

## CHAPTER - IV

## PILGRIM FACILITIES

## 4.1 Introduction

## 4.2 Transportation

#### 4.2.1 Railway

#### 4.2.2 Barshi Light Railway (BLR)

#### 4.2.3 Declining trend of pilgrims

#### 4.2.4 Road transport

#### 4.2.5 Growth trend of pilgrims

### 4.3 Accommodation

#### 4.3.1 Dharmshalas and Mathas

#### 4.3.2 Hotels (lodging & Boardings)

#### 4.4 Devotional goods and articles

#### 4.4.1 Devotional eatables

#### 4.4.2 Musical instruments

#### 4.4.3 Basil (Tulsi) rosary

#### 4.4.4 Amber rings

#### 4.4.5 Marathi religious literature

## References

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#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION :

The basic idea of tourism starts from the perception of attraction and the various facilities available to support and supplement them (Singh S.N.,1986, p.93). The intensity and quality of facilities are considerably responsible for the duration of stay and also indirectly in promoting further attraction for the tourist centre. Any tourist first of all would like to know about transportation facility and then various other facilities existing there. It is the nature of these facilities and services which makes the stay comfortable or otherwise.

Pandharpur is a pilgrimage centre. Most of the tourists are pilgrims who do not bother about fine facilities but others look for them and today those facilities are provided by this centre. Transportation by rail and S.T.buses improved a lot and accommodation in Dharmashalas, mathas, hotels as well as rental houses provide the need of the tourists either at the time of pilgrimage or any other time of the year.

#### 4.2 TRANSPORTATION :

Tourism does not exist in isolation. It consists of certain components. The three basic components of tourism are transport, locale and accommodation (Bhatia A.K.,1989, p.35). Transportation means movement of goods and passengers from one place to another. It plays a vital role in the development of



tourism. It is an integral part of tourism. Robinson states, " transport has been at once a cause and effect of the growth of tourism. Improved transport facilities have stimulated tourism, the expansion of tourism has stimulated transport," (Robinson 1976, p.97). It indicates the relationship between transport and tourism. It is noteworthy that the rapid growth of tourism is not possible without the help of transportation. We may say that growth of tourism is a result of modern transportation.

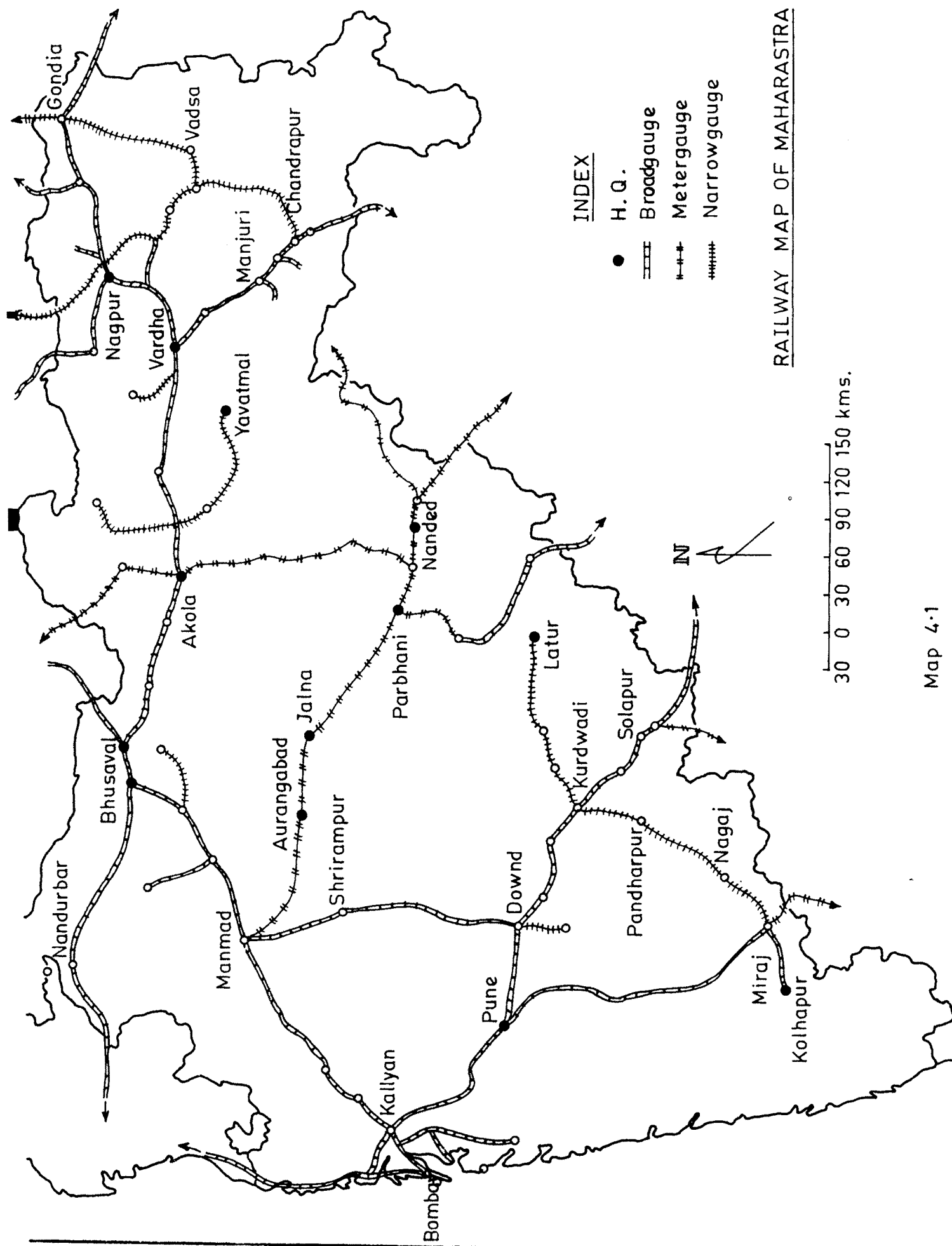
The pilgrims came to Pandharpur by railway, Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC) buses, other states transport buses, private buses, cars, motor cycle, cycle and even by walk on a long distance.

#### 4.2.1 Railway :

The large number of tourists especially on long route generally prefer to travel by rail, rather than road. The main reason is that the tourists find rail to be more comfortable and economical. But the main problem with the tourists is that the railway rarely follows the arrival and departure timings. If the railway transport could be made regular and efficient many people may be inspired to travel by train.

#### 4.2.2 Barshi Light Railway (BLR) :

BLR was started in 1951. It connect the two important railway junctions Kurduwadi and Miraj. Now, it is merged in



INDEX

- H. Q.
- +—+— Broadgauge
- +—+—+— Metergauge
- +—+—+— Narrowgauge

RAILWAY MAP OF MAHARASTRA

30 0 30 60 90 120 150 kms.

Map 4.1

central railway. It affords travel facility to the North Indian people from Kurduwadi and South Indian people from Miraj. Now, the central railway thinks to convert the narrow guage into broad guage (Map 4.1).

