

The Process of Urbanization in Colonial India (1800-1947 A.D.)

MD MAIDUR RAHMAN

Assistant Teacher, History, Mozampur H S S B High School (H.S.)
Kalichak, Malda, West Bengal, India.

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ABSTRACT

Urbanization has always been a vital issue for India's evolution. Through the ages the cities have developed and laid a crucial impact on the country's growth and development. The growth and development of the cities started in ancient and medieval age but it got momentum during the colonial period in India. Historians have opined that the growth and development of the cities of India have occurred in different ways during different ages. In the late 19th century Britain became the most urbanized nation. When they started to rule India; Calcutta, Bombay and Madras became leading administrative, commercial and industrial cities. In 1911, the capital of British India was shifted to Delhi and it became a modern commercial and administrative area. Several hill stations like Darjeeling, Dehradun, Nainital, Simla, Kurseong, Kalimpong etc. developed during the colonial rule. Besides industry, port city, railway station, court town etc. are also the product of colonized India.

Keywords: Urbanization, Colonial India.

INTRODUCTION:

Even since 2500 B.C., urban places have played an important role in the evolution of India's culture, economic and social life. The human being formed the group, state for happiness, prosperous human life or society. With the same process, not suddenly, but gradually one by one the city have got this modern shape with some optimum environment through the ancient and medieval age. The favorable atmosphere of the growth and development of the city, which helped, these are follows- growth of population, suitable natural environment and geographical position, well communication, favourable trade and commerce place, growth of industry, religious places. The cause of security, political and administrative cause, land lord and land less labour class and famine etc. It is true that the growth and development of the city started in ancient and medieval age but absolutely developed in the colonial period in India.

THREE HYPOTHESIS OF PROF. DR. GADGIL

According to Economic Historian Prof. DR. Gadgil most of the town in India owed their existence to one of the three following reasons (i) They were places of pilgrimage (ii) They were the seat of a court (iii) They were commercial depots. Of these reasons the first two were by far the most important.

According to the different historians: the growth and development of the towns have occurred in difference ways in the difference ages (i) In Ancient time, the inhabitant place of king and his bureaucrat group and feudal group, geographical position which was suitable for trade and commerce, communication like sea and river port, place of pilgrimage etc. (ii) In Medieval age, the fortcity of inhabitant place of king, trade and port city, religious city etc. (iii) In Colonial period, hill town, industrial town, railway station town, court town, coastal city, cantonment town, administrative and presidency town etc.

URBAN CENTER- COLONIAL PERIOD:

Though the growth and development of city were started from ancient and medieval age but mostly developed in Colonial period. In the late 19th century, Britain had become the most highly urbanized nation of the world. European migrants were dominant as for example in the U.S.A., Australia, Asia, Africa there was tendency for cities to develop the Britisher had newly come in India, established the new empire as they new man so they had new demand in India. Therefore they accepted an extraordinary manoeuver to build up the city. There were many type city would be buildup by the patronage of Britisher in the colonial period like Hill Town, Railway Station Town, Court Town, Industrial Commercial Town, Cantonment Town, Port Town and Administrative or Presidency Town etc.

(A) CANTONMENT TOWNS:

We know that the Britisher occupied the Indian Territory and political power by their military force and gave the permanency of their rule in India. After that they also occupied the political power and

business marked of Africa, Burma, Singapore, China and approximately all over South-East Asia by the Indian Money, Indian Army and from the Indian Territory. So they needed strong military campaign and established the cantonment. The needful thing of army to supply the people began to live these places and gradually there were grown up a city. For example- Yashohar Cantonment Town, Darbhanga Cantonment Town, Kanpur Cantonment Town, Lahore Cantonment Town etc.

(B) THE METROPOLITAN CITIES:

By the start of the 20th century, Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras had become the leading cities of India. Calcutta, Madras and Bombay were leading administrative, commercial and industrial cities. The city's focal point was the central commercial area, with tall European-styled buildings, representing the banks and headquarters of commercial and industrial houses. In 1911, the capital of the British India Empire was shifted to Delhi and an entirely new city- New Delhi was built. This new city was completed by about 1935. New Delhi had a modern commercial, a magnificent administrative area.

(C) HILL STATIONS:

The hill station is an inheritance from the British Period. It is a permanent factor today. The British coming from a cool temperature climate, found the Indian summer season inhospitable and even considered it a threat to good health and longevity. They found an escape in the hills, where they spent the greater part of summer. They built up the alternative capital in a cool area due to hot seasons, like Darjeeling was the alternative of Calcutta, Deradun was the alternative of Delhi, besides this they built up the city Nainital, Simla, Kurseong, Kalimpong etc. now-a-days these city have developed as a health center for the tour place.

(D) INDUSTRIAL AND PORT CITY:

The British had come to India for trading interest and they occupied the political power for the weakness of Indian unity to grown up the business interest. During the American Civil War (1862-64) lost cotton industry, the Britisher established the cotton industry at Ahmedabad in Gujrat and then which was made a big city. They founded the Jute Industry in the two bank of the Hoogly River, the raw material had come from the different part of India into the different Industry by the ships, railway etc. and many raw material had to send to England from the Calcutta. Bombay, Madras, Karachi port etc. The worker of industry, port etc. had come in the industry, tea garden from the different part of India and they began to live there. So the capitalist group, working class and different professional man started to live in the industry, port area. Naturally, the population was to be increased and gradually it would be developed into city like- Calcutta, Hoogly- Jute Industrial area ; Ahmedabad- cotton Industrial area; Jamsedpur, Ranchi, Kanpur, Surat, Lahore, Multan, Bombay, Madurai, Karachi etc. There were many river port and commercial place to be grown up in city like Old Malda of Malda, Dhulian of Murshidabad, Narayanganj in present Bangladesh etc.

(E) RAILWAY STATION- CUM-COURT TOWN:

The introduction of railways in India in the latter half of the 19th century contributed to the emergence of a national network of urban places, in which the metropolitan cities formed the primary foci, supported by the one lakh cities, which acted as satellite centers.

The most direct contribution of the railways to the growth of the existing cities was the railway station. The railway station, soon become a focal point of the city, rivaled only by the main market center. The cities began to grow in the direction of the railway station and even the main market began to shift towards this area. The result was haphazard urban growth from the city center towards the railway station. The railways also introduced, in number of larger towns, railway colonies to accommodate their administrative and engineering staff. The railway colonies have become an integral part of many Indian cities. The enlargement of the railway network also led to the establishment of railway workshops and the employment of large number of workers. As a result of this development, new railway towns emerged in various parts of the country, for example, Jamalpur in Bihar, Waltair in Andhra, Bareilly and Merut in Uttarpradesh, Nagpur in Maharashtra and so on.

CONCLUSION:

Thus from the above discussion we may conclude that the process of town planning which was started from ancient and medieval age, this town planning got an entire modern development progressive frame in colonial period in India. It was a major influence on the drafting of Britain's first place of town planning legislation the Housing Town Planning Act 1890 (one of the leading organization promoting town planning in Britian was "National House Reform Council" founded 1900). In this circumstances several Indian national leaders such as Surendranath Banerjee, Lala Lajpat Rai, Pherose Shah Mehata, Gopal Krishna

Gokhle, Ballavbhai Patel, Subash Chandra Bose and Jaharlal Nehru became associated with municipal work. Bombay bravely took the lead by passing the first Town Planning Act in 1915 in India.

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