CHAPTER II

HARYANA: PHYSICAL AND CULTURAL SETTING

The Physical Setting

Population and Settlements

The Economy

Regions of Haryana
Development contours are a manifest expression of the geographic setting as evolving over time. The spatial context, physical resource base, technological level, and social, economic and political institutions of any region shape the pattern of its development. An understanding of the historical, physical and cultural geography of Haryana is, therefore, imperative for an analysis of its development process.

Although the region had been changing its name and political boundaries like all other provinces of India, from time to time, its physical boundaries are more than permanent. These are the Siwalik hills on the northeast, the Yamuna river to the east, the Rajasthan desert to the west, southwest, and south, and the Ghaggar stream in the northwest.

The Haryana tract is essentially in the nature of divide between the Ganga and the Indus river systems. It is transitional to the Rajasthan desert and the Ganga plain.

Haryana probably derives its name from terms like Haritanaka, Hariala, Hariyanka and Haryana (Prakash, 1967; Yadav, 1968; Phadke, 1990). All of these have their root in the word 'Hari' (green) and are reminiscent of the time when this land was fertile and fairly forested (Imperial Gazetteer, 1908; p. 222). This contrasts with its present disposition when its forest cover was reduced to less than four per cent of the total area, and agriculture over a large part is not so productive.
Historically, the Haryana territory during the Vedic period (1800 B.C. to 1500 B.C.) and right up to the fourth century B.C. was a part of 'Saptsindhu', the land of seven rivers, namely Indus, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas, Satluj and Saraswati (now dried up), extending over to the 'Kurudesh', the land between the Satluj and the Yamuna. It had a northwestern orientation in its spatial relations. During the Mauryan rule (322 B.C. to 185 B.C.), it formed the western periphery of the Great Magadha province centred at Patliputra in the east. This changed the spatial orientation of this territory toward the south. Subsequent to the fall of Mauryan Empire, the territory got fragmented into small kingdoms. After an interlude of consolidation during the Gupta reign (A.D. 285-550) and Harshvardhana's time (first half of the 7th century), the Haryana territory, like the other parts of northwestern India, again got divided into a number of feudal territories under the Rajputs.

During Akbar's reign (1556-1605) the Haryana territory fell partly under the subah (province) of Delhi (which included Rohilkhand and Upper Doab of Uttar Pradesh), and partly under the subah (province) of Agra (again in the present Uttar Pradesh). The internal division of the territory was in the form of sarkars (districts) of Delhi,

* The term Haryana territory is meant to denote that undefined area, at any point of time in history, which now corresponds to the Haryana state formed in 1966.
Rewari, Hisar and Sirhind whose boundaries did not always terminate with the boundaries of present Haryana.

The point to be noted is that Haryana territory had not evolved as one political or administrative entity even by the close of the sixteenth century. Haryana had essentially been a marchland due to its proximity to Delhi where ambitious powers converged from all sides. Panipat is testimony to the three decisive battles in 1526, 1556 and 1761, fought here for imperial rule in India.

The above mentioned administrative divisions continued unchanged with minor modifications up to the middle of the 18th century when the whole administrative machinery broke up into pieces owing to the rise of the Jats, Rohillas, Marathas and Sikhs. This situation was finally resolved by the British who occupied the Mughal capital in 1803 after defeating the Marathas and dispersing the Sikhs. They split the Haryana territory into small units under the control of petty chiefs who had rendered services to the British against the Marathas.

The year 1833 saw another crucial change for the territory. The British formed a new Northwestern Province with Agra as its headquarters. A large part of the Haryana territory formed one of its six divisions (Bhanu, 1955). It was known as the Delhi division. An initiation of a process whereby this territory started assuming some semibalance of unity is seen here.
The British were greatly perturbed over the participation of inhabitants of this territory in the revolt against them in 1857. As the things settled in favour of the British, the Delhi division or the Haryana territory was tagged with the Punjab province in 1858. This was a kind of punishment (File R/199, State Archives, Patiala). The territory was reduced to the status of a periphery of a large province whose heartland lay distant from it.

