

POPULATION COMPOSITION IN INDIA

27.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous lesson we studied distribution, density and growth of population of India. We also looked into the causes and consequences of distribution and density of population. We pondered over the causes and consequences of rapid growth of population for the past hundred years. We also took note of causes and consequences of migration of various types. In this lesson we will study composition of Indian population along certain dimensions. Firstly, we will like to note the location and size of settlements in which people prefer to live and why they do so. This constitutes the rural and urban composition of population. Next we will find out if males and females are equal in number and more importantly in status. Age structure composition of Indian population and its implications would be yet another focal point of our inquiry. Then we would move away from purely demographic to cultural dimensions of our population composition. This will help us to know the linguistic and religious composition of our society. Finally, we have a glance at scheduled castes and scheduled tribes with regard to their numbers, location and distribution. Last but not the least important focal point of our study would be the literacy rates of our society and its major social components. All these analytical aspects would help us to look at our population not only as mere numbers but as a human resources as well.

27.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- analyse the rural-urban, male-female (Sex ratio) and age composition of Indian population;
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- establish the relationship between literacy rate and population growth rate;
- show on the outline map of India the areas of tribal population;
- analyse the reasons for concentration of scheduled tribes and scheduled castes population in specific areas;
- explain the reason for the high concentration of scheduled castes population in the area of very low concentration of scheduled tribes and vice versa.
- describe the important features of religious and linguistic composition of population.

27.3 RURAL-URBAN COMPOSITION

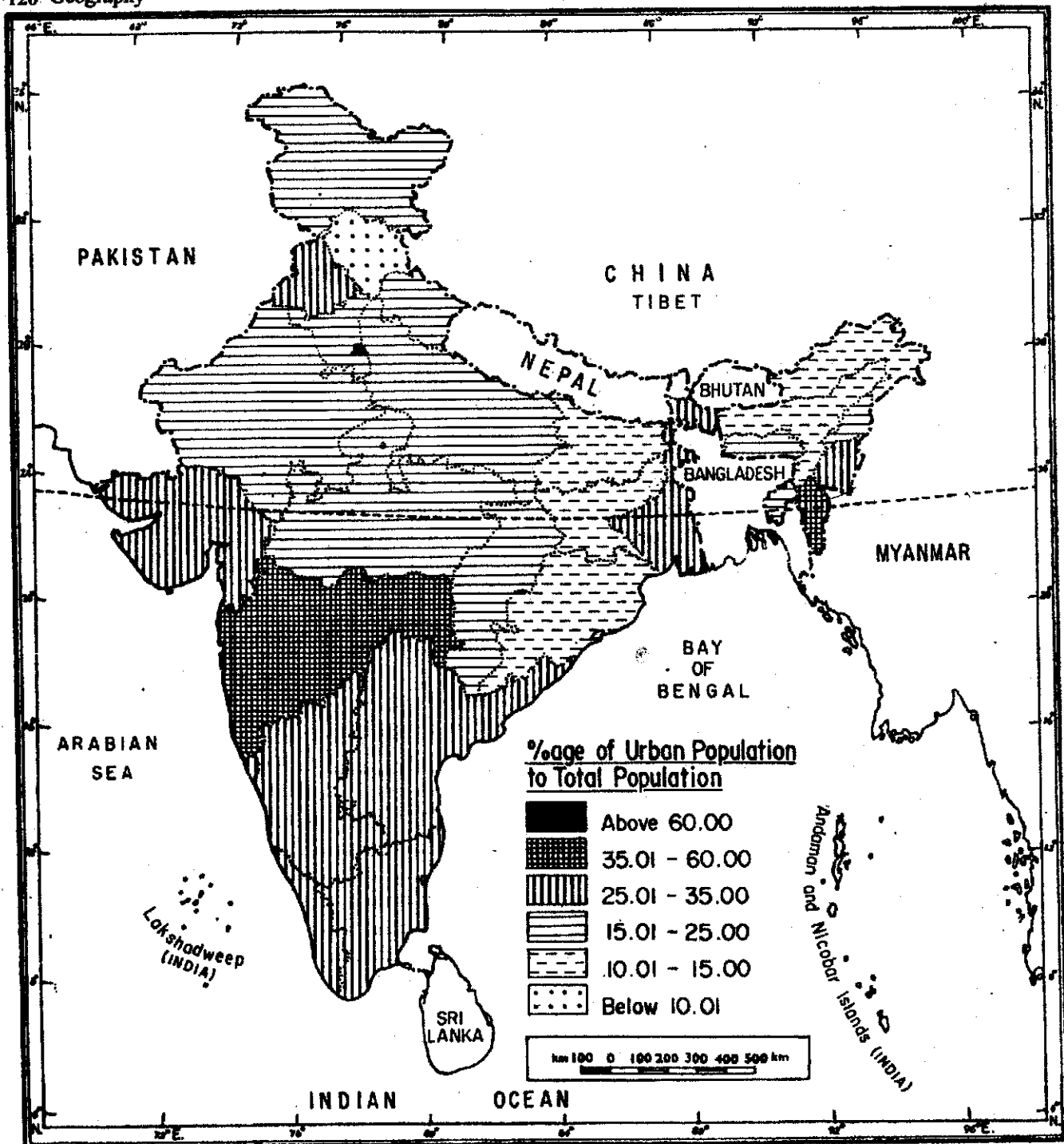
Population is divided into two parts - rural and urban - on the basis of the size and location of settlements. The rural population consists of small sized settlements scattered over the countryside. Urban population is one that lives in large size settlements i.e. towns and cities. However, more importantly this division is based on occupational structure. In India, rural area is defined as one where three-fourths or more of its population is engaged in primary occupations such as farming, animal rearing, forestry, fishing, quarrying etc. On the other hand, urban area is one where three-fourths or above of its population is engaged in non-agricultural activities such as manufacturing, trade, transport, communication, banking and social services like health, education, administration etc.

- * Rural population lives in the villages and has three-fourths or more of its people engaged in primary occupations.
- * Urban population lives in towns and cities where three-fourths or more of its number is engaged in non-agricultural pursuits of secondary and tertiary sector.

Table 27.1 Rural and Urban Population in India : 1901-1991

Census Year	Percentage of total Population	
	Rural	Urban
1901	89.2	10.8
1911	89.7	10.3
1921	88.8	11.2
1931	88.0	12.0
1941	86.1	13.9
1951	82.7	17.3
1961	82.0	18.0
1971	80.1	19.9
1981	76.7	23.3
1991	74.3	25.7

The total population of India spreads over more than 5.8 lakhs of villages and 4,615 towns. India, proverbially is considered to be a country of villages. Even today, 74% of the total population



Based upon Survey of India outline map printed in 1979.

