

CHAPTER IX.

ECONOMIC TRENDS AND MISCELLANEOUS OCCUPATIONS.

Some factors indicating the economic trends of the district have been indicated in different texts on 'People', 'Agriculture and Irrigation', 'Industries', 'Banking, Trade and Commerce', etc. In this text there will be some repetitions.

LIVELIHOOD PATTERN OF THE DISTRICT.

The general population has been divided into two broad livelihood categories, namely, Agricultural classes and Non-Agricultural classes in 1951 census. These two classes have been sub-divided into four groups and each group has three sub-sections. The following table will show the break-up figures of each livelihood class*:-

Principal livelihood classes.	Number.	Percent- age.	Self- support- ing.	Non- earning depend- ents.	Earning depend- ents.
1	2	3	4	5	6
A. AGRICULTURAL CLASSES	12,23,460	93.55	3,37,806	8,16,698	68,956
(i) Cultivators of land wholly or mainly owned and their dependents.	5,66,634	43.32	1,47,381	4,00,698	18,555
(ii) Cultivators of land wholly or mainly un-owned and their dependents.	2,63,347	20.12	79,765	1,71,946	11,636
(iii) Cultivating labourers and their dependents.	3,88,055	29.67	1,09,390	2,40,240	38,425
(iv) Non-cultivating owners of land, agricultural rent-receiver and their dependents.	5,424	00.44	1,270	3,814	340
B. NON-AGRICULTURAL CLASSES.	84,738	6.45	21,052	57,754	5,932
(v) Production (other than cultivation).	14,594	1.11	4,341	8,072	2,181
(vi) Commerce ..	33,684	2.57	8,750	22,801	2,133
(vii) Transport ..	1,375	0.10	412	867	96
(viii) Other services and miscellaneous sources.	35,085	2.67	7,549	26,014	1,522

* *District Census Hand-Book of Saharsa, 1951, pages 6-9.*

The perusal of the foregoing table shows that 3,58,858 persons or 27.43 per cent of the total population (13,08,198) are self-supporting, i.e., who are economically active persons. The rest 9,49,340 or 72.57 per cent of the total population are earning and non-earning dependents. The proportion of earning dependents (74,888) constitutes 5.72 per cent of the total population and they are able to supplement the income of their families. As many as 8,74,452 persons or 66.85 per cent of the total population are entirely dependent for their maintenance on the earnings of others. This large proportion of wholly dependents is composed of not only of children and old and infirm persons but also of womenfolk who in the absence of suitable handicrafts and other village industries are unable to supplement the earnings of the householders. They do, no doubt, look after their domestic duties and thereby reduce the possible expenditure on servants. A large number of women of agriculturist families particularly of such castes which are poorer, work on the fields during certain agricultural operations like sowing and harvesting. Most of the women population could be described, however, as economically dependent. The foregoing table also shows that 12,23,460 persons or 93.50 per cent of the total population falls under agricultural classes and the remaining 84,738 persons or 6.50 per cent under non-agricultural classes. It may be compared with the two neighbouring districts of Darbhanga and Purnea which have according to the census of 1951, 89.11 per cent and 87.80 per cent agriculturist population and 10.9 and 12.20 per cent non-agriculturist population respectively. The comparison with these two districts shows that Saharsa district with 93.55 per cent has got the highest population engaged in agricultural pursuits while lowest in non-agricultural pursuits with 6.55 per cent. The all-India average of agriculturist and non-agriculturist population according to the census of 1951 is 68.10 per cent and 31.90 per cent respectively while the average for Bihar is 86.04 per cent and 13.06 per cent respectively. There is no other State in India where the predominance of agricultural population is so high. This is also partially due to the systematic increase in the population of the district. It may be mentioned here that in 1961 census there has been nothing less than a population explosion in this district. There has been an accretion of 31.75 per cent of population in 1961 census and this matter has been discussed elsewhere. Detailed figures of 1961 census under different categories are, however, not available. The population associated with agriculture is most marked in Champaran and Saharsa among the districts of North Bihar.

From the perusal of the preceding table it appears that the proportion of owner cultivator, i.e., cultivators of land wholly or mainly owned (livelihood class I) is 43.32 per cent of the total population. In the North Bihar Plain as a whole owner-cultivators form 48.25 per cent of the total population.

The cultivators of land mainly unowned (livelihood class II) constitute 20.12 per cent of the total population. They are larger in Saharsa except Purnea in the North Bihar Plain. In these two districts cultivators of land mainly unowned, i.e., *bataidars* constitute more than 20 per cent of the agricultural population*.

Cultivating labourers (livelihood class III) form 29.67 per cent of the total population and 31.7 per cent of the agricultural population. The reason for the large percentage of the cultivating labourer in the district is mainly owing to the absence of alternative employment in the industries and other avenues of employment. The district has no large industries and the few cottage industries discussed elsewhere do not employ any sizeable population.

Non-cultivating owners of land and agricultural rent-receivers (livelihood class IV) number a few. They constitute about 0.44 per cent of the total population. In the North Bihar Plain their proportion is highest in Purnea (1.4 per cent). The corresponding figure for Bhagalpur is 1 per cent. This class has now been liquidated due to passing of the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950.

The non-agricultural population, as stated before, constitutes about 6.45 per cent of the total population. In production other than cultivation (livelihood class V) only 1.11 per cent of the population is absorbed. It appears that the proportion of persons deriving their means of livelihood from production other than cultivation is lowest in Bihar among the States of the Indian Union.

Commerce (livelihood class VI) absorbs 2.57 per cent of the total population. In Bihar about 3.4 per cent of the total population derives their livelihood from retail and wholesale trade or commerce.

Transport (livelihood class VII) has only 1,375 adherents or 0.10 per cent of the total population. It is because the transport services have not fully developed in the district. There are a few long distance roads with buses and trucks running all the twelve months.

Miscellaneous and other services (livelihood class VIII) includes the residual class. This class will be discussed later in the section under Miscellaneous Occupations. This class constitutes about 2.67 per cent of the total population in the district.

In the 1961 census details of livelihood pattern, as indicated above, are not yet available. They are still under compilation. But we can have some basic information of the livelihood pattern from the "Census of India—Paper no. 1 of 1962"†. According to this publication the total population of the district in 1961 was 17,23,566

* *Census of India*, 1951, vol. V, Bihar, Part I—Report, p. 74.

† Published by the Manager of Publications, Government of India Press, Delhi-8.

(males 8,86,440, females 8,37,126). For economic purposes the population has been divided into two categories—Workers and Non-workers. Out of 8,86,440 males and 8,37,126 females, 5,06,299 and 2,79,464 respectively have been enumerated under workers. Thus according to 1961 census about 45.5 per cent of the total population are workers and the rest are non-workers.

LEVEL OF PRICES.

The level of prices has a bearing both on the real income and the standard of living of the people. Rise in the prices with the income being constant lowers the purchasing power of money and affects the consumer directly.

One of the most significant economic trends since the turn of the present century is the upward rise in the prices of the agricultural products. The price-level rose much higher than in the preceding century and it affected economically the people of this area also. As mentioned elsewhere the present area of the Saharsa district remained a part of the Bhagalpur district till 31st March, 1954. Hence the picture given in the old Bhagalpur Gazetteer, regarding the level of prices of essential commodities holds good for this area also. It mentions as follows:—

“Taking four staple articles of everyday consumption we find the following prices in seers per rupee prevailed in the years given, at the end of March each year, in Bhagalpur:—

—				Wheat.	Rice.	Gram.	Salt.
1895	..	..	..	14.3	17.10	18.15	10.1
1900	..	..	..	13.4	13.14	17.14	10.0
1907	..	..	..	7.8	8.3	8.12	20.0
1908	..	..	..	9.8	8.14	12.10	20.0

The very marked rise towards the last years quoted is due directly to the extreme local scarcity that prevailed in those years and less directly to the general rise in prices that has been noticed all over India. Various explanations based on diverse economic theories have been put forward to account for this very widespread increase in the cost of the barest necessities of life. Perhaps the soundest, if not the most plausible as well, is that based mainly on considerations of currency.”*

From the perusal of the foregoing table mentioned in the quotation, it is gathered that there was a fall in the price of salt which may be attributed to the reduction of the duty on that commodity.

* *Bhagalpur District Gazetteer* by J. Byrnes (1911), pages 113-114.

In addition to the above reason, the prices of foodgrains also rose because of the malpractice of the dealers and merchants. What they did actually was that the larger firms at the chief commercial centres purchased the entire stock in the village before the local dealers could have any chance to offer a bid. There was an apprehension of scarcity in Supaul subdivision in 1902 due to low rainfall and for want of its proper distribution. But due to the timely action taken by the Collector of Bhagalpur district, the distress was averted.

As mentioned in the *Bhagalpur District Gazetteer* (1962) at pages 352-53, agriculture in Supaul and Madhepura subdivisions, which then covered the entire area of the present Saharsa district, was adversely affected by the high flood of the Kosi in 1906 and as a result the distress was severe so long the flood lasted but when the flood water receded, there was a considerable deposit of silt over the lands which gave bumper crops of *bhadai* and *aghani* in the following year. Due to surplus production in this area Bhagalpur district was saved from one of the worst famines caused due to complete failure of *bhadai* and winter crops in other parts of the district in that year. Consequently, there was also a large migration of landless labourers from the south of the district of Bhagalpur to Madhepura and Supaul subdivisions and also to rice lands of Bengal proper. The occasional rise, in later years, in the prices in Supaul and Madhepura subdivisions may also be attributed to the high floods of the Kosi which used to destroy the crops of the area. Moreover, cholera was rampant in this area from 1915 to 1916 which raised the death rate above the normal. However, in general the period, from 1911 to 1917, was good for agriculture.

The price level of most of the essential commodities in common with the other districts of the province was affected after the declaration of the First World War in 1914. At the beginning of the War the effect was not very perceptible. From 1917 onwards, the prices of imported articles like cloth, salt and kerosene oil began to increase and the position became acute. People particularly landless labourers and small artisans suffered as a result of the rise in the prices of imported commodities while the income remained almost the same. The increased prices of foodgrains improved the economic condition of the big and middle class cultivators as they began to get higher prices for their surplus produce. It is mentioned in the *Bhagalpur District Gazetteer* (1962) that the area under cultivation in Kishanganj thana of Madhepura subdivision had gone up.

