Accumulation at Margins: The case of Khora Colony

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**Introduction**

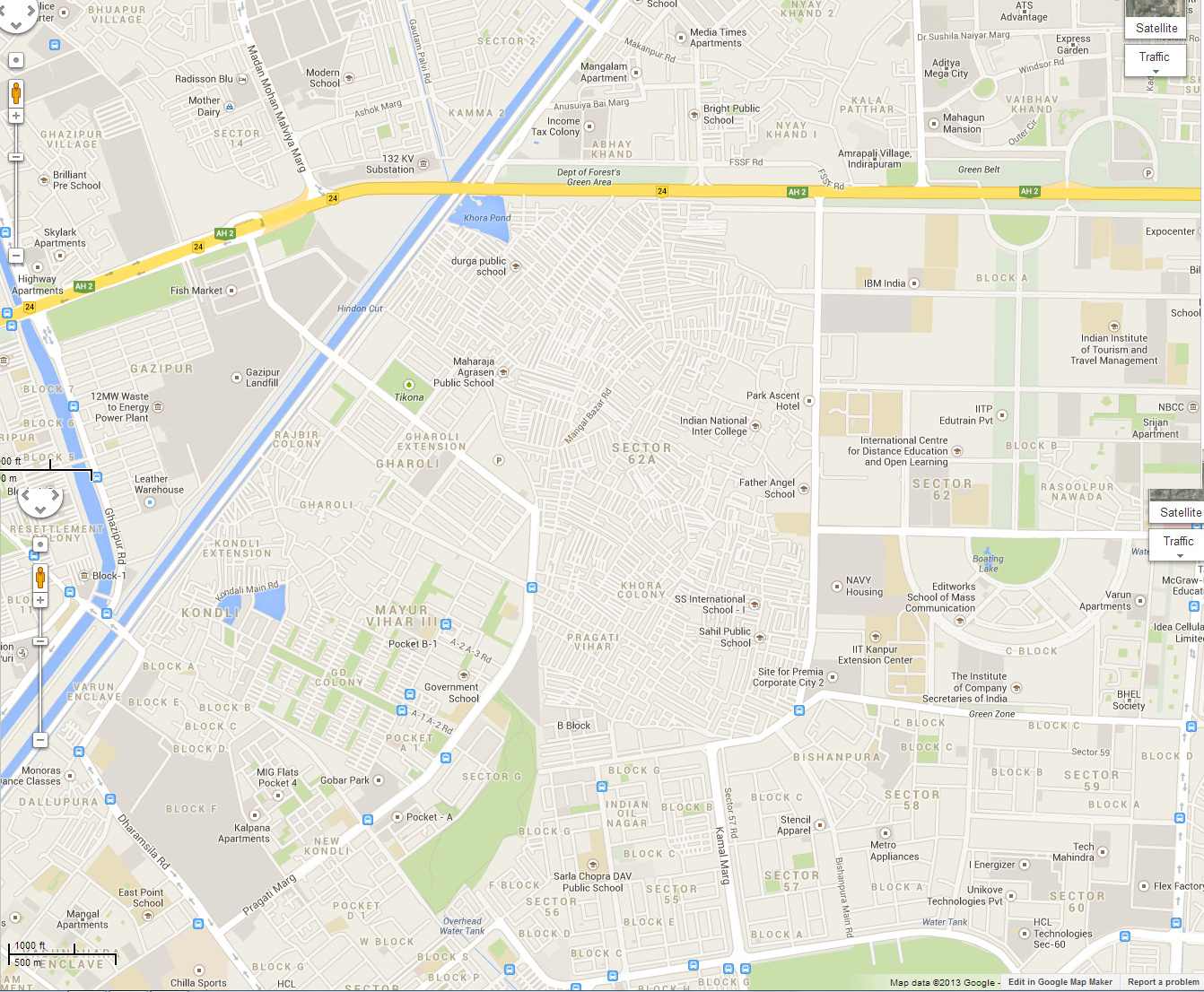
This paper is about the transformation of a sparsely populated village called Khoraat the border of three cities: Delhi, Noida and Ghaziabad into one of the most densely populated unauthorized colonies of Asia inhabited mostly by low income migrants from UP, Uttaranchal, Bihar and Bengal. This transformation primarily took place due to the development of satellite town of Noida. Noida was created in 1976 to decentralize economic activities from the capital, prevent in- migration and decongest the metropolis; to curb speculation around the land close to Delhi giving rise to unplanned growth; to provide an alternative site for absorbing non-conforming industries in Delhi and to provide affordable housing at a manageable distance from Delhi (NOIDA 1983). The model of development followed in Noida was similar to that of Delhi. An industrial authority was constituted by an act of the state government that gave the responsibility of land acquisition and development of the villages notified under them. Khora was one of the villages notified and eventually acquired by Noida. The theoretical effort in the paper is to explore the various regimes of accumulation involved in the development of industrial new towns such as Noida in the post liberalization economy through the case study of Khora.The fieldwork for the following paper has been done in the months of March and April, 2013 and April and May, 2014.

