CHAPTER VIII

URBANISATION: 1951-1961

The study of urbanisation during 1951-1961 is beset with a great difficulty arising from some change in the procedure for determining the urban status of a settlement. The definition of a town was made rigorous at the 1961 census and only those places that satisfied certain specified criteria were adopted as urban. As many as 803 towns with a total population of 4.4 million were declassified in 1961. Many of these places were simply overgrown villages with a considerable proportion of agricultural population. No wonder, the growth rate of urban population fell down to 26.4 per cent during 1951-1961 as compared to 41.4 per cent during the preceding decade. Had the 1951 definition of a town continued in 1961 also, the urban population would have recorded a growth rate of 34.0 per cent.

Even a growth rate of 34.0 per cent would have been significantly lower than that experienced during the preceding decade. This decline was more glaring in the context of a further rise in the rate of natural increase from 14 to around 20 per thousand during 1951-1961. There was a definite fall in rural-urban migration and consequently the urbanisation process.

1 The problem has already been discussed in the introductory chapter.
slackened somewhat\(^4\). The drop in rural to urban migration was rather intriguing against the background of vigorous efforts by the government for economic development of the country under the first two five year plans (1951-56 and 1956-61). Certain developments did take place that brought about this trend. First, sizeable migration took place from rural to rural areas during 1951-1961, diverting a part of potential rural to urban migration\(^5\). The reclamation of new agricultural lands in various parts of the country and initiation of rural developmental activities, including the various multipurpose projects, created new employment opportunities within rural areas. Second, the growing tendency of many ruralites to commute rather than migrate to towns also reduced the incidence of short-run rural to urban migration\(^6\). Third, automation in industries at big places like Bombay, Calcutta and Kanpur also rendered some labour surplus apart from reducing the scope of new employment\(^7\). Above all, the rise in natural increase of urban population was detrimental to rural-urban migration. Urban-born population was now competing in the employment market in far greater number.

\(^4\) It was estimated that magnitude of rural-urban migration during 1951-61 was nearly 5 million, a half of about 10 million during 1941-51. See : A. Mitra : "A note on internal migration and urbanisation in India, 1961", p. 257 in Census of India, 1961, Economic Regionalisation of India, Problems and Approaches, Vol. 1, No. 8, 1968.


\(^6\) Ibid., p. 205.

None the less, rural-urban migration engaged nearly five million persons. It contributed more than one-fourth of the urban growth during 1951-1961. This migration was induced largely by availability of new employment opportunities in the industrial centres. Many new industries, including the three major iron and steel plants of Durgapur, Rourkela and Bhilai, were established under the public sector. The production of steel, petroleum, fertilizers and machine tools recorded a big increase. New industries, as a matter of policy, were located in backward areas subject to availability of raw materials. The tribal localities benefitted in particular. This brought modern urbanisation to areas that had primitive societies throughout their history. Some of the industries were located near the hydroelectric dam sites, such as Nangal, Hirakud and Vijayapuri. These became nuclei of new urbanisation.

The expansion of administrative machinery under the plans strengthened the functional base of administrative centres like state capitals, district headquarters and tahsil centres. Towns enjoying some administrative status grew relatively fast, and growth rate of administrative centres was related positively to their status.

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8 As compared with two-thirds during 1941-51.


Construction of several new towns was another hallmark of this decade. New towns were of all variety: capital (Chandigarh), port (Kandla), mining (Kumardhubi), and industrial (Faridabad). New towns were the recipient of considerable migration from both rural and urban areas.

Thus, the process of urbanisation during 1951-1961 was under the impact of mutually counteracting forces. Colonisation of cultivable wastelands and initiation of rural developmental activities generated sizeable migration with rural areas. Simultaneously, heavy investments in industrial centres and construction of a variety of new towns stimulated rural to urban migration. On the whole, factors fostering urbanisation were weaker than those operating during the last decade slackening somewhat the process of urbanisation. The differential growth behaviour of towns belonging to various size groups persisted.

