

Chapter 18 : COUNTER MAGNET AREAS

18.1 BACKGROUND

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

The counter-magnet area as envisaged in the Regional Plan-2001 for NCR was to play two distinctive and mutually complementary roles in the context of NCR:

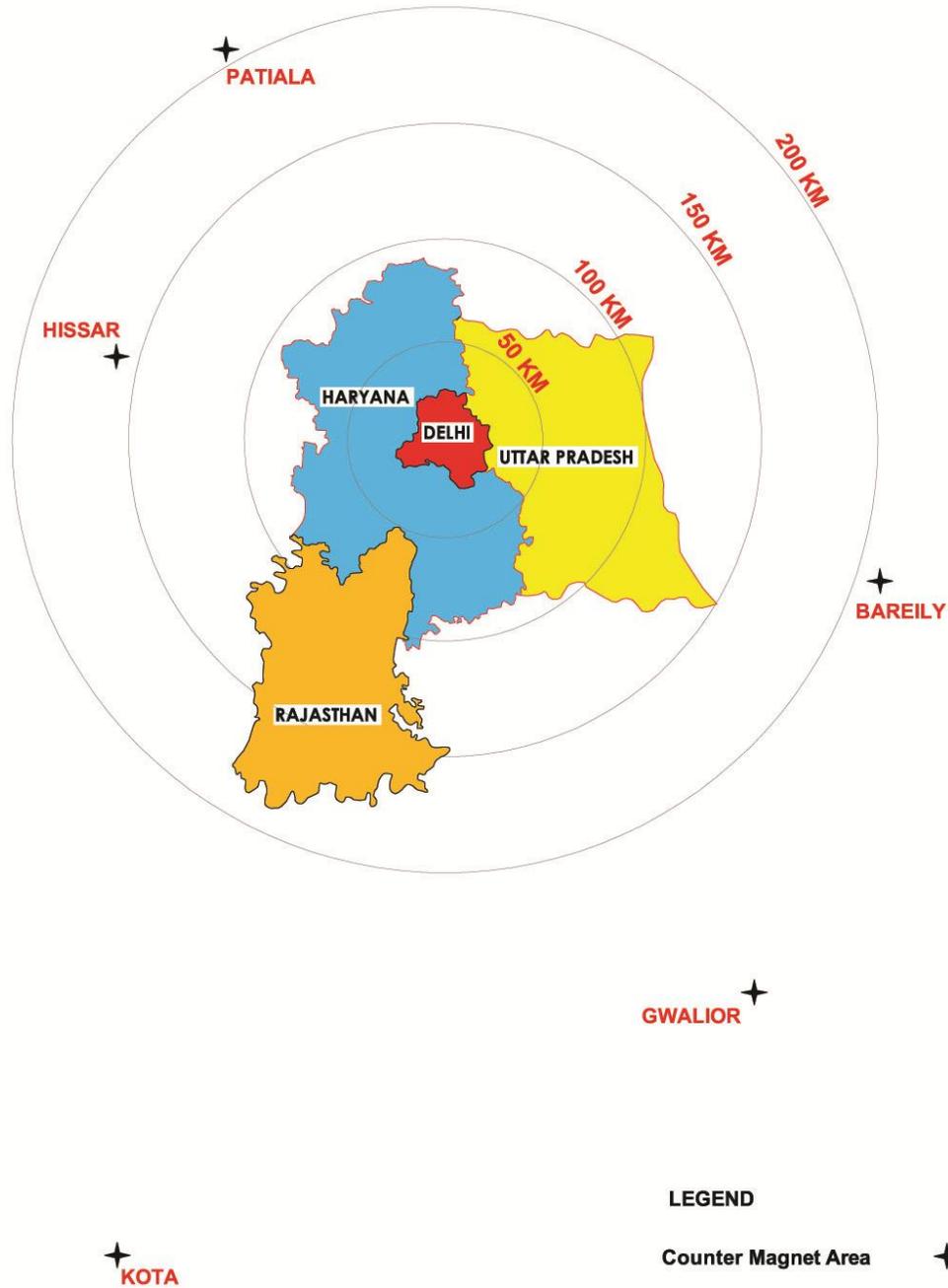
- a) As interceptors of migratory flows into NCR, which may escalate, as the accelerated development of the NCR would provide a pull to migrants from the less developed adjoining areas;
- b) As regional growth centres in the region of their setting, which would help to achieve a balanced pattern of urbanization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

