



DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES ALONG THE KONKAN COAST

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Introduction:

The life of man is totally dependent on his environment. From the first stage of evolution of human societies, man obtained all the resources needed for his survival from the environment. As human societies grew, man and environment relationships became adverse. Dynamics of this relationship can be understood through the stages of food gathering and hunting, animal rearing and community living, plant cultivation and agricultural development, science,

technology and industrial revolution. Today, man's relationship with his environment is highly negative. This has affected the equilibrium of the environment, thereby creating a host of environmental problems for him to deal with. Thus, there is an urgent need to bring about a so-called 'Degree of Balance' in this give and take relationship. The present paper deals with demographic aspects of the coastal people in mangrove areas of Konkan. The parameters taken and interpreted for the study include population growth and density.

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Konkan - Population Growth - 1991 - 2011

Population growth refers to the average annual rate of change in the population size during a specified period which is usually expressed in percentage. Population

growth of a region is based on four fundamental factors such as birth rate, death rate, pattern of immigration and emigration.

Konkan: District Wise Population Growth Rate

District	Konkan: District wise Number of Persons			Growth Rate (1991 - 2011)
	1991	2001	2011	
Greater Mumbai	99,25,891	11,978,450	1,24,42,373	25%
Thane	52,49,126	81,31,849	1,10,60,148	111%
Raigad	18,24,816	22,07,929	26,34,200	44%
Ratnagiri	15,44,057	16,96,777	16,15,069	5%
Sindhudurg	8,32,152	8,68,825	8,49,651	2%
Konkan	1,93,76,042	2,48,83,830	2,86,01,441	48%

Source: Based on data from District Census Handbooks - (1991 to 2011)



The population growth rate of Konkan has been steadily increasing since the last three decades. At 48%, it is the region with the highest growth rate in the State. The reason for this is linked to the reformation of Bombay which began in the year 1960. Since then, its regional development has played a key role which is having a tremendous impact on its demographic structure. Prior to 1960, industrial and trading activities were limited to the city of Bombay alone. Post 1960, due to the movement of regional planning the process of industrialization and its related expansion activities steadily started gaining momentum in districts of North Konkan. To fulfill the economic backlog of the South Konkan region, the State government introduced many incentives to boost industrial activities in the form of low interest economic loans, subsidy in loans, priority in providing electricity and water supply and various other forms of incentives. Subsequently after 1970, the State government started giving more facilities to the farming community in the form of free seeds, fertilizers, interest free loans, information on various farming techniques and technologies through government agencies etc. Later, it also recognized the potentialities of the region for the development of horticultural activities which became a natural driving force in attracting large number of people to settle on a permanent basis in this region. Today having reached the pinnacles of development and with continuous expansion seen in various sectors, the region has become a thriving hub supporting large number of people to come over and make a living.

Thane district has recorded 111%, the highest population growth rate in Konkan. Large part of the district falls in Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), associated with good infrastructure. Raigad district has undergone an increase of 44% in the growth rate of population. This district is also in close proximity and connectivity with the city of Mumbai and the northern part of it coming under MMR. It must be noted that

Thane and Raigad districts record the highest population growth rate in Konkan region. The population growth rate in Greater Mumbai district is 25%, apparently lower in the last three decades due to the saturation point reached by the city in terms of space and constraints posed by the environment. Quite a good number of families have moved out of Greater Mumbai district due to availability of comparatively cheap houses in the neighboring districts of Thane and Raigad. The population growth rate in the districts of Ratnagiri is 5% and in Sindhudurg it is only 2%. The districts are experiencing large scale out migration of population due to poor economic development. These districts are also located at a distance from MMR, which is acting as a strong deterrent.

Konkan: Population Growth in the Coastal Talukas

In Thane district, the talukas with mangrove vegetation include Vasai (210%), Thane (192%), Bhiwandi (82%), Talasari (67%), Phalghar (64%), Dahanu (48%) and Kalyan (48%). The average population growth in these talukas increased by 141% during the study period. Population growth was much higher than the total population growth of Thane district.

In Raigad district, the talukas with mangrove vegetation include Panvel (167%), Uran (50%), Pen (33%), Alibaug (27%), Roha (20%), Murud (15%), Mahad (10%), Shrivardhan (6%), Mhasala (3%) and Tala (N.A.). The average population growth in these talukas increased by 58.87% during the study period. Population growth was much higher than the total population growth of Raigad district. The talukas of Pen, Alibaug, Roha, Murud, Mahad, Shrivardhan, Mhasala and Tala recorded a low population growth mainly due to locational disadvantages. Industrialization is only a recent phenomenon being experienced in the taluka of Pen. Alibaug, Roha and Murud have always been famous as tourist destination centers.



For Greater Mumbai district, it is very difficult to get the taluka wise growth of population. Most of the wards in the city have a coastline or the presence of creeks associated with mangrove vegetation. The average population growth of Greater Mumbai increased by 25% during the study period. The city is facing innumerable problems related to overpopulation, increased level of pollution due to industrialization and urbanization, proliferation of slums and disposal of waste.

