

## CHAPTER VII.

### COMMUNICATIONS.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION.

There does not appear to be much information available regarding the old time trade routes and highways and modes of conveyance in the period prior to the later Mohammedan period. The importance of the area now represented by the district of Monghyr in epic age when it formed a part of the kingdom of Anga assures that there must have been means of communication connecting this area with the other parts. The district is associated with many mythological stories. King Karna ruled over this part of the kingdom of Anga. Popular belief even today ascribes a particular tract within the fort area of Monghyr town passing by the name of "Karna Chowrah" to be seat of King Karna's kingdom. The extensive river front of the district assures a highly developed water-borne traffic in the olden days. The particular position of the town of Monghyr with the river Ganga enclosing it on three sides made it strategically important for establishment of the headquarters of a ruling dynasty. Centuries after, the Muslim king built a fort, which is at the place the river takes a bend, the ruins of which are yet standing to bear the testimony to the importance of the town. The bathing *ghat* in the fort area, known as the Kastaharni *ghat*, traces its origin according to the popular hearsay to the spot where Shri Ram Chandra on his return journey from Mithila to Ayodhya after his marriage with Sita halted with his consort to have a dip into the sacred water of the river to relieve themselves of the fatigue of the journey.

Sitakund near Monghyr town, the Shiva temple at the neighbouring township of Sultanganj, the religious *mela* at Simaria *ghat* are factors which pre-suppose a flow of traffic both by road and river.

Till the middle of nineteenth century, the chief highway of commerce and the main routes by which the district of Monghyr was connected with other parts of India, were the river Ganga and the road running along its southern bank. Local tradition ascribes the latter to the Emperor Sher Shah, and it is known to have been the highway along which Mohammedan armies passed in their marches to and from Bengal and North-West India. The Ganga, however, appears to have been used far more by travellers, several of whom have left accounts of the journey up and down the river. From their accounts and from other sources it is learnt how great the cost of travelling, whether by road or river used to be. Travellers by road from Calcutta, a distance of 301 miles had to pay no less than Rs. 406 out of which Rs. 301 represented the wages of *Palki*-bearers and the balance the hire of the *Palki*. Travellers by river had, according to a return of 1781, a journey of 45 days from Calcutta and its costs depended upon

how many *Dandis* or boatmen were engaged. For a "*bajra*" the rate varied from Rs. 2 to Rs. 8 per diem, while larger boats, which were called then "*Utanka*" cost from Rs. 22 to Rs. 29 a day. Steam vessels do not appear to have come up so far up the river until 1828, when a vessel called the *Hoogly* came up from Calcutta, and the journey up and down was performed at an average speed of  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles per hour.

The first rail track was laid in India by the East Indian Railway Company in the year 1853. It was extended to Monghyr in the year 1862 and since that date several other lines have been constructed. The first to be constructed was what is known to be the loop line with a great bend towards the north from Khana Junction in order to follow the course of the river Ganga and then when traffic increased a chord line was made from Lakhisarai to Khana Junction. Near about 1895-96 the construction of the South Bihar line was completed. It starts from Kiul in this district and extends up to Gaya on the west where it meets the Grand Chord line.

During the earlier period, when travelling facilities to and from the regions on the northern bank of the Ganga were scarce, the East Indian Railway put into commission at Sahibganj a steam vessel by the name of "*Kashiji*" in 1870 for ferrying passengers over the river Ganga. This arrangement, besides affording immense facilities to the travelling public immediately proved to be a great economic success to the Railway. The passenger ferry at Monghyr was introduced at a much later date after the Monghyr *ghat* to Sahebpur Kamal Branch of the old Oudh Tirhut Railway had been opened for traffic.

Near about the year 1900 the Bengal and North-Western Railway (Company) extended their system in the north of the district to Katihar and since then several branch lines from Mansi in this district to Supaul, Bachhwara and Samastipur, and from Sahebpur Kamal to Monghyr *ghat* and from Barauni Junction to Simaria *ghat* were constructed. Till during the recent times the road communication in the district was poor and there were only a few roads and they too were not suitable for fast mechanised traffic. The high cost of transport and the risk involved in a journey by road by means of slow moving transport were stumbling blocks in the way of inland trade and the material progress of the district.

In the pre-independence days the road system under the British grew up largely, if not mainly, in response to the need of strategy or administration. Since Independence, however, the direction and extent of road planning has been much influenced by the need for promoting the economic development and accordingly improvement to the existing roads and construction of a number of good roads with bridges were taken up almost immediately after the achievement of Independence in 1947 linking Monghyr and its important marketing and agricultural centres with other neighbouring districts. This has

removed the long-felt necessity to some extent. The position of the road communication of the district lying on the north of the river Ganga which is commonly known as North Monghyr could not, however, yet been much improved partly due to the fact that the area lies in the belt of the Kosi, which is subjected to frequent heavy floods and partly due to non-availability of road materials on that side and the transport difficulties involving heavy cost in taking the materials from the south of the Ganga.