The territorial waters of India extend into the sea to a distance of twelve nautical miles measured from the appropriate base line.

The boundary of Meghalaya shown on this map is as prescribed from the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971, but has yet to be verified.

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of India lives in villages. But the proportion of rural population has been decreasing in each successive census (See Table No. 27.1). Consequently, the proportion of urban population to total population has been increasing slowly but steadily. It was as low as 10.8% in 1901 and rose to 25.7 by 1991. The question arises why is it so? It is because the rate of growth of urban population is higher than that of rural population. In contrast to an average growth rate of about 23.85% in 1991, the urban population has registered a growth rate of 25 percent. However, all this growth is not a result of only the natural increase of population. Infact, much of the growth of urban population is due to high rate of migration of people from rural to urban areas. This also indicates a slow change in the occupations of people from primary to secondary and tertiary activities. Very often limits of municipal or city Corporation areas are extended to cover neighbouring villages or suburbs.

Half of the total urban population of India lives only in five states. These five states are Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh. Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Bihar and Rajasthan have more than thirty percent of urban population. Rest of the urban population (about 20%) is spread over the remaining fifteen states and seven Union Territories.

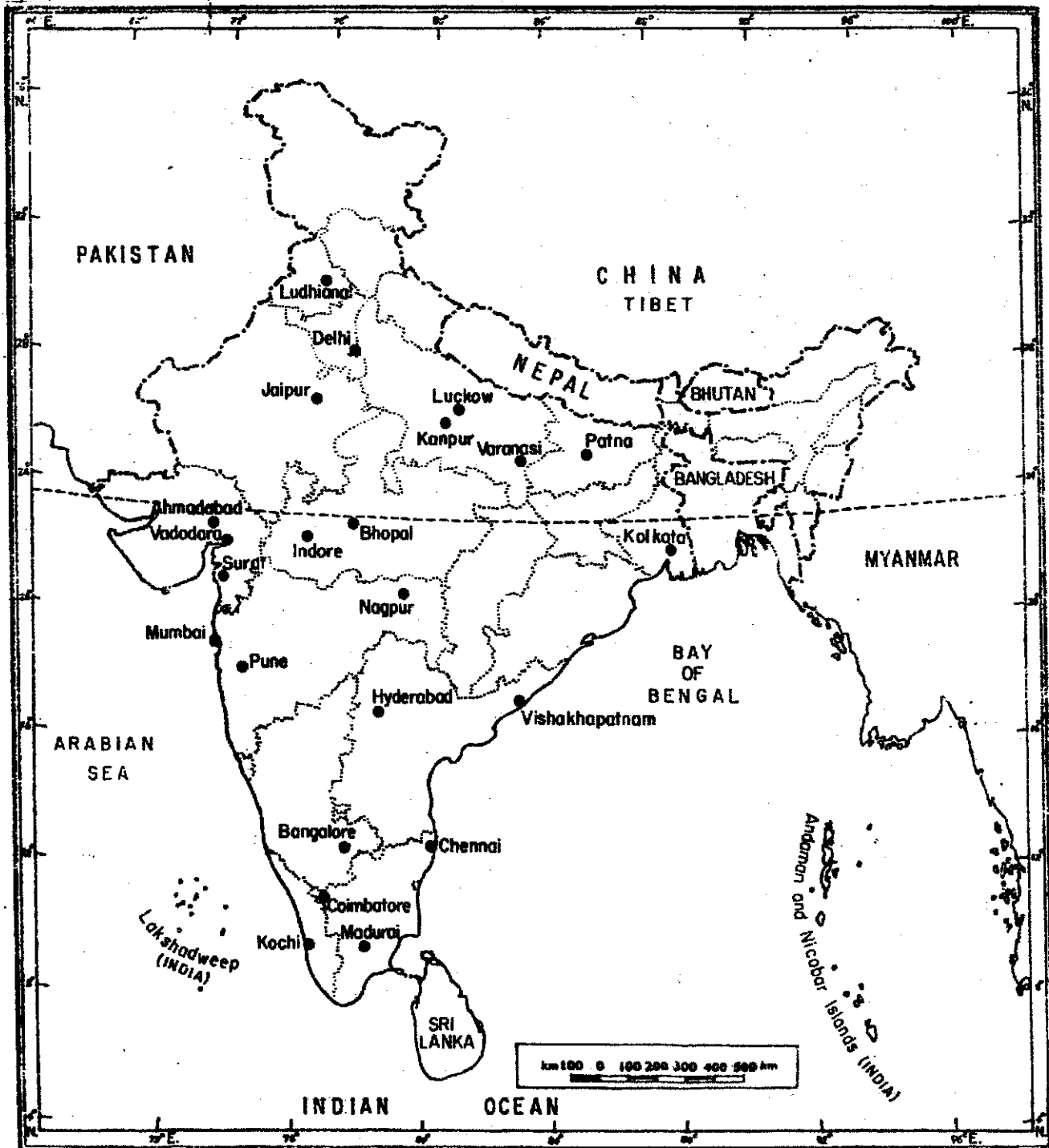
According to 1991 census, 23 cities had a population of more than 1,000,000 each. They are called the metro politan or the million plus cities. These cities are Mumbai, Calcutta, Delhi, Chennai, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, Pune, Kanpur, Lucknow, Nagpur, Surat, Jaipur, Kochi, Vadodara, Indore, Coimbatore, Patna, Madurai, Bhopal, Visakhapatnam, Ludhiana and Varanasi (See Fig. 27.2)

These metropolitan cities alone account for 65% of the total urban population. This highly rapid growth of huge cities brings in its wake several problems - supply of housing, water, electricity, schools, transport, dispensaries, ration shops and law and order.

- * About 25.7% of the total population of India lives in urban areas. The proportion of urban population to the total has been increasing steadily at a faster pace. The rate of growth of urban population in the country is higher than the rate of growth of rural population.
- * The cities which have a population of more than 1,000,000 each are called metropolitan cities. There are 23 metropolitan cities as per 1991 census.

INTEXT QUESTION 27.1

1. Fill in the blanks with suitable words from those given in the bracket. (secondary and tertiary, increasing, 23, lower, primary)
- (a) The rate of growth of rural population is _____ than the rate of growth of urban population in India



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The boundary of Nagaland shown on this map is as illustrated from the North-Southern Areas (Reorganisation) Act 1971, but has yet to be verified.

