

DISPERSAL OF POPULATION : A CASE OF BOMBAY CITY

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Bombay's rapid growth of population over past several decades has given rise to a number of serious problems of crowding, congestion and severe infrastructure deficits. The housing situation in the city since long continues to be critical, currently more than 50 per cent of the city's population is estimated to be living in sub-human living environment. Many areas of the city have experienced extremely high densities. In spite of a negative population growth rate in the latest census decade the densities continue to be very high in most of the areas of the island city.

Many of these problems of Bombay city have drawn the attention of state and town planners as long back as 1950. They diagnosed that most of Bombay's ills were the product of excessive spatial concentration of population in the southern part of Bombay island and proposed various decentralization strategies to relieve excessive pressure on basic infrastructure and reducing congestion in the part of the city. This paper attempts to study the population growth differentials in different wards of Greater Bombay and other close by urban centres with specific objective of studying the concentration and dispersion of population over 1961-91 period. The study utilizes both census and survey data to study the dispersal of population within Bombay urban agglomeration.

In 1958 a state appointed study group (The Barve Study Group) proposed rigorous control on further development in the main city, particularly controlling the establishment of new industrial units in the Bombay island area. In 1967 another high level committee (The Gadgil Committee On Metropolitan Regions) was appointed to look into the problems of Bombay city and suggest policy measures to ameliorate these problems. The committee felt that the Bombay's problems could not be solved by planning within the narrow limits of Greater Bombay city itself. Regional development was considered a necessary condition to solve multi-faceted problems faced by Bombay city. Same year the state government constituted Regional Planning Boards for three metro cities of Bombay, Pune and Nagpur. After several studies a draft

Similarly question can also be raised about the dispersal of population. Most of these centres of dispersal serve only as centres of residential dispersion and woefully lack a strong infrastructure as well as economic base. The dispersal of population without a commensurating dispersal of economic activities has put severe pressure on transportation means. Beside dispersal of employment to closeby areas it will be more sensible to develop the economic and infrastructure base of many more urban centres away from these long established metropolises particularly of those cities which have potential to grow as regional centres.

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Population Growth In Greater Bombay

| | Absolute Size (figures in 000) | | | | Average Annual Growth Rate | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------|------|-------|----------------------------|---------|---------|
| | 1961 | 1971 | 1981 | 1991 | 1961-71 | 1971-81 | 1981-91 |
| Greater Bombay (U.A.) | 4515 | 6584 | 9308 | 12596 | 3.8 | 3.5 | 3.1 |
| 1. Greater Bombay (M. Corp.) | 4152 | 5970 | 8243 | 9926 | 3.7 | 3.3 | 1.9 |
| (i) Island City | 2772 | 3070 | 3285 | 3160* | 1.0 | 0.6 | - 0.4 |
| (ii) Suburbs | 1037 | 2167 | 3510 | 4556* | 7.7 | 4.9 | 2.6 |
| (iii) Extended Suburbs. | 343 | 733 | 1448 | 2194* | 7.9 | 7.0 | 4.2 |
| 2. Thane (M. Corp.) | 109 | 207 | 390 | 803 | 6.6 | 6.5 | 7.1 |
| 3. Kalyan (M. Corp.) | 139 | 228 | 375 | 1015 | 5.1 | 5.1 | 10.5 |
| 4. Ulhasnagar (M) | 108 | 168 | 274 | 369 | 4.5 | 5.0 | 3.0 |
| 5. Mira Bhayander (M) | 7 | 11 | 26 | 176 | 4.6 | 9.0 | 21.1 |
| 6. New Bombay. | - | - | - | 308 | - | - | - |

*Provisional figures, Rest of the figures are final population totals.

Source: Census of India, 1991, Final Population Totals.

TABLE - 2

VITAL RATES IN GREATER BOMBAY
(RATES PER 1000 POPULATION)

| Years | Birth Rate | Death Rate | Natural Increase Rate |
|-------|------------|------------|-----------------------|
| 1981 | 26.6 | 8.5 | 18.1 |
| 1982 | 23.5 | 8.2 | 15.3 |
| 1983 | 23.5 | 8.3 | 15.2 |
| 1984 | 23.3 | 8.1 | 15.2 |
| 1985 | 23.0 | 7.9 | 15.1 |
| 1986 | 22.4 | 7.6 | 14.8 |

TABLE 3

Trends in population densities in the wards of
Greater Bombay ... 1961 - 1991.

