

## **DEMAND FOR NEW DISTRICTS IN MAHARASHTRA**

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**INTRODUCTION:**

Now a day it is expected that state should take care of various needs of its citizens. No longer functions of state are confined to maintain law and order and collection of revenue. State is supposed to perform numerous functions to fulfill the aspirations of people. Hence, state is engaged in looking after many needs of human life like –health, education, recreation, sanitation, transport and communication, and social security etc. To ensure these services, state formulate policies and implement them through administrative machinery. Central and State Government plays important role in the formulation of policies and District Administration implements the same. Thus ‘district’ is one of the important units in the hierarchy of administrative set up in India.

**JUSTIFICATION:** District administration plays a pivotal role in the execution of public policies. Almost all central and state government policies are executed at district level. Since the formation of Samyukta Maharashtra in 1960 there is enormous increase in the governmental activities. However, there is lack of proportionate increase in administrative apparatus at ground level. Over the period of time there has been a gradual increase in work of district administration. Therefore, to lessen the pressure of work on district administration there is a need to create new districts in Maharashtra.

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:** Most of the existing districts is the legacy of British rule and there is need to create compact size of new districts. There were 26 districts in Maharashtra in 1960. Now the population of Maharashtra has increased by four times and governments (central and state) have introduced number of new policies and programmes over the period of time. There were only ten new districts created by bifurcating large districts in last 50 years. In other states approximately there is double number of districts created during last fifty years. So, it is worthwhile to examine the demand for creating new districts from administrative point of view. In addition to this, the study of district map of Maharashtra indicates that, some districts headquarters are located in one corner of district and its geographical area is spread far away from the headquarter e. g Sangli, Ahmednagar, Pune, Gadchiroli and Kolhapur etc. The boundaries and map of existing districts is defined during British Regime. Then existing political and administrative exigencies are considered to demarcate the boundaries of districts. Today all references have changed. Therefore, we need overall reorganization of districts keeping in mind the two important factors viz. geography and population. With this background let us study the creation of new districts in Maharashtra.

**OBJECTIVES:** The objective of this research paper is to justify the need for creating new districts in Maharashtra from administrative point of view.

**HYPOTHESIS:** Attempt has been made to test the hypothesis with the help of statistical data. The first hypothesis is -the existing number of districts is relatively inadequate in Maharashtra; and second hypothesis is -there is need of creating new districts in Maharashtra.

**METHODOLOGY:** This paper is prepared on the basis of secondary data. Report of ARC, Census Reports, Books on District Administration, Research Journals, Articles in News Papers etc. are referred.

**CONTENT:** The existing district organization lacks the principle of span of control. Because, there are some districts in Maharashtra with nearly about one crore of population. It is virtually impossible for a single district collector to address all issues judiciously in such a large district. Whereas population of some districts is between 12 to 15 lakh only. Thus there is a violation of basic principle of Span of Control in the existing district organization. The size of the district and location of district headquarter are important factors to be considered in reorganization of districts.

Therefore it is essential to study the organization of district administration from a new perspective. To make administration people friendly and people convenient there is a need to

evolve certain new standards for creating new districts and restructuring existing districts. In comparison with growth in the number of districts in Maharashtra and other states it becomes clear that there is inadequate number of districts in Maharashtra. According to following table Maharashtra is the second largest state in population; third largest state in geographical area; and fourth largest state in number of districts and average area per district. It means Maharashtra stands at higher level among all 29 states including union territories, so far as population and geographical area is concerned. It is one of the large states in India with 3,07,713 sq. km of area and 11.23 crore population.

