive, appear to agglomerate more in large cities like Bangalore. Whereas manufacturing industries (more land intensive and less skill intensive) seems to thrive better in smaller towns. But other factors like land market, property rights, and contractual institutions should also be taken into consideration. These factors can restrain mobility and prevent households and firms from moving into cities, which in turn can slow down the pace of industrialisation.

Internal conflicts and violence can either accelerate or retard urbanisation. When conflicts arise predominantly in rural areas, rural-to-urban migration rates tend to accelerate. Internal conflicts can lead to distressed urbanisation that's urbanisation without growth. The prolonged civil unrest in countries such as Cambodia, Myanmar and the Philippines seems to have contributed to this type of urbanisation. Whereas when conflicts that arise in urban areas, tend to experience under urbanisation, as they deter private investments. Other factors such as poor infrastructure in urban areas can also deter migration and urbanisation. Thus, these are some of the challenges facing Indian urbanisation.

Some questions for further discussion are: Can the “new economic geography” be distilled into development of cities? How important are the economies of scale, factor market distortions, and the role of city Mayors, in urbanisation? Are spatial dimensions of development impacted more by social and environmental factors? Are crime, violence, and squalor “*externalities*” of urbanisation or an integral part of development?

4.3 SHORTCOMINGS OF RAPIDLY GROWING URBAN INDIA

Most modern cities in India are undergoing a haphazard growth, because of which, the effects of living in huge cities have not been fully anticipated. The social, economic and psychological consequences of industrialisation and urbanisation have not been fully considered and the steps which should have been taken to bring about an adjustment between man and his new environment have not been forthcoming in ample measure. This is particularly true in the case of under-developed regions.

The old controversy between town and village life is puerile. Much has been written against urbanisation, although, the objection in reality is not to urbanisation *per se*, but to the unplanned drift to the towns from the countryside and to centralisation of industry and administration in the urban areas which has created so many problems of a baffling nature. The critics of urban civilization regard it as representing social decay and deplore its artificiality, sophistication, intellectualism and loss of instinctive activity. The critics also feel its denial of family life and blood ties, loss of vitality and of the will to live, which clearly is being manifested in the decline in birth rate and in the high rate of suicides in the urban areas. It also points to the growing evils of urbanisation such as juvenile delinquency, prostitution, addiction to alcohol and drugs of the most injurious kind, as well as

the unplanned growth of slums, increasing in crimes and suicides. The poor are forced by necessity to live on footpaths, in slums or under most dehumanised conditions. They are forced to confront the inclement weather and live amidst incredible squalor, dirt and disease. Urbanisation has not only created slums, but also has denied a large section of the people even elementary civic amenities—pure drinking water, underground drainage, hospitals and dispensaries, well-built and well-run schools and *pucca* roads.

Urbanisation has created another vital problem that's environmental pollution. According to a biologist, the price of pollution could be the death of man. It's the direct outcome of the application of science and technology to human problems. Man has learnt to turn deserts into fertile lands, harness the forces of nature for human benefit, add immensely to production in all spheres, so that the rapidly growing population may be 'fed, clothed, housed and provided' with all sorts of luxuries and comforts, and even conquer space. But Man has not yet learnt to live in peace with nature and preserve the balance which has made life possible and given it such richness. The increasing use of science and technology in industry and agriculture is playing havoc with both urban and rural environments, but the urban environment is affected much more, because most industries are located in the cities and more urban people use cars and other power-driven machines. Chemical wastes also contaminate rivers and seas and poison drinking water and fish.

As Lewis Mumford has pointed out that, while large-scale urban community contains dangerous and destructive potentialities, it also had a bright future before it, if people plan city-life intelligently and decentralise it. There is no warrant for the belief that urban life is unhealthy, unnatural and harmful, that the people in villages live longer, are free from ailments common among city folk and live more naturally. The fact that urbanisation is accompanied by various evils, and involves certain undesirable consequences, does not establish that they are inherent in it. It only emphasises man's inability to plan his life intelligently and create an environment congenial to him. The pressure of population has led to the construction of vertically rising skyscrapers to accommodate the maximum number within the minimum space. It has given birth to lot of problems such as fire hazard, insanitary conditions, congestion, traffic jams and lack of civic amenities like parks, playgrounds.

