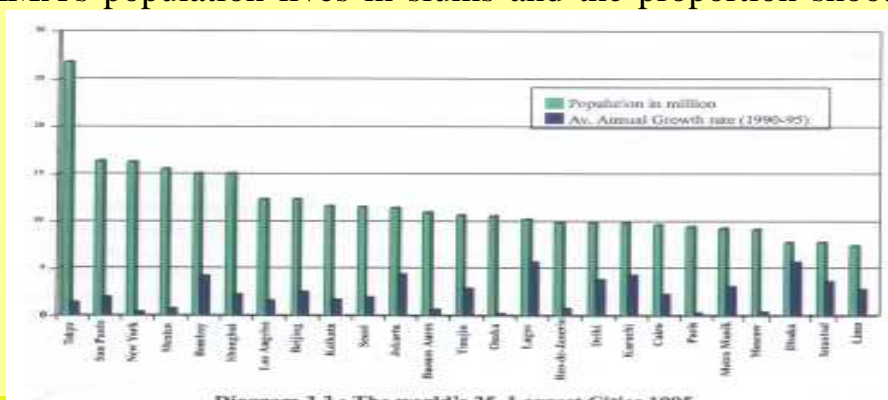


Introducing KMA

Kolkata Metropolitan Area (KMA) is the largest urban agglomeration in eastern India. KMA, as delineated under West Bengal Town and Country (Planning & Development) Act, 1979, extends over 1851.41 sq. km. and envelopes 3 Municipal Corporations, 38 Municipalities and 24 Panchayat Samitis. KMA is not only one of the largest metropolises but also the oldest metropolis in India, the genesis dating back to the 19th Century after the British colonial rulers set their foot in Kolkata. Today's KMA is nothing but the metropolitan outfit of Kolkata City that has evolved over more than 300 years. The demographic and economic primacy of KMA is significant.

KMA holds a population of 14.72 million, according to 2001 Census, as against the total urban population of West Bengal of 22.5 million. Despite the fact of declining share of KMA in the State's urban population over the last 25 years or so owing to a number of measures undertaken by the State Government towards improving urban facilities in other cities and towns of West Bengal, KMA accounts for almost 59 percent of the State's urban population down from 69 percent in 1981 and 64 percent in 1991. Another important demographic attribute of KMA is that its average residential density is the highest among the metropolises in India at around 8000 persons per sq. km. Noticeably, the metro core of KMA comprising the cities of Kolkata and Howrah accounts for nearly two-fifths of KMA's population. Interestingly, the city of Kolkata has been witnessing sharp decline in the decadal population growth because of the near saturation obtaining in the city. But population in the municipal towns immediately surrounding Kolkata City has been growing at higher rates. The overall growth of population in KMA has been, however, falling over the last couple of decades owing to considerable decline in the incidence of rural to urban migration as a result of agrarian prosperity and proliferation of job opportunities achieved in the rural and semi-urban areas.

One important socio-economic attribute of KMA is the existence of large number of slum settlements, particularly in the cities of Kolkata and Howrah. Around one-third of KMA's population lives in slums and the proportion shoots up to 40



percent for the city of Kolkata. The slum dwellers suffer from lack of access to basic infrastructure and services.

