CHAPTER-I

LAND REVENUE SETTLEMENT AND COLLECTION
OF LAND REVENUE
LAND REVENUE SETTLEMENTS

The land revenue system was a simple one and was practically homogeneous throughout the States. In every State, periodical settlements were made for the assessment of land revenue. The land revenue was collected through the big farmers called gauntias, ganjus, sarbarakars, pradhans and thikadars. During the period under review, the states followed as far as possible the development of land revenue system of British Orissa to which they were attached for administrative purpose.

So far as records go, attempts were made for systematic land revenue settlements in most of the states after 1905. What was done earlier, was to have an eye estimation or by a rough measurement with a pole. After 1905, most of the states had detailed traverse and cadastral survey, however, unsatisfactory. Of course, in a number of states like Keonjhar, Bonai, Ranpur, Kalahandi, there was large areas inhabited by aboriginal tribes practising shifting cultivation which had not been subjected to a traverse survey.

Whether the land revenue was regarded as a tax on
Agricultural income or as a rate for the privilege of cultivation under the protection and facilities afforded by the state, it had come to mean an acreage rate throughout India. According to most modern method of settlement, it was supposed to bear relation to the productive capacity or income from the land. As land revenue was primarily an acreage rent, its proper assessment was bound up with an accurate measurement or survey of the surface of land so as to indicate the area cultivated or in the possession of individual persons. Survey was also necessary for the determination of areas of land likely to be cultivated in future and for the determination of areas which might not be cultivated.

In the Orissa States, survey of the lands was done in an unsatisfactory manner. Most of the states failed to get a proper survey. Complete and accurate survey seemed to be an urgent necessity in the states.

The states did not follow any definite system of settlement and the work done in any settlement generally followed the method in which settlement officer had his training in the province from which he was deputed for the work. Generally speaking, throughout the states, both survey and settlements had been done by officers who held no higher post than that of the Assistant Settlement Officer in provincial settlements.

Settlement and survey were technical matters, what the
Settlement Officer did, was practically final. But there was no post like Settlement Commissioner and others to guide the Settlement Officer and to supervise the settlements. In this connection R.K. Ramadhyani observed: "In view of the vital importance of settlements and the amount of harm an unimagi-native settlement can do both to the agriculturist and the administration; the introduction of a competent joint agency for the framing of settlement rules and instructions and for the actual supervision of settlement is urgently necessary. The importance of such a controlling agency is clear as few of the states can exist as such independently and employ a really competent settlement staff."1

The states had no settlement principles or rules of their own, neither was there any formal application of any particular system. In the matter of the classification of villages and lands, on the whole, much arbitrariness had prevailed. Each Settlement Officer had more or less given scope to his own previous training and background without studying proper conditions of the states. As Ramadhyani observed: "Settlement were in a fact, regarded as merely a means to augment the revenue, and the method adopted was of little importance so

As regards the period of settlement, much variety and capriciousness prevailed. The term varied from 7 to 20 years, most states having 10 to 15 years. The period of settlement in the provinces was generally, minimum 30 years. The state and the cultivators found a lot of harassment and loss in such short-term settlements. Besides, frequent settlements resulted in the continued increase of land revenue.

Economic conditions in the states had not been changing at any great rate. So it was not desirable to make a settlement after 10 or 15 years. R.K. Ramadhyani remarked: "Even taking the undeveloped condition of many of the states into account, the pace of development is in no case sufficient to warrant consideration of a resettlement within a shorter period than 20 years and even then, that period cannot be applied as a hard and fast rule irrespective of circumstances. Shorter periods have in fact been found impracticable. The main consideration should be whether profits from agriculture have increased sufficiently to justify the imposition of an extra burden on the agriculturist."²

In order to make above analysis of the settlements of Orissa states abundantly clear, a detailed account of the settlements of the individual states have been given below:

Athgarh:

First settlement of the Athgarh state was made in 1844. In this settlement only cultivated areas were measured. Measurement was done by some rough means as standard stick or bamboos.³

Next settlement was made in 1861 and the whole state including the cultivated and uncultivated areas were measured. The measurement was again rough and did not amount to any sort of accurate survey. At this settlement, the area of the state was found to be 1,31,489 acres of which 1,09,709 acres were uncultivated and 21,780 acres were cultivated. Of this cultivated area, 11,298 acres were rent free and 10,482 acres were rent paying lands. The total revenue from these rent paying lands was Rs. 9095/-. The above settlement

continued to be in force till 1868 when a new settlement was made. The rent paying area was assessed at Rs. 25,252/- in this settlement. 4

In 1900 a more elaborate settlement was taken up. The survey was rough and it was described as lathi survey. The total area in this settlement stood at 1,08,623 acres of which 30,861 acres were cultivated and 77,762 acres were uncultivated. Out of this cultivated area, 20,076 acres were rent-paying and the rest were rent free.

For the purpose of assessment, villages were divided into six classes and lands into four classes. In determining the classifications, the facilities of irrigation, fertility of soil, liability to flood or drought and variety of paddy grown on other factors, were taken into consideration. The classification of villages was made in consideration of nature, kind and productive capacity of the soil, sources of irrigation and liability to flood or drought and ravages of wild animals. However, the settlement of 1900, resulted in the assessment of Rs. 41,738/-. The next settlement was taken up in 1920. At

this settlement, the measurements of the previous settlements were found defective, but this settlement was no better, being based on lathi survey.

In this settlement, it was found quite unnecessary to keep the six classes into which villages were divided in the last settlement. So, by the Political Agent and Commissioner's letter dated 10 August 1922 three classes were assigned to villages and three classes to the lands. All the Taila lands were made of one class as in the last settlement. Classification of villages and land was made on the basis of the factors already mentioned.⁵

At the settlement of 1920, the total amount of rent paying cultivated land had been 23,045 acres against 20,076 acres of the previous settlement and the rent had been Rs. 52,189/- as against Rs. 41,738/- of the last settlement. This meant an increase of 2,969 acres or 14.8 per cent in land and Rs. 10,451/- or 24.8 per cent in rent. Regarding the settlement of 1920, Sri Birendra Kishore Das, Superintendent and Settlement Officer, Athgarh, stated:

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"The increase of rent is quite fair and equitable in consideration of the fact that the increase on sarad lands is by 18.4 per cent and other lands by 10.8 per cent. I may kindly be permitted to mention here that the percentage of collection in new rent during the first kist is 99.7 which clearly shows how the new assessment has been ungrudgingly accepted by the people."

The settlement of 1920 expired on 1937, but a fresh settlement had not been taken up owing to lack of funds. 6

Athmallik:

Until the year 1896-97, there was no regular land revenue settlement in the State of Athmallik. The rents were used to be collected by nazarkut (as ascertained by sight) and as such they were neither fair nor equitable. The next settlement was made in 1896. This was known as padikā settlement as the lands were measured with a padikā or rod of 10' 5½", the standard rod common in Orissa. The second padikā settlement was done in 1915-16 for a term of 15 years.

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which expired on 30 September 1930.\(^7\)

In these two padikā settlements, lands and villages were classified according to the practice in Orissa States. The first padikā settlement resulted in the cultivated area of 56,687 acres and land revenue of Rs. 29,406/- . As a result of the second padikā settlement of 1915, the land revenue arrived at, was Rs. 72,847/- and the land measured as cultivated area, were 93,544 acres.\(^8\)

The operations regarding the next settlement were commenced in May 1927 and completed in December 1931. In this settlement there was a cultivated area of 98,910 acres and the total land revenue of Rs. 95,132/-. This settlement stood for 15 years and expired on 30 September 1945.

There were certain glaring differences between the previous settlement and the settlement of 1931.

The previous settlements were padikā settlements, which afforded only the approximate areas, where as the settlement

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\(^8\) L.E.B. Cobden Ramsay, Gazetteers of the Orissa Feudatory States, Part-II, Calcutta, 1910, p. 117.
of 1931 was a cadastral survey and settlement, which afforded more accurate measurement. Secondly the last settlement did not actually measure the areas other than the cultivated areas within the village boundaries. But the settlement of 1931 had ascertained such area by actual measurement. Thirdly, the last settlement classified the villages into three classes, in each class of village, the wet lands being subdivided into three classes and in all villages, the dry lands being subdivided into six classes. The settlement of 1931 abolished the village classification and subdivided all wet lands into four classes and dry lands into three classes, in view of the actual cash return, the tenants got from the lands.9

In the settlement of 1931, rates for both dry and uplands ranged between Re 0-6-3 to Rs. 2-11-0 per acre. The first class wet lands were assessed at the maximum rate of Rs. 2-11-0 per acre against Rs. 3-4-0 per acre in Dasapalla, Rs. 3-2-0 in Bamara and Rs. 2-11-9 in Angul. So obviously the Athmallik rates were in no way higher than the neighbouring states. In making assessments, the damage done to the crops of riparian villages by the floods of Mahanadi and the depredation done by

the wild animals, were duly taken into consideration. So the assessment of land revenue at this settlement seemed to be more fair and equitable. 10

Bamra:

No regular settlement of Bamra State was made till 1877 and the rents were fixed by appraisement of harvest. In 1877, measurement of wet lands was made by means of a standard rod. Lands were classified into three classes i.e., aul, doyam, soyam. No assessment was made on gorā uplands. In 1888-89, a tadarakhi settlement which included a larger number of paraganas than the previous one, was made. But the classification of lands and rents remained unaltered. There were complaints about cesses and bethi at this time, but they were dismissed by the Commissioner. 11

In 1894-95, another settlement which again did not include the whole area of the state, was made. There were six different


rates for each of the seven classes of crops grown on these lands. The uplands were also assessed according to the crops grown on it. The period of settlement was fixed at 10 years. In 1910 a tadarakhi settlement resulted in the assessment of only of excess and newly reclaimed lands, without the change in rates and classifications.

