

CHAPTER X

LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

REVENUE HISTORY

BEFORE British rule was established, the whole of the district, as now constituted, with the exception of thanas Raipur and Khātrā and of the western portion of the Bānkurā thana now included in the Chhātnā outpost, was comprised within the territory of the Rājā of Bishnupur, the descendant of a long line of independent or tributary chiefs. On the cession of Bānkurā, the Rājā was reduced to the position of an ordinary land-holder. In 1788 a settlement of his estate was made with the then Rājā Chaitanya Singh, the land revenue payable being fixed at Rs. 3,86,708 : a copy of the *kaḅuliyat* signed by Mr. (afterwards Sir) Arthur Hesilrige, dated Indās, the 4th August, 1788, is still preserved in the Collectorate of Bānkurā with an *ekrāmāmā* signed in the Nāgrī character by the Rājā. At the decennial settlement Chaitanya Singh engaged to pay 4 lakhs of rupees annually as land revenue; but this sum he was unable to pay, for his estate was impoverished by the famine of 1770, by the lawless state of the country, which had for many years past been overrun by banditti, and by costly litigation with a rival claimant. The result was that, soon after executing the agreement, the Rājā failed to meet his engagements; and in default of payment of revenue, the Bishnupur *pargana* was split up into smaller estates, which were either sold or settled under separate engagements with the subordinate *tālukdārs* already in possession.

In this way 12 separate estates were formed, viz., in 1791, Bārahazāri now included in the Gangājalghāti thana, Karisundā in Indās and Kotalpur, Barsiāli and Hutbalsi in Indās, Baytāl, Hutdesrā and Kotalpur in Kotalpur, and Paruliā in Sonāmukhī; in 1798, Jāmtārā in Ondā and the estate known as the Jungle Mahāl; and in 1800 Kuchiākol and Pānchāl in the Bishnupur thana. The following portions of estates were also separated and settled with *tālukdārs* in 1791, viz., Māliārā in the

Gangājalghāti thana, and Shāhārjorā and Kismat Shāhārjorā in Barjorā. Among these estates the Jungle Mahāl calls for special mention. Large portions of the old estate of Bishnupur were under jungle and the timber, firewood, honey, wax, etc., which they yielded, formed a valuable source of revenue. The right of collecting these jungle products was farmed out by the Rājā, and the revenue he obtained thereby was called the Jungle Mahāl, and had nothing to do with arable land. But afterwards, when it was formed into a separate estate, the name of Jungle Mahāl was given to the whole area from which jungle products were collected, some part of which was cleared and cultivated, while the rest remained covered by jungle.

Even after these portions of the estate had been detached and sold, the Rājā was unable to pay the assessed revenue. Consequently the portion of his estate which still remained was eventually put up to auction in August 1806 in satisfaction of arrears of land revenue. At that time, no individual would bid above Rs. 1,50,000 and Government accordingly became the purchaser for that sum. On the 12th November in the same year it was again put up for sale by Government, and purchased for Rs. 2,15,000 by the Mahārājā of Burdwān, whose property it still is.

Though the revenue-paying property had thus been disposed of, the Rāj family retained some properties consisting of (1) *bābuān* lands, which had been granted rent-free by Rājā Chaitanya Singh or his predecessors to relations, and (2) lands granted rent-free for the maintenance of idols. A considerable area had been assigned for the latter purpose, and even after the estate of Bishnupur had been sold off in 1806, these assignments held good, the Rāj family remaining in possession as *sebaits*. Altogether 168 idols are, it is reported, still maintained on the estate, among which may be mentioned Madan Mohan, Rādhā Syām, Ananta Deva and Mrinmayī at Bishnupur, Syām Chānd at Rādhāmohanpur, Gokul Chānd at Gokulnagar, Siva at Ekteswar, Rāmkrishnajī at Sābrākon, and Brindāban Chandra at Bīrsinghā. As regards the *bābuān* lands, i.e., lands held rent-free by relations of the Bishnupur Rājās, Sir Charles Blunt, who was appointed Commissioner of Bishnupur in December 1801 and held charge of the office until it was abolished in 1805, proposed the resumption by the Rāj family of rent-free

lands in the *pargana* in April 1803. This proposal was sanctioned, and the *bābuān* lands were resumed on behalf of the Rājā. There are still a number of revenue-free estate standing in the name of members of the family, besides a few small revenue-paying estates, which were originally revenue-free properties, but were subsequently resumed as invalid *lākhirāj* holdings and settled with the Rājā.

