CHAPTER II

REGIONAL SETTING

INTRODUCTION

Physio-cultural components of the environment of a region have direct impact on the socio-economic development of population. Physical components—relief, climate conditions, drainage pattern, soil types and vegetation, have indirect influence on the human activities, while cultural components have direct influence on the socio-economic development of people in a region. Narsimhapur district has favourable physical and cultural environment for economic development and, therefore, this region is one of the developed parts of Madhya Pradesh. Narsimhapur district is equivalent to Sikkim State in terms of area and it is equivalent to Arunachal Pradesh in terms of population.

LOCATION

Narsimhapur district, physiographically know as Narsimhapur Plain, is situated in the central part of Madhya Pradesh. It occupies a little part of the upper Narmada valley bordered by the Vindhys in the North and the Satpura in the South. The district lies between 22° 45’N., and 23° 15’N., and 78° 38’E., and 79° 38’E. The Northern most point of the district is above 27.36 Kms. South of the Tropic of Cancer. The Bombay- Allahabad railway line traverses the district from West to East and the head quarters town i.e. Narsimhapur is 80.47 Kms. West of Jabalpur. Narsimhapur district is roughly quadrangular in shape, elongated in the East-West direction. The greatest length of the district along the Narmada, East to West is about 120.70 Kms., while it measures only 64.5 Kms. from North to South. The Northern boundary
runs along with the boundaries of Raisen, Sagar, Damoh and Jabalpur district and the Southern boundary is common with those of Chhindwara and Seoni district. In fact, Jabalpur and Seoni district occupy North Eastern and South Eastern position, respectively and also closes this district in the East. Hoshangabad district is reached across the Western boundary (Map 2.1).

**TABLE 2.1**


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<td>206</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Forest village</td>
<td>1676</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| District   | 5133            | 785496     | 1040                      | 4           |           | 5133          | 668708     | 1040                      |

**Source:**

2. Gazetteer of India 1994, Madhya Pradesh, Narsimhapur district (Supplement)

Physically, the Narmada forms the Northern boundary, except in the middle sector, where the boundary runs along either way of the Vindhyan
Scarp. The entire Western and a part of the Eastern boundary join the Narmada from the South. The rest of the boundary is formed along the natural features. The geographical area of this district is 5133 km\(^2\), which is equivalent to that of Sikkim State. The district is divided, for revenue and general administration into four tahsils, viz, Narsimhapur, Gotegaon, Gadarwara and Kareli. The Kareli and Gotegaon tahsil have come into existence after 1981 (Table 2.1).

TOPOGRAPHY

The district occupies a part of the Eastern Narmada valley, a continuous chain of the Satpura hills bordering on the South and a section of the Vindhyan Scarp on the North. The natural divisions of the district stretch into three narrow belts parallel in an East-West direction. The major part of the district is South of the river Narmada, which is a natural feature diversely affecting the district topography.

THE NARMADA VALLEY: The most fertile and populous part of the district lies in the alluvial basin of the Narmada. The valley begins just beyond the marble rocks at Bheraghat waterfall area, about 24.1 kms. By road beyond the Eastern boundary of Narsimhapur district and extends East to West across its length. From North to South, the width of the valley is about 32.19 to 48.28 kilometers. The general height of the valley is 335.28 to 365.76 meters above mean sea level. The face of the Satpura range, overlooking the valley is almost parallel to the river and rises to about 152.42 meters above the lowlands except in the South-West where Gotitoria and Premnarayan hills abruptly rise over 365.76 meters from the valley. The Southern scarp of the Vindhyans though generally abrupt, is an irregular alignment, limiting the valley across the Narmada in the North.

The Southern tributaries of the Narmada viz; the Sher, the Shakkar, the Dudhi and their feeders sloped gently towards the North. The
valley North of the Narmada is rather narrow being closely bound in the North by the Southern Scraps of the Vindhyans, eroded and broken at intervals. This valley is drained by the Birainj Nala, which flows to the South West and joins the Narmada near Hiranpur and Timarawan villages.

