

CHAPTER 3

REGIONAL SETTINGS & URBANIZATION TRENDS IN THE DISTRICT

Urbanization is the process by which large numbers of people become permanently concentrated in relatively small areas, forming cities. Hence it causes a gradual increase in the proportion of people living in urban areas. It is predominantly the process by which towns and cities are formed and become larger as more people begin to live and work in central areas. Urbanization is relevant to a range of disciplines, including urban planning.

The chapter deals with regional linkage and trends in urbanization of the planning area.

3.1 REGIONAL LINKAGE

The regional setting of a planning area is determined by its hierarchy of settlement, the activity that the town has to perform in the district and its connectivity with different nearby settlements.

The Municipal Corporation area is located about 518 km north of Thiruvananthapuram, the state capital. Kozhikode, the major urban

centre of north Kerala, is 90 km south of Kannur.

Another important urban centre, Mangalore of Karnataka State is located about 160 km north of Kannur. The planning area is well connected by road and rail. The NH 66 and the railway line passing through the town provide a good connectivity to other urban centres like Kozhikode, Kochi, Thiruvananthapuram on the southern side and Mangalore, Mumbai and Delhi on the northern side and Chennai, Bangaluru and Hyderabad on eastern side.

Both these linkages can play a major role in the trade and commercial activity of Kannur district by making the planning area a major trade centre. Figure.3.1 indicates its regional connectivity with other urban centres.

At present, the Corporation area is the part of Kannur Parliament Constituency. Also, there are two Legislative Assembly Constituencies; Kannur and Azheekode (Pallikkunnu and Puzhathi zones).

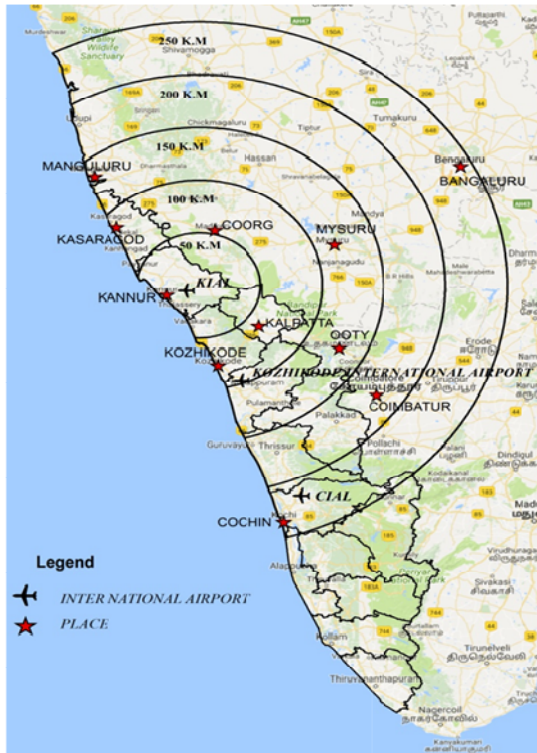
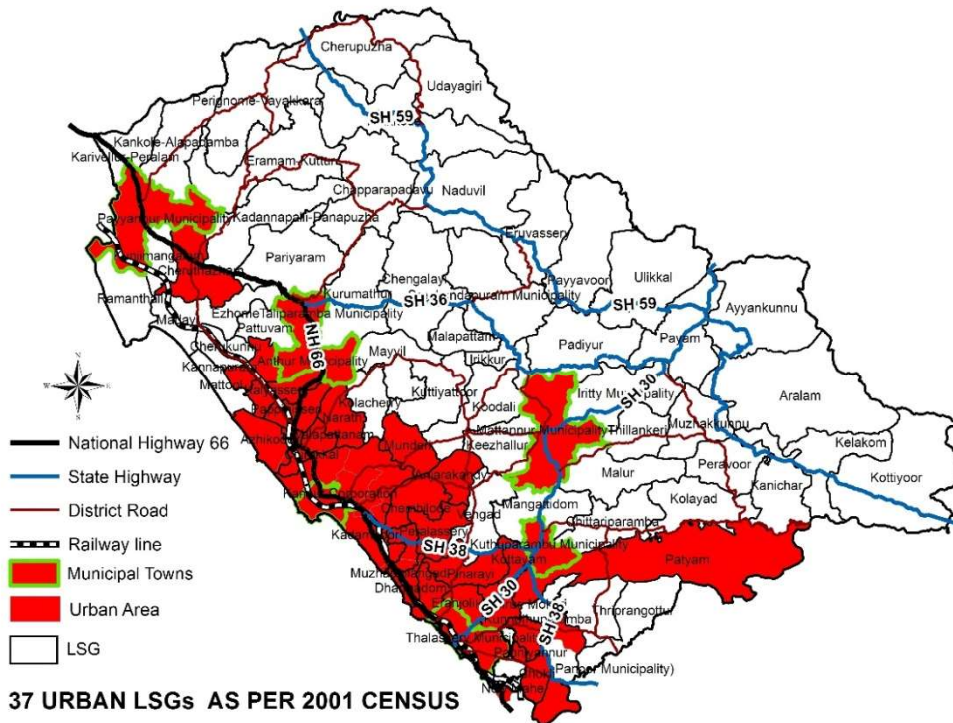