The sequence of the paper is as follows. In the first section we will describe the current location of Khora village and colony and its surrounding areas in Delhi, Noida and Ghaziabad. In the second section we will look at the plan of Noida authority regarding development of Khora, the ‘illegal’ speculation on the ground and the developments before the acquisition of the land from the farmers. This will highlight the form of capital accumulation intended by the authority on the land of Khora village that was partly jeopardized by the unauthorized plotting and occupation of land. In the third section we will look at the actual development of Khora, the micro economies operating over there and the way in which different classes of residents are accumulating or subsisting there. We will probe why Khora colony that is always expressed in terms of a ‘lack’: of municipal services, infrastructure and a legal status is the most densely populated ‘labor colony’[[1]](#footnote-2) in Asia. We will see the interconnection between the formal and informal economy and housing. We will argue that accumulation is possible for not just the Yadav village landowners but also for the low income migrants ranging from shopkeepers, auto-rickshaw drivers, factory workers, scrap dealers, lower end government servants and school teachers in a space like Khora. In conclusion we will try to theoretically locate the form of development happening in Khora.

**Section 1: Location of Khora Village and Colony**

The Khora village, with its extended abadi in the form of Khora colony, is situated between the south eastern periphery of Delhi, the south western periphery of Ghaziabad and north western periphery of Noida. Being located on the eastern fringe of Delhi it is in the vicinity of Ghazipur landfill site, a wholesale meat market, Gharoli village and its extension, and is contiguous with MayurVihar Phase three, that a moderately developed residential colony. The Hindon cut canal marks the north western boundary of Khora colony, while the National Highway 24 separating Noida and Ghaziabad forms its northern boundary. It is flanked by gated group housing societies in Indirapuram built by private developers on the side of Ghaziabad and surrounded on the Noida side by the institutional area of Sector 62 in the east, and RajatVihar, a posh gated residential colony in the south. Khora has rapidly changed from being a sparsely populated village in 1971, spread over an area of 426.55 hectares in the Ghaziabad Tehsil of Meerut District[[2]](#footnote-3) with 96 households and a total population of 656, (Census 1971: 55) to a population of 189,410 in 2011. This increase was not evenly distributed over successive decades. The progression reported in the official census was 844 in 1981 (Census 1981: 54), 14751 in 1991 (Census 1991: 260), 99,506 in 2001 (Census 2001) and 189,410 in 2011 (Provisional Census 2011). Officially, Khora has been declared a census town in the 2011 census. While these are official census figures, the actual numbers living in Khora seem to be much more with newspaper and other media sources reporting around 1 million in 2013.

Map showing Khora colony between MayurVihar (Delhi), Indirpuram (AbhayKhand and NyayaKhand) and Institutional Areas of Noida (Sector 62).



**Section 2: The ‘unintended’ development: Noida Master Plan and Khora**

The formation of new industrial town of Noida was announced in 1976 in the vicinity of Khora village and by 1978 the Noida authority officially brought it within the development area of its Master Plan via the notification 2691-Bha-U-18/11-27/NOIDA/77 dated 18.5.1978 (NOIDA 1983). Though the land of Khora was notified in 1978, its acquisition took place only in 1989-90. This is because the development of sectors in Noida had started from another direction with the land of Haraula, Chaura, Raghnathpur, Naya Bans, Jhundpura, Nithari, Attavillages to be acquired first. In fact the first Draft Master Plan of Noida released in 1983 with a perspective of development till 2001, mentioned Khora village as an agricultural area that was to be separated from the proposed adjacent residential areas of 55-56 through a green belt. Thus there was no plan to develop Khora till a long time after the notification of the village. But the notification only enhanced the land speculation in Khora that had already started at the borders of Delhi due to increasing land prices over there. Khora started attracting colonizers and property dealers mostly from Delhi around the same time from the late 1970s onwards. This led to a considerable unauthorized development of Khora colony before its land could be acquired by Noida. The first person to come to Khora village to cut a colony was a dealer called Khurana from Shahadra, Delhi[[3]](#footnote-4). He bought land in Khora for a pittance atRs 70/bigha[[4]](#footnote-5).