THE SATPURA HILLS: The Satpura hills are aligned in continuous ranges from Amarkantak in the East, to the proximity of combay in the West. The Northern slopes of the range stretch in the South of the district, throughout its length. The hills are high in the West and form broad table-lands, separated from each other by the deep and narrow channels of streams. They rise suddenly over 304.80 meters from the plain in the North. The important peaks in this part are Bariadhana (919.09m.), Piplakachhar (788.52m.), Nandkot Pahar (787.91m.), Ghora pahar (572.72m.), Putri Toria (550.77m.) and Devi Toria hill (641.60m.). The highest peak in the district is Unchakhera peak (904m) on the Narsimhapur–Chhindwara boundary East of Dudhi river. East of Shakkar the Satpuras are represented in the district by a narrow belt of foot-hill country running towards the East along the boundary for some distance and ultimately dispersed into a country of low-hills intermixed with the valleys of the Macharewa and the Sher river. The Eastern section of the Satpuras, South of Bachai and Shrinagar is the highest rising over 609.60 meters along the ‘V’ shaped boundary of the district, the interior being degraded by the intersecting valleys of the Macharewa, the Sher and the Umar.

THE VINDHYACHAL RANGE: The Southern scarp of the Vindhyan plateau, though generally abrupt, is an irregular alignment along the Northern boundary of Chawarpatha tract, North of the Narmada. While the crests over look the valley about 19.31 Kilometers wide in the Tendukhera tract, they form a mass of hill very close to the Narmada in the Eastern tract of Hiranpur. The
NARSIMHAPUR DISTRICT
DRAINAGE SYSTEM

SCALE

Kms 10 20 30 40 50 Kms

Source: 1. Census of India
2. District Gazetteer Narsimhapur
isolated peaks rise to about 457.20 meters in the West but they form a difficult plateau over a height of 533.40 meters in the East.

**DRAINAGE**

Nearly the whole of the district except a small portion of the Vindhyan plateau in the North of Hirapur, forms part of the Narmada drainage system. This system is developed on a long narrow fault zone between the hard masses, which formerly were a compact mass of the Southern plateau. The valley stands towards the West and the consequent river Narmada forms the main channel of the drainage system. The channel of the river hugs more on the side of the Vindhyanas in the North and divides the valley into two unequal parts, Viz., the Northern and the Southern. The important tributaries from the South are the Dudhi, the Shakkar, the Barurewa, the Sher and the Umar. The Hiran river and the Biranj Nala are the major feeders of the Narmada from the North. During the dry season most of the streams become dry and water is available in the channels of the major streams only (Map 2.2).

**THE NARMADA RIVER:** Narmada is the principal river of this district which rises in the plateau of Amarkantak (22°40′N-81°45′E), in Shahdol district and after flowing through Mandla and Jabalpur district forms the Northern boundary of the district from Bhikhanpur (23° 36′N-79° 36′ E) to Sankal (23° 36′N-79° 21′E), a distance of about 39.6 kilometer. The course of the river is from East to West. From its confluence with the Hiran, a tributary from the North to the confluence of the Biranj Nala (23°6′N-78°45′E), the river crosses the district for a distance about 64.37 Kilometer and then again flows along the Northern boundary. The Central Railway and the parallel road at Bhikampur near Bikrampur Railway Station cross the river. An important National Highway (N.H.26) crosses at Barmhan ghat. The Southern tributaries mostly feed the river. The total course of the Narmada in the district is about 160.93 kms.
THE SHER RIVER: This river rises at (22°34’N-79°41’E), East of Lakhnadon in Seoni district. After a North-Western course of about 126.72 kms, it falls into the Narmada at Ranikarar in Narsimhapur district. It is crossed by railway’s bridge at about 12.67 kms. East of Narsimhapur. Its principal tributaries are the Macharewa, the Barurewa and the Umar.

THE BARUREWA RIVER: It is a stream which rises in the hills South-West of Bachai and flows North-West in a tortuous course past Singhpur, being joined by several other small streams after they have entered the plain. It is crossed by large railway bridge a few kms. West of Narsimhpur and falls into the Sher river at a short distance from the junction of the Sher with the Narmada, after a course of about 48.28kms.

THE SHAKKAR RIVER: Its rises about 19.31 kms North of Amarwara in Chhindwara district and flows through Narsimhapur in a North Western direction joining the Narmada near Sokalpur after total course of about 112.65 kms. It passes Harrai in Chhindwara and Shahpur, Gadarwara and Paloha in Narsimhapur district.

