

Revision Notes
Chapter 6
Work, Life and Leisure

Characteristics of the City

Towns and cities first appeared in river valleys in Ur, Nippur and Mohenjodaro.

Cities are the centres of political power, administrative network, trade and industry, religious institutions and intellectual activity, and support various social groups such as artisans, merchants and priests. Ancient cities could develop only when there was surplus agricultural produce, to feed people engaged in non-food activities.

The modern city worldwide has developed over the last 200 years.

Three historical processes have shaped modern cities in decisive ways.

- The rise of capitalism.
- The establishment of colonial rule over large parts of the world.
- The development of democratic ideals.

Industrialisation and the Rise of the Modern City in England

In the modern era, the form of urbanisation has changed due to industrialisation.

Most western countries were largely rural even many decades after the beginning of the industrial revolution.

The early industrial cities of Britain such as Leeds and Manchester attracted a large number of migrants to the textile mills set up in the late 18th century.

Five major types of industries employed a large number of people. These were

- Clothing and footwear
- Wood and furniture
- Metals and engineering
- Printing and stationery
- Precious products such as surgical instruments, watches and objects of precious metal

During the First World War (1914-18), London began manufacturing motor cars and electrical goods. The number of large factories increased until they accounted for nearly one-third of all jobs in the city.

Marginal Groups

- Crime became an object of widespread concern in London.
- The police were worried about law and order, philanthropists (someone who works for social upliftment and charity and donating time and money)
- To discipline the population, the authorities imposed high penalties for crime and offered work to those who were considered deserving poor.

Women's Status

- Lost their industrial jobs owing to technological developments and were forced to work within households.
- A large number of women used their homes for increasing family income by taking lodgers or through such activities as tailoring, washing or matchbox making.
- In the 20th century, women got employed in wartime industries and offices and withdrew from domestic service.

Children's Status

- Large numbers of children were pushed into low paid work by their parents, while many became thieves.
- The Compulsory Education Act of 1870 and the Factory Act of 1902 kept children out of industrial work.

Housing

- After industrialisation, A large number of people began to migrate to London.
- Individual Landowners put up cheap and unhealthy tenements (run down and often overcrowded apartment house, especially in a poor section of a larger city.
- Finally workers Mass Housing Schemes were accepted by the British Government.
- A million of houses, mostly single family cottage were built by the local British authorities.

Cleaning London

- A variety of steps were taken to clean up London. Attempts were made 1) to congest localities 2) green the open spaces 3) reduce pollution and 4) landscape the city.
- Attempts were made to bridge the difference between city and countryside through ideas as Green Belts (Area of open land with plants and trees) around London.

Transport in the City

- Factories or workshops did not provide housing to the migrant workers. Instead, individual landowners put up cheap, and usually unsafe, tenements for the new arrivals.
- The unhygienic condition of slums highlighted the need of housing for the poor.
- There was a widespread fear of social disorder, especially after the Russian Revolution in 1917. Workers' mass housing scheme were planned for preventing the London poor from turning rebellious.
- Attempts were made for decongesting localities, creating open spaces and reducing pollution. Large blocks of apartments were also built.
- Rent control was introduced in Britain during the First World War for easing the impact of the severe housing shortage.
- Between the two World Wars, the responsibility for housing the working classes was accepted by the British state, and a million houses, most of them single-family cottages, were built by the local authorities.
- The London underground railway was introduced. It partially solved the housing crisis by carrying large masses of people to and from the city. 10th January 1863: The first underground railway in the world opened between Paddington and Farringdon Street in London. Between the two World Wars, the London tube railway led to massive displacement of the London poor. Better-planned suburbs and a good railway network enabled large numbers to live outside Central London and travel to work.

Social Changes in the City

- In the 18th century, the family had been a unit of production and consumption as well as of political decision making. But after urbanisation and industrialisation had been completely changed.

