Chapter 4

Bundelkhand Region: A Profile

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Geographical description

Bundelkhand better known as land of Bundelas, has a long and restigious history going back to the pre - Buddhist era. There is no dearth of monuments and historic sites in the region to support the 'place of eminence' that this region has enjoyed throughout the ages. From the mighty Chandelas and brave Bundelas to the legendary Rani Laxmi Bai of Jhansi, Bundelkhand has always been witness to many historic landmarks. The rugged forts and palaces of this heart - land tell tales of bravery and chivalry associated with them. The contribution of the brave, sturdy, hardworking and honest people of Bundelkhand especially in the freedom movement of India does not starve for any evidence.

Area

The Bundelkhand lies between 24°11' to 24°27' N latitude and 78°10' to 81°34' E longitude. The river Yamuna covers the norht, while the south by Vindhya ranges the west by Madhya
Pradesh, North west by river Chambal and Kali Sindh and in North East Panna Hills demarcates the northern boundary of the region. The eastern boundary is determined by Allahabad district of Uttar Pradesh. This is one of the under developed regions of the country, owing to complexity of climate, edapic and socioeconomic limitations on one hand and significant past history and social customs on other hand.

Geography and Geology

The Bundelkhand has total geographical area of 72000 sq. Km. with specific topography, geology, geography, climate, vegetation and subsoils.

The region consist of 12 districts of which 6 are from Uttar Pradesh territories i.e. Jhansi, Banda, Chitrakoot, Hamirpur(Mahoba), Lalitpur and Jalaun. 6 districts belongs to statutory boundaries of Madhya Pradesh State that includes Panna, Chhatarpur, Teekamgarh, Datia, Damoh and Sagar. (2) The region has passed through many tectonic forces in the past due to its situation in the northern edge of old Peninsular India. It can be divided into four geological structures of granite, Vindhyan sand stones, recent deposits and transitional system. The formation of Archean system are spread over on the south
part of the region and composed of metamorphic and crystal rocks. Vindhyan system is scattered Bundelkhand Gneisses and granites in southern and south western part of the region. In the northern part of the region, recent deposits cover an extensive area.

Geological setting, distribution of rainfall and circulation and movement of water through the geological formation essentially controls the hydro geological framework of the region. Chambal, Sindh, Pahuj, Betwa, Ken, Dhasan, Birma, Urmal, Chandramala, Baighin and Paisuni are the rivers enriching the region with water resources yet under exploitation and unequitable distribution of water resources causes major physiological problems in the region. Droughts during summers and heavy floods during rains are usual causes of heavy losses of life and property. Hardly 11% of water resource is gainfully used in the region with a population of about 2.5 crores.

As regards in relief, the area can be divided into two parts- plateau with hills and plain. One is the southern part of the region characterized with undulating surface traversed by numerous streams, while the other is the homogeneous plain of the north. On one side the change is very gentle in the western portion, while in the eastern portion it is very clear. However, it
region. Roughly the contour of 250 meters and 150 meters detach the hilly areas from the alluvial plains. The middle part of the rivers Betwa and Dhasan is badly eroded. Similarly, the western part is affected by the rivers shahjad, Sajana and Jamin but the eastern part of the region is less affected.

In the extreme southern part of the region so many hilly ranges and hillocks are spread over. So many slopes and escarpments characterize the Vindhyan ranges reaching up to southwestern portion. This line of escarpments runs from kurar to Jakhlaun (Lalitpur district) though it is broken up at few places i.e. near Dhaura, Narhat and Madanpur villages. So many small rivers and Nalas cross this hilly portion. The river Betwa forms a narrow gorge here. The height of Lakhunjar hill is 612 meters, which is the highest point in Lalitpur district.

There are two hill ranges in the western part, one starts from Baruwa Sagar and Reaches up to Moth towards northeast while the other starts from Katera and going towards northern direction. The Vindhyan ranges in eastern portion start from Bhalwahi, runs up to Ansuya hills and again reappear in Hamirpur district. The Panna range in southern portion is normally 150 meters higher than the general level of the plateau around it.
Climate

The location of the region creates a particular type of climate. This central position between monsoon type maritime climate of the east coast (the Bay of Bengal) and tropical continental dry climate of west (Indian desert) imposes the features of transitional climate. The climate of region is characterized by excessive heat during the summer months and mild cold during winter. Thus, Bundelkhand falls under semi-arid climate with aridity index of 38 lan'gs, rain factor 34.9 and N.S. quotient 78.8 in Jhansi.

