

CHAPTER XIX

PLACES OF INTEREST

Introduction

The Ambala district comprises a region which as a cradle of a great civilization and culture has a glorious past. Located in the region, is the valley of the Saraswati and Drishadvati, which was in times gone by a hub of great activity. The district abounds in many places, the antiquity of which has been established by archaeological explorations and excavations. Some other more recent places have acquired importance on account of their economic and industrial development. Still others have been developed as tourist spots like Tajewala, Hathini Kund and Kalesar complex, Morni hills and Pinjore complex.

The following pages describe the important places of interest in the district.

Ambala Cantonment

Ambala Cantonment, the headquarters of the division of the same name lies in the south-east of the Ambala City at 30° 20' north latitude and 76° 51' east longitude. It is an important railway junction where Delhi-Kalka and Saharanpur-Ludhiana railway lines intersect. The Grand Trunk road, a national highway, also passes through the town. Its population was 1,02,493 in 1971 against the population of 1,05,543 in 1961.

This cantonment was established in 1843. It is said that after the abandonment of Karnal cantonment in 1841 on account of the prevalence of malaria, the troops were marching to a place near Sirhind which had been selected as a possible site for the new cantonment. After salubrious halt of two days, it was decided to turn the scales in favour of a cantonment at Ambala.¹ Not long after the cantonment was located here a garrison church, one of the finest in the region was also constructed with a seating capacity of 1,000 persons. It now stands in ruins, the only remnant of the building being a bell tower. The lawns are spread over a vast area. The Sirhind club, founded in 1891, is located on the Mall road and has a large membership.

The town has progressed well as a consequence of industrial units having been established in it. It has become a centre for the manufacture of scientific and surgical instruments.

1. *Ambala District Gazetteer*, 1923-24, p. 131.

There are two parks, i.e., Gandhi Park and Patel Park for the recreation of the general public. The military dairy farm, military grass farm and military poultry farm, extending over a vast area, form a part of the complex. The numerous places of public utility include 3 degree colleges, 16 high/higher secondary schools, a middle school, a War Heroes Memorial stadium, a civil hospital, a military hospital, an E.S.I. dispensary, a telephone exchange, a post and telegraph office, a veterinary hospital, a police station, an industrial training centre, two privately-managed industrial schools, a P.W.D. rest house, a P.W.D. circuit house, Central State library and a bus stand.

Ambala City

The town, the headquarters of the district, is termed as Ambala City to differentiate it from Ambala Cantonment. It lies on the Grand Trunk road at 30° 23' north latitude and 76° 46' east longitude in an open plain between the Ghagghar and the Dangri (Tangri) streams. It is a railway station on the Saharanpur-Ludhiana railway line. Its population increased from 76,204 in 1961 to 83,633 in 1971.

The town is said to have been founded during the 14th century by one Amba Rajput, from whom it derives its name. Another version assigns the name of the town to Bhawani Amba whose temple, the date of which is not known, exists in the town. Third version, however, is that the name is a corruption from Ambwala or the mango village, judging from the number of the mango groves that existed at one time in its immediate neighbourhood.¹ The name Ambala as such has not been mentioned anywhere in the old texts, however, Rodgers discovered Indo Parthian coins and coins of Hunas, Toramana and Mihirakula from its site from which we conclude that the area came under the sway of Parthians after the break-up of the Mauryan empire and was later included in the domain of Hunas.²

There are three historical gurdwaras, namely Badshahi Bagh Gurdwara, Sis Ganj Gurdwara and Manji Sahib Gurdwara. The first is associated with Guru Gobind Singh, the second with Guru Teg Bahadur and the third with Guru Hargovind. Annual celebrations are held and offerings in the form of *pankhas* (fans) are made at the famous Muslim shrines of Lakhi Shah (Tej-ud-Din Chisti) and Tawaqul Shah. A temple of Bhawani Amba is located in the town and is visited by a large number of devotees.

In 1968, a stagnating water tank near bus stand was transformed into a lake. A park was developed on the outskirts of the lake. In addition to

1. *Ambala District Gazetteer, 1923-24*, p. 130.

2. C. J. Rodgers, *Report of the Punjab Circle, Archaeological Survey of India, 1888-89* (Simla), pp. 2-4.

boating arrangements in the lake, a light house and coloured fountains beautify the park.

The places of public utility include a civil hospital, a Philadelphia Mission hospital, 3 degree colleges, two teachers' training colleges, 18 high/higher secondary schools, a middle school, a polytechnic, a technical institute for women and an industrial training institute, government industrial school for girls, a privately-managed industrial school for girls, a telephone exchange, a post and telegraph office, a veterinary hospital, a canal rest house, a police station, Guru Gobind Singh Municipal library, a *gaushala* and bus stand.

Bilaspur (Jagadhri tahsil)

Located 67 kilometres east of Ambala, it is a place of great antiquity. It lies at 30° 18' north latitude and 77° 18' east longitude and had a population of 4,050 in 1971.

The place is said to be associated with sage Ved Vyas, the compiler of the *Mahabharata*. Tradition has it that it was the place where Ved Vyas's hermitage was located. It was named as Vyaspur after the name of great sage but later on the name corrupted to Bilaspur.

The antiquity of the place is established by the discovery of several archaeological finds. These include Indo Sassanian coins of the 3rd century A.D.¹, an image of Uma Maheshvara of the 9th-10th century A.D., another of Ganesha belonging to the 11th-12th century A.D.² and two fragmentary stone inscriptions recorded in Gupta character.³ from Kapal Mochan and the adjoining areas.

