

CHAPTER IX

ECONOMIC TRENDS

128. Introductory

Vast changes have taken place during the last two decades. A visitor to Sambalpur today would feel like Rip Van Winkle waking up after long years of sleep. A huge lake, large areas criss-crossed with canals, corn swaying in the fields in summer, indeed a Green Revolution, electric and telephone wires covering the sky, H. T. Electric towers looking like huge skeletons standing in fields and forests to carry electric power, are all signs of a new look. Growth of heavy and light industries in and around Sambalpur, Jharsuguda, and Bargarh has transformed the pastoral countryside into centres humming with activity and concentration of people both from within and outside the district. Life in rural areas is also very different. *Zamindars*, *Gauntias*, and *Chaukidars* are no longer there. Gone also are *Deraghars*, and *Dharsas*. One who knew Sambalpur of old may view these with nostalgia. All today and in future will regret the rapid disappearance of wild life. The majestic tiger, the cunning leopard, and pretty spotted deer are nearing extinction. Gone also is lac, the resin of a wild insect. *Tassar*, the strongest of all textiles has so deteriorated that people prefer synthetic fibres. You no longer see cocoons being sold in village markets. Where you could see hundreds of bullock carts moving leisurely on dust roads, you now find Diesel trucks racing on black topped roads polluting the atmosphere by the masses of smoke emitted by their exhausts. The *Dhenki* which used to pound rice is no longer seen or heard. It has been replaced by rice-hullers and giant rice mills. The old way of life is gone for ever.

Sambalpur is situated in the North-Western part of Orissa, and is the second largest district in the State with an area of 6,764.6 sq. miles. It has 11.24 per cent of the State's area and 8.6 per cent of the State's population and ranks second and fourth respectively among all the districts. The density of 223 persons per sq. mile is below the State average of 292 persons. The average rainfall is 60 inches or more. The main river is the Mahanadi which flows from North-West to South-East for a distance of about 90 miles with a number of tributaries. But the district had no canals prior to the construction of Hirakud Dam and the people were depending largely on rain water for *Kharif* crops and on tanks, *Katas*, wells and rivulets for their *Rabi* crops. If any year the rains were scanty, the local water reservoirs never got filled up and naturally no water was available for irrigation during *Rabi* seasons. Before the coming of Hirakud canals, most of the crops were grown in *Khari*

season and autumn and winter paddy predominated the total cropped area. 83 per cent of the total cropped area was under paddy, 2 per cent on other cereals, 10 per cent on pulses, 3 per cent on oilseeds, and 2 per cent on cash-crops and other minor products. The area under cash-crop was insignificant. Sugarcane was the only cash-crop. In *Rabi* season practically no crops were grown. The double-cropped area was only 1.88 per cent. Thus, the vast agricultural population remained unemployed almost half of the agricultural year.

But this problem has been solved to some extent by Hirakud canals. Water of the Hirakud reservoir is made available to the cultivators of Sambalpur and Balangir districts through the main canals with irrigation potential of 6 lakh acres annually. The canals are supplying water throughout the year serving the *Kharif* and *Rabi* crops. The Bargarh canal is the longest canal which flows for 55 miles, with a culturable commandable area of 312,000 acres. The Sason canal commands a culturable area of 68,000 acres in the Sambalpur Subdivision. After 14 miles it has bifurcated into two distributaries of 'Huma' and 'Parmanpur', serving Sason, Sambalpur Sadar, Jujomura, and Dhama Police-stations. The Sambalpur distributary, and Hirakud distributary are the smallest with a culturable area of 11,772 acres spread over Sambalpur and Hirakud Police-stations.

Hirakud canals cover 10 Community Development Blocks (area 945,828 acres) in this district with a total net irrigated area of 230,000 acres, i. e., net physical area excluding double-cropped area. Almost all the villages of Bheden Block are irrigated through Hirakud canals. Bargarh subdivision covers most of the irrigated Community Development Blocks and more than one-third of the total irrigated villages of Hirakud canals. It has passed through a plain land having good soil. The villages are developed in agriculture and the economically active population of the irrigated villages mostly depend on agriculture alone for their livelihood. The soil is mostly of clay, loam, sandy and sandy-loam, clay loam and sandy-clay. Most of the soil in the irrigated area is red soil which produces good crop.

After the coming of canal water the cultivators started double cropping and rotation of crop to maximise agricultural production. In the year 1958-59 when canal water was made available the cultivation of Summer paddy during *Rabi* season was introduced for the first time. In the year 1961-62 the area under Summer paddy was about 30,000 acres and covered 95 per cent cropped area of the *Rabi* season. The cropping pattern has undergone a change in the last six years and two principal paddy crops are usually grown in the irrigated villages. The *Rabi* season is now a full working season for the cultivators and they remain busy throughout the year. The yield rate of summer paddy is

increasing from year to year. Groundnut in *Rabi* season is also a new crop. Summer vegetables and banana cultivation have been possible. Ragi, hybrid maize, jowar, and summer *til* are the other crops which have been introduced. On the other hand in unirrigated villages the land remains fallow and the cultivators remain idle almost half of the agricultural year and sometimes migrate for daily wages to the nearby towns. Jute has also been introduced in the irrigated Blocks of Sambalpur-I, and Bargarh. Improved variety of potato is being grown and found to be very profitable. The area under this crop is increasing from year to year. A few crops like field-pea, and gram are gradually disappearing from the Hirakud ayacut area as more profitable crops like Dalua or Summer paddy, groundnut, and potato have taken their place. Other minor crops like tobacco, winter vegetables, chillies, garlic, and sweet potato are also grown with an increased acreage. The sugar-cane area has also increased substantially.