(Number of Persons Per Sq. Km.)

| | 1961 | 1971 | 1981 | 1991 |
|-----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| GREATER BOMBAY: | 9486 | 13641 | 18833 | 22677 |
| WARDS | | | | |
| A | 18671 | 17567 | 16052 | 13431 |
| B | 71451 | 71482 | 60128 | 47563 |
| C | 190703 | 175546 | 152081 | 110575 |
| D | 53340 | 57729 | 57924 | 51798 |
| E | 67316 | 71354 | 69780 | 62553 |
| F | 25939 | 31295 | 38484 | 40050 |
| G | 36965 | 46200 | 55070 | 55944 |
| H | 14854 | 26784 | 36155 | 41015 |
| K | 6382 | 12088 | 19504 | 47153 |
| P | 2608 | 5793 | 10327 | 14422 |
| R | 1513 | 3041 | 6665 | 12623 |
| L | 10631 | 20472 | 32486 | 45857 |
| M | 2471 | 5760 | 10302 | 15001 |
| N | 2985 | 8652 | 15835 | 19469 |
| T | 16700 | 3634 | 6462 | 8364 |

TABLE - 4

INDEX OF INTER - WARD REDISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION
1961-71 - 1981 - 91

| | Redistribution Index | Size of the Population to be Redistributed |
|-----------|-------------------------|---|
| 1961 - 71 | 15.3 Percent | 9.1 Lakhs |
| 1971 - 81 | 11.7 Percent | 9.6 Lakhs |
| 1981 - 91 | 8.4 Percent | 8.3 Lakhs |

TABLE 5

Loss and Gain In The Percentage Share of Population
In The Wards of Greater Bombay 1961 - 1991

Percentage Distribution
of Population

| | |
|---|-------|
| A | - 2.8 |
| B | - 3.0 |
| C | - 6.2 |
| D | - 5.0 |
| E | - 7.3 |
| F | - 4.6 |
| G | - 5.8 |
| H | + 1.1 |
| K | + 5.2 |
| P | + 5.4 |
| R | + 7.1 |
| L | + 2.8 |
| M | + 4.9 |
| N | + 6.8 |
| T | + 1.4 |

TABLE - 6

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS
IN NEW BOMBAY BY PLACE OF LAST RESIDENCE AND
TIMINGS OF MOVE

| P.L.R. | Time of Moving to New Bombay | | | | | Total |
|------------|------------------------------|---------|---------|---------------|------|-------|
| | Before 1980 | 1980-85 | 1985-90 | After 1990 | N.A. | |
| Bombay | 4.4 | 17.8 | 66.8 | 10.3 | 0.7 | 75.7 |
| New Bombay | 8.8 | 10.3 | 70.6 | 8.8 | 1.5 | 6.9 |
| Elsewhere | 1.9 | 19.2 | 55.8 | 23.1 | - | 15.8 |
| N. A. | 12.5 | 37.5 | 37.5 | 6.3 | 6.2 | 1.6 |
| Total | 4.5 | 17.8 | 64.8 | 12.2 | 0.7 | 100 |

TABLE - 7

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS
BY REASONS FOR MOVING TO NEW BOMBAY

| Reasons for moving to New Bombay | |
|---|--------|
| 1. Better House, Housing problem | 39.0 |
| 2. Working in New Bombay | 29.7 |
| 3. Job Transfer | 3.6 |
| 4. Got a Better Job | 3.6 |
| 5. Retired | 10.3 |
| 6. Sold House in Bombay and came to New Bombay | 0.5 |
| 7. Others | 10.8 |
| 8. N.A. | 2.3 |
| Total | 100.00 |

TABLE 8

Percentage Distribution of Heads of the Household by Current Place
of Work, Distance Covered and Mode of Commutation

| Place of Work | | Distance to Place of Work | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|---------------------------|-------|
| New Bombay | 24.3 | Upto 5 kms. | 25.0 |
| Thane/Kalyan | 12.5 | 6 - 10 kms. | 6.6 |
| Beyond Dadar (Towards main city) | 26.0 | 11 - 20 kms. | 12.8 |
| Upto Dadar | 26.7 | 20 + kms. | 52.9 |
| Other areas | 8.7 | N.A. | 2.7 |
| N.A. | 1.8 | Total | 100.0 |
| Total | 100.00 | | |
| Mode of Commutation | | | |
| Walking | 14.4 | | |
| Bus | 36.0 | | |
| Train and Bus | 39.9 | | |
| Own Vehicle | 2.8 | | |
| Others | 1.9 | | |
| N.A. | 5.0 | | |
| Total | 100.0 | | |

perspective plan for Bombay region was prepared by the Bombay Metropolitan Regional Planning Board. Decentralisation and dispersal of population and economic activity was one of the very important objective of this plan.

