CHAPTER – 2
PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA

2.1 GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY OF THE STUDY AREA

Kangra district derives its name from Kangra town, which was called Nagarkot in the ancient times. Kangra proper originally was a part of the ancient Trigartha (the present Jalandhar), which comprises of the area lying between the river "Shatadroo" (Sutlej) and Ravi. A tract of land to the east of Sutlej, which probably is the area of Sirhind in Punjab, also formed a part of Trigratha. Trigratha had two provinces; one in the plains with headquarters at Jalandhar and other in the hills with headquarters at Nagrkot (the present Kangra) (Punjab District Gazetteer, 1926). The term ‘Trigartha’ seems to have a physio graphical connotation. It conveys that the land was watched by the three rivers: Ravi, Beas and Sutlej. This area roughly corresponds to the present day districts of Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Hoshiarpur, Jalandhar and Kapurthala in Punjab; Bilaspur, kangra and Mandi in Himachal Pradesh. All these districts together may have formed the kingdom of Trigartha which also at times is mentioned as the kingdom of Jalandhar (Jha and Garg, 1991).

In the time of Harsha, the famous Chinese pilgrim Huien Tsiang visited Jullundur in March 635 A.D. and in his writings he has referred to the principality of Jullundur (the present Jalandhar) situated towards the north-east of China-Po-ti (China Bhakti) and towards the south east of Kiu-lo-to (Kullu). From the history of Kashmir given in the Rajtirangini, Raja Shanker Verma (883 to 903 A.D.) of Kashmir held suzerainty over Prithi Chand of Trigartha.
In the beginning of the 11th century, Mahmood of Ghazni, after defeating the Hindu king at Lahore invaded Nagarkot. Mahmood satisfied his lust for wealth by carrying away, enormous wealth of gold and silver from the fort and temple of Kangra on camel backs. One Ibrahim of Ghazni conquered this territory from the Katoch King Jagdeo Chander in 1070 A.D. In 1337, Mohd. Tuglak, an Afghan king of Delhi, captured the fort at Kangra in the reign of Raja Priti Chand. In 1351, however, Raja Purab Chand recaptured the fort from the Muslims. Sher Shah Suri, the Afghan king, who turned out Humayun from India, also captured Kangra in 1540. By 1555, the Muslim influence again declined. Kangra was ruled by Raja Bidi Chand during the reign of great Mughal king Akbar however, subjugated the entire hill Rajas. Occasionally the hill rajas rebelled against the imperial authorities, but after a few skirmishes with the Mughal Generals, they submitted and renewed their pledges of loyalty (Mian, 1988).

In 1752, the weak Mughal rulers of Delhi transferred Punjab to Ahmed Shah Durani. The Afghans could not successfully control these far flung areas from Kabul. In 1758, Raja Ghamand Chand was appointed Nazim or Governor of Jullundur Doaba under the Afghans (Ahluwalia, 1988).

After his death in 1775 Kangra saw the rise of another great ruler Sansar Chand (II). Raja Sansar Chand had an ambition to recapture the fort and in 1781, he called to his aid Sardar Jai Singh of Kanhaya Misal. The Mughal officer surrendered the fort. After getting the fort, Sansar Chand revived the tradition and laid a claim to supremacy over all the principalities and hill states of the Jullundur Circle. For full twenty years he reigned supreme over all the hill states of Kangra, Mandi, Kullu and Chamba. However, reckless bravery and unlimited ambition of this great Raja ultimately ruined him. It was in the beginning of 19th century when Gurkhas dominated the state of Kangra and unseized much of its
territory (Jerath, 1995). In 1806, with the help of the hill chiefs, the Gurkhas defeated Raja Sansar Chand who had to take refuge inside the fort. Sansar Chand's son, Anirudh Chand succeeded his father in 1823 but he was not destined to rule for a long time. Raja Dhian Singh, the Dogra chief of Jammu, led an expedition against him. Anirudh Chand had to flee and Sikhs occupied the entire state of Kangra.

After the first battle of Sikhs in March 1846, the territory of Punjab lying between the Sutlej and Ravi rivers, including the hill states of Kangra proper and Kullu were ceded to British Government. The headquarters of district was transferred to Dharmshala because that place was considered cooler and healthier for the British officers and also the slopes of Dhauladhar provided ample room to accommodate in a newly raised local contingent for the army (Balokhara, 1997).