There are a number of *tirthas* in and around Bilaspur, among these the most famous is Kapal Mochan where a big fair is held annually for five days from *Ekadshi* to *Purnamashi* in Kartik (October-November). The holy tank of Kapal Mochan is situated about 2 kilometres north of Bilaspur.

The intriguing mythological legend of the Kapal Mochan tank is mentioned in the *Mahabharata* and other Puranas. According to *Skand Purana*, three fire pits (*agni-kunds*) were created by Brahma for performance of *yajana*. The fire-pit which was in the north became known as Plaksh Tirath. It is popularly associated with the name of Pulastya Rishi who is said to have meditated here for a long period. It is located near Rampur, about 6 kilometres north of Kapal Mochan. The firepit originally in the shape of half moon in the south at first became the Somsar Tirath and later on became famous as Kapal Mochan Tirath. The third firepit which was close to Kapal Mochan

1. A. Cunningham, *Archaeological Survey of India, Report XIV*, p. 75.

2. Manmohan Kumar, *Archaeology of Ambala and Kurukshetra Districts*, Haryana Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, Mss, 1978, p. 149.

3. A. Cunningham, *op. cit.* p. 77.

was called Rin Mochan Tirath. It is said that Shiva stayed at Kapal Mochan for some time and at a little distance towards the north installed a *linga* (phallus) himself, named Sidheshwar which is now located in village Sindhai at a distance of about 2.5 kilometres from Kapal Mochan. According to *Skand Purana* those who take bath in Kapal Mochan tank in the bright half of Kartik month and visit the *linga* of Shiva, get eternal bliss.¹

Kapal Mochan Tank.—This is the main holy tank. It was known as Somsar Tirath and was renamed by Shiva as Kapal Mochan because a bath in the tank had effected the removal of (*mochan*) the impression of the skull (*kapal*) from his hand which had appeared when he chopped off Brahma's head. Its western *ghat* is called Ram-ashram *ghat* because it is said that Bharata, the younger brother of Lord Rama, who happened to visit this *tirtha* got an image of Rama placed on the western side of the tank. The statues of a black cow and black calf are located on the eastern bank and of a white cow and a white calf are on the western bank. It is said that a cow and calf turned black as a consequence of killing a Brahmin, entered Kapal Mochan tank raising the tail and nostrils above water and took their bath. Their original white complexion was restored to their bodies but for the nose and tail which continued to remain black. Whatever the mythological basis, the tank is held in high esteem and a fair is held in October-November which is the biggest fair of Ambala district.

Rin Mochan Tank.—Located to the south-east of Kapal Mochan tank, it was the place of the third fire-pit (*agni-kund*) created by Brahma. It is said that after the battle of Mahabharata, the Pandavas who had killed a number of their kith and kin and their *guru* Dronacharya, performed a *yajna* at this place and took bath in the tank to get rid of the sins.

The tank has pucca *ghats* on all four sides. A temple containing idols of Pandavas is located on the western side of the tank.

Suraj Kund.—It is another holy tank to the east of Kapal Mochan. A mausoleum of a *swami* who is said to have got the tank dug, lies close to the tank. This holy place is traditionally regarded to grant a boon of a child to issueless women.

Vyas Kund.—The tank of sage Ved Vyas, the compiler of the *Mahabharata*, lies to the south of Bilaspur, 2.5 kilometres south of Kapal Mochan. This is said to be the place where the hermitage of Ved Vyas existed. It is also believed that Duryodhana hid himself in this tank in the last stage of the battle of Mahabharata.

1. *Fairs and Festivals, Census of India, 1961, Volume XII, Part VII-B, pp. 18-19.*

Sidheshwar Temple.—It is situated about 2.5 kilometres north of Kapal Mochan in village Sindhai. The temple contains *linga* (phallus) said to be installed by Shiva himself, after his bath in the Kapal Mochan tank.

Gurudwara Kapal Mochan.—Towards the east of the Kapal Mochan tank is a gurudwara dedicated to Guru Gobind Singh. He is said to have stayed here for 52 days after the battle with the hill rajas in A.D. 1687. He is also said to have cleaned the weapons used in the battle in the Rin Mochan tank and this place on the tank is called 'Shastra-Ghat Guru Gobind Singh Ji'. A stone slab probably a lower part of some sculpture bearing an inscription in Brahmi is lying at the gurudwara. On the basis of paleography, the inscription can be assigned to 7th-8th century A.D.¹

The places of public utility include a police station, a post and telegraph office, a telephone exchange, a primary health centre, a veterinary health centre, two government high schools, a P.W.D. rest house and few dharmshalas.

Buria (Jagadhri tahsil)

Situated near the west bank of Western Yamuna (Jumna) Canal, it lies at 30° 10' north latitude and 77° 22' east longitude. It is located 62 kilometres to the south-east of Ambala and 6 kilometres to the east of Jagadhri. In 1971, it had a population of 4,645.

It is an ancient place which has seen many upheavals. The Chinese traveller, Hiuen Tsang who visited Buria in the 7th century, referred the place in his memoirs. The place was rehabilitated by Mughal emperor Humayun. Raja Birbal, one of the nine ministers of emperor Akbar, was born here. Shah Jahan also used to visit this place and erected a Rang Mahal, a well-built palace with stone arches. The Rang Mahal is now in ruins.

Buria was captured by the Sikhs in 1760, and became the headquarters of a considerable principality, which before the treaty of 1809 between the British Government and Ranjit Singh, had been divided into two chiefships of Buria and Dialgarh. Dissensions between the widows of the last male holder of Dialgarh led to its sub-division a few years after it came under British protection, into the estates of Jagadhri and Dialgarh. Jagadhri lapsed in 1829. The Rani of Dialgarh was one of the nine chiefs who were retained as independent protected chiefs. She retained her position until her death in 1852, when Dialgarh also lapsed. Buria proper was reduced to the status of an ordinary jagir in 1849.²

1. Manmohan Kumar, *Archaeology of Ambala and Kurukshetra Districts, Haryana*, 1978, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, Mss, p. 185.