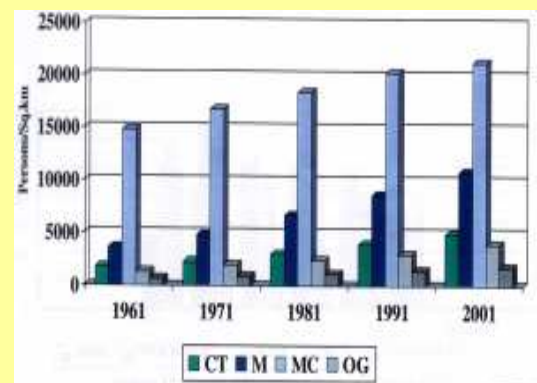
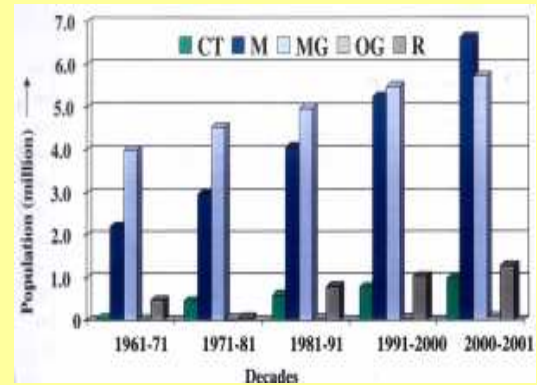
The demographic primacy of KMA has been to some extent the result of a vibrant economy that the metropolis experienced over a sustained period of time in the history. The first seeds of industrialization in the country were sown in and around Kolkata with jute, chemical and engineering industries making the mark. Kolkata has always been the largest trading hub in eastern India with Kolkata Port having facilitated the process. Major wholesale markets of the country are located in and around the city of Kolkata. The railheads at Sealdah and Howrah connect KMA to all other parts of the State as well as the country. KMA's contribution to SDP is estimated to be around 30 percent, although KMA accounts for only 18 percent of the State's population. The share of KMA shoots up considerably if the SDP of urban West Bengal only is considered. Despite a more spatially balanced development in the State in recent years, KMA accounts for three-fourths of the organized sector industries and employment. KMA houses the major financial, commercial, educational, health, research and other organizations that cater to the requirements of not only of KMA but also the entire State, the eastern region and the country. In recent years, Kolkata has seen a tremendous spurt in the growth of IT and ITeS industries and has figured as a destination among international investors. Kolkata and its surrounding areas are also experiencing a rapid stride in real estate activities as can be judged by the number of new modern housing complexes, malls, multiplexes, cineplexes etc. coming up. The per-capita income in KMA is much higher than what it is in the rest of the State and this has created an opportunity for growth of various service sector industries including real estate development.

The demographic and economic dynamics of KMA obviously called for planned interventions in development of various infrastructure and facilities such that the growth in population and economic activities could be sustained in a healthy and environment- friendly manner. Many of these interventions and plans called for cutting across the boundaries of the units of local self-government such as municipalities and corporations. A comprehensive and integrated planning and development approach was required to be taken at the metropolitan level i.e. at the level of KMA. KMDA, established in 1970 under presidential ordinance and later sanctified under the KMDA Act of 1972 functioned essentially as a development agency with the specific purpose of carrying out major infrastructure development in KMA. With the enactment of West Bengal Town and Country (Planning & Development) Act in 1979, KMDA was designated as the statutory planning and development authority for KMA. Between 1970 and 1981 KMDA functioned as an overarching development authority in KMA, as most of the units of local self-government in KMA were under suspension with no elected representation in place. It is only with the State Government's avowed policy of decentralized planning

and development across the urban and rural areas of the State that elected representation was installed in all the urban local bodies of the State including those in KMA. The concerned municipal/corporation Acts have also been amended suitably to provide for a more effective functioning of the ULBs and a cabinet form of local self government was introduced in the ULB areas with Mayor-in-Council for municipal corporations and Chairman-in-Council for municipal bodies. KMDA has been working in tandem with the elected ULBs towards the overall development of KMA.

The process of decentralized planning and development had taken a further stride following the enactment of West Bengal Metropolitan Planning Committee (WBMPC) Act in 1994 in line with the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992. Following the provisions of WBMPC Act of 1994, Kolkata Metropolitan Planning Committee (KMPC) had been established in KMA towards the end of 2000. Of the 60-member KMPC, 40 are elected from amongst the local elected representatives. The WBMPC Act provides for preparation of a Draft Development Plan for KMA by KMPC having regard to the plans prepared by the individual units of local self-government. The Act further mandates that KMPC should co-ordinate all the development activities undertaken by the different agencies of the State and Central Governments within the geographical boundaries of KMA to ensure conformity of developmental actions to the development plans. A 25-year Perspective Plan and sectoral Master Plans for KMA have already been prepared under the aegis of KMPC.

The State is now poised for rapid pace of



industrialization and KMA has to play an important role in facilitating the process of industrial growth. The population of KMA is projected at 17 million in 2011, 20 million in 2021 and 21.1 million in 2025. Necessary infrastructure and facilities shall have to be created for the projected population as well as the industrial activities that are likely to come up within KMA, especially IT and ITeS and other service sector industries including financial and other specialized institutions.