Not only that. The evolving unity of the Haryana territory was given a setback with the fragmentation of Delhi province. In 1912, Delhi was carved out as a separate province. Rest of the territory remained a part of Punjab as its Ambala division.

No significant territorial change took place either in the boundaries of Punjab or of Delhi till Independence in 1947. In 1956, the Indian states were reorganised on linguistic lines. The Haryana territory continued as a part of the erstwhile Punjab till 1966 (Map 2). It had, of course, been recognised as the Hindi zone of the former state wherein the present Punjab territory was designated as the Punjabi zone.

In 1966, Punjab was reorganised on linguistic lines. This event saw the emergence of Haryana as a separate state. It included the whole of Hisar, Jind, Mahendragarh, Rohtak, Gurgaon, and Karnal districts and parts of Sangrur and Ambala districts.
Successive Reorganisations of Punjab and Evolution of Haryana

Post-Independence Punjab Pepsu and Himachal Pradesh: 1947

Merger of Pepsu with Punjab: 1956

Reorganisation of Punjab and Formation of Haryana: 1966

Administrative divisions of Haryana: 1981

Map 2
Thus, Haryana which lacked a strict historical unity, assumed the character of a distinct regional entity through the process of its administrative organisation as Ambala division before Independence in 1947, as a separate Hindi speaking zone during 1947-66, and a separate state in 1966.

Administratively, it is now divided into 4 divisions, 16 districts, 53 tahsils, and 107 development blocks. It covers an area of 44,212 sq. kms. Its population at the recent 1991 Census was recorded as 16.32 million. It is one of small states in India in both area and population (Table 2.1).

The Physical Setting

Haryana is essentially a plain area: 94 per cent below 300 metres. The plain spreads between the hilly tract in the northeast and the sand dune sprinkled desert topography in the south and southwest. The outliers of the Aravallis make their appearance in the southern part of the state. As such, Haryana assumes the shape of a saucer with its depression in the tract around Rohtak (Map 3a).

For a convenient understanding of its topography, Haryana may be divided into the following five landform regions:

i) The Siwalik hills forming a narrow belt on the northeast; their general elevation ranges from 300 to 1,000 metres.

ii) The piedmont plain, locally known as Ghar, adjoins
Haryana: Physical Setting

Landform regions

- Swatik hills
- Piedmont plain
- Ghaggar-Yamuna alluvial plain
- Upland plain
- Undulating sandy plain
- Sand-dunes infested plain

Annual rainfall

- Cms

- 100
- 75
- 50
- 25

Ground water quality

- Fresh
- Brackish/Saline

Soils

- New alluvium
- Old alluvium
- Sandy soils
- Mountain soils

Map 3
## Table 2.1

**INDIA : Area and Population of States/Union Territories, 1991**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State/Union Territory</th>
<th>Area (sq. kms)</th>
<th>Persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INDIA</td>
<td>3,287,263</td>
<td>843,930,861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>275,068</td>
<td>66,304,854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arunachal Pradesh</td>
<td>83,743</td>
<td>858,392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>78,438</td>
<td>22,294,562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>173,877</td>
<td>86,338,853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goa</td>
<td>3,702</td>
<td>1,168,622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>196,024</td>
<td>41,174,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>44,212</td>
<td>16,317,715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Himachal Pradesh</td>
<td>55,673</td>
<td>5,111,079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jammu and Kashmir*</td>
<td>222,236</td>
<td>7,718,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>191,791</td>
<td>44,817,398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>38,063</td>
<td>29,011,237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>443,446</td>
<td>66,135,862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>307,690</td>
<td>78,706,719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>22,327</td>
<td>1,826,714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meghalaya</td>
<td>22,429</td>
<td>1,760,626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizoram</td>
<td>21,081</td>
<td>686,217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagaland</td>
<td>16,579</td>
<td>1,215,573</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orissa</td>
<td>155,707</td>
<td>31,512,070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>50,362</td>
<td>20,190,795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>342,239</td>
<td>43,880,640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikkim</td>
<td>7,096</td>
<td>403,612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>130,058</td>
<td>55,638,318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tripura</td>
<td>10,486</td>
<td>2,744,827</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>294,411</td>
<td>138,760,417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>88,752</td>
<td>67,982,732</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Andaman and Nicobar Islands | 8,249 | 277,989 |
| Chandigarh                 | 114   | 640,725 |
| Dadra and Nagar Haveli     | 491   | 138,542 |
| Daman and Diu              | 112   | 101,419 |
| Delhi                      | 1,483 | 9,370,475 |
| Lakshadweep                | 32    | 51,681  |
| Pondicherry                | 492   | 789,416 |


