The following statement shows the revenue earned by the Excise administration in the district in 1973-74.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Amount (in Rs.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country Spirit</td>
<td>66,03,516.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Pachwai</em></td>
<td>27,523.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Tari</em></td>
<td>34,774.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beer</td>
<td>17,393.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Liquor</td>
<td>37,620.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Spirit</td>
<td>120.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opium</td>
<td>1,163.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Bhang</em></td>
<td>8,380.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ganja</em></td>
<td>77,982.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>15,323.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total establishment expenditure of this organization during 1973-74 was Rs. 3,62,900.

The District Controller of Food & Supplies, Puruliya is in overall charge of the food and supplies organisation of the district. He is assisted in his varied duties by 1 Chief Inspector, 6 Inspectors, 1 Accountant and the usual complement of clerical staff. The Subdivisional Controller of Food & Supplies, Puruliya Sadar, with his separate establishment is directly responsible for the distribution of food-grains and consumer goods in the Sadar Subdivision. The organization of the District Controller incurred an establishment expenditure of Rs. 99,402 during 1974-75.

The District Fishery Officer is responsible for implementing all schemes of his department in the district. He supervises technical work relating to the development of pisciculture within his jurisdiction and is authorised to sanction and disburse loans, under various projects, for the development of pisciculture. In his work he is assisted by one Assistant Fishery Officer, several Fishery Extension Officers (posted under the Block Development Officers in the C.D. Blocks), 1 Fishery Sub-overseer, 3 clerks, 4 peons and 1 night guard. The total establishment expenditure incurred by the set-up during 1973-74 was Rs. 64,072. There is also a separate establishment of the Farm Manager, Ranibundh Fish Farm with the usual complement of office staff.

The District Agricultural Marketing Officer, who belongs to the West Bengal Junior Agricultural Service, is in
charge of the District Agricultural Office, Puruliya. He keeps close watch on the prices of all agricultural commodities and prepares market reports in respect of arrival and sale of such commodities. He is also the officer on the spot to give replies to various queries from the Government of India and Marketing Adviser of the State Government and various institutions. He is authorised to supervise and inspect the working of the cold storages, located within the district, in terms of rules and regulations as laid down in The West Bengal Cold Storages (Licensing and Regulation) Act, 1966. One Subdivisional Agricultural Marketing Officer is also posted in Puruliya Subdivision, who assists the District Agricultural Marketing Officer in the discharge of his duties. Both the officers are required to evaluate the viability of the markets for advancing Government loans to intending loanees for the rapid development of the market. They are also responsible for realization of loan amounts from such loanees. There are also three Market Reporters posted at Puruliya, Jhalsa and Manbazar under the direct supervision of the Subdivisional Agricultural Marketing Officer, Puruliya. These Marketing Reporters; collect data of different agricultural commodities and keep watch on the arrival, despatch and stock position of these commodities. They also prepare reports and send these to the Central Government with copies to the authorities concerned. The District Agricultural Marketing Officer and the Subdivisional Marketing Officer prepare exhaustive project reports of some viable markets containing relevant information regarding the existing and available economic resources of agricultural products and the related infrastructural facilities. They also try to ascertain the future requirements in view of the steady development in the production of farm-products with assured supply of marketable surplus of agricultural commodities. They select the viable markets, market areas, markets proper and market yards, etc., which are required to be regulated under the West Bengal Agricultural Produce Marketing (Regulation) Act of 1972. The District Agricultural Marketing Officer, as ex-officio member of the Regulated Marketing Committee, supervises the working of the committee in all spheres of its activities. The total expenditure incurred by the establishment during 1974-75 was Rs. 32,358.
The District Social Education Officer is responsible for implementing various social education programmes in the district. He is to inspect and supervise Adult Education Centres, Public Libraries and Area Libraries,—all imparting social education. He is also responsible for the sale and distribution of Nationalised Text Books in the district. As Secretary of the District Library Committee, he is in overall charge of the District Library. The District Social Education officer acts through the Extension Officer, Social Education (Headquarters) primarily in respect of implementation and supervision of the one-teacher *Pathshala* Scheme. The Extension Officer also assists the District Social Education Officer in the work of the sale and distribution of Nationalised Text Books. The Extension Officers working at the Block level are responsible for implementing the Social Education Schemes in their respective Blocks. They supervise the sale and distribution of Nationalised Text Books in their Block areas as also organize Small Savings, Sports and Youth Welfare activities. The establishment expenditure incurred by the D.S.E.O.’s organisation during 1972-73 was Rs. 41,153.

