***URBANIZATION***

**THE NATURE AND CONCEPT OF URBANIZATION**

Urbanization refers to the population shift from rural areas to urban areas, the gradual increase in the proportion of people living in urban areas, and the ways in which each society adapts to this change.

Urbanization is a universal process implying economic development and social change. Urbanization also means, **“a breakdown of traditional social institutions and values”.** However, in India, one cannot say that urbanization has resulted in the caste system being transformed into the class system, the joint-family transforming into the nuclear family, and religion becoming secularized.

**Two trends are clear regarding urban life:-**

1. **Dependence upon agriculture for livelihood has steadily decreased; and**
2. **Population of towns and cities has increased over the years.**

Both the trends indicate an increase in the processes of industrialization and urbanization. Towns and cities offer jobs and better amenities, whereas people in villages live a hard life. **Due to urbanization, traditional bonds based on religion, caste and family have weakened in the villages.** Anonymity, as found in towns, is absent in rural areas.

**STRUCTURE OF TOWNS AND CITIES**

**Towns:** For the Census of India 2011, the definition of urban area is as follows:- **All places with a municipality, corporation, cantonment board or notified town area committee, etc.**

**All other places which satisfied the following criteria:**

1. **A minimum population of 5,000;**
2. **At least 75 percent of the male main working population engaged in non-agricultural pursuits; and**
3. **A density of population of at least 400 persons per sq. km.**

The **first category** of urban units is known as **Statutory Towns.** These towns are notified under law by the concerned State/UT Government and have local bodies like municipal corporations, municipalities, municipal committees, etc., irrespective of their demographic characteristics as reckoned on 31st December 2009. **Examples:** Vadodara (M Corp.), Shimla (M Corp.) etc.