The *Census Report* of 1911 mentions that Kishanganj thana borders on the water-logged area but as the river Kosi had for some years past not shown any marked tendency to shift its channels, there was a rapid expansion of cultivation in its south-eastern portion, which was till then a desolate tract of swamp and jungle.

It is also mentioned that at the time of enumeration in Kishanganj thana in 1911, there was an influx of non-resident cultivators who came with labourers to cut their crops. This extension of cultivation was partially helped by the opening of railway line from Mathahi to Madhepura in Madhepura subdivision.

During 1919 due to the aftermath of War and local famine and scarcity, the price of rice shot up to $3\frac{1}{2}$ seers per rupee in some places during July and August against 6 seers in April of the same year but this was just a temporary phase and did not last long. In 1921 the crop in Supaul and Madhepura subdivisions was slightly damaged by the Kosi floods. Agriculture also suffered to some extent in Supaul subdivision due to Kosi floods of 1927 and 1929. Murliganj, a centre of trade in jute, maize and rice in Madhepura subdivision, was connected with Bihariganj by railways—Bihariganj is still an important trade centre. It is reported that the price-level of the foodgrains remained at high level till 1929. In absence of authentic records the prices during this period, given in the revised *Purnea District Gazetteer** may be taken into account which holds good for this area also. It mentions that rice was being sold on the average 5 to 6 seers per rupee, wheat 6 to $6\frac{1}{2}$ seers and gram and maize 7 to 8 seers per rupee. It further mentions that the world-wide slump which ensued from the closing months of 1929 brought in a sharp fall in the price of foodgrains. The agriculturists were hard hit. The downward trend of the prices continued till 1938.

The result of this fall in the prices of foodgrains was rather disastrous for cultivators. The district being primarily agricultural suffered terribly as a result of the agricultural depression. Some of the recurring expenditures, namely, land revenue and interest in face of low prices of foodgrain caused great hardship to the agricultural population. Arrears in payment of land revenue became the usual feature. Suspension of and remissions in land revenue had to be granted for temporary relief, but these steps were not adequate. It affected both the landlords and the tenants because none of them could meet their obligations. Arrears of rent began to accumulate and the landlords filed rent-suits in thousands in order to escape from the laws of limitation. An important effect of this depression was that agricultural holdings began to pass into the possession of the landlords and money-lenders in execution of decrees obtained for arrear of rent and default in payment of loans taken by the mortgage of holdings. There was a slump in engagements for casual labourers.

The price-level again soared high with the declaration of the Second World War in September, 1939. The expectation of prolongation of the War made the speculators hoard the stock in anticipation of sharper rise in the price of foodgrains and other

* *District Gazetteer of Purnea* (1968), p. 396.

commodities. This man-made scarcity of commodities in the open market pushed up the prices further. An attempt was made by the Government to control the price-line and to assure a fair distribution of the available commodities by opening up of Fair Price Shops, passing ordinances and imposing various restrictions.

Consumption was restricted and free movement of commodities was curtailed. Inter-district and inter-provincial embargoes were imposed. But in spite of all this there was a lot of blackmarketing of essential commodities including cloth. The price-line could hardly be held and prices rose very high. The price control measures were to some extent responsible in halting the upward swing in prices. It may be mentioned here that due to intermittent and often delayed supply of foodgrains, kerosene oil, sugar and other essential commodities, the Fair Price Shops did not work very well. The price-level of foodgrains of general consumption (such as rice, wheat and gram) from 1946 to 1950 has been shown in the table that follows.

The partially "suppressed type" inflation of the war period made a jerky outburst in the immediate post-war period under the impact of the pent up demand. The voluntary abstinence during war period ended and the people were eager to consume more goods without sizeable increase in the volume of goods supplied because of heavy war time depreciation of plants, machinery and labour unrest.

The mean wholesale prices from 1946 to 1950 are given in the following table*:-

[Price per maund]

Year.			Rice. (medium).	Wheat (red).	Gram.
			Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1946	..	..	12.71	12.50	13.27
1947	..	..	18.79	15.58	19.66
1948	..	..	19.58	26.8	19.58
1949	..	..	23.35	23.8	14.75
1950	..	..	28.75	27.50	22.66

The above table shows the increasing tendency of the price which almost doubled itself in 1950 in comparison with the price in 1946. In 1951 the price level shot up all the more but after this

* The mean prices have been worked out from the figures given in the *District Census Hand-Book of Saharsa*, 1951, pages 100-101.

year it began to fall. This is evident from the index number of wholesale prices given below*:-

Base : September, 1939—100.

	Year.	Rice.	Wheat.	Gram.
1950	732.0	716.8	506.9
1951	829.0	748.3	612.0
1952	745.6	672.2	584.9
1953	579.3	583.0	529.6
1954	425.9	461.5	329.5

Though the index number of wholesale prices is for the whole Bihar State, it is generally applicable to this district also with minor variations. From the above tables it seems that 1951 was the peak year for the increase in the prices of the commodities.

The Second World War ended in August, 1945 and steps were taken by the Government to convert the war-economy to a peace-economy. The popular national Government was set up at the Centre in 1946 and the Congress Party returned to power in Bihar in the same year.

The acute shortage of foodgrains and their continued high prices led to an all-out effort on the part of the State Government and larger sums were placed at the disposal of the different departments so as to bring more land under cultivation and also to increase the yield per acre. But these efforts had little effect till 1951. Agriculture suffered during 1946—51 due to Kosi floods and occasionally due to drought or excessive rain in this district. Cash crops like jute started replacing paddy and this was also a reason of the prices of grains going up.

The rise in the prices of essential commodities improved the condition of the big and middle class cultivators. But landless labourers, small cultivators and people having fixed income suffered more because of the unprecedented rise in the prices of foodgrains. The rise in the level of the wages of the agricultural labourers did not fully compensate.

The State Government had advanced a large amount by way of land improvement and agriculturists' loans every year. The details have been covered elsewhere. A major portion of the district (Bhagalpur including Saharsa) allotment of Rs. 25,000 for 1944-45 for land improvement loans was advanced to the people of Madhepura and Supaul police-stations for reclamation of waste lands. Another sum of Rs. 28,000 was sanctioned for the whole district of Bhagalpur comprising Madhepura and Supaul subdivisions for food relief in the same year. Reclamation of cultivable waste lands was encouraged to increase the total yield of grains. Irrigation works

* *Bihar Statistical Hand-Book*, 1955, published by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Bihar, p. 264.

were undertaken for the same purpose. Minor Irrigation Projects under the Grow More Food Campaign were also undertaken and according to the Land Revenue Administration Report for 1950-51, 54 minor irrigation schemes were completed in Madhepura subdivision and in Supaul subdivision a *bandh* and a canal were constructed.*

There was deterioration in the material condition of the people during 1950-51 due to heavy rainfall which damaged the *bhadai* crops. Drought thereafter in the same year damaged the *aghani* crops. *Hathia* rains failed completely. These were the reasons why the price-level of agricultural produce reached its peak in 1951.

As mentioned elsewhere in order to make up the shortage of foodgrains, Government again opened Fair Price Shops in order to enable the people to purchase grains at reasonable prices but there was little relief to the people due to insufficient and irregular supplies, poor qualities of grains and defective method of distribution.

Relief work was undertaken and minor irrigation schemes were extended. *Taccavi* and Land Improvement Loans were also given. A few enterprising cultivators, acting under the spurt of high prices of agricultural produce purchased tractors and pumping sets for improving agriculture. The Agriculture Department intensified its efforts in construction of wells, *bandhs*, etc., under its Grow More Food Scheme. This department has also been trying to increase the yield per acre by distributing better seeds and chemical manure, etc.

All these measures have brought in some improvement in agriculture. The prices began to fall from the year 1952. Due to favourable rainfall in 1953 there had been bumper *aghani* and *rabi* crops in 1953-54. The supply of paddy from Nepal side to this area has also been partly responsible for a fall in the price of this commodity.

But after 1954 the prices again began to rise. Though the figures of the prices of different commodities in the district are not available, but the prices per maund prevailing at Patna in September, 1954 and in Bihar State in September, 1957 which hold good for this district also, are shown here:—

Year.	Rice (medium).	Wheat (red).	Gram.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
September, 1954 **	16.0	14.0	10.50
September, 1957 †	24.72	17.86	14.15

* *Bhagalpur District Gazetteer*, 1962, p. 362.

** *Quarterly Bulletin of Statistics, Bihar*, October, 1954, published by Director of Economics and Statistics, Bihar, p. 101.

† *Quarterly Bulletin of Statistics, Bihar*, October, 1957, p. 36.

The prices in 1957 were fairly high in comparison with the prices in 1954 but they were, however, less when compared with the prices prevailing in 1949, 1950 and 1951.

The slight upward movement in prices since 1957 still continues. After October, 1962 the big merchants and dealers tried to hoard essential commodities consequent upon the Chinese aggression to make unjustifiably higher profit and as such the price-level has gone up. But efforts are being made to stabilise the price-level. The working of the Fair Price Shops has been tightened up and control has been imposed upon sugar.

The Kosi barrage as mentioned elsewhere has been completed only in 1963. This project is a multi-purpose scheme and is calculated to irrigate thousands of acres more in Saharsa district along with large areas of Purnea and Darbhanga districts. It is expected that the people of Saharsa will be saved from the constant and often unexpected floods. It is expected that the agricultural prospects will considerably improve because of barrage and the irrigation canals that have been taken out of the barrage. The agricultural economy of the district, more or less, dependent on the vagaries of Kosi as much as on the rainfall is now bound to improve. The control of one turbulent factor has been hailed with joy as this will open out much better agricultural prospect.

LEVEL OF WAGES.

The discussion on the level of wages in the recently published rewritten *District Gazetteer of Bhagalpur* may be looked into for the general trends of the wages prevailing till 1954 when Saharsa was a part of Bhagalpur district. The level of wages naturally went up with the rise in the prices of the essential commodities discussed earlier.

The study of wage-level is essential for a proper understanding of the standard of living of the peoples. Trend in wages can be studied under two heads—agricultural wages and non-agricultural wages.