* 1991 Census has not yet been conducted in Jammu and Kashmir. The figures are as per projections prepared by the Standing Committee of Experts on Population Projections, October, 1989.*
the hills to its northeast; it is highly incised by seasonal streams emerging from the hills.

iii) The Ghaggar-Yamuna alluvial plain which forms the main body of the state; within it one can distinguish between the main upland plain on the one hand, and the peripheral floodplains along the Ghaggar and Yamuna, on the other.

iv) The sand dune infested plain, locally known as bagar, in the southwest, and sandy undulating plain in southern Haryana; these are extensions of the Rajasthan desert; and

v) The Aravalli outliers in Bhiwani, Mahendragarh and Gurgaon districts; these are badly dissected.

Except for the Yamuna which marks the eastern boundary of the state, Haryana is devoid of any perennial river. The Ghaggar, which roughly defines the boundary between Haryana and Punjab, was a mighty stream till the recent geological past but has now been reduced to a status of a seasonal stream through the process of river capture. Markanda, the Chautang and the Saraswati are its tributaries.

Besides, several rainfed torrents, locally known as choes, flow down the outer slopes of the Siwaliks. Likewise, a number of small seasonal rivulets, namely the Sahibi, Krishnawati, Indoris, and Landoha carry water along the Aravalli outliers into the southern part of Haryana. These all represent inland drainage. Their potential for irrigation is highly limited.
The underground water in Haryana is beneficial only in parts. In almost two-thirds of the state, covering the central and western parts, the subsoil water is brackish to saline. This prohibits tubewell irrigation (Map 3c).

In the piedmont plain, underground water is sweet, but deep and scarce, again posing problems for regular irrigation. To cap all this, in the state's eastern part, where water is sweet and close to the surface, waterlogging has emerged as a serious problem in the canal irrigated and low-lying pockets of Rohtak, Sonipat, Jind and Hisar districts. Evidently water is the problem over large parts of Haryana.

In spite of its small size, Haryana exhibits climatic conditions ranging from sub-humid to arid along a northeast-southwest transect. On the whole, it is subtropical semi-arid tract. This is explained by its continental location on the outer margins of the Thar desert.

Rainfall ranges from over 100 cms in the northeast to less than 25 cms in the southwest. The 50 cm isohyet divides the state into two almost equal parts: the west and the east (Map 3b). The latter is agriculturally more productive. Not only it receives a higher amount of rainfall in relative terms but also its underground water is sweet. Nevertheless it does require irrigation for an assured crop.

There is no adequate compensation from rainfall to the scarce water in the state. Additional water from the
neighbouring states is a must for meeting its irrigation and other (including for drinking) requirements. Things have not been happy on this front because its sister state of Punjab has been reluctant to part with any additional water to what Haryana could get as its share at the time of its formation.

The traditional 'land of greenery' is left with only 3.8 per cent of the area under forest cover. Vegetation is in the form of open forest on the Siwalik hills, plantation belts along the rivers, canals, railway lines and roads, and tree clusters in and around village settlements. The Aravalli outliers generally carry bushes with some sprinkling of trees.

Vegetation varies by topography. On higher elevations of the Siwalik hills, chil (Pinus roxburghii) is the main species. Hard wood species of tropical dry deciduous forests, such as chail (Anogeissus latifolus), khair (Acacia catechu), jhingan (Launea coromandelica), amaltas (Cassia fistula), dhak (Butea monosperma), and sal (Shorea robusta) occur on the northern slopes of the Siwalik hills. In more moist areas, this dry deciduous type turns into pure bamboo forest. On the outer hills, where the incidence of grazing and biotic interference is considerable, the dry deciduous type degenerates into scrub forest.