Though the population of Madhya Pradesh and Bihar is less than Maharashtra the number of districts are more in these states. There are 50 districts in Madhya Pradesh and 38 districts in Bihar. It means when we take into consideration the ratio between population and number of districts, it is the least in Maharashtra. The average population per districts in Maharashtra is more than 32 lakh as per 2011 census. It means right now it might be more than 33 lakh. In other words there is no proportionate increase in number of districts with growth of population. As we know after the formation of Maharashtra in 1961, there were only 26 districts and 3.95 crore population. In small states and union territories the ratio of number of districts is higher than number of districts in big states. Generally there is one district for about one lakh population in states like Sikkim, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Arunachal Pradesh etc. In many other states also it is less than five lakh. In Maharashtra Thane district crossed, one crore population before bifurcation; whereas, Pune and Mumbai (suburban) these two districts are likely to cross one crore population shortly. Ten districts are having more than 30 lakh population. The ten districts in Maharashtra consist of population between 20 to 30 lakh. Remaining 12 districts have the population between 10 to 20 lakh. No other state in India, except Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal, is having more than 30 lakh average population per district.

Table No. 1 Population, Area and No. of Districts in India as per 2011

Sl. No.	States	Districts	Population	Avg Population/ District	State Area Sq. km.	Avg. Area/ Dist Sq. km.
1	WB	19	91347736	4807775	88752	4671
2	AP*	23	84665533	3681110	275069	11959
3	Maharashtra	35	112372972	3210656	307713	8791
4	UP	71	199881477	2815232	240928	3393
5	Bihar	38	103804637	2731700	94163	2477
6	Kerala	14	33387677	2384834	38863	2775
7	Gujarat	26	60383628	2322447	196024	7539
8	TN	32	72138958	2254342	130058	4064
9	Rajasthan	33	68621012	2079424	342240	10370
10	Karnataka	30	61130704	2037690	191791	6393
11	Delhi	9	16753235	1861470	1483	164
12	MP	50	72597565	1451951	308144	6162
13	Chhattisgarh	18	25540196	1418899	136034	7557
14	Orissa	30	41947358	1398245	155707	5190
15	Punjab	20	27704236	1385211	50362	2518
16	Jharkhand	24	32966238	1373593	79714	3321
17	Haryana	21	25353081	1207289	44212	2105
18	Assam	27	31169272	1154417	78438	2905
19	Chandigarh	1	1054686	1054686	114	114
20	Tripura	4	3671032	917758	10492	2623

21	Uttarakhand	13	10116752	778211	53484	4114
22	Goa	2	1457723	728861	3702	1851
23	HP	12	6856509	571375	55673	4639
24	J and K	22	12548926	570405	222236	10101
25	Meghalaya	7	2964007	423429	22429	3204
26	Dadra N H	1	342853	342853	491	491
27	Pudducharry	4	1244464	311116	479	119
28	Manipur	9	2721756	302417	22327	2480
29	Nagaland	11	1980602	180054	16579	1507
30	Sikkim	4	607688	151922	7096	1774
31	Mizoram	8	1091014	136376	21081	2635
32	Andaman Nco	3	379944	126648	8249	2749
33	Daman Diu	2	242911	121455	112	56
34	Arunachal Pr.	16	1382611	86413	83743	5233
35	Lakshadweep	1	64429	64429	32	32
35	Total	640	1210493422	1326991	3288014	3888

\*Including Telangana

Let us examine the table No. 2. When we carry out state wise and decade wise analysis, it is clear that there is uneven increase in the number of districts in various states. During 1960's hardly 17 new districts were formed all over India. During 1970s, 1980s, 1990s and the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century there is addition of 55, 54, 127 and 47 new districts. There is remarkable growth in the number of districts in majority of states. There were only 340 districts in 1961 and as per 2011 census report the number of districts in India was 640. There is about double increase in the number of districts during last 50 years. At present approximately there are more than 675 districts<sup>1</sup> in India.

Table No. 2

State-wise increase in number of Districts in India after Reorganization of States in 1956.

States	1961-1970	1971-1980	1981-1990	1991-2000	2001-2010	2011
A.P.(+ Telangana)	20	21	23	23	23	23
Bihar (+Jharkhand)	17	17	31	42	37	38
Jharkhand	--	--	--	--	18	24
Gujarat	17	19	19	19	25	26
Himachal Pradesh	6	10	12	12	12	12
Jammu and Kashmir	9	10	14	14	14	22
Karnataka	19	19	19	20	27	30
Kerala	9	10	12	14	14	14
M.P.(+ Chhattisgarh)	43	43	45	45	45	50
Chhattisgarh	--	--	--	--	16	18
Maharashtra	26	26	26	30	35	35
Orissa	13	13	13	13	30	30
Punjab (+Hariyana)	19	11	12	12	17	20
Hariyana	--	7	12	16	19	21
Rajasthan	26	26	26	27	32	33
Tamil Nadu	13	14	16	21	30	32
U.P.(+ Uttarakhand)	54	54	56	63	70	71
Uttarakhand	--	--	--	--	13	13