Urbanisation disturbs the equilibrium between demand and supply in the economic market, resulting in larger demands and lesser supplies. It is very difficult to get pure food, milk and other commodities or pure drinking water. Everything is either impure or adulterated or spurious. Sociologically, urbanisation has led to the breaking of joint families and the establishment of 'nucleus' families. People in the cities forfeit the ancient ideals of corporate living and tend to become self-centred. They live in their own grooves and flats without having any social contacts with their neighbours, or other fellow beings.

Despite the fact that India is considered the capital of Information Technology (IT), more than a million girls are killed before or after birth as they are considered a divine curse on a family. Around 47 percent of Indian girls are married off before legal age as was reported by the National Human Rights Commission. While around two-third of the married women are regularly confronting domestic violence, often without recourse to justice. Dowry deaths are very common as

five married women are burnt or killed each day. On an average, around 60 cases of rape take place daily and about 45 per cent of women are either, slapped, kicked and sexually molested in public places or in families annually. Honour killing is on the rise even in big metropolitan cities. Despite the fact that India is changing dramatically, corruption is rampant in all walks of life. It is said that corruption is a one billion dollar strong industry in India with everyone from top to the bottom trying to make money for a legitimate work. India, the land of growth is also the land of regression. Illiteracy, injustice, inequality, crimes, murder, caste and religious violence and corruption are so rampant that no one can escape it. Why is there so much paradox? Why is it that in Mumbai, the financial capital of India, the world's largest slum exists in front of a religious leadership that sings praises of gods for 24 hours? Many places of worship are oozing money and gold, while outside the temples thousands sit hungry, begging for food.

4.4 URBAN CRIME AND VIOLENCE

Crime and violence are typically more severe in urban areas and are compounded by their rapid growth, especially in developing and transitional nations. It has been estimated that 60 per cent of all urban dwellers in developing and transitional countries have been crime victims, with rates of 70 per cent in parts of Latin America and Africa. Some of the major aspects of crime and violence which have engulfed the urban areas in general and metropolitan cities in particular are described below:

i) **Fear of Crime and Violence**

Cultures of fear of crime and violence are widespread in both developed and developing countries. Public opinion surveys in many countries repeatedly show that people rank crime among the top concerns that they have in everyday life. In Nairobi, Kenya more than half of the citizens worry about crime all the time or very often.

ii) **Robbery and Burglary**

Primarily a contact crime, robbery, is often classified as both a violent crime and a property crime in many jurisdictions. Consequently, it is more likely to be reported to police than lesser crimes. Global robbery trends increased between 1980 and 2000, from about 40 to over 60 incidents per 100,000 individuals.

iii) **Intimate Partner Violence, Child Abuse and Street Children**

Also known as *domestic abuse*, intimate partner violence (IPV) negatively affects many intimate relationships and families worldwide. Due to its sensitive and personal nature, many victims do not report crime to the authorities. Surveys in the UK show that there were almost 500,000 official reports of domestic violence in the year 2000. In the US, about 29 percent of women and 22 percent of men are victims of IPV during their lifetime. Globally, women are significantly more likely than men to be victims of IPV.

iv) **Corruption**

Corruption is generally classified as a crime against public order. There is no universally accepted definition of corruption; but it has been summarized

as the abuse of public power for personal gain. One of the most widely used measures of corruption is the Corruption Perceptions Index, which calculates a score based on perceived levels of corruption in a given country.

v) Urban Terrorism

In recent years, cities have become increasingly vulnerable to terrorist attacks. Indeed, cities make attractive targets for terrorist attacks for several reasons. Terrorism is seen as violent acts that are deliberately targeted at civilians and urban infrastructure.

Major terrorist incidents that have taken place in the cities of both developed and developing countries. Serial blasts in Mumbai, terrorist attack in Delhi, bomb blast in major cities of Pakistan, i.e. Karachi, Islamabad are a few examples. Although these acts of terrorism are local events, they have had international repercussions that have ricocheted across the world. It is worth stressing that in relation to everyday violence, or common crime, the incidence of terrorist attacks is significantly small. Nonetheless, the impacts of terrorism on cities have been enormous in recent years. Different kind of violence, crime, atrocities occurred in ten most dangerous cities in the world as shown in Table-1.