PARGANAS

The above account will show the manner in which *pargana* Bishnupur was disposed of; and it will be sufficient to add that the Chhātnā outpost, coinciding with *pargana* Chhātnā, and

Pargana	Area in acres	Thana or outpost
Ambikānagar ...	97,017	Khātrā.
Bārahazāri ...	168,265	{ Bānkurā, Ondā, Gangājālgāhāti, Bishnupur, Sonāmukhī, Kotalpur and Indās.
Bhālāidihā ...	26,266	Simlāpāl.
Bishnupur ...	674,421	{ Bānkurā, Ondā, Gangājālgāhāti, Bishnupur, Sonāmukhī, Kotalpur and Indās.
Chhātnā ...	167,721	Bānkurā.
(Mahiswarā ...	132,723 }	Gangājālgāhāti.
Māliārā ...	3,477 }	
Phulkusmā ...	16,568 }	
Raipur ...	86,896 }	Raipur.
Shāhārjorā ...	20,834	Gangājālgāhāti.
Simlāpāl ...	50,158	Simlāpāl.
Supur ...	122,599	Khātrā.
Syāmsundarpur	30,028	Raipur.

the thanas of Raipur and Khātrā, comprising *parganas* Ambikānagar, Bhālāidihā, Phulkusmā, Raipur, Simlāpāl, Syāmsundarpur and Supur were subsequently received on transfer from the Mānbhūm district. Besides these *parganas*,

there is another *pargana* called Mahiswarā, which lies within the geographical limits of this district, but is borne on the revenue roll of Mānbhūm. The statement in the margin shows [the table at p. 144. Ed.] the different *parganas*, their area, and the thanas or outposts within which they are situated.

GHĀTWĀLI LANDS

The most important event in the subsequent revenue history of the district has been the settlement of the lands held by *ghātwāls*. The *ghātwāls* appear to have been originally a quasi-military body of men employed by the Rājās of Bishnupur to defend the country against the incursions of the Marāthās and other invaders, and generally to maintain peace within their borders. As regards the *ghāts* for which they were responsible, it may be explained that, though the word itself denotes a pass of some kind, their duties were not confined to the protection of passes through the hills. Some *ghāts*, it is true, were hill-passes in the strict sense of the term, but others merely embraced a section of an ordinary road, and others again nothing but areas of open country, which might contain one or more villages and might not be traversed by any road at all. In return for their services the *ghātwāls* had assignments of land granted to them subject to the payment of a quit-rent called *panchak*, and such assignments constituted the *ghātwāli* tenures.

These tenures were of three kinds, viz., (1) *sarkārī panchakī*, i.e., those in which the *panchak* or quit-rent was realized by Government direct, (2) *zamīndārī panchakī*, or those in which the quit-rents were amalgamated with the land revenue of a parent estate and realized through the *zamīndārs*, and (3) *be-panchakī*, or those in which no quit-rent of any kind was realized. The tenures of the third class call for no explanation, but an account of the origin of the first two classes may be given. The *zamīndārī panchakī* lands consisted of lands forming portions of the old Bishnupur estate sold for arrears of revenue between 1791 and 1802, for which the *panchak* or quit-rent was paid to Government through the *zamīndār*. The *sarkārī panchakī* lands consisted of *ghātwāli* tenures belonging to 43 *ghāts* and comprised the greater portion of the thanas of Bānkurā, Ondā and Bishnupur. At the close of the 18th century, the Rājā of Bishnupur found that he had no control over the *ghātwāls*,

who refused to pay the *panchak* due from them. He, therefore, agreed to make over these *ghāts* to Government, on condition that he was given an abatement of revenue equal to the amount of *panchak* payable to him by the *ghāt-wāls*. This arrangement was made by Sir Charles Blunt, Commissioner of Bishnupur, in 1802; and it was agreed that if Government should ever dispense with the services of the *ghāt-wāls*, the lands should be re-annexed to the *zamīndāri* (i.e., of Bishnupur or the *zamīndāri* to which they then appertained or in the ambit of which they were included when that *zamīndāri* was settled). By the sale of the Bishnupur estate in 1806 the Mahārājā of Burdwān succeeded to the rights of the Rājā of Bishnupur, but the lands have continued to be known as *sarkārī panchakī*, as the *panchak* or quit-rent has been realized by Government since 1802.