The eucalyptus and poplar predominate in the strip plantations. Shisham (Dalbergia sissoo), kikar (Acacia nilotica), neem (Azadirachta indica), and siria (Albizia lebbek) are more common in village settlements.
Haryana is distinctly deficient in wood. It is dependent on the neighbouring hill states, particularly Himachal Pradesh, for this purpose.

Haryana is covered largely by alluvial deposits. The main distinction lies between new alluvium (khadar), comprising of silty loam, along the Yamuna and the Chaggar, and the old alluvium (bhangar), comprising coarse, light or fine loam on the main upland plain. Both kinds of soils are suited to cultivation of wheat, rice, gram and barley. The old alluvium is more productive, being deep and well drained. It quickly responds to irrigation (Map 3d).

Sandy soils (bagar) are common in the western part of the state. These have high content of salt and their sub-soil water is often brackish. Average yields turn out low. Only inferior foodgrains like gram and bajra can be raised in absence of irrigation. In the south and southwest, the rocky surfaces of the Aravalli outliers are stony and infertile for any field crop.

Soils of the Siwalik hills are friable and contain beds of clay, sand and conglomerate. Similarly, soils of the piedmont plain are sandy, with pebbles, shingles and boulders lying close to the surface. These regional differences in the soil cover of Haryana get represented in varying cropping patterns and agricultural productivity in the state.

With a large part of it covered by alluvium, the state is highly deficient in mineral resources. Mineral
bearing tracts, small in extent, are confined to the districts of Mahendragarh (limestone, kankar, marble, iron ore and slate), Gurgaon (china clay, quartz, slate and silica sand) and Ambala (limestone). All minerals contribute hardly 0.10 per cent to the state's net domestic product.

It follows that nature has not been too kind to Haryana. Water, both surface and underground, is scarce. There is a complete absence of any perennial stream through the body of the state, two-thirds of underground water is brackish to saline, and about a half of it receives a rainfall of less than 50 cms. It has suffered an indiscriminate removal of its forest cover. It lacks in minerals. However, the plain topography and soils responsive to irrigation do form an asset. The realisation of the potential of this asset is, however, subject to availability of water.

Population and Settlements

Haryana was perhaps the first area of permanent settlement by the Aryans around 1500 B.C. Despite a long history of human occupancy, it remained one of the less populated parts of India for long. Reasons are rooted partly in its role as a historic marchland subject to frequent invasions and recurrent political instability and partly in lack of water resources for productive agriculture. The Haryana territory recorded a population of 4.6 million in 1901. It gave a density of 105 persons per square kilometre
as compared with 150 of Punjab, 165 of Uttar Pradesh, and 165 of Kerala.

Independence in 1947 marks a great divide in the state's demographic history for two reasons. First, there was a stupendous change in the composition of population, with a large scale efflux of its Muslim population to Pakistan accompanied by an equally massive influx of non-Muslim displaced persons therefrom. The proportion of its Muslim population got reduced from 25 to 5 per cent. Secondly, a phase of explosive growth of population started. Haryana's population multiplied threefold to 16.3 million in 1991.

The phase of explosive growth of population was the outcome of two developments. First, the extension of irrigation and reclamation of wastelands in the naili tract of Hisar and Sirsa districts and khadar-bhangar tracts of Karnal, Kurukshetra and Ambala districts attracted large scale agricultural migration from the crowded neighbouring districts, now in Punjab. The process of agricultural immigration had stabilised by the time the state was formed in 1966. Nevertheless migration to its industrial places, especially in the neighbourhood of Delhi, continued. Secondly, the expansion of health facilities in the state, as in India in general, caused a sharp decline in death rate while the birth rate came down only grudgingly. The gap between the birth and death rates in Haryana has been one of the widest in India. Social development in the state lagged
behind economic development. While the former did not permit a fast decline in fertility, the latter did cause a big drop in mortality.

