

CHAPTER XV.

LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

ORIGINAL NUMBER OF ESTATES.

When the British took over the diocani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa in 1765, the area of the district was distributed between three estates, (Ramgarh, Kendi) and (Kharagdiha) and one (Thanadari Jagir of Kunda) on which no revenue was assessed.

NUMBER OF ESTATES.

At the time of the last Revisional Settlement (1906—1909) there were seventy revenue paying estates, one temporarily-settled estate (Karharbari Colliery), four Government estates and 272 revenue-free estates. Before the Land Reforms Act came into operation there were in 1949-50, 84 revenue-paying estates, 4 Government estates and 266 revenue-free estates besides one rent-free land borne on the Touzi Roll. The temporarily-settled estate (Karharbari Colliery) has since been removed from the Touzi Roll.

AMOUNT OF REVENUE.

The land revenue payable was Rs. 47,260 only, the demand from the Government estates being Rs. 51,354. The increase in the number of revenue-paying estates since the last Settlement is due to the partition of parent estates of Tandwa and Khoksimar. The decrease in the number of revenue-paying estates is due to the merging of some of the estates with others.

ABOLITION OF ZAMINDARIES AND LAND REFORMS.

The problems relating to the Land Revenue system were for many years past engaging the attention of the Government and the public men in Bihar and Bengal where the Permanent Settlement of 1793 prevailed. Towards the end of 1938, the Government of Bengal appointed a Land Revenue Commission to examine generally the existing Land Revenue system of Bengal in its various aspects, with special reference to the Permanent Settlement. After examining the question in all its aspects and after recording evidence, the Commission made its report in 1940. After pointing out the serious defects in the Zamindari system the Commission came to the conclusion that in order to improve the economic conditions of the cultivators, the Permanent Settlement and the Zamindari system should be replaced by a Rayatwari system under which the Government would be brought into direct relationship with the actual cultivators by the acquisition of all the superior interests in agricultural lands.

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In its first session after the elections, the Bihar Legislative Assembly adopted the following resolution moved by a private member: "That this Assembly recommends to Government that immediate steps be taken for the abolition of the Zamindari System." As the vital interest of the State required immediate steps to be taken for improving agricultural production and the lot of the cultivators, the Legislature enacted various laws towards that end. The Bihar Tenancy Act and the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act were amended providing for commutation of produce rent into money rent on the basis of the price prevailing before 1942. The Legislature passed the Bakasht Disputes Settlement Act, 1947, in order to provide summary and cheap procedure for expeditious determination of disputes regarding possession. The Rent Reduction Operations covered the whole district for several years from 1938 when the Legislature passed an Act providing for reduction of rents. The operation led to a substantial reduction in rent and gave considerable relief to the *raiyyats*.

With a view to establishing direct relations between the State and the tiller of the soil two measures were conceived, viz., the Bihar State Management of Estates Bill, 1947 and the Bihar State Acquisition of Zamindaris Bill, 1947. Two years later the Bihar State Management of Estates and Tenures Act, 1949 (Bihar Act XXI of 1949) was passed. Some of the estates, viz., Dhanwar, Kunda and Satganwan were actually taken over and managed under the provisions of the Act but as the validity of the Act was challenged in court, the estates were released and no further action was taken. The Bihar Abolition of Zamindaris Act, 1948, received the assent of the Governor-General on the 6th July, 1949. The validity of this Act was challenged by some of the Zamindars and whilst the petitions were pending in the Hon'ble High Court the said Act was repealed by the Bihar Legislature and another measure called the Bihar Land Reforms Bill, 1949, was introduced in the month of December, 1949. The above Bill was passed and became law as the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950 on the 25th September, 1950, and was published in the *Bihar Gazette* Extraordinary of that date.

