An attempt was made to capture the changes taking place during 1991-2002 in the urban-rural relations in the ISCR. This period, in fact, coincides with radical changes effected in India’s macro-economic policies to promote the role of the private sector, attract foreign capital and improve economic efficiency. Special emphasis was placed on the development and maintenance of good quality infrastructure especially in the fields of transport, communication and information technology. Foreign capital and technology were liberally invited in such fields. Consequently, the number of vehicles (two as well as four wheelers), telephones, both landline and mobile, televisions and computers increased tremendously. Under the privatization policy, informal urban economy and super specialization in medical, educational, banking and other professional services recorded a mushrooming growth in urban centres especially in cities like Chandigarh. Under the liberalization policy, private investment, both foreign and Indian, found an added attraction in cities like Chandigarh where availability as well as quality of services was par excellence as per Indian standards. Chandigarh, thus became a great attraction for investors, service providers, job seekers and professionals. Consequently, urban land prices shot-up in the city which led to the emergence of a number of legal and illegal residential colonies in and around the city of Chandigarh. In this process a big geographical city emerged, which is generally termed as Chandigarh Urban Complex. Under the changed scenario brought by the revolution in electronic and automobile technology, distances began shrinking. By now, to travel a distance of 15 to 20 kilometers is no more a worrisome
problem. The zone of commuting is expanding further and further and so are the services supplied by the city of Chandigarh. All this has led to the redefining of urban-rural relations in the region.

This chapter presents the recent scenario of urban-rural relations in ISCR captured through a fieldwork conducted in randomly selected 30 villages. The sample was stratified on the basis of relief, population size, distance from Chandigarh and road accessibility. Thereafter, a sample from each strata was drawn using a random table. A well-structured pre-tested questionnaire was used to collect the information. The questionnaire was related to village level information viz. identification, commodity and service exchange, commuting, facilities and amenities available as well as village landuse and cropping pattern. Following is the list of selected villages along with their *Hadbast* number where fieldwork was conducted (Fig. 6.1): Bhabbat (234), Karoran (352), Singhpura (43), Kotian (196), Chhoti-Bari Naggal (339), Landran (37), Tira (20), Khizerabad (322), Khera Gajju (269), Shiamipur (83), Simbal Majra (73), Kot (238), Chikan (185), Dharak Kalan (56), Manauli (270), Bari Rauni (281), Sialba (148), Manpur (273), Majra Mehtab (140), Arnauli (238), Hasanpur (96), Dehar (224), Barwala (246), Shivdaspur (180), Raipur Rani (06), Kheri (10), Bhoj Dhati (318), Bhoj Jabyal (324), Narainpur (207), Shahzadpur (58) and Hangola (265). In addition, the observation method was also used to supplement information/data collected through the questionnaire.

The discussion to follow has been organized under four sections. The first focuses on commodity exchange, the second on commuting and the third on service exchange. Finally, an overall picture emerging out of the discussion in three sections has been presented in a consolidated form in the fourth section.
Inter-State Chandigarh Region
Location of Sampled Villages

- Hassanpur
- Amauli
- Ban Rauni
- Manpur
- Chotti Bari (Naggal)
- Majra Mehtab
- Shiamipur
- Simbal Majra
- Tira
- Chikan
- Kotian
- Bhoi Dhati
- Shivdaspur
- Dharak Kalan
- Kot
- Raipur Ram
- Barwala
- Hangnia
- Shahzadpur
- Jabyal
- Chikan
- Simbal Majra
- Tira
- Chikan
- Kotian
- Bhoi Dhati
- Shivdaspur
- Dharak Kalan
- Kot
- Raipur Ram
- Barwala
- Hangnia
- Shahzadpur
- Jabyal

Sample village
- Urban places
- Reserved forest and hill tracts without settlements

Fig. 6.1
I

COMMODITY EXCHANGE

During the fieldwork it emerged from the observations and discussions with the knowledgeable persons, that prior to the emergence of Chandigarh and even a decade after, the surrounding villages of the ISCR maintained their ties with already existing and organically evolved towns of Kalka, Kharar, Dera Bassi, Banur, Morinda, Kurali and Naraingarh (Table 6.1). Each of these centres had, among other things its own grain market, bank branch, police station, high or higher secondary schools, hospitals or dispensary and a weekly market. In fact, in the historical past these places served as the administrative headquarters of different administrative units under various rulers.

