1. BHAGALPUR CITY:

A Historical, Demographic and Economic Perspective

Bhagalpur is a city situated in eastern Bihar on the southern bank of river Ganga. City of Bhagalpur is the headquarter of Bhagalpur Division as also of the district and sadar sub-division. This city inhibits in the middle of the present Bhagalpur district, which is bounded on the north by the river Ganga, in the south, and the east by Santhal Pargana and in the west by Mungher district. No authentic report is available as to the origin of the name of Bhagalpur, however according to the District Gazetteer of Bhagalpur 1962, Bhuchnan has observed that the name have been given by the Mughal Officers.\(^1\)

Geographically, the city of Bhagalpur is located on 25°7' north to 25°22' north latitude and 86°20' east longitude. It shares its physical characteristics with most part of the state of Bihar. Winter is cool which lasts from November to February. Summer season is followed by the southwest monsoon which lasts till the end of September. Average annual rainfall is approximately 120 cm. July is the rainiest month, on an average there are 60-80 rainy days as has been observed in last
decades. March and April are driest months of the year, when relative humidity ranges between 50-55 per cent in the afternoon.

Bhagalpur contains a population of 2.53 lakhs (hundred thousand) according to the census report of 1991. The city is divided into 37 municipal wards. It is a long and linear city with south-ward extension in the centre. It forms an administrative focus, as it is the headquarter of the district and the division. Several important services found within the city have significance not within the division only but outside the division also. As such the city is connected with outside regions by different means of transportation. Since it posses an important junction of the eastern railway, people from distant places come to avail facilities. It is well connected with Mandar Hill in the south and ferry services in the north. The loop line of the eastern railway connects Howrah (railway junction of metropolitan Calcutta) in the east and Delhi (another metropolitan city and the capital of India) in the west which run almost along the southern boundary of the city.

The city of Bhagalpur lies on the Patna-Sahebganj State Highway, which transverses the city in east to west direction. It is also connected with several important urban centres like Dumka, Godda, Deoghar, Banka, Munger, Ranchi etc. This
city has good trade connections with Patna (capital of the state Bihar), Delhi, Calcutta and Mumbai. The city lies at a distance of 425 kilometres west of Calcutta and about 200 kilometres to the east of Patna.

The higher land running west to east in the form of Levee along the southern bank of the river and northern fringe of present city has been significant for early shelters of this town. The city’s constituents part namely Nathnagar, Laxmiganj, Bhagalpur proper and Jagdishpur each developed separately but more recently all of these four units form the parts of the city and are well linked by Champanagar-Cleaveland Road³.

1.1 HISTORY

1.1.1 Early History: According to the traditions preserved in the Epics and Purans, the descendants of Anu, the great grandson of Manu, founded the Anava Kingdom in the east. This kingdom was divided among the five sons of king Bali known as Anga, Banga, Kalinga, Pundia and Sumha. Agna’s great grandson was Champa, after whom the capital of Anga was named, till then was known as Malini. Anga along with Magadh first find mention in Vedic Literature, in the Atharveda Samhita. Budhist scripture mention Anga among the different traditions in North India. According to the tradition,
Brahamadatta the king of Anga defeated Bhatia, the king of Magadh. But the later's son Bimbisar (c. 445 BC) avenged his father's defeat and subjugated Anga. Ajatshtru the next king of Magadh is said to have transferred his capital to Champa.