In all these settlements, there was no proper survey of the land and state. The first regular survey and settlement of the Bamra State was taken up in 1927 by Macpherson. At this settlement the whole state seemed to have been covered by traverse survey. The cadastral survey by chain extended to all the settled cultivations. 12

At this settlement the former classification of lands and villages was maintained on the ground that though it was elaborate, it had been in vogue for 30 years and well understood by the people. On gora uplands, however, the assessment of crops was abandoned. The village classification was based on the fertility of the soil, liability to drought and destruction of crops by wild animals, means of communications and

The objections to the enhancement of rent proposed at the settlement were that the fertility of land had been diminished and existing rates had been high. First objection was dismissed on the ground that though the burning of the jungle by which ashes were obtained for the fields, were abolished, irrigation had been increased. The rates were definitely higher than the Sambalpur rate, but the Superintendent of the Bamra State held that Sambalpur rates were unexpectedly low. He proposed to enhance the rates by 12½ per cent, and reckoned that this would be only 8½ per cent of the gross profit.

This settlement was completed in 1928-29. The rents in Bamra State were always considered high, compared with the rents of the surrounding areas. The ruler was not prepared to make a new settlement as he feared that it would result in a reduction of revenue rather than increase. A minor settlement was undertaken during the period from 1941-47 for assessment.


of rent in respect of newly cultivated lands.15

Baramba:

Land appeared to have been measured for the purpose of assessment before 1880, and probably the land revenue of holdings were fixed by estimation of seed capacity and what the cultivators agreed to pay. In 1882-83 a settlement was made by assessment with a standard rod, but there was no classification of land or villages. The enhancement caused some dissatisfaction and rents were adjusted. A settlement was made in 1892 and villages as well as lands were classified accordingly.

In the settlement of 1902, all the villages were surveyed by plaintable and survey, but assessment of lands was done as before with the standard rod. The next settlement of state took place in 1924-25 and land had been surveyed by plaintable and traverse and cadastral survey. This was the first time that the state had been surveyed and measured on a scientific

basis. Prior to this, the state was measured by padika or rod system. 16

In all the settlements, lands had been classified according to the productive power of lands and assessed to rent at different rates. In the settlements prior to 1924-25, no attempt was made to classify the villages into groups in order of fertility of land. But rates were fixed on fertility of land in general. This automatically brought about different rates for different villages. At the settlement of 1924-25, an attempt was made at the time of assessment to classify the villages into groups. But the attempt became futile as no regard was paid to it at the time of measurement.

At last, the old rates were revised in order to make them uniform as far as possible and enhanced in proportion of the productive powers of various lands. This resulted in seven rates for 1st class sarad lands, 8 rates for 2nd class sarad lands, 7 rates for 3rd class sarad lands, 11 rates for first class beali lands, 9 rates for second class beali lands, 8 rates for third class beali lands, 9 rates for first class

padar lands, 7 rates for second class padar lands, 3 rates for third class padar lands, one rate for taita lands and dual rates for homestead lands in the state. The revision of the old rates had resulted in the reduction of some rates which were quite unworkable and had never been applied on any general basis. Besides there were practically reck rents and had properly been done away with. 17

According to the settlement of 1924-25, total area of the state was 90,819 acres. Out of this, 26,203 acres had been assessed to rent at Rs. 49,935-2-9 and the rest were roads, rent free and waste lands and forests etc. The term of the present settlement was for 20 years, during which no enhancement of rent would be made. The new rate had been realised with effect from 15 April 1924. 18

Regarding the success of the settlement operations, Sufik-ud-Din Mahammad, Superintendent of the Baramba stated:


"There has been a rise of Rs. 13,761-0-0 over a total tauzi demand of Rs. 36,450-0-0 which was before the present settlement. The operations were smoothly conducted and the tenants have practically no complaints to classifications or the assessment. Out of 33,244 cases in all, only in 10 cases appeals were preferred. The meagre number of objections filed as to the classifications and assessments shows how smoothly the work has been concluded. Besides, in 1924-25, the new rent has been realised in full. This also speaks well of the sound basis on which the assessment work has been done."

Boudh:

The first settlement of the Boudh State was made in 1874. It was generally known as nazarkut settlement i.e., the assessment of rent had been made on rough calculation of gross produce. The rent per acre of land came to one rupee. Revenue obtained in that settlement was Rs. 32,000/- (Rs. 25,000/- in cash and Rs. 7,000/- in kind).

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This settlement expired in 1907 and next settlement came into effect in 1909. The settlement of 1909 was based on the classification of lands and classification of rents for the first time. But the measurement was made by a standard rod called padika. In this settlement, rates were fixed on the basis of assessment at the money value of 1/8th of the net produce. Thus the Government demand was fixed at the rate of Rs. 1-9-0 for one man of first class wet land. The net revenue reached a sum amounting to Rs. 1,01,984-6-0. As compared with the revenue obtained at the last settlement of 1874, it gave an increase of Rs. 69,000/- a year.\(^{20}\)

This settlement continued till 1924 when fresh operations of survey and settlement were taken up. It was completed in the year 1930. During that operation, the modern method of survey by Guntur's chain and plain table and other such instruments as were used in modern settlements had been used for accurate survey of the lands. Its term had been fixed for 10 years.

In the settlement of 1930, the rate of rent for different

\(^{20}\)Completion Report of the Boudh Settlement, 1907, p. 5.
Classes of lands had been suggested to be revised and the rates had been duly approved by the then political Commissioner of Orissa States. These rates represented considerable enhancement over the previous rates. The rates did not appear to have been based on any such principle as 1/8th of the net produce as at the former settlement. But it was said that there was an increase of 50 per cent in prices. The enhancement varied from 52 per cent to 68 per cent in case of rice lands and 62 per cent in first class dry lands. The total enhancement in the revenue had been 117 per cent which was partly due to increase in cultivation. 21

The Settlement Officer said that there was full justification in the enhancement of rent for the following reasons. Since the settlement of 1909, the price of every raw produce and staple food commodities had gone up considerably. So the economic condition of the people had been improved.

Unfortunately economic depression began to appear all over the world from 1931 and the rainfall became far from being uniform. The damage of crops by wild animals was another

factor adding to this unfortunate situation. Hence the tenants could not bear the heavy burden of this rate of rent and began to bolt away leaving their lands fallow for years together. Remission of rent followed after remission and surrender of lands followed after surrender. 22

Although the period of settlement was fixed for 10 years, the Government resolved to take up settlement in time, inspite of the deficit in finance in the state. The deficit finance was the only reason why the Government took up the settlement in spite of the extreme bad economic condition of the people. In 1938, though the period of settlement had not elapsed, operations for settlement were started. In this settlement villages had been divided into three classes according to the facility for irrigation available or proximity to forest. In villages classified as first class, there was to be an enhancement from Rs. 1-9-0 in 1909 (last but one settlement) to Rs. 3-2-0 at this settlement. In the villages of second class, there would be a reduction from Rs. 2-10-0 to Rs. 1-4-0. In third class villages, there was a reduction to Rs. 1-6-3. Regarding this assessment of rent Sri Ramadhyani remarked:

22 Completion Report of Boudh Settlement, 1907, p. 5.
"The whole idea seems to be an attempt to redistribute the assessment so as to give some relief to backward villages without, however, sacrificing the revenue. This is to be achieved by sharply increasing the rents in certain places and reducing in others to a figure below that of the last but one settlement. . . . . . . . . The heavy assessment of 1931 which the state seems to have recognised as a great burden on the cultivator, did not prevent it imposing an 'improvement cess' of no less than Re 0-3-0 in the rupee in addition to the education cess already existing, of 9 1/2 anna per rupee and the forest cess."23

During the settlement of 1938, the assessable rent had been fixed at Rs. 2,21,452-14-3 as against Rs. 3,17,659-2-3 during the settlement of 1924-30.24

Bonai:

For the first time in 1880, a summary settlement in Bonai State was undertaken. This settlement, apart from

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24 Completion Report of the Boudh Settlement, 1907, p. 11.
being summary was also extremely restricted in scope and only a small area of wet lands was assessed. Measurement at this settlement was done partly by eye estimation and partly by means of a rod of 10' 5½" long. Only wet rice lands were dealt with and in consultation with the Chief, leading headmen and ryots, Hewitt, the Settlement Officer, fixed the rates of the rent for assessment.  

