CHAPTER 3

Post-Independence Reorganisation in the Hinterland: Emerging Socio-Economic Patterns in the Study Region
3.1 Initial Years of Post-Independence Planning and the Evolving Imperatives in the Study Region

Formerly, the entire metropolitan land area played a central role with respect to the colonies and semicolonies, sucking up wealth, imposing its own order. Today, domination is consolidated in a physical locale...(and as) a result, control is exercised throughout the national territory, which is transformed into a semicolonial. (Lefebvre, 2003, p. 170)

The above observation bears an uncanny resemblance to the role that Bombay city has played starting from its early days as an ‘open gateway’ for exploitation of its hinterland. Conversion of the immediate periphery of the Bombay islands into a source region for supply of food and other essential supplies was started in the late 18\textsuperscript{th} century. This was essentially to sustain the influx of handicraftsmen, weavers, merchants, manufacturers and wealthy financiers enticed there to assist in the transformation of the islands into a premiere entrepot to serve the colonial need and ambitions. The related requirements of earth and stone for construction and land reclamation were also sourced from the immediate hinterland by reserving plots such as the one on Elephanta Island (Sinclair W. F., 1865) where excavation and quarrying were made ‘legally’ possible. From the beginning of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century the British initiated a systematic process of restructuring the hinterland to maximise extraction of resources. The deliberate destruction of the economy (Savur, 1980) and the socio-economic structures that supported it was an integral part of this process.

The period between World Wars I and II were significant as colonial ties loosened and the textile industry developed a domestic market (Patel, 2006). The huge profits, which doubled and then trebled, were partly reinvested in the textile industry while the remaining\textsuperscript{1} went into the establishment of new capital-intensive industries of food processing, pharmaceuticals, drugs, small and medium engineering. The migrant merchants from Gujarat and elsewhere who were linked to the indigenous banking systems, evolved into the ‘local’ influential business group in the city. They subsequently played key roles in the disobedience and Independence movements. The various peasant

\textsuperscript{1} Some amount was also invested in various arts such as theatre, dance, painting, or cinema (Patel, 2006).
struggles that had emerged in the hinterland during colonial rule were co-opted and mobilised under the Congress umbrella by the elite (Cleaver, 1976). With Independence the city was nationalised and integrated into the national economy and Bombay, which had been established as a municipal corporation in 1861, grew physically and administratively, finally turning into the Municipal Corporation of Greater Bombay in 1950. The business group determined the economic and urban development choices for the city (Patel, 1995). The initial period of post-Independence therefore had similarities with other regions (Schrader, 1997) where growth of domination in administration and industry had strong correlations in colonial and post-colonial contexts.

The industrial boom combined with the simultaneous expansion of the service sector caused an enormous increase of 11.6 lakhs in the population of the city in the decade 1951-61, leading to a spill-over into the hinterland along the two railway routes to Pune and Nasik (Grant & Nijman, 2002). In addition, the city faced an inflow of partition-related migrants from Sindh and modern Pakistan who flooded the city along with the lower and upper caste migrants from backward regions of Maharashtra and other regions such as Punjab and other northern, eastern, and southern states (Patel, Bombay and Mumbai: Identities, Politics, and Populism, 2006). Rising mobilisation and conflict between the largely Marathi-speaking working class and the Gujarati-dominated business class was inevitable in a city that was the capital of a province comprised of people from these two major language regions. The movement for making of language-based states that had initially emerged in the forties to redress the wrongs of regional unevenness and skewed distribution of resources (Patel, Bombay and Mumbai: Identities, Politics, and Populism, 2006) developed momentum with the earlier mentioned developments in the city and new socio-economic formations in its hinterland.

The primary sellers of agricultural produce in the hinterland had until the 1950s remained an unorganized and exploited group with a few dysfunctional agricultural produce market committees (GoM, 1964). These were mainly syndicate agents from Bombay who organized purchase of paddy, rice, wood, coconuts and betel-nuts from the district markets such as Panvel and Kalyan that were the main markets other than Bombay for
Uran and nearby talukas. The Peasants and Workers Party (PWP) that had broken from away from the Congress Party in 1947 developed a strong base in Raigad District. Uneven development and skewed land distribution (Table 3.1) were critical issues around which people were mobilised.

**TABLE 3.1**

**DISTRIBUTION OF LAND IN RAIGAD DISTRICT (1952-53)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>% Landholders</th>
<th>% of the total land</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>73.72</td>
<td>23.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-15</td>
<td>18.71</td>
<td>19.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-25</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>11.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-100</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>23.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101-500</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>13.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500+</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>7.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (Thakur, 2007)

Prior to Independence, most of the land in the district, either under cultivation or under salt production, was owned by Muslim landlords or Brahman, Sonar, Bene Israeli (Jew) Telis and Marwari savkars. A few among the Agris also owned large tracts of land, and were also referred to either as savkars or as khots depending on whether they lent money or upon the amount of land they held (Thakur, 2007).

Under the Bombay Tenancy and Agricultural Lands Act of 1948, registration and settlement of tenants’ claims was begun. The aspirations of the peasantry were partly realized as land reforms were implemented and achieved some success in the region. However, the first decade of implementation in the study region appears to have seen a rapidly decreasing number of settlements in favour of tenants (Table 3.2) until 1957-58. All tenants interviewed in the study region reported obtaining title to land after this year. Some change appears to have occurred due to an amendment to the Act made in 1955.

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2 Savkar means rich man or banker. (Dhongde & Wali, 2009)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>URAN PETA</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>No. of cases filed</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>699</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of cases disposed of</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>619</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>101</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of cases pending</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of cases decided in favour of tenants</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of cases decided in favour of landlords</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>602</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% cases decided in favour of landlords</td>
<td>42.03</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>37.25</td>
<td>24.44</td>
<td>83.87</td>
<td>78.85</td>
<td>85.25</td>
<td>79.01</td>
<td>97.25</td>
<td>94.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PANVEL TALUKA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of cases filed</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>1279</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>3187</td>
<td>2980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of cases disposed of</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>1279</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>2744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of cases pending</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>2797</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of cases decided in favour of tenants</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>471</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of cases decided in favour of landlords</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>808</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>2693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% cases decided in favour of landlords</td>
<td>59.65</td>
<td>97.38</td>
<td>97.03</td>
<td>63.17</td>
<td>71.43</td>
<td>62.42</td>
<td>71.43</td>
<td>78.09</td>
<td>73.08</td>
<td>98.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Maharashtra State Gazetteer - Kolaba District (Revised Edition), 1964
Under the amended Act, 1st April 1957 was declared as the “Tillers’ Day” on which day all tenants were “deemed to have purchased from his landlord” (Dantwala & Shah, 1971) the land that they cultivated. It appears that communities experienced tremendous friction and conflict during this time as the history of land ownership in the study region was found to be an extremely sensitive issue. Those who reported land titles awarded under the Tenancy Act, insisted that their payment of the mandated instalment to the landlord “under clause 32-G” (bathees-ga) also be noted for the record. However, many villagers recall this period as one in which they had sufficient to eat.

The issues of low wages and poor working conditions of the saltpan workers, on the other hand, continued to remain an agenda of concern. There were extensive salt pan lands – approximately 3000 acres – in Uran which were controlled and managed by local savkars. An important leader, Tukaram Hari Vajekar, from the Agri community took up the cause. Originally hailing from Jaskhar, Uran, he had settled in Bombay in pursuit of a livelihood at a very young age. In the mid-1930s, he joined the Civil Disobedience movement through the salt satyagraha. From then onwards he became a committed worker of the Indian National Congress. His active role in the settlement of inter-community conflict however led to threats to his safety. His return to Uran coincided with a strike by salt pan transport department workers led by activists from within the workforce against the saltpan owners. The labour (Table 3.3) for the salt pans consisted largely of villagers from the single-crop areas. Migrant workers, locally known as kharvis, were brought in from Surat, Valsad and Marol in Gujarat for the most difficult tasks in salt production. They lived in temporary tenements near the salt pans for eight months of the year and would return to Gujarat during the monsoons. Each group of kharvis had a mukadam who would be contacted by the owners when required.\(^3\)

\(^3\)The traditional practice of bringing seasonal labour from Gujarat continues in current times in the few salt pans remaining in eastern Uran. The profile of labourers has however changed from migration of families to migration of men only in recent times.
### TABLE 3.3
SALT PAN LABOUR DIVISIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF LABOUR</th>
<th>NATURE OF WORK</th>
<th>LABOUR GROUP OR UNIT</th>
<th>PAYMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dalal</td>
<td>Fill salt in sacks</td>
<td>4 women and 8 men per 400 sacks</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shivnar</td>
<td>Stitch the filled sacks</td>
<td>3 men per 360 sacks</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamal</td>
<td>Load salt on the boats</td>
<td>16 men per boat</td>
<td>Rs. 15 – 20 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>Count the sacks, weigh them, maintain the records, collect the payment vouchers from the Syndicate Office and distribute them to the labourers</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rs. 50 per month (1961) Rs. 200 p. mth. (1978)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (Patil, 2011)

The salt pan work had two parts, the first being the preparation of land by beating the ground till it became hard and smooth which took three months from October to January. From January onwards the actual salt production would begin. Sea water was first stored in tanks and then released through channels to the salt pans that had been divided into plots arranged in rows. Water would be filled in the first plot where it would be kept for some time to thicken before being released into the next plot, and so on until the last plot in the row got water and the excess water would then be drained out through another channel. Mud roads measuring about 5-6 feet in width and 20-50 feet in length were made near the salt pans (agars) where the boats would come and get loaded. Each boat had an average capacity of 500 sacks weighing 75 kg each. From Uran the salt was generally transported to Bombay, Panvel, Thane and Dharamtar. Vajekar’s proposal of a trade union resulted in the formation of the *Uran Peta Mithagar Kamgar Sangha* (Uran Saltpan Workers Federation) in 1944. In the 1950s and 1960s, when the number of saltpans and saltpan-workers was high, the union had a dominating presence in the region and was dreaded by the saltpan-owners (Mhatre, 1999). One of the key leaders affiliated to the PWP, D. B. Patil from Uran taluka, also became prominent at this time.

