

CHAPTER VII. COMMUNICATIONS.

HISTORY.

Roads.

The history of the communications of Saharsa district till 1954 when it was a part of Bhagalpur district has to be traced from the authoritative literature, blue-books, maps and various reports. The testimony of the older generation is also relevant. The vagaries of Kosi river, changes in her course and floods had severely affected the communications, roadways, railways and waterways. An early picture of the communications will be found in the *Final Report of the Survey and Settlement Operations in Bhagalpur District, 1902-1910* by P. W. Murphy:—

“North of the Ganges a road runs from Lattipur Factory to Madhipura *via* Kishanganj, a distance of 50 miles. But this road has been so cut up by the Kosi floods that there are now 21 gaps between Phulaut and Madhipura. The other important roads in the north are those from Madhipura to Supaul, 21 miles, Madhipura to Sonbarsa, 17 miles, Supaul *via* Partabganj to Birpur on the Nepal frontier, 37 miles, Gopalpur Ghat on the Monghyr boundary west of Supaul to Keotgaon and Purnea boundary *via* Parsarma and Singheshwar, 36 miles, Nirmali to Pratabganj, 25 miles, Supaul *via* Pipra and Pratabganj to Balua, 37 miles, Mahisi *via* Supaul and Bhaptiahi to Kobauli, 49 miles. In recent years many new bridges have been constructed over the rivers in the north of the district at the points where they are crossed by the principal roads. In Kishanganj and Bihpur *thanas* there are practically no roads and in Colgong the beds of the *nalas* which are streams in the rainy season, are used as roads in the cold weather. Many of the roads in the district were constructed during the famine of 1872-73 at the expenses of the Darbhanga estate, which was then under the management of the Court of Wards.”*

Mr. J. Byrne, I.C.S., has also made a reference to the roads in the *Bhagalpur District Gazetteer* (1911) which is as follows:—

“North of the river, there are no metalled roads. The main route is Lakhipur to Madhipura *via* Jhurki and

* *Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the Bhagalpur District, 1902-1910*, p. 8.

Phulaut, a distance of 43 miles. A continuation of this *via* Singheswarsthan, 21 miles long, leads to Supaul. From Supaul a road runs north-east *via* Pratabganj to Birpur on the frontier, a distance of 45 miles. Another runs from Supaul *via* Bhaptiahi to Kanauli which also is on the Nepal frontier. There are routes across towards Purnea district, one *via* Singheswarsthan and Dhalesori to Keotgaon; another *via* Murliganj from Singheswarsthan. But these are impassable except in the end of the cold season and the early part of the hot weather. They are largely within the area subject to the devastations of the Kosi and it is practically impossible to keep them up satisfactorily".*

But the map of Bhagalpur district in the *Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the Bhagalpur District, 1902-1910*, clearly shows that there was a metalled road from Shahpur Chaumukh to Madhepura. This was the only metalled road in Saharsa district according to the map.

It is gathered although the roads were not metalled, they were planted with a fine arboriculture. The common species of trees on either side were mangoes and banyan. The conveyances were bullock-carts, *dolis*, ponies and elephants. Elephants were in great demand owing to the marshy patches and breaks on the roads. The roads though unmetalled and dusty served their purpose quite well. This area was connected with the districts of Bhagalpur, Purnea, Darbhanga and Nepal border by good *kutchas*. Singheswarsthan temple used to be visited by thousands of people although it was connected by *kutchas* roads.

A particular feature of communications was the series of private and public *bandhs* (embankments) that used to be put up by the Government, the *zamindars* and the people from time to time to save particular areas from Kosi floods. Many of these *bandhs* used to give way if there was a severe flood. But some of the *bandhs* did their work well and gave security for a prolonged time. They were also used as roads. One such *bandh* was known as *Birbandh*. Tradition associates one Hindu King Lakshman II about the end of the twelfth century with the construction of this *bandh*. Some say it was constructed by one Bir. It is, however, not known who this Bir is. The *bandh* was an earthen embankment, some twenty to thirty feet high at places and some 50 miles long. The *bandh* ran from the foot of the outer range of the Nepal hills southwards. It was constructed at a distance of six to about eight miles from the western embankment of the Kosi and had stopped the encroachment of the river westward. The object of the embankment was to cut off the spill of the Kosi from the Tiljuga, Dhimra and other rivers

* *Bhagalpur District Gazetteer* (1911), p. 134.

in this area. *Birbandh* was noticed by Buchanan Hamilton. It was probably the dividing line between Bengal and Tirhut in the middle ages.

Railways.

The *Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the Bhagalpur District, 1902—1910* (published in 1912) mentions: "Another branch of the Bengal and North-Western Railway—the Samastipur-Pratabganj Branch enters the district at Nirmali and runs due east to Pratabganj, a distance of 24 miles. Previous to the year 1904 this line ran up to Kanwa Ghat on the Kosi river, from which place passengers were ferried in country boats belonging to the Railway Company, to Anchara Ghat on the opposite side of the river in Purnea. Anchara Ghat in turn was connected by rail with the Debiganj-Katihar Branch of the Eastern Bengal State Railway. But the portion of the line between Debiganj and Anchara Ghat was so often breached by the Kosi floods that all attempts to keep it in repair were given up in 1904, and since then the portion of the line between Pratabganj and Kanwa Ghat has also been abandoned. The line now ends at Pratabganj. In 1905 a railway was constructed from Mansi, a station on the Barauni-Katihar Branch of the Bengal and North-Western Railway to Bhaptiahi on the Samastipur-Pratabganj Branch of the same line—a distance of 60 miles, of which 40 lie in Bhagalpur. The portion of Monghyr district through which this passes is a marshy tract, and a large expenditure on bridges and high embankments was necessary to secure the safety of the line. It passes through the centre of the rice-growing tract of north Bhagalpur, viz., *thanas* Bangaon and Supaul. A large export trade in rice is carried on from this tract, and formerly all the grain had to be carted by road to Bhaptiahi and other stations. The construction of the new line has provided greatly increased facilities for this trade.

A branch line has been constructed from Saharsa Station on this line to Bodhama Ghat *via* Madhipura—a distance of 18 miles."*

The relevant portion of *Bhagalpur District Gazetteer* (1911) dealing with railway lines of this area is quoted below:—

"North of the river parallel to the Nepal Frontier this same company (i.e., the Bengal and North-Western Railway Company) has a line from Nirmali *via* Raharia, Bhaptiahi and Pratabganj to Balua. Formerly this line went on to Khanwa Ghat and a ferry boat connection was maintained with Anchara Ghat Station on the Eastern Bengal State Railway system on the Purnea side of the Kosi. Owing to the difficulties of

* *Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the Bhagalpur District, 1902—1910*, p. 7.

crossing, the through traffic was always inconsiderable and of late years, the *ghat* lines have been abandoned on each side. The bridging of the Kosi between Katarea and Kursela stations opened up the unbroken connection between Samastipur and Katihar and so drew all traffic away from the frontier route.

A cross-link from north to south between Bhaptiahi and Mansi (in Monghyr district) *via* Supaul with a branch line to Madhipura, has opened up this northern portion of the district, which was hitherto inaccessible at times. Since its opening Bhagalpur as a district enjoys exceptional railway facilities. On the north bank there are now about 120 miles of line open. In the event of a widespread failure of crops, the value of these lines north of the river could not be over-estimated. They are all on the metre gauge.**

It will so appear that this area was connected with Purnea, Monghyr, Bhagalpur and Darbhanga districts by rail-route also. It seems that there was no regular steamer or boat service connecting places of Saharsa district with those of Bhagalpur or other districts. But cargo-laden boats used to move about.

EFFECT OF KOSI FLOODS.

The *Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the Bhagalpur District, 1902-1910*, mentions: "The river Kosi lies for the most part in Purnea District and joins the Ganges near Patharghat. The changes in its course, however, have considerably affected North Bhagalpur, the whole of the eastern portion of which is liable to inundations, the usual effect of which is to increase the fertility of the soil. The whole of the north of the district bears signs of having been subject to the action of this river at some time or another. Its action in the process of soil formation has already been alluded to in describing the characteristics of Kishanganj *thana*. The deposit of silt which it leaves is particularly suited for growing rice. The positions of former channels or '*dhars*' as they are called are generally marked by deposits of sand. East of Pratabganj are to be seen the remains of villages which have been suddenly flooded by the Kosi and abandoned by their inhabitants. They are now covered to a depth of several feet with sand, rendering the houses uninhabitable and the lands unfit for cultivation.***

Major Rennel had shown the course of the river in his map in 1781 and from Dr. Buchanan Hamilton's report in 1807-13 it appears that the river was passing through almost the same direction.†

* *Bhagalpur District Gazetteer* (1911), pp. 181-82.