2. *Imperial Gazetteer of India, Provincial Series, Punjab*, Vol. I, p. 334.

A small fort of the erstwhile Buria chief is used by his successors as their residence.

The places of public utility include a post and telegraph office, a police post, 2 privately managed high schools, a health sub-centre and a dharmshala.

Chhachhrauli (Jagadhri tahsil)

Chhachhrauli, the headquarters of the sub-tahsil of the same name, lies at 30°15' north latitude and 77°22' east longitude, about 11 kilometres from Jagadhri towards its north-east. Its population was 5,386 in 1971 against 5,038 in 1961.

The town was the capital of erstwhile princely state of Kalsia which was established in 1763 by Gurbax Singh. The prominent buildings of the town are Ravi Palace, clock tower, fort and Janak Niwas.

The places of public utility include a civil hospital, a veterinary hospital, two government high schools, a civil rest house, a post and telegraph office, a telephone exchange, Sainik Pariwar Bhawan and Bal Kunj.

Jagadhri

Jagadhri, headquarters of the tahsil and sub-division of the same name, is situated on the high bank of the river Yamuna which flows about 13 kilometres away. It is 55 kilometres to the south-east of Ambala and lies at 30°10' north latitude and 77°18' east longitude. Its population which was 32,637 persons in 1961 increased to 35,094 in 1971.

Jagadhri is thought to be a relic of the old name Yugandhari, the king of the Yugandharas.¹ In the *Mahabharata*, Yugandhara stands for the name of a warrior, a people, a place or a mountain.² As a mountain, Yugandhara has been referred to in some Buddhist texts also. It, therefore, seems probable that the name Yugandhara was used for a region inhabited by a tribe of that name and it comprised some mountainous tracts also which were given the same name. It probably extended from the Sirmaur hills to the southern part of erstwhile Jind State. The punch-marked square coins, a hemidrachm of Apollodotus and one of Antimachus, a gold coin of Samudragupta and other coins of the period upto the Chauhan and Tomara kings of Delhi, obtained from

1. V.S. Agarwal, *India As Known to Panini*, 1963, P. 59.

2. S. Sorensen, *An Index to the Names in the Mahabharata*, Delhi, 1963, P. 786.

Jagadhri prove the antiquity of the place. It was possibly the capital city of a Janapada and it seems very probable that it derives its name from Yugandhari.¹

The town seems to have come into prominence again in Sikh times when Rai Singh of Buria conquered it and encouraged commercial and manufacturing classes to settle here. Nadir Shah destroyed it during his invasion of India but it was rebuilt in 1783 by the Buria chief Rai Singh.

Jagadhri has been famous for brass utensils. Ornamental lamps and other forms of brassware were exceptionally well made. The brass utensils of Jagadhri are famous all over India and it is the biggest centre for this industry. The metal working was a flourishing industry in Jagadhri region during the early centuries of the Christian era which is borne out by the discovery of a large number of crucibles and copper and iron lumps and slags from Sugh during the excavation in 1964 and 1965.² There are two important temples, Gauri Shankar temple and Devi Bhavan.

The places of public utility include a police station, a post and telegraph office, a telephone exchange, a civil hospital, Christian hospital, an E.S.I. hospital, a veterinary hospital, two degree colleges, two higher secondary schools (one government and one private), five high schools (one government and four private), and a few dharmshalas.

Kalka

Kalka, headquarters of the tahsil of the same name, lies on the Ambala-Simla national highway and is at an elevation of 2,270 ft. (691.0 metres). It is the terminus of the broad gauge Delhi-Kalka railway line and the starting point of narrow gauge Kalka-Simla railway line (opened in 1903). It forms the gateway of Himachal Pradesh territory and most of the traffic and trade between these hills and the plains passes through it. It lies at 30° 50' north latitude and 76° 56' east longitude. Its population which was 18,068 in 1961 decreased to 17,711 in 1971.

The area now forming Kalka was part of erstwhile princely state of Patiala but was acquired by the British in 1846 and was included in Simla district. It was transferred to Ambala district in 1899.

A famous Kalka Devi temple is located on the Kalka-Simla road near octroi post. A fair is held every year in March-April.

1. Devindra Handa, Some Important Towns of Haryana, A Study of their Ancient Past, *Journal of Haryana Studies*, Vol. III, No. 2, July 1971, P. 1.

2. Dr. Suraj Bhan, 'Report on Excavation at Sugh', (1964 and 1965), *Journal of Haryana Studies*, Vol. IX, No. 1—2, 1977, P. 7.

The places of public utility include a police station, a post and telegraph office, a telephone exchange, a civil hospital, a veterinary hospital, a government college, government Industrial school for girls, three higher secondary schools (one government and two private), a high school (private), a civil rest house and a few dharmshalas.