Population Growth in Greater Bombay.

Over past few decades Greater Bombay has experienced a rapid rate of population growth and has attracted large number of migrants from rural areas as well as from other urban centres. The reason for Bombay's high growth as well as migration are well analysed and discussed. Our aim here is not to elaborate them but it will be worth while to discuss some of the factor responsible for a sudden deceleration in the growth of Bombay's population during 1981-91 period.

Before we discuss Bombay's population growth during previous census decade it will be worth while to mention that it is at the time of 1991 census that Greater Bombay has been treated as an urban agglomeration for the first time for census purpose keeping in line with other metropolitan cities. The Greater Bombay U.A. includes the municipal corporations of Greater Bombay, Thane and Kalyan and Municipalities of Ulhas Nagar, Mira Bhayander, and New Bombay, With a population of around 12.6 million in 1991 the Greater Bombay U.A. now claims to be the largest U.A. of India and far exceeds the population of Calcutta U.A.(10.91 million).

A glance at table 1 makes it clear that the rate of population growth within Municipal Corporation limit of Greater Bombay as well as within Greater Bombay urban agglomeration has decelerated markedly during 1981-91 period. The decline, however, is more significant in case of Greater Bombay city, than for Greater Bombay U.A. Not only rate of population growth has decelerated the absolute addition of population in Greater Bombay during 1981-'91 period is also significantly lower (1.68 million) in 1981-'91 compared to 1971 - '81 (2.27 million) and 1961-'71 (1.82 million) decades. A number of factors have worked simultaneously to bring down Greater Bombay population growth rate during the latest census decade.

In an earlier study by this author possibility of a higher magnitude of underenumeration during 1981-'91 period compared to earlier decades is ruled out (Gupta, K. 1992). Decline in natural increase rate as well as in net immigration rate are mainly responsible for lower rate of population growth during the past decade. In case of Greater Bombay city dispersion of population is also accountable in bringing down the growth rate significantly.

As there are no boundary changes in case of Greater Bombay the entire growth of city population is due to natural increase and net migration. In the absence of published data on net migration as well as age structure of population for Greater Bombay in 1991 net migration to city can't be estimated either through direct or indirect techniques. However, the registration of vital events is found to be sufficiently reliable in Greater Bombay and hence it is possible to determine the rate of natural increase of population for Greater Bombay

The published figures about vital rates for Greater Bombay show a continuous decline in the rate of natural increase (table 2). The rate of natural increase has come down from around 18.1 per thousand in 1981 to around 14.8 per thousand in 1986. Though the data about vital rates after 1986 are not yet published looking at the trend in the first half of the last decade it could be safely concluded that the natural increase rate has declined significantly during the entire 1981-'91 period. Beside the natural increase rate of population during 1981-91 period was relatively lower than in the 1971-81 decade. If the average rate of natural increase is taken as 1.48 percent (that of 1986) then there is an addition of around 1.33 million persons due to natural increase only. Thus out of a total addition of around of 1.68 million persons in city population, around 79 percent is due to natural increase only and net migration has added only 21 percent or around 3.5 lakhs persons. In other words the net immigration rate to the city population during 1981-91 period may be around .39 percent. During 1971-81 period the natural increase rate and net immigration rate for Greater Bombay city are estimated around 2.0 percent and 1.2 percent respectively. The contribution of natural increase and net migration in city population growth during 1971-81 period was estimated around 52 percent and 48 per cent respectively (Narain and Gotpagar, 1983).