- In the Industrial city, household members loosened increasingly, higher levels of isolation was faced and among the working class and the institution of marriage tended to break down.
- The city encouraged a new spirit of individualism among both men and women.
- The public space increasingly became a male preserve and the domestic sphere was seen as the proper place for women.
- The 19th century Chartism Movement was a movement demanding the voting rights for all adult males.
- The 10-hour movement demanded limited hours of work in factories.
- Women also demanded voting rights and the right to property from the 1870s

Leisure and Consumption

Various methods of recreation were adopted by the working class people in the 19th century. These included

- Cultural events such as opera, theatre and classical music performances.
- Working classes met in pubs to have a drink, exchange news and sometimes for organising political action.
- Libraries, art galleries and museums provided a glimpse of the British history.

By the early 20th century, cinema became the great mass entertainment for mixed audiences.

The City in Colonial India

The pace of urbanisation in India was slow under the colonial rule. In the early 20th century, no more than 11% of Indians were living in cities.

There were three Presidency cities- Bombay, Bengal and Madras in British India.

Population in the Presidency towns rose considerably owing to the availability of major ports, warehouses, homes and offices, army camps, as well as educational institutions, museums and libraries.

Bombay: The Prime City of India

- Bombay was a group of seven islands under Portuguese control.
- 1661: The control of Bombay passed into the British hands after the marriage of

Britain's King Charles II to the Portuguese princess.

- Bombay became the principal Western port for the East India Company. At first, Bombay was the major outlet for cotton textiles from Gujarat.
- It became an important administrative and industrial centre of Western India.
- 1819: Bombay became the capital of the Bombay Presidency after the Maratha defeat in the Anglo-Maratha war.

Maratha defeat in the Anglo-Maratha war.

- 1854: First cotton textile mill was established in Bombay
- 1919-1926: Women formed 23% of the mill workforce
- The late 1930s: Women's jobs were increasingly taken over by machines or men
- With the rapid and unplanned expansion of the city, the crisis of housing and water supply became acute by the mid-1950s.
- More than 70% of the working people lived in the thickly-populated Chawl's of Bombay. Chawl is multi-storeyed old structures.
- Merchants, bankers and building contractors owned these Chawl. Each Chawl was divided into one-room tenements with no private toilets.
- Lower castes were kept out of many Chawl and often had to live in shelters made of corrugated sheets, leaves or bamboo poles.
- Town planning emerged from fears of social revolution and the fears about the plague epidemic.
- 1898: The City of Bombay Improvement Trust was established. It focused on clearing poor homes out of the city centre.

Land Reclamation in Bombay

- Reclamation meant the levelling of the Hills around Bombay.
- The need for additional commercial space in the mid-19th century led to the formulation of several
- Governments and private plans for the reclamation of more land from the sea.
- 1864: The Back Bay Reclamation Company won the right of reclaiming the Western foreshore.
- from the tip of Malabar Hill to the end of Colaba.
- As population started growing in the early 19th century, every bit of the available

area was built over and new areas were reclaimed from the sea.

Bombay as the City of Dreams: The World of Cinema and Culture

- Bombay is known as a city of dreams or "Mayapuri".
- 1896: Harishchandra Sakharam Bhatwadekar shot a scene of a wrestling match in Bombay's.
- Hanging gardens and it became India's first movie.
- 1913: Dadasaheb Phalke made Raja Harishchandra.
- By 1925, Bombay became the film capital of India.
- Many people in the film industry were migrants from cities such as Lahore, Madras and Calcutta.

Cities and the Challenge of the Environment

- Large quantities of refuse and waste products polluted air and water, while excessive noise became a feature of urban life.
- Black fog engulfed the towns owing to pollution, thereby causing bad temper and smoke-related illnesses.
- The Smoke Abatement Acts of 1847 and 1853 did not work to clean the air as smoke was not easy to monitor or measure.
- By 1840s: Towns such as Derby, Leeds and Manchester had laws for controlling smoke in the city.
- In Calcutta, high level of pollution was a consequence of the huge population that depended on dung and wood as fuel, and also the use of steam engines that ran on coal.
- The railway line introduced in 1855 introduced a new pollutant-coal from Raniganj.
- 1863: Calcutta became the first Indian city to get smoke nuisance legislate.

Conclusion

- In spite of various problems, Calcutta always attracts those who dream of freedom and opportunity.