Chapter-II

HARYANA: LAND, PEOPLE AND ECONOMY

The Physical Setting
Population and Settlements
Polity
The Economy
Development contours are a manifest expression of the geographic setting as evolving over time. The spatial context, physical resource base, technological level and social, economic and political institutions of any region shape the pattern of its development. An understanding of geographical, political and socio-economic profile of Haryana is therefore imperative.

The Physical Setting

Haryana probably derives its name from terms like Haritanaka, Hariala, Hariyanka and Hariyana (Prakash, 1967; Yadav, 1968; Phadke, 1990). All of these studies have their root in the word ‘Hari’ (green) and are reminiscent of the time when this land was fertile and forested (Government of India, 1908, p.222). This contrasts with its present disposition when its forest cover was reduced to less than four percent of the total area and agriculture over a large part is not so productive.

The Haryana state (latitudes 27°39’ to 30°55’5" North and longitudes 74°27’8" to 77°36’5" East) is one of the north-western states of India adjoining Delhi, the capital of the country. The total area of the state is 44212 km². It is bounded by Himachal Pradesh in the north, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi in the east, by Rajasthan on its south and south-west and by Punjab and Chandigarh on the north-west. Administratively, the state is now divided into four
divisions, nineteen districts, forty-five subdivisions, sixty-five tehsils and 111 development blocks. In 1991 it had sixteen districts. These form the basis on which discussions in the present thesis are made. Its population at the 1991 census was recorded as 16.46 million. It is one of the small state of India in both area and population.

Excepting some hills of the Siwalik system in the north and of the Aravalli system in the south, Haryana is essentially a plain area; 94 percent below 300 metres. As such, Haryana assumes the shape of a saucer with its depression in the tract around Rohtak. The state can be divided into the following five landform regions.

Broadly speaking the Haryana plain is a part of the Indo-Gangetic plain which was formed by the deposition of the alluvial sediments brought by the Himalayan rivers.

On the basis of local topography and distribution of sandy and calcareous sierozemic soils Census of India (1988) has sub-divided the region into three sub-divisions.

1. Eastern Haryana Plain covering the districts of Ambala, Yamunanagar, Kurukshetra, Kaithal, Jind, Karnal, Panipat, Sonipat and Rohtak.

2. Western Haryana Plain covering the districts of Sirsa, Hisar and Bhiwani.
3. Southern Haryana Plain covering the districts of Mahendergarh, Rewari, Gurgaon, Faridabad.

The Eastern Haryana Plain is bordered by low hills of Siwalik system in the north-east. The Siwalik tract is composed of sand, silt, clay and conglomerates. The slope is generally from the north-east to the south-west in which direction most of the rivers flow. Most of them -- the Ghaggar, the Markanda, the Chautang and the Saraswati are rainfed. These rivers have their flood plains known as 'Khadar' or 'Bet'. The soils of these flood plains are riverborne sand, silt and clay. The state is devoid of any perennial river except for the Yamuna which marks the eastern boundary of the state.

The western Haryana Plain has the presence of a number of sand dunes of varying heights and magnitudes. Wind erosion is active and water table is deep. The region is also geographically known as Bhiwani Bagar. The Ghaggar river and its flood plain bifurcate the Sirsa district.

The Southern Haryana plain is infested with Aravalli Offshoots, slopes towards the north and has an undulating character. The region does have sand dunes of varying size. Since the Aravalli hills project from the south towards north, a number of small rainy season rivulets -- the Sahibi, the Krishnawati, the Indoris and the Landoha carry the water from Rajasthan into Haryana in the south.
These streams represent inland drainage. However, the volume of water carried by them is very small and lacks potentialities for utilisation on an extensive scale. However for our convenient understanding of its topography, Haryana may be divided into following five landform regions:

(i) The Siwalik hills forming a narrow belt on the northeast; their elevation ranges from 300 to 1,000 metres.

(ii) The piedmont plain, locally known as Ghar, adjoins the hills to its northeast; it is highly incised by seasonal streams emerging from the hills.

(iii) The Ghaggar-Yamuna alluvial plain which forms the main body of the state; within it one can distinguish between the main upland plain on the one hand, and the peripheral flood plains along the Ghaggar and Yamuna, on the other.