Not only the Greater Bombay city as a whole has registered a sharp decline in its population growth rate but same is true in case of the three constituents unit i.e. city, suburbs and extended suburbs as well as in all the wards except 'A' ward (Colaba, Fort, Esplanade area). The island city, which so far was experiencing a very low growth rate of population, actually has registered a negative growth rate of population during 1981-91. As a matter of fact the population in the island city is less by around 1.25 lakh persons in 1991 than in 1981. Majority of the wards (B.C.E.D) have experienced significant loss of population. Even in case of those wards where the growth rate of population is positive, its magnitude is very low. This suggests a significant movement out of the island city. The only exception is ward 'A'. Ward 'A' ..4

which has experienced a negative growth rate till 1981 has registered a positive growth rate of around 14.8 percent during 1981-91. The backbay reclamation and the construction of high-rise buildings have been mainly responsible for the positive growth rate of population in this area. Except R, L and M wards in rest of all the suburban and extended suburban wards also the absolute addition in population during 1981 - 91 is significantly lower than the previous decade (Appendix 1). As a matter of fact more than half (51.2) percent) of the total addition in Bombay's population has taken place in R, L and M wards only (Kandivali, Borivali, Dahisar, Kurla Naupada, Chembur, Mankhurd, Govandi and Trombay areas).

Population Concentration and Dispersion.

The extreme crowding and congestion in the city has been a matter of serious concern for city planners as well as for general public. Even as far back as 1951 it was felt that the city has been already saturated and had an excess population of a million people (Rajagopalan, 1962). But since then Greater Bombay has already multiplied by more than three times. The density of population has increased from 9486 persons per square kilometer in 1961 to 22677 persons per square kilometer in 1991. Some of the sections of the island city had a population density of more than two lakh persons per square kilometer in 1961 (Bhuleshwar, Mahalakshmi)(Revathi, 1978). However, since 1961 onwards a process of dispersion of population is on in Greater Bombay which can be seen from table - 3) which depicts the density of population in the wards of Greater Bombay. The density has come down significantly in ward B, C, D and E. However, it doesn't imply that now the city doesn't face crowding and congestion. Still the population density is as high as 110575 persons per square kilometer in ward C. The section level population data are not available for 1991, however, a glance at section wise and city map shows that inspite of negative population growth rate even in 1981 in some the sections in 'B' and 'C' wards the density of population continued to more than 200,000 persons per square . kilometer.

Below we determine the magnitude of population concentration and dispersion in Greater Bombay using some standard techniques.

Graph 1 presents the Lorenz curves¹ of population distribution (using ward as a unit of analysis) in Greater Bombay in 1961, 71, 81 and 1991. It can be seen that Lorenz curve has continuously shifted closer to line of equal distribution over 1961 - 91 period thus suggesting a more evening out of population distribution within the corporation limits. A continuous decline in concentration-ratio² from .65 in 1961 to .21 also suggests the dispersion of population.

The earlier studies which studied the changing pattern of population distribution within island city during 1901 - 1971 and within Greater Bombay during 1951 - 71 and 1971 - 81 have shown that density gradient (rate of change in population density with increasing distance from city centre - density gradient shows the pattern of density decline with distance from the city centre and also is a measure of dispersion and horizontal expansion of the city.) steepened from 1901 to 1921 but since 1921 the gradient has declined continuously and has greatly accelerated after 1961 (Revathi, 1978, Sita et, al., 1984). The mean centre of population has also continuously shifted northward (Revathi, 1978).

As none of the above mentioned methods give the magnitude of dispersion we have used 'Redistribution Index'³ in order to get an idea about the size of the population that has to be redistributed at the end of the period in order to obtain the

1. Lorenz curve and Gini's Concentration ratio are the standard techniques to measure the state of inequality or concentration in any distribution. The time series construction of Lorenz curve and computation of Concentration Ratios, however, can also depict the process of concentration or dispersion. In the present case the cumulative proportion of area and population of different wards are plotted on 'X' and 'Y' axis respectively. The displacement of Lorenz curve with respect to line of equality shows graphically the magnitude of concentration. Closer the curve to line of equality lower is the concentration.
2. The Gini Concentration Ratio measures the proportion of the total area under the diagonal that lies between the diagonal and the Lorenz curve and is calculated by the following formula :-

$$Gi = \left(\frac{\sum_{i=1}^n X_i Y_i}{n} + 1 \right) - \left(\frac{\sum_{i=1}^n X_i + 1 Y_i}{n} \right)$$

Where X_i and Y_i are cumulative percentage distribution of area and population and n is the number of sub areal units.