Figure.3.1 Regional connectivity of Kannur Municipal Corporation area

3.2 URBANIZATION

Urbanization has taken various forms at different times. It is the movement of people from rural to urban area, which results in a transformation from traditional economy to modern industrial activities.

In case of other metropolitan cities in India, urbanization rates are increasing because of urban migration and overcrowding of population. Kerala shows a special trend in urbanization and the main reason for that is the increasing numbers of cities and urban agglomerations. Moreover, Kerala is the best example for urban – rural continuum. All amenities and facilities inside the urban area are also



Source : District Urbanization Report

Figure.3.2 Urban LSGs in Kannur district as per 2011 Census

enjoyed and shared by the outgrowth population also.

Within a decade between 2001 and 2011, the urban population growth rate (26% and 48% respectively) of Kerala has increased by 22%. The urbanisation level of Kannur district had increased to 47% as per 2011 Census which was 26% in 2001 Census.

The Kannur district population is 25,23,003 as per the 2011 Census, constituting around 7.56% of the state population.

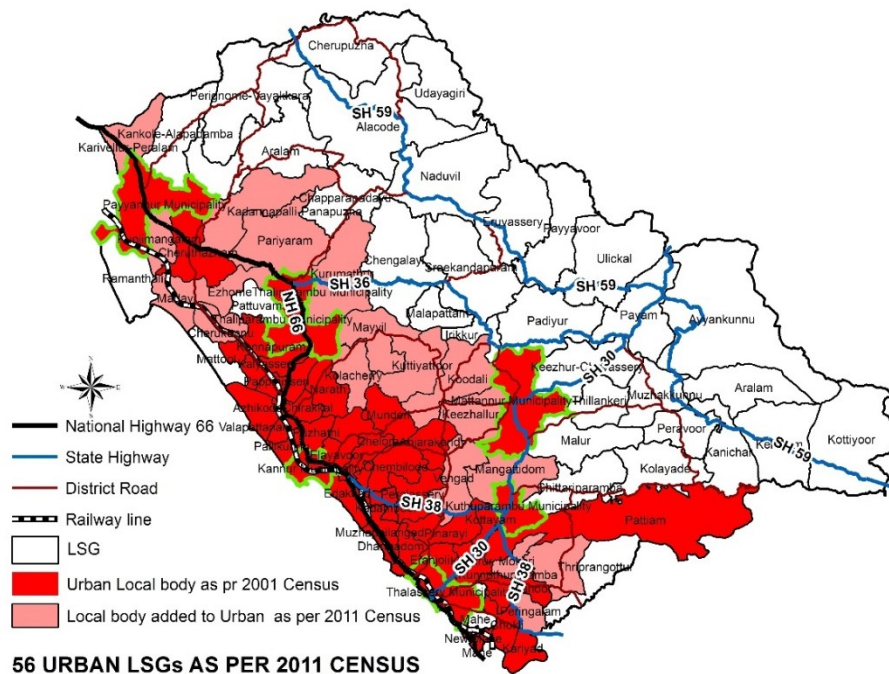
The population density of Kannur district is about 852 persons per km². The district has 5 Taluks namely Taliparamba, Kannur, Thalassery, Iritty and Payyannur. The population

growth of Kannur district from 1991 is represented in the Table.3.1.