First regular settlement of the state with survey, was taken up in 1910 and completed in 1930. The areas occupied by the Bhuyans were not subjected to survey. Only the villages in the valley of Brahmani river, were surveyed by traverse and cadastral survey. The waste lands did not seem to have been properly surveyed even in the valley of the river Brahmani.  

At this settlement, it was found necessary to reduce the rate and apply new rates, apparently on account of defective measurement and underestimation of the area at the previous settlement. Besides, the adoption of the rates of the previous

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settlement would have meant that villages not so favourably situated would be called upon to pay the same rates as those in the immediate vicinity of the river, Brahmani. Of course, an assessment at this settlement at Hewitt's rates would have resulted in an increase in the net land revenue of over 200 per cent, but because of the above mentioned reasons, it was decided to make an all-round reduction and to tax heavily the best lands and more prosperous areas. Accordingly the new rates of rent were proposed and sanctioned. They varied between Rs. 2-0-0 and Re. 0-5-0.  

The new assessment resulted in the land revenue of Rs. 40,362/-, whereas, the total revenue assessed in the previous settlement was Rs. 11,860/-. Thus, there was an enhancement of 102 per cent in 30 years. This large enhancement was done due to the enormous amount of cultivation that had been made within the last 30 years.  

This settlement was made for a period of ten years. The term of the settlement expired in 1923, but the period

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was extended for another ten years.

A revisional settlement was started in 1930. But on account of financial difficulties, it was not carried to completion and was stopped. In 1934 the operations were resumed. A nayabadi settlement, to assess the new cultivation was taken up. There seemed to be considerable extension of cultivation after 1930. So nayabadi settlement of 1930 resulted in the total land revenue of Rs. 45,117/-, an increase of nearly Rs. 5,000/- over the previous settlement. As a revisional settlement was not undertaken before the merger, there was no further enhancement for a period of years.29

Dasapalla:

In 1874, levy of excessive rent and cesses caused a serious discontentment among the people of Dasapalla. So, the Superintendent of the Tributary Mahals took a pledge from the ruler that he would not make a nazarkut or settlement by eye appraisal, but this, instead of allevying discontent, seemed to make it worse, and some people were

reported to have left the state.

A settlement based on measurement was then ordered. But there were allegations that the Raja had corrupted the Amins who showed excessive measurements. Finally the Superintendent decided that the existing rents in cash and kind, would stand for a period of 10 years i.e. up to 1889. 30

Mismanagement and oppression by the ruler however, continued. The misfortune of the people aggravated by a famine of 1889. In these circumstances, the administration of Dasapalla was taken over by the British Government in 1894. As land revenue was the main cause of the trouble, a settlement by measurement with the padika or rod of 10' 7½" was attempted and completed in 1897, but the Kondha areas were not measured at all. The settlement was to stand for a period of 15 years. 31

At the settlement of 1897, the Oriya cultivators were assessed to cash rents but the Kondhs were required to pay a rent for house which was the commuted value of previous


payment in kind. However, in some paraganas payment continued in kind.

Although the next settlement was ordered to be started in 1914, it could not be undertaken till 1916 on account of Kondh rebellion. Actual settlement was started in October 1916 and completed in 1921.\textsuperscript{32}

A traverse survey was made by plane table and compass. Cadastral survey was made by chain. All villages of the state were traversed including Kondha villages. But in a number of villages, cadastral survey was not done as they were not being cultivated. The total area of all kinds of lands measured at the settlement of 1897 was 40,652 mans (a man being nearly equal to one acre) and at this settlement, it was 54,495 acres. The increase of 13,843 acres was due to the fact that Kondhmals were newly brought under regular payment in this settlement. The increase was evidently 46 per cent over the area of the last settlement.

At the 1921 settlement, lands were divided into three

\textsuperscript{32}L E. B. Cobden Ramsay, Gazetteers of the Orissa Feudatory States, Part-II, Calcutta, 1910, p. 159.
classes, sarad, pada and pal according to single or double cropping. Each of these was divided into three grades. Taila and homestead lands were not classified. Rates of these lands were not enhanced. The pada lands were assessed in respect to the village classification in the Oriya tract. But in the Kondh areas, they were assessed according to village classification. 33

An arbitrary enhancement of 2 annas on an acre as in the case of Nayagarh Settlement, was adopted for the Oriya tract. In the Kondha tract, a lower rate was adopted. In the Kondha villages which did not take part in the rebellion of 1914, half rates were applied. At this settlement, produce rent was abolished. The settlement was for a period of 15 years.

The settlement of 1897 resulted in the assessment of total land revenue of Rs. 33,154-2-50, but the total amount of land revenue assessed in the settlement of 1921 was Rs. 42,392-11-3. In certain Paraganas the rents of the settlement of 1897 had been decreased in the settlement of 1921. The reason was that a large quantity of taila lands

had been relinquished and also a quantity of lands in riverside villages had been covered with sand deposits.\textsuperscript{34}

The percentage of increase in land revenue in the Kondh tract was out of question as it was for the first time surveyed and assessed. Their previous nominal rents were only in kind. In the Oriya tract it was estimated to be 22 percent. In the opinion of B. Biswala, Superintendent and Settlement Officer, Dasapalla State, this was not much, considering the fact that the new settlement was delayed by nine years. He stated: "The delay for nine years is not a small period during which the people would have paid a new rents of the settlement, had it been timely done. Evidently this is again on the side of the people. To add to this, the fact was that the country was greatly opened up which developed trade and commerce by which the agriculturists were immensely benefited and also added to this, the high price of food grains ruling, since the Great European War which have greatly improved the agricultural class.\textsuperscript{35}


On the whole, the settlement of 1921 was an improvement on the settlement of 1897 in two ways. Firstly, settlement of 1897 was a padika settlement, but the settlement of 1921 was a cadastral survey and settlement, decidedly more accurate and equitable. Secondly, the settlement of 1897 made the Oriyas pay rents in cash and the Kondhs nominal rents in kind, but the settlement of 1921 had secured the uniformity of payment of rents in cash and obviated this improper system of land revenue, i.e., payment in kind.

The settlement of 1921 which stood for 15 years expired in 1936, but before the merger, no other settlement was made.

Dhenkanal:

The first settlement of Dhenkanal was made in 1846-47. Another settlement was made in 1883-84. A more detailed settlement was made in 1901. It took seven years to complete. The earlier settlements did not appear to have been accompanied

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by proper survey. 37

Next land revenue settlement of the state was commenced in 1912. Traverse and cadastral survey, assessment of areas of the entire state were done. It was interrupted in 1918 owing to the outbreak of famine, soon after the death of the Chief, Raja Sura Pratap Mahindra Bahadur. Settlement operations were suspended under the orders of the Political Agent for five years. But three years after the famine, it was found that the state was sufficiently recovered from its effects. So the revision settlement which was in continuation of the last settlement was taken in hand in May 1922 by the Superintendent of the state with the help of two other Assistant Settlement Officers. 38

In the last settlement, 26 rates of sarad lands ranging from Rs. 3-2-0 to Re. 0-1-2 were adopted. In this settlement, out of these, 9 intermediate rates only ranging from


Rs. 2-1-4 to Rs. 6-3-0, were adopted.

In fixing the new rates of rent, all circumstances justifying enhancement were considered so as to make them fair and equitable. As in the case of other states, the assessment of rent was based on classification of villages and lands, taking into consideration, the improvement in the condition of the ryots due to facility of communication and high prices of food grains and appreciable increase of cultivation mainly by 23.29 per cent. The rates of rent were increased by 07.20 per cent. The total gross land revenue of the settlement was Rs. 241549/-. 39

The general attitude of the people towards the settlement at the beginning of the revision settlement was peaceful. The operations went on without a hitch for over a year, when a few tenants started agitation because of the imposition of penalties for unauthorised ryoti lands. They began to excite the people by making false and unfounded statement, against the administration. The ring-leaders were arrested and tried for sedition. On their conviction, agitation came to a stop and the settlement operations were resumed and brought to a successful conclusion.

39 Ibid., pp. 34-36.
The term of the settlement was fixed for ten years, but the Chief might, if he thought fit, have extended the term to any further period. However, no other settlement had been made before merger.

