

## Introduction

## I. INTRODUCTION :

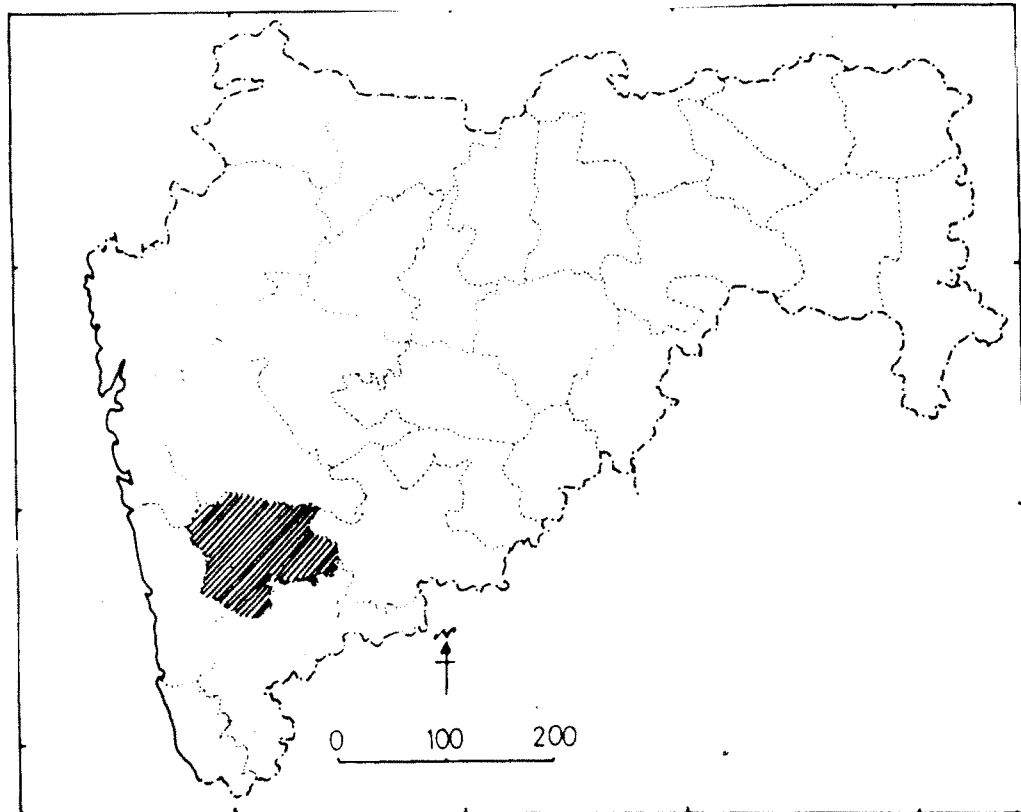
Satara is one of the thirty-one districts of Maharashtra and is one of the five districts, the group which is commonly called as "Western-Maharashtra." Satara is capital Place of this district, which has many historical backgrounds. The great king Shivaji had made foundation of Maratha empire in this region.

Satara district forms part of the Deccan Plateau  $17.5^{\circ}$  to  $18.1^{\circ}$  latitude and  $73.33^{\circ}$  to  $74.74^{\circ}$  longitude. It is bounded by four districts as Poona to its north, Sangli to its south, Sholapur to its east and Ratnagiri to its west. District comprises eleven talukas as Satara, Karad, Patan, Javali, Koregaon, Khatav, Man, Phaltan, Wai, Khandala and Mahabaleshwar. The total area of the district is 10,43,682 hectares. It is hilly district drained by Krishna, Koyana and other rivers. Small rivers as Venna, Yerala, Manganga flowing through Krishna basin. Koyana river is said to be "Bhagyalaxmi of Maharashtra."