BLR plays an important role as far as Pandharpur is concerned. It is a narrow guage line. BLR runs between Kurduwadi, Latur; Kurduwadi - Miraj and Kurduwadi - Pandharpur. Any person or tourist who wants to travel by railway must get down at Kurduwadi, Miraj or Latur Road and continue his travel by BLR. It is the most economic travel, but heavy time consuming. The distance between Miraj and Kurduwadi to Pandharpur is about 137 and 53 kms. The time requires to reach Pandharpur from Kurduwadi and Miraj is about two and half hours and eight hours respectively. By road we can reach Pandharpur from Miraj and Kurduwadi in four and two hours respectively. The journey is more economic than that of road. The poor pilgrims generally travel by train. The role of BLR is very important at the time of Ashadhi and Kartiki Ekadashi, in one trip it carries about 1000 pilgrims at the time of pilgrimage. Before 1986 it was running on coal, but now it runs on diesel, which reduced the time of journey by one hour from Kurduwadi and two hours from Miraj. The time table of this train is given in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 reveals that BLR runs from Latur to Kurduwadi, and it requires three and half hours. The journey from Kurduwadi to Pandharpur requires two and half hours. Journey from Miraj to Pandharpur requires eight hours.

**TABLE 4.1 : Railway time table of Barshi Light Railway**

| Sr. No. | From station to station | Frequency | Departure time |
|---------|-------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| 1       | Kurduwadi to Latur      | 4         | 7.30           |
|         |                         |           | 8.30           |
|         |                         |           | 16.15          |
|         |                         |           | 22.30          |
| 2       | Latur to Kurduwadi      | 4         | 5.30           |
|         |                         |           | 13.00          |
|         |                         |           | 14.55          |
|         |                         |           | 20.00          |
| 3       | Kurduwadi to Pandharpur | 2         | 5.30           |
|         |                         |           | 16.35          |
| 4       | Pandharpur to Kurduwadi | 2         | 9.00           |
|         |                         |           | 20.40          |
| 5       | Kurduwadi to Miraj      | 2         | 7.45           |
|         |                         |           | 22.05          |
| 6       | Miraj to Kurduwadi      | 2         | 12.00          |
|         |                         |           | 20.40          |

The frequency between Latur to Kurduwadi is four time in a day. It runs between Kurduwadi and Pandharpur twice a day and Miraj to Kurduwadi twice a day.

Transport of passengers by BLR may be grouped into two categories. First is regular passengers traffic and the second is the traffic at the time of fairs. It is observed that regular

traffic does not show rush in the train. The passengers on the way of this train move for their work. They never bother about their time. But recently after 1986 the number of passengers increased because of heavy fares of road transport and increase of the speed of the BLR.

The pilgrims traffic is concentrated at the time of fairs in Pandharpur; Ashadhi, Kartiki, Maghi and Chaitri Ekadashi. From all over Maharashtra pilgrims come to Pandharpur for celebrating these days and to pray god. Amongst those four Ekadashi days Ashadhi and Kartiki fairs are very important. Pilgrims from every corner of Maharashtra and to some extent from outside the state visit Pandharpur for these fairs. Table 4.2 gives idea about these fairs at Pandharpur.

Table 4.2 reveals details of the Ashadhi, Kartiki, Maghi and Chaitri Ekadashi fairs. The Ashadhi Ekadashi fair is celebrated in the month of Ashadha (June-July). Duration of this fair is 21 days, which includes period of heavy rush of pilgrims of four days before and five days after the Ekadashi. On the full moon day Kala festival (breaking of Dahihandi) celebrated in the Gopal-Krishna temple at Gopalpur, and next day in the temple of Lord Vitthal named as Namdeo Kala, after this fair began to disperse. To this fair pilgrims came from Khandesh (Dhulia, Jalgaon, Nasik districts of Maharashtra), Vidarbha, Marathwada, Poona and Bombay division of Maharashtra. The incoming and outgoing pilgrims during the period are about 56,499 and 56,634 respectively, which recorded in the year 1980-81.

TABLE 4.2 : Pilgrims flow to Pandharpur at Ekadashis in year 1982.

| Sr.<br>No. | Name of the<br>fair                | Fair<br>period<br>in days | Period of fair<br>(heavy rush)                           | Pilgrims came from   | Pilgrims |          |
|------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|--|--|----------|----------|
|            |                                    |                           |  |  | incoming | outgoing |
| 1          | Ashadhi Ekadashi<br>(June-July)    | 21                        | Four days before and<br>five days after Eka-<br>dashi    | Khandesh, Vidarbha<br>Marathwada, Pune and<br>Bombay Divisions | 56,499   | 56,634   |
| 2          | Kartiki Ekadashi<br>(October-Nov.) | 13                        | Three days before and<br>four days after the<br>Ekadashi | Konkan, Belgaum,<br>Bombay, Bijapur,<br>Raichur                | 40,181   | 35,523   |
| 3          | Maghi Ekadashi<br>(January-Feb.)   | 9                         | Two days before and<br>five days after the<br>Ekadashi   | Marathwada, Belgaum,<br>Bijapur                                | 23,214   | 24,332   |
| 4          | Chaitri Ekadashi<br>(March-April)  | 11                        | Two days before and<br>five days after the<br>Ekadashi   | Marathwada, Belgaum<br>and Bijapur                             | 33,949   | 30,043   |
| Total      |                                    |                           |  |  | 153,843  | 146,532  |

SOURCE : Railway record of Pandharpur.



The Kartiki Ekadashi (Oct.-Nov.) the fair period is of 13 days, which includes seven days heavy rush of pilgrims. Three days before and four days after the Ekadashi, like Ashadi Ekadashi on fullmoon day (on fifth day after ekadashi) Kala festival is celebrated in Gopalkrishna temple at Gopalpur and next day Namdeo Kala in the temple of 'Lord Vitthal'. At this time pilgrims come to Pandharpur from Konkan, Belgaum and Bombay, Bijapur and Raichur. Number of incoming pilgrims was 40,181 and number of outgoing pilgrims was about 35,523.

**TABLE 4.3 : Pilgrims traffic to Pandharpur (BLR)**

| Sr. No. | Year | Total pilgrims (arrivals) |
|---------|------|---------------------------|
| 1       | 1951 | 266,657                   |
| 2       | 1956 | 229,784                   |
| 3       | 1961 | 288,811                   |
| 4       | 1966 | 160,486                   |
| 5       | 1971 | 109,606                   |
| 6       | 1976 | 117,909                   |
| 7       | 1981 | 153,213                   |
| 8       | 1986 | 121,902                   |

**SOURCE :** Railway records of Pandharpur.

The Maghi Ekadashi (January-February) consist of nine days fair with two days before and five days after the Ekadashi days is a period of heavy rush of pilgrims. The pilgrims from Marathwada,