Still lower in spatial hierarchy were rural service centres like Mubarkpur, Mullanpur, Sohana, Burail, Sialba Majri, Landran, Tira, Khizerabad, Manauli and Lalru. Each of these had a high school, dispensary and veterinary centre. However, a grain market and or bank service was absent in most of them.

It was revealed by the respondents that prior to the emergence of Chandigarh, Ambala was the most important centre for them to make bulk purchases especially for marriages and other important family functions. Even today, Ambala has a big wholesale cloth market which is still preferred to purchase items like silken clothes (especially sarees), utensils and jewelry for marriages and other social functions. Even the current families of Chandigarh prefer the Ambala market for making such purchases.

As stated earlier, Chandigarh gradually captured the umland of the existing towns in the region by weakening and eroding away the traditional functional ties, which the villages had with existing service centres in the region. It took almost a decade for Chandigarh to establish the functional links with its region.
In this process, the nearby villages, falling in the zone of 10 kms, started an earlier interaction in the 1960s while the rest took nearly a decade for the same. Information collected from the field reveals interesting and little known facts about commodity and service exchange patterns before the emergence of Chandigarh (see Table 6.1).

### Table 6.1

ISCR: Commodity and service exchange before the emergence of Chandigarh

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance zone</th>
<th>Places from where commodities were purchased</th>
<th>Nature of the commodities sold / purchased from towns</th>
<th>Higher education or health services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. (upto 10 kms)</td>
<td>Kharar, Mani Majra, Ambala, Dera Bassi</td>
<td>Sell – Grains</td>
<td>Kharar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Purchase – Grocery, Clothes and other items of domestic need</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. (10-20 kms)</td>
<td>Ambala, Mani Majra, Kurali, Dera Bassi, Kharar</td>
<td>Sell – Grains</td>
<td>Ambala, Kharar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Purchase – Grocery, Clothes and Household items</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. (20-30 kms)</td>
<td>Ambala, Kurali, Kharar</td>
<td>Sell – Grains</td>
<td>Ambala, Kharar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Purchase – Grocery, Clothes and Household items</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. (30-40 kms)</td>
<td>Kurali, Ambala, Morinda</td>
<td>Sell – Grains</td>
<td>Ambala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Purchase – Grocery, Clothes and Household items</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. (40-50 kms)</td>
<td>Ambala, Raipur Rani</td>
<td>Sell – Grains</td>
<td>Ambala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Purchase – Grocery, Clothes and Household items</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. (more than 50 kms)</td>
<td>Ambala, Naraingarh</td>
<td>Sell – Grains</td>
<td>Ambala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Purchase – Grocery, Clothes and Household items</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Fieldwork, 2002
City demands, hinterland supplies

Plate 6

Truck farming in village Khera Gajju

Floriculture in village Tira
To begin with, milk and vegetables constituted the two most important commodities, which the region supplied to Chandigarh. Before the emergence of Chandigarh, hardly 40 villages around the city supplied vegetables and milk to any service centre (Krishan and Aggarwal, 1970). Gradually, the vegetable and milk supply zone extended to more than five hundred villages. Villages known for specialization in vegetable cultivation are Jhando Majra, Mehrululi, Khizerabd, Desu Majra, Jhungen, Harlapur, Jhandpur, Palheri, Teur, Khanpur around Kharar town, Batouri, Khatauli, Natwal, Rampur, Fatehpur and Kami near Raipur Rani town, Kherra Gajju, Lehal, Manakpur, Tasoli, Devinagar and Urdan near Banur town. The vegetable supply zone extended beyond the Ghaggar river in the South-east and towards the West and South-west. The zone roughly spreads along the Banur – Kharar road. This can rightly be identified as a 'vegetable belt' of the region where the Samis (traditional vegetable growers) make up the most dominant caste.