West Bengal	16	16	16	17	18	19
Delhi	1	1	1	1	9	9
Goa	2	2	2	2	2	2
North Eastern States	17	29	47	64	76	86
Assam	11	9	10	23	23	27
Sikkim	1	1	4	4	4	4
Meghalaya	--	2	5	5	7	7
Tripura	1	3	3	3	4	4
Mizoram	--	1	3	3	8	8
Manipur	1	5	6	8	9	9
Nagaland	3	3	7	7	8	11
Arunachal Pradesh	--	5	9	11	13	16
Other	13	9	10	11	11	12
New Additions during the decade	17	55	54	127	47	--
Total	340	357	412	466	593	640

1. [www.goidirectory.nic.in/district.php](http://www.goidirectory.nic.in/district.php) 1/1/2015

Note- Other includes- Chandigarh, Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Lakshadweep, Puducherry, Andaman & Nicobar Islands Source: [www.goidirectory.nic.in/district](http://www.goidirectory.nic.in/district) on 12/12/2014

There is rapid increase in the number of districts in North Eastern states of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Tripura, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Mizoram. In 1961, there were only 17 districts in North Eastern region, which are increased more than five times during the last 50 years. According to 2011 Administrative Atlas, there are 87 districts in this region. Along with creation of new states, new district were also carved out in this region. This is how it leads to political as well as administrative decentralization. Large states like UP, MP, Bihar and Punjab were bifurcated in last three decades and have also shown rapid increase in the number of districts. In Bihar including Jharkhand (i.e. before bifurcation of Bihar), there were only 17 districts in 1961, which went up to about four times in 2011. As per 2011 census report total number of districts in Bihar and Jharkhand is 62. Likewise, Punjab including Haryana, UP including Uttarakhand and MP including Chhattisgarh also shown considerable number of increase in districts. Except Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Maharashtra in rest of the states there is nearly about two times increase in the number of districts during last fifty years. In Maharashtra there were only 26 districts in 1961 and as per 2011 census report it increased upto 35. Recently Thane district, which was having the highest population in Asia, was bifurcated and a new Palghar district was formed on 1<sup>st</sup> August, 2014. Thus at present there are 36 districts in Maharashtra. It means there is not even one half increase in the number of districts in Maharashtra during the same period in Maharashtra.

#### CONCLUSION:

The present setup of district administration is a result of historical progress. The features of modern district administration had its root in the administrative system of British administration. During the first two decades of independence district administration confined itself to maintain law and order and to implement policies formulated by state or central government. There was a little democratic element found in the administration. But in due course of time district administration become more responsible towards demands of common man. The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitution amendment act 1993 was an important milestone which had its impact on district administration too. Democratic element becomes dominant. The creation of office of President of Zilla Parishad, Sabhapati of Panchayat Samiti and Sarpanch of Gram Panchayat culminated into decision making process of administrator a little difficult. The same position was played by Mayor and President of Municipal Corporation in their respective administration. Thus, district

[www.navjyot.net](http://www.navjyot.net)

administration is now bound to consult all these elected element while taking major policy decisions. They are no longer independent to decide the matter purely on administrative merits. It becomes clear from above discussion that, district administration is important unit of administration in India.

Now a day, administrative system of district becomes more complex than ever. It becomes a challenging task to coordinate various departments in the district. The policy and programme of one department depends upon the cooperation of other departments. Numerous activities of government are interdependent on various departments. Many a times there arises conflict between two or more departments in implementation of a particular programme. Therefore compact size of districts are essential. There should be ideal size of district from geographical and population point of view. It should not be too large or too small. The variation in size and population of two districts shall not be too much. There should be periodical revision of boundaries of districts and talukas.

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