Role of KMDA

KMDA has played distinctive role in the arena of urban planning and development over about 35 years of its existence. Initially set up as a funding and co-ordinating agency for major infrastructure development in KMA, KMDA has gradually taken over the task of project execution within its fold. For the sake of planned development KMA and also for the need of providing conformity between plans and developmental actions, KMDA has taken over the planning responsibility also. With the enactment of West Bengal Town and country (Planning & Development) Act 1979, KMDA has assumed the status of statutory planning and development authority for KMA and has been made responsible for regulatory functions in a planned manner, in addition to planning and development functions. Further, with the coming into being of Kolkata Metropolitan Planning Committee, KMDA has become the technical secretariat of KMPC. With the evolution of functions of KMDA over the long 35 years, KMDA has become an epitome for urban planning and development in KMA.



Broad functional domains of KMDA

As already mentioned, KMDA's functional domains broadly extend over three areas, namely, regulatory functions, planning for development and project implementation. Besides these major functional areas, KMDA is also engaged in providing consultancy services and implementing projects on behalf of other public sector departments and agencies.

Under provisions of the West Bengal Town and Country (Planning & Development) Act 1979, KMDA has to prepare existing Land Use Maps and Registers (LUMRs) for different zones within KMA to be able to prepare Land Use and Development Control Plans for those sub areas. KMDA has to follow the process of preparation of LUMRs and LUDCPs as laid down in the Act itself. Adoption of the statutory planning documents is preceded by publication of the documents for public inspection, invitation of public objection, hearing of public objection and incorporation of the necessary modifications in these documents. The LUDCPs provide for regulatory measures, enforcement of which would lead to obtaining an environment-friendly, eco-friendly urban growth subject to protection and conservation of exhaustible natural resources and heritage. As the process of official adoption of LUDCPs usually takes a longer time, Development Control Regulation (DCRs) are often drafted and enforced to prevent unregulated and haphazard use and development of land, as an interim measure. In most cases, the responsibility of enforcement of LUDCPs and DCR are delegated to the units of local self-government. KMDA, however, retains the enforcement power to itself in selected areas/zones.



KMDA is engaged in carrying out different levels of planning exercise right from perspective plan to formulation of investment programme. KMDA keeps on updating the perspective plan and sectoral development plans to take into account the changing physical, social and other contexts. KMDA does these exercises at periodic intervals. Whereas the perspective plan sets out the broad goals and objectives and puts forward a 'vision' to be achieved over a longer period of time, the sectoral master or development plans set out the norms and standards of infrastructure, services, the projected requirement of such infrastructure and services, the strategies to be adopted for achieving the projected requirement and an indicative requirement of funds for the purpose. KMDA strives to ensure that the project-level interventions conform to the long-term plans.

KMDA formulates short-term action plans based on *inter se* priorities between different sectors of infrastructure, between zones of KMA and between economic groups of beneficiaries. Based on short-term action plans, KMDA undertakes

preparation of project reports towards execution of the same by adopting a competitive tendering process. A large number of projects have so far been executed by KMDA covering different sectors of infrastructure such as water supply, sewerage and drainage, traffic and transportation, township and area development, housing and slum improvement, commercial complexes, parks and playground and so on and so forth. It should be very pertinent to note that in design of interventions, the urban poor have always received priority attention. KMDA's interventions have not confined to development of physical infrastructure alone and have extended to cover the fields of health and community development especially of the urban poor.

Notwithstanding the mandates laid down in the WBT&CP Act and WBMPC Act, KMDA *willy-nilly* has to operate and maintain some infrastructure facilities, especially those trans-municipal in nature.

KMDA has been approached by different government department/agencies for planning, designing and implementing certain projects that require specialized skills. This has happened because of the credibility that KMDA has achieved over the long years of its existence. KMDA is provided with the funds for implementing the projects on turnkey basis and is allowed to retain service charges at mutually acceptable rates. In KMDA parlance, these are called 'deposit works'. KMDA has also extended consultancy services to government departments and agencies in specific areas. Introduction of Geographic Information System (GIS) in municipal functioning has been one of the prime areas where KMDA has provided a great deal of consultancy services to ULBs.