Anga remained a part of Magadhan Empire under the Nandas, the Mauryas (324-185 BC), the Sungas (185-175 BC) and the Kanvas (75-30 BC). During the rule of canvas, king Kharavela of Kalinga invaded Magadh and Anga. The history of the next few centuries up to the coronation of Chandragupta First (in 320 AD) is rather obscure. Anga was the part of the Gupta Empire during 320 AD. This was an era of great material and cultural progress. With the decline of Guptas, the Gaud King Sasanka gained control over the area in 602 AD and maintained his dominion till his death in 625 AD, after which came the rule of Harsha, and Madhavagupta became the king. His son Aditya Sena has left an inscription in Mander Hill indicating the installation of Narsimha or Narhari temple by him. Huen Tsang, a Chinese traveler visited Champa, in the course of his travel account it has been quoted that Gopala of Palas founded Vikramsheela, seat of the famous ancient university. Narayan Pala's copper plates have been found at Bhagalpur. Jain religion prevailed during Karna Rajas and there are two remarkable places of worship of prehistoric
times, one erected by the great banker Jagat Seth, is a squire building, two storied high, each storied consists of an apartment surrounded by a narrow open gallery and another is the splendid Jain temple situated in Kabirpur.

Hence the account about the ancient existence of the city is not systematic and rather obscure and also because of the subject having little relevance with the research, it has not been discussed in very much detail. But it is certain with above description that any kind of habitation was existing where present Bhagalpur city is situated.

1.1.2 Medieval Period: The town retained its original character till the advent of Muslims who came into India in the twelfth century AD. At that time it was not a strong centre of attraction. It was during the period of Akbar, Bhagalpur was made the seat of an Imperial Fauzdar.6

The town of Bhagalpur is occasionally mentioned, when Akbar's troops marched through it, while invading Bengal in AD 1573 and 1575. In the Second Afghan War, Maan Singh made Bhagalpur the rendezvous of all the Bihar contingents which in AD 1591 were sent thence over Chotanagpur to Bardhwan, where they meet the Bengal levies to invade Orissa. In the Ain-e-Akbari, that is the third volume of Akbarnama, Bhagalpur is mentioned as the chief town of Bengal Pargana
which was assessed approximately 47 lakh dams (prevalent currency) equal at the rate of 40 dams to one Akbarshahi rupee to 1 lakh and 17 thousand rupees. Subsequently Bhagalpur was made the seat of an Imperial Fauzdar or Military Governor. It is learnt from Padshahnnama that in AD 1639 this office was held under Shahjahan by one Aatish Khan Deccani. At the beginning of Auranzeb’s region another Seikh Raziuddin hold the mansab (rank) of one hundred. Further in due course of time, the ruler was raised to the Ameer (portfolio) and received the title of Khan.7

The Muslims wanted to impress the Hindus with a new civilization of their own. As such they developed another township of their own style in the east of the older one. The new town extended from about 3 kms. in length and 1 km in width. Its western boarder coincided with the eastern end of the low laying vacant area and the eastern limit was Khanjarpur.8 The southern limit probably extended up to Maulanachak, near the railway station. Later on the construction of Baunsi road led to the extension of the settlement towards the south.

Township developed at new site by the Mughal Officers based on the planned construction. As such, streets reveal somewhat grid iron pattern. It is also said that Mughals erected
Remains of historic importance of the medieval period is a mausoleum of a Mohammedan saint in Champanagar, inscription of which states that it was built in 1622 by Khawaja Ahmad Samraquandi Fauzdar of Sarkar Mongher. Another place of interest as a Mohammedan shrine is the tomb of Pirshahjanga Shahnawaz on a hill west to the railway station below which a very fine tank has been excavated.

1.1.3 Modern Period: Modern development of Bhagalpur could be traced back somewhere in Mughal period, especially after the invasion of Bengal during 1573-75. But the state of Bihar, including Bhagalpur, ruled by Mughal Viceroy with its seat at Rajmahal for approximately two centuries, had fell into the hands of Britishers in 1769. Bhagalpur was made a separate district in 1774, Augustus Cleveland was made its first collector and in 1832 it became the divisional headquarter. Opening of new offices increased the opportunity for jobs in the town and attracted the people of working age groups from far flung areas.