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- (b) The rural population is mainly engaged in _____ activities whereas the urban population is primarily engaged in _____ activities.
- (c) Proportion of urban population has been _____ since 1921.
- (d) Altogether there are _____ "million cities" in India according to Census of India, 1991

27.4 SEX-RATIO COMPOSITION

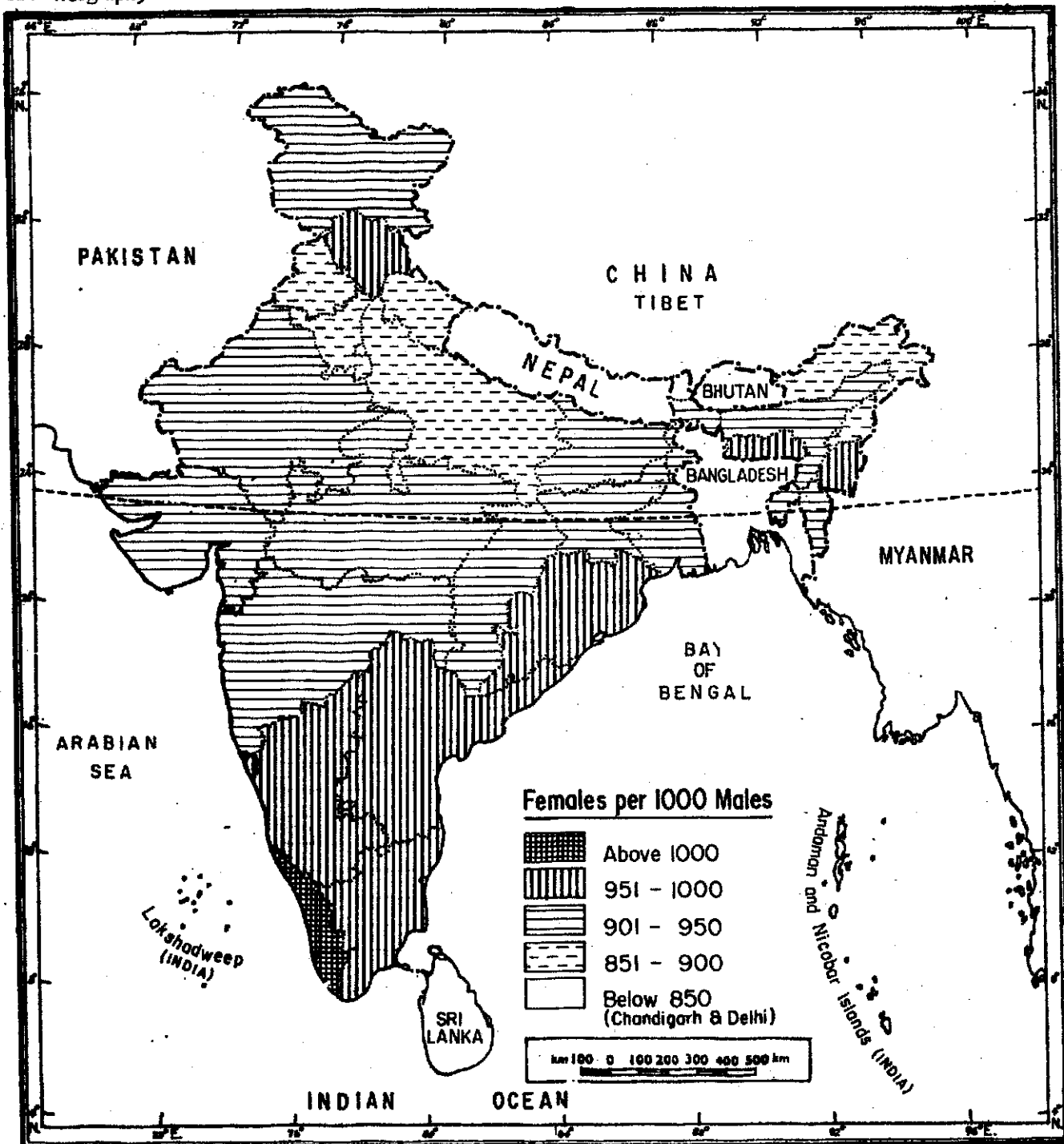
Sex Ratio refers to the number of females per thousand of males in the population of an area. According to the census of India- 1991, there are only 927 females per one thousand of males. So, sex composition in India is called unfavourable. It means there are less number of females than the number of males. When the number of females is more than the male it is said to be favourable. The sex ratio is favourable in Kerala(1038). The lowest sex ratio among states is found in Arunachal Pradesh (859). Among the Union Territories, Pondichery has the highest sex ratio in the country with 979 females per thousand males, whereas the lowest sex ratio is found in Chandigarh where 790 females are per thousand males. The significant trend with regard to the sex ratio in the country is that it has been a steadily declining.

Table No. 27.2 Sex Ratio in India(Female per 1000 Males)

Year	Sex Ratio
1901	972
1911	964
1921	955
1931	950
1941	945
1951	946
1961	941
1971	930
1981	934
1991	927

District Level Pattern

An overview of the district level data reveals that there are some clusters of districts in eastern and western Rajasthan, western Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and its surrounding regions and north western Madhya Pradesh where the sex ratio remains below the national average. The situation is just opposite in the hilly districts of Uttar Pradesh, parts of Himachal Pradesh, south-eastern part of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh which have an excess of females over males. Almost all districts of Kerala has a favourable sex ratio.



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Why is there a decline in the sex ratio in India? The major reasons for the declining sex ratio in India are the low life expectancy among the females and a high child mortality among the female children. These two causes are related to the comparatively lower status of the women in our society. Apart from this our socio-religious values and beliefs like male preference in our society are responsible for the declining sex ratio. The female mortality rate is likely to be reversed due to the improving status of the women and also due to better medicare facilities and education particularly of the females. The improved medicare facilities have helped in checking the rate of child mortality and the deaths of mothers during child birth.

* The Sex ratio in India is unfavourable. On an average, there are 927 females per thousand males in the country. The highest sex ratio of 1038 females per one thousand males is in Kerala and the lowest of 700 females per one thousand males is in the Chandigarh.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 27.2

Answer the following question in brief:

- (a) Name the states having the highest and the lowest sex ratio in India
(i) _____ (ii) _____
- (b) What is the sex ratio of India according to Census of India, 1991?