The transfer of land from the *savkars* to the peasants continued for more than a decade. Land reforms were fairly successful in releasing the tenants from the clutches of the large landholders in Raigad district only by the late 1970s. *Savkars*, who were predominantly
Brahmans and Muslims, lost their land and shifted to Bombay or nearby urban areas. Many of them were already city-based absentee landlords. Land reforms effectively completed the process of their migration (Thakur S., 2007). However, the implementation of land tenancy and ceiling reforms during the 1950s, development of irrigation and power projects in river valleys, trunk infrastructure development and encouragement of cooperative credit institutions led to the emergence of a class of rich peasants and a cash-crop economy with highly uneven economic consequences at the regional level (Grant & Nijman, 2002).

The introduction of cooperatives for salt production in the 1960s created incentives for development of new salt pans in the eastern part of Uran taluka. This led to differences in the ownership pattern of salt pans, with state ownership of salt pans in western Uran and cooperative ownership in the eastern half. Thus a strategic division was engineered between salt pan workers in these two parts that had otherwise been connected organically through kinship and marriage. The introduction of private property with emphasis on individual ownership to the tiller, contributed to the breakdown of community labour sharing arrangements and/or critical financial support for the maintenance of embankments, earlier provided by savkars, in several low-lying villages in the study region. Some villages such as Panje and Nhava experienced devastating floods soon after reforms were implemented as communities were unable to organise themselves in time to maintain the common embankments and prevent their fields from flooding. Many families faced years of impoverishment due to which some relocated to other villages or migrated to Bombay city.

Reclamation of salt lands was a long-drawn process that began with the construction of two embankments - one outer and one inner bank. The outer banks had sluice-gates that were kept closed from October to June and opened at the onset of monsoons to allow the rain-water to escape. Two years after the embankment was completed, rice was sown on the reclaimed land to allow the decayed straw offer a resting-place and supply nourishment to grass seeds. Five years generally elapsed before any crop could be productively grown. Ensuring that the embankments were not breached by the sea or excessive rains was a critical function. Landowners formed groups to protect the
embankments that ran along the border of their fields, with families allocated the length of embankment to be maintained depending on the size of their holding. Each group appointed a *kharpatil* who was responsible for keeping watch and warning group members in case of weak spots or breaks in the embankments. The *kharpatil*, in return for this service, was given exclusive rights to catch fish in the channels protected by the group. Even today villagers of Uran recall how they used to maintain the sluice gates that were so critical to the cultivation of the salt rice lands. Continuous checks had to be maintained due to the ebb and flow of tides as well as weakening of embankments due to burrowing by water snakes and other creatures. Erstwhile *kharpatils* remember the tensions of warning members in time, having to run several kilometres in the middle of the night from village to village if group members belonged to different villages, with no roads, lights or means of transport. The complete disregard for the needs of the hinterland is striking when one considers that the city of Bombay had an advanced international communications system with establishment of telegraph lines to Calcutta in 1852, Europe in 1866, London in 1870 and a telephone exchange in 1882.

By this time the Communist Party and the Republican Party had developed a strong presence in Bombay city through the trade union movement and mobilization of the largely Dalit migrant workforce. The PWP combined forces with the Communist Party, the Praja Samajwadi Party, and the Republican Party to press for a separate state for Marathi speaking areas. The Samyukta (United) Maharashtra Samiti constituted by these four main parties (Dhawale, 2012) was formed in 1956 and took forward the Samyukta Maharashtra movement, engaging in a period of intense struggle up to 1960. On 1 May 1960 Bombay State was divided into Maharashtra and Gujarat with Bombay retained as the capital of the former. The city became firmly integrated within the state of Maharashtra and oriented to its regional ethnic and cultural heritage. The business class now saw fragmentation along community lines with the Marathi-speaking groups asserting their domination since 1960s to redefine the politics and design of the city. The non-Marathi-speaking elite distanced themselves from state-level issues and aligned themselves with national level structures and designs (Patel, Bombay and Mumbai:
Identities, Politics, and Populism, 2006). Thus the economic base of Bombay shifted towards international and national rather than regional markets (Saha, 1989).

This event of state formation also led to another wave of migration from interior regions of Maharashtra. The population growth of 66% between 1941-51 and nearly 40% between 1951-61 had already led to continuous areal expansion and urban sprawl that needed urgent address in the city whose area had increased from 18.62 square miles in 1864 to 26.4 square miles in 1961 (GoM, 1965). The series of reclamation projects that transformed the original seven islands into one land mass could not be stretched beyond a point and the takeover of the Salsette Island which today constitutes the city’s Suburban District was inevitable. The physical expansion of the city (Table 3.4) was thus invariably in response to the internal crisis generated from time to time rather than any systematic efforts at planning. In an attempt to at least partially solve the problem of population growth and the physical expanding of the urban agglomeration, the limits of the corporation were twice expanded during a short span of seven years. The limits were first extended in 1950 beyond the Bombay City Island up to Jogeshwari on the Western Railway and Bhandup on the Central Railway along with Trombay island to include the suburbs. The extension of the Corporation limits however failed to arrest the urban sprawl or to control it, as no effective measures were at any time taken for land use control and zoning (GoM, 1965).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION OF AREA TAKEN FOR EXPANSION</th>
<th>AREA INCREASED BY (Square miles)</th>
<th>AREA (Cumulative Total in sq. miles)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early 1800s</td>
<td>Bombay Island</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late 18th century to early 19th century</td>
<td>Bombay Island + reclaimed areas</td>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Salsette had actually been an archipelago of seven islands until 1808 – Salsette proper, Trombay, Juhu, Vesave, Marve, Daravi and Rai Murdha – but became one large island with the gradual silting up of the creeks between them (GoM, 1965).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>5 municipalities + 34 revenue villages merged with Bombay</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>(94)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Extended suburbs - areas up to Dahisar in the west and Mulund in the east – merged</td>
<td>(75)</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Details not available</td>
<td>(16.4)</td>
<td>185.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (Verma, 1985; Dossal, 2010) Figures in brackets ( ) have been calculated.

Indigenous social and class conflicts were apparent in the nature of realignment that took place in the southern parts of the island city with almost every outward expansion (Verma, 1985) with a strong bias in favour of the elite for settlement location, prioritisation of services, provision of basic amenities in terms of quantity, supply sequence and availability; unequal redistribution of hinterland resources with prioritization of city requirements and needs; and increasing dependence on foreign aid. Verma summarized the recurrent methodology of the city’s growth as a scheme of ‘growth-spillover-annexation-growth’ (Verma, 1985, p. 33).

### 3.2 Evolution of Bombay Metropolitan Region (BMR)

Until 1957, Greater Bombay included the original island city of Bombay together with five municipalities and 34 revenue villages that had been added to the city area in 1950. The extended areas up to Dahisar in the west and Mulund in the east were also added in 1957 to absorb the spill over created by continued and rapid unplanned population growth and deteriorating living conditions due to increasing congestion. The Bombay Port had exhausted all the available space in its vicinity while container traffic continued to grow. Industries also sought to expand their establishments. It is usually seen that alterations and restructurings of cities due to changing societal needs are marked by diverse class and economic interests. In Bombay, urban development was influenced by a nexus that had evolved between urban planning endeavours in the city and the business class (Banerjee-Guha, 1995). Escalating land prices, conflict between industrial, residential and other requirements in the city led to the formation of a Study Group on
Greater Bombay\textsuperscript{5} in 1958 to envisage a plan for expansion. The report emphasized the need to connect the peninsula of Bombay with the mainland to accelerate development there and relieve pressure on the city.

Using the recommendations of the Study Group on Greater Bombay (GoM, 1965), the Bombay Municipal Corporation drew up the first legally enforceable Bombay Development Plan in 1964. The plan recommended changes in the land use pattern within the city and decentralization of industry. With the rationale of legal jurisdiction the plan did not include proposals regarding expansion eastwards onto the mainland. For implementation of the city development plan, the post-Independence governance structure dominated by the business class proposed to raise resources by levying development and betterment taxes on the people. This was a typical colonial strategy that the indigenous elite had always opposed during British rule. The ensuing public outcry led to considerable discussion, during the period 1964 to 1969, of the Bombay Development Plan (Verma, 1985) and its failure to take into consideration the development of the areas outside the city limit. This was a pressing need as the periphery and most of the city’s hinterland was characterised by stagnation, decline and impoverishment. Growing economic depression in the hinterland compounded the problem, as the land reforms, community development and area development programmes of the 1950s had failed to facilitate a reorganisation of rural power relations (Cleaver, 1976) in favour of the peasants. Also, the plan was developed four years after Maharashtra State was carved out of the erstwhile Bombay Presidency when the push for overall development and growth of the new state had primacy.

The Board of Industrial Development constituted by the new government in 1960, had by this time passed the Maharashtra Industrial Act and created the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC). Yet the lack of a regional plan or blue-print for communications systems led to further ribbon growth with the Government of Maharashtra allocating 20 industrial estates to the MIDC for development of which ten (Thana, Marol, Bhandup, Ambernath, Dombivili, Kalwa, Atale, Kulgaon, Kandivali, Mira) were in the immediate periphery of Bombay city. In spite of the Barve Study

\textsuperscript{5} Also known as the Barve Committee.
Group report, this concentration was further enhanced in the sixties with a predominance of multinational capital investment (Rodrigues & Gavaskar, 2003) in the Thane-Belapur Industrial Area (TBIA). The class bias in their translation of decentralisation was seen in the prioritisation of potable water supply and infrastructural development in the already evolving industrial centres around the city of Bombay such as Kalyan. Peasants of Chirner and Vindhane in Uran lost fertile agricultural land due to land acquisition for construction of the Ransai Dam at this time (Thakur, 2007). They are yet to receive compensation for their loss even after five decades. The forces operating behind the self-contradiction in the plan that simultaneously spoke of development within the city and decentralization of economic activities (Banerjee-Guha, 1995) were manifest as the establishment of industrial areas within Greater Bombay and in the periphery were at a time promoted to benefit the business class at public expense. This was further compounded by destructive processes such as the disposal of industrial and domestic waste into creeks (Saha, 1989), in and around the city and related industrial belts that formed the livelihood base of populations in the city’s periphery. Fishermen and salt pan workers in the study region report the increasing impact of such pollution on fish and salt quality from the 1970s.

