

## CHAPTER III

### PEOPLE

#### POPULATION

The population of the district, as per Census 2011, was 12,05,437 (6,46,857 males and 5,58,580 females), while in the 2001 Census, its population was 9,67,449. In the decade (2001-2011) there was an increase of 2,37,988 persons. The district occupies 10<sup>th</sup> rank among the 21 districts of the State in respect of the population according to Census 2011.

Decadal (2001-2011) variation in population of three tehsil Panipat, Samalkha and Israna is given below:-

Tehsil	Population						Percentage decadal Variation 2001-2011			Percentage urban population	
	2001			2011			Total	Rural	Urban	2001	2011
	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban					
Panipat	5,97,382	2,35,168	3,62,214	7,91,634	2,76,259	5,15,375	32.5	17.5	42.3	60.6	65.1
Israna	1,22,006	1,22,006	-	1,08,196	1,08,196	-	-11.3	-11.3	-	-	-
Samalkha	2,48,061	2,18,195	29,866	3,05,607	2,65,897	39,710	23.2	21.9	33.0	12.0	13.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,67,449</b>	<b>5,75,369</b>	<b>3,92,080</b>	<b>12,05,437</b>	<b>6,50,352</b>	<b>5,55,085</b>	<b>24.6</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>41.6</b>	<b>40.5</b>	<b>46.0</b>

The variation is more pronounced in urban areas than in rural areas. In Panipat tehsil, the percentage of decadal variation in respect of towns is the highest which seems to be due to steep rise in the population of Panipat town. The district has experienced decadal growth of 24.6 percent during 2001-2011. In absolute numbers, there has been an increase of 2,37,988 persons from 9,67,449 in 2001 to 12,05,437 in 2011. Panipat tehsil has experienced maximum decadal population growth of 32.5 percent and Samalkha tehsil showed it at 21.9 percent, whereas Israna which had no urban population have shown a negative decadal population growth of 11.3 percent. The total number of ruralites in Panipat, Samalkha, Israna, Bapouli and Ghauranda is as under:-

#### Number of Villages and Rural Population, 2011

Name of C.D. block	Number of Villages		Rural population		
	Total	Inhabited	Persons	Males	Females
Madlauda	35	34	1,34,077	71,601	62,476
Panipat	39	38	1,10,243	59,289	50,954
Israna	32	31	1,26,075	67,453	58,622
Samalkha	34	31	1,35,550	73,284	62,266
Bapauli	49	44	1,32,798	71,732	61,066
Gharanuda(p) <sup>1</sup>	3	1	11,609	6,283	5,326
<b>District (Rural) Total</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>6,50,352</b>	<b>3,49,642</b>	<b>3,00,710</b>

The population of Samalkha tehsil, as per Census 2011 was 3,05,607 (1,65,076 males and 1,40,531 females) while the total number of persons in

Panipat tehsil during the same Census period was 7,91,634 (4,23,899 males and 3,67,735 females). The population of Israna tehsil, according to Census 2011 was 1,08,196 (57,882 males and 50,314 females). The urbanites in Panipat district as per Census 2011 are as under:-

Name of UA/Town	Population		
	Persons	Males	Females
Panipat	5,15,375	2,75,836	2,39,539
Samalkha	39,710	21,379	18,331
<b>District Urban Total</b>	<b>5,55,085</b>	<b>2,97,215</b>	<b>2,57,870</b>

Out of the total urban population of 5,55,085 in the district, Panipat urban agglomerations claim 5,15,375 persons which comes to be about 92.8 percent which show marginal increase of 2.5 percent more than the 90.3 percent figure of the total urban population of 2001. But in terms of persons it has shown an increase of 1,53,161 persons from 3,62,214 persons of 2001 Census thereby showing a growth of 142.3 percent. Samalkha urbanities have added 9,844 persons in its population of 29,866 persons of 2001 up to Census 2011. Israna tehsil has no urban area.

The Panipat district, as constituted at present, had 2,38,834 persons (1,27,978 males and 1,10,856 females) in 1951. During the span of sixty-years (1951-2011), the population has increased by nearly 40.5 percent to 12,05,437 persons. The decadal population variation of the district since 1951 is as follows:-

Year	Persons	Males	Females	Decadal population	
				Absolute	Percentage
1951	2,38,834	1,27,978	1,10,856	-	-
1961	2,98,232	1,60,601	1,37,631	59,398	24.9
1971	3,82,445	2,06,550	1,75,895	84,213	28.2
1981	5,07,164	2,74,331	2,32,833	1,24,719	32.6
1991	6,98,103	3,76,991	3,21,112	1,90,939	37.6
2001	9,67,449	5,28,860	4,38,589	2,69,346	38.6
2011	12,05,437	6,46,857	5,58,580	2,37,988	24.6

The above table shows sex-wise population and decadal variation at each Census from the year 1951 to 2011 since the data is available from the year 1951 for the district. Decadal variation shows accelerated rate of growth at every succeeding decade. Highest decadal growth (38.6 per cent) has been recorded during 1991-2001.

After Independence, the district was free from disease and the public health measures taken up by the government reduced the death rate while the birth rate increased. In the last sixty years, population of the district has become nearly 5 times (2,38,834 in 1951 to 12,05,437 in 2011). The rapid extension in agriculture and industrialization particularly during the post partition plans under the five year plans has contributed to high rate of growth

in population in the district. Its proximity to Delhi and a good scope for gainful employment especially in the field of handloom and weaving are the other important factors besides the general trend of population rise in the country.

**DENSITY OF POPULATION.**—Panipat is the second most thickly populated district in the State. The main reasons behind its high population density include its nearness to the National Capital Delhi, age old handloom and textile industry, Panipat Oil Refinery and its overall industrialization. According to the 2011 Census, the density of population in the district was 951 persons per square kilometre as compared to the 573 persons per square kilometre for the State as a whole.

**DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION.**— As per Census 2011, there are only 2 towns and a total of 186 villages in the District, out of which 176 villages are inhabited and 10 village are uninhabited. With 82 villages, Samalkha tehsil is the biggest followed by Panipat tehsil with 76 villages. Israna tehsil is the smallest one with only 28 villages and no town. Rural population is higher in Panipat tehsil (2,35,168 persons) than that of Samalkha tehsil (2,18,195). Panipat tehsil has one statutory town and four census towns. Samalkha tehsil has only one statutory town. The villages classified by population are given below:—

Range of population	Number of villages in each range	Percentage of villages in each range
Up to 199	3	6.8
200-499	4	4.2
500-999	11	8.8
1000-1999	38	21.9
2000-4999	80	39.6
5000-9999	34	16.7
10000 and above	6	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>100</b>

The above table shows that 56 (34.9 %) villages in the district are small sized having population below 2000 persons, 80 (39.6 %) villages are of medium size with a population ranging from 2000-4999 and 40 (18.7 %) villages are of large size having population of more than 5000 persons.

**DISTRIBUTION OF VILLAGES BY DENSITY.**— Thirty seven villages in the district are having a very low population density below 300 persons per square kilometre, in 68 villages the population density is medium ranging from 301 to 500 persons per square kilometre, and 74 villages are thickly populated with a

population density of more than 501 persons per square kilometre. The distribution of villages by density is shown in the table below:-

Range of population density (per square kilometre)	Total number of villages in each population density range.	Percentage of villages in each population density range	Percentage distribution of population
0-100	1	0.6	0.3
101-200	8	4.5	1.1
201-300	28	15.6	7.7
301-500	68	38.0	39.0
above 501	74	41.3	52.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**HOUSEHOLD.**— The total of 2,35,640 houses (1,21,876 rural and 1,13,764 urban) in the district were occupied by 9,67,449 persons. Normally, a single house was used by one household which on an average consisted of 5-7 persons. The over burdened households reflect the shortage of houses in the district. Additional housing is essential to relieve the inconvenience of increased density as conditions of living and working are determined by it. However, the total houseless population in the district was 1,418 persons. The highest number of houseless population (1,029) and institutional population (1,318) have been recorded in Panipat tehsil followed by Samalkha tehsil (houseless 207 persons and institutional 485 persons) and Israna tehsil (houseless 182 persons and institutional 346 persons). In the urban areas, the highest houseless population of 549 has been reported in Panipat MCI+OG. It is followed by Samalkha MC with 73 houseless persons. 57 houseless persons have also been reported in Panipat Taraf Ansar. The highest institutional population 824 has been found in Panipat MCI+OG followed by Samalkha MC with 150 persons.

**SEX RATIO.**— Although in number, the two sexes are not widely divergent, the disparity is of great interest to social scientist because of different roles of the two sexes in society and its economy. Like other districts of the State, Panipat too is female deficient district. According to 2011 Census, out of the total population of 12,05,437 persons of the district, 6,46,857 are males and 5,58,580 are females showing a ratio of 53.66 : 46.34. The district comes at 18<sup>th</sup> rank in the State in terms of sex-ratio. There are 864 females per 1000 males in the district as against the Haryana State which stood at 879. The sex ratio has been deteriorating continuously in the district since 1951. It showed a bit of recovery in 1991 to 852 females per thousand males and stumbled again showing the worst deterioration with a loss of 23 females to 829 females per thousand males in 2001 as per the then Census. The district has witnessed a good recovery of 35 females per thousand males in its sex ratio during the

2001-2011. The changes in the sex-ratio during the decades 1951-2011 in Panipat district have been shown below:-

<b>Sex Ratio in Panipat (females per 1000 males)</b>				
<b>Census</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Rural</b>	<b>Urban</b>
	1951	866	857	899
	1961	857	849	885
	1971	852	844	877
	1981	849	841	867
	1991	852	845	869
	2001	829	837	818
	2011	864	860	867

**POPULATION OF SCHEDULED CASTES.**— As per 2011 Census, the total population of Scheduled Castes in the district is 2,06,213 (1,09,695 males and 96,518 females). The district ranked sixteenth in the percentage of Scheduled Castes population, which accounted for 17.11 percent of total population in the district. In rural areas, the district had 20.02 percent of population of Scheduled Castes to the total rural population. In towns, the Scheduled Castes population constituted 13.69 percent of the urban total population in the district.

The proportion of Scheduled Castes population to total population in each town/tehsil as in 2011 is as follows:-

<b>Name of the tehsil</b>	<b>Total population</b>	<b>Total Scheduled Castes population</b>	<b>Percentage of Scheduled Castes population to total population</b>
Panipat	7,91,634	1,37,758	17.40
Israna	1,08,196	20,606	19.04
Samalkha	3,05,607	47,849	15.66
<b>District total</b>	<b>12,05,437</b>	<b>2,06,213</b>	<b>17.11</b>

**DISPLACED PERSONS.**— As a result of the partition of the country in 1947, many Muslim families migrated to Pakistan and 59,435 persons mainly Hindus from Jhang, Multan, Muzafargarh, Lyallpur and other parts of Pakistan migrated to India, and settled in the district as per Census 1951. The Government extended various facilities to rehabilitate them by giving financial and other facilities which included technical and vocational training, special priorities in recruitment to public services and loans to settle down in petty business of trade.

The detailed account about their rehabilitation may be seen under the caption of 'Rehabilitation' at the end of this chapter.

**LITERACY.**— Literacy rate of the population is defined as the percentage of literates in the age group of seven years and above. For different age groups the percentage of literates in that age group gives the literacy rate. The literacy rates are 65.25 percent for the district as a whole, 61.96 percent for rural areas and 69.12 percent for urban areas. The literacy rate is 71.75 percent for males as against 57.73 percent for females. In rural areas, the literacy rate is 69.70 percent for males and 52.95 percent for females. In urban areas, the literacy rate is 74.16 percent and 63.30 percent for males and females, respectively. As shown above, the literacy rates are higher among the males and females in urban areas. The following table presents tehsil-wise number and percent age of literates and gap in male-female literacy in 2011:-

Name of Tehsil	Number of literates and illiterates						Percentage of literates.			Gap in male female literacy rate
	Number of literates			Number of illiterates			Persons	Males	Females	
	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females				
Panipat	5,29,045	3,08,332	2,20,713	2,62,589	1,15,567	1,47,022	66.83	72.74	60.02	12.72
Israna	67,493	40,835	26,658	40,703	17,047	23,656	62.38	70.55	52.98	17.57
Samalkha	1,90,061	1,14,969	75,092	1,15,546	50,107	65,439	62.19	69.65	53.43	16.21
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,86,599</b>	<b>4,64,136</b>	<b>3,22,463</b>	<b>4,18,838</b>	<b>1,82,721</b>	<b>2,36,117</b>	<b>65.25</b>	<b>71.75</b>	<b>57.73</b>	<b>14.02</b>

The above table indicates that the literacy rate in Panipat tehsil is 66.8 percent. Literacy rates of Israna tehsil (62.2 percent) and Samalkha tehsil (62.4 percent) are almost at par with each other. Similarly, the sex wise literacy rates in Panipat tehsil (males 72.7 percent, females 60 percent) are better than Samalkha tehsil (males 69.6 percent, females 53.4 percent) and Israna tehsil (males 70.6 percent females 52.9 percent). The total gap in male-female literacy rate is recorded as 14.02 percent in the district. The comparative low literacy among females is associated with the conservative outlook of the people as well as their social and economic backwardness.

**LANGUAGE.**— Language is a critical attribute of India's population which is marked with a pluri-lingual and pluri-cultural society. Language in itself is a group of mother tongues. The mother tongue is defined as the Language spoken in childhood by the person's mother to the person. The importance of the language in Indian context could well be understood from the fact that the Country was reorganized into States in 1956 on the basis of language.

Panipat district falls in the region of the Bangru dialect. Bangru represents the western group of dialects of Hindi. Its phonology and grammar are similar to a great extent to that of standard Hindi but dissimilarities are also conspicuous. Standard Hindi dental 'n' and 'i' are changed (not though always) to cerebral 'n' and 'i' i.e. 'Ja'na' for Ja'na' to mean 'to go' and Sa'la

for sala' to mean brother-in-law. In Bangru, there is no short vowel in the final position of words, i.e. sa'dhu' or 'sadh' to mean saint and 'Kavi' for Ka'vi to mean poet. Consonant clusters are rarely used in this dialect. A few other peculiarities of the Bangru dialect are :sai 'सै' for hai 'है' to mean 'is', Karda 'करदा' for Karta 'करता' to mean 'doing' and kad 'कद' for kab 'कब' to mean 'when'.

Hindi is spoken by the largest number of people (91.2 percent) in the district and *haryanavi* is the main dialect spoken by 48 per cent population. Punjabi is spoken by 7.8 percent of the population according to Census 2011. The displaced persons who settled in the district after the partition speak Punjabi while interacting with their community members whereas Hindi with small admixture of Punjabi words is spoken by them in most parts of the district while communicating with others. In the Government offices and educational institutions Hindi is spoken by the majority. As the district falls in the region of Bangru Dialect

The various scripts used in the district are Devnagari for Hindi, Gurmukhi for Punjabi, Persian for Urdu, Roman for English and *Lande*<sup>2</sup> for book-keeping. After the migration of Muslim in 1947, the use of Urdu has been replaced by Hindi. Its use is now limited to the older generation. The younger generation mostly uses Hindi and English in speech and writing.

## RELIGIOUS LIFE

The majority of the population of the district consists of Hindus, while Muslims, Sikhs, Jains, Christians and Buddhists are in minorities. After Hindus, the second largest population is that of Muslims. Christians were introduced in the district about a century ago under the patronage of the British. Churches were established in Panipat and Samalkha in the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The religion-wise details of population as per 2001 Census of Panipat District are given below:-

Religion	Total Population	Males	Females
Hindus	8,73,593	4,77,310	3,96,283
Muslims	59,696	33,389	26,307
Christians	1,017	525	492
Sikhs	27,437	14,617	12,820
Buddhists	645	352	293
Jains	4,852	2,539	2,313
Religion not stated	209	128	81
<b>All religions</b>	<b>9,67,449</b>	<b>5,28,860</b>	<b>4,38,589</b>

**HINDUS.** — The 90.2 percent of total population, in rural and urban areas, of the district consists of Hindus, who follow Hinduism. There are different ideas and theories regarding definition of Hindus. The scholars have different opinions on Hinduism. Quite a few scholars consider it as a jumble of creeds and rituals. For instance, a reputed scholar on religion, Deva Raja has observed, “Compared to the neatly formulated religious creed as Christianity and Islam, Hinduism appears to be a welter of beliefs, due doctrines and practices that defy the understanding and interpretive ingenuity of even sympathetic students”<sup>3</sup>.

“Hinduism has no single book, no single dogma or set of exhortation, no single philosophic concept to believe in, no single God to worship, no single *prophet* to follow, even lord Krishna is not the authority of *Vedas*. But the *Vedas* are his authority. His glory is that he is the greatest preacher that ever existed. Hinduism was not born at a given time and at a given place. It has no beginning and no end. It is eternal. It is an everlasting process of moving towards realization of divinity within a continuous attempt to search God and see God<sup>4</sup>.”