A very great landmark in the development of communication not only for the district of Monghyr but for the whole of Bihar is the completion of the ambitious project of Rail-cum-Road Bridge in 1959 on river Ganga at Mokameh *ghat* connecting Barauni in Monghyr on the north of Ganga. There was an unfortunate bottleneck for transport, trade and commerce because of the want of a Rail-cum-Road Bridge on Ganga throughout the State of Bihar. The two portions of Bihar, namely, North Bihar and South Bihar have been brought nearer by the construction of this project, the formal opening of which was celebrated on the 2nd May, 1959 by the Prime Minister of India. The completion of the construction of Kosi Dam will be another landmark. It is expected that this multi-purpose project on Kosi will bring cheaper electricity and various other facilities to this area as well. There is no doubt that Barauni area will be very much changed in the course of the next one decade. There are already proposals for the construction of Refineries and a Thermal Plant in this area. Already there is a scramble for various industries and speculations to acquire lands in the area in the vicinity of the Rail-cum-Road Bridge.

#### MODES OF TRANSPORT.

The chief means of transport in the district are steamers, boats, State and private buses, trains, public and private trucks and bullock-carts. Taxies and cycle rickshaws are also available at Monghyr, Jamalpur and some of the urban areas. Light vehicles drawn by a single horse known as *ekkas* are on the decline. Cycles have become common.

About two-third of the bus services on the portion south of the river Ganga has been nationalised and State buses ply. As a good number of roads have been improved and bridges provided in the unbridged crossings and linked up with the neighbouring district a large number of mechanised goods transport vehicles have come into use. Bullock-carts the number of which has not been calculated still remain the main conveyance in the villages. There is no restriction for them or the *ekkas* for not using the highways.

#### ROAD COMMUNICATION.

##### *South Monghyr State Roads.*

Most of the important and arterial roads in the district have been taken over by the State Public Works Department and improved to

cope with the heavy traffic and are maintained by them. The total length so far taken over and improved by the Public Works Department is in the proximity of 250 miles. Two major bridges on the river Kiul, one at Lakhisarai on the Monghyr-Patna Road and the other near Jamui on the Monghyr-Jamui Road have been constructed with waterways 1,398 feet and 1,198 feet at an approximate cost of Rs. 16,00,000 and Rs. 16,81,500, respectively.

The principal roads on this side of the district mainly radiate from Monghyr, Jamui and Lakhisarai. The oldest road and historical route is the one which runs along the Ganga and is commonly known as Patna-Monghyr-Bhagalpur Road. The distance from Monghyr to Patna is 108 miles and that of Bhagalpur from Monghyr is 37 miles. Barhiya is at the western boundary and Ghorghat is on the eastern boundary of the district. The distance from Monghyr to Barhiya is 39 miles and that of Ghorghat from Monghyr is 16 miles. The road passes through Lakhisarai, Surajgarha, Monghyr, Nawagarhi and Bariarpur in the district. It is a first class metalled and tar-dressed road and there is a regular State bus service on the road between Lakhisarai and Monghyr on one side and between Monghyr and Bhagalpur on the other side. The river Harohar between Lakhisarai and Barhiya is not bridged. But there is a ferry service at the crossing and one good boat is maintained there all the year round to pass across the light vehicular traffic besides country boats for passengers. A permanent bridge on this river has already been started and the work will be completed soon. After the construction of this bridge there can be a regular bus service from Patna to Monghyr. By this route Patna is of a much shorter distance.

There is another important road connecting the district headquarters with the subdivisional headquarters of Jamui and extending to Gaya *via* Sikandra and Arha. It meets the Patna-Ranchi Road at Nawadah in the district of Gaya. The road takes off from Bariarpur about 11 miles east of Monghyr on Patna-Monghyr-Bhagalpur Road and passing through Kharagpur, Guddi, Mallehpur, Jamui, Sikandra and Aliganj of this district enters the Gaya district near the village Arha. It is a first class metalled and tarred road. There is a regular State bus service on the road from Monghyr to Jamui and from Jamui to Nawadah.