The Land Reforms Act was also challenged by the principal landlords of the State including the proprietor of Ramgarh Estate. Parts of this Act were declared *ultra vires* by the Patna High Court. The Constitution was amended by the Constitution 182 Amendment Act of 1952. Even after the amendment of the Constitution the Act was challenged but the Supreme Court declared the Act to be *intra vires* except for some minor sections. Government decided at first to take over the big estates and tenures having gross annual income exceeding Rs. 50,000. In pursuance of the decision of Government Ramgarh,

Kunda, Dhanwar, Gawan and portions of Madhubani Estate lying in this district known as the (Satgawan Estate) and portions of Bodh-Gaya and Budhoul Estate lying in the district were notified under the Act, Sikri and Jagodih-Tarwan, the only two tenures in the district having an annual income of Rs. 50,000, were also notified. Government have taken over possession of Kunda, Dhanwar, Satgawan, Gawan, Budhoul and Bodh-Gaya Estates and Sikri Tenure. The proprietor of Ramgarh Estate parcelled out his estate to a number of Trusts Companies and ikhorposhdars with a view to save his estate from the operation of the said Act; and these concerns and individuals instituted a number of title suits against the State. The title suits were sub-judice for some time and the State Government had been enjoined from taking over possession of the Ramgarh Estate and Jagodih Tarwan Tenure.

The State Government later decided to take over the entire zamindari and intermediaries in the district of Hazaribagh. Under the provisions of section 3(b) of the Bihar Land Revenue Act all the estates and all the tenures had passed to and become vested in the State with effect from the 26th January, 1955.

The administrative machinery set up for the management of the lands thus acquired has been described later.

SARKARI HATA GOVERNMENT ESTATE.

The Sarkari Hata Government Estate extends over a compact area of 7,270 acres (according to the 1910 Survey) in and around the town of Hazaribagh and comprises 22 villages.

The name implies that this lies within the (Hata) or the limits of the cantonment which existed at the time.

The first nucleus of the estate was formed in the year 1790 when 465 *bighas* of land were acquired from the Ramgarh Estate for the purpose of establishment of a cantonment and an abatement of revenue amounting to Rs. 371 was allowed to the proprietor for this area. Additions were made to this area from time to time, the details of which as far as traceable are as follows :—

In 1819, 188 *bighas* were acquired at a rental of Rs. 203.

In 1838, 496 *bighas* were acquired at a rental of Rs. 879.

In 1842 the cantonment was abolished. It was, however, restored in 1859 when the total area held by Government was 1,400 *bighas* and the total rental payable to the Ramgarh Estate was Rs. 1,357, besides the original abatement of Rs. 371 allowed in 1790 (vide Mr. Lister's Gazetteer, page 154).

In 1865 a further area of 4,462 *bighas* was taken up (the Ramgarh Estate as a perpetual lease) at a rental of Rs. 2,600 with the object of extending and improving the sanitary condition of the cantonment. In 1871 the total rent payable to the Ramgarh Estate was commuted into a reduction of revenue amounting to Rs. 4,328 as detailed below:—

| | Rs. a. p. |
|---|-----------|
| Abatement of revenue acquired in 1790 ... | 370 14 5 |
| Abatement of rent of lands acquired in 1858-59. | 1,357 1 7 |
| Abatement of rent of lands acquired in 1865. | 2,600 0 0 |
| Total ... | 4,328 0 0 |

In May, 1884 the cantonment was again abolished and all the land and the building of the Military Department were handed over to the Civil Department (*vide* Mr. Slack's *Settlement Report*, Chapter II).

The administration of the estate assumed importance since the year 1865, area comprising 21 villages around the town of Hazaribagh was acquired, but no direct collection of rent from the *raiyats* was made till 1875. During this period the villages used to be let out in favour of *thickadars* and other middlemen on short leases.

Besides the abatement of land revenue referred to above a sum of Rs. 20,631-9-0 was paid by Government to *raiyats*, *jagirdars*, *Mokararidars* and all other kinds of intermediate holders in satisfaction of all their claims (*vide* paragraph 3 of Board of Revenue L. P.'s letter no. 466-A. of the 3rd August, 1875) and the Government thus acquired the position of absolute landlord, all occupants being reduced to the position of tenants at will (*vide* letter no. 967, dated 21st August, 1874, from H. S. Beadon, Deputy Commissioner, Hazaribagh to the address of the Commissioner).