Captain Sherwill in his geographical and statistical report of the district of Bhagalpur (1869) mentioned that the most remarkable object in the pargana (administrative unit) are first
the town and station of Bhagalpur. The town is miserable struggling collection of huts extending over four miles of ground cut up and divided by fields, gardens, plantations and numerous roads, the whole plan resembling an uninhabited forest rather than a town. Another observer Bryn wrote about the same city of Bhagalpur that the town has a lot of changes and mentioned it as the chief town and administrative headquarter of the district. It appears with these two statements that in 1869, Bhagalpur was not very important, while Nathnagar and Champanagar had not only a large population but a sizable trade and commerce. It also seems that the growing economic importance of Nathnagar and Champanagar (western quarter of the present town) led to the spread of the town towards the east, and Bhagalpur as Sherwill describes is consisting of huts, started growing. And in a few decades, Bhgalpur became more important than the Nathnagar and Champanagar.11

The British also established a new town to the east of the central city, according to their choice which was based on western culture and civilization. Both topographically and environmentally, these area were the most suitable site for planned settlement, where buildings are constructed leaving sufficient space and roads and lanes are wide enough. Opening
of new offices increased the opportunity for jobs in the town and attracted the people of working age groups from far flung areas. The location of Fauzdar and Diwani Adalats in Bhagalpur, tremendously increased the growth rate of the town. The acquisition of lands for railway station in the town (1857), extension of postal communication (1858), opening treasury for collection of revenue (1857), re-metalling of main road passing from east to west through Bhagalpur railway station (1860) and repair of several other roads boosted up the development of the town. Later on, the establishment of various institutions such as Zila High School (1863), Municipality (1864), T.N.B. college and waterworks (1887), C.M.S. High School (1903), Sabaur Agriculture College, Sabaur (1910) and other government offices have greatly accelerated the educational and economic activities of the town. Bhagalpur Electric Supply Company was established in the year 1928. It encouraged the growth of industrial and commercial activities in the city. In the year 1938 the existing water supply system was reorganized to supply drinking water to Nathnagar and southern part of the city. In 1943 Bhagalpur circle of Central Excise Department was established. In the following years Bhagalpur Circle of Commercial Taxes was
opened. These offices also encouraged the growth of settlement in the city.\textsuperscript{12}

1.1.4 Post-independence Period (1947-2000): After independence the city of Bhagalpur has recorded phenomenal growth (fig. 1.1). Bhagalpur being headquarter of the district and Commissionery has large number of offices, institutions and industries. And their impact on the growth and development of the city is more obvious in almost all areas of the city. In the year 1948, the District Employment Exchange office was established. In 1950 the division of Public Health and Engineering Department were opened. In educational sphere, Sunderwati Maheela College, the first college for female education were opened in 1949, the college attracted women folk for higher studies. In the year 1953, the first government Girls High School came into being and the two technical institutions namely Bhagalpur Engineering College and Industrial Training Institute get established at Barari.

These institutions also encouraged the growth of settlement in the eastern portion of the city. Remarkable growth took place when Bhagalpur Engineering College and Bhagalpur University were established in 1960. As a result of these two institutions quite a large number of academicians and
Fig. 1.1 Bhagalpur City at the time of Independence (1947)
Source: Imperial Gazetteer of India 1962
officials got employment in the city and majority of them settled there. Remarkable growth concerning the employee’s of the university and college has taken place in Nathnagar area. Besides these institutions, the establishment of Bhagalpur Medical College, Radio Station, Silk and Tasser Research Institute and several other private institutes and small industries developed during recent decades, have greatly increased the urban sphere of Bhagalpur city. Bhagalpur city has got the status of Municipal Corporation in 1981. Municipal boundary of the city in the east is metre-guage railway line, in the south radio-station, in the west Champanala-bridge and in the north the river Ganga. The area extent of Bhagalpur Corporation is 30.61 square kilometres, inhibiting 253 thousand people in 1991. Present city of Bhagalpur is comprised of 37 municipal wards including 15 identified slum areas. As far as transport and communication is concern, this city is served by roadways, railways, waterways and airways. However air service is still not regular.$^\text{13}$