Mansa Devi Temple (Kalka tahsil)

The shrine of Mansa Devi lies in Balasपुर village, about three kilometres east of Manimajra (Chandigarh U.T.). There are two temples dedicated to the goddess here. The older one is said to have been built by the ruler of Manimajra (c. A.D. 1815). The legend is that originally the shrine was in the territory of erstwhile princely state of Nahan and the stream which supplied water to the pilgrims visiting the temple, was cut off by some hill people causing great distress to the pilgrims. Thereupon the goddess appeared in dream of Gurbaksh Singh, ruler of Manimajra and asked him to construct a temple for her at this place. This temple contains thirty-eight panels of wall paintings besides floral designs painted all over the ceiling and the arches leading into the temple. The drawings of the temple are not of high standard but a great variety of themes is illustrated. There is an inscription in one of the galleries of this temple which can be translated as follows: 'This Chandi (was) painted by Angad in Samvat 1870 (A.D. 1813) in the bright half of the month of Chaitra (March)'. B. N. Goswami, Professor of Fine Arts, Panjab University, Chandigarh, thinks that these paintings must have been executed by A.D. 1816 at the latest but according to Mira Seth, these paintings were done in later half of the 19th century.¹ The other temple is said to have been constructed by Maharaja Karam Singh of erstwhile Patiala State (c. A.D. 1861) to commemorate his success in the battle against the Gurkhas.

The fairs are held twice a year in March-April (*chet sudi ashtmi*) and September-October (*asoj sudi ashtmi*).

Morni Hills (Narayangarh tahsil)

The Morni hills are offshoots of Shiwalik ranges of Nahan and run in two parallel ranges from south-east to north-west. Between them the ground is broken by projecting spurs but through the bottom of the valley, the Ghagghar makes its way. The village of Morni lies on the mountain side, at 30° 41' north latitude and 77° 05' east longitude, 1,220 metres above sea level. Tradition assigns the name of Morni to a queen who is believed to have ruled this area.

Among the spurs of hills, lie two lakes, the larger is about 550 metres long and 460 metres broad and the other about 365 metres either way. A hill

1. Mira Seth, *Wall Paintings of the Western Himalayas*, 1976, pp. 85—87.

divides the two lakes but there is some hidden communication as the level of the two lakes remains the same. The people look upon the lakes as sacred. There is an old fort which is now in ruins. The hills are covered by pine trees. The climate is salubrious and the area is suitable for trekking. The Haryana Government undertook to develop this hill resort and provide facilities to tourists. A motorable road was constructed to connect the Morni hills with Haryana State highway near Panchkula. A forest tourist hut 'Lal Munia' and a P.W.D. rest house were also constructed to accommodate tourists and trekkers.

The places of public utility include a government high school, a post and telegraph office, a police station, a civil dispensary and a veterinary dispensary.

Narayangarh

Headquarters of the tahsil and sub-division of the same name, it lies at 30° 29' north latitude and 77° 08' east longitude. It is located 38 kilometres from Ambala to its north-east. In 1971, it had a population of 6, 880.

The town derives its name from its founder, Raja Lakshmi Narain of Sirmaur (Himachal Pradesh) who on the decline of the Mughal empire, built a fort at Kulsan; and called it after himself, Narayangarh.¹ The fort now houses tahsil offices and police station.

The places of public utility include a police station, a post and telegraph office, a telephone exchange, a civil hospital, a veterinary hospital, a government higher secondary school, a government high school, a government industrial school for girls, a civil rest house and two dharmshalas.

Panchkula (Kalka tahsil)

The new township of Panchkula lies at 30° 42' north latitude and 76° 52' east longitude. It is enclosed by Ambala-Kalka national highway, Ambala-Kalka railway line and Chandigarh-Panchkula road. It is developed on the outskirts of Chandigarh, amongst the picturesque background of the Shiwaliks and the Ghagghar.

The township has been sub-divided into 14 residential sectors, 2 industrial sectors, one town centre, a park and areas for regional recreation, major institutions, whole-sale markets and government and semi-government offices. An ancillary industrial estate of HMT with 29 built-up sheds has been established. The entire area lying between Ambala-Kalka national highway and the Ghagghar has been earmarked for regional recreation. This area will have

1. W Wynyard, *Report on the Revised Settlement of the Southern Pargunahs of the District of Ambala in the cis-Sutlej States*, 1859, p, 24.

a golf course, a deer park, a zoological garden, an exhibition ground and a children's park. A beautifully designed 47-bedded youth hostel to provide cheap and comfortable accommodation for young tourists is situated on the bank of the Ghagghar. Very popular with the people of Chandigarh and with those travelling to Himachal Pradesh, 'Red Bishop' a bar and a restaurant is a comfortable stopover.

On the junction of the Ambala-Kalka national highway and Chandigarh-Panchkula road lies the old settlement of Panchkula. A Jainendra Gurukul was established there in 1929 which is now running as a high school.

There are a number of stone-crushers in and around Panchkula. The places of public utility include a post and telegraph office, a police post, a rural dispensary, and a high school.

Pinjore (Kalka tahsil)

Pinjore lies 5 kilometres short of Kalka on Ambala-Simla national highway. It lies at 30° 48' north latitude and 76° 55' east longitude. Its population of 1,438 in 1961 increased to 2,779 in 1971.

Pinjore is an ancient historical and religious place. It is said to be the earliest habitation of man as Guy E. Pilgrim discovered certain teeth and part of a jaw in the lower Shiwalik hills and concluded that one and half crores years ago, the early man lived in Pinjore region round about Chandigarh.¹ Tools of lower palaeolithic period fabricated on quartzite have been found from the region stretching from Pinjore to Nalagarh (Solan district- Himachal Pradesh) and also along the nullah which runs in the HMT factory premises.² These archaeological evidences point towards the antiquity of the place.

Pinjore is associated with five Pandava brothers who en route to Himalayas during their exile, stayed here for some time. The place was then known as Panchpura which was later corrupted into Pinjore. Cunningham could decipher in the worn out letters of Pinjore Baoli inscription, the old name of the place as Panchpura.³

A part of the modern town is situated on an old mound. The antiquarian remains recovered from here or its environs comprise ornamental structural pieces, pillars, sculptures and inscriptions. Some of the important sculptures found from Pinjore are ; two figures of Ayudha Pursas, fragments of a colossal image of Vishnu, an image of Shiva, four armed Shiva, colossal head of Bhairava, Shiva, and Kubera, seated Ganesha, Surya head, Shakti images of Saivi,

1. Guy E. Pilgrim, 'New Shivalik Primates and their Bearing on the Question of the Evolution of Man and the Anthropoides, *Records of the Geological Survey of India*, 1915, Vol. XIV, pp. 2-61.