American scholar, Emerson have expressed his views on Hinduism and said “Hinduism believes that our life is an apprenticeship to truth that around circle another circle can be drawn; that there is no end in nature, and every end has a beginning, and under every deep a lower deep opens”.

Arya Samaj has contributed a great deal in the enrichment of Hinduism especially the theory “Back to the Vedas” expressed by Swami Dayanand Saraswati, founder of the Arya Samaj. Also, the role of Swami Vivekanand, in the enrichment of Hinduism is no less significant who believed, “whether we are conscious of it or not, we think in the *Vedanta*; we live in the *Vedanta*, we breathe in the *Vedanta*, we die in the *Vedanta*, every Hindu does that<sup>5</sup>.”

Religion plays an important role in the life of people. Hinduism is hardly distinguishable from the faith of their co-religionists elsewhere. Most of the Hindus follow traditional Hindu beliefs and practice Sanatan Dharma. Hindus worship God in its various aspects, the chief being Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesha(Shiva). Rama and Krishna are incarnation of Vishnu. Hanuman, popularly known as Bajrang Bali, is worshipped by all sections of Hindus. He is also worshipped as *Rudra* being eleventh incarnation of Shiva. The *Vedas*, *Puranas*, *Upanishads* and Epics, namely *Ramayan*, *Mahabharata* and *Bhagwat Gita* are sacred Books of Hindus. Spirits of streams, trees and other minor deities are also objects of worship. The other deities revered by the people are: the Sun, the Yamuna, Bhumia, Small pox sisters, Gugga, Khawaja Khizr and



*Sayyads*. It has been observed that Hindus follow traditional Hindu beliefs and are generally orthodox in their religious practices.

The religious practices of the Hindus all over Haryana are almost identical. The variations, if at all, are due to customs peculiar to each caste and family. On the occasion of child birth, marriage etc. *purohit* (the priest) is invited for performing ritual worship. For the performance of *sanskara* and *grih pravesh* (entering newly built or purchased house) ceremonies presence of *purohit* is required.

Most of the temples are dedicated to Vishnu and Shiva. Some temples are, however, built to local deities. Very few people go to temple for worship, while most of them go for *darshans* or for asking boons. The educated people mostly worship at home and some of whom keep install images or idols of their favorite deities at their homes and shops and perform the ritual of deity worship in the morning and evening.

The practice of observing *shradhas* in commemoration of the dead ancestors is also common. These are performed 15 days preceding *Navaratri*. During these days professional *Brahmans* are invited and are offered delicious food either on the important *tithi* (date) or on the last day of the *shradhas* i.e. *Amavasya* (new moon) and some portion of the food is offered to cows and birds. The members of the family take meals after the traditional performance of *shradhas*. *Charhawa* (offerings) is made mostly by women which generally, is in the form of cereals or cooked food or sweet meats; and they offer it in front of the deity. The Priest putting a part of the offering on the platform where the deity is placed and gives the remainder of it to the appropriate receiver as *prasad*. In many cases, Brahmins are fed in the names of the God.

The popular deities and the way of worship by the people are as follows:-

**SHIVA.**— The people of the district are closely associated with Shiva worship since ancient times. *Shivalas* or temples of Shiva are found in large number in towns and villages. Shiva is worshipped in the form *Shivlinga*. People visit Shiva temple generally on Monday and worship the deity (God Shiva) by pouring milk and water on the *Shivlinga* (symbol of God) enshrined in it. Fast is observed also by some people on Monday which is considered as day of Shiva. During the month of *Shravan* (*July-August*) some worshippers bring *Kawad* i.e. water of holy river Ganges, from Haridwar (Uttanchal) for pouring it on the *shivlinga* (*jalabhishek*) on *Shivratri*. Traditionally, the *kawad* is brought on feet, but the use of vehicles is also in vogue. Some young worshippers bring '*dak kawad*' in groups in which they bring it at a very fast pace by covering the distance by running in relays.

**VISHNU.**— People in the district worship Vishnu either directly or in the form of his *avatara*(incarnations), most famous of whom are Krishna and Rama. In Hinduism, Vishnu is considered as the All-Pervading essence of all beings, the master of—and beyond—the past, present and future, one who supports, sustains and governs the Universe and originates and develops all elements within. Vishnu governs the aspect of preservation and sustenance of the Universe, so he is worshipped as "Preserver of the Universe".

**RAMA.**— Rama or Ram is worshipped by all Hindus as the incarnation of Vishnu. Temples of Lord Rama are popularly known as *Thakurdwaras* (abode of Lord). Every temple of Rama is adorned with the idols of Rama, Lakshman and Sita alongwith Hanuman. The devotees worship these idols in the morning and evening. The people attach a great reverence to the lord Rama. On the occasion of *Ramnaumi*, devotees keep fast; go to temples and warship lord Rama. They donate things and distribute *pakwans* such as *kheer-puri* and *halwa* among other devotees and to the poor. Like elsewhere in the country, Ram Lila or the story of Ramayana is staged in various parts of the district during *Navaratri*s. Rama is worshipped on the occasion of 'Dussehra' for killing the 'adharmā'(non-religion) and 'evil' in the form of 'Ravana' on the tenth day of 'Aashvin' month. Ram Lila, which is keeping the folk theatre alive, has also undergone a lot of change with the advancement of technology in the theatrical stream, mechanisms and advancement of light and sound systems.

**KRISHNA.**— Krishna is also worshipped throughout the district by Hindus as the incarnation of *bhagwan* Vishnu. The name of Krishna is very dear to every Hindu of the district as elsewhere in the country. Like Ram Lila, Krishna Lila also provides a favourite theme to the folk theatre. Devotees generally keep the idols of Lord Krishna in their homes for worship. Cow worship is deeply connected with the worship of Lord Krishna. Devotees read 'the Gita' stated to be discoursed by Lord Krishna and the poetry versed by saint poet Surdas, who devoted his whole life in the worship of Lord Krishna.

**HANUMAN.**— Hanuman (*Anjaneya* or *Maruti*) was an ardent devotee of Lord Rama and is worshipped as Hindu deity in *Vanara* (ape-like humanoid) shape. He is believed to be immortal. He is a central character in the Sanskrit epic *Ramayana* and also finds mention in several other texts, including *Mahabharata* and various Puranas. Folk tales increasingly eulogize the powers of Hanuman and he is considered an *avatar* or reincarnation of Shiva who fought from the side of Lord Rama in war against the demon king Ravana. Like elsewhere in India, Hanuman is worshipped in the district by all Hindus and other section of the society as the *Sankatmochan* (danger-destroyer) and God of Strength. His worshippers generally read *Hanuman Chalisa*(a 40 verse booklet), observe fast on Tuesday, offer sweetmeat as *prashad* to the images

installed in the temples, and start every different job after uttering the word of 'Jai Bajrang Bali' to appease of the deity.

During the auspicious days before Dussehra hundreds of human Hanumans can be seen dotting the city streets of Panipat. Residents invite these Hanumans to their houses and organise ceremonies in which neighbours are also called in to receive blessings. The tradition is considered to be attached with those who had come here from Pakistan and has been adopted by the local residents in a big way with the passage of time.

**MINOR DEITIES.**— Most of the malevolent deities are worshipped by women and children while at their mother's apron. Some Muslims *pirs* are also revered by all sections of society; particularly those that are the malevolent type, for it can do no harm to worship them whereas they may be troublesome, if not propitiated.

**SUN GOD.**— The people chiefly delight to honour this God. No shrine is ever built to this God but the Sunday is the day sacred to him. On Sunday, the devotees do not set milk for *dahi* (curd) but make it into rice-milk (*kheer*), a part of which is given to the *purohits* in honour of the Sun. A lamp is lit and water is poured towards the Sun (*argh*)<sup>6</sup> in his honour, and when the devotees first step out of the door in the morning, they salute the sun, and say *dharm ko sahai rakhya suraj maharaj* (Keep me in the faith, O'Lord the Sun). The professional Brahmans in temples take offerings. The staunch devotees keep fasts in the honour of the deity by eating only one meal with one sort of grain and abstaining salt. During the solar eclipse, people from the district visit the Yamuna, the Ganges and the city of Kurukshetra for taking bath in the *Brahma Sarovar* and other holy tanks.

**BHUMIA OR THE GOD OF THE HOMESTEAD.**— Bhumia or the god of the homestead or the village itself, often called *Khera* is the most important deity amongst rural people of the district which is usually worshipped on Sunday. People light up a lamp and offer a cake of bread at the shrine, and feed the Brahmans. This is always done twice a year, after the harvests are gathered in and also on other occasions like marriages, birth of son etc. The bridegroom worships the Bhumia of his village before proceeding to the bride's house, and before entering his house along with his newlywed bride. When a woman has had a son, she lights lamps, and affixes with cow-dung five culms of the *panni* grass called *bearn* to the shrine. The first milk of a cow or buffalo is always offered to Bhumia. Orthodox women carry their young babies to the temples of these deities to ensure longevity of life.

**THE YAMUNA.**— The People refer to river Yamuna as Jamna Ji. The Yamuna is highly venerated in Hinduism and worshipped as a goddess. In Hindu mythology, she is the daughter of Sun God, Surya, and sister of Yama,

the God of Death, hence also known as *Yami* and according to popular legends bathing in its sacred waters frees one from the torments of death. There are no shrines to the Yamuna in the district, but people go and bathe in the river on the occasion of *Sankrants* in the month of *Chaitra* and *Kartika* and on 15<sup>th</sup> of *Kartika* (October-November) or every day in that month.

**KHWAJA KHIZR.**— The worship of the local god of water, though the name is Muslim, is prevalent more in the *Khadar* than in the *Bangar*, and especially on Sundays. Twice a year after the harvests, he is worshipped at the wells by lighting lamps there. On the festivals of Holi and Diwali, a raft called *langri* is made of the *bearn* (type of grass), and a lighted lamp is put on it and set afloat on the tank in the honour of the deity. The Brahmans take the offerings to Khwaja Khizr, though they are occasionally given to the water-carrier or *jhinwar*.

In addition to the worship of these deities, the benevolent spirits such as *pitr* and *satis* are also worshipped in various forms.

**SMALL POX SISTERS.**— *Sitla Mata* is worshipped by the people of the district for protection against small pox. Small pox is supposed to be caused by a band of seven sisters of whom *Sitla Mata*, the goddess of small pox, is believed to be the greatest and most virulent. *Sitla Mata* is worshipped on the 7<sup>th</sup> of *Chaitra* (March-April) which is called *sili-satam*. Besides *phag*, the day after holi festival, and any Monday, especially of the *Chaitra* or *Assad* are favourable days. There are important shrines of these deities at Pathri, Kabri and Baholi of Panipat District.

The offerings are discontinued during an attack of smallpox, till the disease has vanished in the belief that the evil influence may not spread. But, so long as *Mata* keeps her hands off, nothing is too good for the Goddess, for she is one of the great dreads for Indian mothers. Although, the small pox disease has been completely eradicated, yet people still have undiminished faith in the Small Pox Goddesses. The fairies are defined as malevolent spirits and with the spread of education the fairies are considered nothing but only a superstition.

**GUGGA PIR OR ZAHIR PIR.**— *Gugga Pir* is supposed to be the greatest of the snake kings as *Gugga* had a peculiar power to cure victims of snake bite. There are number of legends clustered around *Gugga*. He is also called *Zahir Pir*. Some refer to him as *Bagarwala* because of his grave near Bhadra tehsil of Hanumangarh district in Rajasthan where thousands of Hindu and Muslim devotees throng to pay homage at his Shrine annually in the month of *Bhadrapada* (August-September) during the Gogaji (*Gugga*) fair, which lasts for three days. The fair is held from the ninth day of the dark half of *Bhadrapada* (Goga Navami) to the eleventh day of the dark half of the same

month. The 9<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of *Bhadra*, especially the former, considered as *Gugga Naumi*, are dedicated to this *pir*, and generally the 9<sup>th</sup> of any month and all Mondays are his days. His shrines known as a *mari*, marked by a long bamboo with peacock plumes, a coconut, some coloured threads, *pankhas* (hand-fans) and a blue flag on the top, is a small one-room building with a minarat on each corner and a grave inside.

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of *Bhadra* the *Jogi's* take *Gugga-ki-Chhari* (a strong and long bamboo wand, decorated with fans, garlands, flower and coloured pieces of cloth) round the village to the sound of *deroos* (a type of percussion instrument) and the devotees salute it and offer *Churmas* (sweet meal). The *Balmiks* and *Dhanaks* in many villages play the *deroos* and sing devoted psalms in the honour of the *Gugga*. It is said that beating of *deroos* is the exclusive privilege of the *Balmiki* community; others may partake in singing, dancing, and simply offering *churmas*. It is said that the spirit of the *Gugga* temporarily enter into the body of devotee dancer who proves this fact by beating himself occasionally with a bunch of iron rods called *Chabuk*. The important *maris* of *Gugga* are at villages *Asan Kalan* and *Mandi*. *Gugga Pir* is also subject of folk songs sung on the occasion of child birth and marriage.

**SACRED BOOKS OF HINDUS.**— The sacred books of the Hindus are the *Vedas*, *Puranas*, *Upnishdas*, *Shrutis*, *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata* and *Bhagwad Gita*. All these religious books guide the destiny of the Hindu race. These books carry some eternal and constant message for the people.

**OTHER SAINTS.**— There are innumerable local saints. A few of the most celebrated are *Guru Ravidas* whom the members of Scheduled Castes, particularly *Chamars*, worship. The Birth anniversary of the *Guru* is celebrated on the Purnima of *Magh* (January-February). On this occasion processions are taken out singing *bhajans* and devotional songs. *Maharishi Balmiki* is revered by *Balmiki* community. Another most celebrated local saint is *Shaikh Sharafuddeen Bu Ali Qalandar* popularly known as *Bu Ali Shah Qalander*. He is supposed to have been born in A.D. 1190 and died at the age of 122 years in A.D. 1312. He was a *Sufi* saint of the *Chishti Order* and contemporary of *Baba Farid*. A large number of people from all walks of life - *Hindus*, *Muslims*, *Sikhs* and *Christians* - visit his *dargah* (mausoleum), which is considered as an important place of pilgrimage, in the district and offer prayers there each Thursday and during the annual '*Urs*' fair.

**SIKHS.**— The word '*Sikh*' of *Punjabi* is derived from the *Sanskrit* word '*Shishya*' which means 'a learner' and 'a disciple'. *Sikhs* are the followers of *Guru Nanak Dev* (A.D. 1459-1539) and believe in the simple formula "the unity of God and brotherhood of man." They believe in the *Karma* and the transmigration of the soul. *Sikhism* attaches great importance to the institution

of *langer* (free community kitchen), according to which the high and low have to sit side by side and dine together, thereby annihilating all distinctions of caste and creed. For initiation, every Sikh is required to receive *pahul*(*amrit*), the baptism of *Khanda*(the double edged sword with broad point), in order to become a 'Singh'. After baptism, he is essentially to wear the five K's (distinguishing physical items), namely *Kes* (unshorn hair), *Kachha*(short drawers), *Kangha* (a comb), *Kara* (an iron bangle) and *Kirpana* ( a sword).

The Sikhs venerate ten Gurus and their holy book Guru Granth Sahib is kept for devotional study and recitation in place of worship called Gurdwara. Before his martyrdom, Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru and founder of Sikhism, issued his final commandment in a big congregation held at Nanded (Maharashtra) that henceforth 'Guru Granth Sahib' (the holy scripture of the Sikhs) alone to be the Guru of Sikhs evermore. He further emphasized that no human being was henceforth to be the Guru of the Sikhs.

The Sikhs constitute 2.8 percent of the total population of Panipat district and form the third largest religious group with 27,437 persons (14,617 male and 12,820 female), as per census 2001. Sikhs are composed of mostly Jat-sikhs and Mazhbi-sikhs. The majority among Jat-sikhs comprise Virks while others include Sandhus, Chatthas, Cheemas, Bhattis and Gills. Another branch of the Sikhs is *Namdhari*. They also wear turbans. In most of the Hindu families, the convention of *jetha kesdhari* is still prevalent, where the hair of the eldest son in the family are never trimmed. He looks like a Sikh as he wears the turban and keeps the hair and beard intact.

Besides observing some Hindu festivals, the Sikhs of the district celebrate *Gurupurab* (birthday and martyrdom day of the Sikh Gurus) and Baisakhi on 13<sup>th</sup> April every year which marks the birth of *Khalsa*. On the occasion of birth, marriage, death and on the fulfillment of a desire, Akhand path is organized. Before the Guru Granth Sahib none must appear bare-headed. The devotees also read *Japji Sahib* in the morning, *Rahrahs Sahib* in the evening and *Kirtna Sahib* before going to bed. Gurudwara Shri Ram Dass Singh Sabha is the most famous gurudwara in the district.

