
Environmental Degradation in the Context of Growing Urbanization: A Focus on the Metropolitan Cities of India*

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ABSTRACT Using the available data on relevant issues, the study concentrate on some of the important environmental problems caused by over population growth and rapid urbanization process in the metropolitan cities of India. Total urban population in India has increased more than ten times surpassing India's total population growth, which has increased less than five times during 1901 to 2001. Also, there was about three-fold increase in the percentage of total urban population in Class-I city followed by almost a fifty-fold increase in the total population in the million plus cities in India from 1901 to 2001. Despite several Government housing policies, 41% of the total slum population of India is residing in million plus city alone (Census 2001). A three-fold increase in the number of motor vehicles has been found in India in the last decade. In all the four metro cities SPM was found highest along with the problem of solid wastes. The noise pollution was noticed more than the prescribed standard in all the four metro cities. Five and more person residing in a room, was faced by more than one fourth population of Mumbai followed by a little less than one fifth population of Kolkata and about 10% population of Delhi and Chennai both. Also there is an acute shortage of piped drinking water in these metro cities. India's urban future is grave. Therefore there is an urgent need to tackle the urban environmental problem in a rational manner giving attention to the need for improving urban strategies.

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