CHAPTER - V

PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA

The potential as well as realized growth of handloom industry depends upon the geographical features of the region. These features determine the nature and growth of industry, which shows the impact on the industrial development of the region. Therefore, it becomes necessary to understand the main geographical features of the region under study as a background for the analysis of the phenomenon to be probed into.

Historical Background

Erode District lies on the extreme north of Tamil Nadu. It is bounded mostly by Karnataka State and also River Palar covers pretty long distance. To the East lies Namakkal and Karur Districts. Dindigal District is its immediate neighbour to the South and on the West, it has Coimbatore and Nilgiri Districts, as its boundaries. Thus Erode District is essentially a land-locked area having no sea-cost of its own. Erode District situated at between 10 36” and 11 58” North Latitude and between 76 49” and 77 58” East Longitude.

The region comprised in the district can be portrayed as a long undulating plain gently sloping towards the river Cauvery in the south-east. The two major tributaries of river Cauvery viz. Bhavani and Noyyal drain the long stretch of mountains in the north. A part of the eastern boundary of the district is formed by river Cauvery, entering the district from Salem and flowing in a southernly direction.
Brief History of the Erode and its Formation as District

Erode District was a part of Coimbatore has its history intervened with that of Coimbatore and because of its close linkage with the erstwhile Coimbatore district. It is very difficult to separately deal with the history of Erode region. Together with the area comprised in the Coimbatore district, it formed part of the ancient Kongu country known as "Kongu Nadu" history of which dates back to the Sangam era. It is found that in the early days, this area was occupied by tribes, most prominent among them being the "Kosars" reportedly having their headquarters at 'Kosamputhur' which is believed to have in due course become Coimbatore. These tribes were overpowered by the Rashtrakutas from whom the region fell into the hands of the Cholas who ruled supreme during the time of Raja Chola. On the decline of Cholas, the Kongunadu came to be occupied by the Chalukyas and later by the Pandyas and Hoysalas. Due to internal dissension in the Pandian Kingdom, the Muslim rulers from Delhi interfered and thus the area fell into the hands of Madurai Sultanate. This region was later wrested by Vijaya Nagar rulers after over throwing the Madurai Sultanate. For a few years, the area remained under Vijaya Nagar rule and later under the independent control of Madurai Nayakas. The rule of Muthu Veerappa Nayak and later that of Tirumalai Nayak were marked by internal strife and intermittent wars which ruined the Kingdom. As a result of this, the Kongu region in which the present Erode District is situated, fell into the hands of the Mysore rulers from whom Hyder Ali took over the area. Later, consequent of the fall of Tippu Sultan of Mysore in 1799, the Kongu region came to be coded to the East India Company by the Maharaja of Mysore who was restored to power by the company after defeating Tippu
Sulttan. From then, till 1947 when India attained independence, the area remained under British control who initiated systematic revenue administration in the area.

**Jurisdictional changes**

Erode District came into being as a result of the bifurcation of Coimbatore District, through the G.O.Ms.No.1917, Revenue dated 31.08.1979. Bhavani, Erode and Sathyamangalam taluks were included in Coimbatore district which had a composite character, at the beginning of the century. Of these, Sathyamangalam Taluk was renamed as Gobichettipalayam taluk retaining Sathyamangalam as a sub-taluk. In 1975, Sathyamangalam sub-taluk was upgraded into a taluk. In 1979 Perundurai Sub Taluk was upgraded into taluk. These five taluks were grouped together to constitute the new district of Erode.

