Chapter I

Introduction
Introduction

The district Muzaffarnagar is roughly rectangular in shape and lies between Lat. 29° 11' N and 29° 43' N and Long 77° 04' E and 78° 07' E. It is situated in the western part of the Uttar Pradesh in the doab of the Ganga and the Yamuna between the districts of Saharanpur on the north and Meerut on the south. Karnal of Harayana state on the west and Bijnor on the east make its western and eastern boundaries, respectively. The district Muzaffarnagar covers 98 km. east to west while north to south is about 58 km. The average length and breadth are about 84 km. and 50 km., respectively. According to 1981 District Gazetteer1 of India the district covered an area of about 4,176.01 sq. km. The district is subject to the fluvial action of the Ganga and the Yamuna, giving rise to frequent changes in its area. There are no forest in the district.

1. There has been no jurisdictional change in the district during the decade. The difference in the area figures is due to revised calculation of area done by the Board of Revenue. Varun, D.P., Uttar Pradesh District Gazetteers : Muzaffarnagar (Lucknow 1980) pp. 74-75; cf. Janganana 1971, Uttar Pradesh Granth Mala 21 : Prathamik Janganana Sarsangrah (Hindi) (Lucknow 1971), p. 4.
The district with its headquarters at Muzaffarnagar is divided into the following hierarchy of administrative units. At present the district is divided into four tehsils (sub-divisions) viz. Muzaffarnagar, Kairana, Budhana and Jansath each comprising a tehsil of the same name. Each tehsil is further divided into blocks (vikas-khand) as per details below:


The urban area of the district consists of eighteen towns, out of which 5 are administered by Municipal Board and remaining 13 by Town Area Committees. In this way district has four tehsils and 14 blocks.

In 1981 the density of the population of the district was 545 per sq. km., as compared to 377 per sq. km. of the state. The density of the population was great because of high soil fertility. The district had a place of importance in the state for good harvest of wheat, sugarcane and potato, since it is one of the districts located in the doab of the rivers the Ganga and the Yamuna. The high fertility of doab is a natural marvel.

The district Muzaffarnagar is connected by metalled road with districts Saharanpur, Meerut, Bijnor and Delhi etc. However, the district, itself, has a network of roads and streets. The district head-quarters is connected by the metalled road with tehsils Kairana, Budhana and Jansath, while one road links it with Roorkee.


3. The density of the population in this district has increased largely since 1901; Varuna, D.P., Uttar Pradesh Gazetteers : Muzaffarnagar (Lucknow 1980) p.46.
For a tourist the countryside of the district does not present many noteworthy spots, notwithstanding a few of the monuments noted for architectural niceties, such as Gausgarh and Mrona mosques, which are known for their magnificence. Other pieces of architectural interest are located at Mujhera, Jansath, Miranpur and Kairana. Similarly, the mosques at Jhinjhana, Kairana and Thana-Bhawan are splendid. Quite a few of the places in the district are known for their historical significance. Shamli, Thana-Bhawan and Harhar are associated with the Freedom Movement of 1857.

Among the other villages of archaeological interest are Doonger, Banti-Khera, Kutubpur-Dataana, Durganpur, Purbalian, Huzur Nagar, Issopur-Teel, Nawla, Tikola, Mubarakpur, Sikreda, Dabdal, Kailapur-Jasmor, Nurnagar, Rohana-Kalan, Jasala, Alamgirpur, Khanjahanpur, Badhai Kalan, Kulheri etc.

**Administrative Changes**

No adequate literature on the early history of the district is available. However, Buddhist literature mentions that the area of the district in the 6th century B.C. was a part of Kuru Mahajanpada. The archaeological findings suggest that the district was dominated by the Mauryas, Shungas and Kushanas between the 3rd century B.C. and 1st century A.D. In the 7th century A.D. it was included in the principalities held by Harshvardhan.

During the Muslims regime the area was made a part of the Delhi Sultanate. Mohammad Ghorii conquered it. Towards the later half of the 14th century, Saiyids of Barha influenced the local history of the district.