2. Manmohan Kumar, *Archaeology of Ambala and Kurukshetra Districts Haryana*, 1978, Mss, pp. 240-241.

3. Alexander Cunningham, *Archaeological Survey of India, Report XIV*, p. 70 ff.

Durga, Parvati and Chaumunda, standing Tirthankaras, a headless Tirthankara image delicately carved with plastic conception and other minor sculptures. These sculptures, indicative of the growth of Hinduism, with its multiplicity of gods and goddesses can be assigned to the period ranging between 9th century A.D. to 12th century A.D. Two inscriptions were noticed by Cunningham on the walls of the Jami mosque and another inscription in the famous *baoli* of the place where old Hindu pillars can also be seen.

The reference of Pinjore is also found in Minhaj-ud-din bin Siraj-ud-din's *Tabakat-i-Nasiri*. Sultan Nasir-ud-din Muhammad plundered the riches of Pinjore in A.D. 1254.¹ The place was again plundered in A.D. 1399 by Timur on his way back from Delhi.

Pinjore is famous for the beautiful Mughal garden, perhaps the loveliest and the oldest garden in northern India. It was made by Nawab Fidai Khan, the 17th century architect of the emperor Aurangzeb. Appointed Governor of Punjab by the emperor, the great builder was fascinated by the sacred springs of the village Pinjore. He conceived the vast terraced garden as a pleasure resort. He followed the classical plan of Shalimar Mughal garden, only adapting it to the concept of the descent into the vista of beauty along the soothing waterways and not the ascent. The inspired designer absorbed the space on both sides of the flowing waters, with an uncanny genius for the human outlook. Each of the seven terraces offers contrast of shadows and substances. Fidai Khan could not stay for long here. There is an apocryphal story showing how the ruler of Sirmaur was trying his best to regain the control over Pinjore. He managed to send some female servants as had their throats swoolen with goitre. The Khan's wives were terrified on hearing that the climate bred such a disease. Fidai Khan deserted the place. This way Pinjore alongwith Mughal garden passed into the hands of Sirmaur ruler but the Sirmaur State could not continue its control over Pinjore in the wake of attacks by neighbouring chiefs. Hence Maharaja Amar Singh of Patiala bought Pinjore and adjoining land from Sirmaur in A.D. 1775.²

The Haryana government recreated the whole complex by adding coloured illuminations to the play of fountain water, providing rest places, picnicking facilities and a mini zoo. The Pinjore garden has now been renamed as Yadvindra Garden as a mark of respect to the late Yadvindra Singh,

1. Elliot and Dowson, *The History of India As Told by Its Own Historians*, 1969, Vol. II, p. 353.

2. Sukhdev Singh Chib, *This Beautiful India, Haryana*, 1977, pp. 105-6.

Maharaja of the erstwhile princely State of Patiala. It is located on the Ambala-Simla national highway. The main gate opens on the highest terrace and seven terraces descend gradually into the distant boundary of the garden.

In the middle of the first terrace is the Shish Mahal, in the Rajasthani-Mughal style, with small windows and apertures. There is a lyrical Hawa Mahal approached by steps on the side of the wall. The second terrace is uplifted to the sky by large arched doorways, above which there is the Rang Mahal. Cleverly devised by the architect, the view of the lower terraces is from the open hall-way below. The place above is itself a pleasure house, with an enormous open courtyard. We descend, by concealed steps on both sides of the big house, to the third terrace where the cypresses and flower beds lead down to dense groves of fruit trees on each layer. The density of the dark green foliage evokes brooding depths. The upward flow of water from the fountains cools the eyes. Already, we are in the presence of the cube-like Jal Mahal, with a square fountain bed and a plinth to sit down on for pleasure. The next terrace is flanked by denser groves of trees, lightened by the water devices in the middle.

We now face the end structure of the doorway, recently made into a disc-like open air theatre with the giant doorway behind as a symbolic opening into the wild woods beyond.

The stiff outer wall of the garden is reminiscent of the fort walls, which has all around miniature pavilions housing the zoo. The garden is open from dawn to mid-night in summer and from sunrise to 10 p.m. in winter. The tourist can stay in air-conditioned suites of the rest house and Rang Mahal.

There is a Bhima Devi temple and an old *baoli* which have legendary connection with Pandavas. It seems that the old temple was destroyed and the present temple seems to have been built at a later stage under the old name. The *baoli* is an old tank where old Hindu pillars can be seen. Nearby is the Jami mosque which is attributed to Fidaï Khan, the builder of the Mughal garden. This mosque seems to have been constructed with the building material of the temple of which a large number of architectural pieces can be seen embodied in the later construction. Two old inscriptions were noticed by Cunningham on the walls of the mosque.

The place became more important with the establishment of Hindustan Machine Tools factory in 1963.¹ The places of public utility include a post and telegraph office, a police station, a primary health centre, a veterinary dispensary, a government high school, a forest rest house and a rest house in the Yadvindra Garden maintained by Department of Tourism.

1. For more details regarding HMT factory, see chapter on 'Industries'.

Sadhaura(Narayangarh tahsil)

It is a small town situated near the hills on the Nakti or Sadhaurawali Nadi. It lies at 30° 23' north latitude and 77° 13' east longitude, at a distance of 25 kilometres from Narayangarh. Its population of 7,775 in 1961 increased to 8,971 in 1971.