The District Employment Exchange in Puruliya town was started in July 1958 and during the first year of its existence from July 1958 to June 1959 altogether 3,939 applicants were registered. The live register of this Exchange at the end of December 1961 included about 69 per cent of applicants registered for unskilled labour. The number of applicants has since increased with a corresponding increase in the number of employers. The Compulsory Notification of Vacancies Act provides, *inter alia*, for the compulsory notification of vacancies by private employers, as from June 1960. Implementation of this Act is inducing more and more employees to notify their vacancies to the Employment Exchange and this fact, in turn, is encouraging more and more of the remaining unemployed people to register their names with the Exchange. The Coal Washery Project and different railway offices at Adra of this district are mainly responsible for the increased number of notification of vacancies. Apart from the railway recruiting units, the branch L.I.C. Office, the State Bank of India and the Bhojudih Coal Washery Project under the Hindusthan Steel Ltd., all in the public sector, the collieries in the private sector have made use of the
services of this Exchange. At present one Assistant Employment Officer is in charge of the District Employment Exchange with the usual complement of staff. The break-up of the Live Register as on 31.12.74 is given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number registered</td>
<td>33,347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisory</td>
<td>353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled and Semi-skilled</td>
<td>698</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical</td>
<td>12,942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic services</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled labour</td>
<td>18,945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of vacancies notified to the Exchange in 1974 was 200. The establishment charges for the year 1974-75 of this organization was Rs. 54,472.

At present only one Inspector of Weights and Measures is posted in Puruliya District. He is under the direct control of the Deputy Commissioner, Puruliya, while the departmental work of his area is supervised by the Assistant Controller of Weights and Measures, Bankura-cum-Puruliya with his headquarters at Bankura. The duties of the Inspector of Weights and Measures include verification and stamping of weights, measures, weighing and measuring instruments; carrying of propaganda work for popularizing enforcement of standard weights and measures; seizure of unauthorised weights and measures and collection of fees and other charges. At present the office of the Inspector is located within the compound of Zilla Parishad. The Inspector of Weights and Measures can perform other functions in exercise of the powers conferred on him by the West Bengal Standard Weights and Measures (Enforcement) Act of 1958 and the Rules made thereunder in 1959. The expenditure of this establishment during 1974-75 was Rs. 13,933.

The District Information Officer is in overall charge of information and public relations work in the district. His organization consists of the Sadar Subdivisional Unit, the District Information Centre, the Maintenance Centre for Rural Radio Broadcasting Scheme, and two Mobile Cinema Units. He is the Drawing and Disbursing Officer in respect of all the staff of this organization. During the Emergency, he is also the Censor Officer of all publications,
such as newspapers, periodicals, books, pamphlets, leaflets and posters published from the district. A Subdivisional Information Officer assists him in the discharge of his duties. This officer is in charge of the Subdivisional Unit, the District Information Centre and the Light Audio-Visual Unit. The Technical Supervisor attached to the District Organisation is in charge of the Maintenance Centre. He is assisted by one Laboratory Assistant and one Electric Mistry. The Technical Supervisor is responsible for proper maintenance of the radio sets (184 in 1975) installed at various places. The Audio-Visual Unit consists of one operator, one assistant operator and one driver, besides a peon and a cleaner. The total establishment costs of this organization during 1973-74 amounted to Rs. 99,571.

The present Income-tax Circle of Puruliya with its headquarters at Puruliya town has administrative control over the collection of revenues derived from all of the direct taxes within the civil district of Puruliya. Prior to 2 July 1973, Puruliya was the headquarter of I.T. Circle of both the districts of Bankura and Puruliya. A separate Income-tax Circle came into existence on 2 July 1973, at the town of Bankura after being bifurcated with the portions of the Civil District of Bankura from the Income-Tax Circle, Bankura-Puruliya. The Income Tax office at Puruliya had actually come into the map of Income tax jurisdiction of West Bengal on 1 November 1956 with the merger of Puruliya in West Bengal. The local authority of the present Income-Tax Circle consists of two Income-Tax Officers, having two independent charges, with the main object to collect revenues and also to explore potential cases for bringing more assessees into the income tax fold within Puruliya. The total number of assessees and the total tax collection in the district for 1974-75 were 2,801 and Rs. 18,05,000. The establishment expenditure incurred by the organization in 1974-75 was Rs. 1,53,000.

There is no separate postal division at Puruliya,—the local set-up falls within the Bankura Postal Division. The district postal administration is headed by a Post Master and in his day-to-day administration he is assisted by three Inspectors of Post Offices. Previously, the district was under Bihar Circle and with effect from 1.70.60 it was placed
under Bengal Circle. The district organization at present consists of 5 Sub-Post Offices and 50 Branch Post Offices, which fall within the jurisdiction of Puruliya P.S. There are also 22 Sub-Post Offices and 202 Branch Post Offices distributed all over the district under various police stations. The establishment costs of the Postal organisation in the district was Rs. 18,86,248 in 1973-74.