So far the statistics of agricultural wages are concerned, they are very unsatisfactory and till recently no such data were collected on a uniform basis. Generally landless people who reside in rural areas offer themselves for agricultural labour. The cultivators who possess a large area of land require to engage labour and the small cultivators themselves do the agricultural work with the help of the members of their families. The agricultural labourers are of two types—one of permanent nature and the other of casual nature. Further, heavy agricultural operations like ploughing, irrigation and threshing, etc., are done by the male labourers, while lighter work such as transplantation and reaping is shared by women. The

variations in prices of food-crops did not affect them much as long as there were any agricultural operations in progress yielding a crop worth harvesting.

The *District Gazetteer of Bhagalpur* published in 1911 gives the wages of certain categories of labour for a few earlier years:—

			1895.	1900.	1905.
			Annas.	Annas.	Annas.
Carpenter—					
Superior	..	..	8	8	8
Common	..	..	5	5	5
Blacksmith—					
Superior	..	..	8	8	8
Common	..	..	6	6	6
Gharami (i. e., thatcher, etc.)			6	6	6
Cooly—					
Man	..	..	3	3	3
Woman	..	..	1—6	1—6	1—6
Boy	..	..	1—6	1—6	1—6

It is found that from 1895 to 1916 there has not been any marked increase in the daily rate of wages. On the contrary it is evident from the following table that the daily rate of wages for a carpenter in 1916 was less than that of 1895, or 1900 or 1905. It seems that during these years (1905–1916) the wages were more or less constant. After 1916 a slight increase in the wages is noticed. A statement showing the rural wages in North Bhagalpur (which then comprised the area of Saharsa district) during the month of April, 1916 and 1924 is given here* :—

Year.	Skilled labour.					Unskilled labour.
	Blacksmith.	Carpenter.	Gharnia.	Ploughman.		
	1	2	3	4	5	6
		Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
1916	0 6 6	0 4 6	0 4 3	0 2 9	0 3 0	
1924	0 7 0	0 6 6	0 5 0	0 4 0	0 4 6	

* *Bihar Statistical Hand-Book*, 1953, pages 240-241.

The tempo of increase in the wages continued in later years. During and after the Second World War when the prices of essential commodities had an unprecedented rise, the wages were also raised to meet the situation. In 1951 the wage of a carpenter was Rs. 3.25 as against 44 nP. in 1924. A statement showing the rural wages in November, 1951 and April, 1953, 1954 and 1955 is given here*:-

Year.	Skilled labour.			Field workers.			
	Carpenter. Blacksmith. Cobbler.			Men.	Women.	Children.	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
1951	3 4 0	3 4 0	2 0 0	1 0 0	0 12 0	0 12 0
1953	2 14 4	2 14 4	2 0 0	1 0 4	0 12 0	0 12 0
1954	2 10 8	2 10 8	2 0 0	0 15 8	0 11 5	0 11 5
1955	2 3 0	2 3 0	1 8 0	0 10 9	0 10 4	0 8 4

Year.	Other agricultural labour.			Herdsmen.		
	Men.	Women.	Children.	Men.	Women.	Children.
	1	8	9	10	11	12	13
	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
1951	1 0 0	0 12 0	0 8 0	..	..	..
1953	1 0 0	0 12 0	..	0 8 0	..	..
1954	0 13 10	0 11 3	0 8 0	0 7 10	..	..
1955	0 10 6	0 10 2	0 10 0	0 6 0	..	..

The figures given in the table are for Bhagalpur district. Though Saharsa district was separated from Bhagalpur district in 1954, the separate figures relating to wages for this district up till 1955 are not available. However, the wages prevailing in Bhagalpur district may be accepted for Saharsa district also.

* Quarterly Bulletin of Statistics, Bihar, January, 1952, p. 28 and Bihar Statistical Hand-Book, 1955, pages 256-259.

From the above table it appears that the wages have been gradually decreasing. However, we find a marked increase in 1956. This is evident from the following table of rural wages for 1956 and 1957*:-

Nature of job.	Daily wages.	
	1956.	1957.
	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
Skilled labourers—		
Carpenter	3 0 0	2.17
Blacksmith	3 0 0	2.17
Cobbler	2 8 0	1.83
Field labourers—		
Men†	0 8 0	1.20
Women	1 4 0	1.17
Children	0 14 0	0.87
Other agricultural labourers—		
Men	1 6 0	1.21
Women	1 3 0	1.06
Children	Not engaged on daily wages.	
Herdsmen—		
Men	0 14 0	1.26
Women	Not engaged	
Children	Not engaged	

To ascertain the current rural wages sample surveys were conducted in 1959, 1960 and 1961 and the data are available in the *Quarterly Bulletins of Statistics* for October 1959, January 1960, July, 1960 and April, 1961, published by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Government of Bihar. A statement showing the average current daily rate of agricultural wages in a selected village in Saharsa district is given here*:-

Name of job.	Year.		
	1959.	1960.	1961.
	July to December.	April to June.	January to March.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Skilled labourers—			
Carpenter	2.50	2.83	Not available.
Blacksmith	2.50	2.83	Ditto.
Cobblers	2.00	2.00	Ditto.

* Bihar Statistical Hand-Book, 1957, pages 372—375.

† The wages of men (field labourer) in 1956 seem to be wrong. It should be Rs. 1.50 as the wages for female is Rs. 1.25 in 1956.

** Source of information—(1) *Quarterly Bulletin of Statistics, Bihar*, October, 1959, pages 116—118.

(2) *Quarterly Bulletin of Statistics, Bihar*, January 1960, pages 118—120.

(3) *Quarterly Bulletin of Statistics, Bihar*, July, 1960, pages 96—98.

(4) *Quarterly Bulletin of Statistics, Bihar*, April, 1961, pages 96—98.

Name of job.	Year.		
	1959.	1960.	1961.
	July to December.	April to June.	January to March.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Field labourers—			
Men	1.50	1.43	1.35
Women	1.50	1.50	1.02
Children	Not available	Not available	1.05
Other Agricultural labourers—			
Men	1.50	1.43	Not available.
Women	1.50	1.43	Ditto.
Children	Not available	Not available	1.05
Herdsman—			
Men	1.47½	Not available	Not available.
Women	1.12	Ditto	Ditto.
Children	0.85	1.00	..

The above two tables indicate the following conclusions :—

The daily rate of wages of a skilled labourer (carpenter, blacksmith, and cobblers) showed, on the whole a declining trend in 1957 in comparison with 1956 but again started rising from 1959 which continue till 1960. Later figures are not available. So far field labourers are concerned, the average daily wage rate also showed a very slight declining trend in 1957 but started rising from July, 1959. But this could not continue long and in 1960 and 1961 gradual fall in the wage rate is noticed. The wage level of other agricultural labourers shows a fall in 1957 but in 1959 the wage went up. But again in 1960 it declined. The wages paid to herdsman show upward movement in 1957 and in 1959.

The level of rural wages discussed so far is also applicable to the urban areas to a very large extent. A separate discussion on the level of urban wages is not needed. On the average it may be said that the wage-level in the urban areas is about 25 per cent higher.

However, there are some particular professions, more or less meant only for the urban areas. For example, motor transport services are mostly concentrated in the urban areas. The monthly wages of a motor driver vary from Rs. 80 to Rs. 100 and above, of

a mechanic, Rs. 100 to Rs. 130 and above, of a cleaner, Rs. 20 to Rs. 35 and of a conductor, Rs. 45 to Rs. 60. The men of the last two categories are also given food-charge at the rate of Rs. 1.50 per day in addition to their basic pay. In Saharsa district due to absence of all weather motorable roads transport services have not developed so much as in other districts of this State.

Rice, flour and oil mills are also generally found in the urban areas. The employees of the mills are generally paid monthly wages. The monthly pay of a manager varies from Rs. 80 to Rs. 120, of a clerk, Rs. 50 to Rs. 75 and of an engine-driver, Rs. 60 to Rs. 100.

A small proportion of the urban population also consists of clerks, teachers, officers, etc., employed in the Government, semi-Government or private offices and other organisations. Though with the rise in the prices of essential commodities their pay has also been considerably raised but not in proportion to the increase in the prices.

STANDARD OF LIVING.

Standard of living is directly concerned with the livelihood pattern, the level of income, consumption preferences, level of prices and various other socio-economic factors. It would be by far the best to look into the standard of living separately for the rural and urban sectors.

In the rural sector the bulk of the people has very small agricultural holdings. A sample survey of one thousand agricultural holdings according to different size was conducted during the census operations of 1951. The results were as follows:—

Distribution of 1,000 agricultural holdings by size of holdings*.

(Based on sample survey of size of holdings, 1952)

Up to 0.5 acre.	Exceeding 0.5 acre and up to 1 acre.	Exceeding 1 acre and up to 2 acres.	Exceeding 2 acres and up to 3 acres.	Exceeding 3 acres and up to 4 acres.	Exceeding 4 acres and up to 5 acres.
1	2	3	4	5	6
326	191	174	70	75	50
Exceeding 5 acres and up to 10 acres.	Exceeding 10 acres and up to 15 acres.	Exceeding 15 acres and up to 30 acres.	Exceeding 30 acres and up to 50 acres.	Exceeding 50 acres.	
7	8	9	10	11	
57	25	25	7	..	

* District Census Hand-Book, Saharsa, 1951, page 91.

From the perusal of the figures, it is apparent that 32.6 per cent of agricultural holdings in this district are up to 0.5 acre in size and 17.4 per cent falls below 2 acres. Agricultural holdings with a size exceeding 5 acres and more constitute only 11.4 per cent of the total agricultural holdings.

The same ancestral plot goes on being sub-divided through succession and there does not seem to be any abatement in the number of dependents.

As the prices of the essential commodities have gone up at a much higher rate than that of the wages, the labourer feels difficulty in meeting the expenditure of even most necessary commodities. They do not get an uninterrupted employment and have to sit idle for many days in the year. Persons with small holdings particularly if a member of the family has been able to secure some services elsewhere are better than the landless agricultural labourers. If the family is small and there are no litigations and extravagance on social matters, the average family with small holdings over 5 acres and below 15 acres can somehow meet the expenditure and have a few of basic comforts. The middle class agriculturist with a sizeable holding (i.e., above 15 acres up to 30 acres) has an income to assure a fair living but they sometimes get indebted because of small commitments and litigations, etc. Expenditure on the education of children is a heavy drain as the son of an agriculturist normally does not want to be a cultivator only.

