

The Times of India, Bombay, 23 Oct 2007

11 desi cities in world's 100 fastest growing list

New Delhi: Economic growth in India is driving an unprecedented shift in population to urban centres. As many as 11 Indian cities figure in the list of 100 fastest growing cities in the world, with Faridabad featuring in the sixth spot.

These figures form part of the report, 'The Transition to a Predominantly Urban World and its Underpinnings', released on Monday by the International Institute for Environment and Development, a UK-based policy research non-governmental body. According to it, even little-known Indian cities are growing at a scorching pace. For instance, Durg-Bhilai in Chhattisgarh, which is home to a massive steel industry, is the seventh fastest growing city in the world. Expectedly, another NCR city, Ghaziabad, is in the list. But some of the other cities finding a place in the top 100 list could surprise many. They include Aurangabad, Bhopal, Chandigarh, Dhanbad, Surat, Guwahati, Visakhapatnam and Asansol. Obviously, the economic drivers at work in pushing populations to shift from the countryside to these cities are as diverse as the cities themselves.

Urban Explosion



City	Pop in 2000*	Growth% 1950-00*
Faridabad	10.18	8
Durg-Bhilai	9.05	7.9
Ghaziabad	9.28	6.4
Chandigarh	7.91	6.2
Guwahati	7.97	6
Dhanbad	10.46	5.5
Bhopal	14.26	5.5
Aurangabad	8.68	5.3
Vizag	13.09	5.2
Surat	26.99	5
Asansol	10.65	5

* in lakh # Average annual growth

Urban populace grew 10-fold last century

New Delhi: According to a report by UK-based International Institute for Environment and Development, India, with 11 representations, is second only to China on the list of 100 fastest growing cities in the world.

And if China and India continue to enjoy economic success, they may have larger urban populations in 2020 than those predicted by the UN, the report says. It adds that the world's urban population multiplied tenfold during the 20th century and most of this growth is now taking place in low- and middle-income nations such as India. The authors predict that urban areas in these nations will accommodate most of the world's growth in population between now and 2020.

Historically, the richest nations have had the highest num-

ber of urban people, but the balance has tipped of late. Now, Africa has more people living in urban areas than North America. The rate of growth in urban populations and the size and number of very large cities is unprecedented.

The implications of such dramatic shifts on economic development, poverty reduction and energy consumption are immense. The authors warn that these migrations will decide global consumption patterns.

The report warns that though de-urbanisation of Europe indicates that economic development and urban migration can be decoupled, the picture is not so simple. Many of the world's largest cities had several million fewer people in 2000 than had been predicted two decades earlier. TNN