CHAPTER III
GEOGRAPHICAL PERSONALITY OF MAHARASHTRA

3.1 A Very Brief Historical Background of Maharashtra:

Maharashtra also has varied stories, legends and myths in its past, as do the other States of India have. We can consider Maharashtra through three existing divisions regionally:

Western Maharashtra, Vidarbha and Marathawada.

In history, Maharashtra’s name as a whole occurs under the rule of Satavahana Dynasty and Vakatakas. Later, this Maharashtar region was rules by various powers viz. the Chalukaya, the Yadavas the khiljis of Delhi and the Bahamanis. Then, the principality of Maharashtar broke into smaller sultanates.

However, during the 17th Century, a young fighter Chh. Shivaji brought the concept of Maratha Unity. He struggled to unite the divided forces and brought them under one banner of Indians. He opposed gloriously with the then ruling Mughal Empire and kept back the Mughal invasion over the Dakkhan plateau. But after Chh. Shivaji, the descendents fell to disintegration losing power. Then the Peshawas usurped power, keeping the Chhatrapatis in title only. But, these Peshawas too collapsed in their confederacy during the battle of Panipat in 1761.

By this time, the English merchants gained power over many regions in India and ultimately they became the ruling power in India, making India a slave country. But, in 1857 Nanasaheb Peshwa rose against the British forces wherein Nanasaheb’s efforts were quashed. Later, under the leadership of Lokmanya Tilak a Mahatma Gandhi there was an altogether a different fight for freedom. It was almost a bloodless fight and much of social conscience organized against oppression. The whole of Maharashtra was at the forefront with nation-wide leaders and workers like Nehru, Patel and many other prominent thinkers and Philosophers. Even poets participated in the Non-Cooperation activity. Thus, in 1947 the British left India to become a free country.

Now, started the huge task of Nation building beginning with the breaking up of central province and Hyderabad and later bringing in Linguistic States of Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Gujarat etc. Maharashtra came into existence on 1st of May, 1960 as a result of the State reorganization scheme of the Government of India with its capital at Bombay which is now called as Mumbai.
A study undertaken by Michael Castelman 1984 dealt with knowing about the crime. It is intended for anyone who would like to become a black belt in the martial arts, live in an electronic fortress, keep a handgun by your bed or teargas in your kitchen. You don’t need to spend a great deal of money. You don’t even have to be able bodied. Despite what the mass media and many law enforcement officials say about crime “raging out of control”, regardless of your age, sex, race, occupation, income, neighborhood, physical limitations are past crime experience, and you can substantially reduce your risk of criminal victimization.

This promise rests on solid evidence. Individuals who incorporate easy-to-learn techniques into their lives can reduce their risk of assault, robbery, and rape by up to 90%, Communities that implement simple, low cost simple, neighborhood crime prevention programs can cut their crime rates up to 88%. The concept and techniques that make these rapid crime rate reductions

3.2 Geographical Setting of Maharashtra:

3.2.1 Introduction:

The State Maharashtra, ranking second among all the State in India in respect of geographical area, population and urbanization has a very wide range in physical ecological, social cultural and linguistic diversities. Therefore the State creates huge complexity in the socio economic set up of the population. The land, where Marathi is spoken today, occupies a significant position in India. The State of Maharashtra was formed on 1st May 1960 making it a unit of the Union of India. Now Maharashtra is the second largest State in India, which occupies 3, 07, 713 sq. km of land area and also holds the second rank in population size in India. The second rank in population size in India. As per 2001 census the population is 9, 67, 52, 247 which is 9.33 percent of India’s total population.
3.2.2 Location:

The state Maharashtra lies between $16^0 4'\text{ to } 22^0 1'\text{ North latitude and } 72^06'\text{ to } 80^09'\text{ East longitude.}$. The state extends about 800 km. from west to east and 750 km. in north to south orientation (fig. 1.1). Administratively the entire region has been divided into six divisions at present namely Mumbai, Pune, Nasik, Marathwada, Amravati and Nagpur divisions and which have totally thirty five districts. The geographical situation of Maharashtra State indicates that, it is located on the Western coast of India. It enjoys the coastal length of 720 kms. of the Arabian Sea. The boundaries of the State are delimited by Gujarat in the North-West, Madhya Pradesh in the North, and Chhattisgarh in the east Andhra Pradesh in the South East and Karnataka and Goa in the South.
Figure 3.1: Location Map
3.2.4 Physiography:

Physically, the State comprises three natural divisions:

1. The narrow coastal low land of Konkan
2. The Sahyadries
3. The Deccan plateau.

Geologically the whole area of the State nearly coincides with the limits of the Deccan Trap formations. Basaltic rocks known as Deccan trap underlie the lands of Maharashtra except the underground part of the Wainganga basin and a small littoral part of Ratnagiri.