(iv) The sand dune infested plain, locally known as bagar, in the southwest, and sandy undulating plain in southern Haryana; these are extensions of the Rajasthan desert; and

(v) The Aravalli outliers in Bhiwani, Mahendergarh and Gurgaon districts; these are badly dissected (Fig.2a).
**Climate**

In spite of its small size, Haryana exhibits climatic conditions ranging from sub-humid to arid along a northeast-southwest transect. On the whole it is subtropical semi-arid tract. This is explained by its continental location on the outer margins of the Thar desert.

The rainfall is the low in the state. It ranges from over 100 cms in the northeast to less than 25 cms in the southwest. The 50 cm isohyet divides the state into two almost equal parts: the west and the east (Fig.2b). The east is agriculturally more productive. Not only it receives a higher amount of rainfall in relative terms but also its underground water is sweet. Nevertheless it does require irrigation for an assured crop.

Additional water from the neighbouring state is a must for meeting its irrigation and other (including for drinking) requirements. Things have not been happy on this front because its sister state of Punjab has been reluctant to part with any additional water to what Haryana could get as its share at the time of its formation.

**Underground Water**

The underground water in Haryana is beneficial only in parts. In almost two-thirds of the state, covering the central and western parts, the subsoil water is brackish to saline (Bhargava, 1988, pp.88-97). This prohibits tubewell irrigation (Fig.2c).
In the piedmont plain, underground water is sweet, but deep and scarce, again posing problems for regular irrigation. To cap all this, in the state’s eastern part, where water is sweet and close to the surface, water logging has emerged as a serious problem in the canal irrigated and low-lying pockets of Rohtak, Sonipat, Jind, Hisar and Sirsa districts. Evidently water is the problem over large parts of Haryana.

**Soils**

Haryana is covered largely by alluvial deposits. The main distinction lies between new alluvium (*Khadar*), comprising of silty loam, along the Yamuna and the Ghaggar, and the old alluvium (*Bhangar*), comprising coarse, light or fine loam on the main upland plain. Both kinds of soils are suited to cultivation of wheat, rice, gram and barley. The old alluvium is more productive, being deep and well drained. It quickly responds to irrigation (Fig.2d).

Sandy soils (*Bhangar*) are common in the western part of the state. These have high content of salt and their sub soil water is often brackish. Average yields turn out low. Only inferior foodgrains like gram and bajra can be raised in absence of irrigation. In the south and southwest, the rocky surfaces of the Aravalli outlines are stony and
infertile for any field crop. These regional differences in the soil cover of Haryana get represented in varying cropping patterns and agricultural productivity in the state.

**Natural Vegetation**

The traditional 'land of greenery' is left with only 3.8 percent of area under forest cover. Neem, Keekar, Safeda, Sheesham, Peepal, Beri are commonly found trees of this region.

**Minerals**

The state is highly deficient in mineral resources. Mineral bearing tracts, small in extent, are confined to the districts of Mahendragarh (limestone, kankar, marble, iron-ore and slate), Gurgaon (China clay, quartz, slate and silica sand) and Ambala (limestone). All minerals contribute hardly 0.10 percent to the state’s net domestic product.

It shows that nature has not been kind to Haryana. Water, both surface and underground, is scarce. There is a complete absence of any perennial stream, two-thirds of underground water is brackish to saline, and about a halt of it receives a rainfall of less than 50 cm. It has suffered an indiscriminate removal of its forest cover. It lacks in minerals. However, the plain topography and soils responsive to irrigation do form a major asset. The realisation of the potential of this asset is, however, subject to availability of water.
Population and Settlements

The region now forming Haryana state was permanently settled around 1500 B.C. by the Aryans. During long periods of history it remained one of the less populated parts of the country due to frequent invasions and recurrent political instability and lack of water resources for productive agriculture. It recorded a population of 4.6 million in 1901 with a density of 105 persons per sq.km. against 150 of Punjab, of which it was a part upto 1966.

