

## Introduction

When the British annexed Sindh in 1843, Sir Charles Napier became "Victor" of Sindh, and what is now "Thar" was merged into Katch Political Agency and Hyderabad Collectorate. In 1860, it was renamed as "Eastern Sindh Frontier" with its headquarter based at Umerkot headed by a Political Superintendent.

In 1882, it was re-identified as a district and its administrative head was Deputy Commissioner. The headquarters were shifted from Umerkot to Mirpurkhas in 1906. The present district has been carved out of district Mirpurkhas in 1990 as District Thar and its name was re-notified as Tharparkar in 1993.

Tharparkar district is specially named according to the geographical conditions i.e. Thar and Parker. ("Thar" means a desert while Parker refers to a rocky and hilly terrain) therefore the name means to cross-over.

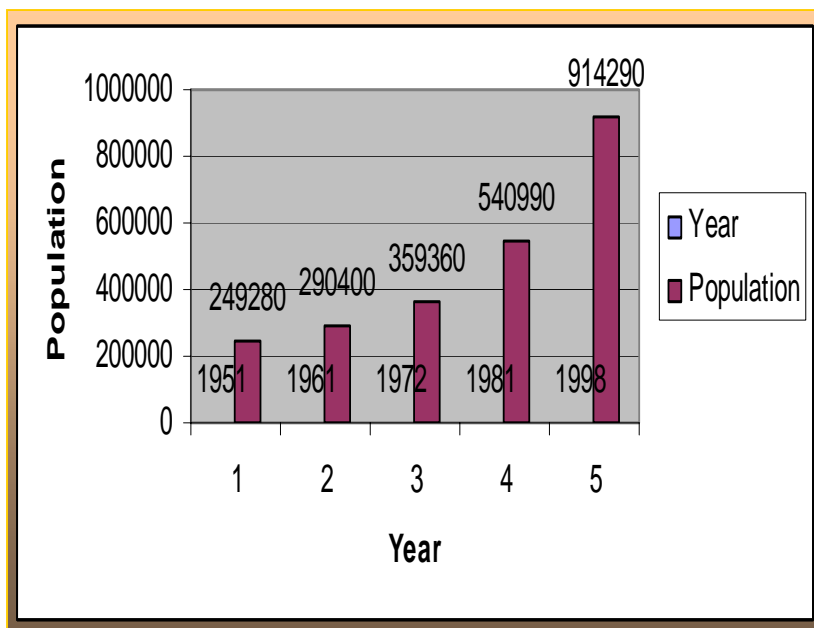
## Location and Area

The current district headquarter is Mithi which is situated at a distance of about 150 kms southeast of Mirpurkhas. It is situated at 22-26 degree north latitude and 69-51 degree east longitude. Districts Mirpurkhas bounds the Thar District while District Umerkot lying in the north, India in the east, district Badin in the west and Runn of Kutch in the south.

Tharparkar is the largest district spread over an area of 47, 91,025 acres (19,637 sq kms) with a population of just under a million (according to the Census of 1998). District Tharparkar is divided into four Talukas and 44 Union councils for administrative purposes. It has more than two thousand villages. Each village contains average 80 households. The area of the district is predominantly comprised of desert.

## Population

The District Tharparkar comprises 04 Talukas, 44 Union Councils and 2005 villages, covering area of 19638 sq kms with a population of 9, 14,290 souls. It is a backward area and has been under drought since few years. Its economy depends upon rainfall. If reasonable rainfall does not occur then almost half of the population migrates to the barrage areas to earn their livelihood.