In Ratnagiri district, the talukas with mangrove vegetation include Ratnagiri (27%), Chiplun (12%), Guhaghar (1%), Lanja (1%), Khed (-0%), Dapoli (-1%), Sangameshwar (-4%), Rajapur (-8%) and Mandangad (-

9%). The average population growth in these talukas increased by just 5% during the study period.

In Sindhudurg district, the talukas with mangrove vegetation include Devgad (1%), Vengurla (-2%) and Malwan (-4%). The average population growth in these talukas saw a negative decline of -1% during the study period. Population growth was much lower than the total population growth of Sindhudurg district.

Konkan: Population Density - 1991 - 2011

Population density is defined as the number of people living in each unit of area. It is calculated by dividing the total population by the area and expressed in square kilometers. Population distribution in Konkan is highly uneven.

Konkan: District Wise Population Density

District	Area in Sq Kms (2011)	Density of Population (Per Sq Kms)			Change 1991 - 2011
		1991	2001	2011	
Greater Mumbai	603	16,461	19,865	20,634	25%
Thane	9,558	610	851	1,157	90%
Raigad	7,152	255	309	368	44%
Ratnagiri	8,208	188	207	196	5%
Sindhudurg	5,207	165	167	163	-1%
Konkan	30,728	654	809	965	48%

Source: Based on data from District Census Handbooks - (1991 to 2011)

The population density of Konkan increased by 48% during the period 1991 - 2011. It is one of the most densely populated regions in the state of Maharashtra. Population density in Konkan is not uniform. Northern and Southern Konkan has a low population density while density is very high in and around Mumbai. The

districts of Thane and Raigad have always been supporting a large number of migrants by providing cheap and continuous work force to various industrial belts in the region. On the other hand, the districts of Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg have always been at a locational disadvantage. The barriers of distance, poor



industrial and agricultural development have always been acting as major handicaps in attracting and sustaining a good proportion of working population.

The population density of Greater Mumbai has consistently been on the higher side. Mumbai being a metropolitan city, population density increased in the study period by 25%. Population density in Thane district is rapidly increasing due to the recent process of urbanization. The population density has substantially increased in the northern part of Raigad district due to its connectivity with Mumbai City by rail and road. A change in density of 44% was recorded for the period 1991 - 2011 in Raigad district. However, in the last decade development is catching up at a faster rate and the population density is sure to rise in the next few decades. The population density has witnessed a marginal decrease in Ratnagiri district. A change of 5% was recorded for the period 1991 - 2011. The population density has seen a very marginal decline in Sindhudurg district due to increase in the number of out-migration of people to other areas for economic and social reasons. A change of -1% was recorded for the period 1991 - 2011.

Konkan: Population Density in the Coastal Talukas

The coastal talukas have always experienced high population pressure. In Thane taluka the population density was 5,588 persons per sq. kms in the year 1991 and it increased to 14,364 persons per sq. kms in the year 2011. In Bhiwandi taluka it decreased to 11,121 persons per sq. kms and in Vasai taluka it decreased to 3,896 persons per sq. kms in the year 2011. Population density was much higher than the total population density of Thane district. The reason for this is linked to the close proximity these talukas share with Mumbai City and its Suburbs.

In Panvel taluka the population density was 1,843 persons per sq. kms in the year 1991 and it increased to 6,182 persons per sq. kms in the year 2011. In Alibaug taluka it increased to 4,190 persons per sq. kms and in

Murud it increased to 3,490 persons per sq. kms in the year 2011. The population density was much higher than the total population density of Raigad district. The reason for this is associated to the overall development taking place in tourism and industrial sectors. Further better connectivity with optional transport links and other infrastructure facilities have contributed immensely.

In Greater Mumbai district, the total percentage of population density was 25.35%. Due to difficulties in obtaining and compiling the taluka level data, the figures are not comparable. The population density in this district has always been at an all-time high due to high levels of urbanization and industrialization.

In Khed taluka the population density was 3,517 persons per sq. kms in the year 1991 and it increased to 8,404 persons per sq. kms in the year 2011 (DCHB, 2011). In Ratnagiri taluka it decreased to 4,901 persons per sq. kms and in Chiplun taluka it increased to 3,157 persons per sq. kms. Population density was much higher than the total population density of Ratnagiri district. The reason for this is linked to the natural increase or decrease in the growth rate of the population.

In Malwan taluka the population density was 2,869 persons per sq. kms in the year 1991 and it increased to 2,960 persons per sq. kms in the year 2011. In Vengurla taluka it increased to 953 persons per sq. kms and in Devgad it remained at 153 persons per sq. kms. Except Devgad taluka, the population density was much higher than the total population density of Sindhudurg district. The reason for this is linked to the natural increase or decrease in the growth rate of the population.

Thus, it is evident that population density is higher in the core urban centers and declines rapidly towards the peripheries in the outskirts.

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