Mould iron ploughs and Japanese weeders have been introduced. Among the improved varieties of paddy high yielding varieties like 1242, BAM-9 in wet land, T. 90, 141, 1141 in medium land, PTB-10 in high land, IR-8, Taichung, Jaya, and Padma are getting popular with the cultivators. Orchards are growing as people are interested in lemon, orange, guava, papaya, plaintain, and mango trees in their back-yards. Pisciculture, horticulture, and poultry rearing are gaining momentum. Improvement of the cattle breed has been taken up by supplying of Haryana and Red Sindhi bulls, buffaloes and by the preventive and curative activities through a large number of stockmen. Simultaneously the expansion of agriculture, communication, education, health, water-supply, housing, and industrial activities have been sponsored through Blocks. Family Planning, and Maternity and Child Welfare measures are also receiving popularity.

The Intensive Agriculture District Programme has been started in the year 1961-62. The participants are more in irrigated area than in the non-irrigated part and the concentration is more in the size of holdings having 5 to 10 acres of land.

Since the Hirakud Dam Project has given a real boost to agriculture, it will not be incorrect to say that a green revolution has occurred. Farmers have gradually acquired self-sufficiency in as wide sphere as possible.

A break-through has been achieved in the agricultural sphere. Life seems to be humming in irrigated villages. A glorious future is awaiting the farmers. Before the construction of the project the cultivators were entirely depending upon the nature. As the land was previously rain-fed they were accustomed to grow only one crop in a year. But after the implementation of the project the nature of land changed and along with it the fate of the cultivators also underwent a

spectacular change. *At* and *Bahal* lands which were then less productive now giving good yield to add to the fortune of the toiler. Land is now found being covered either under *Khariff* or *Dalua*, or vegetable. Practically no rest the field enjoys nor do the cultivators. They are now accustomed to hard labour and from their hard labour a bright future is slowly emerging.

There are regional disparities within the district in economic development. Bargarh Subdivision with irrigation has moved much faster than Padampur Subdivision which is handicapped not only by lack of irrigation but also by periodic droughts. Consequently there is a tendency for population to move north towards Bargarh. Also there has been considerable immigration of farming labour from Andhra Pradesh to the neighbourhood of Attabira.

“The *Per capita* gross income from agriculture comes to Rs. 196.47 for irrigated villages and Rs. 131.44 for unirrigated villages. In taking the average size of family and the *per capita* income from agriculture income per household comes to Rs. 1,149 for irrigated villages and Rs. 679 for unirrigated villages¹.” The average annual income of farming family was only Rs. 326.39* in the year 1954-55 when there was no irrigation. But in 10 years time after irrigation the income of the farming family has substantially increased.

Handloom has been the most important industry. The principal centres are Barpali, Bijepur, Laumunda, Pata, Kadobahal, Khuntapal, Jamla, Bandhapali, Top, Remenda, Bheden, Mahalakata, Jhilminda, Bhatli-Kushanpuri, Singhapali, and Chichinda. Sambalpur town, and Tukra are famous for Bell-metal industries. With the generation of electric power from Hirakud a number of small-scale and large-scale industries have grown around it. The Aluminium plant, the Cable factory, Structural workshop at Hirakud, the Orient Paper Mill, the Collieries and the Caustic Soda Factory at Brajarajnar, the Belpahar Refractories, the Cement Factory at Bargarh and several other industries are the outcome of cheap power available from Hirakud. Apart from these large-scale industries there are also a few small-scale industries, such as saw mills, Biri factories, rope works, match factory, soap factory, chemical industries, automobile engineering, fabricating works, and Ice Factories. Sambalpur is one of the many places of the State, well-known for its wooden toys and dolls. As the Simul tree grows in plenty, which yields easily to the stroke of the carpenter's chisel the village carpenters carve out from it a wide range of attractive toys, using bright indigenous colours. The Dhankauda Tile-making Co-operative Society, Attabira Sugarcane Processing Marketing Co-operative Society, the Bargarh Sugar Factory are the few notable Panchayat

1. Report on the Benefits of Hirakud Irrigation—P.—194

*Economic Survey of Orissa, Vol. I, Page—494

Industries. Besides there are a few Panchayat Industries such as Carpenter's Co-operative Society, and Blacksmithy Industrial Co-operative Society at Jharsuguda, Iron Works Co-operative Society, and Carpenter's Co-operative Society at Barpali, and Carpentry Co-operative Society at Padampur.

Rice is the staple export of the district. Other exports include oil-seeds, hemp, hides, and forest products such as timber, lac, 'Kendu, leaves, and 'Mahua' flowers. The principal imports are salt, sugar, provisions, yarn and various cereals. The shops in the villages deal in essential food commodities, whereas in the urban area, better equipped shops are available, which not only deal in essential food articles but also in various kinds of fancy and luxury goods.

At the end of the Second Plan period (1956-57 to 1960-61), the district had 21 Blocks covering an area of 3,855 sq. miles. A total expenditure of Rs. 1,08,16,795 was incurred in the district on the community development programme up to the end of 1960-61. Among the achievements under this programme up to the end of 1960-61, the important ones are completion of 113 minor irrigation projects, functioning of 827 Co-operative Societies, and opening of 8 Primary Health Centres. 18,508 adults have been made literate and 177 Mahila Samitis with a total membership of 5,681, were functioning as a part of social education programme. The achievements under communication programme include the laying of 417 miles of roads and construction of 378 bridges and culverts.