At the time of creation of, Himachal Pradesh Kangra district was the largest district. On the re-organisation of composite Punjab on the 1st November, 1966 the area constituting Kangra district were transferred to Himachal Pradesh along with the districts of Shimla, Kullu and Lahaul and Spiti and tehsils of Una and Nalagarh and 3 villages of Gurdaspur district. Kangra district with its present administrative set up came into existence on the 1st September 1972 consequent upon the re-organisation of districts by the Government of Himachal Pradesh.

From administrative point of view the district has been divided into eight sub-divisions viz., Dharamsala, Palampur, Baijnath, Kangra, Nurpur, Jawali, Dehra and Jaisinghpur. It has fourteen developmental blocks, viz. Baijnath, Bhawarna, Lambagaon, Panchrukhi, Kangra, Nagrota Bagwan, Rait, Dehra, Pragpur, Nagrota Surian, Nurpur, Indora, Fatehpur and Sulah at Bhedoo Mahadev. The district with respect to revenue control has been divided into fifteen tehsils and three sub-
tehsils. There are 708 Gram Panchayats and 3889 villages (3,620 inhabited and 269 uninhabited). Kangra valley has eight towns, viz. Kangra (Municipal Committee), Nagrota Bagwan (Notified area Committee), Nurpur (Municipal Committee), Dharamsala (Municipal Committee), Palampur (Municipal Committee), Dehragopu pur (Notified Area committee), Jawalamukhi (Notified area Committee) and Yol (Cantonment Board).

2.2. PHYSIOGRAPHY

Kangra valley falls in Kangra district which lies in the Shivalik and lesser Himalayan zone and its topography is well defined by a series of almost parallel hill ranges which rise in height towards northeast. The district is criss-crossed by mountain ranges and enclosed valleys. The ranges are snow covered during most part of the year. The altitude generally varies from 500 metres to over 5,500 metres from the mean sea level. Dhauladhar is the most important range of the district with stretched out beautiful and fertile valleys of Palampur and Kangra. The average elevation of the valley is about 600 metres above the sea (Bruce, 1910). The southern aspect of the Dhauladhar, facing Kangra valley, is steep and precipitous, rising almost perpendicularly from the low ranges of its base. The northern aspect of the Dhauladhar facing Chamba is stubbed with Alpine pastures (Randhawa, 1974). Dhauladhar range starts from the right bank of the river Beas and and forms boundary of the district with Kullu district at a distant point below Sarui Pass. Thereafter, the range passes through Banghal area above Kangra and Palampur valley covering Bara Banghal ridge, which is about 6,000 metres high from the mean sea level and thereafter runs parallel to another mountain range known as Hathidhar which forms
boundary between Chamba and Kangra districts of the state (Punjab District Gazetteer, 1904). The Paprola range shuts out Bir Banghal from Kangra valley and this range after crossing Binwa stream at Paprola runs on to Mandi where it acquires the name of Sikandar Dhar. Kangra valley and the valley stretching from Shahpur on the banks of the river Ravi to Dhatwal on the border of Bilaspur falls in this zone. Slope and aspect of an area are vital parameters that decide the land use pattern of the area and vegetation. Magnitude and direction of slopes developed in the district are the net results of tectonic activities and drainage patterns prevailed in the area over the years. The slope in the district varies from almost flat to highly steep (Balokhara, 1997).

Based on topography, precipitation, soil and temperature etc., Kangra district comprises of four distinct regions viz. High hills wet sub temperate region, Valley region, Changar region and Shiwalik foot-hill region, Bara Bhangal and Chhota Bhangal area in Pir Panjal ranges constitute the wet sub-temperate hilly region which starts from the inter district boundaries of Kullu, Chamba and Mandi on the northern most end of the district. Valley region of Kangra district comprises of three valley areas viz. Palam, Kangra and Nurpur. Palam valley includes areas enclosed within the boundary starting from Ghatta – Bajnath - Chobin – Agojar – Pahra – Dheera – Darang – Jia – Uttrala - Deol and Ghatta. Kangra valley includes area surrounded by Malan - Yol. Cantt – Dharamshala – Bhanala – Tiara – Kangra and Malan village boundaries. Nurpur valley located in the southwest ern foothills touches Punjab (Plate No. 2.1). The area abounds Bodh – Nagawari – Hagwal – Kandrori – Ray – Jawali - Jonta and Bodh.
Changar region of the district comprises of the areas falling between valleys extending up to Bias Basin and including areas such as Bhuana, Tinbar, Bhullana, Dagoh and Jaisinghpur etc. of Rajgir constituency. Shiwalik foothill region includes area of Pragpur block starting from Dhaliara and passing through Sansarpur Terrace - Bharwain – Chalali – Chamukha – Kuhna – Dadaseeba and Sansarpur Terrace. The rock facies seen in the study area are shale, clay and sand stone of Shivalik group. Green shales and fossils rich limestones of Sabthu formation, gneissic and granatic rocks of Dhauladhar group. Slate phyllites, schists, quartzites, basic lava flows and dolomites belong to Jutogh and Sunder Nagar formation.
2.3 CLIMATE