The original area of the lands held by *ghāt-wāls* between 1791 and 1802 is not known, and the first information we have is regarding the *sarkārī panchakī* lands separated in 1802, which, according to Sir Charles Blunt, had an area of 35,282 *bighās* and half a *mauzā*. This area, however, was not ascertained by measurement, but was based on the assertions of the *ghāt-wāls* themselves. From 1805 yearly lists of the *ghāt-wāli* lands called *ism-navisi* or *māthwari* were compiled from the statements of the *ghāt-wāls*, but no reliance can be placed on those lists; and it is not till the revenue survey of 1854-56 that we have any clear record of the area in the possession of *ghāt-wāls*. According to this survey, the area of the *sarkārī panchakī* lands held by *ghāt-wāls* was 136,536 *bighās*, of the *zamīndārī panchakī* lands 130,358 *bighās*, and of the *be-panchakī* lands 2,971 *bighās*, making a total of 269,865 *bighās* of *ghāt-wāli* lands belonging to the old Bishnupur estate. Subsequently a survey (made between 1879 and 1887) was undertaken to determine precisely the area of the *ghāt-wāli* land; and it is reported that they comprise altogether 520,000 *bighās* (i.e., about 170,000 acres), *sarkārī panchakī* and *be-panchakī* lands accounting for 170,000 *bighās* and *zamīndārī panchakī* lands for 350,000 *bighās*. The number of *sarkārī panchakī ghāts* is 43, of *be-panchakī ghāts* 9, and of *zamīndārī panchakī ghāts* 218, making a total of 270; and the *panchak* realized was Rs. 10,800, viz., Rs. 5,000 for the *sarkārī panchakī* lands and Rs. 5,800 for the *zamīndārī panchakī* lands.

Nominally, the *ghāt-wāls* constituted a body of rural police, who bore the generic name of *ghāt-wāl* but were divided, according to their special functions or to the tenures they held, into several classes, such as *sardār ghāt-wāl*, *sadiāl*, *digār* and *tābedār*. The responsibility of keeping the roads open and of protecting travellers from robbery rested with the *ghāt-wāls* generally; but the man at their head was called *sardār*, the man next in rank and immediately subordinate to him was the *sadiāl*, while the *tābedārs* were immediately subordinate to the latter.

The duty of the *sardār* was to collect *panchak* or quit-rent from the *sadiāls* and *tābedār ghāt-wāls* to pay the same to Government or to the *zamīndār*, as the case might be, to depute *ghāt-wāls* for keeping watch and ward in the villages or on roads, to assist police officers in investigations, and to perform other police duties, when necessary. The *sadiāls* had to collect *panchak* from the *tābedārs* to pay the same to the *sardār*, and to supervise the work of the *ghāt-wāls*. In some instances, also, they were deputed for watch and ward duties in the villages and along the roads. The duty of the *tābedār ghāt-wāl* was to keep watch over a *ghāt*, i.e., generally a village or a group of two or more villages, as well as certain portions of road. He was also required to give information of any offence cognizable by the police committed within his *ghāt* and to report births and deaths, for which purpose he had to attend the police station periodically.

In *parganas* Mahiswarā, Supur, Ambikānagar, Raipur, Phulkusmā, Syāmsundarpur, Simlāpāl and Bhālāidihā, those who performed the duties of *sardārs* were called *digārs*, and the *digārs* of the last seven *parganas* exercised the powers of head constables, when those *parganas* were in Mānbhūm. In *parganas* Mahiswarā and Chhātānā again there was a class called *jāgirdārs*, who in the former *pargana* performed the duties of *sardārs*, and in the latter the duties of *ghāt-wāls*.

