

Chhattisgarh

Area: 1,36,034 sq. km

Population: 20,795,956

Capital: Raipur

Principal Languages: Hindi

H.E. Shri Shekhar Dutt



Governor of Chhattisgarh

CHIEF MINISTER



DR. RAMAN SINGH

Ministers

2. Shri Nanki Ram Kanwar



Home, Jail and Cooperation Departments.

3. Shri Brijmohan Agrawal



Public Works Department, School Education, Endowment, Culture, Legislative Affairs and Tourism Departments.

0771-2292300

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4. Shri Ramvihar Netam



Panchayat and Rural Development and Law Departments.

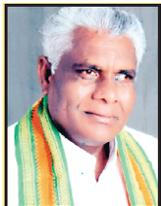
0771-2331169

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5. Shri Punnu Lal Mohile Food, Civil Supply and Consumer Protection, Village Industry and 20 Point Programme implementation.

6. Shri Chandrasekhar Sahu



Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Pisciculture and Labour Departments,
20 Point Implementation



7. Shri Amar Agrawal Health and Family Welfare, Medical Education, Commercial Tax,
Revenue and Rehabilitation Departments. 0771-2331021

8.
Shri Hemchand Yadav



Water Resources Department, Ayacut, Higher Education, Technical Education, Science and Technology
Departments.

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9. Shri Vikram Usendi



Forest, Public Enterprises and Public Grievances Departments.

10. Shri Rajesh Munat



Public Works, Commerce & Industries, Public Enterprise.

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11. Shri Kedar Kashyap



Tribal and Scheduled Caste, Backward Caste, Minority Welfare and Public Health Engineering Departments.

12. Sushri Lata Usendi



Women & Child Development and Social Welfare, 20 Point Implementation Programme.

07786-243447, 243374

Mobile No. 94252-42204

Parliamentary Secretary



01. Shri Komal Janghel Dr.Raman Singh, Chief Minister



02. Dr.Siyaram Sahu Shri Punnu Lal Mohile



03. Shri Bhaiya Lal Rajwade Shri Ramvichar Netam



04. Shri Bharat Sai Shri Vikram Usendi



05. Shri Omprakash Rathiya
Shri Hemchand Yadav



06. Shri Vijay Baghel
Shri Nanki Ram Kanwar



07. Shri Siddhnath Paikra Shri Amar Agrawal



08. Shri Mahesh Gagda
Shri Kedar Kashyap



09. Shri Yudhaveer Singh Judeo
Shri Brijmohan Agrawal

It is bounded by the Indian states of Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand to the north and northeast, Orissa to the east, Andhra Pradesh to the south, and Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh to the west. Its capital is Raipur. Area 52,199 square miles (135,194 square km). Pop. (2008 est.) 23,646,000.

Land

Chhattisgarh is located in the Chhattisgarh Plain, which forms the upper Mahanadi River basin. The basin proper lies at an elevation that ranges from about 800 to 950 feet (250 to 300 metres) above sea level. It is a structural plain with topographic variations resulting from extensive denudation (wearing away of the earth by such processes as weathering and erosion). Knolls, undulating interfluves (areas between adjacent watercourses), and valleys flanked by belts of clayey soils are characteristic of the region. About 100 miles (160 km) wide, the Chhattisgarh Plain is bounded by the Chota Nagpur plateau to the north, the Maikala Range to the west, the hills of Raigarh to the northeast, the Raipur upland to the southeast, and the Bastar plateau to the south. These highlands comprise mostly erosional plateau forms reaching an elevation of more than 2,300 feet (700 metres) in the Maikala Range and the Dandakaranya hills.

Earthquakes are relatively infrequent in Chhattisgarh, though seismic activity of mild intensity has been recorded in northern Chhattisgarh and along the border with Andhra Pradesh in the south. A few tremors also have been felt in the east and around Raigarh.

Drainage and soils

Chhattisgarh contains the source of one of the most important rivers of the South Asian peninsula—the Mahanadi. This river originates in a village near Raipur. It flows westward for about 125 miles (200 km) and meets the Shivanth River about 8 miles (13 km) from Bilaspur. Thereafter it flows toward the east and enters Orissa, ultimately emptying into the Bay of Bengal. Among the other rivers that drain Chhattisgarh are the Indravati, Arpa, and Pairi.