Temperature

The mean monthly maximum temperature ranges from 24.6°C in January to 42.5°C in May. The mean monthly minimum temperature varies between 9.9°C in January to 29.2°C in June. The normal mean monthly maximum temperature has been recorded as 45.7°C while the peak maximum temperature was 47.8°C. The lowest minimum temperature has been recorded up to 5.8°C.
Resources

Mineral Resources

The different types of mineral resources are available in this region and bright prospect for the possibilities in exploration and exploitation in varying scale.

In this region bauxite, iron ore and gold are very new discoveries. Extensive exploration work is going on mostly in south of the Lalitpur. Gold - Here potential gold deposits are noticed mainly with sulfide bearing ferruginous quartzite of Iron Formation of Girar. Rock phosphate - Mainly occur in Sonrai area of Lalitpur as discontinuous beds. Granites - In the Bundelkhand region granites are frequently used as small blocks for the construction purposes; locally known as "khanda" Dimensional stone granite has been found in Jhansi, Hamirpur, Banda and Lalitpur district. Molybdenum - GSI organization is doing detail investigation in and around the Jharar village that is located on the right back of Betwa River. Uranium - Bundelkhand is very much favorable region for the uranium mineralization. The mineralization is associated with various rock units of Bijawar Group. In addition to above Copper, Lead Zinc, Cobalt and Nickel, Silica sand Deposits, Diaspore and
pyrophyllite etc. are dispersed in a good quantum throughout the region

*Forests:* (3)

Extensively available in Bundelkhand region, forests are the boon factor for the region by increasing rains volume, check on soil erosion, regulation of temperature and reducing pollution impacts on environment. Forests are the major source of economic welfare of the region. Panna, Sagar, Damoh, Tikamgarh are rich areas in terms of forest resources. High grade Sagaun and Sheesham wood extracted from these forest areas enjoys a high level of demand for furniture business. Tendu Leaf and Beetal leaf are source of living for thousands of families of this poor region. Mahua Trees provide its fruit as well as oil as source of revenue; Catechu (Kattha) is another source of living for the region due to availability of Kheir trees. In addition to that a range of medicinal plants like Amla, Bahera, Arusha, Sarpgandha, Amaltas, Giloi, Gokhru, Sharifa, Chironji, Karonda etc. also adds to livelihood of people from Bundelkhand.
Tourist Places in Bundelkhand

Bundelkhand region comprises of Jhansi, Lalitpur, Jalaun, Banda, Chitrakoot and Mahoba in U.P and Sagar, Chhatarpur, Tikamgarh, Panna, Datia and Damoh in Madhya Pradesh.

We get number of jewels on the tourist map of Bundelkhand region. Some of the places of the tourist interest are Jhansi, Orchha, Shivpuri, Datia, Sonagiri, Deogarh, Mahoba, Chitrakoot, Kalingar, Khajuraho and Panna etc.

Jhansi: The walled city of Jhansi can easily be considered to be the gateway to Bundelkhand. It reminds one of the valour and bravery of its young and fiery queen i.e. Laxmibai who played a historic role in the meeting of 1857, against the British empire. She led her troops into the battle and fought for her Jhansi and finally laid down her life. There are number of places of tourist interest in and around Jhansi, some of these are the fort, Rani Mahal, Raja GangadharRao’s Samadhi, Laxmi Tal, Laxmi Mandir, State Museum, St.Judes Church etc.
**Orchha:** Orchha is a small town with lot of historical and religious importance. It is 18 km. from Jhansi. Orchha was founded in the 16th century by the Bundela Rajput. It is situated at the bank of river Betwa. Orchha saw a long period of peaceful prosperity. When the early Bundela paintings were painted in the walls of the places. One of the notable ruler of Orchha was Raja Bir Singh Ju Deo(1605-27)who built the exquisite Jehangir Mahal, Hardaul Temple, Chattarbhuji Temple, LaxmiNarayan Temple, Phool Bagh, Chattaries and Shahid Smark.

