

PREFACE

The word 'Gazetteer' is a derivative of word 'Gazette' which is believed to have been derived from the Greek word 'Gaza' meaning 'treasury of news'. Gazetta was also the name of the newspaper published by the Government of Venice in 1566 A.D. that was sold for a coin also named 'Gazetta'. Later on, in many countries 'Gazetta' came to be recognised as an official bulletin publishing important circulars of the governments. Gazetteer as per Everyman's Encyclopedia is —“an alphabetical arrangement of place names, in other words, a geographical and topographical dictionary containing more or less abundant information, comprising statistics, descriptions and historical details”.

The extent of reliance and importance of District Gazetteers in India is well expressed in the glowing remarks of Lord Curzon who in one of his minutes remarked:

“During my recent tour, I have, over and over again in reply to an inquiry, had the district volumes thrust into my hand and found all that I wanted to know excellently told. The volume accompanies the District Officer in camp or lies on his office table and its condition shows how constantly it is referred to. It would be difficult to praise too highly some of these productions. Many of them are full of information regarding the customs and peculiarities of the people of the district, its history, its tenures and so forth, a knowledge of which is simply invaluable to the District Officer and especially to a newcomer.”

The District Gazetteers were chiefly intended to give a complete picture of the district to the foreign administrators. After the attainment of independence, the old outlook of Gazetteers of providing background information about the district and its people to the administrators has changed. The Gazetteers now are also aimed at reflecting several activities, schemes and programmes of the Government and covering all the facets of District Administration with accuracy and authenticity. With its widened scope, the Gazetteers these days present, within a limited range, and in a readable manner, a comprehensive view of a place and its people, on the pattern laid down by the Government of India. These are thus compiled with utmost care and perfection.

Panipat has great antiquity, dating back to the period of Mahabharata war between Pandvas and Kauravas, and it is averred that it (historical name *Panprastha*) was one of the five *prasthas* or *patas* mentioned in *Mahabharta* which Yudhishtira demanded from Duryodhana. During the Medieval period, owing to its strategic location on the highroad from Ferozpur and Sirhind to Delhi, Panipat has witnessed important and decision making battles of the Indian history fought between the ruling powers of Delhi and those of coming from the North-West with the intention of supplanting their authority.

When the British took over the area after the Treaty of Surji Arjungaon in 1803, the portion comprising the present Panipat tehsil and a part of the Karnal

tehsil became a part of the Delhi territory. In 1819, the Delhi territory was reorganised into four parts which were the beginnings of the districts of Delhi, Rohtak, Gurgaon and Hisar (Hissar). The Panipat district, including the area of Panipat, Karnal and Sonapat, was formed as the fifth district in the reorganisation of 1824. In 1832, the district was included in the North-Western Provinces along with other districts. In 1851, the Panipat district was divided into Panipat and Karnal tehsils with tehsil headquarters at Panipat and Gharaunda, respectively. About three years later, the headquarters of the district were shifted to Karnal. Since then, and till the inception of Panipat as a separate district, the area of Panipat was a part of Karnal district.

After the formation of Haryana in 1966, the Panipat district was first created vide Haryana Government Notification dated 16th October, 1989 and came into existence on 1st November, 1989. It was abolished and merged in Karnal district on July 24, 1991, but was created again with effect from 1st January, 1992 by taking out Panipat subdivision from Karnal. At the time of its inception Panipat district had two sub-divisions, namely Panipat and Samalkha. At present, it comprises of three tehsils, namely Panipat, Samalkha and Israna and two sub-tehsils i.e. Bapauli and Madlauda.

‘Panipat’ the name which was once connoted the three major wars, now symbolises the ‘City of Weavers’ and has carved out a niche for itself in the international market for ‘Handloom Production’. The city is one of the biggest centres in the country for producing ‘Shoddy yarn’. Cotton *durries*, made-ups, throws and mats, bed-covers and other handloom products are exported to various countries besides woollen carpets and Pachranga *Achar* (pickle). The district also has three major industries, namely the Oil Refinery, the Thermal Power Station, and the National Fertilisers Limited, besides a number of large, medium and small scale industries.

The Panipat District Gazetteer would serve as an eloquent commentary on the political, social and economic reforms introduced after independence, and as a factual account supported by figures and other data, of life story of the district and its people, from the earliest times.

The compilation of this volume on Panipat was necessitated consequent upon its creation as a separate district. The department is thus bringing out this volume which is the first District Gazetteer of Panipat and 13th publication in the revision series of the Haryana District Gazetteers.

My thanks are due to the Deputy Commissioner, Panipat, and other offices working under him that have extended whole hearted assistance and supplied the requisite information, data and photographs for compilation of this volume have

earned our gratitude. My sincere thanks are also due to the Directors of the Census Operations Department, Haryana and the Department of Economic and Statistical Analysis, Haryana. The available Census data of 2011 have been incorporated and in other cases, the figures of the 2001 Census had to be depended upon.

My special and sincere thanks are due to Dr. S. K. Chahal, Professor, Department of History, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra who has spared his valuable time in vetting and finalising the chapter of History for this volume.

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I hope that this volume will be received well by the incisive readers.

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Chandigarh
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