1.2 DEMOGRAPHY

1.2.1 Growth of Population: An attempt was made, as early as in 1857 to enumerate the inhabitants of the city, but it was of little value because it was based on the estimates of police
and revenue officials. The first census of 1872 provided relatively more satisfactory data. It was done by government officials, and the population was estimated to 65 thousand. The 1881 decade marked an increase of 4.4 per cent over the previous figure and the population had become 68 thousand. This figure was indicative of the fact that there was little immigration and the increase in population was mainly due to reproduction. In the next decade of 1881, the population of the city increased to 69 thousand with a growth rate of 1.3 per cent over the last decade. In the absence of any evidence, it can be said that this minimal increase in population, might be the after-effect of reproduction and epidemic occurrences. In the same way, the population of the town increased to 76 thousand in 1901 at a growth rate of 9.6 per cent.\textsuperscript{14}

In the first half of the present century population of the town as well as district, have shown an irregular growth. From 1901 to 1921 population of the town has faced many natural calamities and epidemics.
Table 1.1 Decadal Growth Rate Of The Population of City District and State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Town Population</th>
<th>Growth rate of Town</th>
<th>Growth rate of District</th>
<th>Growth rate of State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>75,700</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>75,300</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>70,900</td>
<td>-4.5</td>
<td>-6.7</td>
<td>-0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>83,800</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>93,200</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>114,500</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census Report

Table 1.2 Persons born outside the City but in the District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Immigration of the town</th>
<th>Persons in the Age-group of 15-35</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>1002</td>
<td>0761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>6518</td>
<td>4321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>5778</td>
<td>3780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>10990</td>
<td>7959</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census Report
It is interesting to point out that Bhagalpur city grew demographically after 1921 and remained more or less a large country town till then. The commercial activities and demographic expansion, though quite significant in comparison to other towns of the district made no notable progress and remained almost stagnant. With the closure of second decade the long drawn era of population stagnation came to an end. Though famines were largely confined to the surrounding agrarian areas, and epidemics struck the town infrequently, but due to expansion in medical facilities and improvement in public health, any further loss of population was prevented. The population went up from 71 thousand in 1921 to over 80 thousand in 1931. With increasing commercial activities of the town and employment in small-scale industries, people from nearby agrarian regions gradually became semi-permanent in the town. As a result of which the demographic expansion reached to 93 thousand in 1941 whereas it was most pronounced in 1951 when it crossed the mark of one lakh with an actual increase of 21 thousand over the just last decade.

In the first decade of the post-independent India (1951-61), population increased at a rate of 12 per cent giving a variation of 156 thousand, when the district population reached to 1429 thousand, which has subsequently increased at
a rate of 20 per cent, 22 per cent, 25 per cent and again 22 per cent in the decades of 1961, 1971, 1981 and 1991, respectively. Like the growth trend of district population, the population of Bhagalpur city increased at a rate of 22 per cent, 28 per cent, 33 per cent and 16 per cent in the respective decades of 1961, 1971, 1981 and 1991.

**Table 1.3 District and City Population in Post-independence Period (in thousand)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>District Population</th>
<th>Growth Rate</th>
<th>City Population</th>
<th>Growth Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>1429</td>
<td>12.25</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>1711</td>
<td>19.74</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>2091</td>
<td>22.21</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>2621</td>
<td>25.36</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>3198</td>
<td>22.01</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census Report.

Here population of the district as well as the city both increased at the same rate, but the only difference in the higher increase rate of city population was due to incoming migration waves. The trend of migration and population increase is almost uniform throughout the second part of this century except in the decade of 1981-1991. It could also be inferred
from the above table, that the growth rate of district rural population as well, is higher than the growth rate of the city population in 1991. It is due to the occurrence of an inhuman communal riot in 1988 which has not only destroyed the habitable environment of the town but also fractured the economic structure of the city. A keen observation of population control measure, unravel that the Family Planning scheme has hardly exerted any influence over the population structure of the city. With this, it is clear that the city population could not inter into the third stage of population growth. And it was the communal riot which has diverted the immigrating trend of population and has injured the health of the city.

