ODISHA DISTRICT GAZETTEERS

SUBARNAPUR

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PREFACE

The Gazetteer is an authoritative document that describes a District in all its hues—the economy, society, political and administrative setup, its history, geography, climate and natural phenomena, biodiversity and natural resource endowments. It highlights key developments over time in all such facets, whilst serving as a placeholder for the timelessness of its unique culture and ethos. It permits viewing a District beyond the prismatic image of a geographical or administrative unit, since the Gazetteer holistically captures its socio-cultural diversity, traditions, and practices, the creative contributions and industriousness of its people and luminaries, and builds on the economic, commercial and social interplay with the rest of the State and the country at large. The document which is a centrepiece of the District, is developed and brought out by the State administration with the cooperation and contributions of all concerned. Its purpose is to generate awareness, public consciousness, spirit of cooperation, pride in contribution to the development of a District, and to serve multifarious interests and address concerns of the people of a District and others in any way concerned.

Historically, the "Imperial Gazetteers" were prepared by Colonial administrators for the six Districts of the then Orissa, namely, Angul, Balasore, Cuttack, Koraput, Puri, and Sambalpur. After Independence, the Scheme for compilation of District Gazetteers devolved from the Central Sector to the State Sector in 1957. Within the State, the responsibility for developing the Gazetteers was transferred from the Revenue Department to the Gopabandhu Academy of Administration (GAA) in 1999. In this process, the "District Gazetteers" of all thirteen Districts were published as follows: Koraput/1966 (Supplement/1984), Mayurbhanj/1967, Bolangir/1968, Sambalpur/1971, Dhenkanal/1972, Sundargarh/1975, Puri/1977, Kalahandi/1980, Boudh-Khondmal/1983, Keonjhar/1986, Balasore/1994, Ganjam/1995 and Cuttack/1996. The Gazetteers of Balasore/1994, Ganjam/1995 and Cuttack/1996, however, could not capture the implications of the reorganisation of these Districts. Though 10 out of 13 Districts had been reorganised into 27 and the total number of Districts in the State had gone up to 30, the reality remained to be captured in the Districts' Gazetteers.

Be it so, the time is now ripe to build on the rich cache of Gazetteers available across the Districts in Odisha, and to develop updated documents that capture the essence of each District as it exists today. The Districts have evolved over the last couple of decades as a result of various natural phenomena and unforeseen forces, besides a slew of economic and social sector reforms undertaken at the National, State and local levels. The resulting impacts have been more cataclysmic in some Districts than others, which are reflective of the complex dynamics at work which determine a District’s state of preparedness and receptivity to change or its absorptive capacity. This diversity in impacts across Districts is now captured both in measurable parameters and non-measurable underlying trends and perceptions in the updated District Gazetteers.
Besides catching up with the developments in each of the thirty Districts and the environs, it was felt opportune to capture the major shifts in areas and issues of priority and concern across the districts by suitably restructuring the document, to recount the post-Independence events in brief for their historic value and evolutionary impact on the District, and to bridge an important lacuna, viz. incorporating the role played by freedom fighters from each District in India’s Independence, which was sparingly mentioned in the Gazetteers initially prepared by colonial administrators. Though the updated Gazetteers draw heavily on the past Gazetteers of thirteen undivided Districts, the documents were also restructured to provide for elimination, modification and insertion of some issues in discussion with the Consulting Editors and District Administration in order to present a comprehensive and contemporaneous picture of the Districts.

The task of developing and updating the Gazetteers for the present 30 Districts was initiated in the first week of May 2015. Procedurally, a series of time-bound initiatives taken since then were bed-rocked on the complete and continuous involvement of the District Collector and heads of concerned line departments at the district level in the coverage of issues and developments over time, coupled with specific participation of a number of scholars and experts, including some senior serving and retired civil servants. A standardised synopsis of the District Gazetteer was prepared by GAA to assist in the development of the initial drafts by each District Administration. For this exercise, a Committee was constituted by GAA under the District Collector to steer the development of the initial draft for the respective District. A number of Sub-Committees comprising officials and experts were also constituted, again at District level, for drafting specific and thematic chapters. The initial drafts prepared by the District Administration were received by GAA starting in August 2015. After in-house scrutiny of these drafts, detailed comments and suggestions for bridging information gaps were sent by GAA to enable suitable revisions by the District Administration. A process of continuous monitoring of the development of the next stage of drafts was followed, and the second drafts were received by GAA by the end of October 2015. This revised draft Gazetteer of each District was then placed for scrutiny at two levels – the first by the public at large by hosting the drafts at the website of GAA (gopabandhuacademy.gov.in), and the second by a set of 30 Experts, one for each District, designated as Consulting Editor.

Simultaneously, Government in General Administration Department (GAD) with the approval of Hon’ble Chief Minister reconstituted the State Advisory Committee (SAC) and State Working Committee (SWC) on Gazetteers vide Notification No. 23473 dated 26 September, 2015. The SAC continues to be headed by Chief Secretary, Government of Odisha. The SWC hereafter was to be chaired by the Director General, GAA, who had also been notified as the ex-officio Chief Editor of Gazetteers, besides being granted functional freedom to prepare and publish the Gazetteers. A series of meetings were held by DG, GAA with the Consulting Editors appointed for refinement of the drafts prepared at the District level to discuss and to ensure accuracy and coherence, quality and content. The Consulting Editors also visited the respective Districts regularly to interact with senior officials, governmental and non-governmental organisations and persons concerned with the preparation of the initial two drafts. The drafts reviewed by DG,
GAA, with the Consulting Editors were forwarded to the District Collectors for authentication of content and further improvements in quality, wherever felt necessary.

The final round of discussions with the Consulting Editors was held in GAA in February through till April 2016, and the draft Gazetteers, finalised at this stage again in consultation with the District Collectors, were placed before the SWC. Drafts recommended by it were placed before the SAC for approval.

Subarnapur owes its origin to pre-Christian era. It has had a prominent presence in the history of Western Odisha. Right from 1867 when it was declared a feudatory state by the Britishers till its formation as an independent district in 1993, it has witnessed sea changes, which gazetteers across time have tried to capture in varied ways. In preparing the draft gazetteer, Sri Dasarathi Satapathy, IAS, Collector, Subarnapur, his team of officers and local experts have worked wholeheartedly. I owe a debt of gratitude to Prof. Pabitra Mohan Nayak for his tireless editing of the draft gazetteer of the district. But for his commitment and competence, this gazetteer would not have been a reality within a short time.

I convey sincere gratitude to the members of the State Working Committee and State Advisory Committee for their valuable inputs and advice. I will be failing in my duty if I do not acknowledge the contribution of my friends and colleagues in the State Administration and particularly those at GAA namely Dr. R.N. Patra, Deputy Director (Studies), Sri Subrat Kuanr, Research Officer and Dr. R.N. Swain, Compiler.

Finally, despite optimum efforts to plug the obvious limitations and lacunae in the Gazetteer, factual deficiencies, misspellings and grammatical errors might be found. The responsibility for all its shortcomings doubtless remains mine. With an eye to the future, I urge all readers, including thematic experts, young scholars, and luminaries, to offer their valuable suggestions for improving the quality and contents of the document for the next addition with the passage of time.

I would like to thank the people of the District of Subarnapur for their contributions over time to the making of the District as we now know it, and commend this document to them and to all other stakeholders within the State and beyond.

Dr. Taradatt, IAS
Chief Editor, Gazetteers &
Director General, GAA
A NOTE FROM THE CONSULTING EDITOR

A District Gazetteer, it is needless to maintain, is a mirror of the district, a mirror that reflects its past and present, history and heritage, politics and economics, art and craft, religion and philosophy, law and order, health and education, castes and tribes, banking and business, roads and bridges, language and literature, culture and agriculture. In a word, it is a comprehensive compendium of information on a district, a sort of Zilla Parikrama.

Such a work naturally and necessarily presupposes involvement of knowledgeable persons from all walks of life. When the draft Gazetteer in 2 volumes prepared by the district administration arrived, it posed a twofold problem: reduction of its bulk and retention of facts and figures which were mostly data downloaded. A fact that makes a gazetteer perhaps irrelevant to a researcher tuned to press-the-button-and-get-the-information mode. The gazetteer, therefore, must contain something unseen, unknown, unheard in order to be able to engage the reader. The number of statistical tables has to be brought down to the minimum to make it readable. The language had to be correct and concise, simple and intelligible so that you do not stumble at every step. All in all, new developments in different fields have to be identified and incorporated to make it up to date. For, if one obtains all the information one needs from the net, where is the necessity for a gazetteer?

But a gazetteer is a gazetteer. It is not just information offloaded from the internet, it is the image of the district, visible and invisible, into the making of which several hands and heads have gone. A gazetteer on a new-sprung district like Subarnapur is highly demanding. It has certain significant aspects left untouched, untapped, unrecorded. It is the most ancient seat of tantra in Odisha, a place where there is a Sakta triangle within a Saiva triangle, the cradle of Sahajayara Buddhism, the legendary Lanka of the Ramayana, it has temples, inscriptions on walls, images, rocks and stones more than any other district headquarters of this radius in Odisha. It was the capital of distinguished historical dynasties like the Bhanjas, Somavansis, Telgu Chodas, Kalachuris, Gangas and Chauhans. It was a centre of maritime trade connected with the south, the north and the east of the country, even with Tibet and Indonesia. It has archeological sites whose excavations have revealed remnants of neolithic and chalcolithic civilizations that once flourished in the middle Mahanadi valley. Its pre-historic rock art on Puja Dungri, its punch-marked coins, its unique terracotta Hanuman exhibited in Copenhagen, its peerless pattachitra preserved in the British Museum, its copperplate charter donated not by Rajas but by 500 aboriginals, its earliest brick Buddhist shrine in Odisha converted into a Hindu stone architecture, its rare Stambheswari Inscription that carries the earliest Odia script, its Chardei image of the 6th century BC, its Sureshwari idol seated singularly on a kundaliniyantra, its brass image of the four handed Laxmi-Nrusimha, the tallest in the country, its Trikuta hills where Lord
Jagannath was originally worshipped before he was transplanted and transported to Puri, its Papaksayaghat on the Mahanadi where a holy dip is said to have cured Anangabhimadev III of a dread disease, its siddhayogi, Chandramani capable of metempsychosis or transmigration of the soul for which Sankara was so well-known, its saint from Khaliapali, poet Bhima Bhoi whose unique world-view of the oneness of men and women, birds and beasts, even stars and planets still resonates the glass-and-steel structure of the United Nations, and, last but not least, its dhan that once yielded two grains of rice, writes GM Bhattacharya in Sonepur Rajyer Krishi – a challenges to modern agricultural science – all this makes Subarnapur stand out of the rest of the districts. One of the most powerful and populous cities of Eastern India in 1881 Census, Subarnapur has been squeezed by time to an area of 906 sq. miles, and with the merger of states has lost its importance and independence, reduced to a sub-division on 01.01.1948 till it was declared a district on 01.04.1993, nearly half a century after, with its old nomenclature – Subarnapur – restored.

Therefore, when the call came from Dr. Taradatt, IAS, Director General, Gopabandhu Academy of Administration, it was a clear call and a sure call that could not be denied. For it offered me an opportunity to pay my obeisance to the place of my birth. I had already published on the cultural heritage of Subarnapur a couple of books, namely, The Voice of Silence : Sonepur Durbar and Indian Cultural Traditions, Sahitya Academy, 2001, Impact of Chauhan Rule on the History and Culture of Odisha, Punthi, Kolkata 2013 and Inscriptions of Orissa : Special Reference, Subarnapur, New Delhi, 2013 which I thought would stand me in good stead. These books I spared to the contributors for reference when they clamoured for materials. But as I proceeded, the road became increasingly difficult. First, because the facts obtained were completely computer-fed. The website was the only site. When the facts needed were not forthcoming despite repeated reminders, and when the fourth draft was not very different from the first, I desperately devised on my fourth visit the familiar method of guided composition – one point, one page. When this too failed, I fell back upon my own resources. I drafted on my own, some chapters like History, Places of Interest totally and Temples, Demography, Literature, etc. partially. I had to merge some chapters which were either too thin or too inadequate. Thus after a lot of revisions, permutations and combinations the gazetteer has assumed its present form.

I take this occasion to thank Dr. DB Mishra for his contribution on Inscriptions, Dr RP Mishra on Religion and Philosophy, Dr. Kedar Mishra on Commerce and S Agrawal on numismatics. My thanks are also due to the Collector Dasarathi Satapathy, IAS, Sub-Collector, SN Dash and Asst. Collector DP Das for the interest and initiative they have evinced in making this endeavor a success. I also express my sincere thanks to those whose strength and support has made this volume what it is. In the end I offer my gratitude to the Director General for the
opportunity he gave me to serve my motherland lulled by the gentle music of the Mahanadi and loud with the merry chime of temple bells.

I’ll be failing in my duty if I don’t say a word in praise of Binay, the typist who spared no efforts to put the words and the photographs in place.

My labour will be amply rewarded if readers and researchers find this volume interesting reading. As poet Kalidas has it in *Kumarasambhavam*: *Kleshah phalena hi punernavatam bidhatte*.

Pabitra Mohan Nayak
16th April 2016
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CHAPTER-I
THE LAND

Subarnapur has figured on the political and cultural map of Odisha since prehistoric times as an ancient place of human habitation. The discovery of a large number of stone tools, rock art of Puja Dunguri near Rampur Tahasil and punch-marked coins is a testimony to primitive human settlements in this region since the 3rd century B.C. Subarnapur occupied a place of prime importance under various royal families like the Bhanjas, the Somavamsis, the Telugu Chodas, the Kalachuris, the Gangas and the Chauhans. It was declared a feudatory state by the British in 1867. With the division of Bengal in 1905 it came under the jurisdiction of Lt. Governor of Bengal. This feudatory state merged with Odisha province on 1st January, 1948 and became a sub-division under Bolangir district. Subsequently, it was made a separate district w.e.f. 1st April 1993.

Nomenclature

In the Middle Ages Subarnapur was known as Lanka. The Tibetan historian Taranath refers to Lanka as a place of tantric Buddhism. Buddhist literature of the 8th century also speaks of Lanka. Laxmikara, sister of the Vajrayanist king Indrabhuti of Sambalaka is said to have married prince Jalauka of Lanka. Further the Greek geographer Ptolemy underlines Lanka as a diamond prone zone located on the bank of the river Manad or Mahanadi. N.K. Sahu and D. Sankalia identify Subarnapur with Swarnapuri Lanka of the Epic Age.

Around the mid-19th century A.D. the Somavamsi king Mahabhagavagupta Janmejaya for the 1st time uses Subarnapur instead of Lanka in his epigraphic record. Since then, it became the hot seat of hectic political, cultural and commercial activities. It may be noted that the Indian Institute of Marine Archaeology, Goa emphasizes the importance of many riverine port towns in the middle Mahanadi valley, including Subarnapurapattanam and Manamunda located on the confluence of Mahanadi and Tel as the lifeline of Kalingan maritime commerce with South East Asia.

There was a significant change in the nomenclature during the reign of Mahabhabagupta Udyotakesari around the 11th century A.D. He seems to have been inclined towards reviving the old nomenclature, Lanka. He called Subarnapur Paschima Lanka in his charter.

The Sonepur Stone Inscription otherwise known as Khambeswari Inscription dating back to the 13th century A.D. names Subarnapur as Sunapura. As a matter of fact, it resembles the Pali or Prakrit phonetics as district from its Sanskrit counterparts. In other Ganga epigraphic records, Kosala is called Pachhimadesa with Sunapura –Kataka as its capital. It goes without saying that such suffix as kataka or puri in medieval Odishadenoted capital metropolis.
The Chauhans of Patna, the last ruling dynasty of which the Chauhans of Sambalpur and Sonepur were offshoots (mid-14th century A.D. till the merger in January 1, 1948.) revived the nomenclature Subarnapur as evident in Pt. Gangadhar Mishra’s *magnum opus*, Kosalanandam. Later, however, Subarnapur was known in the Chauhan records as Swarnapura or Sonepur which might have led Belini in 1741 and Rennel in 1752 to record its name on the map as Jounpur till it became Subarnapur again after it was declared a district in 1993.

**Location**

The district is located in the western part of Odisha. It lies between 20° 30' to 20° 10' North latitude and 83° 27' to 84° 15' East longitude. It is bordered by Bolangir in the west, Sambalpur in the north, Boudh in the south-east and Rairakhol in the east.

**Topography**

Subarnapur constitutes a portion of the peninsular region. The district is a table land constituting a part of the Western Central Table Level. It falls under the ninth agro-climatic zone of Odisha. It is located in the Mahanadi basin. Parts of the district are undulating plains with irregular hill ranges. The district has two types of agro-climatic situations, irrigated and rainfed. Binka and Dunguripali are irrigated. Tarbha, Birmaharajpur and Ulunda are rain-fed. There are four major rivers namely Mahanadi, Ang, Tel and Suktel.

**Soil**

The soil of the district is broadly classified as sandy, sandy loam and sandy clay. The rock types in the district are alluvial and laterite. Lower Gondwana sandstones are also found here. The hills of the district have a cap of high level laterite. Rainwater soaks through the laterite and then oozes out as springs and waterfalls.

**Climate**

Subarnapur is situated in north eastern corner of the Deccan plateau. The climate is extreme. It is hot and moist. The mean maximum temperature 43.3°C celsius goes up to 45°C. Winters are very cold with temperature as low as 7°C celsius. The mean minimum temperature is 13°C celsius. The summer is followed by the rainy season, which starts with the outbreak of the south-west monsoon in June. It reaches its peak in August and retreats in the middle of October. It experiences fairly good rainfall and high degree of humidity. The normal average rainfall is not uniformly distributed. The annual rainfall of the district is 1418.5 mm in 61.6 rainy days.

**Administrative Setup**

The district is spread over 2337 Sq.kms. 1.5 % of the State’s land mass. There are 959 villages, of which 130 are uninhabited. For administrative convenience, the
district is divided into two Sub-divisions, six Tahasils, six Blocks, seven Police stations and 96 Gram Panchayats. There are three towns, one Municipality, i.e. Subarnapur and two NACs viz, Binika and Tarbha.

Demography

As per 2011 census, total population of the district is 6,10,183 which is 1.45 % of the State’s population. The density of population per Sq.km. in the district is 261 as against 270 in the State. During the decade 2001-2011, growth rate of population in the district was 12.6 % , lower than 14.00 % growth rate of the State. The sex ratio of the district is low with 960 females per 1000 males as compared to the corresponding figure of 979 at the State level. This is likely to decrease in the coming years. The children in the age group of 0-6 years constituted 12.26 % of the population. Among these children, boys (6.28 %) are proportionately more than girls (5.98%). General and other backward castes dominate the district population. The SC number 1, 56,219 (25.60 %) and ST,57192 (9.37 %). Most of the people in the district live in rural areas.

Natural Resources

Land, forest, water and mineral resources are the main components of natural resources in a region. Sonepur is rich in all these resources except minerals which perhaps have not been exploited to the full.

River system

The Mahanadi flows right through the heart of Subarnapur district. The other prominent rivers which traverse the territory are the Tel and Ong. They drain water from different parts of the area through small tributaries and ultimately flow into the Mahanadi at Sonepur. The Ong originates in Gandhamardan Hills and after flowing through Bargarh it enters Balangir district on the west of Salebhatta near Agalpur. It meets Mahanadi a few km north-west of Sonepur town. River Tel emerges from the north-western part of the Koraput district and after flowing through Kalahandi, it touches the southern border of Balangir and then flows into Mahanadi near Sonepur. Among other rivers Jira, the northernmost affluent river discharges water into Mahanadi. Besides Surubali jore, Harihar jore, Badjore and Balijore are rain-fed rivulets that flow in Subarnapur. Here are also small rain-fed streams / nallahas that discharge into the main rivers/ jores during the rainy season.

Mineral Resources

The district has very few natural mineral deposits scattered throughout the area. Lead and manganese deposits have been found in Dunguripali area. Manganese ores occur in association with laterites. Manganese content of this ore is low-around 30 -35%, though iron and phosphorus contents are high. These mineral ores are mostly psilomelane. Bauxite is also found in some parts of the district. Other minerals like Garnet are traced in Birmaharajpur and Binika regions.
Gemstones like Aquamarine, Heliodor & Topaz and Rhodolite Garnet are there in Birmaharajpur, Badmal, Siali and Naktammunda belts.

**Physical Infrastructure**

Physical infrastructure and economic development are interwoven. Physical infrastructures like roads, highways, bridges, mass transit, water and sanitation, sewerage, electricity, housing and telecommunications are essential for economic growth and human development which are available in the district, yet not sufficient and satisfactory.

**Transport and Communication:**

The district is well-connected with the state capital Bhubaneswar. There are 46 kms of national highways, 40 kms of state highways and 118 kms of district roads. Besides, forest roads run over 40 kms. And GP roads and PS roads measure 2616 kms and 629 kms respectively. Village roads in the district cover 438 kms. PMGSY roads have also been added. Railways (12.13 kms) have a symbolic presence in the district touching Dunguripali (As per 2011).

Communications like posts and telegraph, telecom connectivity continue to play a very important role in enhancing accessibility of a region. Communication in the district has improved over the years. As per 2011 census, there are 12 Sub-Post offices and 85 branches in the district. The private players in the cell phone sector do not find operation in the district profitable because of inaccessibility and low subscriber base. Tele-density in the district has remained low.

**Energy**

Subarnapur district is close to Hirakud dam and power generation system. It would not be unreasonable to expect 100% household electrification in the district. But by the end of 2014-15, only 945 villages (100% of the total) in the district were electrified. Annual consumption of electricity in the district is 180 million units, of which domestic consumption accounted for 100 million units.

**Drinking water & Sanitation**

Drinking water is provided through tube-wells, sanitary wells and piped water projects. There are tube wells in 898 (94%) villages and sanitary wells in five villages. 226 piped water schemes operate in 242 villages.

**Financial Institutions**

All the six blocks of the district have banking facilities. There are 30 commercial bank branches and 18 RRBs in the district. Only 13.7% rural households have access to banking services. The average population served by a Bank branch is about 13,245. State Bank of India is the Lead Bank of the district. With the insistence of opening up of bank accounts for the labourers engaged in the MGNREGS, people’s access to banks has increased substantially. The credit-deposit ratio of the commercial banks was 54% in 2008-09 and that of RRBs was about 80%.
Co-operatives

Co-operatives provide credit in rural areas and facilitate the marketing of agricultural output and input as well. In 2011-12, there were 64 agricultural and 19 non-agricultural credit co-operative societies in the district. These societies have respectively 72,969 and 765 members. Loan overdues and loan outstanding were much higher than their loan advances. Non-recovery of loans has created non-circulation of funds. There are 3 Regional Co-operative Marketing Societies, one each in Birmaharajpur and Dunguripali Blocks and Subarnapur Municipality. The Central Co-operative Bank has seven branches.

Urban Infrastructure

Subarnapur is one of the least urbanized districts of Odisha with only 7 % urban population. There are 2 NACs and 1 Municipality in the district. Whatever infrastructure available in these urban centres is not adequate so far as the modern concept of urbanization is concerned. All the urban roads are metalled and blacktapped. All the areas of the urban centres have been supplied with electricity. Street light provision has been made. There are sewerage lines and piped water connections but it remains to be modernised.

Land-use pattern from 2010-11 to 2012-13 (in hector)

This estimate excludes, Urban area, Reserve forest, protected forests, Project area, Hill Blocks, Villages submerged under rivers and water reservoirs.

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<th>Culturable waste</th>
<th>Land put To non-agricultural uses</th>
<th>Barren and uncultivable land</th>
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Forest
Although the district has 3 forest ranges i.e. Sambalpur-Rairakhol border, Patna-Kamsara border, Menda-Lachhipur border, the geographical tract here comprises a very small area under forestry. The forest area is 428.75 sq.km. which constitutes about 18.34% of the total area of 2337 sq.km. in the district. The
percentage of forest here, as compared to the State total, is only 4.30% (2014-15). A number of factors like poor distribution of rainfall, geological formation which is very resistant to withering, shallow, sandy and dry soil, and intensive shifting cultivation in the past and recurring forest fires resulted in depletion of forests. These forests contained more of sal and teak in the past. There are also bamboo, climax and savannah type of forest in some places. A forest belt comprising teak trees borders the Khariar and Charbhata blocks. Hence, timber is one of the important forest produces.

There are 37 Reserve Forest blocks, 29 Village forests and 7 DPFs with 39194.49, 372.386 and 460 hacs. Besides, there are 3 hacs of unclassed forest and 2845.59 hacs of reserve forests.

The reserve forests under Surbarnapur range covers 8886.788 hac., under Binka range 2321.276 hac, under Ulunda range 14896 hac, and under Birmaharajpur range 5548 hac. Thus the reserve forests stand on a total area of 31652.064 hac.

The village forest under Sonepur range cover 77.000 hac and Binka range 30.386 hac. The total comes to 107.386 hac.

**Flora & Fauna**

**Flora**

The forests of Subarnapur Division are situated within the dry deciduous zone. Sal trees occur as almost pure crop in a few blocks and in a compact area in Subarnapur Division. The crop in general is a mixed one with preponderance of miscellaneous species. Bija, the other economically important species, is seen scattered throughout the forest and constitutes a low proportion of the crop. The other principal species in the crop have rare prominence. Sal also occurs in parts of mixed forests but forms a small percentage of the stand. The miscellaneous inferior species constitute the bulk of the crop. The prominent feature of the forest of this Division is the openness of the crop, high proportion of unsound stems, poor growth of trees and less economically important species.

The tract has been experiencing prolonged dry climate because of extreme temperature and uneven distribution of rainfall. The productive profile of the soil is shallow and has low moisture-retaining capacity. All these facts together with high biotic interference are the reasons for large scale deterioration in the condition of these forests, as seen today.

Sal forest in this Division was most likely in a stable sub-climax stage in the past. Due to intensive shifting cultivation, severe retrogression had taken place, causing the disappearance of Sal and subsequent replacement by miscellaneous species in different parts. Sal is sparsely represented, almost non-existent in most of the blocks. It occurred in pure groups in favoured localities of Chandili, Barpahad, where as it was sparse along with other species in a few remaining blocks forming less than 25% of the crop composition. The forests are very open.
The crop density varies from 0.1 to 0.3. Dense crops are rare in this Division and are restricted to Barpahad Forest block and are in small pockets where favourable conditions exist. Except these congenial sites the growth of trees is poor and defective. The land in the plain forests is cut off by so many nallahs and these are the reasons for bearing of open vegetation with poor crop composition. Extensive patches of exposed rocks are seen in the upper slopes of the hills of this Division. The process of soil erosion is progressive. Many blocks have patches of bushy growth of miscellaneous species with rare tree growth. This is very common in Sonepur, Binka and Birmaharajpur Ranges which are encircled by populous tracts.

In the top canopy of the existing forest, Sal (Shorea robusta) is the dominant species in patches where it grows well under favourable conditions and Teak is the other dominant species in its zone of occurrence but where it is in mixture with other dominant species, it is a co-dominant species. The other economically important species found in the top canopy are Bija (Pterocarpus marsupium), Asan (Terminalia alata), Bandhan (Ougenia ozonensis), Semul (Bombaxceiba), Mundi (Mitragyna parviflora), Sissoo (Dalbergia latifolia). Haldu (Adina cordifolia) and Gambhar (Gmelina arborea) of which the proportion of the first two species are fairly high when compared to the other species, but very much less when the entire crop is taken as a whole. These two species are scattered throughout the forests and rarely form pure groups. Among others, Gambhar and Bandhan are occasionally met with.

The top canopy however consists of high proportion of inferior species such as Dhaura (Anogeissus latifolia), Salai (Boswellia serrata), Moi (Lannea coromondalica), Kendu (Diospyros malanoxylon), Sidha (Lagerstroemia parviflora), Harida (Terminalia chebula), Bheru (Chloroxylon swietenia) and Rohini (Soymida febrifuga) on calcareous soil, Dhiba (Dalbergia paniculata), Kadi (Bridelia retusa), Padhel (Steraspermum suaveolens), Mahul (Madhuca indica), Arjun (Terminalia Arjuna) on banks of the streams etc. Of these inferior species, Salai and Moi form fairly high proportion in the crop and occur in almost every block in varying proportion. Salai is seen in pure patches also in some blocks.

The middle storey consists mainly of Khair (Acacia catechu), Karla (Cleistanthus collinus), Bahara (Terminalia beberica), Char (Buchanania lanzen), Amla (Emblica officinalis), Dhaman (Grewia tilifolia), Bhalia (Semicarpus anacardium), Sunari (Cassia fistula), Kanchan (Bahunia purpurea), Kangura or Tangen( Xyilia xylocarpa), Ber (Zyzyphus jujuba) Chauli (Eleodendron glaucum), Damkurudu (Gardenia latifolia),Genduli (Sterculia urens) mostly on bare rocks and hill slope, Ganiari (Cochlospermum gossypium) is another among the important species. Karla and Khair are common but Sunari and Bahada are scattered.

The ground flora consists of the shrubs like Dhatuki (Woodfordiafruticosa), Antia (Helecteres isora), Gilri (Indigofera pulehelia), Kharpat or Harsinghor (Nycanthes arbortristis), Gilo (Enteda scandens), Bhuinkurien (Ixora parviflora), Kurehin (Holarrhena antidysenterica), Ranikathi (Flemingia chapper) indicating Sal
patches, Ban-Kharjuri (*Phonix acualis*) and Grewia species etc. The ground flora is normally thin except during rainy season.

Climbers are not very common. Few climbers are found in these forests and are confined mostly to moist localities. The important ones are Siali (*Bauhinia vahlii*), Lata palas (*Butea superba*), Muturi (*Smilax macrophylla*), Budel (*Spatholobus roxburghii*), and Gaj (*Miuetia auriculata*). Grasses are very thin and a few species like Sabai (*Eulaliopsis binata*) confining mostly to eroded sites, thatch grass (*Andropogon contortus*), Sinkula (*Arstida setacea*) and Badhuni (*Thysanolaena agrostis*) are commonly seen.

Natural regeneration of principal species, particularly Sal is generally inadequate. Although there is fairly good recruitment of Sal in the areas where it occurs, they die back every year by the annual fires. Establishment of Sal regeneration is a continuing problem and appears to be a prolonged one and difficult proposition. Of the other principal species, the position with regard to the regeneration of Bija and Asan is much better and it is fairly adequate, though they are scattered throughout the forests except in eroded land and degraded sites where conditions are not conducive. The regenerations of inferior species, particularly of Karla, Salai, Khair, Dhuara, Moi, Kendu and Sidha are adequate and assured. Production of bamboo culms in potential bamboo bearing areas is not healthy. Bamboos are produced in Singhasan RF in particular and in other forests in scattered patches. In the areas where the clumps are subjected to maltreatment and over-felling, there is either no recruitment of the culms, or if produced, are very few and thin.

The regenerations of Teak is deficient. In some blocks like Chandili, Barpahad RFs, Harinapali RFs, however, it is regenerating fairly well but are confined mostly to the compartments where Teak is either in pure patches or in mixture.

Besides the natural forests, species introduced by artificial regeneration in different blocks of this division during the past years also form part of the existing crop. Among all the introduced species, Teak (*Tectona grandis*) has been raised successfully in most of the blocks either in compact patches or in small-scattered patches alternating with mixed forest.

Excellent plantations of Teak exist in compact patches in Barpahad, Arjunpur, Chandli Baradungri blocks while those existing in some other blocks are in small and irregular scattered patches. In many other blocks, Teak plantations also exist in scattered patches but the growth is not uniformly good, mainly due to lack of timely tending operation.

In order of success, Gambhar figures next to Teak but is found to have been planted in a few patches only, either pure or in mixture with Teak. The other introduced species, viz. Eucalyptus, *Cassia siamea*, *Accaciaauriculiformis*, Bamboo (*Dendrocalamus strictus*) etc. are practically non-existent, the contributing factors for the failure being the biotic interferences, or lack of necessary post-planting operations like tending, thinning etc.
Fauna

In early times, forests of Subarnapur Division were reputed for abundance of Wild Fauna—both Herbivora and Carnivora. The deterioration of habitat, increasing level of pressures and some ancillary factors on forests have contributed towards rapid decline in the population of forest fauna.

The National Forest Policy 1988 has emphasized the need to conserve Wild Life and their habitat. Not much emphasis had been given earlier for conservation of Wild Life and their habitat. Therefore, to provide protection to the existing wild life, to improve their habitat, and to conserve bio-diversity, the Wild Life (Overlapping) Working Circle has been constituted, which extends to the entire Working Plan area of the Division.