Gangpur:

In 1874, the Chief of Gangpur attempted a nazarkut or survey by eye-estimation. This, however, covered only a small number of villages and uniform rate was applied to all lands. A part of the revenue was payable in kind. The areas were assessed by nazarkut subjected to a percentage enhancement. The financial result of this settlement was to raise the revenue to Rs. 45,000/- in cash, plus 3,780 monds of rice and 360 monds of biri (blackgram).

The first proper settlement of the state commenced in 1907 and completed in 1911. A traverse survey had been done by means of planetable. A cadastral survey was also done of the villages, surveyed by traverse. The uplands which had not been subjected to assessment before, were left unassessed.

Classification of land was done according to local system i.e. according to the levels of various kinds of rice lands. The Settlement Officer considered that little was to be gained by making a further classification. In view of the fact that local classification was well understood by ryots and rice was the dominating crop, this view seemed to be quite sensible. This settlement resulted in nearly 100 per cent enhancement. It was decided to adopt Rs. 1-4-0, 1-0-0 and 0-12-0 rate per acre.

The new rates of rent met with very little real opposition but easily it became evident that there was a strong feeling against the retention in kind. As soon as this was known, the Chief very magnanimously offered to commute the abwabs and agreed to take only cash rents at the rates stated above. The abolition of abwabs appeared to afford great satisfaction to the large body of ryots and the rents had since been collected with very little trouble. 41

The settlement of 1907-11 was made for a period of ten years. But on expiry of this period, a revision was not taken

up as the economic condition of the ryots was not satisfactory. Apart from this, the ruling Chief in 1916 imposed a special cess of 12 annas for every rupee of rent to defray a portion of the expenditure of a wedding. A nayabadi settlement of newly cultivated lands was, therefore, made in 1923-24 and a revision settlement was postponed.

The operations of the revision settlement were commenced in October 1928 and completed in 1936. The main feature of the settlement was that the whole state was surveyed and all lands were assessed.  

Prior to the last regular survey and settlement there was a systematic assessment of rents. In addition to the cash amount, a numerous other exactions in kind were made. Admittedly too, the last regular survey and settlement was itself far from perfect so far as rent assessment was concerned. Rents were assessed more or less arbitrarily. No account was taken of the prices which varied greatly in different localities at any given time. A field lacking irrigational facilities in the remote forests was assessed at the same rate as a similar

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field having good irrigational facilities. The quality of the soil which affected the crop of the turn considerably was not considered. The result was that rents while they pressed hardly on villages, were extremely low in case of others.

It was proposed at the settlement of 1928-36 to remedy the state of affairs to some extent. In this connection Indra Vilas Mukherjee, the then Settlement Officer remarked: "It is proposed at the present settlement to remedy this state of affairs to some extent. It can't be remedied altogether and to be left further. For example, if a ryot who is in good locality, has been paying Rs. 1½; on the other hand a ryot who is in bad locality, had not given rent at a reduced rate. The former will have to be increased and the latter will have to be reduced gradually till more or less, the assessment arrived at."

With this end in view, what is know as Soil Unit System, had been adopted. On the soil unit system, the Settlement Officer wrote as follows:

"Soil Unit System is inductive method of assessment as you go from particular to particular to arrive at a general conclusion. Acreage rate of rent is a deductive method of assessment as you go from general to particular. By the Soil Unit System we reduce the area of the soil unit
to a common denomination by multiplying the area of each class of land, comprising the holding by the figure representing accelerating progress. These figures are called soil factors. The reduced rent of holding is found by multiplying the total number of units, by the unit rate of rent sanctioned for the village. The soil unit rent which is generally a fraction of one anna is expressed in general appreciation.\(^{43}\)

The rates of rent as fixed in this settlement were lower than those suggested by the Commissioner, Hewatt nearly 53 years ago. The Settlement Officer said that the present rates of rent would be considered normally low in the ordinary villages of the adjacent states of Bagara, Jashpur and Ranchi district. The average pressure of rent before revision of wet land was Re. 0-14-1 and after revision it was Re. 0-15-10 or an increase of 12.4 per cent only. The actual land revenue demand before revision was Rs. 1,10,257-15-7. The actual land revenue demand after revision was Rs. 1,49,861-8-3. So the increase obtained in the revenue of the state as a result of the revision was Rs. 39,603-8-8. The causes of increase were

\(^{43}\text{Indravilas Mukharjee, Final Report of the Land Revenue Settlement of the Gangpur State, 1929-36, p. 49.}\)
threefold, viz., (i) assessment of upland hitherto unassessed, (ii) assessment of new wet land since nayabadi settlement, (iii) increase in the rates of rent of old wet land which was between 12 to 16 per cent only. 44

The term of the settlement was announced to be for 10 years i.e. from 1936-37 to 1946-47. 45

Hindol:

Prior to 1875, there was no regular settlement of the land revenue in the Hindol State. The headman of the villages were paying a lump sum money to the Chief as amicably settled between them, and on the other hand realising the same from the tenants according to their sweet will. The tenants got displeased and demanded to ascertain what area of land really held by each of them. The discontent being general, proposal for summary settlement for the state was laid before the

44 Ibid., pp. 65-66.

Superintendent Tributary Mahals. He deputed Assistant Superintendent, Babu Harekrishna Das in 1873 to have a summary settlement of the state.

During the settlement of 1873-75 there was no regular measurement of land. Panchayats were appointed for each village and they were directed to ascertain on the spot and declared solemn oath, the produce of land held by each ryot by guess. This settlement was known by the name of nazarkut settlement.

The total assessable area of the state was 8217 acres and the land revenue Rs. 19,077-0-0. Average rent per acre was Rs. 2-5-0. This settlement was confirmed by the then Superintendent of the Tributary Mahals, T.E. Ravenshaw for the period of five years. But the resettlement did not commence till 1884.

Next settlement was the settlement of 1884. In this settlement, the lands were measured by the standard padika or rod of 10' 5$$" size. This was known as padika settlement.

At this settlement, villages were divided into four classes and lands into six classes on the consideration of fertility and improvement already made of the lands. The assessed area at this settlement increased to 31,217 acres and the rent to Rs. 37,355/- . The average rent per acre was
Re. 1-3-2. This settlement was made for ten years, but re-settlement could not be finished till 1901. 46

Third settlement was the settlement of 1901. In this settlement the principle of the previous settlement was followed as to measurement, classification of villages and lands. The area of the assessed land was 48,158 acres and the assessed rent was Rs. 55,931/-. The settlement ended in 1901 and the state came under the direct management of Government in 1906. It was found that the land revenue system was in most backward condition. The sum of Rs. 14,790/- was in arrear. Many big villages were almost abandoned. In many cases it was impossible to get land revenue without certificate procedure. Number of certificate cases went on increasing and on enquiry it came to light that the settlement work was done very hurriedly to complete in seven months. So, the measurement and classifications could not be done correctly and the necessity of another settlement was keenly felt.

The work was commenced in March 1910 and ended on

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30 May 1912. Some kind of traverse and cadastral survey had been done in this settlement. At this settlement, classification of land had been made with regard to soil, not with regard to crops grown. There were eighteen rates altogether in the place of 39 rates of the last settlement. Average rent per acre was Rs. 1-4-10 against Rs. 1-1-7 of the last settlement. The land rent of the state according to this settlement was Rs. 64,417-8-8 against Rs. 49,284-3-4 of the last settlement. Thus the increase was Rs. 15,133-5-4 i.e. 30 per cent.

The term of this settlement had been made for 20 years. This was good for the state and the people of the state. This was much appreciated by the people as they would have sufficient time to devote full time to the improvement and extension of cultivation and the state would reap the benefit at the next settlement. Of course, no other settlement was made before the merger.

Kalahandi:

The first summary settlement of Kalahandi was made in

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1883 and the second summary settlement in 1888. In these settlements area was recorded in terms of seed capacity. Rent was fixed on the consideration of yield and paying capacity of the tenants.

The first regular survey and settlement was made in 1904-1905. All the villages were not surveyed. The settlement except of certain villages were summary. The settlement resulted in an increase of revenue. The term of the settlement was for four years, but settlement was not taken up till 1911.

The settlement of 1911-12 was the second regular survey and settlement. It resulted in the 30 per cent enhancement of rent. The period of the settlement was fixed at 11 years.

In 1922, a new settlement was made on the Soil Unit System as adopted in Madhya Pradesh and Sambalpur district. The Soil Unit System was as follows:

"It involves the reduction of the area of each holding..." 

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to a denomination by multiplying the area of each class of
land comprised in the holding by the figure representing the
relative productiveness known as hector. The sum obtained,
gives the total number of soil units contained in the hold­ing. The rent of the holding is then obtained by multiplying
the total soil units by the unit rate of the village. Unit
rate was usually expressed in the fraction of an anna in deci­
mal notation. So, the product of multiplication is considered
as so many annas." Soil Unit System appeared to be a suitable
method of assessment in a hilly and irregular country like
Kalahandi.