Table.3.1 Growth of population in the district

Census Year	Population	% decennial Variation
1991	22,51,727	16.63
2001	24,08,956	6.98
2011	25,23,003	4.73

The Figure.3.2 indicates the location of 37 urban LSGs of Kannur district as per 2001 census. From this, it is clear that the urban LSGs are mainly concentrated along the coastal stretch and both sides of NH 66. The first order urban settlements are Kannur Municipal Corporation area and



Source : District Urbanization Report

Figure.3.3 Urban LSGs in Kannur district as per 2011 Census

Thalassery Municipal Town. The other LSG mainly depend on these two for all urban services. The major supporting factors of urbanization are connectivity, functional character and activity pattern of the LSGs.

Kannur district has a tendency of spreading urbanization towards the eastern side. Thus in 2011 census, the urban LSGs rose to 56 and is shown in Figure.3.3. From this, it is clear that the numbers of urban local bodies are increasing year by year. Hence effective planning measurements are necessary to avoid the problems of overcrowding and hap-hazardous developments. This points towards the need for a Master Plan which brings an effective, efficient and sustainable development in urban areas.

Table.3.2 gives the proportion of rural and urban population of the district as well as the state. It indicates a steady progress of urbanization in Kannur district. Moreover, at present, Kannur is the highly urbanized district of Kerala, with nearly two-third of its population living in urban areas.

As per 2001 Census, Kannur district is ranked 1st in urban content (urban population 50.45%) and 11th in per capita income among the districts in Kerala. But 2011 Census reveals that Kannur district has been pushed back to 4th position in urban content (65.05% urban population)

Table.3.2 Rural-Urban break up of Population (Kannur District)

Census year	Rural in %		Urban in %	
	Kannur	Kerala	Kannur	Kerala
1901	93	93	7	7
1911	92	93	8	7
1921	93	91	7	8
1931	93	90	7	10
1941	93	89	7	11
1951	91	87	7	13
1961	83	85	17	15
1971*	86	84	14	16
1981	77	82	23	18
1991*	49	74	51	26
2001	50	74	50	26
2011	35	52	65	48

Source: District Urbanization Report, Kannur

** The declination of urban population of 1971 in Kannur district is due to change in concept of urban area and the resultant declassification of urban areas of 1961 census. The high increase of urban population in 1991 is due to carving out of Kanhangad and Kasaragod Taluks having mostly rural population to form the Kasaragod district (in 1984).*

whereas, Ernakulum district which ranked second in urban content (47.6%) and 1st in per capita income as per 2001 Census, has ranked 1st in urban content (67.5%) as per 2011 census. This relative reduction in the urbanization in the district may be due to the prevalence of low income generating small-scale industries, compared to the large scale

industrialization in Ernakulam district.

Prior to the preparation of Master Plans for the Municipal Towns, under LSGD Planning, Kerala conducted a study on urbanization of each district and published the District Urbanization Report in 2011. The report presents the urbanization trend and development pattern of each district at present as well as in the future contexts. The current trend of urbanization has been studied and analysed using different growth parameters, infrastructure and urban facilities.

3.3 HIERARCHY OF SETTLEMENTS

Hierarchy value of settlements is an indication on the extent of concentration of facilities in a region. Cumulative Functional Index (CFI) method is used to find out the hierarchy of settlement. The CFI of a settlement is assessed based on the number and hierarchy of the following types of facilities in the settlement:

1. Educational facilities
2. Health Facilities
3. Markets
4. Physical infrastructure facilities
5. Transportation facilities

The weightage of each of these facilities in the district and CFI value are calculated. CFI value is plotted against the number of settlements to

find out the hierarchy of settlements in the District.

