

WORK, LIFE AND LEISURE

Metropolis: A large densely populated city of a country or state.
Rise of the modern city in England: Most of the European countries remained rural long after the industrial revolution. Early industrial cities of Britain such as Leeds and Manchester attracted large numbers of migrants to the textile mills.

London in the 18th century:

One out every nine people of London and Wales lived in London. In 1750, it was a colossal (metropolis) city with a population of 6.75 lakhs. In 1810, its population multiplied fourfold. The city was a powerful magnet for migrant populations. "Nineteenth century London was a city of clerks and shopkeepers casual labours, street sellers and beggars." said the historian Gareth Stedman Jones. Shipping and dockyards, clothing and footwear, wood and furniture, metals and engineering, printing and stationary etc. were some of the Industrial works. During the First World War London began to produce Motor cars and electrical goods.

Marginal groups: A large number of women worked in factories in the late 18th century. With technological developments, women lost their industrial jobs. They were forced to work within households. Women used their houses to increase their family income by taking lodgers or through such activities as tailoring, washing, match box making etc. Their status improved during the war. A large number of women were employed in wartime industries.

Large number of children were pushed into low paid work. They were made to work in mines and factories. (Andrew Mearns wrote 'The Bitter Cry of Outcast London'). Some signs of improvements came only with the passage of the Compulsory Elementary Education Act in 1870 and the Factory Act of 1904 which prevented children from industrial work.

Housing

Housing and lodging became a problem for the increasing number of urban population. Charles Booth, a ship-owner from Liverpool conducted the first social survey. He found that one million Londoners were poor. He estimated the life expectancy of a worker at an average age of 29, as compared to the age of 55 among the middle class. Better off city dwellers began to recognise the need for housing for the poor.

Concern for housing- reasons

- One room houses were seen as a serious threat to public health (they were over crowded, badly ventilated and lacked sanitation).
- There were worries about the fire hazards.
- Fear of rebellion and revolt ; especially after the Russian revolution in 1917

Cleaning London (steps were taken to clean up London)

- Attempts were made to decongest localities
- Reduce pollution and landscape the city
- Large blocks of apartments were built.
- Building cottages for single family
- Ebenezer Howard, an architect developed the principle of the Garden City.
- Green belt around London (to bridge the difference between city and country side)

Transport in the city: The congestion of traffic and fumes increased with the increase in wealth and vehicles plying on the roads.

The first underground train service in the world started on 10th January 1863 between Paddington and Farrington. It met with lot of cynicism initially. Many felt that the 'iron monsters' (underground railway) added to the mess and unhealthiness of the city. Yet the underground eventually became a large success. Charles Dickens wrote in Dombey and Son(1848) wrote about the massive destruction of houses and displacement of the London poor.

SOCIAL CHANGES IN THE CITY

Family life was affected in the industrial cities. The city encouraged a new spirit of individualism among both men and women.

Men, women and family in the city: status of women changed and varied amongst the working class, middle class and upper class. Conservative people railed against the presence of women in public places. Most political movements were dominated by men eg. Chartism (a movement demanding the vote for all adult males). Their participation including in property rights came much later only after 1870s through a lot of struggle.

Leisure and consumption: Several cultural events, such as the opera, the theatre and classical music performances were organised during the annual London season. Libraries, Art Galleries, Museums etc. were established in the 19th century. All these increased the historical sense and pride in British identity and achievements. Music Hall and Theatres were popular places of entertainment for the lower classes. Industrial workers were increasingly encouraged to spend their holidays by the sea.

Answer the following questions

1. What is individualism?
2. What is meant by Chartism?
3. Who was Ebenzer Howard? What was his contribution in the beautification of cities?
4. Describe the steps taken to clean up London
5. In what ways did the city life change the shape and functions of families?
6. Why is it said that cities encouraged a new spirit of individualism?

Politics in the city: (London riots 1886 & 1887)

When outdoor work came to a stand still due to severe winter the London poor exploded a riot in 1886 Relief from terrible conditions of poverty was their demand. Around 10000 strong crowd marched from Deptford to London. But it was dispersed by the police.

A similar riot occurred in 1887; this time, it was brutally suppressed by the police (known as Bloody Sunday of November 1887). In 1889, thousand of London's dockworkers went on a 12 day strike to gain recognition for their union.

THE CITY IN COLONIAL INDIA

The pace of urbanization in India was slow under colonial rule. In the early 20th century, there were less than 11 per cent of Indians living in cities. Most of the urban people were residents of the three Presidency cities (Bombay, Madras and Calcutta).

Bombay: The Prime City of India:

Bombay was under Portuguese control. In 1661, it passed into British hand after the marriage of Britain's King Charles II to Portuguese princess. The English East India Company shifted its base from Surat to Bombay.

