

CHAPTER IX.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION.

COMMISSIONER.

The Commissioner, Patna Division with his headquarters at Patna, is in overall charge of the general administration of this district, as indeed of the other districts in the division. Three Commissionerships were created in 1829 out of the districts at present included in Bihar, Patna including the districts of Patna, Bihar and Ramgarh being one of them. The other was Saran comprising the districts of Saran, Champaran, Tirhut and Shahabad and the third consisted of Bhagalpur (with Monghyr), Purnea and Maldah districts. Later, in 1834, however, the Saran Division was abolished and Patna district along with Shahabad was absorbed in the Patna Division, while Tirhut was added to Bhagalpur. Another re-arrangement took place in 1855, when the creation of a new non-regulation district of the Santhal Parganas under the Bhagalpur Division led to the separation of Tirhut, which was placed under the Commissioner, Patna Division. A third Division of Chota Nagpur was created in 1854 for administrative convenience. These arrangements continued up to 1908, when a separate Tirhut Division came into being with the districts of Saran, Champaran, Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga*.

The position of the Commissioner was strengthened by Sir Andrew Henderson Leith Fraser, K. C. S. I., who, soon after his appointment as Lt.-Governor of Bengal in October, 1906 introduced a system of placing allotments at the disposal of the Commissioner of Divisions, from which they could make grant for public purposes and remedy small defects brought to their notice. Since then the trends of decentralisation took a definite shape and more and more powers flowed from Government to Commissioners, from Commissioners to Collectors and then to Subdivisional Officers.

Sir Andrew was a great believer in personal contact for the smooth running of administration. With a view to bring the Commissioners in close association with the Government as well as Heads of Departments he instituted annual conferences where all administrative measures of general importance were discussed and thrashed out. The Commissioners were also asked to hold similar annual conferences of Collectors in their jurisdiction and preside over them and also to be in close touch with the districts and subdivisions through tour. He also gave his attention to the position of the Commissioner in relation to matters not falling within the official duties of the latter as defined by laws and rules.

* *Bihar Through The Ages*, p. 627.

This question was referred to in a conference at which all the Commissioners and Heads of Departments and some senior judicial officers were present. It was unanimously agreed that as the seniormost officer in the Division, the Commissioner must be entrusted to look into cases of personal misconduct and mutual quarrels among officers and straighten their social relations, as far as possible.

The present role of the Commissioner is a continuation of the aforesaid duties. The system of placing allotments at his disposal is continuing and he has now much wider powers in financial matters than his predecessors enjoyed six decades back. He exercises a general control over the conduct of affairs within his Division. He is to see that the local officers duly perform their duties, and that the orders issued by Government are carried into effect. All cases of intricate nature and doubt he has to refer to Government and to the Board of Revenue, but he is fully authorised to pass interim orders to carry on the administration. He is the Presiding Officer of his Division for all the multifarious development works. Since 1962 there is a Regional Development Officer of the rank of an Additional District Magistrate and under the direct control of the Commissioner to assist him in this respect. His main function is to inspect the Community Development Blocks in the Division. Besides, from very early times the Commissioner is helped by a Secretary who is also of the rank of an Additional District Magistrate. He apprises the Commissioner of the details of work done in the office and disposes of routine files under the overall supervision of the Commissioner.

The present strength of the officers and staff of the office of the Commissioner, Patna Division is as follows* :—

Officers.

Commissioner ..	..	1
Additional Commissioner ..	..	1
Secretary to Commissioner ..	..	1
Regional Development Officer ..	..	1
Deputy Director, Gram Panchayat ..	..	1
Secretary, South Bihar Regional Transport Authority.		1
Divisional Hindi Instructor ..	..	1
Sectional Officer (General side) ..	..	1†
Sectional Officer (Revenue side) ..	..	1
		9

*As on 31st October, 1968.

†Till recently, a Special Officer, Bhoodan and a Deputy Director, Food were attached to the office of the Commissioner but these posts have now been abolished.

Ministerial Staff (Class III).

Upper Division Posts	13	
Lower Division Posts	21	(including 3 vacant posts).
Personal Assistant (previously designated as Stenographer, Class I).	1	
Stenographers, Class II	2	
Steno-typists	2	
Statistical Specialist	1	
Statistical Computer	Nil	
Head Typist	1	
Typist, Class I	1	
Typists, Class II	4	
Routine Clerk (Selection Grade)	1	
Routine Clerks	2	
	49	(including 3 vacant posts).

Class IV staff.

Daftaries	2	
Driver (Staff Car)	1	
Record Supplier	1	
Motor Mechanic	1	
Peons and Orderlies	14	
Mali	1	
Contingent Menials	3	
	23	

DISTRICT MAGISTRATE.