The District Savings Officer, National Savings, Puruliya is the sole officer now working in the district on behalf of his organization. He is at present posted at Puruliya town with no other staff. He propagates the small savings movement amongst the people and supervises the work of the authorised agents working in different areas of the district. He is under the direct control of the Director, National Savings, West Bengal (with his office in Calcutta).

The Life Insurance Corporation of India has one branch office in Puruliya district situated at Puruliya. The Branch Manager is the head of the office, assisted by one Assistant Branch Manager (Development). Altogether, 31 Class III employees are working in this office, besides 4 class IV employees working as sub-staff. The number of Development Officers is 8, while 379 Agents are working under them all over the district for procuring new business. The establishment expenditure incurred by the entire set-up during 1974-75 was Rs. 3,34,895.

The office of the Food Corporation of India is located in Puruliya Sadar with its two main godowns at Puruliya and Balarampur. Besides these, the Storing Agents have their own godowns at Puruliya, Balarampur and Raghunathpur. At present the organization mainly operates from three rail heads, viz., Puruliya, Barabhum and Adra. The District Manager, Food Corporation of India, is the head of the organization and is assisted in his work by one Senior Assistant Manager (Executive), one Assistant Manager (Accounts) and one Assistant Manager (Quality Control). A number of Sub-Inspectors are also posted at different Block headquarters of the district in connection with procurement work. The Inspectors attached to the godowns are in charge of the receipt and distribution of modified rationing and relief commodities. The Inspectors who work at the rail heads are responsible for records of receipt and despatch of incoming and outgoing wagons.
Their work is supervised by 2 Chief Inspectors, who take orders from the District Manager. At present 2 Chief Inspectors, 22 Inspectors and 7 Sub-Inspectors are working in the organization, besides other categories of employees. An expenditure of Rs. 5,62,819 was incurred by the district organization in 1973-74.

One Divisional Engineer is at present in charge of the Puruliya Division of the State Electricity Board, and under him, three Assistant Engineers posted at the Subdivisional headquarters of Puruliya, Raghunathpur and Jhalda to look after the operation, maintenance, transmission and distribution of electricity as well as the work of rural electrification. The district's first Super Power Station at Santaldih, however, has a different and independent set-up altogether. During the period of construction and commissioning of the 1st Unit of this Power Station, the set-up for Relay Instrument Inter-Communication under Operation and Maintenance set-up was headed by one Divisional Engineer who was functionally under the Superintending Engineer (TCR) and under local administrative control of the Dy. Chief Engineer, Santaldih. After commissioning of the 1st unit, the Subdivisional set-up has been retained under the General Superintendent, Santaldih Thermal Power Station.
CHAPTER X

REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

It is difficult to reconstruct even a conjectural picture of the revenue system obtained in the tracts now comprising Puruliya district or parts of it when, for instance, the king Chandravarman of Puskarana ruled over the northern parts of the present district in the 4th century A.D. or when Vijayasena, the Uparika of Barddhamanabhukti, ruled over the same Damodar valley as the viceroy of the King Gopachandra. From around the 9th century A.D. to the beginning of the 14th century A.D. numerous Hindu and Jain temples in stone and in brick were constructed in several different places in the Damodar, the Dwarakeswar, the Kangsabati and the Suvarnarekha valleys in the district. The largest conglomeration of these temples was located at Telkupi on the Damodar (now gone under the stored-up water of the Panchet Dam reservoir), where the construction activities continued well up to the 15th century. From an eleventh century source (Ramacharitam of Sandhyakaranandi) we learn that Telkupi had been the seat of an important semi-independent chief of that time, which is corroborated by a fourteenth century account (Sirat-i-Firuz Sahahi). Now, a dynasty or the dynasties which built so many temples and to give to the seat of power an urban entity, must have collected the necessary funds for building the edifices by levying taxes and realising revenue or by imposing tributes. Whatever might have been the mode of collection of funds by the ruling power, unless the people themselves produced sufficient agricultural surplus, or minerals or craft objects, sold them to traders at sufficient margines and the latter in their turn took them out to be sold elsewhere—the ruling authority could not possibly have extracted the necessary funds by way of taxes, etc. On the evidence of inscriptions and of Jain (a majority of whom had always been traders) temples in a conglomeration of Hindu temples, we can assume that some
of these temples were built by traders and that this place was on a trade route and a number of traders lived there. If this assumption be correct, then it seems that the rulers of Tailakampi or Sikharbhum probably not only extracted surplus produce of land by way of land revenue but also used to impose and collect different kinds of dues from the traders; some of these dues were probably of the nature of excise duties, custom dues etc. Although the temple building activity in the Damodar valley and in some places in the Dwarakeswar valley, that is, roughly in the ancient Tailakampi kingdom, corresponding to the early medieval Sikharbhum and the late medieval Panchet or Pachet zamindary, had continued right up to the fifteenth century, in the south, that is, in the Kangasabati valley, roughly corresponding to he late medieval and early modern Manbhum and Kuilapal paraganahs, and the Suvarnarekhā valley, roughly corresponding to Baghmulī paraganah of the early modern times, came to a halt in the first half of the 14th century A.D. There is hardly any reference to tracts to the south of the Dwarakeshwar in any record, report or account before A.D. 1765. The glimpses of this region that we get from the late 14th century account Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi and the 15th or the 16th century Purana called Bhavisya Purana (Brohmanda-Kanda), invariably lead us to reconstruct the picture of a sparsely populated forest land, lacking in communication of any sort, lived in by hunters and food gatherers of fierce nature who roamed about half-clad, ate all kinds of flesh, drank spirituous liquors and worshipped demons and spirits unknown to the Brahminical Hindu peasants and Jain traders. They hardly seems to have lived a settled peasants' life. From all these it appears that the pockets of civilization, based as it was on settled agriculture, producing a handsome surplus, that grew up in the Kangasabati and the Suvarnarekha valleys between the 9th and the 14th centuries were wiped out of the face of south Puruliya; agriculture declined, trade vanished, with it the Hindu and Jain traders left the country; the local states and the ruling powers which thrived on surplus producing agriculture and trade, broke-up. There began an influx of Mundari speaking tribals from Ranchi, Hazaribagh and Singhbhum, according to Col. E.T. Dalton, from around the fifteenth century; there were already some Mundari speaking hunters and food gatherers.
in the up-lands of the district away from the river valleys. Tracts to the south of the Dwarakeshwar became wholly re-tribalised and de-urbanized by the fifteenth century. When these Mundari speaking tribes took to wetland agriculture, settled down in villages, started producing an agricultural surplus, began lac extraction and silk rearing, broke up into functionally specialized groups from which developed fighting groups of elite, developed vertically stratified society, started becoming Hinduized and ultimately formed states, no body knows for certain. But if some guess work is permitted then it seems probable that the Utkal Brahmins of this area were responsible for the introduction of settled agriculture in this region. And their motive behind the introduction was to ensure the Orissan king a regular flow of tributes from this area; unless a surplus produce could be guaranteed such extraction of tribute could not be assured. If not directly, at least indirectly, the Orissan State influenced the formation of hierarchical state structures in this region to ensure its own flow of tributes and soldiers from this area—between the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries. When the curtain is raised to let us have a view of this region in the late eighteenth century we find several states in this area, all having hierarchical feudalistic structures. Although the people in general were still savages, hunters and food gatherers and non-Hindu animists, some among them had already become dry-land cultivators and some settled agriculturists; social and political elites were Hinduized peasants and landlords, already claiming a Rajput-Kshatriya status.

Colonel Edward Tuite Dalton thought that there was once a big Munda tribe which inhabited a wide-spread area of the Chhotanagpur plateau (spread out in Ranchi, Hazaribagh, Singhbhum and Santal Parganahs districts of Bihar). To maintain communication, for standardisation of behaviour and practice and for the maintenance of social control in such a wide-spread society a hierarchical system of authority was devised. Each hamlet or village had a headman or munda, twelve or so contiguous villages or a parah had a manki and all the mankis would meet once a year during annual festival and elect one among them to preside over that year’s festival or hunt. Hindu
peasants and traders infiltrated into the area, caught hold of some influential mankis, started to settle down in the forest-cleared areas near the rivers and introduced wet-land agriculture in small pockets and initiated some of the mankis to wet-land agriculture and Hinduism. Mankis in their turn introduced settled wet-land agriculture, where it was possible, among their fellows and started claiming shares of the produce of the others for the social and political functions they performed. Thus there arose a system of vertical stratification in the society, where there was only some form of horizontal stratification due to functional specialization. Some time in the first half of the eighteenth century, or a little earlier, Phani Mukta Rai was elected by the Mankis of the table-land of Chhotanagpur proper, the Raja. Following this lead, the parah chiefs of Barabhum, Manbhum, Kuilapal and Baghmundi elected Rajas of their own and these Rajas (except the Raja of Manbhum) founded their own dynasties claiming divine origins from either the sun or the moon and Rajput-Kshatriyayhood at the same time. Raja of Manbhum was, however, a Bagdi, but it is not known how the family came to possess authority over a largely Bhumij (originally a Mundari speaking tribe) inhabited area.