Growth by Size Category of Towns

The most peculiar phenomenon of this decade was the declassification of 803 towns with a total population of 4.4 million. The number of towns declined from 2890 in 1951 to 2421 in 1961 despite an emergence of 497 new towns (Table 8.1). This was due to the definitional change of a town at the 1961 census. Except for Akhij in Maharashtra that belonged to class III, all the declassified towns had a population of less than 20,000 each. The declassified towns were more common to Uttar Pradesh (222), Maharashtra (128), Mysore (85), Rajasthan (84),

11 See the note in Table 8.1.
## Table 8.1

### INDIA

**Towns/Urban Agglomerations by Size Group : 1961**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size group of towns</th>
<th>Number in all towns</th>
<th>Percentage in all towns</th>
<th>Percentage in urban population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class I (population, 100,000 and above)</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>50.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class II (population, 50,000 to 99,999)</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class III (population, 20,000 to 49,999)</td>
<td>459</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Towns (population, less than 20,000)</td>
<td>1727</td>
<td>71.3</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2421</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note: There were 2890 towns in 1951 out of which 803 were declassified and 53 merged with other towns at the 1961 census. 497 new towns emerged at the 1961. Accordingly, the number of towns in 1961 worked out to be 2531 which when readjusted to urban agglomerations fell to 2421.
Gujarat (74) and Andhra Pradesh (74). These were simply overgrown villages with nearly a half of them having more than a half of their male working force in agriculture (Table 8.2).

**Table 8.2**

**INDIA**

| Classification of Declassified Towns by Percentage of Male Agricultural Workers | 1961 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Percentage of male agricultural workers | Number of declassified towns | Percentage in total declassified towns* |
| in male workers |  |  |
| 75 to 100 | 83 | 11.4 |
| 50 - 74.9 | 271 | 38.5 |
| 25 - 49.9 | 297 | 40.5 |
| 0 to 24.9 | 70 | 9.6 |
| Data not available | 82 | - |
| Total | 803 | 100.0 |


* Only those towns for which data were available have been taken into account.
At the same time 497 places classified as urban for the first time in 1961 contributed 4.8 million to the urban population. Among these, 36 belonged to class II or class III categories and all others were small towns with a population of less than 20,000 each. The large new towns included Chandigarh (99,262), Rourkela (90,287), Bilainagar (86,116), Valparai (80,023), Habra (64,716) and Pondicherry (51,762). These were either new state capitals or newly developed industrial centres. The number of new towns was large in Tamil Nadu (73), Madhya Pradesh (71), West Bengal (66), Bihar (51) and Kerala (35).

Nearly one third of the towns existing in both 1951 and 1961 either decreased in population or recorded a slow growth by less than 15 per cent (Table 8.3). Fast growth rate of 30+ per cent was observed in the case of another one-third of the towns. The remaining towns experienced moderate growth rates ranging from 15 to less than 30 per cent.

Class I towns or cities grew fast as usual. Their number increased from 75 to 105. They accounted for about a half of the total urban population and also contributed more than a half of the absolute increase in urban population during 1951-1961. Of the total city population, 38 per cent was confined to the seven 'million' cities of Calcutta, Bombay, Delhi, Madras, Hyderabad, Ahmadabad and Bangalore. All the

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cities, with the solitary exception of Kolar, recorded a positive growth. Growth rate was 30% per cent in more than a half of the cities and it ranged between 15 and less than 30 per cent in another one third (Table 8.4). Phenomenally high growth rates were typical of the steel cities: Durg-Bhilainagar (558.0), Asansol (78.0) and Jamshedpur (50.4).

Table 8.3

India

Classification of Towns/Urban Agglomerations by Growth Rate: 1951-1961

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Growth rate* (in percentage)</th>
<th>Percentage of all towns/urban agglomerations in the total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60 and above</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 - 59.9</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 - 44.9</td>
<td>16.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 - 29.9</td>
<td>36.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 15</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decrease</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India, 1971, General Population Tables, Series 1, Part II-A(i), pp. 239-497.