**Baruasagar:** It is 24 km. from Jhansi. This is the place where battle between Peshwa troops and Bundelas was fought in 1744. The place is named Baruasagar Tal, a large lake since last 260 years. The ruins of the ancient fort built by Raja Udit Singh, two old Chandela Temples(Built of Granite) are other tourist attractions.

**Shivpuri:** It is 120 km. from Jhansi. Shivpuri’s main attraction are Madhav National Park, Chattaries, Madhav Vilas Palace, George Castle, Sakya Sagar Boat Club etc.

**Datia:** it is an ancient town which is 30 km. from Jhansi. Seven storied Palace of Raja Bir Singh Ju Deo and Gopeshware Temple are the historical attraction of Datia.
Datia is also famous for a pilgrimage spot, Siddhapeeth Shri Peetambara Devi.

**Deogarh:** This city is situated at a distance of 123 km. from Jhansi and lies in the limits of district Lalitpur. It has figured in the history of the Guptas, Gurjars, Pratihars, Gondas and the muslim rulers of Delhi. Dashavtar temple and Jain shrines are the main attraction of Deogarh.

**Chitrakoot:** It is one of the most famous religious place of Hindus in India. The fact that Bundelkhand region, during the epic era was under a dense forest, is evident from the fact. Rishi Valmiki advised Lord Ram to stay in Chitrakoot in his exile days. Chitrakoot is the celebrated pilgrimage town which is located on the northern spur of Vindhyas. The places for tourist interests here are Gupt Godavari, Sati Anusuuya, Janaki Kund, Hanuman Dhara, Kamadgiri, Ram Ghat, Bharat Koop, The Bharat Milap temple, Balmiki Ashram etc.

**Chanderi:** It is 127 km from Jhansi And 37 km from Lalitpur. The vast fort at Chanderi was built on a high hill during the Mughal period. It is known as “Khooni Darwaja”. It has one of the biggest mosque of Madhya Pradesh. Jain temples, Koshal Mahal, Shahjadi ka Roja, Karka math, Maniva Deva temple
and Kothi Tirath are the famous tourist places of Chanderi. Chanderi is also very famous for its silk sarees in whole India.

**Khajuraho:** In the temple architecture of India, the Khajuraho complex is unique. All the temples are divided into three geographical blocks, the western, eastern and the southern. The western block is the biggest and the richest in artistry. The walls, doorways, frieze, pillars, and ceiling every inch in exquisitely carved with subtly modeled, lively and intricate figures displaying great balance and poise, sensitivity and warmth. Western group of temples are Lakshman temple, Chitragupta temple, Vishwanath temple, Kandriya Mahadeva temple, Matangeshwara temple, Chausat temple. Eastern group of temples are Paraswanath temple, Ghantai temple, Adinath temple and Brahma temple, Southern group of temples are Duladeo temple and Chatarbhuj temple.

**Panna:** This historic town was the capital of Chhatrasal, the founder of the Bundela kingdom. It is 44km from Khajuraho. Panna is noted for its temples of Baldevji, Kishoreji, Govindji, Prannatji, Jagannath Swami and Ram.

**Kalinjar:** 280 km from Jhansi is Kalingar which is known for its fort. The fort a stronghold of the Chandelas from the 9th to the 15th century AD, remained citable. Kalinjar fort is situated
on the Vindhyan ranges, and has seven gates. These gateways are Alam Darwaza, Ganesh Dwar, Chandi or Chatarbhuj Darwaza, Budha Bhadra Darwaza, Hanuman Dwar, Lal Darwaza and Bara Darwaza.

**Economic and Industrial Scenario**

Spread between adjacent state of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh; region of bundelkhand has paucity of drinking water, infertility of land and scratch in growth of industrial and infrastructure sectors. The average land holding in the region is between 5-10 acres. The sex ratio is 847 females per one thousand males. Total literacy percentage stands 34.5% while the female literacy rate is 19.34% and male is 46.98%.