Regional Plan-2001 for NCR envisaged that any such urban area which are located sufficiently away from NCR and has its known established roots and inherent potentials to function as viable independent growth foci may act as counter-magnet for the Region. After a detailed study taking into consideration various parameters such as nodality with respect to transportation network including the quality of physical linkages in the form of transportation and communications facilities, spatial, size, viability, migration, etc., five Counter-Magnet Areas were identified. Hisar in Haryana was one such Counter Magnet town.

The respective State Governments were to prepare an integrated development programme for the Counter-Magnet Areas for strengthening their economic base and upgrading its physical and social infrastructure. The concerned State Governments were also required to take steps to strengthen the organizational capacities of the local bodies/development authorities and provide adequate financial resources for development. The Central Government and NCR Planning Board were to provide financial assistance for strengthening of regional linkages like transport, communications, etc., for the development of these areas.

The Study Group on NCR Policy Zones, Demographic profile and settlement pattern constituted while preparing the Regional Plan-2021 for NCR was of the view that the selection of counter-magnets in areas/States, from where only less than six percent migrants come to NCT-Delhi do not appear to be justified and there is a need to review the policy in detail. To be effective, counter-magnet areas need to be located at a reasonable distance from NCT-Delhi and should have adequate potential for development to retain the out migration.

Map 18.1 : Counter-Magnet Areas-2001



Source: Regional Plan 2021.

