

Villages of Chhattisgarh Situated on a mountain, a Plain and a Plateau

9

9.1. Uparvedi – A Village Situated on a Mountain

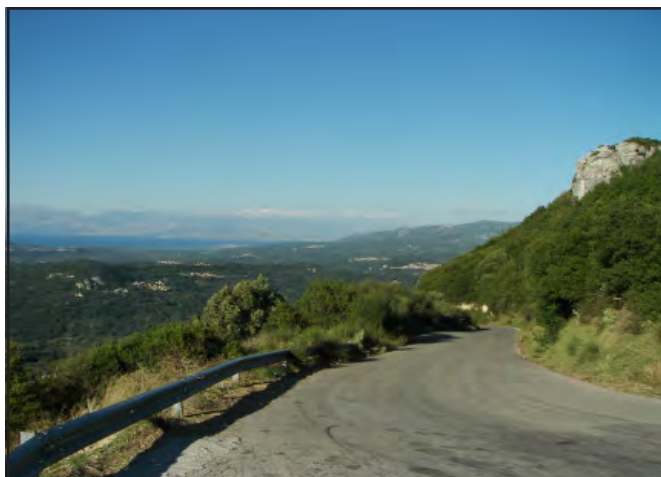
Chhattisgarh has a varied topography. On one side there are high mountains and valleys covered with dense forests and on the other side there are large plains and high plateaus. Our people living in these varied land forms work hard and produce a variety of things, giving a heterogeneous look to our culture.

Would you like to know about life styles of the people inhabiting in these areas? In this lesson we shall read about people living on inaccessible mountains. We shall read about things that are available there and how they are used. But to know all this we will have to go towards Bastar region.

MOUNTAINS OF BASTAR

Abujhmad mountains of Bastar region are very famous. This mountain range is on the north-west of this region. If we travel towards south from Kanker, we can see the edge of the mountains. Our team went to see a village located on these mountains on 16th feb. 2002.

A little away from the bus stand of Kanker, we could see the beautiful Doodh river and Gadiya hill on its bank. From where some hills could be seen here and there. The bus started. When we moved 30 km further, towards the south, we could see a high hill covered with dense forest. Sharp bends and steep ascent were very exciting. We felt



Pic. 9.1.1 Mountain Road

as if we were moving around the same place. We reached its peak enjoying the valley scenic beauty. Here we saw a beautiful temple of Devi and Panchawati park. The valleys together near this peak is called Keshkal Valley. A little further away is the headquarter of Keshkal block.

About 5-6 kms away from Keshkal, we had to leave the metalled road and enter into thick forest. The path was narrow, uneven and rocky and at some places even such type of path was missing lost in the forests (Pic 9.1.1) On the way, we came across some children who were hunting birds and small animals. A few women were collecting *mahua* (*Bassia latifolia*) and plucking leaves.

Among thick trees of 'mahua', mango, teak, harra, bahera, dumar etc. a tiny village could be spotted.

After climbing about 20 kms towards west we could see the Uparvedi village. We felt as if we had reached Uparvedi (that is raised platform *upar ki vedi*). When

we reached the village we found that there were steep slopes on its eastern, western and southern sides.

Identify the hills of Abujhmada in the Atlas of Chhattisgarh .

Look at the map 4.1 and fill in the blanks

On _____ of Kanker lies Keshkal and on _____ of Keshkal lies Uparvedi.

INHABITATION OF UPARVEDI

Inhabitation of Uparvedi villages is very scattered. Groups of one or two houses could be seen here and there. These houses were linked by narrow lanes. On reaching the village we sat under the shade of a tree. Just then we saw an old man. We asked him why we can't see anyone in the village. Where have they gone?

He said that everyone had gone to the forest.

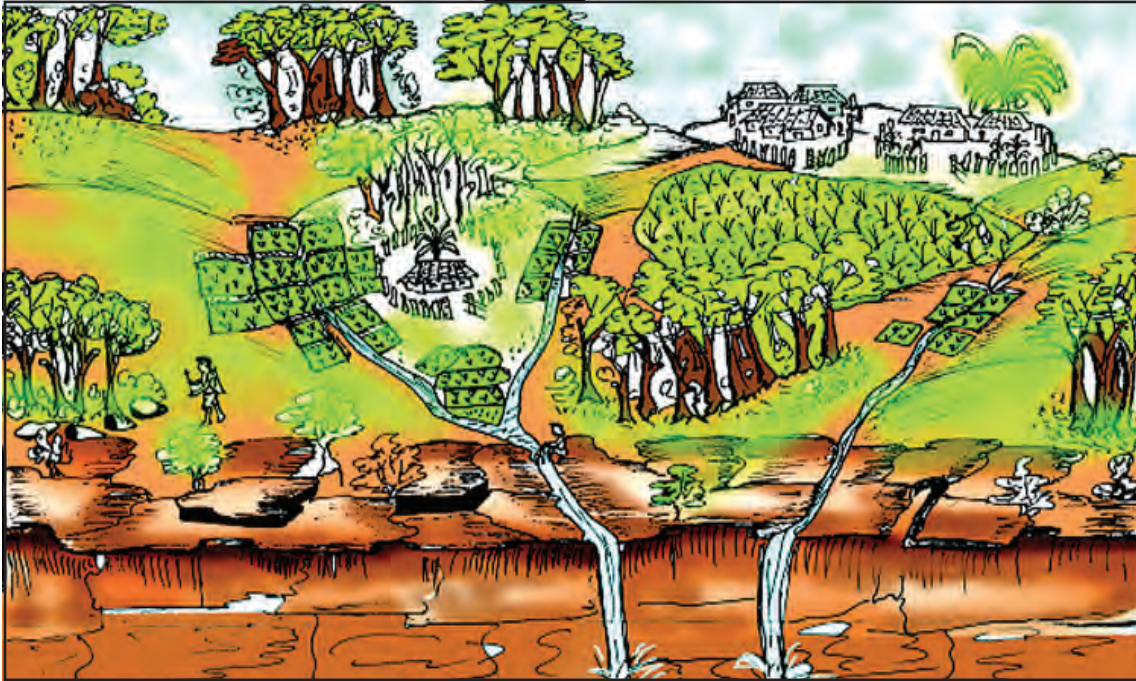
‘When will they return?’ we asked.

There is nothing in the village when all requirements are fulfilled from the forest what is the use of staying in the village.

His answer made us think that our visit to this place is useless if we do not meet the local people. Then we asked him if he would take us to them in the forest. He agreed and we started walking with him. After a little while we reached a steep slope and started going down hill very fast. When we reached the base we saw a small stream flowing. Some people were working near it. These people were the villagers. When they saw us, they came and sat near us. They all had spades, and Tumbi (pic 9.1.2).