During the fieldwork it was mentioned by the respondents that since the eighties there had been a clear-cut shift in favour of seasonal vegetables. Farmers preferred growing all type of vegetables viz. leaf, stem and root. However, tomatoes, potatoes, onions, cauliflower, chillies and leafy vegetables were the most popular ones. These vegetables find their way in to Apni Mandis or Farmer’s markets organized daily in some or the other sectors of Chandigarh, Panchkula or Mohali. Farmers get the price prevailing in the market, as the farmer and the consumer deal directly without the middleman in such markets. Of late, the progressive farmers have also started growing cabbage, carrots, beans, broccoli and mushrooms. The new additions are in great demand for being important ingredients of popular Chinese and Italian recipes being served in the city hotels and restaurants and which are increasingly finding favour among the local population.
### Table 6.2

**ISCR: Commodity and service exchange after the emergence of Chandigarh**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance zone</th>
<th>Time period in which road to Chd. was constructed</th>
<th>Time period in which interaction with Chd. commenced</th>
<th>Commodities purchased from Chd.</th>
<th>Commodity sold to Chd.</th>
<th>Frequency of visits to Chd.</th>
<th>Higher Education / Medical services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>III (20-30 kms)</td>
<td>1970-75</td>
<td>1980 onwards</td>
<td>Building material, bricks, marble, off season vegetables, fruits</td>
<td>Vegetables, milk, poultry grains.</td>
<td>Weekly / Occasionally</td>
<td>PGI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV (30-40 kms)</td>
<td>1970-80</td>
<td>1985 onwards</td>
<td>Building material, bricks, marble, off season vegetables, fruits</td>
<td>Milk, poultry Vegetables, fruits</td>
<td>Particular occasion</td>
<td>PGI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. (40-50 kms)</td>
<td>1970-80</td>
<td>1985 onwards</td>
<td>Building material, bricks, marble, off season vegetables, fruits</td>
<td>Vegetables, milk</td>
<td>Particular occasion</td>
<td>PGI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. (more than 50)</td>
<td>1970-80</td>
<td>1990 onwards</td>
<td>Buy and sell commodities from Ambala since it is near</td>
<td></td>
<td>Particular occasion</td>
<td>PGI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Fieldwork 2002

On an average, 1.79 lakh litres of milk is supplied to Chandigarh, Mohali and Panchkula everyday by the surrounding villages. Besides, there is an average increase of 8 per cent in the milk supply every year (The Hindustan Times, September 25, 2003). The ever increasing demand for milk with increasing urban population and rising standards of living has stimulated the dairying...
Proliferation of dairy farming

A view of a dairy farm near Morinda town

Milk supply to Chandigarh
activity in the surrounding villages especially around Chuni, Dera Bassi, Morinda and Barwala. This is now done on professional and scientific lines with improved hybrid variety of milch cattle. In a study conducted in 1970 (see Krishan and Aggarwal, 1970, pp. 36) it was found that only about 30 villages supplied milk to any service centre before the birth of the city. Within a span of 15 years such a zone has expanded over to about 320 villages. In the South-East direction it extends upto Barwala on the Chandigarh-Naraingarh road, in the South beyond Dera Bassi and Banur on the Chandigarh-Ambala and Chandigarh-Patiala roads respectively, in the South-West beyond Chuni on the Chandigarh-Sirhind road and in the West upto Morinda on the Chandigarh-Ludhiana road. These corridors can rightly be called as milk-pails of the region (Table 6.3).