Kangra valley is alluvium filled erosional and tectonic valley. Because of the considerable width the valley is free from a closed or shut in location and have more pleasant climate than the narrower valleys. Climate of the valley can be divided into four broad seasons. The winter generally spreads over from December to February. The period from March to June is summer. Hot and rainy season is experienced from July to September. October and November exhibit autumn. While the places at high altitudes are covered with deep snow during the winter months, the lower areas get rains. The temperature during the winter months even in the lower areas is too cold because of the lashing cold breeze of the mountain ranges of Dhauladhar and Hathi Dhar. Indora block of Kangra district falls in sub-humid sub-tropical zone where annual precipitation is about 1000 mm and mean temperature of about 24 degree Celsius. Dehragopipur and Nipur blocks fall under humid sub-tropical zone where the annual rainfall is between 900 -2350 mm and mean temperature about 20° to 24° Celsius. Palampur and Dharamsala fall under wet temperate zone where the temperature ranges from 15° to 19° Celsius and annual rainfall is about 2500 mm. Other parts of the Kangra district fall under hill area where the mean annual temperature varies from 13° to 20° Celsius and annual rainfall is 1800- 3000 mm. Kangra valley (Dharamshala) receives second highest rainfall per annum. The weather is alpine summers are mild and winters are cold (Singh, 2001).

2.4 DRAINAGE

The Kangra valley, the valley of the river Beas and its numerous tributaries is known for the mellow beauty of its landscape, its low hills and valley studded with charming hamlets. The terraced fields studded with charming hamlets. The terraced fields with wave like embankments run numerous snow-fed rivulets with pure sparkling water (Randhawa,
Major parts of Kangra valley fall within the drainage basins of Beas which is the principle river of the kangra district. The river rises from the Pir Panjal range near Rohtang pass at a height of over 4,000 metres from mean sea level. After flowing through Kullu and Mandi districts Beas enters Kangra district at Sanghol and leaves it near Mirthal. Binwa, Neugal, Banganga, Gaj, Dehr and Chakki are important tributaries of Beas from North side. Binwa stream rises in the hills above Baijnath and after receiving the water of Awa and some minor effluents joins the river above Sanghol. Neugal stream which is the prime stream flowing from Palampur tehsil discharges itself into the river opposite Tira Su janpur area of Hamirpur District. Ban Ganga stream flows through Kangra and Dehr near Kotla region of Nurpur tehsil. The Awa and Neogal streams can be said as the lifeline of the Palampur valley. During the monsoon season, these swell and rage madly over the entire width of the chasm taking stones and boulders along with it (Singh and Singh, 2001).

2.5. VEGETATION

This valley is rich in flora. The following various species of plants and forest trees are generally found in Kangra valley. In Kangra valley the lower slopes of the Dhauladhar are covered with forests of the pine rise in rugged grandeur covered by snow or shoot up in pinnacles of base granite, which are too steep for the snow to rest on (Randhawa, 1974). These consist of scrub forest at low elevation to Alpine pastures at higher altitude, with the forests of chir, ban oak mixed conifers (kail, spruce and fur) and kharsu oak forests in middle altitude.

Forest area of 2,76,840 hectares (1999-2000) can be classified into seven main groups; 1) Miscellaneous Sc rub forest (Khair, Kachnar, Siris etc.) 600-1200 mts. 2) Chir forests, 800-1700 mts. 3) Ban oak forests, 1600-2300 mts. 4) Deodar forest (Dharamkot and Mcleodganj area) 2000-2500 mts. 5) Mixed conifers, 2100-3000 mts. 6) Kharsu oak
forest (Kharsu oak and Rhododendron), 2300-3800 mts. 7) Alpine scrub and alpine pastures, above 3800 mts. Further, these forests have been classified into six classes based on management practices. These are reserved forests 7,415 hectares, Demarcated protected forests 54,754 hectares, Un-Demarcated protected forests 1, 65,220 hectares, Un-Classed forests 44,295 hectares, Private forests managed under section 38 of IFA 985 hectares and Forest managed under LPA 4,171 hectares (Randhawa, 1962 and Balokhara, 1997). The important vegetation species in the form of trees, scrubs and grasses are given under-