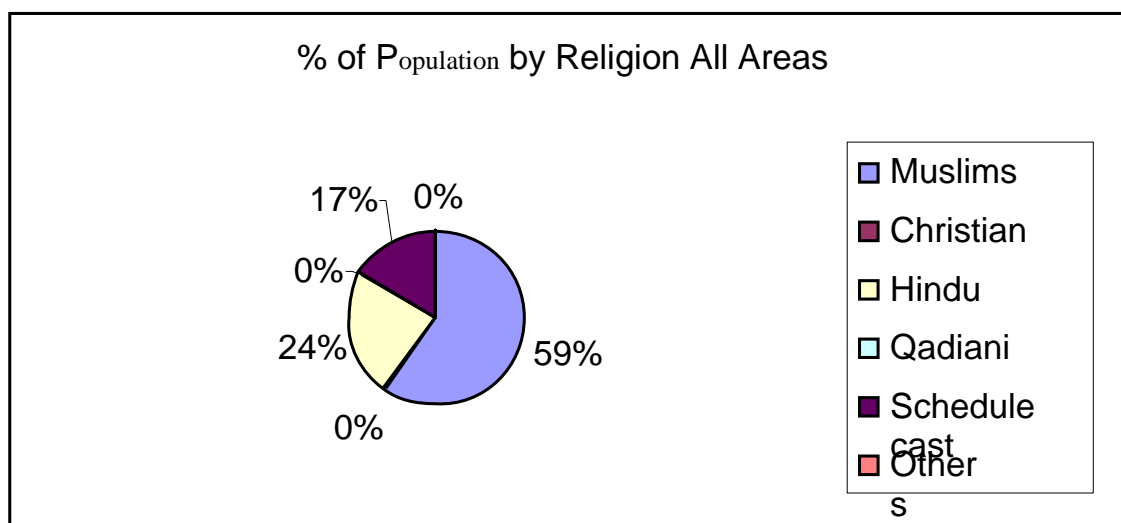


Growth in population year wise (1998 Census)

Admn-Unit	Area	Population 1998							Populat ion on 1981	1981-98 average Annual Growth Rate (%age)
	Area (SQ Km)	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Sex Ratio	Popul ation Densit y per sq. km	Urba n Popul ation	Avera ge H. hold Size		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
TharparkarDis trict	19638	914291	499859	414432	120.6	46.6	4.4	5.6	540985	3.13
Chachro Taluka	6399	357757	202276	155481	130.1	55.9	-	5.8	176567	4.24
Dilpo Taluka	4037	161880	87013	74867	116.2	40.1	6.0	5.5	105428	2.55
Mithi Taluka	5340	241548	129143	112405	114.9	45.2	12.5	5.6	154431	2.66
Nagarparkar	3862	153106	81427	71679	113.6	39.6	-	5.2	104559	2.27

### Religion

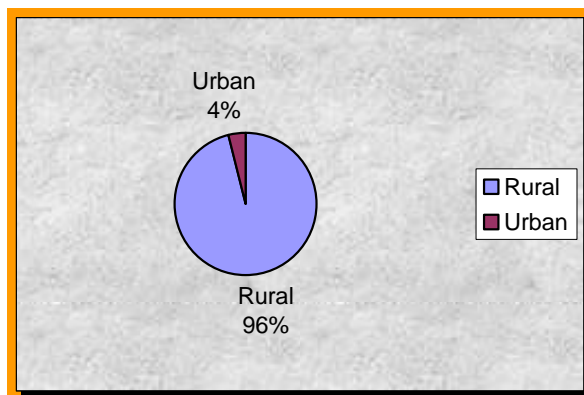
The people in the district are predominantly Muslims which constitutes 59.42 percent of the total population followed by Hindus and others as shown in the following chart:



Population by religion

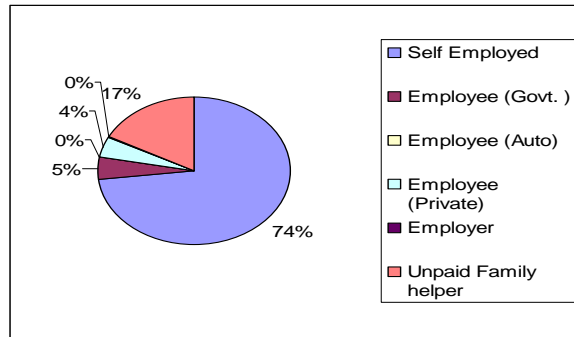
### Economic Profile

More than 95 percent people live in villages in Thar as shown in the following chart... Almost every house is made of hut (cone shape round hut like thatched; which in local language is called *Chounra*) and rooms made of mud. About 1 million people depend mainly on rain-fed agriculture, which is often affected by drought, and on rearing livestock for their livelihood. During the past few decades the area has received only two or three years of rain. The government, during the last few years, has focused on this area and has constructed roads to link the four cities of Thar and some villages.