**MUSLIMS.**—Muslims, the followers of Islam, are second largest community in the district constituting 6.2 percent of the total population with 59,696 persons (33,389 male and 26,307 female) as per 2001 Census. The Muslims believe in one God and their religion enjoins five duties upon them. These are recitation of *kalma*; expression of faith in God and Prophet Mohammed with the offering of *namaz* five times a day preferably in a mosque; observing *Roza* (fast during month of *Ramzan*); *Haj* (a travel to Mecca), and contribution in cash and kind for charitable purposes.

Many Muslims have faith in saints and hold annual 'Urs' (fair) at their tombs and some important places. During the performance of *namaz*, they keep their heads covered with caps. For the performance of *namaz* in a mosque, only the male members of the community are allowed.

The Muslims celebrate religious festivals like *Id-e-milad*, *Id-ul-Fitr*, *Id-ul-zuha* (*Bagrid*) with great enthusiasm. They also observe *Muharram* to commemorate the martyrdom of Hussan and Hussain, the prophet's grandsons. Quran is their sacred book and *jumma* (friday) is sacred to them. The Muslims from rural areas flock to Panipat on the occasion of their festivals for offering mass prayers. The Muslims from other parts of the country come to Panipat, the birth place of the poet Hali, to celebrate his *Urs*.

Marriage among the muslims is contracted with the usual *Nikah* ceremony performed by a *Maulvi*. A Muslim's dress comprises a *Lungi* or *tehmat*, shirt jacket and turban or Gandhi cap or round cap. A woman generally wears a *salwar*, *shirt* and *dupatta*. *Burkah* is rarely seen.

**JAINS.**— Jains constitute only 0.5 percent of the total population of 4,852 as per census 2001. They worship lord Mahavira and *Tirthankaras*. They celebrate festivals connected with the life of Lord Mahavira and Tirthankaras and all other festivals like rest of the Hindus. There are two sects of Jains, namely *Shwetambar* and *Digambar*. They do not believe in idol worship but congregate at *Sthanaks* visited by Jain *Munis*. According to Jainism five vows enjoined on men are truth, *ahimsa*, celibacy, restraints of passions and non-stealing. The Jain priests are required to observe these vows strictly.

**CHRISTIANS.**— With only 1,017 (525 males and 492 females) persons, Christians constitute only 0.1 percent of the total population as per census 2001. They believe in Jesus Christ and consider the Bible as their holy Book. In 1960, a church was built at Panipat when catholic mission was reorganized. The important festivals among the Christians are New Year's Day, Easter, Good Friday and Christmas. Christians worship at the Churches and special prayers are offered on Sundays.

**BUDDHISTS.**— With only 645 persons (352 male and 293 female) Buddhists are the smallest community, in terms of population, as per 2001 Census. Buddhism was started by Gautam Buddha. His name was Siddartha and he belonged to Gautam clan. He was born in 566 B.C. After great struggle and ups and downs, he became *Buddha*, the enlightened one and taught his followers the four "Noble Truths" (*Arya Satya*) concerning suffering, the cause of suffering, the distraction of suffering and the way that leads to the destruction of sorrow. The Buddhists follow "the Noble Eight Fold Path" that is to say: right views; right aspirations; right speech; right conduct; right livelihood; right effort; right mindfulness; and right contemplation.

## SUPERSTITIONS

Orthodoxy grips the thought of most people in the district and their minds continue to sink in superstitions. A simple belief in the destiny, nature or God sustains their faith. The worship of the sacred herb *Tulsi* (sacred basil) and *peepal* tree is popular among many households. The wrath and retribution of the gods is feared as much as their boons are solicited. Some offerings are also made at certain shrines of the gods to propitiate them and to ward off evil. In some rural areas, people have superstitious faith in the capacity of professional charmers to subdue an evil spirit. Hindu sorcerers seek to ward off the affect of the evil eye by amulets (*taviz*) which they prefer to have endowed with magic powers. No doubt these irrational beliefs are on the decline, but still many people have faith in the potency of charms, amulets and secret formulae (*jantra*, *mantra* and *tantra*).

People also believe in the efficacy of the omens to forestall the coming events. If a black cat comes across one path, it is believed as a bad omen. If someone sneezes at the beginning of a new activity and on going out for an auspicious work it is known as a symbol of failure. A woman with an empty pitcher and coming across one's path is considered inauspicious. A pitcher or a pot full of water is treated as a lucky sign. When a human being is ill, a rupee and four annas are wrapped in a cloth with some rice and placed in a corner of the room in the name of some deceased relation of the sick man, which is given to Brahman, on his recovery from illness. A dog howling at night chills the blood as it is considered a portent of approaching death. Matching of *gunas* (virtues) based on the horoscopes of bride and groom is considered essential. Barber shops remain closed on Tuesday as hair is not cut on that day. Ladies avoid washing their hair on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday and Amavasya (new moon day) of the month. People avoid eating anything during solar eclipse and take a dip in rivers on that occasion. On the birth or death of a member, *Sutak* and *patak*, respectively, are observed for a stipulated period by the concerned family and they do not visit temples during this period.

Some of the above quoted prevailing superstitions have been liberalized, but others have a grip over the people even today despite the teachings of Arya Samaj and increasing literacy.

## FESTIVALS AND FAIRS

Festivals and Fairs are an important feature in the life of the people. They symbolize people's cultural, social and religious aspirations. They provide a change in routine life, physical diversion and mental recreation, and are source of joy and gaiety to all. In fact, festivals are special days, periods of time and season, which are so designed as to ensure individual joy by



practicing religion coupled with social joy and domestic happiness. The fairs and *melas* have traditional significance.

The common festivals celebrated by the Hindus are *Diwali*, *Holi*, *Janam Ashtami* and *Dussehra*. Other festivals are *Shivratri*, *Gugga Naumi*, *Raksha Bandhan* and *Bhaiya Dooj*, *Durga Ashtami*(twice a year), *Gita Jayanti*, *Teej*, *Karva Chauth*, *Basant Panchami*, *Ram Naumi* etc.

*Teej* which falls in *Sawan* (rainy season) is mainly the festival of women. The previous day swings are hung on the trees. On the day of festival women and children attired in their best clothes swing and they sing songs of *Teej*. The other important festival of women is *Karva Chauth* which falls in the month of *Kartik* (October-November). They keep fast for the long life of their husband. The *pooja* is performed by the women sitting together in the afternoon; the fast is, however, broken after looking at and offering water to the moon at night. Some of the fairs and festivals celebrated by people of the district are described below:-

**JANMASHTMI.**— *Janmashtmi* is celebrated in the district with religious fervour. Special worship ceremonies are performed in the temples. *Prashad* and sweets are also distributed. The colourful processions are taken out re-enacting the life of Lord Krishna. The devotees in large number visit the decorated temples. Many temples including the Lord Rama temple, Geeta Bhawan, Shiva Mandir, Devi Mandir (city) and Lakki Sar Baba Mandir of village Chulakana attract thousands of devotees throughout the day where special discourses and lectures on the Geeta and the Lord Krishna's life are organized.

**SHIVRATRI.**— *Shivratri* literally means the night consecrated to Shiva who is one of the three Gods of the Hindu Trinity. *Shivratri* is a special occasion that falls on 14<sup>th</sup> day of the dark fortnight of the lunar month *phalguna* of *Vikrami* Calendar, for the worship of Shiva either in the house or in a temple. Devotees also observe fast on this day. People worship Shiva by pouring water, milk, curd and honey on Shivalinga and offering leaves and fruit of *bail* tree, fruits of *Dhatura*, leaves of *Bhang*, grains, sugar, jaggery (*gur*) and fruits. In rural areas, women often keep some rice grains in the water to be poured on Shivalinga. Cultural fairs and wrestling matches are organized on the day.

**GUGGA NAUMI.**— *Gugga Naumi* is a religious festival connected with snake worship. A number of legends have clustered around *Gugga*, who is also called *Gugga Pir*, *Zahir Pir* or *Bagarwala* and is believed to have a peculiar power of curing snake-bite. His main Shrine containing his grave is in *Bhadra* tehsil of *Hanumangarh* district in *Rajasthan* in the *Bagar* tract which he is said to have ruled once during middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The Muslims also flock to his Shrine. *Gugga* descended on the earth on the 9<sup>th</sup> day *Bhadrapada*

(August-September) and to commemorate this event, fairs are held on his Shrine every year on this day.

**BAISAKHI FAIR.**— Baisakhi, traditionally, marks the end of the harvesting season and religiously it is associated with the birth of *Khalsa* (Sikh) *Panth*. The day is celebrated on the 1<sup>st</sup> of *baisakh* (13<sup>th</sup> April) which is also celebrated as New Year's Day. Baisakhi fairs are organized at many places in the district.

**LOHRI.**— The festival is celebrated, in the district, on the last day (usually 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> January) of the month *Paush* during which winter solstice takes place. People, especially of Punjabi community, take peanuts, *rewri*, flour, butter and various food items to places of religious worship. Lohri is celebrated by lightening a bonfire and worshipping it followed by singing, dancing and games. Eating of *til* (sesame seeds) and *rewri* (crisp toffee like desert made from jaggery and sesame seeds) is considered to be essential on Lohri day.

**PIOUS ANNIVERSARIES OF SIKH GURUS.**—Sikhs of Panipat celebrate birth anniversaries and martyrdom days of various Sikh Gurus. Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh is celebrated on *Poh Sudi '7'* (December-January) by holding *Kirtan Darbars* in Gurudwaras. Similarly, Guru Nanak Dev's birthday is also celebrated on *Kartik Purnamashi* (October-November). Religious functions are held to commemorate the martyrdom of Baba Zorawar Singh and Baba Fateh Singh (younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh) on *Poh Badi '1'* (December-January), of Guru Teg Bahadur on *Maghar Sudi '5'* (November-December) and of Guru Arjun Dev on *Jeth Sudi '4'* (May-June).

**HOLI.**— Like elsewhere in India, the festival of Holi is celebrated in the district with much enthusiasm both in urban and rural areas. In urban areas, where people limit themselves to the use of *gulal*, *abeer* (dry colours) and water dissolving colours and *pichkaris*, in rural areas, it is celebrated in a little different traditional manner. On the day of holi, only bonfire is created to represent the end of Holika, where women and girls offer *Dhalls* made of cow-dung cake and wish for the long life of their brothers. On *Dhulendi* (phag), next day of Holi, married women play with men, having a degree of relationship with them, by throwing coloured water on them and beating them with *kordas* (twisted cloth of strips). Men defend themselves with a stick or by throwing water on women. Men act as if they are powerless and their inability to defend themselves leads to much fun and frolic.

**DIWALI.**— The name 'Diwali' or 'Divali' is a contraction of 'Deepavali' which means 'row of lamps'. Diwali commemorates the return of Lord Rama, along with Sita and Lakshmana, from his 14-year-long exile and vanquishing the demon-king Ravana. In joyous celebrations of the return of their king, the

people of Ayodhya, illuminated the kingdom with earthen clay lamps. Therefore, like elsewhere, people of the district celebrate Diwali by lighting of '*diyas*' (small clay lamps) to signify the triumph of good over evil and by bursting fire-crackers. People clean, white-wash, paint and decorate their homes. The lamps are kept lit during the night and one's house is kept clean, both done in order to welcome the gods especially goddess Lakshmi. The festival starts with *Dhanteras* on which most Indian business communities begin their financial year. Homes are lit up with hundreds of *diyas* and shops, markets and temples are lit up using decorative electric lights. Shopkeepers offer discounted sales of cloths, jewellery, ornaments, and household goods. People wear new clothes, greet each other, share sweets and snacks with family members and friends.

**THE FESTIVAL OF BASORA.**— The festival of Basora falls in the month of *Chait* (March-April) and literally means festival of stale bread. On the eve of the festival, all household in the villages prepare *dalia* (porridge) or sweet rice (cooked in jaggery) and set it aside uneaten. Next morning women rise early and after ablution they perform puja at *Chabutras* (platforms) dedicated to the '*Matas*' (deities). In rural areas, warming of the *chuhla* (clay oven) and cooking is prohibited and people eat only the stale food on this day.

**THE FESTIVAL OF DEVUTHANI GIYARAS.**—The festival of Devuthani Giyaras, celebrated on the eleventh day of month of *Kartik*, is mainly festival of women. This is observed in order to awaken the gods who are supposed to be asleep since the ninth day in *Asadh* (June–July). Women keep fast during the day. In the evening they assemble at a selected place and beat upon brass utensils to wake up the gods and offer special dishes made at this occasion. After this, they break the fast and eat *prashad*.

The Jains celebrate the birth and *Nirvana* anniversaries of Parsvanath and Mahavira. The principal festival of Buddhists is *Buddha Purnima*, the day on which Buddha is believed to have been born and to have attained enlightenment as well as *Nirvana*.

Christmas and Easter are two principal festivals of the Christians; the former is celebrated in the honour of the birth of Jesus Christ while the latter commemorates his resurrection. The Christians go to churches during these festivals and exchange presents with family members and friends. Special prayers are held in the churches of the district during these occasions.

The Muslim festivals include 'Eid' and pious month of *Ramzan*. During the month of *Ramzan*, the devotees keep fast during the day-time throughout the month. *Eid-ul-Zuha* commonly called '*Bakrid*' as goats are butchered in the name of Allah, *Shab-a-Barat* is celebrated with fire-works and exchange of sweetmeat gifts.

All the principal religious festivals are celebrated in the district in the same way as are celebrated in the other parts of the northern India. Relevant details of other fairs and festivals celebrated in the district are given in the Table-V of Appendix.

### **CASTES AND SOCIAL GROUPS**

The doctrine of caste system by Manu still dominates the society. The important social groups are Ror, Brahman, Jat, Guzzar, Rajput, Khatri, Aggarwal, Arora, Kumhar, Khati, Saini, Lohar, Jhinwar, Chamar, Balmiki etc. Jat, Guzzar and Ror are chiefly the cultivators concentrated in rural areas by and large. Bania and Arora/Khatri are major business communities which are concentrated in the towns of which Arora/Khatri are displaced persons from Pakistan who settled in the district as a consequence of the partition in 1947. Socially and economically backward classes of the district comprise of Khati, Saini, Kumhar, Lohar, Sunar, Nai etc. and Scheduled castes comprise Balmiki, Chamar, Dhanak, Khatik etc. Every caste is divided into *gotras and sub-gotras*. The following description gives an idea about the profession and pattern of life style of various social groups.

**JAT.**— Jat is a major community of the district. The major gotras of the social group in the district are Dahiya, Jaglan, Gathwal or Malik, Deswal, Katkar, Gahlaut, Sandhu and Kundu. They are predominantly found in rural as well as urban areas of Panipat District. Jats who pre-eminently are the agricultural caste of the tract, are very good cultivators. With the spread of education many of them have also joined government services and defence forces. Those who had become Muslims were called *Mula* Jats.

**AGGARWAL OR BANIA.**— They trace their origin to Maharaja Agarsen whose capital was at Agroha in Hisar District. Most of them are traditionally engaged in trade and industry. Known commonly as Mahajans they form the economic backbone of the community. Their money lending capacity enabled them to monopolize the village economy. In the past, some families followed the profession of money lending. Now besides business and trade, they have switched over to industry and government services from their traditional family pursuits.

**KHATRI AND ARORA.**— Khatri and Aroras are basically non-cultivators. These castes have migrated from Gujranwala, Multan and Muzaffargarh districts of the West Punjab (Pakistan) in the wake of Partition in 1947. Though, most of them have settled in urban areas of the district, few of them have also settled in the rural area. Both these communities are known for their business acumen. Educationally, they are very forward and have entered into all professions, but are most successful in business and services. The Aroras in particular, who came in a large number after the partition, are noted for their

capacity for hard work, thrift and business acumen. Energetic and enterprising by nature they engage freely in banking, shop keeping, trade, government service and agriculture and have carved a comfortable place for themselves in the local society.

**GUJJAR.**— Gujjars (*Gurjars*) claim to have their descent from Rajputs. The principal clans of Gujjars are Rawal, Chokar, Chamain and Kalsan and are mostly concentrated in the rural areas of the Panipat tehsil. Gujjar community is a social, secular and a patriotic race. The country is proud of their contribution in freedom movement before Independence. Generally of good physique, they devote most of their energies in cattle keeping. Earlier known as indifferent cultivators, they are now taking interest in agriculture and have proved good cultivators. They have their own peculiar customs. They are devotees of Lord Krishna.

**BRAHMAN.**— Brahmans have always enjoyed the status of being the most respected and the most privileged social group of the society. They are often called 'Pandit ji'. Traditionally, Brahmans perform religious ceremonies of all types, professionally and usually earned by practicing astrology and palmistry. According to Kurma Purana<sup>7</sup> "there are two types of Brahmans" one who takes food in a *Shraddh* ceremony and other one who does not. There are many Brahman families in the district who possess agricultural land and are agriculturists. Gaurs are mostly cultivators and have abandoned priestly profession. Saraswats are engaged in business, agriculture and services, some attend to the priestly work. Acharya Brahmans perform death ceremonies. Brahmins also have a good share in government services and defence forces.