Another important road starts from Jamui subdivisional headquarters and goes to Biharsharif in the district of Patna touching the Patna-Ranchi Road in its 48th mile from Patna. It passes through the important marketing and agricultural centres of this district, e.g., Sikandra, Sheikhpura and Barbigha. The distance from Jamui to Barbigha is 40 miles. The road crosses the district border near Ambabigha, a village about two miles from Barbigha. It is a first class metalled and tar-dressed road. There is a regular State bus service on the road from Jamui to Barbigha and from Barbigha to Biharsharif.

Another important road takes off from the northern bank of the river Kiul near Jamui railway station and passing through Jhajha and Chakai in this district goes to Baidyanathdham in the district of Santhal Parganas, an important religious place for Hindus. Jhajha is at a distance of 20 miles and Chakai is at a distance of 40 miles from Jamui town. A road coming from Hazaribagh *via* Giridih and passing this district through Sirwan meets the above road at Chakai linking this district with Hazaribagh. Both these roads are first class metalled and tar-dressed roads and there is a regular State bus service on them from Jamui to Chakai *via* Jhajha and from there to Baidyanathdham as also from Hazaribagh to Chakai *via* Giridih.

There is another important road known as Sultanganj-Belhar Road. It starts from Sultanganj, a village in the Bhagalpur district and passing through Tarapur and Sangrampur in this district again enters Bhagalpur district at Belhar and extending further goes to Baidyanathdham in the district of Santhal Parganas.

It is a first class metalled and black-topped road up to Belhar. There is a regular State bus service on this portion of the road. The road beyond Belhar up to Baidyanathdham (Deoghar) is a fair weather road and there is a bus service during fair weather only. A road from Kharagpur connects this road at Tarapur. This is also a first class metalled and black-topped road.

There is also a road from Sikandra to Lakhisarai, a distance of 16 miles. This road links the Jamui-Barbiga Road with Monghyr-Patna Road and forms the shortest route to Patna through the interior of this district. There has been a large increase in the number of private cars in the last ten years owing to the vast improvement of the roads.

#### *North Monghyr—National Highway.*

The road which is commonly known as Tirhut Road is a part of the National Highway. It enters this district at village Rashidpur on the western border and terminates at Monghyr old steamer *ghat*. The total length of the road falling in this district is 43 miles. It is to be extended to Narainpore in the Bhagalpur district and thence to Assam Access Road. It is a *Jhama*-metalled road to a length of 31 miles and unmetalled for 12 miles. The portions in Begusarai Bazar and Teghra Bazar have been improved, metalled and black-topped. There is a proposal to improve the remaining portion of this road in the Second Five-Year Plan. The work is being executed by the State Public Works Department. This road passes through Teghra, Phulwaria, Begusarai, Balia and Lakhminia in this district.

#### *State Roads.*

About 92 miles of the District Board roads excluding the portion of the National Highway (Tirhut Road) had been taken over by the Public Works Department till 1955 for their improvement and

metalling in the First and Second Five-Year Plans, 40 miles of which have so far been improved, metalled and black-topped, and made passable all the year round. Work on the remaining miles is in progress and it is expected that many more miles will be improved by the end of the Second Five-Year Plan.

The principal roads which are maintained by the State Public Works Department on this side are Begusarai to Sagi *via* Majhaul, Khagaria to Bakhri, Maheshkunt to Agvani *ghat*, Maheshkunt to Sonbarsa, Khagaria to Parihara, Parihara to Majhaul and Maheshkunt railway station to Gogri Bazar.

#### *District Board and Local Board Roads.*

Besides the roads mentioned above, which are maintained by the State Public Works Department, there are other roads scattered throughout the interior of the district. These roads are maintained by the District Board and Local Boards. An aggregate length of the same is 1,252 miles of which 90 miles are metalled and 1,162 miles are unmetalled. They mostly connect the interior villages with the main roads of the Public Works Department.

#### *Village Roads.*

About 122 miles of the village roads are maintained by the Local Boards. As the necessity of village roads connecting the villages with the nearest Public Works Department or District Board roads has been considered to be of utmost importance to open out vast areas which are closed up and which one cannot reach unless one walks or rides, the Community Projects and National Extension Service Administration are intensely concentrating on village roads construction by enlisting public co-operation. Funds have been sanctioned by the State Government for encouraging construction of village roads on co-operative basis by the villagers offering free labour, gifts of land, etc.

#### *Forest Roads.*

Monghyr Forest Division was created during the year 1945-46 with the forests of Banaily Raj and Gidhour Raj. Previously the private forest owners did not give any importance towards communications and construction of roads within the forest areas with the result that vast areas inside forests remained undeveloped and unexploited in forest wealth. After the promulgation of the Bihar Private Forests Act, 1948, Government started taking over of the forests of this district and due to stiff opposition of the landlords in forest administration the department had to face difficulties in developing the roads and communications inside the forest areas in the beginning. Gradually a five-year road programme was chalked out and during the year 1950-51 the department was able to align a part of Barhat-Gurmaha Road at a total cost of Rs. 35 only.