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5. Tripathi, R.S. *op.cit.*, p. 314.
In the Mughal period, Babar, along with Delhi occupied the major part of Muzaffarnagar. During Akbar’s reign the area of Muzaffarnagar formed part Subah\(^7\) of Delhi and was divided into units of revenue administration called Mahals\(^8\). Subsequently with the exception of paragana Kandhala the rest of the district was put under jurisdiction of Sarkar\(^9\) Saharanpur.

Owing to the changes, in the boundaries of paragana for administrative purposes, the existing paragana represents the Akbari Mahals only in name. The Akbari paragana of Kairana and Banat constitute the present paragana of Shamli. The paragana of Jauli-Jansath and Shikarpur are made up of old paraganas of Jauli and the portions of two old Akbari paraganas namely Soron-Palri and Khudi. Bhum and Sambhalhera were separate paraganas, but the two make one paragana now. The paragana Thana-Bhawan was known as Than-Bhim at that time\(^10\). The paragana of Muzaffarnagar and Gordhanpur were known as Sarwat and Tughalqpur at that time\(^11\). Later on this was changed to Muzaffarnagar during reign the of Sahajahan.

Since the time of Akbar down to 1861, the administrative boundaries had undergone considerable changes. After the British occupation in 1803 the area comprising the present district of Muzaffarnagar was assigned to Saharanpur. Part of the district was administered by the Resident of Delhi when entire area fell into northern and southern units with administrators stationed at Saharanpur and Meerut. In 1824 post of a sub-collector was created at Muzaffarnagar with revenue juris-

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7. Province in the pre-British days.
8. Unit of land (comprising several villages) under separate engagement of payment of revenue.
9. A sub-division of the Subah; a district is the pre-British days.
11. Atkinson, E. *op.cit.*, p. 440; For detail see Administrative Division as given by Atkinson, E. in his monograph.
diction over the parganas of Muzaffarnagar, Baghtra, Shamli, Bidauli, Jhinjhana, Charthawal, Khatauli, Jauli, Pur-Chhapar, Gordhanpur, Bhokerheri, Jansath, Soron and Lalukheri. In 1826 the sub-collectorship was converted into regular district. Since then further changes were of minor importance. The Rajputs, Tagas and Brahmans are said to have been the early colonists of this district, followed by the Jats.

**Topography**

The region forms a part of the Upper Gangatic Plain. The natural division of the district is very much influenced by the flows of rivers Ganga and Yamuna, which have constantly been changing their courses; and thereby affecting the boundaries and area of the district\(^\text{12}\). The great changes in the Ganga have resulted in the formation of the *khadar*. During the seventies, river Yamuna too has changed its direction towards west in the neighbouring Haryana state. Consequently, villages Manglore, Ahatmali, Jadiel and Jamalpur of Haryana state have been shifted to the district\(^\text{13}\).

The terrain of district Muzaffarnagar has a central elevated tract, flanked on either side by the low-lying land of the *khadar* of the Ganga and the Yamuna. The Ganga *khadar* is a precarious tract of moist land with scanty cultivation, but generally covered with the course grass and occasional patches of tamarind\(^\text{14}\). The Ganga *khadar* is chiefly valuable as

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\(^\text{13}\) For knowing detailed topographical change in the district see Varun, D.P. *Uttar Pradesh : District Gazetteer, Muzaffarnagar* (Lucknow 1980) pp. 3-4; cf. Nevill, H.R. *op.cit.* p. 13.

