CHAPTER VI

WAI TALUKA

Wai Taluka is in District Satara of Maharashtra State.
The principal place or the place of Tahsil, as it is known, is Wai city. On the globe Wai city is located on Latitude 18°05′ North and Longitude 70° East.

Wai taluka is based in the upper valley of river Krishna in the Mahadeo Ranges of the Western Ghats. The population at the deep end or western parts of the valley had been, comparatively, in less contact with other parts of the district until the commencement of the work of the Irrigation Project at Dhom. The population at the broader end or eastern parts has a history of coming in contact with other cultures.

Historical accounts of this place before that of 1429 is not available. But this place has a mention in the Mahabharat. It is also mentioned that there was an old Buddhist settlement in the taluka. Ruins of Buddhist caves are found mainly to the north of the taluka. Wai city has been known to be a place of pilgrimage for the Hindus and to be a seat of learning of Hindu religion. After 1429 it has been mentioned that the taluka was under the Muslim rule until 1659. Subsequently it went under the Maratha rule until it came under the British rule towards the end of the Eighteenth century.
- = locations (included referrals)
- = locations (excluded referrals)

WAI TALUKA
SCALE: 1 INCH = 2 MILES
The soil of the taluka along the course of river Krishna is Alluvial and fertile. Until the Dhom Irrigation Project was commissioned, and even thereafter, the major cultivation is dependent on the climate. Actually Wai taluka comes under the rain-shadow area. The rainfall though heavy is seasonal. The winters have been severe sometimes and so have the summers.

Majority of the population is engaged in farming or farm-related work. A very small portion of population mostly in Wai city would be such that it has no truck with agriculture at all. Most of the villagers have their work related to agriculture. Many from the city too pursue different vocations during work hours but during the spare-time and holidays are engaged in farm-work.

Eighty-three percent (82.76%) of the total population of Wai taluka lives in area which is outside the limits of Wai city. This rural population is distributed in 102 villages at an average of 1160 persons per village. Many of these villages (about 25%) are more or less collections of two or three bustees (called Wadi in this area). The pattern of settlement in rural as well as urban areas is compact settlements.

Barring a small portion of population from the extreme south of the taluka for whom Satara city is nearer, Wai city is the only major market centre for others. The city is located right in the centre of the taluka.
Even though the persons living nearer to the city visit Wai city practically everyday, those living in the remote areas visit the city rather infrequently. The purpose of their visit is seldom other than marketing related to farm-work. Wai city has a big vegetable market supplying the produce of the area to Bombay, Pune and Mahabaleshwar. The other reasons for visiting Wai city are medical treatment and legal and administrative work at the Court and Government Offices of the Tahsildar.

Almost one member per family from the taluka has migrated out of the taluka in pursuit of a job or a career. These persons migrate mostly to Pune and Bombay—88 kilometers and 282 kilometers away from Wai respectively. These members do provide a different dimension to the nature of their family's social contact owing to their own secondary-group contacts. Yet for those members who have to stay behind, the primary-group contact remains predominant. There is preponderance of traditions. This is evident from the high priorities which are given to the festivals of the village-deities and marriages in the neighbourhood.

In Wai taluka, like in other parts of India, the solidarity is village-centred and caste or sub-caste-centred. Thus in numerically large groups formed on the basis of sub-caste a homogeneity of thought and action is perceivable.
Even then strict adherence to such social strata is not evident either. The 'Jajmani' system exists only up to a certain extent mainly in the upper socioeconomic class. Intercaste rivalry is known, but there is no evidence of inter-caste or inter-religion feuds as is apparent in other parts of India. It may be significant to mention that Wai was the centre of the Bramho Samaj activity in Satara District.

In Wai taluka social mobility is widely prevalent. This could partly be owing to the government policies of reservation of job opportunities for persons from Backward Classes. The other possible reason for this can be the influence of other religions. Muslims and Christians form a sizeable part of the population of the city. Owing to the vocations of the people of these communities they have a social, cultural and economic integration with the population of the entire taluka. Muslim traders have been an important and integral part of the trading community. The Christian community have become important and integrated since the beginning and spread of medical and health services which are provided by one of the leading peripheral service hospitals in the form of the W.F. Pierce Memorial at Wai since in 1913.

### Significant Statistical Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Number of Cities</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of villages</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. Urban land area</strong></td>
<td>3.6 Sq.kilometers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rural land area</td>
<td>589.8 Sq. kilometers</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
C. Irrigated land area.
   Non-irrigated land area.
   Female
   Rural Population Male.
   Female.
   Overall Population Male.
   Female.
E. Irrigation Project.
   : 1 Dhom Project
   Total capacity
   $12\frac{1}{2}$ T.M.C.
F. Factories.
   : 1 Sugar Factory at Bhujn.
G. Electrification.
   : 1 City
   102 villages.
H. Health Facility (Government and Municipal.)
   Primary Health Centres.
   Primary Health Units.
   Dispensaries.
   (Private.)
   Major Hospitals.
   Minor hospitals.
   Dispensaries & Clinics—exact number not available.
I. Teaching Institutes (Government, Municipal and Private)
   Balwadi
   Primary Schools
   Secondary Schools.
   Junior Colleges.
   College.
   School for Mentally Retarded.
   *It is claimed that enrollment at Primary Schools is 100%*
J. Libraries major and minor.
   City :- 4
   Villages:- 82
   Wells built: 69
   Bore pumps: 134
L. Milk Cooperative Societies - 62
Collection Centres. - 33

M. Other Programmes,

a) National Rural Employment Programme from 1981
facilities provided, Gutters, Roads, Gram Panchayat
Offices, School, Pipe-water, Samaj-mandirs,
Community Development works, Burial Grounds Latrines.
b) Integrated Rural Development Programme,
Total 5495 beneficiaries.
c) Miscellaneous.
Bio-gas plants. - 375
Social Forestry - 16 percolation tanks
1600 trees.
Horticulture Development Scheme 162 Hectares.
Agriculture-assistance - Land Development
70 beneficiaries.

RESOURCE READING
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Sawant, P. River Dam Construction and Resettlement of
Affected villages (A case study of two villages in the
Upper Krishna Valley; Vyabali and Chandavadi (Dist. Satara).

Wai Taluka Panchayat Samiti, Summary of Records 1985-1986
Wai, 1986.