Haryana's population has experienced two marked changes. The first was the large scale efflux of its muslim population to Pakistan and influx of non-muslim displaced persons therefrom as a result of which its muslim population got reduced from 25 percent to 5 percent. Secondly it has experienced explosive growth of population since 1951. Its population multiplied three times to 16.3 million in 1991. This explosive growth of population was the result of -

1. The extension of irrigation and reclamation of wastelands in the niali tract of Hisar and Sirsa districts and Khadar-bhangar tracts of Karnal, Kurukshetra and Ambala districts attracted large scale agricultural migration from the crowded neighbouring districts, now in Punjab. The process of
agricultural in-migration had stabilised by the time the state was formed in 1966. Nevertheless migration to its industrial places, especially in the neighbourhood of Delhi, continued.

2. The expansion in health facilities in the state, as in India in general, caused a sharp decline in death rate while the birth rate came down only grudgingly. The gap between birth and death rates in Haryana has been one of the widest in India. Social development in the state lagged behind economic development while the former did not permit a fast decline in fertility, the latter did cause a big drop in mortality.

Haryana is characterised by one of the highest natural increase rates of the country. It natural growth rate is 22.4 against 19.3 for India as recorded during 1993-95 (Population Foundation of India, 1998). Its total fertility rate (3.7 percent) is higher than the average for the country (3.5 percent) (1993-95). The average size of the household is also very large (6.3 persons), which is attributed to high rate of natural increase and higher frequencies of joint families. The tradition of joint family system historically has been a more salient feature of rural settlements with a joint tenure of land (Baden Powell, 1988 reprint). Haryana has been slow to change on the social plane.

Haryana is one of the more densely populated state of the country. According to 1991 census it has 372 persons per square km.
as compared to 257 in India. The population density declines as one moves from east to west and north west. The density and distribution of population finds a strong association with the availability of sweet underground water and agricultural productivity, the state’s economy being predominantly agriculture. The population was distributed among 6759 villages and 90 towns and urban agglomerations. The average size of a village comes to about 1836 persons or 278 households. The average size of rural household comes to 6.59 persons. Among the towns, 12 are cities with a population 100,000.

Haryana is one of the less urbanised state’s of the Indian union with 24.63 percent urban population. The state has a low sex-ratio of only 874 females per thousand males. Sen et al. (1987) calls this kind of trend ‘the missing women’. The literacy rate of 55.85 percent is higher than the average for the country (52.21 percent). Female literacy is low.

Thus, the economic development in the state has not been accompanied by a commensurate advancement in social development.

How is the above explained? Singh (1998, pp.110-13) looks at the plausible factors which explain this situation.

The Haryana territory has traditionally been a self-contained agricultural society. Strong caste and kinship feelings persist even today. The joint family system, as a core institution, governs the
common living, renders continuity in the social heritage, binds an individual with an inflexible social structure, and impedes the penetration of modern thinking. And in a strong patriarchical society like that of Haryana, a strong resistance is given to rise in the status of women.

Secondly, the various castes, such as Hindu Jats, Ahirs, Gujars, Rajputs are contained within certain pockets or tracts. Caste solidarity is quite endemic. Traditional values tend to perpetuate. An egalitarian culture is slow to emerge.

Thirdly, the Haryana territory has historically been a marchland. Political instability was frequent and evolution of a mature culture did not take deep roots. The region did not experience any strong religious or social movements till around the beginning of twentieth century when Arya Samaj entered as a reform movement.

Fourthly, migration from Haryana to other parts of India was small, except for service in the army. Likewise, any sizeable migration to Haryana had to wait till the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947. Hence for a long time Haryana did not experience benefits accruing from its exposure to external influences associated with migration.

Fifthly, the impact of urbanisation on rural life remained feeble till recent past. Haryana has been one of the less urbanised parts
of the country. Its urban places were small and not too effective in transformation of the countryside. It is only after independence in 1947 that the Haryana territory came under an active influence of the national capital Delhi.

Sixthly, being a peripheral part of the former Punjab till 1966, it suffered a neglect in provision of social infrastructure. As a result, it was late in evolution of its middle class.

Above all, never had social development been projected as an important issue for special attention of the government. Priority was always given to the economic sector. The social sector did not receive requisite importance in allocation of resources. Plan outlay for this sector seldom went beyond one-fifth of the total.