However, at this settlement enhancement was made up to
100 per cent in the case of individual ryots of villages, and
for the paragana, it was limited to 60 per cent. Where the
assessment was 100 per cent or more, gradual enhancement for
a period of 10 years was prescribed. This settlement which
was made for a period of 20 years expired in 1942. But the fresh
settlement operations could not be taken up due to the World
War II. This started in 1946 and continued after the merger
of the state.

49 Final Report of the Land Revenue Settlement
in Kalahandi District, Ex-State Khalasa area, 1946-
56, pp. 11-17.
First revenue settlement of Keonjhar was made in 1803. Subsequent settlements were made in 1858 and 1888, but those were not regular. Seed capacity was used for estimation of area. Rather more elaborate settlement was made in 1899 which was current till 1913-14.

At this settlement, there was no regular survey of the entire area, but only of those portions of the villages which were actually brought under cultivation. Unit of measurement was padika or a bamboo pole of a given length which varied in different places. So the measurement was inaccurate in many places. At this settlement, the Settlement Officer recorded that gora and other lands were not paying rent since the tenants were liable to bethi. These lands were assessed, but bethi was only modified. 50

The term of the settlement was to expire in 1913-14. So the revision settlement operations commenced in 1911. There was a regular chain and planetable survey in these operations.

The survey did not cover the areas inhabited by Bhuyans and Juangas. Assessment was made under the Bengal Tenancy Act. Accordingly, land was classified into two kinds with 3 grades in each.

The cultivated land enormously extended since 1899. The result was that revenue increased proportionately. The total land revenue assessed at the settlement of 1913-14 was Rs. 2,33,990/- against Rs. 98,204/- at the previous settlement. Thus there was an increase of Rs. 91,524/- or 93.2 percent. The rates fixed for different classes of lands varied from Rs. 3-0-0 to Re. 1-0-0. Settlement of 1913-14 was the last settlement before merger. 51

Khandapara:

Prior to 1849, the ruling chiefs generally fixed the rents on the capacity of the land. In 1849, first settlement of the Khandapara State seemed to have been made. The fields were measured by means of a pole or padika equal to 10' 5½" size. Lands were classified into six classes besides

homestead holdings. Some 74 so called rates of rent had been adopted. The state obtained a revenue of Rs. 21,089/- from this settlement.

Eight years after i.e. in 1857, the then Raja Kunja bihari Singh attempted to have another settlement, but his desire could not be materialised owing to the discontent of the ryots. Settlement operations were therefore, dropped after field measurement.\(^{52}\)

Then in 1867, Raja Natabar Singh, though he administered the state for 39 years, made no regular settlement, but was satisfied with Nayabadi or newly cultivated area found in villages. Assessment was made at the rates fixed at the previous settlement. No figure was available to show to what extent the land revenue was increased.

Then came the other settlement which was taken up in 1910. The field measurement was done as before with the rod or padika of 10' 5½" size. In this settlement, classification was made on the basis of natural advantages. Villages then

were classified into three classes. In each village there were 12 classes of lands, besides the homestead lands.

Assessment in this settlement presented a problem which the Political Agent, Philip, very carefully solved, having gone fully into the questions. The 74 so called rates of the settlement of 1849 were discarded as it was found difficult to apply them. Thirty six (36) rates were approved by the Political Agent of the Feudatory States of Orissa. Besides, homestead lands were assessed at special rates, viz. Rs.25-0-0, Rs. 12-8-0 and Rs. 6-4-0 per acre.

On applying the above rates it was observed that, the land revenue would go up to Rs. 51,612/- against Rs. 21,089/- which, would represent an increase of 144 per cent. The rates approved were not applied henceforth. It was at length decided to enhance the old rents of ryoti and paikana lands at 4 annas, 3 annas and two annas per rupee of rental according as the village concerned was first, second and third class. This was considered as arbitrary, so only excess areas were assessed in the villages at average village rates. No assessment was made in the village on rent-free land.

In this settlement, land revenue was raised to Rs. 31,961/- against Rs. 21,260/-, giving an enhancement of 50 per cent.

Next settlement was commenced in 1920 and a traverse
as well as cadastral survey was made. In this settlement, the classification of land was again altered. Sri R.K. Ramadhyani remarked: "In some of the settlements done, it appear that a classification of land was made according to local usage by the ryots but each Settlement Officer seems to have made a more or less arbitrary classification, so far as I can see without any actual detailed examination of the matter in the field. These changes of classifications are the features of settlements in the states which have all proceeded upon no definite principles evolved from local circumstances, but upon classification, often without considering modification of exotic systems. In addition to altering the classification of land, the Settlement Officer abandoned the classification of villages. The rates were again more or less arbitrary." 53

Several rates were proposed to limit the general enhancement to 20 or 29 per cent. The rates were fully considered by the Political Agent and Commissioner in comparison with the rates of rent of the neighbouring states of Dasapalla, Nayagarh and Baramba. Finally it was decided to adopt old rates. But

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the rules were laid down limiting the maximum enhancement to 110 per cent and providing progressive enhancement in case of an application for reduction of the new rent. The principles of progressive enhancements proved to be very sound and useful. It was intelligible to the people.

Concessions were granted to Kondhas who gave hitherto vegetables, creepers, bamboo-mattings, charcoal and other general produce free of charge to the Rajabati in the shape of rent for their holdings. No rent was levied on their homestead lands at this settlement. No enhancement was made of the rent-free holdings. But the excess areas found in respect of them in this settlement, were assessed at full ryoti rent.

The total rental of the lands held under this state at the settlement of 1928-29, was Rs. 68,780-15-3 and the total rent paying area, 42,248 acres. The incident of rent per acre therefore came to Rs. 1-10-1. As compared with those of the neighbouring states, it was rather equal to the average rate of Dasapalla and below those of Narasingpur and Baramba, their rates of incidents being Rs. 1-10-1, Rs. 1-12-12 and Rs. 1-11-7 respectively.

Another important feature of this settlement was that all produce rents had been commuted under the orders of the Political Agent and Commissioner. This system of produce-
rent existed mainly in case of ryoti holdings under tenure holder. In this settlement the rents of such lands were commuted to cash rents, 50 per cent in excess of the general rates sanctioned by the Political Agent and Commissioner.

This settlement was in force till the merger of the state.

Mayurbhanj:

Before introduction of the regular system of settlement, rent used to be assessed on each village by the simple process of bargaining between the state and the headman. The state only ensured that undue harassment was not meted out to any tenant on the process of assessment and collection. During the settlement of 1847 the rate of assessment was Rs. 3-6-0 per acre. This system must have proved crude and archaic. This system was also found out of date when compared to the methods adopted in the neighbouring districts.

During the settlement of 1895, the system of cadastral

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survey was introduced. Owing to the vastness of area and the paucity of trained personnel survey could not be done for the entire state.

Land was assessed in accordance with the potentiality. A relativity of the production of the different classes of soil in different paraganas was ascertained in order to fix the rates of rent. This settlement obtained for the state the land revenue of Rs. 3,60,880/-.

Next settlement of the state was made in 1916-17. This is the only settlement made during the period under review. The whole of the state was cadastrally surveyed. The main consideration to guide the Settlement Officer in determination of either retention or modification of the existing rate of assessment of paragana, were its rainfall, state of communication and nearness to markets, class of cultivation, the state of husbandry, collection and remission of revenue, etc.

Lands were divided for the purpose of settlement into six categories viz., (1) dahi or worst kind of upland, (2) asu or upland, (3) kala or homestead land, (4) Gari or best alluvial land on the bank of the rivers, (5) pal or alluvial land on the bank of the rivers and (6) jal or the paddy land. Different rates were assessed for the each kind of land, keeping in view as far as possible, the relative
productivity of the soil, their physical character and other allied consideration, such as proximity to railway and other transport facilities. However, this settlement which was the last one before the merger resulted in the total land revenue of Rs. 4,30,560/-.

Nayagarh:

Everything was in chaos prior to 1852 when Rai Harmohan Lala, Government Tahasildar on deputation, made a regular settlement. The cultivated land of the state according to his settlement was 67,981 acres and the land revenue was Rs. 36,940/-. The term of the settlement expired after five years when Maulavi Muhammad, a Government servant on deputation, made an udhbat settlement of the reclaimed areas in 1857. The result of this settlement was that the cultivated area came to 73,619 acres and the land revenue to Rs. 39,415/-. It meant that during the interval of five years, there was 8.28 per cent increase in acres and 6.7 per cent in revenue. In the year 1870, the revenue of 1857 increased to Rs. 51,501/- by summary methods.

adopted by Babu Harekrishna Das, Assistant Superintendent of the Tributary Mahals. The increase in revenue was Rs. 12,086/- i.e. by about 30 per cent after a period of thirteen years.