* The growth rate categories on this table, as also on similar tables for all other decades, correspond to those on decadewise growth of urban population maps.
Table 8.4

INDIA
Growth Rate of Class I Towns/Urban Agglomerations: 1951-1961

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Growth rate (in percentage)</th>
<th>Name of town/urban agglomeration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60 and above</td>
<td>Durg-Bhilainagar, Gauhati, Dhanbad, Malegaon, Bhopal, Visakhapatnam, Ernakulam, Kota, Erode, Asansol, Shillong, Kumool, Delhi, Thana.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 - 59.9</td>
<td>Ludhiana, Coimbatore, Raipur, Bangalore, Jamshedpur, Guntur, Musaffarpur, Rajkot, Vadodara, Ulhasnagar, Mangalore, Vijaywada.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 - 44.9</td>
<td>Burdwan, Jabalpur, Cuttack, Kolhapur, Nagpur, Sangli, Bombay, Calicut, Varanasi, Kanpur, Ahmadabad, Nasik, Gorakhpur, Agra, Salem, Jaipur, Amravati, Surat, Jhansi, Madurai, Lucknow, Ranchi, Vellore, Sagar, Aligarh, Poona, Vellore, Machilipatnam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 15</td>
<td>Kharagpur, Ahmednagar, Gaya, Shahjahanpur, Ambala Cantt, Ujjain, Hyderabad, Thanjavur, Calcutta, Dehra Dun, Patiala, Mysore, Rampur.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decrease</td>
<td>Kolar Gold Fields.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cities with new industrial projects in public sector, such as Bhopal (117.9, heavy electricals), Kota (84.8, fertilizers), Erode (79.3, tanneries), Kurnool (67.4, cement), Thana (61.2, chemicals) and Bangalore (54.0, aircrafts) grew equally fast. The rapid expansion of industrial cities located on the Bombay-Calcutta and Bombay-Madras rail routes was striking (Map 33). Delhi, the national capital, grew by 64.2 per cent. By contrast, the former native state capitals such as Rampur (0.8), Mysore (3.9), Patiala (8.0), Ujjain (11.0), Ahmednagar (13.1), Srinagar (16.4) and Gwalior (24.4) recorded below average growth rates. Sluggish growth of cities in Uttar Pradesh, in particular, was related to the slow pace of industrialisation in the state.

There was not much to distinguish between growth rates of class II and class III towns. Towns belonging to both the categories grew fast in general. The number of class II towns increased from 96 to 130 out of which a half got their class II status at the 1961 census. Some of the new entrants in this category recorded explosive growth rates: Imphal (2266.1), Howrah (647.6), Yamunanagar (229.6), Sambalpur (145.4), Bilaspur (121.8), Purnea (114.1), Ichakaranji (85.9), Murwara (78.5), Davanagere (76.4), Ganganagar (75.2) and Hisar (70.6).

Some of these were new industrial centres, and some benefitted from the agricultural development in their surrounding area. On the whole, two out of every five class II towns grew by 30+ per cent and growth rate was 15+ in four out of every five towns. Only one-fifth of the class II towns showed a sluggish growth by less than 15 per cent (Table 8.5).

Parenthesis contain the growth rate of a city along with its dominant industry.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Name of town/urban agglomeration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60 and above</td>
<td>Imphal, Yamunanagar, Sambalpur, Bilaspur, Purnea, Siliguri, Murwara, Davanagere, Ganganagar, Hisar, Pathankot, Bermo, Anantapur, Ghaziabad, Ichalkaranji.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 - 59.9</td>
<td>Basirhat, Bhadravati, Dibrugarh, Gomia, Firozabad, Bhatinda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 - 44.9</td>
<td>English Bazar, Nizamabad, Faizabad, Navasari, Krishnanagar, Katihar, Kothagudem, Proddatur, Ratlam, Hospet, Quilon, Shimoga, Mussofarpur, Tenali, Cambay, Ambala, Wadhwan, Midnapore, Adoni, Pollachi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Towns</td>
<td>Chandigarh, Rourkela, Valparai, Pondicherry.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of class III towns increased from 336 to 459. More than one-third of them got their class III status at the 1961 census. Nearly four-fifths of class III towns recorded a growth rate of 15+ per cent; about two-fifths of 30+ per cent. Practically the same pattern was observed in the case of class II towns. In line with class I and II towns, class III towns grew fast in northeastern India, western Uttar Pradesh and Punjab that witnessed emergence of new industries under the plans.