The duties of the *ghāt-wāls*, as a body, differed from those of the village *chaukidārs*, in that they were exercised not within the village as such, but within an area roughly determined by immemorial custom and known as a *ghāt*. The bulk of the force may be described as rural patrols working on stated beats, which did not necessarily coincide with any line of district or village road. A few did useful work in preventing or reporting crime, and more rarely, in assisting in its detection, but as a rule they

neglected their duties. The system was, in fact, an anachronism, the circumstances which led to the creation of the service having long since ceased to exist. The *ghātwāls* were practically useless for police purposes, and with no definite duties to perform, they became in time perpetrators or abettors of crime. As late as 1873 the Magistrate of Bānkurā reported that, "they have or have had the reputation of concocting robberies, dacoities and the like". This was no new feature, for we find Sir Charles Blunt reporting in 1802 that "instead of protecting the *pargana* from the depredations of others, they have readily seized every opportunity of joining the invaders, and many of them are by profession dacoits".

Eventually, in 1876 a Bill was introduced in the Bengal Council with a statement of objects and reasons to the effect that—"The *ghātwāls* are doing as little police work as they like, and that little as inefficiently as they choose, and are disputing the authority of the Magistrate to make them do anything, while the Magistrate himself has doubt as to what his lawful authority is. The expediency of legislation is therefore manifest". The bill, which was passed in April 1877, recognized the hereditary title of *ghātwāls* whose families had been in possession since the Permanent Settlement. The heir of an hereditary *ghātwāl* could only be passed over on certain definite grounds of unfitness and with the sanction of the Local Government. The duties of *ghātwāls* were laid down, and penalties for their neglect were prescribed. Alienation of *ghātwāli* lands was forbidden; leases were not to be binding on a *ghātwāli* successor; and no civil court was to entertain a suit by a dismissed *ghātwāl* for the possession of service lands. The Viceroy and Governor-General, however, withheld his assent from the Bill, on the ground that the local legislature could not oust the jurisdiction of the civil court, and also because of various inconsistencies and defects in the wording of the Bill.

It was then determined to have a survey of all the *ghātwāli* lands and a record of the rights of the *ghātwāls* in order to separate the lands held on a variety of other titles or no title at all; to ascertain what lands were really *ghātwāli* by whom they were held and on what terms of service, etc., so that dispute might be at an end and proper service demanded in return for the holdings. The work was commenced in 1879, but at the

end of 1884 it was found that the survey had cost an enormous sum of money, and produced nothing but a long list of civil suits, in which Government was bound to fail. Mr. Risley, c.s. (now Sir H. H. Risley, K.C.I.E.) was then deputed to compromise the suits and bring the survey to a close as quickly as possible, both of which objects he effected. The total number of tenures demarcated as *ghātwāli* was 6,011, with an area of 155,603 acres or 2,430 square miles, and the cost of the proceedings, amounted to Rs. 63,380. The survey was completed in 1886-87; and on its basis an amicable settlement of the *ghātwāli* lands was undertaken in November 1894. These proceedings are approaching completion.

In all cases in which settlement has been effected, the *ghātwāls* concerned have been released from police duties. The *panchak* has been abolished, and they pay the rent assessed for their land. The assessments have been made according to prevailing rates as regards lands in the direct occupation of the *ghātwāls*, but as regards lands held by them through their tenants, 75 per cent of the rent realized by them from the latter has been accepted as the assessment. A concession of 25 per cent of the total assessment has been allowed to the *ghātwāls* in consideration of the fact that they have been enjoying the lands from generation to generation on payment of a small quit-rent. The remaining 75 per cent of the assessment is being divided equally between Government and the zamīndārs, the Government demand being fixed in perpetuity.

This amicable settlement has been made possible by the peculiar nature of the tenures. Up to the present there have been three parties supposed to be beneficiaries in the land, the State, the zamīndār and the *ghātwāl*. The State has consented to the settlement, as hitherto there has been but little return for the heavy expenditure incurred on surveys and litigation in connection with these tenures, and because the peculiar distribution of the service land rendered it impossible to arrange for adequate service, e.g., one part of the district had more *ghātwāls* than could be employed on any useful purpose, while another part had not enough for the necessary watch and ward on the roads. The zamīndārs again received nothing but the quit-rent from the *ghātwāls*, whereas in the case of the zamīndāri *panchakī* lands the lands are now being made integral portions