There are at present 37 elephants, 2 leopards, 8 hyenas, 8 sambars, 45 barking deer, 27 spotted deer, 9 wolves, 41 jackals, 82 rabbits, 496 langurs, 144 apes, 196 wild pigs, 2 wild fowls, 35 sloth bears and 23 peacocks only as enumerated by the Division in 2015. Census of 2015 revealed 4091 Birds and different species of Water fowl in the Division. Elephants are found mostly in Barpahad RF of Sonepur range. Leopards are found in Barpahad block. Hyena and Sambar are common in parts of Barpahad, Chandli forest block. Spotted deer, Barking Deers, Hyaena (Hyaena hyaena) are seen on the plateau of RFs like Singhasan, Chandli, Barpahad RF. Besides, Wild Bear, Langurs, Barking deer, Rabbits, Jackals are seen all over the Division. The distribution of fauna is more in the Barpahad and Chandli blocks. The wild animals are commonly seen in all forest areas of the Division.

Vana Samrakshyana Samiti

In this Division till now 212 VSS have been formed covering an area of 15127.0 ha.

The VSS are taking key role in Joint Forest Management and creation of awareness among the people on environmental issues. They are participating in protection of forest from fire, poachers, encroachers and other detrimental biotic factors as and when required

Source:

1. Working Plan of Bolangir East Forest Division, Sambalpur South Forest Division & Redhakhol Forest Division.
2. Impact of Chauhan Rule on Orissan History & Culture by Prof. Dr. P.M. Nayak.
# APPENDIX-I

## GLOSSARY OF LOCAL NAMES OF COMMON PLANTS

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<td>BATRA</td>
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## Appendix II
### Animals A. mammals

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Badudi</td>
<td>Shortnosed-fruitbat</td>
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<td>Badudi</td>
<td>Flying fox bat</td>
<td>Pterosus quiganteus</td>
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<td>Bagh</td>
<td>Tiger</td>
<td>Panthera tigris</td>
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<td>Bajrakapta</td>
<td>Pangolin</td>
<td>Manis crassicaudata</td>
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<tr>
<td>Balia Kukur</td>
<td>Wild dog</td>
<td>Cuon alpinus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bana Biradi(Katas)</td>
<td>Jungle Cat</td>
<td>Felis chaus affinis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barha</td>
<td>Wild boar</td>
<td>Sus scrofa cristas</td>
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<td>Belermusa(Napali)</td>
<td>Malayan Giant squirrel</td>
<td>Ratufa bicolor</td>
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<td>Bhala</td>
<td>Sloth Bear</td>
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<td>Bilua</td>
<td>Jackal</td>
<td>Canis aures</td>
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<td>Chausingha</td>
<td>The four horned antelope</td>
<td>Tetracerus quadricornis</td>
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<td>Cheetah Biradi</td>
<td>Leopard Cat</td>
<td>Felis bengalensis</td>
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<td>Chemgha</td>
<td>Beared sheath tailed bat</td>
<td>Taphozous melanopogon</td>
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<td>Chita Bagha (Kalarapatria)</td>
<td>Leopard</td>
<td>Panthera pardus</td>
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<td>Chital(Harin)</td>
<td>Spotted Deer</td>
<td>Axis axis</td>
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<td>Chuchundra</td>
<td>Grey musk shrew</td>
<td>Suncus murinus</td>
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<td>Gada Bhalu</td>
<td>Ratel</td>
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<td>Gayal</td>
<td>Bison.</td>
<td>Bos gaurus.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gunduchi Musa</td>
<td>3 Striped palm squirrel,</td>
<td>Funambulus palmanum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gunduchi Musa</td>
<td>5 Striped palm Squirel</td>
<td>Funambulus pennanti</td>
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<td>Gurandi</td>
<td>Mouse deer</td>
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<td>Hati</td>
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<td>Barking deer</td>
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<td>Mankad(Pati)</td>
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<td>Rat</td>
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<td>Neula (Kuji)</td>
<td>Small Inidan mongoose</td>
<td>H. auropunctatus.</td>
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<td>Neula(Hatla)</td>
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<td>Nilagai</td>
<td>Blue bull</td>
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<td>Odha</td>
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<td>Ramsiali</td>
<td>Wolf</td>
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<td>Toddy cat</td>
<td>Paradoxurus hermaphroditus</td>
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<td>Small Indian Ceivet</td>
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<td>Sambar</td>
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### B. BIRDS

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<td>Baya (Baya weaver bird)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bee eater small green</td>
<td>M. orientalis</td>
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<td>Bhadabhadalia</td>
<td>Coraeas bengalesis</td>
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<td>Bhaliakhai (Grey hornbill)</td>
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<td>Bhungaraj (Racket tailed dronge)</td>
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<td>Bulbul l (Bulbul Red vented)</td>
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<td>Chatak (Pied crested cukoo)</td>
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<td>Dove king</td>
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<td>Eagle crested Hawk</td>
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<td>Eagle serpent</td>
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<td>Eastern golden plover</td>
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<td>Eosypaster</td>
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<td>Ghukika</td>
<td>Acridotheres ginginanion</td>
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<td>Gobra Chadhei</td>
<td>Molpastes cafer</td>
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Grebe little or Dab chick
Great blackheaded gull.
Grey horon
Haladi basanta (oriole black headed)
Harada Chadhei
Heron Night
Heron pond (Kantiabaga)
Hoopoe
Indian Roller
Jungle Fowl Grey (Bana Kukuda)
Jungle Fowl Red (Ban Kukuda)
Jungle bush quail (Teetri)
Kajalpati (Common Drongo)
Kaligoduni
Kathakumper (Wood peacker pigmy)
Kau (Damara)
Kau (Pati)
Kochilakhai (Malabar pied Hornbill)
Koili
Kumbhatua
Kundachadei
Larks (Easter skylark)
Larks (Bengal Bush)
Macharanka (Lesser pied King Fisher)
Mappie robin (Lesser pied)
Mayura (Peacock)
Munias (Easter Black-headed)
Myna
Night jar
Nilkhanta (Rboin magple)
Owl Forest Eagle
Owl grass
Owl (Indian Barn owl)
Owlet Jungle
Owlet Scoops
Pahadi Bulbul
Painted supurfowl
Parakeet roseringed (Sua)
Patridge
Pecha
Phutki (Tailor bird)
Quaker babbler
Ramchadhei
Red wattled Lapwing.
Sandpiper common
Sari (Hill Myna)
Shrikes (Indian Grey strike)
Snipe common
Soguna (Vulture)
Spotted babbler
Podiceps ruficollis capensis
Larus ichthyaeus
Ardea cinera
Oriolus xanthornus
Crocoropus phoenicopterus
Nycticorax nycticorax
Ardeola grayii grayii
Upupa epops
Coracias pengalensis
Gallus sonneratii
Gallus gallus
Percula asiatica
Dicurus macrorhynchos
Dissoua episcopus
Picoides nanus
Corvus macrorhynchos
Corvus splendidus
Anthrococeros coronatus
Eudynamis scolopaceus
Centropus sinensis
Turdues somervillii
Alauda gulgula
Mirafrassasmica
Ceryle rudis
Copsychus saularis
Pavo cristatus
Lonchura malacca
Acridotheres tristis
Caprimulgus asiaticus
Copsychus aullaris
Bufo nipalensis
Tyto capensis
Tyto-alba stertens
Glaucomela radiatum
Otus scoops
Pnyonotus jocosus
Gallopeodix lunulata
Psittacula krameri
Francolinus francolini asiace
Athena brama
Orthotonus sutorius
Aleippe poicicephala
Burhinus oedicnemus
Vanellus indicus
Tringa hypoleucos
Gracula religiosa
Lanius excubitor
Gallinago gallinago
Sacrocogyps calvus
Pellorneum ruficeps
Sua (Parakeet large India)  Psittacula eupatria
Sunpurple  Nectarinia astatica
Swifts crested Tree.  Hemiprocne longipennis coronata
Thrushes (White throated ground)  Zothera citrina
Warbler Wren ashy  Prinia socialis
Warbler Wren futos  Prinia rufuscens
Warbler wren Inidan  Prinia subflava
Whistilling teal  Dendrocyhna javanica
White Breasted Kingfisher  Halcyon smymensis fusca
White browed bulbul  Pycnonotus luteolus
Woodkpecker black  Larus ridibundu
Woodpecker Pigmy  Picoides nanus
Woodpecker black naped gren  Picus canus
Yellow cheeked tit.  Machlrophus xanthogenye aplonotus
CHAPTER II
HISTORY

Sonepur, headquarters of Subarnapur district of Odisha, has a special place on the political and cultural map of India since time immemorial.

Pre-History and Proto-History

The discovery of a large number of stone tools and weapons from different places in and around Sonepur and the Rock Art of ‘puja dungri’ near Rampur Tahasal support this presumption. The archaeological excavations of Kumursingha, Khamsiripali and Hikudi on the left bank of the Mahanadi in Birmaharajpur subdivision, the excavations in the Suktel valley, the archaeological remains like chopper biface, flake blades, white-painted red slipped wares, black red wares of white paints, battered large-sized bricks, beads made of laspers, cornellion and agate, stone implements designed with copper metallurgy during the explorations of Tarapurgarh, and the Punch-marked coins from Sonepur make us believe that there were human settlements in this region dating from 3rd century B.C. to 1st century A.D. But the exact nature and the extent of Sonepur region in these periods of Paleolithic, Mesolithic, Microlithic, Neolithic and Chalcolithic civilizations are yet to be known.

In the Vedic Age emperor Vaibaswatamanu handed over south Kosala to his daughter Ila of whose four sons, Vinitaswa set up on the bank of the Mahanadi his capital known as Vinitaswapura or Vinitapura (modern Binka) of the Somavamsi charter. (Koshala Itihasa Katha Vol.1). Vinitaswa’s successor shifted their capital to (Tusra) near Bolangir on the bank of the Tel.

Sonepur has been linked with the Lanka of the Ramayana because of its location, its tradition and its association. The Aranya Parba of the Mahabharata, Devi Purana, Markendeya Purana, Bhagabata Purana, Kathasaritsagara, Vikramarka Deva Charita etc. show Ceylon and Lanka separately on the map of the world. Neither archaeology nor tradition nor the 16th century Rameswar temple nor the coral bridge which is but a natural growth of the Palk Strait supports the hypothesis that Ceylon was Lanka. On the other hand, the Tibetan scripture Pag Sam Jon and the folk tales of the Binjhals of Padampur locate Lanka in Sonepur. During the Buddhist days it was the Lanka of Laxmikara. Sonepur was known as Paschima Lanka in the 11th century Kelga charter of Kumara Someswara. While K.D. Bajpayi seeks Lanka in Bastar–Odisha–Andhra border, Ramila Thapper and N.K. Sahu place it in the Mahanadi valley. And they may be right. The proximity of Gandhamardan with rare medicinal herbs, the existence of Dandakaranya in its close proximity, the Rameswar Temple at the confluence, Lankeswari in the midstream of the Mahanadi, Subalagiri with wide wheel-tracks, Shyenagiri, Marichapur, Tarapurgarh, Asurgarh at the confluence etc., associate Subarnapur with Swarnapur Lanka. The Meghanada festival under the Nikumbhilabata at Chhatabar (Birmaharajpur), the Ram-Ravana Ganjpa cards of Sonepur and the
Lankapodi festival of Bhadrab Amabasya that ends with the breaking of terracotta Hanuman images on the Jodakhumb on the Somlei temple premises link Subarnapur with Lanka. During this Ramayana Age, Parasuram, sage Yamadagni's son is said to have spilt the blood of the Ksatriya kings in the Tantric hole known as Khaulgad on the precincts of Sureswari temple. Even goddess Sureswari is identified with Renuka, mother to Parasuram in popular parlance.

Early History

After the fall of the Aikshakus in the middle of the 4th century B.C., this region came under Mahapadma Nanda for a time. The punch-marked coins of Mahapadma Nanda discovered at Sonepur resemble those found in Kosambhi (Allahabad) of U.P. which shows their political and commercial connection.

During the time of Kharavela the Chedis ruled this region with their capital in Suktimatipur or Sothavatinagara of the Chetiya Jataka (Jatakas Vol.II), on the bank of river Suktimati or Suktel (D.C. Sarkar) that flows down Gandhamardana hills and meets the Tel not far from its confluence with the Mahanadi. The valley of Suktel is full of ancient ruins and the village Sakma on its bank retains the memory of this ancient city.

There was a capital city called Kanchanapura according to the Jaina Uttaradhyayanasutra. The emperor of Kanchanapura was a chief patron of Jainism. And Sonepur might have been this Kanchanapura (The Mukura XIX). In the opinion of Bhandarkar the Satabahana king of Gautamiputra Satakarni brought this region for a short period under his regime (History of Orissa 142).

In the middle of the 4th century A.D. Samudragupta as evident from his Allahabad Pillar Inscription led his victorious campaign against the kingdoms of Daksinapatha and subjugated Sonepur (Smith's Early History of India 300). Samudragupta defeated king Mantaraja of Korala identified with San Karle and Bad Karle of Sonepur (History of the Guptas 51). Sonepur represents the ancient Kingdom of Korala which was contiguous to Kosala and Kantara and was located in the Ang river valley where a number of antiquities datable to pre and post Gupta period have been discovered. (Ray Choudhury 539; Chatopadhyaya 163; N. K. Sahu History of Orissa Vol.I)

Medieval History

In the 8th century A.D. Sonepur region, known as Subarnapur was a part of Khinjalimandala ruled by the Bhanjas as feudatories of the Bhaumakaras of Toshali. The Somavamsi Janmejaya I (850-885) snatched this territory from the Bhanjas and in the midst of Indradhwaja festival was coronated king. Subarnapur became his vijayaskandabara (victorious camp). Gradually, the Somavamsi kingdom extended as far as Utkala for the better administration of the newly conquered kingdom. The empire was divided into two parts by the ruler Yayati II (A.D.1023-1040) as Utkaladesa with Abhinaba Yayatinagara (modern Jajpur) as its
capital ruled by the king himself and Kosaladesa with headquarters at Subarnapur which remained in charge of a prince. In A.D. 1070, the Telugu Chodas as the feudatories of the Chindaka Nagas of Bastar region snatched Subarnapur from the Somavamsis and ruled this tract for a period of 45 years. The Telugu Chodas who called themselves Baidyanathapadapankajabhraramah. (Bees on the lotus feet of Lord Baidyanath) were devotees of Kosaleswara. In A.D.1113, the Kalachuris expelled the Telugu Chodas and ruled over Subarnapur for about 100 years.

In the meantime, the Somavamsis were ousted from the Utkala region by the Gangas. The Gangas waged a hundred-year-war with the formidable Kalachuris to occupy the Subarnapur territory. Ultimately, Subarnapur was conquered by the imperial Ganga monarch Anangabhimeva III (A.D.1211-1238). The discovery of Ganga gold coins from Subarnapur and the Stambheswari Stone Inscription confirm the Ganga rule over this region. As the Gangas neglected the administration of this territory due to their preoccupation with the Muslims of Bengal, this tract temporarily went back to the Bhanjas until the Chauhans came.

**Modern History**

The Chauhan rule was established in Patna by Ramai Deo who had his honeymoon in Charu Subarnapattanam. His son Vaijal Dev is said to have built at Sonepur the temple of the golden Mahadeo (Subarnameru). His successor Balabhadra Dev (A.D. 1605-1630) took away Sonepur territory from the Bhanja ruler of Boudh, Siddhabhanja Dev. The next Chauhan ruler of Sambalpur Madhukar Dev, constituted the newly conquered kingdom into a vassal state and entrusted it to his second son Madangopal. Madangopal (1650-60) laid the foundation of the Chauhan rule at Sonepur.

Sonepur under Madangopal comprised 160 villages including the zamindaris of Rampur, Agalpur, Sukha, Kamsara and Barapali. By sheer strength of his arms, he subjugated Uphuladesa and exchanged Agalpur for Kamsara Zamindari. During the reign of his successor Lal Sai Deo (1660-89) Sonepur town was very populous, inhabited by 52,000 residents, spreading over an area of 3 sq. miles. from Rameswar in the east to Kabattalai in the west, from Rajghat in the north to Ganeshghat in the south. It was during the reign of Lal Sai Deo that Lord Jagannath was carried inland into the caves of Kotsamalai hills during the Mughal invasion. Purusottam Dev (1689-1709), his successor, set up 18 garhs here and declared himself Astadashadurgahipati. While his son Raj Sing Deo (1709-1729)is credited with the construction of Khambeswari temple and Jagannath temple of the town, his grandson Achal Sing Deo (1729-49) built the Sureswari temple and initiated the tantric puja paddhati and introduced the annual inspection of arms and ammunitions of the gartias and gartisepoys. His successor Divya Sing (1749-66) was expansionist in his design. He acquired 82 villages from Rairakhol and 63 from Patna and extended the boundary of Sonepur to the north-east and to the west. Mazumdar tells an interesting story about this attack on Rairakhol. When directed
by Ajit Sing of Sambalpur, Divya Sing sent his son, Yuvaraj, Jarawar to bring the refractory Raja of Rairkhol to book, he returned disappointed at his first attempt. Rani Suryapraya sent her son waiting on the left bank of the Mahanadi for a message, a box of bangles and a sari, infuriated at this insult, Jarawar went back, inflicted a crushing defeat on Raja Bhagirathi Jenamani and brought him a captive. Since then it was customary for the Raja of Rairkhol to prostrate before Sonepur Raja when he met him. (A. Fraser: Among Rajas and Ryots,1912). During the rule of Sobha Sing (1767-81) the Panchara pragana of the neighbouring Boudh state was annexed to Sonepur.

The next ruler Prithvi Sing (1781-1841) who reigned for a period of long 60 years lived a life which was politically significant and historically eventful. He created the Sukha zamindari on the open border with Patna, renovated the moat and fortified Sonepur. Defeated by the Marathas in 1802, he was remanded to Chanda Jail of Nagpur for 17 years. Sonepur remained in the hands of the Unscrupulous Four, Chandaji Madho Rao, Balwant Babu, Sakaram Gopal and Kasiram Kubedan who plundered property, exacted exorbitant taxes, molested women, burnt villages. People ran away into the forest. Sonepur looked deserted. Against this background, Rani Laxmipriya Devi signed an agreement with the East India Company on 13th Dec,1803 by which Sonepur came under the British protectorate. With the departure of Wellesley, there was a change in British policy and according to the Treaty of 24 Aug,1806, Sonepur along with the Sambalpur state was restored to Raghuji Bhonsla till 1818. After the defeat of the Marathas in the 3rd Anglo-Maratha war of 1817 Raja Prithvi Sing on a ransom of Rs. 1 lac to Raghuji Bhonsla was released around 1821 Sonepur permanently came under British protection. In 1826 the British Government annulled the supremacy of the Sambalpur Raja over its 17 dependencies including Sonepur.

Long before the cabinet form of government was introduced in India, Rani Gundicha Devi after the death of Prithvi Sing in 1841 ran the affairs of the state with the help of five ministers namely Biswanath Pujari, Raghu Mishra, Raghu Adhikari, Jagabandhu Ray and Palau Mallick. When Palau Mallick rose in revolt, killed the loyal officers and burnt down villages, she alone faced, fought and routed him. She was an intelligent and strong-minded woman, wrote JP Grant, Secretary to govt. of Bengal to the Political Agent of Sambalpur on 12.6.1852. Gundicha Devi was not only a fighter; she was a builder. She built the Laxmi-Nrusinha temple popularly known as Gundicha temple which is the tallest in west Odisha, her son Niladhar Sing Deo (1841-91) was a helping hand to the British government during the mutinous disturbances in Sambalpur, Khondmal, Angul and Athmallik caused by the rebellion of Surendra Sai and Chakra Bisoi for which he was awarded the title, Rajabahadur, for, as Mazumdar says, ‘evolving cosmos out of chaos’ (Sonepur under theSambalpur Tract 1911).
But this is only a part of the story. The 30s of the 19th century witnessed the Kandha revolt from Ghumsur to Kalahandi, Angul to Sambalpur, Daspalla to Boudh and to some extent Sonepur. There was a growing discontent among the tribals over the introduction of new revenue laws, money economy, insecurity of proprietorship, increased revenue demand, erosion of traditional value system etc. All this led to tribal uprising against colonial rule spearheaded by Chakara Bisoi of Ganjam and Surendra Sai of Sambalpur. It is true Niladhar, like his mother, had an independent mind and a strong will. It is also true that while the 8th Bengal Battalion was fighting a desperate battle at Manamunda on the right bank of the river Tel, on the left bank was Raja Niladhar sitting and fiddling, disregarding the request by the Commissioner, Cuttack and Deputy Commissioner Sambalpur for men and ration. It is only when he was intimidated and threatened with a fine of Rs 500/- that he bent to the British will, so much so that while Pitambar Deb, Raja of Boud spent only Rs 1000/-, Sonepur incurred Rs 2030/-towards provision for the British soldiers. This is not all. Raja Niladhar was instrumental in putting down the Kandha revolt in Athmallik and Angul and in apprehending Mrutyunjay Panigrahi who had amassed 2000 tribals at Maneswar to protest against the British government and Padmanabh Guru who was a close associate of Surendra Sai (Impact, 2013). Given the option, a strong-minded and independent ruler like Niladhar would have undoubtedly lent his support to a nationalist leader like Surendra Sai and his devoted compatriots.

Niladhar was the first among the Garjat Rajas to receive English education and the first in his command over three branches of knowledge: Gandharbabidya (music), Dwipantaribidya (magic) and Mallavidya (wrestling). It was during his time that Bhima Bhoi set up his ashram at Khaliapali.

Rajarsi Prataprudra (1891-1902) was the most benevolent ruler Sonepur had ever seen. In the words of A.D. Young husband, he was the worthy son of a worthy father and the worthy father of a worthy son. The land settlement work was undertaken from 1893 by his Dewan Trayambak Rao Sathe and then by Rai Saheb Dinabandhu Pattnaik. And for the first time royatwari parcha showing the extent of land and an assessment register reflecting the dues of the royats and gauntias was prepared. For the promotion of education in the state Prataprudra opened a number of schools and carried on emergent relief works during the famine of 1899-1900.
Prataprudra had an educated wife in Rani Amulyamani Devi. He started a tribal school in Sonepur which was perhaps the first of its kind in Odisha.

Birmitrodaya Sing Deo (1902-37) succeeded Prataprudra on 8th August, 1902 and ushered in a golden age for Sonepur in communication and commerce, in education and enlightenment. He was given the title of Maharaja, Knight Commander of the Indian Empire (K.C.I.E.), by the British Government. Jnanagunakar by Bangiya Sanskruta Mahamandala, Dharmannidhi by Puri Mukti Mandap Sabha. BM Sing Deo was on friendly terms with the British Govt., from the Political Agent, Sambalpur to the Chief Commissioner of the Orissa Division, from Lt. Governor of Bihar and Orissa to the Lt. Governor of Bengal. During his tenure, the top British bureaucrats who visited Sonepur included Sir Andrew Fraser, Lt. Governor of Bengal, Sir Edward Gait, John Grunning, FW Duke, Sir Hugh Stephenson, Sir Henry Wheeler, Governors of Bihar and Orissa. On top of all, he was in touch with Lord Linlithgow, Viceroy, Their Majesties, King and Queen of England. He presented a portrait of Sir Henry Wheeler, a marble bust of Sir Edward Gait to Patna Museum, a bust of Lady Stephenson to Ravenshaw college and a portrait of Sir Gait to Victoria Town Hall, Sambalpur. He even threw a bamboo bridge over the Mahanadi so that the Sahebs could cross the river easily and comfortably.

Yet BM Sing Deo was a Maharaja of high self-esteem. When H. Dippe, Inspector of Schools, Bihar and Orissa, got the Maharaja High School, Sonepur disaffiliated for poor results, he obtained two Inspectors from Patna and got it, on their recommendations, re-affiliated. When he found one Scott Saheb, unamenable to his interest, he had him transferred to the Tirhut division of Bihar. When a Political Agent sent him a revised estimate of the pillars to be planted on the Sonepur-Patna border he questioned the propriety of the revision which no ruler would have ordinarily dared. Birmitrodaya was the Vice-Patron of Bihar and Orissa Research Society and Vice-President of Maternity & Child Welfare League of India. He founded the Sonepur Chair of Oriya in Calcutta University and the Sonepur Chair of English in Ravenshaw College. He instituted the Sonepur Trust Funds for Rs25/-lac for the general welfare of the State which was a unique step in the whole country. During his reign Sonepur was transferred from the control of the Central Provinces and was placed under the Commissioner of Orissa Division in consequence of the historic division of Bengal in 1905. In this connection Sir Andrew Fraser, Lt. Governor of Bengal writes..., and I, as Head of this Government have to thank you ... for the help that you have given me in making arrangements connected with the reconstitution of Orissa (Sonepur Raj).
Birmitrodaya was a great patron of learning, and during his rule a large number of manuscripts saw the light of day, eminent Sanskrit classics were translated into Odia, half a dozen collections of Odishi songs, two novels, three kabyas, one purana, one smrutiwasstra were published. In fact, Birmitrodaya was the ‘maker of modern Sonepur’. And with his death the freedom movement here gathered momentum when Sudhansusekhar (1937-47) was called upon to drive the last nail into the coffin of the Chauhan rule in Sonepur. While World War I (1914-18) threw B. M. Sing Deo into the vortex of Indian politics, the Second World War (1939-45) rang the death bell of Sudhansusekhar.

Meanwhile a momentous event took place in Europe which plunged the whole world into a thunderous volcanic cataclysm. The assassination of Archduke Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary and his Duchess by the Bosnian revolutionaries with the secret support of Serbia triggered off the most dreadful conflagration in human history. The world stood divided, England, France, Belgium, Serbia, America, Russia and Italy, on the one hand, and Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey, and Bulgaria on the other, From August 4, 1914 to November 11, 1918 when the Armistice Treaty was signed, about 8 lac soldiers were killed, 60 lacs disabled, 1 crore and 20 lac wounded in this, the first world war. India as a part of the British empire joined the Anglo-American Allies, and Sonepur under the leadership of its loyal chief contributed men, money and means in support of the allied cause. Even prayers were chanted in the temples of Sonepur for the victory of the Allies. The Maharaja remitted Rs 36,001/- to the Indian Imperial War Relief Fund and Rs 9000/- to the Prince of Wales Fund. He realized Rs. 60,000/- from the poor farmers for the Indian war loan for which he himself contributed Rs. 5,56,987/-. He sent Sonepur sweepers to Mesopotamia, 111 maunds of rice for the Indian soldiers, Rs. 4444/- for the comfort of the Indian troops, Rs. 4800/- for two machine guns, Rs. 8000/- for an ambulance on which was to be superscribed ‘Sonepur Raj’. And under his initiative Rs. 51,000/- was contributed by the garjat chiefs, namely, Bamra, Patna, Kalahandi, Dhenkanal, Baramba, Ranpur, Boudh, Khandapara, Tigaria, Keorjhar, Nilgiri, Daspalla, Nayagarh, Pallahara, Narsingpur, Seraikela, Kharswan for presentation of two aeroplanes to the British army. And on the planes was written ‘Orissa Feudatory States’. Thus Sonepur paid around Rs. 9,00,000/-, to the British cause, the highest among the garjats despite its slender resources, and sent paikas and sweepers and coolies to the war front. But history did not care to record their services nor return the surviving recruits, if any. In addition, Sonepur contributed Rs 12,000/- for the vigorous prosecution of the Afghan war. The Political Agent wrote on 27 June 1916 to the Commissioner of Orissa Division: The “Feudatory
Chief (BM Sing Deo) must have heavily entrenched on his private saving to have made all these generous gifts, and I am quite sure that no state has exceeded in liberality the gifts and contributions made by Sonepur state in proportion to its resources (Sonepur Raj). In recognition of this liberality and patriotism, this deep loyalty and profound devotion to their Imperial Majesties, this unreserved material, monetary and moral support, BM Sing Deo was conferred on 1.1.1918 the title of KCIE with a permanent salute of 9 guns. There his Maharani Lady Parvati Devi, Kaisers-I-Hind and Life Fellow of Patna University earned a rare reputation among the Ranas of Odisha for rehabilitating orphaned girls of the state and beyond.

Not only war donations, but BM Sing Deo’s munificence reached out to all corners of the country, from Ramkrisna Mission, Calcutta to Tara Kutir Mission, Koraput, Ravenshaw College, Cuttack to Rajkumar College, Raipur, Calcutta University to Benaras Hindu University, Orissa Flood Relief Fund to Viceroy’s Earthquake Relief Fund, Calcutta Deaf and Dumb School to Ranchi Blind School, All India Oriental Conference, Patna to Indrapastha Vaidyasabha, Delhi (Sonepur Raj). In fact, as AP Guru observes, his heart was always drenched with the waters of charity: danabarikanakeih sadaradrakam (Syenagirih).

In 1919 a severe famine visited the Orissa Tributary States, there was a huge influx of famine-stricken people from Athgarh, Baramba, Khandapara, Dasapalla, Hindol, Talcher, Dhenkanal, Narsinghpur into Sonepure. BM Sing Deo started 3 annachhatras and 30 Food-for-Work centres and gave gratuitious relief to around 1,73,878 persons. When flood followed famine in September the same year Sonepur sent to Cuttack, Puri, Angul districts rice worth Rs.2,40,000 at 9 seers and 10 chhataks per rupee while the prevailing rate was just four and a half seers. Grunning, Commissioner, Cuttack remarks in his Annual Report of 1918-19: He (BM Sing Deo) could have disposed off surplus stock at very great profit to himself instead of which he placed them freely at our disposal at cheap rate for the benefit of the States in distress (Impact: 2013) ‘Without this assistance so generously given the results would have been very serious indeed’, comments the Political Agent on 16th November, 1919. Sing Deo rushed relief to govt. of India even for Bihar earthquake of 1934 and Quetta earthquake of 1935 (Letter from Lord Willingdon, Viceroy of India to BM Sing Deo on 19th June, 1934; Sonepur Raj P.148

NIGHT BEFORE DAWN

It was the best of times. It was the worst of times. It was the spring of hope. It was the winter of despair. The whole of India was in a state of ferment. The national congress had become a mass movement under the popular leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. The farmers were gradually becoming conscious of the oppression and atrocity of the alien government. They were beginning to see the Rajas and Zamindars as instruments of exploitation. They must go with British. In Patna and Sonepur they organised Krusak Party. They flew the national flag. They formed clubs. They read The Harijan. They protested through placards and posters. They held political rallies and public meetings. There the Durbar under Sudhansusekhar
Sing Deo (1937-47) invoked the Special Criminal Act on 27th Jan 1939 to contain this upheaval. It provided a fine of Rs.50/- and imprisonment up to one year in case one is found buying or selling the national flag or enrolled as a member of the congress party. There was now no Birmitrodaya with strong links with powers that be. Sudhansusekhar (1937-47) was a poor shadow of his father. He adopted the policy of appeasement and accommodation. The Garjat Enquiry Committee with Balwantrao Mehta as President, H.K. Mahtab, Sarangadhar Dash, Nabakrishna Choudhury, Raj Krishna Bose, Lal Mohan Pattnaik as members came to Sonepur. Yudhistir Mahakud, Kastu Padhan, Meghu Karna etc. deposed before the committee against the atrocious action and arbitrary exactions of Sonepur Maharaja. In 1938, just a year after BM Sing Deo died, Laxmana Satpathy, his elder brother Ram Chandra Satpathy, Mohan Mishra, Chaturbhuja Mishra, Pitambar Bhoi held a meeting in the house of Prahallad Lath at Sambalpur and decided to form Sonepur Prajamandal. A committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of Laxmana Satpathy for membership drive. Thus Sonepur Prajamandal was born in the house of Dolamani Das at Brahman-Turum on 11.12.38 and not at Sonepur for fear of apprehension. Bhimasen Bhoi was elected President while just across the river Jira, Sonepur waited.

March 22, 1939 was a red letter day in the history of Sonepur Prajamandal. Turum was agog with activity. Each door was decorated with mango leaves and Jhoti. The whole village reverberated with the slogan, “Mahatma Gandhi ki Joy” in the midst of conchshells and drums. The memorandum presented to the Maharaja was put in a Khadi bag and sealed. It demanded the right to hold meetings, enroll members, collect donations, print pamphlets. It demanded abolition of chanda bheda, bethi begari, magan, rasad, marjmanibhar, haldianpatti. It demanded the abolition of kharchari tax, bi-cycle tax, betel tax, school tax, and the nazrana system. A team of three-Laxmana Satpathy, Mohan Mishra and Pitambar Bhoi proceeded to present the charter of demands to the Maharaja but the moment they reached Binka they were put under arrest by the Sub-Inspector, Gourishankar Mishra. There Satyabati, Ramchandra Satpathy’s wife was summoned by Birmaharajpur Tehsildar to appear before the Court. In the intense heat of summer her child caught diarrhoea and died, while the father was rotting in jail.