In the last few years, apart from milk and vegetables, some other commodities too have found a lucrative market in Chandigarh. Amongst them, poultry products, flowers and bricks are worth mentioning. Villages located on Chandigarh-Naraingarh road and around Zirakpur have gone in for poultry products on a big scale (Table 6.3). The ever increasing demand of eggs and chicken by the fast growing hotel industry in the city has stimulated the growth of poultry farming in these villages. Similarly, introduction of floriculture around Chandigarh had led to the introduction of flower cultivation in villages such as Tira, Rani Majra and Jhampur as they are located in close proximity of Chandigarh. Marigold and gladli flowers are mostly grown and supplied to the florists in the city. Apart from this, a number of brick kilns have come up in the villages surrounding the city especially along the Chandigarh-Naraingarh road. These bricks are supplied to Chandigarh, Mohali and Panchkula for construction of various public and private buildings.
### Table 6.3

ISCR: Important villages specialising in activities promoting commodity exchange

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Villages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. Truck Farming</strong></td>
<td>Jhande Majra (144), Mehrauli (143), Khizerabad (322), Desu Majra (31), Jhungian (29), Harilpur (181), Jhandpur (28), Palheri (173), Teur (81), Khanpur (302), Kherra Gajju (269), Lehlan (267), Manakpur (272), Tasoli (273), Devi Nagar (274), Urdan (265), Raipur Rani (6), Kheri (10), Samlheri (11), Batouri (247), Khatauli (3), Natwal (23), Rampur (209), Fatehpur (80).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II. Floriculture</strong></td>
<td>Tira (20), Rani Majra (85), Jhampur (22), Manana (21), Bad Majra (25).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>III. Dairy Farming</strong></td>
<td>Ban a Madanpur (231), Nagal Mogindgarh (229), Ramgarh (232), Manka (233), Behla (237), Kot (238), Naggal (239), Kami (243), Manak Tabra (244), Bhagwanpur (248), Barwala (246), Haripur Kura (17), Devinagar (18), Shatabgarh (41), Singhpura (43), Dhanas (15), Karoran (352), Dhangrauli (244), Rattanghar (250), Aurnauli (238), Prempur (284), Sandhari Majra (255), Bari Mandauli (248), Bari Rauni (281), Boothgarh (265), Dhcomchari (262), Gopalpur (234), Kainaur (235), Kajauli (266), Kakrauli (231).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IV. Poultry Farming</strong></td>
<td>Barwala (246), Rewahar (239), Jatwar (14), Mauli (16), Taborah (73), Rampur (75), Dodhali (76), Laha (77), Khora Bhura (78), Taber (15), Saidpur (44), Sawara (45), Magar (46), Ras-anheri (47), Sukhgarh (289), Patti Sohana (290).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Hadbast numbers of villages are in parentheses  
Source: Fieldwork, 2002

The impact of change in transport technology is now quite visible on the behaviour of rural consumers and items they purchase from the urban market. Their visits to Chandigarh are more multi-purpose in nature. Secondly, some of
Brick kilns along Chandigarh-Naraingarh road (Haryana)

A brick kiln in the vicinity of Chandigarh in village Togan (Punjab)
the items which they earlier used to purchase from Chandigarh market are now readily available in their own villages or at the nearby rural service centres. The villagers in most cases do not come to Chandigarh for the sole purpose of purchasing provisions and goods but may go in for shopping when they visit Chandigarh for disposing off milk, vegetables or agricultural produce. It is quite true that many villages have one or two local shops catering to most of the daily needs. Besides, they procure things like grocery, ready made garments and building material especially marble from Chandigarh. Even now, the factor of retail sale does not function as a strong link between Chandigarh and its surrounding villages. This is performed by different service centres such as Kalka, Kharar, Banur and Dera Bassi located at a convenient distance from Chandigarh.

All such service centres, which existed long before the emergence of Chandigarh had traditionally evolved functional relations with their surrounding villages. The whole context of such relations registered a radical change with the emergence of Chandigarh. The people in the villages of the region now prefer to purchase provisional goods from old service centres in place of Chandigarh where such items are now easily available and that too on competitive prices. No doubt, the question of variety and quality of goods is still important. For a larger variety and better quality goods, they certainly prefer Chandigarh over the nearby market centres. In fact, those who visit Chandigarh quite frequently or commute daily prefer Chandigarh for making purchases even for provisional goods. The rest opt for multipurpose visits to Chandigarh / Panchkula / Mohali.

