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Ind. Jn. of Agri.Econ.
Vol.64, No.3, July-Sept. 2009

Urbanisation and the Peripheries of Large Cities in India: The Dynamics of Land Use and Rural Work

Chinmoyee Mallik*

I

INTRODUCTION

Studies on urbanisation trends in India reveal that it is primarily large city oriented (Sivaramakrishnan *et al.,* 2005). Recently, it has been observed that the loci of urban growth has shifted away from the city core to the peripheries such that out of the six mega-cities, five of them experience higher growth rate in their periphery relative to that experienced by the core.[1] This shift in the focus of growth of economic activities to the peripheries of the mega cities from the mega city itself has been facilitated by the emergence of environmental lobbies in the big cities (Kundu, 2003) that regulate the location of manufacturing units within the city coupled with shortage of land for expansion within the city (Keivani and Mattingly, 2007). It is also associated with easy availability of land and access to an unorganised rural labour market (Kundu, 2003; Keivani and Mattingly, 2007) besides lesser awareness and less care towards implementation of environmental regulations in the rural settlements in the urban periphery (Kundu 2003). All these factors have been instrumental in triggering off the emergence of "new off centre business districts" (Keivani and Mattingly, 2007; p. 461) towards the metropolitan peripheries leading to a two-fold impact upon the peripheral areas of the cities: firstly, land-use change in favour of non-agricultural uses, and, secondly, change in the nature of work available to the people in the periphery in response to land-use changes. Globalisation has accentuated this entire process of land-use and livelihood transformation along the urban fringes (Keivani and Mattingly, 2007; Anguilar and Ward, 2003; Adesina, 2007) as transnational capital has been found to favour locations in and around the largest cities (Chakravorty, 2003). It is therefore not difficult to understand that following the reforms the urban fringes of the mega cities are emerging as hot spots of economic activities that convey serious implications for the rural workers residing there as the economic base is continually exposed to radical transformations. Observing the unpleasant impact of liberalisation of the Indian economy upon rural labour market marked by retarded pace of rural diversification, worsening of the

*Ph. D Scholar, Centre for the Study of Regional Development, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi – 110 067.

Thanks are due to my supervisor Sucharita Sen of Centre for the Study of Regional Development, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and my fellow researcher Tanusree Paul for their valuable comments and suggestions.

conditions of the women workers, and casualisation of workforce at the macro level (Chadha, 2001; Chadha and Sahu, 2002; Bhalla, S., 1999; Kundu *et al.,* 2005), it may be conjectured that the peri-urban areas of the largest cities, where the imprints of globalisation are visible quite clearly would expose the rural workers to a much more challenging labour market scenario. This paper therefore argues that the rural workers in the urban fringes of the largest cities would experience a higher degree of marginalisation from work relative to their counterparts in the interior rural areas following the economic reforms as the economic base in the peri-urban locale is far more dynamic and touched by the process of globalisation. The present study focuses on the six largest metropolitan cities of India.[2]

The paper comprises five sections. The first section delivers an overview of the conceptual framework. Section II reflects upon the databases used and the analytical framework. The third section very briefly looks into the dynamics of land-use change in the vicinity of the large urban centres and seeks to decipher what implications it has for changes in the workforce structure in the study area. The fourth section specifically attempts to look into the rural workforce structure trends in the districts around the mega-cities (DAMs) relative to that in the respective states and the third section tries to conclude the discussion attempting to throw up issues for further research.

II

DATABASE AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Data have been taken from the Indian Agricultural Statistics and Economic tables of the population census. The working age population (ages between 15-59) has been used for this analysis. A scheme of two tier comparative analysis has been adopted where the districts around the metro-city (henceforth referred to as DAMs) representing the rural periphery of the city and the regional rural interiors represented by the domain state[3] have been compared. Such a framework intends to reflect upon whether or not the behaviour of the DAMs and the respective rural interior converge. Any departure from the regional trend may be interpreted as the result of the distortions created by the metropolitan city.