**TYAGI (TAGA).**— They were originally Brahmans, but their ancestors gave up the priestly profession and took to agriculture. Consequently, the Brahmans eschewed (*Tyag*) them and made them outcasts. Hence, they are called 'Tyagi'. In Panipat, they are mostly concentrated along the Grand Trunk Road. They wear sacred thread but Brahmans do not intermarry with them. They are good cultivators. Now they are turning towards other occupations besides agriculture. They mostly join army and field of education.

**SAINI.**— Traditionally, Sainis are considered experts in vegetable cultivation and fruit gardening and are commonly known as '*Mali*' in rural areas. They are in small numbers. They own small holdings of land. They have also diversified from their traditional profession with the passage of time and spread of education.

**RAJPUT.**— They are fine brave men. The Rajputs are well known for their valour, chivalry, loyalty, horsemanship and swordsmanship. They retain the feudal instinct more strongly developed. They are very tenacious of the integrity of their communal property in the village land and seldom admit

strangers to share in it. Muslim Rajputs are called *Ranghars* by other castes and *Chotikats* by their Hindu brethren from *Choti*, the Hindu scalp look which the Muslims do not preserve. But both terms are considered abusive, especially the latter. The principal clans are the Chauhans and the Mandhars.

About their bravery, the historian's account is testimony. In the words of Dr. Hari Ram Gupta an eminent historian of Haryana, "Rajputs were the first people of India to strive and sacrifice in the service of the nation and religion. They continued the struggle for over seven hundred years, and set the noblest standards of chivalry and morality which have not so far been surpassed by any other people or country. It was for this reason that everyone in India who had some pretension to valour and heroism laid claim to Rajput origin". Many Rajputs believe themselves to be the descendants of their *Surajbansis* and *Chanderbansis*, hallowed rolling dynasties whose deeds have immortalized in the great epics, the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*.

**BACKWARD CLASSES AND SCHEDULED CASTES.**—There are many social groups which are socially backward and economically weaker. These social groups are divided into sub-groups, castes and sub-castes. On the order of the President of India a schedule or list of these castes are notified by each State and Union Territory which are valid within the jurisdiction of the concerned State and Union territory. Such socially backward and economically weaker castes which have been given a place in this schedule are called Scheduled Castes. Previously, like others, they did not marry in other groups, but this rigidity is on the wane in these days. Formerly, their avocations were restricted and they could not change them. Things have, however, changed after independence of the Country. The Backward Classes and Scheduled Castes are now at liberty to adopt any profession they like. The members of these classes are engaged in trade, commerce, industry, private and government services including police, and armed forces. Illiterates of these classes are however, still engaged in agriculture, their traditional profession or other labour oriented works.

To raise the economic and social condition, Govt. of India formulated a policy and schedules of these castes were prepared. The scheduled castes have been defined in Article 341 of the Constitution of India. For ensuring welfare of these classes and addition or deletion of the castes and groups in the existing lists or schedules, national and state level commissions have been constituted, by respective governments, under the provisions contained in Constitution of India. Lists of Backward classes and Scheduled Castes are given in Chapter XVII-Other Social Services.

**SCHEDULED TRIBES.**—There is no population notified as scheduled tribes in the district.

## **SOCIAL LIFE**

In the customs, traditions and social life of Haryana, kinship plays a significant role. The pattern of social life varies considerably from group to group, but the general mode of behaviour and attitude is more or less the same. Each relation has certain duties and responsibilities towards others in the group in the day-to-day life, birth and marriage ceremonies, funeral and other occasions.

**FAMILY SYSTEM.**—The joint family system, has always been a distinguished feature of the Hindu society. The joint family is locally known as *kunba*. A group of families having common ancestors is called a *thula*. Two or more *thulas* are jointly called *Pana or Patti*. Brothers and occasionally, cousins farm the land jointly, but they do not always live together. The income of the whole family is spent for the benefit of all its members, whether or not they have actually earned any part of it. The basis for the system is to insure maintenance of all descended from a common ancestor, father or grandfather or great grandfather. All received the attention of the head of the family and are supported and maintained out of the joint family funds.

Joint family system has been a distinguishing feature of Hindu society since time immemorial. Now, it is breaking up under the stress of the changed economic and social conditions. The main conditions for the break-up of joint family system are the competition for earning a livelihood, the tax structure, the increased cost of living, the mobility resulting from the requirements of service sector and above all, the growing spirit of individualism. It is no longer possible for one earning member of a family to feed and support many dependents. Another factor which has contributed in the dissolution of joint family system is the growing tendency of late marriages both for boys and girls. When boys and girls marry at a comparatively advanced age, they prefer to live independently. A new pattern, with an individualistic basis, is steadily emerging. Those who enter service have to go wherever they are posted. They can hardly uproot the headquarters of the joint family and move it with them place to place according to exigencies of service.

Not to talk of urban areas, the joint family system is disappearing even in the villages, where people depend almost entirely on agriculture. The average holding is not enough to support a joint family which continues to grow in size. It is, therefore, inevitable that some members of the family should move out in search of service to the urban areas to supplement the meager family income. In this way the migration of rural population to the cities in search of living, whether in business, industry, service or some form

of labour has virtually affected the structure of the joint family. Those who migrate to the towns get attuned to modern amenities of life and try to settle down there with their families.

**INHERITANCE.**—Prior to Independence, the matters relating to inheritance in case of Hindus including Sikhs, Jains and Buddhist were governed by a common law viz., the Indian Succession Act, 1925. The rule of inheritance of property has undergone a change with the passage of the Hindu Succession Act, 1956. Under the Act which governs the inheritance among the Hindus, the Sikhs, the Jains and the Buddhists, the property of the deceased is equally divided among sons, daughters, the widows and the mother. The Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act, 1956 governs the adoption of children and maintenance allowance to the wife.

Regarding the Muslims they are governed by the Shariat Act, 1937 of succession and inheritance. Under Islamic law, the sons, daughters and wife inherit the property of the deceased. The wife is the sole owner of *Mehr*, given to her at the time of marriage. The Christians on the other hand, are governed by the Indian Christians Succession Act, 1925.

**MARRIAGE.**— In India, marriage is not an affair between two individuals, but it involves a larger kin group from selection to finally tying the knot and solemnizing it. Most religions consider it sacrosanct (reared by religion<sup>8</sup>). Without marriage system there cannot be a sexual discipline in the world. Through marriage, family system is established which is essential for a healthy society. Family as an institution is fundamental to all the societies and, marriage that binds the two adults, male and female for procreation is meant to perform certain responsibility as husband and wife and later as parents.

The marriage among the Hindus is based upon the *Vedic* system. It is treated as sacred and is governed by traditional customs. Marriage is considered as a union of souls and not a contract between the parties. The marriage among Hindus is monogamous; according to the Hindu Marriage Act of 1935 (substituted by the Act of 1956) and polygamy is illegal. On the other hand, a Muslim may, according to the personal law, take four wives at a time. Due to economic factors, however, this practice is diminishing. A Christian is invariably monogamous. Now, a government employee, irrespective of the religion, is liable to be dismissed from Government service if he/she marries second time without the permission of the Government. Marital age has been prescribed as 21 years for males and 18 years for females by law. The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929, provided penalties for the celebration of marriages of male children under 21 years and female children under 18 years of age. As a result of this, there is a tendency for postponing marriage beyond the age specified in the Act.



Marriage among the Hindus is sacrament; its rites being prescribed in the scriptures and, to some extent, governed by customs and tradition. However, some variations in the performance of different rites by the different castes, or even different families within a caste, may occur. Certain rules and restrictions are observed before contracting a matrimonial alliance. The general rule is that marriage should take place within one's own caste, but not in the same *gotra*, the same *gotra* implies *gotra* of father. *Gotras* of mother and grandmother are also taken into consideration by majority of social groups barring a few groups. Besides the above, marriage with maternal uncle's son or daughter is also prohibited among the Hindus of Northern India. However, some Arora families may cross over this tradition. Another restriction observed is that marriages should take place not only outside one's own village and 'Gwand (villages that share the boundaries with the village of the bride or groom)', but also outside the village or villages where people of the same *gotra* reside.

Marriage is an important event of one's life it is preceded by a number of preliminaries including betrothal and elaborate preparations.

**Betrothal (*Sagaai*).**—Betrothal known as *Rishta* or *Sagaai* is the most important preliminary ceremony involved with marriage. The brother of the girl or one of the close relatives goes to the boy's place with proposal. If the offer is accepted and the result of the detailed discussion is satisfactory, the *Rishta* is settled by putting some money into the boy's hand. This is called *rokna*. Selection of suitable match was the sole responsibility of the parents. Sometimes the horoscopes of the boy and girl are examined to ensure that they are mentally compatible.

After *rokna* the next ceremony to be performed is betrothal (*sagai*) at boy's house with religious and social celebrations. On the appointed day, the father of the girl, with some relatives, goes to the boy's house for *tikka* or *tilak* ceremony wherein he applies *tilak* on the forehead of the boy. Generally, sweets, fruits, cash and other gifts are presented to the would-be-groom on this occasion depending upon his economic and social status. Likewise, from boy's side a make-up kit consisting of *bindi*, *sindoor* and glass bangles etc. along with some sweets is sent for the girl as a token of *sagai*. However, in educated families, settled in the cities, the ladies from the boy's side visit the girl's home and perform the ceremony of *Godh-bharai* (*maang-bharai*). Sometimes, the ceremony of *Godh-bharai* is deferred till the day of wedding and it is performed by women from boy's side who accompany the *baraat*, on reaching the girl's place, before the wedding. In return, they are offered gifts and cash as a token of *shagun*.

*Sagai* is followed by other marriage preliminaries. The parents of girl consult *purohit* or Brahman regarding *Mahurat*; auspicious day and time, for wedding ceremony. The intimation of the proposed date of marriage is sent to the boy's parents through a letter called "*pili chitthi* or *lagan*" which is often sprinkled with turmeric paste.

Maternal uncles bring *Bhat*, which consists of presents and wedding suits for bride or bridegroom, and performs *Mandha* ceremony one day before the date fixed for the departure of *Baraat* in case of the bridegroom and the day on which the wedding party reaches, in case of the bride. Seven reeds put together are tied with seven knots of *Munj Rope*. A piece of red string then taken and seven *thuthies* with *suparies* alternating spares are strung there on. This string is tied to the middle of the reeds which are then fastened to a door. Prior to this *Chak puja* is performed. Amongst Brahmins *Janaeu* (sacred thread) ceremony is performed before *Mandha*.

**Wedding.**—At the auspicious time, on the day of marriage, the bridegroom wears in his wedding suit and *kangna* or seven knotted sacred thread is tied on his wrist. Traditionally, his head dress consisted of a crown or a crest(*mod*) worn over the turban. The practice of wearing *mod* has diminished with time and is rarely practiced even in rural areas. Face of the bridegroom is covered by *sehra*. The wife of elder brother (*Bhabi*) of the groom also applies *kajal* in his eyes for which she is given *shagun* by her in-laws. After this, *ghurchari* ceremony is performed. The mare is fed with *Dal-Chana*. The brother-in-law of the bridegroom or *nai*(barber), thereafter, leads the decorated mare with the bridegroom on its back, while women follow along singing customary songs particular to the region, caste etc. His sister puts a wrap over her right hand, and on it places rice which she flings at the crown of the bridegroom as he goes along. The God of the homestead (*Khera*) and other deities are worshipped by him and family members. Thereafter, the *baraat*, usually comprising the relatives and friends, starts its departure singing and dancing with loud music. In case the *baraat* is to go at a distant outstation, then the *ghurchari* is performed a day earlier. In that eventuality, the bridegroom does not come back home and stays/sleeps elsewhere.

If both the parties reside in the same place which frequently happens in a town, no arrangements for the residence of the *baraat* are necessarily made. If on the other hand, the *baraat* comes from an outstation, it is received by the bride's side usually at the pre-fixed venue, in the case of a town or on the outskirts of the village from where the *baraat* is taken, sometimes in procession, to a *dharamsala*, or a *chaupal* or any other place where arrangements for stay, refreshment along with sweets and snacks, and entertainment of the *baraat* are made. The elders of the family come to

invite the bridegrooms family for *dhukao* or *barothi* and receive from them the clothings and ornaments (*bari*) brought by them for the bride which is called *rang-lena*. The *baraat* in procession with the bridegroom on a mare or a decorated chariot goes to the bride's place for *barothi*.

Upon arrival at the bride's place, *milni* is performed wherein the bridegroom's father and the bride's father embrace each other and the latter gives gifts and *shagun* to the former. The bride along with the women-folk wait for arrival of the bridegroom at the main door of the bride's place where ceremonies of *neem-jharrai* (sprinkling of water with neem twigs usually by unmarried would be sister-in-law) and *aarta* (by a married would be sister-in-law) of bridegroom are performed, who are in turn given *neg*(money) and gifts by the groom or his father. This is followed by *jaimala* (putting of garlands by the *bride* around the neck of the bridegroom and vice-versa). The *baraatis* are then entertained to a sumptuous feast with merriment and festivity. The mother of bride and other close relative women folks observe fast on the marriage day which is usually broken after looking at the face of the bridegroom by consuming some fruits, a cup of tea or milk.

A pavilion structure called *mandap* is erected where a *vedi* is generally setup. After the ceremonies at the door, the bridegroom is taken to the *mandap*. The sacred fire is kindled symbolically as divine witness to the nuptial ceremony and also as its sanctifier. The bridegroom and bride together perform oblations. Then the *agniparinayan* commonly called as *Phere* ceremony is performed which means walking round the sacred nuptial fire amidst the chanting of hymns by the priest. *Phere* is now recognized as one the essential ceremonies under the Hindu Marriage Act. At this time, as a part of tradition, women folk sing couplets giving *sithne* (sarcastic remarks) to the bridegroom and his close relatives in entertaining mood. In the meantime, the couple goes round the sacred fire seven times(*saat phere*). In first four *pheras* the bridegroom leads, and then she leads in three rounds. The *Purohit* (priest) formally seeks *saat-vachana* (seven promises), usually with each *phera*, regarding acceptance of bride and bridegroom as husband and wife and regarding performance of various marital obligations and duties towards each other. With the last *phera*, the bridegroom and bride exchange their places to become husband and wife. *Kanyadaan*, the so-called formal bride-giving ceremony is also performed as per the directions of the *purohit*. The parents thus give away their daughter in marriage and bless her into the new world of *grihastha*. This is followed by the *saptapadi* (seven steps taken together by bride and groom) ceremony which is the last ritual of the wedding marking its completion. Thereafter, the wedding is considered final and binding.

Previously, the *baraat* used to stay at the bride's place for two to three days but things have changed now due to the improved means of communication and under the stress of economic forces. Now the *baraat* returns the same or next day.

At *vidai*, bride's maternal uncle escorts the girl, followed by singing women, to the *doli*-usually a bus, car or a jeep in which she is to travel. The bride follows the bridegroom during this short walk. A few small coins are thrown over the heads of the couple as a mark of good wishes and the procession starts back for home. This ceremony of *vidai* generally takes place in evening before sunset or in the wee hours of morning.

On reaching bridegroom's house one of the *baaratis* inform the ladies of the house regarding the reaching of the bridegroom with bride for which he is paid in terms of sweet meat. The mother of bridegroom welcomes the bride and performs the *bahu ka utarna* ceremony which relates to taking out the bride from the *doli* (vehicle) while other ladies sing folk songs of the occasion. The bridegroom and his bride are stopped from entering the home for the ceremony of *bar-rukai* by his sisters who allow him to enter only after payment of *neg*. The mother of bridegroom then welcomes the couple at the entrance, sprinkles some water from the vessel and drinks few drops from it also. Oil is put on the two ends of the frame of the entrance door. In the next morning, after the ceremony of *sirgundi* (combing of hair) of bride by her sister-in-laws, she is taken for worship of the God of the homestead (*Khera*) and other deities that are worshipped by her in-laws. The ladies of the house, relatives and neighbourhood accompany her singing all the way. On return from there, *kangana kholna* ceremony takes place in which the seven knots of the sacred threads are opened by using fingers of single hand. This playful ceremony is followed by another one called the *Angoothi Khailai* wherein a gold/silver ring is hidden in a solution of milk and water with grass tufts and the competition is organized between the bride and groom for finding it in three attempts. It is believed that one who wins will lead in the marital life. In the *munh-dikhai* ceremony, the bride is offered some gifts, usually cash, on showing her face to the female relatives and friends. After staying for a day or two the couple visits the bride's house for *pag-phera*.