## Rural Urban Population (1998) Censuses

The people of the area mostly do labor work in the irrigated agricultural areas along the Indus River. In order to do this, they had to migrate to these irrigated areas on foot for hundreds of kilometers. Due to poverty, the people are mostly dependent on money lenders and they take loans from them which are given on unfavorable terms and conditions. As a result the poor families are constantly in debt as they can only pay the high interest on their loans.



Due to lack of economic opportunities, the only traditional source of earning is the production of handicraft items which includes carpet weaving. Contractors act as a link between the carpet weaving families and the market. They own the looms and also provide raw materials on credit to the families involved in carpet weaving. The credit is provided on unfavorable terms and the families are constantly under heavy burden. The children, therefore, also work on the looms from dawn to dusk and earn a very small proportion of the value of the carpets. These families are therefore trapped in a continuing circle of poverty.

The people of the area are facing numerous problems such as cultural barriers, dowry system, early child marriages, child labor, no schools for girls, limited health facilities, snake bites, and difficulties in access to drinking water. These villagers have to go far from their houses to fetch water from the three hundred deep dug-wells.

About 60 percent population of the area is Muslims while 40 percent are Hindus. Among these Hindus, nearly 70 percent are called dalits meaning low cast Hindus. These Hindus are treated discriminately. But most of the upper cast Hindus and Muslims do share their utensils among themselves.



Women's are fetching water from well in-group

The main diet of the people is simple meal with chili sauce. Some may also be able to get yogurt beverage called lassi. Only the few rich people of the village are able to get rich foods and meals.

Mostly the women are involved in day to day routine works such as fetching water, caring for livestock, cooking, washing, house maintenance and repairs, plus taking care of their kids. They also assist their males in agriculture fields.

The common dress for males is shalwar qameez while females wear a large scarf like veil but ghagra (a large rounded cloth wrapped around the waist) is also used widely. Most of the females adorn themselves with locally made jewelry of silver along with small gold ornaments as well. Women also wear large plastic bangles from wrist to shoulders.

### The SDSSP Program

The Sindh Devolved Social Services Program (SDSSP) was initiated in District Tharparkar with the signing of the MOU (memorandum of understanding) between Sindh Government and District Government Tharparkar on 23<sup>rd</sup> Day of June 2004. Malik. Asrar Hussain Secretary Finance Department Government of Sindh and Mr. Arbab Atta Ullah District Nazim Tharparkar respectively represented the respective Government sectors for signing this MoU. After the

signing of the MOU, the SDSSP immediately initiated its activities in the district and these activities are now at peak level.

### **Establishment of Local Support Unit (LSU)**

The main objective of the SDSSP is to improve the health and education of the people in the district and simultaneously reduce poverty and gender imbalances as well.

After the implementation of the devolution plan in 2001, the Sindh Local Government Ordinance (SLGO), had the following declaration in the preamble: "WHEREAS it is expedient to devolve political power and decentralize administrative and financial authority to accountable local governments for good governance, effective delivery of services and transparent decision making through institutionalized participation of the people at grass-roots level."

The office of LSU (Local Support Unit) was established in Tharparkar from 12<sup>th</sup> July 2006 with a finance and governance specialist to carry out the activities of SDSSP on already established guide lines in order to facilitate the District Government. As a result, the Unit has established good working relations with the District Nazim, District Coordination Officer (DCO), Executive District Officers (F & P, Education, Health and CDD) and all Taluka Nazims along with the Taluka Municipal Administrations.

