

DISTRICT GAZETTEER OF SARAN.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL.*

INTRODUCTORY.

The district of Saran, which is the westernmost district of the Tirhut Division, is situated between 25°39' and 36°39' north latitude and between 83°54' and 85°12' east longitude. It contains an area of 2,678 square miles and a population, according to the census of 1951, of 31,55,144 persons. The principal town and administrative headquarters is Chapra, situated on the north bank of the river Gogra, close to its former junction with the Ganga, in 25°47' N. and 84°44' E.

ORIGIN OF THE NAME.

The origin of the name Saran is doubtful. General Cunningham was at one time of opinion that it was derived from the Sanskrit word *Sarana*, meaning an asylum or refuge, and connected it with a legend of Buddha overcoming and converting certain evil demons who lived on human flesh. "The demons," he says, "embraced Buddhism, or as it was expressed by the ancient Buddhists, sought the refuge or asylum of the three Precious Ones, i.e., of the Buddhist triad, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha". To commemorate the conversion of the demons of the desert, Asoka erected a *stupa* which General Cunningham concluded must have been called the *Sarana* or Asylum *stupa*, adding that "It must have been one of considerable celebrity as there can be little doubt that its name was eventually imposed on the district in which it stood". He subsequently, however, changed his opinion regarding the position of this *stupa* and considered that the site must be looked for near Arrah in the Shahabad district.

Another and more plausible derivation which has been suggested is that the name is a corruption of *Sarangaranya* or the deer forest. According to local legend in prehistoric times a holy recluse, named Rishi Sringi, had his hermitage at Singahi, a few miles east of Chapra, in the midst of a dense forest full of deer. A third suggestion which has been put forward is that Saran is a corruption of *Sakra-aranya*, i.e., the forest of Sakra or Indra, which formerly covered the country

* This text is mostly based on the Chapter "Physical Aspects" in *Saran District Gazetteer* by A. P. Middleton, I.C.S., (1930) with necessary changes and recent statistics. (P.C.R.C.)

round Visala, where King Sumati entertained Rama when he was proceeding with Vishwamitra from Ajodhya to Mithila.

BOUNDARIES.

The district is a wedge of alluvial soil thrust in between the Ganga (previously known as Ganges), Gogra and Gandak rivers. The Gandak separates it on the north-east from the district of Champaran and on the south-east from Muzaffarpur; on the south the Ganga forms the boundary, dividing it from the Patna and Shahabad districts, while the western and north-western boundaries march with Uttar Pradesh. The Gogra, running parallel with the Gandak, meets the Ganga a few miles from Chapra and forms the boundary between Saran and the Balia districts on the south-west, while an irregular base-line drawn north-east from Gogra to the Gandak, constitutes the western and north-western boundary between this district and the Gorakhpur district of Uttar Pradesh. On this side alone can there be said to be a fixed boundary; for along the greater part of the perimeter of the district, the mid-stream of the Gogra, Ganga and Gandak forms a constantly changing boundary, as these great rivers are perpetually oscillating from side to side and necessitating frequent changes in jurisdiction.

Investigations are made by the Collector of Saran and his counterpart of the neighbouring district in Uttar Pradesh after the rivers or any other channels have changed their course in the floods and some mutual adjustments have to be made. Only four *tauzs* have been transferred from this district to other districts and none from other to Saran during the last 20 years. Their approximate area according to Regulation Settlement Records comes to 1,110.44 acres only.

The history of the district as an administrative unit has been covered separately. Sarkar Saran or the district of Saran originally included the present district of Champaran. In 1866 Champaran was separated as a district. The present district of Saran has three subdivisions, namely, Sadar, Siwan and Gopalganj. Details about the subdivisions and the thanas have been given separately.

TOPOGRAPHY.