Now Erode District consists of 5 taluks viz., Sathyamangalam, Bhavani, Gobichettipalayam, Perundurai and Erode. There are 4 Municipalities in the district viz., Sathyamangalam, Bhavani, Gobichettipalayam, and Punjai Puliampatti. The other four Municipalities in the district viz. Periasemur, Kasipalayam, Surampatti and Veerappanchatram have been merged recently with Erode Corporation. There are 42 Town Panchayats, 230 Village Panchayats and 375 Revenue Villages. There are 14 Community Development Blocks in the district.
Figure 5.2

ERODE DISTRICT MAP
### DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

#### Table 5.1

Area and Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>i.</th>
<th>Area (Sq.Km)</th>
<th>5714</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ii.</td>
<td>Population</td>
<td>2016582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>Male Population</td>
<td>1024732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>Female Population</td>
<td>991850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>Rural Population</td>
<td>1028938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>Urban Population</td>
<td>987599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii</td>
<td>Density</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv.</td>
<td>Literates</td>
<td>1188228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>691246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>496982</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Occupational Structure

Main Workers (Census 2001)

| a. | Total Workers | 1012356 |
| b. | Male Workers | 674357 |
| c. | Female Workers | 425407 |
| d. | Rural Workers | 617759 |
| e. | Urban Workers | 482005 |
| f. | Cultivators | 196194 |
| g. | Agricultural Laborers | 323597 |
| h. | Household Industry | 53575 |
| i. | Other Workers | 438990 |
| j. | Marginal Workers | 330211 |
| vi. | Non-Workers | 1342567 |

Source: Directorate of Statistics, Chennai.
**Climate and Rainfall**

The district in general is characterised with a scandy rainfall and a dry climate. Maximum rainfall is recorded in Gobichettipalayam and Bhavani taluks. The Palghat gap in the Western Ghats, which has a soothing effect in the climate of Coimbatore District, does not render much help in bringing down the dry climate in this area. The cool-wind that gushes out of the west coast through Palghat gap looses its coolness and becomes dry by the time it crosses Coimbatore district and reaches Erode region.

Unlike Coimbatore which is blessed with a health-aiding climate, Erode District has dry weather throughout except during the monsoon season. Generally the first two months of the year are pleasant, but in March, Mercury gains an upward trend which persists till the end of May. Highest temperature is normally recorded during May. The scandy showers during this period do not provide any relief to the oppressive heat. There is a light improvement in the climate during June-August period. During this pre-monsoon period, the mercury reverses its trend and by September, the sky gets overcast heavily but the rains are meagre. North-east monsoon sets in vigorously only during October-November and by December, the rains disappear rendering the climate clear but pleasant.

**TEMPERATURE**

a. Plains
   i. Maximum : 33.7 C
   ii. Minimum : 19.2 C
b. Hill Stations
   i. Maximum : Nil
   ii. Minimum : Nil

RAINFALL (IN mm)

a. Normal : 711.4
   i. South west Monsoon : 229.9
   ii. North East Monsoon : 308.5
   iii. Winter Season : 0
   iv. Hot Weather Season : 204.8

b. Actual
   i. South West Monsoon : 209.3
   ii. North East Monsoon : 324.5
   iii. Winter Seasons : 00.7
   iv. Hot Weather Season : 153.3

Soils

The soils of the district are mostly red sand and gravel with moderate amounts of red-loam and occasional black loam tracts. Vast stretches of the upland regions are mostly and gravelly. Red-loam occurs mostly in land under Kalingarayan channel and in beds of tanks in Erode Taluk and to some lesser extent in the valleys in Perundurai taluk. It also occurs in the hilly tracts of Bhavani taluk.

Soils of Bhavani, Erode and Perundurai taluks are chiefly gravelly, stony and sandy of the red variety. Soils of Gobichettipalayam and Sathyamangalam taluks are mostly of the red sandy variety. Red loam is prevalent mostly in Gobichettipalayam and Perundurai taluks.
Minerals

Though the district cannot boast of great mineral wealth, it has a few varied items of significance. Both opaque and translucent varieties of fine quality of Feldspar is found abundantly in Erode taluk. Mica and Muscovite occur in Vairamangalam near Bhavani and near Punjai Puliampatti respectively. Asbestos is found to occur in a few places of Bhavani and Perundurai.

Doddan Combai forest in Gobichettipalayam is bestowed with rich iron ore. This ore is found to be of very fine quality and rich in metal. Traces of gold also have been found in a few auriferous veins in Gobichettipalayam.