### **Up gradation of Government Primary School Bhakuo**

The village Bhukuo consists of 510 houses with a population of 4300 (2200 males and 2100 females). It is the head quarter of Union Council and is situated at a distance of 25 kilometers from the Taluka head quarter Mithi.

The village is facilitated with a BHU (Basic Health Unit), a wireless telephone, one government girl's primary school, two government boys' primary schools and one middle school. Currently, 302 students (173 boys and 129 girls) are studying at primary level while 136 students (110 boys and 26 girls) are studying at middle level.

The middle school is being run in government boy's primary school, where 136 students (110 boys & 26 girls) are getting their education in an open sky Chounra. The following picture shows more clearly under what circumstances these students are studying having only 2 primary and 3 middle teachers.



**Students are getting education in open sky GMS Bhakuo building (Chounra)**

The main objective of SDSSP is to improve the education of the people and therefore it is working to increase gross enrollments in primary and middle schools, arranging funds, hiring of education personnel especially females, expand the support for SMCs, rehabilitation of schools, and provision of textbooks, improving the curriculum and arranging training facilities for the teachers.

The said school was included in the SDSSP Annual Sector Plan 2004-05 for the up gradation of primary schools with an estimated cost of Rs 2.0730 million.



Up gradation of GPS Bhakuo into GMS Bhakuo (under construction) SDSSP ASP 2004-05

The This building exists on 5 rooms including (3 classrooms, one drawing hall, one head master office, two lavatory blocks and compound wall with iron gate) covering a total area of 2324 sqft.

As there is no middle school in the surrounding areas, the following villages will be the beneficiaries; Deda, Dori, Najo, Khabra Jo Tar, Machayo, Sidiq Ji Dhani and Bhagrijo all these are having a population of around 3500 people. This scheme will fulfill the requirement of the area to continue and promote their education up to the middle level. One of the goals of Sindh Devolved social Services Program (SDSSP) in education sector is to increase gross primary enrollment and gross middle school enrollment.

Participants of visit:

- |                        |        |                 |
|------------------------|--------|-----------------|
| 1. Mr. Dost Ali Arbab  | EDO    | W & S           |
| 2. Mr. Hajan Saheto    | DO     | W & S Education |
| 3. Mr. Akber Ali Arain | DDO    | HQ              |
| 4. Mr. Saghir Hussain  | F & GS | LSU             |

### Comments

#### Mr. Dost Ali Arbab (EDO Work & Services)

The progress of the construction work is satisfactory and we will complete it in a week's time. The doors, windows, and shutters have not been fixed, for which we will request the contractor to please expedite the work, so that students getting their education in Chounra could be shifted in class rooms.

The quality of work carried out is good. The work needs to be expedited so that school may be functional within two months.

#### Mr. Muhammad Hashim Lanjo Chair man SMC Primary School

This scheme will help us to increase the school enrollment and students living in surrounding areas will continue their education here. We need more teachers to maintain and improve the quality of our education in the school. All the SMC members are working hard with the education department to ensure the increase of school enrollment and are also trying to enroll each and every child in our school.

#### Mr. Sajjan Dars Chair man SMC Middle School

The population of village Bhakuo is 4300. More than 50% of the population is Manghwar (minority) community. They are educated and are interested to educate their children as well. This attitude will also encourage other communities to educate their children particularly girls. But to promote the girl's education in remote rural areas of the village; female teachers are needed in

middle school. After completion of primary education, a girl's becomes 10 to 11 years of age and their parents engaged them in house work or marry them. Due to social barriers, girls are not allowed to study with boys. If female teachers are appointed at middle school level, then this will provide an opportunity for female students to continue their studies.

On behalf of my village and community, I am really grateful to the SDSSP and the education officials who have selected the school of our village to provide the facilities which were much needed. As chairman of the SMC I assure that we will work to increase our school enrollment and enhance the quality of our education.