

# NCERT Solutions For Class 12 History Chapter 12 Colonial Cities Urbanisation, Planning and Architecture

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## NCERT TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED

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**1. To what extent are census data useful in reconstructing patterns of urbanisation in the colonial context? (or)**

**“A careful study of census reveals some fascinating trends of urbanisation in 19th century.” Support the statement with facts.**

**Ans:** A careful study of the data collected through the census provides us a lot of information in understanding the trend of urbanisation. It can be examined as under:

(a) The process of urbanisation was sluggish in India after 1800.

(b) In the nineteenth century and in first two decades of the twentieth century the proportion of the urban population was very low and stagnant.

(c) Which recorded between 1900 and 1940, A 13% increase in the urban population which recorded between whereas during the same period, these was a overall 10% increase in the population of the whole country.

(d) The data, thus, collected helps us in the enumeration of people according to their age, sex, caste, religion, occupation, etc.

**2. What do the terms “White” and “Black” Town signify?**

**Ans:** The White Town was the area where Europeans lived. These areas were separate. They had broad streets, bungalows set amidst large gardens, barracks, parade ground and church. They were safe heaven for the Europeans. For example in Madras Fort St. George was the nucleus of the White Town where most of the Europeans lived. Walls and bastions made this a distinct enclave.

The Black Town on the other hand, were meant for Indians – the Indian agents, middlemen, weavers, artisans and interpreters. In Madras, the Black Town was developed outside the Fort. A Black Town generally resembled traditional Indian town, with living quarters built around its own temple and bazaar. There were narrow lanes and distinct caste-specific neighbourhoods.

**3. How did prominent Indian merchants establish themselves in the colonial city?**

**Ans:** The prominent Indian merchants and traders settled in colonial cities like Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. They served as agents or middlemen for the British and lived traditionally built courtyard houses in the Black Town. They centred over large tracts of land in these cities and heavily made investments for the future. They wanted to impress

their British masters or colonial ruler or white people living in white towns by giving lavish parties during festivals seasons and built temples to establish their supremacy and prestige in society.

#### **4. Examine how concerns of defence and health gave shape to Calcutta.**

**Ans:** Concerns of defence and health gave shape to Calcutta in the following ways :

**1. Defence :** In 1756, Sirajudaula had attacked Calcutta and sacked the small fort of British traders. Subsequently, when in 1757 Nawab was defeated in the Battle of Plassey, the British decided to build a new fort that could not be attacked easily. So, when the new Fort William was built, they left a vast open space known as the Maidan or garer-math. This was done from the defence point of view to ensure that there would be no obstructions to a straight line of fire from the Fort against an advancing army.

**2. Health :** Health too played an important role in giving shape to Calcutta. When Lord Wellesley became the Governor General, he found that the condition of the Indian part of the city was bad. There was overcrowding, the excessive vegetation, the dirty tanks, the smells and the poor drainage. The British worried that such conditions were the cause of most diseases. The tropical climate itself was seen as unhealthy. They thought that there should be open spaces in the city. Lord Wellesley felt the need for town planning and set up various committees for the purpose. Many bazaars, ghats, burial grounds, and tanneries were cleared or removed. From then on the notion of 'public health' became an important factor in shaping the development of Calcutta.

#### **5. What are the different colonial architectural styles which can be seen in Bombay city?**

**Ans:** In the past, buildings were at odds with the traditional Indian buildings. Gradually, Indians too got used to European architecture and made it their own. The British in turn adapted some Indian styles to suit their needs. One example is the bungalow which was used by government officers in Bombay. The colonial bungalow was set on extensive grounds which ensured privacy. The traditional pitched roof and surrounding veranda kept the bungalow cool in summer months. These bungalows can still be seen in the city. Other than that traditional styles of decoration and building exist. The lack of space in the city and crowding led to a type of building unique to Bombay, the chawl.

#### **6. How were urban centres transformed during the eighteenth century?**

**Ans:** Urban centres were transformed during the eighteenth century in the following ways :

1. With the decline of Mughal power, Delhi and Agra lost their importance. With the rise of regional powers, importance of regional capitals : Lucknow, Hyderabad, Seringapatam, Poona, Nagpur, Baroda and Tanjore increased.