A Regional Planning Committee was set up in 1965 by the Government of Maharashtra\textsuperscript{6} to develop broad principles of planning for the metropolitan regions of Bombay-Panvel and Poona and also suggest the formation of an authority that would plan and execute the regional plans (GoM, 1965). Central assistance was provided to the Committee as part of the emphasis in the Third Five Year Plan (1961-66) for the country to become a self-reliant and self-generating economy through an ‘integrated scheme of regional and national development’ (GoI, 2010). Besides the use of clearly defined or demarcated physical characteristics, the members identified the Bombay-Panvel Region by including areas over which they found urban activity was already affecting the socio-economic patterns and considered it physically feasible to plan integrated development across the area. The following limits for the Bombay-Panvel Region were suggested by them.

\textsuperscript{6} The committee was set up vide Government Resolution No. TPS-3664-M in the Urban Development and Public Health Department, dated 10\textsuperscript{th} March 1965
- North: Vaitarna Creek and the taluka boundary of Bassein and Bhivandi talukas, along river Tansa
- East: Sahyadri ranges up to and including Khopoli in the region.
- South: Patalganga River
- West: The sea

The following observations (GoM, 1965, pp. 65-70) were made by the Committee about the land use in the area outside Greater Bombay.

1. Outside Greater Bombay, between the coastal ranges and the Sahyadri and along the coast the level land is mostly under paddy cultivation. Agriculture which was the principal occupation for 47.51% of the workers is characterised by a single agricultural season, low per capita availability of cultivable area (0.89 acres) and small land holdings with about 55% of households having below 2.5 acres and another 27% between 2.5 and 4.9 acres.

2. Out of areas that contain the region’s forest cover of 30% Thana, Bassein and Bhivandi were found to be important in the production of timber and coal.

3. There are 43 fishing centres or villages in the region and the industry supports more than 31 thousand persons belonging to the fishing community. From the point of quantity of fish catch the most important are: Versova and Danda (gb); Arnala, Bassein and Uttan (Bassein Taluka) and Karanja from Uran Mahal. The total annual fish catch at all the centres together is estimated to be about 77,240 tonnes valued at Rs. 328.27 lakhs.

Surprisingly there was only a passing mention of salt pans and marshy areas along sea coasts with salt production comprising one of the many primary activities of the area along with agriculture, cattle breeding, dairying, poultry farming, and fishing. Despite the mandate for a regional perspective, the Committee’s report showed a continuation of dichotomous and compartmentalized understandings of the region’s ecology and natural resources that were prevalent during colonial times. Although livelihoods were recognised, there appears to be no understanding of the land and community relations based on the interdependence between different ecosystems such as uplands and lowlands, saltpan lands and paddy lands, forest and field. Emphasis was put on quantity of commercial production keeping only the principal occupation of the sub-region in
mind. Although the limited forests of Uran had no significant commercial value they played a vital role in maintaining the ecological balance through moisture retention in the uplands. The water conserved here served as the only source of potable water for the villagers of Uran for a large part of the year until the 1990s. Even in current times, when the municipal supply to this marginalised area consists of muddy polluted water, villagers employed as gardeners and sweepers at Sheva collect water from the old wells before they return home.

Upland villages on or near the coast like Panje, Sheva and Nagaon, with their fertile soil, forest and sweet water sources, served as resource centres for the low-lying villages located around them. Most of the forests here did not produce commercial timber or coal but were important – in fact critical – sources of fuel wood, housing material, organic fertilizer, medicinal plants and fruits. The oldest story connected with Uran and the erstwhile Karanja island – and probably the first one that every visitor hears – is the one connected to the Dronagiri hill located at the southern end of the island. The legend (Patil, 2007), associated with Ramayana, is that Dronagiri was formed from a piece of the Himalayan mountain that fell next to Karanja village when Hanuman was carrying the mountain back to its place from Lanka (the present Sri Lanka), after Lakshman was treated using the life-giving herbs found on its slopes. The hill was the site of establishment of various Hindu, Muslim, Christian and other places of worship in various periods in addition to which a fort was built during Portuguese occupation. Older respondents from nearby salt land villages recall walking to Dronagiri fort for water in the summer and for lotus leaves that were used as plates for ceremonies, and the hill slopes for medicinal plants and firewood. The hill is now part of the property of the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) and has been fenced off since 1980 as a security measure.

Labour sharing arrangements (handa and parkai) within and across villages were developed to facilitate cultivation. Similarly, villages located along creek banks and around creek inlets formed labour sharing networks for fishing, pearl harvesting and sand mining. In the upland villages paddy cultivation was undertaken from June to September along with the monsoon vegetables – ridge gourd, ladies finger, chillies – and pulses that
were grown on part of the varkas lands. Until the 1980s the main source of income during the monsoons was from grass sent to the Bombay tabelas for fodder. This activity lasted for four months starting from May. By the end of this period the rice would be ready for harvesting. After the kharif harvest the agricultural land was used to cultivate vegetables, irrigated with water from shallow (10-12 feet deep) wells in each field.

The rain water in these wells lasted through the summer and also served the low-lying village communities who faced severe water shortages in the summer. Some low-lying villages like Khopta required water to be supplied by tankers throughout the year. Almost a century had passed since planned water supply schemes for the city of Bombay had been developed, sourcing water from its hinterland. Yet the Regional Planning Committee found that the metropolitan region had about 77 villages with no source of water supply at all for drinking purposes and 387 other villages where water supply was not adequate for part of the year. The number of ‘dry’ villages increased to 185 in 1982 (BMRDA, 1982), while Bombay continued to source water from the extended hinterland well beyond the boundaries of the metropolitan region. Today, while water-starved villages increase, so do the number of water parks, the “ideal retreat for the withered urban souls” (Green World eSolutions, 2011) as advertised by one of them! Govathane, one of the study villages of this research, did not receive any public water supply until four years ago. The lack of seriousness regarding the needs of the region is evident given the fact that there are still villages in the metropolitan region without adequate drinking water supply.

The wide disparities and uneven development in the region got intensified by the transport and communication lines. Authors like Phadke (1982) opine that the development of infrastructure had been dictated by the topography of the area. However, a review of the road and railway network developed by the British (Table 3.5) shows that infrastructure development often defied ‘topographical sense’. The motivation and urgency to establish control over the Peshwas in Pune required the British to have quick access to Pune. The military road and railway constructed in 1804 to connect Bombay with Pune surmounted the obstacle of a perilously steep and treacherous mountain pass, as well as the difficulty of construction over marshy terrain. The few existing roads that
go through undulating and hilly terrain are colonial roads connecting Bombay with Ahmedabad, Agra, Pune and Goa (GoM, 1965) built for quicker extraction from wider hinterlands. Most routes passed through Thane and radiated outwards since this was the only crossing point created until then.

**TABLE 3.5**

**DEVELOPMENT OF ROAD AND RAILWAY ROUTES IN COLONIAL TIMES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of construction</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Via/Through</th>
<th>To</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1804</td>
<td>Military road</td>
<td>Bhor Pass</td>
<td>Pune</td>
<td>Travel time reduced from 6 weeks to 4/5 days (included construction through marsh lands)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1830</td>
<td>Macadamized road</td>
<td>Bhor Pass</td>
<td>Pune</td>
<td>Allowed the first mail cart to run between the two cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1838</td>
<td>Elevated causeway</td>
<td>Old Woman’s Island</td>
<td>Colaba</td>
<td>Linked all 7 islands for the first time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td>Elevated causeway</td>
<td>Mahim</td>
<td>Bandra</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840s</td>
<td>Military trunk road</td>
<td>Nasik</td>
<td>Agra</td>
<td>Massive increase in traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1853</td>
<td>Railway</td>
<td>Thana</td>
<td></td>
<td>First track in South Asia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1863</td>
<td>Railway</td>
<td>Bhor Pass</td>
<td>Pune</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>Railway</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ahmedabad Baroda</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>Railway</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nagpur</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>Railway</td>
<td></td>
<td>Calcutta (Kolkatta)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884-5</td>
<td>Railway</td>
<td>Pune</td>
<td>Southern Maharashtra districts Bangalore</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table created based on a discussion of transport development in Heitzman (2008).

Control over Uran taluka on the other hand, was enforced through the lack of development of infrastructure. The only road that connected Panvel with Uran was deliberately left un-metalled (Bombay Government, 1892) by the British for a considerable stretch from Jasai to Uran to prevent the locals from smuggling salt during the monsoons. Uran villagers describe graphically the journeys made by foot carrying injured or unwell family members through darkness and mud for more than two to three hours to the nearest health facility in Uran town, with many patients expiring en route.
The colonial imbalance continued in the post-Independence period with major railway routes being the Western and Central railways and the regional roads constructed being Vasai-Ambadi, Bhiwandi-Vada, Kalyan-Murbad, Panvel-Uran, Pen-Alibag and Bhiwandi-Parol. Of course, the regional roads remained barely passable in all seasons until the creation of some entertainment or money-spinning facility for the metro city-dweller. Many Uran respondents narrated experiences during the 1980s and 1990s of the roundabout route they had to take to travel to and from Uran with irregular bus timings, often having to spend the night with their families and baggage at the State Transport (ST) bus depots.

Closely-spaced, large-sized settlements existed along the railway routes and the Agra, Pune, and Goa roads where there was commercialization of agriculture to supply the metropolis with its requirements. Such developments were also seen on district roads like Alibag and Uran but these were spaced further apart, with villages such as Nagaon and Sheva using water transport to access the city. Spatial variations were thus found (Phadke, 1982) related to the already existing economic activities, such as, paddy cultivation, firewood collection, salt production, and fishing and the newer market-oriented activities, such as, market gardening, poultry farming, dairying, brick making, manufacturing and recreation. These depended on the availability of water/irrigation facilities, type of soil, access to urban markets, transport system and the evolution of middle men or urban agents. The development of roads, although of deplorable quality, gradually displaced peasants engaged in water transport as access by land routes increased. Simultaneously, as horse drawn carriages and bullock carts were replaced by motorised transport grass cultivation also diminished. During the 1970s the peasants were still very poor and cash transactions rare as a mode of exchange.