In the beginning of the present century there were no city in Bihar (a state of India), except Patna, Gaya and Singhbhum with a cluster of first class town population. In 1971 Ranchi and Dhanbad both the industrial town superceded Bhagalpur in terms of population. And it has also been left behind by Mongher and Hazaribagh town in 1991. Purnea and Muzaffarpur are other towns from the agricultural estate of North Bihar which is taking lead in terms of city growth. Bhagalpur city has grown at a rate of 33 per cent during 1971-81 and only 16 per cent during 1981-91 which is less than half
of the previous decade population increment rate. On the basis of the above mentioned reality, it could be inferred that the health of the city is continuously deteriorating. It has also been noticed by various sources that the city which is still sixth largest agglomeration in the state declined gradually due to uncongenial environment. Thus the city, recently dying in nature, thrive for the restoration of habitable and purified social and cultural environment.

1.2.2 Distribution and Density: The distribution of population is more locational while the density is more proportional. The former refers to the spatial pattern in which the population finds its location as dispersed, nucleated, agglomerated, etc. and the later is concerned with the ratio between the population and the area (fig. 1.2).

1.2.2.1 Distribution: Population distribution measure the degree of population concentration or dispersion. Changes in the population distribution of space arises as a consequence of changes in relative importance of economic activities of different regions. An economy dependent on secondary or tertiary activities can support more population than when it is dependent on primitive or primary activities.

According to the census report of 1991 there were 2,53,225 persons in the city of Bhagalpur which were unevenly
dispersed over an area of 30.61 square kilometre. Spatial distribution of population in 1991 shows marked microregional variations in the study area which is shaped either by ecological parameters or economic parameters. Ward 31 has the highest concentration of population i.e. 10,800 persons distributed over an area of 143 hectares. Ward 25 and 3 have second and third rank in order of population concentration which is distributed over an area of 80 and 123 hectares respectively. Ward 32 and 15 have lowest population concentration of 3,119 and 3,191 persons within an area of 55.48 and 30.11 hectares respectively with the distribution of population in Bhagalpur city, it is worth noting that certain inner pockets or wards are highly concentrated while wards located in the outer areas have relatively sparse and dispersed population. The very high (above 8,000 persons per hectare) concentration of population is in the wards bearing numbers 12, 13, 14, 16, 24 and 26. Shujaganj (ward 14) is the Central Business District (C.B.D.). Wards bearing numbers 2, 9, 20, 21 are sparsely populated (4000 persons per hectare) and remaining wards are moderately (4000 - 6000) to highly (6000 - 8000) populated.

1.2.2.2 Density: It is simply defined as man and land ratio. The city of Bhagalpur with 2,53,225 person and almost 31
square kilometers of land area has been 84 persons per hectares (1991). This density is much lower, mainly due to the fact that the city has a large tract of land under agricultural use.

Figure 1.2 shows that the density of population is highest i.e. 628 person per hectare in ward 26 (Tanti Tola) and lowest 20 person per hectare in ward 2 (Anandgarh) in 1991. It is clear from the map that from the city’s centre to the periphery there is a decreasing trend of population density. The peak of city’s population density lies in the Shujanganj (ward 16) and surrounding wards except one ward each in west (ward 26) and central north (ward 7). Otherwise population gradient is almost gentle towards the periphery. Some areas like Tilakamanjhi, Bhikhanpur, Maulanachak, Hussainabad and Kabirpur having high population density are also emerging as nuclei due to locational advantages e.g. high degree of accessibility, availability of vacant land etc. As the central part of the city are very congested and over-saturated, hence there is tendency of decentralization of population from centre to periphery that is why this nucleus has come into existence.