Naturally, Haryana is characterised by one of the highest natural increase rates in the country. It has the discredit of having the maximum (6.30) number of children born per woman against the national average of 5.00 (Census of India, 1981). The average size of the household is also very large (6.47 persons). This is attributed not only to a high rate of natural increase but also to relatively higher frequency of joint families. The tradition of joint family system historically has been a more salient feature of rural settlements with a joint tenure of land (Baden Powell, 1988 reprint). Haryana has been slow to change on the social plane.

Haryana is now one of the more densely populated states of the country. As per the provisional figures of the 1991 Census, it has 369 persons per square kilometre as compared with 267 in India. The population density declines as one moves from east to west and northwest; this being almost two times in the east than in the west. It finds a strong association with the availability of sweet underground water and agricultural productivity (map 4a).

The population was distributed among 6,745 villages and 81 towns in 1981. The average size of a village comes to about 1,500 persons or 220 households (Map 4c). Among the towns, 11 are cities with a population of at least 100,000. Faridabad
Haryana: Population and Settlement

Density of population 1981
(Data by tahsils)

Growth of population 1951-81
(Data by districts)

Annual growth rate
3.0
2.5

First ranking Hindu castes/other religious groups
(Data by assembly constituencies)

Inhabited villages: average number of households: 1981
(Data by tahsils)

Hindu castes
- Jat
- Ahir
- Chamar
- Khatri/Arora
- Others

Other religious groups
- Muslim
- Sikh

Number
400
300
200

Map 4
Administration Complex is the biggest with a population of 330,864.

With about 22 per cent of the total population living in towns and cities, Haryana was one of the less urbanised states in India in 1981. The situation must have improved in 1991 but this can be ascertained only after the detailed data of the 1991 census become available.

**Table 2.2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Estimated percentage of total population of Haryana</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hindu Jat</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamar</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khatri/Arora</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggarwal</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahir</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balmiki</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikh Jat</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajput</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujjar</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saini</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhanak</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamboj</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meo</td>
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<td>Ror</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blishnol</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bangaru is the most common dialect spoken over a large part of the state. In urban areas, there is an increasing use of Hindi and English. The recorded mother tongue is Hindi for no less than 88.43 per cent of the total population.

The Backward Classes Commission's Report (1990) gives a clue to the caste composition of Haryana's population. The Hindu Jats make one-fourth of the total. Other agricultural castes such as the Ahir, Sikh Jat, Gujjar, and Saini, together make another 20 per cent. The trading, priestly, and service castes, such as Aggarwals, Brahmins and Punjabi Khatris, also account for about 20 per cent of the total. The scheduled (low castes), such as Chamar, Balmiki, Dhanak and others share 35 per cent of the total population (Table 2.2). All these castes do display a regional pattern in their distribution (Map 4d).

Despite the constraints posed by nature the Haryana people have tried to utilise the available resources in a meaningful manner. Their distribution corresponds to the productive capacity of different areas. The pressure of fast increasing population on the agricultural land is, however, intensifying, and there is a need for rapid diversification of economy.
The Economy

With a per capita income next only to that of Punjab, Haryana ranks high on economic development among various states of India. Its per capita income stood at Rs. 3,669 in 1985-86 as compared to Rs. 4,416 of Punjab and Rs. 2,596 of the country at current prices. The state's economy recorded an annual growth rate of 5.60 during 1966-85 against 5.18 for Punjab and 4.05 for the country as a whole. This is an index to the creditable advancement made by the state in the sphere of economy.

Agriculture is the mainstay of economy. It absorbed 60.79 per cent of the working force in 1981, as cultivators and agricultural labourers. No less than about 86 per cent of its total area is under plough. The all India figure is 46.31 per cent. About 60 per cent of the net area sown is irrigated in comparison to about 30 per cent in India. Agriculture contributed about 44.48 per cent of the state's domestic product in 1985-86 as compared with 27.30 per cent in India at current prices. The comparatively high per capita income in the state is significantly related to its progressive agriculture. (map 5:a,b).