129. Economic Land-Marks

In the first decade of the present century, recovery from the effects of the famine of 1899 was rapid due to a succession of good harvests except in 1901-03 and 1907-08. The first seven years of the decade beginning with 1911 were prosperous. The harvests were good and people were contented. But the closing year of the decade was not free from calamities such as flood and epidemics. The economy of the district of the closing years of the census decade 1911—21 was affected by the Influenza epidemic which spread all over the world in 1918 and 1919. Large number died and larger numbers suffered on account of which crop and cattle raising was handicapped. So the decade 1921—30 started with a year of struggle for recovery from the calamities of the previous decade. The plentiful harvest of 1921 helped the people to recoup fast. The remaining 9 years of the decade were marked with steady progress on account of a series of good harvests except in the year 1928. There were high floods in 1936 in Kuchinda Subdivision, and in 1937 in the Sambalpur Sub-division, but it did not cause any considerable damage to the crop or to property. One important step towards industrial advancement of the district was taken when

the Orient Paper Mills were established at Brajaraj Nagar in the year 1937. 38. During the decade 1931—40, harvests were excellent and there was no shortage of foodgrains anywhere. During 1941—50 general peace and prosperity of the district continued, though it was affected by conditions of the World War. Although general rise in price-level and other war conditions adversely affected the material conditions of the district, the position improved considerably with the execution of the notable multipurpose project at Hirakud in the year 1946. Many gainful side occupations developed in the wake of this great project. As a result, there was a wave of immigrants to participate in the economic prosperity of the district. The last decade 1951—61 is a period of economic prosperity when peace and contentment swayed over the district. Electrification of all the urban areas and some of the rural areas during the decade was a step taken in the direction of providing modern amenities for better living. In the industrial field, the reputed handloom industry found its way to foreign markets, particularly United States of America. The establishment of Indian Aluminium Factory and its ancillary industries at Hirakud marks the beginning of large-scale industrialisation. The establishment of Engineering and Medical Colleges at Burla for furtherance of technical education and colleges at Bargarh Deogarh, Padampur, Larambha, Jharsuguda, and Kuchinda under private enterprise are note-worthy achievements in the field of education

The south-western part of the district, covering the greater part of the Bargarh Subdivision, is the granary of northern Orissa. It is well drained by two large tributaries of the Mahanadi, namely, Danta and Jira. Though the jungle has been mostly cleared in many localities yet the general landscape is beautiful, as groves and orchards fringe village sites. The central part covering Sambalpur Subdivision is the undulating submontane tract with isolated hills to be commonly seen rising abruptly from the plains and with rocky ridges here and there and deep ravines cut by drainage channels. The area generally lends itself to good cultivation, in restricted areas though mainly, along the valleys of Mahanadi, Ib, Champali and Tikkira, as well as to the east of the Sambalpur-Jharsuguda Road.

130. The General level of prices

Till the district was opened up by the railway, prices were very low as was only to be expected in a land locked tract with little or no means of exporting its surplus. O' Malley, in his Sambalpur District Gazetteer written in 1909, wrote with reference to the changes brought about by the opening of the railway and the increased price of agricultural produce. "Since the advent of the railway, the prices of agricultural produce have been doubled. Twenty years ago, the price of rice in Sambalpur town frequently fell to 40 to 50 seer*, over a year's average, and in outlying

* 1 seer—0.933 Kilogram.

villages it could be had at 80 seers. Three years ago it was reported that in Sambalpur the price never fell below 20 seers, that the lowest rate in the villages was 25 seers, while the average price in the Bargarh market was usually 25 seers cheaper than in Sambalpur and 15 seers in the interior, while in 1908 owing to a short crop locally, and a heavy demand from outside rice has been selling at about 8 seers per rupee in Sambalpur and 9 seers at Bargarh. The same upward tendency was equally marked in the case of other products. For example, the price of *til* before railway export became possible was seldom less than 20 seers. In 1887, it was reported that the average rate was 17 seers whereas the average for the 10 years ending 1901-02 was 11 seers. The wholesale price of pulses had similarly risen from 24 seers to 12 seers. During the period from 1909 to 1912 the average price of common rice, wheat, gram, and salt was 14 seers, 11 seers, 14 seers, and 16 seers per rupee respectively.

Cobden-Ramsay, in his 'Feudatory States of Orissa' pointed out that, the opening up of the Bamra ex-State (present Kuchinda and Deogarh Subdivisions) by the advent of the railway had enabled the farmers to dispose of surplus stocks at handsome profits with a general rise in prices. During the period 1902-03 to 1907-08, the average rate of rice, mung, biri, wheat and salt was 18 seers, 16 seers 20 seers, 8 seers and $17\frac{1}{2}$ seers per rupee respectively.

In the Rairakhol Subdivision during the same period the average price of rice, mung, urid, Kulthi, and salt as available was 20 seers, 12 seers, 24 seers, 60 seers, and 10 seers per rupee respectively.

In the year 1914-15, in Deogarh and Kuchinda Subdivisions, the price ruled high throughout the year owing to the great demand from outside. The price of rice varied in between 14 seers to 11 seers per rupee. In Rairakhol Subdivision, in the same year, price of common rice as available per rupee was 12 seers in the month of April and May, $9\frac{1}{2}$ seers from June to October, and 14 seers from November to the end of the year.

Next year, there was a general rise of price in daily necessities throughout the year and the price of rice varied from 16 to 18 seers per rupee. Pulses were also dear. In the same year, in Rairakhol Subdivision, the price of common rice was 10 seers per rupee in the beginning of the year, but fell to 9 seers in July. It rose to $13\frac{1}{2}$ seers in December and towards the close of the year reverted again to 9 seers per rupee.

The year 1916-17 was on the whole a fairly prosperous one, and enabled the people to recover from the stringent conditions of the preceding lean years. But the year 1918-19, was marked by a serious failure of the crops. The price of commodities imported from outside continued to rule high especially of cloth. Even the well-to-do classes who would in the ordinary course have fitted themselves out with new clothes had

for some-time past been carrying on with old clothes. The poorer classes found the provision of clothing as a serious burden. However, the result was not without its advantages. The local weavers were able to earn good wages as a number of clothes used then were locally woven articles.