The density map also shows multiple clusters of population around the city. To the north of the Shujaganj hub region, population clusters covers the area of Jogsar, Mansurganj, Maniksarkar which have high density of
population ranging between above 125 and below 300 persons per hectare, as these areas have favourable conditions for human habitation. Thus, the density of population in Bhagalpur city is markedly uneven because of its earlier commercial and religious importance of being situated on the bank of sacred river Ganga around the Shujaganj complex and later expansion in the form of administrative buildings and colonies. This is typical characteristics of old cities in India. The high density areas are confined to older areas and low density areas to newer extension. The old areas have limited space where as newer areas with open segment, capable of absorbing additional population are gaining momentum in density of population. There is scope for occupancy in the newer extension as there are open agricultural lands. This city with great indigenous influence shows the peak density at the centre with a descending gradient towards the periphery. The population density map of the city highlights the points that the wards which comprise the historical and commercial cores of the city have lower growth rates than the peripheral wards mainly due to the migration of population to these areas from the congested core. Although high density areas are found in the two regions that is commercial core Shujaganj and surrounding and industrial core Champanagar and Nathnagar of
the city. On the whole the higher density of population in the city are due to better earning facilities, occupational diversity and cultural inter-courses.

Between the old industrial centre of the west and the commercial belt in the centre, is the zone of lowest density. This zone has a vast tract of land under agriculture, orchards and barren lands. The southern and eastern part of the city also have low density of population due to vast open spaces.

1.2.3 Literacy: Literacy in Indian context is defined as the ability to read and write a simple message with understanding. From this point of understanding over 60 per cent population of Bhagalpur city was literate as per the census report of 1991. This is an increase of 5.68 per cent over the previous decade of 1981 (Census Report of Bihar, India).

Among the city wards, the literacy rates range between a minimum of 44 per cent (ward 21) and a maximum of 84 per cent (ward 6). The high literacy wards include the commercial and historic core of the city (Fig. 1.3). The newly developed cores such as Bank Colony, Housing Colony ward 2 and Professors Colony or Tilakamanjhi (ward 10) have also very high literacy rates.

Literacy rates are moderate away from the CBD in the central Bhagalpur. And it is low and very low as the distance
BHAGALPUR CITY
Literacy Situation (1991)

INDEX
- Above 70 per cent
- 50 - 70 per cent
- 30 - 50 per cent
- Below 30 per cent

Fig. 1.3
increases from the centre. Very low literacy areas are lying along the fringe of the municipal boundary. Ward 16, 24, and 26 are highly literate wards of the city. The above mentioned wards are the oldest settlements and are comparatively in a better state of economy. Ward 16 is the business hub of the city and ward 24 and 26 are industrially advanced segment of the city, so the literacy rate is also higher here. In contrast to newly settled part of the city, particularly all along the fringe of the city, literacy rate is very low because these areas have been settled by villagers and low wage workers. Second important aspect is that the number of dependents per family is also high, that is why the actual per cent of literacy is low.

1.2.4 Occupational structure: In the year 1961, the city of Bhagalpur had 44 thousand workers out of which male and female consisted of 35.60 thousand and 7.82 thousand respectively. Workers engaged in household industry and other industries consisted of 15.41 per cent and 13.85 per cent respectively. As a matter of fact industries engaged maximum number of workers in the city in the year 1971. In construction work only 1.76 per cent workers were engaged. Trade and commerce form important occupation. In these activities 21.89 per cent workers were employed. Even in transport services, there were 8.31 per cent workers. Other services engaged 26.28
per cent workers of the city. It may be noted that most of the workers of this city are male workers.

In the following census of 1981 number of workers increased to 52 thousand (male 49.43 thousand and female 2.83 thousand). Altogether there were 23.62 per cent main workers. Cultivators and agricultural labourers consisted of 4.16 per cent and 6.73 per cent respectively. Workers engaged in household industry, manufacturing, processing, servicing and repairing consisted of 18.75 per cent. As a matter of fact, the percentage of workers engaged in industrial activities decreased in comparison with 1971 census. In the same way, main workers in 1991 became 58 thousand of which 54.76 thousand were males and 3.43 thousand were females engaged in various types of activities.