The distribution of land is inequitable. In 1985-86, more than half of the landholdings were smaller than 2.0 hectares each and together they shared less than one-fifth of the agricultural land. Contrarily, about 5.0 per cent of the landholdings, which were larger than 10.0 hectares each, partook one-fourth of the cultivated land.

Average size of landholding declines from east to west. It is generally smaller than 2.50 hectares in the
Haryana: Agricultural Patterns

Net area sown 1984-85
(Data by tahsils)

Modes of Irrigation 1984-85
(Data by tahsils)

Average size of landholdings 1985-86
(Data by districts)

Crop combination regions 1983-84
(Data by tahsils)

Map 5
eastern part and ranges from 2.50 to 4.00 hectares in the western part of the state (map 5c).

Kharif (July to November) and rabi (December to March) are the two important crop seasons. Some catch crops are also obtained in the intervening (April to June) season. Kharif crops include rice, cotton, jowar (Sorghum vulgare), bajra (Pennisetum typhoides), maize and pulses. Among the rabi crops, wheat, gram and oilseeds are notable. Sugarcane is an annual crop sown in March/April.

About two-fifths of the total cropped area is devoted to foodgrains. Wheat is the first ranking crop over most of the state, except in the west where gram predominates, and in the southwest where bajra is the first ranking crop. Rice is the second ranking crop in the northeast where rainfall of 75 to over 100 cms is supplemented by tubewell irrigation (Map 5d).

Despite a poor mineral resource base, the state has made significant progress in industry. The growth has been impressive since 1966. The number of large and medium scale units increased from 157 to 387 and of the small scale units from 4,519 to 79,542 over the 1966-88 period.

Large and medium scale industrial units roll out a wide range of goods: tractors, motor cycles, bicycles, refrigerators, air conditioners, television sets, agricultural implements, scientific instruments, handloom linen and sanitarywares. Around one-third of the country's production of sanitarywares comes from Haryana. The state
produces largest number of tractors in the country. One out of every five bicycles in the country is manufactured here. Ambala alone accounts for more than one-third of the country's total export of scientific instruments. Yamunanagar meets 60 per cent of the defence forces' demand of ammunition boxes. Panipat, the 'weavers city of India', supplies 75 per cent of the total requirement of woollen blankets to the Indian Army. The state has benefitted a great deal from its proximity to the national capital of Delhi.

The industry in the state is, however, not linked with agriculture to any significant degree. Its markets are also generally outside the state. There is a great need for stimulating the industry-agriculture nexus so as to promote the region's economy in a desired manner.

Haryana is one of the few states in India where particularly every village is linked with a metalled road. This has been a post-1966 development. In 1966, hardly one-fifth of the villages in the state were linked with a metalled road.

Steps to develop the transportation system were taken by the British. The Mughal roads had degenerated under the Sikhs, and even the British had initially cared little for them. Apart from the Grand Trunk road, which functioned as the main arterial channel, roads were constructed by the district authorities for purely local needs of each individual district. Metalled roads radiated out mainly from
the district headquarters. Now the picture has undergone a sea change. Both intertown and urban-rural transport linkages are strong throughout the state. Every part of Haryana is actively connected by road with Delhi.

The role of railways is comparatively small, especially of passenger traffic, in this state of comparatively small size and short distances. Most of Haryana is within five hours of journey from the national capital of Delhi. It is only on the Delhi-Ambala-Amritsar railroute that both the frequency and volume of traffic is high.

**Regions of Haryana**

The above discussion helps us in formulation of a regional scheme for the state. A superimposition of the physiographic, social, economic, political and historical map of the state becomes a methodological necessity. Ultimately the regions are to be identified on the basis of their distinctiveness in total terms.