of the estates in which they are situated, the rental assessed being paid to the landlords, who again pay Government the revenue agreed upon for the *ghāts* minus the *panchak* formerly received by them and included in the revenue demand. As regards the *ghāt-wāls*, as the *sardārs* grew richer, they tended more and more to pose as land-holders, and the obligation of personal service, frequently involving the payment of blackmail to escape bullying by the regular police, became extremely distasteful to them. The *tābedārs*, on the other hand were constantly in trouble between the needs of their cultivation and the requirements of the thana in the matter of patrol. Besides this, the abolition of the system has been acquiesced in by the *ghāt-wāls* as relieving them from the risk of forfeiting their tenures by dismissal for disobeying orders. Such cases had occurred, and when an outsider was appointed to succeed to a vacancy created by dismissal, the family lost its land for good.

ESTATES

According to a return for the year 1887-88 the number of estates borne on the revenue roll was 910, with a current revenue demand of Rs. 4,58,000. The total number of estates in 1907 was 1,143 and the land revenue demand was Rs. 4,83,000, representing an increase of 26 per cent in the number of estates and of 6 per cent in the demand during 20 years. Of these estates, 1,071 with a demand of Rs. 4,81,000 are permanently settled, including a certain number added recently by the resumption and settlement of *ghāt-wāli* lands. The remaining estates are mainly estates which were formerly held revenue-free (*lākhirāj*), but were afterwards resumed by Government and assessed. Most of these were at first settled temporarily, but this error was rectified in January 1866, when the Board of Revenue directed that all settlements of resumed *lākhirāj mahāls* should be revised, and settlements effected with the proprietors in perpetuity. Besides the 1,071 permanently settled estates, there are 72 estates of which Government is the proprietor, 53 with a demand of Rs. 800 being temporarily settled estates, while 19 with a demand of Rs. 1,000 are under direct management. The former are mostly petty estates formed out of the surplus road-side land along the Rāniganj-Midnapore road. The latter include certain town *Khās mahāls* and are also unimportant properties,

which have been bought in by Government at sales for arrears of revenue.

TENURES

The tenures of Bānkurā consist of properties held under the zamīndārs and comprise (a) *patnī tāluks*, with their subordinate tenures called *darpatnī* and *sepatnī*, (B) *mukarrarī tāluks*; (c) *istimrārī tāluks*, and (d) *ijārās* including *darijārās* and *zar-i-peshgī ijārās*. The following is a brief description of each of these tenures.

PATNĪ TENURES

It has been already mentioned that the Rājā of Bishnupur's estate became broken up towards the end of the 18th century, and that in 1806 a considerable portion of it was purchased by the Mahārājā of Burdwān, who gradually became the proprietor of four of the most important estates in the district, viz., Bishnupur, Bārahazāri, Karisundā, and the Jungle Mahāl. On these estates coming into his possession, he created under-tenures, known as *patnī tāluks*, similar to those in existence on his large estates in Burdwān and other districts. A *patnī* tenure is, in effect, a lease which binds its holder by terms and conditions similar to those by which a superior landlord is bound to the State. By Regulation XLIV of 1793 the proprietors of estates were allowed to grant leases for a period not exceeding 10 years, but this provision was rescinded by section 2 of Regulation V of 1812; while by Regulation XVIII of the same year proprietors were declared competent to grant leases for any period even in perpetuity. Finally, Regulation VIII of 1819, known as the Patnī Sale Law, declared the validity of these permanent tenures, defined the relative rights of the zamīndārs and their subordinate *patnī tālukdārs*, and established a summary process for the sale of such tenures in satisfaction of the zamīndār's demand of rent. It also legalized under-letting on similar terms by *patnīdārs* and others.

Since the passing of the Patnī Sale Law, this form of tenure has been very popular with zamīndārs who wish to divest themselves of the direct management of their property, or part of it, or who wish to raise money in the shape of a bonus. It may be described as a tenure created by the zamīndār to

be held by the lessee and his heirs or transferees for ever at a rent fixed in perpetuity, subject to the liability of annulment on sale of the parent estate for arrears of Government revenue, unless protected against the rights exercisable by auction purchasers by common or special registry, as prescribed by sections 37 and 39 of Act XI of 1859. The tenant is called upon to furnish collateral security for the rent and for his conduct generally, or he is excused from this obligation at the zamīndār's discretion.