The year 1919-20, was marked with severe distress and it was found necessary to import rice in large quantities. Rice was sold at 7 seers per rupee in Sambalpur. In the next three years rice was sold in between 16 seers to 10 seers in Deogarh and Kuchinda Subdivisions and 18 seers to 10 seers in Rairakhol Subdivision.

In the year 1924-25, the general prospect was somewhat gloomy in July and August, and in most of the cases the *Rabi* crops saved the situation. The maximum and minimum price of rice was 16 to 10½ seers, and 12 seers to 9 seers per rupee in Deogarh and Kuchinda Subdivisions and in Rairakhol Subdivision respectively. In the next year the copious rainfall was in marked contrast to the scanty and ill-distributed rains of the preceding year. The price of rice remained constant in Deogarh and Kuchinda Subdivisions while it varied in Rairakhol Subdivision. In the next year though the price was a little higher in Deogarh, and Kuchinda Subdivisions it was cheap in Rairakhol Subdivision.

In the year 1927-28 the maximum and minimum price of rice available per rupee, in Deogarh and Kuchinda Subdivisions and Rairakhol Subdivision was 13 seers to 8 seers, and 15 seers to 11 seers respectively. More or less, the same trend was maintained in the subsequent years though in the year 1929-30 the maximum price of rice went up to 16 seers per rupee in Deogarh, and Kuchinda Subdivisions while the minimum was the same as that of the year 1927-28, i. e., 8 seers per rupee.

King, in his 'Sambalpur District Gazetteer' published in the year 1932 wrote, "Since the advent of the railway the prices of agricultural produce have quadrupled. During the past 25 years, the price of rice has risen steadily. The average price from 1906 to 1925 was 10 seers for the rupee in Sambalpur. In the year 1926 the price rose to 7 seers and 6 chittacks".

During the year 1930 the average price fell to 11 seers, due to the general economic depression which started. This depression in rice trade resulted in extraordinarily cheap rice, so that in February, 1931 it was possible to obtain coarse rice at 20 seers per rupee. This low price was exceptional and did not last long. Pulses, til and gur were also cheap during the year 1931, selling at 14 seers, 10 seers, and 10 seers respectively.

The price level shot up with the declaration of the Second World War. Inflationary spiral was set in motion and the price level showed a steep rise, which brought in its wake economic distress. The prices

of nearly all food grains went up from the year 1942. Between 1943 to 1947 price of rice ranged between 3.9 to 3.5 seers a rupee. Price of rice was, however, steady for the years 1943, 1944, and 1945. Wheat, gram, rape and mustard became dearer.

It was expected that with the passing over of the War years, the general food situation would ease but it did not, and the price ruled high. Prices of rice, wheat, gram, rape and mustard continued to soar unusually, from the year 1948. During the fifties, the prices of all commodities rose high, and rice, the principal food, was available only at 2.4 to 2.3 seers a rupee.

Soon after the 3rd Five-Year Plan (1961-62 to 1965-66) was launched, the price which had been steadily rising ever since the Second World War, began to gallop. In recent years, people have been hard hit, and it is becoming difficult for lower, and middle class people to make both ends meet. Rice was available at 1.6 seers a rupee in 1967. Fine rice is so costly, that one gets less than a kilogram per rupee. So also is the case with other foodgrains and daily requirements.

A table regarding the harvest prices of rice, wheat, gram, rape and mustard, per maund of 40 standard seers is given as appendix.

131. General level of Wages

O' Malley, in his 'Sambalpur District Gazetteer', noted that "Owing to the rise in the price of rice, the wages of an ordinary day-labourer have risen from 2 annas to $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas a day and in 1908, owing to the further rise in the price of foodgrains, the wages of adult labourers increased to 3 annas a day, which is also the daily wages paid to road coolies working in the town of Sambalpur and its vicinity".

Agricultural labourers were of two kinds, the 'bhutiar' or day labourer and the 'guti' or farm servant. The bhutiar was paid at the rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ seers per day's work, but 2 seers and 1 chittak at the harvest period and 5 seers and 3 chittaks over time wage for a night's threshing.

Farm servants, called 'Gutis' were generally hired by the year and received a monthly wage of $56\frac{1}{4}$ seers and also a bonus at harvest time of 3 purugs of paddy that is $11\frac{1}{4}$ maunds.

In the summer season his employer presented him with a cloth to protect his head from the sun. On special occasions, such as birth death, or marriage, he was entitled to receive a loan of Rs. 5 to Rs. 10 which was free from interest and was deducted from his harvest bonus.

For each 'madan' the field servants were receiving about 31 seer of paddy per night. A 'madan' was estimated to yield six purugs ($22\frac{1}{2}$ maunds) of paddy usually spread out on the threshing yard at a time. For threshing one 'madan' at least three men are required to work

alternately, each for about three hours from 9·0 P. M. to early morning. After day break all three work together. If, however, a cultivator has more than three field servants, they all attended and divided the night's work between them. To thresh a 'madan' of paddy, eight to ten bullocks are required, and these are driven by each man for about three hours at a time. At Sun rise all the straw is carefully removed, and the grain is stacked round the pole in the centre of the threshing floor. The winnowing begins, the grain being allowed to fall from the winnowing fan and then fanned. After the winnowing is over—a task which takes three men about six hours for one madan—all the husks are collected and are further winnowed by the field servants. It is further supplemented by one 'sup' of paddy per madan, i.e., about 5 to 8 tambis (about 5 seers 2 chattaks to 8 seers 4 chattaks). The latter allowance was called 'Liakhia' and the former 'pol'. Thus for each madan the field servants receive about 30 to 33 tambis of paddy per night. The wives of the gutis are bound to "lip" the threshing floor after every third threshing, i.e., paste it afresh with cow-dung and earth. For this work they get no wages, and if they refuse to work, their husbands forfeit half the allowance of 'Pol' ¹.