Historically, the present Haryana territory was seldom one political entity with a single focus of power as late as the middle of the nineteenth century. Either it formed a part of one or more bigger provinces or was divided within into a number of feudatory states. Boundaries of the internal administrative organisation did not conform to its present boundaries (Map 6a). Hence political history is not of much help in its regionalisation.
Haryana: Regional Divisions

**Historical regions**

- Delhi
- Agra
- Lahore
- Hisar
- Amritsar
- Amritsar (DELHI)
- Sirhind
- Sambhar
- Sambhar (Delhi)

Based on Iran Habib's An Atlas of the Mughal Empire

**Dialect regions**

- Varanasi
- Hindi
- Bengali
- Marathi
- Gujarati
- Malayalam

Based on Grierson’s Linguistic Survey of India

**Socio-Economic regions**

- I. Swatik Hills with hill pastures and general farming
- II. Central part of Haryana
- III. Northern Haryana
- IV. Yamuna area
- V. Thar or desert
- VI. The Thar area
- VII. The southern Punjab region
- VIII. Zone peripheral to the union territory of Delhi

Based on Census of India, Punjab Census Atlas, 1961

**Specific regions**

- I. (A) National Capital Region
- II. (B) Western Haryana
- III. (C) Northeastern Haryana

Boundaries:
- Regional
- Sub-Regional

50 kilometres

Map 6
Culturally, especially in respect of the dialects spoken, Haryana is a mosaic with extensions beyond its border. Vernacular Hindi is spoken in Ambala and upper part of Kurukshestra districts, Bangaru in the districts of Karnal, Rohtak, Jind, southern portions of Kurukshestra, most parts of Hisar, and Bhiwani, Bagri in the western portions of Bhiwani, Hisar, and southwest of Sirsa districts, Pachhadi along the Ghaggar valley and a little south of it, and Malvi north of the Ghaggar valley in Sirsa district and northwest parts of Hisar district, Braj Bhasha in the southeast of Gurgaon district, Mewati in southern Gurgaon, and Ahirwati in Mahendragarh, Rewari and western parts of Gurgaon districts. It is notable that there is no strict correspondence between the dialect regions and physiographic regions - the Ghaggar-Yamuna alluvial plain, the Siwalik hills, the piedmont plain, the sand dune infested plain and sandy undulating plain and the Aravalli outliers of Haryana. (Map 6b).

The Census Atlas of Punjab, 1961, divided the Haryana territory into the following regions: the Siwalik hills, dissected foothill zone, upper Yamuna-Satluj divide (Ambala district part), southwestern Punjab (Sirsa district part), central part of northern Haryana region, Karnal area, zone peripheral to the union territory of Delhi, the Hisar area and the southern Punjab. This was done on the basis of socio-economic-demographic variables. Again a correspondence between these regions and physiographic or dialect regions is lacking (Map 6c).
Indeed the developments in Haryana territory since Independence have given rise to quite a complex pattern of spatial organisation. These events include settlement of displaced persons in the newly reclaimed agricultural lands of northern Haryana as well as in towns located in its eastern belt, constitution of the National Capital Region around Delhi which covers almost one-third of the whole state, and emergence of commercial agriculture in wheat and rice in the northeastern Haryana and in cotton in the northwest. The impact of economic forces emerge as strong in the organisation of space in the state.

Keeping in view the above facts, it was deemed most meaningful to regionalise the state as follows:

1. National Capital Region* (Haryana Zone)
2. Western Haryana
3. Northeastern Haryana.

For actual delineation of the regions or their subregions, the administrative unit of tahsil (subdivision of a district; 39 in all in 1981) was adopted as the building block. This helps in any computation of socio-economic data (Map 6).

* The National Capital Region was constituted by the Government of India in 1985. It spreads over four separate political units, namely the Union Territory of Delhi, the southeastern part of Haryana, the westcentral part of Uttar Pradesh and northeastern part of Rajasthan. The goals were set to be achieved by 2001 through this arrangement: (i) a manageable Delhi, and (ii) a harmonised and balanced development of the National Capital region.
National Capital Region (Haryana Zone)

Covering the southeastern part of the state, this region spreads over an area of about 100 kilometre radius around Delhi. It includes Faridabad, Gurgaon, Rohtak and Sonipat districts as well as Rewari and Bawal tahsils of Mahendragarh district and Panipat tahsil of Karnal district. Its total area works out as 13,398.60 sq. kms or 30.31 per cent of the total area of the state.