- (c) Define sex ratio

27.5 AGE COMPOSITION

Age-sex pyramid refers to the composition of population in terms of the age and sex of the people. It gives an indication regarding the growth rate of population and the nature of population in terms of working and non-working sections. As per the census of India 1991, children up to 14 years of age account for about 36% total population. The age group of 15-59 years accounts for 57.6% of total population and the age group of 60 years and above for about 6.3% of the population. The age structure has been undergoing some gradual changes during the recent decades.

One of the trends is that proportion of the younger population i.e. in the age group of 0-14 years is declining and the percentage of persons on the working age group, i.e. the 15 to 59 age group, is increasing. The percentage of persons in the age group 15 to 59 increase from 54 percent in 1981 to 57.7 percent in 1991. The proportion of people in old age group is 60 years and above is 6.6 percent in 1991. The single largest group are the children below 14 years and it is evident from the figure 27.4

Table No. 27.3 Percentagewise Distribution of Total Population by Age and Sex in India

Age group	Total		
	Person	Male	Female
0-4	13.1	13.2	13.0
5-9	11.8	11.9	11.8
10-14	11.1	11.2	11.0
15-19	10.5	10.6	10.7
20-24	9.8	9.7	9.9
25-29	8.1	8.1	8.1
30-34	7.0	7.0	7.1
35-39	6.0	6.0	6.1
40-44	5.0	5.0	5.0
45-49	4.4	4.4	4.5
50-54	3.7	3.7	3.7
55-59	3.1	3.1	3.1
60-64	2.3	2.2	2.4
65-69	1.8	1.7	1.9
70+	2.1	1.9	2.3

The age-se\ structure depicted through diagram is known as Population Pyramid. This pyramid has a broad base and narrow apex.

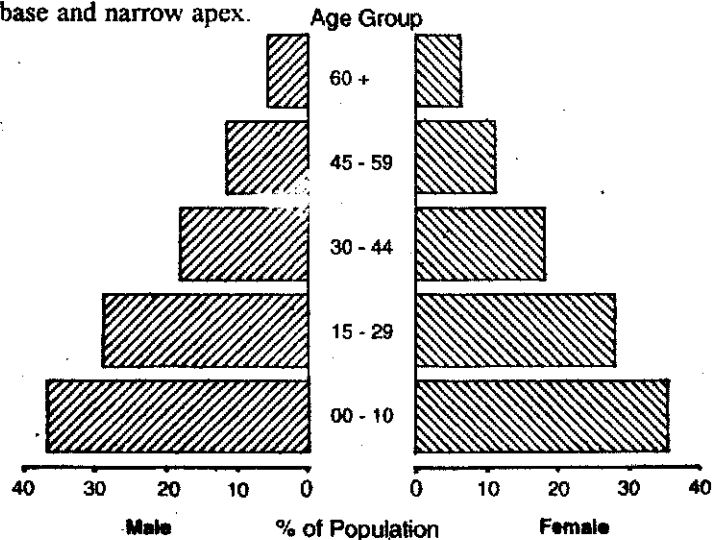


Fig. 27.4 Population Pyramid

27.6 LINGUISTIC COMPOSITION

India has also great deal of linguistic diversity like physical environment. The languages spoken and their dialects number is in hundreds. But constitution of India recognizes only 18

languages which are the major languages spoken by the people. These languages are (1) Assamese, (2) Bengali, (3) Hindi, (4) Telugu, (5) Tamil, (6) Malayalam, (7) Kannada, (8) Marathi, (9) Gujarati, (10) Oriya, (11) Punjabi, (12) Kashmiri, (13) Dogri, (14) Konkani, (15) Sindhi, (16) Nepali, (17) Manipuri, (18) Urdu. The languages also vary slightly in terms of the meaning of different words and their pronunciation. Thus the people speaking one particular language speak it with some difference in vocabulary and pronunciation from one place to the other. Such variations in the way of speaking of a language lead to emergence of dialects of language. Thus a dialect is something akin to a part of some language and they can be thought of as regional language also. Some of the examples of the dialects of Hindi can be Rajasthani, Haryani, Bhojpuri or Poorvi dialects.

Language is an important constituent of culture and various languages and their dialects are spoken in different part of India. It makes Indian culture rich and diversified. Also, the languages have an almost complete regional identity in the country and the distribution of major languages has been considered as a basis for re-organization of states after independence. On the basis of numerical strength, India can be divided into twelve principal linguistic regions. So linguistic region is an area in which most of the people speak a common language. The languages forming linguistic regions in India are; 1. Kashmiri, 2. Punjabi, 3. Hindi/Urdu, 4. Bengali, 5. Assamese, 6. Oriya, 7. Gujarati, 8. Marathi, 9. Tamil, 10. Telugu, 11. Kannada, and 12. Malayalam.

CLASSIFICATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF INDIAN LANGUAGES

Though all the languages spoken in India seem to be different from each other, they can be grouped into four linguistic families on the basis of their roots and genesis. The four linguistic families are: 1. Austric Family (*Nishada*), 2. Dravidian Family (*Dravida*); 3. Sino-Tibetan Family (*Kirata*) and 4. Indo-European Family (*Arya*).

The speeches of the Austric family are spoken by tribal people in Meghalaya, Andaman & Nicobar Island and in parts of central Indian tribal belt, especially in the districts of Santhal Praganas, Ranchi and Mavurbhanj. The languages and dialects of Sino-Tibetan family are spoken by tribal people in North-Eastern region of the country and in the Sub-Himalayan region in the north and north west. These languages are spoken by people living in Ladakh (Jammu & Kashmir), parts of Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim also.

The speakers of the languages of Dravidian family are more numerous in Southern parts of India. Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala are the states where major languages of this family are spoken by the majority of population. A large number of tribals living in peninsular plateau region also speak speeches of this family.

The speaker of the languages of Indo-Aryan family are concentrated more in northern part of the country and also in central parts. The entire north Indian plain is inhabited by the speakers of speeches of this family. Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh also have large populations of speakers of these languages.

The proportion of the speakers of languages of different families in the total population varies significantly. While the Aryans (Indo-European Family) languages are spoken by

more than 70% of the people. The Sino-Tibetan languages are spoken by only about 0.85 percent of the population and Dravidian languages are spoken by about 20 percent of the people.