Thus the rural rimland was constituted by geographically and physically marginal areas. Wide disparities characterised the region with important centres such as Thane and Kalyan which had been significant since ancient times; others such as Panvel, Alibag, Vasai and Bhiwandi at a slightly lower level of importance; some areas that had evolved as small manufacturing centres in the 1960s such as Rasayani, Kalwa, and Majivade; and yet others – Badlapur, Manikpur, Sandor – emerged as dormitory settlements. Rural
settlements located in the remaining spaces were characterised by extreme levels of underdevelopment with 88% of the inhabited settlements not having even basic services related to health and education. Phadke (1982) used demographic indicators to identify three zones in the region – the urban core, a transitional fringe and a rural rimland that gave some measure of urban impact (Figure 3.1). The fringe area was found to be fairly extensive, covering 349 settlements. Alignment along route ways with breaks due to the topography characterised the fringe in the north-east areas of the region. Panvel, Uran and areas adjoining them constituted the fringe in the south.

Fig. 3.1
The areas where significant development was anticipated by the Regional Planning Committee included those where planning measures had already been taken up along with others which had the potential for growth and development. The former group included the Kalyan-Ulhasnagar complex with the existing and other large projected developments of Ambernath on one side and Dombivili on the other side; the other being the Thana-Belapur road area where more than 3000 acres had been marked for development. Bhiwandi and Nala Sopara were discouraged as these were considered ‘rich’ agricultural areas of the region. Panvel, Khopoli, Apte-Turade and Uran Mahal were suggested as areas for potential growth\(^7\) (GoM, 1965). The market value of different resources such as forest, cultivable land, and grasslands was estimated independently rather than in terms of their inter-relationships and the ecological flows the supported. This led to the delineation of ‘high’ and ‘low’ areas of productivity that was used to justify the takeover of ‘less productive’ land for urbanized activity. The demarcation of a feasible area for planning and administration also appears to prioritize considerations of management capability from the city headquarters rather than patterns of resource flows and community survival based on these resource flows. Research in Uran brought to light the complex land use systems evolved over time to maximise the sustainable use of the resources of the area. The use of terms such as ‘low productivity’ to justify the take-over of these lands for urban development depicts the complete lack of consideration for such processes.

The recommendations of the Regional Planning Committee led to the formulation of Maharashtra Regional and Town Planning Act in 1966. This was followed by establishment of the Bombay Metropolitan and Regional Planning Board in 1967 to plan for the Bombay Metropolitan Region (BMR). The BMR was given formal recognition as a regional centre and official demarcation of the administrative boundaries of the metropolitan region made for the first time in the same year. The BMR included the

\(^7\) Extracts from the Report: Panvel has always been an important trans-creek town. It is in the centre of the developing communications system and well placed in relation to growth at Sheva Nhava and Uran (to be) an industrial-cum-commercial centre; Khopoli can develop as one of the smaller centres as industrial activity already exists; Apte-Turade where the HCC factory has already come up; Township development in Uran Mahal would need immediate attention in view of the alternative port facilities planned at Nhava-Sheva
whole of Greater Bombay, Thane, Kalyan, Bhivandi and Bassein talukas of Thana District and Panvel and Uran talukas and portions of Karjat and Khalapur Talukas of Kolaba District. It covered an area of 3,836.98 sq. kms and consisted of 940 villages inhabiting 6.39 lakhs of population besides 71 uninhabited villages and 19 urban centres with an urban population of 46.43 lakhs (GoM, 1965). The city limits included villages and farms in areas of expected growth, urban impact and links with the urban core. The region excluding Greater Bombay therefore contained 6.39 lakhs of rural population and 4.91 lakhs of urban population. Excluding Greater Bombay the regional urban population constituted nearly 44% of the total population as against the state average of 28% and was indicative of the higher degree of urbanisation reached in the region (GoM, 1965).

Until the 1960s Post-Independence planning had not checked the excessive concentration of private institutions, public/government bodies, business offices, industry and related populations within the city. Although a few industries had been established in the periphery of the metropolis, there was no systematic planning and development of townships and public infrastructure. This had led to intense problems of congestion within the city as well as unplanned settlements in the periphery characterised by lack of basic facilities such as drainage, water, transport, communication and power supply. Immediate fringe areas were used for industrial spill over with the active collusion of several State institutions such as MIDC and SICOM. Private developers exploited the commercial potential of these areas to the maximum ensuring that expansion continued to benefit the business class (Verma, 1985). Several tracts of productive agricultural land were also lost to uncontrolled urban sprawl. Intra-regional disparities had continued to grow with enormous inflow of labour from impoverished hinterlands into the metropolis, further heightening the problems of metropolitan urban planning.
3.3 Evolution of New Bombay

Suggestions for more balanced regional development included shifting of the State capital to Nagpur, relocation of some ministry headquarters to the mainland, decentralisation of industries and development of areas on the mainland close to the existing city that would reduce the pressure on Bombay city. The Modak-Meyer plan (1947) for example recommended the development of Thane, Bassein and Uran for this purpose (Shaw, 2004). The subsequent demand for a regional perspective, rather than a narrow focus on the problems of the city, led to the suggestion of more dispersed settlements that would serve as decentralised points for industrial development while retaining productive agrarian areas of the region. The two principal recommendations of the Gadgil Committee had been (i) planned decentralisation of industries in the Bombay region, and (ii) development of the mainland area as a multi-nucleated settlement, each settlement with a population less than 2½ lakh. These multinucleated settlements were to be called nodes in the plan while the entire development was proposed as a series of nodes stretching out along mass transit axes (GoM, 1965). The nodes were to be sufficiently dispersed to allow for green belts around each node. This would perhaps have allowed for a more symbiotic relationship between urban centres and the rural hinterland, as seen in the organisation of coherent regional economies over several centuries.

Simultaneously, however, a group of architects published an article in 1967 that argued for a twin-city on the mainland that would serve as a counter-magnet for Greater Bombay. This was followed by another article published by one of them, Shirish Patel (1970), after the release of the Report on the Draft Regional Plan of the Bombay Metropolitan Region. He raised the importance of ‘an image of the region as far ahead in time as one can reasonably see’ and the need to anticipate technological advances that would, for example make face-to-face contact redundant. The use of these very arguments to promote the twin-city plan as the ‘only tooth in the toothless face’ of the report on the regional plan seems completely illogical. Of course, one should not perhaps expect logic from an article titled ‘Regional Plan for Bombay’. How can one create a

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8 The term ‘Bombay’ is used for discussion of all developments until 1996 when it was formally renamed ‘Mumbai’.
regional plan for one city?!? In case one did not understand the title, the author nicely clarifies in the first section of the article, how unclear he is on what a region is! However, acceptance by the Maharashtra Government of the proposal, popularly called the MARG Plan, came in 1970 itself.

More typical of development planning has been the process described by J. B. D’Souza (1991) in relation to the second Bombay Development Plan of 1981-2001. The latter plan took eight years to formulate and more than six years ‘under consideration’, by which point it was time to start formulating the next development plan. Such decisive – and quick – action on the New Bombay Plan in the face of illogical argument was a clarion call for someone to search for ulterior motives and vested interests that, however, went largely unheard for more than a decade. The excitement of a project that promised world-wide fame and the SOLUTION to all of Bombay’s ills overwhelmed all else. The New Bombay project aimed to create one of the world’s largest planned cities with a target population of two million inhabitants by 1991. It was an ambitious attempt to combine expertise in urban planning, transportation planning, engineering design, architecture & housing, economics & finance, marketing and estate management. It was of course sheer coincidence that the incumbent chief minister pulled off a hat-trick\textsuperscript{9} in the elections that followed in 1972.

The recommendation by the same group of architects for a single planning and regulating agency whose directions would have to be followed by all organisations working in the area was also taken up in a form that had tremendous negative consequences for regional development. The City and Industrial Development Corporation (CIDCO) Limited was set up on 18 March 1970 as a subsidiary company of the State Industrial Investment Corporation of Maharashtra (SICOM) Ltd. The organisation was to plan, develop and initially administer New Bombay. It was to act as an agent of the state government for the development of New Bombay, and was named as the New Town Development Authority (NTDA) for New Bombay first and later on Special Town Planning Authority (STPA) for several other areas under the provisions of the Maharashtra Regional Town Planning Act (MRTPA) 1966 (Verma, 1985). CIDCO, being a company registered under

\textsuperscript{9} His previous term of office began shortly after the Gadgil Committee report was submitted.
The Companies Act 1956 yet owned by the state government created an arena where private sector culture and strategies were pursued by a public sector organisation. The organisation was also severely constrained by its placement in three organisational sets and federative set-ups (Verma, 1985) relating to (a) industrialization; (b) urbanisation; and (c) single and/or multifunction infrastructure laying agencies. This led to enormous constraints related to allocation of resources and jurisdictional powers.

Since its approval in 1973, the Land Use Plan for MMR had been amended several times. With the enlargement of MMR’s boundary in the MMRDA Act, 1974, the land use plan for the 398 sq.km. area of Alibag and Pen Tehsils was sanctioned in 1985 which continued the broad land use zoning system adopted in the original plan, but introduced two new zones for the coastal area, namely, R1 – Recreational Zone, defined as a belt up to 500 meters from the coast, and R2 – Recreational Zone, defined as a belt between 500 and 1000 meters from the coast (MMRDA, 1996). Some of the amendments made after 1973 were related to small individual holdings but others related to larger industrial complexes or sub-regions. Central and State governments decisions on matters, such as, setting up of the new port of Nhava-Sheva in New Bombay, the go slow on land acquisition for the New Bombay project, the pushing of Backbay Reclamation at Nariman Point and so on significantly affected the organisation’s work (Verma, 1985). The renewal an taking up of the Backbay Reclamation Project at a time when the New Bombay project required inputs and resources was a complete contradiction in the planning process (Banerjee-Guha, 1995).

The structure envisaged for New Bombay (CIDCO, 1973) is given below.

- A circular ring of intensive development around Vaghivali which was to form the central part of the city. The location of this area was influenced by the existing and proposed inter-city transport links, the major industrial employment centres and the possibility of damming Panvel Creek to create an island which would provide an attractive waterfront for high density commercial development. A

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closed circular loop development of transport in the central area for an evenly loaded trip distribution was also recommended.

b) Nodes of population and job concentration on four major mass transit corridors leading from the central area, two long arms to Thane and Uran, and two short arms to Taloja and Panvel. Each node was to have a size such that population was within walking distance of a mass transit stop while it was large enough to provide a threshold for schools, shops, etc. Housing was to be provided for all income groups. The sequence of development was to be as transport arteries were opened up.