The pattern of and preferences for consumption of labourers and small cultivators in a number of villages in Tribeniganj, Pratapganj, Udakishanganj, Kahra and Murliganj Blocks are the same. Their main diet consists of rice, maize, *marua* and *kodo* and cheap vegetables. The expenditure on sugar, spices, fuel and kerosene oil is cut down as much as possible. Fish is cheaper in this district and it forms an item in the diet, particularly in summer when it is the cheapest. Footwear is not common in rural areas. The children are not educated and have to supplement the income of the family by sharing agricultural operations.

The food for the middle class agricultural families consists of rice, wheat, maize, gram, pulses, vegetables, milk and fish. Tea has now percolated in the interior and the consumption of sugar is on increase. Betel (*Pan*) and tobacco-chewing has become common particularly with the Maithil Brahmins.

The large cultivators who number a few have a higher standard of living but they are also sometimes indebted because of the social habits and extravagance.

In the urban areas in Saharsa district the pattern of living is almost the same as in other districts of Bihar. Discussions on this subject in the other revised District Gazetteers broadly apply to this district as well.

The huge expenditure on social commitments swallows a large part of the income. It was found that even a man with an average income of Rs. 300 per month spends near about Rs. 400 in the year over purchase of cloth. On being questioned the head of the family told the investigator that he has to buy a large number of *dhotis* and *saris* every year on the occasion of Durga Puja, Holi, etc. Any death in the joint family means some expenditure. In marriages, etc., the accent is more on expenditure even at the cost of contracting debts. To purchase books and newspapers is one of the least items even in an educated family with an income of Rs. 300 per month.

The standard of living is definitely going up in the urban areas. More of the purchase of consumer goods is an index. Cosmetics, watches, bicycles, scooters, radios, sewing machines, utility furniture, better clothes and shoes, etc., are now to be seen in the families of high, middle and upper classes. Expenditure on such items is not grudged. Food preferences are also undergoing changes in the middle and upper classes particularly in the urban areas.

FAMILY BUDGET.

Family budgets are useful to some extent to appreciate the economic trends. The four family budgets of persons representing different income-groups were studied. In the urban areas, rickshaw-pullers, *darwans*, *chowkidars*, office peons and hawkers come under the low income-group with an income of Rs. 115 or below per month. The family budget of a rickshaw-puller which represents the low income-group was studied. The family has five units consisting of one adult male, two adult females and four children aged about 4, 6, 8 and 10 years. Both the husband and the wife are earning members. The wife works as a part-time maid-servant and gets about Rs. 25 per month. On the average the rickshaw-puller earns Rs. 3 a day. The total income therefore comes to Rs. 115 out of which the owner of the rickshaw has to be paid Rs. 30 per month. The items of monthly expenditure were found to be as follows:—

				Rs.
(1) Rickshaw-rent	..	..	..	30.00
(2) Rice	..	..	..	23.50
(3) Flour	..	..	..	10.00
(4) Pulse	..	..	..	5.00
(5) Mustard oil	..	..	..	4.50
(6) Vegetables	..	..	..	5.00
(7) Medicine	..	..	..	2.00
(8) Entertainment (mostly in visiting cinema)				5.00
(9) Clothing	..	..	..	10.00
(10) Spices	..	..	..	2.00

(11) Fuel	..	..	..	5.00
(12) Kerosene oil	..	..	..	1.00
(13) House rent	..	..	..	5.00
(14) Intoxication and tea, <i>biri</i> , <i>pan</i> , etc.	..	..	..	20.00
(15) Miscellaneous	..	..	..	2.00
(16) Fish or meat	..	..	..	2.00
TOTAL				132.00

The budget shows a deficit of Rs. 17.00. It is peculiar that a rickshaw-puller will have an entertainment expenditure of Rs. 5 per month. It was ascertained that the rickshaw-pullers are very keen about seeing cinemas. There is no expenditure on fruits, education or domestic services. Usually the rickshaw-puller gets into some debts if he has the vice of drinking. The expenditure on intoxication seems too much for a person of such poor income.

The family budget of a teacher with an income between Rs. 115 to Rs. 250 showed an expenditure of Rs. 165 per month. The teacher, however, would occasionally take up private coaching and try to supplement his income.

The budget of the teacher was found to be at par with that of office-assistants whose monthly income is about Rs. 150.

The income of the middle class people varies from Rs. 250 to Rs. 600 per month. Provincial gazetted officers, engineers, professors, lawyers, headmasters of high or multi-purpose schools and middle class cultivators constitute the major portion of this income-group. In this connection the family budget of a Provincial gazetted officer was studied.

The family of the officer consists of husband, wife, three children aged about 3, 5 and 7 years, three adult dependents and one servant. The entire unit of the family comes to $7\frac{1}{2}$.

The family budget consists of the following items of expenditure:—

	Rs.
(1) Rice (only transport cost from village)	5
(2) Wheat	20
(3) Vegetables	15
(4) Mustard oil	12
(5) Spices	4
(6) Milk	20
(7) Sugar	8

				Rs.
(8) Fish or meat	..	..	..	10
(9) Tea	..	..	..	5
(10) Coal	..	..	..	12
(11) Electric charges	..	..	..	10
(12) Clothes	..	..	..	30
(13) Medicine	..	..	..	10
(14) Education	..	..	..	20
(15) Transport	..	..	..	10
(16) Entertainment	..	..	..	10
(17) House rent	..	..	..	42
(18) <i>Pan</i> (betel) and cigarette	..	..	..	10
(19) Dhobi and barber	..	..	..	10
(20) Cosmetics	..	..	..	10
(21) Miscellaneous	..	..	..	20
(22) Life Insurance	..	..	..	40
(23) Provident Fund	..	..	..	100
(24) Salary of the servant	..	..	..	10
TOTAL			..	443

The expenditure on pulse and *ghee* has not been shown as they are brought from home. The total monthly income of the officer is Rs. 495 and so the budget shows a net saving of Rs. 52 per month. Moreover, a sum of Rs. 140 which is deposited in the Life Insurance and in the Provident Fund also indirectly adds to the monthly saving and thus the real monthly saving comes to Rs. 192.

Under the fourth category comes the big cultivators and highly paid officers whose income exceeds Rs. 600 per month. The family budget of a highly placed personnel in the educational institution was studied. His monthly income is near about Rs. 1,300. His family consists of 10 units excluding two adult sons who are reading in the Birla Institute of Technology, Ranchi.

The items of his monthly expenditure are as follows:—

				Rs.
(1) Rice	..	..	..	60
(2) Wheat	..	..	..	40
(3) Pulse	..	..	..	15
(4) Spices	..	..	..	10
(5) Mustard oil	..	..	..	20
(6) Ghee	..	..	..	25

				Rs.
(7) Milk	..	..	..	30
(8) Fish or meat	..	..	..	15
(9) Vegetables	..	..	..	60
(10) Tea and coffee	..	..	..	20
(11) Sugar	..	..	..	20
(12) Education (on two sons who are reading in • Birla Institute of Technology, Ranchi).				350
(13) Medicine	..	..	..	15
(14) Transport (including petrol for jeep and railway fare).				100
(15) Clothes	..	..	..	100
(16) House rent	..	..	..	Free.
(17) Festivals	..	..	..	25
(18) <i>Pan</i> , <i>bidi</i> and cigarette	..	..	..	10
(19) <i>Dhobi</i> and barber	..	..	..	15
(20) Salary of the servant, driver and tutor			..	75
(21) Miscellaneous	..	..	..	50
(22) Life Insurance	..	..	..	75
(23) Provident Fund	..	..	..	100
(24) Postal savings	..	..	..	10
(25) Entertainment to guests (tea party)			..	25
TOTAL				.. 1,265

The net monthly saving comes to Rs. 35 only but the real saving amounts to Rs. 210 including the deposit of Rs. 100 in the Provident Fund and Rs. 75 in the Life Insurance Corporation.

ECONOMIC INCIDENCE OF THE PANDAS OF SINGHESHWARSTHAN.

A particular section following the profession of priesthood was studied. There are only 14 Panda families at Singheshwarsthan with a total population of 208 persons. All the families are carrying on their traditional profession of priesthood and agriculture. They do not prefer to take up other occupations.

Every family has got a share in the offerings presented to the deity. The share has been fixed conventionally and it varies with individual family. The temple is run under a Committee which is controlled by the Bihar State Board of Religious Trusts, Patna. All the offerings presented to the deity are deposited in a box which is

opened by the manager of the Singheshwar Trust Committee in the presence of all the share-holders. After keeping apart the amount spent over the maintenance of the temple and other items of expenditure such as performance of *puja*, etc., the balance is divided. Two-thirds of the amount goes to the Pandas while one-third is deposited in the Trust Committee as reserve fund.

On the average a family of the Pandas gets about Rs. 100 from his share in the offerings and Rs. 100 from the pilgrims for the personal services. These personal services include looking after the pilgrims and showing them round. Thus the total monthly income from the temple comes to Rs. 200 per family.

The next source of income of the Pandas is their own cultivation. The land, they possess, is generally fertile due to the deposit of silt by the Kosi river during its flood period. The minimum yield per bigha is calculated to be five maunds of grain. Taking the average price of one maund to be Rs. 15, the total price of the produce comes to Rs. 75. But about Rs. 15 is spent over agricultural expenses and hence the real income from one bigha of land comes to Rs. 65 per annum.

The fourteen Panda families may be divided into three economic groups from the income point of view, viz., low, middle and upper. Out of the 14 families, four families which possess land between 50 to 100 bighas may be placed in the upper income-group, four families possessing land between 35 to 15 bighas in the middle income-group and the other six families with land below 15 bighas to 5 bighas in the low income-group.

The family in the low income-group on the average possesses 9 bighas of land. On the basis of the income per bigha as calculated earlier, the average family of this group gets Rs. 45 per month from cultivation. The income from the temple is about Rs. 200. Thus the total income both from the temple and the land comes to about Rs. 245 per month. The average family of this income-group consists of three males (adult), three females (adult) and five children. The entire unit comes to 8½. The items of expenditure of the family under this income-group are as follows:—

					Rs.
(1) Food	..	..	..	..	150
(2) Spices	..	..	..	..	4
(3) Oil	..	..	..	..	8
(4) Fuel	..	..	..	..	8
(5) Vegetables	..	..	..	..	10
(6) Medicine	..	..	..	..	10
(7) Transport	..	..	..	..	15

	Rs.
(8) Social and religious obligations (<i>Upanayan</i> , marriage, festivals, etc.).	35
(9) Clothing	35
(10) Miscellaneous including <i>bidi</i> , <i>khaini</i> and <i>pan</i> ..	25
(11) Land revenue	2
TOTAL ..	302

The family budget of Rs. 302 as against the monthly income of Rs. 245 shows a deficit of Rs. 57. The Pandas under this group generally take loan for meeting the expenditure to be incurred on performing social and religious obligations. The field investigation shows that the incidence of debt is common in the families under this income-group.