Table 1: Ten Most Dangerous Cities in the World, 2011

Name of City	Problem Related To Crime/Violence
Bogata, Colombia	Violence by narco-terrorist groups and kidnapping and holding citizens for ransom
Ciudad Juarez, Mexico	Crime and Violence
St. Louis, Missouri, USA	Murder, rape, robbery and assault
Port-au-Haiti	Kidnapping, murders, death threats, drug related shootouts, carjacking and armed robberies
Mogadishu, Somalia	Murder, kidnapping, illegal Murder, kidnapping, illegal roadblocks, banditry, and other violent incidents and threats
Caracus, Venezuela	Armed robberies Express kidnappings, in which victims are seized in an attempt to get quick cash in exchange for their release, corruption, pickpockets, hotel thieves
Port Moresby, Papua	New Guinea rape and robbery, carjacking, stoning of vehicles, pickpockets, armed robberies
Grozny, Chechnya, Russia	Gangsters, mob, Organized Crime is rampant political and criminal murder, rape rates, kidnappings
Santo, Domingo, Dominican Republic	Crime, mugging and pick pocketing
Muzaffarabad, Kashmir, Pakistan	Drug trafficking, extortion, human trafficking, abduction

Source:<http://urbantitan.com/10-most-dangerous-cities-in-the-world-in-2011/>

4.5 HEALTH CONSEQUENCES OF LIVING IN CITIES

As outlined in the previous section, good-quality housing and living conditions, social and economic opportunities, and access to services such as education and healthcare contribute to the health and well-being of city dwellers. The higher levels of social support and greater social cohesion typically found in urban areas are also linked to a number of positive health outcomes. Good urban governance underpins the realization of these and other determinants of health. At the same time, cities present a number of health risks, especially when they are poorly governed or fail to sufficiently prioritize health in all policies. Many are confronted by a triple threat: infectious diseases exacerbated by poor living conditions; non-communicable diseases and conditions (such as heart disease, cancer and diabetes) and conditions fuelled by tobacco use, unhealthy diets, physical inactivity and harmful use of alcohol; and injuries (including road traffic accidents) and violence.

i) Infectious Diseases

Infectious diseases are a major threat in many cities due to population density, overcrowding, lack of safe water and sanitation systems, international travel and commerce, and poor health-care access, particularly in urban slums. In the year 2003, the outbreak of SARS is a case in point. Other infectious conditions, such as the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), tuberculosis, pneumonia and diarrhoeal infections, have an ongoing presence in cities. Frequently, it is the urban poor who suffer the greatest burden. Slums are productive breeding grounds for tuberculosis, hepatitis, dengue, pneumonia, cholera and diarrhoeal diseases, which spread easily in highly concentrated populations. Women are particularly vulnerable to HIV infection, stemming from a combination of biological factors and gender inequality. Female drug users and sex workers are particularly at risk along with the stigma, discrimination and punitive policies only increase their vulnerability.

ii) Non Communicable Diseases

Non communicable diseases and conditions, such as asthma, heart disease and diabetes, are a significant problem in urban centres. Most of this heightened risk can be traced to changes in diet and physical activity as a consequence of urbanisation, as well as exposure to air pollutants, including tobacco smoke. Urbanisation is associated with a shift towards calorie-dense diets, characterised by high levels of fat, sugar and salt. As a result, obesity is on the rise in cities around the world. On top of this, people in cities tend to have physically inactive types of employment, and urban sprawl further discourages physical activity. Other factors that inhibit regular physical activity include overcrowding, high-volume traffic, overreliance on motorized transportation, crime and poor air quality. Air pollution, including tobacco smoke, is a risk factor for asthma and other respiratory diseases.

Rapid urbanisation also threatens mental health. Poor housing conditions, overcrowding, noise pollution, unemployment, poverty and cultural dislocation can cause or exacerbate a range of mental health problems, including anxiety, depression, insomnia and substance abuse.