The plan developed by CIDCO combined the MARG Plan and a modified version of the Gadgil Committee’s recommendation for a multi-nucleated settlement on the mainland. The special planning region was decided to be established over an area of 132.70 square miles (343.7 sq.km.) covering 95 villages of Thane and Raigad districts. It was decided that the two municipal areas of Panvel and Uran, the headquarters of the two tehsils of Raigad district that fall within the boundaries of the plan, and land already allocated for defence, port and industrial use would be excluded from the proposed urban development project. Twenty nodes\textsuperscript{11} were planned to be developed as self-contained townships that would be located in close proximity – rather than dispersed as recommended by the Gadgil Committee – along mass transit corridors in a ‘poly-centric plan of development’. Dronagiri in Uran taluka was to be the largest of these nodes. The transport system of New Bombay was planned to have road, rail, water and air transport facilities and infrastructure that would complement each other and get integrated with the overall transport system of the BMR.

In developing New Bombay, the Government sought the involvement of private capital. To do this, the state government decided to buy land from the poor fishermen and peasants at a cheap rate and then leave it in the hands of the CIDCO for a lease period of sixty years which would allow enough time for the development of infrastructure (Saha, 2012).

\textsuperscript{11} The number of and notions about nodes is somewhat confusing as different government and corporation websites list different numbers and often the names of nodes listed don’t coincide with the number of nodes. For example the CIDCO Land and Survey Department data provides a list of 32 nodes.
Of the private land the original owners were a mix of cultivators, salt pan workers, fishermen and artisans who owned approximately 60% of the land to be acquired for the project while the remaining, including the salt pan lands, was categorized as government land. In New Bombay the land itself was the major resource for financing development. This was a departure from the basic concept of land as being governed by the Land Revenue Code, with agriculture being the predominant use (Sita & Ray, 2001). A comparison of the land use prevalent in 1973 and the land use proposed for the establishment of New Bombay shows the almost complete obliteration of all productive uses of the land considering its ecology and natural resource base.

“Land acquisition is unscientific.” This statement was recently made at the presentation of a researcher discussing acquisition of land for a development project undertaken by the Government of Kerala. The project had led to the destruction of the entire eco-system of the area around it. If one looks at the process more closely it will be realised that such land acquisition is actually extremely scientific. One might say that the subsequent environmental destruction proves how land acquisition is unscientific when looking at acquisition from an ecological or eco-sensitive perspective. This perspective, however, has a very marginal space in scientific discourse even today despite the plethora of writings and researches from this perspective. Formal acceptance and adoption of this perspective would be extremely inconvenient for processes of accumulation by dispossession.

What suits the latter process much better is the dominant scientific paradigm based on Cartesian logic which structures the scientific community into botanists, chemists, sociologists, etc and then goes on to structure the entire governance mechanism. Departments of water, land, forest, agriculture, etc are established as separate entities in the government. Further sub-divisions can be created for each element of nature using the same logic. Therefore we can – and already have – separate departments for surface water and ground water. Similarly we can categorise land as wetland, dry land, cultivable land, etc as if they were fixed unchanging entities. From an ecological perspective this is insane.
Using the dominant paradigm and its logic one can isolate land as an entity and a commodity. The state can then use the rationale of minimising environmental destruction by saying they will acquire only ‘wasteland’, ‘government’ land or only a small area, usually one that has been identified as ‘less productive’ as in the case of Uran. They go on to acquire land that is located critically in relation to the eco-system of the area, develop it and in the process destroy its ecology and that of the entire area connected to it by natural flows. The land mafia then laughs all the way to the bank as they take over the surrounding impoverished fields at ridiculously cheap rates, while the people in those areas are not entitled to compensation at all. At least those displaced by state acquisition are recognised administratively and legally. But the former group, dispossessed and displaced do not have even right to appeal to either the state or the judiciary. Their sale of land was a private deal. It is their problem. The design is brilliantly crafted and in praxis shows a deep understanding of ecology. That does not however mean a concern for the ecology. It only means a better way of controlling the same for profit-making enterprises.

The communities in the study region had barely become the rightful owners of their lands through land reform measures, when a process was started by the government by which the alienation of tillers from land took place with full force, this time in the name of urban development. Under the provisions of the Maharashtra Regional and Town Planning Act the total area falling in 95 villages was notified on 3rd February 1970 and hostility started building up since the news of the impending project reached the villagers. Peasants from both eastern and western Uran, related to each other through ties of marriage and kinship, participated in the struggle although peasants of the eastern part were not directly affected (Thakur S., 2007). The peasants were against selling the land, but some of them, out of fear and helplessness, had sold the land for paltry amounts. After negotiations failed, the government announced a Voluntary Surrender Scheme in 1975-76 hoping to weaken the resistance but very little land was obtained under this scheme, the latter being mainly in the Thane-Belapur belt where the government had acquired land before 1970 for industry due to which some development had taken place.

The CIDCO objective providing supports for the project-affected people was removed when the CIDCO made a settlement with local leaders in 1979 to enhance the
compensation for the land acquired to Rs. 15,000 per acre. However, up to 1983-84 there was no progress as there was stiff opposition by the land owners to acquisition (Jadhav, 2010). Between 1966 and 1980 less than 4,000 hectares of land was acquired (Table 3.6) from ninety-five villages of Uran and Panvel talukas (Raigad) and Belapur taluka (Thane) for New Bombay.

**TABLE 3.6**

ACQUISITION OF PRIVATE AGRICULTURAL LAND IN NEW BOMBAY
(as on 31 August 1980)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TALUKA</th>
<th>NOTIFIED AREA (in Hectares)</th>
<th>ACQUIRED AREA (in Hectares)</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE ACQUIRED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thane</td>
<td>2214</td>
<td>714.10</td>
<td>32.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panvel</td>
<td>9666</td>
<td>1488.81</td>
<td>15.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uran</td>
<td>4688</td>
<td>194.12</td>
<td>4.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16568</td>
<td>3691.72</td>
<td>22.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Table created based on data given by Verma (1985, p. 96)

While the peripheral areas of Bombay lost their value for productive activities the people’s desperate search for alternatives began. Vajekar Sheth, who had emerged as a leader working for the upliftment of cultivators and salt pan workers, had repeatedly stressed the importance of education as the only option left for future survival. Many families were in no position to educate their children because of meagre income as well as lack of adequate educational facilities in their area. Primary education itself was a struggle with many recalling how, as children, they would go fishing early in the morning. The morning catch was sold in the village for money to buy the bus ticket to go to school. They went barefoot, in the one pair of torn/patched clothes they possessed, dried out as best they could be using hot coals from the fireplace. Higher education was even more difficult with some attending night schools in Bombay city, working during the day and sleeping on footpaths at night.
3.4 Tracing the Road Map of Evolution of New Bombay

Development plans and projects are frequently seen to discard regional histories and treat the physical and social landscape as a ‘blank slate’ on which new plans can be imagined by the state. One only needs to see the condition of state archival material, where material crumbles every day at a much faster rate than it is preserved, to realise the ease with which history can be erased. The New Bombay Plan created a beautiful structure that had no basis in the region’s history or any clear understanding of the political economy or ecology of the region. The most problematic aspect of the plan that was created in 1973 was its sheer openness to becoming anything that ‘fate’ had in store.

‘The structure of the city…can cater satisfactorily to a wide degree of variations in the type of development, whether primarily office-based or more strongly port and industry oriented, which is likely to emerge in New Bombay.’ (CIDCO, 1973, p. 44)

Therefore the Draft New Bombay Development Plan did not suggest any sequence in which the nodes should be taken up for development. It is the flexibility of the original plan that provided opportunity for dominant political and economic forces to subvert the laudable orientation to serve the ‘vast majority that is under-privileged’ as declared by the planners in the same document. Considering the various recommendations made in earlier documents – the Modak-Meyer ‘Master Plan in Outline’ (1947), the Barve Study Group Report (1961) and the proposed development plan for the Bombay-Panvel Region (1966) – Uran was perhaps one of the best points from which to start the development of New Bombay. It had been considered as one of three possible satellite towns that would facilitate regional development, as well as a centre showing potential for growth. Alternatively, Belapur was identified as a node that could be developed into the Central Business District (CBD) of the twin city, due to it being a point of convergence of existing and proposed transport routes. This was also not prioritised as the node to be developed first. It is perhaps, not surprising that the growth of New Bombay followed, rather closely, the sequence of the MARG plan suspected of promoting the interests of the business class.

The MARG Plan visualised the development of New Bombay in six stages (Shaw, 2004) starting with the construction of the mainland-island bridge across the Thane Creek. This
was to be followed by development of the area next to the link as a new business and administrative centre, industrial development building on the TBIA, creation of housing, development of the Nhava-Sheva port and finally development of the southern part of New Bombay with the construction of a bridge linking south Bombay to this area. Almost twelve percent of the area to be developed was considered ‘unusable’ due to tracts of low-lying marshy land that would require tremendously high expenditure for reclamation. Despite this, Vashi, the node with a large proportion of marshy land was taken up for development as the first township. It was however close to the Thane Creek (Vashi) Bridge that opened in 1973 and most of the land in this node was classified as government land. The present APMC market and the rest were all marshy lands that CIDCO reclaimed and developed with the work beginning in the early seventies and going on until 1980.

Only two sectors, namely 6 and 9, were village lands but the inhabitants did not put up much of an opposition. The villagers in this node had already been influenced by the development of the Thane-Belapur Industrial Area in the 1960s. This area constituted one of the largest petrochemical belts in the country with a total work force of about 16,000 by 1971 (Heitzman, 2008). The choice of Vashi for development served to create a dormitory settlement or suburban rather than an independent township. The negotiations with the ONGC in 1977-78 brought in much needed finances but sparked off the local land owners’ agitation and pushed up land prices (Verma, 1985). CIDCO’s policy of disposing of land to the highest bidders brought in more developers and investors, which had hitherto operated only in Greater Bombay. This increased land prices to levels beyond the common man’s reach, and also facilitated the displacement of lower-income groups. The late 1970s were years of political fragmentation in the city, with various groups aligning and realigning themselves to obtain power both in the formal and informal structures of power (Patel, Bombay and Mumbai: Identities, Politics, and Populism, 2006). Townships in New Bombay were distributed between four different institutions with different political affiliations. The relocation of government offices and creation of a state capital in New Bombay failed to materialize, thereby ensuring that it would remain peripheral to Bombay city. The 1973 plan visualised that Government and
quasi-government jobs would play a lead role in generating employment in an area whose economic base was to be service-dominated.