It is said that Sadhaura was camping ground of sadhus on their way to the Ganga and is the corruption of its original name *Sadhu-rah*. The existence of old temples and tanks in and around the town is quoted to support the tradition. The discovery of ancient copper cast coins, Kuninda coins, Indo-sassanian coins and coins of Samanta Deva from Sadhaura point towards the antiquity of the place.

There are three temples, Gaggarwala, Toronwala and Manokamna and three tanks along with them. These temples and tanks are held in high esteem. Besides, there is a tomb of Hazrat Shah Kumesh built in A.D. 1450 with a mosque dating from A.D. 1600.¹ A fair is held every year and is reported to have been started in A.D. 1556 by Bairam Khan. A Sangni mosque built of blocks of grey stone, in the 16th century is located in the west of the town and is in ruins.

It is said that Banda Bairagi built his fort at Lohgarh about 7 kilometres away from the town and Sadhaura had been the centre of activity of Banda Bairagi. A place 'Katalgarhi' in the town is associated with the massacre of those who betrayed him.

The place is also associated with Pir Budhu Shah, a Muslim saint, who helped Guru Gobind Singh in the battle of Bhagani in which all four sons of Pir Budhu Shah were killed. A gurdwara named after Budhu Shah has been built to commemorate his memory.

The places of public utility include a police station, a post and telegraph office, a telephone exchange, a primary health centre, a veterinary hospital, a maternity hospital, a degree college, two high schools, a civil rest house and a few dharmshalas.

Sugh² (Jagadhri tahsil).

Situated in a bend of the old Yamuna, now the Western Yamuna (Jumna) Canal, which surrounded it on three sides, the modern village of Sugh, about 5

1. *Ambala District Gazetteer*, 1923-24, p. 22.

2. The information regarding Sugh has been taken from Suraj Bhan's Report on Excavation at Sugh (1964 and 1965) published in *Journal of Haryana Studies*, Vol. IX, No. 1-2, 1977, p. 1—49. (For details, the original report, may be referred)

kilometres to the east of Jagadhri, was identified by Cunningham with the site of ancient city of Srughna. He was the first explorer to bring to light the archaeological importance of the site. The ancient mound of Sugh lies at 30° 9' north latitude and 77° 23' east longitude. The ruins of an earlier habitation form a prominent triangular spur covering an area of over 5 kilometres in circumference and is partly covered by the villages of Dialgarh in the north, Sugh in the west and Amadalpur in the south east.

The ruins at Sugh were rightly identified by Cunningham with the ancient city of Srughana on the basis of the description given by the Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang (Yuan Chwang). Srughana was an important city of north India and has been frequently referred to in early and medieval literature. The earliest reference to this city is found in the *Astadhyayi* of Panini. While proving the formation of words by applying rules of grammar, Panini indirectly suggests Srughna to be a well known city of his times after whose name a road and a gate of Kanyakubja were named.

An earlier reference to the city may perhaps be found in the form of Turghna mentioned in the *Taittiriya Aranyaka*.¹ Turghna is stated here as marking the northern border of Kurukshetra, the place where gods performed the *Sattra*.

The city is mentioned several times in the early Pali literature. Patanjali's reference to the name of the city as many as six times indicated the premier position of the city in the 2nd century B.C. The city ranks high in importance in the *Mahabharata* where it is mentioned along with the famous cities of Ahichchhatra and Hastinapura. Varahamihira while describing the regions belonging to Jupiter recounts the *Srughnas* along with *Bharatas*, *Sauviras* and others. In the 7th century, a Sanskrit work *Vasavadatta* refers to it which suggests the continued importance of this town in later times. It may have been founded round about 1000 B.C. and developed into a big city during the early centuries before and after Christ.²

A more detailed account of the city is recorded by Hiuen Tsang, the Chinese traveller who visited the city in the first half of the 7th century A.D. According to him the *Su-Lo-Ki-No* country extended over 6000 *li* in circuit. It bordered on the Ganga in the east and was backed by the mountains in the north. The capital city was 20 *li* in circuit and located on the western bank of the Yamuna. It had been much deserted by this time though the foundations

1. Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index of Names and Subjects*, Vol. I (Varanasi 1968), p. 318.

2. R.C. Aggarwal, Early History and Archaeology of Kurukshetra and Ambala Divisions, *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XXXI, 1955, pp. 293-322.

of the structures were still standing. There were 5 *Sangharams* housing 1,000 Buddhist monks who engaged themselves in learning and learned discussions. Hiuen Tsang also saw several *stupas*, which commemorated the visit of the Buddha or enshrined the relics of Buddhist saints Sariputra and Maudgalyayana. He also mentions 100 Brahmanical temples in the city. The above accounts shows that Srughna was the capital city of a kingdom extending on either side of the Yamuna under the Shiwaliks. Besides, it was an important center of Buddhism in this part of the country for it maintained a large number of learned Buddhist monks, although the religion of the Buddha was on the decline and Brahmanism was growing popular with the people in India about this time. The city probably lost its importance after the 7th century and the name survived in a localized form as the only memory of its former glory.