2. The changes in the networks of trade also affected the transformation of urban centres. The European companies had set up trading centres at Panaji (Portuguese), Masulipatnam (Dutch), Madras (British) and Pandicherry (French). As the trading activities increased, towns grew around these trading centres. By the end of the eighteenth century, the land-based empires in Asia were replaced by the powerful sea based European empires.
3. Commercial centres such as Surat, Masulipatnam and Dhaka declined because due to expansion of trade of the East India Company, colonial port cities Madras, Calcutta and Bombay — emerged as the new economic capitals. They also became centres of colonial administration and political power. These cities became the biggest cities in India in terms of population.
4. Some local officials associated with Mughal rule in India created new urban settlements such as the qasbah and ganj.

### **7. What were the new kinds of public places that emerged in the colonial city? What functions did they serve?**

**Ans:** The Indians found the new colonial cities as bewildering. They were surpassed the new transport facilities available here. The means of transport facilities which included horse-drawn carnages, tram and buses. Enabled the people to live at far away places from the city centre. Now they lived at some other places and served at some other places.

**Emergence of new public places:** The new colonial cities far away place witnessed new public places such as the theatres, cinema-halls, gardens, public parks, etc. Besides these were clubs and Garden Houses.

**Functions:** These newly created public places were very exciting. They were an important source of entertainment and helped increasing social interaction. The people were able to express their opinions on society and government. They could also question the practice of social customs.

### **8. What were the concerns that influenced town planning in the nineteenth century?**

**Ans:** The concerns that influenced town planning in the nineteenth century were as given below :

1. **Security :** The security of the Britishers was an important factor due to the memory of 1857. The vast open space, which is known as the Maidan or garer-math, around the Fort in Calcutta was left so that there would be no obstructions to a straight line of fire from the Fort against the enemy. The purpose of the Civil Lines was too the security of the Britishers.
2. **Health :** In Calcutta, the crowding, the dirty tanks and poor drainage and tropical climate were seen a unhealthy. This led to creating open spaces in the city to make it healthier. Many bazaars, ghats, burial grounds and tanneries were removed. Public health became an object of town planning. Bustis were removed.

- 3. To reflect the authority of the imperial power :** With the growth of their empire, the object of town planning was to represent rational ordering, meticulous execution, and Western aesthetic ideals. For example, in Bombay neo-classical or the new classical style was used to express the glory of imperial India. The examples are Town Hall, Victoria Terminus and other buildings.
- 4. Separation from the Indians on the basis of race :** Black Town and White Town came into existence on the basis of race i.e., Black Towns for the Indians and the White Town for the Europeans. Similarly, later on, the bungalows in the civil lines became a racial exclusive enclave in which the ruling classes could live self-sufficient lives without daily social contact with Indians.

**9. To what extent were social relations transformed in the new cities?**

**Ans:** (i) There was a big contrast between extreme wealth and poverty in the new cities. New means of transport facilities such as horse-drawn carriages, trams, buses, etc. made travelling from home to work an interesting experience.

(ii) Creation of public places like theatres public parks and cinema halls provided new forms of entertainment and social interaction.

(iii) New social groups were formed people of all classes started to migrate to the cities. With an increased demand for lawyers and engineers the “middle class” increased. Debate and discussion became popular and established social norms and practices were questioned.

(iv) Cities also offered new opportunities for women. They chose new professions in the city as factory workers, teachers, film actresses, etc. for a long time so women remained objects of social censure.

**10. On an outline map of India, trace the major rivers and hill ranges. Plot ten cities mentioned in the chapter, including Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, and prepare a brief note on why the importance of any two cities that you have marked (one colonial and one pre-colonial) changed in the nineteenth century.**

**Ans:** Rivers are Ravi, Satluj, Ganga, Yamuna, Beas, Kosi, Narmada, Godavari, Krishana, and Kaveri.

Major Hill ranges are the Himalayas, Aravali, Vindhyachal, Satpura, Karakoram.