Various types of soils are found throughout the state. Two types predominate: the black, clayey soils and the red-to-yellow soils. The latter are less fertile and contain substantial amounts of sand.

Climate

The climate in Chhattisgarh is governed by a monsoon weather pattern. The distinct seasons are summer (March to May), winter (November to February), and the intervening rainy months of the southwest monsoon (June to September). The summer is hot, dry, and windy, with high temperatures typically reaching at least 85 °F (about 30 °C) in all parts of the state; in some areas temperatures regularly rise above 100 °F (upper 30s C). Winters are usually pleasant and dry, with high temperatures in the upper 70s F (mid-20s C). In December and January there is considerable rainfall over the northern part of the state, although the state as a whole receives most of its precipitation during the southwest monsoon. Rainfall usually ranges from 47 to 60 inches (1,200 to 1,500 mm) annually.

Plant and animal life

The eastern and southeastern borderlands of Chhattisgarh are characterized by moist deciduous plantlife, but toward the interior of the state this flora is replaced by dry deciduous vegetation, often degenerating locally into scrub. The most valuable hardwoods are teak and *sal* (*Shorea robusta*). A type of tree called *salai* yields a resin used for incense and medicine, while leaves from *tendu* trees are used for rolling bidi (Indian cigarettes). Bamboo is abundant and is harvested for many purposes.

The forests are home to a broad array of animals, including tigers, striped hyenas, and blackbucks. Other species include the *chital* (spotted deer), gaur (a type of wild buffalo), sambar deer, sloth bear, wild boar, and four-horned antelope, among others. The woodlands are also inhabited by many species of birds. Chhattisgarh has a number of national parks and many wildlife sanctuaries. The Indravati National Park contains a wildlife sanctuary for tigers.

Population composition

Chhattisgarh supports a population of diverse ethnic, social, religious, and linguistic backgrounds. More than one-third of the state's residents officially belong to the Scheduled Castes (groups formerly called "untouchables" within the Indian caste system) or to the Scheduled Tribes (indigenous minority peoples who are not embraced by the caste hierarchy). Of the Scheduled Tribes, the Gond peoples are most prominent.

The vast majority of Chhattisgarh's people practice Hinduism, but there are sizable minorities of Muslims, Jains, Christians, and Buddhists. There also is a small community of Sikhs. Hindi, the official

language of Chhattisgarh, is the most widely spoken language, followed by Chhattisgarhi. Many of the Gond speak Gondi. Marathi, Urdu, Oriya, Gujarati, and Punjabi are spoken by significant numbers.

Settlement patterns and demographic trends

Some three-fourths of Chhattisgarh's population is rural. The distribution of this population is uneven, however, with the far southern portion of the state having significantly fewer residents than its northern counterpart. The urban population of Chhattisgarh is concentrated mainly in the vicinity of Raipur and Bilaspur in the state's midsection and near Raigarh in the east. However, massive public-sector investment in mining has helped to spur growth around Durg and Bhilai Nagar to the west of Raipur, Korba in the north-central region, and Ambikapur in the northern part of the state. Raipur, Durg–Bhilai Nagar, and Bilaspur have become major urban agglomerations, each with a relatively well-developed industrial base.

Since the late 20th century the rate of population increase in Chhattisgarh has been somewhat below the national average, and men have continued to outnumber women but only slightly. Because it is predominantly agricultural, the state experiences seasonal fluctuations in population. When farming activities come to a virtual halt between January and June, there is mass migration of agricultural workers to Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, and anywhere else where there are opportunities for daily wage labour.

Economy

The economy of Chhattisgarh is founded primarily on mining, agriculture, energy production, and manufacturing. The state has major deposits of coal, iron ore, dolomite, and other minerals. The central lowland is known especially for its abundant rice production, and the state as a whole provides the bulk of the country's *tendu* leaves for bidis. Chhattisgarh also is a significant regional supplier of electricity, from both thermal and hydroelectric generators. The state's manufacturing activities focus largely on metals production.

Agriculture

About half of Chhattisgarh's land is farmland, while most of the remainder is either under forest cover or is otherwise unsuitable for cultivation. Roughly three-fourths of the farmland is under cultivation. Often called the country's rice bowl, the central lowland plain supplies grain to hundreds of rice mills. Maize and millet dominate the highlands. Cotton and oilseeds are the important commercial crops of the region. Agriculture continues to be characterized in many areas by the use of manual methods of cultivation; farmers in the basin have been particularly slow to adopt mechanized agricultural techniques.