Rivers

Bhavani, Cauvery and Noyyal are the main rivers of the district. Other significant river is Palar in the North. Palar constitutes the boundary between Erode district and Karnataka State in the North. The Bhavanisagar main canal along with the above mentioned rivers provide proper drainage and facilities for assured irrigation in the district. Bhavani rises in the silent valley in Palghat ranges in the neighbouring State of Kerala after receiving Siruvani, a perennial stream of Coimbatore District and gets reinforced by the Kundah river before entering Erode District in Gobichettipalayam.

Bhavani is more or less a perennial river fed mostly by the South-West monsoon. North-East monsoon also supplements its water resources. This river runs for over hundred miles through Erode District traversing through Bhavani and Gobichettipalayam taluks. It feeds the Bhavanisagar reservoir which takes an easterly course flowing through Gobichettipalayam, Sathyamangalam and Bhavani taluks before it ultimately joins river Cauvery on the Salem borders.
Cauvery rising in the Coorg, is joined by many small tributaries. It turns through Karnataka and at Hogenakal fall takes a sharp turn, east to south. Before reaching this point, its main tributary, viz., river Kabini joins it. From here it takes a south-easterly direction forming the boundary between Bhavani taluk of Erode District and Tiruchengode taluk of the neighbouring Namakkal District. After river Bhavani flows into it, the south-easterly course is continued forming the boundary between Erode taluk of Erode District and Tiruchengode taluk of Namakkal taluk.

Noyyal river is noted for its capricious nature. This is fed mostly by the South-West monsoon but the North-East monsoon brings freshes and this very often results in floods. Inspite of its unpredictable character, the river helps to irrigate considerable areas in Palladam taluk of Coimbatore District and Dharapuram taluk of Tiruppur District.

**Forests**

With more than 228,750 hectares of land under dense forest, Erode is one of the few fortunate districts in the State which can boost of extensive forest area. 27.7 percent of the total district area is under forests. These forests are rich in commercially significant items such as teak, sandalwood, rosewood, vogai, pillaimaruthu etc. Sandalwood is abundant in moyar valley and in strips facting Dodda Combai in Talamalai ranges. Tamarind trees are plenty in Bhavani ranges. In high land forest of elevation 2,000 feet to 5,000 feet, diversified flora are prevalent. Here we find semi evergreen type, teak type, sandal type, bamboo type and shola type of vegetation.
Teak is available mostly in ranges of 3,200 feet to 3,600 feet. Important places where bamboo is available are in the outer slopes of north Coimbatore plateau between 1,500 feet to 3,000 feet elevation. Main centres of availability are Vadaparai and Hussanur basin in Sathyamangalam ranges. Dodda Combai in Bhavani ranges is also significant for the availability of bamboo.

The Southern Forest Rangers' College at Coimbatore has given a fillip to the forest conservation in this district also.

The district is rich in fauna. It is varied and all the common species normally found in ranges and plains in the south are found to occur in this district. Significant is the presence of wild elephants and tigers especially on the hills in the northern or north-eastern parts of the district. Cheetahs are not altogether absent. They are sparsely distributed. Panthers are found in the scrub jungles and rocky hills of the district. Spotted deer, barking deers, jungle sheep etc. are normally present in the northern ranges. The Barugur cattle found in Bhavani ranges are though small in size, well built and sturdy.

**Land and Land use pattern**

As per revenue land records, the total geographical area of the district is 572,264 hectares. Of those 199,389 hectares have been brought under cultivation as net area sown. This accounts for 34.8 percent of the total area of the district. Area sown more than once is 25,397 hectares i.e. 12.73 percent of the total net area sown. Total cropped area is 224,786 hectares i.e. 39.2 percent of the total area in the district. Forests account for 227,511 hectares i.e. 39 percent of the total area. Cultivable waste has been reduced to mere 1707 hectares in the district. Less than 9.2 percent of the total area is put to non-
agricultural use (53,004 hectares). However, 14.5 percent is accounted for by fallow lands (83,368 hectares). Trees, crops, groves, Orchards etc. together account for about 0.6 percent of the total area in the district. Of the 199,389 hectares brought under cultivation, 25397 hectares are sown more than once, thus enhancing the total area cropped to 224,786 hectares. If this is taken into account, the percentage of total cropped area to total area of the district will work out to 39.2 percent thus publishing better utilization of available land resources in the District.