On engaging a 'guti', it was a common practice to give him a few rupees as earnest money, which he had to pay back without interest when his service was over. If, however, he threw up the situation, interest was charged at 50 per cent, and this had the effect of rendering the service of most gutis practically permanent.

There was another class of labourer, known as 'kuthia' that is to say, a boy or oldman who was not equal to as much work as a full-grown adult. A labourer of this class was paid according to agreement, some times at the rate of 31 seers to 41 seers per month.

During the period 1902-03 to 1907-08 in the ex-State of Bamra (Present Kuchinda and Deogarh Subdivisions) the average daily wage for a mason, carpenter, blacksmith, and ordinary coolie was Re. 0·17, Re. 0·19, Re. 0·14, and Re. 0·12 respectively. During the same period the average wage for a superior mason and carpenter, a common mason and carpenter, superior blacksmith, common blacksmith, and ordinary coolie, was Re. 0·62, Re. 0·25, Re. 0·77, Re. 0·19, and Re. 0·15, respectively in the ex-State of Rairakhol.

The labouring class in the Rairakhol Subdivision was generally divided into three classes such as, Gutis, Kuthias, and Khamaris.

1. F. C. King, Bihar and Orissa District Gazetteers, Sambalpur, page 162-136

The 'gutis' received a monthly wage in kind and after the harvest was over they received from 8 maunds to 10 maunds of paddy according to the character of the harvest. This was known as their 'Nistar' (yearly reward) or 'Bartan'. They also received three pieces of cloth annually. Their engagements began from the month of January-February.

The 'Kuthias' were given no monthly wage, but fed in their employer's house and got as their yearly reward from 4 maunds to 5 maunds of paddy after receiving 3 pieces of cloth. Their duties were mainly to act as herdsmen and assist the 'gutis'. They were also engaged from the month of January-February.

The Khamaris were superior class labourers and they acted as head labourers or foreman in charge of the classes mentioned above. They received monthly wages in kind and a yearly reward of 12 maunds of paddy and 4 pieces of cloth.

In the year 1913 the average wage for unskilled labour, blacksmith, carpenter, and gharami was, Re. 0·12, Re. 0·25, Re. 0·25 and Re. 0·15 respectively in Sambalpur and its vicinity.

In the Thirties, wages, whether for skilled or unskilled labour were still mostly paid in kind. The village blacksmith was paid 1 seer and $\frac{1}{2}$ chattak of rice for mending a plough share or preparing a sickle, and the same quantity of paddy for sharpening four share-ploughs. The washer-man was given 20 seers and 10 chattaks of paddy in the case of each adult and 10 seers and 5 chattaks for each boy or girl, as his yearly wage, besides food on the day when he was given clothes to wash, and special fees in rice on births, deaths, and marriages. The barber was getting 20 seers and 10 chattaks of paddy per annum for a man and 10 seers and 5 chattaks for a boy. In some cases, however, these village servants hold service land in which case they served the gauntia without any remuneration. Carpenters were very few in number. Even in the town of Sambalpur, there were not more than 30 carpenters, most of whom were decidedly unskilled. Unskilled labour was, as a rule, and field labour invariably, paid in kind.

The Bhutias were paid at the rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ seers for an ordinary spell of labour, but 2 seers and 1 chattak for a spell of harvest labour, and $5\frac{1}{8}$ seers to $8\frac{1}{4}$ seers overtime wages for a night's threshing. The duration of work was a half day's spell during the ploughing season, for the condition of the plough-cattle was so poor that they cannot be worked, for more than five hours at a time. Consequently, the ploughman usually worked for one spell only. Women who were usually employed on transplanting and weeding, also worked only in the morning. At harvest time, however, and for all work on which oxen were not required the field labourer worked both morning and after-noon his full day's wage being equal to about 2 seers of husked rice.

A puja called Kadobisti was performed by the villagers during the month of Sraban, at which offerings were made to the village goddess. After this ceremony was over, the labourers worked in the fields both morning and evening. Before it was performed, no field labourer would work generally, after he took his mid-day-meal.

The 'Gutis' were generally worked by the year and received a monthly wage of 3 khandis of paddy, 61-7/8 seers, and also a bonus at harvest time of 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ maunds of paddy. In the case of an old and trusted farm-servant, it was usual for his master to allow him, instead of this bonus the cultivation of two plots of land, in the uplands and low lands, with an area of about one acre. As he was allowed to use his master's cattle, this privilege added considerably to his annual earnings, which were frequently sufficient to allow him to acquire small plots of tenancy lands in his own right. The 'Guti' also had a number of other emoluments. If sugar-cane, pulses or oil-seeds were grown, he was allowed a small quantity from each crop. If he threshes on moon-light night, at harvest time, he was given an overtime wage at the end of threshing, the occasion being called "Kallacharani" that is the leavings of the threshing floor. The overtime wage above mentioned, consisted of all the grain blown off with the husks during winnowing, besides one 'Kula' (winnowing-fan) full of paddy per 'madan'. For threshing each 'madan' the field servants received about 31 seers to 34 seers of paddy per night.

A kuthia during the thirties was paid according to agreement sometime at the rate of 31 seers to 41 $\frac{1}{4}$ seers a month. In the Bargarh Subdivision, a 'kuthia' was a boy who was kept in the house and was given his food and clothes and a present at the end of the year.

The following was the average earnings of casual agricultural labourers in the Sambalpur zone, according to the survey, conducted by the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, during the year 1954-55¹.

Nature of work	No. of labourers in sample	Average No. of days worked per labourer	Average value of payments in kind (in Rs.)	Average cash wages (Rs.)
1. In agriculture both in and outside the village.	45	119.6	54.5	33.8
2. In non-agriculture, both in and outside the village.	40	122.8	4.4	114.5
3. Total work done	53	194.2	49.5	115.1

¹. Economics of a Multiple-purpose River Dam, P. 50

Sambalpur had a larger proportion of annual farm servants than Cuttack and Puri¹.