It may be noted, however, that Col. Boddam granted some 27 perpetual leases for building sites from the year 1867—1872 on his own authority which were ultimately sanctioned by the Government though further grant of such leases was prohibited (*vide* Bengal Government Order communicated in Mr. Reginald's letter no. 2100, dated 21st August 1875).

The first regular Settlement of the estate was made in the year 1874-75 and it is known as Kasturi Lal's Settlement. The Settlement was made for a period of 10 years and was followed by Mr. Slack's Settlement in 1885-88 for a period of 15 years. The rental fixed at the Settlement was Rs. 7,749.

The next Settlement was in 1903-04 known as Babu Motilal Roy's Settlement which also was for a term of 15 years and terminated on 31st March, 1918. The rent fixed at this Settlement was Rs. 9,157-6-11 and the area comprised was 7,272 acres.

The Settlement of 1918 was made by Mr. Sifton, I.O.S., for 30 years and the assessment is Rs. 22,342-9-3. The total area under this Settlement is (7,270.37 acres.) The settlement has been extended till 1978.

KODARMA GOVERNMENT ESTATE.

The Kodarma Government Estate extends over about 108 square miles of which about 50 square miles are reserved or protected forests. It is situated in the north of the Kodarma police-station. In 1841, the proprietor, Tejnaraiah Sahi, was implicated in a dacoity and in the following year Government issued order of confiscation of his property which consisted of 12 villages in Gaya district, known now as the Dehour Estate and in Hazaribagh of the remainder of Gaddi Kodarma as well as the contiguous Gaddi of Bagridih. The demand of the estate which stood at Rs. 15,217 in 1904 has increased to Rs. 17,796-0-0 in the year 1952. The last Settlement was made in the year 1924. The leases expired in 1950 but have not been renewed. The demand will increase after renewal of the leases. The reserved forest is rich in mica and mining and splitting of mica provide employment for landless workers of the estate.

KHARAGDIHA KHAS MAHAL.

The holder of Gaddi Kharagdihs sold the entire estate to 11 persons. The sale was held to be in contravention of the conditions of the original Settlement and Government took possession of the estate in 1848. The purchasers sued Government for possession but as they did not bring the suit till more than 12 years had elapsed since the resumption of the estate their claim was held to be barred by limitation. In 1860 the Gaddi was settled for 20 years and was then found to contain 42 villages which were leased out in 17 lots. In 1847-48, resumption proceedings under Regulation II of 1819 were commenced in this district and continued upto the year 1856, when they were summarily stopped and orders were passed that all the villages in respect of which the proceedings had not finally closed should at once be made over to the parties in whose possession they had been found. During the above period, however, Government obtained possession of 151 villages, viz., 149 in Pargana Kharagdiha, one in Pargana Chhai and one in Pargana Kendi. A separate Government estate, termed as Kharagdiha Government Estate, was formed out for management of these 151 villages. The total demand of this estate stands at present at Rs. 11,265 against the original demand of Rs. 11,578. The fall in demand is due to the reduction in the rent after the Rent Reduction Operation.

Personal office

The fourth Government estate is the Camping Ground bearing touzi no. 351 consisting of plots of lands situated mostly on the Grand Trunk Road. These were acquired for furnishing camping grounds for troops. These lands were for sometime past being settled for grazing purposes which has, however, since been discontinued as it has been decided that the lands belong to the Central Government. Accordingly the possession of all the Camping Grounds was delivered to the Military Estate Officer, Bengal Circle under Dis. letter no. 38364, dated the 14th April, 1953, except the Camping Ground of Hazaribagh the possession of which was delivered to the same authority on the 19th April, 1955.

LAND REFORMS DEPARTMENT.

A short account of the Land Reforms and zamindari abolition in this district has been given. According to the provision of section 3(B) of the Bihar Land Reforms Act, all the estates and all the tenures which did not vest by individual notification in the past under section 3(1) of the said Act, passed to and became vested in the State with effect from the 26th January, 1955. Now all the 7,110 villages in the district are under the management of the State Government.