Trees found in Kangra valley are - Acacia catechu (Khair), Bauhinia variegata (Kachnar/Karal), Syzygium cumini Eugenis jambolane (Jamun), Diospyross tomentosa (Kinnu), Cordia dicholoma (Lassura), Celtis australis (Khirk), Morus alba (Toot), Ficus religiosa (Peepal), Ficus psilmata (Dhoora), Ficus hemoralis (Doodhla), Pinus pongifolia (Cheel), Gewia opppositifolia (Biul), Ficus bengalensis (Bar, Bargad), Dalbergia sissoo (Sheesham, Tahl), Pyrus pashia (Kainth), Ceolrela toona (Tuni), Bombax malabarioum (Simbal), Magnifera indica (Amb, Am), Albizzia stipulata (Oei), Prunus sp (persica / Pajja), Salmalia malabericum (Simble), Pyrus lanata (Toony), Nerium odorun (Ghaneera) and Jatropha curcas (Jablota) (Rao, 1978).

Shrubs found in the study area are - Urtica dioica (Bichho Booti), Principia utilis (Bhekhal), Ocimum sanctum (Tulsi), Rubus biflorus (Lal Akha), Dodonala viscosa, R. peniculatus (Peela Akhe), Camellia thea (Tea), Murraya koeingii (Gandhala), Zizyphus mauritiana (Ber), Vitex nigundu (Banna), Lantana camera (Bara Phulunoo/Panch Phoolli), Agave americana (Ram Ban), Berberis lycium (Kasmal), Duranta spp. (Neel Kanta) and Viole canascence (Banaksha).

Climber's grasses found in the study area (with Botanical name and Common name) are - Chrysopogon montanus (Dholoo), Hetropogon
contortus (Lamloo), Thameda authera (Lunji), Eulaliopsis binata (Baggar, Bhabhew Grass), Bothriochloa pertusa (Makora), Brachiaria mutica (Para grass), Cynodon dactylon (Khabbal, Doob), Plantago tibetica (Isabgol) (Mian, 1988).

2.6. FAUNA

The valley is rich in animals and birds, which include some of the rare species. The animals found in the district are - Felis bengalensis Leopard (Cat, Mirag, Bagh), Felis Chane (Jungle Cat Jangli Billi), Muntucus muntisk (Barking Dear, Kakkar), Macaca mulatta (Ressus, monkey, Lal Bandar), Sus sacrofa (Boar Suar), Hystrix indica (Porcupine Sehl), Sehru (farru), Hylopetes fimbriatus (Flying squirrel), Panthera pardus (Leopard Cheetah) and Paradoxurus hermaphroditus (Indian Civet Sakralu) (Singh, 2001).

Birds in Kangra valley are - Milvus migrants (Vulture Cheel, Gidh, Eell), Eudynamys scolopacca (Koel Koel), Payo crisslatus (Peacock Mor), Coturnix columnix (Common quail Bater), Alectoris graeca (Chakor Chakor), Crovus splendens (Crow Kanwa), Prottacula Karneri (Parrot Totta), Pied (Kathfowra Woodpecker), Streptopelia decaocto (Ring dove Gughi), Parus rufonuchalis (Tits), Drycocopus javensis (Woodpecker), Acidotheres tristis (Common Myna Ghatari), Terpsiphone paradisi (Paradise flycatcher Choti-pinja) and Passer domesticus (House sparrow) (Rao, 1978).

2.7. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Predominant population of the district comprises of Hindus followed by Muslims, Buddhists and Sikhs. Christians and Jains constitute the negligible proportion of the population. The Hindus mostly comprises of Rajputs, Brahmins and Scheduled Cast. The main Rajput castes in the valley are Katoch, Pathania, Dogra, Jasrotia, Jaswal,
Jamwal, Katwal, Guleria, Mian, Thakur, Rana, and Rathi etc. The Rajputs are well known in the history for displaying their valour and fighting qualities. The Rajput of high caste never gave their daughters in marriage to those belonging to lower ones. The Brahmin generally acted as priest and religious devotees. During the early period they occupied important position in royal courts as well as in the religious life of the people. The Brahmins are also composed of various classes/groups. Those belonging to high class generally act as priest whereas the lower class Brahmins apart from their religious function also ploughs their fields. Still lower in hierarchy are Acharj and Ghirath. The matrimonial alliances of the Brahmin of different classes are restricted to their own class/group (Mian, 1988).

