

CHAPTER - VI
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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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The researches in the field of natural and socio-cultural environmental setup and human health have attracted the geographers with much interest. It is true that environmental factors such as climate, flora and fauna and man's activities are major contributory factors in spreading the communicable diseases in the society. More subtle aspects of the natural environment, for example atmospheric pollution may be of adverse effect to the human health.

The work undertaken by the researcher in the field of 'Medical geography of Konkan division' is to explain the relationship between environmental factors and spatio-temporal distribution of communicable diseases in the Konkan division.

While studying the environment and its effect on distribution of diseases in Konkan division, it is found that the diseases of respiratory systems and those which are proliferated due to atmospheric pollution are the major diseases of this region. The urban medical problems are mainly related with higher degree of air pollution. In order to provide better health care to the people, the disease pattern of the Konkan region and the health behaviour of the people must be studied. It has been found out that there is a considerable increase in the incidence of cancer in major cities of the Konkan division and therefore the region requires a number of cancer hospitals, equipped with modern techniques of diagnosis and treatments.

It has been also found out that low death rate is noticed in western hilly region while eastern river plains have their high incidence. Waterborne diseases like cholera, dysentery and diarrhoea show their higher prevalence in the river basins and climate plays a major role in the distribution of diseases seasonally.

While studying the impact of socio-cultural factors, it is noted that the number of deaths are rapidly increasing in the working age group; while the age group of 1 to 14 years is the safest as the number of deaths are minimum. The districtwise cause specific death rate shows that tuberculosis, diarrhoea, cancer and pneumonia are the major diseases of the Konkan division. The occurrence of the respiratory diseases is much more in the major cities of the Konkan region. The atmospheric pollution is highly responsible for the spread of T.B., Cancer and Pneumonia in Bombay and adjoining districts. The unsafe polluted water is mainly responsible for the spread of waterborne diseases in this region.

The study of spatio-temporal analysis of communicable diseases in major cities of this region has proved the direct relationship between altered environment and spread of communicable diseases. The overcrowding, the bad insanitary provisions and urban pollution due to the rapid industrialization are the predisposing factors for the spread of T.B., Cancer and Pneumonia in the major cities like Bombay, Thana, Kalyan, Ulhasnagar,

Dombivali and some other. The ever increasing rate of industrialization is responsible for increasing the toll every year. The regions of this division which are away from this metropolitan region of Bombay are comparatively safe as there is less mortality rates due to respiratory disorders. The daily and seasonal migration of the people from the adjoining cities to Bombay is also the chief factor in diffusing the respiratory diseases in other areas of the Konkan region. Even the rural medical setup of Konkan is disturbed by the urban environmental pollution. It is only because of this, in the industrially backward district of Ratnagiri the spread of Tuberculosis and Pneumonia is of more magnitude.

The study highlights that there are wide imbalances in the availability of medical facilities in different districts of the Konkan division. Although considerable growth in health facilities is recorded, its uneven distribution has resulted in the disparities in their availability. It might also be responsible for higher increase in the morbidity and mortality rates. The heavy concentration of medical facilities is noted in Bombay district, all other districts of this division are indelicit of the facilities; and the degree of deficitness increases away from Bombay. Even in each district maximum medical services are either located at the district headquarter or in few of the major cities of that district. There is a need of diversifying the medical services^{or} at least the new services may be established ... cont-

in the mofussil areas instead of concentrating them in the cities which are already over saturated. For this the population of the region is to be taken into consideration alongwith the demand of the people. The hospitals and other health centres are to be ideally located with proper planning.

For improving the health status of the people of the Konkan division the following aspects may be considered.

1. Health planning may be based on population distribution and as per their needs and demands.
2. Supply of safe and unpolluted drinking water to all people of the Konkan division.
3. The rural-urban migration may be checked at its minimum level.
4. The atmospheric pollution may be checked at its maximum level by diverting at least new industries away from the major urban centres.
5. Hospitals and health centres be located centrally and the lower order health centre may be properly linked with the upper order centres.

The aforesaid suggestions may try to solve some of the existing problems about the health of Konkan people.