In the south and the south-western estates of Manbhum, Barabhum, Kuilapal, Baghmundi and Torang the clearest traces of their origin from original Mundari polity system were discernible even when Coupland wrote his Manbhum District Gazetteer. Thus, Baghmundi was made up of five groups of villages or parahs, one of which was held by the zamindar in khas, the other four by mankis on small rentals fixed in perpetuity. The small adjoining estate of Torang, on the other hand, was a single parah zamindary where the zamindar was still being referred to as manki in 1910. In Barabhum, the prevalent arrangement of the grades of ghatwals, in 1910, provided an exact parallel to the archaic Mundari system. In the lowest grade were the tabedars and there used to be several of them in a village and they corresponded to the bhuiyars or original tillers or fair-sized peasant proprietors in the earlier Mundari system. Above them were the village headmen or the chief policemen and collectors of village revenue, termed, in Barabhum, as the ghatwals and their office corresponded
to that of the *mundas* of the earlier Mundari polity. Several such villages formed a *taraf* in Barabhum estate, corresponding to a *parah* of the old Mundari system. Like the *manki* of the old, *taraf-sardar* or *sadiyal* had important socio-political functions, like peace keeping, etc. and enjoyed rent-free grant of land for discharging the said functions.

Elsewhere also the traces of the Mundari politico-economic system survived in various forms till the coming into effect of the West Bengal Estates Acquisition Act and the West Bengal Land Reforms Act, though for the most part the grouping of villages into *parahs* or *tarafs* had disappeared. This happened especially in the areas which came more directly under the influence of the Panchet Raj (the fourteenth century Persian account *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi* mentions of the Panchet Raj and thirty six vassal estates); and it may well have been due to deliberate action taken by the Panchet Raj to break-up the local organizations as sources of possible opposition to their own authority, and to the substitution of a system of petty semi-military, semi-police chieftains (the super imposition of semi-military and semi-police functions on officials with certain economic and social functions in the Bhumij estates or the growth of the so-called *ghatwali* system was perhaps an influence that the Bhumij states imbibed from the Panchet Raj) drawn from their own entourage and more under their direct control. The existence of a few *jagir* estates around the Panchet Raj estate, consisting usually of one or two villagers each, lend credence to this supposition.

Tailakampi, probably a tribute paying chieftdom or kingdom of the Palas in the tenth-eleventh century, seems to have become the independent kingdom of Sikharbhum in the fourteenth century and continued to be so when the area formed itself into Panchet Raj. Though Akbar's general Man Singh had induced the king of Panchet to acknowledge the suzerainty of the Mughals and pay tributes, the Raja proclaimed his independence soon after Man Singh left. Jehangir's Subahdar of Bengal, Islam Khan, had to send out an expedition in 1608 to finally subdue Panchet. In a *Badshahinama* of the 1632-33, there is an entry which states, "Bir Narayan, zemindar of Panchet, a country attached to Subah Bihar, was under Shah Jehan,
à commandar of 300 horse.” This entry may be taken to mean that the Raja of Panchet was made a Mughal jagirdar, which, however, was not the fact. From another Mughal record of thirty years later, we learn that the zamindary of the Raja of Panchet was not regularly assessed to Ausil Toomar Jama, that is, it was not diwani estate. The zamindar of Panchet or the Raja of Panchet used to pay a fixed tribute or peshkush annually, and the Mughal government neither kept an account of the land and the produce of the raiyats nor had any control on the rents paid by the raiyats to the zamindar. From the years A.D. 1728 to A.D. 1743 Raja Garur Narayan was subject to an annual peshkush of Rs. 18,203 for Panchet and part of or kismat of Shergarh parganah of Barddhaman Chakla. In 1743, an additional charge of Rs. 3,323 was levied on Panchet estate in form of a cess, namely, abwab Chauth Marhatta by Nawab Aliwardi Khan. In 1763, the sarif-i-sikka or impost imposed by Kasim Ali to cover losses on the exchange of coins, swelled the net assessment of Rs. 23,544. Muhammad Reza Khan in 1766 raised the peshkush and abwabs to a total of Rs. 30,000 but only Rs. 5,969 was actually collected that year. In 1771, a jor talab or forcible exaction of Rs. 1,44,954, including a saranjami or deduction of collection charges of Rs. 17,302 and the demand was enforced by military authority. In the ‘gross medium settlement’ of 1777, with Raja Raghunath Narayan, the revenue for Panchet estate, with the recently acquired territory of Jhalda, was fixed at Rs. 69,027. The amins on the other hand had calculated the rent collection of the Panchet estate as amounting to Rs. 1,54,423. Finally in 1783, the total assessment of the same territory amounted to Rs. 76,532 with a deduction of about Rs. 57,000 for collection expenses.