III

DYNAMICS OF LAND USE IN THE PERIPHERIES OF LARGE CITIES

Land uses in the urban fringes are being continually exposed to competition from urban uses resulting in escalation of land values near the urban centre. Consequently, lands in the DAMs are increasingly utilised by high return non-agricultural uses displacing agriculture (Nkambwe and Arnberg, 1996) as well as the agrarian population from their livelihoods.[4]

TABLE 1. COMPARISON OF COMPOUND GROWTH RATES OF LAND USES AROUND THE METROPOLITAN CITIES AND THE RESPECTIVE STATES

	Total stock of agricultural land		Net Sown Area (NSA)		Village Common Lands		Land put to non-agricultural uses		Barren and uncultivated land	
State/Districts (1)	1979-80 to 1989-90 (2)	1989-90 to 1999-2000 (3)	1979-80 to 1989-90 (4)	1989-90 to 1999-2000 (5)	1979-80 to 1989-90 (6)	1989-90 to 1999-2000 (7)	1979-80 to 1989-90 (8)	1989-90 to 1999-2000 (9)	1979-80 to 1989-90 (10)	1989-90 to 1999-2000 (11)
Maharashtra	0.27	-0.16	0.17	-0.42	-2.36	0.78	0.77	1.70	-0.68	-0.19
DAM Mumbai	1.70	-0.77	1.73	-0.33	-2.78	1.12	1.91	0.97	-2.45	-0.42
West Bengal	-0.32	-0.17	-0.37	0.20	-12.20	3.19	2.60	0.13	4.11	-17.28
DAM Kolkata	-0.41	-0.22	-1.02	0.37	-11.80	4.26	1.23	0.28	13.78	-16.96
Tamil Nadu	-0.10	-0.23	-0.61	-0.23	-1.71	1.95	0.63	0.71	-1.52	-0.72
DAM Chennai	-0.12	-0.73	-1.12	0.20	-1.18	-0.71	0.66	1.87	-0.52	-1.97
Andhra Pradesh	0.15	-0.09	0.16	-0.13	-0.75	-1.85	0.64	1.30	-0.78	-0.29
DAM Hyderabad	0.06	0.03	-0.68	0.05	-1.16	-1.28	0.94	1.40	-0.81	-1.42
Karnataka	0.13	0.02	0.34	-0.14	-1.82	-1.00	1.14	0.96	-0.68	-0.03
DAM Bangalore	#	-0.09	#	-0.25	#	-1.47	#	2.83	#	-0.60
Uttar Pradesh	0.00	-0.01	0.01	0.20	-1.01	0.00	0.78	0.58	-0.99	-1.17
DAM Delhi (UP)	-0.13	-2.64	-0.26	-2.43	0.09	-13.57	1.57	-1.25	-1.93	-4.86
Haryana	-0.04	0.02	-0.07	-0.02	-2.48	1.84	-2.80	2.49	5.47	-2.16
DAM Delhi (Haryana)	-0.27	-0.21	0.16	-0.21	-1.53	2.19	-0.74	1.57	4.33	-1.07

Source: Computed from Indian Agricultural Statistics, various issues.

Data for Bangalore Rural was not available for 1979-81 as it was combined with the urban part.

At this juncture, the scenario of the six largest metropolitan cities of India may be examined to support the case in point. The following trends emerge from the changes taking place around these cities: firstly, growth rates of total stock of agricultural land,[5] NSA as well the village common lands[6] have declined at a rate higher than the state, the decline being sharper in the post-reform period; secondly, there is corresponding rise in land put to non-agricultural uses in the states as well as the DAMs of all the cities, the rate of growth being higher in the DAMs (exceptions being Mumbai) (Table 1).

So, land-uses which have connotations for livelihood have been observed to be declining in the DAMs at a rate higher than that in the respective states of almost all of the six largest cities, the rate of decline being higher in the post-reform period compared to the pre-reform period. It suggests that the nature of available work in the DAMs is likely to undergo modification such that rural workforce in these regions would be affected.

