3. TOPOGRAPHY AND GENERAL FEATURES

3.1 Soil Types

The soils in the district can generally be classified into three types, i) Black or ‘Kali’, ii) Red or ‘Tambat’ and laterite and iii) the Grey or inferior quality locally known as barad including white or ‘pandhari’ or coarse shallow soil. The barad soil is poor in fertility. The plains in Kopergaon and Shrirampur talukas have comparatively a good depth of soil. While tracts of deep rich lands are found near Pravara and Godavari rivers. At the centre of Shrigonda and Karjat the land is very poor with occasional pathes of good light soil near Karjat and other places. In the hilly areas to the west of Akola red soil, deeper on the slopes than on the plains is to the west of Akola red soil, deeper on the slopes than on the plains is found, the main soil types are high level, red to reddish brown, lateritic soil and light brown to dark brown, shallow, gravelly loams in the ghat zone.

The narrow strip of land west to the ghat zone (Akola) which receives rainfall 2000-3000 mm, has some major soil groups viz., non lateritic to reddish-brown, shallow, light textured soils and brown to dark-brown, medium deep loams to clay loams.

Table 3.1 Types of Soil occur in different tehsils of the district are given below;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Medium soil and in some parts Deep Black soil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kopergaon</td>
<td>Reddish brown soil along hills, coarse shallow soil and Deep Black soil in some areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akola</td>
<td>Different type of the soil found are Coarse Shallow soil, Medium soil and Deep Black soil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sangamner</td>
<td>Medium soil to Deep Black soil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shrirampur</td>
<td>Medium soil and Deep Black soil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevasa</td>
<td>Coarse Shallow soil, Medium soil and Deep Black soil in some areas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The prominent ranges here as follows:
3.2 Sahyadri Hill Ranges

Mountains and hills: It forms a natural boundary between Ahmednagar, Thane and Nasik districts. The north-west part is highly rugged due to this range. It gives an appearance of a high wall of rock about 100 m high when viewed from the west from the lower levels of Murbad lowland in Thane district.

3.3 Kalsubai range

It forms the boundary between Ahmednagar and Nasik districts and spreads over some 40 km and is northern most of the three spurs branching at Kulang/East of Kulang is the twin fort of Alang. Then comes the series of rocky and precipitous peaks with the general pyramidal form averaging 1500m in height followed by Kalsubai 1646 m, a conical summit, which is the highest point in Maharashtra State. The next noteworthy peaks are Palan, Bitangad, (1427 m) and Mahakali. The range here continues northwards to the hill fort of Patta and Avandhe. Further north the Kalsubai range takes a south-eastern direction running parallel to the Kulang spur and enclosing the valley of Mahalungi. This range after running through the southern parts of Sinnar taluka of Nasik district enters Sangamner and after a further course of 25 km ends abruptly with the hill Dudheshwar (837m).

3.4 Adula Range

The Adula hills branch off from the main Kalsubai range near the peak of Patta and runs southwards at an average elevation of 900 m carrying above the flat topped plateau and open jungles on the steep hill slopes. The range abruptly ends about 2 km northwards of Sangamner, the other spur branching off from Kalsubai range in Bittangad peak also running with an easterly trend, parallel to Adula range. The river Adula has carved its valley between these spurs.
3.5 Baleshwar range

The second great spur of Sahyadri branches is at Ratangad 11 km south-east of Kulang, completely traversing the Akola and Sangamner talukas, thus forming the watershed between Pravara in north and Mula in the south. On this range east of Ratangad are a series of lofty, craggy peaks such as Katra dongar, Mura, Wakarai, Shripunj, Ghanchakkar (1,532 m), Bahiroba and Shindola. The range culminates with Baleshwar. Pemgad fort is at the end of one these spurs extending to north-west between Baleshwar and Hevargaon which is the last notable peak in the range in the Chandanpuri valley. East of Hevargaon, the hills decrease in height and subside in open plain west of Rahuri. This range is about 100 km long.

3.6 Harishchandra-gad range

This is the longest range which leaves Sahyadri at Harishchandragad which forms the main watershed between the Godavari and the Bhima tributaries. For the first 25km its direction is eastward. The Mula River flows between it and the Baleshwar range. This range forms the boundary between Ahmednagar and Pune districts. Near Brahmanvada the range gradually decreasing in height turns to the south-east direction and enters Parner taluka and traverses through its widening into a plateau of Kanhore 850 m above the mean sea-level and 200 m above the bed of Ghod River. Near Jamgaon in Parner taluka the flat-topped ridge shoots to the north to form a watershed between the tributaries of the Godavari and the Bhima. The main ridge continues further south-east, gradually widening into a flat level country known as Balghat that extends far into the districts of Marathwada. The length of the hills from the main line of Sahyadri to Balghat is about 200 km. The branch of this range leaving Kanhore plateau crosses the north-eastern corner of Shrigonda taluka and enters Karjat taluka.
3.7 Plateau

The Ahmednagar plateau between Harishchandragad range and Baleshwar has an average width of 50 km and has a trend north-west to south-east along the length of the district from Akola in the north-west to Jamkhed in south-east. The average elevation is of over 900 m in the west and less than 600 m in the east having a general south-easterly slope.

3.8 Valley

On the either side of the Ahmednagar plateau are river plains sloping towards the Godavari and the Bhima rivers respectively.

3.9 Rivers

The two major rivers of Maharashtra namely the Godavari in the north and the Bhima in the south are responsible for the drainage of Ahmednagar district in addition to this a number of tributaries rising within the district drain the area of the district, in general south-eastern areas.

3.10 Godavari river

It drains by far the larger part of the district Nevasa, Shevgaon, the north half of Parner and parts of Ahmednagar and Jamkhed. It rises in the Tryambak hills of Nasik district on the eastern slopes of Sahyadri and enters Ahmednagar district at Wadgaon in Kopargaon taluka. It flows south-east through rich alluvial plains. It forms the boundary between Ahmednagar and Aurangabad districts. About 3 km east of Mungi village the river has an overall length of 200 km within the district. The bed of the river for most part is sandy.

3.11 Pravara river

The Pravara rises in the eastern slopes of Sahyadri between hill fort of Kulang and Ratangad, after the course of 20 km in the hilly terrain between Kalsubai and Baleshwar ranges in an eastern direction, it falls near the village Renod into a rocky chasm 60 m deep, then widens for about 13 km through a narrow glen that opens into wider valley below the central plateau
of Rajur. After flowing across this valley the river enters the Desh, part of the Akola taluka. It flows easterly through Sangamner and Rahuri. It falls into the Godavari at Pravara Sangam near the village of Toka. The total length of the Pravara is 200km. Besides these other rivers in the area are Adula River, Mula River and Bhima River.