THE CHITAREWA RIVER: The river rises in the hills of Chhindwara district and joins the Shakkar after a course of about 80.47kms.

THE DUDHI RIVER: This river rises in Chhindwara and falls into the Narmada after a course of about 106.22 kms. This river forms the Western boundary of Narsimhapur district.

THE HIRAN RIVER: It forms the boundary between the Narsimhapur and Jabalpur district for the last few kms. and joins the Narmada at Sankal on the border of Narsimhapur district.

CLIMATE

Climate affects human life in many ways and is probably the most important of all geographic elements. It is an important control over the
distribution of plant and animal life; hence climate exerts a large influence upon food produced in any area and materials available for shelter and other necessities of life.

The climate of this district is characterised by generally pleasant weather except in the hot season. This part of the country has four seasons. The cold season from middle of November to February is followed by the hot season, which continues up to mid June. The period from mid June to the end of September is the South-West monsoon season.

**TABLE 2.2**

**NARSIMHAPUR DISTRICT: AVERAGE ANNUAL RAINFALL, 1960-97**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Annual Mean Rainfall in M.M.</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Annual Mean Rainfall in M.M.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>1221.02</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>834.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>1329.02</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>1067.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>1176.05</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>1139.04</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>904.4</td>
</tr>
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<td>1445.08</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>960.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>1443.08</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>1160.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>1139.08</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>1217.5</td>
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<td>1985</td>
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<td>1986</td>
<td>1056.02</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>819.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>1043.06</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>1023.4</td>
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</table>

Mean rainfall 1152.86 mm


**RAINFALL:** The average annual rainfall in the district is 1152.86 mm. The rainfall in the district is due to the monsoon, which is active in the months of June to September. August is the month of heavy rains this area. The annual rainfall in the district is observed to be 800 to 1600 mm during last 40 years (Table 2.2 and 2.3).
TABLE 2.3
NARSIMHAPUR DISTRICT: (TAHSILWISE) AVERAGE ANNUAL RAINFALL (MM)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Narsimhapur</th>
<th>Kareli</th>
<th>Gadawara</th>
<th>Gotegaon</th>
<th>District</th>
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<td>1993-94</td>
<td>1512.8</td>
<td>1269.1</td>
<td>1243.4</td>
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<td>1217.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994-95</td>
<td>2098.2</td>
<td>1474.1</td>
<td>1712.2</td>
<td>1507.6</td>
<td>1698.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995-96</td>
<td>871.9</td>
<td>701.0</td>
<td>752.5</td>
<td>922.4</td>
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<td>1199.5</td>
<td>990.0</td>
<td>1038.8</td>
<td>933.4</td>
<td>1023.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


TEMPERATURE: Average maximum temperature during summer days extends up to 41°C but a few days of this month may observe the maximum temperature up to 47°C. December and January are the coldest months in the year and generally the maximum and minimum temperature are observed to be 25°C and 9°C respectively.

SOILS
Soils constitute one of the most important factors in socio-economic development in area. The Narmada valley, which accounts for a good proportion of the land in the district, consists of black cotton soil, which is alluvial in character. According to the classification of soils, the district have been divided into nine categories: (1) Kabar-I (2) Kabar-II (3) Mund-I (4) Mund-II (5) Patarua (6) Sehra (7) Ritua (8) Bhatua (9) Kachhar