Varying frequency of visits with a change in distance from Chandigarh was yet another important feature of visits to the city. People from the villages located at a distance of 20 kms. visited Chandigarh almost daily, whereas in the zone of
20-30 kms, visits are made weekly and in the 30 kms and more distance zone the visits were limited only to particular occasions (Table 6.2). However, factors like family income, mode of transport available with family, nature of an individual’s profession / occupation also play a considerable role in this context. Those with higher income, personal two/four wheelers and engaged in professions which demanded frequent or daily commuting to Chandigarh came almost daily to Chandigarh even from a distance of more than 30 kilometers.

II

RURAL-URBAN COMMUTING

Commuting to the city has been from all the directions except in the North and East where the Siwalik hills and choe (seasonal stream) infested tracts put restrictions on the mobility. In 1951, the Ropar-Kalka road was the only major road in the area. Hardly 2 per cent of the villages were connected by a road but presently 90 per cent of the villages are connected by pucca roads. Gradually, after ‘970’s a number of roads in different directions were constructed. By 1981, the ISCR was served by 2 National Highways i.e Chandigarh – Simla Road (NH 22) and Chandigarh-Ropar-Manali Road (NH 21). There were 3 State highways viz. Chandigarh–Patiala, Chandigarh-Ludhiana and Chandigarh – Shahbad. The construction of all these roads has facilitated commuting. The modes of commuting included cycles, scooters and buses. People used the cycle or scooter if they had to commute a distance upto 20 kms. Beyond 20 kms, they preferred either a bus or a scooter and beyond 40 kms they used buses to commute to Chandigarh. The frequency of buses plying during office hours, morning and evening, range between 4-5 with a half an hour service. The average number of commuters coming from surrounding villages to Chandigarh varied with distance. For villages located in a zone of 10 kms, on an average, 500 commuters commute daily. The number gets reduced to 300
Towards a symbiotic relationship

Plate 9

A scooter stand for commuters in Kurali town

A school bus carrying village children to a Chandigarh school
Persons in the distance zone of 10-20 kms and to only 100 persons in the 20-30 kms zone. Beyond 30 kms the number varies between only 20-50 persons (Table 6.4).

Table 6.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance zone</th>
<th>Average No. of commuters commuting from each village to Chd.</th>
<th>Mode of commuting</th>
<th>No. of buses plying between 8 am to 10 am</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zone I (upto 10 kms.)</td>
<td>500 Cycle, Scooter</td>
<td>4-5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zone II (10-20 kms)</td>
<td>300 Cycle, Scooter, Buses</td>
<td>4-5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zone III (20-30 kms)</td>
<td>100 Bus, Scooter</td>
<td>4-5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zone IV (30-40 kms)</td>
<td>50 Bus, Scooter</td>
<td>4-5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zone V (40-50 kms)</td>
<td>30 Bus</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zone VI (more than 50)</td>
<td>20 Bus</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Among the commuters, a large majority was comprised of government employees working in different offices of Punjab, Haryana and UT governments. Some of them also worked in the industrial and commercial establishments of Chandigarh city. Of late, a number of cycle and scooter stands have come up in Kurali and Kharar towns. Commuters from far off villages which don’t have a direct bus service to Chandigarh, first come to these towns using their own vehicle. They park their vehicles at these stands and board a bus to reach Chandigarh. This not only saves them from long waiting sessions at the bus stops but also ensures a convenient movement from home to the place of work and back.
On the other side of the scale, a large number of commuters go from Chandigarh to these villages to work in schools, colleges, banks, hospitals and other administrative offices. They prefer their own vehicle or public transport to travel. The attraction of quality life and quality education for children forces the employees to undertake the long and tiresome journey daily to and from their work places in rural areas. From the economic angle also, this saves them from the botheration and burden of maintaining two homes at two different locations. An efficient transport network has promoted the habit of commuting in the region. Besides, vehicles like scooter, motor cycles and cars have facilitated even long distance commuting.