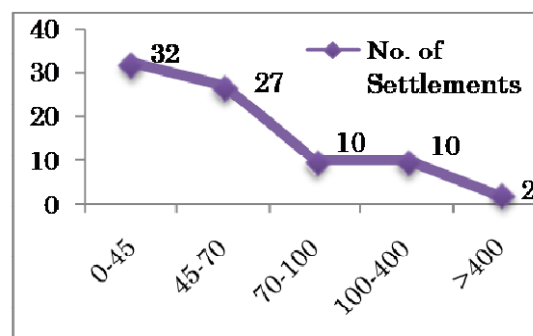


Figure.3.4 Cumulative Functional Index (CFI)

The local bodies whose CFI value is greater than 400 is considered as first order settlements, between 100-400 as second order settlements, between 70-100, 45-70, 0-45 as third order, fourth order and fifth order settlements respectively. The graph, so obtained is shown in Figure.3.4. Graph reveals that there are 2 first order settlements, 10 each second and third order settlements, 27 fourth order settlements and 32 fifth order settlements in Kannur District.

The Figure.3.5 shows the map of settlement hierarchy in Kannur district. Kannur Municipal Corporation area and Thalassery Municipal Town come under 1st order settlements. The first and second order settlements are located along National Highway and State highway.

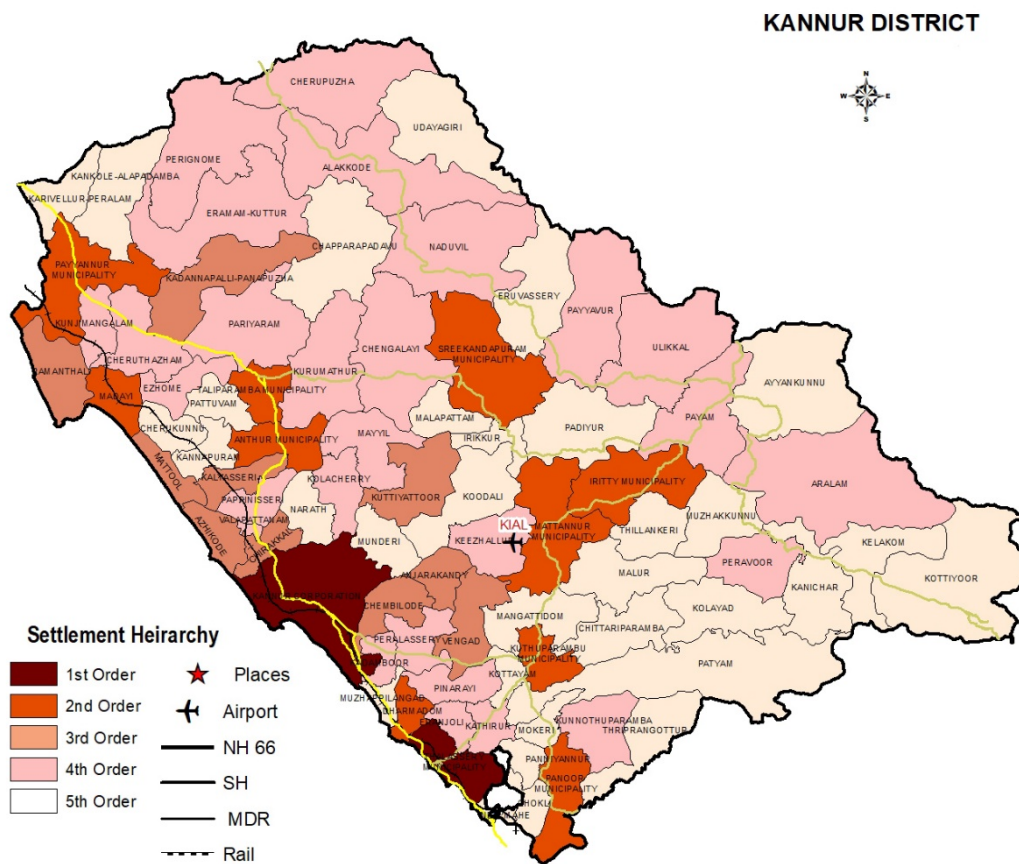


Figure.3.5 Settlement hierarchy in Kannur district

Moreover, Thalassery Municipality is considered as one of the first grade municipalities in Kerala. The majority of LSGs along the coastal stretch come under 1st, 2nd and 3rd order settlements.