Around the same time in 1981 the National Highway 24 was inaugurated that connected Ghaziabad city and Noida to Delhi through road and also served as an important trade route in North India. Khurana bought land a few years before the construction of the National Highway. Sardar Singh Yadav, one of the natives of the village, believes that Khurana already knew that the National Highway was going to come up in the area and had thus bought huge portions of land at extremely cheap rates. The first colony that he constructed was called Maharishi Garden. In order to attract population over there and give the colony a settled look he primarily cut small plots of 25 sq. yard each. Some of these plots were given on rent to his employees, other were distributed either for free to poorer people living in Delhi or for a meagre rent of Rs 150[[5]](#footnote-6). Pramod Kumar Thakur, a migrant from Orissa, who came to the colony in 1987 pointed out to an ironical situation whereby the cost of the land was as low at Rs 40/square yard and the registration was more expensive at Rs 100/square yard. No one believed at that time that there could be a settlement over here[[6]](#footnote-7).

The dealerswould buy land from the farmers, make maps of the area and sell it to migrants. The registry of transfer of land used to happen under the name of the original landowner or the villager himself and the dealers would make profit in between the deal and left. Sometimes when the dealer could not sell all the land, the farmer himself sold it to the outsiders. Soon the farmers learnt how to sell their land and became dealers themselves. Rishi Fauji, the pradhan of the village from 2000-2005, gave me examples of how farmers themselves became dealers and started the plotting of their farms on their own.He contended that the sons of farmers became property dealers and sold their land ahead to their relatives, dealers from outside or incoming migrants. The starting price of selling of land was Rs 30 per gaj in the late 1970s. The pace of selling land increased a lot after 1990 with the increase in the flow of migrants to Noida[[7]](#footnote-8).

Khora village had a huge segment of 1200 bigha as LMC or government land[[8]](#footnote-9). The farmers sold the LMC land to the migrants as well with the collusion of the lekhpal, pradhan, property dealer and the police. This was possible because the LMC land used to fall in between farms and it was difficult to distinguish the government land from the one owned by the farmer. In fact one piece of land was sold several times by the owners. This was because a lot of times the buyers did not take immediate possession of the land they bought. The powerful in the area used to occupy that land and sell it to someone else. Even after taking compensation from the authority in 1990 the farmers kept on selling the land to the incoming migrants[[9]](#footnote-10).

The Second Master Plan with the perspective of 2011 was released in 1989, considering the fast pace of industrial development of Noida especially after 1985. The land next to Khora village, originally comprising of residential sectors of 57 and 58, were converted from residential to industrial for small and medium scale industries leading and additional industrial areas were carved out in its proximity (NOIDA 1989). Since institutional areas were supposed to be located along the National Highway 24, the land use of Khora village was proposed to be institutional. The authority wanted to take possession of the whole land of the village including that which was illegallyoccupied. Thus they went to Khora with bulldozers in order to demolish the unauthorized occupation in 1987. There were around 1000 to 2000 houses then. Amidst chaos and gunshots the authority demolished parts of the settlement. One of the residents of Khora died in the incidence. This stalled the demolition and the bulldozers went back. The authority did not try to demolish it again immediately because of the casualty in the last incidence. Meanwhile the villagers started selling their land desperately to the incoming migrants at very cheap rates. Those who bought land also stated constructing rapidly so that it becomes difficult to demolish. The authority left the area on its own and in the words of a retired town planner it was left “free for all”.

After a few months of demolition ND Tiwari who was the Chief Minister of UP had come to Sector 11 to inaugurate Nehru Youth Centre. People of Khora reached there and did a gherao of the Chief Minister. ND Tiwari heard their grievances. He was told that the Noida authority regarded the occupation of Khoraas illegal but there were already a number of residents living in the colony who had legally registered their land transactions.They in fact demanded development from Noida as it had done in other villages. ND Tiwari assured them that the colony would not be broken and there would be development of Khora[[10]](#footnote-11). Though the state did not take any steps for the development of Khora, the announcement increased the prices of land over there from 100/sq. yd. to Rs250/sq. yd[[11]](#footnote-12).

The Authority had realized that it would not be able to demolish all the unauthorized encroachment in Khora that had spread in a huge area and acquire the whole land of the village. In 1988 the then Land Acquisition Officer ordered a survey by the government to ascertain the khasras that had been occupied by the residents and those that were free to acquire. It was found in the survey that khasra no. 1 to 537 had been occupied. The rest of the land was taken by the authority from 1400 acres around 500 acres was acquired by the authority and the compensation was awarded from 1990 to 1991[[12]](#footnote-13). All the landowners were dissatisfied with the amount of compensation awarded to them and filed cases in the court to increase the amount of compensation. In order to prevent further expansion of Khora the CEO of the Authority ordered the construction of an eight feet wall around Khora village and colony and separated it from the planned area of Noida.