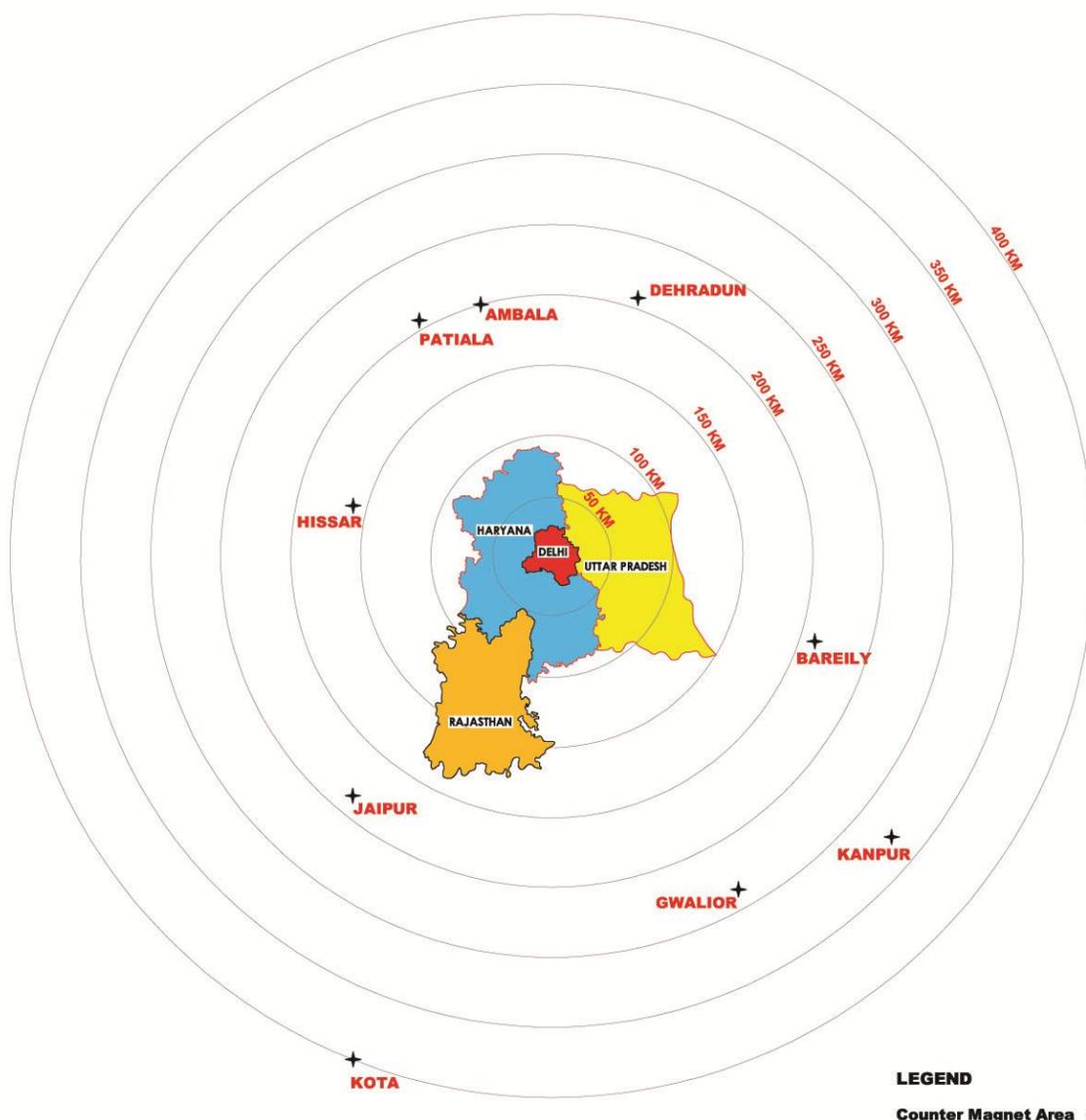
In order to review the status of developmental activities covering location and connectivity, regional importance, population, migration and economic base.

The study of Hisar town reveals that in-migration is higher than out-migration. Similarly workers participation

rate has increased and regional connectivity has improved. Hisar now has improved water supply and sewerage system.

Ambala in Haryana was identified as a CMA in the 56th meeting of the Planning Committee of the Board held on 19.01.2008. It was also decided that the counter-magnet areas shall be an area of about 120 kms radius around the above identified towns as zone of influence for migration. The State Governments shall notify their respective Counter-Magnet Areas proposed to be developed in and around these towns and prepare Development Plan and Plan of Action for its implementation.

Map 18.2: Counter-Magnet Areas-2021



Source: Regional Plan 2021.

The recommendations of the Planning Committee were approved by the Board in its 31st meeting held on 11.11.2009. Board also decided that the Counter-Magnet Areas should not limit to urban area only and development could be proposed in the form of corridors also. Respective State Governments shall notify their respective Counter-Magnet Areas and prepare Development Plan/Master Plan and Plan of Action for its implementation.

18.2 POLICIES AND PROPOSALS

In order to make the counter-magnets areas capable to undertake their assigned roles more effectively, their future development was proposed to cover the following aspects:

a) *Strengthening of Economic Base Functions*

The success of the counter-magnet areas 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 concerned State Governments may develop the counter-magnet areas as Model Industrial Estates or Technology Parks or Special Economic Zones (SEZ) for attracting economic investments 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 State governments will have to prepare joint projects which could be financially supported by the NCRPB. 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.

18.3 STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPMENT OF CMA

In order to play the effective role of the Counter-Magnet Areas, the two pronged strategy is envisaged for development of CMAs (a) economic development and (b) urban development, which are elaborated below:

a) *Urban Development Strategy*

The State Governments should prepare Development Plan and Action Plan for implementation with 20 years perspective incorporating the major aspects such as land, area, population distribution, housing,

transportation, physical infrastructure, social infrastructure and areas of economic development. While preparing the Plan, the concerned State Governments shall consider the strategies proposed for their development.

