

Seoul urbanization



The population of the metropolis increases because people from rural areas and overseas migrate to the urban areas in large numbers, averaging 7.6 per cent per year (United Nations Population Division, 2001). Increasing of population in many big cities may causes serious problems even in advanced countries. Seoul, the capital city of South Korea, which more than 11 millions of population, has grown rapidly into a metropolis since the end of Korean War (Kim, 2005). Over population in Seoul creates many problems such as traffic congestion and lack of housing.

This essay will discuss about two issues caused by increasing number of population in the city. The first is traffic congestion in Seoul and policies to decline this problem and the second is lack of housing and solution by the government. Traffic congestion is one of the most serious problems in Seoul because of a large number of vehicles in the city (Asianinfo. org, 2000). The increasing number of population in an urban area produces a plentiful number of passenger cars on the road. Approximately amount of cars is 2.8 million (Mok, 2007).

In Seoul, the statistic shows that one out of three citizens has a car (Zhang, 2010). This situation brings a big pressure to the traffic in the city. The congestion issue causes a distress of travel to metropolitans. Due to this serious problem, the Seoul metropolitan government has created the key measures to solve the traffic congestion. The first measure is to reform the metropolitan transportation system. There are many kinds of transportation in Seoul such as bus, subway and taxi. Under the revolution and reform of transport system, the government has developed bus services according to route demands.

In addition, the extension of subways and establishment of exclusive median bus lane make easier and cheaper for passengers to transfer between buses and subways (Jin, 2005). The other measures are policies and encouraging drivers to reduce traffic volume. For example, the government's measure which encouraging drivers to avoid using of private vehicles for one day of the five-day working week and Seoul Car Free Day campaign which the parking lots of public organization are compulsory closed and drive people to use public transport (Mok, 2007).

The government is also searching for a new measure to address the issue of traffic congestion and benefit the megacity's residents (Cohen, 2009). Apart from traffic congestion, lack of housing is also an important issue caused by population growth in Seoul. Since the end of the Korean War, the nation has focused on increasing only the output within industry (SeoulSouthkorea.jimdo.com, n. d.) This is the reason for encouraging many people to move into urban centers. A lack of housing for the majority of the new residents has been resulted by rapid urbanization.

This is one product of rapid urban development. The influx of population increases need for housing infrastructure. For example, during the last few years there have been approximately twice as many households as houses. Those who can find no houses must become squatters and construct shanties and this cause emergence of slum areas in Seoul. The government has an urban development activity with the purpose to clear and relocate squatters from parks and green zones to the outskirts of the city.

The measure of Seoul's government is to allocate houses for the residents which named as Citizen Apartment Building Program (Lee, 2000). Under this

program, the government constructs low-rise apartment buildings for squatters and low-income groups. The apartments are intended to be cheap to build and buy. In addition, the government produces low-interest loans that make buyers purchase more easily. In conclusion, urbanization in Seoul began at the end of war. With a rapid growth of the city, Seoul is one of the largest cities in the world with a large amount of population.

It can be seen from above examples that increasing number of population in Seoul causes serious problems such as traffic congestion and lack of housing. However, the government has attempted to address the problems with logical plans and policies.