The wedding ceremony is very colourful and picturesque. There may, however, be noticed minor variations among certain castes in the performance and observance of these ceremonies. Notwithstanding legislations against dowry, it remains an integral part of Indian marriage system.

Wedding among Sikhs is performed according to *Anand Karaj Act*, 1909. The distinction between the *Anand Karaj* and Vedic marriage is that in the former the bride and bridegroom instead of going round the sacred fire, go round the Holy Guru Granth Sahib. Other marriage rituals are almost identical with that of Hindus. The ceremony of *ghurchari* is also performed. When the *baraat* reaches the bride's place *milni* takes place and then *Jaimala* ceremony. After a brief shabad kirtan, the *Granthi* (Sikh Priest) recites the four *lavaan* (couplets) from Guru Garanth Sahib and the couple simultaneously moves round the Guru Granth Sahib. Anand Sahib is recited and the marriage is solemnized. The farewell ceremony is called *doli* after which the *baraat* returns with the bride. Anand Karaj is performed during daytime (mostly on Sunday).

Marriage among the Muslims is a mutual contract and is called *Nikah*. It is generally arranged by parents of the girl and boy through negotiations. The amount of *mehr*, which is explicitly the property of the bride, is settled. After the betrothal takes place at the bride's residence, the date of marriage is settled. The marriage party proceeds to the bride's house where it is treated with special feast and *nikah* is performed. In the case of Sunni Muslims, the *Vakil* (agent) of the bride obtains her consent in the presence of two witnesses and conveys it to the *Vakil* of the bridegroom who stratifies the *nikah*. Among the Shia Muslims, consent is taken at the first instance.

Among the Christians, marriage is solemnized in the Church by the priest. Before the marriage ceremony, bride and the bridegroom are baptized by the priest. After the ceremony, the friends and relatives are served with a feast.

Marriages in Jains are performed according to Vedic traditions and their other marriage rituals are same as prevalent among Hindus.

**Recent trends.**— In recent times, due to spread of education, social legislation and standard of living the social outlook of the people on marriages has undergone a change. Under the changed circumstances, a number of social customs, which were observed strictly in the past, have lost their significance. The practice of child marriage, which was earlier common, has been banned by law. The age of marriage has increased both in case of males and females owing to increased education and strict enforcement of the provision of the Child Marriage Restraint Act, which prescribes the minimum age of marriage as 21 years, in case of males and 18 years in case of females.

A worrying trend which is emerging due to adverse sex-ratio is that marriages are taking place outside the state. The brides are brought from

States like Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, and other states without disclosing in the village before marriage takes place. In such type of marriage, only close relatives of people of confidence take part. The girls are brought through middlemen after paying a handsome amount to the parents of the girl as well as to the middlemen. In such cases, there is problem of language, culture and adjustment in the new socio-cultural environment. Such practices have been there in the past also but the number was not large. Now due to skewed sex ratio and less number of girls available, it is on the increase. The children out of such wedlock enjoy equal share in the property of their parents and are treated at par with other members of the kinship system. Now, due to increase in number of such marriages people do not raise objection and take it as a normal practice<sup>9</sup>.

**Civil Marriages.**—Civil Marriages, which were unknown in the past, are now-a-days on the increase. Civil marriages are regulated by the Special Marriage Act, 1954. It provides a secular code of marriage irrespective of caste, religion or race. The only conditions stipulated by the Act are that a man should be over 21 years and a woman over 18 years and neither should they be within the degree of prohibited relationship or insane, nor should they have a spouse living at the time of marriage. Marriage Registrars are appointed under this Act, who register such marriages and issue certificates.

This solemnization does not include any religious ceremony. The procedure for a civil marriage is very simple; either of the two parties to marry can give notice to the Registrar of their intention to marry. The notice must be given 15 days before the date of the proposed marriage. The notice is then exhibited on the notice board for any objection, if no objection is raised within 15 days, the marriage is performed, the parties sign the register and a marriage certificate duly signed by the registrar is issued.

**Inter-Caste Marriages.**—Inter-caste and inter-religion marriages are also taking place among the younger generation especially in the urban areas. In the rural areas inter-caste marriages are still tabooed but the restrictions are not as strict as they used to be a few decades ago. The trend of inter-caste and inter-religion marrying is on the rise due to love marriages and marriages from status families. Mainly, it is confined to those families whose children are getting higher education. It is by and large an urban phenomenon, expanding slowly to rural areas. Normally, people accept it without much fuss, if it is not within the village or the *gotra*.

**Dowry system.**—Although, a rotten social evil, the dowry system still prevails in the district. It is prevalent among all the communities of the

district. The amount of dowry generally depends upon the economic and social status of the person concerned. Dowry which was non-existent about 30 years ago is now a major issue in finalizing the marriage. The expenditure in marriage is increasing fast, starting normally from motorcycle to luxurious car etc. All sorts of articles such as ornaments, clothes, utensils other household goods and cash are also given. The amount of dowry to be given by the girl's parents is decided before the marriage. Large sum of money has to be spent if the girl is to be married in a well placed family. Besides, in case the father of the girl fails to give sufficient dowry, sometimes it may result in quarrels and even ill treatment of the bride by her husband as well as her in laws.

The practice of giving, taking and demanding dowry has been declared illegal with the passing of the Dowry Prohibition Act in 1961. Any person violating the laws can be sentenced to imprisonment up to six months or to a fine ₹ 5,000 or both. Even the dowry legislation of 1961 has not fully succeeded in achieving this object as people find ways and means of by-passing the laws because their ideas have not been reformed.

**Widow marriage.**—*Karewa* or *Karao* is a simple sort of marriage for widows. It is also called *Latta odhana* or *Chunri Pahnana*. *Karewa* is common among the *Jats*, *Gujjars* and Scheduled Castes of the district. It was rare among *Rajputs*, Brahmins and *Banias* until recently when they have started accepting it as a mode of social reformation.

*Karewa* is generally contracted by the widow with the younger brother of her deceased husband. If she wishes to remain in the same family and there is a younger brother of the deceased husband, she is given liberty to marry him provided he is willing to accept her. The father of the widow gives one rupee to the brother of her daughter's deceased husband as a mark of giving the daughter to him. Such a marriage generally takes place after a year of the husband's death. *Karewa* is unaccompanied by ceremonies of any kind; the widow is simply covered by the man with the sheet of cloth in the presence of near relations. The woman merely resumes her jewels and coloured clothes which she had ceased to wear on her husband's death. Sometimes there is a public ceremony to give it a sanctimonious touch.

The main reason for *karewa* is to retain the control of the deceased person's land in the family. *Karewa* will not usually take place, if the widow has children, unless they and their mother are very young.

In case the husband dies shortly after marriage and the girl has not lived with him or if she has no issue, she is remarried with all the usual

ceremonies performed at the marriage. This is called *punarvivah*. *Punarvivah* is mostly adapted among such communities in which brother-in-law generally do not accept his sister-in-law as his wife like in Aggarwals and Brahmans.

When a woman enters into intimacy with any person without any social formalities and they begin to live together as husband and wife, it is called *Kara* or *Krepa*. *Kara* is also not accompanied with any ceremony.

The *karewa* wife is in all respects a legitimate wife. The *Muhmmmandans*, of course, are free to marry again. The *Karewa* of a woman in Islam is called *Nikah shani* (a second marriage). The system of widow marriage is also prevalent among Sikhs and Christians.

**DIVORCE.**—Marriage ties are solemn and sacred in the society. Divorce was unheard in the past. There was a general tendency to suffer hardship resulting from ill-matched marriages than to dissolve the marriage. This is particularly true of uneducated and conservative people. The other practice had been to leave the girl with her parents and never recall her. With the spread of education, change in social values and with the enactment of Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, divorce is no more a taboo. According to this Act, divorce is now permitted among all classes of Hindus under stipulated conditions and by Mutual consent through the Court. No legal provision for divorce existed among the Hindus prior to 1955. The cases of such nature were decided by the village or caste *Panchayats*. The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 was made applicable to all Hindus, Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists, and section 13 of it provides for divorce by husband or by wife.

The marriage was treated as purely social and contractual obligation by the Islam religion. A Muslim husband divorces his wife by simply pronouncing the word *talak* three times. A divorced Muslim woman cannot claim any maintenance from her husband as she has been provided *mehr* at the time of her marriage. In order to mitigate the unequal position of the Muslim wife, the Government enacted the Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act, 1939, under which the wife could claim a divorce from her husband under certain conditions enumerated in the Act. But unlike the husband, she is required to establish her case in the court before she can obtain a divorce.

The divorce among the Christians is governed by the Indian Divorce Act of 1869. If a Christian can prove that his wife has committed adultery only then he can obtain a divorce from his wife. On the other hand, a wife has to prove that her husband's conduct is not merely adulterous but also cruel or he has committed incestuous adultery or adultery with desertion for two or more years.



Desertion, cruelty, adultery, impotency and lunacy are the grounds for judicial separation. Generally, separation/divorce is looked down upon in almost all communities. However, with the coming into force of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 cases of divorce are being instituted in the law courts.

The provision for divorce as provided under the Special Marriage Act 1954, are among the most progressive in the world. It allows for divorce by mutual consent without imputation of misconduct against either party. Also the divorced person has the right of remarriage after the lapse of one year from the date of the decree of the divorce.

**POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE SOCIETY.**—Every religion has its own tradition and prejudices. Since ancient times, women occupied a high position in the Hindu society. Manu preached that Gods reside in those houses where women are respected.

The position of woman however declined after onslaught of Muslim invaders during medieval period when seclusion or *purdah* came in vogue as a measure of safety and protection of females. This seclusion was stricter in villages than in towns. The maidens covered the heads while the daughter-in-law covered their faces when moving among elderly persons in house or in village.

With the spread of education and efforts made by religious reformist movement like Arya Samaj and other social organizations, the status of women has undergone significant changes. The age old social dogmas which debarred women to rise, however, are disappearing. Women are now no more confined to homes. The society has gradually discarded many prejudices against women. The educated and serving women have discarded *purdah*. The traditional concept of women being nothing more than a housewife has undergone a revolutionary change and women are successfully penetrating fields which were previously exclusive male domains. Now, women take active part in almost every walk of life. Education has brought about a welcome change in the status of women in the society. More and more women are now joining services. With economic independence, serving women have acquired new confidence. Undoubtedly, women in urban areas enjoy better status than woman in villages, where certain age long social prejudices against women still exist. A vast majority of women in rural areas are still not economically self-supporting. *Purdah* is still prevalent in the rural areas, though not so strictly. Among agricultural classes, the women share work in the field besides doing domestic duties. In fact, they work for longer hours as compared to the male members. Women help their men in almost all agricultural operations and even carry food in fields for men at work. Women, especially belonging to below poverty line segment of the society, also do odd

jobs with their men, in the field and on daily wages during weeding and harvesting seasons. Some of them also work on construction and repair work on roads, ponds and canals under various schemes of government. In short, the Haryanvi woman is still the bread earner. Her equipoise and self-possession is indeed remarkable, despite growing concern about the future of her family. She withstands all hardships only for the satisfaction that she has been able to discharge, to the best of her capacity, the combined role of mother and father to her children.

Since independence efforts have been made to remove legal disabilities of women by passing several Acts. Certain legislative measures undertaken by the government played important role in bringing new awakening among women and in ameliorating their lots. The Hindu Code Bill and Hindu Marriage Acts not only prohibited polygamy but granted the right of divorce to women as well. Women have an equal footing with the men with regard to inheritance rights, legally. Now women are given absolute control over their property. In the matter of adoption too women had no choice but according to the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act 1955, a married woman can adopt a child under certain circumstances. The legal rights of maintenance for women are also protected by the Act, under which a wife has right to maintenance even when she is legally separated from her husband.

**PROSTITUTION.**—Trafficking in women for immoral purpose does not exist in the district, nor is there any organized gang of traffickers of women. Earning a living by sex or flesh trade is punishable under the Suppression of Immoral Traffic 1956.

### **OTHER RITUALS AND CUSTOMS**

The customs and rituals are integral parts of cultural life of the people. The Hindu way of life involves many *sanskaras* and rituals. Some customs and rituals have vanished in the due course of time but various castes and sub-castes continue to celebrate many customs and rituals. It may vary among different castes in celebrating these customs and rituals but essence remains the same. Some of the important customs connected with birth and death observed in the district are detailed below:-

**BIRTH CEREMONIES.**—The birth of a child is normally an occasion of celebration whether it is a boy or a girl. Among the Hindus, the birth ceremonies start even before the birth of a child. When the mother conceives, she is offered gifts amid rejoice by relatives and neighbours. A pregnant woman has to observe many restrictions during the period of pregnancy. She is not allowed to cut anything or to go out during the period of solar or lunar eclipses or to see them. She is also not permitted to sleep in the open especially under the tree.

After the birth of the child, the mother remains confined to the house for a period of 40 days after the delivery as the period is called *sutak* during which normal worship of the house Gods is postponed till the performance of purifying *havan/pooja*. In case of a male child, a mango-twig is hung on the top of the main door of the house. Some other superstitions are practiced to keep the evil spirits away. The *chuchk dhowai* (washing the mother's nipples), with warm water, is generally performed by the sister-in-law of the women. She receives monetary gifts or some ornaments and then puts the baby to the breast of mother for feeding. The parents of the *jachcha* (mother of the baby) are informed accordingly. In case of birth of male child, the grandfather of the new born visits the parents of the *jachcha* with five *sers* (now kilograms) of *gur* (jaggery) called *bheli* and clothes of her parents to congratulate and inform them about the birth of their *naati*. Who, in turn, honour him and his accomplice, if any, with *shagun* (monetary) and cloths (usually *lohi*). Afterwards, usually on 10<sup>th</sup> day after the birth of the child, they visit their daughter and bring her *peelia* consisting of *chunri* (*peelia*), *pure ghee*, gifts, ornaments, clothes, toys etc. for their daughter and her new born baby.

On the sixth day, *chhatti* ceremony is performed. It is generally believed that the *Behmata* (Goddess of Fate) write the fate of the new born baby on this night. On the tenth day, the whole house is cleaned and *havan* ceremony is performed for purification of the house. *Ganga Jal* (sacred water of the river Ganges) is sprinkled in the house. If it is not available, the cow urine is sprinkled. The child is often named on this day. The priest after studying the horoscope suggests the name. The name of the child as proposed by Brahmans was almost final in the past but is not binding these days; however, some parents still prefer to stick to the initial word suggested by the family priest. In rural areas, there are many families in which *kuan dokh* (well worship) is performed by the mother of the newborn. The priest is consulted about the birth time of the child. If the child is declared as born under *gandmool* (under the bad influence of stars) the necessary *upai* (an expiatory ceremony) or remedies are performed under the guidance of the priest.

Among Arora's, the *chola* is an important ceremony which is celebrated on the 15<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> day of the newly born son when new clothes consecrated (sanctified) by their own Brahman are worn. A feast is provided to friends and relatives.

Among the Hindus, the *mundan* ceremony of male child is performed at the age of one or three years, and in some cases at the age of five years, according to the rituals of the sect (religious doctrine) to give him the first haircut in his life. The child is tonsured of all his hair (which are considered *suchhe* hair). Some orthodox families take the child to some temple to perform this ceremony. Friends and relatives are invited and feasts are held.

Among Sikhs, on the 10<sup>th</sup> day, *path* of the *Guru Granth Sahib* is performed and the newborn and the mother are presented before it after bathing. The *karah prashad* is distributed among the friends and relatives. The *Granth Sahib* is opened at random and first letter of the *bani* at which the it opens, gives the first letter of the child name and the child is named on this day. Sikhs do not perform *mundan* ceremony. They instead perform *Kesi dahi* ceremony, corresponding to *mundun* among the Hindus, by putting curd in the hair of the boy. When the boy grows younger with long hair and is in a position to tie a *dastaar* (*pugree* or turban), the ceremony of *dastaarbandi* of the child is performed by the sikh priest in the presence of friends and relatives.

Among muslims a *Qazi* is summoned on the birth of a male child who visits the house on any of the first three days and recites the *bang* (holy words) in the infant's right ear and the *takbir* in its left ear. The infant's aunt washes the mother's nipples with warm water and receives some money, like in Hindus. On the sixth day, the mother is bathed, her clothes are changed and sweet rice is distributed. The name is given to the child by opening the *koran sharif*. *Khatna* (circumcision) is an important ceremony. It is performed, in the presence of *biradari*, at any time before the child acquires an age of 12 years. A child who is born circumcised is called *rasulia*, though it is a rare phenomenon.

A child born in a Christian family is baptized by the church priest. The Christians also rejoice at the birth of a son but the birth of a daughter is not disliked by them. The mother observes no period of impurity.

**DEATH CEREMONY.**—The Hindu in the district cremate the dead body, the only exception being *kanphara jogis* who bury their dead like Muslims and Christians. Dead children below the age of 8 years are buried without any ceremony among Hindus, Sikhs and Jains.