The institutional and commercial area of Sector 62 was built on the land acquired from Khora as per the Noida Master Plan 2021. Bharat Bhushan, a retired planner who was on deputation to Noida from 1997-2001 and 2005-06 told that the residential colony of RajatVihar, Indus Valley School, Karl Huber School, SabziMandi were recent attempts to salvage whatever pockets were available and were not encroached by the residents of Khora[[13]](#footnote-14). In fact it was Bharat Bhushan himself who expedited the change in land use from Institutional to residential by appealing to the state government for the construction of RajatVihar and institutional to commercial for the construction of shops in SabziMandi, Sector 62, Noida. He firmly believed thatif it were not for the efforts of Noida authority the residents of Khorawould have encroached all the pieces of land that were available in its vicinity. For the planners Khora represents an encroached space that could have produced much more surplus value for the authority and contributed to the GDP of National Capital Region, but has instead acted as a source of devaluing the land in and around Khora.

Thus Noida did not take charge of its development and Khora was left to fend for itself to attain basic infrastructure. In 1997 the carving out of the new district of GautamBudh Nagar from Ghaziabad and Bulandshahar district that incorporated Noida, administratively separated it from Khora, which was left in the Ghaziabad district. This gave rise to a conflict of jurisdiction whereby both Ghaziabad and Noida kept on shifting the responsibility on each other for Khora’s upkeep[[14]](#footnote-15). Consequently Khora does not have access to municipal water, sanitation, health care and sewage services usually provided by the state. Interestingly, the telephone and electricity connections come from Noida while the police station that oversees Khora located in Indirapuram, Ghaziabad. Despite the fact that Khora village gradually transformed into an unauthorised colony, with the rise in the number of those engaged in non-agricultural activities, it is still governed by a Gram Panchayat. There are two members from Zila Panchayat, one Pradhan and fifteen Block Development Committee members that are elected from Khora. Although Khora represents a village which has undergone tremendous densification, and become urban in character, it still does not formally come under any municipal authority. It has 150 mohullas or neighborhoods, and 1861 lanes[[15]](#footnote-16), though most of the roads are in bad condition. With narrow lanes, open drainage and bad roads the area seems to be a stark aberration compared to its neighboring areas in Noida and Ghaziabad, which look far more posh and upmarket.

**Section 3: Khora as a dynamic space of accumulation**

Noida has built a well-planned institutional area with schools, management institutes, multinational companies like Barclays in Sector 62, on the land acquired from Khorathat is keeping with its aspiration of being a ‘futuristic city’[[16]](#footnote-17). Its attempt to build a wall around Khora seemed to be part of its desperate efforts to confine the illegal encroachment and hide the ‘problematic interstice’[[17]](#footnote-18) in the otherwise well planned area[[18]](#footnote-19). In this section we attempt to look at the socio economic life behind the walls in Khora and outline the dynamic ways of accumulation going on in Khora.

1. **Accumulation through rent: Erstwhile Villagers and Property Dealers**

The land of the farmers in Khorahad to be acquired by the Noida authority for its development and they had to pay them compensation. This could not happen as it was desired by the authority because of the plotting done by dealers and then the farmers themselves. The pace of plotting started increasing by 1984. This was in consonance with the increase in the establishment of industries in Noida. The dealers and farmers tapped in on the demand of shelter of the initial influx of the working class and other low income migrants who could not afford to buy LIG and EWS housing or land elsewhere in Noida. Thus even before getting compensation for the land that was eventually acquired by Noida, the farmers, in this case the dominant Yadav community amongst the villagers sold their land to dealers or migrants.

A number of people bought land during this time. Dealers from nearby areas who saw an opportunity to sell land to the migrants, factory owners in Delhi and Noida who built housing for their employers, local police who in collusion with thepradhan and dealers cashed in on an opportunity to make money by selling land or flats[[19]](#footnote-20), and ironically the lower officials in the authority themselves. After the announcement by ND Tiwari and a considerable unauthorized development the residents and incoming migrants were reasonably sure that the colony will not be demolished. Hence Khora was seen as an investment opportunity where they could buy land for cheap and sell it further whenever it is profitable. Land transactions happen at a very high rate in Khora. The letters that the various welfare associations formed by the migrants wrote to authorities in state government staked a claim to development by mentioning the fact that state earns revenue in lakhs due to the high rate of registries happening in Khora.