People below poverty line are in majority and fulfillment of basic needs i.e. food, shelter and cloth is the basic and central problem in the region. Agriculture though being the main profession of residents is not sufficient to fulfill the needs of people in terms of output; the reason is mainly limited area of cultivated land, paucity of water resources; lack of awareness about technology; lack of financial support and very small land holdings.
Few industrial units have come into existence but that too in Jhansi and Lalitpur being on railway route and with a comparative better roadways network. Lack of railways and roadways network, poor infrastructural development and extremely poor power resources has caused a lopsided economic growth of the region. The region has been accepted as one of the most backward industrially developed region though a few units like Bharat Heavy Electrical Limited, Baidyanath Ayurvedic limited, Parricha Thermal Power Plant, Diamond Cements, Hindustan Lever Limited etc. are trying to improve the conditions. Proposed oil refinery of approx Rs. 60 lakhs tons capacity near Beena is one major unit likely to come in near future. (4) Handloom industry of Ranipur & Mau ranipur used to be one of the significant contributors of economy of the region through local as well as export market but due to extremely poor power conditions and lack of economic and financial and managerial resources it is moving towards the end. The only industry sustaining in the region is that of Tendu leaf collection and beedi rolling. However, some of the industries are surviving on a modest rate like **Carpentry work** due to availability of Sheesham and Sagaun woods mainly in and nearby areas of Jhansi, Chitrakoot and
Chhatarpur; **Stone Artifacts** due to demand for artistic stone products manufactured at Jakhlaun, Ata, Narhat and Dhaurah along with increasing use of crushed stones and stone slabs that has given a rise to number of stone crushers, Kabrai being the major area, in the region. Manufacturing and processing of **Ayurvedic medicines** also exists as growing industry with a potential due to availability of medicinal plants in the region.

Jhansi, Datia and Orai are growing centers for the industry.

(5) Bundelkhand region is rich in mineral resources so most of the organizations are based on these resources. Tikamgarh district has most of the granite factories. These organizations are stone cutting factories.

Mahoba and Pali are very famous centers of cultivation and export of Beetle leaves; that have their special variety turning it costly and export quality within and beyond the national boundaries. **Dairy farming, Fisheries, Paper making and Beedi manufacturing** are few other names to quote. Service sector is comparatively in a better state due to growing tourism opportunities in areas like Jhansi, Khajuraho (Chhatarpur), Panna etc. Jhansi district is situated on main railway track and is divisional office of North Central Railway and thus has
much better development potentials and has attracted big names in service sector like ICICI, HDFC etc. in banking sector; Airtel, Hutch in telecom etc.

Bundelkhand region is not having an equitable distribution of industrial sectors to its various parts; which can be one of the reason of its lop sided development.

Distribution of industrial units of Public, Private and Service sector at a glance can be as:

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<th>Districts</th>
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<th>Private Sector</th>
<th>Service Sector</th>
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Approximate number of industrial units in Service sector is 300, private sector is 300 and public production sector is 6. The figures are a sum of small scale, medium scale and large-scale industrial units existing in the region. Units of Service sector are the total number of registered names; however if branches and franchisee are included total number can reach up to 20,000 – 25,000; like State Bank of India in banking service sector is having above 2,000 branches in the region.

As through data it can be seen that Public sector production units are very less in number. Most of these units are located in the local boundaries of Jhansi district. Other parts of Bundelkhand region are untouched by public production sector. Scarcity of Electricity plants and production has created an adverse impact on existence and growth of industrial sector in Bundelkhand region. Jalaun district had registered many private concerns but hardly 20% units are presently in working condition with average or low profitability.
Annexure 4 B

GUIDE MAP OF BUNDELKHAND

UPPER PRADESH

MADHYA PRADESH

4.19
References:


2. ibid, p. 24

3. ibid, p. 15

4. ibid, p. 20

5. Source – District Industries Centre - Jhansi, Sagar, Banda, Orai.

6. Political & Cultural History of Bundelkhand - Abdul Kayyum madani, p. 50-51