\(^\text{14}\) In the recent years much of the waste land has been brought under cultivation.
a grazing ground. The Yamuna khadar is less swampy\(^\text{15}\) than the Ganga khadar. The other rivers flowing in the district are Kali Nadi and Hindon. The four rivers have fashioned the topography of the district into four fairly distinct tracts.\(^\text{16}\)

1. **Ganga Khadar Tract**: On the extreme east of the district is the Ganga khadar, covering the whole of the parganas of Gordhanpur, and parts of parganas Pur-Chhapar, Bhokarheri and Bhuma Sambhalhera. This tract is bounded on the west by the old high bank of the Ganga. The width of the Ganga khadar is the greatest towards the north, where it covers 20 km. Moving southward the tract gradually narrows until in the vicinity of Bhokerheri the Ganga comes quite close to the high bank\(^\text{17}\).

The chief rivers flowing though the tract are the Saloni and the Banaganga, which generally change their course. On the whole, the khadar presents a broad far-stretching tract of levelled country with patches of cultivation.

2. **Ganga Canal Tract**: It is also known as the Eastern Upland Tract. This tract lies between the high bank of the Ganga canal and the Kali Nadi (west). As the name indicates, it is traversed from north to south-west for its entire length by the main Ganga Canal. The tract covers the parganas of Khatauli, Jauli-Jansath, and major portions of the parganas Pur-Chhapar, Muzaffarnagar, Bhokerheri and Bhuma-Sambhalhera.

The most prominent physical feature of the tract is the presence of sand, which occurs in the belts of hillocks with a direction from north to south, and occasionally transverse


\(^\text{17}\) Varun, D.P., *op.cit.*, p. 4.
ridges in the north and a levelled sandy plain in the south. However, outside the sandy belt the soil is generally good loam except in the neighbourhood of the Kali Nadi18.

3. **Kali-Hindon Doab**: Also known as the Central Tract, it is high throughout and is naturally fertile with very low water table19.

The low land of the Kali river is often uncultivable owing to its swampy character. The northern portion of the low land of the Hindon is also swampy, but southern portion contains considerable tract of cultivated land.

4. **The Western Tract**: The tract lies between the Hindon and the Yamuna. The tract covers the entire tehsil of Kairana, parts of *pargana* Charthawal, Baghra, Shikarpur, Budhana and the *pargana* of Kandhla. It is transversed by the river Krishni, which flows from north to south. The land between the Hindon and the Krishni generally has a uniform character owing to the absence of sand.

The north-western portion of the tract, which covers the *pargana* of Bidauli and parts of *pargana* Jhinjhana and Kairana is separated by the Katha Nala from the rest of the district. The south-western portion of the tract is a developed plain with rich soil, except in the vicinity of the Yamuna.

**Rivers**

The Ganga and the Yamuna make the eastern and western boundaries of the district. Both the rivers run parallelly from north to south. The Ganga recedes yearly more and more towards the east, cutting away the villages from the district Bijnor and adding them into this district20. Similar loss by ero-

18. Varun, D.P.; *op.cit.*, pp. 4-5.
20. As a result of the eastward fluvial action of Ganga in the period between 1842 and 1900 a total of 31 villages were taken out of Bijnor and added to this district. Varun, D.P., *op.cit.*, p. 2.
sion is caused by the Yamuna on the west. The rivers and streams of the district are included in the river system of the Ganga and the Yamuna. The chief tributaries of the Ganga are the Kali Nadi (East), the Saloni and the Banaganga. Among the tributaries of the Yamuna, the important ones are the Katha Nala and the Hindon. The latter is joined by the Krishni in the district Meerut and the Kali Nadi (west) in the district.

Three rivers traverse the district fairly parallelly from Saharanpur to Meerut border. In the west Kali Nadi flows past the town of Muzaffarnagar, the Hindon Nadi is about 16 km. farther west and about 18.5 km. still further west is the Krishni Nadi. Towards the southern boundary these rivers converge. The Hindon and Kali Nadi unite after a few kms. south of the border and Krishni joins their united stream some distance lower down. In addition to these, a small stream, called the Katha Nala, crosses the north-west of the district and falls into the Yamuna. The following rivers flow through the district.