- * Languages spoken in India belong to four major linguistic families. These families are: 1. Austric family, 2. Bravidian Family, 3. Sino-Tibetan Family, and 4. Indo-European Family.
- * Languages belonging to different families have their major concentrations in different parts of the country. Austric Family in the North-Eastern part; Bravidian Family in the Sub-Himalayan region; an Indo-European Family in the Northern and central part of the country.
- * The languages of Indo-Aryan Family are spoken by the largest number of people in India. The languages of Sino-Tibetan Family have the smallest number of speakers. More than 70 percent of the people in India speak languages and dialects of Indo-Aryan Family.

IN TEXT QUESTIONS 27.3

Fill in the blanks with the most appropriate words out of those given in the brackets.

1. (a) One of the languages belonging to the Austric Family of languages is _____
(Santhali, Hindi, Bengali)
- (b) Hindi is a language belonging to the _____ family of languages
(Bravidian, Aryan, Austric)
- (c) Name one of the dialects of Hindi.
- (d) Speakers of Austric languages are concentrated primarily in _____
(tribal areas of north east, western Himalayas, Konkan region)

27.7 RELIGIOUS COMPOSITION

Indian society is divided into a large number of religious communities. But broadly there are seven major religions. The majority of people follow one of these seven major religions. These are Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism and Zoroastrianism. Hindus are the largest religious community in India. According to 1991 census 82.11 percentage of population follow this religion. Followers of this religion are more concentrated in the northern plains and the northern parts of the plateau region. However they are sufficiently numerous in all parts of the country. But the distribution of the other religious communities is less continuous and there are only some pockets in which they have larger concentration. The Muslims make a large proportion of the total population in Jammu and Kashmir, some coastal districts in Tamil Nadu and Kerala and in Lakshadweep. Sikhs are more numerous in Punjab. Buddhists are mostly found in Maharashtra and Arunachal Pradesh and the Zoroastrians in and around Bombay. The Christians are more numerous in Tamil

Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and North-East region. They make a large proportion of the total population in the North-East. Find out their percentage out of total population in India which is given in the abovesaid table.

Table 27.4 Population By Religion in 1991

Religious groups	% to total population
Hindus	82.41
Muslim	11.67
Christians	2.32
Sikhs	1.99
Buddhists	0.77
Jains	0.41
others	0.43

* There are seven major religions and to which most of the Indians subscribe. Hindus are the largest group followed by Muslim, Sikhs and Christians. Concentration of different religions occur in various parts of the country.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 27.4

- In which part of India do most of the zoroastrians live

- In which states do most of the Indian Christians live

- Name one state having a large concentration of Muslim population in India

- In which state of India do most of the Indian Buddhists live

27.8 SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES COMPOSITION & DISTRIBUTION

The Constitution of India recognises a number of castes and tribal groups. These castes and tribes are called Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes respectively. They are major constituents of the population of India. According to the census of India 1991, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes constitute 16.48% and 8.08% respectively. Their distribution is very uneven throughout the country.

(A) Scheduled Castes

Numerically, they have their largest concentration in Uttar-Pradesh followed by West Bengal and Bihar. In terms of the proportion of the total population of a state, they are most

numerous in Punjab where they form more than 28 percent of its total population. The Scheduled Castes are by and large landless agricultural labourers, Cultivators with small land holdings and small commodity producers or artisans. Due to the association with agricultural activities, their main concentrations are found in the alluvial and coastal plains of the country. That is why, the major concentrations are found in the states like Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, and Bihar. On the other hand the hilly and forested tracts and the tribal belt of the central and north east India have only a small population of the scheduled castes.

The analysis at district level pattern leads to the identification of the following three zones

(i) Areas of High Concentration: There are mainly two major areas with high concentration of Scheduled Castes. They are Indo-Ganga plain and the eastern coastal plain. Both these plains are endowed with fertile soil, adequate water supply and climate suited to the cultivation of a large variety of crops. These opportunities help to develop intensive agriculture which supports agricultural labourers.

(ii) Areas of Medium Concentration: The Scheduled Castes are moderately concentrated in the districts adjoining the zone of high concentration discussed above

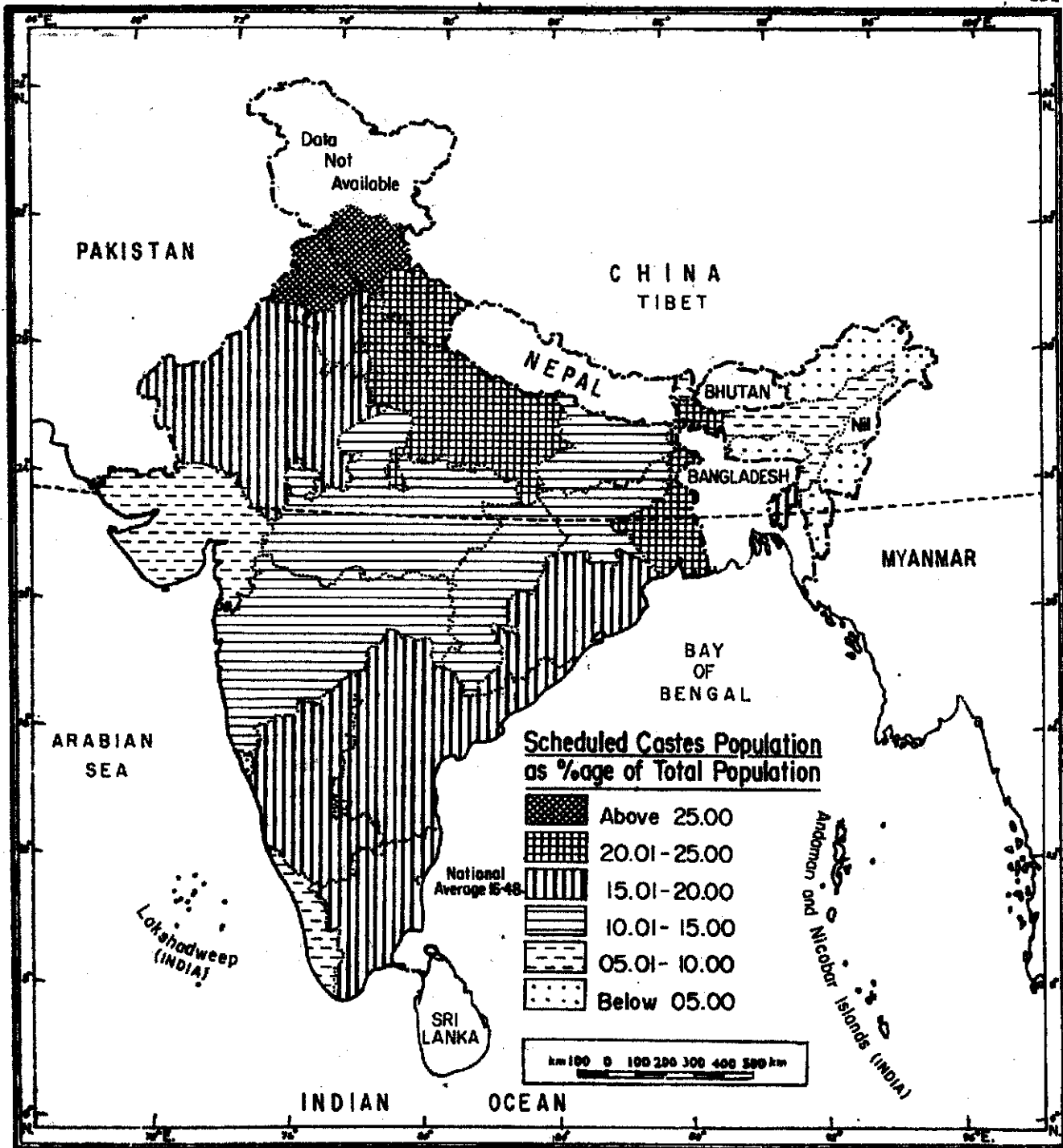
(iii) Areas of Low Concentration: Low concentration of Scheduled Castes is found in the central Vindhyas, Chotanagpur region, the western dry region of Rajasthan, the hilly tracts of Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and the North-East and the coastal parts of Karnataka and Maharashtra.