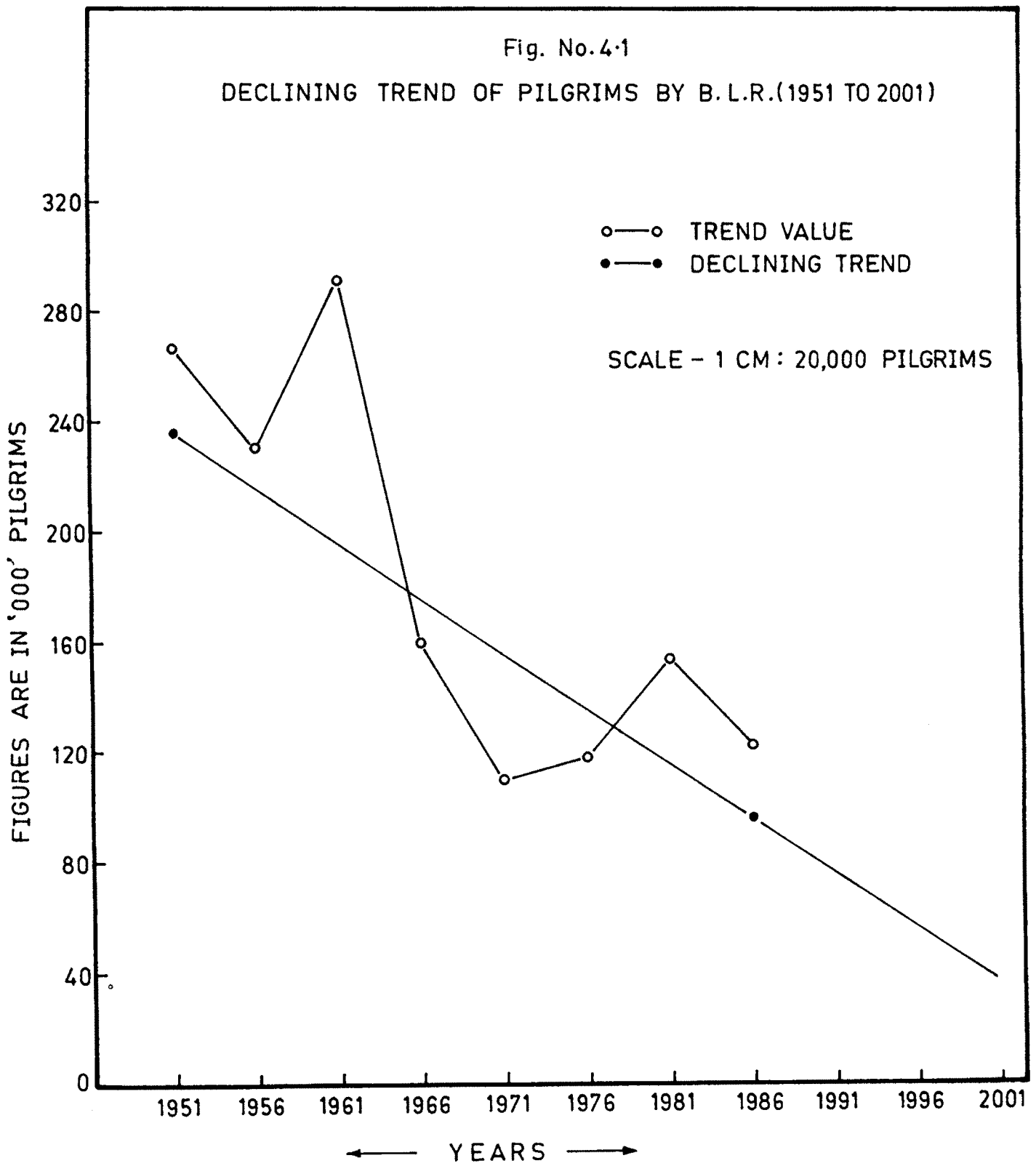
Belgaum and Bijapur mostly visit the Pandharpur in this month. In this period number of arrivals was 23,214 and number of departures was about 24,332.

Chaitri Ekadashi (March-April) also covers eleven days of fair with two days before and five days after the Ekadashi day is a period of heavy rush of pilgrims. Marathwada, Belgaum and Bijapur were the main sources of pilgrims to this Ekadashi. About 33,944 arrivals and 33,043 departures of pilgrims were noted in the year 1982.

Table 4.3 reveals that in 1951 BLR carried nearly 266,657 pilgrims at the time of four important fairs at Pandharpur. From 1966 onward the flow of pilgrims started coming down. It was 160,486 in 1966, and there after it has been slowly declining. In 1986 it was 121,902.

#### 4.2.3 Declining trend of pilgrims (1951-1986) :

Scientific study of the flow of pilgrims has been made to have an assessment of the position of pilgrims. It helps to estimate the future. This can be done by using time series technique. If we can observe this numerical data as different points of time and the set of observation is known as time series. In this analysis of time series, time is most important factor, because the variable is related to time. The analysis of time series helps in understanding the past behaviour. It helps in planning future operations. It also helps in evaluating current



accomplishment. Therefore, the number of pilgrims and its declination during last 36 years have been studied and the prediction have been made by understanding the past behaviour of the declination of number of pilgrims. On the basis of 36 years data prediction of attendance of pilgrims have been made.

In this study declining position of the pilgrims has been analysed. The method of least square is used for this analysis. The line of best fit has been drawn (Fig.4.1) through the arranged data. It represents average line which has the characteristics of arithmetic mean. By this trend analysis it is observed that number of pilgrims has been decreasing. Rapid decrease was started from 1961 to 1971 with little fluctuation. This trend may continue for next years also. On this basis we can predict the number of pilgrims in the year 2001. The prediction for the year 2001 A.D. would be about 46,000 pilgrims. In comparison with the year 1971 it was reduced by 2.4 times, and decrease of pilgrims with compare to year 1951 was by 5.6 times pilgrims.

The analysis reveals that the number of pilgrims decreased mainly due to increase in the MSRTC bus services. The travel by MSRTC buses are more suitable than the BLR as it reduces the travel time, and easy reach to his native place. In festival time large number of people prefer to travel by MSRTC bus as in order to avoid inconveniences caused by the

railway. It is necessary to reduce these inconveniences caused by the BLR to improve the number of pilgrims.

It is not the narrow gauge which causes the difficulty but the meeting with the broad gauge which results in the trouble. This interruption is experienced at terminals viz. Kurduwadi, Miraj and Latur. Pilgrims from different parts of state arrive at these junctions by Broad-Gauge Railway, but due to change in gauge they have to get down there. And therefore, there is no possibility of getting train easily. Therefore, normally they prefer MSRTC buses. The same situation is observed while returning from Pandharpur. The MSRTC buses provide them services from their native place to Pandharpur directly. So instead of railway, day by day pilgrims are preferring to travel by MSRTC buses. And that is why in general, the flow of pilgrims by railway is lowering down, and on the other hand MSRTC buses are carrying more and more pilgrims on the occasions of important fairs at Pandharpur.

#### 4.2.4 Road transport :

The roads, as the means of travel, have been serving the needs of the people since long. Today, road systems have brought significant changes in tourist activity, by linking the different distant places by roads, where the railway cannot be reached there the accessibility of the tourist places has been made possible by roads. Therefore, road transport has become very popular now-a-days.