Under-tenures created by *patnīdārs* are called *darpatnī*, and those created by *darpatnīdārs* are called *sepatnī* tenures. These under-tenures are, like the parent tenures, permanent, transferable and heritable; and have generally the same rights, privileges, and responsibilities attached to them. They are usually granted on payment of a bonus. Section 13 of Regulation VIII of 1819 provides rules for staying the sale of a *patnī*, if it takes place owing to the intentional withholding of payment of rent by the *patnīdār* with the object of ruining his subordinate tenure-holders. In such cases, the under-tenants are allowed the means of saving the *patnī* tenure and their own under-tenures, by paying into the Collector's office the advertized balance due to the zamīndār. The *patnī* tenure so preserved forms the necessary security to the depositors, who have a lien on it in the same manner as if the loan had been made upon mortgage. The depositors may then apply to the Collector for obtaining immediate possession of the defaulter's tenure; and the defaulter will not recover his tenure, "except upon repayment of the entire sum advanced, with interest at the rate of 12 per cent per annum up to the date of possession having been given, or upon exhibiting proof, in a regular suit to be instituted for the purpose, that the full amount so advanced, with interest, has been realized from the usufruct of the tenure".

SHIKMĪ TENURES

Shikmī tenures are a class of tenures of a peculiar nature, created by Government at the settlement of resumed *lākhirāj* villages. During the investigations which were made into the validity of the rent-free tenure of the district, several villages were discovered to be held under invalid *lākhirāj* grants. They were resumed; and in the course of the measurement and assessment

of the tenants' holdings preliminary to the settlement of the villages by Government, several small *lākhirāj* holdings were found. These were separately measured and assessed, and their proprietors were called upon to enter into a settlement on the same principle as was observed in the settlement of the entire village—half the assets being allowed to them as profits, etc., and half taken as the revenue due to Government. But for convenience sake, the proprietor of the entire *mahāl* was at the time of the settlement entrusted with the collection of the revenues due from his *shikmīdārs* and was allowed 10 per cent on the collections as his remuneration. Thus came into existence the *shikmī mahāls*, the revenue of which is paid to Government through the proprietors of the village in which they are situated. The status of a *shikmīdār* is that of a tenure-holder with hereditary and transferable rights; the Government revenue paid by them is fixed in perpetuity, and is not subject to enhancement. *Shikmī* tenures may be found in almost every part of the district.

MUKARRARĪ TENURES

The old *mukarrarī* tenures formerly existing in Bānkurā were nearly all abolished at the decennial settlement, and the *mukarrarī tāluks* subsequently created are not numerous. Those that exist have definite rights expressed in the written engagements by which they are created. It is generally specified that they shall be hereditary, and their rents are not subject to enhancement. Hence the name *mukarrarī*, which is derived from the Persian *karār*, meaning fixed. At the creation of a *mukarrarī* tenure, the lessee pays a bonus or *salāmi*.

Darmukarrarīs are subordinate to *mukarrarī*, and are created by the *mukarrarīdār*. These tenures are also of a fixed nature, and the rights of the lessee are the same as those of the superior holder or *mukarrarīdār*, who created the tenure. *Darmukarrarī* tenures, however, are very few in number in Bānkurā.

ISTIMRĀRĪ TENURES

Istimrārī Tāluks also are not numerous. All those found in Bānkurā are said to have been created by proprietors of estates subsequent to the decennial settlement. The rights and privileges of *istimrārīdārs* are similar to those of *mukarrarīdārs*, and a bonus is also paid by the tenant at the time of the execution

of the lease. *Daristīmrāri tāluks*, or *istīmrāris* of the second degree, are rare.

ĪJĀRĀS

The status of *ijārādārs*, or farmers, and of their subordinate *dar-ijārādārs*, differs widely from that of the other intermediate tenure-holders described above. *Ijārādārs* hold farming leases, by which a definite amount of annual rent is fixed for a specified term, usually varying from five to thirty years. Such leases are granted not only by the *zāmīndārs* or superior landlords, but also by subordinate *tālukdārs* or tenure-holders in an estate. The lessor cannot enhance the rent of an *ijārā* lease during its term; and on its expiry, the *ijārādār* is not entitled to renewal. If the latter is not specifically, by the conditions of his lease, debarred from creating an under-tenure, he occasionally creates a *dar-ijārā* tenure, the term of which cannot, of course, be longer than that of his own lease.