## MILEAGE.

There are several existing cart tracks which were previously owned by the private landlords. These existing cart tracks are mostly situated within the forests of Darbhanga, Banailly and Gidhour Raj which extend about 38 miles approximately. In addition to these existing cart tracks the department has aligned several roads which extend 84 miles approximately and about 42 miles 22 chains of roads have been newly constructed up to the year 1956-57. The forests of this district extend over an area of 500 square miles and the mileage of roads so far achieved inside the forests is almost negligible and as such alignment and construction of new roads are earmarked and taken up for execution.

*Statement showing the description of roads with mileage and expenditure incurred since the creation of the Monghyr Forest Division.*

- |         |    |   |
|---------|----|---|
| 1945-46 | .. | No roads were constructed.  |
| 1946-47 | .. | Ditto ditto.  |
| 1947-48 | .. | Ditto ditto.  |
| 1948-49 | .. | Ditto ditto.  |
| 1949-50 | .. | Ditto ditto.  |
| 1950-51 | .. | Only a part of Barhat-Gurmaha Road was aligned at a cost of Rs. 35.   |
| 1951-52 | .. | The following existing fair weather roads were improved out of relief fund at a total cost of Rs. 16,610 :—<br>Gurmaha-Chormara Road—4 miles.<br>Gangta-Bhimbandh Road—8 miles.<br>Bhimbandh-Chormara Road—4 miles.<br>Chormara-Karmegh Road—12 miles.<br>Barhat-Gurmaha Road—6 miles.                    |
| 1952-53 | .. | The following existing cart tracks originally constructed by the forest contractors were repaired at a cost of Rs. 1,999 :—<br>Gangta-Bhimband—8 miles.<br>Chormara-Karmegh—12 miles.<br>Dabiakura-Jhikulia—3 miles.<br>Daihari-Bhelwa—1 mile.  |
| 1953-54 | .. | Barhat-Gurmaha Road—6 miles was constructed at a total cost of Rs. 8,897.<br>The following existing cart tracks originally constructed by the forest contractors were repaired and maintained :—<br>Gaighat-Bhimbandh Road—8 miles.<br>Bhimbandh-Chormara Road—4 miles.<br>Chormara-Gurmaha Road—4 miles. |

1954-55 .. The following roads were aligned :—

- Kharagpur-Karmegh Road—8 miles 40 chains.
- Rupabel-Mahengro Road—3 miles 40 chains.
- Gurmaha-Mananpur Road—8 miles 49 chains.
- Bhelwa-Ramchandradih Road—6 miles 71 chains.

The following existing cart tracks were repaired and maintained at Rs. 8,362 :—

- Gaighat-Bhimbandh Road—4 miles.
- Bhimbandh-Chormara Road—5 miles.
- Chormara-Gurmaha Road—4 miles.
- Barhat-Gurmaha Road—6 miles.

The existing Kharagpur Lake Road was repaired at a total cost of Rs. 6,000.

1955-56 .. The following new roads were constructed :—

- Bhimbandh-Chormara Road—6 miles.
- Chormara-Karmegh Road—5 miles.
- Karmegh-Paisra-Kandhi Road—6 miles.
- Batia (Dhubiakura)-Bhelwa Road—5 miles.

The following roads were aligned :—

- Lachuar-Janamthan Road—4 miles.
- Bhelwa-Narganjo Road—8 miles.

1956-57 .. The following new roads were constructed :—

- Kandhi-Kharagpur Road—4 miles.
- Banbarsa-Kandhi Road—1 mile 42 chains.
- Rupbel-Mangrar Road—3½ miles.
- Barahat-Gurmaha Road—5 miles 20 chains.
- Gaighat-Dighi Road—60 chains.

The following roads were aligned :—

- Narkol-Karmantari-Gaighat Road—15 miles.
- Chitardih-Kiajori Road—2 miles 46 chains.
- Kundghat-Bhelwa Road—8½ miles.
- Narganjo-Mangrar Road—6 miles.
- Mallepur-Mananpur Road—8½ miles.

The following roads were repaired :—

- Gaighat-Bhimbandh Road—6 miles.
- Bhimbandh-Chormara Road—6 miles.
- Karmegh-Paisra Road—6 miles.
- Chormara-Karmegh Road—5 miles.
- Barhat-Gurmaha Road—7 miles.
- Asurni-Kachua Road—5 miles.
- Batia-Bhelwa Road—6 miles.