During the time of Late Raja Ladukishore Singh Mandhata, the assets of the state was reduced to Rs. 40,000/- from Rs. 51,501/- as some lands were granted by him as niskar to his favourites.

The next settlement commenced in March 1896. It continued for ten years, owing to various circumstances. New rents were realized from 1906. The rent paying area increased to 1,12,387 acres from 89,168 acres of the settlement of 1890 i.e., an increase of 23,219 acres or 26.04 per cent. The rents realised from the tenants were raised to Rs. 79,536-1-9 i.e. an increase of Rs. 46,210 or 58.09 per cent. Term of the settlement was fixed for 15 years with effect from the year 1906.56

Before the expiry of the term of the settlement of 1906, settlement operation commenced from 1 November 1913. It claimed to be better than others. But as yet there was

no proper survey, and measurements were made roughly. The assessment was made, however, very crudely on the basis of a flat rate increase of two annas on all of the 9 rates, which prevailed in the previous settlement. This amounted to 4 per cent increase in the highest rates and 33 per cent in the case of lowest rates. The homestead lands in this state were assessed at various stages. Where there had been transferred cases, they were assessed at full ryoti rates. Some poor people were allowed free homesteads. Rates of rent at this settlement varied between Rs. 3-4-1 and Rs. 0-8-4. The rent paying areas increased by 8,329,49 acres. This was due to the correct measurement and reclamation of waste areas. Total rents to be paid by the tenants in this settlement were Rs. 116,964-6-3 in place of Rs. 79536-1-9 in the last settlement. The increment was Rs. 37,427-14-6 i.e. 29.46 per cent increment or Re. 0-4-9 per rupee. The term of the settlement was fixed for fifteen years. 

At the settlement of 1928-32, a fairly reliable and cadastral survey of the state seemed to have been made. The mal area of the Kondhas was also surveyed. Assessment of the

rent was made on the basis of crop experiment and the rent did not exceed 10 per cent of the profit. Homestead up to 0.1 acre was allowed rent-free for every agriculture holding. Special rates were applied to homesteads in Nayagarh town. In the backward tracts inhabited by Kondhas, lands were not assessed according to the measurement, but the actual rents being paid by them were recorded in terms of cash irrespective of the areas held by them.

Where enhancements were more than 100 per cent, progressive enhancement was allowed. Rent in kind almost was entirely commuted except in a few tenure holders. The commutation was done at a rate not exceeding double the settlement rent. However, the settlement of 1928-32 resulted in the enhancement of land revenue of Rs. 65,320/-. The term of the settlement was fixed for ten years. 58

Narsinghpur:

The first regular settlement of Narsingpur State was taken up by Raja Braja Sundar Mansingh Harichandan Mahapatra

in 1881 under the instructions of the Superintendent of the Tributary Mahals. This was a padika settlement as the lands were measured with a rod of 10' 5½" size. In that settlement the area of the occupied land was 27,304 acres of which 21,728 acres of land were assessed at Rs. 41,772/-. Rates, 454 in number, were fixed in this settlement. These varied from Re. 0-1-8 to Rs. 8-7-0 per acre. The people raised objections. Ultimately it was reduced to Rs. 30,000/-. So the average rent per acre stood at Re. 1-6-0.

The next settlement was taken up in 1895 and completed in 1899. This was also rod measurement. The occupied area at this settlement was 33,900 acres of which 32,930 acres were assessed at Rs. 42,575/-. So, at that settlement, there was an increase of 6,596 acres of occupied land, 7,252 acres of assessed land and increase of Rs. 1,275/- in rent i.e. increase by 22,23 and 41 per cent respectively. There were 501 rates varying from Re. 0-1-8 to Rs. 7-8-0. The average rent per acre was Rs. 1-7-6. The basis of assessment was not clear.59

The next settlement followed in 1914-18. At this settlement, there was a survey by plane table of the boundaries of villages, and cadastral survey of fields was also made. Villages were divided into six classes and lands were also classified and graded. At this settlement number of rates had been reduced to 35, varying from Re. 0-2-1 to Rs. 6-0-8. Objections to the classifications was raised, but they were disposed of after hearing the reasons. At the last settlement, the rates were fixed according to the crop grown on land. At this settlement the rates had been fixed according to the soil.

All the tenants had been allowed homestead land free of rent at the rate of 2 decimals for each acre of agriculture land. The aboriginals and village servants, widows, orphans and beggars had been allowed to enjoy their homestead lands free of rent. The Kondhas as before had been allowed to hold their land at the reduced rate. The progressive increase of rent had been allowed to avoid hardship by sudden increase of rent.

The increase of rent over that of the last settlement was by Rs. 5,689/- or 14.6 per cent. The period of the settlement was fixed at 20 years but, this had been extended by another 10 years till 1948.\footnote{R.K. Ramadhyani, Report on the Land Tenure and the Revenue System of the Orissa and Chhatisgarh States, Vol.III, 1942, pp. 178-179.}
The first settlement of the state began in 1849 and its period was till 1886. In 1886, another settlement was made and its period was till 1917. In this settlement, the assessable area was 26,169 acres with a gross rental of Rs. 54,198-7-11. The 99 rates were drawn up, ranging from Re. 0-2-0 to Rs. 5-0-0 per man.

The operations in respect of the next settlement started on 1 November 1917 when the previous settlement expired. Both traverse and cadastral survey were made and this survey covered all the villages. Villages as well as lands were classified according to their nature, situation, advantages and disadvantages, etc. At the previous settlements, there was no classification of villages. The rates fixed were based on the productivity of the different classes of land on the price of the produce.

New settlement however, raised the state land revenue from Rs. 56,447-15-3 to Rs. 73,496/- which represented an increase of 20 per cent. The main causes of the increase were two; i.e. increase in the area of the uncultivated land and revision of the rates of rent based on the productive power of the lands. The average rate of rent per acre was Rs.1-14-0.
The settlement was for 15 years, which expired on 1936. A new settlement had not been taken up owing to the economic circumstances and old settlement had been extended.

Pal-Lahara:

The first settlement of the state was made in 1875. It was called nazarkut settlement because there was no measurement of the lands and assessment was made by a mere inspection of the cultivated lands and their produce, on an estimate of the quantity of seeds sown for production. The result of the land revenue settlement was Rs. 18,000/- which however, went hard against the tenants. Hence, frequent reductions had to be made till at last it stood at Rs. 12,596/-. The rates of rent varied between Rs. 3-2-0 and Re. 0-6-3.

The next settlement was made in 1893-96. Lands were measured by a rod called padika, the length of which was 10' 5½". Villages were classified into three classes, taking into consideration their productive capacity, their situation

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61 Final Report of the Nilgiri Settlement commenced on 1 December 1917 and concluded on 31 March 1922, pp. 23-42.
and facility of irrigation. Certain rates were objected by the tenants as being very high. As per the rates of rent finally approved, these varied between Rs. 2-11-9 and Re. 0-4-0. Assessment being made on the above rates, the land revenue came to Rs. 19,409/-.

The term of the above settlement was for fifteen years. So, the next settlement was due in the year 1909. But it could not be taken up at that time for want of funds. In the mean time, however, nayabadi or newly cultivated lands were assessed. So, when the next settlement was taken up, the land revenue rose to Rs. 22,307/-.

Next settlement was commenced in 1914 and completed in 1917. Detailed survey was not done. Measurement of the cultivated lands was done by a rod of the same length as was used in the previous settlement.

Assessment was done on the lines of the previous settlement. Classification of villages into three classes was retained according to the previous settlement. The rates of rent approved and finally adopted in the settlement were the same as in the previous settlement. The total assessable area was 24,561 acres and the net rental assessed was Rs. 32,205/-. Thus, there was an increase of 32 per cent in land revenue over the previous settlement.
The Settlement Officer reported: "The settled rents are inadequate or that the assessment has been unduly lenient". But the records show that the ill-assessment went hard against the ryots some of whom abandoned their holdings and some entire villages. Consequently, abatement of rents had to be allowed but on the other hand, nayabadi lands were also assessed. As a result of these additions and subtractions, the net revenue demand of the state stood at Rs. 29,044/-. 62

Next settlement was commenced in September 1929 with a programme for three years. Detailed survey of the cultivated as well as uncultivated lands was done on the line of the cadastral survey. Every possible care was taken to get the accuracy of land measurement.