**Ganga**: The Ganga first touches this district near the village of Balawala in **paragana** Gordhanpur. It flows in the district south-westward as far as the village of Chandpuri, where it is joined by the Banganga. It than takes a south-easterly course alongwith the eastern boundaries of **parganas** Bhukerheri and Bhuma Sambhalhera. The Ganga leaves this district near the village of Khera in the **pargana** Bhuma-Sambhalhera.

**Kali Nadi (East)**: The river has its origin in the Antwara lake on the western border of **pargana** Jauli-Jansath between the Ganga canal and much sandy ridge. It flows through **pargana**

21. Between the years 1841 and 1861, because of the change in the course of the Yamuna six villages were separated from this district and added to the district Karnal. *Ibid*, p. 2.

Jauli-Jansath and Khatauli and leaves the district to enter district Meerut. The river at first flows in an ill-defined channel, but ultimately becomes the main arterial line of drainage for the whole of the eastern doab as far south as Kannauj in district Farrukhabad, where it joins the Ganga. This river is generally called Nagin, probably because of it takes a sinuous course.

**Saloni**: The Saloni enters the district in the extreme north to paragana Pur-Chhapar and flows south-eastward traversing paragana Pur-Chhapar, Gordhanpur and Bhukerheri, meeting the Ganga at some distance towards north-east of Bhukerheri.

**Banaganga**: This tributary of Ganga enters into this district near the village of Kanewali in paragana, Gordhanpur\(^{23}\). Flowing through the pargana in a southern direction, it joins near the Chandpur.

**Yamuna**: The Yamuna first touches the district in the extreme north-west of paragana Bidauli, about 4 km. north-west of Bhari Mustaffabad. It has an irregular course along the western boundaries of parganas Bidauli, Kairana and Kandhia, separating this district from district Karnal of Haryana state. Near Navada it is joined by the Katha Nala and then takes a sharp turn towards the west. The Yamuna leaves this district near village Issopur-Teel in pargana Kandhia.

**Katha Nala**: This stream, which rises in the district Saharanpur, enters this district near Mundait in pargana Jhinjhana. The villages lying along the Katha Nala on the both sides suffer to a great extent from the floods of this river, which also receives water of several drains.

**Hindon**: The Hindon enters this district at the village of Budha Khera in pargana Charthawal. Following southward the

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23. Formerly this river entered in this district near Gordhanpur about 6 km. west of Kanewali, Varun, D.P., *op. cit.*, p. 8.
river traverses the pargana of Charthawal, Baghra, Shikarpur, and Budhana. The river is used for neither irrigation nor rowing.

Krishni: This river enters the district from the district of Saharanpur, near the village of Chandsina in the extreme north of pargana Thana Bhawan. It traverses the pargana of Thana Bhawan, Shamli and Kandhla. The river generally flows through high banks of broken and uneven ravines and has practically no khadar (low land). The river leaves this district at the village of Baral.

Kali Nadi (West): The Kali which is also known as Kali Nadi (west) to distinguish it from the Kali nadi (east) or Nagin enters the district near the village of Rohana in pargana Muzaffarnagar. The Kali Nadi (West) leaves this district at the village of Kurthal.

Geology

Geologically, this district forms a part of the Indo-Gangetic alluvim, which has sands of various grades. The mineral found in the district are kankar and reh.

Climate

The climate of this district is generally healthy. Being close to Tarai area, the extent of cold during winter is much more than in the plains. Also, the temperature during summer is not as high as in southern districts. The rains largely occurs during monsoon season. Winter rains are very scanty in this district.

Soil

Apart from minor peculiarities the soils possesses the same general characteristics throughout the district. Good ordinary loam or dumat land is locally known as rausli, stiff clay soil, is called dakar, while the low-lying parts yielding rice are called dahar. Besides these, there is a hard and stiff soil, which has at one time been the bed of jhils, known as dabar
or jot, bhur or bhudda is the usual name for all light dry soils which have a larger proportion of sand. High ridges of sand are locally called ghur and are usually not fertile\textsuperscript{24}.

\textsuperscript{24} Varun, D.P., \textit{op. cit.}, p. 87.