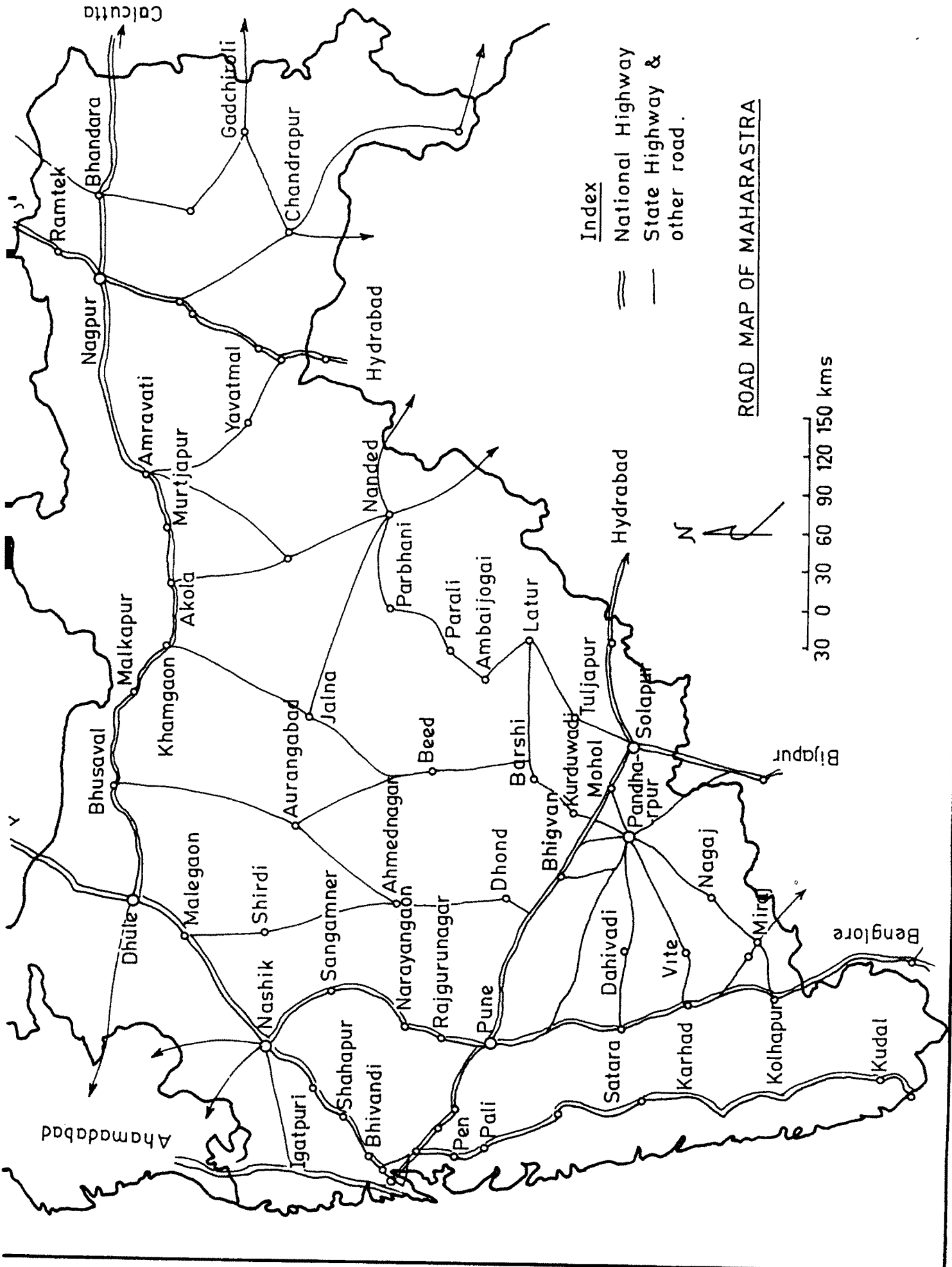


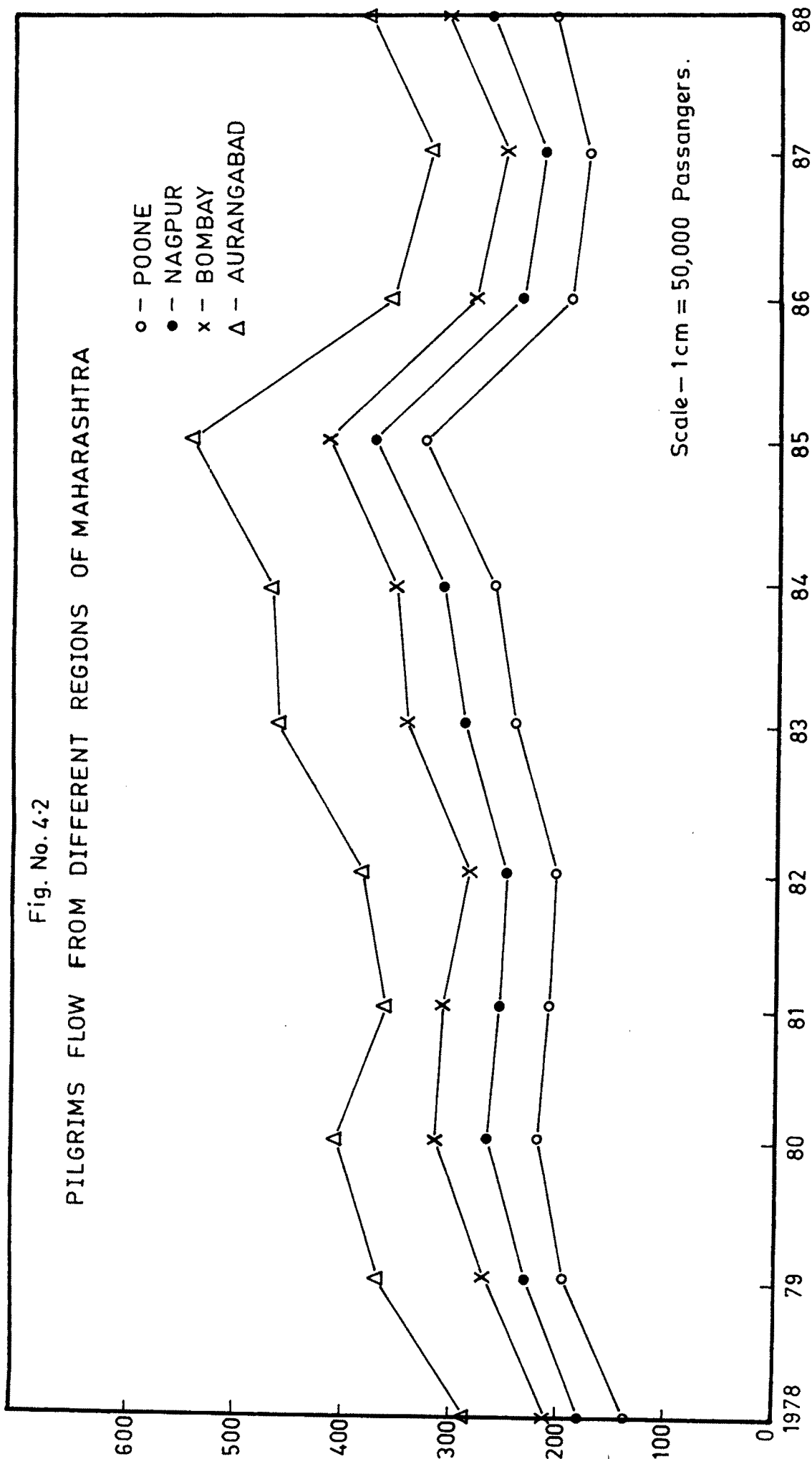
Fig. No. 4.2

# PILGRIMS FLOW FROM DIFFERENT REGIONS OF MAHARASHTRA

- - POONE
- - NAGPUR
- x - BOMBAY
- Δ - AURANGABAD

Scale - 1 cm = 50,000 Passangers.