** *Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the Bhagalpur District, 1902-1910*, p. 4.

† For details see the revised *District Gazetteer of Purnea, 1962*.

During the last one century the course of the river has been drifting towards west and in 1850 Nathpur, a great commercial centre was washed away along with obviously several land communications. There were also floods of the other rivers creating havoc with the communications of the area.

The acute period of Kosi ravages in this district is 1905 to 1952. The Kosi attacked East Madhepura near about 1920 and floods recurred there regularly up to 1938. After 1938 it moved towards West Madhepura and Supaul subdivision. The course of Kosi turned towards Saharsa subdivision in later years. Details of the vagaries of Kosi river will be found elsewhere.

The Kosi floods were almost regular from 1938 to 1944 and used to affect various areas and particularly Dharhara police-station area. Owing to the ravages of the floods the subdivisional headquarters had to be shifted to Saharsa, a small village but in a less vulnerable area. The headquarters came back to Supaul several years after as has been mentioned elsewhere. There was a very heavy flood in 1948 affecting a very large area including Dugmara, Supaul, and Bangaon police-stations. This flood created havoc with the economy of the district as important places like Sonbarsa, Nirmali, Sourbazar, Madhepura, Singheshwar Asthan, etc., were affected. But worse floods followed in 1951 and 1952. The details have been mentioned elsewhere. As a result of these floods railway communications were breached, roads were rendered useless, culverts and bridges affected and vast tracts of land were put under a thick layer of sand. Fertile lands were rendered into wilderness infected with *kans* and *pater*. Shrubs and jungles grew where there were fertile lands. Village communications were mostly shattered and a large number of villages were kept water-logged for most of the year due to the topography, low lands and marshes. Temples, trade centres and in some cases even villages have vanished. It is no wonder that the communications were one of the largest casualties of the Kosi floods. Kosi control schemes have been covered elsewhere. It may just be repeated here that the scheme first mooted in 1953 for harnessing Kosi was taken up actively only in 1955 year and now Kosi barrage is an accomplished fact. Now Kosi floods are controlled and the vast volume of water that used to spill and create havoc is now to be utilised in irrigating in Nepal and some districts of Bihar including Saharsa.

A report of Swami Sahjanand Sarswati, a Kisan leader after a tour in Kosi-affected areas was published in the *Searchlight*, dated 14th November, 1947 as quoted in Sri Laliteshwar Mallick's book *Kosi*. A portion of his report dealing with communications is quoted below:—

"I have just returned after a week's tour in the area of North Bhagalpur ravaged by the wild Kosi, but now left by

it to take care of itself. This area of 200 to 300 square miles..... lies on the border of Nepal territory with its population of two lacs of people, with lacs of acres of its best land lying waste and fallow and covered with jungles, with no railways and telegraph offices, with no roads worth the name, with a few post offices in name only as no letter from outside will reach there generally within less a week..... the nearest railway station being at not less than 25 miles' distance, no leaders and officers dare go there unless they are made to. The bullock-cart is only conveyance in the absence of pony or an elephant. They say, the road to hell is all torture. I don't know but I am sure it is not worse than the one that exists there, with deep ditches at short intervals and full of mud and stagnant water. They are impassable even for a man, let alone a cart."*

This description is not far from truth. In 1940 in connection with the Waste Land Reclamation Scheme the Editor of this Gazetteer had to visit Supaul area several times. The journey from Mansi to Supaul had to be done by railway, boat, trolley and on foot. It was a very difficult problem to transport the tractors and the heavy machineries because there were hardly proper roads. Saharsa, the headquarters of the sub-district did not even have one mile of metalled road. It was also observed that the arboriculture on the roadsides and many of the famous mango orchards of the district had been completely uprooted. Within a mile of Supaul the *kans* and *pater* jungles were the abode of hundreds of deer, wild boars, etc. It was extremely difficult to carry out proper repairs to the roads. Road materials had to be brought from outside and the Kosi-ridden villages hardly provided the proper labour force.

The problems of the communications could hardly be met by the Local Boards of Madhepura and Supaul. The headquarters of the district was at Bhagalpur and there were no activities of the Public Works Department in this district before 1947, so far as roads were concerned. It is only after Saharsa was created into a sub-district, the Saharsa District Board was constituted in 1948 and some improvement was possible.

It may be pointed out that the Kosi flood had one good effect. During the rainy season when the area was flooded, the communications from Murliganj to Madhepura or other places became very easy by boat and commodities for trade and jute, bamboos and food-grains were transported from Murliganj to Sahebganj and other places by boat. The cost on water transport was very low and so trade developed in the areas in those months. But after the rainy season or when the flood was over the communication was miserable.

* As quoted in the book *Kosi* by Laliteshwar Mallick, pp. 144-45.

A man had to cross seven *dhars* (viz., Benga, Baluaha, Loran, Chauri, Budhma, Manikpur and Gumti) while going to Madhepura from Murliganj.

PRESENT COMMUNICATIONS.

Roads.

The roads may now be classified as Public Works Department roads, District Board roads and village roads. The statistics of village roads managed by Gram Panchayats are not available, but from our investigation it was found that there are only a few village roads of worth the name. From communication point of view they are of little value as during the rainy season almost all the village roads become unserviceable.

District Board roads.—The Bhagalpur District Board was not in a position to improve the roads of this area and the communication by road was deplorable. There was a great demand for a separate District Board for this area. As a result the Saharsa District Board was constituted in 1948 and since then attempts have been made to improve the roads under its management. The total number of the District Board roads is 91. The total length of the metalled and the unmetalled roads is about 14 and 812 miles respectively. Only two roads, one in Supaul town and the other road from Madhepura to Jemra are metalled and the rest are *kutchha*. Out of the abovementioned *kutchha* roads the following roads have practically no trace because they fall within the two Kosi embankments and are badly affected by the Kosi floods:—

Name of the roads.		Mileage.
1. Siami to Kamalpur	.. ..	7
2. Jhitki to Bhabtiahi	.. ..	11
3. Supaul to Jhitki ..	.. ..	19
4. Kunauli to Pachpararia	.. ..	10
5. Khokhnaha to Marauna	.. ..	10
6. Nirmali to Tharbhitta	.. ..	7
7. Raharia to Chandpirar	.. ..	8
8. Kunauli to Narpatpatti	.. ..	4
9. Dagmara to Narpatpatti	.. ..	4
	Total ..	80

The roads are not liable to be improved in the circumstances as they, being within the two Kosi embankments, are exposed to Kosi flood every year.

There are only a few good District Board roads from communication point of view. They are as follows:—

- (1) *Gopalpurghat to Chakmaka*.—This road connects Saharsa with Darbhanga and Purnea. It is a *kutcha* road and is 40 miles long. It is a fair-weather road and jeepable. At present there is no bus service (May, 1963) on this road.
- (2) *Mahisi to Kunauli*.—It is a 50-mile long *kutcha* road which runs up to Nepal border (at Kunauli). It is a jeepable and a fair-weather road but no bus service plies on this road.
- (3) *Madhepura to Mora*.—It is an eighteen-mile long *kutcha* road connecting Sonbarsa and Alamnagar police-stations with Madhepura. The road is discontinued at three places, viz., Sukhasandhar (one mile from Madhepura), Narahia Dhar (14 miles from Madhepura) and Boarighat (16 miles from Madhepura). In the rainy season this road becomes unserviceable. It is a fair-weather road but without any bus service.
- (4) *Supaul to Singheshwar Asthan*.—It is about 17 miles long *kutcha* road. Singheshwar Asthan is an important religious place where thousands collect on particular festivals. It is also a trading centre. In the months of February and March a big cattle fair lasting for about a fortnight is held here every year. There is a bus service.
- (5) *Murliganj to Behariganj*.—Both Murliganj and Behariganj are centres for jute trade and the road linking them is of importance. It is also a fair-weather road. There is no bus service.

From communication point of view the District Board roads serve little purpose as most of them are crossed by many *dhars* (portions criss-crossed by streams) and in rainy season become unserviceable.