The classification of the land in the last settlement, had been followed in this settlement also. In the last settlement, villages were classified into three classes for the purpose of assessment. The settlement officer considered that such classification was proper. He stated: "In a hilly country like this state, some villages are situated in the interior

sorrounded by jungles without any facility of communication, where crops are frequently destroyed by wild animals; whereas others are situated beside the high-road with greater facility of communication in a more open space where depredation by wild animals is less frequent. The same class of lands situated in former villages is not expected to yield the same benefit to the tenants as that situated in the later villages. So, it should not be assessed at the same rate of rent. Further, if the classification of villages be abolished and all the villages of the state be assessed at the same rate of rent, the rents of some villages will be enhanced unduly, while the rents of some other villages will be reduced. To avoid the anomaly and also to do justice to the tenants of the different villages situated under different conditions, it was considered reasonable to retain the classification of villages into three classes according to the last settlement with modification only with few cases."

In this settlement, existing rates of rent were adopted without enhancement. On account of the economic distress, it was considered undesirable to increase the rent. Inspite of this, there had been an increase of 23 per cent in sarad lands and 7 per cent in gora lands and 6 per cent in total assessable area. This increase was partly due to the reclamation of waste lands and partly due to the accurate measurement by chains. But, rent-free lands were exempted from assessment.
The net demand of the state assessed at this settlement was Rs. 34,190/-. In cases where the increment had been found more than 50 per cent, progressive rent had been fixed. The progressive system was intended to help the ryots a great deal in reducing the hardship of the individual cases and also to help the state in tackling the problem of the then economic distress. The term of the settlement of 1929-32 had been fixed for 10 years only in consideration of the fact that, the rates of rent had not been increased and the increment of land revenue on the whole was very light. No other settlement was known to have been made before merger. 63

Patna:

The first regular settlement of the state was made in 1895-96. The better cultivated areas of the state were surveyed by plaintable. Where the cultivation was patchy, survey was done in a rough manner. The assessment of revenue was made on the Soil Unit System of the Central Provinces. In determining the rates of rent, the condition of the villages was taken into consideration. The net land revenue demand of the state

as fixed by this settlement was Rs. 76,900/-.

The next settlement of the state began in 1903 and dragged on till 1919. The whole state was surveyed regularly. In the assessment of land revenue, the principles followed were almost the same as were adopted in Sambalpur. The land revenue demand of the state was Rs. 1,50,820/-.

Next survey and settlement operations commenced in 1932 and completed in 1937. It was purely a revisional one. While the previous settlements were made according to the Central Province system, the settlement of 1932-37 was done according to the Bihar and Orissa system. 64

Settlement of rent was made according to certain special rules. Soil factor was used to determine the rental pressure of the holdings. After classification of lands, a figure was allotted to each of the soils to show its value in relation to the other soils. This was more or less how the relative productivity of each class of land was determined. However, there was an increase of revenue by about 47 per cent as a

64 Nilamani Šanapati (Chief Editor), Orissa District Gazetteers, Bolangir, pp. 338-340.
result of this settlement. Part of this was due to the new cultivation and assessment of rent free holdings. The period of settlement was fixed for 15 years.

Rairakhol:

The first regular settlement of the Rairakhol State was made in 1898. But in this settlement, all the villages were not regularly surveyed. The result of the settlement was that the revenue of the state came to Rs. 20,121/-. The effect of this settlement was given to till 1917 after which a revisional settlement commenced. In this settlement all the villages also were not regularly surveyed as in the previous settlement. Assessment of land revenue at the 1917 settlement seemed to have been made on the soil unit system prevalent in the Central Provinces and Sambalpur. The result of the settlement was that the revenue came to Rs. 25,563/-. The increase in the land revenue was Rs. 5,442/- i.e., 21 per cent.

The term of the settlement of 1917 expired in the year

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1930, which necessitated the revision of the survey and settlement. It commenced in January 1930 and was completed in 1932. At this settlement, villages were cadastrally surveyed. Homestead lands had not been measured in this settlement and was followed as in the last settlement.

The settlement of rent was made on the system, common in Orissa. Villages were placed in 3 classes and a table of 10 rates was framed. Enhancement of rents was limited to 100 per cent. In case of such enhancement, that was to be taken gradually to avoid hardship to the tenants. At the settlement of 1932, the assessment came to Rs. 39,277/- against Rs. 25,563/-, of the last settlement. The total increase in the land revenue was Rs. 13,714/- i.e., 54 per cent. The total area assessed at the last settlement was 3,930 acres. So, the average rent per acre was Re. 0-13-0 in the last settlement. The cultivated area found in this settlement was 46,728 acres. So the average rent per acre came to one rupee. 66

On the whole, the revenue was enhanced by 50 per cent,

the average rate per acre going up from 13 annas to one rupee. R.K. Ramadhyani who enquired into the land revenue system of the Rairakhol State ascertained that enhancement in many cases reached the maximum of 100 per cent. He remarked: "The application of the new system of settlement without studying the previous one, is not confined to Rairakhol among the states. The complaints of heavy enhancements, I heard in villages, do not seem to be without foundation." \(^67\)

At the 1932 settlement, rents formally paid in kind were abolished and converted into cash payment. The term of the settlement was fixed for 15 years. \(^68\)

Ranpur:

Before 1880, rents were being recovered purely in kind. It led to a rising caused by the oppressions of the servants of the Raja. The settlement of 1880 made the part of rent


\(^{68}\) Ibid., p. 237.
payable in money but the rapacity of the officers, in charge of grain collection, caused serious dissatisfaction. There was another meli for this. So in 1894 the payment of rent in kind was abolished altogether. But in the areas, inhabited by Kondhas, the Kondhas paid only certain commodities to the ruler in return for the payment in cash.

Next settlement was made in 1896. Like the previous settlement, the measurement was done with a rod of 10' 5½" in length. There had been no proper traverse and cadastral survey in the state. 69

In both the settlements of 1880 and 1896 the assessment was made on the basis of soil classification. The rates of rent were fixed in the settlement of 1880-81, and in the settlement of 1896, the same rates were kept intact. But, still, there was an increase of 51 per cent in assessment. This high increase was due to the abolition of rent in kind, resumption of paik lands and the excess jagir lands, and increase in ryoti lands by soil classification.

The settlement was for twenty years, but the resettlement

69 Final Report on Original Survey and Settlement operations of the Ranpur Ex-State area in the district of Puri, 1946-52, p. 36.
was not taken up apparently for want of funds. So, the settlement of 1896 was in force till the merger of the state.

Sonepur:

Prior to 1887, land of the villages were put to quinquennial auction and the gauntias or the headmen of the villages deposited the amount in the state treasury in lump sum. System of quinquennial auction automatically conferred the right on the gauntia to hold the village for five years. After 1887, the auction became annual and the gauntia made annual payment for lands. This system enabled the gauntia to reap the benefits of lands reclaimed afresh and brought under cultivation by tenants till there was settlement.

In the year 1893, Tryambak Rao Sathe, the then Dewan made an attempt to measure lands by rod or padika measuring

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71 Nilamani Senapati, Chief Editor, District Gazetteers, Orissa, Bolangir, p. 353.
10' 5½" in length. Thus he roughly calculated the area of the cultivated lands leaving aside the uncultivated lands. This settlement was completed in 1905. The whole state was not settled simultaneously, but between 1906 and 1910, the settlements of various paraganas had been done.

Settlement of various areas took place in 1912, 1916, 1925 and 1937, the period varying from 6 to 15 years. Unfortunately, no proper settlement report of any of these operations was available. It appeared that there were separate rates for rice-lands and uplands, and rice land was divided into three grades. Settlement was done on the soil unit system of the Central Provinces, but it was not clear whether this was totally followed or not. The reasons for different periods were not given in Reports, but the system of short-term settlements no doubt, caused much annoyance of the tenants.  

Talcher:

First settlement of the state seemed to have been made in 1898. The lands were measured by locally recognised pole

or padika of 10' 5½" long. The rice lands were classified into three classes and the lands for miscellaneous crops were assessed according to rates for crops. The total amount assessed in this settlement amounted to Rs. 58,971-10-5. The settlement was for a period of 15 years i.e. up to 1912.

In the settlement of 1912, both traverse and cadastral survey of the whole state were made. No appreciable changes seemed to have been made in the system of assessment. The average rate of rents increased from Rs. 1-11-2 to Rs. 2-6-10. In the opinion of the Settlement Officer, this increase was justified on the ground of the increase in prices of the produces. The net increase of land revenue of the settlement of 1912 was Rs. 27,020-14-3.73

In 1928 settlement, major portion of the assessment of revenue was due to the assessment of nayabadi or newly cultivated lands. The 1928 settlement, like its predecessor, was for 15 years and was due to expire in 1943. But no other settlement was made before the merger of the state. In 1941 R.K. Ramadhyani, who was examining the land revenue system

of the Talcher State, observed: "The State was well cultivated and is not a backward area like Bonai. There has been the development of coal mines since the last settlement and a Railway now connects Talcher to Cuttack. But the interior of the state does not appear to be much affected by these developments and it is doubtful if a short period of settlement is justifiable." 74

Tigiria:

First land settlement of the Tigiria State was made in 1854. In that settlement no measurement was done by any pole or padika, but the lands occupied by holders were roughly ascertained and were assessed with rent according to the value of those crops.