iii) Injuries and Violence

About 16 000 people die every day as a result of injuries – about 10 percent of all deaths. The principal causes of death from injury are road traffic accidents (22%), suicide (15%) and homicide (10%), with war accounting for another 3%. Road traffic injuries alone are responsible for 1.3 million deaths per year globally. In many developing countries, urbanisation and the increased number of motorized vehicles have not been accompanied by adequate transport infrastructure, enforcement of traffic regulations or implementation of measures to ensure improved road safety. Low and middle-income countries have higher road traffic fatality rates (20.1 and 22.1 per 100 000 population, respectively) than high-income countries (11.9 per 100 000). And, more than 90 percent of the world's road fatalities occur in low and middle-income countries, which have only 48 percent of the world's registered vehicles. For every person who dies from violence, many more are injured and suffer a range of physical, mental and other consequences. Child abuse, youth violence, intimate partner violence, sexual violence and abuse of the elderly, although unlikely to result in death, are other highly prevalent forms of violence with significant behavioural and health consequences. Major contributors to urban violence include social exclusion, poverty, unemployment and poor housing conditions. The fear of such violence further contributes to the fragmentation of cities, socially, economically and politically. Youth particularly affected by urban violence. In urban areas, people aged 15 to 24 commit the largest number of violent acts, and are also the principal victims of violence.

iv) Work –Related and Environment Hazards

The long hours and heavy physical work to which many women are subjected which poses serious threats to their health. In addition, they are exposed to toxic chemicals, radiation, extreme temperatures, excessive noise, violence and sexual harassment and rape. When they are pregnant their unborn children are also affected. Heavy work during pregnancy can lead to premature labour, and when associated with poor nutrition can result in low-birth-weight babies. There is evidence that exposure to toxic fumes from working in the home environment has adverse effects, such as chronic bronchitis.

4.6 URBANISATION AND VIOLENCE IN INDIA

Urban areas are confronted with new kinds of challenges posed by the changing nature, quantum and intensity of crime and violence. There is a need to examine those aspects of urban spatial patterns and social relationships between groups and/or individuals which make urban areas more prone to violent upsurges. This has become relevant due to the manifold increase of crimes in urban areas. An analysis of crime recorded shows that seventeen cities, with a population of more than five lakhs, have registered more than five thousand cognizable IPC crimes each. These cities are Vadodara, Bhopal, Indore, Jabalpur and Trichy besides the twelve metropolitan cities. The overall growth of crimes under IPC and local and special laws had been 2% and 3% per annum respectively (Crime in India, 1991). The cities register much greater share in this overall growth of criminal activities. According to the rate of crime (IPC) the average rate of crime in the urban areas was 318.6 compared to the nation's crime rate of 181.4. The

top ten crime spots in India along with their crime rate are given in Table 2 below. The nature of crimes which the major cities experience is burglary, theft and riots. For instance, share of incidence of theft of cities, having a population of 5 lakhs or more, 40% in Karnataka, is 53% in 30% and in Rajasthan 28%.

Table 2: Top Ten Urban Crime Spots in India

	Name of City	Crime Rate
1)	Bhopal	836.4
2)	Indore	860.3
3)	Jaipur	722.4
4)	Kochi	646.3
5)	Bangalore	569.4
6)	Jabalpur	554.6
7)	Patna	515.9
8)	Vijayawada	512.4
9)	Lucknow	462.4
10)	Ahmadabad	458.6
11)	Bhopal	836.4

Source: <http://socyberty.com/crime/top-10-crime-spots-in-india/#ixzz1xqKcO1b5>

The nature of crimes which the major cities experience is burglary, theft and riots. A disaggregate analysis shows that most of these urban crimes also acquire a communal form. Criminal activities like rioting, stabbing, kidnapping, murder have greater likelihood of acquiring a communal form particularly when criminals belong to religions perceived to be antagonistic. These criminals are seen to be providing security to their religious group in the event of any violent upsurge. They emerge as community leaders working for the welfare of their fellow residents of the locality. Number of studies has shown that spontaneous criminal's acts provide a basis for the eruption of communal riots. For instance, in 1985, 12% communal riots erupted due to improper behaviour with women and 11% riots started due to disputes over land. Significantly, communal riots have also increased manifold since 1956. Between 1956 and 1960, two hundred and thirty eight riots erupted and it increased to four thousand one hundred ninety six between 1986 and 1990.

Another aspect of these crimes pertains to crime against women. During 1991, the cognizable crime against women listed under rape and kidnapping/abduction forms 1.2 and 1.7 percent of the crime respectively. The volume of rape in the total cognizable crimes has been steadily increasing over the years. Cities over 5 lakh population account for 11.7 of the rapes. Though crimes against women such as dowry demands, dowry deaths, molestations, rape, eve teasing have been increasing over the years (total crimes against women were 52,830 in 1987 and 72,987 in 1991) there was some crimes which occur more in urban areas. In Punjab, all the eve-teasing cases that have been registered have occurred in cities. Similarly, crimes such as sex determination and female foeticide would have a higher incidence in urban areas due to easy accessibility of modern technology.