Some welcome light on the history of the site has been thrown by the excavation conducted by the Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology of the Panjab University during 1965. Remains, ranging in date from c. 600 B.C. to c. A.D. 300, were discovered here. The archaeological finds included pottery, terracotta figurines and miscellaneous terracotta objects, coins, sealings and animal remains. The pottery found here hardly differs from its counterpart met with at other early historical sites in north India, and the bulk of it falls either in the Grey Ware or Red Ware traditions. The terracotta figurines, male, female and animal deserve special mention for their imbued beauty, plastic conception and artistic disposition. The other terracotta objects recovered included flesh rubbers, stamp, seal impression, wrattle, gamesmen, discs, cart frames and wheels, balls, crucibles, goldsmiths heating cup and an ear ornament grooved on the exterior. Among these terracotta finds, a broken figure depicting a headless child with a *takhti* (wooden plank) in lap now on display in the National Museum, New Delhi is of special interest. The importance of the plaque lies in the fact that the writing board has alphabets belonging to Sunga period. No such figure has yet been found from any other site in India.¹ Chronologically, these terracotta finds can be grouped in various divisions, such as, Mauryan, Sunga, Kushana, Gupta and medieval. Two terracotta sealings one bearing the name of Vyaghraraja in Gupta characters of the 5th-6th century A.D. and the other bearing the name of the city 'Sugh' in early Devanagari characters of the 12th-13th century A.D. are also important finds and may stretch the life span of the city by a few centuries.²

1. Udai Vir Singh, Terracottas from Sugh, *Journal of Haryana Studies*, Vol. VI, No. 1-2, 1974, pp. 9-13.

2. Suraj Bhan, Report of the Excavations at Sugh (1964 and 1965), *Journal of Haryana Studies*, Vol. IX, Nos. 1-2, 1977, p. 8.

A few more ancient monuments are located around Sugh. In between Amadapur and Sugh is located a late medieval temple facing a rectangular tank on the east. The temple as well as the tank are both constructed of *lakhauri* bricks. There are still preserved flights of steps and screened *ghats* for women in the tank. The shrine, though locally known as the sun temple, in fact houses a Shiv *linga* in it. The use of *lakhauri* bricks in *chunam* and domical roof of the temple might suggest a late Mughal date for the shrine. Two more significant ancient monuments in the vicinity are a monastery in the south-west of the Sugh village and a stupa in the north-west at Chaneti, both constructed of burnt bricks. Though nothing can be said about these structures with certainty yet it seems to suggest that these monasteries were of the Mauryan and Kushana period.¹

Yamunanagar

Situated on the western bank of the Western Yamuna (Jumna) Canal, it lies at 30° 08' north latitude and 77° 17' east longitude. It is located 60 kilometres south-east of Ambala and 5 kilometres south of Jagadhri. In 1971, it had a population of 72,594.

Initially, a few factories and a timber market were established at Abdullapur on the western bank of the Western Yamuna (Jumna) Canal. After 1947, a camp to accommodate refugees was established on Radaur road. Later, a model town and other few colonies were established. Thus Yamunanagar a name derived from the river Yamuna, was established.

It is one of the major industrial centres of Haryana and has distinction of having many large scale as well as small-scale industrial units.² Yamunanagar has a big timber market and there are many saw mills to process the wood.

The municipality is developing a city centre complex on the banks of Western Yamuna (Jumna) Canal, at an estimated cost of Rs. 60 lakh. The complex when completed will have a lake, a restaurant, club, view tower, stadium, swimming pool, library, museum and gymnasium hall.

The places of public utility include a police station, a post and telegraph office, a telephone exchange, Mukand Lal civil hospital, four E.S.I. dispensaries, four degree colleges, four higher secondary schools (one government and three private), six high schools (one government and five private), an industrial training institute, a canal rest house and two dharmshalas.

1. Suraj Bhan, Report on Excavation at Sugh (1964 and 1965), *Journal of Haryana Studies*, Vol. IX, Nos. 1-2, 1977, pp. 1—49 ; Devindra Handa "A Maurayan Stupa at Chaneti, Punjab" *Vishveshwaranand Indological Journal*, Vol. IV, 1966, pp. 75—79.

2. For details, see chapter on 'Industries'.

Places of Archaeological, Tourist and Religious Interest

A few more sites of holy places or of archaeological interest which have not been mentioned among the more important ones are described below. The places of tourist interest are also described separately for the sake of facility.

Places of Archaeological Interest

Chaneti (Jagadhri tahsil).—It is a small village situated about 3 kilometres east of Jagadhri and nearly the same distance from the famous site of Sugh. Just about one hundred metres south-west of the village lies a huge brick mound which is of 20 metres diameter and is 8 metres high. The bricks used are well burnt and yellowish red in colour. The very shape and structure of this mound, the laying of concentric layers of huge bricks, the gradually diminishing diameter as the structure rises, the bricks well set in the circular fashion and the testimony of Hiuen Tsang, the Chinese traveller, lead us to believe that the mound is the remnant of an Asokan stupa. This finding, however, has to be confirmed by more positive epigraphical or excavational evidence.¹

Adi Badri (Jagadhri tahsil).—Situated about 18 kilometres to the north of Bilaspur on the foot-hills of the Shiwaliks, it is a place associated with ancient past. The river Saraswati is believed to have originated from this place. A number of sculptures of Shiva-Parvati and Ganesha belonging to A.D. 9th-10th century and a few Buddhist images belonging to 11th-12th century A.D. have been discovered from this place.

Basantoor (Jagadhri tahsil).—It lies north-east of Chhachhrauli and is said to be associated with Raja Shantanu of Mahabharata. There is a sacred well whose water is said to be as sacred as that of the Ganga. The place has also yielded Painted Grey Wares.

Places of Religious Interest

Besides the temple of Mansa Devi, there are many other religious places which are held in high esteem and attract quite a large number of devotees. These places are Talokpur, Chandi Mandir, Nada, Lakhnaur Sahib, Panjokhra, Haryoli, Harnaul, Sakhi Sarvar, Jamkesar tank and Panchmukhi Hanuman temple.

Talokpur (Narayangarh tahsil).—Lying about 50 kilometres north-east of Ambala, it is a place of religious importance. The place is famous for a temple of Sharda Devi where a big fair is held in March-April.