In order to administer the land revenue of the district 42 Anchal-Development Blocks have been formed with their headquarters at the following places, namely—(1) Hazaribagh, (2) Kathamsandi, (3) Ichak, (4) Mandu, (5) Nagri, (6) Ramgarh, (7) Patratu, (8) Goja, (9) Peterbar, (10) Kasmar, (11) Jaridih, (12) Barhi, (13) Barkatha, (14) Kodarma, (15) Markacho, (16) Jainagar, (17) Barkagaon, (18) Keridari, (19) Tandwa, (20) Bagodar, (21) Bishungarh, (22) Gomian, all within the Sadar subdivision, (23) Chatra, (24) Simaria, (25) Pratapur, (26) Huntergunj, (27) Chauparan, (28) Itkhorl within Chatra subdivision, (29) Giridih, (30) Bengabad, (31) Gandey, (32) Gawan, (33) Tisri, (34) Satgawan, (35) Dhanwar, (36) Birni, (37) Jsmua, (38) Deori, (39) Dumri, (40) Pirtand, (41) Bermo and (42) Nawadih within Giridih subdivision. ADB

Before the introduction of the Anchal Adhikari Scheme, however, for the revenue administration the district was divided into 478 halkas, each halka consisting of about 15 villages. To minimise the cost of management the 478 halkas were grouped into 245 blocks, each block consisting of about two halkas and each of the blocks was placed in charge of a Karamchhari who was given a male peon to assist him in collection work. The 245 blocks were further grouped into 18 units each of which was in charge of a Circle Inspector. It was proposed to place one Gazetted Officer of the rank of Sub-Deputy Collector as Circle Officer to man the administration. The Circle Officers within their circle jurisdictions and the Karamcharis in their halkas or blocks were in charge not only of rent collection but also of agricultural statistics.

minor irrigation, execution of works of improvement, agriculture welfare, and other development works. With the total abolition of zamindaris in this district it was considered expedient to revise the pattern of-administration by increasing the number of blocks so that each Karamchari might be in charge of not more than ten villages to enable him to do more intensive work in his areas. Accordingly the 42 Anchals were sub-divided into 420 blocks. Each block is now in charge of a Karamchari. These 420 blocks have been grouped into 42 units, each unit is in charge of a Circle Inspector and in the ultimate set up it is proposed to place one Gazetted Officer in charge of each Anchal-cum-Development Block. It has not been so far possible to post one Gazetted Officer to each Anchal due to paucity of officers. But, however, a Gazetted Officer of the rank of Sub-Deputy Collector has been posted at Kodarma, Ramgarh, Bagodar, Sadar, Tandwa, Bermo-cum-Nawaddi, Giridih, Dhanwar, Gawan, Pratappur, Chauran and Chatra Anchal-cum-Development Block. Each Karamchari has been given a male peon to assist him in his work. The 420 blocks are again sub-divided into 840 Gram Panchayats. One Gram Sewak will be under each Panchayat. His duty will be to assist the Mukhia in the administration of the Panchayat work. In the ultimate set up the work of rent collection will be handed over to the Gram Panchayats who will be given a commission of about 10 per cent of the rent collected.

For the administration of the N. E. S. Blocks, it has been decided that there will be one Gazetted Officer who will eventually function as Anchal Adhikari as well. Under him there will be 10 village level workers besides a contingent of technical staff such as Overseer, Veterinary Officer, Social Education Organisers, etc. Printed hand books of instructions have been issued to the Anchal Adhikaris for their guidance.

Government decided that for every Anchal-cum-N. E. S. Block an area of 15 acres of land should be selected for construction of buildings for accommodating the Officer and the staff working in an Anchal-cum-N. E. S. Block. Accordingly 15 acres of land for every Anchal have been selected and Land Acquisition proceedings have been started in respect of the *raiyati* lands selected for the purpose. The expenditure on this item was to be met by diversion of funds originally provided under "Agriculture" in the Five-Year Plan, and the amount has to be spent during the financial year 1955-56. A rough estimate of the land for which Land Acquisition proceeding has been resorted to has been sent to the Development Commissioner. A type plan has been prepared for construction of buildings and tenders were invited for the purpose. Construction work has been started in some of the Anchal-cum-N. E. S. Blocks, viz., Dumri, Bengabad, etc., and it is expected

that action for construction of buildings in the remaining blocks will be taken up as soon as the Land Acquisition proceeding is complete.