1.2.5 Community wise Distribution of Population: On the basis of community, Bhagalpur is a Hindu dominated city which constitute approximately 70 per cent of the total population. Hence it had remained a seat of administrative machinery of Muslims, so they are also found there in considerable proportion. Their proportion is approximately 29 per cent of the total population. Muslims were living here since medieval times. They were 25 per cent during the last decades of the eighteenth century. But the migrating waves increased
them to 29 per cent according to the 1991 population figure. After Hindus and Muslims other community such as Jains, Christians and Sikhs are also found in the city.

(i) **Hindus**: are dominant in the city as well as in the district. There were 23,566 households in 1981 inhibiting 158 thousand population in 1981. Census of 1991 shows that there are 185 thousand population of Hindus in 1991, out of which 99 thousand are males and 83 thousand are females. Sex ratio of the Hindu community is 807 female for every one thousand males shows highest sex difference except that of the Sikh community. There are hundreds of castes among the Hindus including scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Among the higher caste Brahamins, Bhumihars, Rajputs and Kayasthas are notable. In these castes Brahamins and Kayasthas show their intensive interest in academic and educational fields and are called as the Pujaris of the pen. Marwaris, Jains and Sikhs are mainly business class castes. Marwaris and Muslims are primarily involve in the industrial and textile activities. Apart from this Banias, Yadavas, Thakurs, Koiris and Kurmis are also found in considerable percentage.

(ii) **Muslims**: Muslims are residing in this ancient city from very beginning. The evidence of their presence dates back to fifteenth century. They form second part in the population
structure of the city since olden days and are the old inhabitants of the city. There were 75 thousand Muslims household in 1981, inhibiting 65 thousand people of which 34 thousand were males and 31 thousand females. The total population of this community became 75 thousand in 1991. Muslim’s sex ratio is 912 and their proportion to the total population of the city is approximately one third (29 per cent). Muslims are also divided into different castes in accordance with the characteristics of Indian culture. Among them Sheikh, Syed, Momin, Rain, Kasai and Mansoori Brothers are well known. Momin, Rain and Mansoori are business class of the Muslim community. Momins are mainly holding the ownership of the silk and textile industries in Bhagalpur and Nathnagar.

(iii) Jains: Jains are one of the sacred sect of Indian society, they worship Mahavira. Their women show keen interest in performing the jobs of nurses in the hospitals and medical colleges. Men’s are interested in white collar jobs. They are very old habitants of this city. As earlier noted that there are various ancient Jain temples, which give glimpses of the origin of this community in the city. Jains are the third community of the city. Their approximate number is 1100 and the approximate households are 125.
(iv) **Others:** Among the other community of the Bhagalpur city Christian, Sikh and Budhist are important. There were 120 household of the Christians in 1981, two of the Budhist and 38 of the Sikhs inhabiting 500 and 200 population respectively. Here, greater sex-difference can be seen among the Sikhs, because they are purely business minded and live in the city purposefully and their families in Punjab and Delhi. There are not more than 20 households of Budhist in the city, basically they are Bhikcchus. Christians are permanent settlers and community are running many missionary schools which not only gives education and the economic assistance to the weaker castes and tribes of the Hindu community but also encourage them in changing their belief and religion. This is one of the most educated community of the town. Approximate population of Christians are more than 600 according to 1991. Apart from this there are various other unidentified community but they do not constitute above 1-2 per cent of the total population.

(v) **Scheduled Castes and Tribes:** There are sizable number of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in the city, constituting more than 9.5 per cent of the total population. There were 28 hundred households of the scheduled castes in 1981. The total population of scheduled caste was 17 thousand in the same year contributing 7.4 per cent of the total, which
again became 18.5 thousand in 1991, which is 10.4 per cent of the total population. Scheduled Tribes were 883 in 1981 which increased at the rate of 2.3 per cent and became 108 hundred in 1991. 13

1.3 ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CITY

The main occupation of the people of Bhagalpur district is agriculture. The cultivators are fully aware of the beneficial effects of rotation of crops. Rice is far away the most important crop of the district. It covers the largest proportion of the gross sown area. Wheat is the main rabi (summer season) crop, maize forms another important cereal and an item of food among the poor masses. Sugarcane is the most important non-food crop of the district. The next important non-food crop are oil seeds. But all these things can give an account of the economic structure of Bhagalpur district rather than the Bhagalpur city. So that a brief account of the economic attributes of urban area especially of Bhagalpur municipal corporation is described.