Apart from these, the caste Hindus also constitute communities like Sood, Khatri, Mahajan, Walia, etc; who are mainly engaged in business activities. The scheduled castes comprises of Bhangi, Barad, Chamar, Chhimbe, Dumne, Julahe, Lohar, Sanhai, Teli etc. Matrimonial alliances of Schedule Caste are also restricted to their own community. The schedule castes are still backward in the Kangra valley. In villages, people of the different castes live in the different groups in the form of scattered settlements. The scheduled Tribes population is negligible in district. Gaddi and Gujars two tribal communities have lost their Scheduled Tribes status in district because of area restriction. Gaddis belonging to the Chamba area and settled in the Kangra valley have been given the status of Schedule Tribe recently. Gaddi tribe, a tribe of pastoral semi-nomads spend three quarters of every year out herding sheep. The other great tribe of professional herdsmen in the valley is a Mohammedan tribe named Gujars (Bruce, 1910). The term Gaddi is generic and includes people from all castes such as the
Brahmins, the Rajputs, the Khatris and the Harijans. The traditional belief is that Gaddi’s migrated from Lahore to valley during the reign of Aurangzeb when proselytism to Islam was at height. They refused to accept Islam, opted to leave their hearths and homes for good and took refuge in the forests of the Dhauladhar range of Chamba (Randhawa, 1974).

The native people of Kangra are the Kangri people and the native language is Kangri, which is very similar to Punjabi. The majority of the people are Hindu, although many Tibetan people who follow Buddhism have also settled here recently. The main areas having Buddhist settlement are McLeodGanj of Dharamshala, Tashijong and Bir of Baijnath, and Tilokpur of Kotla tehsil. Majority of the people in the district speak Kangri or Pahari.

According to the classification of languages, made by the Linguistic survey of India, Kangri have been shown as one of the several dialect grouped under Western Pahari. Under the sub-group Western Pahari are included a number of dialects spoken in the hilly areas stretched from Bhadarwah and Chamba on the northwest to Sirmaur on the southeast (Census of India 1961). Beside Kangri, Dogri is being spoken by a fraction of population who has social links with Jammu region and the people living in the areas bordering Chamba district speak Gaddi dialect. Hindi is the official language of the district.

Table No. 2.1 shows the population details of Kangra valley as per 2001 census. The total population of Kangra District is 13, 39,030.
## TABLE NO 2.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KANGRA DISTRICT TOTAL POPULATION - 13,39,030</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(2001 Census)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male Population</th>
<th>49.38 per cent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female Population</td>
<td>50.62 per cent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rural Population</td>
<td>94.60 per cent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urban Population</td>
<td>5.40 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population (0-6)</td>
<td>12.28 per cent</td>
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<tr>
<td>S.C. Population</td>
<td>0.71 per cent</td>
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<tr>
<td>S.T. Population</td>
<td>.11 per cent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sex Ratio</td>
<td>1025 Females per 1000 males.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Density of Population</td>
<td>233 per sq km</td>
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<tr>
<td>Birth and Death Rates</td>
<td>22.1 and 7.7 Per 1000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Census of India, Paper I, 2001.*

### 2.8. ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

The main occupation of the people of the study area is agriculture. The agro climatic conditions of the valley are most suitable for growing the food crops such as wheat, rice, maize, oil seeds, tea and potato. Tea and potato are the main cash crops. Tea plantation provides employment to 2000 people of the valley directly. People are also engaged in horticulture, sericulture, apiculture and fisheries. In the
Kangra valley the fruits are generally tropical due to low elevation and higher temperature. The important fruit trees are mangoes, oranges, Litchis, guavas and bananas. These are also a source of income to people of the valley (Ahmed, 1992).

The valley is predominantly agrarian and around 82 per cent of its population depends on agriculture and its allied activities for their livelihood. Soil in the district varies from sandy loam to clay. The spring crops are called Rabi or Harri. This crop is sown before the onset of winter and the harvesting is completed in the month of April-May. The popular Rabi crops are wheat, barley, gram and oil seeds (linseed). Wheat and barley are the principal crops. Kharif crops sown before the onset of monsoon and is ready for harvesting in September-October. Forests comprise of 2.76 Lakh hectare areas whereas cultivable waste and fallow land constitute 0.68 Lakh hectares.

Some portion of the population is also engaged in the tertiary sector and serving throughout the state and country. Large number of people has joined army. Kangra valley is also rich in Hydroelectricity potential and Binwa hydel project (16 mw.) near Baijnath and Neugal and Baner projects with installed capacity of 18mw are generating electricity. The number of small-scale industries in the Kangra district is 7284. The major industrial estates are in Kangra, Dehra and Jawali. Nagrota Bagwan, Sansarpur Terrace and Dhaliara are being developed as Industrial areas. Electronic complex has been developed at Nagrota Bagwan.