The location of the Sahyadri, extending from north to south roughly parallel to the Arabian coast divides Maharashtra into clearly cut four natural divisions. Physically, the State comprises coastal lowland hilly area of the Sahyadris and it’s off shoots extending South-Eastward known as the Deccan plateau region and Tapi Purna valley region. The Shambhu Mahadeo, Harischandra-Balaghat and Ajantha-Satamala mountain ranges, again divide Deccan plateau region into three subdivisions separating:

1. Krishna basin
2. Bhima basin
3. Godavari basin
4. Tapi-Purna basin

The coastal plain called Konkan is bounded on the west by the Arabian Sea and in the east by the Sahyadris. The remaining portion of Maharashtra is a land of the high plateau of the Deccan, which starts form the Sahyadri ranges in the west and it slopes gradually east wards to Nagpur. The plateau is divided into different units such as the Ajantha hills the Godavari valley. The Balaghat plateau the Bhima basin. The Mahadeo uplands and the Krishna basin. Figure no 3.2
Source: Based on Census of India, 1981, Census Atlas Series XII Part XII, Map 3
3.2.5 Climate:

Climatically the State has a tropical monsoon type’s climate with moderate rainfall, but it varies from place to place. The State of Maharashtra has monsoon types of climate with the regional variations in the temperature and rainfall. The range of variation temperature becomes higher in the interior parts of the State. The area gets different amounts of rainfall in different areas. The areas west of the Sahyadries including Thane, Raigad, Ratnagiri and Sindhudurga districts receive heavy rains with an annual average of 200 cms. Mahabaleshwar receives a highest rainfall of 6226 mm. and a very low rainfall in the rain shadow areas of the Sahyadries get an average rainfall of 60 to 75 cms. In some areas the rainfall is less than 50 cms. It includes the districts of Nasik, Pune, Ahmednagar, Dhulia, Jalgaon, Satara, Sangli, solapur and the eastern part of Kolhapur. Vidarbha region enjoys comparatively better rainfall. An average annual temperature is 30° to 35°C. The temperature condition does not change significantly but in summer the part of Vidarbha and Khandesh have to face a high temperature more than 40°C.

Drainage:

There are several important rivers flowing from west to east and west to east directions. The western Ghat or the Sahyadris works as a water divider in the State. The rivers of Tapi – Purna system flow towards the west in the northern Maharashtra, meeting the Arabian Sea. The Deccan River and their tributaries flow down the plateau slope tilting eastward and merge into the Bay of Bengal outside the Maharashtra State. The short and swift rivers of Konkan drain from the western steep slope of the Sahyadris, into the Arabain Sea. Another isolated group of rivers wardha such as Vainganaga, Paiganaga rivers flow north-south from the
Figure 3.3 Maharashtra Rivers
eastern part of the State. Krishna Bhima Godavari, Tapi, Purna, Wardha and Vainganga are the important rivers of Maharashtra. (Fig 3.3.)

### 3.2.6 General Land Use Pattern:

The general usage of land in Maharashtra indicates that, out of the total geographical area 17.57 percent is covered by forest and 58.27 percent land is under cultivation. The area cultivated is more than the past when it was only 7.57 per cent. The total gross crop yielding area is 65.84 percent. In respect of agriculture scenario in the State, it is observed that the western Maharashtra has developed agriculture where the percentage of land under cultivation is quite more. Marathwada and Vidarbha regions have more percentage of cultivable land, but the percentage of land under irrigation is less. Physical constraints put many barriers against the development of agriculture in the Konkan region.

### 3.2.7 Agriculture:

Maharashtra could be considered as one of the heterogeneous states in the Indian union as far as the varying agro climatic conditions. The state comprises of konkan western Maharashtra, Marathwada and Vidarbh regions which represent varying types of natural, physical, social, and economical conditions quiet distinct from each other these factors influences the agricultural reforms. The regional difference in agriculture development arises due to diversities in agro climatic conditions and extension.