No. of passangers in thousand



In Maharashtra MSRTC controls passenger traffic since 1948. Maharashtra is divided into four regions. Each region controls all transport activities within its area. The Pandharpur comes under the jurisdiction of Solapur division, of Poona region. All transport activities are controlled by the division office at Solapur. Pandharpur is a pilgrimage centre and almost all regions of Maharashtra are connected with this centre (Map 4.2).

In Solapur district almost on every motorable road the state road transport buses ply. The network of the bus routes is remarkable in the district. All the important towns, taluka places, market places, villages of some historical or religious importance are linked with the towns in the district. At the time of Ashadhi and Kartiki Ekadashi MSRTC makes special arrangement of transport for the pilgrims from most of the villages of the district. During Ashadi and Kartiki Ekadashi there is a continuous flow of pilgrims to Pandharpur and MSRTC provides buses for twenty four hours to them.

The Pandharpur is connected with the other talukas of the district and adjoining districts of the state by metalled roads. Nine metalled roads radiate from Pandharpur. The MSRTC buses ply between Pandharpur and all parts of district and all districts of the state, and a few places outside the state. Pandharpur, the biggest pilgrimage centre, attracts pilgrims from all over Maharashtra and other states of the country. Special arrangements are made to run buses to and from Pandharpur



at the time of Ashadhi, Kartiki, Maghi and Chaitri Ekadashi, Makar Sankranti and in Adhikmas. Like Solapur division, the other divisions of MSRTC also arrange extra buses continuously for eight days, three days before and four days after the Ekadashi to Pandharpur. Over lakhs of people every time take advantage of this facility.

**TABLE 4.4 : Pilgrims flow from different regions  
of Maharashtra (MSRTC).**

| Sr.<br>No. | Year | Poona   | Bombay | Nagpur | Aurangabad | Total   |
|------------|------|---------|--------|--------|------------|---------|
| 1          | 1978 | 141,618 | 35,131 | 35,185 | 37,857     | 275,781 |
| 2          | 1979 | 194,721 | 33,166 | 40,499 | 98,987     | 363,377 |
| 3          | 1980 | 136,637 | 43,815 | 41,983 | 92,901     | 325,336 |
| 4          | 1981 | 106,192 | 47,126 | 51,077 | 61,690     | 295,219 |
| 5          | 1982 | 200,899 | 39,635 | 29,136 | 104,169    | 373,169 |
| 6          | 1983 | 246,446 | 57,835 | 44,681 | 109,237    | 466,409 |
| 7          | 1984 | 266,716 | 42,750 | 46,975 | 109,968    | 466,409 |
| 8          | 1985 | 324,231 | 44,608 | 41,324 | 130,300    | 540,951 |
| 9          | 1986 | 184,467 | 38,503 | 38,080 | 76,707     | 337,357 |
| 10         | 1987 | 172,271 | 36,164 | 33,004 | 67,994     | 309,403 |
| 11         | 1988 | 204,134 | 55,651 | 42,556 | 92,494     | 394,825 |

**SOURCE :** MSRTC Solapur Division.

Table 4.4 shows pilgrims traffic by MSRTC buses during Ashadhi and Kartiki Ekadashi fairs from different regions of the Maharashtra during 1978-1988. In 1978 MSRTC carried 275,781 pilgrims at the time of Ashadhi and Kartiki fairs to Pandharpur. In 1985 number of pilgrims carried by MSRTC is 540,951 which is highest in the decade.

Fig.4.2 represents the highest number of pilgrims carried by the Poona division from 1978 to 1988. The trend is followed by Aurangabad region, Bombay region and the lowest is of Nagpur region. It is also observed from the figures that there is a fluctuation in number of pilgrims (Fig.4.2). The number of pilgrims increased by 87,596 in 1979 than 1978 but again decreased by 28,041 pilgrims in 1980. But from 1980 onward there is continuous increase in number of pilgrims upto 1985. Though there is a fluctuation in the number of pilgrims in the span of ten years, it is seen that the number of pilgrims is increasing as compared to the base year 1978.

#### 4.2.5 Growth trend of pilgrims :

The Table 4.5 gives idea about the annual pilgrim traffic to Pandharpur during the 1978-1988. This data is used to show growth trend of pilgrims.

The trend analysis is made here to show the increase in the number of pilgrims during the span of 11 years. This original data is utilized to draw the line of best fit by least square method to predict the growth of pilgrims in future.

**TABLE 4.5 : Pilgrims traffic to Pandharpur (MSRTC).**

| <b>Sr.No.</b> | <b>Years</b> | <b>Total number of pilgrims</b> |
|---------------|--------------|---------------------------------|
| 1             | 1978         | 389,026                         |
| 2             | 1979         | 370,609                         |
| 3             | 1980         | 664,411                         |
| 4             | 1981         | 485,286                         |
| 5             | 1982         | 598,607                         |
| 6             | 1983         | 650,162                         |
| 7             | 1984         | 592,552                         |
| 8             | 1985         | 795,459                         |
| 9             | 1986         | 474,000                         |
| 10            | 1987         | 436,000                         |
| 11            | 1988         | 531,450                         |

**SOURCE : MSRTC Solapur Division.**

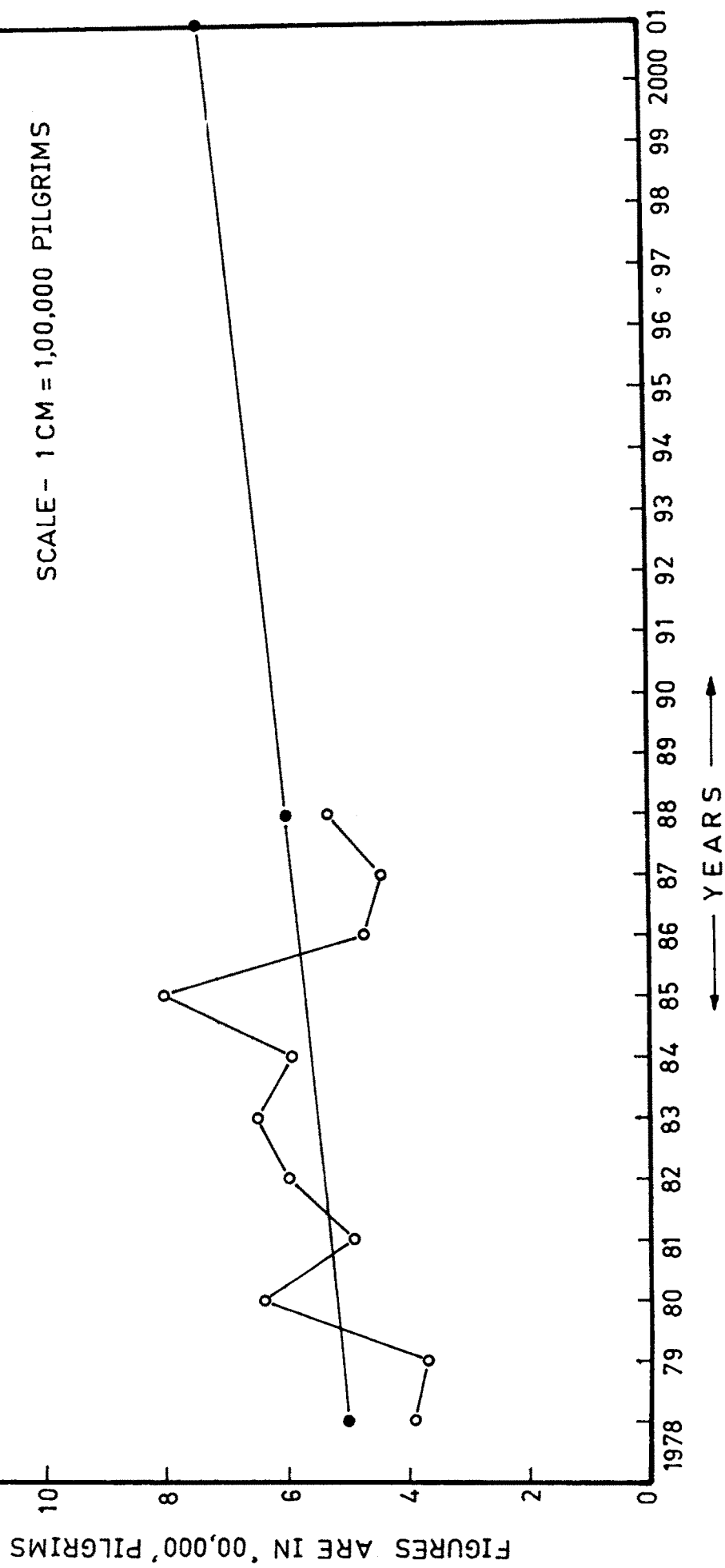
By this trend analysis it is observed that the number of pilgrims has been increasing. The prediction of the pilgrims flow for the year 2001 A.D. is shown in Fig.4.3. It shows that number of pilgrims may increase to 730,000 in the year 2001. This increase of pilgrims is about 1.88 times greater than 1978.