(B) Scheduled Tribes

The tribal people have a number of distinct characteristics which set them apart from the rest of the people. Generally, they live in isolation in the forested and hilly regions and they profess very old religious beliefs. Most of these groups are pre-literate i.e. they do not have a script. Most of them believe in super natural powers and super natural beings.

The Scheduled Tribes are not uniformly distributed all over the country. There are three main regions in which most of their population lives. These regions are (i) the central Indian belt comprising parts of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and West Bengal (ii) The North-Eastern region comprising the hilly areas of Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh; and (iii) the southern region comprising the hilly tracts of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Andaman & Nicobar Island. The distribution of the tribal population is shown in map (see Figure No. 27.5)

It is evident from the above discussion and also from map that the tribal population of India is more concentrated in a few specific regions. It will also be clear after a close study of the map that most of the tribal people live in the forested and hilly regions and areas of lower agricultural productivity. Most of these areas suffer from natural difficulties like rough terrain and climatic difficulties and the level of economic development in all these regions is very low. The natural resources have not been developed much and there is little development of means of transport and communication and this factor is also responsible for the low levels of development.



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Some times it is thought that the level of economic development in areas of tribal population is low because these areas are inhabited by the tribal people. This, however, is not true. These areas suffer from lower levels of development primarily because in many of the cases, the very potential for development is limited and partly because the lack of means of transport and other natural environmental factors hamper the pace of development in these areas. It is the general difficulty of life in these regions that is responsible for occupation of these areas by the tribal people.

In fact the tribal people originally did not settle in these areas of harsh environmental conditions by their own choice. They were rather pushed by the expanding modern civilization into these areas. Under the pressure of the successive invaders and the migrants, the earlier settlers of the country who could not fight with new comers had to migrate into remote areas and it is these people who are today represented by the tribal population.

District Level Pattern

Like Scheduled Castes, district level analysis of Scheduled Tribes reveal that there are different levels of concentration. These levels can be grouped into three categories. They are (i) areas of high concentration; (ii) areas of medium concentration and (iii) areas of low concentration.

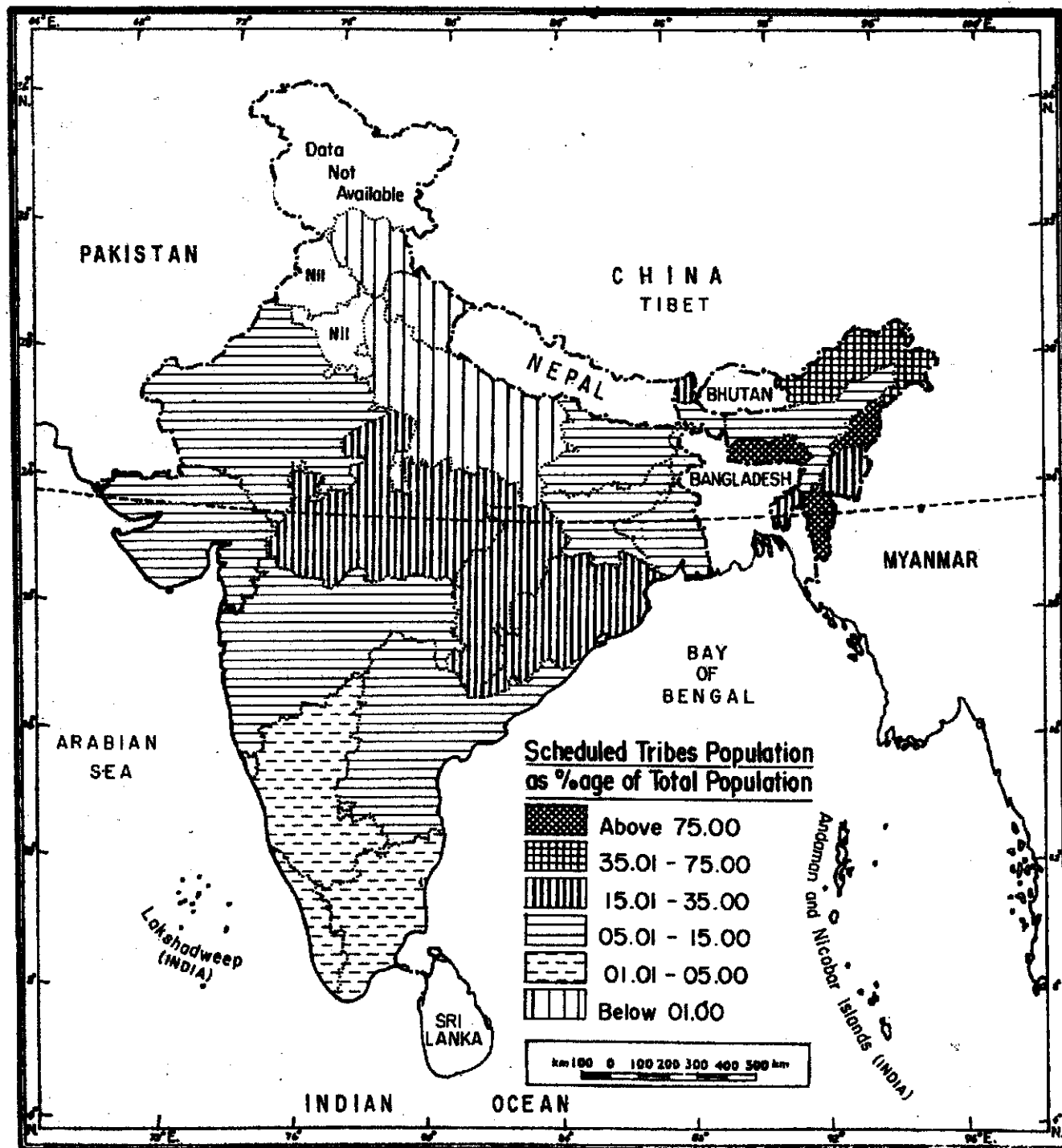
(i) **Areas of High Concentration** : There are fifteen districts in which the Scheduled Tribes hold a dominant position. In all these districts, the share of the tribal population to total population is above 80 percent. Of these fifteen, thirteen lies in North East, the Dang district of Gujarat and the Jhabua district of Madhya Pradesh.