The total number of the flood-damaged roads is 25 and for their improvement as well as for repairing of the damaged buildings the Saharsa District Board moved the Government, vide its letter no. 2466, dated 30th October, 1961, for allotment of fund amounting to Rs. 99,300. The matter is under correspondence and due to paucity of its own fund the improvement of the District Board roads has not been taken.

The expenditure of the District Board over the improvement of the roads for the last four years is as follows:—

Year.				Amount in rupees.
1958-59	..	..	..	2,89,067
1959-60	..	..	..	3,02,773
1960-61	..	..	..	2,16,867
1961-62	..	..	..	2,89,506

The District Board roads have a great importance for the economy of the district. But for their very bad condition they have not been playing a vital role. A large number of pockets in the district remain difficult of access and ponies and bullock-carts are the only possible conveyances. Elephants have become scarce. *Dolis* are disappearing because of want of carriers who are very expensive now. People usually carry their village produce as headload for short distances. Many of the primary and secondary markets have remained undeveloped. The impact has been discussed elsewhere.

As it was found that the resources of the District Board were not adequate to improve the existing roadways, a large number of roads were taken over by the Public Works Department. The chart below shows the road-lengths so far made over by the District Board to the Public Works Department with dates:—

Name of the roads transferred to Public Works Department.	Length.			Date when the road was taken over by P. W. D.
	Mile.	Furlong.	Yard.	
1. District Board road nos. 15 and 16, Bihpur to Birpur.	90	1	4	4th January 1951.
2. Road nos. M-3 and M-6, Madhepura to Murliganj.	14	2	0	4th January 1951.
3. Road no. 20, Supaul to Pipra ..	13	0	0	29th July 1954.
4. Road from Railway approach road near Thakurbari to District Board compound (i. e., a portion of approach road to Government colony).	1	2	110	3rd May 1954.
5. Road no. 17, Saharsa to Madhepura	13	0	0	25th April 1956.
6. Portion of road nos. 17 and 21, Saharsa-Bangaon and Supaul Road.	23	7	0	25th April 1956.
7. Road no. 24, Simrahi to Pratapgauj	8	0	0	25th April 1956.
8. Road nos. 17 and 15, Baijnathpur to Sourbazar.	6	0	0	25th April 1956.
9. Road no. M-25, under Union Committee, Madhepura.	1	4	0	3rd November 1956.

Name of the roads transferred to Public Works Department.	Length.		Date when the road was taken over by P. W. D.
	Mile.	Fu long. Yards.	
10. Road no. S-11, Pipra to Daparkha	8	0	0 12th July 1958.
11. Portion of road nos. M-15 and M-1, Sourbazar to Sonbarsa.	12	0	8½ 8th October 1958.
12. Road no. M-39, Behariganj to Kishanganj.	4	2	0 1st September 1959.
13. Road no. M-12, Kishanganj to Chilaunighat, first and a portion of second mile of the road from Kishanganj only.	1	6	0 1st September 1959.
14. Road no. 21, Supaul to Kishanpur	8	0	0 1st September 1959.
15. Road no. M-10, Sourbazar to Pathar-ghat.	6	0	0 1st September 1959.
16. Road no. M-10, Kishanganj to Phulaut.	25	0	0 3rd August 1960.
17. Road no. M-12, Kishanganj to Chilaunighat.	34	0	0 3rd August 1960.
18. Road no. S-13, Bishanpur to Jadia	1	0	0 3rd August 1960.

Roads under Public Works Department.—In this district the total mileage of metalled roads under Public Works Department up to May, 1963 is only 147 miles out of which 132 miles of roads were metalled during the First Five-Year Plan period and the rest during the Second Five-Year Plan period. The statement given below shows the details of the roads taken up and completed during the First and Second Five-Year Plans and also the roads to be taken up during the Third Five-Year Plan:—

Name of the road.	Total mileage.	Mileage of the road completed.	Mileage of road under improvement.
<i>First Five-Year Plan.</i>			
1. Bihpur-Birpur Road (1st to 8 miles fall under Bhagalpur district).	80	57	13
2. Madhepura-Murliganj Road	14½	13½	
3. Supaul-Pipra Road	13	10	3
4. Saharsa New Government Colony Road	6½	6½	
5. Saharsa-Madhepura Road	14	12	2

Name of the road.	Total mileage.	Mileage of the road completed.	Mileage of road under improvement.
6. Saharsa-Supaul Road	24½	21	3½
7. Baijnathpur-Sourbazar Road	5½	5½	..
8. Simrahi-Pratapganj Road	8	6½	1½
<i>Second Five-Year Plan.</i>			
1. Sourbazar-Sonbarsa Raj Road	13	11	2
2. Pipra-Tribeniganj Road	6½	..	6½
3. Pratapganj-Narpatganj Road	9½	..	9½
4. Kishanganj-Behariganj Road	6	..	6
5. Supaul-Kishanpur Road	9	2	7
6. Sourbazar-Patharghat Road	7	2	5
7. Mirganj-Jadia Road	14	..	14
8. Kishanganj-Chausa Road	14	..	14
9. Bhagwanpur to Bhiinnagar (a part of Bihpur Birpur Road).	5½	..	..
<i>Third Five-Year Plan.</i>			
1. Bangaon to Mahisi (up to Kosi embankment)	4½	..	..
2. Panchgachhia to Naulhatta Road	9	..	..
3. Parsarna to Bakaur	4½	..	..
4. Tribeniganj Balua Road <i>via</i> Jadia	32	..	..
5. Karma to Alamnagar Road	3 miles 2,100 feet.	..	..
6. Chausa to Laulagaon-Bijoyghat Road	5	..	..
7. Simri-Bakhtiarpur to Sonbarsa Raj Road	8 miles 50 feet.	..	..
<i>Roads to be constructed under Central Road Fund.</i>			
1. Singheshwar Asthan to Supa 1 Road	18	..	..
2. Tribeniganj to Purnea Border (to be improved from Jadia to Khajuri).	6	..	..
3. Simrahi to Bhattiahi	8	..	..

A short description of the roads completed or taken up during the First and Second Five-Year Plans is given below:—

- (1) *Bihpur-Birpur Road* starts from Bihpur Bazar in the district of Bhagalpur and terminates at the 79th mile where it meets the Kosi Eastern Embankment in Saharsa district. A portion of the road from the 79th to 87th mile has now fallen within the two Kosi embankments. The entire length of the road is, therefore, 87 miles only out of which the actual length of the portion of road under Saharsa district is 72 miles, starting from 8th mile (from Bihpur), i.e., near about the village Phulaut. The portion up to the 8th mile falls in Bhagalpur district. Out of the entire length only 57 miles of road had been metalled so far and 13 miles of road is under improvement. The rest is *kutchha*. The construction of the culverts is complete but the construction of the major bridges has not yet been completed. This road runs through the entire length of this district, north to south. It passes through the important towns and markets of this district such as Kishanganj, Madhepura, Singheshwar Asthan, Pipra, Simrahi, Karzain, etc. When completed it will be one of the most important artery of the district.
- (2) *Madhepura-Murliganj Road* is nearly 15 miles long. It starts from a point on the Bihpur-Birpur Road at Madhepura town and terminates in Murliganj Bazar at a point from where the Purnea link road starts. Murliganj is an important centre for jute trade and is connected with Madhepura by this road. This road is a part of the road connecting Saharsa, the district headquarters, with Purnea town. Metalling and black-topping of the entire road excepting major *dhars* (crossings by river) has been completed.
- (3) *Supaul-Pipra Road* starts from Supaul town where Saharsa-Supaul Road ends. It runs up to Pipra Bazar which is on the Bihpur-Birpur Road. It also serves as a by-pass for going to Ganpatganj Bazar which is connected by a District Board road which starts from a point on this road. It is 13 miles long and has been metalled and partly black-topped. There are four major streams crossing the road rendering it unserviceable during the rainy season.
- (4) *Saharsa New Government Colony Road* is metalled and has $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles of length. The road runs up to the Government new colony where the quarters for

ministerial staff have been built. The road is within the Saharsa Notified Area. This is an important road for Saharsa town.