Studies on spatial pattern of a city show that, most of the crime and riot prone areas are in the inner or walled city. The crime rate tends to diminish as one move away from the inner city. The walled cities have paucity of social amenities particularly those relating to health, education, public lavatories, street lighting, drinking water, etc. They are also marked by low economic activities and large size families.

Cluster formation on the basis of religion or caste also provides a congenial environment for crime and violence. This kind of cultural segregation delimits social interaction and perpetuates mistrust and suspicions between religions. Clusters render their residents psychologically claustrophobic and present the other religious group the threat of to be organised. Location proximity of clusters inhabited by diverse religious groups is most vulnerable to rioting. This kind of settlement pattern reinforces the minority persecution complex. The inhabitants of these exclusive clusters see a direct link between their own underdeveloped localities and development of other clusters on the basis of communal categories.

Slums are known for their stinking public toilets. Coupled with their unhygienic conditions are the facts that they are unlawful encroachments on Government land as their inhabitants are mostly poor migrants. The unlawful encroachment is done either by real estate dealers with the tacit approval of law enforcing agencies or in desperation by hapless migrants. In both these cases, a vicious circle of crime and patronage starts ending in myriad incidents of violence generated through drug peddling, bootlegging, prostitution etc. The concentration of poor and impoverished in urban slums in major cities has compounded the crisis of deteriorating facilities and unfulfilled human needs. The frustration thus generated finds expression in violence. Land scarcities and housing problems are leading to property owners seeking 'private justice' instead of legal remedies. *Mafias* seem to have become important agencies for 'developing' land in big cities.

The major cause of increasing crime in cities is a large unemployable population. The young population has been reduced to what has been termed as 'street corner men' involved in dope addiction, sex oriented crimes and rioting. These vulnerable sections become easy prey to communal propaganda and become active participants in a communal riot. Socio-cultural setting in urban areas is increasingly becoming 'crime friendly'. These cities particularly metropolitan cities are more inhabited by unknown neighbourhoods. In fact these cities can be termed as city of strangers. This perhaps is one of the reasons for the growth of exceptionally heinous crimes like cold blooded murders of old couples, rapes of minor girl children etc.

4.7 CHALLENGES OF SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE CITIES

The most noticeable evil associated with over-urbanisation is the marked deterioration in the environment of the city and the appearance of slums. Modern cities have grown in a haphazard and unplanned manner due to fast industrialisation. Cities in developing countries become over-populated and over-crowded partly as a result of the increase in population over the decades and partly as a result of migration of persons from the countryside to the big industrialised cities in search of employment, or in search of a higher standard of

living and better living conditions. As decent habitation is not possible for them to afford, the poor are driven by necessity to living on foot paths or in slums under most intolerable conditions of incredible squalor, dirt and disease; in fact, they are unfit for habitation, a disgrace to the community. Being devoid of hygienic and sanitary considerations, they breed all kinds of epidemics. They become the nerve centres of all the worst vices and crimes, for all kinds of persons earning their livelihood by dubious means—beggars, thieves, pickpockets, prostitutes, chronic drunkards, vagabonds, gamblers and drug pedlars and the like come to live in slums.

There are four key urban challenges. The first challenge is the sheer scope and pace of urbanisation. We need to provide jobs, housing, water, energy, transport, education and health infrastructure for a city. The second challenge facing our cities is unsustainable development. As a region, Asia and the Pacific have achieved spectacular economic growth and poverty reduction. Producing over 80 per cent of the region’s GDP, cities have been at the forefront of this economic growth. However, this growth first strategy has come at a cost. Cities account for 67 per cent of all our energy use, 71 per cent of all our green house gas emissions and generate 300 million tons of solid wastes per year. Our people suffer from congested roads, energy and water shortages, and air and water pollution.

While coping with the impacts of unsustainable development, we are faced with the third challenge that is of climate change. Over 50 per cent of Asia-Pacific’s urban residents live in low lying areas and are at risk from extreme weather events such as floods and typhoons. The frequency and intensity of climate related disasters will increase — affecting our economy, energy, water and food security. While natural disasters affect both the rich and the poor, it is the poor who suffer most because they do not have the assets to cope with risks and vulnerabilities.