John Bowstead came on 16.08.1948 to enquire into the Prajamandal’s memorandum of allegations. The people were prepared to stand witness. But Bowstead said he had come to enquire and not to examine witnesses. On his exit, however, the interest on takabi loan came down. The free service rendered by the nertha, porter, barber, launderer to the visiting state officers was abolished. Officers paid their bills. Section 39 of Bhumibidhi which forced free services was done away with. Section 40 which provided for bethi, begari or forced labour was amended. Rasad and school tax were abolished. The right over baran or forbidden trees were restored. The auction of the post of Panua became a thing of the past. All this intended to assuage the pains of the prajas was too little and too late. Though the prajas saw the glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel, the tunnel remained. Arrest
and confinement remained. Threat to life and property remained. Jagannath Panda, Debendra Bhanja, Gourishankar Raiguru were banished. Dhanwant Mallik and Satyananda Hota were imprisoned.

A Blue Shirt Volunteers Organisation came up at Tarbha, Binka, Menda, Bagchhera to mobilize the youth.

A workers sammilani was held at Bagchhera. Sarangadhar Das, Parbati Giri, Prabhabati Devi addressed the meeting. There were meetings at Tarbha and Sonepur. All this had its fallout on Sonepur administration. Sudhansusekhar introduced on the model of Patna, a cabinet form of government. The Secretary of state was replaced by a Chief Minister. BC Roy from Bengal was the first Chief Minister of Sonepur. Sonepur Sadar, Birmaharajpur and Binka were made Sub-Divisions, each administered by an SDO. The Bichar Samiti rules were amended to include members from different fields – agriculture, business, education etc. Binka and Tarbha were declared Municipalities. A tax called “Danagadi” was imposed for town improvement. But the people saw it was a huge hoax. So a protest movement was launched at Binka. There was a vast gathering of 20,000 men and women under the leadership of Jagdish Agrawal, Muralidhar Mishra and Chaturbhuja Mishra. When the police came to arrest them, the people protested and prevented them. Hundreds of men and women were lathi-charge. One Gurubari Meher gave her life to the bayonet. The day was 30 Jan, 1947. One year after the Father of the nation bared his bosom to the flying bullets of Nathuram Godse exactly on the same date. Binka Andolan stopped. “Danagadi” tax was abolished.

Sonepur Prajamandal organised a three-day-conference at Bagchhera from April 2 to 4, 1947. The venue was named Nehru Nagar. Nearly 60,000 people gathered. Political heavyweights like Malati Choudhury, President, Surendra Dwivedi, Secretary of the Orissa Pradesh Congress Committee, Biswanath Dash, Rabindra Roy, Pradip Kishore Das, Biren Sarkar, Mitrabhanu Panigrahi, Dhabaleswar Bastia attended the meeting. This Sammilani was a milestone in the history of the Prajamandal movement. It passed a historic resolution for the formation of responsible government and integration of the garjat states with Orissa.

The impact was immediate. Every village had a Gram Panchayat, a library and a spinning wheel.

India became independent on 15 Aug, 1947. The tri-colour flag was unfurled on the Judge Court field amidst chanting of ‘Janaganamana’ just a few yards from the palace. And while the roads of Sonepur resounded with ‘Inquilab Zindabad’, there a shadow of silence fell on the Sonepur palace.

The Merger

India became independent. Yet the garjats retained their individual identity. Each garjat was run by an administrator on behalf of the Orissa government.
December 14, 1947, Sardar Patel had called a conference of the Rajas and Prajamandal workers. V.P. Menon, Secretary to the Ministry of States who rose from a stenographer in the Central Secretariat to the position of Constitutional Advisor to Mountbatten had accompanied the redoubtable Sardar to effect integration of states. In 1947 Nilgiri had merged with Orissa under Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Act. This was an indirect warning to the states who were unwilling to fall in line.

Now the 26 Orissa states were categorised into three classes—ABC. The C class rulers quietly signed the agreement. The B class states followed suit. One ruler absconded. Patel asked the Collector, Cuttack to put him under arrest, and this was enough to bring him back to the track. Only six chiefs remained—Patna, Kalahandi, Sundargarh, Keonjhar, Dhenkanal and Sonepur. They were all A class states. Patel said, Orissa states were like ulcers on the body of the province, and they must be either cured or eliminated. If they listened to his advice, they could be cured, otherwise they will find themselves uprooted by the people.

Next day Patel addressed a public meeting at Nari Seva Sadan. Someone asked him, what about the states that did not sign the instrument of accession? Patel’s reaction was a warning and an advice: The people will decide, he blasted. And long before the people decided, the Rajas did. In the evening when the train carrying Patel was about to leave the Cuttack station the six defaulting Rajas met Patel and said they were willing. Patel asked them to see Menon. The agreement was signed.

On 16th Dec, 1947, Laxmana Satpathy with his group was going round the Cuttack town when he saw a car screech to a stop. Those who were in came out and greeted him. They were Kanhu Charan Mohapatra, Magistrate, Madan Mohan Mohanty, Ram Chandra Tripathy and Panchanan Bohidar, top officers of Sonepur ex-State. The table had turned. The Mountain had come to Mahammed. Next day Laxmana returned to Sonepur. He must visit his wife first. She was passing through excruciating labour pain. And when Laxmana met Sulaksana, all that was left with her to offer her victorious freedom fighter was a still-born baby. Binka observed a band in sympathy. But that was that.

Sonepur had to wait till 26 January, 1950 when with the promulgation of the Constitution of India all the garjats including Sonepur merged with Orissa. A new chapter was added to the history of Sonepur.

Contemporary History

On 1.1.1948 the sun rose in a different sky and shone upon a different earth. There was no king and no kingdom, no palace, no power, no authority, no tyranny. People became their own rulers. There while the leaders of India set about framing the Constitution of India, here in Odisha there was a cabinet under the prime ministership of Harekrushna Mahtab in which Kapila Nanda from Bolangir Patna was a minister. The Maharaja of Sonepur either remained behind a closed
Singhadwara or remained self-exiled in Calcutta. The Maharaja of Patna left for Lucknow. This was more or less the situation in all garjat states. The Rajas suddenly found the land that had been under them for generations was no longer theirs, the subjects no longer loyal and obedient. The subjects too felt they were no subjects. They were now free to choose the road to destiny and to democracy.

But it was not the whole story. In place of the omnipotent Maharaja Sudhansusekhar Sing Deo came Banchhanidhi Dash, Administrator of Sonepur Raj. He was answerable to the Chief Administrator, Nilamani Senapati, ICS for the management of the ex-state. This hangover continued for a couple of years. It is true that the garjat Rajas had signed the instrument of accession on 15 Dec. 1947. It is also true that the Rajas handed over charge of the state to the Administrator who was the authorised agent of the Odisha government. But that was that. Sonepur along with other garjats had not yet merged with Orissa.

The uncertainty remained. For some time, the Maharajas of Patna, Kalahandi and Boudh entertained the idea of forming a Chaunabha territory of their own. Chaunabha in the name of the respective dynasties of the rulers- Chauhans of Patna and Sonepur, Nagas of Kalahandi and the Bhanjas of Boudh. But it could not materialize.

Meanwhile, Rajendra Narayan Sing Deo, Maharaja of Patna, son-in-law of Bhupinder Singh, the powerful Maharajadhiraj of Patiala, President of the Chamber of Princes, spearheaded the Mahakosala Movement. He published a book, The Political Status of Orissa and Chhattisgarh States where he tried to emphasize and establish the separate identity of the Orissa garjats including Seraikela and Kharswan in the field of language, history and culture. A Pamphlet titled 'Kosal' was printed and propagated. The garjats of the Eastern States formed what is known as the Eastern States Union with separate judiciary, army and administration the offices of which were located at different places of the Eastern States. In the meantime the idea of the Hirakud Dam and consequent dispossession and displacement agitated the minds of the people against the government. Maharaja RN Sing Deo as an astute administrator had rightly read the pulses of the people. Yet the agitation could not take off, although popular discontent was growing against local administration. Earlier people paid tika and taxes, no doubt, but they could access the Maharaja and had their grievances addressed and redressed. But now local administration looked towards Bhubaneswar for signals and signature, while here prices spiralled and sufferings augmented.

Under the Odisha Estate Abolition Act, 1960 the abolition of the States and estates left the zamindars, gartias and gauntias powerless and useless. Under the British administration the police duty of the Zamindars and gartias had already been taken away. They merely remained tax-collecting agents. Now that too was taken over by the government. Their land was no longer revenue-free. They ceased to be mautidars. They paid taxes, their excess land was distributed among the
landless with the Orissa Land Reforms Act, 1960. With the promulgation of the Constitution on 26 Jan.1950 the garjats merged with the Orissa province. The separate existence of Sonepur dissolved. It became a Sub-division of Bolangir district. Now Bolangir became the hub of political activity. In 1949 Patna Maharaja formed Ganatantra Parisad. From Rajatantra to Ganatantra. And in the first general Election that took place in 1951 the Ganatantra came in overwhelming majority from west Odisha. This party maintained its position of popularity even in its new incarnation as Swatantra Party in 1961 election in its three Assembly Constituencies, namely, Sonepur, Binka and Birmaharajpur. In the 8th and 9th General Elections, however, there was a brief interregnum in favour of Congress. From the 12th General Election onwards it is BJD that has been sweeping the polls with a single exception that the reserved constituency of Sonepur sent a Congress candidate in the 13th General Election.

Sonepur became a separate district with effect from 1 April 1993 with 2 subdivisions, Sonepur and Birmaharajpur, four Tehsils, Sonepur, Binka, Rampur and Birmaharajpur, six Blocks, Sonepur, Binka, Tarbha, Dungripali, Birmaharajpur and Ulunda and seven Police Stations, Sonepur, Binka Dungripali, Rampur, Tarbha, Sindhol and Bhimaharajpur. This district-comprises 80 Gram Panchayats, 31 RI circles and 780 revenue villages.

With the operation of the Orissa Land Reforms Act, the govt. acquired 10,370,621 acres of land and distributed 7,442 acres among the landless, prioritizing the SC and ST beneficiaries by 31.3.1997. While the SC families numbering 3189 got 3870.289 acres, the ST families’ whose number was 1626 got 2074.158 acres (RDC Insp. Report; 96-97).

In Pre-Independence Subarnapur the farmers depended only on traditional sources of irrigation like bandh, Munda, Kata etc. But in the latter half of the last century the Hirakud Dam Project benefited the farmers of Dungripali and Binka irrigating about 42,870 Ha. of land. Besides, around 4835 Ha came under minor Irrigation, 2527 Ha under Lift-Irrigation projects and 2448 Ha under Dugwell. The Harihar Dam Project known as Theng Project which irrigates a large command area is a signal development in post-independence Subarnapur in the field of irrigation.

In the sphere of education, the post-independence Subarnapur has exhibited an excellent record of performance. While there was not a single English medium school here by 1947, there are now 17 such schools including one Navodaya Vidyalaya at Tarbha and a Kendriya Vidyalaya at Sonepur. There were 933 Primary Schools by 1993 against one in 1886, and 128 High Schools against one in 1913. There are now 5 women’s colleges with 47 co-education colleges while there was not a single college by 1947. Sonepur College established in 1964 in the original royal Guest House constructed on the bank of the Mahanadi known as
Mitrodaya Bhawan, a full-fledged Graduate college in the faculties of Arts, Science and Commerce operates as the Premier College of the district.

There were sporadic incidents of Maoist uprising in Sindhol area of Birmaharajpur Subdivision but it is under control. Similarly, there were socio-political agitations from time to time but they were peaceful agitations. One was the Trust Funds agitation of 1970 demanding Sonepur Trust Funds to shift from Bolangir to Sonepur. During the first Chief Ministership of Biju Patnaik the fear of Tikarpada Dam and the consequent submergence gripped the minds of Sonepur. The foundation stone was laid by Nehru. Since Boudh and Sonepur fell under the catchment area of the proposed dam, there was an upsurge among the people. Meetings, processions, placards, slogans filled the space. It was repeated during JB Patnaik’s tenure as Chief Minister in 1980, although the catchment area was reduced along with the height of the dam. It was Manibhadra Project on the Mahanadi which flared up a \textit{Jana Andolan}. It sent echoes resounding the floor of the Assembly. The project was dropped.

Maharaja BM Sing Deo had created Sonepur Trust Funds on 27 Sept.1925 with 23 heads with a corpus fund of Rs10 Lac which went up to Rs 25 Lac with 49 heads by 1937 for the all-round development of Sonepur. After independence the Board of Trustees was reconstituted on 20 Feb1952 with the District Magistrate of Bolangir as Managing Trustee under the control of the Finance Department of the Govt.of Orissa. The Trust Funds was people’s money, and they cannot spend it. It needs the sanction of the Orissa Govt. through the Collector, Bolangir. It was a circuitous process and by1970 the people’s patience was at the end of its tether. This ignited an agitation. Meetings were held. Arrests were courted. Schools and shops were shut down. Ultimately order was passed to shift the management of the Funds into the hands of the Sub-Divisional Officer, Sonepur.

Eighty years after the Trust Funds agitation, there was an uprising for a Spinning Mill. Sonepur is known for its weavers. Although the raw materials were available at Sonepur, there was no spinning mill here. So a popular movement for a spinning mill took off. A spinning mill came. It gave employment to more than 200 workers. But labour unrest and loss sent the spinning mill to sleep.

The next agitation was staged in 1993 when the Districts reorganisations Committee submitted its report. It was known as Das Commission’s Report. Sonepur was not considered, although it fulfilled the criteria laid down by the Commission, The Bar Association and the Press, Schools and Colleges joined the agitation. Delegations were sent to the Chief Minister, Biju Patnaik and on 1 April 1993 Subarnapur District came into existence.

Tikarpada came and went. So did Manibhadra Project. And now in 2011 there was a proposal for a check Dam Sindhol. The MOU was signed. The extent of the area and other details under the projects-I, II and III were not disclosed. There were doubts and fear in the minds of the people. Even the local representatives
were not sure. This sparked off an agitation. People observed a parallel Independence Day in 2011 on the Gandhi Maidan. The people, urban and rural, united against the government and the proposal was shelved. This is not all. There have been dharanas and bands over the Khurdha-Bolangir railway line establishment of a High Court Bench in west Odisha. But all these agitations have been staged within democratic limits. They created law and order situation. They created headaches in the government but no head rolled, no public property damaged

With independence came people’s awareness and assertiveness about their own rights. With independence came the recognition and appreciation of their art and craft, their trade and their talent. Kailash Meher and Chaturbhuj Meher have been awarded titles of Padmasri for their dexterity in textiles. Lokanath Rana has won international recognition for his terracotta craft. Sadhu Meher, Sabyasachi Mohapatra and Padmasri Nilmadhab Panda have acted and directed films of international standards. The talent of a poet-prophet like Bhima Bhoi came to be appreciated in India and the world. Bhima Bhoi has found a place in the Indian Parliament and in the United Nations. The translation of his poetry in English has attracted the attention of German scholars like Kulke and Eschmann through the medium of the media. The songs of Fakir Patnaik reverberate the avenues of Sanfransisco, the folk dance and folk music, the fairs and festival, the mantra and tantra, dhols and madals that create unique music, fairs and festivals that once flourished with royal patronage are better able now to draw global applause through internet and intercommunications. The Meher of Sonepur can weave Konark in thread, the Maharanas can recreate and revive through a box of paint and a brush the whole epic episode of Rama and Ravan. The Durbar used to send a pack of Ganjpa Cards or a parcel of Sonepuri Sari for exhibition at Wembley, London. Now London comes down to the Mahanadi to see the wonder that is Sonepur.

There is a lot of creative activity in the field of literature, too. Hundreds of unknown yet unparalleled poets have figured in the compilations, namely, Sangita O Lokagita (2009) published by Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre, Kolkata, Sangitara Swara (2013) published by Sangeet Natak Academy, New Delhi. Sangeet Natak Academy has also published half a dozen collections of Odishi Songs attributed to BM Sing Deo (1902-37) under the title, Sangita Mitrodaya (2016) which contains around 250 songs so long unknown to the musicians of Odisha. Two monumental works, namely, Manusabhamandala (1993) written in a mixed language of Odia and Sanskrit and Mahima Vinod (2016) written in a mixed language of Odia and Bengali by Bhima Bhoi published by Sambalpur University have also been edited by Nayak. The other books of Sonepur brought to light by Nayak include Prematarrangini (2016) by Pt. Bhubaneswar Panigrahi, an outstanding poet of Abhimanu’s calibre, and Bhavatarka (2011) by Chandramani Das, an illustrious contemporary of Bhima Bhoi. The Voice of Silence :Sonepur Durbar and Indian Cultural Traditions (2001) published by Sahitya Academi is a work first of its kind.
in English on 150 years of Sonepur Durbar Literature and the Impact of Chauhan Rule on Orissan History and Culture published by Punthi Pustak, Kolkata is the first cultural history of Sonepur in English written after BC Mazumdar’s Orissa in the Making (1925). Besides Inscriptions of Orissa: Special reference to Sonepur, published by Readworthy, New Delhi, Subaltern Voice: Bhima Bhoi, poet of the people published by Odisha Sahitya Academy and a score of important publications, Nayak has edited the Valmiki Ramayan published by Tirupati Sanskrit University. There are other writers, too, who have thrown a lot of light on the rich literary traditions and historical heritage of Subarnapur in the post-independence period of this district’s history. One of them is Bhagirathi Nepak, retired auditor of the AG Office, Odisha. Out of a large number of books on various subjects his contributions to Subarnapur centre round his works on Bhima Bhoi.

Compared with the neighbouring garjats the pre-independence Sonepur had produced a plethora of Odia and Sanskrit literature under the patronage of the Durbar. And now with the increasing channels of publication, the number of writers, cultural clubs, literary associations, magazines and periodicals has considerably increased. And like the art and craft of Sonepur, its architecture and sculpture, its fairs and festivals, its songs, dance and drama, its vibrant cultural diversity and its rich literary tapestry have begun attracting the eyes of the world largely through the attempts of the writers today.

In the Late 70s of the last century two decades after independence, there was an attempt to excavate and explore the one-and-a-half–km-long Asurgarh mound on the confluence of the Mahanadi and river Tel under the joint sponsorship of Pune and Sambalpur University. The pottery, the ashes, the stone implements, an iron bow, etc. triggered up an animated discussion on whether this longest archeological site in the whole of Boudh-Subarnapur-Kalahandi region was not the historical–mythological site of Subarnapur Lanka. Prof. N.K. Sahu, Sambalpur University and D Sankalia of Pune University were inclined to believe here was Lanka of the Ramayana. Whether here was Lanka is another story but recent excavations at Hikudi, Khamsiripali and Kumursingha on the left bank of the Mahanadi under the leadership of PK Behera indisputably prove the existence of a prosperous civilization of the Chalcolithic times beginning with the 6th century BC and ending with 8th Century AD. Archeological findings like charred bones of animals, glazed pottery with marks of husks and pulses show that a rich river valley civilization existed here in the middle Mahanadi Valley. P. K. Behera observes:

Recent archeological excavations in the area (Subarnapur) revealed that in comparison to the Neolithic and Chalcolithic settlements, sites belonging to the Iron Age and early historical periods are fairly widespread in the region. They are not only reported from along the Mahanadi but also in its several perennial tributaries, viz, the Ong, the Tel, the Harihar and the
Behera relates the black—red wares (BRW), black slipped wares (BSW) and reed slipped wares (RSW), reed impressed burnt—clay lumps to the Iron Age while bowls, vases, jars, dishes carry us to megalithic and chalcolithic culture in this region.

**NUMISMATICS**

Numismatics, derived from Latin *Numisma* or currency is like epigraphy, a major contribution to history. The earliest coins so far discovered in India are the punch-marked silver coins. The technique involved in their manufacturing was by cutting thin sheets of silver into various shapes and sizes and impressing only on one side bold punches. These ancient coins which bear the stamps of one to five punches are known as PUNCH-MARKED coins. The punching devices of these early coins bear no inscriptions, instead they carry on them various forms of hills, trees, birds, animals, reptiles, human figures, floral and geometrical pattern, religious symbols and the like.

After merger a number of old coins found at Sonepur and Baidyanath were brought to Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar. These coins have been classified into the following groups: (1) Silver Coins — 162 Punch-marked 50 Moghul coins, 2992 Saha Alam Rupees of Murshidabad mint; and (2) Gold Coins: 27 Kalachuri coins, 27 Yadava coins, 49 Ganga fanams, 3 Moghal coins.

These punch-marked silver coins were first published in the *Journal of the Numismatic Society of India*, Vol.XIII, part-I, then in July 1952. B.B. Nath re-edited these coins in OHRJ, Vol.I No.2. These coins having a group of 4 symbols on the obverse, being blank on the reverse, are irregular in shape and size, which is a general characteristic of all early punch-marked coins discovered in different parts of the country. The symbols are: elephant with a tiny circle over its back, humped bull with a dot below the mouth, a pair of standing bulls with a dividing line between them and a dot below their mouth, *vindu mandala* or dots round an eye symbol.

Manufactured from thin bars or sheets of silver, they look coarse in appearance and technique and they vary from 19.2 grains to 21 grains in weight. Scholars have ascribed these coins to pre-Mauryan period i.e. to 4th century B.C. Regarding the importance of its discovery, Nath remarks: “The reports on the discovery of coins as a whole are rare in Orissa and so far punch-marked coins are concerned, Orissa remained unrepresented till now. Only two, Sonepur and Bahalda hoards are there to add to our knowledge.”
Recently a large hoard of silver punch-marked coins has been discovered in the village Lukapada near Menda on the river Suktel and was kept in Tarbha Police Station of Subarnapur district, now transferred to Odisha State Museum. They are traced to a period between 4th century B.C. and 1st century A.D. The symbols on the coins are Sun, Discus (Chakra), human figures, animals, hills, geometrical patterns, trees within railings etc. Some symbols in these coins resemble the figures of prehistoric rock art of western Odisha. Many slightly thicker coins bear the symbols of crescent on three arched hills. This device has been accepted by scholars to be the imperial marks of Chandragupta Maurya and these coins have been safely ascribed to his reign. Some minute symbols are also found on the reverse side of some coins. It is believed that these are the marks of the shroffs, bankers or money-testers and were affixed in all probability to attest the bonafide of the coins in respect of their weight and metal. What actually the symbols on these coins mean has not yet been ascertained. They are as enigmatic as the prehistoric symbols. Mention may be made here that the Suktel valley hoard closely resembles the Asurgarh hoard of Kalahandi district.

Truly, the Somavamsi rule has been a golden era in the annals of Subarnapur. Their epigraphic records reveal the prevalence of coins. The word Hiranya has often been used in the context of the offerings to be made to the grantee by agriculturists in the form of cash. The Degaon (Tarbha) charter reveals interesting facts about the revenue system of the period. In lines 32-33 the revenue for the donated village has been fixed at Sobhana rupya per annum i.e. silver coin known as Sobhana weighing three palas. Since no coin of this period has been discovered so far it is difficult to speculate about the currency system of the time.

The next important group is the hoard of Kalachuri gold coins. Out of 27 such coins 11 belong to Ratnadeva-II (1120-35 A.D.), 5 to Prithvideva-II (1135-65 A.D.) and 11 to Jajalladeva-II (1165-68 A.D.). These coins contain on the obverse a legend in two lines in bold nagari letters representing the name of the king and on the reverse the figure of a lion upon a running elephant within the dotted border. The suggestion of Mirashi that the ‘lion attacking an elephant’ seen on the gold coins of this dynasty seems to have been introduced for the first time by Jajalladeva-I and that it was in commemoration of his victory over the Gangas who were known as Gajapati or Gajadhisa, no longer holds good. Mention may be made here that this symbol of Gajasardula was regarded in those times as an auspicious symbol to represent wealth and power, valour and strength and yogic conceptions. Had it not been the case, the motif might not have been profusely sculptured in the temples built by the Gangas of Utkala and Kalachuris of Kosala. Some of those coins have the letter ta below the mouth of the lion; some others have the letter ma about that place. According to BB Nath these two letters stand for the mints and while ta denotes
Tummana, ma probably denotes Mallara, the two important towns in the Kalachuri kingdom. This Sonepur hoard, however, testifies to the inclusion of Sonepur region in Kalachuri dominion for some time, a fact corroborated by epigraphic and numismatic evidences. A large number of Padma-tankas relating to Yadava rulers namely, Singhana (1210-47), Krisna (1247-60), Mahadeva (1260-71) and Ramachandra (1271-1309) discovered at Subarnapur confirm Kalachuri rule.

The Kalachuri rule over Subarnapur region was supplanted by the imperial Gangas of Utkala. The Sonepur hoard of Ganga fanams presents common features of other such hoards discovered in Odisha. The Sonepur hoard was first edited by BB Nath in JNSI Vol-XIII p.191-192. According to local belief these coins were showered from the sky when Lord Subarnameru was installed in the temple.

The symbols on the obverse occurring on these so called Ganga fanams are invariably a crouching bull facing right with various minute religious symbols in front and above the animal. These religious symbols generally consist of a Sankha (conch), Chakra (discus) and two horns of the bull. Sometimes a trident or a dagger like minute symbol is noticed in front or above the bull. The reverse of the coins shows an Odia sa like symbol identified by scholars, which is placed horizontally and flanked by symbols of an ankusa (elephant goad) and a kuthara (battleaxe) on either side. Below this symbol, are inscribed some numerals, presumably the regnal reckonings of the issuers of these coins. Another variety of such type of coins bears a legend of three letters in Northern Nagari characters of 12th-13th centuries A.D. above the sa like symbol on the reverse while the obverse devices are same as on other varieties stated above. This legend reads Sri Rama. The symbol on the reverse of the Ganga Fanams, generally taken as the modern Odia letter sa, denoting the regnal reckoning of the issuer of the coins. But this letter cannot be taken in its modern Odia form as has been suggested by earlier scholars. Snigdha Tripathy remarks:

But if we minutely observe this symbol, it would clearly reveal that the letter in fact a Nagari Sa of 12th-13th centuries written in the same direction as the numerals and the legend, below and above it respectively which also belong to the same period.

The numerical symbols found on these so-called Ganga fanams are generally taken to be the regnal reckoning of the rulers who issued them. The numbers so far known on them are from 2 to 59. The numerals like 1, 6, 16, 20, 26, 30, 36, 40, 46, 50, 56 are conspicuously absent on the coins. It is significant to note here that these regnal years are omitted as a rule in the reckoning of the anka system. It is of course, not possible to assign at the present state of our knowledge any of these fanams to a particular king of the Ganga family.

In the year 1978 NK Sahu collected six gold Ganga fanams from Sonepur, which he deposited in the Sambalpur University Museum and the same hoard has been edited by SC Behera with an elaborate note on the history of discoveries of
Ganga *fanams* in Odisha\(^1\). Behera give us the numerals 19, 4, 5, 4, 27 and 21 respectively. It is, however, supposed that these coins might have been showered by Anangabhimadeva-III, who was the first Ganga ruler to conquer the Sonepur region, in commemoration of his significant victory. After this victory the Ganga monarch established the political headquarters of the western part of his empire at Subarnapur.

**References**

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2. Ibid, VOL.1, NO., P.27
3. Ibid VOL.1, NO.3&4, P.30
4. GUPTA, P.L, COINS, DELHI, 1969, P.9
5. JORS, NO.3, 1885, P.31
6. OHRJ, VOL.1, NO.1 P.36FF
8. NATH, BB. JOURNAL OF NUMISMATIC SOCIETY OF INDIA (JNSL), VOL. II, P.200 FF.
9. 10, VOL. VI, P.130
10. NAHO
Some coins of the British period
APPENDIX

Sonepur State Administration Trust Fund Founded by
Maharaja Sri Sir Bir Mitrodaya Sing Deo, K.C.I.E., Dharmanidhi Jnangunaka, Ruler, Sonepur State, Eastern States (A).

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<td>Kaviraji School Fund</td>
<td>15000</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>Middle English School Fund (Binka)</td>
<td>60600</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>Dharmanidhi Maharaja Cattle Breeding Fund</td>
<td>3200</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>Maharaja Sri Sir Bir Mitrodaya Epidemic Relief Fund</td>
<td>12000</td>
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<td>35.</td>
<td>Raja Bahadur Sri Pratap Rudra Sing Deo Sanskrit School Fund</td>
<td>15000</td>
<td></td>
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<td>36.</td>
<td>Ranee Amulyamani Devi Girls School Fund</td>
<td>17000</td>
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<td>38.</td>
<td>Maharaj-Kumar Sri Sudhanshu Shekhar Singh Deo Hostel Fund</td>
<td>139000</td>
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<td>39.</td>
<td>Guru Training School Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>Maharaj-Kumar Sri Sudhanshu Sekhar Singh Deo Heir-Apparent Tarbha Middle English School Fund</td>
<td>1500</td>
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<td>41.</td>
<td>Tikait Lah Sahib Sri Bir Pratap Singh Deo Irrigation Fund</td>
<td>216000</td>
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<td>42.</td>
<td>Agricultural improvement Fund</td>
<td>24000</td>
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<td>43.</td>
<td>Birmaharajpur Middle English School Fund</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>44.</td>
<td>Sonepur State Deva Seva Fund</td>
<td>12500</td>
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CHAPTER-III
INSCRIPTIONS

The inscriptions of Subarnapur on stone, copperplates and brass constitute a vast corpus of historical records. Inscriptions on stone are as many as 14 while those on copperplates number 30. They ‘supply the most authentic data and are more reliable than tradition and literature’. In the case of Subarnapur, inscriptions of different periods of its history -ancient, medieval and modern – are available so significantly, although some of them like the inscriptions on the riverbed of Binka or at Lankeswari darh at Subarnapur, even the engraving on the Kosaleswar temple: Siddham Ranaka Sri (Dha)ndokasya of the Teluguchoda times or Saranagata Raja Prithisingha Deva in proto-Odia on the back of the dancing Ganes of Godhaswar temple in the last lap of 18th century lead us almost nowhere. In fact, epigraphy has become the ‘life-blood of history’. The earlier ones (9th-12th century A.D.) are incised in Kutila variety of Nagari script and Sanskrit language, that of medieval time (i.e. Khambeswari inscription of 1268 A.D.) in a script evolving from Nagari to an archaic Odia. And now in both modern Odia script and language (like Baghamarakud and Lupursingha Shiva temple inscriptions of 1885 and 1879 respectively), while some others on Subarnapur temples are Odia script and Sanskrit language. Traces of proto-Odia characters seen in the Lupursingha and Baghamarakud inscriptions are written in various poetic metres like Malini, Sragdhara and Sardula Vikridita.

The Bhanjas

The present Subarnapur district was ruled by the Bhanja dynasty Khinjali mandala from Dhriripura near Boudh during mid-8th-mid-9th century A.D. Some of the rulers called themselves Ubhaya khinjali mandaladhipati (Lord of both the Khinjalis), one part, the northern part or uttarapallivisaya included Dasapalla- Birmaharajpur region and the other was Daksinapalli or Sonepur region. The Mahanadi was the demarcater.

Satrubhanjadeva issued Sonepur1 and Kumarkeli2 copperplate grants. Milupadi in Royara Visaya (Rahila near Binka where Papaksaya Ghat absolved the legendary Anangabhimadeva III of his brahmahatyadosa one solar eclipse day) was donated in the Sonepur plate Jaintamura (Janmura near Sonepur) and Kumarkeli (near Birmaharajpur subdivision) were donated in the Kumarkeli charter to a Brahmin Bhattamanoratha. While editing the plate B.C. Mazumdar writes:

I am blind now. I made my amanuensis to draw the letters on the palm of my hand to enable me to decipher the text; it affords me very great delight that following this curious process I have been able to decipher the record successfully and can confidently publish an account of it3.

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It is indeed a ‘curious process’ of reading an ancient inscription of this nature. Satrubhanjadeva’s son Ranabhanja donated in his 14th regnal year Tulendu (Tenda under Ulunda Block) recorded in his Daspalla charter. His Taspaikera charter records the grant of village Taspaikera in Uttarapalli Visaya. In the University Museum Plates Ranabhanja declares the grant of Champamalli (Champamal in Birmaharajpur Subdivision) on the Mahanavami day in his 52nd regnal year. Ranabhanja who was the most powerful king among the Bhanjas declares himself the proud receiver of the blessings of goddess Stambheswari: Stambheswarilabdhabhavaraprasadah. Janamejaya, however, killed him with a kunta (spear) and constituted Boudh-Dasapalla-Phulbani region as Odradesa under his suzerainty (Brahmeswar Temple Inscription.)

**The Somavamsis**

The Somavamsis ruled this tract for a long time from 850 to 1069 A.D. The inscriptions which bear the history of Subarnapur are 30 in number. In fact, the name Subarnapura came to limelight, all of a sudden, out of the limbo of oblivion, as the capital metropolis of Kosala kingdom. Thereafter, Subarnapur remained a metropolis, whether capital or not, till date.