By its very nature, it is a subregion of a national level planning region. Its most distinguishing features include: a strong interaction with the national capital of Delhi, a high degree of industrial and urban development, and massive commuting.

The region can be further divided into two zones: the inner and the outer. The inner zone is in most intimate contact with Delhi. As a result, it is urbanising fast and land prices are exceptionally high here. The outer zone, by comparison, is under a lower degree of impact emanating from Delhi. Its major link with the national capital is through commuting. Certain parts of this tract are not so developed. These include, in particular the Nuh-Ferozepur Jhirka tahsils of Gurgaon district, Bawal tahsil in Rewari district, and Maham and Jhajjar tahsils in Rohtak district. This is attributed mainly to the physical constraints to which these tracts are subject to.
2. Western Haryana

The hallmark of the Western Haryana is its sand dune infested topography and semiarid climate. Rainfall is universally less than 50 cms and underground water is generally brackish to saline. Good agriculture requires canal irrigation.

The region is further divisible into three zones: northern, middle, and southern. The northern zone, adjoining Punjab, is canal irrigated. It experienced immigration of the Sikh agriculturists when Bhakra canal system was extended to this area in fifties. Now it is noted for commercial agriculture in cotton. The middle zone is much less productive agriculturally but has been politically active. Quite frequently the chief ministers of Haryana hailed from this tract. No wonder, it is fairly provided with social infrastructure in the form of educational and health institutions, piped water supply and road transport. The southern zone is the least developed. It is deficient in infrastructure. Irrigation is highly inadequate. Inferior grains dominate the cropping pattern.

3. Northeastern Region

The northeastern region displays a balanced development of agriculture and industry. This is the hearth of the Green Revolution in wheat and rice in the state. The contributory factors included a highly dependable irrigation
system, fertile soils and progressive farmers. Agrobased industry has emerged in a big way. Urbanisation is picking up fast.

However, some striking spatial disparities are met within this region. One may, in fact, distinguish four subregions in this case. These include: (i) the Siwalik hills and the dissected foothill zone, which is honeycombed with small, deep ravines leading to extensive soil erosion, and consequently resulting in poor agriculture; (ii) the upper Ghaggar-Yamuna divide, which has traditionally been relatively developed both industrially and agriculturally, under the impact of the Amritsar-Calcutta railway route passing through it; (iii) Karnal-Kurukshetra tract where the Green Revolution met its greatest success, and the (iv) Jind plain which was earlier a part of a princely state and by that legacy is not much developed (Table 2.3).

The above regional scheme provides a summary picture of great internal differentiation within Haryana. This regionalisation provides a convenient spatial framework for any discussion. The regional differentiation in the state is, of course, of much higher order as the chapters to follow will reveal.
### Table 2.3

**Haryana : Regional Divisions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Subregions</th>
<th>Administrative units (tahsils)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Capital i) Inner zone</strong> Region (Haryana Zone)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Faridabad, Gurgaon, Bahadurgarh, Sonipat and Panipat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii) Outer zone</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gohana, Maham, Rohtak, Jhajjar, Rewari, Bawal, Nuh, Ferozepur Jhirka and Palwal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Haryana</td>
<td>i) Northern</td>
<td>Dabwali, Sirsa, Fatehabad, Tohana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii) Middle</td>
<td>Hisar, Hansi, Bawani Khera, Bhiwani, Loharu, Dadri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iii) Southern</td>
<td>Mahendragarh, Narnaul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeastern Haryana</td>
<td>i) The Siwalik hills and the dissected foothill zone</td>
<td>Kalka, northern part of Naraingarh and Jagadhri and Naraingarh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii) Upper Ghaggar-Yamuna divide</td>
<td>Ambala, southern half of Jagadhri and Naraingarh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iii) Karnal-Kurukshetra tract</td>
<td>Karnal, Assandh, Kaithal, Guhla, Pehowa, Kurukshetra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iv) Jind plain</td>
<td>Narwana, Jind, Safidon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>