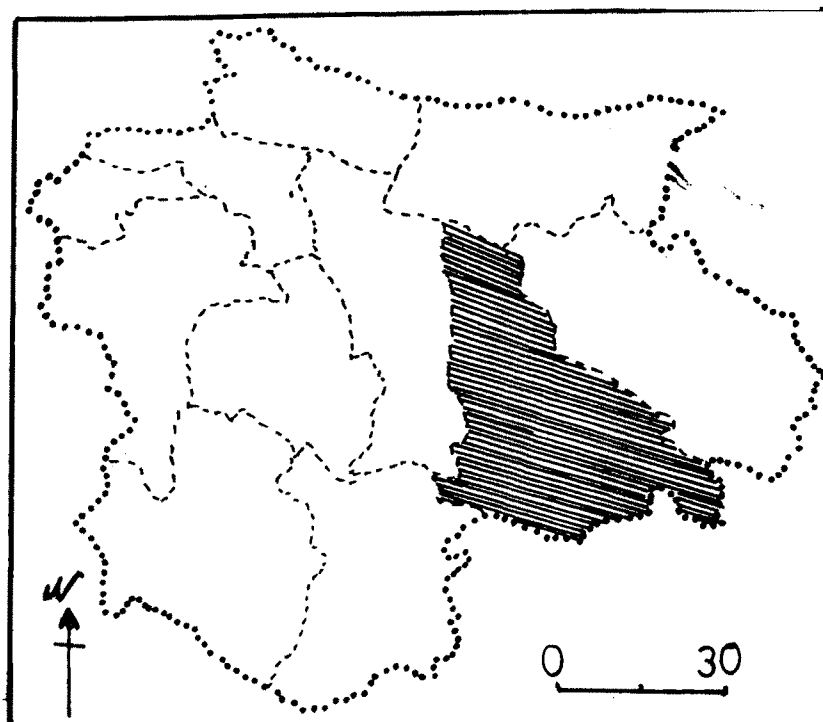
Satara has many forts like Pratapgad, Makarandgad, Ajinkyatara and Sajjangad. Mahabaleshwar is the second highest peak of Sahyadri, 1438 meters in height. It lies at the west edge of Sahyadri mountains. It gets about 6226 mm of rain. The soils in Satara district is red being of lateritic origin.

District has evergreen vegetation on Konkan side and Semievergreen on Desh-side. Eastside vegetation consists of dry