In 1876, a settlement based on measurement was said to have been made. The term of the settlement was for five years only which expired in 1880, but no settlement was made after the expiry of the term, probably due to the want of funds.

Although the question of resettlement was not raised, only assessment of nayabadi lands added to the last settlement jama in 1887. This revenue was considered to be inadequate for the smooth administration of the Feudatory State. So the necessity of resettlement was proposed and approved by the Political Agent of the Feudatory States in March 1910. 75

In the last settlement both money rent and produce rent in paddy were settled for the same land in certain classes of tenants. But the practice of realising produce rent, having been considered unfair and unjust, was abolished. The rates of this settlement proposed by the Settlement Officer and approved by the Political Agent were classified in consideration of the natural aspects of the village, nature of the soil, protection of crops against damages sustained by river floods and depredation by wild animals and facility of irrigation. However, the average rate per acre in the last settlement was Rs. 2-0-1, and that of this settlement was Rs. 2-6-3.

The land revenue was Rs. 10,576-10-7 prior to this settlement and the last revenue finally assessed at this settlement was Rs. 18,197-13-2. Thus the revenue was

75 Completion Report of Survey and Settlement of the Tigiria Feudatory State, 1913, pp. 11-17.
increased by 72 per cent on the whole. The area of the occupied land prior to this settlement was 11,196 acres while the area had become in this settlement 15,106 acres. So the cultivated area had been increased by 46 per cent. This was mostly due to the reclamation of waste lands.

In the next settlement which was made in 1931-32 villages were divided into three classes and regular cadastral survey was made. The rates of the previous settlement were applied. On the whole, the settlement did not seem to have been a great advance on previous settlement in quality except that a cadastral survey was made.

The term of the settlement had been fixed at 20 years and it was current at the time of merger. 76

COLLECTION AND RECOVERY OF LAND REVENUE

The land revenue was collected through the village headman. In fact, he was responsible for the revenue of the village. Practically in every state the village headman

whether he was known as sarbarakar or thikadar or gauntia
in the village, had responsibility for the payment of the
entire village revenue to the state. The cultivators were
of course expected to pay the land revenue to him, but from
the point of view of the state, it mattered little whether,
at the time the revenue fell due, all of them had paid the
headman or not. The ruler did not trouble how the amount
assessed on a village was raised so long as it was paid.

In view of this responsibility there were many villages
in the states without headmen as the circumstances of the
villages were not such as to render feasible the acceptance
of responsibility. Such villages, in the past, at least seemed to have started with headmen who were later removed on
account of inability to fulfil their pledges in respect of
the revenue and new candidates did not appear on account of
unattractiveness of the village. On account of this responsi-
sibility, there were many villages in every state for which
headmen could not be found. So the state had to often seek a
man who had financial capacity to pay out of his own pocket,
in case the ryots failed to pay or delayed payments. Many
headmen had to borrow in order to pay their kists in time,
as the normal remedy against the defaulting ryots was to
file a civil suit. In most states, the headman was permitted
to file a list of defaulters in the Revenue Court for the
purpose of summary procedure, but certificate procedure was permitted only if the headman paid the dues on the due date or within a specified time and file a list of defaulters within the given period. In Athmallik state, a large number of headmen were removed between the years, 1936-1939 for failure to pay the land revenue.

R.K. Ramadhyani commented: "What is wrong with the system of village headman is really the fact of the responsibility for the whole of the revenue whether the ryot pay or not and the fact that in most cases, he had to pay first and then incur the expense of the trouble of a civil suit. The possibility of village headmen without responsibility for the whole of the revenue, but responsible for collection, i.e., working as the local collector of revenue on behalf of the state (to which practical position he has been reduced in some of the states) does not seem to have been envisaged." 77

The ryots were required to pay the land revenue to the land revenue to the headman on or before the fixed dates.

In a large number of states, the ryots were required to pay the revenue in two instalments, in December and February and between March and May. In a few states, payment was made in three instalments, in November, January and April-May. Collection of land revenue was not the only duty of a village headman, but also he had numerous other functions to perform such as reporting crimes, looking after the interest of the state, the sanitation of the villages and so on.

The common practice in the states had been not to recognise the hereditary right of the village headman to succession, but to make the lease or patta of a village, terminable after a certain number of years or at the next settlement. During the currency of a lease, the right of the son to succeed was commonly recognised, but after the expiry of the lease, the ruler or the zamindar was at liberty to give someone else. In some states, the headmen of certain villages had been granted protected status though in practice the status was nominal. This meant that the headman had the right to renew the lease on its expiry. The existence of the unprotected village headmen did not mean that their leases were invariably terminated and given to new persons.

Where a village headship fell vacant through failure of heirs, removal of headman for a breach of contract or surrender
of the village by him or other reason, there only a new comer ordinarily was appointed. Of course, instances of arbitrary removal and resettlement of villages with favourites or persons who offered financial inducement, had not been uncommon.

The common mode of remuneration of headmen was by land incident to the post known as bhogra. These lands were formerly held rent-free and the headman received no other remuneration. But in due course, a percentage of the total rental of the village was fixed as the gauntia's remuneration in addition to the revenue free bhogra lands. He received it either in the shape of rent-free home-farm or a drawback upon the village rental, if the rental of the home-farm was less than the fixed percentage. Of course, some headmen got a higher percentage than others. It had been found necessary, to allow a higher percentage where the revenue of the village was small. In few states, the bhogra lands had been all resumed and resettled on ryoti terms, and the headmen got only the percentage of land revenue. 78

If the ryot failed to pay the revenue on the fixed date

or the headman did not pay the land revenue to the state on the due date, the question of recovery arose. The process of recovery was as follows: Generally speaking, wherever default was made by a headman with responsibility, he was proceeded against in the first instance. A notice or sometimes a warrant of attachment of movables was issued against him. If he did not pay, the movables were put to auction. If this did not result in recovery, the headman might be ejected and the post auctioned or resettled otherwise.

The ryots were required to pay the rent in two or three instalments to the headman. Headman could submit to the ruler a list of tenants failing to pay the rent in due time, if he had paid the rent in due time i.e., demand of the whole village, out of his pocket. If the defaulting tenant did not pay the revenue inspite of repeated warning of the state authority, either the ruler or the headman proceeded to recover the dues by filing a case against him. For the recovery of arrears, the movable and immovable property of the tenant were attached usually and sold if necessity arose. The collection of revenue was satisfactory in many states. But in some, collection was poor and the number of coercive process was heavy. The improvement in the collection of land revenue was reflected in the fact that in the years of failure of crops due to drought or flood, an unusual high standard of collection was reached. This was mainly because of the fact that the ryots generally
realised that it was best in every way for them to pay the demand when due.

On the other hand, the tenants faced a great difficulty in paying their rents, as most of them had to depend on the sale of paddy in order to do so. Some had to raise necessary funds by selling their gold ornaments and others by labour under the forest and public works contractors. Moreover, the tenants suffered a lot due to the corrupt practices of the headmen. The very common corruptions practised by them were extracting more from the ryots, neglecting to issue proper rent receipts to them, utilising the services of the ryots as bethi for their personal cause, and putting them to trouble in many other ways.

The coercive process for the recovery of revenue ruined many ryots, but it was said that these were necessary to safeguard the state's interest. Attachment of movable property was universal and usually effective method of recovery. Apart from the movable property, standing crops of the tenants were attached. There were also instances of the ejection of the cultivators from the holdings.79

The ejection of a cultivator from his holding was unjustified in many ways. The cultivator had either paid the value of the land or had given it the value it possessed. To deprive him of the whole of the land for the land revenue which was usually a small amount, was unfair. It deprived him of his source of livelihood and made him a labourer. Ejection from a portion of the land or sale of a portion sufficient to cover the arrears did not seem to offer satisfactory solution. R.K. Ramadhyani remarked: "Neither sale nor ejection should be a common or readily practised mode of recovery; if a cultivator fails to pay his revenue even at the possibility of his land being put to sale, it is usually because of genuine inability to pay, and if this process has to be resorted to except rarely, it is a sign that there is something wrong which only an unimaginative administration will overlook."^{80}

In the villages where there were no headmen known as Sarbarakars or gauntias or thikadars, collection was effected directly by the State through specially appointed patwaris of Tahasildars or Amins. The system of collection of land revenue by peons or patwaris or Amins was susceptible of serious abuses and the results were not satisfactory. The collection of land revenue by Talasidar caused serious inconvenience was the tenancy for the Tahasildar was to go to certain villages and

require the villagers of neighbouring villages to attend. Moreover, the same coercive process was followed for the realisation of arrear of revenue which caused much hardship to the tenants. 81