

**Listen to a radio report about India.****Optional exercise**

Listen to the radio report about India and answer the questions. (Answers below).

- 1 India is the 12<sup>th</sup> richest country in the world.
  - 2 India's economy is growing three times faster than the United States.
  - 3 A quarter of India's population are very wealthy.
  - 4 Over half the people in Mumbai live in poor housing conditions.
  - 5 Most of India's population live in rural areas.
  - 6 250,000 people marched to Delhi in a protest about poverty.
  - 7 Many poor farmers have sold or lost their land.
  - 8 The differences between rich and poor are decreasing in India.
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In today's special report we're looking at India, the second most populous country in the world and the world's 12<sup>th</sup> wealthiest in 2005, according to the World Bank. The country's economy is growing very fast. In the US and most of the EU average GDP growth was around 3% last year, compared to 9% growth in India. The economy is heading for 10% growth this year, but not everyone in India is benefiting from this boom.

While India has the most billionaires in Asia, many of the country's poor are actually getting poorer. There are over 1 billion people in India and 25% live in abject poverty. A recent UN report pointed out that two-thirds of India has no access to sanitation.

A case in point is Mumbai, India's biggest city with a population of 19 million, where almost 60% of the city's population live in slums. And at least one third of the city's population is without access to clean drinking water.

The Indian government wants to make the country slum-free by the year 2020 but it is a huge task and there aren't enough resources to relocate so many slum dwellers with more people arriving in India's cities from the countryside every day in search of a better life for themselves and their families.

More than 70% of India's population lives in the countryside and more and more people are migrating to the cities to find work because subsistence farming doesn't provide enough to make a living. There is a lack of investment in healthcare and education for rural communities and few employment opportunities, which is having disastrous consequences for many millions of people.

In October 2007, 25,000 landless workers, indigenous tribespeople and "untouchables" from the bottom of Indian society marched 320km to Delhi to protest about the growing poverty in which they live. While some parts of Indian society are enjoying the economic boom, other parts are suffering from inflation, higher food prices and the loss of their lands.

Government projects to promote special economic zones have displaced hundreds of thousands from their land. Many of these people were not compensated or cheated on the price.

While incomes are going up, and tens of thousands of new jobs are being created, the government of India cannot seem to generation essential investment in public services such as health, education, sanitation, public safety and housing. Many observers now ask will India be able to sustain its rapid growth despite the widening gap between rich and poor.

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**Answers:** 1 t, 2 t, 3 f, 4 t, 5 t, 6 f, 7 t, 8 f