1. Devindra Handa, A Mauryan Stupa at Chaneti, *Vishveshvaranand Indological Journal*, Vol. IV, 1966, p. 75.

In the vicinity of Sharda Devi temple, there is a complex of temples dedicated to Shiva, which are enclosed in a *dera*.

Nada (Kalka tahsil).—It lies about 2 kilometers south-east of Panchkula across the Ghagghar on Haryana State Highway and is famous for a gurdwara.

The gurdwara is named after one Nadu Shah, a disciple of Guru Gobind Singh, who rendered great service to him when he alongwith his army was camping at this place. In his blessings to Nadu Shah, the Guru said that the place thereafter would be known after his name.

Lakhnaur Sahib (Ambala tahsil).—Situated about 6 kilometres south of Ambala, Lakhnaur Sahib is held in high esteem because of its being the home town of the maternal ancestors of Guru Gobind Singh. A gurdwara exists here to commemorate the memory of Guru Gobind Singh. A folding cot of the Guru is lying there.

Panjokhra (Ambala tahsil).—It lies about 8 kilometres east of Ambala on Ambala-Narayangarh road. There is a gurdwara to commemorate the visit of Guru Har Kishan, the 8th Sikh Guru.

It is said that the Guru stayed here on his way from Kiratpur to Delhi and did a miracle by setting a stick on the head of a deaf and dumb person who recited the *Geeta* and explained its meanings.

Haryoli (Ambala tahsil).—Situated about 15 kilometres to south-east of Ambala Cantonment, it has a temple of Rishi Markanda. It is said that the Rishi was only 12 years of age when the messenger of *Yama* came to take away his life. He was deep in meditation worshipping Shiva. He invoked Shiva's protection. Shiva appeared and gave him blessings that he would never perish till the deluge.¹ A fair is held every year in September-October.

Harnaul (Jagadhri tahsil).—Situated about 7 kilometres west of Jagadhri, the place is held in high esteem because of the Panch Tirtha, a sacred tank. It is believed that the five Pandavas took bath in the tank here. A big fair is held every year in January-February.

Sakhi Sarvar (Jagadhri tahsil).—A shrine is located on a peak of the lower Shiwalik hills near Khizri in Jagadhri tahsil. Its structure is not unlike that of the shrine dedicated to Guga Pir. Sakhi Sarvar was not a local saint, and little is known of him in the neighbourhood. A businessman is said to have built the shrine. A fair is held here on every thursday in July-August.

1. *District Census Handbook, Ambala District*, 1961, pp. 136-137.

Jamkesar Tank.—It is located in Hussaini village near Narayargarh. Close to it are two temples, one dedicated to Lord Rama and the other to Lord Shiva. The tank is said to mark the spot where the Pandavas halted during their flight to the Himalayas. A fair is held here twice a year in the months of March-April and October-November.

Panchmukhi Hanuman Temple.—Located about 4 kilometres away from Bilaspur on Bilaspur-Chhachhrauli road, the temple lies in the land of village Basatianwala. The temple has an idol of Hanuman with five different images. The temple is said to be one of the three of its kind in India. It is held in high esteem and a large number of devotees visit it on every Tuesday.

Places of Tourist Interest

Though the district can boast of Pinjore and Morni which have been described earlier yet Tajewala, Kalesar, Hathini Kund are worth visiting.

Tajewala/Hathini Kund/Kalesar Complex

Located on Jagadhri-Paonta road, Tajewala, Hathini Kund and Kalesar are really picturesque spots. These resorts are located within 5 kilometres of each other.

Located 92 kilometres from Ambala, Tajewala headworks is a very popular tourist resort in this complex. Here the Western Yamuna (Jumna) Canal and the Eastern Yamuna (Jumna) Canal take off from the river Yamuna. The place is ideal for angling. The rest-house at Tajewala preserves an angler's record book that dates back almost 50 years.

The Hathini Kund about 5 kilometres from Tajewala is an angler's paradise. The river abounds in mahaseer fish and there is a lovely view of the Yamuna's water making shifting patterns of light and shade. Permits for fishing here are available from the Sub-Divisional Officer, Irrigation, Tajewala.

Located 95 kilometres from Ambala, Kalesar presents an exquisite picture of solitude. Nestling in enchanting surroundings, the Kalesar game sanctuary sprawls with thick *sal* trees in an area extending over 5,098 hectares. The magnificent jungle area is studded with spots of unrivalled beauty. The green foliage, myriad flowers, ornamental trees and beautiful shrubs present a view of ethereal beauty. The dancing peacock presents a delightful sight.

Suitable accommodation for the tourists visiting the complex is available in the Kalesar forest rest-house, Hathini Kund rest-house and Tajewala rest-house.

The mention of the names of a large number of holy places in the eastern and north-eastern part of Ambala district, though surprising at first sight,

can be easily explained. Brahmavarta, home of Rigvedic culture can be identified with a wider area in Haryana. The area of Kurukshetra lying immediately to the south of Ambala district is connected with happenings in the *Mahabharata*. The association of the Pandavas during their exile from the Delhi region with places along the Yamuna as they made northwards towards the Shiwaliks is understandable. During the course of centuries, however, as religious concepts and practices changed, we find old traditional associations with places also changed in the process. It ultimately show itself in the acceptance of holy baths and superstitious beliefs and in fact the whole paraphernalia of Hinduism in its degenerated form. This view may possibly explain the abundance of places which continue to claim a holy character on the strength of a traditional association in the eyes of the masses. To the archaeologist and the scholar, these appear as bits of evidence which have to be pieced together to frame coherent cultural whole, as is possible.