Uran taluka was the heart of the resistance to land acquisition in New Bombay. Mobilisation began with the formation of a *Zameen Bachao Samiti* (Save the Land Committee) in 1980. The rate of Rs. 15,000 per acre (RS. 37,500 per ha) was announced in 1982 but still there was opposition. The Nhava Sheva Port Trust, a Central government scheme, was planned at this time when efforts to acquire land were intensified. Almost fifty percent of this land (1185 ha) was private agricultural and residential land. Remaining was salt pan (1023 ha) and Revenue Department land (376 ha). At the time of acquisition, the project affected communities were categorised as “Backward Communities” by the Government of Maharashtra, with Agris constituting 78 percent, Kolis ten percent and Karadis ten percent of the population (Parasuraman, 1995). The remaining two percent consisted of Marathas, the service castes and Muslims. All the three dominant caste groups were, in varying degrees, engaged in cultivation, salt-making and fishing for consumption, sale or both. Ninety percent of the affected households were landowners with most holding less than three acres. In 1983 the then Collector decided to forcefully acquire the land with the support of the police and the Special Land Acquisition Officer.

Despite intense negotiations between the people and government officials, no settlement was reached, with the people remaining adamant about not surrendering their land. Pressure mounted and the State sent in extra police despatches and units of the State Reserve Police Force\(^\text{12}\), which is an armed police unit. This obviously constituted one of many political situations where, as Zizek (2008) points out, one is presented a choice on condition that one makes the ‘right’ choice. It took some time for this reality to sink in. In January 1984 when police surrounded Sheva village, which was to be totally displaced, the people protested with women and children pelting the police with whatever rubble and stones they could lay their hands on. Rekha (Bhoir, 2011), who was then sixteen,

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\(^{12}\) Established on 6th March, 1948, the Special Armed Force of the Government of Maharashtra was expanded in the 1970s to guard installations such as the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) and the Bombay Airport. Subsequently in the 1980s the number of units was expanded to tackle the rise of Naxalism in Maharashtra (MPD, 2008).
said, “Of course I threw stones! Wouldn’t you fight if someone came to take away your land?” She got a bullet through her stomach for her spirited resistance, along with another woman whose jaw was shattered in the firing, and now faces a lifetime of medical expenses from related complications. For the first time an element of fear entered the people’s minds. However, this incident was followed by a massive protest and two-day rally in which police again fired on the protesters and five people died. There was uproar and the matter went to the Assembly for debate.

The struggling peasants gradually realized that democratic provisions ‘guaranteeing’ space for objection to development projects proposed by the State were totally specious. Initially, the peasants retaliated against the acquisition and later against the paltry remuneration that they were receiving for it. The shift in the struggle from total rejection of the demand to give up their land, to one of negotiation for adequate compensation, is significant in the light of the shifts in the wider debate on farmers’ right to land as a means of livelihood to their right to compensation and inevitability of ‘public interest’ projects. Thereafter attempts were made for an amicable settlement. While the people demanded Rs. 40,000 per hectare plus 25% of developed land to be given back to them, the government decided to pay Rs.27,000 per acre plus 12.5% of the land to be given back to the original land owner after development by CIDCO. The people would then have a choice of occupying, developing or selling this plot of land. This became the demand in the rest of the acquisition phase in the New Bombay area. 2584 ha of 12 villages (Table 3.7) were acquired and handed over to CIDCO for the JNPT project in 1984 itself.

**TABLE 3.7**

**LAND ACQUIRED FOR JNPT (AREA IN HA.)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Village Name</th>
<th>Total Acquired Area</th>
<th>Private Land Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sheva</td>
<td>711</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Jaskhar</td>
<td>727</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Funde</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sawarkhar</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

141
<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sonari</td>
<td>724</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Karal</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Pagote</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Jasai</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Paundkhar</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Navghar</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Chirle</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Shemtikhar</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (JNPT, 1997)

The growth of New Bombay was much slower than planned. By 1991 the population had only grown to 209,676\(^{13}\) (Shaw, 2004). The rail system was planned to combine a commuter railway system of six rail corridors and an inter-city railway system. Of these the Mankhurd-Belapur railway line was inaugurated in 1992 and later extended up to Panvel by 1999. By this time CIDCO had developed eight of the planned twenty nodes. The total number of nodes was reduced to 14. An additional set of expressways, arterial roads and local roads were planned that would also interface with the national highways. Water transport was also included in the grand plan but the first project that was undertaken from Vashi to south Mumbai collapsed and was abandoned within a short while of it being inaugurated.

Development in New Bombay was also impacted by the period beginning with the reforms of 1991 that saw the creation of a new development plan for the BMR that was a complete reversal of the earlier one. The new plan projected Bombay as the “capital of international trade, finance, services and hi-tech industries” and advocated more centralized investment (MMRDA 1995) in the metropolis. After 1992, there is no authentic survey of the industrial situation in the area (Sharma & Sita, 2001). Many industries have been closing down, resulting in redundancy of labour. The flight of capital away from Bombay has resulted in a severe setback to the capacity utilisation of industrial infrastructure created by CIDCO or MIDC. As an alternative strategy, CIDCO shifted its emphasis to the development of information technology parks, theme parks,

\[^{13}\text{As per provisional reports of the Census of India, the population of New Mumbai in 2011 was 1,119,477.}\]
etc. (Sharma & Sita, 2001) reinforcing early criticisms of the twin city plan failing to integrate a substantive economy that would make it self-sufficient.

The region was expanded and renamed Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) in 1996\textsuperscript{14}. The MMR now consists of six rapidly growing municipal corporations, 13 municipal councils and 995 villages (MCGM, 2010). The boundaries of the Region, defined and marked by natural features (creek, rivers, sea and hills), encompass a total area of 4355 sq km that consists of the following administrative units (MMRDA, 1996).

1. Mumbai City District;
2. Mumbai Suburban District;
3. Part of Thane District comprising
   a. Thane, Kalyan, Bhiwandi and Ulhanagar tehsils; and
   b. part of Vasai tehsil.
4. Part of Raigad District comprising
   a. Uran tehsil and
   b. part of Panvel, Karjat, Khalapur, Pen and Alibag tehsils.

The entire logic of development in New Mumbai is found to follow the philosophy of restructuring Mumbai (Banerjee-Guha, 2002) aimed to serve the needs of the international economy. The entire pattern of investment also changed to suit the priority of the private sector especially in areas of infrastructure and real estate. The bulk of the population is left with few options but ad hoc daily wage labour and/or involvement in any number of black markets that have sprung up in association with almost every tradable commodity. Many families continued to cultivate their land for survival with even this now carrying the taint of illegality since CIDCO had become the legal owner of their lands. The scope for ‘illegal’ cultivation has also gradually decreased as CIDCO landfills continue relentlessly irrespective of whether the area filled is used for activities that would create a sustainable livelihood base for the local communities. With no other meaningful employment options, locals participate in the destruction of their own natural

\textsuperscript{14} The name “Bombay” was changed to “Mumbai” by the Corporation Resolution No.512 dated August 12, 1996, Maharashtra Act, XXV of 1996
resource base by taking up landfill contracts or working as daily wage labour on these sites. Such ‘developed’ land is then sold to the highest bidder. Land use plans have also periodically been modified to create increasing scope for real estate and business interests.

3.5 Uneven Development: Patterns and Fall-Outs

Since the inception of the planned city in 1973, there have been considerable changes in population, land use dynamics and functional characteristics of the then existing settlements. Such has been the extent of change that not only have the uninhabited villages become considerably populated, but the habited small villages have also become non-agricultural urban settlements in the short span of ten years. This wave of change however, has reached in different parts of New Bombay in different ways and primarily affected the nodal points and their surrounding areas, their growth of population, livelihoods and facilities and not the villages in the same manner. Considerable literature from other locales show that reduced opportunities and relative impoverishment of the immediate countryside and hinterland is a common feature of city growth and economic diversification (Abbott, 1985). Such urban growth is found to impact the periphery and the hinterland in such a way that they lose their use value for production for the city and merely provide space for the establishment of gated communities, resorts and farmhouses for the elite (Banerjee-Guha, 2009).

The entire infrastructure developed in New Mumbai was aligned and oriented to suit the requirements of the industries. The new projects required basic infrastructural facilities such as roads, bridges, electricity and water supply. Villages located along the supply lines to ‘development projects’ indirectly benefited as they refused to permit infrastructural development until their demands were met. The usual scramble for drinking water in villages due to water scarcity, which was widely prevalent in all Kharland areas, started showing signs of subsiding. Although there is still room for improvement, the earlier drought-like situation which took a heavy toll of women’s time
and labour, is no longer a reality. Electricity had reached the region in 1961, and communication and transport improved only by the 1970s. Ironically, people of the region had been demanding these facilities for a long time without any success. The new projects almost forced the improvement of the infrastructural facilities, and incidentally improved the life of the people residing here. However, the peasants were not an integrated component in these new developments. Rather, these developments brought much bitterness to them as they were forced to give up their cultivable land, their only means of livelihood, at throwaway prices to CIDCO. Also, given the general educational, economic and social backwardness of the people residing in the region, there were limits to the extent to which they could take advantage of most of these developments. As a result, once the land was lost, it became very difficult for them to replace it with other meaningful and sustainable modes of earning. In several cases, the cash compensations were either wasted on non-productive consumption or on businesses which they were ill-equipped to handle. The way of life associated with paddy cultivation, salt production and fishing was forcibly replaced by a very different kind of social life, without the growth of any solid economic base.