3. The 'Redistribution Index' or popularly known as 'Index of Dissimilarity' in this case denotes the sum of changes in the percentage of greater Bombay's population in its each ward in successive decades and is calculated by :-

$$\text{Index of dissimilarity} = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^n (X_i - Y_i)$$

where X_i and Y_i are uncumulated percentage of area and population of each ward.

original distribution, i.e., the distribution of population in the beginning of the period. This index varies from lower limit of zero, which occurs only where there is no change in distribution to the upper limit of 100 if the distribution changes entirely at two points of time. This index in the present case is, therefore the percentage of Greater Bombay's population at the end of the period that has to be redistributed among the wards to regain the distribution that existed at the beginning of the period. However, it should be cautioned that this index measures only the net distribution, a heavy shift to any smaller unit countered by an equally heavy outward shift would have no effect upon its value. Beside this index doesnot identify the components of redistribution i.e. it is not possible to know whether the distribution is caused by inter - unit differentials in natural increase or net-migration. The index for each decade has been converted into the equivalent number of persons by applying the percentage for the decade to the population at the end of the decade. The results for 1981-91 period are presented in Table-4.

The results of this index show that the rate of inter-wards redistribution has pursued a downward course. It was the highest during 1961-71 period, when the change in the distribution amounted to 15.3 percent after which it has dropped continuously. Not only the Redistribution Index is the lowest during 1981-91 period but the absolute size of population that is to be redistributed is also the lowest during 1981-91. The decrease in the size of absolute population to be redistributed, however, doesnot mean that the dispersion process was of lesser magnitude during 1981-91 period compared to earlier decades. It seems that during earlier decades the outmigration, from island as well as settling down of new migrants was mainly limited to suburban and extended suburban areas but in the latest decade the population has moved beyond corporation limits. The extraordinary high growth rate of population in some nodes of Bombay U.A. bears the testimony to this significant dispersal (Table-1). Mira-Bhyander, Kalyan and Thane municipal corporations have registered a growth rate of 21.1 per cent, 10.5 per cent and 7.1 per cent per annum respectively.

Table-5 presents the wards of Greater Bombay ranked according to maximum loss and gains in share of population over entire 1961 to 1991 period. Over the period 'E' ward (Chaupatty, Girgaum, Mahalakshmi, Mazagaon areas) has experienced the maximum loss (7.3%) in its population share followed by 'C' ward (6.2%) Bhuleshwar, Dhobitalao, Fanaswadi, Kharatalao areas). The maximum gain in population share (7.1%) has been registered in 'R' ward (Borivali, Dahisar, Eksar, Shimploi and Mandapeshwar areas) followed by 'N' ward (6.8%) (Bhandup, Ghatkopar, Kirol, Panjrapol and Vikhroli areas).

Findings from some recent surveys conducted in and around Greater Bombay offers some insight into the forces of this dispersal. In a study on declining city core of Bombay it was found that social reasons, i.e. marriage of daughters and formation of new families and households (separation of sons and brothers after marriage) were the main reasons for the moving out from the core areas. As majority of these surveyed households were found to be living either in chawls (43.25%) or in single room tenements (24.54), with nearly 63 percent households occupying houses with less than 400 sq. feet area crowded living conditions must have been important triggering off factors in moving out (Sita et.al. 1988).

Recently this author, along with other faculty members at IIPS has conducted two surveys : one in slums of Thane U.A. and the other in the seven nodes of New Bombay. The third survey by the same authors in Vasai, Virar and Mira Bhyander region is still continuing. The survey in the 160 slums of Thane U.A. was conducted in 1990 and has collected information on socio-economic and living conditions of 2450 slum households and 50 pavement dwellers.

The survey in Thane slums showed that all the slum households as well as pavement dwellers were migrant households. Nearly 27 per cent of principal migrants of these 2500 households reported Greater Bombay as their place of last residence. Majority of the migrants who moved from Greater Bombay to Thane slums were belonging to Ratnagiri, Raigad, Pune and Nasik districts of Maharashtra. Nearly 7.3 per cent of migrants who stated Greater Bombay as their place of last residence were from U.P. (Gupta and Nangia, 1991). The survey in New Bombay has been conducted during October - December 1991. The preliminary results on the basis of 987 surveyed households in Vashi and Nerul nodes of this survey show that all the heads of the households in Vashi and Nerul nodes of New Bombay have moved after 1975. Majority of them (75.7%) have moved here from Greater Bombay. Only 15.8 per cent have come from other parts of Maharashtra and India (Table-6). Nearly 95.5 per cent of these migrants have moved between 1980 and date of survey, particularly between 1985-1991. Nearly 73 per cent of these heads of households are in the age-group 25 - 49. Nearly 98 per cent of them were having an education level above high school.