MAP I -Map of Maharashtra Showing Satara District

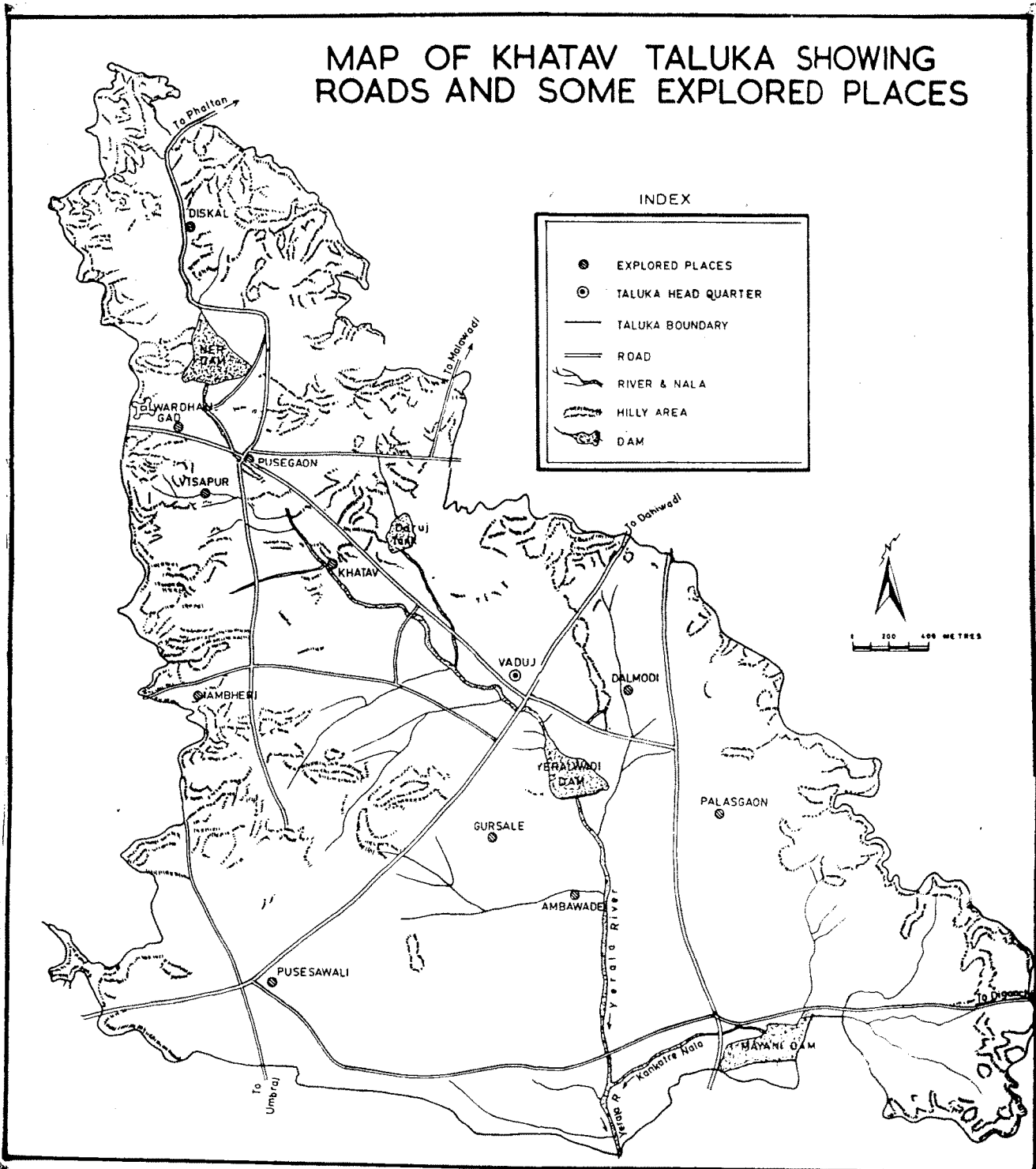


MAP II Map of Satara Showing Khatav Talukā



MAP III

# MAP OF KHATAV TALUKA SHOWING ROADS AND SOME EXPLORED PLACES



deciduous forest on desh side. In district many places are with rich variety of flora. Mahabaleshwar, Panchgani, Koynanagar, Kas (near Satara) comprising of semievergreen forests.

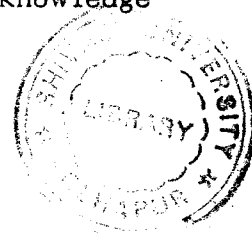
Annual rainfall is different in various places, among which Mahabaleshwar receives highest rainfall. While Man Taluka gets minimum rains.

Among the cultivated crops Rice, Bajara, Wheat, Peanut, Sugarcane, Potato, Onion, are the major crops. while Chillies, Garlic, Tomato, Sunflower, Bean, Pea, Mung, Gram, are taken as minor crops.

Khatav is one of the eleven talukas of Satara district. The area of the taluka is 1,36,457 hectares according to the figures given by Land Development Officer, Satara. This is the eastern taluka of Satara district which forms the part of the "Ghat Matha" plateau. It has got Khanapur taluka of Sangli district to its south, Phaltan taluka to its north, Man taluka to its east and Korogon taluka to its west. there are about 137 villages in the taluka and total population is about 2,07,693 (1981).

#### **Reasons for Undertaking the Present Work and its Significance :**

The western part of Satara district, rich in floristic composition has attracted attention of many workers, however very stray references on flora of western dry part of Satara district are seen in literature. To the best of my knowledge



no plants have been collected from places in Khatav taluka and no herbarium specimens from Khatav taluka are represented in major herbaria like Blatters herbarium at St. Xavier's College and Herbarium of Botanical survey of India western circle, Poona. Deshpande has explored the Flora of Satara district and it is told by authorities of BSI, Poona, that the flora of Satara district is in press. I could not get the Ph.D. thesis of Deshpande on flora of Satara district, even after requesting to authorities of Poona circle, however, in casual discussion with Deshpande, I came to know that she has not visited Khatav Taluka of Satara District during flora exploration phase. Thus there is no account of flora of Khatav Taluka.

This rain shadow area receives very less rains as compared to western part of Satara district. It differs greatly from western zone of Satara district in its physiognomy, topography and edaphic and climatic conditions. It is a dry area and obviously it possesses poor flora, however, usually it has happened in past that, botanists have paid more attention to area rich in vegetation and neglected botanically poor area. For instance, after Cooke, J.U. congesta has not been collected by anybody which grow in this taluka. There are some rare species as Oianthus urceolatus, Oianthus disciflorous, Ceropegia noorjahanii, etc. which grow in this area. Therefore, attempts have been made to study flora of the taluka which will give insight of flora of drier part of the district.



PLATE : I



CHANDKHANA HILLS



RAMDONGAR



PLATE-II



Delphinium dasycaulon, fres



Tribulus terrestris, Linn



Momordica dioica Roxb



Datura ferox





*Ceropegia noorjahaniae*, Ans.



*Ceropegia hirsuta* Wt & Arn.



*Oenanthus urceolatus* (Dalz) Benth



*Oenanthus disciflorus* Hook



PLATE IV



Striga sulphurea



Clerodendrum Seratum , L



Gloriosa superba L



Ottelia alismoides L