Since 1990s a rent economy has flourished in Khora. The main partakers in this economy are the erstwhile zamindars/farmers from the dominant Yadav community[[20]](#footnote-21)who have invested the money gained from selling plots in constructing buildings within Khorafor the working class. There are different kinds of buildings of the same. They could be either single storied row houses with a courtyard in between or multi storiedbuilding in which rooms are built in a row. Such buildings have a minimum of twenty rooms with the rent ranging from 1500 to 3000 per room depending on the condition of the building. In the absence of municipal supply of water, the Yadav or Gujjar landlords who live in Khora colony also sell drinking water from tankers or have installed RO and refrigeration plants for their rentees and others in the colony. Dharma Pal Yadav, relative of Rishi Fauji, owns around 10 buildings and 10 tankers. All his sons have their own tractors and tankers. Most of the buildings that he owned consisted of one rooms for workers but the most recent building that he constructed in 2011 has two bedroom flats to be rented out to more prosperous families[[21]](#footnote-22). His brotherRangpal Yadav who lives in Lakuan Ghaziabad bought back a building on his ancestral land that had been sold twice by his grandfather in Khora in 2003 for 26 lakhs for a plot of 272 sq. yd. There was hardly any profit in the land when his grandfather had sold the land. But he bought it back due to the booming rent economy in Khora. The building has thirty two rooms and he earns around 2000 from each room. He has another similar building in Chaprail, Lalkuan but the rent is lesser over there. He has around 20 plots in different parts of Ghaziabad which are lying unused. He would either sell them at bigger profit later or make more buildings or just let them lie fallow. He claimed that instead of buying farmland he prefers to invest in plots[[22]](#footnote-23). Similar buildings are owned by dealers living outside Khora who only come to take rent once in a month.

They also sell as well as rent out land for markets. There are a number of markets inside Khora that have been constructed on the land owned by the Yadavs. Some of the shops are bought and some are taken up on rent by small time businessmen in Khora. Kalu Yadav, the de facto pradhan of the area[[23]](#footnote-24), invests the money earned from rent of the several buildings and shops in the area in cutting colonies elsewhere. He is currently cutting colony in Chajarsi, Ghaziabad.

1. **Accumulation by the migrant landowners**

The reasons whyKhora is a dynamic space and it offers opportunities to the lower income groups to not merely subsist in a need economy but also accumulate and prosper are as follows. The high pace of industrialization was constantly attracting migrant labor from the relatively under developed parts of UP, Uttaranchal and Bihar to Noida. The low income housing constructed by the authority was too expensive for poor migrants. They were also grossly inadequate in number because the authority aborted the idea of construction of EWS housing by the mid-1980s. As a consequence urban villages and slums were absorbing most of the laboring population. Khora presented itself as an affordable place for migrants where they could either buy a small plot because of the cheap land rates and earn a livelihood due to flexibility to open shops, small workshops in the residence itself, or enter as rentees and save up enough to buy a plot later. Thus a number of migrants came to Khora as rentees or squatters and were able to buy their own piece of land in due course of time. The homeowners have also incrementally built rooms to be given out on rent. Those who are in lower end government service and own land in Khora have constructed rooms, the number depending on the size of the plot, on upper floors to give on rent. Different sources of income can be easily combined in Khora. Thus a small general store within the house to supplement family income is one of the most common phenomenon. The reason for density of Khora is that it is a place where everyone finds work. Being in the middle of the three cities it gives locational advantage of accessing three cities, thereby increasing employment opportunities. The ability to combine residence and work is one of the chief advantages of Khora.

In order to illustrate the way in which accumulation is possible by the low income migrants in Khora, we would cite some concrete cases. Pramod Kumar Thakur[[24]](#footnote-25), locally known as Udiya has a small shop selling boring instruments. He installs and repairs borings and has hired two laborers for that purpose. He owns two private water tankers that he sends to Delhi, Noida and Ghaziabad. He also does property dealing, which is the main or side business of every second person in Khora. It is interesting to see how space is used by him. He built his residence and shop in a plot size of 50 sq. yd at the corner of the road. The ground floor had two shops and a room. The boundary of the house is formed by wall with a small gate to enter the house and two shutters of the shops that open outside on the road. The boring shop is in one corneris separated from both, the room in which they live and a smaller shop selling bread and milk that blended into each other, by a wooden wall made of the shelves containing the boring supply material of his shop. The wood wall doubles as a divider and a holder of things in the boring shop. There are two more rooms on the first floor for residential purposes. He was an ex-man in military in Bhubaneshwar that he left in 1984. He came to Delhi where he started working as a contractor for boring and installing pipe lines in MayurVihar. Pramod told that dealers were encouraging people to live there for free as they wanted to show it as a settled colony. Hence he moved to Khora with his family in VandanaVihar for free in 1987. There were a few houses built in the area where no one lived then. Once he was sure that the colony will not be demolished, he bought a land for himself in 1991.