(ii) **Areas of Moderate Concentration** : In these regions the share of tribal population varies between 50 to 80 percent of total population. These areas are Dhar, Mandla, Surguja and Bastar districts in Madhya Pradesh; Sundergarh, Mayurbhanj and Koraput districts in Orissa; Lahul and Spiti and Kinnaur districts in Himachal Pradesh; Dungarpur and Banswara in Rajasthan; Ranchi in Bihar and Valsad in Gujarat. Several districts in the North East such as Kameng, Lohit and Tirap districts of Arunachal Pradesh; Mikir hills and North Cachar hills in Assam and Manipur, also fall in the same region.

(iii) **Areas of Low Concentration** : In this region the proportion of tribal population varies from 20 to 50 percent of the total population. It covers several districts of Bihar, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tripura and West Bengal.

INTEXT QUESTIONS 27.5

1. Fill in the blanks with the most appropriate words out of those given in brackets:
 - (a) One of the areas of large concentration of tribal population in India is _____ (Punjab, Haryana, Bihar)
 - (b) Santhals have a large concentration in _____ (Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra)
 - (c) In terms of the total population of a state, scheduled caste are most numerous in the state of _____ (Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Punjab)



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27.9 LITERACY

Literacy is generally defined as a person's ability to read, write and able to do some simple calculation. Despite this liberal definition, the rate of literacy in India is not very high. According to the census of India-1991, the average literacy rate in India works out to be 52.19 percent. This percentages do not include the population below 7 year.

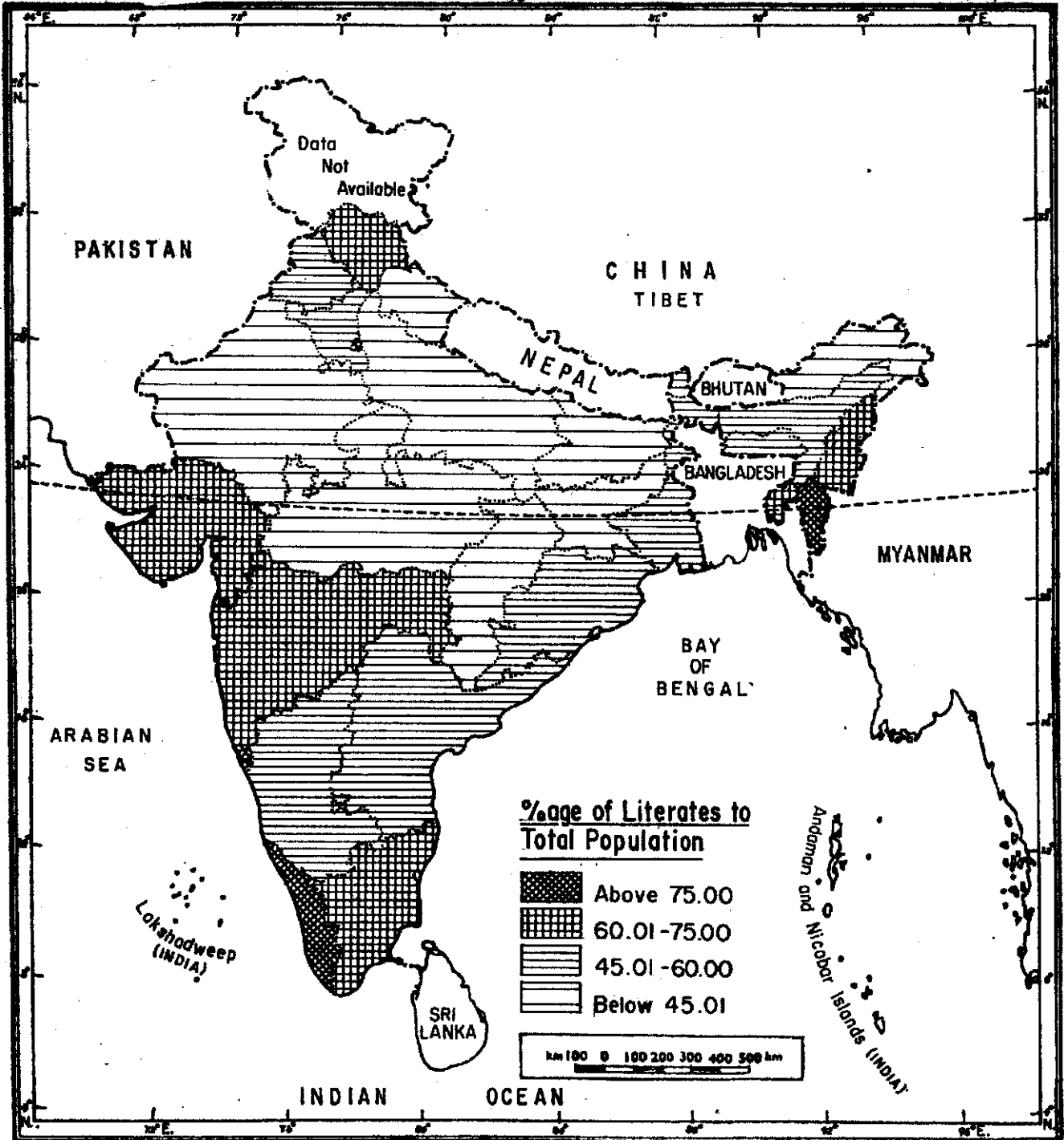
The rate of literacy varies a great deal from one part of the country to the other. On the one hand is the State of Kerala with a rate as high as the 89.79 percent and on the other extreme is the State of Bihar, where this rate is only 38.48 percent. In the Union Territories, Lakshadweep has the highest rate of literacy where it is 81.78 percent and lowest rate is in Dadra & Nagar Haveli (40.71 percent)