IV

DYNAMICS OF RURAL WORK IN THE PERIPHERIES OF LARGE CITIES

This section focuses on the emerging pattern of workforce structure in the DAMs with the background of decline in the shares of agricultural land uses and village common lands especially during the post-reform period. With outflow of land from agricultural uses in the urban vicinity it may be expected that some of the cultivators and also those agricultural labourers depending for livelihood on acquired plots of lands shall be affected adversely. The trend of marginalisation of rural workers from productive work would therefore be sharper in the DAMs than that in the respective states such that rural non-workers and job seekers may be expected to be higher in the DAMs. Some of the displaced agricultural workers may get absorbed within the non-farm economy but this would be towards the low-end spectrum of it as the rural agricultural workers have been observed to be ill-equipped for reaping the benefits of the emerging opportunities owing to their low human capital index (Chadha, 2001; Chadha and Sahu, 2002). So, the question remains as to whether urbanisation induced land conversion processes are benefiting the rural population of the peripheral areas. This section attempts to validate the propositions outlined above through an analysis of the status of work and the sectoral trends therein in the rural peripheries of the six largest cities in India.

(a) *Status of Work in the Rural Peripheries of Large Cities*

Growth rates for total workers have been higher in the DAMs relative to the respective states during the post-reform period (except Delhi and Bangalore) although there has been a deceleration of the rates of growth from the pre-reform levels in almost all areas (Table 2). The increase in available work in the DAMs

discernibly has been on account of casual activities accompanied by waning away of main workers (Table 4), a phenomenon perceived by the scholars as a general deterioration of working conditions. The rough index of casualisation has increased over the decades and it is higher than the state in the DAMs of Mumbai, Chennai and Delhi (Haryana) in 2001 (Table 3) which only supports the preceding contention of higher degree of casualisation of the rural workforce in the DAMs compared to those residing in the corresponding rural interiors.

TABLE 2. EXPONENTIAL GROWTH RATES OF TOTAL WORKERS (BOTH MAIN & MARGINAL) AND NON-WORKERS (AGES 15-59)

	Total workers		Non-workers		Those seeking work among non-workers		Main Workers		Marginal Workers	
States/Districts (1)	1981-1991 (2)	1991-2001 (3)	1981-1991 (4)	1991-2001 (5)	1981-1991 (6)	1991-2001 (7)	1981-1991 (8)	1991-2001 (9)	1981-1991 (10)	1991-2001 (11)
Maharashtra	2.39	1.07	1.04	3.44	@	20.45	2.47	0.16	1.76	6.73
DAM Mumbai	1.56	1.19	-0.46	3.93	@	22.55	1.33	-0.80	3.61	10.31
West Bengal	3.03	2.97	1.26	0.73	@	13.27	3.00	0.72	3.47	14.52
DAM Kolkata	3.02	3.02	1.99	1.30	@	18.73	3.03	1.06	2.88	18.00
Tamil Nadu	1.88	-0.32	1.01	-0.12	@	15.50	1.85	-1.54	2.32	8.85
DAM Chennai	2.06	0.03	1.58	1.77	@	18.16	2.29	-2.41	-0.91	14.52
Andhra Pradesh	2.04	1.59	2.36	2.34	@	27.88	2.34	0.22	-1.87	12.81
DAM Hyderabad	1.28	2.09	1.52	4.77	@	35.87	1.72	0.86	-6.44	16.21
Karnataka	1.99	1.87	0.66	1.59	@	17.77	2.00	0.61	1.88	9.22
DAM Bangalore	#	1.87	#	1.17	@	24.30	#	1.20	#	5.00
Uttar Pradesh	2.82	2.24	1.43	1.53	@	19.76	2.47	-0.38	7.32	14.51
DAM Delhi (Uttar Pradesh)	3.11	0.05	0.71	0.63	@	12.09	1.79	-0.74	29.34	4.09
Haryana	2.24	4.88	2.61	-1.44	@	22.96	2.51	2.55	-0.07	15.97
DAM Delhi (Haryana)	2.09	4.78	2.10	-2.51	@	17.14	2.55	2.41	-1.27	15.39

Source: Computed from Economic Tables, B-Series, Census, 1981, 1991, 2001.
Data for Bangalore Rural was not available for 1981 as it was combined with the urban part.
@ Data not available for 1981.