Agriculture in Maharashtra holds a foremost place, a key to the rapid economic development of the State. As an occupation, agriculture holds a very vital place in the life of agriculturists in Maharashtra. On par with the national level, about 70% of the population of Maharashtra is engaged in agriculture. Comparing the area under agriculture, about 68.31% of the geographical area is under agriculture which is slightly higher than the 58.26% of the nation. Both the types of agriculture subsidized and commercial are practiced in the State. While 19.70% of land of India is under irrigation, in the State it is 6.70%. The major food crops are rice, jowar, bajara, wheat and pulses, while the main cash earning crops are sugarcane, soyabean cotton and groundnut.

The Konkan area or the western coastal line is usually called as the California of India and predominantly rice, millets, ragi and various fruit crops, such as mango, cashewnut, Coconut etc. Jowar and rice are the main food crops of western Maharashtra and its cash crops are sugarcane.
groundnut, cotton, grapes and Soyabean. In Marathwada and Vidarbha region jowar and pulses are the staple food crops and the cash crops are groundnut, cotton and orange. The eastern Vidarbha has a dominant cultivation of rice.

Compared with India, Maharashtra has two important and dominant crops namely jowar and cotton. However, the cash crops like sugarcane, pulses, groundnut etc also dominate the irrigational lands cape of Maharashtra.

This general information gives us an idea of the geographical setting of the Maharashtra State. We can also summaries the influence of the people living in Maharashtra and understand their trend of life. The rivers of Maharashtra do not only irrigate the land and help to produce electricity, but they are also seats of Indian Dieties like Vithal, Tuljabhawani, Dattatraya where crores of people flock to attend the Yatri’s on the fixed dates of every year.

3.3 Economic Development of Maharashtra:

The State of Maharashtra is very rich in the availability of natural resources, but unevenly scattered throughout the State. There are abundant industrial fuel minerals like iron-ore, manganese, coal, bauxite and limestone. There are rich deposits of chromite, limestone, dolomite and various industrial clays in different parts of the State. The forest land in the State is about 64,078 sq. km. (20.82 per cent of the total geographical area). The major forest products are various timber wood and finewood and teak is mainly a money earning asset. The forest areas of Maharashtra are, the western Ghtas, Satpura ranges, shule Chandrapur areas and Gadchiroli district of the Vidarbha.

On the sea-coast of Maharashtra, fishing is another activity. Maharashtra comes next Kerala in the output of Fish. For the private and commercial fishery activity the State has a coast line of 700 km. and 87000 sq.km. of an area is available for the fishing activity. Maharashtra has great potentials for marine fisherman. There are 386 marine fishing villages and 16573 boats engaged in fishing.

Coming to the mineral resources as detailed in the first paragraph, there are rich mineral deposits in Yavatmal, Nagpur, Bhandara, Chandrapur, Gadchiroli, Raigad, Kolhapur, Ratnagiri, Sindhudurga and Thane districts. As per report of 2001, Maharashtra has mineral potential area of 38000 sq.kms. which means 12.33 per cent of the total geographical area of the State.
There are hydroelectrical and thermal power projects to meet the growing need of power which is growing every year. The State has a consumption of 29001 Kwts of electricity for domestic purposes (16.15%), 6.92% for commercial purposes, 48.01% for industry, 3.18% for traction and other purposes accounting to 25.76%. When we compare all these requirements, the State percentage is found to be rather that the national consumption.

3.4 Industrial Development:
The State of Maharashtra is highly developed in the industrial sector, rather slightly higher than the national average. Maharashtra is industrially more developed than any other State in India. It is not at all wrong to say that a very large proportion of the Maharashtra population depends on the industrial output compared to other state; the per capita industrial income is also high as compared to other states. Agro-industries play a very large role in the industrial development. We find that the industrial development is characterized by a controlled growth of industries with Mumbai and Pune as base and Mumbai Nasik urban belt. This has created an extreme imbalance regionally. Another industrial zone is found in Kolhapur and Solapur urban sectors. In Marathawada Aurangabad, Nanded and Latur districts are covered by industry. In vidarbha on Nagpur district is vasted developed industrially. Recently, the districts like Bhandara Chandrapur Amaravati and Yavatmal of Vidarbha are spreading in their industrial development. The districts of Vidarbha have a rich infra-structure with heavy mineral resources. The industries of Vidarbha produce a variety of goods like textiles, food, electrical, engineering, petro-chemical, transport equipment, sugarcane products and their machinery, rubber products, chemicals, paints etc. There are 23067 working factories about 1,160,065 workers in the whole of Maharashtra, putting it on the top rank in India. There are 122 cotton and textile mills, 98 cooperative sugar factories and four private sugar factories and the total production of sugar last year was 42 lakhs tones. The first railway track was put for traffic in 1853, to cover 35 kms between Bombay and Thana.