The early days of British rule were marked by a constant struggle between the authorities and the zamindar of Panchet. The main reason for the struggle was that the zamindar of Panchet had never before paid anything like a regular land revenue as a duty and secondly, least they err on the low side, the ‘diwani’ administration was putting up excessive land revenue demands on the summary assumption of land holding and produce on an estate which had never been properly surveyed before and at a time
when population of the country was fast decreasing due to famine and uncertain situation in the countryside and cultivation was declining. So, the zamindary often began to fall in arrears insofar as payment of revenue dues were concerned. From time to time portions of the zamindary began to be seized from the zamindar, albeit temporarily, by the administration and farmed out in auction to highest bidders for the realization of the arrear revenue. But most often than not these experiments became abortive. Eventually, the Decennial Settlement was concluded in 1791 with Panchet Raja which 18 months later, in March 1793, was made Permanent and the revenue was fixed at Rs. 55,794. The demand was supposed to have been arrived at after an assessment of rent-paying tenancies in the estate. The zamindar had already supplied a list of rent-free grants within his territory as far back as in 1771. According to this list and the later one of rent-paying villages returned at the time of the Decennial Settlement, the whole estate consisted of 1,280 villages of which 404 only were malguzari or rent-paying (that did not, however, mean that the land-holding peasant at the bottom of the rent-free holdings did not pay any rent; it only means that the holder of the mal did not pay a rent to the zamindar), 49 villages were held by the Raja in khas khamar, 388 villages were brahmottara rent-free grants, 68 were devottara rent-free grants, 2 bhatottara rent-free grants, 2 mahattaran rent free grants and 180 jagirs held on quit-rents and variously described as moghuli, talabi or panchaki, 58 villages were set aside for 'digwars' as service grants free of rent and 129 more villages were assigned to various other rent-free holders. Apart from the revenue demand on the zamindar, made permanent in 1793, the estate was made liable to a contribution of Rs. 1,754 per annum as contribution towards the maintenance of police force in the territory.

There were two temporarily settled estates, namely, Matha and Kuilapal. From 1793 to 1954, the government from time to time revised the revenue demand and resettled the estates with the zamindars. The origins of these estates are wrapped in obscurity. Matha was possibly a part of Baghmundi, the estate which was not restored to the zamindar of Baghmundi, Ananda Singh, in 1799 but was
settled with the local taraf sardar or manki who eventually became the zamindar. According to tradition, the zamindar or the Thakur of Matha is a descendant of Bayar Singh who was a notorious robber. On his death, his son Paban Singh succeeded, about 1805, in getting himself recognized as the zamindar with the backing of the government; his father on the other hand, was only a taraf sardar. Bayer Singh used to pay a sum of only Rs. 60 to the zamindar of Baghmundi as taraf sardar’s tribute. On the other hand, he used to get back a bribe of Rs. 35 and 35 maunds of paddy annually from the zamindar of Baghmundi as price for not attacking and looting Baghmundi zamindar’s property. Notwithstanding the government’s recognition of Paban Singh as the zamindar, Baghmundi Raj claimed a larger tribute from him. The Panchet Raj at the same time laid a claim on Matha as a subordinate estate or vassalage. None could, however, give any proof in support of the respective claims. At long last in 1860, Colonel Dalton recommended settlement with the holder of the estate at a sadarjama equal to one-third of the rental receipts, the holder himself would admit as real. At the settlement the Sadarjama was fixed at Rs. 135 and annas 8 only. In 1881, a survey and settlement of the estate was made and the revenue was fixed at Rs. 647 annas 5 and pies 9 annually for a period of 15 years which expired in 1896. The revenue demand was further raised to Rs. 649 annas 15 and pies 3 in 1904.

The other temporarily settled estate was Kuilapal, a small parganah to the south of Manbhum, north and east of Barabhum, north of Silda in Medinipur and west of Shyamsundarpur in Bankura. The predecessors of the zamindars of Kuilapal were probably taraf sardars, sadiyals or mankis and robbers at the same time. Shab Lal Singh was the first of the line with whom a settlement was struck by the British administration, some time in the beginning of the 1790s. During the rebellion of Ganga Narayan Singh in 1832, two brothers of the then zamin called upon by the Collector of the Jungle Mahals to deliar, Bahadur Singh, joined the rebels. Bahadur Singh was ver them up; he eventually did so and as a reward for his services Harrington, the Collector, declared his estate to be a rent-free service tenure. The validity of Harrington’s
grant was not called in question till 1860. In that year, Colonel Dalton reported that the estate was not entirely an uncultivated wild and recommended its resumption to a revenue-paying temporarily settled estate, carrying a gross revenue equivalent to one-third of its declared gross rent receipt. At the first settlement sadarjama was fixed at Rs. 196 per year. Revenue was increased to Rs. 1,021 after the survey of 1881; further increased in 1896-97. This last increase was objected to by the zamindar as unjust and he offered to pay half of his gross rental receipt as sadarjama. In 1901-02, at the persistent persuasion of the zamindar the sadarjama was refixed at Rs. 2,696 considerably below the 1896-97 proposal, for a period of 15 years.