A very large proportion of the cultivated area of the district is under the two types of soils i.e. Kabar and mund soils. Kabar is described as the best black soil, occurring on level land and in shallow depressions and containing very little quantity of sand and pebbles. Kabar-I is said to differ from the inferior, Kabar-II in its supposed capacity to grow double crops.
Mund is also black soil, containing a greater proportion of sand and pebbles than Kabar, the latter generally of limestone. The classification of mund into two classes is on the basis of its sand and limestone pebble content. Kabar is very good for wheat and Mund also is better suited for wheat than gram. Patarua is described as Mund of very poor quality, and it is found on ravine or uneven ground. Though best types of this soil are capable of growing wheat, the soil is usually sown with the autumn crops. Patarua accounts also for a sizeable portion of the cultivated area in the district. The light coloured sandy soil known as Sehra occurs below the hills and is suitable for growing rice and even sugarcane, the later crop with irrigation. Ritua as the word ‘Ret’ meaning sand, from which it is derived shows is more sandy and inferior soil, occurring generally in the beds of rivers and can grow the crops of melons etc. Also occurring on the banks of rivers is Kachhar, but it is very good land capable of growing wheat and vegetables. Bhatua is very inferior type of soil occurring on the near hills, capable of growing the inferior millets like Kodon, Kutki etc. It however has a small area in the district. Besides the above classifications cultivated soils in the district are also distinguished on the basis of crops grown i.e. Wheat land, minor cropland or garden land. A classification according to position of the soil is also recognised.

FOREST RESOURCES

Forest resources are important natural resource. The forest of the district, are under the group of Tropical Dry Deciduous forests. However, a few patches of forests in most of the villages may also be classified under group of Tropical Moist Deciduous forests. The ground flora, as it originally existed, has given way to cultivation almost in the whole of the Narmada valley and has greatly distributed on the Satpuras and the Vindhyanas along Southern and Northern margins. The forests aligned on the Satpura hills are most extensive, while those on the Vindhyanas are most compact. According to
land records statistics of the district for the year 1962-63 forests account for 27.6 per cent of the total area and they have 16 per cent shrinkage in the year 1991 (Map 2.1).

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

The economy of Narsimhapur district is primarily based on the agricultural resources, where more than three-fourth (78.7 per cent) Population is engaged in this activity. About one-fourth (25.3 per cent) of total area is under forests, and more than two-third (68.8 per cent) of the total geographical area is under cultivation. The proportion of cultivated area in this district is higher than that of the State's average. Out of the total cultivated area 37.6 per cent is double cropping and therefore total cropped area is 79.7 per cent.

TABLE 2.4

NARSIMHAPUR DISTRICT: LAND UTILISATION
1997-98

<table>
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<th>Land Use</th>
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<th>Geographical Area</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total Geographical area</td>
<td>513651</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area under forest</td>
<td>129759</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agricultural area</td>
<td>353301</td>
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<td>Net sown area</td>
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<td>57.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double Cropped area</td>
<td>111770</td>
<td>37.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cropped area</td>
<td>409210</td>
<td>79.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area under cereals</td>
<td>108340</td>
<td>26.5 (per cent of total cropped area)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area under pulses</td>
<td>159327</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irrigated Area</td>
<td>150629</td>
<td>50.6</td>
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</table>

The study area is rich in its agricultural resources. The area under irrigation, fertilizers consumption, high yielding varieties of seeds and mechanization are relatively high in this region. Consequently the production of food grains is also high. The region is famous for its Arhar dal and Gram. About 50.6 per cent total cropped area is irrigated and remaining area (49.4 per cent) depends upon the Monsoon rain. Wells and tubewells are the major sources of irrigation, which occupy 90.1 per cent of the total irrigated area. Narsimhapur district as a whole is primarily a rabi crop area. Among the various crops grown in this district, Wheat, Gram and Arhar occupy more than half total cropped area (51.8 per cent) Gram alone consists of about one-fourth (26.5 per cent) of the total cultivated area. Therefore, cereals (26.5 per cent) and pulses (38.9 per cent) occupy a major proportion of the total cropped area in this region (Table 2.4).

TRANSPORT FACILITIES

Transport plays a very significant role in the development of a region. Extensive, efficient, economical and dependable means of transport is a basic need for socio-economic development of a region (Singh, 1984:59). The communication lines of the district consist of the road and the railways, The roads, running spine-like through its boundaries, consist of the National Highways, State Highways, major district roads, minor district roads and others roads which have made remote places accessible and distances traversable. While the railways, running East to West through the district, have accelerated the movement of men and goods.