Manufacturing and agriculture rooted in the local resource base are being bypassed and previously existing productive areas are being rapidly destroyed. In the 1990s Maharashtra was producing more than sufficient quantity of salt to meet its requirement. Holding an area of more than 5000 hectares within the BMR, the Salt Department considers itself one of the largest landlords in the city. Urban sprawl and priority for urban activities including real estate has led to enormous pressures on salt pan lands and the production of salt has decreased. The requirement of Maharashtra for edible salt is 5 lakh tonnes but it now produces 1.7 lakh tonnes of common salt (NIDDCP, 2008). Most of the salt pans have emerged as contested terrains as individuals realize the potential for tremendous gains from real estate in the vicinity of Mumbai city where foreign investors are also looking for space to expand. Salt pan license holders are now challenging State ownership of the salt pans that had been introduced in colonial times in order to get some benefit from these developments in the absence of any real job creation. Land under agriculture, plantation and forests are being taken over for urban and industrial
development with disastrous consequences for agriculture and fisheries due to air pollution, water pollution, destruction of marine wealth and loss of fertile lands (Brahme, 1999). In the ecologically sensitive coastal districts, chemical, copper smelting, steel, cement factories, thermal power stations, petroleum refineries and several other polluting industries are being invited. Such loss is critical in a context where despite a fourfold increase in food grain production in post-Independence decades the shortage of rice, pulses and oilseeds is growing.

The take-over of productive land and widening disparities in the study region have been facilitated further by relaxation of restrictions on FDI, land acquisition by multinationals, the conversion of agricultural lands to non-agricultural (NA) uses and the ceiling on agricultural land holdings (Brahme, 1999). For example, the Maharashtra Government Ordinance issued in 1994 declared that permission for conversion of agricultural land to NA uses would not be required in areas where the Regional Town Planning Act (1966) applies and any area where a legally declared industrial zone has been proposed, accepted or already exists. Further, the MIDC Act (1961) provides for the acquisition of private land anywhere in the state with just a notice to the land owner. By 2000, the MIDC had acquired more than 35,000 hectares and was planning for the acquisition of another 30,000 hectares (Brahme, 1999). In recent times this Act has been combined with the policy to promote Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in the region. For example, on October 27, 2006, the government of Maharashtra, through an extraordinary gazette notification, unilaterally declared an entire 5000 acre agricultural belt of 22 villages in Alibag as an "Industrial Area" under Clause G of Section 2 of the Maharashtra Industrial Development Act 1961 (Ramdas & Ramdas, 2007). The day before the notification was issued, the government passed a resolution changing the land-use allocation in this belt from that of a green zone to an area for industrial development.

The notified area consists of land on which 50,000 residents and farmers are dependent. It was to be handed over to India Bulls Infrastructure Development for a multi-product SEZ. Although such land acquisition is to be made only in ‘public interest’, the prime consideration appears to have been the potential profits from land speculation due to its proximity to the area covering 30,000 hectares in Uran and Pen talukas, demarcated for
acquisition by Reliance Industries for the Maha-Mumbai SEZ. Similarly, the Maharashtra Land Revenue Code (1966) offering some protection to tribal lands too had earlier been illegally negotiated on many occasions but with recent policy changes open transfer of such property is found to occur frequently. Vulnerable populations who had received some respite with land reforms in the 1950s and other protective legislations now face a reversal and threat of large-scale dispossession. Developed and undeveloped lands have been opened up for speculation. While about 30 to 40 % of the newly constructed houses in developed areas remain unoccupied for the purpose of price appreciation and speculation, there is a sharp increase in the number of slum dwellers in this planned settlement of New Mumbai (Sharma & Sita, 2001).

The transfers appear to be in line with capitalist corporate design, given the evidence of extensive concessions and tax exemptions and proposed privatization of ports, infrastructure, road transport and water supply. The New Mumbai plans have been altered to allow for Special Economic Zones and more than 2000 hectares of land have already been sold at a concessional price to one of the richest corporates in the city. A perusal of the changes in land use allocation (Table 3.8) with each modified plan shows substantial increase in area for residential use, steep decrease in areas meant for institutional purposes, decrease in areas for fishing and transportation, increase in land for the port, and substantial reduction in areas set apart for regional parks and the no development zone. The existence of residential and industrial use in juxtaposition violates the general guideline of land use zonation in any town that recommends keeping conflicting land uses far apart (Sita & Ray, 2001). Much of the hills and forests that had been demarcated for regional parks have been devastated (Plate 3.1) by numerous quarries that emerged – and continue to emerge – to meet the extensive need for reclamation and landfills prior to any other development on the erstwhile mudflats and low lying marshlands which constituted the unique ecology of this region.
### TABLE 3.8
LAND USE ALLOCATIONS IN THE SPECIAL PLANNING REGION

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Area (sq km)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Area (sq km)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Area (sq km)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Area (sq km)</td>
<td>%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industrial areas</td>
<td>28.70</td>
<td>8.50</td>
<td>28.10</td>
<td>8.18</td>
<td>43.21</td>
<td>12.53</td>
<td>43.14</td>
<td>12.55</td>
<td>52.13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low-lying areas</td>
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<td>34.20</td>
<td>9.94</td>
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<td>Salt pans</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Forests</td>
<td>28.61</td>
<td>8.20</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hills (&gt; 30m) not covered by forests</td>
<td>21.72</td>
<td>6.30</td>
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<td>Defence</td>
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<td>MSEB</td>
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<td>Cultivable land</td>
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<tr>
<td>Waterbody(^1)</td>
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<td>Port</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>22.70</td>
<td>6.60</td>
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<tr>
<td>\textbf{No development zone}</td>
<td>\textbf{78.86}</td>
<td>\textbf{22.94}</td>
<td>\textbf{46.73}</td>
<td>\textbf{13.91}</td>
<td>\textbf{34.03}</td>
<td>\textbf{9.90}</td>
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<td>Quarrying(^2)</td>
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<td>Regional parks</td>
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<td>21.02</td>
<td>90.26</td>
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<td>19.35</td>
<td>58.49</td>
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<td>Sewage farming</td>
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<td>2.62</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisheries</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>6.14</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>1.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>60.76</td>
<td>17.67</td>
<td>101.15</td>
<td>29.33</td>
<td>132.68</td>
<td>38.64</td>
<td>152.5</td>
<td>39.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>13.85</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>6.51</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>5.75</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>15.42</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service industry and warehousing</td>
<td>11.06</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>6.08</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Public and semi-public institutions</td>
<td>35.75</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>0.31</td>
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<td>Transportation</td>
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<td>10.5</td>
<td>30.86</td>
<td>8.94</td>
<td>29.73</td>
<td>8.65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks and playgrounds</td>
<td>17.12</td>
<td>4.98</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1: Introduced as sub-heads in 1996; Data sourced from (Sita & Ray, 2001)
The combined effect of quarries and landfills has led to environmental damages in the immediate vicinity of these activities as well as in other parts of the region that are experiencing drastic changes in their water flows. Some areas have dried up while others are facing recurrent floods for the first time. All these processes are disrupting the productive capacity of land, damaging the essence of interconnectedness of areas within the region and in the wider hinterland. The logic of regional development that had been projected in justifying the creation of the MMR, gradually surfaces as a façade exposing the design to create a region for the purpose of resource extraction to suit the needs of Mumbai city for select urbanised activity and speculative investments. The dispossessed communities living in these areas face extremely insecure futures with no social or ecological resources to fall back upon.

While it had been anticipated that this twin city on the mainland would largely be a middle-class settlement, a positive image of the project was created with the presentation of New Mumbai as a city that would not be a mere encroachment in rural areas but house
all classes including the locals (Banerjee-Guha, 1995). However the outcomes have proved to be different and every andolan in the area bitterly concludes that CIDCO should rephrase their slogan “We build cities” to “We build cities and destroy villages”. Although the New Mumbai plan envisaged no physical displacement of affected villages, large-scale economic displacement of the villagers was inevitable. There were promises made of education, employment and business to the locals but the common perception is that ‘outsiders’ have taken all the jobs. High-value production was retained in the city because of the availability of skilled labour while the production of high-volume, low-value goods moved out of the city to be dealt by subcontractors. Thus low order production went to the suburbs and satellite centres such as Thane, Kalyan, and New Mumbai while a few production activities moved still farther to nearby cities such as Pune and Nasik (Patel, Bombay and Mumbai: Identities, Politics, and Populism, 2006).

The other significant characteristic of the post-land acquisition era was the commercialization of politics. Contesting elections after the 1980s and 1990s became the forte of the wealthy. The construction business in the post-1980s after the commencement of New Mumbai and JNPT projects, became a lucrative means of earning money. In the next two decades, there emerged a strong nexus between the political parties, estate agents and construction business sector. The economics of this changed process showed up in 1998 when Ram Thakur of Gavhan village, a local teacher-turned-contractor contested the Lok Sabha election from the Raigad constituency as a Peasants and Workers’ Party (PWP) candidate. The situation aggravated further with implementation of the SEZ Policy in the region. Estate agents, acting as the mediators between buyers and the peasants (Thakur, 2007) have emerged as the new ‘kulak’ group working in association with specific political parties like Congress or Shiv Sena. With land having become a commodity since 1980s, the earlier basis of transaction has been replaced and big money has started to play an increasingly dominant role. It is found to be systematically associated with misappropriation of land and increase of land value, thanks to the new development policies. As mentioned, Special Economic Zones have generated a new drive for land acquisition in the region, shooting up land prices like
never before. The current unrest among the peasants is largely due to lack of transparency in land transactions and State policy to safeguard their interest.

The MMR, however, is projected by the government as one of the most industrialized, most urbanized, and most productive regions of India that forms part of the larger economic region in Western Maharashtra called the Mumbai-Pune corridor (Grant & Nijman, 2002), despite the above processes. Such a conceptualization has been deliberately created (Banerjee-Guha, 2009) to hide the tension between current state initiatives and the determination of people’s resistance movements. Reality in general also reflects a nature of industrial development happening in relatively less developed areas of the world following the imperatives of global capital that gives no importance to the way in which regions have evolved historically, based on their unique characteristics. In order to attract new foreign investment, land is being taken over in areas that have incentive for established communication and infrastructure networks. This is mostly found in functionally active agricultural areas, forest, coastal or/and in the peripheries of metropolitan areas (Brahme, 1999).