In shape, the district resembles an isosceles triangle, the sides of which have an aggregate length of nearly 280 miles. The base, which is very irregular and is about 90 miles in length, lies towards the north-west; the sides are formed by the Gandak, 95 miles long, and by the Gogra and the Ganga which also have a combined length of about 95 miles; and the apex is formed by the junction of the Gandak and the Ganga towards Sonapur at the south-east corner. The district forms a wide alluvial plain, bounded by great rivers and intersected by numerous water channels which flow in a south-easterly direction and carry off the drainage of the country. They generally

run along levels higher than the adjacent land, which is therefore liable to inundation whenever they overtop their banks. Beneath these high banks lie the basins in which the surface drainage primarily collects, to be discharged into the rivers in their lower reaches. Such depressions locally known as *chours* cover large areas in the south and south-east of the district.

There is a very gradual slope from the north-western corner, where Kuchaikot, the highest point in the district, is 222.51 feet above mean sea-level, to Sonepur in its south-eastern corner at the junction of the Ganga and Gandak, where the height is only 168.32 feet above sea-level, giving a difference of 54.19 feet. The slope is almost imperceptible, averaging only 8 inches a mile, and the district thus presents the appearance of a level plain without hills or natural eminences and with hardly any elevation, except the mounds which mark the sites of old fortresses or of deserted villages. It used to be beautifully wooded with an abundance of mango groves as mentioned in the last District Gazetteer. Decades back the people had a passion for planting them and mango gardens were a valuable property. It is said that the rainfall at Chapra was decreasing owing to the decreasing number of groves with which the town was surrounded. Nowadays, the demand for timber on the one hand and for arable land on the other, and the facilities afforded to the cultivators of disposing of their rights in them have led to a depletion of these orchards. The Sugar and other Mills at times have had to depend on wood fuel. Before the abolition of the zamindari, a large number of such mango groves were cut down and sold.

There is little or no waste land. The district being very much deficit in food crops even marginal lands, *chours* and pasturages have not escaped the plough. The district which is densely populated has long been known for the high state of its cultivation. The wide expanses of the low land along the banks of the rivers produce good cold weather crops, but the autumn harvest is rendered precarious by the rivers overflowing their banks during the rainy months, when the maize crop is approaching maturity. One side of the district is now, however, fairly well protected against flood by the Gandak embankment; and the Gogra and railway embankments afford partial protection on the other. Some parts still continue liable to be submerged, either by the local rivers and channels directly overflowing their banks or by the flood waters of the larger rivers forcing their way up them. At the same time, it is open to question whether the girdling of the district with embankments would be an unmitigated benefit, both because complete exclusion of river-water would deprive the land of part of its irrigation supply, as well as of a fertilising deposit of silt, and also because embankments, if not pierced by a sufficient number of sluices, prevent the water from flowing off, with the result that the floods take longer to flow off than they otherwise would.

NATURAL DIVISIONS.

There are no hills in Saran. Though the district presents the appearance of a level plain, the uniformity of which is broken here and there by the depressions and marshes dotted over the country, it may be divided into three distinct tracts, namely, the alluvial low lands adjoining the great rivers which are liable to be submerged periodically; the upland tract which is remote from their influence; and the *diara* lands in the beds of these rivers. The first two divisions call for no special description. They merge imperceptibly into each other, and there is no prominent feature to distinguish them, though their composition is different, the former being composed of new alluvium in which sand is found, and the latter of old alluvium which in many places contains the nodular limestone known as *kankar*. The *diara* lands, however, call for a more detailed description as they play an important part in the economy and administrative system of the district.

DIARAS.

The creation of these *diaras* or chars, as they are also called, is an interesting example of soil formation. Some back-water or curve of the river bed sets up an eddy in the current which thereupon becomes sufficiently stationary to deposit a portion of the sand which it holds in solution. The level of the *diara*, which is so far nothing but a heap of sand, then gradually rises as the water lying stagnant, spreads a thin layer of clay and silt over the sand; and this deposit of silt deepens at every high flood until at last the *diara* rises above flood-level. The soil of such a *diara* is extremely fertile and grows magnificent crops. The fertility of the *diara* land is so great that people would frequently riot and engage in murderous assaults if there be any alleged encroachment. If, however, the growth of the *diara* is arrested by the river altering its course, the flood-water does not cover it during the second stage of its formation and it remains sandy and barren. Some of the fertile *diara* lands produce fine *bhadai* crops before the river rises and good *rabi* crops in the cold weather. Other *diaras* again may be all sand, and the good field of one year may be ruined by a deposit of sand the next. Cultivation on *diaras* is thus often a mere speculation.