ROADS: The development of means of communication is a necessary precondition for economic betterment of a region. The total road length in the region is 763.81 kilometers, 615.91 kilometers metalled and 147.90 kilometers unmetalled (Map 2.3)
NATIONAL HIGHWAYS: The district is traversed by two National Highways, viz, Sagar-Kareli road and Narsimhapur- Lakhanadon road. The Sagar-Kareli road’s length in the district is 51.7 kilometers. This road is the composed of the following two distinct sections. (1) Sagar-Kareli 34.4 kms. and (II) Kareli- Narsimhapur 17.20 kilometers. The Narsimhapur–Lakhanadon road length in the Narsimhapur district is 40-83 kilometers. It is an important road connecting Narsimhapur with Jabalpur via Lakhanadon. The total length of the State Highways in the district as per records of 1991 was 215.53 kilometers.

RAILWAYS: Railways are regarded as the most efficient means of transport. They exercised a profound influence on the economic development of the region. The district headquarters Narsimhapur is situated on the Bombay-Allahabad railway line. It traverses the district from West to East and the headquarters town is 80.47 kilometers West of Jabalpur. The total length of the railway line in the district is 125.53 kilometers.

INDUSTRIES
The percentage of “workers”, in household and manufacturing other than household industries in the year 1991 is 5.63 per cent of the total “worker”, Dal milling, spinning of kosa silk, manufacturing of lac and glass Bangles, iron- work, sunn-hemp work, making of ropes, broom, mats and baskets of bamboo, cartwheels, wooden furniture, brass utensils, manufacture of combs, leather shoes, lime industry, benerayki oil, writing paper, maida-suji, oil milling and bidi making are some of the important industries and household industries in the district.

Dal mills are important industries in the district. Different dals like Gram, Tur, Masoor etc; are mostly exported to different place in the
country. Village Chichli of Gadarwara tahsil of the district was in olden times a hub and center of this manufacturing activity, though there were other centres also in the district carrying on this activity. There were 10 units working during the year 1989-90, where on an average 35 workers were employed daily. Bidi making emerges as an important industry in the district by virtue of its capacity in providing employment to comparatively large number of workers. The raw materials in the manufacture of bidi are Tendu leaves available from the forests in the district. In the district, 13 saw mills were registered during 1990-91 and they employed on an average 26 workers every day. Making of leather and leather-products comes next as regards size of the working force. This is an industry carried on almost exclusively by members belonging to the Chamar caste as an enustral work.

MINERALS
In view of the power and mineral resources the district is lacking in the requirements necessary for the existence of any heavy and large-scale industries. Besides inadequacy to power and mineral resources there are not even industrial raw materials that can be utilised in a large-scale industrial production. The industries as such in the district are there fore, small-scale industries based on agriculture like dal milling, oil extraction, saw milling, bidi making and brick and tiles manufacturing etc.

HEALTH SERVICES
Health services provide a wide spectrum of service including primary health care, integration of preventive and curative services, health education, family welfare and control of environmental hazards The district has 242 hospitals and dispensaries with a total of 355 beds and 128 doctors (1998). The medical facilities provided to the people do not seem to be adequate. The family planning situation is again, rather unsatisfactory.
HOSPITALS: Hospital can play an important role in providing the preventive, promotive and rehabilitative services to the local community including training and research besides the restorative function. By established peripheral health centres and with the help of medico-social workers all these functions can be done satisfactorily by a well organised hospital. The district hospitals provide facilities for indoor patients with equipped beds. The primary health centres are the focal points for delivery of health and medical care in rural areas. Their operational responsibility is to cover medical care, maternal and child health services, family welfare, nutrition, control of communicable diseases, protected water supply and environmental sanitation. The primary health centres (PHCS) are located at the block headquarters, while at certain places independent civil dispensaries are also functioning to provide some medical care. The primary health centres have male and female doctors with nurses, health visitors, vaccinators and others and these are the only source of modern medical care, medicine, etc. as far as rural areas are concerned.

HOSPITAL, DOCTOR AND BED RATIO
Per thousand square kilometre area: From what has been Stated under health services, it is inferred that the medical facilities are insufficient in the study area. From the figures given above, it has been worked out that health services are provided by 47.12 hospitals with 24.94 doctors and 69.16 beds in every thousand kms² of area.
Per thousand persons: There is only one government hospital in the district controlling lies through 26 primary health centres providing medical facilities is 785496 people of the district. The population hospital ratio worked out to be 0.034 hospitals per thousand persons. Other words one hospital (including primary health centres) serves for a population of 29092 persons. Number of doctor per thousand populations is 0.66 or one doctor for every 6137 person.
Similarly the number of beds in the hospital is worked out to be 0.45 per thousand persons, which comes to be one bed for 2213 persons (1998).