**Mahabhavagupta Janamejaya I**

**Gopalgur Inscription (Year-1)**

The name of Subarnapur as a great metropolis (mahakatakavara) appears in Gopalgur (Loisingha) inscription of Janmejaya’s first regnal year. It contains quite a vivid description of the place. There were shops of conch-shells, sea-shells, pearls, gems, corals and gold. There were houses for entertainment where the best of public damsels danced when their small pitcher-like breasts swung to the rhythm of musical instruments. There were public gardens and parks which looked enchanting with the advent of cuckoos. Importantly, the coronation ceremony of the king was celebrated amidst organization of a great vedic festival called Shakrothana (raising the standard or banner of Shakra or Indra). It is the same as Indradhwaja festival described in Aiteraya Brahmana. Some emperors of ancient India performed it as a mark of attaining suzerainty. It is like Ashvamedha, Vajapeya, Svarajya etc. The place-names (toponyms) Naditata Vishaya (district) may be identified with the area extending from present Subarnapur to Binka along the right bank of the Mahanadi after which the division was named. The donee of the grant was an eminent, highly learned, virtuous and extraordinary minister named Sadharana. He was recipient of as many as six grants from the king.

**Vakratentuli Incription (Year-3)**

Subarnapur is described as a victorious military camp (Vijaya Skandhavara). Probably the king launched invasion from here against Baudh region (Khinjali Mandala) as known from subsequent inscriptions. The gift-village was Vakratentuli (Banktentli) in Lupattara (Lupursingha) Khanda (Sub-division or
upasambhaga). With land and all appurtenances, it was donated to Bhattaputra Jatarupa, a resident of Meranda (Menda), who had migrated from Radhavalkandara (Redhakhol) on the Vishumati Samkranti of the king’s regnal year 3.

**Gopalpur Inscription (Year 10)**

The donee was the same minister Sadharana. Jollamura (Janmura near Subarnapur or Junla near Lachhipur) was the gift village. The occasion was a lunar eclipse. Interestingly, the donee divided the land into some parts and gave one to Lord Jalashayina Narayana Bhattarakha. There is no trace of the temple which was probably inside a water-body, as indicated by the name. or, it may mean Anantasayi Visnu. Significantly, it contains the famous Vaisnavite formula: *Om Namah Bhagavate Vasudevaya.*

**Ranipur Jharial Plate (Year 16)**

It was issued from Arama Kataka (modern Rampur) near Binka. The gift-village was Tunkala of *Khitimandapadhara Visaya,* identified with Tukla near Khariar.

**Sonepur Inscription (Year 17)**

The inscription records the grant of Gattaikela (Gatarkela near Sonepur town) in Lupattara khanda (Lupursingha) Kosala (Balangir-Sonepur-Bargarh region in those days) in favour of two deities, viz., Sri Keshava Bhattarakha and Sri Aditya Bhattarakha for their offerings, maintenance and repair of shrines. The grant was made by a merchants association *Kamalavana Vanika Sthana* immigrant from Khadirapadra (Khairpadar of Kalahandi) after it purchased the village from the king. It was a Kraya-shasana. Creation of *sasanas* were permissible and two more of them were there in the king’s time. This place of donation was Arama Kataka from which Janamejaya issued his charters from 16th to 31st regnal years.

**Gaintala Inscription (Year 17)**

Rishigrama of *Nimuna Vishaya* (present Nimna village in Birmaharajpur subdivision) was donated to Sri Tiku who migrated from Madhyadesha or Dasapalla region. The place of proclamation of the grant was Arama.

**Three sets of Chaudwar Inscriptions (Year 31)**

These grants were donated to the Brahmin minister Sadharana from Arama. Janamejaya declares himself Kosalendra. Randa and Alanda (Malunda) two adjacent villages near Balangir town of the inscription suggest that the king’s dominion had extended up to Balangir. Baudh (Khinjali) had already been conquered and named Odra-desa. He ruled over a vast stretch of territory comprising two provinces – Kosala and Odra.
Kalibhana Inscription (Year 34)

Suvarnapura Vijaya Kataka is again the place of issue of this inscription. The gift village Konnapilla grama of Tokara Visaya is difficult to identify in the present state of information.

Bargaon Inscription (Year 13)

It was donated by a feudatory king named Prithvi vigraha of Janamejaya\(^1\). It mentions toponyms like Manivadpataka, Sankara, Sasana Sanapalli, which have been identified by D.B. Mishra with Manigaon, Sankara and Sasamura respectively. It is in Sambalpur University Museum now.

Sambalpur University Museum Inscription (Year 23)

It was donated by Devapya of Mathara dynasty, a feudatory of Janamejaya. It mentions Kolleda Mandala which might be the present Kadaligad area touching Subalaya of Subarnapur.

Deogaon Inscription (not dated)

The grant of this inscription (about end of 9\(^{th}\) century A.D.) was made by Ranaka Mugdhangondaladeva of Parakkala-Mandal, another feudatory of Janamejaya\(^1\). The gift-village was Kirankela in Telatata visaya (district on the bank of the Tel river). The donee was a resident of Antarala. Antarala has been identified with village Antarda (near Tarbha or Antarda of Ulunda Block). In that case, the gift village on the bank of the Tel in Tarbha-Kantamal (Boudh district) might be located.

Thus out of the seventeen copperplate inscriptions of Janamejaya I available till date, eleven contain toponyms, names of rivers and other physical features and cultural attainments of present Subarnapur. The rivers, viz. Mahanadi, Tel, Ong are lifelines of Subarnapur district, and it is befitting that administrative divisions in ancient times were named after them Naditata, Telatata and Ongatata Visaya. One Sharnnavati river in Yayati I’s inscription remains unidentified.

Mahasivagupta Yayati I (885-928 A.D.)

Of the six copperplate inscriptions of the king, four mention villages around Subarnapur. Vinitapura (Binka) was probably the capital of the Somavamshi kingdom in his time. It was a political necessity. The kingdom set up by his father Janamejaya was far-flung from Dasapalla-Baud-Athamallik in the east to Balangir-Bargarh-Khariar in the west. A centrally located capital with easier connectivity among its parts particularly during rainy season was the need of the hour.

The inscriptions of the years 4, 8, 9 and 15 were all issued from Vinitapura. The Somavamsi dominion was divided into two – Kosaladesa and Odradesa. The latter comprised Baudh-Athmallik-Dasapalla-Nayagarh region as revealed from the place-names. Janamejaya’s victory against powerful Kalachuris of Central India
has been described by his son in the inscription of the year 8. The inscription of 
year 9 contains a beautiful and ornate description of Vinitapura:

Where the fatigue of women enjoying conjugal caresses with ardent attachment is removed by the breeze surcharged with particles of water sent up by the breaking and swelling of the high waves of the Mahanadi.

In the inscription of the year 15, Nibinna Charter mentions the donation of Nibinna (Nimna of Birmaharajpur sub-division) in Uttarapalli Visaya. The residence-village Maremenda of the grantee Pundarika Sarma may be identified with Mendamal (Birmaharajpur).

Mahasivagupta Yayati II alias Chandihara (923-40)

Jatesingha Dunguri Inscription or Maranjura Charter (Year 3)

For political reasons Suvarnapura ceased to be capital of the Somavamsis from Yayati I (Circa 900-930 A.D.) to Yayati II’s time of coronation (1023 A.D.) The latter was a greatgrandson of Janamejaya I. In this inscription Suvarnapura finds its longest, high-flown and ornate mention:

Om, Svasti! One free from the many sins of the Kaliyuga. He had been sanctified by the pure water of the confluence of the rivers Mahanadi and Tel with lucid, liquid, ripples crested with flowers of foam, which glitter with cool moonbeams, and are like the very nectar of Dharma itself. Devoted to religious works, he had built many temples to various gods and mandapas (royal pavilions) in the Arama or parks or vihara (pleasurable recreation) together with udyana or garden. His charming person has been dyed yellow by the pollen grains of the sweet-scented flowers hanging in bunches and tossing (in the breeze) under the shade of flower-trees of various kinds. Followed and surrounded by friends and companions, he is a Vidagdha-bhujanga (passionate libertine) who dallies with the loveliest girls whose lotus-like faces bloom and glow with amorous charms arising from lustful and pleasure-giving desires, and whose glances were delightful with playful movements of the eye-brows, whose breasts grow eager with desires by the music of many birds. This is the occasion when he leaves the palace on hearing the shrill call of the peacocks. And he dwells at Pattana Suvarnapura (where exists the goddess) Bhagavati Panchamvari Bhadrambika, who mercifully grants boons to all that pray. Exceedingly mighty in his victorious campaigns, he is bent, as it were, with the weight of his own prowess, whose foot-stool is kissed by the crest-jewels of the head-gears of all the feudal lords. In character he resembles such renowned kings as Nala, Nahusa, Mandhata, Dilipa, Bharata and Bhagiratha. He is the conqueror of Karnata. Lata, Gujarat, the master of Dravida country, the paramount lord of the world who has taken off, like a lustful lover, the tinkling waist girdle of the Kanchi country, chosen in the Svayambara as their lord by countries like Kalinga, Kangoda, Utkala and Kosala, whose limbs have been cooled by the wind in the sky raised in the victorious assaults against the noted countries of
Gauda and Radha. He is the full moon in the pure sky of Vanga, the lord of Trikalinga country which he has conquered by the strength of his own arms - he it is Sri Mahasivagupta Sri Yayatideva who is king of kings (Maharajadhiraja) overlord (Paramesvara) at whose feet many minor Rajas (Rajanyas) bend, and who himself meditates upon the feet of Sri Mahabhavagupta who was a great devout worshipper of Mahesvara and was highly honourable (Paramabhattachaka) is present here in peace.

Kumar Somesvara

Kelgan Plates (Year 1)

The inscription was proclaimed from Suvarnapura by Somesvara. He was the son of Udyata Keshari (1040-60 A.D.), and grandson of Yayati II. Importantly, the inscription refers to him as Pashchima Lanka Adhipati (lord of west Lanka kingdom i.e. Suvarnapura)\(^1\). A number of villages viz. Attenda (Achanda), Kamalpura, Rangoda Mandala, Burabuda grama (Budbuda), Gudhuamala, Khandakshetra (Khandahata), Kanhapura (Kanpur) are said to be in the jurisdiction of Uttaravalli visaya (Birmaharajpur subdivision). He had an autonomous status, used imperial title and his own regnal year. Suvarnapura which had sunk low now became a province.

Karnakesari (1090-1118)

Kamalpur inscription (Year 4)

The last Somavamsi king Karna’s feudatory Jayarnama issued the inscription from Kodedapata, evidently Kolleda referred to in earlier inscriptions. The gift-village Vadakela might be Baradakata. Like Devapya of Janamejaya’s inscription of the year 23, he is depicted as a devotee of goddess Khambesvari\(^1\).\(^8\).

The Somavamsis who ruled this tract for almost a period of two centuries till their decline and fall has been a landmark in the history of this region which witnessed the height of culture, sculpture, architecture and literature. They have contributed so immensely to the culture of Odisha that Mazumdar calls them the ‘Makers of Orissa’ in his Orissa in the Making (1925).

The Telugu Chodas

Three Telugu Choda Copperplate Inscriptions

The Teluguchodas who ousted the Somavamsis in 1069 A.D. and ruled up to 1114 A.D. have left inscriptions three of which have been discovered till now. The donor was Somesvara II who had granted the Mahada charter. All the three inscriptions refer to Vaidyanath Siva as the noumen of the dynasty. Patna Museum Plates record the donation of Phulmuthi and Mahada village in Charda Visaya where stands the famous Kapileswar temple. These plates carry on them some pure Odia words. The letters have rounded tops which are the distinct characteristics of Odia script.
The Kumarisingha charter was issued from Suvarnapura in 19th year of the king’s reign on full moon day of Magha. The donated village was Kumursingha in Uttarakula visaya (Birmaharajpur sub-division). The Patna inscription was also issued from Suvarnapura. The village Baniabandh with suburbs of Phullamuthi (Phulmuthi in Binka Tahasil) was gifted to three Brahmins named Sadhu, Utsavakara and Divakara; for propitiation of Lord Narayana Bhattaraka. It is dated regnal year 17.

The grant of the Mahada inscription, dated year 23 Magha Sukla Saptami, was made to a Brahmana named Madhusudana. Mahada, Atandrela (Achanda or Antarda), Medhakakhadan, Kokkatideva (Kotsamalai) and Champamalla (Champamal) all in present Birmaharajpur sub-division were gifted. Importantly, the inscription revives the old names of the Mahanadi as Chitrotpala and Lankavarttaka (Lankesvari gorge). The glory of these names of yore have come back. In fact, the donation was made near the gorge (Chitrotpala – (pa)Yas-tire Lankavarttaka-sannidhau).

The interregnum of Telugu Choda rule was a glorious epoch in the history of Suvarnapura. The rulers tried their best to restore the greatness by accepting Vaidyanatha Shiva as family deity and the Mahanadi as Chitrotpala. The prestige of Suvarnapura attained a new high.

Ganga Inscription

Bhanudeva I (1268 A.D.)

The Stambhesvari inscription of Bhanudeva I which once stood as a slab of stone in front of Stambhesvari or Khambeswari temple of Sonepur town, is now preserved in Sambalpur University Museum. It records the donation of Barapali (a cluster of 12 villages) by Sankaradeva for the health and wealth of his overlord Bhanudeva I, grandson of Anangabhimeva III (1264-78), Gajapati. Sankaradeva was the vice-regent of the western part of his kingdom, who bore four titles. He was Pachchhima Desadhikari, ruler of the western province. He was visayapati or Governor posted at Sunupurakataka to defend the Ganga kingdom against frequent Kalachuri incursions from the west which has been numismatically and epigraphically established. The donation was made on Saturday (Saurivare), the third day of the dark fortnight of Mina or Chaitra in the seventh anka of Ganga emperor Bhanudeva I (1264-79), the 11th king of the imperial Ganga dynasty of
Kalinga which corresponds to 7 March 1268. This happens to be one of the earliest inscriptions which carry the Odia script.

We do not find any inscription, copper or stone, related to Subarnapur till we come to Achal Singh (1729-1749) the 5th Raja of Subarnapur Chauhan dynasty.

**The Chuhans**

**The Lupursingha Inscription (1743)**

This relates to Birakesari Deva I (1736-93). The donation was made on the 11th day of the dark fortnight, *anka* 9 of Birakeshari maharaja, the Gajapati. A group of five hundred people donated the village Lupursingha in the bushy jungles of Rengali (village) in favour of one Ghasi Dash for the offering to Lord Hanumat. He is to provide for the *chakuli pitha bhoga* to the deity, ten *tambis* of ghee, one and a half *khandi* of rice, two *visas* of *guda* (molasses), three *tankas* for the umbrella, silk cloth and other appurtenances. And must plant trees in place of trees felled. This is the special feature of this inscription – tree for a tree. The other feature is the donation by five hundred people when Achal Singh was very much the Raja (1729-49). Besides, this is the first copperplate inscription in Odia discovered so far in Subarnapur after Stambheswari Stone inscription of Sankaradeva of 1268 A.D.

**Divya Singha Deva (1749-66)**

**Lehedi copperplate Inscription**

This plate records the donation of village Lehedi on the Uttaratira of the Mahanadi just opposite the Sonepur town. This is a settlement of Utkalia Brahmmins whose progenitor was one Chakradhara Mohapatra (miscalled Chakrapani in Ghikundhi Palmleaf MS). The donor was Divya Sing (1749-66), 6th Raja of the Sonepur Chauhan dynasty. Once during his pilgrimage to Benaras and Gaya, Divya Sing donated at Baidyanath of Bihar, village Lehedi to one Chakradhara Mahapatra, a Brahmin from Badkhemundi as *Jyotisidana* for his eye trouble. The donation was made on Friday, *Margasira sukla Panchami*.

Subsequently, as maintained by D.B. Mishra, the same village was donated to the Mahapatra family as *dana, punardana* and *Mahadana* by three successive generations of Chauhan rulers, Prataprudra, Birmitrodaya and Sudhansusekhar, which is rather peculiar.

**Five charters of Prithvi Sing (1781-1841)**

**Meghala Inscription (1818 A.D.):**

This charter was donated in the 2nd regnal year of Gajapati Ramachandra Dev III (1817-1856). The village Meghala in Binka pragana was donated on *Bhdrava krusnapaksa dwitiya* equivalent to August 18, 1818 A.D. in favour of Khansama Banamali Rai for his enjoyment as long as the sun and the moon (remain in the sky). Subsequently this Banamali Khansama became Tehsildar under Maharaj Sai of Sambalpur.
The Govindpur charter

The grant of Govindpur village in the inscription was made in favour of Bamadev Purohit, in anka 7 on Friday, in the bright fortnight of Kartik of (Gajapati) Ramachandra Deva. The date corresponds to November 8, 1821 A.D. The village is in Birmaharajpur sub-division. The special feature of this inscription is the mode of payment of annual revenue. It is a thread of gold to be offered to the Raja at the time of annual abhiseka. The other is the name of the scribe. The scribe is Padmanabha Patnaik.

Anandpur Copperplate Inscription:

The inscription is written on both sides. The boundaries on all the cardinal directions and four corners have been specified with marks of trees, stones, tank. The donee was Nilakantha Panigrahi. The date of inscription is the full moon day of Pausa, anka 8 of Gajapati Ramachandra Deva. The Shakavda 1744, too corresponds to the year 1822 A.D. Anandpur is near Birmaharajpur. Anandpur, however, has been incised as Sanandpur on the plate.

Kamira Copperplate Inscription (1826):

Lately the inscription was discovered in the Dash family of Kamira (Binka). In anka 8 of Ramachandra Deva Gajapati III (1817-56) Kamira village was donated in favour of Karunakara Dash with all its appurtenances. This anka 8 corresponds to the year 1826.
The Ghikundi Copperplate Inscription:

The grant of the village Ghikundi in Birmaharajpur subdivision was made by Prithvi Sing in favour of Mukunda Padhi on Thursday, Magha Sukla Panchami, in anka 21 of Gajapati Ramachandra Dev II (1817-56) which corresponds to 13 February 1834 A.D. The donee was a resident of Dharmpur or Dhama, a village 25 kms to the west of Sambalpur on the road towards Birmaharajpur. The annual revenue was 4 khandis of dhan and one kuta of biri, phaseolus mungo. (1822).

Niladri Sing Deo (1841-91)

Gadgadbahal Copperplate inscription of Niladri Sing

The grant was made from Sunapura (Sonepur) in favour of Karana Gangadhar Bahidar as baksis (tips) for supply of chewing betel to Raja Niladri Singh. The inscription is written in archaic Odia. The donee was interested to deposit land revenue (malguzari) and other taxes such as Sabhaprapa Kampani t2nka, Shravani hapra t2nka Kampani t2nka. The inscription is dated A35nka of the reign of Ramachandra Deva Gajapati and 1902 Sal which corresponds to 1845 A.D. Now Khurudha Itihas by Kedarnath Mohapatra refers to three Gajapatis bearing the same name Ramachandra Dev I(1592-1607), Ramachandra Dev II (1727-36) and Ramachandra Dev III (1817-56). Ramachandra Dev III was a contemporary of Raja Niladri Sing (1841-91) of Subarnapur. This charter has a special historical significance. Niladri was the most learned and luxurious among the Garjat rulers. He was fond of sumptuous food and splendid robes and sweet-smelling mali flowers and Arabian perfumes. No wonder, he had donated villages for supply of belaripana, the best of betels.

Stone Inscription of Kasiviswanath Temple

Lupursingha Inscription (1879):

This inscription says Banamali Dash, gramadanadhyaksa, built this temple in the twenty seventh regnal year of Divya Singh which corresponds to 1879 A.D. at the age of 53. This inscription is special in more senses than one. Construction of temples was the privilege of kings. But Banamali built this temple on his own resources without any assistance from anybody. The inscription is written in Odia language.
Baghmarakud Rock Inscription (1885)

The inscription pertains to the period of Raja Nildri Sing (1841-91). It is a unique inscription in the sense; it contains the history and geography of Subarnapur in just nine couplets written in Odia verse. It records on the rock the dynasty and gotra of Niladri Sing, his Dewan Dinabandhu Dasa Karana (Patnaik?) and his court Pandit Ananta Ballabha Tripathy for the first time. It celebrates Subarnapur as the land of Astasambhuse and Astachandis, the land of Parasurama of Ramayana reputation. Here Mahanadi in the sands of whose bed this rock stands is depicted as Ganga: *Kalau chitrotpala Ganga*. To inscribe these important lines on a huge rock on the outskirts of the town is indeed interesting. The scribe who seems to be a poet too does not forget to mention his name Govinda Chandrasekhar Mohapatra. Niladri’s Durbar was adorned with a galaxy of pundits like Pt. Sripati Mishra, Pt. Arttatrama Mishra, Dayanidhi Pandit, Siba Sadangi and Dinabandhu Nanda. The chief of the Pundits was one Anantaballabha Tripathy whose works remain unknown. Although a monumental smrutiyastra Niladri Mahodaya on Lord Jagannath’s pujapaddhati, mode of worship, was the greatest contribution of Niladri’s durbar, we do not know who the author was nor have we come across the works of ‘Kabi Dinabandhu Dasa Karana’. *Sangitara Swara*, compiled by PM Nayak and published by Sangeet Natak Academy, New Delhi, however, contains a lone lyric by one Dinabandhu Patnaik.

The next significant reference this inscription includes is the reference to Sonepur as the abode of Astasambhuse and Astachandis. The Astasambhuses are Subarnameru, Gokarneswar, Siddheswar, Balunkeswar, Rameswar, Lokanath, Rudranath and Paschim Somanath while the Astachandises are Sureswari, Somalai, Budhi Somlai, Narayani, Ramchandi, Bhagavati (Panchamvari Bhadrambika), Durgadevi and Dasamati.

What the inscription does not say is that Sonepur, too, was the land of Astavisnus, namely, Gopalji, Bhitiri Gopalji, Ramji, Narasimha, Brundabanbihari, Dadhivaman, Jagannath and Gopinath.

The inscription reminds us of the hoary antiquity of Sonepur as the mythical land of Parasurama. The bank of the river Tel is still littered with ashes of the yajna said to have been conducted by Parasurama. The tantric hole known as khaulgad is where Parasurama buried his mantrapothis or spilt the blood of the kings he killed. People even identify goddess Sureswari with Renuka Devi, Parasuram’s mother, the Amghat of the Mahanadi where he flung away his janughanta and declared his historic fight with the ksatriya kings, *Maragadia* where he consigned the dead and chhanchana dungri where he had built his ashram.

The sakabda mentioned in the inscription astadasa sata sastha batsara dates this inscription at 1884 (1806+78) while the Christian year recorded is 1885. The lines written in 1884 might have been incised in 1885.
Inscription on a red sandstone on Bhairava temple(1905)

There is a temple within a temple – Bhairava temple on the premises of Paschim Somanath temple of the town. On the body of the Bhairava sanctum stand inscribed a few lines in Sanskrit in odia character by Rajmata Amulyamani Devi, Rani of late Prataprudra. It is dated 1905: Sake nagakshidanti, ksitipatimitake (Naga-7, Akshi-2, Danti-8 and Ksiti-1 = 7281; counted from the right it comes to 1827+saka 78 =1905. Thus the Bhairava temple was erected in 1905, just three years after her husband’s death and three years before her own. This inscription depicts Prataprudra as Kalpabruksa (tree of fulfilment). It celebrates three generations, Pratapradra, Birmitrodaya and Somabhusan. Besides, it shows the Rajmata's religious liberalism. A devout vaisnavite, she built the Bhairava temple on the precincts of Lord Somanath.

Prataprudra Sing Deo (1891-1902)
Marble Inscription on the outer right wall of the garvagriha, Gundicha Temple

There stand twin inscriptions side by side on the outer right wall of the grava griha, Gundicha temple of Subarnapur. They contain 4 lines each in Sanskrit with Odia script. The first one helps us ascertain the date of the temple and the name of its builder, Gundicha Devi, w/o Prithvi Sing, 9th Chauhan Raja of Kanakapura (Subarnapur) : Srimat Piusadhamanvayajaladhividhav-atsagotrasya rajnah. Raja Prithvi Sing, the inscription claims, like other Durbar and inscriptive literatures, belonged to chandravamsa and vatsa gotra. His Rani Gundicha Devi belonged to Suryavamsa or solar lineage. She was the mother of Raja Niladri Sing, whose birth on 18 April 1887 the temple (mandap) commemorates. The importance of this inscription lies in this: it records for the first time the year of the completion of the temple: 1858. Kalyabde randhravanagrajaladhimitve (randhra=9, vana=5, graham=9, jaladhi=4, 9594). When reversed (ankato vamato gatih), it comes to 4959-3101 (kalyabde)1858.

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It may be mentioned here that this tallest temple of west Odisha took twenty years to complete. The most important information this inscription contains is thus the year of completion of this gigantic monument which finds no mention in any available contemporary records.

Adjacent to this stands a unique marble inscription whose parallel is never met with anywhere in India. It carries the figures of father and son, Prataprudra gathering the royal robes of Raja Niladri Sing (1841-91), Raja Bahadur – symbolic of the son’s services to the father. The British government awarded Niladri the title of Raja Bahadur in 1857, one year before the completion of this temple in recognition of ‘the meritorious services rendered by him in putting down rebellion and anarchy’ in Sambalpur, Khondmal, Athmallik and Angul. Contemporary history, however, tells a different story, it was not anarchy, it was the time of the first freedom movement of India, the time of political upheaval in this tract led by Chakara Bishoi in the south and Surendra Sai in the west of Subarnapur. This inscription pertains to this period of political unrest.

Inscription on the brass idol of Lord Laxmi-Nrusimha

On the pedestal of the huge Laxmi-Nrusimha image installed in the Gundicha temple by Raja Prataprudra is an inscription composed in run-on Sanskrit in a semi-circular fashion. It consists of four Sanskrit slokas of four lines each written in Odia script. It sings the glory of Prithvi Sing, the 9th Raja among the Chauhans of Subarnapur and his Rani, Gundicha Devi, the illustrious architect of this magnificent temple known in her name, like its counterpart in Puri.
Raja Prataprudra (1891-1902) replaced the old wooden idol of Lord Nrusimha installed by his grandmother, Gundicha Devi by a grand brass idol on whose pedestal the lines were incised.

Here Prithvi Sing (1781-1841), consort of Rani Gundicha Devi has been described as an embodiment of spotless virtues (sukrutavimalamurtta), as one born in lunar lineage (dhavalakarakulodyat) and of vatsa gotra as in inscription no. i. Raja Prithvi Sing was pious and virtuous. He was wedded to the tenets of Sanatana Dharma: smartacharavicharacharachaturah. He was a respecter of gods and Brahmins. He constructed the Navagraha temple and the Ram-Sita temple on the premises of Jagannath temple, Puri, the Sun temple and the Narayani temple of Sonepur and installed the huge Radha-Krishna image on the precincts of Ramji Math, Puri. He donated villages to Brahmins, Didimal to Baman Pujari, Kapasira to Paramananda Pujari, Anandpur to Nilakantha Panigrahi, Gobindpur to Bamadev Purohit, Achanda to Banamali Panigrahi, Ghikundhi to Mukunda Padhi, etc. Prithvi Sing, too, was heroic. When the Marathas demanded peskush, he refused even if it meant 17 years of imprisonment at Chanda of Nagpur.

The rest of the slokas are devoted to Rani Gundicha Devi whose glory they sing. Gundicha Devi was the daughter of Harihar Rai, brother of Krusna Chandra Bhanja of Daspalla. She belonged to Suryavamsa and kasyapa gotra. She was the mother of Niladri Sing (1841-91), the most powerful among the Garjat Rajas, grandmother of the pious Prataprudra (1891-1902) and greatgrandmother of the illustrious Birmitrodaya (1902-37). It was she who installed the Nrusimha image in Gundicha temple.

It appears from the inscription as though Gundicha Devi herself had installed the present image. Prataprudra with all his innate nobility and humility attributes the installation of the image to his grandmother. But it is not so. Pt. Gopinath Panigrahi in his Brata Charita (1915) observes that Prataprudra substituted the wooden idol by a massive four-armed Laxmi-Nrusimha image with sankh (conch), chakra (discus), gada (mace) and padma (lotus) in his hands. There is no usual Hiranyakasipu. Instead, there is goddess Laxmi seated on the left thigh of Lord Nrusimha who is described as the god among gods (suravara) who fulfils our cherished wishes (varadavara) and grants us unalloyed bliss (amandanandasandohadoham). This image is the rarest of its kind in the country.
The names of Rani Gundicha’s father and gotra have been for the first time recorded here in this inscription. The image was installed in 1877 A.D. baranaswagarahabdhi parimitakallyugabde (barana-8, aswa-7, graham-9, abdhi-4=8794. Reverted it comes to 4978. 4978-3101=1877).

**Biramitrodaya Sing Deo (1902-1937)**

**Four inscriptions of the Gundicha Mandap**

**The Gundicha Mandap Inscription of 1922**

There is a four-line-inscription in Sanskrit in Odia character on a slab of stone on the wall of the western gate. It speaks of Gundicha Devi, wife of Raja Prithvi Sing (1781-1841), mother of Niladri Sing, greatgrandmother of Birmitrodaya (1902-1937) as patirata. She was the architect of this majestic temple shining white like the moon (indudhavalam).This Gundicha Devi was ‘a strong minded and intelligent woman’, as Richard Temple would have it.

It was incised on Thursday in the bright fortnight of sravana in Dilliswarabda 1330 which corresponds to 1922 (1330+592).

**The Gundicha Mandap Inscription on the southern gate**

This inscription, too, was recorded the same year, i.e. 1922. The temple needed a porch, a mandap. So Prataprudra, Gundicha’s grandson, set about building it with all seriousness. But it could not proceed beyond the foundation. Death overtook him. With the punya he had earned all his life he was gathered into the abode of the gods.

**The Gundicha Mandap Inscription of 1928**

This marble inscription which adorns the eastern door is dated sravana suklapaksa dwadasi of Sakabda 1845 which tallies with the year 1923 (1850+78). It was an auspicious Thursday when these lines were incised. Prataprudra laid the foundation of the mandap and left the world. It was Birmitrodaya (1902-37) his son and successor, who raised the superstructure in keeping with the beauty, dignity, sublimity of the main temple which is 90 ft tall. The design contemplated by his father was executed on a grand scale with Baulamala stones obtained from Sambalpur; sthanat durat cha sambalapurat aniya krusnopalah.

This inscription is a panegyric on Prataprudra (1891-1902). Prataprudra was a great Sanskrit scholar. He was a saint who was a ruler. A ruler who was a saint, well-versed in Vedas and Vedangas. What is the use of the Sonepur state, he once wondered, if it did not contribute to his spiritual life? When BC Mazumdar met Yuvaraj Prataprudra for the first time, he felt he had entered the ashram of a sannyasi (Chohan Rulers of Sonepur : 1925). So he was called a Rajarsi : Rajarsirityapi janah jagati prasiddhah. This is what this inscription confirms.
**Gundicha Mandap Inscription on the northern gate**

This is a benedictory verse: Glory to Birmitrodaya, Lord of Subarnapur, pursuer of the path of dharma, consort of virtuous Parvati Devi and father of Sudhansusekhar (1937-47).

This is an undated inscription but the omission of the name of Somabhusan, places its date alongside the other inscriptions. Parvati Devi here figures as virtuous. She was the benefactor, the protector, the patron of parentless girls, orphans, destitute whom she gathered from the State and gave an identity – a mother to the world of the luckless and the lowly. BM Sing Deo (1902-37) was given the title ‘Dharmanidhi’ by Puri Muktimandap Sabha for his acts of charity and magnanimity. The Trust Fund he had created out of his personal savings for the all-round development of the State has earned him a permanent place in the comity of Garjat Rajas of Odisha.

These seven inscriptions of the Gundicha temple are of inestimable value for the study of the cultural profile of Suvarnapur, covering an eventful period of about a century and a half when five generations of Rajas ruled Subarnapur: Prithvi Sing (1781-1841), Niladri Sing (1841-91), Prataprudra (1891-1902), Birmitrodaya (1902-37) and Sudhansusekhar (1937-47). During this period Subarnapur witnessed the Maratha and the British rule.

The establishment of the Nrusimha temple reminds us of the Nrusimha cult prevalent in Chhatisgarh – west Odisha tract which has travelled from Purusottama Nrusimha temple of Sripura to Bidala Nrusimha of Narsingnath, Bargarh to Laxmi-Nrusimha temple constructed by Gosani Gundicha Devi.