#### STATE TRANSPORT.

In this district passenger road transport has been partially nationalised. The State Transport Department was opened in this district on the 26th January, 1956. A report from the Raja



Transport Depot at Monghyr in the first week of March, 1958 gave the routes of buses and mileage covered by them :—

	Miles.
(1) Monghyr—Bhagalpur .. .. .	39
(2) Monghyr—Sangrampur <i>via</i> Sultanganj .. .. .	45
(3) Monghyr—Sangrampur <i>via</i> Kharagpur .. .. .	41
(4) Monghyr—Sangrampur <i>via</i> Gangtamore .. .. .	37
(5) Monghyr—Kharagpur .. .. .	22
(6) Monghyr—Jamalpur .. .. .	5
(7) Monghyr—Jamui .. .. .	50
(8) Monghyr—Kiul .. .. .	30
(9) Monghyr—Gourabdih .. .. .	29
(10) Monghyr—Biharshariff .. .. .	108
(11) Monghyr—Nawadah .. .. .	98
(12) Monghyr—Nawagarhi .. .. .	6
(13) Jamui—Monghyr .. .. .	50
(14) Jamui—Bhagalpur .. .. .	67
(15) Jamui—Chakai .. .. .	48
(16) Chakai—Simultala .. .. .	17
(17) Arha—Jamui—Mallehpur .. .. .	36
(18) Jamui—Biharshariff .. .. .	58
(19) Chakai—Deoghar .. .. .	58
(20) Jamui—Nawadah .. .. .	46
(21) Jamui—Sikandra—Lakhisarai .. .. .	29
(22) Sangrampur—Jamui .. .. .	32
(23) Tarapur—Bhagalpur .. .. .	29
(24) Tarapur—Sultanganj .. .. .	6
(25) Sultanganj—Belhar .. .. .	27

The report mentions that 29,56,047 passengers were carried in the year 1957 by the Rajya Transport vehicles plying in Monghyr district. The income earned by Monghyr and Jamui Depots and Tarapur Station of the Rajya Transport functioning in Monghyr district excluding the Terminal-tax at -/1/9 in the rupee for the year 1957-58 up to date is Rs. 11,88,269.60 nP. The expenditure figure was not available as this was compiled at the Rajya Transport Divisional Office at Bhagalpur.

Private buses run concurrently on the following routes :—

- (1) Monghyr—Sangrampur *via* Gangtamore.
- (2) Monghyr—Sangrampur *via* Kharagpur. . . . .
- (3) Monghyr—Deoghar *via* Jamui.
- (4) Arha—Jamui.
- (5) Tarapur—Sultanganj.
- (6) Monghyr—Bhagalpur.
- (7) Monghyr—Kharagpur.
- (8) Monghyr—Surajgarha.
- (9) Jamui—Chakai.

- (10) Monghyr—Jamui.
- (11) Monghyr—Tarapur *via* Kharagpur.
- (12) Monghyr—Jamalpur.
- (13) Monghyr—Kajra *via* Surajgarha.
- (14) Monghyr—Lakhisarai *via* Kiul and Surajgarha.
- (15) Bhagalpur—Sangrampur *via* Sultanganj—Tarapur.
- (16) Bhagalpur—Belhar.
- (17) Bhagalpur—Tarapur.
- (18) Sultanganj—Belhar.

The State Government have now set up a Road Transport Corporation which controls the State Transport vehicles.

#### RAILWAYS.

The district is, on the whole, well served by railways, those to the south of the Ganga being broad gauge and those to the north being meter gauge.

The railway on the south of the Ganga is known as Eastern Railway and that of on the north is known as North Eastern Railway.

#### *Eastern Railway.*

The loop line of this railway passes through the district from east to west and the chord line from north-west to south-east while the South Bihar Railway runs through the Sheikhpura Thana of this district westward to Gaya. There is also a branch line leading from Jamalpur to Monghyr town.

The loop line enters the district five miles east of Bariarpur, and leaves it just beyond Barhiya on the western border of the district. This line presents some interesting engineering features. Shortly before reaching Jamalpur, it passes through the northernmost ridge of the Kharagpur hills by a tunnel called the Monghyr tunnel. This tunnel is 900 feet in length, 23 feet in height and 25 feet in width. After leaving Jamalpur the line proceeds for about thirty miles close to the Kharagpur hills, and between Kiul and Lakhisarai crosses the river Kiul by a fine lattice girder bridge of 9 spans of 150 feet each. It then takes a sharp curve in a northerly direction, and four miles further on crosses the Harohar river by another lattice girder bridge of 3 spans of 150 feet each.