Agriculture

Though noted for trade and industry, the district is by no means backward in the filed of agriculture. Close association and link with Coimbatore district which has the advantage of two premier agricultural Institutions viz., the Agricultural College and the Research Institute have helped the ryots to keep abreast of developments in agricultural methods and practices and also improved strains of seeds. The publicity and developmental activities launched by the agricultural institutions in Coimbatore penetrated far and wide in Erode District. Added to this was the propaganda and demonstration organised by the Agricultural Department. Availability of irrigation facilities coupled with the awareness of improved methods of farming helped the agriculturists to forge ahead. Though the soil is not the best, utilisation of improved methods of cultivation and improved strains of seeds together have helped the agriculturists in the district to maximise their output. Paddy accounts for 86,939 hectares. Next to Paddy is Cholam which is raise in more than 11240 hectares.

Pulses are not much in cultivation in the district. Only 31498 hectares are used for raising pulses. Among condiments and spices, turmeric and chillies are significant. Cultivation of turmeric extends over 14533 hectares.
Among the non-food crops, oil seeds constitute the major item. 55.23 percent of the total area under non food crops is accounted for by oil seeds. A total of 95018 hectares is under oil-seeds cultivation and of these ground-nuts account for 55696 hectares while gingely accounts for 24084 hectares. Ground-nut is the most popular oil-seed raised here.

Among other non-food crops raised here, the most important items are cotton, sugarcane and tobacco, sugarcane is raised in 30903 hectares. Cotton is grown in few hectares while tobacco is raised in 4923 hectares in the district. In respect of all commercial crops also improved varieties have been adopted by the farmers and this has helped them to maintain high yields.

I. a. Total Cultivated Area (Hec) : 224786
b. Net Area Sown (Hec.) : 199389
c. Area Sown more than once (Hec.) : 25397
d. Area and Production of Area (Hec.)

**Principal Crops**

i. Paddy (Rice) : 38113
ii. Millets and Other Cereals : 58894
iii. Pulses : 5134
iv. Sugarcane (Gur) : 34597
v. Groundnut : 19392
vi. Gingerly : 12922
vii. Cotton (BT) : 914

e. Agricultural Land Holdings

(Agriculture Census 2010-2011)
i. Holdings : 291305
ii. Area : 482575 Hec.
iii. Average Size of Holdings : 1.650 Hec.

### II. a. Important Agricultural Crops

1. Paddy  
2. Sugarcane  
3. Cotton  
4. Ground nut  
5. Maize  
6. Turmeric  
7. Onion  
8. Chilies  
9. Vegetables  
10. Coconut.

### b. Important Non-Agricultural Crops:

1. Teak  
2. Causarinas  
3. Eucalyptus  
4. Tea  
5. Coffee  
6. Pepper  
7. Cardamom

### Irrigation

The sub-soil in most parts of the district being sandy and surface soil thin and of poor quality, the farmers have to depend heavily on irrigation facilities. The uncertain aspects of North-Eastern monsoon and not too favorable contribution from the South-West monsoon make the plight of local agriculturists miserable. The chief sources of irrigation in the district are the canals and wells and these constitute the main stay of the farmers.

As noted earlier, the main sources of irrigation are the canals and wells. Canals under various irrigation projects together help to irrigate about 98,805 hectares of land while the wells irrigated 68,570 hectares. Area irrigated by tanks and springs and channels are negligible. The net area irrigated under various sources together constitute 58.9 percent area irrigated to total area sown in the district. The net area irrigated in the district totals to 209,432 hectares.
Rivers in the western ghats and fed mostly by the south-west monsoon are the chief sources of irrigation in the district. These rivers are Cauvery and Noyyal. Apart from these main rivers, there are a few uncertain jungle streams which also contribute towards better irrigation and drainage in a small way. The main irrigation projects of consequence in the district is the Lower Bhavani project. The completion of Lower Bhavani project under First-Five-year Plan has boosted the irrigation resources considerably.