As indicated earlier, Gundicha temple inscriptions point to a significant period of political ups and downs under five generations of kings. Subarnapur which had been enjoying a splendid insular status since the mid-17th century was thrown suddenly, as it were, into the vortex of contemporary political developments in the reign of Prithvi Sing. The Marathas of Nagpur took Prithvi Sing hostage to Chanda in 1802 where he lived a life of confinement for long 17 years until he was ransomed. It was then that he heard the untimely death of his only son Raghunath and married Gundicha Devi of Daspalla Rajfamily on his way from Puri to Subarnapur When Prithvi Sing died in 1841, Niladri was hardly 4. When Niladri was 20, the whole of west Odisha was in a state of political turmoil. Chakara Bishoi unleashed a reign of terror in the entire region from Ghumsur to Kalahandi while Surendra Sai raised a battle cry against the British in Sambalpur. Here in Subarnapur, Palau Mallik revolted against Rani Gundicha Devi who faced and fought him with a courage rare in history. It was then that Niladri rose to the occasion and loyalty assisted the British in lieu of the unlimited power in administration the Garjat chiefs enjoyed in their states. The British government decorated him with the title Raja Bahadur. It was during these dark years that Gundicha temple was moving towards completion.
When Durgakumari, Niladri’s first wife died in 1862 Prataprudra was nine. When he was 16, he married Amulyamani Devi of Kalahandi who gave him a son, Birmidrodaya in 1874. While Niladri added the antarala or vestibule to Gundicha temple, Prataprudra installed the biggest brass idol of Lord Laxmi-Nrusimha. BM Sing Deo (1902-37) was the foremost among the rulers of the country during whose tenure the first world war broke out, and he contributed men, money and means in support of the allied cause. BM Sing Deo was a friend to the British in war and a friend to the people in peace. He set up temples and mandaps all over the state. The mandaps of Bhagavati temple, Somlai temple, Jagannath temple, Gopalji temple, Gundicha temple etc are all his handiwork. The inscriptions in the Gundicha Mandap may be in the form of eulogy, yet they throw a lot of light on the history and heritage of Subarnapur. The Gundicha temple is a veritable archive of inscriptions of great historical importance.

**Gopalji Temple Inscription**

The Gopalji temple which stands in front of the dilapidated palace of Sonepur on the Mahanadi is one of the Astavisnu temples of Subarnapur town dating back to the later half of the 17th century. On the lintel at the entrance to the temple, we have a massive stone inscription which contains the genealogy of the Chauhan rulers of Sonepur from Achal Sing Deo to Sudhansusekhar. As the first four lines have been demented and disfigured, an attempt has been made with reference to PM Nayak’s *Inscriptions of Orissa* (2011) to revive and reconstruct the original inscription.

The inscription says the temple was built by Raja Sobha Sing (1767-81) which is not a fact. It was built by Bansigopal, brother of Madangopal and builder of the Gopalji Math of Sambalpur and Ramji Math of Puri. Nor was Sobha Sing kirttman nor prabhuatcharita (illustrious). His unsuccessful coup in league with the Marathas to usurp the Sambalpur throne was a blot on his character. Hence Prahlad Dubey in ‘Jayachandrika’ satirically calls him Mahapatra. Nonetheless he was a great builder. He rebuilt the Somalai temple at the western gate of the garh. He rebuilt the Gopalji temple with the remains of Sasisena temple. Prithvi Sing (1781-1841), his son, is truly said to have decorated the earth with good deeds: Satkirttivaryeih njakrutasukruteih bhusayamasa bhunim. Although his life was strife-torn, his youth wasted in prison, he remained devoted and dedicated to gods and Brahmns: Devaradhanabhusurarchanamatih.

The inscription depicts his son, Niladri Sing (181-91), as gentle in disposition (dhirachetah) and saintly in temperament, though history says otherwise. He was strong in mind and body. He was a lover of flowers and perfume, music and poetry. His son, Rajarsi Prataprudra (1891-1902) took up major repair of the Gopalji temple and started the mandap in front of the sanctum which was carefully completed by his son, Birmidrodaya.
This inscription is history in stone. Only the incumbency omits Divya Sing, the eldest son and successor to Achal Sing and his son Jarawar Sing (1866-67) who ruled Sonepur hardly for a year. As Jarawar died issueless, his paternal uncle Sobha Sing catapulted to the throne.

As to the date, the inscription must have been installed before 1918, the year Somabhusan died a premature death.

**Two Marble Inscriptions of the Parvati Temple**

Maharani Parbati Devi set up a sanctum consecrated to goddess Parvati on the precincts of Subarnameru temple of Subarnapur. As we cross over from the sprawling outer courtyard into the inner, we see, to our right, a small sanctum with the marble idol of goddess Parvati obtained from Benaras with a small inscription on the pedestal.

While it uses no usual eulogistic epithet for Parvati Devi, the two attributes for Birmitrodaya are unexaggeratedly exact and appropriate: **dharmanidhih and yasaswi**. BM Sing Deo was indeed illustrious or yasaswi. He was on the frontline of the rulers of India. The title of 'Maharaja' with nine gun salutes was bestowed on him in 1908. He was one of the few decorated with the title of KCIE. The Muktimandap Sabha of Puri conferred the title of ‘Dharmanidhi’ for his devotion to religion and the Bangiya Sanskruta Mahamandala the title of Jnanagunakar for his immense contributions to the world of knowledge. Birmitrodaya was Vice-Patron of Bihar and Orissa Research Society and Vice-President of Maternity and Child Welfare League of India. He was alone among the nobilities of Bihar and Orissa to have performed a Maharudra Yajna at Benaras. In loyal obedience to such *swarnapuradhinatha ajna tadiyamavalamvyya bhaktya*, she constructed this temple in 1917 (*grahaganadri dharamitobde sake*).

The other inscription lies just above the lintel on the outer wall of the main sanctum. It is all about Parvati Devi. It says Parvati Devi, daughter of Baidyanatha Deva, Raja of Kashipur (under present Raigada district) and Rani Suryakumari, shines like goddess Laxmi, full of compassion for the poor and the orphaned (*Dinanathajananukampanapara Laxmeiba ya bhrajate*). Commenting on the marital relationship struck by Bamanda and Sonepur, BC Mazumdar writes:

The Maharaja (BM Sing Deo) married the daughter of the late That Raja of Kashipur of Kalahandi, on the 26th day of February of the year 1895. I cannot resist the temptation of noting that for two generations the chiefs of Sonepur and Bamra have married in the same families. The late Raja Prataprudra Sing Deo Bahadur and Sir Sudhal Deo, the late chief of Bamra, married the two daughters of Maharaja Udit Pratap Sing Deo of Kalahandi. Now again the Feudatory chiefs of Sonepur and Bamra, who are cousins, have married the two sisters of the That Raja of Kashipur. Maharaja Sri Birmitrodaya Sing Deo has been blessed with two sons...
The inscription not only mentions Rajarsi Prataprudra as Parvati Devi’s father-in-law and Maharaja BM Sing Deo as her consort, it goes down to her son Sudhansusekhar and grandson Birpratap. Thus it figures out four generations in three slokas. It leaves out of its ambit the celebrated name of Somabhusan, the first-born who had been gathered to his fathers in 1918 in the very meridian splendour of his youth. Birmitrodaya was succeeded by his son, Sudhansusekhar (1937-47) who had the misfortune of writing the epitaph of Subarnapur Chauhans. He had to abdicate when Birpratap, his son, was hardly 24.

The inscription praises Parvati Devi as Subrata (of steadfast vows), suddhacharara (pure in character) and gunalankruta (embellished with virtues). And here is no exaggeration. Her whole life was a round of brata and upabasa. She brought up orphan girl children and when they came of age, got them married in well-to-do families with sufficient wherewithal. Her charity and generosity extended from Sonepur to Athmallik, Binka to even Brindaban. It was for her devotion to Lord Siva that she has been described as Maheswarapadabandane tatpara. Even the names she had given her sons are names of Lord Siva : Somabhusan and Sudhansusekhar.


The most important issue this inscription raises pertains to the period of construction of the temple. It says it was built in 1922 whereas the inscription in the image traces it to the year 1917. The construction of the temple might have started in 1917 and completed in 1922.

**Pancharatha Temple Stone Inscription of 1929**

Somabhusan Sing Deo (1896-1918) was the eldest son to Maharaja Birmitrodaya Sing Deo but was no successor to his father. He predeceased his father in October 1918, hardly six months after his marriage with Sita Devi, d/o Raja Krupamaya Deva of Khimidi (Paralakhemundi). A deadly influenza which visited Sonepur took him away. Somabhusan died when he was 22. Writes BC Mazumdar:

His life was uneventful as young lives in aristocratic families are in India, but the charm with which he held all who came within the circle of his existence attracts us and induces to speak of him in mournful whisper. (*In Memory of Somabhusan Sing Deo*).  

Somabhusan Ayurved School, Somabhusan Sadan, Somabhusan Sagar, Somabhusan Orphanage carry his name, but the most memorable monument is
Somabhusan Memorial Pancharatha Temple of the town. On the lintel of the Brusabh Mandap we find the following four lines inscribed on a piece of stone:

Raja Biramitrodaya who belonged to the dynasty of Prithviraj Chauhan built this beautiful Siva temple in the design of five chariots for the salvation of the soul of late Somabhusan embellished with virtues.

The Chauhans of western Odisha claim their descent from the famous Prithviraj Chauhan of Delhi. In this connection BC Mazumdar observes:

There is a tradition in the form of a legend of quasi-mythical character that so early as the 12th or 13th century AD, one Humeru of the family of the Chauhan Rajputs of Mainpuri in the united provinces came to Patna with his wife who was then enciente and acquired there a position of some significance by his heroic deeds. It is also narrated in this legendary account that the son of Humeru born in Patna state became, by his mythical powers, the chief of the eight Malliks who had the government of Patna and Sambalpur in their hands and thus established the Chohan rule in the Kosala country by being established at Gadsambar. (*The Chohan Rulers of Sonpur*)

This quasi-mythical tradition of the Sonepur-Sambalpur Chauhans has been supported by some sections of the Rajputs in Raipur-Bilaspur region. And this inscription is reminiscent of this tradition.

This inscription describes Somabhusan as an embodiment of virtues and this is no hyperbole. Somabhusan was a prince among men, rather a man among princes. He refused to maintain the usual difference, the distance from Tom, Dick and Harry. He freely mixed with them. He was one with them. He was fond of music and drama, and he acted his part with the commoners. He sang and danced on the stage and unhesitatingly assumed female roles. This is not all. He was moved to pity and charity when he saw people in distress. When the first world war broke out, and people from Sonepur whose names history does not record, were recruited he appealed to the Maharaja to send money if he must and not men. And Sonepur was the biggest donor in Orissa during the war time.

When such a soul succumbed to Influenza, a shadow of sadness and silence fell on Sonepur. Sonepur mourned this death in the most tearful terms.
Somabhusan passed away on 18th October 1918. And when Kishorimohan Das, Somabhusan’s one-time teacher saw his dear young student no more, he turned a sannyasi and left for Allahabad never to return. *(My Gipsy Life)*

This brief epitaph on the most ornate temple of Sonepur thus stirs a long train of unhappy memories associated with Somabhusan.

Somabhusan Memorial Pancharatha Temple is a miracle of design, a rare specimen of Chauhan architectural excellence. This *Pancharathanvitam suruchiram prasadam*, as the inscription has it, is indeed a unique artistic structure, a single yet singular structure that houses the entire family of Lord Siva. Lord Siva in the centre, Parvati to his left, Ganes to his right, Karttikeya behind and Brusabha in front. A family of five in separate sanctums and yet in one templar structure. It is five-in-one. Have you seen another temple of this type in the whole country? And yet, that this sanctum lay unenshrined for half a century was a cruel decree of history.

**The Parvatipati Temple Inscription of 1931**

This marble inscription has been installed on the right outer wall of Parbatipati temple of village Parvatipur on the left bank of the Mahanadi, a stone’s throw from the Dharmasala-Birmaharajpur road.

**Text in Translation**

Baidyanatha Deva, Raja of Kashipur, was blessed, as a result of his good deeds, with a daughter through Rani Suryakumari. This daughter, Parvati Devi shone like a goddess. She became daughter-in-law to the world-renowned, heroic Prataprudra and the wife of Birmitrodaya who was a repository of virtues, who sparkled like a jewel on the crowns of the Rajas of India, who was the very source of delight to the progeny of Prithviraj, who was observant of all religious rites and who was foremost among the religious men (of the country). She begot, as a result of her *punya*, a son, Sudhansusekhar who was like a garland on the neck of the wise and who was embellished with wisdom and fame. Her grandson, Birpratap, endowed with the handsome appearance of his forefathers, was the source of happiness for the subjects. The British emperor, seeing her donate a huge sum of Rs.2 lacs for the well-being of the people and the welfare of the country, awarded her, out of love, a gold medal with the title, Kaiser-i-Hind. They offered this wise lady their grateful admiration. She built on her own, at Parvatipur, a temple to Lord Parvatipati (Siva) for the delight of Parvati. *(Inscriptions of Orissa:PM Nayak)*

This inscription is a celebration of four generations of Suvarnapura Chauhans. It begins and ends with Maharani Lady Parvati Devi. Parvati Devi was the daughter of the *That* Raja of Kashipur (of the present Raigada district) and his Rani Suryakumari. She was the daughter-in-law of Raja Prataprudra of Subarnapur, well-known for his piety and charity, wife of Maharaja BM Sing Deo who has been described as a repertoire of virtues, a jewel on the crowns of kings of India, a source
of delight to the successors of Prithviraj Chauhan of Delhi and the foremost among the religious men of the country. Lady Parvati Devi was the mother of Sudhansusekhar and the grandmother of the handsome Birpratap. She was the winner of the covetous title of Kaiser-i-Hind and the builder of beautiful Parvatipati temple.

Maharani Lady Parvati Devi has been depicted as shining like a goddess \((\text{Deviba dedipyate})\), as a loving mother to the lowliest and the lost \((\text{dinesusadbatsala})\). In fact, she was the benefactor and protector of parentless, hapless girls of Odisha and beyond. She gave them an identity. Her father-in-law, Rajarsi prataprudra was well-known for his moral rectitude and saintly detachment which drew from the pious pen of poet Gangadhar Meher a rare paean of praise.

Then comes Birmitrodaya compared in the verse with a dazzling jewel on the crowns of the Rajas of India \((\text{Bhrajat bharatabhumipalamuktalankara ratnollasat})\). In fact, BM Sing Deo, compared with the small size of Subarnapur rose to the pinnacle of glory among the Indian Rajas. He was awarded the title of KCIE by the British, ‘Jnanagunakar’ by the Bangiya Sanskruta Mahamandala and ‘Dharmanidhi’ by Puri Muktimandap Sabha. Thus the epithet \(\text{dharmatmanam agranih}\) is not at all misplaced. It was he who constructed the Siva temple of Kumarkeli, the Jagannath temple of Paligan, the Gupteswar temple of Sindhol, even the Radhamadhab temple of Brindaban. He extended financial assistance to the orphanages of Puri, Kankhal, Kalimpong, to the Leper Asylums of Cuttack and Purulia, British Empire Leprosy Fund, Lady Irwin Maternity Welfare Fund, Maternity Child Welfare League of India wherein he was nominated Vice-President \(\text{(Sonepur Raj)}\).

Lady Parvati Devi was the mother of Sudhansusekhar \((1837-47)\) who succeeded BM Sing Deo as the ruler of the state. But to say that he was bestowed with wisdom and fame is not to say the truth. He was a shadow to his father. He had neither wisdom \((\text{prajna})\) not fame \((\text{yosa})\) and it was during his tenure that the flag of the Chauhans which was flying high during BM Sing Deo’s time was lowered. India became independent and Sonepur as a separate State lost its identity and entity. The two epithets used here to depict Parvat Devi’s grandson Birpratap is, however, correct. Birpratap had inherited the physical beauty of his forefathers \((\text{kulanuruparuchirakaradisambhusitam})\). He was a sportsman and hence a source of delight to the people \((\text{prakrutipramodajananam})\). He was born on the fifth day of the dark fortnight of \text{sravana} in 1924 which was the theme of Gopinath Panigrahi’s \text{Kumara Janmotsava} \((1927)\).

The last six lines highlight Parvati Devi’s achievements and awards. Impressed with her donation of Rs.2 Lac for the welfare of the people, the British government decorated her with a gold medal and a title ‘Kaiser-i-Hind’, the best lady of Hindustan. The donation, however, stands unspecified.
This inscription installed in 1931 omits Somabhusan from the genealogy as he had already predeceased his father. It carries the genealogy to Birpratap born 9 years before the installation of the inscription.

The images of Siva and Parvati, obtained from Benaras, are made of marble. The temple with its tall boundary wall and spacious premises carries the name Parvatipati which is, by itself, interesting. First, a temple with this nomenclature is unique in India. Second, it is equivocal. On the one hand, it means Lord Siva, consort of Devi Parvati, on the other, Birmitrodaya, husband of Maharani Lady Parvati Devi.

The inscription during the tenure of the Chauhans from Achal Sing (1729-49) to Niladhar Sing (1841-91) were composed in Odia including the Kasiviswanath temple inscription and the Baghamarakud rock inscription which were written in verse form. They help us study of the evolution of Odia language. The latest Chauhans, particularly Prataprudra Sing Deo (1891-1902) and BM Sing Deo (1902-37) had the inscriptions composed in Sanskrit, yet they retained the Odia script.

Like Koi Ghosa, Ballabha Ghosa, Ballabha Naga, Malla Datta, Dhara Datta, Charu Datta, Ananga Datta, Mangala Datta etc. who inscribed the Somavamsi charters in Sanskrit in kutila form of the nagari character, the Chauhans appear to have maintained scribes like Gobinda Chandrasekhar Mohapatra, Padmanabha Patnaik, Gangadhar Mohapatra, etc. as engravers and sculptors.
References

3. Ibid. p.429
7. Ibid. p.244
10. *Studies on Odishan Epigraphy*, Delhi, 2015, p.97 ff
"Sonepur contains numerous temples", writes Cunningham," but I saw nothing which I could pitch upon as a relic of ancient architecture. Some temples appear comparatively modern and the remainder were built within the memory of living men (Archaeological Survey-XIII, 120). True, most of the temples of Sonepur are handed down from the Chauhans but the Kosaleswar Temple of Baidyanath and Kapileswar Temple of Charada, attributed to Janmejaya Mahabhabagupta (850-85 AD), are glorious exceptions.
The temple of Baidyanath which is the earliest known temple in the whole of Odisha is an outstanding example of a Buddhist shrine having been converted into a Hindu temple. There could not be a better example of transition from Buddhist brick structure to Hindu carved stone temple architecture (Fabri-30). The lovely lady adjusting the jewel on her forehead while looking at the mirror is a superb example of early post-classical art. Her body carved in sensuous elegance has no tribhanga, pose of later mannerism and her eye-slit, no elongation. The Kartikeya image unusually placed inside the temple on the right door-jamb of the entrance with its wig style and head-dress, the mother and child image and the loving couple are moving works of a master sculptor, an amoret in stone. The charming beauty of the standing lovers, the gentleness and tenderness with which the man holds the lovely foot of the girl is unparalleled. “Indeed” comments Fabri, “it would be false to call this an erotic image. This is not eroticism, this is loving tenderness, love in its full sense” (Fabri -43). Daripada’s faceless temple, which stood close by and which carried triangles, squares, rectangles and numbers instead of figures of gods, birds, animals, flora and fauna on the walls was wiped out in the 1967 flood. And what remains now is the precarious but priceless Mukhasala, mossed with age, yet shining in solitary splendour.

The workmanship of the Kapileswar temple of Charada is strikingly similar to that of Kosaleswar temple, Baidyanath. A delightful lot of indolent maidens, lovely Dryads and sylvan nymphs contemplated in several graceful postures and manifold enchanting moods with attractive coiffures, elegantly poised trunks and legs, fine drapery and nice ornaments are depicted on the pillars and pilasters of Baidyanath and Charada temples. There is a Natraj image on the pilaster in the mandap of Charada temple, decorated rather austerely, performing the dance on a full-blossomed lotus. The enchanting flexed limbs, the eyes closed as if in intoxication, vivacious attitude and rhythm and sprightliness of the dance portray the god in passionate, eternal Tandava. The doorframe of the sanctum contains Nagas and Naginis in mongrel
form with intertwined tails, the marriage scene of Siva and Parvati where Ganesh is found dancing and a miniature Anantasyi Visnu which is the earliest of its kind in Odisha.

When the Chauhans came, the Odishan temple architecture, the Kalinga style, was already on the decline. The Chauhans continued this Odishan art which is more a sub-class of Nagara style than a class by itself, considering its curvilinear spires and square plans. While the Vaisnava temples of the Chauhans exhibit the Odishan style and the Sakta temples adopt the original manifestation of the Nagara style found in Khajuraho temples in Bundelkhand, some Saiva temples synthesize the Khajuraho art with the Odishan.

The Gopalji temple, rebuilt by Sobha Sing (1767-81) on the remains of Sashisena temple contains along with the Dasavatara images carved out of black chloride stone in the niches of the outer wall of the main sanctum, sculptures of Laxmi, Ganesh, Nrusimha, Krsna, Mahisamardini Durga, Hanuman and a god on a human mount. There is a tantric Gajalaxmi sculpture with a garland of human skulls on the lintel of the temple. The pre-Chauhan temple of Kosaleswar, like the Mukteswar temple of Bhubaneswar, also bears on the arch of the gateway Gajalaxmi figure which B.C. Mazumdar identifies with the Kamala of Dasamahavidya or Matangi Mahalaxmi (Orissa in the Making). The beautifully designed door at the entrance of the temple with figures of 24 Avataras and the finely carved wooden Vimana in the mandap built by BM SingDeo in 1925 with delicate, decorative motifs of creepers, birds and animals are specimens of rare wood-carving.

**Images in the niches of Gopalji Temple**
The Jagannath temple built by Raj Sing Deo (1709-29) on the stones of the dilapidated Varahanath temple has its Jagamohan and Naytamandir attached to the main sanctum. Prithvi Sing Deo (1781-1841) added the temples of Ganesh, Bimala and the Sun-God, and Niladri, the temple of Lokanath, while BM Sing Deo (1902-37) erected the compound wall with four gates in imitation of Puri temple. Maharani Parvati Devi and Birmitrodaya added the Sarasvati temple in the name of late Somabhusana Sing Deo and the Laxmi temple in the name of Amulyamani Devi respectively. The wooden snana mandap where the new Raja wears his pugri caught fire in 1884 and was replaced in 1915 by the present pucca mandap (Swarnapuragunadarsah:1921). The images painted by the local Maharanas look more attractive than their counterparts in Puri temple.

The Nrusimhanath temple, popularly known as Gundicha temple, completed in 1858 at a cost Rs. 12,000/- by Rani Gundicha Devi to commemorate the birth of her son, is the highest monument of Sonepur representing the last flicker of the Chauhans' architectural glory. About ninety feet high, it is the tallest temple of western Odisha. Its high pyramidal roof, which exhibits pancharatha style, is adorned with various cult images and miniature temple motifs on all sides. The architectural decoration of the porch built by B.M. Sing Deo in 1915-27 with Baulmala stones displays high workmanship. The wooden Nrisimha initially enshrined in imitation of the Gundicha temple of Puri was replaced by Prataprudra (1891-1902) by a befitting brass image. It is a rare image of Laxmi-Nrusimha. Lord Nrusimha here carries sankha (conch), chakra (discus), gada (mace), padma (lotus) in his hands and Laxmi on his left thigh. There is an inscription on the
pedestal. The Gundicha temple is associated with the *Dolayatra* in *Phalgun*, *Chandanyatra* in *Vaisakh*, *Rathayatra* in *Asrah* and *Rasayatra* in *Kartik*.

While Ramji Temple originally set up by Prithvi Sing (1781-1841) was rebuilt by Laxmi Prasad Mallik, Dadhivaman temple and Brindavan Bihari temples were built on people’s donation raised by Prithvi Sing and Tehsildar Kesab Guru respectively. To Brundabanbihari BM Sing Deo added the boundary wall and Prataprudra the *Snanmandapat, Dolamandapat* and *Singhadwar*. The images in the niches have been beautifully sculpted by Sadasiva Maharana. Gopinath temple founded by Prataprudra and completed by B.M. Sing Deo has a circumambulatory passage on the *Pitha* reminiscent of Manikeswari temple architecture. Besides, Raghunath Temple of Urle, Dadhivaman temples of Kamalpur, Khandahata, Tarbha, Baghbar, Bidurpali, Mursundhi, Menda, Rampur etc. Baladev temple of Bhujabalpur and Gopalji temple of Apat Nuagarh are some of the Vaisnavite temples of the State. To this may be added the Jagannath temples of Subalaya, Lakni, Lachhipur, Kartang, Kotsamalai, Pitamahul, Paligan, Jaloe, Binka, Mursundhi, etc.

The Somaleswari Temple rebuilt by Sobha Sing (1767-81) faces north like the Somlei temple of Sambalpur. There is a *Gajalaxmi* image on the lintel at the entrance of the temple. Goddess Samlai who is the tutelary deity of the Chauhans stands on a square of the *Garvagriha*. It contains an outer sanctum with Sakta goddesses in the niches-Varahayani, Narayani, Jaya Durga, Kali, Rudrayani, Vijaya Brahmayani, Hanuman, Mahisamardini, Indrayani, and Sureswari and two Vaisnavite *Dwarapalas*. Where are Birabhadra and Genesh in place of Hanuman and Mahisamardini? wonders Charles Fabri. The porch in front of the outer sanctum is a hall with its *torana* decorated by elaborate designs and carvings. An image resembling Pataneswari is sculptured on the eastern *torana*. This decorative porch was built by B.M. Sing Deo.
Images in the niches of Somlai Temple
The Stambhesvari temple stands right at the centre of the tantric triangle constituted by Gokarnesvar, Suvarnameru and Ramesvar temples. It has a long audience hall with a stylistically perforated torana. The Suresvari temple facing north, Stambhesvari temple facing east and the Bhagavati temple facing west constitute a triangle within a triangle. It is said the Rani of Raj Sing Deo (1709-29) had brought with her a Stambheswari idol from Khemandi who directed her to build her a temple. But Stambheswari cult is the oldest Sakta cult of Odisha. The Bhanjas
of Boudh were great worshippers of goddess Stambheswari. They called themselves Stambheswarilabdhabhavaraprasadah. On the Mahanavami night the Vali festival is held here. Stambheswari or Khambesvari is worshipped at Binka, Khamsiripali, Kotasamalei etc.

The Sureswari image, which was installed at the gate of what once was the fort of the Somavamsis is an eight-armed Mahisamardini Durga image enshrined in a temple built by Achal Sing Deo (1729-49) The images of the six-headed Kartikeya and the ten-armed Ganesh in the niches of the temple walls, the twin lingams known as Amvesvar and Jamvesvar, show the worship of siva and shakti. The Mahabhairava and Tara images on the premises of the temple are splendid in sculpture. There is a tantric hole near Sureswari temple. It is called Khaulgad. The Panchami Bali of Aswin is held here in complete secrecy.

The image of Bhagavati enshrined in the modern Bhagavati temple is an old weather-beaten figure identified with Bhagavati Panchamvari Bhadramvika of the Maranjmura charter of Yayati II. The figure has the attributes of sword, skull, trident and drum in the right hands and shield and a stringed bow in two of the left hands. The lowermost right hand is akimbo and the lowermost left is on the head of the demon, emerging in full human form out of the neck from which the head of the beast is severed. She is one of the Astachandis of Sonepur.

The Manikesvari brick temple, said to have been built by one Chamra Mahalik, contains to the east and south of its compound two Vajrayani images of exquisite workmanship one of which is Avalokitesvara. Besides these, the Bhagavati temple of Chandlipali, Narayani and Sitala temples of Binka, Umadevi temple of Kadodar, Bhubaneswari temple of Dusipara, Paramesvari temple of Bisipara, Ramachandi temple of Tenda, Narayani temple of Narayanpur, goddess Durga of the palace, Mahesvari temple of Amsarbhatta etc. are significant sculptured Sakta spots of the State. Among the minor Sakta temples may be included Budhi Maa temple of
Dherapada (Dheras were inducted into Sonepur by Raj Sing Deo) and Sasthi Devi temple of the Rajbhawan.

Chief among the Saivite temples of Sonepur are the Suvarnameru and Ramesvar temples which consist of a sanctum, a Jagamohana and a Natamandap in the style of Lingaraj temple of Bhubaneswar. The sanctum is crowned by a prominent sikhara of Pancharatha style, but the Jagamohana and Natamandap have each on it a pidha deula. While B.C. Mazumdar attributes Suvarnameru temple to Madangopal in mid – 17th century (Chohan Rulers of Sonpur, 1925). RD Banerjee ascribes it to the beginning of 18th century (JBOBS, XV, 83) since, devoid of sculptural ornaments, it has more than one mandap and the outline of its sikhara is northern type and not the medieval Odishan type which is a stepped pyramid. It is said one Neuli Sahu was dream-directed by Lord Subarnameru to worship Him on the left bank of river Tel. So Subarnameru left Subarnapali for Subarnapur where he was greeted with showers of gold. On the temple premises we have a beautiful Nataraja image, a Parbati temple by Rani Parvati Debi and a temple consecrated to Lord Baneswar by Prataprudra. History says, Vaijal Deb of Patna completed the temple left half constructed by Neuli Sahu. There is an Anantasayi image on the lintels of Rameswar and Subarnameru temples which is symptomatic of Harihara cult.

There is a Bhimapada on the Kaleswar rock close to Rameswar temple on the confluence.

The Paschim Somanath temple, started by a goldsmith and completed by an oil presser, consists of the sanctum, the Jagamohana and Yajnamandap to which were added the temples of Ganesh and the Sun-god by BM Sing Deo, the Hanuman temple by Prataprudra and the Bhairava temple by Amulyamani Devi. The attractive architecture of Gokarnesvar temple, the images and semi-divine human and animal figures used as decorative motifs in the Chandrasekhar temple built by Prataparudra and the Somabhusan Pancharatha Siva temple by B.M. Sing Deo which uniquely accommodates a whole family – Siva, Parvati, Ganesh, Kartikeya and the bull – in a temple of five temples reveal the exquisite beauty of execution.

Besides, the Champesvar temple of Champamal, the Jambesvar temple of Jaloe, the Kapileswar temple of Bisipara, the Godhanesvar temple (built by Prithvi Sing with an inscription on a Ganesh image) near Subalaya, the Gupteswar temple of Sindhol, the Nilakanthesvar temple of Tarbha, the Nageswar temple of Nakdein,
the Dhavaleswar temple of Dheloi, the Svapnesvar temple of Sunariberna, the Biresvar temple of the Raighat, the Siddhesvar temple of Sripura and Viswesvar temple of Barajhula, Kaddapal and Subalaya are some of the important Siva temples of Sonepur, which carry on them the unmistakable stamp of Chauhan architecture.

There is a rock in the bed of the Mahanadi known as Baghmarakud where an inscription celebrates the glory of Sonepur as the seat of Astasambhu and Astachandi. There are also Astavisnu temples here and all this proclaims the message of unity among diverse and divergent religious creeds like Vaisnavism, Saktism and Saivism.

**Religion and Philosophy**

Subarnapur was the home of Animism, Saktism, Saivism, Tribal Tantricism, Tantric Buddhism, Brahminical Tantricism, Vaisnavism, Nathism, Mahimaism, etc.

**Animism**

Animism is embedded in pre-historic culture. The primitive man believed that the spirit leaves the body after death and inhabits the hills, rivers, streams, trees, rocks, forests, etc. He believed that every individual life was governed by spirits and supernatural powers. The funeral rites and the *sraddha* ceremony prevalent among the tribal and non-tribal communities spring from these adorations of the spirit. The people of all regions of Subarnapur observe this tradition of worship of the spirit irrespective of caste, community and creed. As the oldest tradition of primitive religion in the whole world, animism has a strong hold on the minds of Subarnapur.

**Saktism**

Saktism comes next. It is the cult of the mother goddess represented by Metakani, Balikan, Chandlipat, Barali, Bahmanidei, and many non-Brahminical goddesses. These goddesses were worshipped for protection from danger, diseases, evil fate as also for prosperity. Most of these deities belong to the time earlier than the goddesses worshipped in temples. These goddesses were the inspiring sources of agriculture, naval trade and cultural harmony. Sakti is the progenitor of the Cosmos, protector of the universe and annihilator of evil forces. In *Devisukta* she is considered Brahman and even the mother of the supreme gods of Hinduism.