Also, the growth rates of non-workers have been higher in the DAMs than in the respective states in both pre and post reform periods, although the rate has been higher in the latter phase compared to the former (Table 2). That the growth of non-workers within the working age group (15-59), especially in the DAMs, is indicative of gradual marginalisation of workers from productive work is reiterated by the higher growth rates of non-workers seeking work in the DAMs compared to the domain states (Table 2). The peripheral rural areas of the largest cities are therefore plagued by increase in jobs of casual nature on the one hand while they are also

experiencing incidence of joblessness during the post-reform period much more than the rural population of the respective states.

TABLE 3. INDEX OF CASUALISATION*

	Total workers			Agriculture			Non-agriculture		
State/Districts (1)	1981 (2)	1991 (3)	2001 (4)	1981 (5)	1991 (6)	2001 (7)	1981 (8)	1991 (9)	2001 (10)
Maharashtra	12	11	22	14	13	23	129	144	97
DAM Mumbai	10	12	37	12	15	49	334	253	153
West Bengal	9	9	37	9	9	40	291	346	145
DAM Kolkata	5	5	28	6	6	36	825	959	315
Tamil Nadu	7	8	22	8	9	26	295	297	170
DAM Chennai	9	7	36	11	8	47	280	426	146
Andhra Pradesh	9	6	22	10	7	24	212	327	135
DAM Hyderabad	8	4	17	10	4	19	337	605	228
Karnataka	11	11	26	12	12	28	162	168	110
DAM Bangalore	#	18	26	#	19	27	#	99	127
Uttar Pradesh	6	10	42	6	11	45	253	173	69
DAM Delhi (Uttar Pradesh)	1	15	25	1	14	24	5708	389	406
Haryana	13	10	39	16	13	42	182	257	107
DAM Delhi (Haryana)	16	11	41	22	17	48	195	310	134

Source: Computed from Economic Tables, B-Series, Census, 1981, 1991, 2001.
Data for Bangalore Rural was not available for 1981 as it was combined with the urban part.
*Index of casualisation refers to the number of marginal workers per 100 main workers (adopted from Chadha, 2001).

(b) *Sectoral Trends in the Rural Peripheries of Large Cities*

Growth rates of workers in agriculture decelerated between the pre- and post-reform periods in almost all the areas (Table 4). Within agriculture, on the one hand, the total cultivators have registered decline in growth in the post-reform period at a greater degree in the DAMs than that in the respective states in five of the DAMs while on the other hand total agricultural labourers registered positive growth in the post-reform period although the rates of growth declined from the pre-reform levels (Table 4). In the DAMs of Mumbai and Bangalore growth of total agricultural labourers was higher than that for the state accompanied by simultaneous lower rates of growth of total cultivators in the DAMs compared to the state. Such a process entailing growth of agricultural labourers with simultaneous declining trends of cultivators has been referred to as 'the process of peasant pauperisation' (Jha, 1997; p. 12) where the cultivators being uprooted from their land take to wage labour as the principal means for livelihood.

