बसना  **to dwell**

This intransitive verb has many different senses relating to the fundamental sense of 'dwelling', and is often used metaphorically and/or poetically. (It has to be distinguished from its homonym बसाना to be fragrant, together with associated words such as बास m. fragrance.) Here is OHED’s definition of बसना to reside —

बसना basnā [vasati], v.i. 1. to dwell, to reside. 2. to be settled, populated. 3. to be cultivated (land). 4. to settle, to lodge; to camp; to roost. बसा हुआ, adj. situated (in or on, अं or पर). 5. to be set up (a household). उसका पर बस गया है, he is married, settled down. 6. to prosper (as a household).

Here are some examples of usage (mostly news headlines) from the internet:

हर बिल में तिरंगा बसता है
In every heart dwells a tricolor [the Indian flag]

असली भारत गाँवों में बसता है
The real India lives in the villages

एक शहर जो हर साल बसता है
A city that forms every year [the Glastonbury pop festival’s tent city, UK]

इस हंसी में बसते हैं परमात्मा
In this laugh dwells the supreme spirit

हुई है शाम तो औखों में बस गया फिर दूू
Evening has come and you have settled in my eyes once more. [from a ghazal by Ahmad Faraz]

ये शहर जो उजड़ गया तो फिर से बस जाएगा
A city that’s been ruined will be established again. [from a song]

मंगान पर बसना बाहते हैं हजारों भारतीय
Thousands of Indians want to settle on Mars

The common idiom बस बसना  means ‘to part for another life’, a euphemism for ‘to die’:

जवान पोते की मौत का एक बुखार को झटना गहरा संवादा लगा कि उस भी चल बसे |
The death of an elderly man’s young grandson was such a shock that he too died

ब्रिटेन बंध की एक पूर्व प्रधानमंत्री बसी |
A former prime minister of Britain [has] passed away
Watch out for ‘false friends’! The stem बस- has four completed unconnected homonyms:

1. बस- 
   to be fragrant, to smell;

2. बस 
   adj., adv. & interj. enough etc.) — from Persian;

3. बस 
   m. power, control etc. — from Sanskrit वश;

4. बस 
   f. bus — from English (an abbreviation from Latin omnibus, ‘for all’, dative plural of omnis ‘all’)

See OHED for the many usages and idioms based on the first two of these.

बसाना, the transitive equivalent of बसना, has a causative sense: to cause to dwell, etc. Its usage is less common than that of बसना, and again, may be metaphorical and/or poetic.

अब वैज्ञानिक तरीके से बसाया जाएगा केदारनाथ
Kedarnath [valley] will now be settled scientifically.

सोनाघाटी की सरकारी जमीन पर पारदीयों को बसाया जाएगा
Pardhis will be settled on government land in Sonaghati [in MP; पारदी — a nomadic tribe].

बूढ़ क्षेत्र में बसाई जा रहीं अवैध कलोनियां
Illegal colonies being settled in flood-plain.

दूर-दराज क्षेत्र में नहीं बसाए जाएंगे गरीब
The poor will not be settled in a remote area.

कश्मीरी पंडितों को एक स्थान पर बसाया जाए
Kashmiri Pandits should be settled in a single location.

The Hindi verb बसना derives from the Sanskrit verb वसित (root वस् ). Though this does not immediately resemble any European equivalents, there is actually a very significant cognate in the past-tense verb ‘was’ in English. (See the शब्दरूप feature on होना.) Both वसित and ‘was’ derive from a PIE root *wes, ‘which in other Indo-European languages usually has the sense ‘to remain, to stay (the night)’ (OED). Another possible cognate is the name ‘Vesta’, the Roman goddess of hearth and home, to whom were dedicated the famous ‘vestal virgins’.

Common Sanskrit words deriving from this same root, and with related meanings, include:

- आवासी adj. & m. aboriginal, indigenous; original inhabitant
- आवास m. immigration
- आवास m. ‘residence’, also common in compounds such as तावास ‘embassy’
- उपवास m. fast, fasting (lit. ‘abiding’)
एकांत-वास  m. seclusion
कारावास  m. solitary confinement
छात्रावास  m. student hostel
देशवासी  m. citizen, resident
निवास  m. residence (common in house-names, such as मिल-निवास)
पुनर्वास  m. resettlement
प्रवास  m. residence abroad, exile; प्रवासी adj. & m. migrant, exile
बनवास, वनवास  m. (Rāma’s) forest exile
सहवास  m. co-habitation; sexual intercourse
स्वर्गवास  m. ‘residence in heaven’, i.e. demise; स्वर्गवासी ‘deceased; the late…’

सब से हिलिये सब से मिलिये, सब से लीजिये नाम |
हाँ जी हाँ जी सब से कहिये, बसिये अपने गाम ॥ (attrib. Kabir)

Meet with all, fall in with all, take the Name from all;
agree heartily with all, [but] dwell in your own abode!