At the time of 1904 settlement with Matha and 1901-02 settlement with Kuilapal, forest lands were taken out from the estates and made Government khas land under the Protected Forest Act.

As has already been stated earlier in this chapter and in Chapter II of this volume, Barabhum, Manbhum, Torang and Baghmundi had never been under Mughal rule. Not to speak of the ausil toomar jama or regular diwani-due, unlike the estate of Panchet, these states had never even paid peshkush or tribute or quit-rent as acknowledgement of the suzerainty of either the Mughal emperor or the Subahdar or Nawab of Bengal. Yet, when Mir Qasim ceded the Chakla of Medinipur in 1760 to the Company, the latter claimed rights over the revenues of Barabhum, Manbhum, Torang and Kuilapal, as those figured in the rent roll of Murishid Qali Khan as parganas or mahals of the Chakla of Medinipur. Baghmundi’s case was little different. Baghmundi, originally a taraf under a taraf: sardar or manki or sadiyal under the Raja of Ramgarh, become a Raj or State by itself, not acknowledging the suzerainty of Ramgarh before the British take over of Ramgarh. But the Raja of Ramgarh had never ceased to regard Baghmundi as a taraf within his raj. This gave the Company the ‘right’ to claim revenue from Baghmundi after the Raja of Ramgarh had submitted to the Company.

There had not been any survey of land (including land utilization, classification, productivity, etc). and rent receipts insofar as these jungle mahals of Medinipur
Chakla and Ramgarh were concerned. The British administration not only had to wage military struggle to subdue the Rajas of Barabhum, Manbhum, Kuilapal and Baghmundi and make them accept British suzerainty, but had to proceed militarily against turbulent semi-independent sadiyals, mankis, digwars and ghatwal sardars as well. The first expedition against these Rajas and their semi-independent sub-ordinate tenure holders was sent out in 1767 and the last of the big military operations was concluded in December 1832. In between these two date-lines several military and police operations had to be undertaken by the Company administration against the recalcitrant Rajas and/or their subordinate tenure holders for noncompliance of agreements, non-payment of the stipulated dues and overheads and/or general rebellious behaviour or brigandage, the detail narrative of which has been given in Chapter II of this volume. It appears that these Rajas and their sub-ordinate tenure holders, not being habituated to acknowledging overlordship of any non-traditional power over them, felt extremely reluctant to acknowledge the suzerainty and overlordship of an alien power to which they had to succumb militarily and whose terms they had to accept under duress. After each military victory the alien administration would force a Raja to a settlement or an agreement, which invariably included the sum of money the Raja should pay to the administration as annual sadarjama for his zamindary. The Company had the privilege to go on increasing the sadarjama and other additional imposts at will on the non-permanently settled estates and on the permanently settled estates till 1793 (levying on additional imposts and cesses, however, continued unabated on the permanently settled estates even after 1793). Groaning under these imposed commitments the Rajas seized upon any and every opportunity to throw the commitments and agreements to wind and rebel.

Till 1861, no settlement was concluded after a proper survey of land uses and land tenures. The settlements which were imposed by the administration from time to time on all Rajas, prior to 1793 and on temporarily settled estates after 1793, were less of the nature of settlements of revenue. The settlements were more of the nature of fixed tributes or quit rents to be paid by the semi-indepen-
dent chieftains of inaccessible regions, acknowledging the suzerainty of the British administration. The Rajas were not revenue agents of the Company administration, as were the zamindars elsewhere in Bengal; they were mockurary tenure holders.

The settlements made with Barabhum, Manbhum, Baghmundi and Torang from time to time prior to 1793, including the last one made in 1791 which become permanent after 1973, were not so much of settlements for land revenue as for fixed tributes or quit-rents.

Reference has been made in Chapter II of this volume to the military operations of 1767-68. These operations culminated into the agreements which Graham, the then Collector of Medinipur, Lieutenant Fergusson and Higgins, the Residents at Barddhaman, reached with the Rajas of Barabhum, Manbhum, Kuilapal and Baghmundi. The mockurary, fixed in 1776 in the case of Barabhum, was Rs. 885. Manbhum’s tribute was fixed at Rs. 316 annas 2 per year in 1767-68, but was raised to Rs. 1,702 anna 1 and 6 pies per year in 1776. Similar agreements were concluded with other zamindars also. “The settlements are described in the contemporary records as mokurary or fixed settlement of an easy peshkush or quit-rent, as an acknowledgement merely of the Company’s sovereignty.”