TABLE 4. EXPONENTIAL GROWTH RATES OF WORKERS IN AGRICULTURE (15-59)

Districts	Total workers in agriculture		Total cultivators		Total agricultural labourers	
	1981-1991	1991-2001	1981-1991	1991-2001	1981-1991	1991-2001
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Maharashtra	2.32	0.72	1.99	0.10	2.78	1.26
DAM Mumbai	1.80	-0.62	1.16	-2.52	3.35	2.16
West Bengal	2.50	1.40	2.75	-1.05	2.42	3.69
DAM Kolkata	2.43	0.47	2.38	-2.19	2.33	1.87
Tamil Nadu	1.72	-1.38	0.38	-2.16	2.87	-1.02
DAM Chennai	1.72	-1.60	-0.39	-3.26	2.86	-1.10
Andhra Pradesh	1.99	0.88	0.69	-0.36	3.08	1.50
DAM Hyderabad	1.78	0.86	0.81	0.95	2.94	0.68
Karnataka	1.93	1.11	1.17	0.50	2.90	1.32
DAM Bangalore	#	0.63	#	0.14	#	1.71
Uttar Pradesh	2.66	1.34	1.97	-0.31	4.73	4.51
DAM Delhi (UP)	2.85	-2.31	2.17	-2.75	5.14	-4.34
Haryana	1.92	4.03	1.04	3.84	3.86	2.79
DAM Delhi (Haryana)	1.54	3.99	0.84	3.66	3.53	2.31

Source: Computed from Economic Tables, B-Series, Census, 1981, 1991, 2001.
Data for Bangalore Rural was not available for 1981 as it was combined with the urban part.

On the other hand, the non-agricultural workers taken together have registered positive growth in both the periods in all the areas (Table 5). While during the pre-reform period, growth rates were higher in some of the states than that in the DAMs, in the post-reform period growth of non-agricultural workers has been higher in the DAMs (except in Delhi). Growth rates have been higher in the post reform period for both the main and marginal categories of non-agricultural workers, the rates being higher for the marginal categories in the DAMs. However, the incidence of

TABLE 5. EXPONENTIAL GROWTH RATES OF WORKERS IN NON-AGRICULTURE (TOTAL, MAIN AND MARGINAL) (15-59)

Districts	Workers in Non-Agriculture					
	Total		Main		Marginal	
	1981-1991	1991-2001	1981-1991	1991-2001	1981-1991	1991-2001
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Maharashtra	2.85	2.95	2.94	1.80	0.82	16.09
DAM Mumbai	0.89	5.13	0.75	3.74	4.20	17.90
West Bengal	4.90	6.68	4.94	4.84	4.44	17.17
DAM Kolkata	4.18	6.44	4.22	4.90	3.34	21.96
Tamil Nadu	2.55	3.05	2.64	2.18	-0.30	16.79
DAM Chennai	3.17	3.82	3.29	2.23	-0.98	23.32
Andhra Pradesh	2.27	4.38	2.50	3.44	-2.10	15.83
DAM Hyderabad	-0.54	5.97	-0.28	4.86	-8.66	23.83
Karnataka	2.30	5.12	2.45	3.88	-0.35	17.23
DAM Bangalore	#	7.01	#	6.08	#	12.83
Uttar Pradesh	3.74	6.29	3.73	3.67	3.79	27.78
DAM Delhi (UP)	3.59	3.20	2.11	2.51	29.94	6.49
Haryana	3.40	7.25	3.53	4.59	-4.57	38.32
DAM Delhi (Haryana)	3.46	6.37	3.67	3.77	-10.28	41.49

Source: Computed from Economic Tables, B-Series, Census, 1981, 1991, 2001.
Data for Bangalore Rural was not available for 1981 as it was combined with the urban part.

marginalisation is more conspicuous in non-agriculture than agriculture in the DAMs (Table 3) which shows that although sectoral diversification is under way owing to urban influence, it is principally in favour of marginal non-agricultural work and therefore, the diversification of rural livelihoods may not be taken as indicative of improved income and standard of living of the rural folks.[7]

Table 6 attempts to summarise the broad post-reform trends of the workforce integrating all the concepts that have been grappled with in the paper focusing on the spatial aspect of the state vis-à-vis DAM framework. There is, however, not much uniformity in the behaviour pattern of the DAMs of the different cities. While marginalization of workforce in the DAMs has been a universal phenomenon, it may be observed that the DAM of Mumbai conform the most to the model proposed here followed by Chennai (Table 6).