The general administration of the district is in the charge of an officer, who is designated as District Magistrate and Collector and is under the administrative control of the Commissioner of the Patna Division. He is a member of the Indian Administrative Service. For the purpose of general administration the district is divided into five subdivisions, namely, Sadar, Patna City, Danapur, Barh and Bihar, each under the charge of a Subdivisional Magistrate, who is either a junior member of the Indian Administrative Service or of the Bihar Civil Service (Executive Branch).

The district has 37 police-stations to maintain law and order. For rural development 28 Community Development Blocks, each consisting of a number of villages have been opened, while 18 *anchals* look after revenue administration.

The District Magistrate with his headquarters at Patna is at the apex of the administrative structure. He is responsible for maintenance of law and order in the district and is assisted in this respect by Subdivisional Magistrates, posted at the headquarters of each of the subdivisions. As Collector he is the head of revenue administration in the district. Prior to the abolition of Zamindari, the *khasmahal* had to do but small collections of rent and cess ; but now the entire responsibility in this regard has devolved on the Collector. He is assisted by an Additional Collector.

The District Magistrate also heads the District Planning Committee which consists of the heads of various Government departments in the district and co-ordinates their functions. In development work he is assisted by a District Development Officer, who is also Administrator of *Zila Parishad*. The Subdivisional Officers assist him in their respective jurisdiction in these matters. There is a Deputy Collector Incharge Revenue and Development posted at each subdivisional headquarters to execute the details of such work under the general guidance of the Subdivisional Officers.

At present (1968) besides the District Magistrate, the district headquarters has the following Gazetted Officers to assist him : Additional Collector—1 ; District Development Officer—1 ; Deputy Collectors and Deputy Magistrates—10 ; Sub-Deputy Collectors and Sub-Deputy Magistrates—3 ; District Welfare Officer—1 ; District Panchayat Officer—1 ; District Public Relations Officer—1 ; Land Acquisition Officers—4 ; District Statistical Officer—1 ; District Accounts Officer—1 ; Treasury Officers—5 ; Assistant Mining Officer—1 ; District Industries Officer—1 ; Special Officer, Package Programme—1 ; Special Officer Incharge Rationing (A. D. M.'s Rank)—1 ; Deputy Rationing Officers—2 ; Assistant Rationing Officers—2 and Personal Assistant to the District Magistrate—1.

The staff posted at the subdivisional headquarters are detailed below :—

Sadar—Subdivisional Officer—1 ; Deputy Collector Incharge Land Reforms and Development—1 ; Deputy Collectors and Deputy Magistrates—5 ; Sub-Deputy Collectors and Sub-Deputy Magistrates—2 ; Block Development Officers—5 and *Anchal Adhikaris*—4.

Patna City—Subdivisional Officer—1 ; Deputy Collectors and Deputy Magistrates—3 ; Sub-Deputy Collectors and Sub-Deputy Magistrates—2 and Assistant District Supply Officer—1.

Danapur—Subdivisional Officer—1 ; Deputy Collector Incharge Land Reforms—1 ; Deputy Collectors and Deputy Magistrates—2 ; Sub-Deputy Collector and Sub-Deputy Magistrate—1 ; Assistant District Supply Officers—2 ; Block Development Officers—6 and *Anchal Adhikaris*—3.

Barh—Subdivisional Officer—1 ; Deputy Collector Incharge Land Reforms—1 ; Deputy Collectors and Deputy Magistrates—2 ; Sub-Deputy Collector and Sub-Deputy Magistrate—1 ; Assistant District Supply Officers—2 ; Block Development Officers—7 and *Anchal Adhikaris*—3.

Bihar—Subdivisional Officer—1 ; Deputy Collector Incharge Land Reforms—1 ; Deputy Collectors and Deputy Magistrates—5 ; Sub-Deputy Collectors and Sub-Deputy Magistrates—2 ; Assistant District Supply Officers—2 ; Block Development Officers—10 ; *Anchal Adhikaris*—7 ; Consolidation Officer—1 and Assistant Consolidation Officer—1.

The District Magistrate is also responsible for the administration of Excise, Registration and Jail Departments and is assisted by the Superintendent of Excise, District Sub-Registrar and Superintendent of Jail respectively. Besides, he is in overall charge of the Police Department.

The Collectorate has following principal section :—Confidential ; General* ; Revenue† ; Development ; Establishment ; Legal Section and Treasury and Accounts.

The subdivisional offices also have the same pattern of organisation. This scheme was introduced in 1958. A significant development under this is that a Sadar Subdivisional Officer like his counterpart in the mufassil subdivisions has come to have an independent existence, distinct from the collectorate, which he did not enjoy previously.

STATE EXCISE DEPARTMENT.