The stagnation of small towns continued. Their number came down from 2363 to 1727 due to declassification of many small towns. More than one-third of them grew sluggishly by less than 15 per cent. Out of 111 decrease-towns of all sizes, 96 belonged to this category. Sluggish growth of small towns was typical of almost all parts of India.

The explosive growth of cities, thus, contrasted with the stagnation growth of small towns during 1951-1961 also. There was an increase in the rate of urban to urban migration. A redeeming feature of the decade was the relatively fast growth of many medium-sized towns due to their enhanced ability to attract new industrial and commercial activities. Part of this development was the outcome of the public policy.

Spatial Pattern

Map 34 based on districtwise data revealed striking spatial disparities in urbanisation process during 1951-1961. Urban growth was fast (30+ per cent) in about one-third of the districts, moderate (15 to less than 30 per cent) in one-fifth, and slow (less than 15 per cent) in another one-fifth of the districts (Table 8.6). There was a decrease in urban population in 56 districts and 29 districts continued to be without any urban population (Map 35).

Table 8.6

INDIA

Classification of Districts by Urban Growth Rate 1951-1961

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Growth rate (in percentage)</th>
<th>Number of districts*</th>
<th>Percentage in total districts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60 and above</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 - 59.9</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 - 44.9</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 - 29.9</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 15</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decrease</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entirely rural</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India, 1971, General Population Tables, Part II-A for all states and union territories.

* Data for one district were not available. Nine districts witnessed the emergence of a town or towns for the first time in 1961.
Areas of Rapid Urban Growth

The northeastern states including Assam, West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa as well as the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh were the scene of rapid urbanisation during 1951-1961. Urban population in these states increased by 126.2, 36.0, 49.0, 86.8 and 47.7 per cent respectively. This spectacular rate of urban growth was the outcome of emergence of new towns as well as fast growth of the existing ones. The number of new towns was 34 in Assam, 66 in West Bengal, 51 in Bihar, 23 in Orissa and 71 in Madhya Pradesh. These contributed 56, 32, 35, 59 and 23 per cent of the gain in urban population of the respective states.

Underlying the fast pace of urbanisation was the great role of new industrialisation and extension of mining. These states together were allocated nearly a half of the total investment in the public sector under the first two five year plans. The intention was to industrialize these areas by using their bountiful resources. Iron and steel industry got the first priority and three major plants, each with a capacity of one million tons, were established at Durgapur (with the British collaboration), Rourkela (with German collaboration) and Bhilai (with Soviet collaboration). Other prominent industries included fertilizers.

16 Census of India, 1951, General Population Tables, op. cit., p. 55.
at Sindhri, Tachher and Korba; aluminium at Sambalpur and Korba; engineering works at Kumardhubi; railway engines at Chitrakhan; heavy machines at Ranchi and heavy electricals at Bhopal (Map 36). Establishment of these industries was greatly facilitated by availability of power from the multipurpose projects like Hirakud, Damodar Valley Corporation, and Kosi (Map 37). Besides, iron ore mining projects were started at Kiriburu, coal washeries were put up at Durgapur, Kathara, Sawang and Gidi, and oil refineries were located at Naharkatiya, Mokam, Moran, Gauhati and Barauni. All these industrial and mining project sites attracted a large number of migrants.

The Punjab-Haryana plain and Delhi constituted another area that witnessed fast urban growth. Within this region, three tracts are specially noteworthy: (i) newly irrigated areas served by Bhakra canals, (ii) the Amritsar-Delhi belt and (iii) Delhi and its peripheral zone. The fast growth of towns in the canal irrigated districts of Ferozepur, Bhatinda, Sangrur and Hissar was the result of increasingly high degree of commercial farming in cotton and oilseeds. These towns were generally agricultural markets, situated along the Delhi-Ferozepur rail route, and several of them grew into cotton and oilseeds processing centres. Towns along Amritsar-Delhi railway route also grew fast but due to industrial development on different lines: textiles at Amritsar,