III

SERVICE EXCHANGE

In contrast to an evolved town, setup by its surrounding area to perform central functions, Chandigarh was superimposed on a backward region to stimulate development. It was designed as a capital for the state of Punjab as well as a regional centre of education, health care and culture.

There has been a marked improvement in the availability of education and health services in the region since the inception of the city. Prior to the emergence of Chandigarh, only two villages had a high school and there were three health centres. Presently, almost 25 per cent of the villages in the region have at least one high school and 35 per cent have a government health centre or dispensary. The service base has, thus, expanded considerably over the years. Chandigarh has undoubtedly set in motion the socio-economic development of the region.
Chandigarh, a well known centre for health and educational services caters to such needs not only of its own hinterland but also of the entire North-West region. Therefore, people come to avail these services from long distances. Similarly, in schools and colleges of Chandigarh, students and teachers from surrounding villages commute daily. Earlier, the mode of commuting used to be the bicycle which now has been replaced by public transport, school buses, and privately owned vehicles i.e., two wheelers / four wheelers. Earlier, the daily commuting zone was restricted to 10-12 kms, but now it has extended to 20-30 kms and even beyond. Similarly, while previously people commuted to avail education and medical facilities in rural areas but now they come for quality education or higher and professional education to Chandigarh. The same is also true of medical and health services.

Privatisation policy in the post-reforms period has added a new dimension to urban-rural relations. Under the privatization policy, taking advantage of the pent up demand for technical and professional education, private investors have invested heavily in the education sector in and around the city. Recently, several engineering, management and medical colleges have sprung up around Chandigarh. Such colleges are located in Tangori, Bhaddal, Dera Bassi, Landran, Jaulan Kalan, Ratwara Sahib, Kot Billa and Abhipur and need special mention in this regard.

Students from Chandigarh commute daily by college buses to these colleges and return in the evening. Besides the students, their teaching and administrative staff also commutes from Chandigarh, Panchkula and Mohali. This is definitely a new phase in urban-rural relations. Surprisingly, it is now the rural areas which also attract students and teachers from urban areas and that too for higher technical and professional education. Privatisation, exorbitantly high urban land prices, pent up urban demand for professional and technical
education and automobile revolution have largely contributed towards shaping up this new phase in the urban-rural relations.

Another technological factor, which has played a significant role in further strengthening the urban-rural interactions, is the telephone. In recent years, there has been rapid expansion of the telephone facility in rural areas. As a part of the government's policy, telephone facilities have made large strides during the Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97). Telephone facilities have further boosted the trade and service relations between Chandigarh and its surrounding hinterland. Now a retail trader in a small town or rural service center can conveniently place an order on phone in the wholesale market at Chandigarh. The wholesale merchant delivers the commodities at the doorstep of the retailer on the same day or next day by a supply vehicle. Similarly, for acquiring construction material and catering services from Chandigarh and nearby towns the villagers can now place orders on phone. Thus, the city and its surrounding villages are drawing closer to each other in the region.

IV

URBAN-RURAL RELATIONS: A CONSOLIDATION

In the post 1991 period, the region witnessed a major change in both quality and quantity of transport, telecommunication, electronic media and information technology. This is to be seen in the context of macro-economic reforms initiated by the national government in 1991. The number of vehicles, telephones, televisions and computers in rural areas grew manifold. Under the changed scenario, created by a revolution in the electronic and automobile technology, the distances began shrinking. Also, the distinction between the rural and urban areas seems to be falling apart.
Plate 10

Villas in the village

A view of a modern house in village Landran
Craze for urban goods and urban style

Growing craze for readymade garments: A view from weekly market in Kurali town
The increased use of two wheelers and four wheelers, telephones (both mobile and landline), televisions and computers have contributed positively in the strengthening of urban-rural interaction in the region. It is the change in transport technology which has not only facilitated the movement of perishable goods (milk, poultry, flowers, vegetables) but also increased the mobility of commuters from longer distances. Earlier, the daily commuter zone was 10-12 kms but now it has extended even beyond 30 kms.