3.4 FUNCTIONAL CHARACTER OF THE CORPORATION AREA IN THE DISTRICT

The functional character of a region is determined on the basis of population distribution within the region, average plot size and land use of that area. Function of a settlement is determined based on the major

activity within the settlement. This may be rural if it has agriculture and allied activity or urban if it has secondary or tertiary sector activities. The methodology used here to determine the major function of the settlements is by studying the land use and the average plot size within the settlement. The LSG in Kannur district are classified as urban, semi urban, semi-rural and rural. Figure.3.6 shows the details of the Functional characteristics found in Kannur district. The ward wise study of Functional Character is shown in detail in Chapter 23 (Spatial Structure).

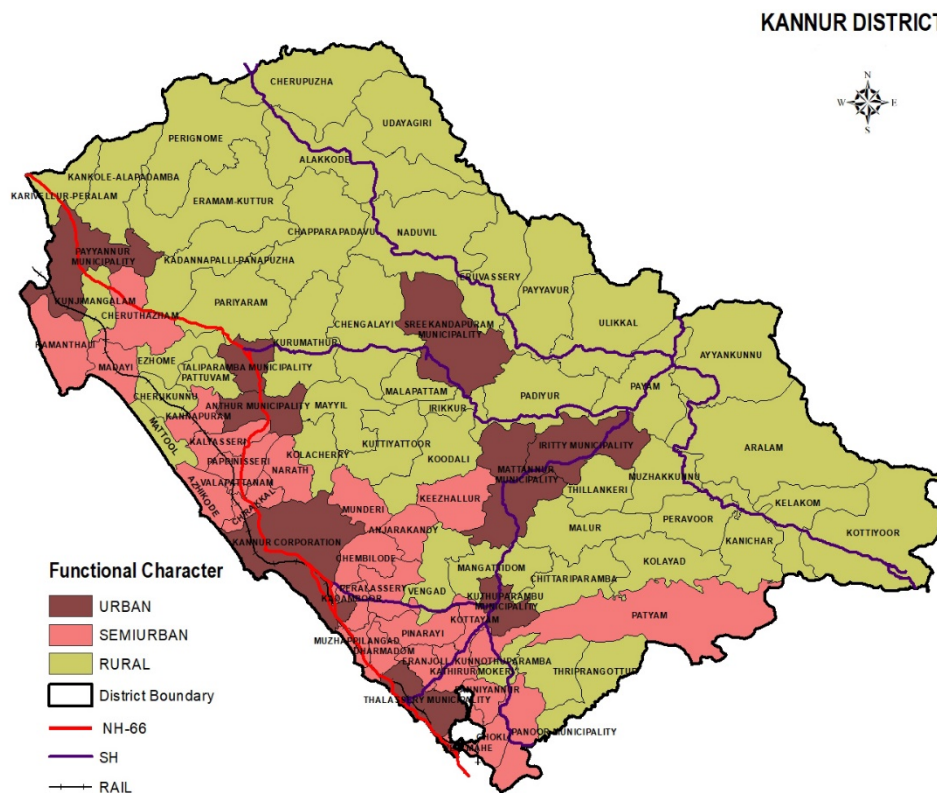


Figure.3.6 Functional Character of Kannur district

3.5 POPULATION CONCENTRATION PATTERN

From spatial distribution of local bodies, it is clear that the urban areas are mainly concentrated on coastal sides. The urbanization has gradually shifted towards midland and high land regions.

The population concentration pattern in Kannur district is shown in Figure.3.7 which depicts the majority of district population is concentrated on western side of the district. District’s 1/3rd population is concentrated in 19 LSGs. Among these, 18 LSGs are very close to the coastal zone. The figure also reveals that 33% of district population is

concentrated on 10.46% of district area and 50% of population is concentrated in 20.23% of the area of the district.

3.6 ACTIVITY PATTERN OF THE TOWNS IN THE DISTRICT

The activity pattern is determined based on three important parameters: land use concentration pattern, future urban profile and functional classification of that area. The Urbanisation studies conducted in the District clearly shows that Kannur Municipal Corporation area and its neighbouring Panchayaths in north and east are mainly having urban activities.



