TOPIC NO. 1

INTRODUCTION

The origins of man are still the subject of considerable dispute, speculation concerning this being based on a limited number of fragments of skeletons, some of the earliest of which have been discovered in recent years in East and North-east Africa. Modern man (Homo sapiens) can be traced back for over a million years but, during most of that period, the number of people on earth was very small in comparison with the present population. Rates of population growth were very slow, and the economic basis of existence was hunting and food-gathering. Primitive communities with this type of economy gradually spread, possibly from early bases in tropical Africa and Asia, to occupy much of the world. As recently as 10,000 years ago, when man first began to cultivate crops and domesticate animals, estimates suggest that the entire world population probably totaled only 5 million, a figure roughly equivalent to the present populations of small countries such as Denmark or Scotland.

This period of economic change when man first became a farmer rather than a hunter (often described as the Neolithic Revolution) drastically altered the relationship between man and his environment, and further changes followed. These included the development of permanent rather than the earlier shifting cultivation, the introduction of new technological aids such as the plough, increases in production and exchange of agricultural and other commodities (which in turn helped to make possible the growth of cities) and the discovery of how to smelt and make use of metals. During the long period between the Neolithic Revolution and the beginning of early modern times (in about 1650) population is thought to have increased at a considerably faster rate on average than in the pre-Neolithic era, though no doubt the rate fluctuated through time and between different groups.

The total world population probably reached 500 million by about 1650 and has since grown at an ever-increasing rate. Between 1650 and 1830, a
period of 180 years, the total population approximately doubled to reach 1,000 million. In the following hundred years it doubled again and since 1930 it has doubled yet again, exceeding 3.7 Billion in the mid 1970s according to many estimates. If some forecasts prove correct the next doubling will take only thirty-five years, so that by the year 2011 the world population could total approximately 7 Billion, though the most recent evidence suggests that the rate of increase is at last beginning to slow down slightly. An increase on anything approaching this scale in such a short space of time is extremely difficult to comprehend, however, amounting to an average annual increase of about twice the present population of the United Kingdom, or more than a thousand times the number of people that fill Wembley Stadium on FA Cup Final day. The possibility of population growth on such a scale is seen by many people as a serious threat to man’s survival. The use of terms like ‘population explosion’ tends to encourage such concern and it is easy to view the future of the world with considerable gloom. If the situation is to be understood, however, it is important to examine what has happened in the recent past so that likely future developments can be more fully appreciated and assessed.

The role of geographers in the study of population patterns in the past, although closely tied to the general development of historical demography, is worthy of note in three respects. First, geographers have made distinguished contributions to historical demography per se, without necessarily developing a distinctively ‘geographical’ approach; second, some of the main advances alluded to above have been made by scholars unaided by a geographical training; third, as is broadly the case with contemporary studies of population geography, geographers have been rather more active in the field of migration than in studies of fertility, mortality or the family. This is particularly so in the development of theoretical innovation.

A recent general observation on progress in the field has been that ‘European historical demographers are catching their breath on a cloudy ledge’ where, after a quarter century scrambling up a steep slope, the results of parish-
level, family reconstitution studies are showing how complex was the European experience and how inadequate old theories may be in coping with such diverse research results. One of the difficulties is precisely related to the problem of geography: not only how to measure geographical variations accurately and consistently, but above all how to explain them and relate them to the wider social and economic environment.

Consistent with the general philosophy of the subject, population geographers in India have been concentrating on studying population in the spatial perspective, dealing essentially with spatial distributions, spatial associations and spatial interrelations. In explaining the spatial patterns of population phenomena, there is a general tendency to confine consideration to elements of the physical environment. It is a legacy of the once dominant man-environment. The social, economic, cultural and political correlates have received far less attention than they deserve. In fact, the whole universe needs to be searched to unravel the truth as far as cause-and-effect relationships are concerned.

Population geography is generally studied empirically in India. The ‘from-facts-to-theory’ approach is the chief guiding principle with most population geographers. Not that there is anything wrong with it, or that it is less scientific in any way, but there is an equal need to match this method with the theoretical approach from theory-to-facts’. There is no dualism between the two. The two are, in fact, interdependent and interrelated. The simultaneous use of the two approaches will serve better the cause of promoting not only population geography but geography as a whole.

Population Geography is a recently developed branch of human geography since 1953 when Trewartha deplored the neglect which population geography has been suffering at the hand of geographers and made a strong case for it. This branch of geography has awakened a great deal of interest among geographers which is evidenced by the detailed bibliography on population geography compiled by zelinsky2. In these studies more attention was
paid to the distribution and numerical growth of population other aspects of populations like sex-ratio, literacy occupation all structure urbanization etc. were dealt with in very few geographical researches.

The determinant of population characteristics also have spatial variation moreover population in its varied aspects extents a powerful influence in evolving the total character of an area. It is pivotal element in geography around which all other phenomena are oriented man’s interest in studying his own species is an usual thing since nothing is more important to man than the man himself and also most of the characteristics of population are quantifiable and map able.

The population geographers do not perform a distinctive function in any study of population. Whereas the demographers are interested in establishing population theories based upon quantitative observation.

Ackerman has stated that geography treats areal differentiations have time dimension most of the western geographer favor population study by systematic approach. However with the recent behavioral revolution in geography an increasing emphasis has been put up on looking beyond the simple spatial patterns of various attributes of population.

Geographical study of population growth & characteristics is of vital importance for understanding it’s dynamism as well as for planning at the local and regional levels.