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19 Ibid., p. 22.
INDIA
MAJOR POWER PROJECTS
(AS ON MARCH 31, 1970)

Completed Construction

Under Construction

Hydel

Thermal

Nuclear

Map 37
sport goods at Jullundur, sugar at Phagwara, hosiery goods at Ludhiana and scientific apparatus at Ambala being the most notable. Another area of rapid urban development was the one that included Delhi and its region. Not only the national capital itself was marked for its explosive growth but also its nearby towns like Sonepat, Ballabgarh, Faridabad, Ghaziabad and Modinagar were noted for unprecedented increases in their populations during the decade. The over-spilling of industrial activity from Delhi, where the prices of land were high and where the planning agencies had imposed restrictions on the use of land for industries, were mainly responsible for this development. Sonepat became famous for bicycles, Ballabgarh for tyres, Faridabad, Ghaziabad and Modinagar for a variety of manufactures including agricultural implements, transport equipment and engineering goods. These towns also accommodated thousands of persons who could not afford a residence in Delhi but commuted daily to this city for work. In brief, these developed into industrial and residential satellites of Delhi.

20 The Times of India : op. cit., p. 906.
The Bombay-Ahmadabad industrial belt was another tract distinguished by rapid urban growth associated with development of new industries. This industrial belt, traditionally famous for its cotton textiles, witnessed the development of textiles machinery, chemicals and rayon manufacturing also. The new lines were ancilliary to cotton textiles industry. Petrochemicals, deriving their raw materials from the Bombay refinery, was another enterprise to grow on a large scale. The expansion of dairying and increased production of tobacco and bananas stimulated the growth of many a market town in the Gujarat plain. Among other factors, availability of additional power to Bombay from the Koyna project and to Ahmadabad from a new thermal plant were vital to this new industrialisation.

Madras-Salem-Coimbatore was another industrial belt to experience fast growth of towns. Several new industries including engineering goods, electricals, transport equipment, chemicals, aluminium and textiles machinery were located in the towns of this belt. Availability of cheap and skilled labour as well as the presence of a populous regional market and an increased supply of power through the various projects were the factors behind this development. Bangalore also grew fast due to establishment of public sector industries like aircraft, electrical appliances, telephone and machine tools.

24 C.D. Deshpande : Geography of Maharashtra, National Book Trust, New Delhi, 1971, pp. 120-121.
27 The Times of India : op. cit., p. 892.
Towns on the various multi-purpose project sites were also the scene of new industrialization and urbanization. Examples included Nangal that was built as a part of Bhakra project, Kota whose industrial growth owed much to the power generated by Chambal valley project, and Hirakud, Rajgangpur, Brajarajnagar that benefitted from the Hirakud project (Map 38).

It follows that liberal investments by the government in various heavy industries, mining and multipurpose projects played a crucial role in Indian urbanisation during 1951-1961. The northeastern states, where the public investment was by far the highest in proportion, experienced phenomenally rapid urban growth. The central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh had a similar experience. The Bombay-Ahmadabad, Madras-Salem-Coimbatore, and Delhi-Amritsar belts also recorded rapid growth of towns. The expansion of existing towns or emergence of new ones near the multipurpose project sites was another noticeable feature of this decade.

Areas of Slow Urban Growth

The state of Uttar Pradesh (excluding its zone peripheral to Delhi, the hilly region and sporadically distributed big cities, all of which recorded fast growth) was noted for sluggish urbanisation. As many as 222 towns out of 462 in 1951 were declassified at the 1961 census. Nearly one-third of the towns experienced a decrease in their population or grew by less than 15 per cent; in another one-half the growth rate ranged between 15 and less than 30 per cent. The main reason for this urban
INDIA
MAJOR IRRIGATION PROJECTS
(AS ON MARCH 31, 1970)

Map 38
stagnation was lack of industrial development. Most of the towns functioned merely as service centres for their economically underdeveloped hinterlands. There was a little incentive for town growth. Rather many of them suffered out-migration to other big cities outside and within the state. The metropolitan cities of Delhi, Bombay and Calcutta, towns in Madhya Pradesh, and cities like Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh itself were the recipient of this migration. Some parts of the state did record a fast growth of urban population. The zone peripheral to Delhi and the hilly region were the most notable. The industrial development in the former and expansion of administration and tourism in the latter were the main underlying factors.