The rate of literacy varies between males and females. The average rate of literacy among the males in India is 64.20 percent which is higher than the rate among the females (39.19). Kerala has the distinction of highest literacy among both, males and females (93.62 and 86.13 percent) respectively, whereas Arunachal Pradesh has the lowest male literacy rate (51.45 percent) whereas lowest literacy among females is found in Rajasthan (20.44%). From the point of view of rural-urban composition of population there is a huge difference between rural and urban area. The literacy rate in urban areas is 73.01 percent where as in rural areas is as low as 44.54 percent.

Though the rate of literacy in India is low, it is increasing in each successive census. In 1911 it was less than 6 percent and it could rise to only about 16.7 percent by 1951. The most noteworthy progress in this regard has been made after 1951 census. In 1961, the literacy rate was about 24 percent which rose to 52.19 percent by 1991. The most significant development in this regard has been the rate of increase in female literacy. The proportion of illiterates among the females was only 1.1 percent in 1911 which has increased to 39.19 percent in 1991. To a great extent, this is a result of the policies of the government, emphasising upon the Universalisation of Elementary Education. The extended facilities of schools in the rural areas have helped considerably in raising the literacy rate in the country, especially among the females.

Though the literacy rate is increasing percentage wise in each successive censuses, the number of illiterate is also increasing in absolute number in each successive census. To solve this problem Government has taken up various programmes like National Literacy Mission, District Primary Education Programme etc.

District level Pattern : District level pattern analysis of literacy level reveals that the literacy rates vary between 95.72 percent in Kottayam districts of Kerala to 19.01 percent in Jhabua district of Madhya Pradesh. Out of 452 districts in which 1991 census was conducted 21 districts have literacy rate of more than 80.0 percent. These 21 districts include all the Fourteen district of Kerala, Madras and Kanyakumari districts of Tamil Nadu, Greater Bombay of Maharashtra, Lakshadweep, Gandhi Nagar district of Gujarat, Aizawal district of Mizoram and Mahe district of Pondichery. On the contrary 27 districts have literacy rate less than 30 percent. They are scattered in seven states. Of these 27 districts ten are in Bihar, seven in Uttar Pradesh, three each in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, two in Arunachal Pradesh one each in Orissa and Andhra Pradesh



Based upon Survey of India outline map printed in 1979.

The territorial waters of India extend into the sea to a distance of twelve nautical miles, measured from the appropriate base line.

The boundary of Nagaland shown on this map is as prescribed from the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971, but has yet to be verified.

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* Price: Twentyfive Paise.

* These may be deleted when printing a map based on this outline map.

- * A person who can read and write with an understanding in any one language is called literate.
- * The rate of literacy in India is 52.19 percent.
- * The highest rate of literacy is in Kerala (89.79 percent) and the lowest rate is in Bihar (38.48 Percent)
- * The rate of literacy is higher among the males than among the females and in Urban areas than the rural areas.
- * The rate of literacy is rising rapidly in India.

WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

- The development of a country depends upon both quality and quantity of the human resources. The quality of human resource depends upon the population composition. They are rural - urban, sex - age, linguistic, religious scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribe, literate-non literate composition.
- India is proverbially known as the country of villages. Till today more than 75 percent of people live in rural areas. The rate of urbanisation is however increasing. The growth rate of urban population is higher than the average growth rate in the country. This is mainly due to migration of people from rural to urban areas. There are 23 metropolitan cities in Indian having population more than 10,000,000.
- On the other hand, sex ratio in India is negative. The highest number of females per one thousand males in Kerala (1038) whereas it is lowest in Chandigarh (790). The sex ratio has been gradually decreasing in each successive censuses with exception in 1981.
- The rate of literacy in India is not very high (52.11%). It is the highest in Kerala where the literacy rate is as high as 89.79% and on the other extreme is the State Bihar where literacy is as low as 38.48% percent.
- India is a land of great social diversity. It is the home of people belonging to different racial stock, languages and religions. The tribal people are the nearest relations of some of the original racial stocks and others which include Schedule Castes are inter-mixture of various racial stocks. According to 1991 census, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes constitute 16.48% and 8.08% respectively of the total population. The concentration of these population are found in the plain areas due to their profession. Whereas Scheduled Tribes generally live in isolated forested and hilly tract. They are pre-industrial and believe in super-natural powers.
- India is unique country in terms of language and religion. Here all the major religions of the world are found. There are 18 major languages and hundreds of dialects are found in this country.

TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Discuss in brief the following characteristic of Indian population
(a) age structure (b) rural-urban ratio and (c) sex ratio
2. Give an account of literacy in India
3. What are the factors responsible for the decline in sex ratio. Discuss in brief
4. Discuss the regional distribution of tribal population in India
5. To which major linguistic families do most of the Indian languages belong? Give a brief account of the distribution of various linguistic families in the country.

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS**INTEXT QUESTIONS**

27.1

- (a) lower
- (b) Primary, secondary and tertiary
- (c) increasing
- (d) 23

27.2

- (i) Kerala (ii) Arunachal Pradesh
- b) 927
- c) It refers to the number of females per thousand males in an area.

27.3

- (a) Santhali
- (b) Aryan
- (c) tribal areas of north east

27.4

- 1 in and around Mumbai
2. Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh & North East region
- 3 Jammu & Kashmir
- 4 Maharashtra & Arunachal Pradesh

27.5

- (a) Bihar
- (b) Bihar
- (c) Punjab

TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Outline briefly the spatial and temporal pattern of age structure, rural-urban ratio and sex ratio (for detail refer to sections 27.3, 27.4 and 27.5)
2. Refer to section 27.9
3. The decline in sex ratio are due to low life expectancy among the females, child mortality rate especially among female child and socio-religious belief like male preference
4. Ref. to section 27.8(b)
Refer to section 27.6