- (5) *Saharsa-Madhepura Road* connects Saharsa, the district headquarters, with Madhepura town. It starts where Saharsa-Supaul Road begins and ends on the Bihpur-Birpur Road at Madhepura town. The length of the road is about 14 miles out of which the length of 12 miles of road had been metalled. The construction of the bridges over the major streams is in progress. It passes through Baijnathpur and Methai Bazar.
- (6) *Saharsa-Supaul Road* connects Saharsa with Supaul town. It begins from the starting point of Saharsa-Madhepura Road and ends at a point where Supaul-Pipra road starts. The total length of the road is 24.5 miles out of which 21 miles of road had been metalled and black-topped and the remaining 3 miles of road is under improvement. Three important roads coming from Darbhanga district meet this road at different places, viz., one coming from Gandaul meets this road near Bangaon, another coming from Partaha meets this road near Panchagachhia, *via* Nauhatta and the third road coming from Gopalpur bifurcates into two parts—one part meeting this road near Parsarma and the other part at Supaul.
- (7) *Baijnathpur-Sourbazar Road* starts from Baijnathpur Bazar from a point on the Saharsa-Madhepura Road and ends at Sourbazar from where the Sourbazar-Sonbarsa Raj Road starts. The length of the road is nearly 5.5 miles and the entire road has been metalled.
- (8) *Simrahi-Pratapganj Road* connects Simrahi with Pratapganj. It starts from Simrahi Bazar on the Bihpur-Birpur Road and terminates in Pratapganj Bazar from where Pratapganj-Narpatganj Road starts. In Pratapganj Bazar two other important roads—one coming from Tribeniganj Bazar and the other from Chhatapur meet this road. The length of the road is 8 miles out of which only $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles of road had been metalled.
- (9) *Sourbazar-Sonbarsa Road* starts from the terminating point of Baijnathpur-Sourbazar Road at Sourbazar and ends on the northern bank of river Tilway, about two miles south-east of Sonbarsa Raj Bazar where Maheshkhunt-Sonbarsa Raj Road meets. Two roads—one coming from Simri-Bakhtiarpur and other from Madhepura meet this road at two places. The length of this road is nearly 13 miles out of which 11 miles have been metalled.

- (10) *Pipra-Tribeniganj Road* starts from Pipra Bazar, on the Bihpur-Birpur Road and terminates at Tribeniganj Bazar. It is, in fact, a part of the old Pipra-Daparkha Road. The length of the road is nearly 6.5 miles and is under improvement.
- (11) *Pratapganj-Narpatganj Road* starts from the terminating point of Simrahi-Pratapganj Road in Pratapganj Bazar and terminates on the border line of Saharsa and Purnea district and from where the portion of the road in the Purnea district starts and goes up to Narpatganj Bazar. At Narpatganj Bazar Forbesganj-Narpatganj Road meets this road. The length of the road is about $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles and is under improvement.
- (12) *Kishanganj-Behariganj Road* starts from the Bihpur-Birpur Road near the village Kishanganj and terminates at Behariganj. It passes through the important villages namely, Gamai, Gorpara and Bishanpur. The total length of the road is nearly six miles and is under improvement.
- (13) *Supaul-Kishanpur Road* starts from Saharsa-Supaul Road at Supaul and ends at Kishanpur. The road is crossed by a *dhar*, namely, Gajua. The length of the road is nearly 9 miles out of which 2 miles of road had been metalled.
- (14) *Sourbazar-Patharghat Road* starts from the 5th mile of Baijnathpur-Sourbazar Road and terminates at Patharghat. It passes through the villages Sour, Silet, Kamp and Satalpatti. The length of the road is nearly 7 miles out of which 2 miles of the road was metalled.
- (15) *Mirganj-Jadia Road* begins from Mirganj at 12th mile of Madhepura-Murliganj Road and ends at Jadia. It passes through Mirganj, Rahta, Lakshmipur, Kumar-khand and Jadia villages. The total length of the road is 14 miles and is under improvement.
- (16) *Kishanganj-Chausa Road* takes off from the third furlong of the first mile of the Kishanganj-Behariganj Road at Kishanganj and terminates at Chausa. It passes through the villages, namely, Nabtota, Dubli, Jogirar, Bagma, Kalasan and Chausa. The length of the road is 14 miles and it is under improvement.
- (17) *Bhagwanpur-Bhimnagar Road*, $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles in length, is a part of Bihpur-Birpur Road and starts at the 80th mile of the Bihpur-Birpur Road near village Bhagwanpur. It is a *kutch*a road and it has not been taken up for improvement (May, 1963).

All the roads except Baijnathpur-Sourbazar Road ($5\frac{1}{2}$ miles in length) as mentioned above are fair-weather roads and during the rainy season they are not serviceable. This year (i.e., 1963) Pipra-Tribeniganj Road is expected to be metalled and if done, two important places, namely, Tribeniganj and Chhatapur will be connected with Supaul town by road throughout the year. The reason for the roads being unserviceable during rains is mainly the *dhars* which cross most of the roads are filled up with water rendering them unserviceable. Without bridges over them they cannot be serviceable throughout the year.

During the Third Five-Year Plan the roads, namely, Batigaon to Mahisi ($4\frac{1}{2}$ miles), Panchgachhia to Nawhatta (9 miles), Parsarna to Bakaur ($4\frac{1}{2}$ miles), Tribeniganj to Balua *via* Jadia (32 miles), Karma to Alamnagar (3 miles, 2,100 feet), Chausa to Laulagaon-Bijoyghat (5 miles), are to be metalled by the Public Works Department. Simri-Bakhtiarpur to Sanbarsa Raj Road whose length is 8 miles, 50 feet, falls entirely (except about half a mile in Saharsa district) in Monghyr district and so the metalling of this road is not to be done by the Public Works Office, Saharsa. The three roads, namely, Singheshwar Asthan to Supaul Road (18 miles), Tribeniganj to Purnea Border Road (to be improved from Jadia to Khajuri—a distance of 6 miles only) and Simrahi to Bhaptiahi (8 miles) are to be metalled under the scheme of Central Road Fund.

Expenditure.—The expenditure of the Public Works Department on the improvement of roads and construction of culverts and bridges thereon in this district has been shown in the table below:—

Serial no.	Name of the road or culvert improved or constructed.	Total expenditure (in rupees).
1	Bihpur Birpur Road (improvement from 8th to 80th mile, i. e., 72 miles of road).	12,57,372
2	Improvement to Madhepura-Murliganj Road ($14\frac{1}{2}$ miles) ..	10,21,396
3	Improvement to Supaul-Pipra Road (13 miles)	10,09,133
4	Improvement to Saharsa-Madhepura Road (14 miles) ..	18,19,012
5	Improvement to Saharsa-Supaul Road ($24\frac{1}{2}$ miles) ..	20,96,135
6	Improvement to Sourbazar-Sonbarsa Raj Road (13 miles) ..	11,58,417
7	Improvement to Simrahi-Pratapganj Road (8 miles) ..	6,11,887
8	Improvement to Pipra-Triboniganj Road ($6\frac{1}{2}$ miles) ..	5,93,630
9	Improvement to Pratapganj-Narpatganj Road ($9\frac{1}{2}$ miles) ..	1,61,616
10	Improvement to Bihpur-Birpur Road, from 80th mile to Bhitnagar, i. e., 7 miles only.	82,263
11	Improvement to Mirganj-Jadia Road (14 miles) ..	2,64,079

Serial no.	Name of the road or culvert improved or constructed.	Total expenditure (in rupees).
12	Improvement to Bihpur-Birpur Road, from 10th to 15th mile, i. e., 6 miles only.	3,20,949
13	Improvement to Kishanganj-Chausa Road (14 miles) ..	3,72,266
14	Improvement to Bihpur-Birpur Road, from 62nd to 68th mile, i. e., 7 miles.	3,19,450
15	Cost of bridges and culverts over Bihpur-Birpur Road ..	13,86,337
<i>Roads under Jute-growing Area.</i>		
16	Improvement to Simrahi-Bhagwanpur Road (11 miles) ..	3,73,794
17	Improvement to Sourbazar to Patharghat Road (7 miles) ..	2,52,451
18	Improvement to Supaul-Kishanpur Road (9 miles) ..	2,20,937
19	Improvement to Kishanganj-Behariganj Road (6 miles) ..	2,40,267
<i>Inter-district Roads.</i>		
20	Metalling and black-topping of Bihpur-Birpur Road (72 miles)	26,31,189
21	Metalling and black-topping of Madhepura-Murliganj Road (14½ miles).	9,00,744

The term improvement means metalling of the road and this meaning of the term has been retained throughout the discussion on roads under Public Works Department.

