SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

The district of Kinnaur, till recently a relatively 'closed area' had some communication for socio-economic matters with Tibet before Independence. However, after Independence and more particularly since Chinese invasion in 1962, the region has been led by the changed context of circumstances to look towards the mother country for all its needs and interaction. It was only on May 1, 1960 that the region was made an independent district. Earlier, it was a part of the erstwhile Mahasu district (now Simla district) and prior to 1948 it was in the princely State of Rampur Bushahr. Located along the international border in the Trans-Himalayas, the region suffers from extremely rugged terrain, severely cold climate and high degree of inaccessibility. With the initiation of socio-economic development, and continuously increasing contact with other areas of the country, the demographic characteristics of the region have been undergoing far reaching changes since 1951, especially after 1962.

In view of the physical constraints only about 2.16% area of the district is inhabited. The rest is all empty land from the demographic point of view. The population settlements are found strung along the river valleys alone and thus present a dendritic pattern of distribution. The
population distribution in this region is a function of the availability of relatively level land which can be put to terraced farming. The terraceable land is found only along river valleys. Elsewhere the slopes are too steep for terracing or ploughing. River valleys being gorgeous almost everywhere, the stream water can be rarely used either for irrigation or for drinking purposes. Water for these purposes is obtained from springs and check dams. For irrigating the fields, the water is further transported by means of Kuhals which are zig zag contour water channels.

The total population of the district is contained in 77 census villages. A census village in the region, is a cluster of 4 to 6 hamlets grouped together for revenue purposes. The population of a hamlet normally ranges between 150 and 200 persons. The census villages located in the humid parts enjoying relatively good conditions for agriculture are comparatively heavily peopled. The census villages that have become 'service centres' and the ones located on relatively more flat land contain more hamlets than villages located in bitterly cold areas and away from the main river valleys. At the village level, caste wise segregation is a common feature. The huts of the scheduled caste people (Harijans) are located away from the non-scheduled caste (Swarans, only Rajputs in this context) people. Even among the Harijans, the Chamang community whose traditional occupation pertains to the disposal of dead animals, flaying and tanning of hides and skins
and making and or mending of shoes have their houses at a distance from those of the blacksmiths, carpenters and other Harijans of the area.

Nearly 73% of the total population of Kinnaur is found distributed along the main Satluj valley, which forms the nucleus of Population Geography of the district. Rest of the population lives in the tributary valleys of the Satluj. Thus the entire human population of the region is confined to the Satluj river system.

The density of population at the village level, in general corresponds to the availability of arable land, productivity of soils, sufficiency of rainfall, and the provision of irrigation facilities. Nevertheless, it so happens in the context of the study region that the areas suffering from extremely rugged terrain, low rainfall, poor soils and inadequate irrigation are situated near the international border which became sensitively strategic after the Chinese aggression in 1962. The influx of defence personnel in these areas increased the human pressure on limited land resources. Consequently the general as well as nutritional density in these areas has risen steeply. Moreover, the area around district headquarters also received a large number of migrants to man civil administration, developmental work and miscellaneous activities. Consequently this tract has also come to be characterised by high arithmetic and nutritional density. However, it is pertinent to point out here that in the case of military posts the present situation does not refer
to normal living as in other parts. By way of supply of subsidised rations, these areas are partly dependent on the resources of other areas.

Barring 1911-21 decade when influenza epidemic caused a decrease by 0.98% in the population of the region, the growth rate has always been positive. However, till 1951 the growth rate has never been above 10%. During the post-independence period there has been a regular and substantial decline in mortality, accelerating the rate of growth. In addition, with the beginning of socio-economic development in 1952 the growth rate has been further rising (18.87% in 1951-61 and 21.61% in 1961-71) in the district. Thus the growth during 1951-71 has resulted from declining mortality, socio-economic development of the region and immigration of labourers, technical hands, civil servants, defence and allied personnel. The zones of rapid population growth form bands along the National Highway-22 and the service centres.

In terms of migration it has been found that whereas there is male dominated immigration of floating population to the region, some natives after coming in contact with other areas have started outmigrating for higher education and employment. Earlier to that an average Kanaura hesitated to outmigrate and only some people with flocks of sheep temporarily moved out of the region during winters. In and out migration have led not only to the general awakening of the people but also in increasing literacy, intra-regional mobility, changing patterns of sex ratio, relative occupational diversification, and has created dents on the traditional outlook.
Earlier because of the apathy of feudal rulers, lack of means of transport and communication, want of appreciation of education, inadequate educational facilities and almost primitive living, literacy was deplorably low, more particularly among the females. Nonetheless, with speeded efforts of socio-economic development the literacy rates have started rising and the same have been augmented by business bound immigration. The overall general literacy rate has risen from 8.51% in 1951 to 37.02% in 1981. The female literacy rate which stood at 2.15% in 1951 has moved up to 20.78% by 1981. In spatial perspective, literacy is higher in areas located along the roads, service centres and defence posts. The areas situated in the interior, having a good chunk of Harjian population and still largely bound to farming and livestock rearing, are at a lower rung of the ladder in literacy.

Sex ratio which had earlier been high in relation to the state and country as a whole started falling steeply after 1951 and more particularly in the post Chinese-invasion period. It was only 887 (females per 1000 males) in 1971. The heavy immigration of male selective civil servants, technical workers, construction workers and military as well as para military personnel has reduced (on the average 700) the sex ratio in settlements lying along the roads, service centres and defence posts. The remote village still unaffected by immigration have relatively high sex ratios (Above 1000).

Difficult terrain, high degree of isolation, bitterly cold winters, demuded as well as stony soils elsewhere compel
almost every able bodied hand to do one or the other job to earn a living. Moreover, there is no taboo against the women participating in economic activities. Thus 60.52% of the population forming work force in the region, as compared to 32.9% in the country and 36.95% in Himachal Pradesh as a whole, is indicative of the pressing economic compulsions. Agriculture (68.47%) of the total work force in 1971) continues to be dominant occupation although it has shown a decrease of 1.53% in relation to 1961. With the progress in economic planning and increasing contact with other areas, the traditional occupations like agriculture and household industry have been losing ground while occupations like trade and commerce, other services (civil services, technical services, defence and allied services) livestock rearing and forestry have been gaining importance gradually. 'Other services' have gained by 9.51% during the 1961-71 inter-censal decade. About 31.25% of the gainfully employed persons in 1971 were engaged in non-agricultural activities. Thus the region that was once predominantly agricultural is slowly moving towards occupational diversification. The areas lying along the National Highway with higher incidence of immigration have shown noticeable changes in their occupational structure.

In sum, the growing process of socio-economic development in general and the construction of roads in particular have been instrumental in a major way in bringing about visible changes in the demographic landscape of Kinnaur. The results so obtained, of course, do bear the imprint of the continuing pace of immigration of civil as well as defence personnel.