

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

1. Delhi is located in northern India between the latitudes of 28°-24'-17" and 28°-53'-00" North and longitudes of 76°-50'-24" and 77°-20'-37" East. Delhi shares bordering with the States of Uttar Pradesh and Haryana. Delhi has an area of 1,483 sq. kms. Its maximum length is 51.90 kms and greatest width is 48.48 kms.
2. The Yamuna river and terminal part of the Aravali hill range are the two main geographical features of the city. The Aravali hill range are covered with forest and are called the Ridges; they are the city's lungs and help maintain its environment. The Yamuna river is Delhi's source of drinking water and a sacred river for most of the inhabitants.
3. The Yamuna river originates from the Yamnotri glacier in the lower Himalayas at an elevation of about 6387 mtr. above mean sea level. From Tajewala, the river sluggishly meanders via Delhi to its confluence with the Ganga at Allahabad after flowing a distance of about 1200 kms. The total length of the river from origin to the confluence point at Allahabad is 1376 kms. The catchment of the Yamuna river system covers parts of Uttranchal, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan, Delhi and Madhya Pradesh.
4. The average annual rainfall in Delhi is 714 mm, three-fourths of which falls in July, August and September. Heavy rainfall in the catchment area of the Yamuna can result in a dangerous flood situation for the city. During the summer months of April, May and June, temperatures can rise to 40-45 degrees Celsius; winters are typically cold with temperatures during December and January falling to 4 to 5 degree Celsius. February, March, October and November are climatically the best months.
5. The forest cover has increased from 0.76% of total area in 1980-81 to 1.75% in 1994-95 and 5.93% in 2000-01. Delhi's mineral resources are primarily sand and stone which are useful for construction activities. However, the stone quarries in the Ridge area have been shut down since 1984 on account of environmental considerations.

PEOPLE

6. Delhi was a small town in 1901 with a population 0.4 million. Delhi's population started increasing after it became the capital of British India in 1911. During the Partition of the country, a large number of people migrated from Pakistan and settled in Delhi, and in the decade 1941-51 the population growth rate was 90%. Migration into the city continued even after Partition. The 2001 Census recorded 137.83 lakh population of Delhi with 3.81% annual growth rate and 46.31% decennial growth rate during 1991-2001.
7. As the country's capital, with vibrant trade and commerce and excellent employment opportunities, Delhi has attracted people from all over the country and its population today reflects the characteristics of almost every region. Delhi truly reflects the wealth and diversity of India wherein diverse religions, languages, customs and cultures co-exist in splendid plural harmony. Religious, cultural and social functions of different socio-cultural groups have transformed Delhi into a city of festivals.
8. Delhi is among the top three States/Union Territories in terms of per capita income (Rs. 38864 in 2000-01), current prices. More than 80% of the state income is from the tertiary sector. However, with the continuous inflow of labourers and unemployed persons, the number of people living in sub-standard areas is increasing. More than the 45% of Delhi's population resides in slums, unauthorized colonies and other unplanned settlements.
9. With the rapid pace of urbanization the rural area of Delhi is shrinking. The number of rural villages has decreased from 314 in 1921 to 165 in 2001 census. The percentage of rural population of Delhi has also declined from 47.24% in 1901 to 6.99% in 2001.

ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM

10. The British began their rule in Delhi in 1805 with the operation of General Regulations made by the British under the charge of the Resident and Chief Commissioner of Delhi. The system continued with periodic modifications till 1857. In 1858, the British made Delhi a provincial town of the Frontier Province and later transferred it to the newly formed Punjab province under a Lieutenant Governor. Delhi continued to be administered directly by the Government of India through a Chief Commissioner till 1950.
11. With the shifting of the capital from Calcutta to Delhi, a separate Committee known as Imperial Delhi Committee was formed on 25 March 1913 to oversee construction and management of the civic affairs of the new capital. In 1916, it was notified as the Raisina Municipal Committee under the Punjab Municipal Act 1911 primarily for meeting the sanitary needs of the workers engaged in the construction of the capital. On 16th March 1927, it was re-designated as the New Delhi Municipal Committee. In 1932, it was upgraded to the status of a first class municipality entrusted with the responsibility of providing civic services. New Delhi Municipal Committee has been reorganized under the New Delhi Municipal Council Act, 1994.

12. A committee, chaired by Dr. B. Pattabhi Sita Ramayya, was set up on 31st July, 1947 to study and report on constitutional changes in the administrative structure of the Chief Commissioner's Provinces which included Delhi. Based on the committee's report, the Constituent Assembly agreed to incorporate Articles 239 and 240 in the constitution to allow Part-C states functioning through a Chief Commissioner or Lieutenant Governor. Delhi became a Part-C state in 1951 with a Council of Ministers and a Legislature.
13. The States Reorganisation Commission, set-up in December 1953, recommended that Delhi, as the national capital, must remain under the effective control of the national government. It also suggested the formation of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD). Accordingly, the Council of Ministers and Legislative Assembly of Delhi ceased to exist from November 1, 1956. Delhi, as a Union Territory was administered thereafter by the President of India through a Chief Commissioner appointed under Article 239 till the Delhi Administration Act 1966 came into force.
14. The Municipal Corporation of Delhi Act was enacted by Parliament in 1957 and the Municipal Corporation of Delhi was formed with elected members in 1958. The Delhi Development Authority was created under the Delhi Development Act, 1957. The first Master Plan, 1961-1981 was published by DDA in 1962.
15. The Delhi Administration Act 1966 (No.19 of 1966) was enacted by Parliament to provide for limited representative government for Delhi with the creation of a Metropolitan Council comprising 56 elected and 5 nominated members. An Executive Council was also constituted by the President, and four Executive Councillors, including the Chief Executive Councillor, were appointed by the President.
16. Delhi's administrative set-up has seen another change through the 69th Constitutional Amendment by way of insertion of Article 239 AA and the passage of the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act, 1991. This Act, which came into force in January 1992, provides for a Legislative Assembly and a Council of Ministers to aid and advise the Lieutenant Governor. The President appoints the Chief Minister and six other Ministers on the advice of the Chief Minister. The Act provides for a 70-member Legislative Assembly with powers to make laws on matters contained in the State and Concurrent lists applicable to the Union Territory, except for those relating to public order, police and land. The first Legislative Assembly under this Act was constituted after elections in 1993. The second Legislative Assembly was constituted in November, 1998.
17. With the new administrative set-up in Delhi, a number of other changes have followed, such as the transfer of the Delhi Transport Corporation from the Central Government to the Delhi government. Similarly, the Delhi Electricity Supply Undertaking has been reorganised as the Delhi Vidyut Board (DVB). The Delhi Water Supply and Sewage Disposal Undertaking has been reorganised into the Delhi Jal Board (DJB). Both DVB and DJB have been transferred from MCD to the Delhi Government. In place of the single district that existed in Delhi, 9 districts with 27 sub-divisions have been created since January 1997 (Map 1.1).

Map 1.1