Roads under Notified Area Committees.—The roads under the management of Notified Area Committees in this district are as follows:—

Name of the Notified Area Committee.	Metalled road.	Kutcha road.
1. Saharsa Notified Area Committee ..	1½	2
2. Murliganj Notified Area Committee ..	2	8
3. Supaul Notified Area Committee ..	1	16
4. Madhepura Notified Area Committee ..	Nil	2,000 feet.
5. Nirmali Notified Area Committee ..	Nil	18,184 feet.

The condition of the roads under the Notified Area Committees is not satisfactory and the details have been given in the chapter Local Self-Government.

There is no National or State highway passing through the district.

IMPACT OF COMMUNICATIONS ON ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL LIFE OF THE PEOPLE.

The communication facilities in this district are very miserable. There is no proper road yet of some length that is serviceable for the whole year. Almost all the roads are fair-weather roads and

during the rainy season, they become unserviceable. The railway, as will be shown later on, also does not serve the district adequately. There is also no river navigable for the whole year. Hence, from communication point of view this district lags far behind the other districts of Bihar. The chart given below shows the distance of different important places of this district by road as well as their distance from the nearest railway station:—

Polymetrical Table for Saharsa District (By road, viz., shortest route).

Serial no.	Name of the chief public places.	Madhepura.	Saharsa.	Bangaon.	Dharhara.	Nauhatta.	Singh-eshwar.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Madhepura (b)	0	14	20	28	20	4
2	Saharsa (a) ..	14	..	6	14	18	17
3	Bangaon ..	20	6	0	8	13	22
4	Dharhara ..	28	14	8	..	6	30
5	Nauhatta ..	20	18	13	6	..	25
6	Singheshwar ..	4	17	22	30	25	..
7	Sour ..	11	8	13	21	24	18
8	Sonbarsa ..	19	18	18	26	35	29
9	Kishanganj ..	21	31	37	45	41	25
10	Alamnagar ..	28	33	39	47	48	32
11	Behariganj ..	25	39	46	54	47	30
12	Murliganj ..	14	28	34	42	34	18
13	Supaul (b) ..	23	24	18	16	12	17
14	Bhimnagar ..	60	64	57	55	50	46
15	Pratapganj ..	36	43	49	44	39	32
16	Nirmali ..	35	37	32	39	34	30
17	Kishanpur ..	22	31	26	23	18	20
18	Chhatapur ..	35	49	55	63	68	31
19	Tribeniganj ..	25	31	37	45	34	20
20	Pipra ..	17	25	31	39	23	12
21	Raghopur ..	26	36	42	36	31	22
22	Simrahi ..	27	37	43	37	32	23

(a) District Headquarters.

(b) Subdivision.

Serial no.	Name of the chief public places.	1	2	9	10	11	12	13	14
1	Madhepura (b)	11	19	21	28	28	28	28	14
2	Saharsa (a)	8	18	31	33	39	39	28	28
3	Banraon ..	13	18	37	35	46	46	34	34
4	Dharhara ..	21	26	45	47	54	54	42	42
5	Nauhatta ..	24	35	41	48	47	47	34	34
6	Singheshwar	18	29	25	32	30	30	18	18
7	Sour ..	..	11	25	26	30	30	25	25
8	Sonbarsa ..	11	..	18	18	28	28	30	30
9	Kishanganj ..	25	18	..	9	5	..	17	17
10	Alamnagar	26	16	9	9	..	..	26	26
11	Behariganj	30	28	5	9	..	..	12	12
12	Murtiganj ..	30	30	17	26	12	12	..	..
13	Supaul (b) ..	27	37	47	51	48	48	35	35
14	Bhimnagar	61	69	60	68	66	66	42	42
15	Pratapganj	47	68	57	66	52	52	51	51
16	Nirmali ..	45	55	62	65	60	60	51	51
17	Kishanpur	28	49	45	54	40	40	33	33
18	Chhatapur ..	55	66	39	48	34	34	29	29
19	Tribeniganj	38	49	39	48	34	34	23	23
20	Pipra ..	26	37	38	47	43	43	30	30
21	Raghopur ..	38	49	47	56	47	47	36	36
22	Simrahi ..	39	50	48	57	48	48	37	37

(a) District Headquarters.
(b) Subdivision.

Serial no.	Name of the chief public places.	Supaul.	Bhim-nagar.	Pratap-ganj.	Nirmali.	Kishan-pur.	Chhatrapur.
1	Madhepura (b)	23	50	36	35	22	35
2	Saharsa (a)	24	64	43	37	31	49
3	Bangson	18	57	49	32	25	55
4	Dharhara	15	55	44	39	23	63
5	Nanhatta	12	50	39	34	18	68
6	Singheshwar	17	16	32	30	20	37
7	Sour	27	61	44	45	38	55
8	Sonbarsa	37	69	55	56	49	66
9	Kishanganj	47	60	57	52	45	39
10	Alamnagar	51	68	66	65	54	48
11	Behariganj	48	56	52	60	40	34
12	Murhiganj	35	42	34	51	38	29
13	Supaul (b)	..	48	28	13	8	35
14	Bhimnagar	48	..	22	32	33	21
15	Pratapganj	28	22	..	26	22	9
16	Nirmali	13	32	26	..	13	35
17	Kishanpur	8	33	22	13	..	31
18	Chhatrapur	35	21	9	35	31	..
19	Tribeniganj	20	35	15	33	19	14
20	Pipra	13	30	18	14	14	21
21	Kaghopur	22	20	9	21	15	16
22	Simrahi	23	19	8	20	16	15

(a) District Headquarters.
(b) Subdivision.

Serial no.	Name of the chief public places.	Tribeni-ganj.	Pipra.	Raghopur.	Simrahi.	Distance from the nearest railway station.
1	Madhepura (b)	25	17	26	30	0
2	Saharsa (a)	31	25	36	37	0
3	Bangaon ..	37	31	42	43	6
4	Dharhara ..	45	39	36	37	14
5	Naubatia ..	34	23	31	32	9
6	Singheshwar	20	12	22	23	4
7	Sour ..	38	26	38	39	4
8	Sonbarsa ..	49	37	49	50	12
9	Kishanganj..	39	38	47	48	5
10	Alamnagar	48	47	56	57	13
11	Behariganj	34	43	47	48	0
12	Murliganj ..	23	30	36	37	1½
13	Supaul (b)	20	13	22	23	0
14	Bhimnagar	33	30	20	19	32
15	Pratapganj	15	18	9	8	28
16	Nirmali ..	33	14	21	20	0
17	Kishanpur	19	14	15	16	8
18	Chhatapur	14	21	16	15	29
19	Tribeniganj	..	7	16	17	20
20	Pipra ..	7	..	12	13	18
21	Raghopur ..	16	12	..	1	22
22	Simrahi ..	17	13	1	..	20

(a) District Headquarters.
(b) Subdivision.

From the chart it appears that Bhimnagar, Chhatapur, Pratapganj, Raghapur, Simrahi, Tribeniganj, Dharhara, Pipra and Alamnagar are at a distance of more than 12 miles and less than thirty-three miles from their nearest railway stations respectively. The approach roads from the villages to the railway stations in most cases are *kutch*a and they are unserviceable during the rainy season. For want of communications the cultivators have to sell their produce at a very low price in the neighbouring market. Ghee, milk, fish and foodgrains of this area have to be sold cheap.

Mahisi and Chandrain in Sadar subdivision, Tribeniganj, Chhatapur and Maurna villages in Supaul subdivision are practically inaccessible during the rainy season. Nirmali an important trade centre for jute and foodgrains has no direct communication. It is connected by rail *via* Mansi, Barauni, Samastipur and Sakri (in Darbhanga district) and by road *via* Kosi barrage. Nirmali is only about 16 miles from Supaul town but due to bad communication one has to cover about 100 miles by railway to reach Nirmali. It is due to this fact that the trade of Nirmali is more with Darbhanga district and not with Saharsa district.

Litigation is very costly to the people of Nirmali, Pratapganj, Chhatapur and other places which are distantly connected with their subdivisional towns.

Crimes like dacoity or murder in the inaccessible villages often escape detection. Post-mortem of bodies several days after is not satisfactory for crime investigation. Bad communication is a great hurdle in the way of the administration of justice.