**Brief History of Sindhudurg District –**

Sindhudurg district was established on 1 May 1981. It is the southern part of the greater tract known as Konkan, which is historically famous for its long coast line and safe harbors, and was previously part of Ratnagiri district. Sindhudurg district now comprises eight tahsils: Sawantwadi, Kudal, Vengurla, Malvan, Devgad, Kankavli, Vaibhavwadi and Dodamarg. The word Konkan is of Indian origin and of considerable antiquity, though its origin has never been sufficiently explained.
The seven kingdoms of the Konkan of Hindu mythology are mentioned in the 'Hindu History of Kashmir' and are said to have included nearly the whole west coast of India. The Pandavas, are said to have passed through this region in the 13th year of their exile and had settled in this area for some time. The Raja of this region Veerat Ray had accompanied them in the famous war at Kurukshetra with the Kauravas. In the second century A.D. The great empire of Mauryas annexed all the Konkan coast. In the middle of the sixth century, kings of the Maurya and Nala dynasties appear to have been ruling in the Konkan. The district of Ratnagiri was under the Silahars and the capital of their kingdom was probably Goa and later it may have been transferred to a more central place in the vicinity of Ratnagiri or Kharepatan.

Chandrapur was one of the most ancient towns in Kokan, probably founded by Chandraditya, a son of the Chalukya king Pulakeshin II. The 16th century saw the advent and rise of Portuguese power on the west coast of India and Sindhudurg was no exception. The sultan lost hold on the district in 1675 with the rise of Shivaji leading finally into the hands of Marathas. Marathas continued to the district till 1817 i.e. when the struggle between the British and the Peshvas came to an end and the whole of Konkan was transferred to the British. In 1819 South Konkan was formed as a separate district with its headquarters first at Bankot and later at Ratnagiri. Three northern subdivisions were transferred to Thane District in 1830 and the district was reduced to a sub-collectorate level under Thane district.

In 1832, it was again made a full-fledged district and named as Ratnagiri district. In the year 1945, a new mahal (tahsil) called Kankavli Mahal (tahsil) was formed. The former Indian state of Sawantwadi was merged with the district and the taluka boundaries were reorganized in the year 1949. In the same year the new taluka of the Sawantwadi was created and two new mahals namely Kudal and Lanja were formed. With the reorganization of the states in 1956, the district was included in the Bombay state and since 1960, it forms a part of Maharashtra. The name of the district has been adopted from the famous sea fort of Sindhudurg. This was built by Shivaji Maharaj near Malwan and it literally
means 'Sea Fort'. Its construction started on November 25, 1664 and after 3 years it was completed in such a fashion that it could not be seen easily by the enemy coming from the Arabian Sea.

**The study region**

Sindhudurg district is the southern part of the greater tract known as the "konkan" which is historically famous for its long coastline and safe harbors. Sindhudurg district was a part of the Ratnagiri district. But for administrative convenience and Industrial and agriculture development Ratnagiri district was divided into Ratanagiri and Sindhudurg with effect from 1st May 1981. Sindhudurg district now comprises the taluka of Devgad, Vaibhavwadi, Kankavli, Malvan, Vengurla, Kudal and Sawantwadi. After 1991 census new tahsil Dodamarg was created by transfer of 56 villages from Sawantwadi Tahsil.

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Sindhudurg District is one of the district of South Maharashtra situated along the west coast and forming the part of the Konkan. The Sindhudurg district lies between $15^\circ 37'\ N$ to $16^\circ 40'\ N$ North latitude and $73^\circ 19'\ E$ to $74^\circ 13'\ E$ East Longitude covers an area about 5207 sq.km. And having total population of 868825 persons according to 2001 census. There are 743 inhabited villages and 4 towns, having population density 164 persons per Sq.K.m. Administrative district is sub-divided in to eight talukas. The district has a coast line of about 121 k.m. The streams which flow from the sahyadri towards the sea have formed basins at places between the hill ranges and on the coastal plains. The height of the region varies from sea level up to 1300 m.

**Aims and objectives of the Research Study**

1) To study the population growth of Sindhudurg district.

2) To study the distribution of population in Sindhudurg district

3) To study the density of population in Sindhudurg district.

4) To study the structure of population in Sindhudurg district.

**HYPOTHESIS**

*Demographic characteristics are change according to decade*
Source of data collection:-

The present study is mainly based on the primary and secondary data. All the required data has been collected from various sources.

The secondary data has been collected from the various following sources.

1) District census Hand book Sindhudurg.
2) Socio-economic review and district statistical abstract of Sindhudurg.
3) Various branch offices of Sindhudurg Zillah Parishad.
4) Taluka Panchayat office and village Panchayat.
5) Various Municipal Corporation offices of the Sindhudurg District.

Besides this information regarding the proposed study has been taken from various reports and journals.

Methodology:-

In the present study various quantitative methods has been used to study the demographic characteristics of Sindhudurg Districts. Specially used Gibes Method, Rn Method etc. The maps and the diagrams will be prepared from various data and their interpretation support to the present study.
The present research work can prove to be beneficial for the following factors.

1. For planning Economic development in the district.
2. For planning social and political development in the district.
3. To form various governments schemed at center and state level in the district.
4. For the proper implementation of various government schemes at center and state level in the district.
5. For preparing various plans regarding family planning, literacy, population growth etc. in the district.
6. To chalk-out various schemes for the upliftment of rural area in the district.
7. To prepare plan for the welfare of the Back-ward class people in the district.
8. To implement schemes for the development of backward class women in the district.
9. To chalk-out plan for the development of health facilities in the district.