Pic. 9.1.2 A man from Uparvedi village



Pic 9.1.3 Uparvedi

After the initial formal talk they started opening up and told us about their village and their lives.

STREAMS

They told us that their village was situated at the top of a hill. On southern side of the village there is a water fall . There are steep slopes on three sides of village and it is surrounded by several streams. These streams are the main source of water. People get their drinking water from them and farming is done near the streams where there is moisture in the ground. They caught fish from the streams and their animals also come here to drink water.



Pic. 9.1.4 Woman catching Fish

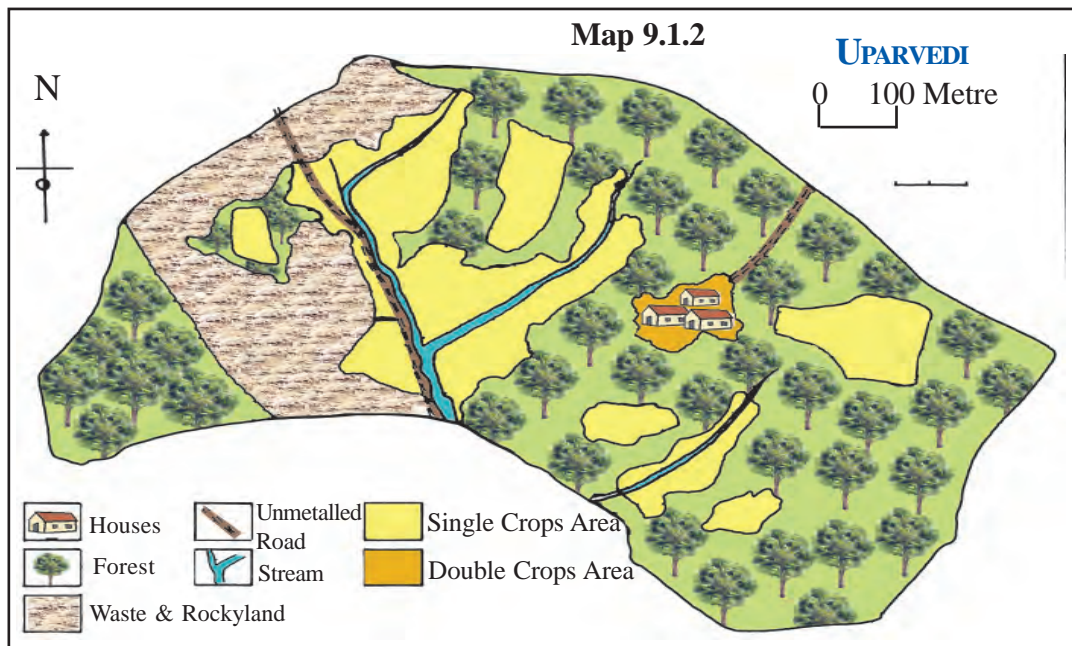
Look at the picture 9.1.3 and answer

1. How many streams were there in the village?
2. Are there more forests or fields in the village?
3. Where is the waterfall?

SOIL AND CROP

Among the people who were sitting, was the upsarpanch of village Shri Amaluramji. When we asked him about farming he took us to their fields.

Amaluramji told us that, as there are steep slopes, the soil there was fine and fertile as it has flowed down from top and settled near the stream. This was the reason why there was a thick layer of black soil near the stream.



Amaluramji further explained that soil near the stream is damp and fertile. So in this narrow strip small paddy fields are made. In these fields variety of rice is grown. If rainfall is good then ‘gadakutta’, ‘maisafari’, ‘moto safari’ type of rice is grown which take a longer time to ripe. But if rainfall is less than ‘turiapara’, ‘turia safari’, ‘masuri’ are grown as they ripe early. If rainfall is heavy then the whole crop is washed away by water of the stream.

1. Why are paddy fields found only near the stream ?
2. Why is there a thick layer of soil near the stream ?
3. When rainfall is less, rice which ripens _____ is grown and when rainfall is heavy then rice which ripens _____ is grown. (early/late)

KODO KUTKI ON ROCKY LAND

Amaluramji further told us that paddy was grown in this village but on a very small land. The land between stream and where they live is rocky and uneven. The soil is red in colour and is sandy and rocky. At some places there are tall trees too. It is clear that fields are made by clearing forests. No paths are seen any where on the land. In the village most of the land which can be cultivated is like this. Amaluramji told that during rainy season they grow Kharif crops like *kodo*, *kutki*, *barley*, *ramtil* and *parabat*. These crops need less water and can grow in shallow soil. But yield is less on this land as fertile soil flows away with the monsoon rains.



Pic. 9.1.5 Woman drying Kodo - Kutki

1. What difference was seen in soil between rocky land and land near stream?
2. Which type of land is prominently found in the village?
3. What steps can be taken to stop the flow of water and soil from the rocky land?

MAIZE AND MUSTARD IN THE KITCHEN GARDEN

From local people we learnt that tribal farmers had more faith in their kitchen gardens called 'loada'. Every house has a large bada at the back side, which is fenced with sticks to protect it from animals. In these badas they would grow fruit trees like mangoes, bananas, jack fruit, salfi and vegetables like 'kulthi', beans, brinjals, tomatoes etc. These badas are made fertile by spreading composed manure and kitchen garbage. In rainy season, maize is grown in badas and in winter they grow mustard. This way, badas are the only place where they can have two crops.



Pic. 9.1.6 Kitchen Garden

Can you tell, why is soil more fertile in badas ?

When we returned back to the stream, after seeing three types of fields, then they told that there was no means of irrigation, no Ponds, no canals and no tube wells. Some houses have wells in their 'badas but the water level is very low. So it cannot be used for irrigation. As there are steep slopes in the mountains, water flows away and soil is without moisture. Fertile land is found in some small patches only. This is the reason why there is very little fertile land. Remaining land is fallow. Production from fields is very low because of these reasons. They survive for 6-8 months on field produce and for remaining period they depend on forests.



Pic. 9.1.7 Tendu Leaf

USES OF FORESTS

People of Uparvedi use forests extensively. They keep cows, bullocks, buffaloes, goats, pigs, hens, etc. in large number. They leave their animals in forests for grazing. From these animals, people get milk, eggs and meat which forms their main diet.

HUNTING, FRUITS, ROOTS

Children, women and men form small groups and go to forests with bows, arrows, axes and baskets. They collect and bring edible fruits, flowers, roots and leafy vegetables. They also hunt rabbits, birds, porcupines and catch fishes from the stream. During summer they get mangoes, goose berries, *chaar*, *tendu*, *kadi*, *kosam*, *mahua*, *gulli*, *baheera*, *saal* seed etc. In rainy season they get '*karu kanda*, *targai ya kanda*, *jirra* etc. Besides these, they get several other types of vegetables also from forests.



