CHAPTER TWO

PROFILE OF SINDHUDURG DISTRICT AND VENGURLA TALUKA

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PART-I

2.1 Location:

Sindhudurg District, a part of the erstwhile Ratnagiri District, came to be carved out as a separate administrative District from 1 May 1981. This district comprises seven talukas, viz., Devgad, aibhavwadi, Kankavali, Malvan on the north and the remaining Sawantwadi, Vengurla, Kudal on the south.

The region has a north-south length of about 280 Km and an average width of 64 Km (east-west). The region is a coastal strip running north to south along the Western Coast of Maharashtra and Sahyadri hill ranges and lies between 15°36' and 18°50' north latitude and 73°50' to 74°36' east longitude. The coastline is about 120 Km; that of Maharashtra State is 720 Km.

2.2 Topography:

The district can be divided into three north-south belts. They are:

(i) The coastal north-south belt known as "Khalati" meaning lower strip. It has a relatively

better soil cover which supports agro-horti-cultural activities. Development dependent on water transport may also be considered in this region. The belt covers Deogad, Malvan and Vengurla talukas.

(ii) The second north-south belt known as "Valati" meaning the upper strip. This strip includes Kudal, Kanakavali and Sawantwadi.

(iii) The third belt falls on the eastern side with mostly steep slopes of Sahyadri, suitable for construction of dams for importing water; high rainfall entails forestry and horticultural development.

2.3 Climate and Temperature:

The climate of the district is humider moist. Owing to the proximity to the sea-coast, the maximum temperature crosses 35 degrees across the sea-coast and 40°C in the interior. The minimum and maximum temperature ranges between 19°C to 40°C. Again the proximity of sea always maintains relative humidity around 60 per cent in rainy season, humidity is as high as 90 per cent. Such type of climate conditions are suitable for cashew crops.

2.4 Rainfall:

The rainfall is not uniform in all the parts of the district. It increases rapidly from coast to Ghats. Amboli gets the heaviest rainfall in the district. The average yearly rainfall for the district as a whole is 3,000 mm.

2.5 Soil:

Generally the region's soil is reddish and created by passing of the rainwater through the rocks. The proportion of phosphate and calcium is less which has affected its fertility but the proportion of nitrogen and potassium is good; horticultural trees can grow very well in the region. It is estimated that about 7.5 lakh hectares of Warkas land is available in the region which could be brought under rainfed crops.

2.6 Hills and Rivers:

Most of the land surface of the district is hilly. All rivers in this district flow from east to west to join the Arabian sea. The majority of the rivers receive water from Sahyadri main range. Their personal nature is yet another limitation to their economic use.

2.7 Land Utilization:

The district's 5,040 sq km land has poor

- forest cover of just six per cent, very low net sown area of 20 per cent, while large area is not available for cultivation, which is almost 31 per cent and a large portion of uncultivated culturable land, as much as 15 per cent, includes fallow.

TABLE 2.1

Pattern of Agricultural Land-holdings 1989

Size of holding	Sindhudurg	Maharashtra (excluding Gr. Bombay) % share
Below 2 hect.	75.13	36.20
2 to 10 hect.	21.68	40.80
Above 10 hect.	33.19	23.00

Source: Development potential of Sindhudurg District - Draft Report, 1992.

From the above table it would be seen that three-fourths of the land-holdings in the district are below 2 hectares. Most of these are also without any irrigation facilities and grow just one crop a year, which is characterised by subsistence farming all round, since agriculture is the main occupation of the district.

• 2.9 Horticulture & Agriculture:

TABLE 2.2

Present and Estimated Future Areas Under Main Horticultural Crops

Crops	1981-82 in hect. (%)	2001 in hect. (%)
Mango	9,400 (31.34)	86,500 (39.12)
Cashew	11,400 (37.87)	1,11,500 (50.41)
Coconut	6,800 (22.59)	12,000 (5.42)
Kokam	-	-
Jackfruit	2,500 (8.30)	5,180 (2.34)
Chikku	-	6,000 (2.71)
	31,100(100%)	221,180(100%)

The above table indicates that horticulture is the main hope of the district. Among all crops, cashew gets the highest priority as far as area under main horticultural crops is concerned. Out of the total geographical area of 29.37 lakh hectares in the region, only 27.91 per cent is net sown area, which is the main economic means of livelihood for generations.

2.10 Ecology:

Sindhudurg is an ecologically sensitive district. The ecological and economic degeneration process of

over 2,000 years has already degraded the free cover, silted its creeks and rivers and soil erosion poses a potential danger to its beaches as well. Hence it is necessary to take special care of these natural endowments where agricultural and horticultural activities are predominant.