CULTIVATING TENANCIES.

Before the passing of the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950 the cultivating tenancies of the district were divided into tenure-holding cultivators, raiyats and under-raiyats on the basis of Chapter VI of the Settlement Report. Tenure-holding cultivators were either khuntkattidars or doami thikadars with the exception of one Mundari khuntkatti tenure-holder in Gola.

KHUNTKATTI TENURES.

In the case of the khuntkatti tenures the descendants of the original founders had the rights of cultivating the lands which they originally added clearing the jungle. They also collected the rents of their relatives, or of the outsiders who from time to time had been admitted to their villages. The task of collecting the rents might have been in the hands of a single member, or divided with others and all such were technically tenure-holders by virtue of their function of receiving rent. Those who did not discharge that function were technically not tenure-holders and were recorded as khuntkatti raiyats. Im

The cultivating tenancies of the district underwent a drastic change with the passing of the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950. All the intermediaries of the tiller of the soil either tenure-holders, under-tenure-holders or landlords have disappeared for good and to all intents and purposes there remained only the tiller of the soil and the State Government.

The tenancies of the district now can be divided under two categories :—(1) the tenants who held land directly under the State Government and (2) the Mundari khuntkatti tenancies. The Mundari khuntkatti tenancy, however, still exists as this tenure had been exempted from the operation of the Bihar Land Reforms Act. The origin and incidents of this class of tenancy are described in Chapter V of the Settlement Report of Ranchi, in which they are numerous and important. V. I

It is difficult to say the exact number of settled raiyats in this district as the outgoing landlords did not part with their jamabandi registers. Since the Survey Settlement of 1906-09 no Revisional Settlement has been made in the district. The Land Reforms Department has been collecting the statistics of holdings by means of bujharat. The exact number of tenancies will only be available when bujharat is done and accepted after a proper check.

The outgoing landlords were aware of the move for the abolition of Zamindari system in the State since 1947 when the Bill relating to the acquisition of zamindaris in the State was introduced in the

Legislative Assembly. In the course of nine years that have elapsed the outgoing Zamindars have adopted themselves to the changed situation and as a result the majority of them have resorted to cultivation or business and some of them have taken recourse to service.

The jamabandis and khatians kept in the Anchal offices are being brought up-to-date by means of Bujharat but the record-of-rights cannot be properly brought up-to-date unless a revisional survey is held.

The passing over from the zamindari to the *raiyatwari* system is only the first phase of the Land Reforms. The agrarian policy of Government has not yet taken any final shape. The Land Reforms Act provides for the establishment of a Bihar Land Commission to advise the State Government generally with regard to the agrarian policy which the State Government may from time to time follow in administering the system of land tenure in the State. In the meantime, however, the State Government have been carrying programmes of works of improvement, like execution of tanks, ahars, etc., desilting of tanks for pisciculture, to provide irrigational facilities with a view to increase the food production of the district and to enable the people to supplement their cereal requirements by fish. Special attention is being paid to provide grazing grounds for cattle in village and to give educational and medicinal facilities to the tenants of the estates taken over.

COMPENSATION.

As a result of the area-wise notification under the provision of the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1857 outgoing intermediaries lodged their returns for payment of compensation. The returns lodged, however, do not contain the details required and difficulties are being felt for commuting the *ad interim* payment of compensation.

SETTLEMENT OF LAND WITH HARIJANS AND ABORIGINALS.

In order to improve the economic condition of the Harijans and Aborigines Government decided that every Harijan family should be provided with 0.05 acre of land for homestead and 5 acres of land for agricultural purposes. Accordingly a list of the Harijans and aboriginal families living in a village had to be prepared and also the vacant cultivable waste lands lying in a village demarcated for the purpose. Intensive drive was made in this district for settlement of land with such classes of people. As a result during 1954-55, 384.41 acres of lands with 167 persons were settled in Chatra subdivision. In Sadar subdivision 278.55 acres of lands were settled with scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and backward classes during the period under review consisting of 177 families. In Giridih subdivision, 2,606.19 acres of lands were settled with 1,312 families in 1955.

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