Ghanshyam[[25]](#footnote-26) came from the village to Delhi and stayed in Lakshminagar and then to Rajbir colony and then in Khora. He did odd jobs such as beldari in Delhi or vending vegetable, eggs and ice candies. He used to earn around Rs. 60 in beldari then, while his income increased to Rs 300 per day by vending. He was living in Rajbir colony on rent in the adjacent village Gharoli when he got to know about a colony being cut in Khora in the early 80s. He bought land at Rs 70 per sq. yd. in MadhuVihar, next to MayurVihar Phase Three and made a house bit by bit. He himself used to be a scrap cart puller in the vicinity in Delhi. He then took up a shop on rent and eventually bought a shop close to his house. He employs around seven cart pullers who collect scrap from the lanes that are assigned to them and sell them to Ghanshyam in the evening. They either live in Khora or the nearby villages in Delhi such as Gharaoli and Khichripur. He further sells scrap to bigger godowns in Delhi in Patparganj Industrial Area and Shahdara. Now he owns two more plots in Sector 63 of 50 sq.yard and 90 square yard each.

Khora has a number of small scale industries like that of textile printing, dying, manufacturing food products. The garment export houses in Noida find it profitable to give orders of printing and dying clothes to smaller workshops in urban villages or unauthorized colonies such as Khora that take smaller orders in accordance with the needs of the export houses. They first try out a sample of clothes in the market and increase the number of orders according to the demand. Mahipal Singh Yadav[[26]](#footnote-27) bought 100 sq. yard land in Khora in 1990. He used to work in a small shop in Sector 10 where he lived. His work was seen by a foreigner and he got his first huge order. It was from the payment that he got from him with which he bought land in Khora. He opened printing house on the ground floor and made his home on the first floor. Yadav gets his orders from established export houses of Noida such as Bani Cloth House, NY International. The export houses supply the cloth on which he prints and send the vehicles to collect the finished orders. He had employed two workers who hailed from District Farrukhabad which is famous for textile printing. The labor employed at Mahipal’s workshop also live on rent in Khora. Sometimes they live on rent at their employers house only.

1. **Khora: A storehouse of devalued labor and economy**

The lowest rung living in Khora consist of those who do not own any land and are living on rent in Khora. The rent of a single room ranges from 1500 to 3000. They are primarily rickshaw pullers, rag pickers, scrap cart pullers, laborers in the repair or printing shops and young factory workers earning something between Rs 7000-12000in Noida, most of whom are employed on a contractual basis. In addition, the low end unskilled labor such as security guards, domestic help, nannies, sweepers, drivers, cooks that are required tosupport those with corporate jobs and lifestyle, who form, in the terminology of SaskiaSassen, the ‘survival circuit’ of the global city,also live on rent in Khora. The high density of Khora colony and other urban villages in Noida certifies the fact this population cannot afford to live or squat in the planned areas of the city. It is a concentration of devalued population and the illegal status and lack of infrastructure ensures that its land value also remains low as compared to other parts of the city.

It has absorbed not just the devalued population but also the economic activities that are important for the functioning of the core cities but are shifted in margins or peripheries. For instance, Khora is used as a storehouse by many companies. Dhoom Singh Yadav, a native of the villagehas rented out space to Maruti for keeping cars for repairs. A number of dealers of the paper market that has been shifted from Old Delhi to Ghazipur have kept their machinery or operating small plants in Khora. There are hardly any free plots in Khora. Most of the free plots have been rented out to be converted into open or closed godowns for collecting and sorting wasteof all kinds of recyclable material ranging from plastic bottles, cartons, paper. Khora has also become a shelter for the rag pickers from Bengal who have been ousted from Noida. The larger plots have been converted into temporary shelters made up of tarpaulin sheets where the waste pickers both live and sort waste into different gunny bags and sell to the godown owners.

A number of scrap collectors as well as godown owners have come from Delhi because of the ceilings that were going on in the last decade. Sunil has his house in Delhi in Shakkarpur and used to have a godown where he stored the waste collected and distribute in various parts of UP, Uttarakhand and Haryana. Because of the fear of ceiling that was going on a large scale, he moved to Khora which falls under UP and has no threat of ceiling. His godown is on a plot of 2000 sq. yd. and the rent for it is around 6000. He said that ceiling was now shut and he could go back to Delhi.But he is on good terms with his landlord. He trusts him and hence is assured that his material would be safe at night.