Both riparian and river islands are constantly being destroyed and re-formed as the rivers sway from side to side, now eroding the land and now forming it. At one place, the river is cutting into its bank and washing away village sites and groves; at another point the shore is receiving an alluvial deposit to fill up the void left by the receding waters. Here, for instance, the Gogra may be encroaching on the Saran side, and a little farther down it sweeps round and cuts into the Balia district, now throwing up extensive *diaras* and now destroying them, as it tears down and cuts out new channels. These lands are the subject of perpetual dispute and frequent riots occur

entailing litigation which is of a complex nature owing to the difficulties of knowing whether the land is an accretion or a re-formation *in situ* and to the absence of fixed landmarks, as the great rivers every year carry on a continual process of destruction and renewal.

RIVER SYSTEM.

As mentioned above, there are three great boundary rivers, the Ganga, Gandak and Gogra which are navigable by large boats all the year round. These three rivers have a mythical and historical association. There is also a net-work of minor streams flowing into the Gogra or Ganga, many of which are fed by the overflow of the Gandak and dry up in the hot weather. These smaller streams, which divide the district into fairly well-marked portions, comprise the Jharahi, Khanwa, Daha, Gandaki, Dhanai, Gangri and Khatsa; the Daha, Gandaki, Dhanai and Gangri, all of which rise near the Gandak embankment, were utilised for what is known as the Saran canal system. Each of these principal streams has numerous small tributaries which as a rule take their rise in large swamps called *jhils*. For the most part they are mere overflow channels which relieve the lowlands of surplus water in the rains and at other seasons of the year dry up leaving stagnant pools or marshes in the deeper portions of their beds.

Alluvion and diluvion are constantly taking place along the banks of the Ganga, Gogra and Gandak. One bank of the river, on which the current strikes, is generally high and abrupt, while the other is shelving; but these characteristics are generally reversed in a short space of time. The high bank is gradually eaten away, and the current then turns to the opposite side, where a similar process is repeated. Farther down, large sand-banks form one year and are swept away the next and transfers of land to and from this and other districts are consequently frequent. The Gogra is, throughout its course, proverbial for the number and variety of these changes; and they also occur, though to a less extent, in the Ganga and Gandak.

The beds of the rivers are generally sandy, and the banks are cultivated as near to the water's edge as possible. Along the channels of the larger rivers, there are often large expanses of low land which are flooded in the rains but are sown later in the year with spring crops which always turn out well, owing to the rich layer of silt annually deposited. In some places during the dry season there is often a belt of tamarisk jungle between the river and the cultivated fields, and this is the first step in the conversion of the sandy riverain into arable soil.

Further description of the rivers and particularly floods has been given in the Chapter on Agriculture and Irrigation.

Lakes, properly so called, do not exist in the Saran district, but a vast number of broads or marshes called *chaws* may be found after

the cessation of the rains. They used to contain water till well into the cold, and even into the hot weather and were the home of innumerable water-fowl. Most of the *chaur*s are drying up and are under cultivation. There is hardly any of the previous species of birds that used to visit these *chaur*s in thousands in winter.

The largest *chaur* known as the Hardia *chaur* extends from Sonapur 20 miles along the Gandak embankment and has a breadth varying from 2 to 5 miles and a depth of from 4 to 13 feet. It is formed by the backwaters of the Ganga in flood forcing their way up through the Gandaki or Mahinadi. Another large *chaur* is that near Mirzapur, which is 5 to 6 miles long and 2 to 3 miles broad. Other marshes are to be found near Manjhi, Ekma, Giaspur, Raghunathpur, Pipra, Dharmangta and Barauli. Those which dry soonest leave the ground saturated with moisture for the winter crops while in others where the water lies longer, a precarious crop of early rice is snatched before they are again covered with a sheet of water. A special feature of such marsh cultivation is the growth of a long-stemmed rice, which keeps pace in its growth with the rising of the flood water; no matter how high the latter rises, the rice keeps above the flood-level.