**Fisheries**

In Erode District, Inland fisheries is the only resource for fishermen. Being a landlocked district, there are no chances for marine fishing. As such, opportunities for fishing are restricted. With the help and encouragement by the Fisheries Department, rapid strides have been made in the development of fisheries in the District. Special emphasis is laid on the formation of fishermen's co-operatives and familiarising the local fishermen with the improved methods. With the help of the co-operative organization which assured deep involvement of the fishermen, a number of co-operative organizations have been formed. The activities of Fisheries Department in the district are being guided and controlled by the Assistant Director of Fisheries stationed at Bhavanisagar.

**Animal Husbandry**

The district is rich in its natural cattle wealth and concerted efforts of the Animal Husbandry Department have further augmented the cattle wealth in the District.
There are three major breeds of cattle in the District. They are the Burgur breed, the Kollegal variety and the Alanbodies. Burgur breed though smaller in size are well built and sturdy. Kollegal variety is noted for their road draught and is normally reared for transport purposes.

With varieties of breeds available, the district has made rapid progress in the field of animal husbandry. Erode has carved out an enviable position for itself in the field of dairy development industry in the State. The Tamil Nadu Milk Producers Federation has a milk collection center and processing plant at Erode from where pasturised milk is transported in cases to different parts of the State every day.

To support the growing cattle wealth in the District, Animal Husbandry Department has taken various measures including opening and maintenance of 5 bull stations for the collection and supply of serum to various veterinary hospitals and artificial insemination centers.

Rhinderpest Squad stationed at Erode, Rhinderpest Vigilance unit at Gobichettipalayam and Rhinderpest check-post at Dimbum are all engaged in the eradication of Rhinderpest disease in the District. The district can also boast of a sheep breeding co-operative society.

As regards poultry development is concerned. There are three Poultry Extension centres in the district. There are at Chengampalli, Polavakalipalayam and Bhavani Sagar. The poultry diagnostic laboratory in the district facilities early diagnosis of various diseases affecting the poultry and thus helps to prevent heavy losses due to poultry diseases.
The activities of the Animal Husbandry Department are controlled by 2 Assistant Directors of Animal Husbandry functioning from Erode and Gobichettipalayam.

**Industries and Trade**

In the Industrial map of Tamil Nadu, Erode district has a place of unique importance with 40.32 percent of population depending on non-agricultural sector. Industries and trade naturally occupy a place of prominence in the economy of the district. Industries that flourished in early days in the area were handloom weaving, carpet manufacturing, cart manufacturing, oil-pressing, brass vessel manufacturing etc. Though these industries flourished well in the early days, the advent of modern times changed the fate of some of these well established ancient industries. However, the industry still survives here and load carrying carts are still manufactured. Similarly, Bhavani which was noted the world over for its very beautiful carpets, has shrunk into insignificance and the industry is almost non-existent now. Bhavani, Erode and Gobichettipalayam contribute to occupy important place in the field of oil-pressing. The industry which has been able to totally withstand the onslaught of modernisation has been the handloom weaving. Erode, Chennimalai etc. still hold their way and the district is noted for its handloom products, which include cotton sarees, bed-spreads, towels, furnishing fabrics etc. Two other important production centers are Bhavani and Jambai.

The cotton textile industry in Coimbatore and handloom industry in Erode district have encouraged the growth of various ancillary industries to meet the needs of the textile mills. Chennimalai, Erode, Gobichettipalayam
etc., are important centres where cotton ginning is carried on a large scale. There are also important dying works in Erode, Chennimalai and Bhavani. A number of factories engaged in cotton fabric printing are functioning in Erode.