Pic. 9.1.8 Children hunting

TRADE OF FOREST PRODUCE

Things from forest not only bring a variety in their food but even give them different tastes. They get nutrients from them. Several things are sold in market at high price like *chiroungi*, *harra*, *baheera*, leaves and fruits of *tendu*. Villagers go and sell at the nearby towns of Ghanora and Keshkal and buy cereals, salt, oil, cloth etc. in return. The main problem of these people is that they do not get proper price for their goods.



Pic.9.1.9 Woman carrying forest produce

TIMBER FOR HOUSE

People, here, do not construct their houses with bricks, iron and cement. They build it with mud and wood. They get the wood from forests for their houses.

LABOUR

People of Uparvedi work as labourers for government department like the Forest Department. They do plantation for forest department. Sometimes they also work on road construction.

1. What are the things which people of Uparvedi get to eat from forests?

2. What are the things which people of Uparvedi sell in nearby markets ?



Pic. 9.1.10 Labourers doing

PROTECTION OF THE FORESTS

We have seen that tribals living at Uparvedi and nearby areas depend heavily on forests. We were surprised to see that forests were very thick and they were within the village boundary. In spite of the heavy use, the forests were not cut neither were they destroyed. The main reason is that to fulfill their domestic needs the people use the forest reasonably (in a controlled manner). They do not cut trees to sell in the market and earn profit. That is why forests are saved till now.

TRIBALS

In that village a total of 134 people lived in twenty one houses. Nearly all of them were Gond tribals and were related to each other. No one was very rich nor very poor. Hence there was a lot of rapport among them. Their main diet is 'pej'. This is made by boiling rice, maize, maida, dumar etc. together. Every house has *salfi trees*. The juice of it is extracted and taken for intoxication.



Pic. 9.1.11 Salfi tree

MUTUAL COOPERATION

By talking to people of the village we learnt that both men and women share responsibility of family. The feelings of co-operation and coordination is very prominent among people there. If any one has to sow the field or do any other household work then everyone readily offer their help. No money is given for work, but food is arranged for them. The next day if any other person has work to do, then all will go to help the next person.

GHOTUL

Villagers told us that like other tribal villages they too have 'ghotul'. This is the place where unmarried boys and girls get together in evening for entertainment where they sing, dance and play games. Ghotul is the place where marriages are fixed between unmarried boys and girls. The elders of their family accept their mutual feelings and get them married.

Though this village is full of natural resources still there is scarcity of modern facilities. It does not have tar roads, pure drinking water, electricity, school, hospital etc. When ill, people practise exorcism. Proper treatment is not available.

While returning from Uparvedi we felt that though there is little farming in the hilly areas of Chhattisgarh, however forests, which provide invaluable properties, are in abundance. On the one hand we were attracted by lives of tribals and on the other hand we were forced to wonder why the basic amenities like schools and hospitals had not reached in these villages yet.

EXERCISE

I. Fill in the blanks -

1. Uparvedi was _____ inhabited.
2. On three sides of Uparvedi there are steep _____.
3. As the village is on a slope the _____ soil from the top flows and settles down near the stream.

II. State whether right or wrong -

1. Uparvedi village has a bumper crop of paddy.
2. People of the village grow two crops in their badas.
3. People of the village of Uparvedi get a good price in the market for the things from the forests.
4. Irrigation of crops is done from wells in the Uparvedi village.

III. Answer the following questions -

1. What type of soil is mostly found in the village of Uparvedi ?
2. In which way is the stream utilized by villagers ?
3. Which type of paddy is grown when there is less rainfall ?
4. Why are forests so dense there ?
5. What examples of co-operation among the people did you see in Uparvedi ?

IV. Discuss -

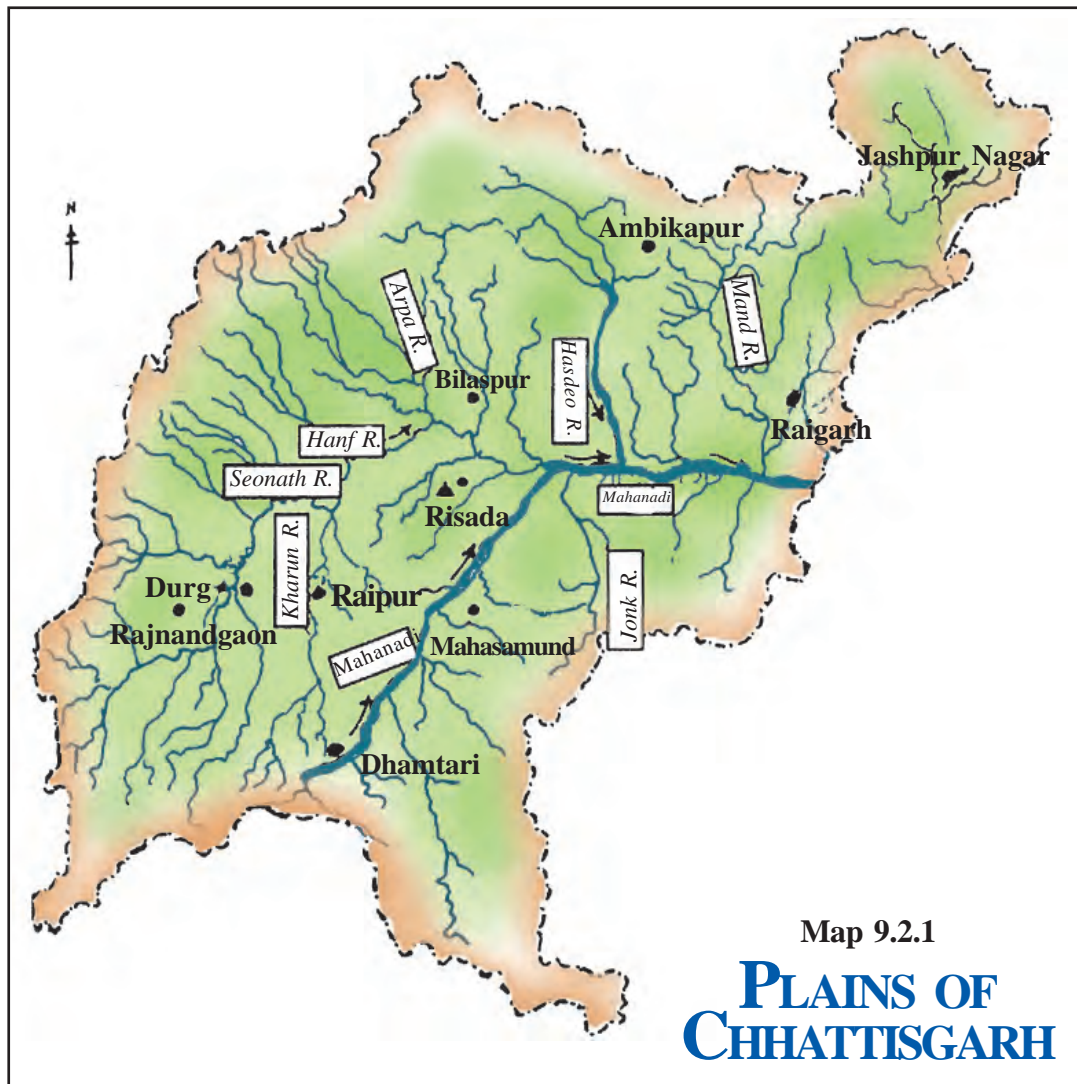
How can the problems of people of Uparvedi be solved according to you?