The following information, pertains to the total wage earnings of 36 attached agricultural labourers (farm servants in the Sambalpur zone sample²).

Total receipts :

Cash	..	Rs.	800·00
Kind (in value)	..	Rs.	7,712·00
Total	..	Rs.	<u>8,512·00</u>

“In Northern zone the kothias in the Bolangir Patna district were usually paid at the following rates. Both adolescents and adult males were employed at the same rate :

	Annual Income
6‘Khaais’ or 90 seers of paddy	Rs. 12·00
Meals	.. Rs. 84·00
Cloth	.. Rs. 7·00

For extra work in threshing (from 7 P. M. to 3 A. M.) at the rate of $\frac{3}{4}$ seers of paddy per day (for 20 days per year).

	Rs.	10·12
Total	..	<u>Rs. 113·12</u>

Adult males were also employed as Halias. An advance of Rs.20 to Rs. 30 was given free of interest at the beginning of the year and was adjusted towards wages. The wage rate was as follows :—

Wage : Nine maunds of Paddy	Rs.	58·50
One maund five seers of paddy per month.	Rs.	87·75
Cloth	..	Rs. 8·00
Extra for threshing (2 maunds and 24 seers of paddy).	Rs.	17·06
Total	..	<u>Rs. 171·31</u>

1. Economics of a Multiple-purpose River dam, P. 51.

2. Report of the Agricultural labour enquiry, Vol. III, 1953, P.75

Similar wage rates were prevalent in the Kalahandi, and Sambalpur districts, but the total annual remuneration came to about Rs. 163 and Rs. 133 respectively. Children were employed usually as graziers and were allowed six maunds of paddy worth Rs. 39 a year¹.

During the Sixties owing to the rise in the price of rice and other foodgrains the wages of ordinary day-labourers rose. In 1957, skilled labourers, such as carpenter, cobbler, and blacksmith were available at Rs. 3.09 to Rs. 3.32, and Rs. 1.96 respectively. A male field labourer was available at Rs. 1.05, a female at Re. 0.74, and a child at Re. 0.50. In case of other agricultural labourers, a male in 1957 got Rs. 1.04, a female Re. 0.72, and a child Re. 0.59 per day. This rate of wages was prevalent up to 1963, with slight changes. Now a days, the wage rates of both skilled and unskilled labourers have gone high. A good carpenter gets Rs. 7 to Rs. 8 per day. A mason gets Rs. 7 per day, and an ordinary male labourer Rs. 3 per day.

It is very often alleged that employment of rural labour is uncertain and precarious in character. If the supply of labour is much in excess of the requirements labour has to face this uncertainty of employment. In busy seasons of farm operations labourers are in great demand and for those few months in the year they do not face any uncertainty.

The percentage given below shows the distribution of rural labour according to their mode of employment. This will help to ascertain the usual patterns according to which labourers are employed during the year.

Male labourer casual	..	50	Per cent
Female labourer casual	..	4.89	Per cent
Male labourer weekly	..	0.54	Per cent
Female labourer weekly	..	0.54	Per cent
Male labourer monthly	..	4.35	Per cent
Female labourer monthly	..	1.09	Per cent
Male labourer annual	..	38.59	Per cent

It would be seen from the above figures that the vast majority of labourers, consisting of 54.89 per cent of the total labour population is employed in casual basis. The next important mode of employment is on the basis of annual contract. Nearly two-fifth of the total number

of labourers is employed on annual terms. Such labourers are usually farm servants, though occasionally they work as domestic servants or in some other work assigned by the employer. Labourers engaged on weekly or monthly basis form a very small proportion, consisting of 6.82 per cent of the total labour force.

This general picture of the rural labour shows the uncertain terms of employment which adversely affect the socio-economic condition of the labourers.

In the existing agrarian pattern, the nature of agriculture and the unfavourably man-land ratio, there are uncertainty and inadequacy of employment. The extent of under-employment or disguised unemployment which is a usual feature, can be visualised from the number of days for which the labourers find employment either in farm or non-farm work.

The following sample figures shows the number of days during which a labourer is employed during the year.

	Number of labourers ..	184
	Number of man-days worked	37,261 (75.10%)
Farm work	{ Number of days worked per labourer.	202.51
Non-Farm work	{ Number of man-days worked	12,357 (24.90%)
	{ Number of days worked per labourer.	67.16
	Total number of days worked per labourer.	269.67
	Number of days unemployed	95.33

(Source—Economic Survey of Orissa, Vo.1.)

This is an indication of the extent of under employment that exists among the rural working population. This, of course, does not include the volume of unemployment because those who do not have any employment at all are not included in the table given above.

In considering the conditions of employment in rural areas, it is of interest to analyse the problem with reference to the places of work of the rural labour. The proportion of workers going outside the village, for purposes of employment would indicate the extent of

adjustment, that is taking place in the labour market. The following figures show the annual employment in days per worker according to the place of worker.

Farm work	.. {	Inside village ..	197.76
		Outside village ..	4.75
Non-farm work	.. {	Inside village ..	47.93
		Outside village ..	19.23

(Source—Economic Survey of Orissa, Vol. I)

The above data reveal that more than 91 per cent of the days worked are in the worker's own villages while only about 8 per cent of the days worked outside. It will be observed that so far as farm work is concerned 97.65 per cent of the days are worked in the village and thus movement for search of farm work outside is an exceedingly rare feature. The situation in respect of non-farm work is different in this respect. Nearly three-fourth of the total amount of work is non-farm employment is rendered outside the village. On the whole, the picture emerges from the table that mobility of labour is relatively small in the rural areas. Movements of workers to urban centres and industrial regions in and outside the State is only peripheral.