They borrow interest-free money from the Singheswar Trust Committee on the security of their share in the temple. A sum of Rs. 2,000 has been advanced to the Pandas as loan during 1961-62 by the said Committee.

The total landed property belonging to the families of middle income-group is 90 bighas. The average family under this income-group possesses 22.5 bighas of land. The total monthly income from cultivation is calculated to be Rs. 112.50 per family from cultivation. The income from the temple is about Rs. 200. Thus the total income of the family both from the temple and the land comes to Rs. 312.50 per month. The average family consists of 18 members, i.e., 5 males (adult), 5 females (adult) and 8 children. The entire unit comes to 14. The items of monthly expenditure of the family under this income-group are as follows:—

	Rs.
(1) Food	200
(2) Spices	5
(3) Oil	10
(4) Fuel	4
(5) Vegetables	10
(6) Education	10
(7) Medicine	10
(8) Transport	15
(9) Social and religious obligations	35
(10) Clothing	35
(11) Miscellaneous	25
(12) Land revenue	5
TOTAL ..	364

The total expenditure of Rs. 364 as against the income of Rs. 312.50 shows a deficit of Rs. 51.50 per month. The families take loan only on the occasion of marriage or *Upanayan* (sacred thread-wearing ceremony), etc., which involves heavy expenditure. However, the incidence of indebtedness in the middle income-group is less than that of the low income-group. The expenditure on fuel in this group is less than that of the low income-group. The reason is that as the families under this group possess more lands, they get fuel from their fields to a larger extent and hence they have to spend less for purchasing the same. Any expenditure on servants has not been taken into consideration. The expenses on this account, if incurred, are small.

Under the upper income-group there are four Panda families and the total land, they possess, is about 292 bighas. Thus the average family possesses about 73 bighas of land and its monthly income from cultivation comes to Rs. 365. The minimum income from the temple may be taken as Rs. 200. Thus the total income both from the temple and the land amounts to Rs. 565 per month. But this amount may be taken as the minimum. The real income of the family may be higher as the families under this group have greater percentage of share in the temple and hence their income from the temple is higher than that of the families under the low and middle income-groups. The average number of members in the family of the upper income-group comes to about 17, i.e., 5 males (adult), 4 females (adult) and 8 children. The entire unit comes to 13. The items of average monthly expenditure of the families under this income-group are as follows:—

	Rs.
(1) Food	200
(2) Spices	5
(3) Oil	10
(4) Fuel	4
(5) Vegetable	10
(6) Education	15
(7) Medicine	10
(8) Transport	25
(9) Social and religious obligations	40
(10) Clothing	40
(11) Miscellaneous	25
(12) Land revenue	15
TOTAL	399

The monthly budget of Rs. 399 as against an income of Rs. 565 per month shows a saving of Rs. 166. The saving is understood to be invested in purchasing lands and also in advancing loans to the needy Pandas. Some of the Pandas of this group deposit nearly 50 per cent of the savings in the postal savings banks. The families of this income-group have also *pucca* houses. The families of the low and middle income-groups do not possess such houses.

The expenditure on milk and *ghee* has not been shown in any of the budgets as the Pandas irrespective of economic groups, generally rear milch cattle (i.e., cows and she-buffaloes). From them they get milk and prepare milk-products.

From the family budgets of the different income-groups it appears that the economic condition of the persons under low and middle income-groups which constitute 71.6 percentage is not good.

The average number of members in a Panda family is about 15 which leads one to think that there is excessive population growth. The large size of the Panda family is also one of the reasons of their poor economic condition. If family planning, which they do not like, is not adopted their present economic position will further deteriorate.

Moreover, their absolute dependence on the land and the temple for their livelihood is also a hurdle. In view of the small holdings which the majority of the families possess and a large number of members in their families it is but essential to get some members engaged in other occupations. The educational backwardness is also a factor for their poor condition. The field investigation shows that none of the Panda families has produced so far a school teacher, a lawyer or a doctor. Thus the Pandas here may be said to have been caught in a whirlpool created by themselves and unless they assert themselves and get out of the whirlpool, their future is definitely dark.

Unlike the Pandas of Baidyanathdham or Varanasi, the Pandas of Singheshwar have no houses to be rented to the pilgrims and as such they do not normally offer the facility of lodging to the pilgrims. The flow of pilgrims cannot be as high as that of at Baidyanathdham (Deoghar) or Varanasi partly because of bad communications in the district and partly due to the fact that the temple at Singheshwar is not so famous as that of Deoghar and Varanasi.

Singheshwarsthan, a famous religious place, has no railway connection. But the place is linked with Madhepura—its sub-divisional town—by a metalled road. Madhepura is connected by railway with Saharsa, the district headquarters, and also with Bihari-ganj, a trade centre in the district *via* Banmankhi. The bus services for Singheshwar are available at Madhepura throughout the year. Moreover, rickshaws are always available at Madhepura to take the pilgrims to this place.

LEVEL OF EMPLOYMENT.

The total number of employable persons in the district is not available and as such it is not possible to gauge the extent of employment or unemployment. However the *District Census Hand-Book of Saharsa*, 1951 gives figures relating to persons (with their dependents) deriving their livelihood from agricultural and non-agricultural occupations. This gives some help.

As mentioned earlier 93.55 percentage of the total population of the district is dependent on agriculture and 6.45 percentage on other pursuits. As the agricultural operations, in which labour is engaged, last nearly for five or six months in a year, it can be said that the agricultural labour remains practically unemployed for about half of the year. The employment in agricultural operations is purely seasonal. The incidence of employment in agricultural operations also varies and depends on the condition of the crops and other factors. During the years of Kosi floods when crops were destroyed, there was acute problem of unemployment for agricultural labourers. But with the completion of Kosi barrage and embankments now the area is generally saved from flood, but due to absence of irrigation the cultivation depends on rain which is uncertain, and with this the employment of agricultural labour is also uncertain.

According to 1951 census only 6.45 percentage of the total population depends on other non-agricultural occupations. Their fate is more secure and they are employed mostly for the whole year. The number of persons engaged in different non-agricultural pursuits according to 1951 census is given*:-

Nature of employment.	Number of persons.
All industries and services	21,052
(a) Primary Industries not elsewhere specified	2,179
(b) Mining and quarrying	16
(c) Processing and manufacturing foodstuffs, textiles, leather and products thereof.	1,172
(d) Processing and manufacturing metals, chemicals and products thereof.	471
(e) Processing and manufacturing not elsewhere specified.	503
(f) Construction and utilities	3,485
(g) Commerce	8,750
(h) Transport, storage and communication ..	560
(i) Health, Education and Public Administration.	1,755
(j) Services not elsewhere specified ..	2,161

* *District Census Hand-Book of Saharsa*, 1951, pages 26-42.

The small percentage (i.e., 6.45 per cent) and the break-up figures of the persons employed in non-agricultural pursuits show the very backward position of the district from industrial point of view.

With the creation of Saharsa district in 1954 a number of offices had to be opened. Moreover, with the expansion of certain small-scale industries under the National Extension Service and with the sponsoring of the programme of rural economic uplift, a greater number of persons have been employed. A large number of Government offices and residential buildings were and are still being built in which the local urban labour has had been engaged. The execution of the Kosi Project schemes also provided employment not only to the people of this district but also to a large number of technical and non-technical hands of other districts.

But with the completion of Kosi embankments and barrage and also many buildings, the demand for local labour is on the decline. In the decade (i.e., 1951-61) that followed, there could not have been any substantial shift of the trends although the number of persons employed might have slightly gone up. Saharsa has still no place in the industrial picture of Bihar. But the district appears to have some potential for the development of paper, sugar and jute industries. If these industries could be developed, the unemployment problem will be partially solved. But with the poor communication system it will be a long way before the district could be even partially industrialised.

EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGE.

The following figures furnished by the Saharsa Employment Exchange office show the total number of persons registered, vacancies notified and the persons placed in employment from 1956 to 1962:—

Year.	Total number of persons registered during the year.	Total number of vacancies notified.	Total number of persons placed in employment.
1956	1,629	391	127
1957	600	75	29
1958	567	183	14
1959	996	168	36
1960	1,803	387	49
1961	1,544	312	119
1962	4,588	1,675	369

The table shows that the number of persons registered has been fluctuating. However, for the last three years the number has swelled up considerably. The probable reason is that Saharsa is a new developing district and its population has increased largely. Moreover, the number of persons passing secondary or higher secondary and university examinations and thereafter seeking jobs has also been increasing every year. The number of persons seeking technical jobs is a few only. In view of the large number of job-seekers registered in the District Employment Exchange, the number of persons placed in employment is not encouraging.

District Employment Exchange, Saharsa supplied the following figures with regard to the persons employed in the public sector from 30th September 1958 to 31st March 1963:—

Date.	Average number of persons employed in the public sector.	
30th September, 1958	..	11,358
31st December, 1958	..	10,896
31st March, 1959	..	10,716
30th June, 1959	..	12,626
30th September, 1959	..	13,052
31st December, 1959	..	13,973
31st March, 1960	..	16,967
30th June, 1960	..	14,462
30th September, 1960	..	15,383
31st December, 1960	..	15,905
31st March, 1961	..	16,343
30th June, 1961	..	15,529
30th September, 1961	..	16,451
31st December, 1961	..	17,186
31st March, 1962	..	16,465
30th June, 1962	..	15,404
30th September, 1962	..	15,402
31st December, 1962	..	13,877
31st March, 1963	..	14,461

The persons employed in the public sector include the employees of Central Government, Quasi-Central Government, State Government and Local Bodies.

The perusal of the foregoing table clearly shows that the figures have been fluctuating. The reasons are:—

- (i) Recruitment and retrenchment of workers engaged in construction of Kosi embankments at Birpur, Nirmali, Supaul, Murliganj and other places; and
- (ii) Recruitment and retrenchment of the seasonal workers under Anti-Malaria Department.