Figure.3.8 Connectivity of Kannur district

to the planning area through a system of road network. Thaliparamba is also well connected to the planning area through a system of road network. Moreover, the State Highway 59 passing through the highland area of the district acts as an effective trade route for exporting the plantation and cash crops within the district.

Kannur Railway Station, the major railway station in Kannur district is located inside the planning area. Also, the railway network parallel to the coastal area brings an effective connectivity of Kannur district with neighbouring urban centres. Moreover, Kannur International Airport is located 30 km away from the corporation area links Kannur district

with the major airport cities in Kerala, India and Abroad, providing broader air connectivity to the Municipal Corporation area. Azheekal and Mappila bay are the major harbours which are located very close to the planning area.

Kannur South–Airport railway line is a newly suggested railway route which needs further detailed studies give hope for a rail connection to the hinterland area in future.

3.8 SPATIAL STRUCTURE OF THE DISTRICT

Spatial structure of the district is evolved by considering various factors such as hierarchy of settlement, activity pattern and the connectivity to

various settlements in the district. Figure.3.9 shows the spatial structure of Kannur district.

The study on urbanization of the district gives the hierarchy of the local body which forms a part of the regional road network.

The study of activity pattern based on the land use data is also an important parameter. The activity pattern of a district is the sum total of a pattern of functional character among various settlements, land use concentration pattern and urban profile within the district. This in effect integrates the land use

distribution, population distribution, occupational structure, average plot size and distribution of facilities within the district.

The functional character is determined based on the population, average plot size and land use. The urban profile is derived taking in to account occupational structure, and hierarchy of settlements.

The connectivity gives the overall outline of all types of transportation networks that affect the trade and commercial activity of the district through which the economic development can be attained.

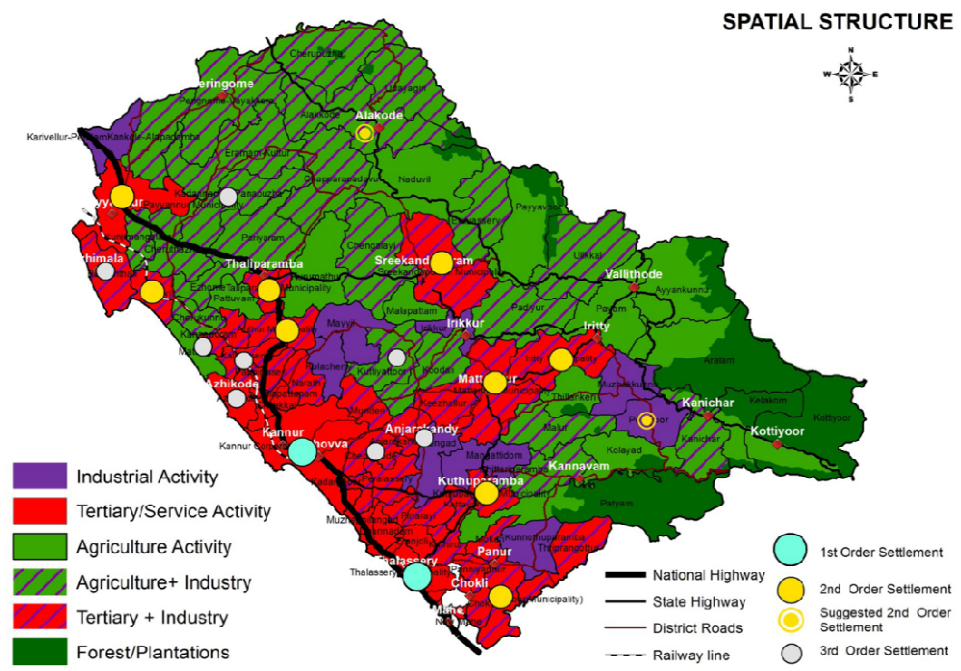


Figure.3.9 Spatial Structure – Kannur District

3.9 INFERENCE

From the above analysis, it is clear that Kannur Municipal Corporation is a highly urbanized local body with the

largest population in the district. The study area comes under first order settlement with Tertiary/Service activities as predominant.