TABLE 6. SUMMARY TABLE FOR BEHAVIOUR OF THE DAMS RELATIVE TO THE STATES (POST-REFORM PERIOD)

Criteria (1)	Mumbai (2)	Kolkata (3)	Chennai (4)	Hyderabad (5)	Bangalore (6)	Delhi (Uttar Pradesh) (7)	Delhi (Haryana) (8)
Growth rate of non-workers higher in DAM	√	√	√	√	-	-	-
Growth rate of 'non-workers seeking work' higher in DAM	√	√	√	√	√	-	-
Index of casualisation (Total workers) higher in DAM	√	-	√	-	-	-	√
Index of casualisation in agriculture higher in DAM	√	-	√	-	-	-	√
Index of casualisation in Non-agriculture higher in DAM	√	√	-	√	√	√	√
Total Cultivators declining along with increasing agricultural labourers (Pauperisation of peasantry)	√	-	-	-	√	-	-

Source: Compiled by the author. "√": applicable; "-": not applicable

V

CONCLUSION

The discussion outlined above has been based upon the recent trend of third world urbanisation that is concentrated in the rural peripheries of the largest cities and its implications for land and livelihood in the peri-urban areas. In an attempt to understand the extent to which the rural workers residing in the vicinity of the six

largest metropolitan cities in India have been able to negotiate with the emerging changes in the structure of available work and shrinking natural resource base, it has been observed that following the economic reforms, there has been clear indication of marginalisation of workforce in the districts around the metropolitan cities at a higher degree relative to the respective states. That the reforms would perpetrate adverse implications for the population residing in the peripheral areas of the largest cities much akin to the impact thrust upon rural workforce in general, has been perhaps somewhat unforeseen. This study has revealed that the rural interiors, represented by the state, have exhibited less drastic trends than that revealed by the DAMs. It therefore emerges that the changes injected by the economic reforms have proved to be much more critical for the transitional areas than either the urban or rural areas. With the understanding of increased rural urban interaction and concentrated investments in the largest cities and their peripheries in the background, the present study indicates that while the economic reforms have not only failed to inculcate forces of inclusive growth momentum for the rural workforce, they have also destabilised the peri-urban areas.

NOTES

1. Examining the growth of the million plus cities in terms of the core (main city) vis-a-vis the periphery (urban areas around the main city in periphery), Sivaramakrishnan *et al.* (2005) have identified four notable features: declining core-growing periphery, growing core-declining periphery and declining core- declining periphery,

2. District around the metropolitan cities: Mumbai- Thane, Raigad (Kolaba); Kolkata- Howrah, Hoogly, 24 Paraganas (N & S); Delhi **(**Districts in Haryana have been compared with Haryana state and Ghaziabad has been compared with Uttar Pradesh as Delhi shares physical contiguity with both these states)- Gurgaon, Sonipat, Rohtak, Jhajjar, Faridabad, Ghaziabad; Chennai- Chengalpattu; Hyderabad-Rangareddy; Bangalore- Bangalore rural.

3. The values of the DAMs have been subtracted from the state totals to obtain the values at the state level. This has been done to remove any distortions created by the values of the DAMs in the state values.

4. However, Chadha *et al.,* (2004) have also exposited that land management for the remaining agricultural land will be more efficient in the DAMs such that barren and fallow lands will be lower than that in the respective states as land values tend to increase.

5. Total Stock of Agricultural Land = NSA + Current Fallow + Fallow other than current Fallow + Culturable Waste.

6. Village Commons = Permanent pastures and other grazing lands + Land under miscellaneous tree crops and groves.

7. Chadha (2001; p. 504) has mentioned the possibility of the phenomenon of "switch-over or seasonal supplementation", but it needs in-depth enquiry to validate how far they are improving the earnings.

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