Another kind of *ijārā* is known as a *zar-i-peshgī ijārā*, i.e., a lease granted in consideration of an advance of money. It may be granted for an unspecified term of years, and made terminable on certain conditions, e.g., when an estate is mortgaged as security for a loan. The term expires when the mortgagee has recovered the amount of debt and interest from the proceeds of the property. Such leases are much in vogue in this part of the country, where even the cultivators often give a *zar-i-peshgī ijārā* of their lands to the village *Mahājans*.

TENANT'S HOLDINGS

The third class of tenures consists of lands held by actual cultivators, which comprise (a) *Jamā* or *jot*, (b) *miādi jamā*, (c) *mukarrarī* and *maurasi jamā*, (d) *korīā* and *darkorīā*, and (e) *bhāg jot*.

JAMĀ OR JOT

Cultivators' holdings, called *jamā* or *jot*, are generally, but not always, held without any written engagement. The lands remain in the possession of one family from generation to generation, and in most cases without any document of title. All these tenures are now governed by the Bengal Tenancy Act, VIII of 1885

as amended by Act I of 1907. In practice, a *jamā* is divided into as many parts as suit the convenience of the ryots who hold it, and the total rent contributed by the different holders thereof is paid by one of them to the *gumāshatā* or rent-collector.

MIĀDI JAMĀ

The term *miādi jamā* is applied to the holding of a cultivator with only a temporary interest in his land, which he holds for a fixed term of years under a *pātūā* or lease.

BHĀG JOT

Holdings for which the tenant pays a share (*bhāg*) of the produce as rent are known as *bhāg jot*. An account of this system of rent payment has already been given in Chapter VII.

JANGALBURĪ JAMĀ

When waste lands are leased out for the purpose of being cleared of jungle and brought under cultivation, the tenure is known by the name of *jangalburī*. Such lands are generally assessed at progressive rates of rent, payable after a certain number of years, during which no rent is paid. There used to be large tracts of waste land on which *sāl* timber grew in abundance; but most of these jungle tracts have now been reclaimed and brought under the plough. Several *zāmīndārs* and *tālukdārs* have leased out a few of their jungle lands at a small annual rent, and others retain them in their immediate possession.

NAYĀBĀDI

A tenure of a similar kind is that known as *nayābādi*. This tenure is created by a *sanad* granted by the *zāmīndār* or *tālukdār* to a person intending to clear and settle on waste land. The tenant is empowered by the grant to bring land under cultivation within certain fixed boundaries and is remunerated either by a gift of a special portion of the land rent-free or by deducting a regular proportion from the rent of the entire tenure.

JALSĀSAN

Another tenure called *jalsāsan* is designed to encourage the permanent improvement of land, i.e., a tenant obtains a grant

of a fixed quantity of land either rent-free or at a small quit-rent on condition that he constructs tanks and reservoirs from which that and other lands can be irrigated.

DAKHALDĀRI

Another peculiar tenure called *dakhaldāri* is found only in *pargana* Simlāpāl in thana Raipur. The holder of the tenure has a right of occupancy, but the rent of the tenure is regarded as liable to enhancement.

MUKARRARĪ AND MAURASI JAMĀ

Some cultivators hold land under leases called *mukarrarī* and *maurasi*, the chief stipulations of which are that the rent is subject neither to enhancement nor abatement, and that the tenure descends from father to son. These leases are generally granted on the payment of a bonus or *salāmī* by the tenant.

KORFĀ AND DARKORFĀ

A sub-ryoti tenure subordinate to that held by an ordinary cultivator is called *korfā*. *Korfā* tenures are generally created verbally, and in some cases there are also *darkorfādārs*, or ryots holding under *korfādārs*.