Rice milling is yet another industry which has been able to hold its own. Erode, Bhavani and Perundurai are the centers where a number of rice mills are flourishing. These mills carry on lucrative trade in the west coast. A number of lorries carrying boiled rice ply between the centers and the delivery point in Kerala. There are a number of leather tanneries in Erode area. Large quantities of leather are brought here for tanning and later exported to foreign countries.

The Government has also come forward to provide incentives to small entrepreneurs. Industrial estates have been set up at Erode and other places where full facilities are offered to small industrialists. Small units have been set up here for the manufacture of steel furniture, nuller screen, etc. There is also a unit at Erode for the manufacture of bolts and nuts and screws.

Both manufactured items as well as agriculture commodities are included in the trade items. Major items of export from the District are handloom products, dairy products, raw cotton, rice etc. While the items brought are mostly oil-seeds, coal etc. A large number of lorries, carrying various items into and from the district ply day in and day out and no detailed statistics are available regarding the flow of trade from and to the district.
Electricity

A. Generation of Electricity

a. Hydro (Million units) : 278.097
b. Wind mill Generation (M.W) : 898.70
c. Thermal : Nil
d. Power Purchased : 336.98
e. Gas Turbine : Nil

B. Consumption of Electricity (in m.u) Kwh/Annual

a. Agriculture : 386.55
b. Industry : 664.20
c. Commercial : 448.32
d. Domestic : 1258.37
e. Public Lighting & Water Works : 98.67
f. Sales to Licensees : Nil
g. Sales to Other states : Nil
h. Miscellaneous : 66.38

Rural Electrification

1. Number of Pumpsets Energised : 1116
2. Number of Villages Electrified : 375
3. Number of Hamlets Electrified : 3195

ENTERPRISES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENTERPRISES</th>
<th>RURAL</th>
<th>URBAN</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. No. of Agri. Enterprises</td>
<td>41739</td>
<td>916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. No. of Non Agri. Enterprises</td>
<td>80873</td>
<td>50314</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. No. of Enterprises</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. With Premises</td>
<td>110534</td>
<td>45906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Without Premises</td>
<td>12078</td>
<td>5324</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Transport and Communication

The transport and communication system in Erode district is well developed. Erode being one of the prominent trading centres in the State is well connected with all modern means of transport and communication except for air service. The nearest airport is at Coimbatore which is only a few hours by road. District access by roads and rail from State Capital Chennai and other District headquarters is available. Erode is an important railway junction on the west coast halt here.

Road transport has developed by leaps and bounds. There a number of inter district bus routes operated by the Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporations linking Erode and other prominent towns in Erode district with places of significance outside the district. The role of Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation in the headquarters at Erode and Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation which operated inter-district and inter-state service in commendable.

The district is also served by a good net-work of Post and Telegraph offices. There are two postal Divisions serving the district with their headquarters at Erode and Tiruppur. Under the Control of these postal divisions, there are three head-post offices one each at Erode, Bhavani and Gobichettipalayam. Of these, the first two come under HSGT category while the other two belongs to HSG II category. Apart from the above there are 286 post offices of various description including extra departmental sub-post offices and telegraph offices. In addition to these, there are numerous branch post offices, combined post and telegraph offices etc., spread out in
various parts of the district. The large network of post and telegraph offices ensure definite means of communication at a nominal rate for the benefit of the common man in Erode District. This district has also a good system of Telephone connection. Erode is connected with State capacity by subscriber trunk dialing system (STD). Telephone connections between various centres in the district have been ensured and within Erode city itself the number of telephone subscribers has been on the increase.

**Education and health**

In the field of education also, Erode District has recorded remarkable achievement. There are a number of well established schools and colleges preparing students for the usual degree and post-graduate degree courses in various branches of science and humanities. Apart from these institutions, there are a number of Polytechnic and other institutions which provide technical education.