Note - Information in this chapter is according to survey done in to 2004 A.D. At present it may vary.



9.2. RISADA - A Village Situated on a Plains

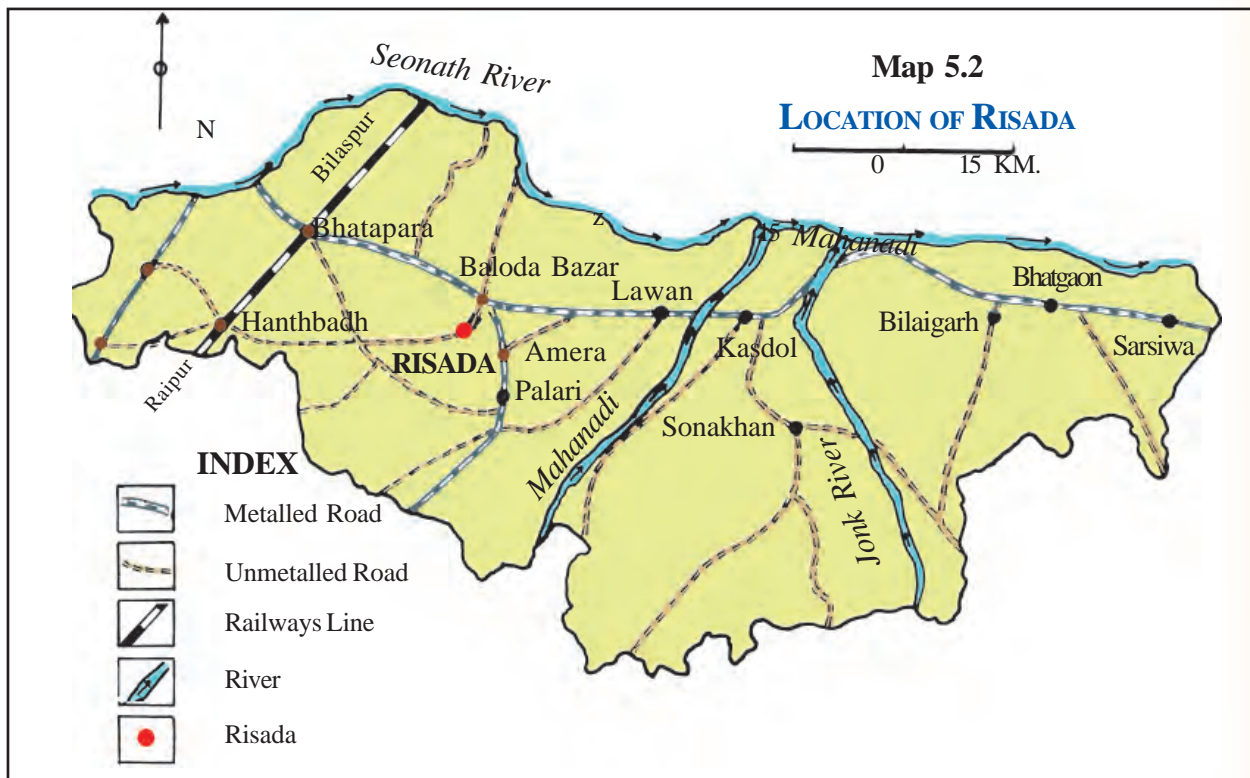
In the previous chapter we had read about Uparvedi, a village in the mountains. The villages on plains are totally different when compared to those in the mountains. In this chapter we shall find out about a village in plains.



PLAINS OF CHHATTISGARH

This plain is made by river Mahanadi and its tributary Shivnath. In the atlas of Chhattisgarh you can see mountains and high plateaus around the plain. These rivers flow down the mountains and plateaus and bring the rain water upto the plains. These rivers even bring fertile soil from higher plateaus and mountains and deposit it in plains. This is why soil of plains of Chhattisgarh is very fertile and has moisture.

Why do rivers deposit soil in plains? Usually plains are flat and even. The flow of water slows down as land is flat. As flow is slow, soil keeps depositing near banks of rivers. During rainy season water of rivers crosses its banks and spreads out in the nearby areas. The soil in water settles down in that area. The Plains are formed when



this process is repeated by rivers for thousands of years. Such plains are called alluvial plains.

Look at the map (5.1) and answer the questions -

- 1. From which sides do small supporting rivers come and join Mahanadi?**
- 2. Identify and write the name of the main tributaries of Mahanadi.**

In this chapter we shall read about a village called Risada, which is situated in the plain between Mahanadi and Shivenath rivers.