While urban development strategy will be restricted to urban planned areas, the State Governments will have to bring in investments and development in the influence zone of CMAs identified in their respective States through State level policies and development interventions integrated with Five-Year Plans and District Development Plans.

b) Economic development

i) Identified Sectors

The CMAs identified present wide range of sectors that can attract investments. All the identified counter-magnet areas have had history of investments in industries therefore the potential really spreads across a wider canvass. Some of the potential sectors for investment in and around these cities/towns are given as under:

CMAs	Initiatives desired / Focus sectors for development	Initiatives for Driving Economic Development
Ambala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nurturing and promoting entrepreneurship that exists in this region. • Take advantage of its location on the Delhi – Chandigarh – Baddi - Shimla route. • Utilise intellectual capital available in the adjoining region to drive economic development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industrial Park • Transport hub • Knowledge Centre
Hisar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing industries in the area need to be revived through infusion of technical and management inputs. A facilitation centre, with access to local and international skills would be able to provide the impetus for revival. • An industrial park in the area can be established to spur entrepreneurs to relocate and take advantage of common facilities to reduce costs and make them competitive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical and management-resource-cum-production centre. • Industrial Park for SSI

The State government based on changing situation would take up further projects for enlarging the economic base. Projects can be undertaken through public-private partnerships or may be taken up through Government funds available under appropriate schemes. A very high level of investment at par with CNCR Towns is required in the identified CMA's to effectively act as counter-magnet area.

ii) CMA's Financing strategy

State governments need to identify exploitable resources and capabilities available in their states and particularly in the region in close proximity to these cities and promote entrepreneurial initiatives to commercially exploit them and create opportunities for employment of the local population. Cities need to provide facilitative infrastructure to support such initiatives. These include physical infrastructure in terms of land, power, water, roads, rail and air connectivity. Besides these, adequate and quality social infrastructure, housing, healthcare, education and entertainment are necessary to attract talent and help them relocate in

these cities. Resource endowments and physical infrastructure enable investors to create value from resources available in the region. NCRPB has also provided funds for creation/upgradation of physical infrastructure in the Counter Magnet Areas identified in the State, which are listed at Annexure 18.1.

iii) Resource Mobilization

Enabling the identified counter-magnet areas to perform successfully, it is imperative that development initiatives are taken up in the cities in time to take advantage of the prevailing economic conditions. Resource requirement for implementing the initiatives can be sourced from various sources such as State and Central Government; Private Sector Participation; Foreign Direct Investments; and other options.

iv) Methods to Strengthen Economic Base through location of SEZ/Model Industrial Estates and other economic activity

With the increasing competition amongst location to attract investments in the regions, the strategy of attracting investments to a location through Government interventions and forcing the entrepreneurs to develop a particular location has not been successful as investors look towards independence in operations and move to locations that offer more freedom in operations. Thus market mechanism is a key driver for attracting investments and locations and local governments need to take the initiative of incentivising investors to invest in their regions.

Annexure 18.1: Infrastructure projects funded by NCRPB in the CMAs as on December, 2013

(Rs. In Crores)

Sr. No.	Name of Project	Implementing Agency	Estimated Cost	Loan Sanctioned	Loan Released	Status
1	Augmentation & Extension of Water Supply / Sewerage Scheme in Hissar	PHED	15.93	11.95	11.95	Completed
2	Setting up of a Coal based Thermal Power Project under stage I for 1200 MW (2 x 600 MW) in Hisar District, Haryana	HPGCL	4258.65	500.00	500.00	Ongoing
3	Improvement & Upgradation of Sub-transmission of distribution network in Hisar	DHBVN	40.01	30.01	16.50	Ongoing

Source: NCRPB.