Among the goddesses venerated in the temples of Subarnapur, Charadei appears the oldest. Charadei to the south of the Kapileswar temple near Binka is an image of Dakhinakali. It dates back to 5th century A.D. It is not the image of Buddhist goddess, Sadabhuja Tara, as has been misconceived by scholars. The image of Stambhesvari-Narayani at Gadbhitar, Binka is comparatively recent. From a hymn sung during the *Solaha Puja* in Asvin, it is known that Stambhesvari has been worshipped in Tarapurgad or Naksatrapur since long. It is probable that the
cult of Stambhesvari travelled from Parvatadvaraka kingdom of Tustikara to ancient Binitapur/Binka in the latter half of the 5th century A.D. The antiquities of Naksatrapur temple of Stambhesvari-Narayani have been kept in Chandimauli temple of Binka. Suresvari, Bhagavati, Stambhesvari, Somalesvari, Narayani, Vimalakshi, Ramachandi and Dasamati are adored as Astachandis or eight prominent goddesses of the town of Subarnapur. The present temples of these Astachandis are Chauhan monuments. Suresvari temple was built by Achal Sing (1729-1749), Stambhesvari temple by Raj Sing (1709-1729), Samalesvari temple by Madangopal (1650-60). Narayani temple by Prithvi Sing (1781-1841). Ramchandi temple by Prataprudra (1891-1902). Although the temple of Bhagavati was erected in 19th century A.D. the cult of this goddess prevailed here from the reign of Chandihara Yayati-II who ruled South Kosala from his capital Subarnapur. Bhagavati is identical with Raktachamunda of Tantrakalpa and was called Bhagvati Panchamvari Bhadramvika in Jatesingha-Dungri copperplate of Chandihara Yayati-II. The Khaulgad near Sureswari temple represents the cult of Yoni worship. The Tantric cult of Khaul valli resembles the traditions of the pre-historic age. It seems Suresvari was worshipped as Dwararakiska of the Somavamsi fort in 11th century. And the present temple was built in 18th century A.D. on the ruins of the old one. Similar was the case of the Stambhesvari cult. Stambhesvari was a popular deity in Sonepur right from the rule of Bhanja dynasty of early Khjnali Mandala. The Sitaeswari temple of Binka, a monument of the 18th century A.D. too, is symptomatic of the Sakta cult. There are quite a number of Sakta temples all over Subarnapur. Of them Uma Devi of Kadodar, Ramchandi of Tenda, Parameswari of Bishipada, Maheswari of Baradakata, Durga Devi of the palace, Manikeswari and Sitala Devi of the town, Bhagabati of Chandlipali are some of the Sakta pithas of Sonepur. Saktism contributed to the power and prestige of women.

Laksminkara, Jnanadei Maluni, Luhukuti Luhuruni, Sua Teluni, Sukuti Chamaruni, Patara Sauruni, Gangi Gauduni, Nitai Dhovani rose to prominence in opposition to the rigid restriction of the orthodox Hindu society. Influence of Saktism countered untouchability and rigidity of caste and encouraged their women folk to participate in religious rituals and ceremonies.

Saivism

Saivism evolved as the most popular creed in Subarnapur region. Kapilesvara temple of Charada and Kosalesvar Siva temple of Vaidyanath axiomatically prove that Saivism had a glorious cultural legacy here. The temples of Kapilesvara, Charada along with Kosaleswara, Baidyanath which was originally a Tantric Buddhist monastery remodelled into a Saivite shrine were perhaps built during the Somavamshi dynasty. Both the temples extended patronage to Pasupata Saivism and Mattamayura Saivism.
Like the Astachandis, Suvarnameru, Ramesvara, Gokarnesvara, Somanath, Lokanath, Siddhesvara, Balunkesvara and Rudranath, each adored in separate temples are identified as Astasambhus or eight forms of Siva. It is probable that the people of Sonepur while encouraging the erection of these eight temples were inspired by the Astamurtis of Siva which form the Cosmos and represent the Cosmic manifestation of Siva, Suvarnameru the most popular deity of Sonepur was worshipped under a banyan tree in Suvarnapali, located on the southern bank of river Tel. Neuli Sahu brought this deity to Sonepur. He built a temple to enshrine this deity but he expired before the completion of this temple. Its construction was completed by the Chauhan King Baijal Deb of Patna. Suvarnameru is described as Hemameru in a Tantric text. Saivite shrines observe the marriage of Siva with Parvati known as Sitalsasthi. During this festival people from far and near assemble for worship in Siva temples which promotes social cohesion. Saivism teaches peaceful co-existence in the family notwithstanding the hostile composition of the family. Viswanath and Yogesvar temples are very important Siva shrines in Binka.

**Vaisnavism**

Vaisnavism like Saivism, was quite popular in Subarnapur. Performance of Yajna or vedic sacrifices with veneration to Yajnapurusa Visnu after the release of Sun or Moon from the grip of Rahu or Ketu during the solar or lunar eclipses is a Puranic tradition of Hinduism. It is probable that this Yajnic or sacrificial tradition commenced in Papaksaya Ghat/Vatapadapa Aghanasan Ksetra near Binka right from the puranic age. The Rewan copperplates of Sarabhapuriyan king Maharaja Narendra record the grant of land in the village Arama kataka in Mantaraja-Bhukti for the adoration of Sridharasvami in Batapadra. In Allahabad Pillar Inscription Samudragupta says, he defeated ten kings of Daksinapath including Mantaraja of Korala kingdom. Korala is identified with Bad Karle and San Karle area which was organized into a realm with the incorporation of Binka and Rampur regions. Mantaraja Bhukti of the Sarabhapuriyan realm was named after this Mantaraja, Aramakataka was the ancient name of Rampur near Binka and Batapadra was perhaps a name of the Vatapadapa Aghanasanakshetra or Papakshaya Ghat which comprised the regions of Urtle, Bhramarpali and Rohila. Sidharasvami as Yajnapurusa Visnu was worshipped in the Papakshya Ghat. Narayani-Stambhesvari worshipped in the latter half of 5th century A.D in Naksatrapur/Tarapurgad is described as Vaisnavi and Shyama which suggest that Vaisnavism and Saivism were very much popular in Naksatrapur.

It is known from the Sonepur copperplates of Mahabhavagupta Janmejaya that a temple of the Vaisnavite lord Kesava existed in Subarnapur. King Janmejaya had granted land for the worship of this deity in the 17th regnal year from Arama or Rampur near Binka. This suggests the popularity of Krisna-worship in Subarnapur even in the early rule of the Somavamsis. Before the conquest and occupation of Subarnapur regions by the Somavamsi king Mahabhavagupta Janmejaya, these regions were ruled by the Bhanjas of Khinjali Mandala. Many of the Bhanjas called
themselves Paramavaisnava. It appears that they extended patronage to Vaisnavism along with Saivism, or the cult of Bhairava or Stambhesvari. Patali Srikshetra was a centre of Vaisnavism. It sheltered the cult of Jagannath. In Madalapanji this was a hiding place of the holy triad to escape the iconoclasm of Raktavahu when Sobhanadeva was king in 241 Saka era corresponding to 318/319 A.D. A group of scholars believing the invasion of Raktavahu as a Rastrakuta incursion suggest its link with that of Govinda-III during the rule of Subhakaradeva-I of the Bhaumakara dynasty. Another group of scholars considering Raktavahu as Khan Durani or Khan-i-Duran, the General of Aurangazeb place this event during the regime of Lal Sai, the Chauhan ruler of Sonepur who ruled from 1660 to 1689 A.D. Trikuta mountain in many ways is related with Tantric Buddhism. The cult of Jagannath had multiple Tantric Buddhist influences in the process of its evolution. It is probable that the concealment of Jagannth took place during the reign of Subhakara-I who is described as Sobhanadeva in Madalapanji. The Bhaumakaras were ruling Utkala while the Bhanjas who were their feudatories were ruling Boudh-Sonepur region during this event. This legend of Madalapanji further depicts that king Yayati traced these hidden images and consecrated these icons in a small temple at Puri. In fact, Yayati-I whose capital was Subarnapur removed Lord Jagannath from his original seat at Kutasmalai and installed him at Puri when he entered the coastal world. It is probable that this Yayati was Mahasivagupta Yayati-I who ruled over South Kosala as also the coastal region of Odisha after shifting his capital from Vinitapur/Binka to Yayatinagar as it is also known from a legend that Yayati-I had built a temple of Lord Jagannath at Binka/Binitapur on whose ruins stands the present Jagannath temple built by Purusottama Deva (1689-1709).

Vaisnavism centering around the worship of Rama, Krishna and Lord Jagannath achieved unprecedented popularity in Subarnapur region during the rule of the Chauhans. During this period eight different forms of Vishnu were venerated in eight separate temples in Sonepur. The temple of Jagannath at Sonepur was built by Raj Sing, the temple of Lakshmi by Amulyamani Devi, Sarasvati temple by Somabhusana and Biranchi Narayan by Prithvi Sing. The Snanamandapa was erected by Biramitrodaya Sing Deo. These temples intimately related with Vaisnavism had profound religious influence over the people in promoting their ethical consciousness and social harmony. Ramji temple was started by Prithvi Sing, but it was reconstructed and beautifully decorated by Biramitrodaya Sing Deo. Gopalji temple in Sonepur was set up by Bansigopal, Prataprudra and Biramitrodaya in different phases. Gundicha temple was built by Gundicha Devi, queen of Prithvi Sing. Raja Pratapprudra enshrined in this temple an icon of Nrisimha made of eight sacred metals. It is also called Narasimha temple. Birmitrodaya Sing Deo constructed a beautiful mandap in 1934. Bhitiri Gopalji temple was raised by Pratapprudra with the enshrinement of the holy triad. Gopinath temple was started by Pratapprudra and completed by Birmitrodaya Sing Deo. Brindavan Bihari temple was built during the reign of Birmitrodaya by a Tahasildar Kesab Guru on local donation. The temple of Bhagavat Svami in Binka was erected during Chauhan
rule. The Gopalji temple of Junhapara, Madanmohan temple of Nuapara and the Harihar temple of Matamath in Binka were built by the people of Binka with their own contributions. The temple of Dadhibamana at Tarbha it is believed is as sanctifying as the Puri Srimandira.

Sun-worship in Sonepur was as ancient as the rule of Mahabhavagupta Janmejaya as the Sonepur copperplate of this Somavamsi king issued from Arama/Rampur in his 17th regnal year pays homage to Lord Aditya. A damaged Sun image was there at Papakshyaghat in Binka as late as the seventh decade of the 20th century A.D. It was a two-handed sun image riding on a chariot pulled by a seven headed horse in a mutilated state. On the occasion of the solar eclipse the Sun-god is venerated here alongwith Yajnapurusa Vishnu. The Sun temples of Jagannath and Paschima Somanath temple premises show that Subarnapur was a Sun-worshipper.

**Tantric Cult**

Tantric cult developed in Subarnapur mainly in three different Streams-Tribal, Brahmanical and Buddhistic. The primitives there believed in the worship of supernatural powers, witchcraft, black magic, sorcery, etc. The Pre-historic antiquities discovered at the confluence of the Mahanadi and the river Tel, in Tarapurgarh in the vicinity of Binka, in the Ghati-Ghatian foothill near Singhijuba, the Puja Dunguri area near Rampur, etc. reliably substantiate this view. It is true that the primitive men worshipped supernatural deities and spirits on roughly erected stone altar, in groves of holy trees, springs, rivers, mountain tops, places fenced by a hedge or a wall of unburnt bricks, stones and in forests. Bhatvalasa, Metakani, Chandalipat, Jadenhadevi, Panthei, Varoli, Khaki-Pankhi, Bararola Kudi, Mauli, Janglen, Ghantasini, etc. deities of nature. Many of these deities are worshipped even today with little or gorgeous reconstruction while many others have retained, to a considerable extent, their pre-historic design. These gods/goddesses worshipped by tribals display a tradition of magic and miracles and mantras of non-Aryan language. Even mandalas or mystic diagrams of un-boiled rice, vermilion, flowers and other materials are used. Tribal deities are worshipped for protection against wild animals, cure of diseases, prosperity and even security against natural and unnatural calamities. Mantras are adopted for taming wild animals, charming snakes and curing illness. The tribal Tantric cults were applied merely for material well-being, not spiritual uplift.

Brahminical Tantric cults in the form of esoteric practices, application of mantras, mudra mandalas and abhicharas began to evolve from the age of Atharva Veda. Tantric system within the fold of Brahminism or orthodox Hinduism achieved a philosophically cognitive recognition when Devi Mahatmya (later on called Durgasaptashati) composed in sixth century A. D was interpolated into the Markandeya Purana of the 4th century. From 6th century A.D. onwards different Brahmanical mantras were composed. Devi Mahatmya popularized Sakti culture.
Brahminical Tantric practices began to evolve in Subarnapur with the cultural assimilation of Non-Aryan elements most probably with the cult of Stambhesvari-Narayani in Naksatrapur/Tarapurgad from 6th century A.D. In Trantras the rigidity of the caste-discrimination is liberalized. Stambhesvari-Narayani of Naksatrapur is described as ‘Mantra-Tantramayi Sakshat’ or embodiment of Mantra and Tantra. The antiquities related to Stambhesvari worshipped in the past in Nakshatrapur have been preserved in Chandimauli hypaethral temple of Khadrapada in Binka. As late as the middle of the 20th century when the goddess had already been transferred from Nakshatrapur, Tantric system of worship in the present temple of Gadbhitar, Binka was conducted with regular Sakti musical cadences.

Tantric cult in Sonepur proper most probably began from 7th century A.D around the cult of Stambhesvari who was worshipped from the days of the Bhanjas, Khaulgad or Viramurchhagahvara was a site for the fertility culture for many reasons since the pre-historic age. Full-fledged Tantric cult in the form of Baliyatra probably materialized when in Subarnapur the veneration of Suresvari and Samalesvari originated within the fold of Saktism. Suresvari identical with Raktachamunda was worshipped in Subarnapur probably from 11th century A.D. Although the temple of this goddess is a later monument on the ruins of the earlier one. Tantric rites of Subarnapur linked with the cult of Samalai/ Samaleshi/ Samalesvari developed from the time of Chauhan rule and the present temple of this goddess is a Chauhan monument of 17th century A.D constructed by Madangopal. Budharaja vali is ritualized in the last night of the black fortnight of the month of Asvina which is also called Mahalaya. Before midnight on this day two Baruas or Valis infused by the powers of Samalesvari and Vauti move dancing with traditional music of local dudulibaja or musical instruments from the temple of Samalesvari along with the Tantric priest (Purohita), the holder of Bauti Chhatar/Umbrella, the carrier of the masal and others on the Tantric path drawn by the ploughlines on either side and made auspicious with the scattering of the feathers of the fowl. In Indian belief ploughlines are indicators or symbols of agrarian prosperity. The Tantric cult of Sonepur was probably an Aryanised cult of fertility materialized with participation of the Brahmins and people of lower caste. The Baruas moving along the delineated path arrive at the spot of Budharaja which is about two kms. from the temple of Samalesvari. Both the Baruas are bathed here in Mahanadi nearby and are brought to the appointed place beneath a tree. Here on the leafy branches scattered on the earth and stones under the tree, the Baruas are laid and by the application of mantras they are raised from the ground. Here the worship is materialized with bloody sacrifice of goats’ late night. Budharaja is a non-Aryan deity, sometimes appearing as a male-principle and sometime a female principle in non-Aryan culture. As in Gaudiya Vaisnavism Lord Krishna is philosophically considered the only male and his devotees, whether male or female, maids of Lord Krishna and Radha, non-Aryans with a matriarchal organization of their society assign prominence to women. Budharaja appears a goddess in Sonepur. The Khaul Vali/ Khaulphita bali appears interesting from the
standpoint of Tantric culture. It is consociated with the worship of Stambhesvari, Suresvari and Samalesvari. This Vali is ritualized at the midnight of the fifth day of the white fortnight of the month of Asvina. Before the materialization of this Vali or Tantric rite the precinct of the temple of Suresvari is secluded by different means in a way what to speak of human beings, even the beasts and birds are not allowed to stay on its premises.

At the midnight hour a man called Varua/vali because of his purification by different Tantric rituals is mantrically prepared by the Tantric priest for bringing the soil from the Khaulgad or the mysterious pit near the temple of Suresvari. A mantrically sanctified rope is tied around his waist at one end of the rope and its other end is fastened around the trunk of a colossal tree close by. Then the Vali/Varua is infused with the spirit of the goddess by Tantric rites on Yantra and the efficacy of mantra. Sanctified by mantra a clay-pot is placed in his hand and mantric prayer is recited to the Varua/Vali for digging soil. Soon after the incorporation of the divine spirit and recitation of mantric prayer the Vali / Varua displays terrific movement and fearful dance with terrible howling and rushes to the Khaulgad in the dense darkness of the midnight with a clay-pot in the hand and no other light materials with him. This Viradhavana or lightning run of the Vali / Varua is Tantrically ritualized at a distance of three to four hundred meters from the Khaulgad and when the Vali/Varua runs towards this mysterious pit, the Tantric priest and his associates of this Tantric rite hide themselves at a distance from where the pit is not visible. The vision of mrittika-sanchayan or soil collection from the Khaulgad is not permissible to anybody except the spirit of Sakti or the goddess.

At the time of soil-collection from the Khaulgad in total solitude, the Vali/Varua howls terrifically uttering, manima, manima, manima thrice. It is confided by the interrelated Tantric conclaves that the terrific howl of the Vali/Varua is audible to his spouse with disheveled hair of the head, face painted with vermilion, eyes displaying a fierce look and mind concentrated on goddess Suresvari, she sacrifices a goat to this goddess for the life of her husband. After hearing the Varua’s screams his consociates pull the rope tied around the waist of Bali/Varua, reciting the mantras of Suresvari in devotion. “Now the Varua comes back to the priest, his body trembling cap-a-pie. Here his ropes are unfastened, soil brought by him is distributed in three clay-pots and the divine spirit leaves his body making him senseless.

All actions in this puja are associated with the chanting of mantras. As the primitive man practising magic believes that he has power over power, Tantric Sadhana theorises that gods and goddesses are under the control of mantras. “Mantradhinastu Devata”. Out of the three clay-pots, one is preserved in the temple of Suresvari, the second is retained in the temple of Stambhesvari and the third is kept in the temple of Samalesvari.

‘Manima, manima, manima’ - what does this mean? It is never a call to the king. In Tantric literature ‘Mani’ denotes Linga/male generative organ /Supreme
male principle/ Parama Siva/the cosmic masculine symbol. And “ma” denotes Yoni/female genital/Super female principle/ Parasakti/ Pranasakti and cosmic feminine symbol. In Tantric Buddhism which comprises the schools of Vajrayana, Sahajayana and Kalachakrayana, Vajrasattva, Sahaja/ Sahajasattva and Kalachakra, the supreme Naumenon of these three schools is venerated with the mystic formula “Om Manipadme Hum”. ‘Mani’ in the mystic incantation means the supreme Male principle /Mahaupaya/ Vajrasattva/ Sahaja/Kalachakra, while padma signifies the Supreme Female principle / Mahaprajna / Bhagavati prajna. As the Buddhist Tantra believes, the mundane, material and esoteric interaction of these two-male and female principles pervades the animate and the inanimate worlds and lead to procreation, survival and annihilative transformation of the phenomenal universe.

It is thus evident that Manima signifies an address to the Supreme male principle/ Parama Siva/ Mahaupaya and supreme female principle/ Parama Sakti / Mahaprajna. The impact of Tribal, Aryan and Buddhist Tantric systems is clearly observable on the Tantric rites of Khaul-Vali in Subarnapur. It is the general theological credence with the people of Subarnapur that the clay tantrically collected from the Khaulgad differs in colour in various years in consonance with the will of Sakti /Supreme female and Parama Siva / Supreme male principle. When the hue of the soil is natural, it indicates fertility, good harvest, prosperity and tranquillity of the people. When the colour is red, it predicts widespread death by natural calamities and disasters like flood or epidemic. When black, it forecasts fear from fire or famine.

As is known from different source-materials, Tantric rites were observed by both the non-Aryan and Aryan populace with austerity and lavish royal patronage in the past for the progress and prosperity of the state. The fertility cult in its non-Aryan and tribal models was popularized and ritualized by both the non-Aryans and Aryans with the Stambhesvari worship. The fertility cult in the form of mud-making ceremony is also observed in the regions of Birmaharajpur. Tarbha, Dungripal, Rampur, etc. In Nuapali near Binka the mudmaking ceremony is ritualized with the adoration of the pre-historic deity Bhatvalasa and historic deity Ghantasini worshipped on a hill-top in Titlagarh since 7th century A.D. The tantric priest of this place is called Jhankar. The fertility cult within the fold of the non-Aryan culture aims at the fertility of the soil as also of animals and women, while in the fold of Aryan Tantric culture it has the objective of fertilizing land, animals, women and the spirit. Spiritual fertility aims at the rise of Kundalini or the innate female principle from the muladhara chakra to the topmost Sahasrarachakra and union of kundalini with Brahman/parama Siva there. Indian Tantras aim at the uplift of its adherents from Pasu/animal mode of sadhana to virabhava or the heroic mode and again from the heroic mode to Divyabhava or divine mode of Sadhana. They also elevate the male and female adherents from fertility to animal fertility for material prosperity. And from animal fertility to spiritual fertility for salvation or moksa.
Tantric practices are materialized almost in all Sakta temples: in the month Asvin in Birmaharajpur, Binka, Rampur, Dungripali, Tarbha, Loisingha and Sonepur region in Sohalapuja or Sodasopachara puja or veneration with sixteen materials. Almost all temples of these areas display the dance of Vali, utterance of mantras, ritualistic drawing of Yantras/mystic diagrams, application of dhyana or yoga and the use of Panchamakaras or Five Mas either in material form or symbolic form. In Divyabhava Sadhana or Divine mode of Tantric meditation the Panchamakaras or the Five Mas in material forms are absolutely discarded and the Yogic Panchamakaras are applied for final siddhi or perfection. Ambrosia oozing from Vyomapankaja / Sahasrara Chakra/ cerebral plexus is madya or wine, elimination of all illusive discrimination by supreme knowledge is mansa or meat, the restraint of mind, organs and speech and their engagement in the realization of Paramatman or Supreme Reality is Matsya or Fish, propitiation of maya within for ultimate spiritual realization and detachment from mundane proclivities is Mudra and harmonization of Paramasakti/Kundalini with Brahman / Paramatman / Supreme and Ultimate Reality is Maithuna or copulation in his divine mode of Tantric sadhana. Abhicharik Siddhi/ perfection in Marana, Mohana, Vasya, Uchatana etc are Samanya Siddhi or ordinary perfection. Realisation of Brahmatva / Brahmahood is the Summum bonum or final siddhi or excellent siddhi.

From 7th century A.D onwards Eastern India witnessed the rise of Tantric Buddhism in Oddiyana / Uddiyana. Notwithstanding the controversy among scholars of oriental and occidental hemispheres, Uddiyana, Udrayana, Oda, Udra, Odra, Odhra, Odica or Odivisa is identified with Odisha by large groups of scholars from the eastern and western parts of the world. Oddiyana being a large territory comprised beside so many realms two important kingdoms Samvala/Samvalaka and Lanka. Samvala/Samvalaka is identified with modern Sambalpur and Lanka with modern Subarnapur.

Tantric Buddhism with Vajrayana, Kalachakrayana and Sahajayana as its three different schools had been developed by eightyfour Siddhas who composed a large number of Tantras and contributed to the evaluation of these three schools along with their philosophy.

Indrabhuti, Bhagavati Laksminkara, Darikapada and others were associated with Subarnapur which was the Tantric Lanka in the past. Indrabhuti, the Vajrayanist king of Samvalaka, was one of the prominent Siddhas of Vajrayana. He was the brother of Bhagavati Laksminkara, brother-in-law of prince Sevola and was associated with Subarnapur, the ancient Tantric Lanka. Sevola, son of king Jalandhar, had married Laksminkara. Indrabhuti played a remarkable role in the initial organization of Vajrayana. He was the author of a large number Tantric works and at least twentythree among them are preserved in Tibetan Tangyur translation. He was the author of Jnanasiddhi which was probably his magnum opus. In Jnanasiddhi he refers to lord Jagannath in many places. His Kurukulla Sadhana in Sadhanamala seems to have influenced the Tantric cult of Subarnapur. The Tantric
philosophy advocated by Indrabhutio suggests the realization of the supreme truth in the midst of natural living. Darikapada as a Siddha of Tantric Buddhism is also linked with the Tantric culture of Sonepur. The Kosalesvar temple at Vaidyanath carrying on the inscription “Daididarikasyapi” suggests the cultural relation of Sahajasiddha Darikapada with this temple. As Charles Fabri and N.K Sahu suggest, the Kosalesvar temple and Mahakala temple at Vaidyanath were originally Buddhist monuments. It is probable that temple of Kosalesvara Vaidyanath was originally a monument for Vajranath or Vajrasattva the supreme noumenon of Vajrayana and the temple of Mahakala / Mahakalesvar, the temple of Kalachakra the supreme noumenon of Kalachakrayana. Vaidyanath is even today called by the local people Chhatapipal Vajnath. It seems that the ruler and the people of this area restored the words Vajranath and Kalachakra into Vaidyanath and Mahakala/ Mahakalesvar and the name of the village from chhatapipal Vajnath to Vaidyanath.

Darikapada, originally named Indrapala and Vimalachandra was a king of Kumara Kshetra also called Kumari-Ksetra and Saliputra in Tibetan source. This may rationally be identified with Kumarasimha or Kumarisimha near Sonepur and the antiquity of Kumarisimha may be dated back to eleventh century A.D when the Teluguchodas were ruling in Sonepur region. The Teluguchoda ruler Somesvaradeva records land-grant in village Kumarisimha in Kumarisimha copperplate dated 11th century A.D. Darikapada seems to be a petty chieftain of Kumarisimha in 9th century A.D and was the author of Chakrasamvara Tantra, Kalachakratantra and Vajrayogini Tantra soon after his initiation into Tantric Buddhism. Jalandra, king of Tantric Lanka and father-in-law of Laksminkara embraced Tantric Buddhism and was initiated by one of his officer-saints who was in turn the Tantric pupil of Laksminkara. Jalandra, also called Jalandhara, was initiated into Tantric Sadhana of Vajravarahi who is described as a goddess in Nispanna Yogavali. Suresvari is depicted probably as Suravairi in Raktachamunda Tantrakalpa. She is delineated as Panchasunya in this Tantra. Panchasunya signifies the protagonist of five voids. Bhagabati probably identical with Bhagavati Panchamvari Bhadramvika, recorded in the Jatesinga and Dungri copperplates of Chandihara Yayati-II may also be identified as the patron of five voids. Pancha means five and Ambara as sky means void. The theory of void or Sunya developed in Madhayamika Sunyavada of Mahayana was also popular with the Tantrist of Vajrayana, Sahajayana and Kalachakra Yana.

Laksminkara, sister of Indrabhuti, wife of the prince of Lanka, Sevola and daughter-in-law of king Jalandhara or Jalendra or Jalandharippa of Lanka was a profound scholar of Tantric Buddhism. The sister and disciple of king Indrabhuti, she was an erudite scholar in Sanskrit language, Buddhist philosophy and other branches of ancient Indian learning. She was the author of Advayasiddhi. In consociation with Sarahapada she laid the foundation of the Tantric Buddhist school-Sahajayana. While Vajrayana and Kalachakrayana insisted on comprehensive rituals of the images of Tantric Buddhist gods and goddesses
including fasting, Laksminkara advised the followers of her new school in her work *Advayasiddhi* to renounce self-torture of any type, fasting, rites and rituals, ceremonial bathing, traditional purification of religious nature, worship of images of gods and goddesses made of wood, stone, clay and other materials. She advises her followers in Verses 13-14 of *Advayasiddhi* to worship merely the body in relevant continuity with delight. The reverence of the body here connotes a Yogic worship of transcendental nature. The rise of Laksminkara with a novel doctrine in Tantric Lanka /Subarnapur empowered the women of the society and the Saptasiddhas-Jnanadei Maluni, Lahukuti Luhuruni, Sua Teluni, Sukuti Chamaruni, Patara Sauruni, Gangi Gouduni and Nitai Dhovali who rose to Tantric prominence in opposition to the conservatism and rigidity of the caste system.

*SrilaghukalachakratantrajaTika* or *Vimalaprabha* shows how king Yasa of Sambalaka sat in *Sarpa-Vishnu-Brahma-Rudrakula-Mohana-nama Samadhi* to attract some reluctant Brahminical sages through Tantra-Yogic power towards Kalachakrayana that leads to Buddhahood. *Jyotirjnanavidhi Mahadesha* traces the rule of King Yasa to 1069 AD. which coincides with the reign of the Teluguchoda king Yasorajadeva I of Subarnapur. Kalachakrayana is the gift of Subarnapur to the world of Buddhism. This Tantric Buddhism might have influenced Bhima Bhoi’s *Brahma Nirupana* where he refers to king Yasa and Kalayoginis.

Godesses like Suravairi, Viramati, Lankesvari and Dasamati are depicted in *Nispanna Yogavali* by Pt. Abhayakaragupta. *Khaulgad/ Viromurchha gahvara* related with Vira mode of Tantric Sadhana appears to have been developed in consocition with the Tantric Buddhist rites of *Viramati* which also embodies Tantra-sexual practice. Because of the interrelation of Khaulgad with Viramati, it is probably called *Viromurchha gahvar* in later time. Lankesvari described as Dakini, a Tantric Buddhist goddess in *Sadhanamala* and *Nispanna Yogavali* is worshipped in Subarnapur. Observing the Tantric rites and rituals of Subarnapur as also of Patnagarh, scholars identify Sonerpur –Patna region as Kaunri Patna, while Chaitanya Das in his *Nirguna Mahatmya* calls Kadial / Khariar region Kaunri Patna ruled by Prataprudra Singhdeo, the Raja of Khariar from 1793 to 1818.

The cult of *Saptamatrika* in Indian Saktism can be traced to 6th century A.D and hence was not the Aryan transformation of the *Saptasiddhas* or Sat Bahen. It is true that temples were erected to the Sat Bahen and mantras were composed in their nomenclature but all these developments are of the later times and are later than the sculptures of *Saptamatrikas* found in Ranipur-Jhariai, Ghodar Udepur, Chandital temples of Baud, Muktesvar temple of Puri, Chausathi Yogini temple near Bhubanesvar. These *Saptasiddhas* probably rose into prominence after 15th century A.D. Saptamatrikas are worshipped as Sat Vahen in the village of Champamal of Birmaharajpur Sub-Division, in the river-bed of Mahanadi in Binka on *Pausa Purnima* and at Tikramara of the town. In Kalahandi Saptamatrikas are also called Jal Bahen or water nymphs.
In Binka on a huge rock in Mahanadi goddess Baikani is worshipped amidst Sat Bahen or Saptamatrika. She was also called Binkai after Binka. In non-Brahminical model they suggest the names of a few local deities of non-Aryan origin like Metakani, Chaurasi, Jhar Budhi and others. In Subarnapur Tandhei uans on Sravan Amavasya is observed to invoke the Saptasiddhas to prevent vampires.

The Natha Cult

A river bank of Mahanadi in Sonepur is called Matsyendraghat. A rock in the river bed is named Daripathar. In Goraksa Siddhanta Samgraha the school of Nathas is termed Siddha Siddhamata or the path of spiritual perfection. The Supreme Reality of Nathas is Sat-Chit-Ananda, Siva-Brahman and Parama Brahman transcending all dualism and non-dualism. Nathism appears to have acculturated many elements from Saivism, Vaisnavism and Saktism. Nathism, like the school of Sahajayana, believes in four Sunyas: Sunya, Atisunya, Mahasunya and Sahajasunya in consonance with their philosophy of Nada-Bindu. Even now Natha Yogis go begging, singing from Saptanga Yogasara, Goraksha Samhita and Tika Govindachandra, Kendura in hand.

Mahimaism

It was during the reign of Niladhar Sing Deo (1841-91) that a new religion was born in Sonepur-Boud region: Mahima religion or Alekh cult. This is an obscure religious cult propounded by one Mukunda Das alias Mahima Swami whose first three disciples hailed from Boudh-Sonepur region: Gobinda Baba from Balasingha, Bhima Bhoi from Jatesinga, and Nrusingha Baba from the Boud rajfamily.

Mukunda Das declared himself Mahima Swami on the hills of Kapilas of Dhenkanal in 1862. In the next four years he got Gobinda Das and Bhima Bhoi initiated. Mahimaism is an original cult of Odisha, even though efforts have been made to club it with Vedanta philosophy. The Mahimaites take no food after sunset, touch no prasad or tulsi leaf or medicine. They do not believe in idol-worship or the existence of spirits. They play no games, sit under no canopy, sleep under no roof. They share no sraddha, do no business, store no wealth, domesticate no birds or animals. They perform sarana and darsana, wash their bodies with cowdung, beg only once from a family, stay a day in a village, practise truth, non-violence and continence and believe in immortality and rebirth. They accept no alms from Brahmins, Kshatriyas, barber, astrologers, washermen, florists, prostitutes, chandalas.

Such a cult with its aggressive monotheism and anti-casteism was bound to face tremendous opposition. It did. Bhima Bhoi bore the brunt of the wrath of Rairakhol Raja and the Brahmins of Sonepur-Sambalpur region. But paradoxically enough, it was Raja Niladhar who gave this restless wanderer a home at Khaliapali and it was Yuvaraj Prataprudra who solemnized the marriage of the sannyasi of the Mahima cult with Annapurna, a Brahmin lady from Joranda, the seat of Mahima.
Swamy. Two Brahmin brothers- Hari Panda and Basu Panda- from Atabira, Sambalpur remained his scribes and disciples. And when they died, the Ashram found them a burial place beside the Samadhi of their master, Bhima Bhoi.