Nearly 39 per cent of them have moved because of housing problem at the place of their last residence or for better housing in New Bombay. Another 30 per cent moved to New Bombay because they were working in New Bombay. Nearly 10 per cent moved from Greater Bombay and settled in New Bombay because of retirement (Table-7).

A questionnaire the current place of work of the heads of the household showed that nearly 63 per cent of them were working in Greater Bombay and nearly 53 per cent have to travel more than 20 kilometers daily to reach their place of work. More than one third (40%) of the heads of household used bus services and another 40 per cent utilized both bus and train services to commute to their place of work (Gupta and Prasad, 1993) (Table-8)

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The foregoing analysis suggests that the forces have attracted a large number of migrants to Bombay city in the past several decades have weakened during the last decade. The decline in net migration rate as well as in natural increase rate and a significant dispersal of population beyond corporation limits have resulted into a sudden deceleration in the rate of population growth in the past decade. Migration as a component of Greater Bombay's population growth does not remain as a powerful force as nearly 79 per cent of Greater Bombay's population growth during 1931-91 decade has resulted due to natural increase of population. The process of spontaneous dispersal and decentralisation of population already started taking place since the later half of the twentieth century, particularly when the limits of island city were extended and Salsette was included within the corporation limits of Greater Bombay. The dispersal, however, became noticeable since 1960 onwards only. It is from this period only that some areas of island city started experiencing either very low or negative rate of population growth. In subsequent decades this process of dispersal out of the island city intensified further both in space and magnitude. However, it is for the first time during 1981-91 period that the island city as a whole has experienced a negative rate of population growth. There is a significant deceleration in the population growth rate in the suburbs and extended suburbs too. At the same time the closeby urban nodes of Bombay U.A. have experienced exceptionally high population growth rate during 1981-91.

Surveys conducted in and around Greater Bombay also suggests a significant movement out from Bombay city to these areas. More than one fourth of slum dwellers in Thane city have Bombay as their place of last residence and majority of them have moved out of Bombay some fifteen years ago. More than three fourth of heads of the households in New Bombay also have Greater Bombay as their place of last residence and most of them have shifted to New Bombay only after 1985. A number of factors seem to be operative in this dispersal of population first from island city to suburban and peripheral areas and then to closeby urban nodes. The typical geographical location of the city has made severely restricted land availability resulting in continuous spurt in land prices.

The land prices in Greater Bombay have soared to very high levels since the beginning of the eighties. According to a survey conducted by the Town and Country Planning Organisation in important cities of India, land prices in Bombay in 1983 ranged from a minimum of Rs. 150 per square metre to Rs. 1500 per square metre (NCU, 1988). According to a recent article in a leading national daily, even a one bedroom flat in any locality in Greater Bombay did not cost less than Rs. 200,000; and was very much higher in posh localities like Bandra, Marine Lines etc. . This high cost of housing as well as a number of other factors such as a conscientious government policy of developing other nodes both industrially as well as infrastructurally within the Bombay Metropolitan region, prolongation of the textile mill workers' - strikes, and the shifting of some wholesale markets etc. have paid dividends in the form of a dispersal of population to nearby cities. The extension of BEST bus services to Vashi, Panvel, Nerul etc. has initiated this dispersal significantly. It is therefore probable that a number of migrants who came to the city during 1981-91 may have settled outside the city boundary sufficiently close to the main city. At the same time, a number of persons living in the city-particularly in the crowded main city and occupying a small house, may have sold off their houses and moved to the nearby urban nodes of Vashi, Konkan Bhavan, Nerul, Panvel etc. where a massive construction of residential houses and small shopping centres was initiated by CIDCO. Private construction companies and builders also came in big way in these areas as well as in the urban centres of Dombivali, Thane, Mira - Bhayander etc.. The extraordinary high growth rate of population in many of the above - mentioned nodes bears testimony to this significant dispersal.

The decline of net migration rate to Bombay as well as dispersal of population from the crowded areas of the city to suburban areas and other closeby urban nodes, though welcome signs, should not be taken as a matter of complacency. Similarly a significant decline in the share of migration in the city population growth doesnot mean that migration no more remains an object of planning interventions and policy formulation. As the city has already acquired a very vast population base even a small net migration rate substantially add to the base population and hence requires specific policy measures. This is just to bring in proper focus the other more important component of the city population growth ie. the continuing high fertility rates even within cities like Bombay. Unless the fertility declines substantially cities like Bombay size will continue to add a huge population even though the migration is completely stopped.