SERVICE TENURES

The fourth class of tenures consists of lands held either entirely rent-free (*be-panchak*), or liable to a nominal quit-rent (*panchak*). Such tenures were formerly very numerous in the district. How numerous and varied they were may be gathered from a letter written in 1845 by the Rājā of Bishnupur to the Judge of Bānkurā, in which he gave the following list and description of the various *panchakī mahāls* which existed in the territory of his ancestor: (1) *Senāpati mahāl—panchak* paid for service lands held by the commanding officers of the army. (2) *Mahāl-berā mahāl—panchak* paid for service lands held by the guards of the Bishnupur fort. (3) *Chharidāri mahāl—panchak* paid for service lands held by the Rājā's mace-bearers. (4) *Bakshī mahāl—panchak* paid for service lands held by *bakshīs* or military paymasters. (5) *Kāshtha-bhāndār mahāl—panchak* paid for service lands held by the suppliers

of fuel for the Rājā's palace. (6) *Shāgirdi-peshā mahāl—panchak* paid for service lands held by private servants of the Rājā, such as *khāwās*, *khidmatgārs*, *nāmhātās*, *goraits*, etc. (7) *Krot mahāl—panchak* paid for service lands held by the court officials of the Rājā, such as the *dīwān*, etc. (8) *Topkhānā mahāl—panchak* paid for service lands held by the gunners. (9) *Dom mahāl—panchak* paid for service lands held by drummers and musicians. (10) *Kāhārān mahāl—panchak* paid for service lands held by palanquin bearers. (11) *Khātālī mahāl—panchak* paid for service lands held by coolies and labourers for working in the fort. (12) *Hātīlā mahāl—panchak* paid for the sites of markets at Bishnupur. (13) *Be-talabī mahāl—panchak* paid for lands granted by the Rājā for charitable and religious purposes.

The majority of these tenures have been abolished by the Mahārājā of Burdwān; but *panchakī lākhīrāj* tenures are still to be found in *pargana* Bishnupur, where certain service and rent-free *panchakī* lands granted by the Rājā of Bishnupur for religious purposes have not been interfered with, though some service lands have lapsed to the proprietor of the estate on the decease of the servants who formerly enjoyed them. Of other service tenures which have survived, by far the most important are the *ghāt-wāli* tenures described above. The *chaukīdāri chākīrān* lands, i.e., the lands held by village *chaukīdārs* in lieu of wages have also been resumed and transferred to the zamīndārs under Act VI (B.C.) of 1870, the *chaukīdārs* being paid from the *chaukīdari* tax. A few other interesting service tenures are still left, such as *simānādāri*, *itmāmdāri* (or *mandālī*), *khorphosh* and *hikīmāl* tenures.

SIMĀNĀDĀRI

Simānādārs are a body of men who do the work of *chaukīdārs* in thanas Indās and Kotalpur, and have grants of land in lieu of wages. These lands are being resumed and settled with the zamīndārs, the *simānādārs* being left in possession of their holdings as occupancy ryots under the zamīndārs concerned.

ITMĀMDĀRI OR MANDĀLĪ

The *itmāmdāri* or *mandālī* tenure exists only in the western portion of the district in thanas Raipur and Khātrā. The holder

of the tenure performs the duties of a *gumāshā* or collector of rents and holds a grant of land in lieu of wages, acquiring an hereditary occupancy right in the land.

KHORPOSH

The grants given by a zamīndār to the members of his family for their maintenance are called *khorposh* tenures. In some instances such tenures revert to the original grantor or his heirs on the death of the grantee, and in others they are hereditary.

HIKIMĀLĪ

Hikimāli is a term applied to a grant of land assigned for the maintenance of the *hikim* or second brother of a Rājā or zamīndār. On the death of the latter, the second brother of his successor takes up the name and the land. A *hikimālī* tenure is thus dependent on the life of the Rājā or zamīndār and not of the tenure-holder himself.

RENT FREE TENURES

Rent-free tenures form the fifth and last class of landed estates in Bānkurā district. Several varieties of this tenure exist, but none prevail to any considerable extent. Lands granted for religious purposes, such as *brahmottar*, *sivottar*, *debottar*, etc., by Hindus, and *pīrottar*, *chirāgān*, etc., by Muhammadans, are found in many villages. Besides these, there are several other rent-free tenures granted for charitable purposes, and numerous small rent-free holdings, which do not appear to have been assigned for any special purpose.

Rent-free tenure-holders have several classes of ryots directly under them, and in some cases middlemen, generally *mukarrarīdārs* or *tālukdārs*, to whom the ryots holding or cultivating the said lands pay their rent. Some proprietors of small rent-free holdings are simple cultivators, who either cultivate their rent-free lands themselves or sub-let them.