Similarly Naresh[[27]](#footnote-28), a scrap collector who works for Ghanshyam. For the first eight years he used to work in Delhi. But he believes that the police used to nag them more in Delhi. “Police kachakkarwahanjyadahai.Yahan par aisanahihaikyunki ye UP pad jatahai.” It is better to work in Khora because it falls in UP where he can work freely. They don’t harass the vendors and cart pullers as much as they do in Delhi. He says that everything that is produced in Noida and Ghaziabad is also produced in Khora. There is a lot of garment export that happens. People have machines in their houses. They produce a lot of katran that is put in a bundle and sold to waste collectors. The scrap is sorted and then distributed to Ghazipur from where they are sent to Muzaffarnagar, Punjab and Haryana. The scrap is ultimately sold to factories that melt them and use iron to make different goods.

**Conclusion**

The opening of the Indian markets due to liberalization have made the peri-urban areas or the new towns in the vicinity of big metropolitan cities in India as the privileged sites of global financial investment due to the feasibility of land acquisition for establishing SEZs, EPZs and offices of the emergent IT/ITES sector (Kennedy 2007).This form of capital accumulation necessitates large scale infrastructural projects via Public Private Partnerships causing the development of some parts of the city that appear as “world class” and devalue others. The internal geography of these towns gets reshaped according to selective capital investmentsleading to “uneven development” (Smith 2008) that gives rise to “splintering urbanism”(Graham and Marvin 2001) and “fragmented cities”. Swapna Banerjee Guha (2010) looks at this process as leading to shifting cores and peripheries; the former being a part of global society and latter remaining in the form of segmented localities. The result is co-existence of gated communities and malls on one hand and slums, unauthorized colonies and urban villages giving rise to intense urban conflicts.

The above fragmentation is true in the case of Noida as well. Noida aspires to be a future city, well integrated into the global economy, and as a hub of businessmen and professionals. The post liberalization investment in Noida in the industrial, residential, institutional and financial sector has made it attractive for the professional class engaged in immaterial labour. At present, there are around 27 SEZs in Noida and Greater Noida, dealing with IT, ITES and electronic hardware (26) and one unit with non-conventional energy (Dupont 2011). It has also become a thriving real estate destination bringing in tremendous investment in multi-story group housing by private developers. But this is only one half of the story. The other half of the story highlights that 70 per cent of the population in Noida lives in urban villages and slums in Noida. The population living here is not a part of the global economy that Noida is proud to be plugged in. This is what the current scholarship of Marxist geographers has referred to as lopsided or uneven development. While we agree with the fact that cities such as Noida are unevenly developed but the question that we are interested in probing is whether uneven development means a binary between accumulation economy and need economy? Would a space like Khora come under the rubric of need economy? We argue that Khora lies somewhere in between an exclusively accumulation or need economy.

As we have looked at in the previous section one of the most obvious modes of capital accumulation in Khora is from the rent economy. The accumulation by the native Yadav villagers is a result of the housing gap left by the Noida for those who form a part of the survival circuit of Noida. The fact that the Noida authority could never acquire most of the land of Khora implied that the farmers were never really dispossessed of the land. They sold their land to the incoming migrants, kept a substantial size of land with themselves on which they built buildings to rent out rooms tobe let out to them, once the population of low income migrants increased in Noida. Thus the theoretical frameworks of primitive accumulation or accumulation by dispossession[[28]](#footnote-29) for understanding land acquisition for urbanization whereby land is taken away from the peasants, depriving them of their means of production and rendering them into wage labor does not work completely for Khora.

The density of Khora has ensured that it is not only a space of production but also a space of consumption by offering a huge market. We have shown that all those migrants who bought land in Khora when the prices were still cheap have also been able to accumulate. They could use the land innovatively, open shops, workshops, godowns within their houses and find a ready market for their products either within Khora or in other parts of Noida, Ghaziabad and Delhi. David Harvey, in his article Right to the City appealed for a democratic control over the production and use of surplus. Khora seems to be a place where the low income migrants could own and flexibly use the land according to their needs. Close proximity of residence and work, readily available labor as well as market, ability to combine various sources of income were the reasons for incremental development. This gave them a greater control over the production and use of surplus and hence an avenue for accumulation.