2.11 Irrigation:

Agriculture in the region largely depends on the monsoons and surface water in the streams and rivers, none of which is perennial, while well irrigation accounts for only 8 per cent in the year 1989-90. Experience shows that utilization of irrigation from ground water source is always more than that from surface water. Ground-water irrigation is also more productive than surface water. This unerlines the need for greater exploitation of ground water resources in the district.

2.12 Population:

The district has population over 8.3 lakhs which is predominantly rural. The degree of urbanisation is 6.54 per cent only. This implies a poor agrarian economy with low level of development.

2.13 Transport:

With the consideration of topography of the district, spread of human dwellings and scattered natural

resources, the existing road length appears to be inadequate.

The Konkan Railway is expected to ply by the end of 1995. It will help to reduce the transport cost of, especially, the bulk primary produce.

2.14 Distribution of Workers:

TABLE 2.3

Percentages of Different Types of Workers

Type of Worker	Sindhudurg
Cultivators	63.63
Agricultural labourers	8.70
Household industry workers	2.37
Other workers	25.30
	100.00

Source: Census office, Maharashtra Region Bombay.

This table shows that cultivators very very much outnumber agricultural labourers in the district. But this does not in any way affect agricultural prosperity.

PART-II

Profile of Vengurla Taluka

2.15 Location:

Vengurla Taluka is in newly constituted Sindhudurg District which is part of the Western coastal zone

of Maharashtra known as 'Konkan'. The entire Konkan belt falls under heavy rain zone. The agriculture has remained very much traditional and depends on monsoon. Most of the agriculturists in this Taluka come under the category of small and medium farmers and agricultural labourers.

2.16 Topography:

The coastal north-south belt known as 'Khalati' meaning lower strip has a relatively better soil cover which supports agro-horticultural activities. Development depends on water transport is also notable in this region. The belt covers Deogad, Malvan and Vengurla Talukas.

2.17 Climate and Temperature:

The climate of the Taluka is humid moist due to proximity to the sea-coast. The maximum and minimum temperature ranges between 34.5°C and 20°C Such type of climatic conditions are beneficial for cashew crops.

2.18 Rainfall:

In Vengurla taluka the normal rainfall in the year is 285.2 mm. The months of June and July show the highest rainfall to the extent of 80.7 and 94.8 mm respectively. The rainy-season

• extends to about 100 days per year in this taluka.

2.19 Soil:

The soil is reddish and created by the passing of the rainwater through the rocks. The land which is available for the cultivation in this taluka is not suitable for the production of foodgrains but suitable for the horticultural production like mango, cashew, coconuts, etc.. The agriculturists are very poor and small land-holders.

2.20 Transport:

The following table shows the pattern of transport facilities in Vengurla taluka.

TABLE 2.4

Road Transport Facilities in Vengurla Taluka

Taluka	Length of road in Km	Length in Km per 15000 persons	Length in Km per 100 sq Km area
Vengurla	248.85	2.9	75.9

Sourece: Supdtg. Engineer P.W.D. Sindhudurg Circle

The transportation of this region was dependent on Katchha roads until the nineteenth century. The situation has alightly improved in the last few years.

2.21 Important Tourist Spots:

Important tourist spots in Vengurla Taluka are as under:

(1)	Kochura:	Beach
(2)	Nivati:	Beach, Alphanso Mango Research Centre, jetty and fishing centre
(3)	Vengurla:	Harbour and beach
(4)	Reddi :	Harbour, historical place. Temple of Lord Ganesh
(5)	Ubha Danda:	Woods and beach; Sagreshwar beach
(6)	Vetore:	Hot springs, temple.
(7)	Aronda	Beach
(8)	Parule:	Temple of Adi Narayan
(9):	Pakhale:	Religious place.

2.22 Utilisation of Available Resources:

Several mineral resources such as silica ilimenite, bauxite, iron-ore, manganese ore, mica, china clay, etc. are available in smaller quantities. The available minerals cannot be exploited because of difficulties of bulk transportation, lack of local entrepreneurship and certain policies of government in the exploiting and export, e.g., all impediments it the export of iron-ore, bauxite, etc. will have to be removed.

It is also necessary to encourage manufacturing

of Mangalore tiles and use of laterite stones as building material. Some research is necessary for digging and cutting laterite stones from the quarries.

(A) Agriculture:

Though agriculture has several limitations in the region, its role in dealing with the poverty situation cannot be be neglected. All efforts, therefore, need be made for full development of irrigation potential, full utilization of available agricultural lands sorting out various problems of tendencies, common holdings and providing suitable technical guidance through Benor pattern and other methods extensively.

(B) Horticulture:

There is a tremendous potential for horticultural development and a vigorous programme for bringing up horticultural crops like mango, cashew, coconut, vegetables, medicinal herbs, flowers, grass etc. could be taken up.