Livestock and poultry farming also are prominent. The state's livestock includes cows, buffalo, goats, sheep, and pigs. There are several centres for improving the quality of these animals, such as those for the artificial insemination and crossbreeding of goats in Bilaspur and Dhar.

Resources and power

Chhattisgarh is mineral-rich. Although many of the state's resources remain to be exploited fully, its major reserves of coal, iron ore, limestone, bauxite, and dolomite, as well as its significant deposits of tin, manganese ore, gold, and copper, make the mining industry a major source of income. In fact, Chhattisgarh is one of the country's largest suppliers of dolomite. Its iron ore, which is of top quality, is found primarily in the south-central and southern parts of the state. Deposits of diamonds have been discovered near Raipur.

Chhattisgarh produces more power than it consumes. The bulk of the state's power comes from thermal power plants, several of which are near Korba. However, the state also is well endowed with potential sources of hydroelectric energy. Main hydroelectric projects (jointly developed with other states) are the Ban Sagar dam, with Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, and the Harked dam over the Mahanadi River. The Hasdeo Bango hydroelectric power project is near Korba.

Manufacturing

Chhattisgarh has been industrializing—slowly but certainly—since the late 20th century. As part of this planned development, the government has established a number of industrial estates, notably at Raipur and Bilai Nagar.

There now are dozens of large- and medium-scale steel industries producing hot metal, pig iron, sponge iron, rails, ingots, and plates; Bilai Nagar is the site of an especially large iron-and-steel plant. Many of the metal industries, as well as other emergent enterprises such as the production of microelectronics and high-tech optical fibres, receive government support.

In the private sector there are cement works, as well as assorted mills producing paper, sugar, textiles (cotton, wool, silk, and jute), lumber, flour, and oil (from oilseeds). A number of factories manufacture fertilizer, synthetic fibres, and chemicals. Most small-scale industries of Chhattisgarh are centred on the production of traditional handiworks, including textiles (such as saris), carpets, pottery, and gold- and silver-thread embroidery.

Transportation

Chhattisgarh is well connected to the rest of the country by road, rail, and air. The state is traversed by two of the national highways, as well as by some of the major rail routes. Most of Chhattisgarh's larger cities are the sites of important railway junctions. There are airports at Raipur and Bilaspur.

Government and society

The structure of Chhattisgarh's government, like that of most other Indian states, is defined by the national constitution of 1950. The head of state—the governor—is appointed by the president of India. The governor is aided and advised by a chief minister, who heads the Council of Ministers, which is responsible to the elected Legislative Assembly (Vidhan Sabha). Although the political capital of Chhattisgarh is Raipur, the High Court is located in Bilaspur. A chief justice presides over the High Court.

Local government includes several divisions, which are subdivided further into districts. Each division is administered by a commissioner, while each is headed by a collector. Collectors exercise both executive and magisterial power.

A large area of Chhattisgarh is under the control of the Naxalites (Maoist guerrillas). Indeed, in several pockets of Bastar division in the south, state law has at times failed to function. The conflict ultimately has hampered the development of this fertile area.

History

The history of the Chhattisgarh region dates back to about the 4th century ce, when it was known as Southern (or South) Kosala. The name Chhattisgarh, meaning “thirty-six forts,” was formerly applied to the territory of the Haihaya dynasty of Ratanpur, founded about 750. Under British rule the present region of Chhattisgarh consisted of a division comprising 14 feudatory princely kingdoms under the Eastern States Agency. Raipur was the headquarters of that division.

Within the Republic of India, Chhattisgarh was part of Madhya Pradesh until Nov. 1, 2000. Although the campaign for Chhattisgarh statehood began in earnest only in the 1970s, its roots go back to the early 20th century, when local leaders began to claim a distinct cultural identity for the region. In the early 1990s the push for statehood was manifested in the election platforms of various political parties, and promises of a separate state were again prominent during the elections of 1996 and 1998. In August 2000 the Indian legislature passed the Madhya Pradesh Reorganization Bill to create Chhattisgarh. The formation of Chhattisgarh was especially noteworthy in that it was peaceful; it was not associated with any of the agitation and violence that marred the establishment of two other new states—Uttaranchal (now Uttarakhand) and Jharkhand—about the same time. Chhattisgarh, a 21st century State, came into being on November 1, 2000.