The most visible economy is that of spare parts and repair shops of automobiles, scooters, electrical appliances, boring pumps and collection, sorting and distribution of scrap and waste. In other words Khora is quintessentially a space of dirty, devalorised material production and the habitation of devalorised material labor. It can be said that the post 90s development in Noida has tried to “bypass the squalor” (Sanyal and Bhattachaya 2011) present in Khora be it by shunning its responsibility as it administratively falls under Ghaziabad or by constructing a wall around it. Thus it would be looked at as if skipped by development. We have argued that it is a product of the development that takes place in cores of the cities and is in fact extremely essential to the functioning of core as core. Khora that are often looked at as peripheral, marginal or skipped by development are in fact most crucial for the development and maintenance of the ‘cores’. They are the constitutive outside of the core. If Noida can be considered to be the core and the accumulation by the authority is happening by the entry of FDI and private capital in residential, commercial and industrial sector especially post liberalization. The densification of Noida has happened also primarily after 1990s due to the gap that is left in the housing of the huge low income migrant population. Also the activities concentrated in Khoraform an integral part of the economy of Noida. The household industries, shops and workshops form a part of supply chains of the small scale industries in Delhi, Noida and Ghaziabad of food products, hosiery and garments, paper and printing, basic metal industries, repairing and other services. Thus we have made a case for considering Khora as a dynamic space of accumulation that is core to the development of Noida.

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1. The term ‘labor colony’ is used by newspapers and a number of residents themselves. It does not refer to any administrative categorization. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Ghaziabad used to come in Meerut District till 14.11.1976 when it was carved out as a separate district. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. It was confirmed in several interviews. Sardar Singh, Deshraj Singh, BallePehelwan, Balwinder Singh. Other initial developers were also from surrounding villages in Delhi such as Chilla and Khichripur. (P I Sardar Singh) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Personal Interview with Deshraj Singh Yadav on 24th May 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Personal interview with Pramod Kumar Thakur famous as ‘Udiya’ because he hails from Orissa. A number of other respondents also told me that the government was encouraging the poorer population ousted from Delhi to settle over there. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. Personal Interview with Rishi Fauji on 12th May, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Personal Interview with Vikram Yadav, Gram VikasAdhikari, Khora on 12 April, 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. Personal Interview with Deshraj Singh Yadav on 24th May, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Personal Interview with Sardar Singh Yadav on 20th May, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. Personal Interview with Deshraj Singh Yadav on 24th May, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. Interview conducted on 4th May, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. “Khora rots as Noida Ghaziabad disown colony”, *The Times of India*, Noida, May, 28, 2001. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. “Sadkon-galionkajaal: sab tootiphootibadhaal”, *Navbharat Times*, Ghaziabad, May 5, 2011. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. <http://www.noidaauthorityonline.com/about-noida.html>, Accessed on October 13, 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. Abdou Malik Simone (2007: 465) has written about how immediate peripheries of metropolises, usually occupied by devalued populations thrown away from central areas are often considered as ‘problematic interstices’ between differentiated poles. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. Khora presents an undesirable space for Noida. I got extremely anxious responses from the town planners of Noida. A retired town planner asked me why I had chosen Khora as a case study as it would reflect badly on the image of Noida. He considers Khora as a clear case of state failure. The current Chief Town Planner of Noida also got irritated on asking questions about Khora. He asked me angrily if I wanted to give solutions or increase their problems by asking about Khora. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. Personal Interview with Sardar Singh Yadav on 20th May, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. It needs to be stated that all those belonging to Yadav caste are not referred to here as the dominant class involved in colonizing. We are specifically referring to the extended kinship networks of the three Yadav families that were there in Khora who owned the land that was acquired by the Noida authority. There are a considerable number of migrants who also belong to the Yadav community who are working in factories or run small businesses of their own. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. Personal Interview with Dharmapal Yadav conducted on 7th April, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
22. Personal Interview with Rangpal Yadav conducted on 8th May, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
23. The de jure pradhan of the area is Brajpal Singh Jatav, who has been an old servant of Kalu’s family. Kalu’s maternal grandfather owned a lot of land in Khora. Since he had no son to inherit his property, his daughter’s sons, that is Kalu and his brothers claimed his property. Kalu supported him in the elections because the constituency of Khora had turned into a reserved seat in this election. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
24. Interview conducted on 2nd May, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
25. Interview conducted on 4th May, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
26. Interview conducted on 13th May, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
27. Interview conducted on 15th April, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
28. David Harvey who has argued that the violence associated with the accumulation of capital in the ‘primitive’ stages is very much part of the contemporary urban processes operative through dispossessing people from their means of production. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)