1.3.1 Industrialisation: Bhagalpur city has been famous for its industrial potentiality since long. Tassar silk, dyeing, salt, indigo, glassware are some of the chief industries. Cloth manufacturing is one of the important industrial activity of the
city. Besides, there are a number of small scale industries and many of them are still continuing. A number of industries have come up during post-independent period. Among the medium industrial establishments, Government Silk Institute Nathnagar and Sheo Mills Co. Ltd., are important. Among the household industries which play an important role in the economy, handloom industry find an important place in the city as well as in the Bhagalpur district. Dairy, pottery making and metallurgy, bamboo work, etc. are quiet significant. There is hardly any large scale industrial establishment in the city. Medium scale industrial works are few in number but small scale industries are great in number. According to 1991 there were 116 tiny industries and 74 sculpturing industries in the district, out of which 30 per cent were concentrated in Bhagalpur city. There were three mineral based, three chemical based, six general engineering, eight animal based industries and ten forest based industries in the city of Bhagalpur. Apart from all the above mentioned, industrial activities as far as the importance of Bhagalpur in outer industrial environment is concerned, it is famous for its silk cloth production since medieval period. It has produced 22 lakhs square metres of silk in 1991. This silk is of export quality. In 1992-93 a bulk valuing 1700 lakhs rupees were exported to many developed
countries like USA, Germany, France, Hong Kong, Australia, Korea and Yugoslavia. There are 15 silk exporter entrepreneurs. Bulk of Bhagalpur silk product come in the market after the approval of the industrialists of Delhi and Calcutta. But most of them are also marketed by the city of Bhagalpur. In Bhagalpur, there were approximately 500 electrified spinners in 1991.

Apart from them there are many saw mills, shoe-making, printing woollen goods, drugs and pharmaceuticals, candles manufacturing and plastic goods manufacturing units.

1.3.2 Trade and Commerce: The position of Bhagalpur on the map of Bihar has a particular importance for trade and commerce. It is extremely well located and commands an extensive river front. It has an adequate railway system supported by roadways. A portion of Bhagalpur lies on the river Ganga and grows luxuriant maize and other crops. Bhagalpur has also been in close contact with Nepal through Purnia district. Trade in Bhagalpur consist mainly of export of jute, oil seeds, food-grains, sugar, timber, tassar silk, hides, bones, buffaloes and cows, handloom products, blanket and carpets. There are mainly three commodities viz. cloth, grains and turmeric arranged according to importance in which wholesale business is carried on in the district. Being the
headquarter of the division and the district Bhagalpur town has
been the chief marketing centre in the district since long. It has
the advantage of all the modes of communication. The main
retail marketing centres of the district is Bhagalpur, where
retail shops of almost all the commodities locally consumed
are found.

1.3.3 Transport and Communication: Bhagalpur city is
served by all the modern means of transport and
communication. It has railways, waterways and roadways
communication with outer world. But as far as intra-urban
transportation is concerned it is the roadways communication
which play vital role. There is total of 729 km. roadways in the
city of which a major part which constitute more than 50 per
cent of the total is unmetalled and brick paved. This is indeed
a low value by any standard. The situation is more critical in
outer fringe area in general and western half as well as
southern extension in particular. Peculiar thing observed by the
author is that more than 70 per cent means of public transport
plying on the road is three wheeler i.e. manually driven
rickshaw and engine driven autos.

This is also served by a radio station for regional
broadcasting. This city is connected with other means of
modern transport and communication.
References and Notes:

5. Imperial Gazetteer of India 1908, Vol. 8.

Other Consultations:-

- Census Report of the relevant years.