There are very few large tanks in the district and even the existing ones are now not in proper order. With the changes in the financial condition, people no longer excavate tanks.

GEOLOGY.

The district is composed of Indo-Gangetic alluvium, i.e., of silt brought down for ages past by the Ganga and its tributaries. The process of land formation has roughly been as follows: during the rainy season, the Ganga and its tributaries increase enormously in volume, carrying down vast quantities of silt or mud, with the result that they overflow into the adjacent country. When the water subsides again, the rivers in their retreat leave some of the silt which they have brought with them spread over the once flooded land as a thin soil deposit. This process has been repeated during thousands of years, and the land has thus been gradually growing and the surface of the land gradually raised. In the older alluvium, nodular segregations of carbonate of lime, known as *kankar*, are found which are used largely to make lime and for road metalling. The soil is in many places saliferous, and the extraction of saltpetre has long been an important industry. There is no mineral wealth so far discovered in Saran district. This district was affected in the Bihar Earthquake of 1934 but escaped with lesser damages than the neighbouring districts of Champaran and Bhagalpur. The effects of the earthquake have been described separately.

BOTANY.

Practically the whole of the district is under cultivation and supports a dense population; so close in consequence is the tilth that

in large areas field is conterminous with field, and the cultivated land abuts so closely on wayside and water course as to leave no foothold for those species that form roadside hedges and fill the weedy waste spaces. The level expanse of tilth is, however, diversified with bamboos, palms and mango orchards, or less frequently groves of other trees; in and about the villages themselves these groves are often accompanied by a number of tree weeds and semi-spontaneous more or less useful bushes and trees. The tracts liable to inundation are mainly confined to the banks of the larger rivers and are therefore often covered with a jungle of reeds and bushes, largely tamarisk, with a few trees. To the south, however, the river courses widen considerably in proportion to their streams and their beds contain little or no vegetation. In the rains the powerful current sweeps everything away and at other seasons the shingly or sandy banks are too dry to admit of much growth. But old river beds, marshes, lakes and such streams as are stagnant or nearly so, except after heavy rain, are almost as completely covered with vegetation as is the land while even small rivers with a gentle stream abound with water plants.

Though the district contains no forests, it was before well timbered, the most conspicuous trees being mango (*Mangifera indica*), Sisu (*Dalbergia Sissoo*), red cotton tree (*Bombax malabaricum*) and tamarind. The tree wealth has, however, considerably declined in the last three decades. The village sites are often embedded in groves of the Palmyra (*Borassus flabellifer*) and date-palm (*Phoenix sylvestris* and *Phoenix dactylifera*). The numerous mango orchards as observed before, no longer exist although there are still some, a marked feature of the landscape. The statistics of the Revisional Settlement of 1915-21 showed in round figures 60,000 acres of mango orchards, 458,000 *tar* trees and 120,000 *khajur* trees. There has been no further settlement and the present figures are not known. The surface of the district is highly cultivated but the banks of streams and patches of waste land are covered by a dry scrub jungle or shrubs of the order of *Euphorbiaceae*, *Butea* and other leguminous trees, and species of *Ficus* *Schleichera*, *Wendlandia* and *Gmelina*.

The principal trees yielding timber are *sisu*, jack or *kathar* (*Artocarpus integrifolia*), *babul* (*Acacia arbica*), *mahua* (*Bassia latifolia*), *bahera* (*Terminalia belerica*), *siris* (*Albizzia lebbek*), *jaman* (*Eugenia jambolana*), the mango, banyan and red cotton trees. All the species are still found although dwindled in number. Among the trees and plants yielding dyes mentioned by Middleton in the last Gazetteer were *kusum* (*Schleichera trijuga*), *palas* (*Butea frondosa*), the indigo plant and the *pipal* (*Ficus religiosa*). Indigo is no longer cultivated. *Kusum* and *Palas* trees are also not very common now. It is doubtful if *Palas* trees were ever common enough to yield dye worth any mention. The *narkat* reed is common in marshes to the west of the district and is made into a coarse matting; the *sirka* reed which grows in drier localities is used for thatching and covering carts.