Things have started changing, the most conspicuous is the growing size of the native middle class through their preferred entry into government service and professions. The tradition in army service of certain parts of state in Rohtak, Hisar, Mahendragarh districts is also contributing to new awareness. The modernising impact of Delhi is also making inroads. Above all, the state government has also been keen to spread education, health, transport and other infrastructure with the twin objectives of promoting economy and breaking social backwardness. Allocation to the social sector has significantly increased since the sixth plan.
Politically the state is dominated by the major cultivating castes, and this has been the case since 1956 when a village born jat, Partap Singh Kairon was elected Chief Minister. Aggressively secular, influenced on the one hand by ideas and people connected with the Ghadar party and on the other by a degree from Michigan University and the experience of work in the Ford Factory and on farms in California, visualised for rural Punjab (Haryana was then a part of Punjab) scientific agriculture, operated by owner cultivators living in villages blessed with a wide range of social and economic infrastructure and linked to each other and the towns by a network of 'pucca' roads.

Consolidation of Land holdings

The highly successful programme of consolidation of landholdings and the conferring of land rights on tenants of long standing, which was one of the factors which contributed to a decline in tenancy and to the rise in the relative importance of self cultivation was carried out in Punjab. Legislation aimed at the abolition of intermediaries and absentee landlordism; conferment of properly titles or occupancy rights on the actual cultivating tenants and de facto controllers of land; ceiling on landholdings were also passed and effort made at their implementation. Haryana, till 1966, was a part of Punjab
and hence had the same legislations as the unified Punjab had. However, the impact of legislations was different in the Haryana region. The Punjab region experienced militant agrarian struggle prior to Independence and also in the post-Independence period. But in the Haryana region the peasant movement was almost non-existent. Consequently, the impact of land reform legislations was also lesser.

Out of the total area of 3,82,044 hectares declared surplus, only 1,36,883 hectares, i.e. 35.83 percent could be finally declared surplus with the rest coming under exemption as provided under the laws and some under court stays. The fate of tenancy legislations has not been much different from the ceiling legislations. The report of the National Commission on Agriculture (1976, Part XV) observed that 1,19,000 tenants could be evicted through the process of law involving 2,06,000 hectares of land. The land consolidation favoured the dominant landed interests because in many cases the big landowners who had the power to influence the official machinery got better quality land, while the smaller landholders had to be content with the poor quality land through consolidated plots (Gupta, 1985).

Besides land reforms, another scheme initiated by the Govt. at the behest of central Government to motivate the "peasants" to "modernize" agriculture was Community Development Programme.
It was also the programme through which peoples' participation in the Indian planning process had been envisaged.

**Community Development Programme**

The Community Development Programme in Haryana was started in 1952. Its aim was to achieve rural development through people's participation. The official agency was expected to play a secondary role. The development block was adopted as the basic unit of this programme. It was exclusively rural in its coverage. The development schemes relating to agriculture extension, animal husbandry, irrigation and land reclamation, health and rural sanitation, education, social education, housing etc. are formulated and executed. Initially a development block covered about one hundred villages with a population of 50,000 to 60,000. But these figures were subject to adjustment to the prevailing population density and village size in different states.

Haryana was fully covered under the community development programme by 1965. It was divided into 82 development blocks in 1966. The number increased to 107 in 1990-91 with carving out of new blocks out of the existing ones.

The fate of Community Development Programme in Haryana was not different from what happened in other regions (Miller, 1975; Dak, 1982).
Interestingly, up to 1967, the people's and the government's contribution to the community development programme was in the ratio of about 1:1. In 1997-98 this ratio stood at 1:2.9 (Government of Haryana, 1999) signifying thereby that people were now much less involved in this programme. It had become more or less a government obligation.

Though community development programme and land reform legislations could not bring about changes as desired, they could effectively break the perpetual stagnation of rural economy and create an environment conducive to the success of green revolution in the state.

**Decentralised District Planning**

Decentralised district planning was the other instrument through which planning was to be taken to the grassroots level. Haryana was late in adopting this strategy. It was only in Seventh plan (1985-90) that state decided to introduce this type of planning.

