Chapter 1: Population: Distribution, Density, Growth and Composition

Exercises — Exercises

Q1 Choose the right answer. India's population as per the 2011 Census is: (a) 1028 million (b) 3182 million (c) 3287 million (d) 1210 million

(d) 1210 million. The 2011 Census put India's population at 1,210 million (about 1,210,193,422), making it the second most populous country after China. The 1028 million figure is the 2001 count; 3182 and 3287 are not population figures.

Q2 Choose the right answer. Which one of the following states has the highest density of population in India? (a) West Bengal (b) Kerala (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Bihar

(d) Bihar. Among these states Bihar has the highest density at 1,102 persons per sq km, ahead of West Bengal (1,029), Kerala (859) and Uttar Pradesh (828).

Q3 Choose the right answer. Which one of the following states has the highest proportion of urban population in India according to the 2011 Census? (a) Tamil Nadu (b) Maharashtra (c) Kerala (d) Goa

(d) Goa. Goa has the smallest rural share of these states (the chapter notes that only a little over half of its people live in villages), so its urban proportion is the highest among the options.

Q4 Choose the right answer. Which one of the following is the largest linguistic group of India? (a) Sino-Tibetan (b) Indo-Aryan (c) Austric (d) Dravidian

(b) Indo-Aryan. The Indo-European (Aryan) family accounts for about 73 per cent of speakers, far above Dravidian (about 20 per cent), Austric (1.38 per cent) and Sino-Tibetan (0.85 per cent).

Q5 Very hot and dry and very cold and wet regions of India have low density of population. In this light, explain the role of climate on the distribution of population. (Answer in about 30 words.)

Climate, with terrain and water availability, shapes settlement. Extremes of heat and dryness or cold and wetness make farming and living difficult, so such regions stay thinly populated, while moderate climates with water attract dense population.

Q6 Which states have large rural population in India? Give one reason for such large rural population. (Answer in about 30 words.)

Himachal Pradesh and Bihar have very high rural population percentages. A major reason is dependence on agriculture and limited urbanisation and industrialisation, so most people continue to live in villages and farm.

Q7 Why do some states of India have higher rates of work participation than others? (Answer in about 30 words.)

Work participation tends to be higher in areas of lower economic development, because many manual workers are needed for subsistence or near-subsistence activities. States like Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh therefore show higher rates.

Q8 'The agricultural sector has the largest share of Indian workers.' Explain. (Answer in about 30 words.)

About 54.6 per cent of India's workers (2011) are cultivators and agricultural labourers, against only 3.8 per cent in household industries and 41.6 per cent in other work, so the primary sector employs most workers.

Q9 Discuss the spatial pattern of density of population in India. (Answer in about 150 words.)

Density is the number of persons per unit area. India's density was 382 persons per sq km in 2011, up from 117 in 1951, an increase of more than 200 persons in 50 years. The pattern varies widely. It ranges from 17 persons per sq km in Arunachal Pradesh to 11,297 in the National Capital Territory of Delhi. Among northern states, Bihar (1,102), West Bengal (1,029) and Uttar Pradesh (828) have high densities, while Kerala (859) and Tamil Nadu (555) are dense among peninsular states. Assam, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Jharkhand and Odisha have moderate densities. The hill states of the Himalayan region and the north-eastern states other than Assam have low densities. Union Territories, except the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, have very high densities. Plains, deltas and coasts are denser than the interior, mountains and arid areas. Density is a crude measure, so physiological and agricultural densities give better insight into land pressure.

Q10 Give an account of the occupational structure of India's population. (Answer in about 150 words.)

Occupational structure shows how people are engaged in farming, manufacturing, trade, services or other professions. The 2011 Census divides workers into four categories: cultivators, agricultural labourers, household industrial workers and other workers. India has a large primary sector. About 54.6 per cent of workers are cultivators and agricultural labourers, only 3.8 per cent work in household industries, and 41.6 per cent are other workers in trade, commerce, construction, repair and services. Male workers outnumber female workers in all three sectors, though the number of female workers is relatively high in the primary sector. The share of agricultural workers has declined from 58.2 per cent in 2001 to 54.6 per cent in 2011, while secondary and tertiary shares have risen, showing a shift from farm to non-farm work. Regional variation is wide: Himachal Pradesh and Nagaland have many cultivators, Bihar, Jharkhand and Odisha have many agricultural labourers, and Delhi, Chandigarh and Puducherry have most workers in other services.