FAUNA.

Saran, the most densely populated and closely cultivated district of the Tirhut Division, offers few attractions to the sportsman. Every available acre has been brought under the plough and the consequence is that there are very few wild animals to be found now. Formerly both leopards and tigers were common but they have now completely disappeared. Even the stray leopards that used to come out and be shot in the district as mentioned by A. P. Middleton have not been recently heard of. They were wanderers from the jungle tracts to the north. The Indian wolf used to be common but is now rarely seen. Isolated specimens of the hyaena and wild dog noticed by Mr. A. P. Middleton in the last *District Gazetteer of Saran* (1930) are extremely rare now. Jackals, however, still abound. Middleton had mentioned three representatives of the Ungulata, namely, *nilgai* (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*), black buck (*Antelope cervicapra*) and wild pig (*Sus cristatus*). The black buck has completely disappeared by now. Indiscriminate shooting is responsible for exterminating this beautiful species. The wild pigs, hordes of which offered an excellent sport to the European planters have also declined in their number. Only the specimen of *nilgai* remain but that is because some people wrongly take them to be of bovine species and would not shoot them. *Nilgais* do much damage to the crops.

BIRDS.

In the last *District Gazetteer of Saran* published in 1930 it was mentioned "The smaller game birds used to be numerous, the commonest being quail, snipe and duck, but they are all decreasing rapidly owing apparently to extensive netting and increased number of gun licenses. The common quail first appears in September or October but is not much seen till February or March when they are to be found in the *rabi* crops. The blue-breasted, the black-breasted and the button quail are now rarely seen. Black partridges are to be found in the jungles near the rivers and the grey sometimes in the west and south-west of the district. The lesser florican was formerly to be found but it is now probably extinct. The common snipe and jack snipe are still fairly common in the cold weather, also the painted snipe which disappears in the hot weather and returns to breed in the rains. The bar headed goose is found on the large rivers in the cold weather. At various times nineteen kinds of duck have been found but none are so numerous as formerly. Those which are still fairly common are the ruddy sheldrake or Brahmani, whistling teal, cotton teal, common teal, gadwal, widgeon, pintail, shoveller and red-crested pochard. Specimens of the smew (*Mergus albellus*) and goosander (*Merganser castor*) have been shot in the past but are not likely to be seen now".

In the last three decades the position has become much worse. The Avifauna, both residents and visitors have declined very

considerably. Late Captain Harvey* who had studied the birds and their eggs in Saran district for decades thought that the following birds had disappeared from the district:—(1) Pallos Sea Eagle, (2) Black-winged kite, (3) Crest-honey buzzard, (4) Juggar falcon, (5) Red-headed marline, and (6) Bengal green pigeon. These birds were not numerous but bred regularly in the district.

One of the rarest birds in Saran district was the common Indian Nightjar. Captain Harvey thought that the district of Saran was at the moment the worst off for birds in Tirhut Division and far inferior to the districts of Darbhanga and Muzaffarpur in which he had done many years of collecting birds' eggs.

Many of the species of resident birds also have now declined. Most of winter visitors have ceased coming as the *jheels* and *chaurs* and waterlogged area have now been ploughed and the monsoon has become very irregular and deficient. The river beds also get drier much quicker. Due to the want of proper cover and environs the chances of mating and laying of eggs have become much less. The cultivation of the marginal lands like *chaurs*, the increasing number of gun licenses granted, the large number of *Bahelias* who live by indiscriminate netting of birds by a camouflage, the vagaries of the *Shikaris* who would even shoot during the close season are some of the reasons why we have lost our bird-wealth to a very considerable extent. Apart from the visitors we have also lost many of the residents like various species of *mynah*, *bulbul*, *patridges*, *snipes* and *quails*.

