

**CHANGING URBAN LAND USE AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION IN THE WAKE
OF RAPID POPULATION GROWTH: A FOCUS ON THE METROPOLITAN CITIES OF
INDIA**

A.K. Singh, **R. Jain**

International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai, India

The paper focuses on changing urban land use and environmental degradation in the context of growing urbanization in the metropolitan cities of India by exploring the data from various sources like Census, CPBC, NFHS-2 and also from different government organizations. There has been an abrupt change in the urban land use with the growing urban population and industrialization, coupled with heavy deforestation, which has further put the health condition of the urbanites in these larger cities at risk. Uncontrolled urbanization has caused environmental degradation which is manifested in worsening water quality, excessive air and noise pollution, and the problems of disposal of solid wastes and hazardous wastes. About three-fold increase has been noticed for percentage of total urban population in Class-I cities between 1901 to 1991. Total population in million plus cities has also increased from 1.5 million in 1901 to 71 million in 2001. The problem of solid wastes is of great concern in these metropolises. Vehicular and noise pollution is constantly increasing, and was noticed to be above than the prescribed standard in all the four largest metro cities of India. The quantum jump of unskilled labour from rural area to these cities has aggravated the problems of slum situation, affecting the hygiene and housing condition of these cities. It is therefore, important to study rationally, each and every deprived environment and social parameters of the Indian mega-cities which is badly affecting the well-being and quality of life of the residents of metro cities in India.