Similarly, the spread of the communications and media network comprising telephones, television and newspapers have increased the scope and field of information of villagers. Today they are acquainted with the latest happenings around them as well as the new products launched in the market. Most of the newspapers now have city editions which keep the villagers well informed about the city life. The villager is being drawn closer to the city and is almost integrated with the urban way of life. This is reflected in the dressing styles, use of consumer durable items like televisions, refrigerators, coolers, music systems, washing machines etc. and adoption of modern architectural forms of houses. At least those who can afford it in the countryside are able to enjoy life comparable to urban standards. In fact, the economic interests of rural elites are no more confined to rural areas only. Now they are keen to invest in urban property or establish some business in the town.

On the other side of scale, the urban elite from Chandigarh especially the political and bureaucratic bigwigs have a great interest in investing in rural property. The huge and palatial farm houses that have come up in the adjoining villages of Chandigarh bear testimony to this. Further, urban middle class, with the soaring land prices and rents in the city, have opted to shift to nearby towns and villages. Easy housing loans, rebate on income tax to those opting for
housing loan and a desire to own a house have also contributed positively in this context. Consequently, a number of residential colonies have sprung up in Desu Majra, Sohana, Landran, Bhabbat, Kharar, Naya Gaon and Zirakpur. With efficient means of public and private transport people prefer commuting even from a distance of more than 30 kms. A reversal in the direction of movement (urban-rural) of the relations is quite apparent.

Yet another recent development, which has altered the course of urban-rural relations, is the coming up of a number of private institutions for technical and professional education in the villages around Chandigarh. Engineering, management and medical colleges in Tangori, Bhaddal, Dera Bassi, Landran, Jaulan Kalan, Ratvara Sahib, Kot Billa and Abhipur are worth mentioning. These colleges ensure a pickup facility for students, faculty and staff members. This has brought a new turn in the mechanism of urban-rural interaction. It is now the rural areas which are attracting the city dwellers and that too for higher technical and professional education. This will definitely pave a new course for urban-rural relations in the region.

In sum, the intensity of urban-rural relations has become stronger over the last decade. Commuting has played a substantial role in strengthening urban-rural relations. A major change has been brought about in the direction of the interrelations. Earlier, the people from rural areas approached urban-centres for various services but now city dwellers visit rural areas to avail the same. It seems that urban and rural areas are now heading towards a symbiosis, but how far they can succeed can only be answered in due course of time.
Emerging residential colonies in the vicinity of Chandigarh

Plate 12

Residential colony under construction in village Landran

Fully developed residential colony near Zirakpur town
1. **Major Highlights**

2. In the post 1991 period, privatization and a revolution in transport, communication and information technology played a significant role in shaping the urban-rural relations in the region. A visible change in their intensity, nature and direction can be seen.

3. Under the changed scenario, the increasing number of vehicles (both two and four wheelers) and telephones (both mobile and landline) have substantially contributed in strengthening the intensity of urban-rural relations.

4. Change in transport technology has not only facilitated the movement of perishable goods but also increased the mobility of the people. Earlier, the daily commuter zone and supply zone of various commodities was limited to 10-15 kms. but now it has extended beyond 30 kms.

5. The rapid expansion of telephones along with the transport networks has boosted trade and service relations between Chandigarh and its surrounding region. The retail trader in the villages conveniently places an order on telephone and the things are supplied from the wholesale market at his doorstep in no time.

6. Of late a new trend in urban-rural relations has been observed to be emerging. A number of residential colonies have sprung up in villages and towns around Chandigarh in the wake of exorbitant land prices in the city. Similarly, many private institutions for technical and professional educational courses have come up in the villages. The
students and staff commute from Chandigarh, Panchkula or Mohali. Thus, a reversal in the direction of movement (urban-rural) is quite apparent. This is altering the course and direction of urban-rural relations in the region.