A good number of villages of Sadar and Supaul subdivisions numbering about 300 have fallen within the two Kosi embankments where every year flood occurs and affects the economy of the people. The worst affected blocks in this district whose villages are within the two embankments are Mahisi and Nawahatta, in Sadar subdivision and Nirmali, Kishanpur, Marauna, Supaul and Birpur in Supaul subdivision.

VEHICLES AND CONVEYANCES.

The importance of bullock-carts in the district is the same as it was a century ago. It is only bullock-carts that can be of some help in the rainy season. The actual number of bullock-carts is not available but it is estimated that it will be over ten thousand. In the jute-growing areas particularly on the Murliganj side bullock-carts are the only vehicle for bringing jute from the neighbouring villages to Murliganj Railway Station.

The number of bicycles is increasing but at a very slow speed. Rickshaws have recently been in use in Saharsa, Madhepura and Supaul towns only. Nirmali and Murliganj towns have no rickshaws (May, 1963) obviously due to the *kutch*a roads.

Another mode of conveyance is the two-wheeled vehicle drawn by one horse called *tamtam*. It is generally found in Saharsa, Supaul and Madhepura towns only. But the number as appears from local investigation is decreasing. The four-wheeled horse-drawn carriage is also declining. Previously the *zamindars* had broughams, phaetons and fine horses. *Dolis* and *palkis* are also on the decline. Elephants were very useful before and the *zamindars* and big cultivators had a large number of them. Now with the abolition of *zamindari*s and the introduction of mechanical vehicles, elephants have rapidly declined. There are a few private cars and jeeps besides passenger buses and carrier trucks. The use of horses has declined.

The expansion of roads particularly of the metalled roads has been not very remarkable. Only 147 miles of roads are metalled. The number of trucks, buses, cars, jeeps, etc., which received permits is as follows:—

Year.	Jeep.	Car.	Bus.	Truck.	Tractor.	Van.	Motor cycle.	Auto-rickshaw.	Total.
1958-59 ..	72	25	4	54	13	6	28	..	202
1959-60 ..	75	33	6	40	13	3	30	1	201
1960-61 ..	43	11	3	36	1	2	16	..	112
1961-62 ..	38	11	3	22	2	2	9	..	87
1962-63 ..	68	10	3	53	8	2	19	..	163

The above figures show that the total number of the vehicles as mentioned above has decreased in 1962-63 in comparison with that of 1958-59 and 1959-60.

The roads in this district have not been nationalised and only private buses ply on them. The truck traffic is not heavy as most of the roads in the district do not permit this. The names of the roads on which private buses ply are given below:—

Serial no.	Name of the route.	Number of bus services.
1	Saharsa Birpur <i>via</i> Madhepura	2
2	Saharsa-Birpur <i>via</i> Supaul	2
3	Saharsa-Bhimnagar <i>via</i> Supaul	2
4	Saharsa-Karjain <i>via</i> Madhepura	1
5	Saharsa-Paulaut <i>via</i> Madhepura	1
6	Madhepura-Birpur <i>via</i> Pipra	1
7	Madhepura-Karjain	1
8	Madhepura-Tribeniganj	1
9	Supaul-Karjain <i>via</i> Raghapur	1
10	Supaul-Birpur	1
11	Supaul-Tribeniganj	3
12	Supaul Forbesganj <i>via</i> Birpur	1
13	Simrahi-Forbesganj	1

All the bus routes as mentioned are fair-weather routes.

RAILWAYS.

The early history of railways in this district has been discussed separately and hence here only the present structure is given.

The total length of the North-Eastern Railway serving this district is only about 79 kilometres.

The names of the railway stations falling within this district are Sonbarsa Kachery, Saharsa Junction, Panchgachhia, Parsarma, Supaul, Baijnathpur, Methai, Dauram-Madhepura, Budhma, Murliganj, Behariganj and Nirmali.

A branch line of North-Eastern Railway from Mansi runs up to Supaul entering this district at Sonbarsa Kachery Station and passing through Saharsa Junction, Panchgachhia and Parsarma stations. The distance between Sonbarsa Kachery Station and Supaul Station is only 37 kilometres. A branch line of the North-Eastern Railway from Saharsa Railway Station runs up to Purnea Junction passing through Baijnathpur, Methai, Dawram Madhepura, Budhma and Murliganj railway stations of this district. The distance of Saharsa to Murliganj is only 42 kilometres while the distance of Saharsa Junction from Purnea Junction is 99 kilometres. Another branch line of the North-Eastern Railway from Banmankhi Junction (in Purnea section) comes to Behariganj. This line is in Purnea district and only ends at Behariganj Station which is in Saharsa district.

There is another branch line of the North-Eastern Railway from Sakri (in Darbhanga district) which terminates at Nirmali. The distance of Nirmali from Sakri is 51 miles. The entire railway line except one or two miles, is within Darbhanga district.

The important stations for trade purpose are Nirmali, Murliganj, Behariganj, Supaul, Madhepura and Saharsa. The volume of traffic moved and earnings of important railway stations have been given in the chart at the end of the chapter.

There has been no expansion in the railway line in this district. On the contrary the line connecting Nirmali with Supaul and Pratapganj, Kanwa Ghat, etc., has been dismantled due to Kosi floods as discussed elsewhere. A line from Madhepura to Behariganj will be very beneficial. Now one has to go to Banmankhi Junction and then to Behariganj by railway.

The role of railway in the economic life of the district is of great significance. As the roads in the district do not encourage plying of heavy trucks, railway is the only means of communications for trade purpose in this district. The bulk of jute, foodgrains, fish, etc., move out by the railway only.

There is no rail-road communication so far.

Regarding goods and parcel traffic of important railway stations statistics have been given in the chapter on 'Banking, Trade and Commerce' and hence here only passenger traffic needs to be mentioned.

1. Murliganj Railway Station.

Month.	1961.		1962.	
	Total number of tickets sold.	Total earnings.	Total number of tickets sold.	Total earnings.
January	30,958	20,667	21,219	18,878
February	22,257	18,583	19,963	16,083
March	22,820	18,170	24,863	19,734
April	20,499	15,405	19,764	12,409
May	20,188	18,431	23,408	19,548
June	18,222	13,949	19,438	17,550
July	18,943	14,132	17,529	15,208
August	18,858	13,018	13,695	11,230
September	23,006	19,870	17,579	13,143
October	22,089	15,254	18,440	16,749
November	22,916	17,324	18,035	15,451
December	18,387	15,611	13,847	12,034

2. Budhma Railway Station.

Month.	1960.		1961.		1962.	
	Total number of passengers.	Total number of earnings.	Total number of passengers.	Total number of earnings.	Total number of passengers.	Total number of earnings.
January	3,671	3,354.43	10,567	5,809.55	7,032	3,331.56
February	7,546½	4,413.99	9,182	5,715.26	6,853	3,786.57
March	6,188	3,620.00	7,910½	4,196.36	7,524½	4,219.14
April	6,593	3,759.07	7,715	4,288.21	7,075	2,908.92
May	6,625	2,753.65	6,550	3,189.49	6,619	4,367.00
June	4,451	1,939.02	5,702	3,087.93	6,719	3,979.74
July	3,480	1,596.00	6,147	2,883.00	6,041	2,894.00
August	4,436	1,924.00	5,724½	2,471.97	4,733½	2,672.63
September	6,361	2,667.25	7,280	3,052.00	6,721	3,382.61
October	6,789	4,003.53	7,858½	3,674.59	7,232	3,916.48
November	7,079	4,915.00	8,744	4,77.32	6,697	4,419.80
December	8,200	4,053.71	6,168	3,340.37	5,050	3,319.45

3. *Supaul Railway Station.*

Month.	1960.			1961.			1962.		
	Total number of passengers.	Total earnings.	Total number of passengers.	Total earnings.	Total number of passengers.	Total earnings.	Total number of passengers.	Total earnings.	
January	N.A.	N.A.	17,314	20,149	16,611	19,517			
February	21,474	24,380	21,495	22,032	25,707	28,454			
March	14,975	18,653	17,219	23,239	17,072	23,115			
April	16,148	19,804	18,344	23,365	17,586	21,394			
May	14,454	17,756	18,399	19,204	20,178	26,524			
June	12,390	13,777	16,231	23,147	17,103	20,879			
July	12,950	17,089	17,988	25,248	14,372	24,378			
August	12,876	19,005	17,669	22,972	17,725	23,711			
September	17,689	22,712	22,480	39,866	18,920	25,337			
October	17,565	28,192	18,331	39,080	16,684	22,811			
November	18,635	23,642	16,018	18,807	13,645	18,356			
December	20,765	25,236	14,975	18,044	15,934	20,922			