The above position of availability of health services in the study area is pitiable. The private hospital / dispensaries are confined to the urban areas only. It is also remarkable that the hospitals and health centres are not ideally located in the entire study area. Some parts of the region do not have basic medical facilities while some areas do not have medical facilities for family welfare programme and other health programmes.

THE PEOPLE

Population is one of the most important factors of cultural environment and it determines the various activities of any area. The pattern of human activities on the Earth’s surface is the result of man’s initiative and mobility within a framework of natural resources gives different colours to the landscape. It plays important role in the field of economic development. Therefore, the various aspects of population—the distribution and density, age group and sex ratio—have a great modifying effect on the various human cultural activities.

The study region is one of the densely populated regions of Madhya-Pradesh. The population of Narsimhapur district is 1.19 per cent of the State’s population. The rural population is about 85.13 per cent whereas the urban population is 14.86 per cent. In other words, the district has rural character. The sex ratio is 931 females per 1000 males.

The scheduled castes and scheduled tribes constitute about 29.49 per cent of the total population, which is lower than that of the State’s average (37.82 per cent). Population both urban and rural is increasing very rapidly. The average annual growth rate is 2.08 per cent (1981-91), which is lower than the State’s average growth rate of 2.67 per cent. The literacy rate is 55.65 per cent in the region, which is higher than that of the State’s average rate (35.46 per
cent). Economically, the participation rate, i.e. proportion of workers total population in the district is 39.6 per cent, which is smaller than participation rate of the State as a whole (42.8 per cent). The participation rate for males and females in the district is 52.5 per cent and 25.4 per cent respectively; comparing with State is 52.3 and 32.7 per cent respectively. Agriculture is the mainstay of the district’s economy claiming 78.70 per cent of all workers. About 39.82 per cent of the workers are registered as cultivators, and 38.82 per cent workers as agricultural laborers. The agricultural land is devoted mainly to the cultivation of food grains. Food-crops account for 75.64 per cent of net had sown area in the district. Thus non-grain food crops e.g. sugar cane, vegetables, fruits, soyabean, linseed etc. occupy 24.36 per cent of the net sown area in the district. Besides agriculture, other occupations are also important in the district’s economy. Trade and commerce (4.78 per cent) important household industry (3.55 per cent) are other occupations, which have provided occupations to about 8.33 per cent of the total worker.

SCHEDULED CASTES: Under the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes list (modification) order, 1956 ten castes (with synonymous groups) have been scheduled in this district. An important omission in the modified order is the Mahar or Mehra caste which being quite numerous in the district. In 1991, scheduled castes formed 16.58 per cent of the population of the district. They are concentrated in rural areas to extent of 87.77 per cent of their population. They are more numerous in Gograon tahsil of whose population they form 19.88 per cent. In Gadarwara tahsil scheduled castes account for 16.18 per cent, in Narsimhapur tahsil they are 15.90 per cent and Kareli tahsil has recorded lowest population of scheduled castes (14.63 per cent).

Among the various scheduled castes (or synonymous caste groups) four viz. Chamar, Basor, Mehtar or Bhangi and Bahna or Bahana are more numerous and together account for 99 per cent of the total scheduled
castes population. The most numerous Chamar (including synonymous castes) caste alone accounts for about four-fifths (79.6 per cent) of the scheduled castes population in the region. Basor caste ranks second in numerical strength and constitutes 12.4 per cent, while Mehtar or Bhangi and Bahna or Bahana castes, which rank respectively third and fourth in numerical strength form 5.7 per cent and 1.4 per cent of the scheduled castes population. The six other castes which are less numerous but which have been returned from the district are in the descending order of their numerical strength, Mang etc.; Khatik, Balahi or Balai, Chikwa or chikvi Dom or Dumar; Gonda or Gandi and Sansi. In the field of education, the scheduled castes still seem to be lagging behind very much. Population of literate and educated to total population of scheduled castes is 35.01 per cent comparing with an about one and half times higher proportion of 51.62 per cent for the general population.