Bhima Bhoi brought about a number of daring deviations in the concept of the Mahima cult. He wore no barks of Kumbhi tree, he had a saffron kopen on. The Mahimaites stay a day in a village. Bhima Bhoi settled down at Khaliapali. They beg only once from a family. Bhima Bhoi did no begging after he settled down to a life of peace and rest in the Ashram. They move with no sanyasini. Bhima Bhoi lived with Annapurna, Sumedha, Rohini, Saraswati and Subarna. The Mahimaites believe in a Brahman who is nameless and formless. Bhima Bhoi himself was deified while he was alive and was offered worship on the altar along with Annapurna who was called ‘Adimata’. Yet it was Bhima Bhoi who was the greatest gift to the Mahima cult. But for him, it could not have spread as far as Bengal, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Assam and the Central Provinces. Bhima Bhoi was the voice of the Mahima cult. It was through his bhajans accompanied by the castanet that thousands of forest-dwellers turned towards this faith which was to them the only survival, the only meaning in a caste-ridden, idol-congested world. It was through him that this cult provided an acceptable alternative to Christianity and Vaisnavism which were spreading like wild fire from the forests to the towns of Odisha.

Mahimaism was one among the many reformist religions like the Brahmo Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj, the Arya Samaj, etc. that dotted the religious landscape of the 19th century India. They all proclaimed one god, one caste, one society. To N N Basu, Mahima cult is derived from Mahayana Buddhism. To Pt, Vinayak Mishra, it is a branch of Sahajayana and to Pt. Nilakantha Dash, it is Tantrayana evolved into a distinct cult. The Buddhists believe that in the ultimate there is nothing, but to the Alekhist or the Mahimaite, there is only one after all the appearances disappear. That again has no appearance. But that is. Though Mahimaism carries the stamp of Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism and Christianity, it is a cult with a difference.

Thus Sonepur was the confluence of conflicting religious creeds like Jainism, Buddhism, Saivism, Saktism, Sourism, Vaisnavism and Mahimaism. The images of Maheswar, Nisaparvati, Harihara, Ganesh, Ananta Visnu, Kartikeya, Ardhanariswar in Baidyanath and Charada indicate a synthesis of Saivism and Vaisnavism. The Anantasayi Visnu on the lintels of Siva temples like Survanameru and Rameswar temples suggests this eclecticism, this holy harmony. Only a Jamejaya who was a staunch Saivite could exclaim, Om namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya. The meeting of the Asta Visnus with the Asta Sambhus on the Doltikra of Sonepur town on the first day of the dark fortnight of Chaitra is symptomatic of this synthesis of Harthara cult. This meeting of Hari with Hara, also found at Birmaharajpur, at Harisankar of Patna and Gandharadhish of Boudh on the border of Sonepur goes down the Mahanadi to Kaltio and Padmavati. The cult of Jagannath which originated in Sonepur region is again a synthesis of Jainism,.
Buddhism, Saktism, Saivism and Vaisnavism. Later this Jagannath cult was synthesized with the Purosottam cult of Puri and the Siva cult of Indonesia. The Chauhan rulers of Sonepur realized the intelligence and importance of this catholicity. Perhaps, therefore, while they retained the worship of Budharaja, Raktamauli, Binkai, Dasamati etc., which are Gond deities, they consecrated their temples to the Sun-god, Ganesh, Hanuman, Siva, Sakti and Visnu, and while they were initiated by the Mahanta of Ramji math with Vaisnava mantra and maintained discus or chakra as their royal insignia, they invoked Siva in official records and worshipped as their family deity the mighty consort of Mahadeva.
CHAPTER-V

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Population

The population of the district of Subarnapur in the Census of 2011 was 6,10,183 out of which 3,11,312 were males and 2,98,871 females. The male and female population represented by sex ratio which is 960 females per 1000 male population. Out of 2 subdivisions, Sonepur had 4,24,974 population including 2,16,781 males and 2,08,193 females whereas Birmaharajpur had a population of 1,85,209 of which 94,531 were males and 90,678 were females.

(i) Growth of Population

In 2001 the total population was 5,41,835 while in 2011 it rose to 6,10,183. The increase was 12.6 percent.

(ii) Variation of population:

The Block and Urban Local Body (ULB) wise variation of population during the decade shows Sonepur had the highest and Tarbha the lowest growth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of ULB / Block</th>
<th>Population according to 2001 census</th>
<th>Population according to 2011 census</th>
<th>Percentage variation (+)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Binka</td>
<td>84463</td>
<td>91118</td>
<td>7.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmaharajpur</td>
<td>82594</td>
<td>95429</td>
<td>15.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunguripali</td>
<td>116002</td>
<td>123838</td>
<td>6.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonepur</td>
<td>70030</td>
<td>80775</td>
<td>15.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trabha</td>
<td>71016</td>
<td>84374</td>
<td>18.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ullunda</td>
<td>77662</td>
<td>89780</td>
<td>15.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binka NAC</td>
<td>14539</td>
<td>15765</td>
<td>8.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonepur Municipality</td>
<td>17540</td>
<td>20770</td>
<td>18.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tarbha NAC</td>
<td>7989</td>
<td>8334</td>
<td>4.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>541835</td>
<td>610183</td>
<td>12.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
iii) Migration

In 2011, 276 persons have migrated to different states like Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamilnadu & Maharastra from the district in search of livelihood and employment. Migration from the district has decreased to 127 in 2012 and to 37 in 2013. But the figure rose to 50 in 2014. And to 29 up to July, 2015.

(iv) Distribution of Population-Rural and Urban:

There are 3 towns and 959 villages (857 inhabited) in the district. The towns are Sonepur, Binka and Tarva. The total area covered by these towns is 24 sq. miles and the total population is 49,659 according to 1961 Census. Out of these towns, Sonepur is administered by Municipality and the remaining two are under Notified Area Councils.

The villages of the district may be classified according to population:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Village in population</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-199</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>17710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200-499</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>88474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500-999</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>160205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000-1999</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>182199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-4999</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>106498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 5000</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>10228</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While percentage of increase in urban population was 11.98, that of rural was 12.66, making the average to 12.61.
Language

The principal language spoken is Odia. The other modern Indian languages spoken in the district are Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Telugu, Malayalam, Marathi, Tamil, Urdu and Punjabi. Among non-Indian languages mention may be made of English and Nepali. The rest are tribal languages.

The Odia language spoken here is classed with the western variety of Odia commonly known as Koshali/ Sambalpuri.

Castes and Tribes

The Scheduled Caste population of the district according to 2001 Census was 1,28,000. Out of the 50 SC sub-caste these seven are numerically important: 1. Barik or Bhandari 2. Chamar, Mochi, Muchi or Satnami 3. Dhoba or Dhobi 4. Dom, Dombo or Duria Dom 5. Ganda 6. Ghasi or Ghasia 7. Mehra or Mahar.

Besides the SCs, there are a few Other Backward Classes (OBCs). They are Agharia, Bania, Bairagi, Bhan, Gudia, Kalhara, Kotha, Mali, Teli, Thanapati and Pudia. The higher castes like Brahman, Karan, Khandayat, Chasa, Kulta, etc., are regarded as clean castes.

The AGHRIAS

The Aghrias are said to be the descendents of Bidura of the Mahabharat fame. They claim to have belonged originally to Kshatriya caste. But later on they adopted agriculture as their profession and were regarded as a cultivating caste. They are called Aghrias as they came to Odisha from the Agra region of Uttar Pradesh. The Aghrias are divided into three classes bearing the surnames Chaudhury, Naik and Patel. Their Caste symbol is dagger, but it is differently named. The Chaudhuries call their symbol ‘Kuili Katar’, the Naiks call it ‘Jamdarh Katar’ and Patels ‘Meghnadh Katar’.

The Aghrias do not cultivate onion and do not take meat of goats. They are very conscious of their caste rules and do not accept cooked food from any other caste. They however take water from the Gaudas. The Aghrias both male and female are industrious. The women, besides helping their male partners in cultivation, spin cotton in leisure hours.

The BETALS

They are recruited from different castes. They are sporadically distributed in the district and mostly found in Binka and Dungripali.

The BHANDARIS

They are the barber caste of Odisha. There are three types of Bhandaris in the district, namely, Udia Bhandari, Jhada Bhandari and Telugu Bhandari. The Udia Bhandaris are superior to other two classes in matters of social status. Telugu Bhandaris who have settled in the district are said to have come from the south.
The Bhandaris are known by several titles, such as, Barika, Dakua, Bej, Behera and Tarasia. There are several Gotras under the caste, e.g. Nagesa, Kasyapa, etc., and ‘Gotra’ exogamy is strictly followed. The three sections generally do not intermarry. Widow remarriage and divorce are allowed. All upper castes accept water from the Udia Bhandaris but not from the Jhaduas. Panch is the Headman of their caste assembly. Their primary occupation is haircutting, shaving and paring of nails. Cultivation is their subsidiary occupation.

The BHULIAS

The Bhulias weave fine cotton cloth for which Sonepur is reputed. Cultivation is their subsidiary occupation. Although all weavers have the honorific title of Meher, the Bhulias claim to occupy the highest rank among them. According to tradition the Bhulias came to this region with Ramai Deo, the first Chauhan Raja of ex-Patna State. Non-weaving Bhulias are generally found as middle-men in the field of business and they have profitable money-lending business in many parts of this district. The Bhulias of this district have no sub-castes although they have different Gotras like ‘Bahajit’ and ‘Kutri’. Previously child marriage was very common among them. But that practice is no longer found. They do not intermarry with other weaving communities of the district.

The BETRAS

The chief occupation of this caste is weaving of baskets of bamboo and cane. They are tabulated as Scheduled Caste. They are mainly found in Tarbha & Binka areas.

The CHAMARS

The Chamars make shoes and chapals out of leather. They also tan leather in their own indigenous method. Some of them earn their livelihood by polishing and repairing shoes. The Dhobas and Bhandaris do not serve them and the Brahmans do not officiate in their religious ceremonies. Widow remarriage and divorce are traditionally allowed by their caste. They are found in all parts of Subarnapur.

The DHOBAS

They are the washermen. There are two types of Dhobas in this district, namely, Udia Dhobas and Telugu Dhobas. Washing the clothes of the higher castes is their traditional occupation whereas cultivation is subsidiary. Jajmani system prevails among them. They neither accept water and cooked food nor wash clothes of such low castes as Gandas, Ghasis, Hadis, Chamars, etc. They are distributed evenly throughout the district.

The GANDAS

The Gandas act as drum beaters on the occasion of marriage of other castes. Their subsidiary occupation is manual labour. They purchase drums from the
Ghasis and no other caste except the Ghasis accept water and cooked rice from them. Widow marriage and divorce are allowed by them. Brahmans do not officiate in their religious functions. Dhobas&Bhandaris do not serve them. They procure fuel from the jungle for sale in the market. Some of them have taken to cultivation. They have several sub castes: (1) Suna (2) Mahanandia (3) Deep (4) Kumbhar (5) Tandia (6) Bayana (7) Kusa (8) Chhatria (9) Banki (10) Nag (11) Bagh (12) Sika (13) Luha (14)Vesra (15) Jagadala (16) Varasagar, (17) Ranbira (18) Bibhar

The Luhars

The chief occupation of this caste is iron-smelting and iron-smithy. The caste name has been derived from the word 'Luha' which means iron. Their subsidiary occupation is cultivation.

The Gaudas

They are the cowherd caste of the district, and are divided into three sections, such as Jhalia, or Kalindi. Nanda and Magadha. They have come from Yamuna, Gopa and Magadh regions respectively. According to Cobden Ramsay, the Magadha Goudas rank last, and is probably a recent accretion from some aboriginal tribe. The Nanda Goudas are elsewhere known as the 'Gopapurias' and they claim to have been connected with the family of king Nanda, the adoptive father of Krishna. Little is known about the Jhalia Goudas. It is not possible to say whether they are the same as the Mathurapur Goudas found in other districts of Odisha. The traditional occupation of the caste is tending cows and selling milk products. Some of them have shifted over to agriculture as their primary occupation, while some others have adopted the profession of supplying water for domestic use among higher castes. The Gouda women go round to sell milk and milk products. They do not work as field labourers.

The Ghasis

They are the scavenger caste of the district and making of drums is their subsidiary occupation. The Ghasis are often found polygamous. No other caste accepts water or cooked food from them. They occupy the lowest stratum of the caste hierarchy. They are tabulated under the category of Scheduled Castes.

The Gurias

This caste is named after the word ‘Gur’ which is made by boiling and condensing sugarcane juice. Preparation of sweets out of ‘Gur’ or sugar is their main occupation. Like many others, people of this caste also have taken to cultivation and service. Members of this caste have the titles of Sahu, Chopdar and Saraf. They are divided into two classes, viz., Udia and Jhadua, previously interdining and intermarriage were forbidden between these classes, but such restrictions are no longer respected. Widow marriage is allowed between both the classes.

The Karans
The Karans are found in minority in this district. They have come from Cuttack and Puri districts. They are generally engaged in service although many of them are at present carrying on business. Widow remarriage and divorce are not allowed in their caste. In this district they are known by the titles of Das, Bahidar Patnaik, Mohanti, etc.

The KEUTAS

The Keutas are the fisherman caste of Odisha. They have got two major sections such as Jamatalia and Bharajalia. Most of them have taken to cultivation as their means of livelihood. Their traditional occupations are fishing and boating. There are several sub-castes such as, Gingra, Keuta, Simli, Dhibara, Jhara etc. They do not intermarry. They are known by the titles of Behera and Pande. There are several endogamous clans of this caste, namely, Bagh, Sethi, Pande, Taria, Dondsana, Mahalik, The widow marriage and divorces are allowed in their caste.

The KHADURAS

Their traditional occupation is to prepare bangles (Khadu of silver and alloy metals). Cultivation is their subsidiary occupation. There is no sub-section under this caste. Formerly, child marriage was common among them but now it has gone out of practice. Their caste assembly is known as 'Pachasghara', the 'Panua' occupying the post of headman. The office of 'Panua' is hereditary. Divorce and widow marriage are prevalent among them.

The KOSTHAS

Kosthas weave only tusser. They purchase cocoons from the Gandas, who are experts in sericulture. The caste name is perhaps derived from 'Kosa' which means the cocoon. There are two sub-classes of the caste, namely, Laria and Udia. The Larias originally came from the Chhatisgarh region while the Udias are probably the indigenous Kosthas. No intermarriage is allowed between these two sections. They have several clans or bargas, the notable among which are Dhakita, Henduba and Garkata.

The KULTAS, SUDHS and DUMALS

These three castes are considered agricultural community of the district, as their chief occupation is cultivation of land. Dumals are found in large number in Sonepur area, while Kultas are an important caste in Patnagarh subdivision. According to tradition the Kultas immigrated from the ex-State of Baudh where they had settled during the wandering of Rama whom they accompanied from Northern India. There is an interesting episode regarding the origin of these three castes. It is said, that when Rama was wandering in the forests of Sambalpur, he once met three brothers and asked them for water. Out of the brothers one brought him water in a clean brass pot and as such was called Sudh, meaning 'pure' and the second brother drew water in a pot of leaves from a well with a rope and hence was called 'Dumal'. According to Cobden Ramsay this name is derived from the words 'Dori-
mal' meaning the chord of rope. The third brother is said to have brought water in a hollow gourd, and so he was named 'Kulta' which according to the same authority is derived from the word 'Kurita' meaning 'bad-mannered'. This episode does not seem to be very old and it shows that these three are connected castes in western Odisha. The 'Kultas' are probably an off-shoot of the 'Chasa' caste although, they do not intermarry with the Chasas.

**The KUMBHARS**

They are the potter caste. Their caste name is derived from the word 'Kumbha', which means an earthen pitcher. Two classes of Kumbhars, viz. Jharua Kumbhars and Udria Kumbhars are found in the district. Jharua Kumbhars are those who belong to the forests and are inferior in social status to the Udria Kumbhars.

**The SUNDHIS**

They are the traditional distillers and liquor sellers. They are of three types, namely: - (1) Kandha Sundhi (Local) (2) Sambalpuri Sundhi (from Sambalpur) (3) Dakhini Sundhi (from South).

At present, most of them have shifted over to cultivation to earn their livelihood. The headman of their caste-assembly is known as Puruseth or Naik. No marriage is allowed in the same lineage and same clan. Widow marriage and divorce are prevalent in their community.

**The TELIS**

Oil-pressing and selling of oil are the traditional occupation of this caste. Two classes of Telis live in this district, viz., Haldia Teli and Ekbaldia Teli. The Haldia Telis sell haldi (turmeric) and hence they are so named, while the Ekbaldia Teli derive their name from the fact that they employ one ox (ek balad) instead of two or more while pressing oil. Cultivation is the subsidiary occupation of this caste. Widow marriage and divorce are allowed among them. Like many other castes the Telis have also their caste assembly to adjudicate minor social offences.

**General Structure of Tribes**


**The BINJHALS**

The Binjhals inhabit chiefly the south-west of the district. They are the earliest inhabitants.

Their traditions associate them with Vindhya hills, and their former home is believed to have been Ratanpur in Chattisagarh, whence they moved eastward in
the direction of Borasambar. It is said, their original ancestors were twelve brother archers, the sons of the goddess Vindbyabasini.

There is an interesting legend current in this district, according to which the mother of the first Chauhan Raja of Patna had taken shelter in the hut of a Binjhal, where she gave birth to the son who was named Ramai. This boy succeeded in getting the throne of Patna and made the Binjhal who had given shelter to his mother the chief of Borasambar.

The majority of the Binjhals of this district are cultivators and the rest are farm servants or field labourers. Those who have settled in the plains have taken to improved methods of rice cultivation. The staple food of the poor consists of roots and Mahua flower. They eat rice on special occasions. Cultivators, however, eat rice in the form of ‘Pakhā’ (cooked rice soaked in water).

The Binjhals worship all the Hindu deities, and also worship arrows, swords and spears. Bindhyabasini and Nrusinghanath are specially worshipped by them.

The Binjhals do not employ Brahmans in any ceremony, but almost every Binjhal takes ‘Karna-mantras’ that is, Mantras whispered in the ear. They believe firmly in ghosts or the spirits of the dead, for the soul of any wicked person may after his death become a malevolent spirit.

The marriage takes place after the girl attains maturity. Special facilities are given to young girls on festival days to mix with the other sex. Child marriage is not common among them. Widow marriage and divorce are allowed. A widow is expected to marry the younger brother of the deceased husband.

The dead are usually buried but persons of advanced age and rich persons are generally cremated.

The Binjhals are concentrated mostly in Sukha, Ichhapur, Dumerpali, Karlajuri, Haladi, Majhimunda, Dunguripali, Samaleichuan, Dungurital, Rabanguda, Sahala, Rampur, Gajabandha, Kusadadar, Antapali, Guliapadar, Lingamarini, Jibandadar, Chinajuri, Khuntapali, Amamunda, Badkarle village of Dunguripali Block. Maa Bindhyabasini is the Supreme Goddess of the community. They also believe and worship Maa Karamsani, Maa Durga. All the members take to fasting on the day of Maa Bindhyabasini Pooja. The women, even the girls, go in a procession with a holy pot (Kalasa) on the head for water. The Kalasa is set up in the temple. The traditional music is played. The traditional weapons like Tabal, bow and arrow are worshipped. Long ago they used to sacrifice chik, duck, sheep and goat. Gradually this practice is being replaced by offering coconut. During the rule of Rajas and Zamindars in Rampur and Sukha, the Zamidars of the Binjhal community were ruling the area of Dungripali Block. As regards the system of marriage, the bride puts on Pagadi on the head while going to marry. The marriage is done by the traditional priest namely Ganit. The community celebrates the holy occasion of Dashahara, Pousha Purnima with pomp and ceremony. The traditional weapon, sword, is washed on the occasion of Dashahara. The Karma Puja is
celebrated on *suklaekadashi of Bhadrav*. One branch of Karma tree is set up for worship of Maa Karamsani in the midst of Karma Nacha, Kalangi Nacha, Danda badi in the form of dances of the community. The senior member of the community of Kendutikra (Sukha) Sri Panibudu Majhi says there was a language of the community known as Binjhal language. Now it is gradually replaced by the Koshali.

**The GONDS**

Like Khonds and *Binjhals*, the Gonds are an important Scheduled Tribe of the district. This tribe is also found in the districts of Sambalpur, Mayurbhanj, Dhenkanal and Koraput. According to the Census of 1951, their total number was a little below 4 lakh in Odisha. The Gonds possess a sound physique, quite well-developed shoulders, bulging out chest and have scanty hair growth over the face. They are generally very industrious and active. They speak Odia. Recently they have been integrated into Hindu society as a high-ranking caste particularly in the district of Subarnapur.

In Dungripali Block there are villages like Chandali, Kapasira, Bandhapali, Dukkidekha, Andharibanji, Chinajuri, Baghhandi, Guliapadar, Adakasa, Gania, Pahandi where the Gonds reside. Kundadeo, Dula, Marhimsan, Kurlapat, Nagenpat, Badrol, Mangala are the deities of the Gond community. Before starting any good work they worship their deities. Mala Bhue, Sadananda Bhue, members of Gond community of Bandhapali say there is a famous temple of their supreme God Kundadeo at Besekela village of Bheden Block of Bargarh where a grand festival is observed for three days every year during *Sukla Panchami of Pausa*. A huge crowd gathers in that festival. During the month of *Margasira* they worship the deity ‘Baghua debta’ after harvesting the crop. In early days the Baghua Debta was offered hens, goats, etc. replaced by coconut now. On the day of marriage when the bride goes in a procession, the women follow her with a bowl containing a small stone inside. The ceremony of marriage is performed by the traditional priest known as “Ganit” or “Lagnia”.

**The KHONDS (KANDHA)**

In all blocks of Subarnapur the Kandhas are mostly found praying for good rain, good harvest, good yield, good health for family members and cattle. They worship their supreme God and Goddess Kandhabudha, Kandhenbudhi, Dharanikhuta, Shulia, Chandlipat. On the full moon day of *Chaitra*, the festival of Chandlipat goddess is observed at Chandli hill. The priest for the festival belongs to Binjal community. Nearby Shulia Thakurani is worshipped on the occasion of Shulia Yatra. Long ago, they used to sacrifice goats, sheeps, hens, buffaloes, etc. to please the deity. They worship traditional weapons like sword, Tabal, Barchha, etc. in every festival. They also observe festivals like *Nuakhai, Pousha Purnima, Dashahara*. Their traditional music comprises Dhaka, Nishan. Earlier boys and girls of the community used to dance “Dhangara dhangiri” dance during special occasions like marriage festival etc. But in recent days this practice does not exist,
100

says Bhismadev Mallik, a member of this community of Gambharpali village. They make huts or ler to protect the crop from monkeys, jackals, bears during night.

The KHADIAS

In a hamlet near Sukha 16 to 18 families of Khadia tribe reside. Patkhanda Devi is goddess of the community. They worship the goddess during holy occasions or festivals. All the members celebrate Nuakhai, Chaiti Yatra, PhagunPuni etc. Earlier, they used to carry Khadkhadipalinqui of kings and queens. So they are known as Khadia. A member of this community, namely Radhe Khadia says, in between the they speak Khadia language while they interact. In their language goat is called meram; hen, shunke; rice, pee; curry, sakana; salt bilung; brinjal, kainrab; tomato, jhalbhata; and so on. Till today marriage is performed by the traditional priest known as Gani. All the families of this community residing in Sukha are farmers and labourers and depend upon agriculture and get wages for their day to day livelihood. Some collect forest produce like Sal leaves from the nearby jungle for sale in the market. Till date one can see dhinki in some families which is used for the purpose of a making rice from paddy and chuna or powdered rice from grains of rice.

The SHABARS

In Sanjayanagar, a hamlet of the revenue village Tamamura of Dungripali Block, reside 40 to 45 families of this community. Their goddesses are Chachakei, Bimalei and Banadurga. They observe the Banadurga Puja, Dashara in a grand way. On this day they worship their traditional weapon, bow and arrow. In early days they offered goat and hen to the deity. Before going to marry the hair of the bride is clean shaved. This practice is known as “baru”. They use “Shabari” language while talking with one another. In Shabari rice is called jhunua; curry, tian; salt, khapiar; turmeric, kulechi; oil, ina; pumpkin, dahital, says Himansu Para, a member of this community. Their traditional music are Dholak, Tasa, Ghuduka. Among their folk dances are ghuduka nacha, dalkhai (Patar Saura), kisimi nacha. Most of the families are small. They are marginal farmers and labourers and they depend upon agriculture for their day to day livelihood i.e. the economy of the Shabars is characterized by agriculture, work, and wages.

The SAHARAS

The Saharas are concentrated in various villages of Dunguripali, Binka, Tarva, Sonepur & Ulunda Blocks. Saharas comprise 80 sub-groups including Khutia and Juria. The Jurias float the mukut in flowing water after marriage is over whereas the Khutias bind the same to a pillar. They celebrate Nuakhai, Pousa Purnima,
Dashahara happily. They also observe festivals like Mahamar, Birhi Chakata, Pani Palata, Khala Yatra, Kado Yatra, Raksi Purnima. At the time of plantation paddy Kado Yatra is observed. On the day of Raksi Purnima they wash cows and worship them with rakshis tied to their horns and feed them with good food. On the occasion of Pani Palata the families of the community exchange water with the relatives after giving them the same amount of Birhi. Badrol, Mahalachhma, Mauli, Matia, Hillipalian, Bhairo, Bauden are amongst the gods and goddesses for the community. Their traditional weapons are swords, arrows, bows. Dhal, Tabal. Nisan are the traditional musical instruments of the community which they always play at the time of observing festivals, says Jogendra Bhoi, a member of Sahara community.

The KUDAS (MIRDHAS)

The Kudas are found mostly in Binka & Dungripali Blocks. They worship Samlei and Mangala. The community celebrates occasions like Nuakhai, Dashahara, Pousha Purnima enthusiastically. They worship Matimata (goddess of earth) before paddy plantations. They offer cooked rice, dal to their ancestors seeking blessings on the occasion of celebrating Panchabal. They use Punhu language while interacting with one another. Now the youth of the current generation use Koshali. In their language old men are called Pacho, observe Mangalu Mirdha, Tuladhar Mirdha, Thabira Mirdha members of this community. The bride and the barat party extend hearty welcome, presenting ghumura dance on the occasion of marriage. They perform dance, sing songs in Punhu language on this occasion.

The KOLHAS

The Kolha tribe are mostly found in villages of Binka Block. The families of this community residing in villages are farmers and labourers. Some collect forest produce like Sal leaves, broom and khajuri leaves to prepare mat for sale. There are many sub-groups of Kolha namely Munda, Sandha, Labania, Danga etc. The Kolhas follow the rules of the tribe endogamy and clan exogamy at the time of marriage. A kolha boy is allowed to marry a girl only if the clan is different. They bury the dead. They eat meat even on the day of the burial ceremony. When a child is born they sacrifice a hen for its good health and long life. All the members observe Nuakhai. The Kolhas have their own mother tongue:

What did you eat? China jamakerape?
Whether you have eaten or not? Jamakerapechi kapi?
Where are you going? Kata santanape?
What are things found in Jungle? Birare menali chinabeta ale?
Their special musical instrument is Mandal

Religious beliefs
There are smatterings of Christians, Muslims, Jains, Sikhs and Buddhists in the district. While the Hindus number 5,38,472, the Muslims, 1,633 and Christians, 1,396. The number of Jains and Sikhs are 10 and 22 respectively. There are only 09 Buddhists so are people belonging to other religions.

The religious communities in the district are tolerant and have friendly feelings for one another. In the town of Sonepur the Hindus and the Muslims have very close social relations. The Hindus are seen taking part in Muslim festivals like Muharram and the Muslims in Hindu festivals like Dasahara.

The Christians

Some Kandhas and Binjhals have embraced Christianity. One St. Annis Convent School and one Don Bosco ITI in the town are functioning under the guidance of the Missionaries.

The Hindus

So far as the tribes are concerned, most of them belong to the Hindu fold, but each tribe is having its specific faith and they all believe in totemism, sorcery and polytheism.

The Hindus worship various gods and goddesses as in other parts of India. But different castes are found to be attached to different deities although communal worship is observed for some important gods and goddesses. Deities like Durga, Mahalakshmi, Shiva and Vishnu are commonly worshipped by all the Hindus. Besides these deities, there are separate caste gods or goddesses.

Maheswari is the goddess worshipped by the Khaduras, the bangle-makers of the district. She is worshipped on the Dasahara festival when she is appeased by special sacrifices. People of this caste offer worship to Siva and Vishnu with equal devotion.

Nitai Dhabani is the caste goddess of the Dhobas, the washermen of the district. They believe that she inhabits the bank of the tank on the stone where they wash clothes. On the occasion of Nabanna (eating of the new paddy crop), ceremonious offerings are made to her. The Dhobas are more or less Vaishnavite and worship lord Krishna and Vishnu. They also believe in the presence of spirits, ancestral cult, ghosts, black-magic and sorcery. Except marriage and funeral rites, they perform other ceremonies without the help of priests.

The Naria Gaudas (a section of the cowherd caste) of the district worship deities like Patkana, Kanavaora, Mahalakshmi, Kalisundri and Mirchu. They do not require Brahmans to officiate in their religious festivals. They also believe in black-magic, sorcery and ghosts and at times practise exorcism of ghosts and demi-gods. Some of their village deities are Kalka, Gangadi, Thakurani, Jadain, Donger, Mulii and Bhima. Their forest deities are known as Donger Devta, Dhunpachen,
Tengrabamni and Jadenguda. The man who exorcises the ghosts and spirits is known as Gunia and one who officiates at religious functions is known as Dehuri.

The important deities of the Sundhis, the traditional brewers of the district, are the Dwarseni, Patamaheswari, Samalei and Rakatmauli. At the time of calamities, they seek help from these goddesses and propitiate them at intervals by sacrificial offerings. They worship their ancestors' spirits and make annual offerings of *pinda* to them like other higher castes. They have also their Dehuries who worship the village deities or the Gramadevatis known as Bugulen and Gangadei.

The goddess Banjari, also known as Chandi and Ghantaseni, is worshipped by the barbers (*Bhandaris*) of the district. Their village deities are called Bastarani and Thuntimonli. Like other higher castes, the *Bhandaris* perform Laxmiipuja on every Thursday in *Margasira*, Mangala puja on every Tuesday in *Chaitra* and such other observances as Janmastami and Ekadasi.

The Gandas, one of the Scheduled Castes of the district, regard Mangala as their highest goddess and also believe that she has seven sisters (*Satbahen*). The forest god is known as 'Jhardevta' and 'Banjardevta'. The deities of mountains are known as 'Budhapanah', 'Dongardevta', and 'Grambati'. They believe in Dharmadevta (the sun-god), Basumata (the earth-goddess), Masandevta (Chandi) and ghosts, such as Bhuta and Petni. If the adult die before marriage, they are believed to become Dangua, a type of ghost in afterlife. Cock sacrifices are offered to Mangala and well-to-do persons offer *buka* or castrated goat as sacrifice. Their village deity is known as Thanapati.

Udayaparameswari is the popular goddess among the Kosthas, the weavers of tusser cloth in the district. Biswakarma is their vocational deity and Samaleswari and Budhei are the village deities. They worship both Siva and Vishnu. 'Aguandevta' is their forest-god. The headman of the house or the 'Sian' worships gods and goddesses. There are 21 types of deities of small-pox of which Koltlia, Gundi, Sindhir, Mugia, Pudamatu, Motijhara and Milimila are important. If anybody suffers from small-pox the deities are appeased with milk, flower and incense.

Chaunrasi Samalei, Barlor devta and Thakurani are the important deities of the Keutas, the fisherman caste of the district. Gangamata is their water deity and there are some other deities whom they worship at home. They believe in the existence of black-magic, sorcery and call for the assistance of Gunias of other tribes for exorcising ghosts and evil spirits. They sometimes worship Krishna, Siva and Hanuman.

The *Bhulias* are a weaving caste of the district who regard Samlai as their highest goddess and Biswakarma as the vocational deity. They also worship a number of gods and goddesses namely Hadmai and her consort Hadgopal, Dhanmai and her consort Dhangopal Kansalei and her consort Budharaja, Dasmati, the ten sisters and Satbahlen, the seven sisters. They believe in spirits called Dahaka and Matia.
Manners and Customs

Connected with child-birth

Among most of the castes, the pollution connected with childbirth continues for a period of seven days. This pollution is known as 'Chhutia'. On the sixth day of child-birth, they worship the Sasthidevi, the goddess of fate. On the 21st day, Ekoisa or name-giving ceremony is performed. The name is generally suggested by an astrologer who fixes it by getting the first letter of the name from the child's zodiac signs. On that day, well-to-do persons arrange feasts which are attended by agnates as well as friends. The name-giving, first hair-cutting, as well as the ear-boring ceremonies are performed from the first to sixth year of the child.

