**Problems of city and country life**

- Where would you prefer to live in the city or in the country?

- If I could choose where to live I would have the best of both places as each of them has its own advantages to say nothing of disadvantages.

- What are the advantages of living in the modern city?

- Life in the city is much easier than in the country - developed transport system, sewerage system, information, sports, shopping malls, etc. Modern men are too sophisticated for simple country pleasures. There is far more entertainment in the city than in the country. Cities offer high concentration of good things in life: big stores, restaurants, theatres, cinema, art galleries. Life is more convenient in a city: services are always better here. In the city people are more open-minded. It is possible to go out, make friends and never be cut off from them by weather conditions. Generally, people do not mind what you do in the city. In the city people have more chances to be employed, as the range of jobs is greater than in a village. Besides in the city people have more chances to succeed. Moreover, life is never dull in the city, people always have something to do here. The objections to city living are not convincing enough. People easily adapt to various inconveniences of city life. For example, noise and traffic are hardly noticeable to city-dwellers. In the city especially in our country people live in apartments with central heating, telephone, gas, electricity, radio, TV the Internet. Most people love cities. In 330 BC Aristotle wrote that by nature man belonged to a city. Many people love the busy city life. It is enough for them to visit a country at week-ends.

- What brought about the growth of cities over the centuries?

- Cities grew over the centuries because they served aims that could not have been served otherwise. Two thousand years ago most people lived in the countryside. It was not their choice. Today, almost half of humanity lives in cities. It does so because it wants to. Man has always lived in groups. It makes life safer and easier. Geography - rich soil, a safe harbour or navigable river, ample fresh water, easy defence, coal - was the start of many towns. In Europe towns grew over the strongholds of a local lord. Most of them developed as buying and selling centres; trade needed a market, and markets needed people.

- How did towns serve their inhabitants?

- Towns served their citizens very well if they in turn were served by them. During the Middle Ages when harvest failed, the nearby town offered hope of survival. All successful towns satisfied economic needs. For a peasant town was the only place where he might make a fortune. In the new industrial order, the city was the nerve centre, brining to a focus all dynamic economic forces: vast accumulation of capital, business and financial institutions, spreading railroad yards, factories, and armies of manual and clerical workers. For example, in the USA villages, attracting people from the countryside and from the land across the seas, grew into towns and towns into cities almost overnight.

- Are there any disadvantages of living in the city?

- Pollution is the greatest disadvantage of the city life of today. Polluted air is hanging like a brown cloud over cities. Dirt and smoke are pouring from the buildings of cites and factories. Polluted urban air causes respiratory distress, particularly in children, and elderly people. The increased number of motor vehicles not only jam the city streets but pollute the city air as well. Cars give a collection of pollutants. In bright, calm weather, sunlight turns the chemicals into a poison smog. All big cities have problems with air pollution. There was still nothing anywhere like "killer-smog" which caused some 3000-4000 deaths in London in December 1952. Mexico city's air is famously filthy, as is that of many Indian, Chinese, and East European cities. The exceeding output of industries and urban communities is harmful to the city aquatic systems. The result is a foul-smelling body of water running for a bath or dish washing. Noise pollution is the problem of big cities too. Urban garbage - like food, paper, and cans - on the ground or in the street is one more problem of cities. People don't always put their garbage in the garbage can. Urban garbage is ugly. It makes the city look dirty, and it spoils the view.

- What are other disadvantages of living in a big city?

- There are lots of other disadvantages of living in a big city. Today's cities are ballooning. Bombay in 1960 was a jam-packed city of 4m people. Now Mexico city holds around 18m people. "The rush-hour" with crowded streets, packed trains, full buses that happens twice a day is one of them. Cost of living is very high in the cities. In addition, people live under constant threat; life is not quiet in the cities, it causes stresses and heart decease. In the city people loose touch with land, rhythms of nature. Everyone who cares about his health tries to move out from the city. Cities are not fit to live in, man are born for countryside. Most people in Europe and America try to live in non-industrial cities, which are set down near big cities and can not be killed by pollution and traffic.

- Do you like to stay in the countryside?

- Yes, I do. I like to stay in the countryside.

- Why do you like to stay in the countryside?

- Well, in the countryside I enjoy such simple things of primary importance as sunlight and fresh air. Besides, living in the countryside is cheaper and safer than in a city. It provides people with more security. There is less crime and, of course, there is less traffic there. Life in the countryside is quiet, peaceful, and healthy. I like to be close to nature. Here people are friendly and it is much more pleasant in the countryside than in the city. Unfortunately, life in the countryside is rather hard. Working and living conditions are difficult, social and cultural life in the countryside is not full of entertainment. And annually more and more young people flee from the countryside for a better life in the city.

- Is it difficult to find a job in the countryside?

- Certainly, the problem of employment in the countryside is very crucial today. It is especially acute for the young people and professionals. As a rule there are few labour places for skilled agricultural workers and less for professionals. Although villages do need teachers and physicians, they can not provide them with the necessary facilities. There are few schools and clinics in the countryside. Sometimes there is one secondary school for several villages and children have to walk ten kilometres to study there. Usually either the village community is too poor to provide the children with a bus or the roads are too bad for the bus to run off them.

- Can this problem be solved?

- Surely, people should always be optimists and hope for a better life. Where there is a will there is a way. Nowadays we can witness the revival of some villages. So far they are few but annually their number is increasing.