FISH.

The Ganga, Gogra and Gandak have edible fish, the most valuable of which belong to the carp family, such as *rahu* (*Labeo rohita*) and *katla* (*Catla buehanai*), *Hilsa* are also caught in the Ganga during the rains as they ascend from the sea but the hauls are getting smaller. It is strange that with these large rivers in the district there should be a poor fish market within the district and very little export of fish. The tanks are also getting disused and the fish of the tank is not large in quantity. The fishing season practically begins in October with the subsidence of the floods; the busy season is from November to March, the largest hauls being made in December, January and February.

Among other common varieties may be mentioned *piyas*, *bachwa*, *buari* and *arwari*. The *buari* is said to be one of the largest of the fish, attaining occasionally a weight of 80-lbs. The *arwari* is a small mullet with flesh of a delicate flavour which moves on the top of the water. Crustaceous fish are common and prawns are caught in large numbers. Porpoises abound in the Ganga and tortoises are also common. The fish-eating alligator (*Gavialis gangeticus*), called

* The late Capt. Harvey was one of the collaborators for this revised District Gazetteer. (P.C.R.C.)

gharial is plentiful in the three principal rivers and is also found in smaller streams in the rains. The mugger or snubnosed crocodile is not nearly so common, being found only in the large rivers.

The most important fisheries are those in the Ganga, Gogra and Gandak, those in the first two being leased out annually by Government. But there are also valuable fisheries in the deeper swamps dotted over the district and in some of the larger tanks.

REPTILES.

Snakes are numerous, the most common being the deadly *karait* (*Bungarus coeruleus*), the *gahuman* or cobra (*Naia tripudians*) and the common water snake called *dhonra*.

CLIMATE.

The seasons in Saran are very similar to those in Muzaffarpur, being perhaps a little hotter. The hot weather begins about the middle of March, when hot westerly winds, often accompanied by dust-storms, begin to blow during the day. At night the wind comes generally from the east and the temperature is comparatively cool, being lowered by occasional thunder-storms; but the nights are extremely hot from the end of May till the first break of the monsoon. In a normal year the rains set in about the third week of June and continue with intermissions till about the end of September or the early part of October. September is generally a very trying month, the air being damp and steamy and the sun's rays extremely strong. The cold weather begins after the middle of October and continues till the beginning of March up to which time the days are still comparatively cool. This season is bracing and agreeable, at least from November till February; the day temperature is low, the air dry and the nights distinctly cold.

TEMPERATURE AND HUMIDITY.

The climate is on the whole hot and dry, and though the winter months are delightfully cool the heat is excessive in May and June. According to the old figures the mean temperature varies from 62° in January to 89° in May, the mean maximum from 73° in January to 100° in April and May and the mean minimum from 50° in January to 79° in June and August; humidity ranges from 57 per cent of saturation in April to 88 per cent in August. Statistics kept at the Sepaya Agricultural Farm during part of 1928 give some interesting and rather unexpected results; it appears that the three hottest days of the year all occurred in April while the number of days on which a shade temperature of 100 or over was reached was distributed as follows: four in April, seven in May, one in June, none in July, five in August, ten in September and two in October.

It is unfortunate that the *Bihar Statistical Hand-Book* of 1955 does not mention any station in Saran district in Table 10 of this

book giving the "Statement showing the Annual Temperature and Humidity" as recorded at different stations in Bihar. However, a discussion of the trends of rainfall till recent years, taken up in the following section, shows that there has not been any marked change in either the degree of temperature and humidity or in its distribution throughout the year.

Rainfall.

The average rainfall for the district obtained from thirteen recording stations for a varying number of years is 45.03 inches. The rainfall is capricious; for the ten years 1919—1928 it varied from 30.38 in 1928 and 33.41 in 1927 to 57.38 in 1922 and 62.25 in 1921. A total fall of over 80 inches was recorded in 1871. In ordinary years the monsoon breaks in June which has an average rainfall of 6.47 inches and a monthly fall of 12.04 inches is reached in July. The maximum monthly fall (12.45 inches) is reached in August after which it drops to 7.89 in September and to 2.26 in October after which the rainfall is negligible. November and December are much the driest months in the year both in average rainfall and in average number of rainy days in a month.