It is a well known fact that agricultural labour constitutes the lowest income group in the community. It has been shown earlier that for considerable part of the year the rural labour does not find any employment. As such, the daily wage which he earns is not a proper indication of his total earning.

The wage rates per day varies less widely in this district. This is reflected in the fact that there is a greater correspondence here between total earnings and total days employed. Non-agricultural wage rates are higher generally than agricultural wage rates.

132 Standard of living

Nethersole, writing in 1887, gave the following sketch of the material condition of the people. "Under normal conditions far more rice was produced than is required for the food of the population, and any one who chooses to work hard, has hitherto had little difficulty in attaining himself and his family in relative comfort". Rice which is the staple food, was ordinarily very cheap, and a few days labour was sufficient to earn a stock of food for a much longer period". He was

of the opinion that probably more than half of the cultivators were more or less, in debt, but under normal conditions there was no widespread poverty or distress of a chronic character. As regards the labouring classes the earnings of a farm servant was approximated at Rs. 63.75 per annum. As for the ordinary day-labourer it was stated that, he could earn by constant work Rs. 2.50, per mensem. This income was largely added to by his women folk, who besides being in constant demand at the seasons of transplanting, weeding, and harvesting were able to make good earnings, in the *Mahua* season. She also dried a stock of *mahua* flowers for household use. At other seasons, in years of good harvest, they had practically continuous work at rice-husking. The income of the ordinary labourers family, even at slack seasons, was not less than Rs. 3.50 which has sufficient for his food, clothing, and usual small comforts. But saving was not possible and in a year of crop failure the labouring class, supported for a few months by scanty harvest earnings and by the rice-husking of the women.

Dewar in his Settlement Report written in 1906 wrote with reference to the changes brought about by the opening of the railway and the increased price of agricultural produce.

“The increased cost of food has enforced greater industry on the labourer and the poorer cultivator and the opportunity of trade and profit has tempted the richer and more industrious to greater effort. The demand for land became keener and its cultivation closer and better. With this progress there came some gradual breaking up of the communal life, and a few cases an undesirable accumulation of land and of capital in the hands of money-lenders.” But the main trend of the village life continued and even the money-lenders were still agriculturists. Dewar says, “The main result hitherto of the stirring up of individual competition has been the establishment of a very large class of substantial cultivators, by habit thrifty and industrious, with adequate holdings, good stock and savings sufficient to allow of independent improvement and extension. The distinction between such men and the lower class of semi-aboriginals with debts and small holdings is much more clearly marked than formerly.

But there are now three distinct classes above the rank of labourer, and the upper class of the raiyats is not far below the landlords in property.”

During this period the standard of comfort did not conspicuously alter. The food, furniture, and clothing of the average people were much the same as in 1888. There was no increase of out-lay on religious or domestic festivals. Dewar wrote, “The people themselves, when asked to point out their changes, have usually explained that the old living has not changed, but is shared now by more families. Thus though all

still eat rice and vegetables only, more people now grow and eat fine rice. All still wear the old simple clothing, but more now wear bhulia cloths of fine quality. There are more tiled roofs and brick walls in the villages and bigger gardens, and more women are able to wear silver and gold ornaments. To this, I may add that the old comfortable standard has been extended over considerable tracts formerly held by aboriginals living poorly in leaf huts and that hundreds of villages have substantially added to their health and comfort by building special drinking tanks".

Hamid writing in 1926 says, "The progress in the material condition of the people noticed by Mr. Dewar at last settlement has continued and increased in every direction". He noted that the agriculturist lived in better houses and wore finer cloth and more gold and silver than they did fifteen or twenty years back. He too, commented on the increased volume of trade and towns, for example, the Bargarh market from which it was estimated that 6,000 to 8,000 laden carts left every Friday after the weekly market. He was, however, of the opinion that the general prosperity did not affect the labouring class and the small raiyats, in whose standard of comfort he noticed little difference. This was true of the landless labourer. But there can be little doubt that round Sambalpur and other centres where traders and contractors congregated, the labour too got better wages. The income of the ordinary labourer's family, even at slack seasons, probably approximates to Rs. 8 per month, which was sufficient for food and clothing but left no margin for saving. Even in the years 1920, 1921 and 1928 which were peak years for rice prices, there was no destitution amongst the labouring classes of the district.

It cannot be denied, particularly in regard to the year 1942, and the subsequent years that the consumer was hit hard. Rising prices resolutely tell upon the standard of living. Those of the low income group and particularly those with fixed salaries, suffered the most. Cost of both food and non-food articles had gone up to a level at which it became hard for a majority of people to make both ends meet. To meet the enhanced cost of living, dearness and other allowances were paid to the Government servants. But people receiving fixed salaries and the lower middle class, whose increased expenses, could not be adequately covered by the increase in their income suffer the severest.

In recent years, the modern way of life is fast enveloping the villagers. The most important among these tendencies is the spreading of a spirit of individualism and the force of monetisation. Technological changes has ushered in an era of social revolution. By and large, the farmers are following a subsistence agriculture in the rural economy. But with planning the subsistence character of agriculture

is undergoing a change and more surpluses are being marketed, which is expected to bring about greater integration with the rest of the economy. Another trend in the same direction is a larger number of labourers and workers migrating from the rural areas to find employment in the towns. Thus ruralites are now being attracted to non-agricultural and non-rural occupations. The introduction of Community Development plans avoke an urge for improvement and progress among the masses.

The Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics in the year 1954-55 conducted a sample survey into the economic condition of the Sambalpur town. According to this report, of the total population of the sample 35 per cent were earners. The ratio of earners to non-earners was 1:1.83. Female earners were 16.5 per cent, of the total earners. Of the total earners only 1.25 per cent were non-adults or juvenile earners. There were 5 male earners to every female earner. The ratio of earners to non-earners among females was 1:8.