Thus the southern belt of the MMR is now being developed due to its imminent proximity to South Mumbai, thanks to the proposed development of transport and communication infrastructure, such as the Nhava-Sewri Trans-Harbour Sea-Link project. Raigad District has been one of the most popular locales for the establishment of Special Economic Zones (SEZs), not only within the region but also at the national level. The approval in principle of nine SEZ projects in Raigad district, however, has been accompanied by agitations and struggles of resistance, particularly within Uran, Panvel and Alibag tehsils, due to large-scale economic displacement of local communities. Despite large scale land acquisition, Uran has been one of the last nodes to be taken up for development. The recent status of land acquisition in New Mumbai is given in Table 3.9.
TABLE 3.9
ACQUISITION OF PRIVATE AGRICULTURAL LAND IN NEW MUMBAI
AS ON 23 SEPTEMBER 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TALUKA</th>
<th>NOTIFIED AREA</th>
<th>ACQUIRED AREA</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE ACQUIRED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thane</td>
<td>2264</td>
<td>2193</td>
<td>96.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panvel</td>
<td>9665</td>
<td>7192</td>
<td>74.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uran</td>
<td>4688</td>
<td>3220</td>
<td>68.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16617</td>
<td>12605</td>
<td>75.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CIDCO Land Acquisition Department, September 2010

In the 1960s there was only one road that connected Panvel and Uran in the area and the only other way to connect with the outside world was by ferry. The only railway line existing in 1965 was used only by the naval dockyard. The area was known for its vegetables – watermelon, bitter gourd, ivy-gourd/gherkins (tondli), field beans – available in plenty immediately after the monsoons. The main occupations at that time were fishing, paddy and salt pan work. The strategic location of Uran coast lying only 20-35 nautical miles from Mumbai was soon recognised by corporate groups. Shaw Wallace was the first to come into Uran in this phase. They acquired land from three villages – Nagaon, Kegaon and Ranwad – in the early 1970s. These villages had good sources of water which was an important resource for the beer production unit established by them. Grindwell Norton was the only industry to be located in the region before this. They mainly sourced sand to produce grinding wheels of various kinds. The following table shows the limited number of projects taken up in Uran after the New Mumbai scheme was launched, with no significant impact till 1989.

TABLE 3.10
INDUSTRIAL AND OTHER PROJECTS UNDERTAKEN IN URAN TALUKA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>NAME OF COMPANY</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>Grindwell Company</td>
<td>Mora</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>National Armaments Division (NAD)</td>
<td>Popud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Scholl Beverages</td>
<td>Kegaon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Indian Yeast Company Ltd. | ONGC | Nagaon
---|---|---
1979 | Gas Turbine Project (GTPS) BPCL bottling plant | Bhenkal
1988 | Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) | Sheva
1989

Source: (Patil, 2011)

In the initial phase not much land was acquired and people’s livelihoods were not affected much. Even when ONGC came next to Nagaon Village, only a small plot of land was acquired for the refinery. Bombay High took some part of the coast but did not affect fishing much although industrial pollution and the entry of trawlers in the area caused fishing to reduce drastically. All the projects except the Gas Turbine Power Station (GTPS) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation (BPCL) acquired land in upland areas where water and other resources were more easily available. The largely agrarian community in Uran that was already characterised by some level of uneven development due to their location and livelihoods (related to upland and lowland ecological features) started experiencing an aggravated syndrome due to the above land acquisition and subsequent compensation-oriented debates. New ruptures were created that got linked with lower level employment generation among the displaced communities (Parasuraman, 1995).

Both ONGC and JNPT were located in upland villages that had better resources and income levels than low-land villages. Both the companies pay high salaries as mandated by the Sixth Pay Commission rules. Therefore, those employed here earn upwards of Rs. 30,000 per month while their counterparts working at Grindwell Abrasives, which had been established at the beginning of the 20th century, earn less than Rs. 14,000 per month. Permanent employment is scarce and has considerably reduced with technology advances. Since 1985 ONGC has stopped recruitments while JNPT began its journey in 1989 with only 400 permanent workers (Heitzman, 2008), while the expectation from them was to generate at least 5000 jobs (CIDCO, 1973). Simultaneously, although shipping office headquarters were retained in the metropolis, experienced workers from the Bombay Port Trust (BPT) area were displaced as cargo-handling activities were reduced there. This situation set in place the grounds for multiple fractures within the
Uran polity as well as conflicts between the locals and the migrant groups coming from other impoverished hinterlands or other locales of displacement.

Construction of a bridge across Karanja Creek near Khopta Village in the late 1990s brought a vast area on the east of Karanja Creek in close proximity to the JNPT port, and the port-based industrial area being developed by CIDCO in New Mumbai. Hence, despite its being currently situated in what is called the G-zone, this area is likely to have a rising demand for housing and industry according to the CIDCO website. A large area has been set apart for service industries in the Dronagiri node in Uran to accommodate a number of port-based industries (Sita and Ray, 2001). Vast tracts of land have been handed over to companies with Reliance holding one of the largest allocations for an SEZ. Negotiations are still underway in the eastern parts of the tehsil to acquire land for the Maha Mumbai SEZ that plans to occupy the land of 46 villages, 22 of which are located in Uran taluka. With plans released for the expansion of the JNPT port facilities and SEZ projects, there is palpable tension in the area with village communities desperately seeking to establish their right to stable jobs and residence in their own villages.

Although the population has considerably expanded, the authorities have till date not increased the gaothan area for most villages that have remained restricted within pre-project boundaries. The original villagers whose lands were acquired by CIDCO had been treated as “non-entities” for more than two decades. A few villagers who were relatively well off, have now become the main contenders for political power as well as for land-related opportunities. They often defy planning norms to pursue their own interests that can be fulfilled only if they align with the powers that operate behind the existing capital flows and land transfers. The following chapter discusses the details of the economic and social processes at work in the study area that is rapidly evolving as a critical sub-region within the larger dynamics of MMR as a global city region. Eleven villages have been selected from Uran taluka for an in-depth understanding of the said process. Six are located within the boundary of New Mumbai where land was acquired by the State and four outside the planned city, in the eastern part of the taluka where private acquisitions and developments began in the late 1990s.
The irony is that while CIDCO has started with the 12.5% scheme in the rest of the New Mumbai area, the decision has still not been implemented in the JNPT area as the Central government refused responsibility for a compensation package negotiated with the state government. It looks like the confusion regarding the agency to resolve this issue is deliberately created only to provide an opportunity for both the Central and State governments to proceed with their priority of making Mumbai a global city with an expansive region to use as a backyard. Although the scheme is being implemented in the New Mumbai area, the pace is kept deliberately slow that may lead to a stalemate in many areas. As land is rapidly being taken over by corporate and private interests, any resolution in favour of the dispossessed communities will also have no scope for implementation.

The present Uran taluka is divided into Uran east and Uran west. These two parts are separated by the Karanja (Khopta) creek which runs north-south and intersperses the eastern part with a number of smaller estuaries. People of Uran also identify these two geographical sub-regions within the taluka which differ even in terms of cultural and social characteristics. The western part of Uran is referred to by locals as mahalan vibhag (due to its mahal status during British times). The eastern part, on the other hand, is referred to as Uran poorva (eastern). Eastern Uran was earlier a part of Panvel taluka to be subsequently merged with Uran mahal to form Uran taluka. The western part of Uran had a greater variety of caste groups with a large population of Kolis in the villages near the sea. In the southern part some villages near the sea have a sizeable population of upper castes such as Chaukalashis, Panchkalashis, Prabhus and Brahmans. Until the 1980s, they worked in the saltpans during the summer and cultivated paddy during the monsoons. In villages like Nhava and Sheva they also earned a living through the collection and sale of pearls.

Eastern Uran, which was separated from the western part by a creek running from Khopta up to Panvel, had comparatively fewer saltpans that were located along the banks of the creek up to the village of Vindhane, Govathane, Pale, Khopta, Pandive, Koproli and Chirner. Many are now closed down. The nearest centre for markets and other facilities for the villagers of this part has been in the past and even now continues to be either Uran
or Panvel. This region was predominantly rural with hardly any urban characteristics. In eastern Uran, due to a lack of proper coastline, fishing has not surfaced as a primary source of livelihood. The same is reflected in the small Koli population in villages like Koproli, Dighode, Aware and Govathane, located either on the sea front or navigable creeks. Unlike western Uran, there is no Koli village in this part. Some tribal communities (adivasis) like the Katkaris and Thakurs are found especially in villages that are close to forests like Chirner.

### TABLE 3.11
CRITERIA USED FOR SELECTION OF STUDY RESPONDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SELECTION CRITERIA</th>
<th>NAME OF STUDY VILLAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. From villages whose lands have been acquired for JNPT</td>
<td>Navin (New) Sheva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Relocated settlements: koli community, agri community</td>
<td>Jasai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Original settlement but village lands acquired</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. From villages whose lands have been acquired for New Mumbai</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Villages near ONGC and Navy area where original patterns of cultivation and livelihood are still seen</td>
<td>Nagaon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Villages where ‘development’ has been allowed with minimal or no sign of original livelihoods</td>
<td>Bokadvira</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Panje</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. From villages outside the New Mumbai boundary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) From the proposed Maha-Mumbai SEZ area</td>
<td>Khopta (Bandhpada, Kacherpada, Dasakhosi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) From outside the proposed Maha-Mumbai SEZ area</td>
<td>Govathane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) From villages subsumed within local municipal boundaries</td>
<td>Chirner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mora</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As mentioned, the study area consists of eleven villages in Uran taluka, located in Raigad\(^{15}\) district of North Konkan. The district includes fifteen talukas in total: Alibag, Pen, Murud, Mangaon, Tala, Uran, Panvel, Karjat, Khalapur, Sudhagad, Roha, Mahad, Poladpur, Mhasala, and Shrivardhan. Study villages have been selected keeping in mind the different patterns of land use and sources of livelihood.

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\(^{15}\) Although the district was formed in 1869 it was renamed Raigad only in 1981.
In 2001, Uran taluka had a population of 1, 40,351, distributed in 62 revenue villages falling within the purview of 34 gram panchayats. The taluka has seen a huge influx of migrants from various states of the country in search of livelihoods with new developments instituted in the 1990s. A majority of them settled in villages located along the roadways to have easier access to container yards and warehouses that have sprung up in the area. The migrants account for nearly 50 per cent of the total population in villages like Jasai. Development in the 1980s and 1990s has also changed the demography of the taluka with huge increase in population density in the villages where many alternative livelihood options have opened up. The same has also intensified disparity that now marks the entire study region. Select individuals, some from backgrounds of poverty and bare sustenance, climb the network of business and political contacts to become the wealthiest contractors and also the leading politicians of their respective parties. A complex ‘politics of difference’ between villages, between locals and migrants, landed and landless, and between various caste groups has sprung up reflecting the changing socio-economic landscape of the area. The following chapter attempts at examining the related patterns in detail.

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