Statistics of the rainfall at selected recording stations are given below for the cold weather (November to February), the hot weather (March to May) and the rainy season (June to October), the figures shown being the average in each case :—

Station.	Year recorded.	November to February.	March to May.	June to October.	Annual average.
Chapra ..	51	1.52	2.16	39.39	43.07
Siwan ..	51	1.59	2.27	43.11	46.97
Gopalganj ..	42	1.43	2.80	41.62	45.85
Basantpur ..	17	1.40	2.60	45.42	49.42
Sepaya ..	6	.85	2.74	37.94	41.53

As against the averages taken down through the selected recording stations, some of the statements from the *Bihar Statistical Hand-Book*, 1955, published by the Central Bureau of Economics and Statistics shall be of interest :—

Statement showing the average rainfall in inches in the district of Saran.

Year.	Average rainfall in inches.
1943-44	38.13
1946-47	51.92
1947-48	38.37
1948-49	49.17

Year.				Average rainfall in inches.
1949-50	..	..	..	48.46
1950-51	..	..	..	36.48
1951-52	..	..	..	36.74
1952-53	..	..	..	43.18
1953-54	..	..	..	69.41
1954-55	..	..	..	32.26
1955-56	..	..	..	47.50
Normal	..	..	..	44.91

Regarding the monthly rainfall in inches in the district of Saran the following statement gives the record during 1953-54, 1954-55 and 1955-56 :—

Statement showing monthly rainfall in inches in the district of Saran during 1953-54, 1954-55 and 1955-56.

Month.	1953-54.	1954-55.	1955-56.
March	0.04	Nil	0.03
April	1.00	Nil	0.41
May	1.17	0.45	0.41
June	12.39	3.08	9.30
July	19.50	10.91	15.28
August	12.69	12.56	11.38
September	20.72	4.36	8.12
October	0.93	0.28	1.02
November	Nil	Nil	Nil
December	0.03	Nil	Nil
January	0.40	0.20	0.55
February	0.45	0.42	1.00
Total for the year	69.41	32.26	47.50

This statement is also taken from the *Bihar Statistical Hand-Book*, 1955.

The monthly normal rainfall for Saran district in inches is as follows :—

March	..	..	..	0.29
April	..	..	..	0.28
May	..	..	..	1.39
June	..	..	..	6.50
July	..	..	..	12.41
August	..	..	..	11.78
September	8.59
October	2.10
November	0.26
December	0.15
January	0.48
February	0.48
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Total	44.91
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The average rainfall for the district as taken note of in the last District Gazetteer runs to 45.03 inches, whereas the recent (1958) average normal rainfall to 44.91 inches as mentioned in the *Bihar Statistical Hand-Book*. A difference of .12 inches seems to have come up in the normal pattern, which expresses nearly a stationary trend. Rather allowing for the calculating inconsistencies like inadequate number of recording stations or the absence of most up-to-date instruments or even lacking sincerity of purpose of the recorder, the averages do show an unchanging pattern of rainfall in the district. What is more remarkable is that even the distribution of rainfall concurs with that of the twenties and thirties, referred to in last District Gazetteer. For example an average rainfall of 6.47 inches in the month of June and 12.04 inches in the month of July has been noted in the last District Gazetteer, whereas these figures are 6.50 and 12.41 respectively in the *Statistical Hand-Book* quotations. The month of maximum average rainfall is August in both the statements, which month ends with initiating a gradually decreasing average rainfall. And in both alike the months of November and December with a conspicuously low rainfall present the driest months in the year. The total average rainfall for the years referred to in the last District Gazetteer and in the *Bihar Statistical Hand-Book*, also are similar in as much as their range of difference from the normal average is concerned.