The district is divided into four ranges, each in charge of an Excise Inspector, who has under him two or more Sub-Inspectors incharge of Circles, each comprising of two or more police-stations. The Sub-Inspectors

*This has replaced the old English Office.

†The Landlord Fee Department of the Collectorate has been abolished as with the abolition of Zamindari, no money orders are to be sent or acknowledged.

are assisted by Assistant Sub-Inspectors and Excise Peons. There are also preventive staff posted at check-posts at Sahokhar, Hathidah and Special Centre at Bihta, mainly for detection of *ganja* smuggling. Some Sub-Inspectors are also placed incharge of warehouses. At present (1965) the excise staff in the district is as follows :—Superintendent—1 ; Inspectors—4 ; Sub-Inspectors—22 ; Assistant Sub-Inspectors—26 and Excise Peons—94. The department administers the provisions under the Bihar and Orissa Excise Act, the Indian Opium Act, the Dangerous Drugs Act, the Opium Smoking Act, the Medicinal and Toilet Preparations Act and the Bihar Molasses Control Act.

Source of Revenue.

Country spirit and toddy being the two most popular intoxicants, the bulk of the revenue is derived from these sources. In accordance with the accepted policy of maximum revenue with minimum consumption, there has been regular enhancement of duty and retail price of country spirit. Duty on the various intoxicants is levied and realised prior to their issue for consumption. Dutiable intoxicants are stored in warehouses under the control of Excise Officers. There are six warehouses in the district located at Kumhrar, Biharsharif, Barh, Hilsa, Masaurhi and Bihta. The rates of duty and retail price for country spirit, *ganja* and *bhang* in effect from 1st November, 1965 are as follows :—

Country spirit.	Duty per L. P.* litre.		Saleable price per 600 ml. bottle	
	Urban.			
	50.0 U. P.†	72.5 U. P.	50.0 U. P.	72.5 U. P.
	Rs. 5.70	Rs. 5.30	Rs. 2.28	Rs. 1.28
	Rural.			
	50.0 U. P.	72.5 U. P.	50.0 U. P.	72.5 U. P.
	Rs. 5.70	Rs. 4.80	Rs. 2.28	Rs. 1.20

*L. P.—London proof.

†U. P.—Under proof.

Throughout the district.

	Duty per Kg.	Saleable price per Kg.
<i>Ganja</i>	Rs. 116.40	Rs. 170.00
<i>Bhang</i>	Rs. 9.65	Rs. 22.00

Country Spirit.

It is supplied by approved contractors on three-year terms. They have warehouses where they store spirit obtained from their distilleries. In these warehouses, the spirit is reduced to prescribed strength by dilution with water under the direct supervision of an Excise Officer and issued to retail vendors on payment of duty. From 1st April, 1965 Manpur (Gaya) distillery supplies the spirit in the district.

Ganja.

Approved contractors obtain the drug from the Central Gola at Bhagalpur and store it in the Sadar Warehouse, Kumhrar (Patna) for issue to the retail licensees on payment of duty.

Bhang.

This drug is obtained from Bahraich (Uttar Pradesh) by the approved contractors and stored and issued along with *ganja*.

Opium.

Oral consumption of opium is now confined only to persons permitted by the medical authorities. They are supplied with the drug according to fixed quotas from the Sadar Warehouse at Kumhrar (Patna). The smoking of opium in the form of *chandu* has been legally banned with the introduction of prohibition on general oral consumption of opium with effect from 1st April, 1959. The present number of opium addicts under medical permit is only eight in the district.

Foreign Liquor.

This is mostly obtained from West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and South India. Most of it is manufactured in the country

and therefore called India Made Foreign Liquor. Some quantity is also locally manufactured at Patna by Messrs. S. K. Shaw and Brothers.

Rectified Spirit and Denatured Spirit.

These are mostly obtained from the distilleries in North Bihar. Rectified spirit is used mainly in hospitals, laboratories and pharmaceutical works. The use of denatured spirit is confined mainly to the polishing industry.

Incidence of annual taxation and consumption per head of population are as follows :—

Article.	Incidence of consumption.	Incidence of taxation.
		Rs.
1. Country spirit (liquor) ..	.46 L. P. litres	2.78
2. Foreign liquor ..	.03 Bulk litres	0.28
3. <i>Ganja</i> ..	.1 Gram	0.013
4. <i>Bhang</i> ..	.2 Gram	0.004

Excise Crime.

The main crimes against the Excise laws are illicit distillation of liquor and smuggling of Nepali *ganja*. The common raw materials used for illicit distillation are *mahua* flowers, *gur* and molasses. The smuggling of Nepali *ganja* thrives because of the vast difference in the price at which such *ganja* is available in Nepal and the prescribed retail price of licit *ganja*.