This increase of number of pilgrims is usually due to the better facilities given by the MSRTC than BLR. The safe journey

Fig. No.4-3

GROWTH TREND OF PILGRIMS BY M.S.R.T.C. (1978 TO 2001)

○—○ TREND VALUE  
●—● GROWTH TREND  
SCALE - 1 CM = 1,00,000 PILGRIMS



and reduction in travel time, as well as facilities of return tickets for the period of fair time give impetus to pilgrims travelling by MSRTC. But, it should be noted that the pilgrims who are economically weaker accept to travel by BLR though they have to face many difficulties.

#### 4.3 ACCOMMODATION :

The impact of accommodation on tourism is immense. Many cities have changed their faces due to newly sprang up chain of star hotels. It has now become one of the main consideration of development of tourism, especially in tourism oriented countries. The hotel industry plays a vital role in the promotion of tourism and many times it has been realized that the tempo of tourism has suffered a set back in past due to the lack of good hotel accommodation at tourist resorts. It has been rightly said that, " In the promotion of tourism a very vital sector is the hotel industry," acting more or less as a king pin (T.V.Singh, 1975, p.153). Similarly the remark of the President of Hotel Association of India is notable that, 'no hotels no tourism'.

Pandharpur is a famous pilgrimage centre in Maharashtra, but accommodation facilities are not satisfactory. There is no problem for varkaris and devout pilgrims as they adjust their accommodation in Mathas and Dharmashalas. They expect only the provision of stay with minimum cost. The tourist-cum-pilgrims

expect better accommodation facilities at Pandharpur. To increase the number of tourists due consideration must be given to accommodation in Pandharpur. At present accommodation facilities at Pandharpur are given as below.

**TABLE 4.6 : Accommodation facilities in Pandharpur.**

| Sr.No. | Type of Accommodation | Number |
|--------|-----------------------|--------|
| 1      | Dharmshalas           | 15     |
| 2      | Mathas                | 330    |
| 3      | Hotels (Lodge)        | 5      |
| 4      | Tourist home          | 1      |
| 5      | Dakbungalow           | 1      |
| 6      | Guest house           | 1      |
| 7      | Circuit house         | 1      |
| 8      | Inspection bungalows  | 1      |

**SOURCE :** Compiled by the author.

#### 4.3.1 Dharmshalas and Mathas :

In Pandharpur town there are 15 dharmshalas and 330 mathas. These dharmshalas and mathas are the important absorbant of pilgrims. These are non profit establishments which are run by various religious and social organizations. They provide free accommodation or accommodation at nominal charges (Rupees five per day). Mostly,

pilgrims from the economically weaker sections of the society stay in these mathas and dharmashalas. Especially during the fairs and festivals these dharmashalas and mathas prove to be very important destination facility as they provide accommodation on these occasions. Most of these dharmashalas and mathas in the town have their fixed visitors who come from definite parts of the state and country and also belong to a particular section of a society. Lad dharmshala during the fair period giving accommodation to Wani Samaj only. S.S.K.Dharmashala giving accommodation for Hindu people only. In Maheshwari Dharmashala, the first preference is given to donars. On the other hand, the Shankar Maharaj Vanjari Dharmashala preference is given to people from Bhir district of Maharashtra and in Holkar Wada Dharmashala people from Akola district of Maharashtra stay. While in the remaining dharmshalas accommodations are provided for all peoples. The list of important dharmshalas is given in Table 4.7.

#### 4.3.2 Hotels (Lodging & Boardings) :

Many pilgrim tourists desire to get shelters in non-classified hotels. These hotels are privately owned. There are five good hotels in the town. These are Gujarat lodge, Rajdhani lodge, Alankar lodge, Shri Datta lodge and Poonam lodge. They provide better facilities at cheaper rate i.e. per day per head Rs.20/- per room Rs.30/-

| Sr. No. | Name of the Dharmshala                 | Accommodation capacity | Year of construction | Accommodation charges per head per day<br>Rs. | Pilgrims comes from  |
|---------|--|------------------------|----------------------|---|--|
| 1       | Shinde Sarkar wada                     | 500                    | 1762                 | 3/-   | Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh  |
| 2       | Ahilyabai Holkar wada                  | 1,000                  | 1767                 | 5/-   | Akola district of Maharashtra only   |
| 3       | Jamanadas Kapole Dharmshala            | 250 to 300             | 1906                 | 5/-   | Maharashtra (Vidharbha, Marathwada), Goa, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka  |
| 4       | Shri Saint Gadage Maharaj Dharmshala   | 4,000                  | 1920                 | 2/-   | Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra   |
| 5       | Shankar-Maharaj Vanjari Dharmshala     | 2,000                  | 1930                 | 5/-   | Maharashtra, especially from Bhir district of Maharashtra  |
| 6       | Shri Saint Tanpure Maharaj Dharmshala  | 15,000                 | 1930                 | 5/-   | From all parts of the country  |
| 7       | Namdeo Mandir                          | 500                    | 1938                 | 10/-  | Preference is given to donors, especially from Bombay, Nashik, Poona, Karnataka  |
| 8       | Mannadkar Dharmshala                   | 500                    | 1945                 | 5/-   | From all parts of state and India  |
| 9       | S.S.K. Dharmshala                      | 200                    | 1955                 | 5/-   | Accommodation is given to Hindu, Buddhist people are not allowed   |
| 10.     | Maheshwar Dharmashala                  | 2,000                  | 1975                 | 1/-   | Preference is given to donors from Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra (Vidharbha, Marathwada)   |
| 11      | Shri Saint Gajanan Maharaj Dharmashala | 4,000                  | 1977                 | 5/-   | Maharashtra (Vidharbha-Marathwada), Gujarat, U.P., A.P., Karnataka, Kerala, Rajasthan  |
| 12      | Aagari Samaj Dharmshala                | 1,000                  | 1982                 | 5/-   | Maharashtra, A.P., Kerala, Tamil Nadu  |
| 13      | Lad Dharmshala                         | 500                    | 1982                 | 5/-   | Maharashtra (Bombay, Poona, Akola, Nagpur), Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Rajasthan, M.P., Pandechery (During the fair period Vani Samaj people preference is given) |



