GEOGRAPHY

THE GONDA DISTRICT

The district of Gonda lies in the north of Oudh in Uttar Pradesh (Map 1) and constitutes a portion of Fyzabad Division between the Ghagra and the outer ranges of the Himalayas. To the North, the district marches with Nepalese territory, the boundary being artificial throughout and marked by a line cleared through the forest with masonry pillars at fixed intervals. On the East the Arrah river separates Gonda from Nepal for some thirtyfive kilometers and the remaining portion of the boundary is formed by the Basti District as far South as the Ghagra. The Southern border washed by the Ghagra, beyond which lie the districts of Fyzabad and Sara Banki, while on the West is Bahraich. The district is one of the largest in Oudh, its area being only exceeded in the case of Kheri. In shape it is a very irregular oblong, narrowest in the middle and widest towards the extremities. The greatest length is 103.8 km and the greatest width 105.6 km having the total area of 4,495.26 square km, of which 254.17 square km as the Government forest. The extremes of latitude and longitude are 26° 46' and 27° 50' North, 81° 33' and 82° 46' East respectively.

BALRAMPUR

Balrampur is a tahsil of the District Gonda lying in latitude 27° 26' North and longitude 82° 11' East, extending from the Bahraich boundary on the West to that of Basti on the East and Nepal border throughout the North. To the East the
boundary is formed partly by Kuwana, which separates it from Pargana Gonda, partly by the western border of Pargana Utraula and partly by the Rapti river which divides the eastern portion of Salrampur from Utraula. To the North the tahsil marches with Nepal border throughout. The tract falls naturally into three divisions, one lying between the Kuwana and Rapti forming the South-West portion, second comprising the country between the Rapti and the Burhi Rapti, a long strip extending across the whole breadth of the Tahsil and widening towards the Basti frontier, while the third is that between the Burhi Rapti and the Nepal border, forming the Northern and North Western portion, far in the East the Burhi Rapti itself forms the boundary.

Salrampur Tahsil comprises of only two Parganas, in the North, Pargana Tulsipur and in the South Salrampur itself, having the total area of 1,379.34 square kilometre excluding the reserved forest of 228.64 sq. km in Tulsipur Pargana. The southern portion where lies the town Salrampur is barely distinguishable from the rest of the area and forms the centre of the district. The elevation of the Tahsil is 105 metre above the sea level (Map 2).

The following towns, villages and localities within the Tahsil are important from vegetation point of view. It is, therefore, desirable to mention these localities in some details:

**MATHURA**

The village is situated in latitude 27° 35' North and
longitude 82° 4' East, at a distance of 3 km North of the Rapti on the road leading from Kharagupur to Chaudhridih. It is at a distance some 24 km from Balrampur town on the West.

**Lalia**

A small village lying in latitude 27° 35' North and longitude 82° 3' East, on the road from Balrampur to Chaudhridih, at a distance of 18 km from the former. The site of the village is very close to Surhi Rapti.

**Sheopura**

A village in the North of the town Balrampur, in latitude 27° 38' North and longitude 82° 10' East, some 8 km North-East of Lalia Thana.

**Kaharaj Gunj**

A fairly large village lying in latitude 27° 32' North and longitude 82° 15' East, some 14.5 km North of Balrampur and 6.5 km from Kawapur Railway Station. The old name of the village was Hariharpur.

**Kawapur**

A hamlet of the village Nowazpur, which lies in latitude 27° 31' North and longitude 82° 19' East, at a distance of some 14.5 km North-East of Balrampur town. It is itself a railway station on the branch line of Tulsipur.
Sahet Mahet

Sahet Mahet, according to Dr. Hoey, is a large mound or a series of mounds in latitude 27° 31' North and longitude 82° 3' East, between the Rapti and the road from Balrampur to Ikauna at a distance of some 16 km from Balrampur town.

A little is known about the early history that Sahet Mahet was probably the capital of a large kingdom, but after its decline the tract seems to have been held by Shars and Tharus or else by the Doms and ultimately by the rags of Balrampur estate.

Dr. Hoey showed that Sahet was a smaller mound in the South-West while Mahet had four gates and divided into separate quarters having the remains of Buddhist, Jain and Brahmanical temples along with a large quantity of statuary and other articles. Sahet Mahet, according to him was the ancient capital of Sravasti. Now this place has been taken over by the Government administration for the tourists and pilgrims especially from China, Tibet, Burma, Jaman, etc. As for vegetation point of view, it is one of the important sites.

Nulipur

This is one of the largest Farganas in Oudh and forms the northern portion of the Balrampur Tahsil and the Gonda District. To the North and the East lies the territory of Nepal, the boundary being the Arrah River. To the South-East is the Basti
District separated from Tulsipur by the Arrah and Burhi Rapti. To the South Pargana Salrampur and to the West the Bahraich District, the dividing line in the latter case being the Gandhela stream. The northern portion of the Pargana consists of reserved forest, the average breadth being little more than 605 km with a total area of 228.64 square kilomètres. The rest of the pargana consists of a strip of farai land with heavy clayey soil, towards the Burhi Rapti there is barren and almost uninhabited plain covered with *Erianthus ravennae* grass.

Tulsipur Town, the capital of the pargana lies in latitude 27° 30' North and longitude 82° 25' East, at a distance of 24 km North-East of Salrampur. It is connected with roads to Pachperwa on the East, Haraiya and Chaudhrudih on the North West and also with the town Salrampur of the South. The railway station lies to the South-West of the town near Debi Patan at a distance of about one kilometre. The town is said to have been founded over some 250 years ago by a Kurmi, named Tulsidas.

**DEBI PATAN**

The village of Patan lies in latitude 27° 32' North and longitude 82° 24' East, at a short distance west of Tulsipur on the road of Chaudhrudih. Patan is solely deserving of mention on account of its temple and the great fair that takes place here. It is a place of great antiquity and is traditionally connected with Raja Karna of the Mahabharata.
The temple stands on a large heap of bricks and rubbish, and close by a tank and well dating from early times. Above these are numerous fragments of broken images and sculptures, the relics of the former temple, the houses of devotees, various small shrines and two walled gardens. The fair is held from the first to nineth of the light half of the month Chait and attracts some two lakhs pilgrims and traders. The religious abirvances consist of frequent sacrifices of buffaloes, goats and pigs to 'Shakti Debi', the priest receiving a small fee for each animal killed.

CHAUDHRIDIH

It is situated in latitude 27° 44' North and longitude 82° 10' East, on the road from Tulsipur to Baghora Tal and Nepalganj. The site is important as it is very near to the Government reserved forest.

GAINSARI

A village situated in latitude 27° 32' North and longitude 82° 32' East, on the road from Tulsipur to Pachperwa, about half way between these two places. There is a railway station and from it a branch line leads northwards to Jarwa in the forest. The Jarwa is an important site for plant collection as is situated in the forest itself.
PACHPERWA

A village in the East of the Pargana Tulsipur, laying in latitude 27° 31' North and longitude 82° 39' East on the road leading from Utraula to Chandanpur and the Nepal frontier. This is joined a short distance North of the village by a road running to Tulsipur. The railway station is situated close to junction of the two roads. The distance from Pachperwa to Tulsipur is about 22.5 km.