More than two-fifth (43.10 per cent) of the scheduled castes population is economically active. The proportion of economically active S.C. Population the district as a whole is 39.56 per cent, which is lower, compared to general castes. Out of the main workers (39.32 per cent) more than three-fourth (79.61 per cent) workers are engaged in an agricultural sector and the remaining one-fifth (20.39 per cent) are engaged in non-agricultural sector. This distribution of workers indicates rural character of the economy in Narsimhapur district. Economically, this is one of the developed districts of Madhya Pradesh. Moreover, agro-based industries such as dal mills, sugar (Gur) mills, etc., have their major share in the non-agricultural sector. Economically, the scheduled castes are dependent on agriculture to the extent of 79.61 per cent of their working force. The dependence is thus clearly less than in case of the general population. Cultivators constitute 18.59 per cent of the working force and 61.02 per cent agricultural labourers.
**Scheduled Tribes:** The Presidential order referred to earlier, declare thirty-two tribes (including in some cases synonymous tribes, and sub-tribes) as scheduled in the district. Of these thirty-two, only thirteen have been returned in the district which together account for 12.91 per cent of its population. They are concentrated in rural areas to the extent of 94.82 per cent of their population. They are more numerous in Gotegaon tahsil of whose population they form 17.58 per cent. In Narsimhapur tahsil scheduled tribes account for 16.73 per cent in kareli tahsil they are 12.84 per cent and Gadarwara tahsil has recorded lowest population of scheduled tribes (9.52 per cent).

Of the thirteen scheduled tribes only five comprise 99.8 per cent of the tribal population. The remaining eight tribes together thus account for 0.2 per cent of the district’s population and are therefore not very significant numerically. Of the five more numerous tribes *Gond* alone (including sub-tribes) constitute 87.2 per cent of the district’s tribal populations. Other numerous tribes with their proportions (given in brackets) are; *Bharia-Bhumia* (4.1 per cent), *Oraon* including *Dhanka* and *Dhangad* (3.2 per cent), *Pardhan, Pathari* and *Saroti* (2.8 per cent), and *Kol* (2.5 per cent). The numerically insignificant tribes returned from the district are *Bhaina, Bhattara, Bhil, Dhanwar, Korku, Korwa, Pardhi* and *Parja* (Map 2.4 and 2.5).

In the field of education, the scheduled tribes still seem to be lagging behind very much. Proportion of literate and educated population of scheduled tribes is 24.22 per cent, comparing of 55.65 per cent for the total population and 35.01 per cent for the scheduled caste’s population. More than half (49.45 per cent of the scheduled tribal population is economically active, comparing with a much smaller proportion 39.56 per cent of the economically active in the general population, and a slightly smaller proportion 43.10 per cent in the scheduled castes. Economy of the tribes is predominantly dependent on agriculture, which absorbs 93.7 per cent of their working population. The
dependence of the tribes on agriculture is thus much greater than the general population, which has only 78.7 per cent of its working force in agriculture, whereas scheduled castes have 79.61 per cent proportion of workers in agriculture.

CONCLUSIONS

Narsimhapur district is equivalent to Sikkim State in terms of area and it is equivalent to Arunachal Pradesh in terms of population. The district is situated in the central part of Madhya Pradesh. It occupies a little part of the upper Narmada valley bordered by the Vindhyans in the North and the Satpuras in the South. The Narmada valley, which accounts for a good proportion of the land in the district, consists of black cotton soil, which is alluvial in character. A very large proportion of the cultivated area of the district is under the two types of soils i.e. Kabar and Mud soils. The population of Narsimhapur district is 1.19 per cent of the State’s population. The rural population is about 85.13 per cent whereas the urban population is 14.86 per cent.

The scheduled castes and scheduled tribes constitute about 29.49 per cent of the total population. Among the various scheduled castes, four castes viz. Chamar, Basor, Mehtar or Bhangi and Bahna or Bahana are more numerous and together account for 99 per cent of the total scheduled caste population. Of the thirteen scheduled tribes only five comprise 99.8 per cent of the tribal population. Of the five more numerous tribes Gond alone (including sub-tribes) constitute 87.2 per cent of the district’s tribal population.

REFERENCE