3.5 Transport Infra-structure:
Any or every State requires a network of transport for the development and mobility of the State. All production, distribution and travelling are interdependent. Efficient and reliable but yet competitive quick transport systems help development and it is achieved in Maharashtra. As on 31\textsuperscript{th} March 2001, the total length of rail line in the State happens to be 5,433 km, which is about 8.71 percent of the total rail length of the nation. Quite recently, the rail line of Konkan was laid
down covering the western part of Maharashtra. If the railway line network is not properly expanded the road transport becomes important and indispensable. The total road length of transport in Maharashtra is 172,565 kms., out of which 43,846 kms. of road is of cement concrete with a black top layer 88,202 kms. of road is water bound macadam and 40,917 kms. of road is unsurfaced. The length of road per 10,059 Km. in Maharashtra is 56.21 kms. The state has four important National High Ways covering a length of 2,959 kms. These high ways are recently well developed. The State High Ways having a length of 30,975 kms are daily used by vehicles which are about 27,03,355 in number. This number is about 12.58 percent of the national number of vehicles. Besides this, the State has aqua transport and air transport connecting all the major regions of the nation. Bombay or Mumbai is the capital of Maharashtra and an all time port, which is connected with the major ports of the world, side by side the connection by road and railway. (Figure 3.4)

3.6 Demographic Characteristics:

The State of Maharashtra has a total population of 9,67,52,247 persons according to 2001 census, which is 1.33 percent of the national population. The scheduled caste and the scheduled tribes population in Maharashtra comes to 6.34 percent and
10.80 percent which comes to caste and scheduled tribes population respectively. In Maharashtra, about 61.28 percent population is rural while in India it is 74.28%. About 38.72% population is urban. The comparative analysis of the growth of rural and urban populations of Maharashtra for the last five decades shows that the total population of Maharashtra has increased from 23.60 percent to 25.43 percent.

3.6.1 Density of Population:
Calculating from the census of 2001, the density of population of Maharashtra comes to 314 persons per sq. km. The average density of population in 2004 in Maharashtra was 314 persons per sq.km. and in India it was 267 persons per sq. km. The highest dense population is found in greater Bombay districts and the lowest density of population is observed in Gadchiroli district. In the study of the five regional districts along the Bombay-Bangalore National Highway except Nagpur shows a very high density of population. More than 300 persons per sq.km. are found to live in. The lowest density of population is found in Gadchiroli district only.

The observation and study of the density pattern study indicates that 53.34 percent area of the State shows a higher density of population 72.73 percent of class I cities are housed in 46.66 percent area of the State. This indicates lower density of population where 27.77 percent cities are existing.

3.6.2 Sex – Ratio:
The sex-ratio of Maharashtra worked out for 1991 census is a bit higher i.e. 935 females as against 1000 males. This ratio is higher than the national levels of 1901, 1911, 1941, 1981, 1991 and 2001. For the years 1921, 1931, 1951 and 1961 the national ratio level is higher than the State level. But for the year 1971, the State sex-ratio is exactly equal to the national level. The analysis of sex ratio reveals that most of the sea-side districts, drought affected zones of Maharashtra, the tribal areas of Dhule district Nandurbar, Bhandara, Gadchiroli, Gondia and Chandrapur districts have a very high sex-ratio. The four districts Raigad, Ratnagiri, Sindhudurga and Satara show a higher male percentage that is more that 1000 female as against per 1000 males. Most of young males who are from the working population periodically who migrate to important industrial centers.
3.6.3 Literacy Ratios:

Maharashtra is considered as one of the most advanced States in India, with an emphasis on primary and higher education. A glance at the figures for the last three decades brings out that the literacy rates in the State are very high when compared to existing national level. The percentage for literacy in Maharashtra is 54.53 percentages while for India as whole it is 52.11 percent in the census year of 1991. The 2001 census reveals that the literate population of India is 77.27 percent. The Konkan districts, western Maharashtra and Vidarbha show a comparatively higher literate population (more than percent). The Marathwada districts and tribal areas of Dhule, Gadchiroli show lower percentage of literacy within the study area. The Maharashtra State occupies nearly a pivotal position in India and in much respect it marks a transitional activity in geographical and cultural exchanges between the North and the South. There is however homogeneity in all the respects whether physical or cultural traits. The cultural identity as Indians is very significant in the physiographic homogeneity all over the State.