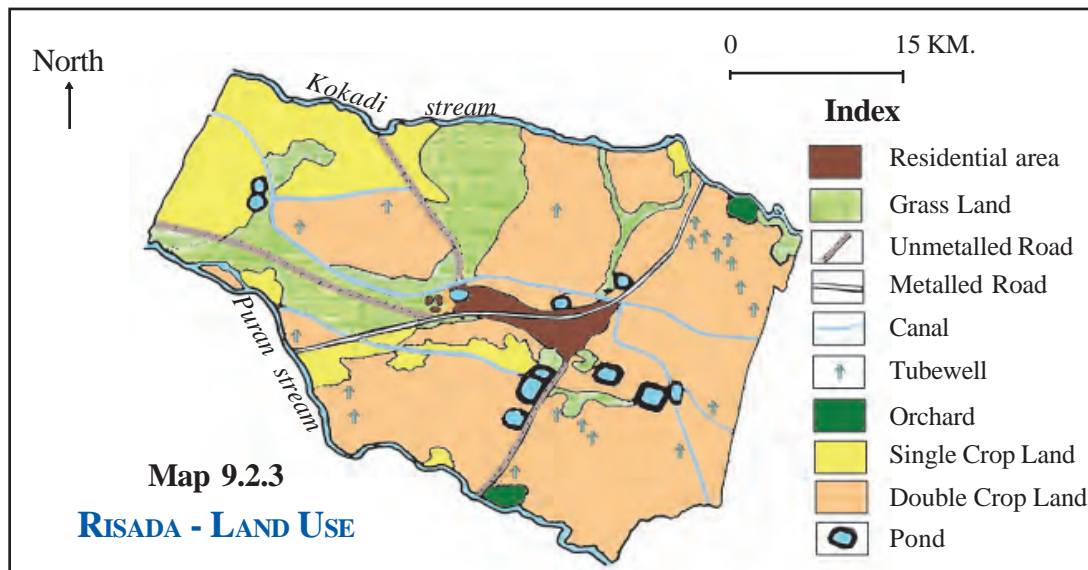
TOPOGRAPHY AND PATH

Risada is a village in Baloda Bazar, sub-division of Raipur district. This village is situated at a distance of about 8 km. south west of Baloda Bazar.

Identify the location of Risada in map.

If we go from Baloda Bazar towards Hathband we can see flat land stretching for miles. Paddy fields are on both sides of the road. We reach Risada village after crossing Kokadi stream.

Kokadi stream is on the north of Risada village. It flows from west to east. Similarly there is Puran stream in south and this also flows from west to east. Between the two streams lies the village of Risada.



Kukuradi dam is at the upper end of the streams. A canal from the dam passes through middle of the village. For kharif crop most of the fields of Risada are irrigated by this canal.

SOIL AND CROPS

In Uparvedi village we saw that there were more forests and little land available for farming. But it is not so in Risada village.

Look at the village map carefully. How much land is barren?

(In this village there is very little land which is fallow. And that is the pasture field of this village). This means farming is done on most of the land.

In Uparvedi village we have seen that most of the cultivable land was rocky and the soil was not fertile. It was red, sandy and rocky. Just reverse is the case of Risada village in plains. The land is not rocky. On the west of Risada there is brown porous soil in some areas. Therefore, in these areas only one crop is grown (paddy, pulses, oilseeds)

The centre of the village has very fine grained yellow coloured soil. This type of soil is called '*matasi*' soil. It retains water for a long time. It is very good for paddy, which is grown as Kharif crop and 'Tivara' as rabi crop. They also grow wheat as rabi crop in places where irrigation facility is available.



Pic. 9.2.1 Paddy Field

Eastern side of Risada has well drained fertile soil. It has fine grains and sandy pebbles in equal proportion. This type of soil is best for farming. Here villagers generally grow paddy as kharif and wheat as rabi crop.

Near the streams on both sides of Risada, soil is black. It is called 'kanhar' soil. It has the highest capacity of retaining water. Here there is moisture in soil even in winter season. So in this soil they can have wheat and gram as rabi crop.

In map 5.3,

1. The land which gives two crops is shown by which colour?
2. Which type of soil is found in your village ?
3. What can be grown there ?

Fill in the blanks.

- A. _____ soil has the highest capacity to retain water; where as _____ soil has the least.
- B. _____ soil is good for paddy where as _____ is good for both paddy and wheat.
- C. In yellow soil after paddy they grow _____ or _____. In well drained fertile soil after paddy _____ is grown and _____ is grown as kharif crop. Wheat/gram grow more in _____ soil.

IRRIGATION

We saw that in Risada Village, where there is irrigation facility, two crops can be cultivated. Now let us see which means of irrigation are available here.

CANAL

It is easier to make a lake or a pond in plains than in mountainous regions. As land form is even canals can also be built easily. You have read that on west of Risada village is the Kukurdi dam. Irrigation for kharif crop, in this village, is done by canal. Rain water is collected in the dam. When rainfall is good there is sufficient water for irrigation. Otherwise for rabi crop irrigation cannot be done by canal.

TUBEWELL

In Uparvedi we had seen that it is difficult to dig wells in mountainous areas and even if it was dug the level of water would be so low that irrigation by it was not possible. But in plains, wells can be dug



Pic. 5.2 Dam and Canal

easily. Several rich farmers have got tube-wells dug in their fields. These tube-wells take out water from the depth of 350 feet. But in Risada much water is not available from tube-wells. It is possible to irrigate only one or two acres of land by one tube-well. These farmers grow paddy as kharif, and wheat and vegetables as rabi crop. Electricity is available in Risada so tube-wells function with it.

Recognize tube-wells in map 9.2.3.

In which type of soil are most of the tube-wells dug ?

POND

In Chhattisgarh ponds have a very important position in villages of plains.

How many ponds are there in the map of Risada? Usually there are about 8-10 ponds in a village in plains. They are surrounded by high boundaries on all sides. Water in ponds is the rain water which comes from fields. Where there are canals, these ponds are filled with canal water. But most of the ponds are private properties of land owners. Maintenance of these ponds is done by owners and only they can use its water for irrigation. Other people of village can use pond water for bathing, washing, bathing their animals etc.



Pic. 9.2.3 Pond

- 1. What are the other irrigation facilities available in plains compare to the mountains?**
- 2. Compare the irrigation facility which is available in your area with that of Risada.**

In spite of so many ways of irrigation only one third land of Risada village is irrigated. Two-third land is not irrigated. So only one crop of paddy is cultivated by scattering seeds on most of the land. Let us find out how paddy is grown.

CROPS AND WAYS OF FARMING

Like Risada village all other villages of the plains of Chhattisgarh get both kharif and rabi crops. Paddy, yellow gram, bengal gram, sesame and kodo are grown as kharif crop. Wheat, gram, sunflower, tivara, green gram, red gram and vegetables are grown as rabi crop.

In most of the villages paddy is grown in two ways.

1. SCATTERING

After the first rain, fields are ploughed and seeds of paddy are scattered. After a month, when the saplings are grown, soil is dug out and weeds are pulled out. The production of rice is less when grown this way. But this method is best where there is scarcity of water or no other means of irrigation is available.

2. TRANSPLANTATION

Production is more in this method. When rainy season starts seeds are sown in one part of the field and are allowed to grow. Remaining field is ploughed nicely and is filled with water. When saplings are a month old, they are transplanted in the field at equal distance. This way each plant gets full nutrition. The field is nicely ploughed and the soil becomes loose. This enables roots of the plants to spread easily. The problem of weeds is also less. So now farmers are adopting this method of transplantation for growing paddy. In this method proper irrigation is essential. Only one fourth of the fields use the method of transplantation for growing paddy as resources of irrigation is limited. In most of the fields, scattering method (which gives less production) is used.