The District Planning Board was constituted on 11 December, 1986. An amount of 0.66 percent of the total expenditure was assigned for it during the seventh plan (1985-90). In Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97), it increased to 0.94 percent. The approved outlay for Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002) is 0.49 percent. Thus, the concept of decentralised district planning was only a lip service.
In addition, there are some schemes for the development of backward areas in the state. One such is for the development of Mewat area covering Ferozepur Jhirka, Nuh and Punhana development blocks of Gurgaon district and Hathin block of Faridabad district. Mewat Development board has been constituted for the purpose. But only 0.53 percent of the total outlay had been earmarked when the programme was initiated during the sixth five-year-plan. Likewise Shivalik Development Board has been constituted in 1993 for the development of hilly and semi-hilly areas of Panchkula, Ambala and Yamunanagar districts. The approved outlay is 10691 lakhs out of a total of Rs.116x10^9 during the ninth five year plan (1997-2002). The programme is not expected to make a big dent.

The Economy

With a per capita income next only to that of Maharashtra and Punjab among the Major States Haryana is economically one of the vibrant states. Its per capita income stood at Rs.4029 in 1996-97 against all-India average of Rs.2761 at constant (1980-81) prices. The per capita income has increased 1.7 times during 1980 to 1997 from Rs.2370 to Rs.4029 in real terms. The state’s economy is growing at an annual growth rate of more than 5.00 since 1961.

Agriculture is the mainstay of economy absorbing 58 percent of the work force as per 1991 census. 82 of the total area is under
plough against the all-India average of 47 percent. 76 percent of the net area sown is irrigated in comparison to about 36 percent in India. Agriculture contributed 37.42 percent of the state's domestic product in 1997-98.

The agricultural development like change in the cropping pattern, strengthening of technical basis of agriculture, introduction of new seeds, fertilizer technology and spurt in the induction of farm mechanisation had a positive impact on the high growth rate of output and increase in per capita income.

But it had a differential impact in terms of percolation of the benefits to the different sections of population. The big landowners benefitted the most and it has also led to the resurgence of a dominant middle and rich peasantry. Income gaps not only widened between the landless labourers and big farmers but also between small and big farmers. The marginalisation of holdings increased. The inequality in land holding continued to characterise the rural scene.

The distribution of land is inequitable. In 1990-91 3/5th of the landholdings together sharing 1/5th of the agricultural land were smaller than 2.0 hectares. Contrarily, 3.0 percent of the landholdings, which were larger than 10.0 hectares each, possessed 1/5th of the cultivated land. The incidence of joint holdings was three-times more
than individual holdings in holding larger than 10.0 hectares each. The average size of landholding was 2.43 hectares which generally declined from east to west.

*Kharif* (July to November) and *Rabi* (December to March) are the two important crop season. Some crops are also obtained in the intervening (April to June) season. *Kharif* crops include rich, cotton, jowar, bajra, maize and pulses. Among the *rabi* crops wheat, gram and oilseeds are notable. Sugarcane is an annual crop sown in March/April.

About 73 percent of the total cropped area was devoted to foodgrains in 1996-97. Wheat is the first ranking crop over most of the state, except in the west, northwest and southwest where gram, cotton and bajra predominates. Rice is the second ranking crop in the northeast where rainfall of 75 to over 100 cms is supplemented by tubewell irrigation.

It is observed that among agricultural workers whereas the proportion of cultivators has declined, those of agricultural labourers has increased. Studies (Brass, 1990) indicate that while male agricultural labourers remain unemployed for half the year, the female labourers are unemployed for eight months in a year. Inclusive of non-agricultural work, males are employed for 200 days and females for 125 days in a year. Overall women have more work burden
(domestic as well as cultivation) than men. Women in Haryana are the last to go to bed and the first to wake up. But men sit all day long in groups in the numerous chaupals in the village. They gossip, crack jokes and play cards. They keep their hukkas warm. On the other hand women operating a tractor harrow or driving a bullock cart loaded with fodder is not an uncommon sight in Rohtak, Sonipat and Jind districts. But in Bagri belt rarely a woman is seen working in the fields. Woman working in this belt is hired labourer from Rajasthan. Workload has increased on women due to green revolution (Bhalla, 1989; Chaudhary, 1993).