In connection with railway communication particular mention has to be made of the Eastern Railway Workshop at Jamalpur. Just a century after Nawab Mirkasim Ali Khan lost the battle at Udhua-i-Nala rivulet, within a distance of one and half miles of that site, the East Indian Railway (now Eastern Railway) mechanical workshop at Jamalpur was established in 1862.

The site selected was convenient from point of view of manpower to be employed as a large number of skilled artisans whose ancestors were the accredited gun-makers of the Nawab Nazib lived

nearby. There were many families who were traditionally smelters of the iron-ores. Besides Jamalpur had already been made the headquarters of a railway district for engineering and traffic operations. At that time the Jamalpur railway district had within its jurisdiction 186½ miles of the railway tracks until the chord line district was opened for traffic and a re-distribution of the entire line became imperative from operational point of view. The cost of maintenance of the track within this district, compared with the others then in vogue was the heaviest up to the year 1872 due to its proximity to Ganga, which whenever in spate used to do a lot of damage to the line. The annual cost per mile was Rs. 73 whereas the same varied from Rs. 45 to Rs. 67 in the remaining eight districts.

The workshop is the largest railway Locomotive Workshop in India. The twenty-eight constituent shops had since far outgrown their original size and been remodelled to meet the modern needs of an undertrial concerns of its kind after the terrible Bihar Earthquake of 1934. For further details of the achievements of the Workshop, railway training of technical personnels, etc., the chapter of Places of Interest may be seen.

#### *Main Line (Chord Line).*

The main line of this railway enters the district eight miles south-east of Simultala, and joins the loop line at Kiul. The main line which was known in the earlier days of the railway as the chord line, is in this district marked by some steep inclines and passes through picturesque hill scenery. After leaving Simultala, it runs through a pass between the hills, and then through some deep cuttings till it reaches Jhajha. The latter station, which is situated near the hills, contains quarters for the accommodation of the Company's servants, and is changing place for engines, a second engine being generally attached to goods train to enable them to ascend the steep incline between this station and Simultala. The line then runs close to the base of the Kharagpur hills till it reaches Kiul, a large junction at which the chord and loop lines meet and from where the South Bihar Railway takes off to Gaya.

#### *South Bihar.*

The line has a length within this district of about twenty-three miles, and after leaving Kiul and Lakhisarai passes two stations, viz., Serari (ten miles from Lakhisarai) and Sheikhpura (six miles further on).

#### *Monghyr Branch Line.*

The only other line in the south of the district is the Monghyr branch line. It is six miles long connecting Jamalpur and Monghyr, and has an intermediate station at Purabsarai, one of the mahallas of Monghyr on the outskirts of the town.

The following is a list of railway stations on the Eastern Railway :—

Main line.		Loop line.		South Bihar Railways.	
Stations.	Distance from Calcutta.	Stations.	Distance from Calcutta.	Stations.	Distance from Gaya.
1	2	1	2	1	2
	Miles.		Miles.		Miles.
Simultala ..	217	Bariarpur ..	291	Kiul Junction	8
Jhajha ..	228	Jamalpur ..	297	Lakhisarai ..	79
Gidhaur ..	235				
Jamui ..	244	Dharhara ..	304	Sirari ..	70
Mananpur	253			Sheikhpura ..	64
Kiul Junction ..	262	Aphaipur ..	311	Monghyr Branch Line.	
Lakhisarai ..	263	Kajra ..	315	Station.	Distance from Jamalpur.
Mankatha ..	266			1	2
Burhee ..	272	Kiul Junction	325		Miles.
				Purabsarai ..	6
				Monghyr ..	6

*North Eastern Railway.*

The total route mileage of this railway in this district is about 130 miles. The Kanpur-Katihar line of this railway enters this district at Bachhwara and proceeding from west to east it skirts the Ganga fairly closely for some miles up to Begusarai. Thence it continues due east to Sahebpur-Kamal at a greater distance from the river, which then takes a sharp bend south before reverting to its easterly course. From Sahebpur-Kamal to Mansi the railway follows the river closely in a northerly bend, and then again assumes a south-easterly direction, roughly parallel to the river. There are short branch lines from Barauni and Sahebpur-Kamal to the Ganga at points opposite Mokameh and Monghyr the terminal being Simaria ghat and Monghyr ghat respectively.

From Mansi there is a branch line, which runs due north, through the centre of Gogri thana to Supaul in the Saharsa district and thence to Bhaptiahi. Another branch line runs from Khagaria through Narhan to Samastipur. Another line to Samastipur, which

takes off from the main line at Bachhwara, runs for five miles of its length in the Monghyr district.