Pic. 9.2.4 Transplantation of Paddy

TRADITIONAL AND MODERN SEEDS OF PADDY

There are several types of traditional seeds of paddy in Chhattisgarh. Each variety is of different colour, size, smell and taste. Each one is grown in different types of soil. Some ripen fast, while others take a longer time. Some grow in little water, while others need plenty of water. Our farmers have worked hard to recognize and protect them. Traditional variety of paddy is a precious treasure of our state.

Our farmers are experimenting with new varieties of seeds because traditional seeds give less production. New varieties give more production, but this proves to be more costly as it needs more urea, pesticide and water for irrigation.



Pic. 9.2.5 Farming

FIELDS AND TREES

Paddy fields have high ridges. In some places a crop of yellow gram is grown on these ridges. On other ridges trees, of neem, mango, saja, babul, kahua and mahua are grown. Farmers can get wood for fuel from these trees. Of the various modern



Pic. 9.2.6 Plain, flat field and Tree

machines for farming, tractors are widely used. However small farmers depend on hard work of men and animals only.

1. **Which kharif crops are grown in your area ?**
2. **What is the main rabi crop ?**
3. **By which method is paddy grown in your area - scattering or transplanting ?**
4. **Which method needs more water for irrigation ?**
5. **Name the traditional varieties of paddy that are grown in your place?**
6. **What is the difference between new and traditional variety of seeds ?**
7. **From where do people of Risada and Uparvedi get wood for their fuel ?**
8. **People of Risada use tractors to plough their fields whereas people of Uparvedi use oxen. Why do they not use tractors in Uparvedi ?**

CATTLE - REARING

Cows, oxen, buffaloes and goats are reared in this village. But farmers say that their number of animals is going down as pasture-land is scarce. A major problem of plains is shortage of pasture-land. Farming is done on most of the land which is available, therefore animals have very little pasture land.

PROBLEMS OF FARMERS AND MIGRATION OF LABOURERS

Irrigation is a major problem of villagers of Risada. Almost the whole village depends upon the canal from Kukuradi dam. This dam has very little capacity and it is filled up with silt. Therefore it cannot hold enough water. So only kharif crop can be irrigated.

Lack of proper irrigation is a major problem on the plains of Chhattisgarh. This is the reason why at most places only kharif crop is grown. The labourers here do not get work throughout the year in villages so, for remaining days they migrate to Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Punjab and Maharashtra in search of work. Every year about 2000 people from Risada migrate to other states in. Now the government is thinking of providing employment for them. Construction of roads, improvement of forest maintenance of ponds and brick industry are the major areas where they work.

TOWNSHIP AND ROADS

Risada is one of the big villages of Baloda Bazar at sub division of Raipur district. Its

population is round 5000. Houses are built very close. Lanes are curved and narrow. Most of the houses are made of mud which have tiles on roof. Houses have a small kitchen garden where they grow vegetables. The pucca houses made of bricks and stones, are also being constructed now a days.



Pic. 9.2.7 Houses built close together

Compare houses of Uparvedi and Risada. What are the similarities and dissimilarities between them ?

Risada village has a weekly bazar where people buy things they need. There is a Co-operative Bank and a fair price shop too. People get drinking water from the tank constructed by of water works department through taps. Electricity is also available there. People use it to light their homes and lanes and to run pumps on tube wells to irrigate their fields. Agriculture produce is loaded on tractors and bullock

carts and is sold in the market of Baloda Bazar. Buses are available for transportation. From Risada buses go to Baloda Bazar and from there to Raipur on one side and Hathband on other side, where there is a railway station too.

Transport facilities are better in villages of plains. You must be remembering that there was no tar road or bus facility in the village of Uparvedi.

CHANGE IN LIFE STYLE

Now people of Risada can see changes in their lives. Educated boys have now started their own business. They have opened garages, repair shops for electrical goods, tailoring shops etc. The number of people going to other states in search of work has reduced now.

Instead of leaving their villages, some people have started making bricks and tiles in large numbers. All family members co-operate in this work. There is a great demand for bricks and tiles in neighbouring villages. Increase in work has created awareness in women and they have formed Self help groups.

Ask your teacher about Self help group.

People of various castes and professions live in Risada. Here economic inequality is more. A few people have large land while majority of them have very little land.

1. Were there any such type of difficulties in Uparvedi village too?



Pic. 9.2.8 Making bricks

EXERCISE

I Fill in the blanks

1. Rivers bring _____ from mountains and plateaus and spread it in plains.
2. In comparison to mountains the land in plains is _____.
3. Irrigation of crops in Risada is mostly done by _____.
4. People of Risada get drinking water from _____

II Say whether following statements are right or wrong.

1. Production of crops is more in villages of plains than that of the villages of mountains.
2. Fewer people live in villages of plains than in mountain villages.
3. People living in villages of plains depend a lot on forests.
4. People of only one caste live in Risada.

III Answer the following questions -

1. How are plains formed by rivers?
2. Why are houses in plains built close together?
3. What are the means of irrigation in plains?
4. Why is paddy grown in Chhattisgarh by scattering seeds?
5. Why has the number of people going out of Risada in search of work reduced?

Discuss

If you are given a choice where would you like to live-in Uparvedi or Risada? Give reasons.



9.3 CHALHA - A Village Situated on a Plateau

In the previous two chapters you read about Uparvedi a village in the mountains and Risada - a Village on the plains of Chhattisgarh. You have seen that there is less farming on slopes of mountains. The tribals of that place depend more on forests. Just reverse of this is the case of villages on plains. On plains the farming is done on most of the land and two crops are cultivated as there is irrigation facility. In this lesson we shall read about a different type of village which is situated on a plateau.

PLATEAU OF RAIGARH

The plain of Chhattisgarh is like a bowl. There is a raised land around it. Towards the south are the hills of Abujhmada and plateau of Bastar. Towards the west is the maikal range and towards the north are the plateaus of Raigarh, Sarjuga and Jashpur. In this chapter we shall read about a village which is situated on the plateau of Raigarh.



Picture 9.3.1

1. Identify plateau of Raigarh in the atlas of Chhattisgarh.
2. On which side of Mahanadi is plateau of Raigarh situated?

WHAT IS A PLATEAU ?

In comparison to plains, plateau is elevated. To reach there, high cliffs have to be climbed. But once we reach on top we find flat slightly uneven land. Here there are no steep slopes like Uparvedi.