Statement showing number and nature of cases detected during the years 1957-58 to 1964-65 is given below*—

Year.	Illicit distillation and possession of illicit distilled liquor.	Illicit possession of country spirit.	Illicit possession and sale of opium.	Illicit possession of ganja plant.	Illicit possession and sale of non-duty paid Nepali ganja.	Illicit possession of wild bhang.	Illicit possession and sale of tari.	Illicit tapping of trees.	Cases detected under medicinal and Toilet Preparation Act.	Total.
1957-58	310	8	..	4	79	31	10	14	..	456
1958-59	123	13	..	7	94	16	8	19	..	280
1959-60	171	29	..	1	69	19	8	8	1	306
1960-61	145	35	..	2	47	6	6	16	3	260
1961-62	79	23	1	1	44	5	..	6	1	160
1962-63	63	12	1	2	36	11	2	6	..	133
1963-64	69	12	1	..	57	9	..	12	2	162
1964-65	92	13	1	..	35	18	1	5	..	165

*Source—Superintendent of Excise, Patna.

REGISTRATION OFFICE.

The Registration Office at Patna was opened in the year 1796. In 1874 a Sub-Registry Office was opened at Naubatpur, but in 1917 its headquarters was shifted to Bikram. A Sub-Registry Office opened at Mokameh in 1894, but it was amalgamated with Bihar Sub-Registry Office in 1922. The Sub-Registry Office at Jhaoganj opened in 1898 was partly amalgamated with Sadar (Patna) and partly with Hilsa Sub-Registry Office in 1922.

At present there are six Sub-Registry Offices in the district. They are at Danapur opened in 1845, Bihar (1865), Barh (1965), Hilsa (1874), Masaurhi (1900) and Bikram (1917). Each is under the charge of a Sub-Registrar.

The District Sub-Registrar at Patna is the administrative head of the Registration Offices in the district and works under the control of the District Magistrate and Collector, Patna, who is also District Registrar. The District Sub-Registrar is assisted by a Joint Sub-Registrar at the district headquarters. He deals with the documents presented for registration at Sadar Registration Office, Patna. The District Sub-Registrar supervises the work of the Sub-Registrars of mufassil offices. He is also the Registrar under the Births and Deaths Act of 1886. He is also the Marriage Officer under the Special Marriage Act, 1954. The Sub-Registrars are also Marriage Officers under the Special Marriage Act, 1954 in their respective jurisdiction*.

DISTRICT SOLDIERS', SAILORS' AND AIRMEN'S BOARD.

The District Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Board was created in 1943. It works under the control of the District Magistrate who is the President of the Board. The State Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Board, Patna, which is a section of the Political (General) Department of the State Government, exercises administrative and financial control over this Board. The Indian Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Board, New Delhi, which is a section of the Directorate of (Defence) Resettlement, Ministry of Defence, has the overall policy control of the whole organisation. Bihar has absorbed the Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Board in its regular public services as a permanent department from February, 1964.

The main functions of the District Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Board are to look after the welfare of discharged armed service personnel and the families of the serving and deceased members of the armed forces.

*The number of such marriages in the district are : 1954—14; 1955—5 ; 1956—12 ; 1957—2 ; 1958—9 ; 1959—7 ; 1960—7 ; 1961—15 ; 1962—8 ; 1963—13 ; and 1964—36.

The Board has an Executive Committee consisting of the District Magistrate, the District Heads of the Police, Medical, Education Employment Exchange and Co-operative, six members from the business community, legal profession and ex-soldiers. This Executive Committee meets every three months to review matters relating to welfare of the ex-soldiers and members of the family of serving *Jawans* and devises ways and means to bring about improvements. Re-unions and rallies of ex-soldiers are also held every year during the month of December on the Flag Day Celebration.

PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT.

The District Public Relations Officer looks after the work of Patna Sadar, Patna City and Danapur subdivisions. At Biharsharif and Barh, there is an Additional District Public Relations Officer and an Assistant Public Relations Officer respectively. The District Public Relations Officer at Patna is under the direct control of the District Magistrate and the units at Biharsharif and Barh are under the overall control of the respective Subdivisional Officers.

There is a Deputy Director of Public Relations at Patna for the whole of Patna Division. There is also a Divisional Information Centre with headquarters at Patna. There is also a Deputy Director of Public Relations for Song and Drama at Patna. This section organises song and drama troops and train them to stage dramas and compose songs.

There is a Tourist Information Bureau at Rajgir and Nalanda run under the Public Relations Department. In the Tourist Office there is a Tourist Information Centre with a Receptionist and a Tourist Guide who work under the District Public Relations Officer to give proper guidance to the tourists.