A list of railway stations is given below :—

Main Line (Kanpur to Katihar).		Mansi-Bhaptiahi Branch.	
Stations.	Distance from Katihar (Miles).	Stations.	Distance from Bhaptiahi (Miles).
1	2	1	2
Pasraba .. ..	58	Mansi Junction .. ..	61
Maheshkunt .. ..	65	Badla ghat .. ..	57
Mansi .. ..	72	Dhamara ghat .. ..	53
Khagaria .. ..	77	Koparia .. ..	49
Sahebpur-Kamal .. ..	85	Makhna Bazar .. ..	45
Lakhminia .. ..	91	Mansi-Samastipur Branch.	
Lakho .. ..	98	Stations.	Distance from Samastipur (Miles).
Begusarai .. ..	102	1	2
Tilrath .. ..	107	Mansi .. ..	60
Barauni Junction .. ..	112	Khagaria .. ..	53
Barauni .. ..	113	Olapur .. ..	47
Teghra .. ..	116	Imli .. ..	42
Bachhwara .. ..	112	Salauna .. ..	38

Branch lines—

Sahebpur-Kamal-Monghyr *ghat*—4 miles.

Barauni Junction-Mokameh *ghat* (Simaria)—5 miles.

WATER COMMUNICATION.

The Ganga which intersects the district from west to east for over 70 miles is navigable throughout the year by the steamers and large country boats. Water-borne trade and commerce have been known to be flourishing since at least the days of the early British rule. This was one of the reasons why Monghyr was made one of the important administrative centres.

There used to be a regular steamer service of the I. G. N. and R. S. N. Co., Ltd. between Buxar and Calcutta touching two *ghats* of the district of Monghyr, e.g., Simaria and Monghyr from which passengers and merchandise used to be transported to the various steamer stations in Bihar, West Bengal and Assam. This steamer

service after working for about one century had closed down its services in 1957 on the ground that it had ceased to be an economic project. The steamer company claimed that owing to the creation of Pakistan and other technical reasons they were finding it difficult to run the steamer service as a business. The closure of this regular steamer service has been a great blow to both passengers and goods traffic within and without the district. The problem is still there and is being studied at a higher level. There is also a ferry steamer service all the year round from Monghyr to the opposite bank of the river Ganga connecting Monghyr *ghat* railway station on the North Eastern Railway. There is also a similar and regular steamer service at Mokameh *ghat* in the district of Patna connecting Simaria *ghat* railway station in the district of Monghyr on the North Eastern Railway. This steamer service is under the management of the North Eastern Railway. These two steamer services provide link between the Eastern and North Eastern Railways.

The little Gandak also remains navigable for large country boats almost throughout the year and this passes through the villages in the interior of the North Monghyr. Khagaria town, the subdivisional headquarters, is situated on the north bank of the river Gandak. A ferry steamer links Khagaria with Monghyr till the water is navigable at the confluence. There is another river called Tiljuga in the North Monghyr, which also remains navigable for country boats all the year round. These two rivers are very helpful specially for inland trades. There are also a number of public ferries in the district specially on the north of the river Ganga for the facility of both passengers and goods traffic.

#### CIVIL AVIATIONS.

There are three "Kachcha" landing grounds in the district, viz., one at Safiabad (Monghyr) at a distance of about four miles from Monghyr court on Monghyr-Jamalpur Road, the other is at Jamui about two and half miles from Jamui court and six miles from Jamui railway station on Jamui-Sikandra Road and the third is at Begusarai, two miles west of Begusarai court. These landing grounds are only suitable for small and light planes.

#### POST OFFICES.

The postal communication as compared with that of five decades back has considerably improved. The following quotation from the *District Gazetteer of Monghyr* published in 1909 is of interest :—

"It is of some interest to compare the present state of postal communications with what it was little over a century ago. From a table of rates of postage issued in 1795 we find that the postage from Calcutta of a letter weighing  $2\frac{1}{2}$  tolas was 4 annas, and heavier letters were charged for at an increasing rate, one rupee being charged for letters weighing  $4\frac{1}{2}$  to  $5\frac{1}{2}$  tolas. An accident

which happened to the *dak* boat in that year shows us how scanty was the correspondence under this system of rates. A *dak* boat containing the Calcutta letters despatched to Bhagalpur and Monghyr having been upset and all the letters lost, a list of both mails was published. The list was not a long one, for there were only 4 private and 4 service letters for Bhagalpur, besides a copy of the "Morning Post" and 12 magazines, while for Monghyr there were 3 private and 2 service letters and 8 magazines only.\* In striking contrast to this is the fact that in 1906-07 no less than 2,636,010 postal articles were delivered in the district, including 1,146,886 letters, 1,239,784 postcards, 118,690 packets, 110,734 newspapers and 19,916 parcels.