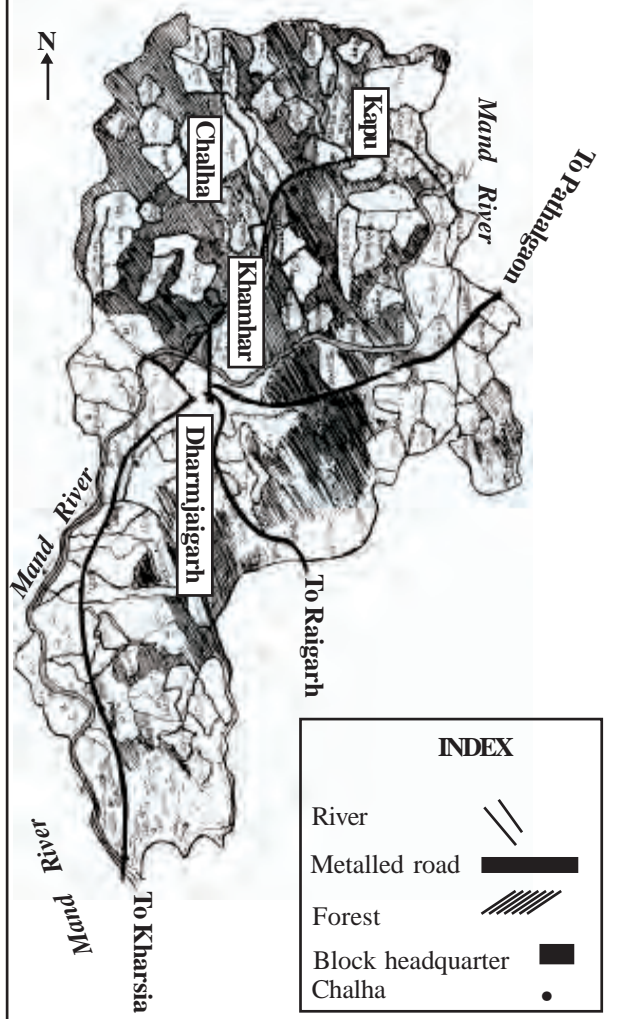
Identify plains, plateaus and mountains in map 9.3.1 and name them correctly. Write their names



Pic. 9.3.2 Way to Chalha village

Raigarh city is situated in the northern plains of Mahanadi. We have to climb a cliff from Kudumkela which is on the way to Dharamjaigarh, in north of Raigarh. After

Map9.3.1A LOCATION OF CHALHA



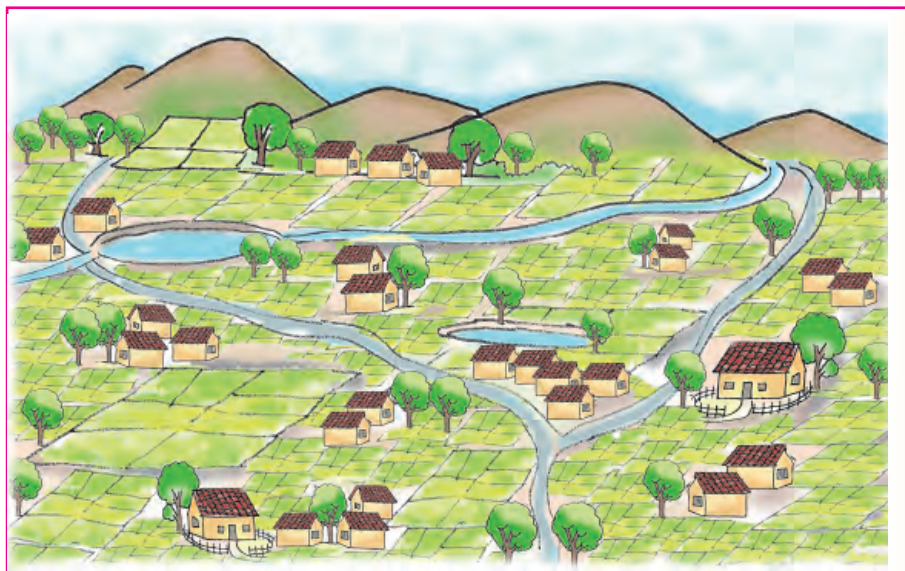
climbing and walking for a short distance on even land we reach Dharamjaigarh. About 18 km. north of Dharamjaigarh is a big township known as Khamhar. From Khamhar towards the west is an unmetalled road which goes through dense forest. Here the road crosses the cliff. After crossing the cliff we find flat land and village Chalha is situated here.

LAND AND SOIL

We have read that Chalha village is on even land. A stream flows from the middle of the village. There is slight slope on all sides of the stream. At the end of the village, the land is steeper and there are high cliffs. North of the village is a small mountain. Soil here has coarse sand and stones which have flowed down from higher areas. Therefore the soil here is sandy and rocky. Pieces of mica shine in the soil here. On the western side of the village we find deep layer of red soil. Here there are big fields. Towards the North of the village, at the base of the mountain the soil is black and in south the soil is yellow .

Farming is done on three fourth of land of Chalha village. Only one fourth has forests and mountains. You may recall that in mountain villages farming is done in a small area, while in villages of plains farming is done almost on all the land.

There is a variety of soil on



Pic. 9.3.3 Chalha village and field

plateaus as the land is uneven. Sloping areas have sandy and rocky soil. Flat or lower areas have deep red or black soil. So the same crop cannot be grown everywhere in village. Different crops according to the competency of soil, are grown.



Pic. 9.3.4 Field

1. Farming is done on more or less land in villages of plateau than villages in plains.why?

2. The soil of Chalha village is mostly _____ and _____.While the soil of Risada a village of plains is _____ and _____.

3. The best land for farming in Chalha village is in (north, south, east, west)



Pic. 9.3.5 Dhodhi

SOURCES OF WATER AND IRRIGATION

Before learning about fields and crops of Chalha, let us first find out the sources of water.

For centuries together, people here have been using '*dhodhi*' for drinking water.

'Dhodhi' is like a well but not so deep and a 'sarai wood' frame is built on its sides. Water which seeps through rocks collects here. 'Dhodhis' are always full of water. Here there are no wells. These days some tube wells are dug for drinking water. Some tube wells have been closed because the water is red.

Remember, there is a stream in middle of the Chalha village. Every year after rainy seasons, villagers construct a dam over this stream. Water collected is used for purpose of bathing both by villagers and their cattle throughout the year.

But there is no means of irrigation in Chalha village. It means that farming, here depends completely on rains.

1.From where do you get drinking water in your village/ city ?

2.Where is drinking water easily available - Uparvedi, Risada or Chalha ?

3.Where is water available with great difficulty ? Why ?

4.Where is water in Risda village available for animals and for bathing and washing purposes ?