The phenomenon of debt has been particularly observed among agricultural labourers (Siris/Naukars/Sanjhi/Share cropper etc.). They contract loans from the landowners and continue to work with them for a period ranging from 5 to 20 years due to their inability to return loans. The loans contracted by them are mainly for social reasons like medical treatment, social ceremonies and the like. These conditions perpetuate inter-generation stagnation with the result that their children are also compelled to work as agricultural labour/siri/naukar etc. Naukar yearly received payment of Rs.8000-8500 in the form of a cash advance in the developed regions of Haryana. Beyond this amount if they take some other financial help to the landlord, he charged 24 to 36 percent rate of interest on the said
The implementation of tenancy reforms in the state is also one of the weakest in the country. The worst affected had been tenants-at-will. According to the report of National Commission about 78000 tenants were evicted from 1.44 lakh hectare on the plea of resuming land for 'personal cultivation'. Another 41000 tenants were evicted through the device of voluntary surrender. Another 1.19 lakh tenants were evicted from 2.06 lakh hectares of land through due process of law. All such tenants were rendered landless. The land reforms legislation thus contributed to accentuate the agrarian inequality in Haryana (Haryana Samvad, 1993). Surplus land in Haryana was allotted by Government to the weaker sections of the society such as the scheduled castes. This was unfortunately distributed on the paper. Actually the surplus land has been captured by affluent farmers.

There is a growth of neo-absentee landlordism in the state. The landowners in the districts adjacent to Delhi like Gurgaon, Faridabad, Sonepat and Panipat are engaged in non-agricultural occupation in Delhi and other areas and have leased out their land to tenants on cash.
The state reveals a low incidence of poverty with 25.05 percent of its population below poverty line as compared to 35.97 for the country as a whole (Government of India, 2000, p.119).

Despite a poor mineral resource base, the state has made a significant progress in industry. The growth has been particularly significant since 1966. In the matter of industrialisation the state has benefitted a great deal from its proximity to the national capital of Delhi. The number of registered working factories in Haryana increased from 1168 in 1966 to 7495 in 1997. The number of registered working factories in Haryana increased from 1168 employing 71,000 workers in 1966 to 7,495 employing 4,23,000 workers in 1997 (Government of Haryana, 1999). However, most of the industrial development is confined in the eastern part of the state and particularly near the national capital.

The Industry in the state is, however, not linked with agriculture like in some other Indian states. The agro-based industries tend to face the problem of marketing and also capital. The agricultural development in Haryana was not able to accelerate the phase of rural industrialisation. There is a great need for stimulating the industry-agriculture nexus so as to promote the region's economy in a desired manner.
Haryana is one of the few states in India in which every village is electrified and is linked with a metalled road.

Conclusions

The above scheme of Land, People and Economy provides a summary picture of great internal differential within Haryana.

• Excepting some hills of the Siwalik system in the north and of the Aravali System in the south, Haryana is essentially a plain area formed by the deposition of the alluvial sediments brought by the Himalayan rivers. It is in the shape of a saucer with its depression in the tract around Rohtak. The state is devoid of any perennial river except for the Yamuna which marks its eastern boundary. The underground water in large parts of the state is brackish to saline, wherever the water is sweet and close to the surface water logging has emerged as a serious problem particularly in the canal irrigated, and low-lying pockets of the state. The rainfall is low ranging from 25cm in the South West to 100 cm in the North East. Additional water from the neighbouring state is a must for meeting its irrigation and other requirements.

• Politically, the state is dominated by major cultivating castes. The state under the dynamic leadership of successive governments adopted a scientific agriculture with a wide range
of social and economic infrastructure. Land reforms legislations, community development programme may not have been able to bring about changes as desired, however, they could effectively break the perpetual stagnation of rural economy and create an environment conclusive to the success of green revolution in the state. The area and people-oriented programmes have not made much headway.

Haryana ranks high on economic development among various states of India. Agriculture has contributed 37.42 percent of the state’s domestic product and absorbs 58 percent of the workforce. The state has experienced green revolution with differential impact in terms of percolation of the benefits to the different sections of population. The rural scene is characterised by inequality in land holdings, a decline in proportion of cultivators, an increased proportion of agricultural labourers and work burdened women.