4. *Nirmali Railway Station.*

Month.	1960.			1961.			1962.		
	Total number of passengers.	Total earnings.	Total number of passengers.	Total earnings.	Total number of passengers.	Total earnings.	Total number of passengers.	Total earnings.	
January	13,090	18,041.00	16,276	28,080	10,521	17,312			
February	21,022	31,157.00	16,186	29,904	12,231	18,307			
March	17,408	25,380.00	15,216	24,680	13,870	22,000			
April	15,355	24,134.00	13,541	21,513	11,366	17,655			
May	13,126	21,424.00	11,515	17,906	11,301	N.A.			
June	8,656	11,384.00	9,476	16,171	8,952	16,174			
July	6,822	8,743.31	8,256	15,515	6,399	14,466			
August	5,200	9,929.00	6,244	11,638	3,162	7,111			
September	5,095	11,926.00	10,167	16,006	6,739	18,250			
October	8,272	14,412.00	8,987	25,385	8,883	19,908			
November	14,296	19,523.00	10,353	17,027	9,678	16,590			
December	9,555	16,834.00	9,211	12,975	7,800	14,275			

5. *Dauram Madhepura Railway Station.*

The average number of monthly passengers (during 1962-63) is 35,551 and the average monthly income from passenger traffic is Rs. 30,024 only. The separate figures yearwise were not available.

It may be pointed out that on these stations, a good number of passengers travel without tickets and so the figures as given do not represent the actual number of passengers travelling.

WATER COMMUNICATIONS.

There is no navigable river in this district. However, country boats of small carrying capacity ply on some of the rivers. The District Board, Saharsa, control 28 public ferries and about 137 free ferries at different important *dhars*, most of them are open only in the rainy season.

The public ferries are settled on an annual fee. The amount of the fees (*jama*) which the District Board, Saharsa, received from the settlement of ferries was Rs. 55,416, Rs. 42,897 and Rs. 55,375 during 1960-61, 1961-62 and 1962-63, respectively. As the *dhars* (streams) are not connected with the river Ganga their utility for trade is very little.

COMMUNICATIONS UNDER THE KOSI PROJECT.

Roads.—The Project administration has constructed a metalled road of 26 miles from Bathnaha to Bhimnagar. A portion of this road measuring about 10 miles beginning from Sonsar to Bhimnagar is within Saharsa district and the rest falls within Purnea district.

There is a barrage over the Kosi river and on its two flanks there are earth dams and flood embankments. The length of the eastern embankment falling within the area of this district is about 65 miles and that of the western embankment is 30 miles. Both the embankments are motorable and serve as means of communication. The embankments also connect this district with Nepal and will play a big role in developing trade relations.

Railways.—The Kosi Project administration has constructed a 76-mile narrow gauge line for their own use. This railway line links Bhimnagar (which is in this district) with various places of Nepal. At present (1963) this railway is mainly used for transporting building materials required for the Kosi Project. Out of the total length, about 16 miles of the railway line is within Saharsa district. The future of this railway tract is not yet decided.

Inspection Bungalows.—The Kosi Project administration has also constructed Inspection Bungalows at Supaul, Madhepura, Bhaptiahi, Chandrain, Nirmali, Kunauli, Karjain, Pipra and Murliganj. In addition to these, there are three Inspection Bungalows at Birpur.

The Kosi Project administration has its own aerodrome, telephone line, and a wireless station at Birpur for its own purpose.

DAK AND INSPECTION BUNGALOWS.

The Saharsa District Board maintains 17 Dak and Inspection Bungalows—

- (1) *Saharsa Inspection Bungalow* is situated in the District Board Compound in Saharsa town. It is half a mile from Saharsa Railway Station.
- (2) *Bungaon Inspection Bungalow* is 6 miles away from Saharsa and is situated by the side of Saharsa-Supaul Road.
- (3) *Chandrain Inspection Bungalow* is situated by the side of Chandrain to Hati and Mahisi to Kunauli Road.
- (4) *Madhepura Inspection Bungalow* is situated in the main market of the Madhepura town and on the roadside leading from the railway station to Madhepura Court. It is at a distance of about half a mile from the railway station and 15 miles from Saharsa.
- (5) *Murliganj Inspection Bungalow* is situated by the side of Madhepura to Murliganj Road at a distance of $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from Murliganj Railway Station. The distance from district headquarters is 30 miles.
- (6) *Kishanganj Inspection Bungalow* is situated by the side of Bihpur-Birpur Road which passes through Kishanganj. Its distance from district headquarters is 36 miles. The mode of conveyance is rail up to Madhepura and therefrom by road route, i.e., by Bihpur-Birpur Road covering a distance of 21 miles.
- (7) *Phulaut Inspection Bungalow* is situated at Phulaut on the side of Bihpur-Birpur Road. Its distance from district headquarters is 49 miles. From Saharsa to Madhepura by rail and from Madhepura to Phulaut—34 miles—by Bihpur-Birpur Road is the route to reach here.
- (8) *Alamnagar Inspection Bungalow* is situated at Alamnagar by the side of District Board road which runs from Madhepura to Phulaut. It is at a distance of 28 miles from Madhepura—the subdivisional headquarters and 42 miles from the district headquarters.
- (9) *Gamharia Rest House* is situated at Gamharia by the side of District Board road running from Supaul to Singheshwar Asthan. It is 11 miles from Supaul town and 35 miles from Saharsa, the district headquarters.
- (10) *Supaul Inspection Bungalow* is situated in the town of Supaul and is only half a mile away from Supaul Railway Station. The distance from district headquarters is $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles only.

- (11) *Pratapganj Inspection Bungalow* is situated at Pratapganj by the side of Jhitki-Pratapganj Road. It is 27 miles from Supaul and 51 miles from Saharsa town.
- (12) *Raghopur Inspection Bungalow* is situated at Raghopur by the side of Bihpur-Birpur Road. It is 36 miles from Saharsa and 22 miles from Supaul town.
- (13) *Pipra Dak Bungalow* is situated at Pipra by the side of Bihpur-Birpur Road. It is at a distance of 13 miles from Supaul town and 25 miles from Saharsa.
- (14) *Kunauli Dak Bungalow* is situated at Kunauli by the side of a District Board road running from Mahisi to Nepal border. Saharsa is about 50 miles from here.
- (15) *Chhatapur Dak Bungalow* is situated at Chhatapur by the side of Bishanpur to Birpur Road. It is at a distance of about 36 miles from Supaul town and 49 miles from Saharsa town.
- (16) *Tribeniganj Dak Bungalow* is situated at Tribeniganj by the side of Pipra to Daparkha Road. It is at a distance of 20 miles from Supaul town and 31 miles from Saharsa town (by shortest route).
- (17) *Baruari Inspection Bungalow* is situated at Baruari and is two miles from Parsarma Railway Station. Its distance from Saharsa town is about 13 miles.

The Public Works Department also maintains a Circuit House at Saharsa. It is situated near the Aerodrome, at a distance of nearly two miles from Saharsa Railway Station. Besides, two rest-sheds, one at Saharsa and the other at Supaul, are also maintained by the Public Works Department.

The Kosi Project Department has also constructed a number of Inspection Bungalows at important places such as Supaul, Madhepura (the building is at present, i.e., May, 1963 under construction), Nirmali, Pipra, etc. There is one Inspection Bungalow, a Circuit House and a Guest House at Birpur, all maintained by the Kosi Project Department. This department has also planned to construct an Inspection Bungalow at Saharsa.

In addition to Inspection and Dak Bungalows there are *dharmasalas* at Nirmali, Saharsa, Supaul, Singheshwar Asthan, Murliganj, Mahisi and Biratpur which provide free lodge for three days. The *dharmasala* of Manikram Baijnath Ram Bajaz at Nirmali is a very spacious and a three-storeyed building. It is gathered that the travellers are, however, not given here rooms to occupy and they have to sleep on the floor. Seven rooms of this *dharmasala* have been occupied by the Government servants for a long time and

some rooms are reserved for those whom the proprietor recommends to occupy. The few remaining vacant rooms are at the discretion of the Manager. The *dharmasala* at present hardly serves the public to a large extent.