Pic. 9.3.6 Dam

CROPS

As agriculture depends on rainfall, only kharif crop is grown. On most of the land paddy is grown and as there is no means of irrigation. Cultivation is done by scattering seeds. Besides paddy, maize, yellow gram, bengal gram, jhunga and ramtil are grown. Here production is less as soil is sandy and rocky. They grow vegetables in their kitchen gardens during winter season.

1.Here on which type of soil, should paddy be grown ? Explain.

2.In Chalha why is there no rabi crop ?



Pic. 9.3.7 Kitchen - Garden

FOOD

Rice and vegetables are the main food of the people of Chalha. Use of lentils is less here. Sometimes they do take fish and meat. For meat they keep chickens, pigs, goats etc.

People mostly use oil made out of seeds of mahua called 'dori'. Mustard and 'Jatangi' oil is also used.

TIRHI

Tirahi is a mechanical device which is made of wood by which oil of mahua seeds (dori) is extracted. It is not just an instrument but a symbol of brotherhood and

cooperation among villagers. Everyone extracts oil by turns. Oil is squeezed out by pressing seeds (dori) between two planks. For this a team of four or six young men from all communities, take turns in running the instrument. The owner of the 'dori' takes the oil

extracted. Next time he joins to help another in extracting oil. This is a unique example of co-operation in the village.



Pic. 9.38 Tirhi

DEPENDENCE ON FORESTS

This whole plateau area has only one crop in a year. So people are free after kharif crop is harvested. As the land is not so productive, living on agriculture itself is not possible. To fulfill their needs they depend on forests.

Dense forests start from the boundary of Chalha village. 'Saal', 'saja', 'bija', 'tendu', 'chaar', 'mahua', 'dhoura', 'salhiya', mango etc. are prominent trees in these forests. Near the village there is a thick growth of mango, tamarind, jackfruit and karanj trees. These trees provide fruits to local people.

Villagers collect different types of roots too like 'pitharu', 'Katharu', 'gainth', 'kanda', boda kanda, siyo kanda etc. These are boiled, salted and then eaten. 'Koilar' leaves are eaten in form of curry.



Pic. 9.3.9 Mahul leaf

Villagers of Chalha get plenty of things from forests to sell in the market. During summer they collect 'tendu' leaves, 'mahul' leaves, 'chaar' 'mahua' flowers etc. to sell in local market. Several ayurvedic medicines like 'dhavai phool', 'lac', 'dhoop' etc. are also collected from forests.

'Mahul' or 'Mohalai' leaf is of great importance. In southern states people take their food in plates and bowls made out of these leaves. Traders sell mahul leaves from this area in markets of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamilnadu.

In summer, local people are busy in collecting forest produce. Things collected are sold in far off villages. You know that 'tendu patta' is used in making 'bidi'. Similarly 'mahul' leaves are of great demand in factories making plates and bowls.

Villagers of Chalha get wood for cooking and building their houses from forests. Their animals are also taken to forests to graze.



Pic. 9.3.10 Picking up Mahua

This way we see that people of plateaus of this region depend more on forests as the production in fields is less.

1. Did you see such dependence on forests in Risada ?

2. What similarities are there in using forests among the people of Uparvedi a village in mountains and Chalha a plateau village? Discuss.

SETTLEMENT AND HOUSES

About 1350 people live in 290 houses in Chalha village. The houses are made with unbaked bricks and tiled roofs. A good deal of wood is also used to construct houses. All houses are close to one another. The village is divided into four main wards.

Compare houses and settlements of Uparvedi and Chalha villages.

People of several castes and tribes live in Chalha village like - Manjhar, Panika, Chauhan, Mahkul, Uran, brahman, Agarwal etc. As several castes of people live together in this village, all types of festivals are celebrated following various rites and rituals.



Pic. 9.3.11 Making basket

Poojas are performed collectively before harvesting crop and before going to forest to collect mahua.

There are several craftsmen too in this village some of them make different types of baskets, fans and boxes out of bamboo and sell them. The others make and sell iron and wooden equipment for farmers and household items.

MARKET AND BUSINESS

In Chalha village there is weekly bazar every Wednesday. Traders come from other places to sell their wares. In this village they still have barter system. Villagers get clothes, utensils etc. in place of forest produce collected by them.

Minerals are usually found in abundance in plateau regions. Pieces of mica are seen in Chalha village. Mica is mostly used in making electrical equipments. But in chalha use of this mineral has not started yet.

HEALTH AND EDUCATION

There is a community health centre in Chalha where patients are treated. There is a primary and middle school. That is why one-third of people here can read and write. But teachers of the school say that very often children here, go with their parents to forests and cannot come to school. Electricity is available in this village.

Compare Uparvedi and Chalha regarding health and education.

PROBLEMS OF THE VILLAGERS

According to Villagers of Chalha their biggest problem is lack of means of irrigation. Because of this they are not able to increase their production. Another problem is that they do not get fair amount of money for forest produce. They want to cultivate the rare species of herbal plants available in forests. The facility should be provided to sell these herbs at a fair price to those who make medicines.

People of Chalha village realise importance of forests in their lives and they make efforts to save forests.

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PLAIN, MOUNTAIN AND PLATEAU

You have read about the villages on the three types of land forms i.e. plains, mountains and plateau. Now let us make a comparative study.

Village of plain-RISADA, village of mountain-UPARVEDI, village of plateau-CHALHA.

1. Where is the land very fertile, less fertile and fallow for farming ?
2. Where was thick and fertile soil found ?
3. Where were sources of irrigation available ?

4. Where were good road and tar roads available? Which village was very difficult to reach ?
5. Where did different types of craftsmen, traders and farmers live together ?
6. In which village do people depend mostly on forests ?
7. In which village do people depend least on forests ?
8. Is there any problem which is common to villages of all three areas ?

In Plains, plateaus or mountains - there is no dearth of resources. At some place there are more agricultural resources and at other places there are forest or mineral resources. How should these resources be utilized for development so that the local people too are benefited? This is the biggest challenge for our state.

EXERCISE

I Fill in the blanks

- i) The main food of Chalha villagers is _____.
- ii) _____ people of the village are educated.
- iii) _____ is a shallow well from where drinking water is available.
- iv) _____ leaves are used to make plates and bowls.
- v) _____ are grown in Chalha in rabi season.

II Give short answers to these questions

- i) Where is Chalha village situated ?
- ii) What did the people of Chalha do to stop the water of stream ?
- iii) Which crops are grown in Chalha ?
- iv) Which craftsmen live here ?
- v) What things do the villagers of Chalha get from forests ?

III. Answer in Detail

Mention similarities and dissimilarities in Chalha and Risada villages.

Soil _____

irrigation _____

crops _____

