

18.1 BACKGROUND

Section 8(f) of the NCR Planning Board Act, 1985 empowers the Board to select, in consultation with the State Governments concerned, any urban area outside NCR having regard to its location, population and potential for growth, which may be developed as Counter-Magnet Area in order to achieve the objectives of the Regional Plan.

Conceptually Counter-Magnet Areas (CMAs) to NCR, as envisaged in Regional Plan-2001, should be such urban areas as may be located sufficiently away from NCR and, should have its known established roots and inherent potentials to function as viable independent growth foci. Such identified Counter-magnets would have the attributes of physical, social and economic viability, nodality with respect to transportation network and have the quality of physical linkages in the form of transportation and communications facilities.

18.2 ASSIGNED ROLE OF COUNTER-MAGNET AREAS IN REGIONAL PLAN-2001

The role of Counter-magnets as envisaged in Regional Plan-2001 was to play two distinctive and mutually complementary roles in the context of NCR:

- a) As interceptors of migratory flows into NCR, which may escalate, as the accelerated development of NCR would provide a pull to migrants from the less developed adjoining areas;
- b) As regional growth centres, which would be able to achieve a balanced pattern of urbanisation in the region of their own setting over a period of time.

18.3 IDENTIFICATION OF COUNTER-MAGNET AREAS IN REGIONAL PLAN-2001

Keeping in with the objectives of the NCR Planning Board Act, 1985 initially 36 cities falling within the range 100-400 kms from Delhi were considered and analysed in respect of their size and status, population growth, work force participation ratio, population density and the spatial parameters like accessibility, congruence with immigration corridors and proximity to other contenders in the region. Based on the analysis of these parameters and after discussions and consultations with the State Governments, the following urban centres were recommended as possible contenders for further scrutiny to decide the counter-magnet areas:

- a) Hissar, Yamuna Nagar, Ambala and Karnal in Haryana
- b) Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh
- c) Patiala, Bhatinda and Ludhiana in Punjab

- d) Kota, Sikar and Ajmer in Rajasthan
- e) Bareilly, Moradabad, Saharanpur and Allahabad in Uttar Pradesh

In the interest of balanced directional spilt, the following centres were finally selected as counter-magnets to NCR by the Board (Map 18.1 National Capital Region: Counter Magnet Areas):

- 1) Hissar in Haryana
- 2) Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh
- 3) Patiala in Punjab
- 4) Kota in Rajasthan
- 5) Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh

18.4 POLICY GUIDELINES OF REGIONAL PLAN-2001

Development of Counter-Magnet Areas would require coordinated efforts of the State and Central Governments and the National Capital Region Planning Board. The broad policy guidelines for development of Counter-Magnet Areas in terms of the role to be played by the respective Governments and the Board have been stipulated in Regional Plan-2001. The State Governments/implementing agencies proposed to prepare integrated development programme for the Counter-Magnet Areas for strengthening the economic base functions and upgradation of physical and social infrastructure. The concerned State Governments proposed to take steps to strengthen organisational capacities of the local bodies/development authorities in the counter-magnet cites and provide adequate financial resources for development. The Central Government and NCR Planning Board proposed to provide financial assistance for strengthening of regional linkages (transport and communications etc.) for development of counter-magnet towns.

Respective State Governments were required to take the following actions in order to make the CMAs eligible for assistance from the NCR Planning Board:

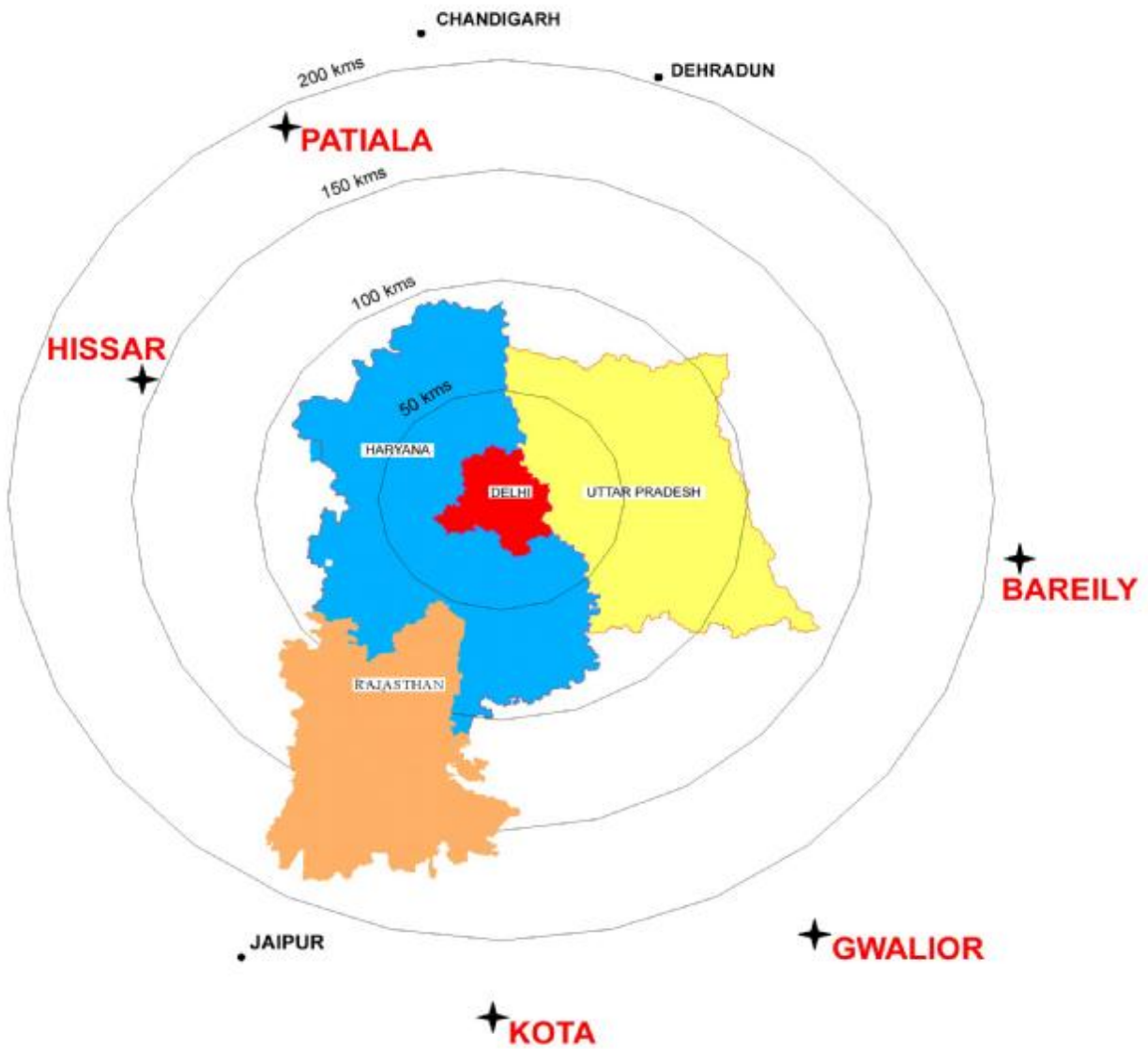
- i) Finalisation of the Development Plan for the counter-magnet town.
- ii) Constitution of Project Sanctioning Committee at the town level.
- iii) Preparation of Annual Action Plan.
- iv) Allocation by the State Government of its matching share in the Development Fund for the counter-magnet areas.

18.5 STATUS OF DEVELOPMENT OF COUNTER-MAGNET AREAS

A review of five Counter-Magnet Areas proposed in the Regional Plan-2001 suggested that the policies of the Plan should be to divert migration streams away from Delhi to the identified Counter-Magnet Areas with urbanization potential because any induced population growth in NCR would lead to the accelerated rate of growth of population of Delhi.

In most of the cases, the State Governments did manage to take the required actions referred to in the foregoing para in respect of the Counter-Magnet Areas. The counter-magnet towns of Gwalior and Patiala have so far availed of maximum loan assistance of Rs.61 crores and Rs.42.48 crores respectively followed by Bareilly at Rs.20 crores. Kota has obtained only a marginal loan assistance of Rs.2 crores and Hissar has not yet taken any loan assistance.

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION COUNTER-MAGNET TOWNS



LEGEND

Counter Magnet Town ✦



NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION PLANNING BOARD
MAP 18.1

18.6 ANALYSIS OF CMA DEVELOPMENT

The analysis of development of the CMAs during the tenure of Regional Plan-2001 has brought out the following observations:

- (i) The Counter-magnets have not played the assigned role in reducing the flow of migrants from the respective States to Delhi largely due to distance factor and paucity of funds allocated for their development.
- (ii) In order to pursue the policy of development of counter-magnets in a more effective manner, it is suggested that more than one such settlement be identified in UP, in consultation with the State Government, from where 49% migrant come to Delhi.

18.7 PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the review of the Regional Plan-2001 on Counter-Magnets, it is important to pursue the policy of development of counter magnets in a more effective manner. Therefore, it is suggested that more than one such settlement be identified in UP, in consultation with the State Government, from where about 49% migrant come to Delhi.

Further in order to make the counter-magnets capable to undertake their assigned roles more effectively, their future development must be directed to cover the following aspects:

a) Strengthening of Economic Base Functions

The success of the counter-magnets as interceptors of migration entirely depends upon their capacity to generate more and more economic activities so that they can provide adequate opportunities to the working-age group population of the surrounding areas, who would otherwise be tempted to migrate to Delhi. The counter-magnet areas may be declared as Special Economic Zone (SEZ) for attracting economic investment therein and projects be taken up jointly by the State Governments and the Central Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Simultaneously, other physical infrastructure and fiscal incentives could be provided so as to attract industry to these Counter-Magnet Areas.

b) Upgradation of Physical and Social Infrastructure

In order to support and sustain the economic infrastructure suggested in the counter-magnet areas, physical and social infrastructure of a very high order needs to be provided in these areas for which the Counter-Magnet Area Development Authorities and the State governments will have to prepare joint projects which could be financially supported by the NCRPB through its prevailing funding pattern for NCR areas.

Specialized social, cultural and institutional activities like universities and centre of higher education i.e., professional colleges could be established as well as encourage development of tourist destinations.

c) Strengthening of Regional linkages

In order to make meaningful use of the economic and physical infrastructure proposed to be developed in these counter-magnet areas, their linkages with the hinterland as well as with the other important metropolitan centres need to be very strong. The Central Ministries of Railways, Shipping, Road Transport and Highways as well as Communications and Information Technology will have to put in a lot of effort in improving the transport and communication linkages in these counter magnet areas in a planned manner within a specified time frame.