|    |                       |       |   |      |                                      |
|----|-----------------------|-------|---|------|--------------------------------------|
| 14 | Banged Dharmshala     | 500   | - | 5/-  | All parts of Maharashtra and country |
| 15 | Padmashali Dharmshala | 1,000 | - | 10/- | All parts of Maharashtra and country |

SOURCE : Compiled by the Author.

TABLE 4.7 : Important Dharmshales in Pandharpur

The Pandharpur has a government tourist bungalow which is run by the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC). It has a single and double bed rooms but no dormitories. For the middle class pilgrim tourist it provides better services at reasonable charges (per day per room Rs.50/-).

There are also other state government establishments such as Dakbungalow, Guest houses, Circuit houses, Inspection bungalow's which are managed by various state government departments and institutions. These are specially meant for officers and state guests.

#### 4.4 DEVOTIONAL GOODS AND ARTICLES :

The devotional goods are the speciality of Pandharpur. There are many shops which have a wide variety of devotional articles and important books. These shops are on the road of temple of Lord Vitthal, especially on the eastern and western side of the temple. Few shops are also located on Pradakshina road. All these shops remain open for twelve hours a day at the time of four important fairs. The monthly Ekadashis and the important festival times the shops remain open for eighteen hours.

##### 4.4.1 Devotional eatables :

The devotional eatables are very important to pilgrims. These goods are purchased by pilgrims as ' Prasad.' Therefore, every pilgrim purchases some of goods which cost about minimum

rupees five. These devotional goods include sugarcandy, sugar balls, corn flakes, churmuras etc. The production of devotional goods is both on private as well as co-operative level. They try to sell the products in their own shops, and also through different other shops of devotional goods. To supply quality goods, the devotional goods producing co-operative society Ltd. Pandharpur has been established and produce various devotional goods like sugarcandy, sugar balls, corn flake, churmuras and futane. These things are provided to the shopkeepers in Pandharpur with minimum percent of profit. The following table gives the annual income of devotional goods in rupees

**TABLE 4.8 : Income from devotional goods.**

| Sr.No. | Year    | Income in Rs. |
|--------|---------|---------------|
| 1      | 1978-79 | 649,839       |
| 2      | 1979-80 | 938,988       |
| 3      | 1980-81 | 1,191,615     |
| 4      | 1981-82 | 1,279,195     |
| 5      | 1982-83 | 1,044,405     |
| 6      | 1983-84 | 1,232,298     |
| 7      | 1984-85 | 1,422,289     |
| 8      | 1985-86 | 1,402,152     |
| 9      | 1986-87 | 1,276,207     |
| 10     | 1987-88 | 1,173,294     |

**SOURCE :** Annual report Devotional Goods Producing Co-operative Society Ltd., Pandharpur.

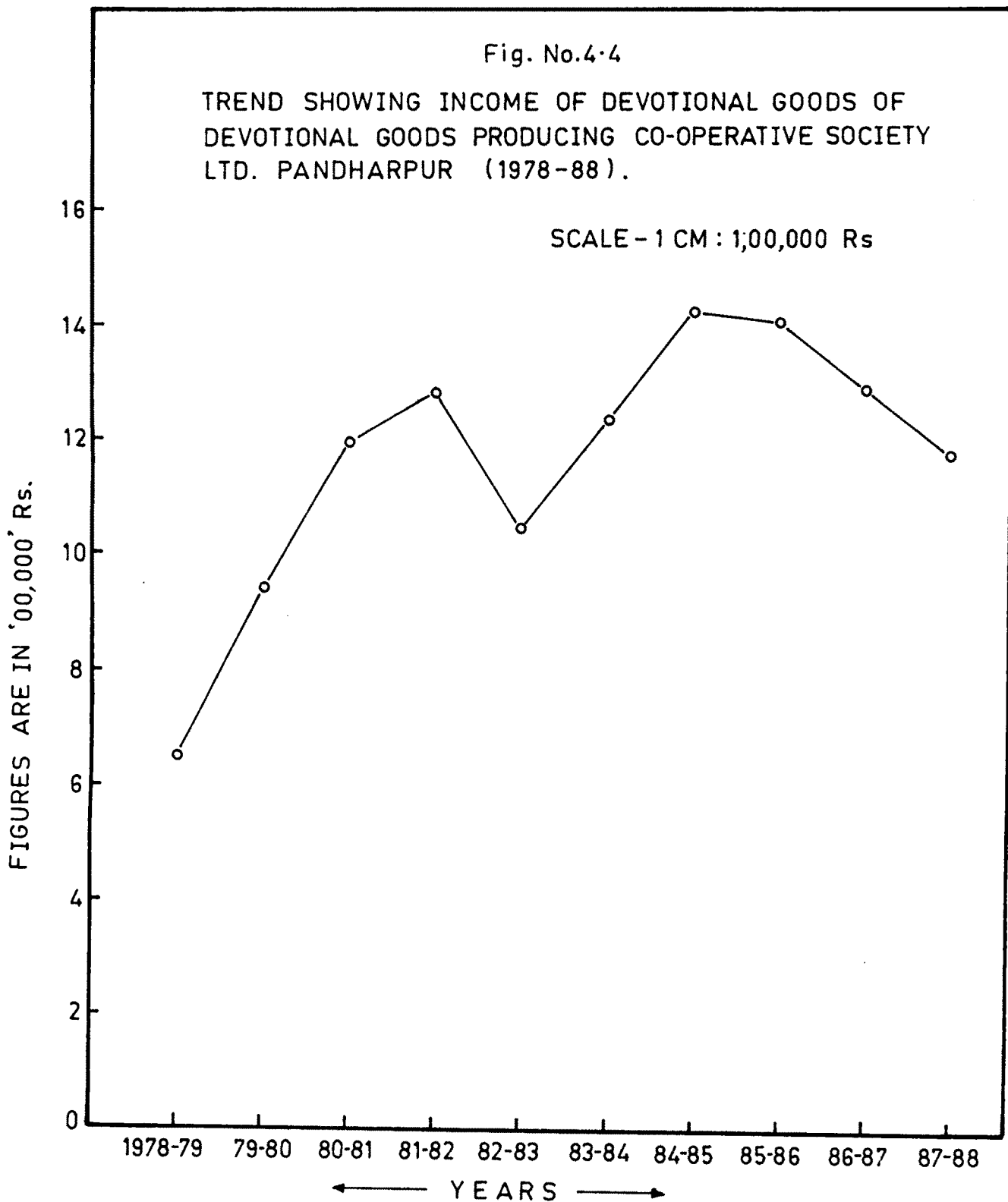


Table 4.8 reveals that the annual income from various devotional products by the Devotional Goods Producing Co-operative Society Ltd., Pandharpur is increasing. The time trend shows that in the year 1978-79 society produced the devotional eatables of Rs.6,49,839 which is the lowest in the decade. Then onward it has been slowly increasing upto 1983-84. The highest income in the year 1984-85 was Rs.14,22,289. Next three years from 1985 onward again there is a decrease in income. This co-operative society has to face with many other newly established factories of devotional goods and hence this decrease in income (Fig.4.4).

