



C H A P T E R - I I

SOLAPUR CITY : A BRIEF PROFILE

This Chapter includes a brief description of the history of the Solapur City and an outline of the main economic, demographic features and activities.

Solapur city is the head-quarter of the district bearing the same name. Situated in $17^{\circ} 40^{\circ}$ North latitude and $75^{\circ} 46^{\circ}$ East longitude. It has got railway station on the broadgauge line of the South Central Railway; the city is situated at a distance of 165 miles to the South-East of Pune, 283 miles to the South-East of Bombay and 210 miles North-West of Hyderabad.

SHORT HISTORY :

The derivation of the name Solapur is attributed to the fact that the town was composed of 16 villages namely Adilpur, Ahmadpur, Chapaladev, Fatehpur, Jamadarwadi, Kaljapur, Khandurpur, Khanderarkiwadi, Muhammedpur, Ranapur, Sandalapur, Shaikhpur, Sholapur, Sonalgi, Sonapur and Paidkawadi. But the recent research shows that the name Sholapur is derived from Sojalapur and not from the congregation of the 16 villages. One of the inscriptions found in Solapur Fort shows that the town was called Sonalapur. It is, therefore, most probable that in the course of time, the name Solapur was evolved by dropping 'na' from the name Sonalapur. Subsequently the British rulers pronounced it as Solapur.

Solapur district was formed in ~~1828~~ 1838 and

although it was abolished in 1864, it was revived in 1869*. Present Solapur district now consists of eleven talukas with population of 22,53,840 according to census of 1971.

The municipality was established at Solapur on August 1st, 1852 and was upgraded into a Municipal Corporation on May 1st, 1964. The municipal Corporation covers an area of 22.35 kms. It is quite surprising that this one time small village, now stands fourth in population in the State of Maharashtra.

MAIN ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES :

Solapur is a great and convenient trade centre for the neighbouring Hyderabad and Karnataka areas and subsequently become an industrial centre. In 1859 the railway root from Bombay passed through Solapur towards Raichur, which was latter supplemented by another from Kurduwadi to Latur and third one from Kurduwadi to Miraj which gave a great stimulus to export trade.

At present there are 8 Cotton Textile mills in Solapur District and out of these eight three are situated in Solapur city only. Apart from these mills, one sugar factory and one large engineering concern are also there in Solapur city.

The jacquard chadars (Bed-covers) manufactured at Solapur are very famous all over Maharashtra. Besides the modern textile mills, Solapur is a congenial home of

* NOTE : The information in this chapter is based on Gazetteer of India.; Maharashtra State, Solapur District Gazetteer, 1977.

the hand-loom weaving industry which provides employment to a considerable number of workers.

The first textile mill in Solapur was started by Seth Murarji Gokuldas of Bombay in 1874. In 1898 Seth Laxmidas Khimaji from Bombay started the Laxmi Cotton Mill and in the same year Mallappa Warad stepped in the field and opened the Narsing Giraji Mills. After the First World War the mills in Solapur earned great reputation for their products. From 1928 they received a little set-back on account of the Congress propaganda of khaddar, i.e., hand-spun and hand-~~we~~ woven yarn. Again, when the Second World War started the textile industry began to make bumper profit. The Jam Mill was started in Solapur in 1909. It can be said that except Bombay there is no other big textile centre than Solapur, in western Maharashtra. Besides textile industry, a variety of other industries such as those of Swith's Pulse maker, oil mill owners, dyers and printers and leather manufacturers, Whole-sale grain dealers and others engaged in trade and transport, and hand-loom. Apart from this there are hundreds of chadar factories-sami- are also started in Solapur city.

The growth of textile industry has created a large class of industrial workers and slums have come into existence gradually in course of time. The Solapur

industry also creates a unity in economic interests by causing a steady flow of labour from the rural areas to the city. The modern textile mills as well as the numerous power-looms as well as hand-loom and weaving industrial units which are less capital-intensive, have given employment to a large number of people.

The significant point to note here is that the only factor in favour of the growth of the industry at Solapur is the availability of cheap labour and the existence of a large class of hand-loom weavers.

It is said that slum is a by-product of unplanned industrial development and the consequent over-crowding caused by a flow of immigrants. These conditions are fully applicable to Solapur city, as it is a big centre of textile mills and hand-loom industry. Most of the industrial workers stay in one room residences in this urban area.

Moreover, during the famine years the economic condition of the agriculturist becomes very worst. The able-bodied men-folk came to Solapur city for seeking job in factories. This causes an acute unemployment problem in Solapur city. The unemployed labour knocking at the mill gate is willing to accept any work at any wage.

The population of Solapur city in 1971 has increased by 429.12% over 1901 and 133.13% over 1931. As per 1971 census the city alone accounts for more than half of the urban population of the District.

In 1971 the population of Solapur city was 3,98,361 and it has grown upto 5,11,103 in the year 1981. According to the slum survey taken by the Municipal Corporation in the month of July, 1976 Solapur has got 119 slums having a total population of 1,18,657. (An exhaustive list of the Slums and their respective population is given in Appendix C).

The slum population in the city is about 23.1% of the total population, and this will give an idea of the extent of this specific problem.

TABLE : 3

Table showing Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe population for the year 1981. :-

Year	Scheduled Caste	Scheduled Tribe	Other than S.C. & S.T.	Total
1981	54075	8123	448198	511103

The above table shows that the percentage of Scheduled Caste population is 10.58 to the total population and the percentage of Scheduled tribe population is 1.58 to the total population.