Medical facilities are provided by the District Headquarters Hospital at Erode and taluk hospitals at each taluk headquarters. Public health activities are guided and supervised by the District Health Officers Erode and Joint Director of Medicals at Erode. There is a Medical College at Perundurai run by the Road Transport Corporation. There are 74 Primary Health Centres under the control of District Health Officer at Erode. These institutions provide succor to the suffering people. 277 Primary Health Sub-centres under the control of District Health Officer at Erode.
Places of Historical, Religious and Archaeological Importance

There are nearly 487 temples in Erode District. They are situated in four taluks, Bhavani, Gobichettipalayam, Erode and Dharapuram. Of the 207 places recognised as padal petra sthalam, there are two temples found in Erode District viz., Bhavani and Kodumudi.

Bhavani Sangameswarar temple is located at the junction of two rivers, Bhavani and Cauvery. It is known as South Prayag and is having a Pagoda of 120 inch in height. It is believed that Bhavani and Amudha (not visible now) join Cauvery at this junction, like Jamuna and Saraswathi (not visible join with Ganges at Allahabad, Prayag). It is said to have existed even before the days of the first Kind Mahendravarma of Pallava dynasty. Thirugnanasambandar one of the four Tamil saints has sung in praise of this temple. Poet Vasudevan also gives the history of the temple in 'Bhavani Kudal Puranam' written in Sanskrit.

Bannari Mariamman Temple is about 15 kms. from Bhavani Sagar town on the road to Mysore. It is a place of pilgrimage during the annual festival known as "Kundam" which takes place in the middle of March every year. Pilgrims on that particular day can roughly be estimated 5 lakhs hailing from Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka States. Kundam or the fire spot where walking rakes place is 60 feet in length and nearly 25 cart loads of fire wood are piled and kindled. About a lakh of persons including men, women and children participate in this walking.

Sri Aggnigunda Kali or Kodantha Kaliamman temple is another one important temple situated 40 kms. from Erode and 3 kms. from Gobichettipalayam. Also it is famous for fire walking to be held in the month of January every year. More than a lakh of people will attend this festival.
There is one Jain Temple at Vijayamangalam 25 kms. from Erode. It was constructed by Jain King Konguvelir some 1,800 years back.

Chennimalali Sri Subramaniaswamy Temple is situated on a hill about 1750 feet height and nearly 35 kms. from Erode. Arunagirinathar and Kalamegapulavar have sung the Lord Subramania here. There is a cave and it is believed that Pinnakku Siddhar one of the 18 Siddhars of South, Saravanamunivar and Sathiamuni lived and performed yoga in this cave.

Sri Magudeeswarar and Veeranarayana Perumal temple at Kodumudi is situated in the bank of Cauvery river and nearly 40 kms. from Erode is one of the three places sung about Erode. Saints Thirugnanasambandar, Thirunavukkarasar and Sundarar visited this place and each one composed one Thevaram about this temple. The special feature of this shrine is that Tirumurtis viz., Lord Brahma, Vishnu and Siva together in one and the same place. The direct sun rays penetrate on the images of Swamy and Amman for four days during the months of Avani and Panguni (September and April). The Moolavar Sri Magudeeswararswamy is a Swayambu Lingam. It is a very old temple (more than 1500 years old). Pandiyan Kings made several renovations to this temple. Adiperukku (July - August), Chithirai and Panguni Uthiram (April - May) are the main festivals of this temple. At the time of Panguni Uthiram festival, devotees carry 'Kavadi' to Palani Temple from here. They used to take bath in the sacred Cauvery river and carry the sacred water in a kalasam to Palani Murugan temple. More than 5 lakhs of people come here for this festival every year and most of the devotees carry the Kalasam having the sacred Cauvery water, will walk the entire distance (nearly 120 kms.) to Palani.
Towards the construction of temples in Erode District popularly known as Kongunad, Cholas, Hoysalas and Pandyas have contributed their mite.

RECAPITULATION

Gathering statistical and theoretical information from respective statistical departments, from the department of handlooms and Textile and from other reliable sources, a profile of the study area is presented in this chapter. It presents the location of the study areas, the agro-climatical conditions and demographic characteristics of the facilities available for the benefit of the handloom weavers in the study areas.
REFERENCES