When a hindu person is about to die or is on the death bed, reciting of verses from the *Bhagwat Gita* is considered as paving way for *moksha* (salvation). The Sikhs pay homage to the departing soul by reciting verses of the *Sukhmani Sahib*.

In case of death among Hindus when a person is about to die, he is often laid down on the floor, there is a common belief that a person who dies on his bed becomes a ghost. Before the body of the deceased is taken for cremation few rites are performed. The woman breaks her bangles at the time of death of her husband. The dead body after giving a final bath and then wrapped in a shroud (a piece of new unwashed unstitched white cloth) called '*kafan*' is put on the bier for carrying away to the cremation ground by four persons, usually from near and dears, on their shoulders in the form of a

procession with accompaniment of recitation of mantras (hymns). At cremation ground the dead body is placed on the pyre and put to fire by eldest son or some nearest male relative after sprinkling *samagri* and *ghee*. When the body is almost burnt, the ritual *kapal kirya* (breaking the skull) is performed. In case of death of a very old person, the bier is decorated and taken to the cremation ground sometimes accompanied by band. This follows the belief that a person who has lived a full life and has left behind a full and prosperous family is not to be mourned. A small piece of gold is put in the mouth of dead person and then pyre is lit. After two or three days, *phul* (unburnt remains) of the deceased are collected from the cremation ground by a few near relatives, and taken to Haridwar, to be immersed in the holy Ganges. The post-cremation rites include *Chautha* (4<sup>th</sup> day), *Dasahi* (10<sup>th</sup> day), *Tehrammee* (13<sup>th</sup> day) or *Strhavi* (17<sup>th</sup> day relating to final mourning and *pugree* ceremony).

Similar customs prevail among the Sikhs with the difference that ceremonies are performed by a *Granthi* and the ashes are generally immerse in river Satluj at Goindwal Sahib or Hari-ke-pattan where both the rivers, namely Satluj and Beas, mingle together. The Sikhs end the mourning with *bhog* ceremony.

The Mohammedans after bathing the dead body wrap it into white cloth and take the corpse to the graveyard for burial. The mullah recites verses from Quran and reads the *namaj-e-zanaja*. Every man attending the funeral puts handful of soil on the dead body during its burial in the graveyard. A stone slab is sometimes placed on the grave.

The Christians bury their dead in coffin. Sometimes an epitaph is fixed on the grave indicating particular of the deceased.

## HOME LIFE

**DWELLINGS.**—The agricultural design and quality of residential houses of an area are indicative of the standard of living and pattern of life of the area. The ordinary types of dwellings in the rural areas of the district consisted of a few rooms which were constructed around a courtyard. Most-of the homes in the villages used to be *kachcha* upto the last quarter of 20<sup>th</sup> century. The walls of these houses were generally made of unburnt bricks and roofs were made of right beams, commonly called *karian*, usually of *beri* (Indian Jujube, *Zizyphus zizyphus*) wood, and mud plastered. The houses were single storeyed but lofty, clean and spacious and there was hardly any provision for separate kitchen, bath room or latrine. There used to be hardly any provision for ventilation and proper lighting. The *verandah* was used for cooking and in the rains for

sleeping. Cattle were tethered in the courtyard. During winters and rains one room near the courtyard served for tethering of cattle.

Housing pattern in the district has undergone changes in the last few decades. Better economic conditions, spread of education and growing awareness for better sanitation and health facilities have brought about a change in the attitude of the people towards housing. The percentage of *kachcha* houses in the rural areas/villages has considerably decreased. The *kachcha* houses in the village are being replaced by *pucca* houses. Though most of the houses still don't have provision for toilet facilities, but well-to-do families have built modern houses with kitchen, bathroom and toilet. Special provisions are made for ventilation and lighting. Most houses have provision for separate cattle shed. Houses in villages can be classified into *ghar* (house) *baithak* (sitting or guest room) and *gher* (cattleshed). Even in the villages multi-storeyed houses are being built without the requirement of any approval from the authorities and these are constructed without any uniform architectural design. Now the Government is encouraging the inhabitants to improve sanitary conditions to make provisions for toilets in their houses. The Government is also providing construction material/subsidy under its rural sanitation programmes. Now, all houses in the villages are electrified and most of the houses also have the facility of piped water supply.

The houses in the urban areas are all *pacca* and mostly double storeyed. These are built on the basis of modern architecture and are well designed. The houses are properly ventilated and well-lighted. In urban areas all houses have separate kitchen, bathroom and toilet. The modern type of houses have a drawing-cum-dining room, a kitchen, bed rooms with attached bathroom and toilet, a store/*pooja* room, and *verandah*. The houses also have a courtyard in the back and open space in the front with the facility of parking for vehicles. From the beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century, apartment culture is also gaining popularity in the urban areas of the district.

**FURNITURE.**— In the past as the life was very simple in the district and there was nothing specific to mention about the furniture available in the house of a common person. The furniture consisted of bedsteads (*manji or khat*) made of wooden frames covered with netted string, a few small stools (*pira, pida, khatola, mudha* and a few small low wooden tables (*patra*) in the name of furniture in ordinary houses. Some well-to-do families would also decorate their house with picture of national heroes, gods and goddesses. With the passage of time, the style of decorating the house has undergone sea change. These days the status of the people is judged by the standard of their dwellings and furniture and decoration have become a matter of prestige. The influence of western ideas and improvement in the economic condition of the people in

general, has brought about a revolutionary change in the concept of furniture. Costly furniture namely sofa-sets, decorative chairs, dining table, sleek centre-tables and well designed beds have become a common sight in the houses in the urban areas of the district. Certain well-to-do families decorate their house very tastefully with the help of carpets, curtains, decorative wall hangings, paintings, decoration pieces, and portraits of their fore-fathers. In the Christian homes the pictures of the Christ, virgin Mary etc. are hung on the walls, whereas the Sikhs have the portraits of their Gurus and Gurudwaras. The Muslims have the sacred number 786 and sketches of Mecca and Medina.

Besides, above mentioned furniture, many modern electrical and electronic gadgets like fans, televisions, coolers, refrigerators, washing machines, mixer-grinders etc. are becoming popular with the people. Now standard television sets are installed in almost all the houses. LCD televisions have also gained entry in the villages. In some urban homes high definition LED, Plasma and 3-D Television sets can be seen. Cable TV connections are a common sight even in the rural areas. Satellite based digital dish antenna systems and Computer systems with internet facility are also cherished by members of wealthy families in the urban families. Majority of the business class and wealthy families have the air conditioners installed in their business premises and houses respectively.

Although, general prosperity has brought rural and urban life closer in respect of facilities and way of life yet, economically weaker section of the society are not capable of enjoying modern furniture or other items like refrigerators and television etc.

**UTENSILS.**— During the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the domestic utensils in use were both of metal as well as clay. The general name for household vessels is *bartan*. The utensils consist of vessels made of brass and bell metal (*kansi*), iron vessels, earthen vessels and wooden articles. The traditional utensils are still in vogue but stainless steel, aluminium, handolium and plastic utensils introduced in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century have gained acceptance and popularity in rural and urban areas of the district. Pressure cookers, non-stick cook wares, and electric cookers made of aluminum and its alloys are now used extensively. People use dinner sets made of bone china, bakelite sheets and unbreakable sets are also used. In kitchen oil stoves, L.P.G. stoves and induction plates are in use even in the rural areas. Besides the traditional *chuhla*, *hara* (round clay oven) and tandoor, based on traditional fuel such as wood, cow-dung-cakes are still in use in rural areas. Advanced solar cookers, on which subsidy is also provided by the government, have also gained acceptance due to its non-polluting and renewable nature of energy, but its use is limited amongst educated urban families. Refrigerator is used as an essential

item for the Kitchen. Thus, modernization and economic conditions of the people has brought a welcome change in the use of utensils and other kitchen articles.

The traditional metal vessels consisted of large narrow mouthed cauldrons (*tokna, tokni*) for storing water in and cooking at feasts. *Degchi* and *jhakari*, smaller vessels of similar shape, were used for ordinary cooking and carrying water to the fields, still smaller ones (*lota, gadwa, banta*) for dipping into water and drinking, some cups (*sarda*) without handles, some tumbler-shaped drinking vessels (*gilaas*), brood shallow bowl or saucer (*bela, katora, katori*) for drinking hot liquids, large tray (*thali*) for serving *chapattis* and cooked vegetables, larger tray (*parat*) for kneading dough in, a ladle (*korchi*), a spatula for turning bread (*koncha, palta, khurchana*) a thick iron plate (*tawa*) for baking cakes(chapati), and pair of iron tongs (*chimta*), fry-pan (*karai*) and sieve (*chalni*) both of iron, and iron bucket (*dol*) for drawing water from the well and some wooden kitchenware *chakla* and *belan* (for shaping chapati) are also commonly used.

**DRESS.**— The dress of the rural people is simple. The everyday clothes are made from the course cloth, whether mill made or of handicraft. Traditionally, the male dress consisted of a *pugri* (turban) or *angocha* (a strip of cloth) wrapped around the head, a shirt, *anrakha* or *kurta*, *dhoti*, arpent (*a short dhoti*) or *langar* (a still shorter one) and *jutti* (a pair of shoes). Common men generally wore *dhotis* while men in service and younger people used to wear *pants or pyjamas, bush-shirts, shirts, coats, sweaters*, leather-shoes or *chappals*, but no headwear. A *chadara* (thin sheet) or *chadar* (thick sheet) in hot weather and a *khes, dohar*, blanket or *razai* (quilt) in cold weather is used as a wrapper. A complete set of male clothes is called *jora*.

Although in the past men used to wear Jewellery<sup>10</sup> as *gokru, kangan todar, mala, kanthla, kanthi, agunthi, tagri* and different forms of ear-rings but this practice is not in vogue now, however, a gold necklace and a finger ring is usually worn by men in rural as well as in urban areas and *tagri* is usually worn by rural male children and youth.

But with the spread of education men in urban areas are more fashion conscious than their rural counterparts. Generally, males wear shirts, pants, kurta-payjama, jackets, woollen suits etc. The employees and students in the urban areas also use pants, jeans, trousers and bush-shirts. In winter season, those who can afford, also use woollen trousers, sweaters, jackets, coats, suits and over-coats etc. While kurta-payjama is preferred by rural males being comfortable, jeans have gained popularity in rural youth. Apparel and shoes of branded companies are preferred by urban youth and service personnel.



The village women, traditionally, wear *kameez*-shirt of gents style and *ghagra* with *wayal* or *odhni* to cover the head. However, after the partition, the *salwar* has replaced the *ghagra* and women wearing *ghagra* are seldom seen. The population which migrated from Rajasthan locally known as *baagris*, wear *lehnga*, although it is also decreasing and is generally worn by elderly women. The women wear an *angi* or *angia* (a bodice) to support the breast. A complete set of female clothes is called *teel* or *tiwal* which is often brightly coloured. They never wear anything pure white as wearing white dress by a woman indicates that she is widow and is as such considered inauspicious.

The women and teenager girls of the district seldom wear their traditional dress *kameez*, *lehanga* or *ghagra*. They usually wear *salwar-kameez* suit and *chunni* or *dupatta*. They have also started wearing sari and blouse, jeans and tops. In winter, they wear woolen sweaters, *shawls*, *jerseys*, cardigans and lady coats. *Chappals* both in urban and rural areas are common footwear. Modern shaped sandals and high heeled sandals are also in use. The women and girls associated with games often wear track suits and sports shoes. They have also adapted modern hair styles. This change has also prevailed in rural areas. The girls belonging to the well-to-do families in rural areas who are going to school and colleges often dress themselves like urban girls. In urban areas of the district, the school/college going girls and working women are becoming more and more fashion conscious.

In the past much heed was not paid about the dress of the children. The kids used to wear *jhhagga* (shirt) and *kachha* (underwear). There is considerable change in the attitude of the people towards dresses of children. People in urban areas spend much on the dresses of their children. This social change/attitude reflected in the dress contrasts with the tradition. People belonging to the learned professions, officials, college students, etc. irrespective of their origin, caste and creed, generally follow the modern trends of dress in western style.

**ORNAMENTS.**—The ornaments worn by women are usually made of gold and silver. The traditional ornaments of the women included a band of silver cowries (*kauries*) going up the parting of the hair that would fasten to pins on the back, *bindi* (a frontlet on the forehead), *bujni*, *karnphool* and *bali* in ears, *koka* and *nath* in nose, *jaumala*, *kanthmala*, *kanthi*, *galsari* (all of gold); *hansli* and *haar* (of silver) and necklaces of 14 coins (*jhalra*; if all rupees, *tikawal*; if one is a gold *mohar*) worn around the neck, *dharu* a breast plate of silver chain, *tad* and *tadia* (bossed armllets), *pachheli*, *chhan*, *kangni*, *chura* or *churi* (bracelets in order from the elbow to the wrist); and a variety of finger rings, *pallu* chains and bells fastened to the right-hand corner of *orhna*, *ghunghat* bosses and chains fastened to the front of *the orhna* so as to fall

over the face, *nara* a silver tassel on the petticoat over the right hip, and *kari* (solid anklets), *chhalkara*, *neori* and *pazeb* (a bunch of chains tassels on the ankle) for wearing on the legs. A women's social standing was greatly determined by her jewellery. The nose ring, the plain armlet and the *chura* or wristlet had a social signification. The armlets, bracelets and anklets being solid that are not easy to get off were always worn, the rest only on special occasions such as marriages, fairs and the like.

The ornaments now in common use by women include *earrings*, *jhumkas*, *tops*, a *koka* for the nose, *necklace*, *locket*, *mangal-sutra* for wearing around the neck, (*churi*) bangles, *kara* (thick bangles) on the wrist, *rings* for fingers and *pajeb*s for the ankles. Although there is much social consideration for the jewellery, yet the modern, young and educated ladies who generally move out for job use a little of it. They wear light gold ornaments just as a *necklace or chain*, *earrings*, *tops* in the ears and a few bangles on wrists. The use of artificial jewellery is also on the increase as gold has become very dearer and is beyond the affordability of an ordinary family. The ladies of well-to-do families besides wearing the gold ornaments also wear diamond jewellery. There is full demonstration of jewellery by women on social gatherings like marriage etc. Use of heavy jewellery in day to day life is on the decline due to dearness of silver, gold and diamond and fear of snatching of ornaments of women, they usually prefer to wear artificial or imitation jewellery with looks even better than the original ones.

The ornaments of men consisted of ear-rings (*gokhru*), bracelets made of a cylindrical bar of metal (*kangan todar*), a single *necklace* or rosary containing beads (*mala*), a broad necklace made of chains (*kantha*) a locket (*kanthi*), rings (*angunthi*). Boys often wore waist bands a silver chain (*tagri*) with little bells (*ghunghru*). The most usually worn of the above were the ear-rings, single necklace with a small locket (often sacred to Shiva), and if a Headman, a ring with a seal in it. In present time, use of ornaments except for finger-rings, *tagri* (in little boys) and necklace has been abandoned by men and boys. However, in urban as well as in rural areas many men and women can be seen wear rings embedded with stones as per advice of the professional *pandits* and astrologers. There are some persons who use garlands of beads or rosary in the name of their *gurus*.

Ornaments have undergone changes from time to time according to prevailing fashion not only in their design but also in size, shape, weight and content. Even in the present day society the ordinary investment for spare capital is to buy jewellery for one's wife as the money could always be realized on requirement of an occasion. Silver, gold and diamond ornaments are considered as insurance against economic problems.

**FOOD.**—The people of the rural areas take simple and nutritious food. The number of meals varies according to seasons and nature of work done by the people. In the morning an average villager takes *roti* (chapati or Indian flatbread) of maize or *bajra* (millet) flour in winter and of wheat flour or *missi* (gram-wheat flour) *roti* in summer with *dahi* (curd), *makhan* (home made butter ) with *lassi* (butter milk) or tea. Day meals usually consist of *roti* with some *dal* or vegetables (*saag*), besides onion, pickle and *chatni* (prepared from crushed onion), mint, chillies and salt. *Dalia* (porridge of broken wheat) is eaten in the rainy season and *khichri* (porridge of millet or wheat and moong) in winter. During winter, maize or *bajra* *roti* with *sarson* (green mustard leaves) *ka saag* is generally taken almost every day by rural folks. Rice is also popular and eaten with delicacy in the district. *Kheer* (rice cooked in milk and sweetened with sugar or shakkar), *halwa* (wheat flour dessert) and other sweet dishes are also prepared on festivals and social gatherings. People in rural areas still prefer *desi ghee*, being home production, for preparing food but use of vegetable oils has also gained acceptance. Practically, the diet of rural people is without any varieties but is simple, healthy and nutritious.