There are altogether 55 post offices in the district and 247 miles of postal communication. There is a Government telegraph office at Monghyr, and 8 postal-telegraphic offices have been opened at Begusarai, Gidhaur, Jamalpur, Jamui, Khagaria, Lakhisarai, Sheikhpura and Khaira. It may be added that the value of the money orders issued in 1906-07 was Rs. 16,45,470 and of those paid Rs. 21,37,013, while the total amount deposited in the Savings Bank was Rs. 5,39,345, the number of deposits being 4,585."

In the *Revised District Gazetteer of Monghyr* published in 1926 it was mentioned—

"In striking contrast to this is the fact that in 1924-25 no less than 4,309,724 postal articles were delivered in the district, including 1,198,608 letters, 2,752,299 postcards, 187,806 newspapers, 153,107 packets, and 17,904 parcels.

There are 62 post offices in the district and 171 miles of postal communications. There are 16 combined post and telegraph offices, at Monghyr, Barauni, Barbigha, Barhiya, Begusarai, Gidhaur, Jamalpur, Jamui, Jhajha, Khagaria, Lakhisarai, Basdeopur, Sheikhpura, Simultala and Teghra. The value of the money orders issued in 1924-25 was Rs. 30,72,696 and of those paid Rs. 48,87,536. The total amount deposited in the post office savings bank was Rs. 7,28,720 and the number of depositors 9,434."

According to a report from the Superintendent of Post Offices, Monghyr Division, in March, 1958 the total area of postal communication in the district is 3,980 square miles. There is one head office, 37 sub-post offices and 376 branch offices in Monghyr district. The

\* *The Good Old Days of Honourable John Company* (reprinted Calcutta, 1906), Vol. I, p. 484.

average annual number of letters received and despatched came to 5,87,605 while the figure for parcels was 9,600. The value of money orders received and paid yearly for the period 1952-53 to 1956-57 is as follows :—

				Rs.	a	p.
1952-53	..	..	..	40,27,758	1	6
1953-54	..	..	..	38,30,251	0	0
1954-55	..	..	..	1,58,56,218	3	6
1955-56	..	..	..	1,58,41,167	5	3
1956-57	..	..	..	2,63,87,415	0	3

#### TELEPHONES AND TELEGRAPHS.

There is a C. B. system of telephone with magnet at Monghyr having more than 128 mains besides extension connections. A C. B. system of telephone is also at Khagaria with over 80 mains besides extensions. At Jamalpur, Begusarai and Jamui there are P. B. Ex-System of telephones.

There are 8 telegraph offices, i.e., at Bachhwara, Barbigha, Gidhaur, Gogri, Lakhisarai, Manjhaul, Simri-Bakhtiarpur and Surajgarha; 15 combined telegraphs and telephone offices, i.e., at Monghyr, Barauni, Barahiya, Basdeopur, Begusarai, Jamalpur, Jamui, Jhajha, Khagaria, Lakhisarai, Monghyr Fort, Muskipur, Sheikhpura, Simultala and Teghra and nine phones-cum-offices, i.e., at Bakhri Bazar, Haveli Kharagpur, Bariarpur, Mallehpur, Meghaul, Maheshkunt, Sikandra, Chakai and Sonbarsa. The average annual number of telegraphs received and despatched came to 1,38,646.

There is no postal stall in the district.

#### WIRELESS STATIONS.

There are four wireless stations, one at each of the district and subdivisional headquarters, i.e., at Monghyr, Jamui, Begusarai and Khagaria.

#### REST HOUSES.

There is a Circuit House at Monghyr which is maintained by the State Government. A Dak Bungalow at Monghyr and 35 Inspection Bungalows scattered throughout the district are maintained by the District Board. There are also four Rest Houses which are maintained by the Forest Department at Bhimbandh, Gangta, Gurmaha and Dularpur.

The District Board of Monghyr maintains Inspection Bungalows at Dharahara, Balia, Surajgarha, Kharagpur, Tarapur, Sangrampur, Gangta, Lakhisarai, Girinda, Barbigha, Barahiya, Jamui, Manjhaul, Billow, Sikandra, Bishunpura, Tehiya, Mallehpur, Nawadih, Simultala, Kankoria, Chakai, Batiya, Khagaria, Dhamra, Bukhtiarpur, Gogri, Begusarai, Parihara, Bakhri, Garhpura, Cheria, Bariarpur, Teghra and Bachhwara. There are *dharmshalas* in all the towns and some of the townships. Stay there for a limited period is free.