#### 4.4.2 Musical instruments :

Pandharpur is famous for production of various musical instruments. These instruments are used for Bhajans and Kirtans. Many varkaris purchase these instruments at the fair time. The Table 4.9 gives an idea about the types of instruments, nature of production and income from these instruments every year.

Table 4.9 reveals that there are six types of musical instruments - Chipali, Veena, Ektara, Dimadi and Khanjeri, Pakhawas and Brass cymbals. The production of Chipali was 100, which costs about Rs.5000/-. The yearly Veena production was 1150 which support economy by Rs.1,72,500 annually. It is the main instrument of Varkaris. The annual production of Ektara was about 1400 which gives income of Rs.70,000/-, Dimadi and

Khanjeri have the annual production of 5600 and income is about Rs.56,000. Pakhawas contributes income by Rs.170,000 and Brass cymbals by Rs.60,000. Veena, Pakhawas and Brass cymbals are important instruments of Varkaris which they mostly use in Bhajans and Kirtans.

**TABLE 4.9 : Production and income of musical instruments in Pandharpur.**

| Sr. No. | Name of the instrument                                       | Annual production | Total income in Rs. |
|---------|--|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1       | Chipali  | 100               | 5,000               |
| 2       | Veena (a stringed instrument)                                | 1,150             | 1,72,500            |
| 3       | Ekatara (a stringed musical instrument with one string only) | 1,400             | 70,000              |
| 4       | Dimadi and Khanjeri (Tambourine)                             | 5,600             | 56,000              |
| 5       | Pakhawas   | 575               | 70,000              |
| 6       | Brass cymbals  | 6,000             | 60,000              |
| Total   |  |                   | 5,33,500            |

**SOURCE :** Compiled by the author.

With these musical instruments, Pandharpur is also famous for various Brass Idols. Brass Idols of Vitthal Rukmini, Ganapati, Shri Sai Baba, Annapurna, Lord Venkateswara, Laxmi Vishnu, Gopal

Krishna, Shri Ambabai are also produced in Pandharpur. The Brass Idols also supported economy by Rs.43,320/-.

#### 4.4.3 Basil (Tulsi) Rosary :

A Varkari wears around his neck a rosary of Tulsi beads. Tulsi is the favourite plant of Krishna and it is to honour him the Varkari wears a tulasimala. This has another significance that the weaver is a vegetarian that is why Varkaris are called as Malkaris. This gives us to characteristics of the varkari, his favourite God is Krishna and he is a vegetarian. Every year rosary wearing persons are increasing and hence the production also goes on increasing. At present about 150 workers are engaged in this industry. Each worker prepares 20 to 25 rosaries in a day. The cost of each rosary is about one rupee.

#### 4.4.4 Ambar Rings :

Another feature of the myth associated with this pilgrim centre is the Amber Rings adorned by women on festival occasion like the Makar Sankrant. The bracelets made of amber are regarded to be holy and auspicious by devout women. This has given a great boost to the Ambar Ring industry in Pandharpur. There are 30 such household industries that manufacture bangles and bracelets of amber for this purpose. About thirty families, including 500 workers, are engaged in this industry. The production is maximum in the months of December and January. Since the production does not meet the demand, amber articles are imported from places like

Hyderabad (A.P.), Latur and Kurduwadi. Every year more than ten lakhs of amber bangles are produced and sold at Pandharpur.

#### 4.4.5 Marathi Religious Literature :

Pandharpur is a great pilgrimage centre and origin of Varkari cult. The writings of the saints of the Bhakti cult are beautiful and of high literary value. The various books regarding Marathi literature were published and available in Pandharpur for sell. Some religious books were also published and sold here in Pandharpur. Purchase of these religious books in Pandharpur is a devotional deed and most of the people from Varkari cult purchase these books.

The message and teachings of the Natha Pantha, Mahanubhava Panth and Varkari Panth were published in the forms of various books. Recently these are published in the form of Abhangas, so that their message and teachings could be understood by the common people. The poets of the Varkari sect like Namdeva, Janabai have composed millions of beautiful devotional songs and lyrics. Devotional Abhangas of Dnyaneshwar are available here in the form of books, which the Varkaris use in their Bhajans and Kirtans. A few of the important books written by various saints are given in Table 4.10.

In addition to this some religious books are published and sold in Pandharpur. These are Anand Lahari, Udhav Geeta, Chatusloki Bhagwat, Eknath Darshan, Eknathi Bharuds (pantomine drama with music and dancing), Kaivalya Deepika, Guru Charitra,



**TABLE 4.10 : Saints and their writings.**

| Sr.<br>No. | Saint                                  | Writing  |
|------------|--|--|
| 1          | Saint Ekanath                          | 1) Bhagvata<br>2) Bhavartha Ramayana<br>3) Rukmini Svayanvara<br>4) Bharudas (Folk songs)                  |
| 2          | Saint Tukaram<br>(famous Marathi poet) | 1) Gatha   |
| 3          | Saint Ramdas                           | 1) Dasa Bodha  |
| 4          | Saint Dnyaneshwar                      | 1) Dnyaneshwari<br>2) Amritanubhava<br>3) Abhangas (lyrical poetry)<br>4) Devotional lyrics<br>5) Haripath |
| 5          | Saint Nivruttinath                     | 1) Nivruttteshwari   |
| 6          | Sopandeo                               | 1) Abhanga   |
| 7          | Muktabai                               | 1) Abhanga (Hyman)   |
| 8          | Mukundraj<br>(first Marathi poet)      | 1) Vivekasindhu  |
| 9          | Chakradhara                            | 1) Sidhanta Sutra  |
| 10         | Vamanpandit                            | 1) Sita Svyamwara<br>2) Yathartha Deepika<br>3) Radhivilasa  |
| 11         | Muktteshwara                           | 1) Samkshpta Ramayana  |
| 12         | Sridhara                               | 1) Harivijaya<br>2) Ramavijaya<br>3) Vedanta Surya   |
| 13         | Raghunath Pandit                       | 1) Nala-Damayanti Svayamvara<br>2) Gajendra Moksha   |

**SOURCE :** Compiled by the author.

Changdeva Pasasti, Thirth Saar, Thirthawali, Navanath Leela-  
mruta, Namdeochaṭitra, Namdeo Darshan, Pandhari Mahatmya,  
Leela Charitra, A history of Varkari cult., Vitthal Sampradaya,  
Vitthal and Pandharpur, Tukaram Maharaj an Autobiography, Shri  
Mul Bhagwat, Biography of Saints, A biography of Shri Ramdas,  
Philosophy of Saint Dnyaneshwar, Dnyaneshwar Darshan and Holy  
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