Food habits are somewhat different in urban areas. The urbanites prefer wheat flour to other kinds of flour. Bread-butter, bread with egg (boiled, omelet or *bhurji*), *paratha* (stuffed or plain) with curd or with pickles and tea or milk is usually taken in the breakfast. Fruits and fruit juices are preferred as breakfast amongst the well-to-do families. The lunch and dinner menu include *roti* or rice with dishes of variety of vegetables, *dal* (pulses) and salad. Some people also take *dalia*. People use refined oil with low fat contents for preparing various dishes besides *desi ghee*. On festivals and social gatherings, *paneer* (Cheese) dishes are relished besides *kheer*, *halwa* (usually of carrots), other sweet dishes and ice-cream.

The people both in rural and urban areas are developing non-vegetarian habits as non-vegetarian food has started finding favour with the younger generation of all communities including Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh and as such the number of non-vegetarians has gone up considerably. Hindus, however, avoid flesh eating on Tuesday. Besides *vaishnu dhabas*, *tandoori* and non-vegetarian *dhabas* have sprung up considerably. Fast food culture is also gaining acceptance in the towns. All the major brands have established their franchises in the district headquarter town. The youth visit these outlets to relish the burgers, pizzas and other dishes there or for quick take-aways. Some of the South Indian dishes like *dosa*, *idli*, *vada*, *sambhar* and *uppama* are also popular and used in restaurants and coffee houses.

In urban as well as in rural areas tea is the most popular beverage. In the past people were hesitant to use tea, instead of tea they used to take milk. Now, people of all ages consume tea with equal delight and it is usually the

first beverage to be taken in the morning. Tea stalls are found in every market place in towns and big villages of the district. In most of the families tea is taken during breakfast, in the evening and between meals.

In the past milk and *lassi* (buttermilk) were the most common and universal drinks. In summer months besides *lassi*, *sharbat* and *shikanjavi* are preferred over hot beverages. Sugarcane juice is used by the people during the summer season. Soft drinks of various brands have also gained popularity with younger people. Various branded juices are also consumed by the well-to-do urban families in routine. Whisky and other types of liquor are consumed usually by adult male villagers and urbanites. Drinking has now become a matter of habit with a larger number of people, the rich and the poor alike.

Smoking has been a popular habit of the people since past. *Hookah* provided a traditional get together, especially of the village elders. The meetings on *hookah* provided a good opportunity for elders to discuss matters of mutual interest. Men are much addicted to the use of tobacco-cigarette and *bidi*. A few females in rural areas also smoke and use other tobacco products. Smoking at public places has been banned by law in the district like in the rest of the State.

*Pan* and *supari* (betelnut) chewing is a habit among the industrial workers in the district and is also relished by many young and old person in urban areas. There are small *pan* shops in towns. The *pan* leaves are of many varieties of which *desi* and *banarsi* pan leaves are available round the year, but other varieties are available only seasonally. *Meetha* (sweet) *pan* is usually on menu in the marriage parties of well-to-do families. Most of the industrial workers are in the habit of using smokeless tobacco products such as *gutka*, *khaini* and *zarda* and a few are even using snuff tobacco (naswar). Food articles containing tobacco and nicotine have been prohibited by law in the district like in the rest of the State.

**GAMES AND RECREATION.**—The popular indigenous games are wrestling, *kabaddi*, *rassa-khichna* (tug-of-war), *gindo-tora* or *gindo-khuli*, *gulli-danda* (tip-cat) and *lukkam-lukka* (hide and seek). The first three games were usually played by boys and middle aged people while the latter are popular among children, traditionally.

*Gindo-khuli* is the indigenous version of the game of hockey, it is played with a stick and a ball made of rags and twigs. *Gulli-danda* is played in ground, outside the village. *Lukkam-lukka* is popular among children of both sexes. Wrestling and *kabaddi* continue to be popular sports among the young and middle aged. Usually, every village has an *akhara* (arena) where the young men and children go regularly for wrestling exercise. *Kabaddi* is

often played in the moon lit nights during the months of *Phalguna* and *Chaitra* (February and March). *Kabaddi* matches are enthusiastically arranged during festivals, particularly in rural areas.

Chess, cards and *chopar* are some of the indoor games which are played and enjoyed in urban as well as rural areas. The trend of playing chopar is, however, declining in the urban areas. The villagers enjoy these games in panchayat ghars, *chaupals* or where ever convenient along with a puff of *hookah* or while inhaling *bidi*.

Modern outdoor games like hockey, cricket, tennis, football, volley-ball and basket-ball are popular among students of urban areas where there are facilities of play grounds. Games like *kho-kho*, net-ball, skipping etc. are popular among girls. However, with the spread of education, these games are becoming popular among girls and women also.

To encourage sports right from the childhood and also in the rural areas the State Government is taking special initiatives by providing coaching facilities and grants for the construction of play grounds. The State Sports Department has constructed a play ground in Ugra Kheri village.

Community listening, gossiping is very popular source of entertainment in the villages. The public relation department educates the people about the policies of the government with the help of print media, mobile cinema and audio-visual ads. With the advent of radio, television sets, transistors, listening to the radio and watching television have become common pastime. Most of the people in urban areas and well-to-do families in rural areas have installed television sets in their homes. The shop keepers have got installed portable T.V. sets in their shops. In towns and cities cinemas are the most popular and universal media of mass entertainment suiting the pocket of the rich and the poor. The traditional cinemas are now converting to multiplexes with better audio-visual systems and seating quality. The villagers also enjoy visiting cinemas and multiplexes in towns. Besides Hindi films, Haryanvi and Punjabi films are also very popular due to their nearness with the social environment and cultural life of the people. English films are usually watched by school and college students and well-to-do families in urban areas. The recorded music is available in the form of cassettes (both audio and video), Compact Disc (CD), Digital Video Disc (DVD), and memory-drive (including pen-drive, i-pod and mobile phone), television (including cable and dish antenna), internet, and radio (including FM) and it has become a major sources of entertainment. Internet is, however, used by fewer people due to limited accessibility.

## COMMUNITY LIFE

The community life is somewhat more effectively organized in villages than in towns. A village largely happens to be the nucleus of a single community. Big and small land owners, agricultural labourers and other workers are not apart from each other. The limited amenities and amusements of village life are equally shared by all of them and require their major attention. Panchayats have also become hubs of community activities.

The social situation in towns is a little different. A growing town cannot claim to be the nucleus of a single community. Its various social and economic groups are more exclusive than inclusive. They do not come into frequent contact with one another. Civic responsibilities no doubt, are applicable to all, but these are not cohesive in their nature. This is more applicable to an expanding town which is sprawled over a large area. The voluntary social agencies establish themselves in local areas or small towns and organize community life in some form or other. They also organize mass celebration of important festivals in their respective areas.

Folk culture of a community is reflected in its folk-songs, dances and theatre. With fast changing circumstances, urban life is slowly but surely making an inroad into rural life taking away some of its inherent beauty and cultural wealth. Like, the gramophone record is an onslaught on the song of the village *ragi*, the radio and television seek to replace the group festivals, folk songs and dances. However, folk culture still continues to enliven the country side which hums with songs and dances on festivals and other numerous occasions. All India Radio and Regional Doordarshan Centre at Rohtak are paying good attention to the revival of folk culture. These air, with the aim of preservation of folk culture, various programmes on traditional folk songs and folk dances showing the folk culture preserved by village women.

**FOLK-SONGS.**—Community life is expressed through folk songs which are the poetical expression of the sentiments and ideas of the people depicting various aspects of the general life of the area. The folk songs are generally connected with ceremonies of marriage, birth of child, crop and agriculture, religious festivals, rituals and customs, and teachings from one generation to another. These songs express hopes, aspirations, love, longings, joys and sorrows of the people. The emotional outbursts of married couples on their union and separation could be heard through songs in the rural areas. The women folk, especially rural, have played the lead role in preservation of folk songs. They can be heard singing folk songs at all places including fields, while doing their daily chores and even on their journey to fields and to the water-wells. Besides religious songs, there are songs that describe the war, nationalism and heroic deeds of the past heroes like Alha-Udhal, Fatta-Jaimal,

Bhura-Baddal, Veer Jawahar Mal and Veer Sadashivrao Bhau. A good number of folk-songs are nature songs sung in the particular months.

*Teej* or *Haryali Teej* is the main festival of *Sravana* (July-August) falling on the third of the *lunar month* after the new moon. It is celebrated in the district with much enthusiasm like in the rest of the Haryana. As a part of tradition, the newly married girl and her mother-in-law are not to remain together during their first *Shravan* and so the newly married women are sent to their parents. Village women assemble in the open space in or outside the village or on the roof of a house, generally at night and sing *Teej* songs about 15-20 days before *Teej*. *Teej* songs include songs of rainy season and Gods of homestead. On *Teej*, women come out in colourful costumes dancing and singing for swinging. An example of *Teej* song is given below:

मीठी तो कर दे माँ कोथली  
*Meethi to kar de maa kothli*<sup>11</sup>,  
 जाऊँगा बेबे के देस पपीहा रे बोल्या पीपली  
*Jaunga bebe ke des papiha re bolya peepli*

(Oh mother, add sweets to the gifts to be presented to my sister; I will go to my sister's place, as the bird has announced the onset of *Sravana* month)

Another song of *Sravana*:

आया री सासड़ सामण मास,  
*Aaya re saasar saman maas,*  
 सीढी घड़ा दे री चन्दन रूँख की।  
*seedhi ghara de ri chandan roonkh ki.*

(Oh mother-in-law, the *Sravana* has set in; get me a seat of sandal-wood tree for the swing).

The month of *Phalguna* (February-March) is very pleasant and inspires the women to sing and dance. Women start dancing late at night starting on Basant Panchami. In a famous folk-song of *Phalguna* a women seeks gift of ornaments from her father-in-law.

सुसरा जी ये दो जोड़े हाथ,  
*Susra ji ye do jore haath,*  
 बाजणा नाड़ा दियो घड़वा  
*bajna nara deo gharwa*  
 नाड़े हो बिन मंदी पड़ रही चाल  
*nare ho bin mandi par rahi chaal*  
 चाल बिन टोक रह्या संसार  
*chaal bin tok rihya sansar*

बहुरिया हे, हम के जाणें थारी सार  
*Bahuriya he, ham ke jane thari sar*

नाड़ा तो थारा देवर दे घड़वाय।  
*nara to thara dewar de gharwae.*

(Oh father in law, I entreat with folded hands, get me tinkling ornaments, without these ornaments my gait is slow and uninspiring and people talk about this deficiency. Oh daughter-in-law I am not concerned with the ornaments, ask your brother-in-law to get it for you.)

The village women go to a tank or river in the month of *Kartika*. They remove mud from the tank or river and place it on its bank and call it *pathwari*. They worship *pathwari* as goddess and sing:

पथवारी आएं खोल किवाड़ी,  
*Pathwari aaen khol kiwari,*  
 बाहर खड़ी तेरी सींचण आळी।  
*baahar khari teri sichan aali.*

के माँगे से सींचण आळी?  
*Ke mange se sichan aali?*  
 अन्न धन माँगे सींचण आळी।  
*ann dhan mange sichan aali.*

(Oh *Pathwari*, open your door, a devotee is waiting outside for your blessings. What is sought by the devotee? The devotee seeks blessings of goddess for prosperity.)

*Raginis* of Lakhmi Chand and Mange Ram, poets from neighboring district of Sonapat and Rohtak respectively, are sung by the people of this district also.

As a whole, these songs form a part of the cultural heritage of the people of the area being the spontaneous expression of the feeling of the ordinary folks. These songs have deep and lasting impressions owing to their connection with various shades of life of the people, the occasions they celebrate and environment and nature around them.

**FOLK DANCES.**—Folk dancing is an outburst of surging emotions generally accompanied with folk-singing. Like the folk songs, folk dances are connected with religious festivals, harvest and ceremonies of marriage, birth of child etc. A brief description of main folk dances which are popular in the district is given below:-

**Phag dance:**—This is a seasonal dance of the farmers usually performed in the month of 'Phalgun'. This is a mixed dance but sometimes performed by



men only. Women wear colourful traditional clothes and men display colourful turbans. The dance is accompanied by the beats of 'Tasha', 'Nagada', and 'Dhol'. Women after their daily chores congregate in the village in an open space and sing and dance till late at night during month of *Phag* (*Phalgun*, February-March). Two, sometimes four, women dance in a circle to the tune of songs and drum beats or pitcher-beats, sometimes with their faces covered. The style of women dance on this occasion resembles *giddha* of the Punjab.

**Loor:**—Loor is exclusively a girls dance which is performed by girls in the month of *Phalgun* around the Holi festival and is very popular in the bangar region of the district. Girls usually participate in this dance wearing their traditional dress consisting of *Ghagra*, *Kurti*, *Chundri* and *Chunda*.

**Gugga dance:**—This dance is performed in procession held about a week before the Gugga naumi for worship of Gugga Pir wherein the devotees dance to the tunes of musical instruments like *Deru*, *Thali* and *Chimta*.

**Jhumar dance:**—This dance is performed exclusively by women. It takes its name from Jhumar, an ornament commonly worn on the forehead by young married women. The dance is performed to the beats of *dholak* and *thali*.

**Khoria:**— This dance is performed by women at the house of the bridegroom in the night on which the *Barat* (marriage party) has gone to the bride's house. By this dance the women ask for the safe and sound return of the marriage party along with the newlywed couple. Due to the bawdy nature of this dance children are generally kept away. By staying awake whole night for this dance, they also protect their house since the men folk are all away to the bride's house.

**Chhathi dance:**— On the birth of a male child, this dance is performed on the sixth day of the birth by women. It is a romantic dance and performed at night. At the end of the celebration *baakli* (boiled wheat sweetened with jaggery or boiled black gram salted) are distributed.

**Chaupaiya:**—It is a harvesting season dance based on songs having four lines and is, therefore, called *Chaupaiya*. Men wearing 'Dhoti', 'Kurtas' and colourful turbans dance to the beats of *Manjiras*, *Chimta* and *Nagadas*.

**FOLK THEATRE.**— '*Sang*' or '*Swang*' means a disguise or 'to impersonate'. *Swang* is a form of open-air theatre wherein the formalities of the drama like costumes, curtains and make-up are hardly observed. The stage is in the midst of the audience which sits on all four sides whereas orchestra takes its seat in the middle of the stage. *Swang* is performed by a group of ten or twelve persons. Women are not allowed to perform in the *Swang*. Generally, the leader of the *Swang* party plays the role of hero and other actors play different

roles including that of females. In summer, it is played late at night and continues till early hours of the morning, while it is performed at noon in the winter. The mythological stories and folk tales generally provide the themes. This form of folk theatre has experienced some apathy in the last few decades. The Government and other voluntary organizations are making efforts to revitalize this form of traditional folk-theatre.

## REHABILITATION

The Independence of India resulted into the dominions of India and in its partition. The partition of the country in 1947 was followed by horrible communal disturbances which inflicted untold sufferings and witnessed a gigantic and unprecedented mass migration of population from Pakistan to India and vice versa. Lakhs of homeless Hindus and Sikhs from Pakistan entered what was then called East Punjab; their immediate location in a large number of camps and eventual rehabilitation in rural and urban areas created numerous problems which Government faced with courage. In the beginning, the allotment of land was made on temporarily basis to groups of cultivators who wished to live together. Subsequently, the Government invited claims on the prescribed forms from the displaced persons and after verification from the revenue records obtained from the Government of Pakistan and land was allotted to them on quasi permanent basis. Likewise the homes / plots in urban and rural areas were also allotted to the displaced persons. The area now covered by the Haryana State took a leading share in the resettlement of these immigrants. According to the Census of 1951, the Panipat District alone absorbed 59,435 displaced persons immigrants (39,821 in urban area, 19,614 in rural area).

These consisted of Afghans, Baluches, Muslim Rajputs, Sayyids, Gujjars and Sheikhs. The immigrants into the district were mainly Brahmans, Virks, Mazhabi Sikhs, Aroras and Khattris from the Shekhupura, Gujranwala, Multan and Muzafargarh districts of Pakistan. The number of immigrants from different areas of Pakistan who settled in the area of Panipat district is provided in the statement below:-

District of origin(in Pakistan)	Number of displaced persons settled		
	Rural area	Urban	Total
Jhang	3,061	9,073	12,134
Multan	5,911	7,512	13,423
Muzafargarh	4,377	10,103	14,480
Lyallpur	2,209	3,353	5,562
Other parts of Pakistan	5,056	8,780	13,836
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,614</b>	<b>38,821</b>	<b>59,435</b>

**REFUGEE CAMPS.**—Partition was one of the most stringent times in history of the region involving inevitable hardships, miseries and tragedies. The refugees travelled by foot, in buses and by rail under the protection of the Military Evacuation Organization. In spite of efforts of the Government to protect the migrating refugees, lawless elements; on both sides, played havoc with many convoys. Communal feelings had been aroused and accentuated, and regretfully, human beings often behaved barbarously in those days.