POSTAL COMMUNICATIONS.

There are altogether 218 post offices in the district including a head post office at Saharsa. Prior to 1960-61 there was no head post office at Saharsa and the post offices of this district were either attached with Purnea, Darbhanga, Monghyr or Bhagalpur head post offices. Out of 218 post offices 35 post offices including one head post office, 31 sub-post offices and three branch post offices were doing savings bank work during 1962-63. This year, i.e., 1963-64 the branch post offices at Mahisi, Nauhatta and Supaul Bazar are doing savings bank work.

The average number of ordinary letters received and despatched during 1962-63 is 3,05,105 and 2,86,104, respectively. The average number of registered articles despatched during 1960-61, 1961-62 and 1962-63 is 71,297, 45,981 and 65,286, respectively. •

The value of money orders issued and paid from 1960-61 to 1962-63 is given below:—

The value of the money orders paid (in rupees).

Year.	Months.					
	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	September.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1960-61 ..	2,61,980.90	2,75,244.09	2,21,819.20	1,74,919.94	2,07,298.75	3,20,355.39
1961-62 ..	2,26,078.00	2,26,637.11	2,28,195.41	2,12,428.15	2,42,329.89	2,43,948.63
1962-63 ..	2,36,187.40	2,78,783.94	2,29,871.49	2,98,655.32	3,21,193.78	2,64,591.41

Year.	Months.					
	October.	November.	December.	January.	February.	March.
1	8	9	10	11	12	13
1960-61 ..	2,20,004.20	2,72,653.98	3,52,055.47	2,70,546.29	3,05,479.70	2,93,421.32
1961-62 ..	2,65,349.62	2,03,298.08	2,56,619.39	3,08,374.00	2,60,895.35	2,98,232.54
1962-63 ..	2,68,772.45	1,93,337.19	3,18,517.47	2,76,124.19	3,36,503.73	3,87,078.92

* The value of the money orders issued (in rupees).

Year.	Months.				
	April.	May.	June.	July.	
1960-61 ..	Value of the money orders.	4,25,306.29	4,41,107.29	4,06,037.00	2,83,620.07
Postal commission orders.	6,770.70	7,079.60	6,493.20	4,580.20	
1961-62 ..	Value of the money orders.	4,38,660.95	4,02,826.68	3,53,786.61	4,22,192.54
Postal commission orders.	7,034.15	6,441.85	5,675.70	6,778.10	
1962-63 ..	Value of the money orders.	4,07,886.17	5,17,531.43	3,78,751.48	4,89,709.62
Postal commission orders.	6,478.90	8,283.55	6,084.35	7,834.35	
Year.	Months.				
I	2	3	4	5	
1960-61 ..	Value of the money orders.	5,04,438.04	5,99,620.59	4,32,043.50	6,13,883.03
Postal commission orders.	8,082.55	9,558.20	6,946.30	9,793.50	
1961-62 ..	Value of the money orders.	5,40,464.03	5,90,178.43	5,01,572.23	4,69,133.84
Postal commission orders.	8,619.45	9,461.35	8,082.00	7,517.15	
1962-63 ..	Value of the money orders.	5,16,039.49	5,44,683.39	3,85,373.73	4,36,623.00
Postal commission orders.	8,209.65	8,640.05	6,261.95	7,042.50	
Year.	Months.				
I	6	7	8	9	
1960-61 ..	Value of the money orders.	6,68,526.29	5,23,933.52	5,71,197.83	6,27,138.36
Postal commission orders.	10,663.35	8,351.80	9,069.35	9,997.40	
1961-62 ..	Value of the money orders.	5,34,575.53	5,39,816.21	4,75,268.95	6,02,171.73
Postal commission orders.	8,423.55	8,580.45	7,588.45	9,851.05	
1962-63 ..	Value of the money orders.	5,47,425.99	4,73,162.62	6,33,679.72	6,15,140.08
Postal commission orders.	8,754.95	7,528.30	10,129.88	10,056.15	
Year.	Months.				
I	10	11	12	13	

The value of money orders paid and issued relates only those post offices which are attached with the head office, Saharsa, i.e., it excludes the value of money orders paid and issued in respect of Birpur, Bhimnagar, Nirmali, Kunauli Bazar, Sonbarsa, Chausa and Alamnagar sub-post offices which are attached with the head post offices of Purnea, Darbhanga, Monghyr and Bhagalpur districts, though fall with the civil jurisdiction of Saharsa district.

The National Defence Fund Money Order on which money order commission is not charged is in effect with effect from November, 1962. The value of such money orders paid and issued is given below:—

		The value of money orders paid (in rupees).	The value of money orders issued (in rupees).
November, 1962	.. ..	30	17,390.57
December, 1962	.. ..	5	4,315.65
January, 1963	.. ..	390.21	3,381.70
February, 1963	.. ..	19.50	1,402.68
March, 1963	.. ..	20.39	1,351.34
April, 1963	.. ..	172.62	591.18

The figures relate to only those post offices attached with the head post office, Saharsa.

The total miles of postal communication is about 734 miles. The postal organisation has been covered elsewhere.

This district is not adequately served by the Posts and Telegraphs Department. There are many villages which still receive letters after a week of the date of its despatch.

TELEGRAPHS AND TELEPHONES.

Telegraphs.

There are nineteen post-cum-telegraph offices situated at Tribeniganj, Udakishanganj, Sonbarsa Raj, Chhatapur, Sour Bazar, Kishanpur Therbita, Bangaon, Belwa Bazar, Birpur, Behariganj, Jiran, Raghapur, Narpaganj, Panchgachhia, Pratapganj, Saharsa, Supaul, Murliganj, Singheshwar Asthan and Karjain.

Telephone Exchange.

There are five Telephone Exchange offices situated at Saharsa, Supaul, Behariganj, Murliganj and Nirmali. Their connection with the other exchanges is given below:—

Name of the Exchange.	No. of connections.	Name of the Exchange to which connected.
1. Saharsa	52	Khagaria.
2. Supaul	40	Saharsa.
3. Murliganj	22	Banmankhi.
4. Behariganj	25	Banmankhi.
5. Nirmali	22	Darbhanga.

There is a public call office at Madhepura which is soon to be converted into an Auto-Exchange. Recently (i.e., in 1962) a Public Call Office at Bangaon has started functioning. There is also a P. B. X. at Birpur operated by the Kosi Project Department and maintained by the Posts and Telegraphs Department.

There is also a phone-cum-telegraph system in this district. The system has been introduced in the following Telegraph offices:—

Phone-cum-system for telegraph service.	The places to which connected.
1. Behariganj Telegraph Office .. ..	.. Udakishanganj.
2. Madhepur Telegraph Office .. ..	.. Kanap and Bangaon.
3. Simri Bakhtiarpur Telegraph Office .. ..	.. Sonbarsa Raj.
4. Supaul Telegraph Office .. ..	.. Therbita.
5. Panchgachhia Telegraph Office .. ..	.. Chandrain.

Murliganj Telephone Exchange is also soon to be converted into a small Auto-Exchange.

Previously there was only one outlet for Khagaria and beyond from Saharsa Telephone Exchange Office but now there are two outlets. Telephone was introduced in Saharsa about 1955, in Supaul on 4th March 1957, in Murliganj on 2nd March 1958 and in Behariganj on 29th March 1958.

RADIO.

The number of radios granted licence was 520 and 472 in 1962 and 1963 respectively. In 1962 there were 504 radios for domestic use and 16 radios for commercial purpose and in 1963, 443 radios were for domestic use and 29 for commercial purpose.

WIRELESS STATIONS.

In this district there are six wireless stations under the management of Police Department. At Saharsa there are two wireless stations one for the transmission of news within the district and the other for outside the district. Besides, wireless stations are located at Supaul, Madhepura, Kishanganj and Birpur. At Birpur there is also a wireless station under the management of the Kosi Project Department. These wireless stations except the last one are primarily meant for serving the purpose of police administration.

LANDING GROUNDS.

In this district there are two landing grounds—one at Birpur which is under the management of the Kosi Project Department and the other is at Saharsa which is maintained by the Public Works Department. The length of the landing ground at Saharsa is 2,800 ft. and its breadth is 500 feet.