The largest group of earners, that is, 28.6 per cent of the total earners, was in 'services'. In the category manufacturing 20.2 per cent and in trade and commerce 19.3 per cent of workers were working in the Sambalpur town. All these above three categories accounting for about two-thirds of the total earners. About 9 per cent were in agriculture, live-stock, etc. and four to five per cent, each in construction, sanitary services, and transport. Sambalpur town, judging from the occupational distribution of earners, was mainly an administrative centre and a minor trading and manufacturing centre.

For a general indication of the level of earnings the average earning can be taken as quite adequate and fairly representative. Examining the average earnings it has been recorded that the highest level was in distributive services, such as trade and commerce and the lowest in agriculture, live-stock, forestry, etc. The median earnings in transport, and storage and services were Rs. 673 and Rs. 693, respectively. In construction, manufacturing, comprising mostly textiles and electricity, gas, water, etc., and services the average earning ranged between Rs. 407 and Rs. 491.

The ratio between the lowest and the highest median earnings was 1:2.3 that between agriculture, etc., and transport and services was around 1:1.7 between agriculture and the rest three around 1:1.80. It is important to note that trade and commerce recorded the highest earnings of all, a fact which reflects upon the cost of distributive services.

Nearly seven to eight per cent of the total sample families were in the income ranges between Rs. 251 and Rs. 2,000 per year. A little more than 60 per cent of the families had incomes ranging from Rs. 501 to Rs. 2,000 per year. The average income was around Rs. 940 and the *per capita* income was Rs. 400.

So far as the Bargarh town is concerned 64 per cent of the total population were adult and 63 per cent of the total adults were earners. Of the adult males, 91 per cent were earners and 1.12 earners to every non-earner. Only 36 per cent of the adult females were earner and there were 3.2 non-earners to every earner. This is an interesting feature of the economy.

As the data reveal nearly 22 per cent were engaged in agriculture between 11 and 12 per cent in manufacturing, the most prominent among which was weaving and 4.5 per cent in transport, storage, and communication. One eighth of the workers were engaged in trade, and commerce with a majority of them in retail trades. An equal percentage was also perceptible in the sphere of services, a considerable portion of which were in Government service.

As regards the earnings from the main occupations the median earnings from agriculture were Rs. 175. In manufacturing, the average earnings were around Rs. 266, significantly higher than in agriculture. In trade and commerce, and transport, storage, and communication the average earnings were Rs. 250 and Rs. 412, respectively. But the average income in the category of services recorded the highest earnings in all the industrial categories. The median income was Rs. 566.

The above deals with the earnings of earners from their main occupation, which does not include subsidiary occupations. However, the total average income (of both main and subsidiary occupations) during the fifties in Bargarh town was Rs. 425 and the *per capita* income was Rs. 329 per year.

133. Employment Exchange

The District Employment Exchange was started on 24th May 1951 with its headquarters at Sambalpur to meet the needs of the Hirakud Dam Project as well as to cope the man-power demand of various Government offices and industrial establishments. The employment situation of the district in general is gradually improving in comparison with the preceeding year. With the implementation of the Compulsory Notification of Vacancy Act, 1959, there has been good rise in the number of registrations and vacancies notified. Almost all the employers in public and private sector are notifying their vacancies to the Employment Exchange.

The scheme for the collection of Employment Market Information has been implemented in this Exchange since June, 1958.

The Vocational Guidance Unit was started functioning since 1st August 1961 with a Junior Employment Officer. He is advising the careerists regarding employment opportunity to suit their educational qualification and selection of future study and training, etc.

Two Employment Information and Assistance Bureaus have been opened at Jharsuguda, and Padampur with effect from 1st February 1961 and 15th January 1962, respectively.

The following table shows the number of registration, vacancies notified, placements and employers used the Exchange during the years 1956 to 1967:—

Year	Regi- stration	Vacan- cies notified	Place- ments	Number of emplo- yers utilised the Employ- ment Exchange
1	2	3	4	5
1956	.. 4,343	947	531	293
1957	.. 4,106	1,042	333	321
1958	.. 3,623	1,377	354	250
1959	.. 4,734	1,843	384	375
1960	.. 6,709	4,936	1,430	380
1961	.. 21,190	6,046	2,977	535
1962	.. 14,630	5,002	2,614	675
1963	.. 15,955	3,824	2,014	789
1964	.. 13,592	3,895	1,864	679
1965	.. 10,710	2,640	1,792	652
1966	.. 10,656	2,916	1,429	694
1967	.. 15,328	2,160	1,586	657

APPENDIX

Harvest price (per maund*)

Years	Rice	Wheat	Gram	Rape and mustard
	Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.
1940-41	3.60	4.57	4.31	5.57
1941-42	4.28	5.88	4.81	5.06
1942-43	6.25	11.75	10.44	9.00
1943-44	10.22	16.37	12.57	15.31
1944-45	10.22	14.06	14.62	15.31
1945-46	10.22	12.37	16.44	16.19
1946-47	8.88	12.31	17.62	21.44
1947-48	11.37	19.62	17.75	21.00
1948-49	15.00	20.00	19.25	30.00
1949-50	16.29	20.00	20.25	40.00
1954-55	13.50	20.00	13.00	18.00
1955-56	13.00	20.00	8.00	18.00
1957-58	16.92	17.23	17.28	..
1958-59	17.31	19.50	22.28	..
1959-60	15.49	16.13	23.58	31.10
1960-61	16.86	14.91	19.97	..
1961-62	19.25	20.00	27.50	40.00
1962-63	21.50	22.23	26.25	37.58
1963-64	26.71	20.75	30.36	32.87
1964-65	23.80	27.17	43.53	41.05
1965-66	22.67	30.78	45.90	..
1966-67	25.20	28.20	45.50	44.10
1967-68	25.20	28.00	45.00	43.80

*1 Maund=0.37 quintal

1 Maund=37.32 Kilograms