In order to settle the refugees, camps were established. Transit camps were established at Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, and Ambala and a particularly large one at Kurukshetra. As a first step, the displaced persons were given shelter under canvas tents in relief camps. Such camps were also set up in the area of Panipat. The educational institutions, which remained closed for months up to February, 1948, provided additional accommodation. The services of the staff and students were utilized in the management of the relief camps. Students who rendered three months social service in refugee camps were considered eligible for the award of Certificate/Degree of the newly established Punjab University without taking the examination.

The camp life was made reasonably agreeable by the provision of a number of facilities. Free ration was distributed in these camps. Fruits, multivitamin tablets and other special items of diet were issued to refugees on medical advice. Blankets, quilts and clothes were supplied. During the winter, dispensaries were opened in tents for medical relief. These camps provided much needed relief to the displaced people and gave breathing time to all concerned to plan their future.

By the summer of 1948, the routine of camp life and administration of relief was well organized. The stage had arrived to take the next step of enabling displaced persons to find independent means of existence. To achieve this, issue of free rations was limited to those families who had no adult male member and could, therefore, maintain themselves. The able bodied male adults between the ages of 16 and 60 years, who began to do some work or who refused to do work, when it was available, were de-rationed along with their dependents though they were allowed to live in camps. Those entitled to allotment of land were obliged to leave soon after temporary allotment of the evacuee land that been made to them.

During the process of this gradual elimination of gratuitous relief, the unattached women and children and infirm and aged persons, who were living in these general camps, were encouraged to shift to social organizations where gratuitous relief at the full prescribed scale was given to women and children and educational facilities were provided for children. Various cottage

industries and crafts such as weaving, spinning, knitting, tailoring, embroidery, laundry toy-making, carpet making, *niwar*(cotton belt) and *durrie*(carpet) making were established to train women and to equip them for earning their livelihood. Arrangements were also made for training them in midwifery and nursing. On completion of their training in selected industries and crafts, the trainees were encouraged to form industrial co-operatives for earning their livelihood.

## RURAL REHABILITATION

The early allotment of evacuee land helped the Government in the speedy resettlement of rural refugees in camps. It was first made on a temporary basis to groups of cultivators who wished to live together. Apart from resettling people the idea was to promote the sowing of Rabi crop of 1947-1948. In order to hasten the re-settlement of rural and agricultural refugees living the camps and to facilitate the sowing of *rabi* crops of 1947-48 temporary allotments of lands, abandoned by Muslims, were allotted to groups of cultivators who were bounded by ties of kinship or friendship. This was done to maintain the homogeneity of such settlements. All agricultural refugees who owned or held land and were cultivating in Pakistan were eligible for such allotment. These temporary allotments were later converted into quasi-permanent in April, 1948. This was a significant preliminary step toward the final resettlement of the displaced cultivators on the lands allotted to them and was to serve as an incentive to improve their lands. Claims were invited from displaced persons and orally verified at tehsil head quarters. Unfortunately, in spite of their sufferings, many unscrupulous displaced persons made exaggerated claims, and obtained excessive allotments. To meet this difficulty Government of India obtained original revenue records from Government of Pakistan to verify claims of the displaced persons. These also showed that there was substantial difference between the land left behind in Pakistan by the incoming displaced persons and that abandoned by the Muslims in East Punjab (India) and the latter was less. To overcome this problem the available land was converted into standard acres, and graded cuts were applied in making allotments to displaced claimants. The cuts were in proportion to the size of the claim. Bigger claimants lost more in comparison to the smaller claimants.

The quasi-permanent allotments were followed by the conferment of proprietary rights in 1955. While doing so, bogus and excessive allotments were cancelled, and only the genuine claims of each displaced person, verified from the revenue record received from Pakistan, were admitted. This resulted in the return to the evacuee pool of lakhs of acres of evacuee lands usurped by

unscrupulous displaced persons. Every effort was made to allot land of the similar quality as that left by the claimant in Pakistan. Sub-urban land was allotted to claimants of similar land or to other claimants on a valuation basis. The total evacuee agricultural land (Urban and Rural) available in the Panipat District and the disposal of Rural/Urban agriculture land as on March 31, 2011 are shown as below:-

Lands in Acre-Kanal-Marla (A-K-M)						
Evacuees Agricultural Lands	Urban			Rural		
	Pure Evacuee	Under Occupancy rights (G. H. Joint Khewat)	Total area	Cultivated	Banjar	Claim
Area available	409-1-15	241-1-3	650-2-18	40380-7-3	413-5-0	40794-4-3
Area disposed of	305-7-12	122-7-8	428-7-0	40291-1-7	290-0-13	40581-2-0
Balance	103-2-3	118-1-15	221-3-18	89-5-16	123-4-7	213-2-3

**Agricultural Loans.**— Allotment of land on a quasi-permanent basis was not enough. The allottees/displaced persons were given assistance by way of agricultural loans for purchasing bullocks, agricultural implements, fodder, seeds, etc. and for repairing house and wells, without which they might not have been able to make full use of land allotted to them. In order to minimize the chances of misuse, these loans from 1947-1948 to 1953-1954 were advanced in kind. The disbursement of the loan was stopped after 1953-54. The following amounts were disbursed for this purpose:-

Year	Amount in ₹
1947-48	2,01,395
1948-49	7,04,135
1949-50	3,70,950
1950-51	5,02,195
1951-52	6,12,370
1952-53	1,92,425
1953-54	1,06,320
<b>Total:</b>	<b>26,89,790</b>

**Rural Housing.**—Rain and floods had damaged a large number of houses abandoned by the Muslims and many of them got damaged beyond repairs. In some villages the number of houses was in excess of the needs of the allottees while in others almost the entire *abadis* had crumbled and not even a single house was available.

Like land, the houses were also allotted on temporary basis in the first instance and later quasi-permanently. Rules for their distribution, analogous to those for quasi permanent land allotment, were framed afterwards. Records were prepared regarding the exact accommodation available in each house, its general condition and its approximate value, along with the list of allottees and the quality and value of houses left by them in Pakistan. The Halqa Revenue Officer, usually a Naib-Tehsildar, was entrusted with the job of allotment of rural houses. A list giving the order of precedence was prepared. After reserving some houses for common purposes, allottees were given a chance of selection according to their place in merit list which was based on the size of their holdings. Those who could not get a house were given cash compensation instead.

### URBAN REHABILITATION

The provision of residential accommodation in urban areas was major problem that Government faced after the partition. The general trend of shift towards urban areas after the Independence made the problem of providing residential accommodation to displaced persons in urban areas more acute. The Government rose equal to the occasion and evolved schemes to utilize the available Muslim abandoned properties and develop more housing colonies. All Muslim's abandoned properties were taken over as evacuee properties and were governed by the Punjab Evacuee Ordinance IV of 1947, later on supplanted by the Administration of Evacuee Property Act, 1950. Such properties comprising houses, shops, vacant sites, *kholas* (dilapidated houses) and industrial establishments were temporarily allotted to displaced persons on rental basis. Their permanent disposal started in 1953-1954. In the district, properties valued above ₹10,000 (below ₹50,000 for industrial establishments) were sold by open auction while those assessed below these amounts were declared allottable. Allottable properties were given away permanently to claimants against their verified claims. If the value of a property was in excess of the compensation amount, claimant concerned was allowed to deposit the excess in instalments. Properties occupied by non-claimants were offered to them on annual instalments. Properties lying vacant or in unauthorized possession were auctioned.

In urban areas, loans were advanced to displaced persons such as traders, artisans, industrialists, lawyers, medical practitioners, etc. to enable them to establish themselves in different locations. These loans carried an interest at the rate of 3 percent per annum and the recovery of loans was to be started after expiry of three years from the date of its disbursement. The loans along with interest thereon were repayable in equal instalments spread over a

period of 6 years. These loans were strictly to be utilized for the purposes for which these were given. The scheme of urban loans was discontinued after 1956-57. The table below shows the year-wise amount of such loans advanced to displaced persons during the period from 1949-50 to 1956-57:-

Year	Loans Advanced in ₹
1949-50	3,90,850
1950-51	2,74,000
1951-52	2,69,000
1952-53	2,90,150
1953-54	2,89,000
1954-55	2,69,000
1955-56	2,27,000
1956-57	90,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,99,500</b>

**Housing Schemes.**— The properties abandoned by the Muslims were insufficient to provide shelter to all the displaced persons settled in the district. The housing problem remained acute because most of the Muslim evacuees were generally labourers or artisans with a comparatively low standard of living while the immigrant Non-Muslims were businessmen and shopkeepers and were used to a much better standard of living. To meet the grave situation arising from the inadequate residential accommodation available in the East Punjab, and to provide shelter according to the income group level of the immigrants, the Government established new townships, in addition to 8 marla (cheap) housing colonies and 4 marla (cheap) tenements. The new townships accommodated the rich and upper middle class displaced persons; the 8 marla (cheap) housing colonies provided house to the lower middle class; and the 4 marla (cheap) tenements to the poor, particularly to displaced persons occupying places of worship or living in *dharamsalas*, infirmaries, and those living on pavements. The statement below gives details of houses and sites and shops constructed and plots laid out under various schemes:-

	<u>House</u>	<u>Shops</u>	<u>Plots</u>
New Township, Panipat	498	26	830
8-Marla (cheap) Housing Colony, Panipat	150	---	---
		<u>Tenements</u>	<u>Shops</u>
4-Marla (cheap) Housing Colony, Panipat		400	18
4-Marla (cheap) Housing Colony, Samalkha		100	---

The houses and plots in new township and 8-marla (cheap) housing colonies were disposed of, under the East Punjab Refugees Rehabilitation

(Building and Building Sites) Act, 1948, at the reserve sale price. The cost of houses and plots sold was treated as loan to be recovered in 30 half-yearly instalments. Subsequently, with the implementation of the compensation scheme in 1954-55, the benefit of adjustment of public dues against the verified claims was extended to the purchasers of houses and plots in all these rehabilitation colonies. The allotment of 4-marla (cheap) tenements was made under the executive instructions issued with the approval of the Government of India.

In all these colonies, satisfactory arrangements for underground drainage, water-supply and electricity were made and provision existed for amenities such as school buildings, public parks, hospitals, clubs etc. Most of the plots, earmarked for schools, hospitals, clubs, libraries and religious places have been sold to private registered bodies at half the reserve sale price on the condition that the plots sold would be utilized for the purpose for which these were earmarked. Shopping centres were also provided in these colonies.

**Mud-hut colonies.**—Besides the new houses detailed above, mud-hut colonies were constructed in 1950 for providing accommodation to the residual population in refugee camps. These were constructed on the respective sites of camps in Panipat with 600 mud-huts and each mud-hut covered an area of 210 square feet. These were immediately offered to the occupants of refugee camps who belonged to Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes and to persons who were resourceless and landless.

In 1953, it was decided to transfer proprietary rights of mud-huts to the inmates. Occupants with claims were required to pay the cost of land and superstructure from their claims and others were charged only the cost of land recoverable in three annual instalments, the cost of superstructure having been treated as a grant. It was also decided that nothing should be charged from destitute widows and disabled persons.

**Small Urban and House Building Loans.**—The scheme of advancing loans and grants was introduced in February, 1948 to help the poor and middle class displaced persons to restart their business, trade or profession. Under the Punjab Refugees Rehabilitation (Loans and Grants) Act, 1948, the loan was limited to ₹5,000 to an individual. The grants were restricted to unattached women, widows and others who were unable to repay loans but at the same time wanted monetary help in their resettlement. The maximum amount of grant was limited to ₹500.

**Small Urban Loans.**— These loans were advanced to displaced persons to enable them to establish themselves in different vocations. All classes of displaced persons comprising traders, shopkeepers, artisans, industrialists,



students, lawyers and medical practitioners were helped under the scheme. The loans carried an interest at the rate of 3 per cent and the recovery commenced after expiry of 2 years from the date of disbursement of such loans. The loans together with all interest were repayable in equal instalments spread over a period of 6 years. The loans and grants were strictly to be utilized for the purpose for which they were asked for by the applicant or sanctioned by the Government. The scheme to advance small urban loans was discontinued in 1956-57. The detail of loans advanced to displaced persons during 1948-1949 to 1956-57 is as follows:-

Year	Amount in ₹
1948-49	61,850
1949-50	85,000
1950-51	1,26,000
1951-52	1,47,150
1952-53	1,50,000
1953-54	2,70,000
1954-55	1,95,750
1955-56	1,41,000
1956-57	90,500
<b>Total:</b>	<b>12,67,250</b>

**House Building Loans.**— House building loans were advanced to purchasers of plots sold out by the State Government in new township. These loans enabled displaced persons to build their own houses on easy terms of repayment. These loans were discontinued from 1956-57 onwards. The loans were advanced to displaced persons for the construction of houses during 1949-1950 to 1955-1956 as per following details:-

Year	Amount in ₹
1949-50	2,29,000
1950-51	1,43,850
1951-52	1,43,000
1952-53	1,39,000
1953-54	1,12,950
1954-55	99,300
1955-56	86,700
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,53,800</b>

## PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION

Compensation was paid to displaced persons, who had abandoned immovable property in Pakistan, after verifying their claims, under the Displaced Persons (Claims) Act, 1950. Interim compensation was sanctioned

for certain categories of displaced persons who were in urgent need of relief. The interim scheme was later replaced by the Displaced Persons (Compensation and Rehabilitation) Act, 1954 under which scaled compensation was prescribed. It gave more to smaller claimants and less to the bigger claimants. This compensation was paid out of the compensation pool, to which the Government of India had contributed. In this manner the rehabilitation of displaced persons was completed.

### **SOCIO-ECONOMIC BLEND**

The rehabilitation of displaced persons proved to be as much the glory of the Punjab as the Partition and the consequent uprooting of millions was its misfortune. The effect of the exchange of population is a phenomenon of great historical importance in the evolution of the socio-economic pattern of life of the people of Punjab and Haryana and the Panipat district has had it in abundant measure. As a result of the partition, as population in urban areas increased, manifold and new industries sprang up and old ones were expanded. This attracted artisans and labourers to a great extent and shopkeepers and others dependent on non-agricultural professions to a lesser extent, from rural areas to towns.

Khattris and Aroras from Multan and Muzaffargarh district, who owned land in the West Punjab, were mostly non-agriculturists and small landholders. As compared with the local business community, they were more energetic and their presence in the urban areas of the district quickened process of change. They successfully set up themselves as shopkeepers and traders and completely changed the outlook of bazaars and brightened rural life by providing the paraphernalia of civilized life like soap, pottery, mirrors, hair-clips and celluloid toys even to the obscure distant villages.

The energy and resourcefulness displayed by displaced persons influenced local population to shake off its inertia. Local people have become more practical and enthusiastic to educate their children. The appreciation for cleanliness and the desire for neat clothes, furniture, crockery and other necessary cooking utensils are symbols of a general awakening which has been accelerated by the intermingling of populations.

In the social sphere, there has not been much intermingling and the marriages are strictly confined to the respective communities. The dress habits have, however, undergone a change. The *salwar* and *qamiz* has been adopted and heavy silver ornaments have been discarded by local females. Local dialect has been adopted by the immigrants and their descendants have also adopted the local culture, fairs and festivals.

## IMPACT OF DISPLACED PERSONS ON LOCAL POPULATION

The impact of displaced persons on the local population has been a beneficial one in variety of ways. Hard work had replaced lethargy and smartness had replaced sloppiness in all walks of life. Agriculture, business, transport and society generally have experienced improvement and modernization.

With the lapse of time, the displaced persons have almost completely integrated themselves with the local population of the district. The mixing of displaced persons with local persons also influenced the latter's way of living including food habits, dresses and fashions. In the process of intermixture of dialects the Aroras, Khattris and others from Pakistan have mastered the local dialect. With the passage of time majority of the older generation has passed away and the younger generation has taken over which is able to identify itself completely with the life and culture of the new homes in which they are born. A few persons of the older generation which bore the sting of the partition are still hooked to and are instrumental in preservation of their cultural heritage by recalling the memories of their old homes.

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## Notes and References

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<sup>1</sup> Gharaunda CD block falls in Karnal District but its 3 villages are part of Panipat District.

<sup>2</sup> A script used by traders for Book Keeping.

<sup>3</sup> Haryana State Gazetteers, Volume-1, 2004, p.443

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p.444

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> This is done to the new moon too on the evening of her appearance. Karnal District Gazetteer, 1976, p.64

<sup>7</sup> Vidya Bhushan: *The Cultural History of North India*, New Delhi, 1988, p.10

<sup>8</sup> *Changing face of Rural Haryana*, Haryana Review, January 2011, p.26

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p.27-

<sup>10</sup> Karnal District Gazetteer, 1976, p.92

<sup>11</sup> A day before Teej, *Sandhara / Kothli* comprising gifts is sent to marriage daughters.