The District Employment Exchange has not yet been able to do much work. The placement brought about through this agency is poor. There is more of a craze to get into clerical jobs than in technical jobs. The agency is not resorted to in many cases by the employer.

NATIONAL PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.

For an all-round development of rural economy, the work on Community Development Projects was started after the independence of the country. The Community Development Projects try to give effect to an intensive and comprehensive programme covering all the aspects of rural life, e.g., agriculture, rural cottage type industries, education, housing, health, recreation, etc., and aim at utilising under a democratic set up the surplus labour force in the rural areas for developmental purpose.

Following are the details of Community Development Blocks in the district as supplied by the Development section of the Collectorate at Saharsa:—

Serial no.	Name of Community Development Block.	Name of Block headquarters.	Subdivision.	Date and year of starting.
1	Kahra—Stage II ..	Kahra ..	Sadar ..	1st June 1954.
2	Kishanganj—Stage II ..	Kishanganj ..	Madhepura ..	1st April 1955.
3	Raghopur—Stage II ..	Raghopur ..	Supaul ..	1st April 1955.
4	Murliganj—Stage II ..	Murliganj ..	Madhepura ..	14th October 1955.
5	Tribeniganj—Stage II ..	Tribeniganj ..	Supaul ..	1st October 1956.
6	Chhatapur—Stage II ..	Chhattapur ..	Supaul ..	1st April 1956.
7	Sourbazar—Stage II ..	Sourbazar ..	Sadar ..	26th January 1957.
8	Alamnagar—Stage II ..	Alamnagar ..	Madhepura ..	1st April 1957.
9	Sonbarsa—Stage II ..	Sonbarsa ..	Sadar ..	1st April 1958.
10	Basantpur—Stage I ..	Basantpur ..	Supaul ..	2nd October 1957.
11	Chousa—Stage I ..	Chousa ..	Madhepura ..	1st April 1959.
12	Kumarkhand—Stage I ..	Kumarkhand ..	Madhepura ..	1st October 1958.
13	Singheshwar—Stage I ..	Singheshwar ..	Madhepura ..	1st April 1959.
14	Pipra—Stage I ..	Pipra ..	Supaul ..	1st April 1961.
15	Madhepura—Stage I ..	Madhepura ..	Madhepura ..	1st October 1961.
16	Supaul ..	Supaul ..	Supaul ..	1st April 1962.
17	Dharhara ..	Nowhatta ..	Sadar ..	1st October 1962.
18	Kisanpur—Stage I ..	Kisanpur ..	Supaul ..	1st October 1962.
Pre-extension Block.				
19	Marauna ..	Nirmali ..	Supaul ..	1st April 1962.
20	Mahisi ..	Bangaon ..	Sadar ..	1st April 1962.
21	Nirmali ..	Nirmali ..	Supaul ..	1st October 1962.

The table below was supplied by the Development Section, Saharsa and will give the details regarding achievements of Community Development Programme and National Extension Service (Blockwise) for the last ten years:—

Item.	Names of the Blocks.									
	Kahra.	Kishan-ganj.	Ragho-pur.	Murli-ganj.	Tribeni-ganj.	Chhatta-pur.	Sour-bazar.	Alam-nagar.	Basant-pur.	Son-barsa.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Distribution of improved seeds (mds.).	10,747.37	6,860	12,342	10,342	13,309	11,201	15,529	17,342	15,431	12,432
2. Distribution of chemical fertilisers (mds.).	1,710.5	1,036	1,108	1,403	1,708	1,215	1,731	1,445	1,132	1,041
3. Number of compost pits	10,761	5,474	14,241	5,152	10,912	8,577	5,604	3,380	8,254	8,502
4. Use of green manures (acres)	5,071.8	2,846	1,298	1,406	2,147	2,413	10,467	10,438	8,312	5,365
5. Cultivation by Japanese method (acres).	1,301	821	2,375	2,076	1,900	2,299	5,053	2,588	2,710	2,952
6. Number of village level workers	31	28	26	22	24	20	28	13	15	20
7. Number of seed multiplication fodder.	1	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	1	1	1	1	1
8. Pucca wells constructed (no.)	53	37	41	82	52	31	31	29	23	27
9. Kutchha wells constructed (no.)	47	39	17	21	14	11	13	9	11	9
10. Medium Irrigation Schemes completed.	Nil	Nil	1	Nil	Nil	1	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
11. Small-scale Irrigation Schemes completed.	29	17	26	10	13	46	10	5	32	Nil
12. Number of schools opened	80	107	91	81	104	69	104	58	47	83
13. Artificial insemination centres and sub-centres.	Nil	1	4	Nil	Nil	1	2	Nil	15	1
14. Number of co-operative societies.	47	31	45	43	44	44	49	34	28	49
15. Number of development works including Youth Clubs, library, etc., undertaken by Gram Panchayats.	185	112	89	79	83	63	71	81	69	53

Item.	Names of the Blocks.										26 Rev.
	Chousa.	Kumar.	Singhesh-	Pipra.	Madhe-	Supaul.	Dhar-	Kisan-	Kisan-	Mahist.	
1. Distribution of improved seeds (mnds.).	2,644	1,905	1,346	9,818	2,312	2,149	1,843	1,432	1,369	1,129	22
2. Distribution of chemical ferti- lisers (mnds.).	1,146	1,213	1,012	1,032	831	931	842	981	1,082	731	21
3. Number of compost pits ..	4,818	3,731	3,643	2,244	2,232	1,797	1,783	2,190	2,149	1,412	20
4. Use of green manures (acres)	471	2,493	6,440	1,188	N.A.*	1,600	4,029	1,214	1,142	943	19
5. Cultivation by Japanese method (acres).	2,358	1,196	790	987	1,291	405	1,941	1,164	1,235	1,346	18
6. Number of village level workers	15	21	29	17	24	21	12	19	38	4	17
7. Number of seed multiplica- tion fodder.	NH	1	NH	1	2	NH	1	1	1	1	16
8. Pucca wells constructed (no.)	19	34	52	26	28	22	19	17	21	19	15
9. Kutecha wells constructed (no.)	7	11	13	9	7	9	1	6	9	6	14
10. Medium Irrigation Schemes completed.	NH	1	1	NH	NH	NH	1	NH	NH	NH	13
11. Small-scale Irrigation Schemes completed.	NH	9	NH	NH	NH	NH	7	NH	NH	NH	12
12. Number of schools opened	111	74	99	70	93	119	67	79	69	59	11
13. Artificial insemination centres and sub-centres.	1	NH	1	1	NH	1	NH	1	NH	1	10
14. Number of co-operative societies.	18	34	47	40	61	71	32	38	32	19	9
15. Number of development works including Youth Clubs, library, etc., undertaken by Gram Panchayats.	67	71	81	47	63	71	77	59	48	58	8

*Not available.

The table below was supplied by the Development Section, Saharsa and will show the expenditure incurred in Development Programme in Saharsa district during 1962-63 and 1963-64 (August, 1963):—

[Ceiling in lakhs.]

Serial no.	Items.	Scheme in		Allotment in rupees.		Expenditure in rupees.	
		Stage II.	Stage I.				
				1962-63.	1963-64.	1962-63.	1963-64.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Block headquarters	41.20	47.50	9,04,800	8,27,093	9,00,138	2,57,172
2	Animal Husbandry and Agriculture.	12.00	13.00	1,12,800	98,532	87,370	53,254
3	Irrigation ..	44.20	51.00	2,71,500	2,59,700	75,869	41,805
4	Health and Rural Sanitation.	15.80	18.00	1,38,500	1,15,700	74,622	36,354
5	Education ..	9.20	10.40	79,500	13,133	20,960	9,578
6	Social Education	10.40	11.80	79,000	28,746	33,754	24,630
7	Communications	12.50	14.20	1,19,400	20,619	27,204	14,347
8	Industries ..	9.80	11.10	97,000	37,706	76,151	47,207
9	Housing for staff	13.20	15.20	62,000	59,373	58,503	21,301

ORGANISATIONAL PATTERN.

The Community Development Programme conforms to the all-India Pattern as adopted in the State of Bihar under the Department of Community Development, now changed to Community Development and Panchayati Raj. The Development Commissioner of the State is the Co-ordinator at State level. At the Divisional level, the Commissioner and at the District level, the District Magistrate are the co-ordinators. The District Magistrate has been vested with the powers of "Head of Department" over the finances and a large part of the administration of the Blocks except for disciplinary action over the staff not appointed by him. He is assisted in the work of co-ordination by the District Development Committee and the District Co-ordination Committee of which he is the Chairman and District Development Officer its Secretary. The District Development Committee consists of the District Magistrate, members of the State Assembly and Councils and members of Parliament representing the District population, 6 non-officials prominent in social work and 3 Subdivisional Officers of the district and all

district technical heads of the Development departments. The District Co-ordination Committee consists of the same membership as the District Development Committee minus the members of State Legislature, Parliament and non-officials and with the addition of all the Block Development Officers. The District Development Committee reviews every quarter the progress in the development block as also on all matters of development concerning the district specially with a view to assess and enthuse public participations and public co-operations. The District Co-ordination Committee reviews and clears up the administrative bottle-necks. The District Magistrate further exercises administrative control over the activities and the staff of all development departments in the district including those in the subdivision and blocks. At the Block level the Block Development Officer is the co-ordinator of the development programme though also he looks after the Revenue works in his area. He is assisted by a Block Development Committee consisting of all the Mukhiyas of the Gram Panchayats in the Block and some prominent non-officials consisting of progressive farmers, selected Secretaries of the Co-operative Societies and other social workers. The technical officers of development departments are *ex-officio* members of this Committee. The District Magistrate is the Chairman of the Committee and the Block Development Officer its Secretary.

The Block team of staff consists of the Block Development Officer, who is an officer drawn from the Bihar Civil Service executive branch or Bihar Junior Civil Service and supervisors and other staff provided by Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Education, Co-operative, Industries, Panchayats, Statistics, Medical and Public Health Departments of the State.

Block Development Committee with its five sub-committees on Finance, Agriculture, Irrigation, Education, and Works reviews and supervises the development work at the Block level and is specially responsible for obtaining public co-operation and public participation.

Drastic changes are shortly going to be introduced in a couple of years in this district as in the other parts of State for de-centralising administrative authority under the newly introduced legislation named "Panchayati Raj Act".