Almost the same trend was observed in another economically backward state of Rajasthan, excluding its agriculturally rich district of Ganganagar and the newly industrializing district of Kota. This state also suffered declassification of 84 towns. Hardly one-tenth of the existing towns recorded a fast growth rate of 30+ per cent. Low level of industrial development and precarious rural agricultural economy were responsible for


stagnation in urbanisation. There was considerable out-migration from both rural and urban areas of the state to other parts of India, particularly Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra and West Bengal. Ganganagar district, however, was noted for fast pace of urbanisation due to in-migration to its market and agro-based industrial towns. Towns grew fast also in Kota district due to coming up of new industries in and around the city of Kota.

The stagnation of small towns around big cities like Bombay, Nagpur, and Sholapur in Maharashtra, around Hyderabad in Andhra Pradesh, and around Bangalore in Karnataka was a marked feature of urbanisation in these three south Indian states. The urban shadow effect of big cities in arresting the growth of smaller towns was distinctly evident. The new industrial, commercial and service activity shewed a tendency of concentrating more in big places.

The sluggish growth of small towns around fast growing big cities was noted in Tamil Nadu as well. About 60 per cent of the small towns in the state grew by less than 15 per cent but practically all the cities grew rapidly by 30 per cent. Urban to urban migration at local level was a characteristic feature of this area.

33 V.C. Mishra: op. cit., p. 165.
34 ibid., p. 165.
Towns in all the Punjab's districts bordering with Pakistan continued growing slow. The proximity of an international border with an unfriendly country was detrimental to fresh industrial and commercial investment in these towns. There was rather some shift of industry and capital to safer places like Delhi. Some of the towns suffered due also to truncation of their service zones by the international border.

Lastly, most of the small ports all along the coastal India were noted for sluggish growth. By contrast, the big ports like Bombay, Mangalore, Cochin, Madras, Vishakhapatnam, and Calcutta grew fast. Small ports were generally losing their population to big ports through the process of migration.

**Conclusion**

Despite a substantial rise in the rate of natural increase, the process of urbanisation slackened during 1951–1961. There was more of rural to rural than rural to urban migration as new development sites in rural areas were also offering manifold employment opportunities. Rural–urban migration was rather moderated by a growing tendency toward commuting and increasing supply of locally born labour in urban places. The slackening of urbanisation process became glaring by declassification of 803 towns consequent upon adoption of strict criteria for defining an urban place.

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36 ibid., p. 167.
37 ibid., pp. 167-168.
Cities grew fast and small towns stagnated - a process that got accentuated during 1951-1961. Urban to urban migration was playing a greater role than before. One of the redeeming features of urbanisation during the decade was a relatively fast growth of medium-sized towns many of which gained in their industrial and service activity under the new public policy.

The northeastern region of India comprising the states of Assam, West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh recorded rapid urban growth, thanks to a multitude of industrial, mining and multipurpose projects started with liberal financial assistance from the central government. The percentage of urban population in all these states, barring West Bengal, was less than the Indian average and the efforts at industrialization and urbanisation were well called for. Some industrial belts, such as Bombay-Ahmedabad, Madras-Salem-Coimbatore, and Delhi-Amritsar, were also distinguished by a fast pace of urban development.

By contrast, urbanisation was slow in Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan where advancement in industrialization was still awaited. Stagnation of small towns under the shadow effect of big cities was a common feature of the four south Indian states of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra. Sluggish growth of small ports in contrast to rapid expansion of big ones all along the coastal India was another notable feature.
In brief, public investment in developmental activities was a big factor in urbanisation during 1951-1961, a decade that witnessed the completion of the first two five year plans of India. New towns emerged as centres of industry, mining and power generation. Urbanisation got decentralized in local areas. The autonomous economic forces, however, favoured the growth of big cities at the cost of small towns. Hence, somewhat conflicting patterns of urbanisation prevailed.