Since times immemorial, all these states and estates have been following some kind of a law of primogeniture insofar as the question of succession was concerned and this partially helped the states to keep the estates undivided and intact. The existing custom was recognized from the outset by the British Raj; an attempt to prove divisibility in the case of Panchet estate was defeated and the right of the then head of the family to settlement of the whole estate was recognized in spite of objection raised at the time of Decennial Settlement; the Regulation X of 1800 definitely affirmed and confirmed what had been the longstanding convention.

After the attempt to sell a portion of the Panchet estate for the realization of arrear revenue in 1795 (described in detail in Chapter II) became abortive, the Government never again ventured to sell any estate or parts thereof for realization of arrears and debts, lest that alienated the turbulent semi-independent chiefs of the jungle.
Instead the Government would take over the management of a defaulting estate or parts thereof for some years and let out the estate or parts thereof to revenue farmers in market, bidding for fixed term; the Government would pay a portion of the revenue so realized to the landlord and keep the other portion as part realization of the arrear and the current revenue. The Government would hand back the management of the estate only after it had realized its dues in full. This custom was given an official approval by an Order of the Board of Revenue in 1834. The Order, however, specified certain cases in which the Deputy Commissioner of the district was empowered to attach a defaulting estate or parts thereof and sell in realization of dues. The result of it all had been that there used to be several estates under Government management at a time. Manbhum was one such estate, which used to remain constantly under Government management.

We have so far been speaking of different kinds of zamindary tenures and trying to assess the causes of their differences in their varying origins; we have referred to the sub-ordinate tenancies only in passing so far. Subordinate tenures in Puruliya are numerous and of considerable variety.

The mankiari and the murari tenures have already been referred to as the survivals of the old Mundari politico-economic system, under which each village had its munda or headman and each group of 12 villages or parah had its manki or divisional headman. The permanently settled estate of Torang in its origin was a mankiari tenure. In its origin mankiari was a service tenure; mankis used to discharge important social and political functions. For such services rendered, a manki used to get one out of the twelve villages in his charge as service grant, free of rent or revenue. But with the spread of British Indian police and land revenue administration, the mankis lost great deal of their former policing and revenue collecting functions and became simple rent-free tenure holders. Though originally a manki could not have but one village out of twelve in his charge as his ‘man’ land, each of the four mankis of Baghmundi parganah in the early part of this century were claiming tenureship over several villages. The zamindars, on the
other hand, were telling the administrators that these man-
kis were nothing but ijaradars with no hereditary rights.

Before the imposition of the zamindary abolition act
there were twentythree digwari estates in PURULIYA district,
all within the ambit of Panchet estate and they correspon-
ded to 58 villages. In its origin the digwari estates too were
rent-free service tenures. Digwars were supposed to be
highway patrolmen and rendered important police service
to the Panchet Raj. But when the traditional policemen
turned into robbers, the British administration took over
policing function from the Raj (please see Chapter II for
details). Though the digwars were deprived of their func-
tions, they were not dispossessed of their landed interests.
The British administration, nevertheless, imposed on them
a special cess to be paid directly to the government; this
cess, called Road Patrol Cess, was supposed to be the fine
the digwars were supposed to pay for not performing
their traditional duties, for which they were granted land by
the Panchet Raj. The digwari estates had an ambiguous
legal status under the British administration. The digwars
paid cess at enhanceable rates directly to the government.
Though the estates formally remained within Panchet
zamindary, yet did not come under the purview of either
the Permanent Settlement or within the Bengal Tenancy
Act. As a matter of fact they were non-functioning service
tenures under the government.

In Manbhum estate the digwars or digwar sardars
or the sardars with similar police functions, on the other-
hand, used to pay to the Raja a small quit rent. It was,
therefore, strictly speaking not a service tenure. After
the take over of that policing function by the British gov-
ernment, they began to pay the same quit-rent, now at
enhanceable rates, to the government.

Sardar-ghatwali or taraf-sardari tenures were
found in Barabhum parganah only (or in the estate of
Barabhum Raj). The tenures of the sardar-ghatwalls or
taraf-sardars were of considerable size and extent. The
smallest of the four major taraf of Barabhum had 28
villages in its ambit and the largest had 75 villages, in
the early part of this century. The taraf-sardars used to pay
small quit-rents to the Raj as fixed tribute. The taraf-