This law envisages transfer of administrative authority from officials to the representatives of the people elected through the Panchayats.

IMPACT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK IN SAHARSA DISTRICT.

The Community Development Project represents an integrated approach to the problem of rural uplift and development centred round agricultural production which in view of the importance of food in the country's economy, has necessarily to be in the forefront.

Its basic aim is to affect material, social and psychological improvement of the rural population, and the improvement of their technique in the matter of agricultural and industrial production. It seeks to provide such means, facilities and agencies as would create an environment in which the villager is able and willing to improve his lot by utilising the fruits of research and modern technical aids in the spheres of better agriculture, animal husbandry and health, broaden his mental horizon through increased opportunities for basic and social education, improve the social and economic life in the village by building up co-operative institutions, whether as multi-purpose societies or *Gram Panchayats*, which would help to stimulate cultural, social and educational activities.

The Community Development Programme was started in Saharsa district in 1954. Since then the programme has steadily expanded and twenty-one blocks have been established so far.

An investigation was made by the investigators in August, 1963 to make an intensive study on the impact of Community Development. For this, eight villages, namely, Kahra, Sulindabad, Agwanpur and Nariar under the Kahra Development Block with headquarters at Kahra and Ratanpatti, Rampur, Parwa and Birgaon under the Murliganj Development Block with headquarters at Murliganj were studied.

Kahra and Murliganj Blocks were started in 1954 and 1955 respectively. They cover an area of 77,763 acres and 66,770 acres with 77 and 82 villages and 31 and 42 *Gram Panchayats* respectively. According to the statistics supplied by Block office the total population of the Blocks is 1,03,497 and 97,308 persons, i.e., 52,474 and 50,320 males and 51,023 and 46,988 females respectively. A few words regarding background of the eight villages where investigation was taken up will be useful:—

- (a) *Village Kahra*.—The village is situated at a distance of about four miles south from Saharsa town. It has an area of 1,281.61 acres with 311 households and the total population is 2,308 souls, i.e., 1,199 males and 1,109 females, according to figures supplied by Block office. The total number of literates is 566, i.e., 435 males and 131 females. It has a village road on which bullock-cart can ply.
- (b) *Village Sulindabad*.—It is situated at a distance of about two miles south from Kahra, the Block headquarters, and about seven miles to the south from Saharsa, the district headquarters. It has an area of 2,221.00 acres and 557 households with a population of 4,228 souls, i.e., 2,117 males and 2,111 females, according to the figures supplied by the Block office. The total number of literates is 537, i.e., 435 males and 102

females. It has a village road and people can reach the village by bullock-cart only.

- (c) *Village Nariar*.—This village is situated at a distance of about four miles from Kahra, the Block headquarters and five miles towards north of Saharsa, the district headquarters. It has an area of 2,009.41 acres. It has 877 households and a total population of 5,227 persons, i.e., 2,714 males and 2,513 females according to the figures supplied by the Block office. The total number of literates is 514, i.e., 481 males and 33 females. The village is connected by a *kutchra* road.
- (d) *Village Agwanpur*.—Situated at a distance of about six miles north from Kahra, the Block headquarters, this village has an area of 411.68 acres. It has 88 households and a total population of 777 persons, i.e., 402 males and 375 females, according to the figures of the Block office. The total number of literates is 68, i.e., 61 males and 7 females. The village is connected by a *kutchra* road.
- (e) *Village Rampur*.—It is situated at a distance of about eight miles west of Murliganj, the Block headquarters. The area is 2,644 acres and there are 547 households. The total population according to the figures of the Block office is 3,214, i.e., 1,698 males and 1,516 females and the total number of literates is 484, i.e., 443 males and 41 females. The village is connected only by a *kutchra* road and one has to cross the Balua river to reach the village.
- (f) *Village Parwa*.—It is situated at a distance of about nine miles west of Murliganj, the Block headquarters. It has an area of 1,519 acres and has 393 households. The total population according to the figures supplied by the Block office is 2,426, i.e., 1,322 males and 1,104 females and the total number of literates is 255, i.e., 233 males and 22 females. The village is connected by a *kutchra* road.
- (g) *Village Ratanpatti*.—Situated at a distance of about eight miles towards south-west from Murliganj, the Block headquarters, this village has an area of 3,700 acres and has 1,128 households. The total population according to the figures supplied by the Block office is 6,461 persons, i.e., 3,481 males and 2,980 females and the total number of literates is 809 persons, i.e., 723 males and 86 females. The village is connected by a *kutchra* road.

- (h) *Village Birgaon*.—This village is situated at a distance of about twelve miles towards south-west of Murliganj, the Block headquarters. It has an area of 1,041 acres and has 264 households. The total population according to the 1961 census is 1,466, i.e., 837 males and 629 females and the total number of literates is 84 persons, i.e., 71 males and 13 females. The village is connected by a *kutchra* road.

It is to be noted that the villages studied had remarkably bad communications and their agricultural economy is much affected by bad communications. The impact on the different sections as found is indicated below:—

Agriculture.—It was ascertained that only 489 families out of 4,183 families had been covered by the Community Development authorities for better cultivation. The soil is sandy and the facility for irrigation is meagre. Paddy, jute, maize and *marua* are the principal crops. The Murliganj and Kahra Blocks have introduced improved seeds, better type manure, etc., to bring about a better cultivation.

In 1962-63, the Community Development Blocks sold the following quantity of improved seeds:—

Fourteen maunds to village Kahra for about 445 acres of land, twenty-eight maunds to village Sulindabad for about 715 acres of land, thirty-four maunds to village Nariar for about 742 acres of land, thirty maunds to village Agwanpur for about 181 acres of land, ten maunds to village Birgaon for about 341 acres of land, nine maunds to village Parwa for about 279 acres of land, sixteen maunds to village Rampur for about 543 acres of land and twelve maunds to village Ratanpatti for about 489 acres of land.

Very little of improved type of crops or rice cultivated by the households were, however, seen. It was gathered that the villagers ate up the seed-grains. The seed supplied was also not adequate even for agricultural purposes in villages Rampur, Parwa and Ratanpatti. Further it was ascertained that in general the villagers had a complaint that every year some influential persons were given more of improved seeds which were not properly utilised by them. It was also complained that there has been delay in the distribution of improved seeds and the seeds are supplied only when the sowing time is over. Thirdly, during 1961-62, the villagers were given improved seed without germinations which gave just the opposite result and hence, the villagers now show apathy towards utilising the improved seeds.

The following quantity of manure was sold:—

Manures.—8.5 maunds to village Kahra, 9 maunds to village Sulindabad, 12 maunds to village Nariar, 15 maunds to village Agwanpur, 7 maunds to village Ratanpatti, 18 maunds to village Rampur, 10 maunds to village Birgaon and 17 maunds to village Parwa.

The quantity distributed was quite inadequate. When questions were put by the investigators to the villagers of all the eight villages regarding the impact of manures and poor response in using the manures, they replied that everything depended on timely and adequate rainfall. The villagers think that the fertilisers alone without ample irrigation will render their lands unfertile. The investigators personally saw many maunds of chemical manures lying in the stock because of poor response. On enquiry from the Block Development Officers of both Murliganj and Kahra Blocks, it was also ascertained that the officers were facing great difficulty in disposing of the chemical fertilisers.

JAPANESE METHOD OF CULTIVATION OF PADDY.

The attempts of the Community Development Blocks to introduce the Japanese method of paddy cultivation have not been successful because of the nature of the soil and want of irrigation. The area is not suitable for this type of cultivation, without proper irrigation. Attempts to sink wells have proved unsuccessful and the people have no money to make their own arrangement for irrigation.

GENERAL.

The incidence of indebtedness is high and the investigators found that practically 75 per cent or even more of the villagers are indebted.

The Community Development Block has not been of much help to liquidate the indebtedness. The income of many of the villages is mostly swallowed up in payment of the interests for the loans.

As regards financial aid from the Community Development Block, it may be noted that no industrial loan was given in the villages studied. Only a sum of Rs. 1,789 was given to village Rampur in Murliganj Development Block in 1962 under Agricultural Loans Act. Besides, some grant has been given by the Co-operative Societies.

There has been provision by the State Government in Saharsa district to dig out jute-retting tanks in the villages because jute is also one of the main cash crops in the district. It was gathered from the papers of Murliganj Block office that three jute-retting tanks had been dug out at the village Rampur, and two at village Parwa and paid for. The system is that the villagers have to pay

50 per cent of the total cost of the tank. On visiting the villages, it was found that there were no jute-retting tanks at all in these villages.

The investigator has also visited many villages in Pratapganj, Tribeniganj and Udakishanganj Blocks and it was gathered that jute-retting tanks in these areas were not always dug out although paid for. The villagers think that the jute-retting tanks exist more on paper only. The attitude was rather depressing as to the success of Government efforts.

The villagers are also responsible for much of the poor response of any development in the rural areas, because they have mistaken the Block to be an agency for only distributing money. As for their attitude towards these programmes and their resistance to change, during the nine years that the Block has been functioning, only 20 per cent of the population have accepted any change. With the coming of the Block in Stage II, funds are not so abundantly available for granting subsidies, the people did not develop much of social consciousness or initiative and did not think it was necessary for them individually and collectively to continue the work that has been sponsored.

One of the basic ideas of Community Development Project was that, spoon feeding will be done at the initial stage and will gradually be diminished when the people will start taking up the work themselves. This objective has not been fulfilled. The villagers still think that, if a bore-hole latrine is filled up or choked up, it is none of their duty along with others to bring it back functioning but that it was the duty of the Block authorities to keep it going.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY.

Poultry farming is generally carried on by the Tribals and Muslims who form a very low percentage in the district. However, the Community Development Block began supplying the other people in the villages with improved type of birds and eggs. Of the villages visited by the investigator, Kahra was supplied with five eggs of improved type in 1962-63 to one person, Sulindabad with two birds of improved type in 1958 to two persons, Agwanpur with 8 birds and 12 eggs of improved type to seven persons, Birgaon with one bird and three eggs to one person, Rampur with two birds and seven eggs to two persons, Parwa with one bird and three eggs to one person and Ratanpatti with two birds and six eggs to two persons in 1962-63.

The birds and eggs supplied by the Animal Husbandry Department to the villages visited were quite inadequate and not much improvement was noticed. Eggs were sold out at the village *hats* at higher price and hardly utilised for hatching. A few better type birds were seen in some of the villages but they could hardly suggest a general upgrading of the standard.