Initially, Bombay was a n outlet of cotton textiles from Gujarat. Later, the city functioned as a port through which large quantities of cotton and opium would pass. It also became an administrative centre in western India. The British defeated Marathas in the Anglo Maratha War. Then, they made Bombay as the capital off Bombay Presidency in 1819. With the growth of trade in cotton and opium many communities such as traders, bankers, artisans and shopkeepers came and settled in Bombay. About one fourth of Bombay's inhabitants were born in Bombay and rest came from outside.. The first cotton textile mill in Bombay was established in 1854. Women formed as much as 23 per cent of the mill workforce. By 1930s women's job were increasingly taken over by machines or by men.

Bombay dominated the maritime trade of India. It was also at the junction head of two major railways. The railways encouraged a higher scale of migration into the city.

The plague epidemic of 1898 made matters worse. District authority sent about 30000 people back to their places of origin by 1901.

Housing and Neighbourhoods

A comparison between Bombay and London

Bombay

- Bombay was a crowded city. Average space of an inhabitant in 1840s was 9.5 square yards.
- The density in Bombay was as high as 20 persons per house.
- Bombay did not grow according to any plan.
- The Bombay Fort area which formed the heart of the city was divided between a native town (where Indians lived) and European or white area.- racial pattern

- City planning began from fear of plague epidemic

London

- Average space of a Londoner was 155 square yards.
- Density in London was 8 persons per house.
- City planning began from fear of revolution.

The crisis of housing and water supply became acute by the mid 1850s. Rich people of Bombay lived in sprawling, spacious bungalows. More than 70 per cent of working people lived in the thickly populated chawls of Bombay. Chawls were multi-storeyed structures in the 'native' parts of the city. These houses were largely owned by private landlords. Each chawl was divided into smaller one room tenements which had no private toilets. Many families could reside at a time in a tenement. Streets and neighbourhoods were used for a variety of activities such as cooking, washing and sleeping. Caste and family groups in the mill neighbourhood had heads similar to village headman.

The city of Bombay Improvement Trust was established in 1898; it focused on cleaning poorer homes out of city centre. In 1918, a Rent Act was passed to keep rents reasonable. But it brought a severe housing crisis, since landlords withdrew houses from the market.

Land Reclamation in Bombay (reclamation of land from the sea):

Expansion of the city was difficult due to scarcity of land. The city of Bombay has developed through massive reclamation projects. The earliest project began in 1784. William Hornby, then the governor of Bombay approved the building of the great sea wall which to prevent the flooding of low-lying areas of Bombay. In 1864, a private company named the Back Bay Reclamation Company won the right to reclaim the tip of Malabar hill to the end of Colaba. The Bombay Port Trust built a dry dock between 1914 and 1918 and used the excavated earth to create the 22 acre Ballard Estate, in which developed the famous Marine Drive.

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

Bombay became a Mayapuri- a city of dreams to many. By 1925, Bombay became the capital of film industries in India. Many films deal with the lives of migrants who encountered with the pressures of life.

The first film to appear was the Harishchandra Sakharam Bhatwadekar wrestling match in the Hanging Garden in 1886. Dadasaheb Phalke (the father of Indian Cinema) made Raja Harishchandra. Most of the people in the film industry were migrants from cities like Lahore, Calcutta, and Madras. Bombay films have contributed in a big way to produce an image of the city of dream and reality.

CITIES AND CHALLENGES OF THE ENVIRONMENT

City development everywhere occurred at the expense of ecology and the environment.

- Building of factories, housing and other institutions led to pollution of water, air and land.
- Excessive noise of the factory, vehicles and crowd created noise pollution.
- The widespread use of coal in nineteenth century raised serious problems.

In British Cities

In industrial cities such as Leeds, Bradford and Manchester, hundreds of factory chimneys spewed black smoke into the skies. The attempt to control pollution was not at all easy, since factory owners and steam engine owners did not want to spend on technologies.

Few towns such as Derby, Leeds and Manchester had laws to control smoke in the city. The smoke Abatement Act of 1847 and 1853 did not always work to clear the air.

In Indian Cities

Calcutta was the most polluted cities.

- The city was built on marshy land.
- High levels of pollution were a consequence of the huge population
- The main polluters were the industries and establishments that used steam engines run on coal.
- The introduction of railway lines in 1855 brought more coal from Raniganj and led to high pollution
- In 1920, the rice mills of Tollygunge burnt rice husk instead of coal.

In 1863, Calcutta became the first Indian city to get smoke nuisance legislation. The inspectors of the Bengal Smoke Nuisance Commission managed to control industrial smoke but domestic smoke continued unabated.

Answer the following questions

1. What were the steps taken to clean up London in the 19th and 20th centuries?
2. How did the poor people resent the government's inability to provide relief from terrible conditions of poverty in London in 1886?
3. Why was the London underground referred to a 'iron monsters'?
4. Why is Bombay referred to as mayapuri or mayanagri?