The fourth challenge is most daunting that is the urbanisation of poverty, manifested by slums and squatter settlements. Thirty-five per cent of urban residents of the region live in slums. Urban Asia includes persistent disparities in income as well as in access to services and opportunities. Without addressing this, the grievances that stem from these disparities will sap the hope we presently hold for our urban future. Despite these challenges, our vision for the future is one where cities are socially just and inclusive, environmentally sustainable, and increasingly resilient to climate change and other shocks, while being the engines of economic growth.

In this section you studied urban crime and violence, health consequences of living in cities, and challenges of sustainable and inclusive cities. Now you should be able to answer some questions relating to this section given in *Check Your Progress 2*.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: a) Write your answer in about 50 words.

b) Check your answer with possible answers given at the end of the unit.

1) Define “Urban Paradox” in the context of rapidly growing cities?

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2) What is the nature of crime and violence in Cities? What is the major cause of increasing crime in cities?

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4.8 LET US SUM UP

The city brings together communication, competence and creativeness. Average wages and income in urban areas are higher than rural areas, even making allowance for higher living costs in the cities. In developing countries today urban health conditions seem to be better than in rural areas. Higher life expectancy and low child and women mortality rate in the urban areas of developing countries sound like one of the blessings of urbanization. Education is a powerful motive for moving to the city. Rural education has often been neglected in favour of urban, but it is also an essential urban function. Cities have always provided the intellectual stimulus and educational leadership. In developing countries there is often a substantially higher proportion of educated people in the cities. Urban environments often encourage improvement in women’s status. In negation of the view that city growth is bad and it aggravate social problems; the ‘blessing’ theorists hold cities as engines of growth for economies for millennia. Cities offer more avenues to break the vicious circle of poverty. It is of course an undeniable fact that a process of urban sprawl has taken place, but this phenomenon did not destroy urban functions, but on the contrary reinforced urban functions. The cities attract investments and tap the economic benefits of globalization. Urban growth gives rise to economies of scale. Large cities also provide big differentiated labour markets. This ongoing urbanization process has often been questioned by referring to the phenomenon of over-urbanization, urban bias and the parasitic role of cities.

However, the growth of urban population in developing countries is rapidly changing the demographic profile and at the same time this pattern is also fraught with enormous tension and tremendously complex problems. However, urbanization would be a blessing only when urban problems would be solved through economic efficiency and vast growth of productive forces.

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4.10 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS-POSSIBLE ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

1) Explain the problem and response of “sex selection” in India?

Ans. Sex selection, whether by infanticide or foeticide, as a result of strong son preference is a recognised problem in India. The government’s response is a legal initiative through the introduction of the Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulations and Prevention) Act (PNDT), which was passed in

1994 and amended in 2003. The Act bans sex determination tests, and has made registration of clinics mandatory. It operates to prevent misuse of techniques leading to sex selection. The PNDT Act has been severely criticised to have too many loopholes and of being poorly implemented.

- 2) What are the environmental problems associated with rapid urban growth? Briefly explain any one?

Ans. The environmental problems associated with rapid urban growth are: water pollution, air pollution, solid waste, noise pollution. Noise generated in urban areas can affect large number of population, both in physical and psychological. Chronic over stimulation has pathological consequences and a level of environmental stimulation greater than the optimum is clearly harmful to health resulting in the so-called “diseases of adaptation”. Small children and young people are today found to be afflicted with hearing impairment for no fault of their own.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) What are the important questions posed by urbanisation?

Ans. Some of the questions posed by urbanisation are: Can “new economic geography” be distilled into development of cities? How important are the economies of scale, factor market distortions, and the role of city Mayors, in urbanisation? Are spatial dimensions of development impacted more by social and environmental factors? Are crime, violence, and squalor “*externalities*” of urbanisation or an integral part of development?

- 2) What is the nature of Crime and Violence in Cities? What is the major cause of increasing crime in Cities?

Ans. The nature of crime and violence in urban areas are follows: (i) fear of crime and violence; (ii) robbery and burglary; (iii) corruption; and (iv) urban terrorism.

The major cause of increasing crime in cities is a large unemployable population. The young population in the urban areas has been reduced to what has been termed as ‘street corner men’ involved in dope addiction, sex oriented crimes and rioting. These vulnerable sections become easy prey to communal propaganda and become active participants in a communal riot.