The Animal Husbandry Department of Kahra and Murliganj Blocks appear to have given inadequate help for preventing diseases of the birds. The villagers of Sulindabad, Agwanpur, Nariar and Rampur complained that injections had been given to only seven birds and only fifteen tonic pills were provided during 1962-63. Village Ratanpatti was given one improved bull from Murliganj Block office but due to some reasons, bull was removed from the village after three months. There has been no perceptible improvement in the livestock of the villages visited.

EDUCATION.

Prior to the establishment of Kahra and Murliganj Development Blocks, there were only four primary schools located each at village Kahra, Rampur, Ratanpatti and Sulindabad and three middle schools at village Parwa, Nariar and Kahra. There was no high school in any of the said villages. Before the establishment of the Blocks, very little attention was paid towards education by the villagers. According to 1951 census the total number of literates in Kahra and Murliganj Blocks was 9,392 and 12,569 respectively but there has been an increase in the incidence of literacy. The total number of literates in Murliganj Block area was 14,225 and 16,052 in Kahra Block according to the reports supplied by the Block office. The eight villages visited by the investigators are rather inaccessible in the rainy season and most of these schools were never visited by any Inspecting Officers before the inception of the Blocks. But with the opening of the Blocks, villages are being visited by officials and non-officials as a result of which, the villagers have been in closer contact with urban and other people and they have changed their outlook. The Blocks have opened Social Education Centres at villages Rampur, Parwa and Kahra to educate the adults. It is gathered that through these centres about 175 adult persons in total of the said villages were benefited. There was no check up if this figure is correct.

The table below supplied by Kahra and Murliganj Development Blocks will show the number of schools in the villages during 1962-63:—

Name of villages.	Primary Schools.			Middle Schools.			High Schools.		
	Sch. ools.	Stu. dents.	Tea- chers.	Sch. ools.	Stu. dents.	Tea- chers.	Sch. ools.	Stu. dents.	Tea- chers.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Kahra ..	3	135	4	1	67	2	Nil	Nil	Nil
2. Sulindabad ..	2	97	3	1	59	2	Nil	Nil	Nil
3. Agwanpur ..	2	89	4	1	74	2	Nil	Nil	Nil
4. Nariar ..	3	212	6	1	68	2	Nil	Nil	Nil
5. Parwa ..	2	112	4	1	75	2	Nil	Nil	Nil
6. Rampur ..	2	98	4	1	59	2	Nil	Nil	Nil
7. Ratanpatti ..	1	61	2	1	63	2	Nil	Nil	Nil
8. Birgaon ..	2	108	5	1	67	2	1	89	4

None of the schools is exclusively meant for girls. There is co-education in the schools located in villages Kahra, Rampur, Agwanpur, Ratanpatti and Parwa.

It is apparent from the above statement that there has been some increase in the incidence of educational institutions in the villages. The investigators did not appraise the actual impact. It was, however, gathered that the quality of the teachers was poor, attendance of the students irregular and some of the schools have a very poor number of students for causes not investigated. •

HEALTH AND SANITATION.

With the opening of Development Block, one six-bedded indoor State dispensary and three health centres have been provided in each Block. The villages Parwa and Agwanpur have one health centre each. Prior to the establishment of the Block in the district, the people had to go either to Madhepura, Saharsa or Supaul for medical treatment.

The table below supplied by Kahra and Murliganj Development Blocks, will show the number of patients treated in Block dispensaries during 1962-63:—

Name of diseases.	No. of patients treated in Kahra dispensary.	No. of patients treated in Murliganj dispensary.	Death (Total).
1. Dysentery ..	47	399	Nil.
2. Diarrhoea ..	300	297	Nil.
3. Cholera ..	272	Nil	5
4. Small-pox ..	145	Nil	4
5. Other diseases ..	2,439	8,907	15
6. Inoculation ..	78	5,132	Nil.
7. Vaccination ..	12,657	10,349	Nil.

Secondly, to facilitate the villagers, a number of tube-wells have been set-up in villages Rampur, Parwa, Ratanpatti, Birgaon, Kahra, Agwanpur, Sulindabad and Nariar by the Community Development Department. Besides, two soakage pits each in the said villages have been provided by Community Development Blocks in the district. There has been an improvement in the incidence of health and sanitation.

CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY.

The table below supplied by the Co-operative section of Kahra and Murliganj Development Blocks will show the expansion of Co-operative Societies:—

Name of the village.	No. of Co-operative Societies.	No. of total members.	Loans advanced to Society. Rs.
1. Kahra ..	1	47	1,350
2. Sulindabad ..	1	51	2,000
3. Agwanpur ..	1	54	1,940
4. Nariar ..	1	71	2,100
5. Parwa ..	1	48	1,700
6. Ratanpatti ..	1	59	1,900
7. Rampur ..	1	61	2,200
8. Birgaon ..	1	53	1,800

The business of the co-operative societies is the distribution and collection of loans for agricultural purposes. On enquiry from the officials and non-officials at village Agwanpur, it was ascertained that the society has been declared defunct since 1963 March because the entire amount which was given to Agwanpur Co-operative Society on loan is alleged to be misappropriated by the Honorary Secretary of the said society and a case has been instituted against him by the Government to realise the amount. The habit of repayment of loan does not appear to be strong. It is also not known if the loan taken has been used for the purpose for which it was given.

COMMUNICATIONS.

There has been no improvement in the communications of the villages where the investigations were carried out.

On enquiry it was ascertained that in spite of the schemes, many Blocks have not been able to undertake them due to indifference of the villagers and local contractors. The main object of the Community Development Programme is to foster a spirit of self-help and co-operation in the villages, but, on the contrary, the villagers want every scheme to be wholly executed with Government money. This has been the real cause of non-implementation of the sanctioned schemes in different Blocks of the district.

EMPLOYMENT.

The basic reason for the poverty and low income of the people of the district is excessive dependence on agriculture. The Community Development Project, in general aims at minimising the incidence of under-employment and unemployment. With the introduction of the Community Development Programme in the district, twenty-one Blocks have been started, each Block having 150 personnels. Most of the clerical and menial staff of the office are residents of the locality. Out of about 3,150 persons employed in all the Blocks, the number of educated persons employed is about 2,000. Apart from this, many subsidiary occupations, namely, fishery, small-scale cottage industrial units and the execution of many irrigational and other developmental schemes have eased to some extent the problem of rural under-employment. With the spread of primary education, many educated persons have been given employment as teachers in schools.

CONCLUSION.

Out of 159 villages under Kahra and Murliganj Blocks, a sample survey on the impact of the Blocks on eight villages was made.

The object of the Community Development Programme has been very partially successful. The main impediments are the inherent conservatism of the villagers, their poor economic condition and a certain amount of lack of proper supervision by the Block authorities. The *Gram Panchayats* have also not eased the litigations in the villages and hence the aim of cheap and quick justice

to be administered by the *Gram Panchayat* has also not been achieved so far. Facilities for loan in shape of improved seeds and manures were misused by appropriating seeds for immediate personal consumption. In short, the impact of the Community Development Block on education, agriculture and health, etc., has not been to any appreciable extent.

The villagers have become more caste-conscious and there is now caste tension in some villages. For instance, in Murliganj Block the Yadavas have got the majority and there is ill-feeling between the Yadavas and the non-Yadavas. Similarly in Kahra Block there is ill-feeling between the Maithils and the non-Maithils and at the time of election even a competent candidate is defeated on caste-basis.

It was also noticed that the rich and the powerful persons in the villages want that the schemes should be carried out through them for gaining more profit which is resented by the other sections of people in the villages. There is also a tendency in the Block staff to get a work done sometimes superficially to draw the earmarked money. There is not much of mass contact or group contact among the villagers.

MISCELLANEOUS OCCUPATIONS.

Miscellaneous occupations cover such occupations which have not been so far covered under the major occupations, viz., agriculture, industry, commerce and transport. They cover public administration, learned professions, domestic and personal services, etc. Persons in the miscellaneous occupations form a very small percentage in the employment structure but have an important bearing on the society and administration. They form the enlightened intelligentsia section of the community and mostly come from the middle class which is the backbone of the society. They have usually supplied the leadership in society.

The *District Census Hand-Book for Saharsa, 1951* gives some of the figures which have to be included in this category. The District Census Hand-Book for 1961 has not yet been published and the detailed figures are not available.

The figures for 1951 are as follows*:-

	Males.	Females.	Total.
1. Medical and other Health services	823	8	831
2. Educational services and research	573	36	609
3. Police (other than village watchmen)	94	Nil	94
4. Village officers and servants (including village watchmen).	136	Nil	136
5. Employees of State Government	67	Nil	67
6. Employees of Union Government	18	Nil	18

* *District Census Hand-Book, Saharsa, 1951, pages 39-41.*

The strength of the non-gazetted staff under the Saharsa Collectorate in 1963 (July) is reported to be 1,477.

The figures will undergo some changes as there have been additions to the learned professions and to the office personnel in the last one decade. For example, during the last decade there was a large expansion of medical and other health services at Government level as a result of which a large number of doctors, etc., have been employed. The legal profession also had addition. On an enquiry it was found that there were 42 advocates (35 at Madhepura, 5 at Supaul and 2 at Saharsa), 50 pleaders (15 at Madhepura, 19 at Supaul and 16 at Saharsa) and 51 mukhtears (32 at Madhepura, 12 at Supaul and 7 at Saharsa) in the district.

The figures of persons engaged in domestic and personal services according to 1951 census were as follows*:-

	Males.	Females.	Total.
1. Domestic services ..	449	90	539
2. Barbers and beauty shops	239	24	263
3. Laundries and laundry services.	271	40	311
4. Recreation services ..	5	13	18
5. Legal and business services	5	Nil	5
6. Religious, charitable and welfare services.	258	21	279
7. Services otherwise unclassified.	734	12	746

These figures will also have undergone some changes by 1961 when the census was taken. It will be pertinent to observe that there has been a good deal of mobility among the domestic services. Personal services are not preferred even by the sons of the traditional families or castes that did domestic services. They prefer to work as rickshaw-puller or hotel-waiters or in the laundry shops. Tailoring establishments have also increased. Cheap eating houses and tea-shops have sprung up in the urban areas and in the large villages.

* District Census Hand-Book, Saharsa, 1951, pages 41-42.