In a Brahmin family an elderly woman cuts the umbilical cord of a new-born baby by means of a knife or a piece of broken earthenware. The birth pollution continues for a period of 21 days and this period priestly functions are restricted. Sasthidevi is worshipped on the sixth day and the name-giving ceremony is held on the 21st day.

In a Dhoba family on the occasion of child-birth, the umbilical cord is severed by an old lady of the family. The birth pollution is taken to be over when the stump of the cord falls between 6 to 9 days of the birth. On 12th day they have their sacred bath and new earthen pots are allowed in the kitchen or the purpose of cooking. On the 21st day (Ekoisa) the name-giving ceremony is performed.

Among the Naria Gaud as the customs and manners connected with childbirth are quite interesting. The umbilical cord is cut by means of a broken piece of earthenware. The placenta, etc., are put in a pit dug in a nearby garden. The mother and the new-born baby are kept in a secluded hut till the navel stump falls off. The final purification ceremony is observed on the 21st day when a name is given to the child. Generally, grandfather and grandmother attend the function and bless the child. On the occasion, the mother, as well as, the baby is given new clothes to wear.

In a Bhandari family, the midwife or an old woman of the locality cuts the umbilical cord of the baby. Placenta, etc., are put in a pit generally dug at the spot where the child is born. They are not buried carelessly outside the house as they believe that catastrophe may befall the child and the mother if the placenta, etc., are eaten up by animals. On the 5th day, an interesting ceremony called 'Panchuati' is performed. The pollution continues for a period of 12 days and the 12th day ceremony is named 'Barajatra'. On the 21st day, Ekoisa ceremony is observed and a name is given to the baby. A feast called 'Suklabhoji' may be offered to friends and relatives on that occasion. Outsiders coming to attend the feast, bless the child and offer presents. In well-to-do families, the exact time of birth and zodiac signs etc., are recorded by maintaining a horoscope which is prepared by an astrologer.
Among the *Bhulias* the pollution (*Chhutikia*) connected with child birth continues for a period of 6 days. Name giving ceremony is performed on the 21\textsuperscript{st}. There is no elaborate ceremony connected with first hair-cutting or ear-boring ceremonies.

**Mortuary Rites**

The Brahmins generally cremate the dead. A string cot is kept upside down and the corpse is placed on it and carried by relatives to the cremation ground. A piece of new cloth is wrapped over the dead body, and fried rice, cotton seed and flowers are generally strewn on the road while the drum beats. The Dhoba accompanies the party with his axe to cut the firewood. The barber shaves the corpse. The funeral pyre is kindled by the eldest son who applies fire to the mouth of the deceased and in his absence it is performed by any other son. The operation is known as *Mukhagni*. The man who performs it keeps his sacred thread over the right shoulder. *Pinda* is offered at the spot. A Brahmin of another family officiates over the function. After *Mukhagni* the eldest son hastens home, having a dip in the tank or river. The persons who accompany the dead come home after a dip. They are known as *Bahampuria Samaja Bhai*. An incense of fried rice (*khai*) and neem leaf is then prepared for their purification. And the clothes used by them are washed by the household Dhoba. No cooking is allowed for that day in the house of the deceased. On the 3rd day a small hut is built near a tank and food in a new earthen pot is offered to the spirit of the dead. On the 10th day, shaving and nail paring are done and on the 11\textsuperscript{th} day, non-vegetarian food which is restricted during the period of mourning is allowed to all concerned. On the 12th day, *Suddha Bhoji* (purification feast) is offered to friends and relatives.

Among the *Dhobas* the corpse is either buried or cremated if the person concerned can afford it. The corpse is carried on a string cot kept upside down. During the period of mourning the relatives of the deceased are not allowed to touch fish or meat. On the 10\textsuperscript{th} day, *Sraddha* and *Pinda* are offered in the name of the dead and ceremonial haircutting, shaving and paring of nails are performed. On the 11\textsuperscript{th} day the members of the family are allowed to take fish and on 12\textsuperscript{th} day, feast is offered to friends and relatives. The man who first applies fire to the dead is entitled to perform the *Sraddha* ceremony.

Among all other non-tribal Hindus of the district the manners and customs connected with the funeral rites conform to the Brahminical rites. Muslims and Christians bury the dead and perform mortuary rites according to their respective customs.

**The Mahimaites**

The Mahimaites or Alekhists believe in no gods, no ghosts, no *sraddha*. They take no food after sunset, touch no *prasad*, no medicine. They play no games, do no business, store no wealth, domesticate no animals or birds. They perform *sarana* and *darsana* and practise truth and tolerance, continence and non-violence.
To them, there is only one caste, the caste of humanity. There is only one God and He is formless and nameless. They condemn casteism although they take cooked rice as alms from people of all castes except Brahmins, Ksatriyas, Dhobas, Bhandaris, Prostitutes.

Social Life

Property and Inheritance: Family system, matriarchal system and other forms of inheritances except Bengalis, all Hindus are guided by Mitakshara law of inheritance as amended by the HinduCode giving daughters equal right with sons in the father’s share of the ancestral property. The eldest son gets an additional share on account of his obligation to perform the Sraddha of the father. Bengalis follow Dayabhag Law.

Joint family system is common among Hindus. But this system is fast disintegrating. Those who are issueless generally adopt sons with the object of perpetuating the lineage and the adopted son is entitled to inherit the property of the father. Matriarchal system does not exist in the district.

Marriage and Morals: Monogamy, Polygamy and Polyandry

Monogamy is common. When the first wife proves sterile or suffers from an incurable disease the husband can take another wife. The rich keep concubines and they are generally from lower caste.

Polyandry is unknown in the district. The children of concubines are not entitled to inherit property. This system finds little appreciation in the society and people having concubines are generally looked down upon. A Zamindar generally marries a new wife on the day he owns a Zamindari.

Traditional Restrictions on Marriage Alliances

In Hindu society marriages between near relatives are avoided as far as possible. The institution of marriage is characterised by certain fundamental rules and conventions, codified or uncodified. Among many castes, marriage within the same gotra is also strictly prohibited. But marriage with the maternal uncle’s daughter is permitted among certain castes in the district. Muslims, Christians and Mahimaites have their own law regarding marriage. In Subarnapur matrimonial alliances were generally limited to Boudh and Athmallik. The Gandas and Saharas, Bhulias and Kultas married a girl before she attained puberty failing which she was first married to a bow and arrow.

Marriage: Customs and Rituals

Rituals connected with marriage in all Hindu castes are mostly alike, but they vary according to the status of parties. Before the marriage negotiations or before fixing of the auspicious day and time for marriage, some castes have the system of bride price (Harja) which is paid by the groom to the bride’s father or guardian.
In many castes negotiation is taken to be finalised when the bride's party receives presents consisting of a piece of sari, bangles and sweets from the groom's party and this function is known as ‘Kanya pindhani’. The day preceding the marriage is known as ‘Mangalana’, and on that day both the bride and the groom in their respective houses anoint themselves with turmeric and oil and take sacred bath. Seven married women (Satbhuasen) perform this ceremonious bath and the function is called ‘Ganasnan’ or “Gansan”. On the appointed day the groom with his father, friends and relatives goes to the bride's house where marriage ceremony is performed. Honeymoon is observed on the 4th day of marriage in the groom’s house.

Among Brahmins, Karans and other higher castes the marriage rites are elaborately performed. Some castes besides the usual rites perform a symbolic marriage known locally as 'Phulbiha'. The maternal uncle of the bride keeps some flowers in a pot and the groom before marrying the bride marries the flower which symbolises her.

Among the Gandas, the groom makes some presents called 'Pindhai Vara' consisting of two pieces of cloth, oil, turmeric, bangles and sweets. They call the bride price 'maithi-mula'. On the first day of marriage, the Gandas worship a branch of Mahul tree which represents prosperity.

Among the Kosthas, negotiations of marriage are known as 'Radbadal'. There is a bride-price. After negotiation, presents are given to the bride which includes ornaments like Katuria, Bandria, bangles, waist chain (gunchi) sari, etc.

The Binjhals perform adult marriage. Marriage among them is fixed by a queer custom of rice grain-divination. If they get auspicious signs from it, the marriage is fixed. Their marriage rites are not so elaborate as in the case of many other castes.

Dowry system is not prevalent in the district. The bride, while coming to the house of the groom, brings articles of common use and ornaments and dresses, indicative of her starting a new home. The groom on this occasion is not to make any demand and the value of the articles brought by the bride depends on what her father can afford. And such articles are generally exhibited before friends and relatives.

**Inter-Caste and Sub-Caste Marriage**

Inter-caste marriages are few and far between. In exceptional cases they assume the “Gandharba” form which is generally solemnised by registration.

**Widow Marriage and Divorce**

Widow marriage is allowed by many castes such as Dhoba, Bhandari, Gauda, Gudia, Teli, Bhulia, Dumal, Ganda, Ghasi, Pan, Behera, etc. No elaborate ceremony is connected with such marriages. Rituals are performed in case of the
marriage of a child widow but in case of adult widow's rituals are observed in a summary manner. The widows are mostly found marrying either a widower or the younger brother of their deceased husband. The bride-price for widow marriage is lower than that in regular adult marriage. This system is called ‘Paisamudi’. Many castes like Kultas, Keutas and Goudas have some special rules regarding widow marriage. The widow is not allowed to marry in case she has a baby who is still at the natal stage and is only allowed to take another husband after complete two years of the child-birth or after the baby has been weaned.

Cases of divorce are rare. Either party has a choice to divorce, but it is not exercised until reconciliation between husband and wife becomes impossible. In all castes and tribes divorce is allowed according to their traditional rules. There are very few cases of judicial divorce in the district.

The principal reasons for divorce are: (1) adultery by wife (2) sterility of the wife (3) incurable disease of husband or wife (4) frequent conflict, and clashes between husband and wife.

Rules regarding social customs in many communities prescribe excommunication and fines for a man who takes another wife without the consent of the first or without divorcing her. In case of a second marriage of the husband the first wife has the liberty to divorce the husband. In case of a woman, remarriage without divorce is not possible as polyandry is not allowed in the society.

Among the tribals, widows and divorced women are free to marry again. Choice in case of a widow generally falls upon the younger brother of the deceased husband.

Women in Society

It is true women in high society kept indoors. Their life was a long series of Osas and Bratas like the Mangala puja and Tarini brata on Tuesdays of Chaitra when the mother carries the ailing child in her arms and goes silently begging at seven doors, the Savitri brata of Baishakh, Rakhi Purnima of Sravana and Tija brata of Bhadrav when the sisters wraps the “raksi” on the brother’s wrist and the wife takes to fasting for the husband’s wellbeing respectively, Kartika brata and Laxmi Puja of Margasira, etc. Yet women were not completely dependent upon men and the degree of their dependence varied according to their social status. The women of lower social status were free to accept service for their livelihood. On the other hand women belonging to higher castes like Karans and Brahmans were dependent on their husbands in many respects. The preponderance of women in corn fields, market places and betel shops speaks of the freedom a woman enjoyed in this tract long before the Europeans hoisted the flag of women’s lib. The family was primarily patriarchal. But now females are gradually asserting their rights and are claiming equal treatment with men. The spread of education has contributed much towards the emancipation of women. Even before the spread of education, ladies of the harem had a role in state administration. The example of Rani
Suryaprava Devi who sent defeated Jarawar a sari and a pair of bangles as a gift that provoked him to victory, Gundicha Devi who routed Pallau Mallik’s rebellion, Amulyamani who guided Pratapuradra in state administration and Parvati Devi, Kaiser-i-Hind who was a fellow of Patna university were great women of Subarnapur the world has seldom seen. The *Utkal Sahitya* observes:

There is no boisterousness, no exchange of eyes...Uninhibited they bathe and wash their clothes and, with their fine apparel and ornaments on, ascend the steps, pitchers in arms. What an enticing sight! One may mistake these non-Aryans for Aryans, so fetching they look...Even the wives of Utkal Brahmins wear Berari clothes...they turn the cynosure of all eyes through their colourful clothes, charming faces and luxuriant hair. The Vaidarbhi ladies wear no smiles, cast no glances unlike the restless Bengalis. Gentle on the surface, and quite heroic inside! We felt as though this was a part Maharastra. Who has not heard the high, heroic tales of Rajput women!

(qtd in *TheVoice of Silence*)

Prostitution as a profession is not in vogue in the district. It is now illegal throughout the country. Cases of sex crime and adultery are, however, occasionally reported, but traffic in women is almost unknown. Among the Scheduled Castes and Adivasis, country liquor is generally used. Foreign liquor has a restricted market in the district and is only open to those who can afford it. Gambling was widely prevalent in the past and the month of *Dasahara* was regarded as the month of gambling. This practice is now gradually vanishing due to the attention of the police. At present only minor types of gambling are found particularly in market places.

**Home Life**

**Types of Dwellings**

In Subarnapur majority of houses are roofed with ‘Khapar’ or semi-cylindrical: firebaked clay tiles, Side by side with these Khapar houses, thatched dwellings are found all over the district.

The thatched or tile-roofed houses can be grouped into five types according to the number of slopes they maintain, e.g., 8 sloped (roofs are fused with each other), 2-4 sloped, 3-2 sloped and odd sloped having 5, 6 and 7 slopes. Generally where there is availability of space there are courtyards and backyards for the houses.

The plinth of a dwelling house is raised to the height of three to three and a half feet above the ground level. The plinth is constructed either of stone-chips and mud or bricks.
The walls are generally made of either bamboo and wattle and mud or brick and earth.

In rural areas thatched houses predominate, whereas in urban areas majority houses are pucca dwellings and tiled houses. The houses in the villages differ considerably from the houses in the urban areas.

In almost all cases the kitchen is found attached to the main dwelling. The houses in rural areas do not need special ventilation as there is automatic ventilation through the gap between the wall and the roof. In some houses one can mark the total absence of windows. There are no proper conservancy and sewerage systems in villages resulting in insanitary conditions. In urban areas excepting Sonepur, the dwellings have been unplanned. In some cases sanitary lavatories of Barapali variety developed by American Friends during their camp at Barpali (1951-56) have been introduced in urban and semi-urban areas of the district in recent times. Yet old habits die hard. Even now people, urban and rural, defecate in open fields and riverside which had made Tryambak Sathe, Dewan impose penalty in the last decade of the 19th century.

Furniture and Decoration

Both in the rural and urban areas, well-to-do persons possess furniture like chairs, tables, cots, almirahs, desks, benches, etc. In an average household of a middleclass family in the rural areas, we can find at least one or two string cots (Khatia), one bench and a few chairs. But in the urban areas people have more advanced amenities of life and better furniture. In a well-to-do family household in urban areas one can find sofa-sets, chairs, tables, almirahs, benches and wooden cots with artistic designs and even foam rubber mattresses and cushions.

Besides furniture, every household possesses different appliances and utensils for kitchen and also wooden seats (pirha).

Furniture sets of cane, like cane chairs, tables and other cane articles are also found in many households.

Food and Drink

The food habits of the people were simple. Rice was their staple food. Majority of them took Pakhal or boiled-rice-in-water along with onions, chilli and a little salt in and out of season. Pakhal in saras or earthen pots during social functions in summer days is served. And even to the deities—a custom peculiar to Sonepur.

Sonepur is famous for rice and mung which were items of export. While the rich took mung dal, the lower classes were content with kuluth (French Lentil), kandul (toor dal) and tul dal (mahua seeds). Items like chakhna and mungsjha were prepared with mung.

Small pieces of bamboo shoots known as kardi and smaller pieces called hendua were also cooked by commoners.
Mushroom was a favourite dish with the people, and a variety of mushrooms like *phutkel chhati, bal chhati, bindhen chhati, pual chhati*, etc. were collected from the forest and sold in the market.

Fresh-water fish and mutton constituted popular non-vegetarian dishes. Occasionally boars were killed for feasts. Chicken was meant for lower classes and beef for Gandas and Ghasis.

Khichidi (kidigree) was a special item of food. Khichidi bhoga was offered in Vaisnava temples, too.

Sweet dishes like *mahuphena, sarsatia, singragharia* were Sonepur special. Sakarpati made of molasses was the children’s toffee. On festive occasions like *Phalgun Purnima, Sivaratri, Rathayatra* items of sugar in the shape of horses, elephants, bull, monkeys were bought and sold. It may be mentioned here that Sonepur had the highest number of Gurias or Confectioners among the Patna Group of States in 1891. From the juice of ripe palmfruit are prepared *patua* and *bara* (lentil fritters) The lower classes cook a kind of porridge made from *kudo, mandia* (ragia), and *palua* which are forest products.

Rice products like *murhi, lia, chura, hundai* constituted the snacks for the people. *Masala bara* and *chakapittha* are Sonepur special. *Murhi laddu* and *rasi laddu* were the children’s favourite. Since wheat was not cultivated, roti was not in use. On special occasions, however, *puri, tikhri, pitha* (pancake), *manda, bara, malpua* made of flour were served.

The forests of Sonepur, in particular and of west Orissa, in general are full of *mahua* trees. The lower classes not only made cakes with *mahua* flowers they used its seeds (tul) for dal and oil. A kind of country liquor called *mahuli* (arrack) made from *mahua* flowers and *toddy* from the juice collected from date-palm trees were taken by the labour class. The distillers and toddy drawers belonged to the Katar and Sundhi castes who numbered 222 and 1102 respectively in 1891 census. Til oil was used for massaging the body and mustard oil for cooking.

On *Pana Sankranti* a kind of drink called *jharapana* was prepared out of *palua*.

Besides mango, guava and jamun, the fruits and roots the common people took were date-palm, sweet potatoes, melon, *kanteikoli, kasurkanda*, etc.

**Dress and Ornament**

People here generally took to simple living. Their clothings were simpler still. *Dhoti* and *gamchha* or anghchi or latpati was the common wear for men. A dhoti is 40 to 50 inches in width, 4 to 5 yards in length. It has coloured borders lengthwise. Mill made dhotis are preferred to handloom ones. Khadar is rare. Lungi is forbidden while performing puja. The higher classes put on *matha* and *pata* on ceremonial occasions. Women wore a variety of saris like *vichitrapari, saktapari, kanakapari,*
duiphulia, panchphulia, dasphulia, chandankura, vaulamala, rasamalati, etc. These saris are 40 to 50 inches in length with artistic borders lengthwise. The saris worn by women of the labour class were called kabta. They were short in length and width. Saris were the only garments women wore, which made them more attractive and alluring. Women wear without their back tuck which conforms to the norm in eastern and northern India.
Women were relatively fond of ornaments. They used glass and silver bangles, vandria, mathi, chhurki, katria, kalari, khadu on the wrists, chutka, angha, jhuntia, vichhuan, chingrijhupa, and chirmudri on their left toes, todal, panjhal, painri on their ankles, khagia, gajbandh, chapsari, kanthimali, dhamali, gutimali, patrimali, duamali, panlakanthi, jiuntia on the neck, a girdle called gunchi on the waist, jhalka, mallikadhi, vaulakadhi, tirtira, ganthia, karnaphula, ventla, fasia on the ears and naakputki on the nose, taia, bahasuta on the arm, etc. The ornaments were all made of silver except those on the ears and the nose which were of gold make. Women of the lower castes wore khadu on the hands and gunchi made of brass on the waist. They carry a karata of the shape of a small ball tied at one end of the sari and tucked at the waist to keep coins in. It is made of silver or brass. The hair-do was a khusa, roundish in shape and studded with a number of hair pins like panpatra, prajapati, sebati phula, malati phula, malli phula, vaulakadhi, jharakathi, gojikathi, charmundi, etc. Their cosmetics consisted of powdered turmeric which lent their skin a light colour. While men of higher classes wore chapals and wooden kathaus, women, high or low, were barefoot.

Soap and scented oil were items of luxury. Flowers took their place. Flowers like malli for the townies and kureiphula for the young tribal women filled their lives with the aroma of romance.

**Games and Sports**

Of the contributions by Sonepur to India in the world of games and sports, special mention may be made of Ganjpa. Unlike playing cards, the Ganjpa cards are small and circular. One and a half inches in diameter, it is painted in vegetable and metallic colours. Ganjpa is played between two opposite camps. One pack comprises 144 circular cards painted in twelve different suits. Each suit has twelve cards equally divided between Ram and Ravan. Mahamahopadhyaya HP Sastri describes a similar set of circular cards invented by the Malla kings of Bishnupur, but while the Bishnupur cards have on them the ten incarnations of Bisnu, four-handed incarnations in one division and two-handed ones in the other, here on the Sonepur Ganjpa we have the figures of Ram, Ravan, Laxman, Hanuman, Jamban, Bali, Sugriba etc. on the one hand, and Ravan, Indrajit, Kumbhakarna etc. on the other. This game which centres round the epic episode of the Ram-Ravan fight is
played in two types—Hamrang or Chaurang and Ekrang by four persons opposed to one another. Ganjpā cards are played in Puri and Ganjam, too, but the Sonepur Ganjpā is quite different in the sense it depicts on the cards two warring mythological troops, the troop of Ram and the troop of Ravan. BM Sing Deo had presented a pack to his British masters which has been preserved on the ground floor of the British Museum.

Ganjpā was an indoor game and Ludo, Chhur and Kho-Kho were outdoor games for males. The females play Chhaka as indoor and Humo or Humva as outdoor games. Chhaka, like Ludo or Chess, is played on a specifically prepared coloured cloth or on the floor with 24 small square blocks on each of its four sides connected at the centre. It is played with 6 pieces of large-sized cowry shell or their imitations in brass or bronze and 16 pieces of coloured wooden dots. Four ladies play the game individually or in pair.

The name, colour and emblems of the suits in each of the two divisions are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Colour</th>
<th>Emblem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ram</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Arrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Laxman</td>
<td>Deep Yellow</td>
<td>Quiver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Mankad</td>
<td>Nigger Brown</td>
<td>Monkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Bhalu</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Bear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Parvat</td>
<td>Navy Blue</td>
<td>Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Dhal</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>Shield</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Colour</th>
<th>Emblem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ravan</td>
<td>Dark Red</td>
<td>Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Kurt</td>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>Double-edged Spear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Phas</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Noose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Katari</td>
<td>Pink</td>
<td>Dagger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sul</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>Pike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Khanda</td>
<td>Pale Yellow</td>
<td>Sword</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each suit has two count cards—King and Minister, and the counters are from Ace to Ten. In the suit of Ram’s Division, the Ace ranks next to Minister but in Ravan’s Division the Ten ranks next to Minister. The Ace is the lowest card.

Humo was played in the evening or in moonlit night by young, unmarried girls who, arm in arm, form two rows and approach one another with sweet songs. The beginning of each song is marked by a meaningless syllable of words which adds to the beauty and charm of the songs. This dance where the steppings are slow and rhythmical resembles the Bharatchari dance of Bengal. Lady Parvati Devi composed in 1929 a Humva Gita for this dance. Call it Humo or Humva, it was quite popular with the grown up girls of the Chauhan times. In his poem “Samvalasri” in Byakarana Stava, Swapneswar Das, Kabi Bhusan says the word “Humo” might
have been derived from “Huma”, a place on the Sonepur-Sambalpur border. But the more plausible and reasonable explanation lies in the refrain, *Hum Bol* (say, yes) from which “*Humva*” is possibly derived. This music-cum dance is peculiar to Sonepur-Sambalpur tract.

**Fairs and Festivals**

Sonepur witnesses, as the saying goes, thirteen festivals in twelve months. The initiative is largely taken by the royal house, no doubt, but the large scale people’s participation in these fairs and festivals lends life and colour, activity and variety to an otherwise indolent, isolated existence of this small state. They make life vibrant. They give it a meaning and a purpose. Some fairs are secular, some religious. But here at Sonepur they gather significance from their association with the divinities.

Chaitra is marked by *Dandayatra, Ramlila and Mangala Puja*.

*Dandayatra* is held from *Mina Sankranti* to *Pana Sankranti* or Mahavisuba Sankranti of April. Also called *Yaniyatra*, it is an open-air lyric theatre consisting of several acrobatics and artistic performances. It is a folk theatre staged as a religious festival by the agricultural community of Sonepur with dance, music and drama. It is a ritualistic, dramatic worship of Lord Siva. The participants are known as *Bhoktas or Risiputras* who represent the cross-sections of the society largely drawn from the lower strata. Held on the public road with people thronged on both sides, it begins with Parbha or Tandava or Kalika dance which is an invocatory dance symptomatic of *Sodasa Upacharapuja* with as many as 16 varieties of steps and movements to the sound of *dhol* and *muhuri*. A man in multi-coloured skirt and a tight-fitting shirt of local design holding with both hands both ends of a piece of cloth on the shoulders and moving in different directions, while a *parbha* or semi-circular plate made of bamboo sticks and coloured cloth is attached to his back. It is followed by a variety of steps and movements to the sound of Dhol and Mahuri. Then comes *Veenakaria* holding a country-made Veena attached with tiny tinkling bell. He gives way to a series of dances, namely, Savara-Savaruni, Kela-Keluni, Chadheia- Chadheiani, Patrasaura- Patrasaurani, Vinakaria-Vinakariani, etc. These dances in the form of twists contain slides of Adivasi life. There is a character *Bandi Botal*, a male in female dress, called *Kutni* or go-between who is a living satire on the society. The yatra closes with a story-dance from the *Ramayana* or *Mahabharata* which appears a later addition. The Dandayatra seems to have originated in Boud-Sonepur region during the Somavamsi period as an effective Saivite instrument to stem the tide of Buddhism. It continued with renewed vigour under the patronage of the Chauhan Rajas of Sonepur who, too, were devout Saivites, The Dandayatra prevalent in Ganjam, Dhenkanal and Keonjhar districts.
is a revised edition of the Sonepur form. This dance has a socio-religious significance. It is a protestant performance by untouchables to assert their right to worship. Ritualistically, Dandayatra is a synthesis of Tantric Buddhism, Tantric Saivism, Saktism and Vaisnavism. While Lila Danda is based on Radha-Krisna amour, Sohala Suanga consists of 16 different duets with different, distinctive dhol beats and dance styles.

Ramlila, like Dandayatra, is also the people’s yatra which takes place on the public thoroughfare, in front of the Dadhivaman temple from Sukla Navami to Purnima. Ramlila is a kind of opera where one recites the abridged Ramayana composed by Bipra Sadasiva to the accompaniment of dibi, tabla, mrudanga and cymbals, while the characters in different costumes and masks re-enact the famous Ramayana.

The other festive feature of Chaitra is the Mangala Puja performed on every Tuesday by the Ghatual of Champamal, a village in the Birmaharajpur Tehsil. On the mid-day appears the team with dhol and muhuri. The Ghatual with his vermillioned face, long hair, a red sari and a string of jingle bells on his waist enacts Mother Mangala. An earthen mace with small tridents planted is placed on his chest, while the muhuris blow and the dhois beat. The Ghatual, then possessed with the deity, dances wild with the jingling painri on his feet, the brass bells on his waist and the swinging garland of blood –red mandara and palasa flowers on his neck. With a knife he cleaves his tongue and screams deafeningly and menacingly while the blood streams down his chest. The Rani observes the Mangala Puja every Tuesday in the Durga Devi temple.

The Chandanyatra of Vaisakh reminds us of Lord Madan Mohan boating in the Narendra Pokhari (pond) of Puri. Here the Lankeswari Darha (gorge) of the Mahanadi turns Narendra Pokhari. From Akshaya Tritiya to Dasami, the image of Brundabanbihari is taken to the Chandan Mandap of the Mahanadi every evening. On Sukla Ekadasi, the Vijaya Pratimas of Debarchan Gopalji, Barh Gopalji, Brundabanbihari, Jagannath, Dadhivaman along with Paschim Somanath, Gokarneswar and Rameswar are carried to Nrusimha temple where Chandanyatra is held till Purnima. In the Jyestha Pratipad night the Vijaya Pratimas are carried in a ceremonial procession round the town to the Rajghat wherefrom they are transported in a chap (boats joined together) to the Lankeswari Darha where the sound of music, the coloured lights, the nimble dancers on the deck and the boats snailing round the Lankeswari rock on the moon-blancheted Mahanadi lend an unearthly charm to the Chandanyatra.
Like Dandayatra, Sital Sasthi or Aranyak Sasthi or Skanda Sasthi of Jyestha celebrates Saivism. Since this is a pre-monsoon festival connected with the marriage of Siva and Parvati, it is sometimes construed as part of the fertility cult. On Jyestha Sukla Panchami night the Vijaya Pratima of Parvati is carried to the Debarchan Gopalji temple of the Rajbawan and those of the Asta Sambhus to the Chandrasekhar temple wherefrom they proceed via Majhipara to the palace. Here the Maharaja performs the BataVarana (reception). The wedding ceremony takes place in the Maharaj Mahal, and the bridegroom night-halt at Sasthi Devi Bhawan. In the evening of Sukla Sasthi a grand bridal procession starts from the palace.

Sital Sasthi is, indeed, a Gana Parva where people in large number participate with about two dozen vimanas prepared by the different parhas of the town. Crackers boom. Conch-shells blow. Birkahalis blare. Drums beat. The procession starts. The vimana of Siva and Parvati with figures of bull and lion in the midst of Saiva and Vaisnava gods installed in their own, slowly marching through Majhipara and Barh Bazar of the town is, indeed, enchanting. It is only at dawn that the procession terminates at the Chandrasekhar temple wherefrom, barring Siva and Parvati, the other deities disperse to their respective temples. The procession ends where it began. Sital Sasthi is also organized at Binka and Baidyanath. It is a festival of light and sound, dance and music.

Asarh comes with the ringing gongs and rattling wheels. It is the month of Rathayatra or car festival popularly known as Gundichayatra. It is a happy coincidence that the Gundicha temple of Sonepur was built by Rani Gundicha Devi just as its counterpart was constructed in Puri by another Gundicha Devi, Rani of the legendary Indradyumna. This is the destination of Balabhadra, Jagannath and Subhadra during the car festival. Asarh Amavasya is the day of the Lord’s Netrotsava or Navayauvana (renewal of youth). But here Netrotsava is observed on Asarh Sukla Pratipad, instead of on Amavasya, for it was in this ominous night in 1802 that the Marathas stormed into Sonepurgarh and took Prithvi Sing prisoner.

There is still another exception. Unlike in Puri, here are two chariots for three deities, one for Balabhadra and Subhadra and the other, the new one, for Jagannath. Two chariots are also used for Kotha Jagannath of the Raj Bhawan, and for deities at Binka. Only after chariots of Kotha Jagannath are drawn back by the Bhitirias from Gadadwara to the Rajbhawan that the pahandi ceremony of the images of Jagannath temple starts. The Raj Purohit performs the puja during the pahandi from the gate of the temple to the gate of the garh. Once the images are installed in the chariots, the Raj Panigrahi takes over. The pahandi of Balabhadra and Subhadra is performed by the Brahmins of Badbazar, while that of Sri Jagannath is conducted jointly by those of Ghodaghatpada and Gadvitar amid the sounds of conch-shells, gongs and trumpets and rhythmic recitation from the Bidagdha Chintamani and Mathura Mangala on the crowded road called Badadanda like the one at Puri. But while the Badadanda of Puri runs straight to
the Gundicha temple, here it runs from Gadvitar via Majhipada to Badbazar on an oval trajectory.

From Asadha sukla tritiya to navami Sri Jagannath assumes as many as twelve incarnations; Machchha and Kachha on tritia, Barah and Nrusimha on chaturthi, Rama and Balarama on panchami, Bamana and Parshuram on sasthi, Kaliyadalana on saptami, Padmamukha on astami and Kalki on navami.

Rathayatra is the people’s festival which men, women and children of all castes and classes participate: Brahmins, Keots, Dhobis, Badheis, Luhuras, Malis, Sunaris, Ghasis, Gingras etc. Babies in new clothes are taken by their kins to touch the chariots - a custom called ratha chhuan. While Vishnusahasranama is chanted by Brahmins for the entire period, Gopalsahasranama is recited on bahuda dasami.

Bhadra brings to Sonepur, as it brings to all other places of the country, Krishna Janmastami in the midst of recitations from the dasama skanda of the Bhagabata. On this occasion the Bakasura badha is enacted next day in a building constructed by Niladhar Sing Deo in the Dilbahalpur jungle.

Bhadra Amavasya brings to boys and girls another occasion to rejoice. The Amavasya, known as Saptapurika Amavasya at Puri where a lotus-shape cake with seven kinds of contents is offered to Lord Jagannath, is observed as Saptapitruka Amavasya at Sonepur. On this occasion seven types of man’s predecessors are worshipped – lion, horse, cow, bull, elephant, monkey etc. made of wood or brass or clay. They are offered seven kinds of sweets like pheni, bundia, ghasa, guli, matha, chhatu and huduma. In the evening wheeled terracotta Hanuman images, big and small, their tails burning, are drawn by children on the road to Somalai temple. There on the Jodakhamva circumambulated seven times by one sahani followed by children, the terracotta Hanumans are hurled to pieces. This Hanuman image with its protruding teeth, its crown, its moustache, its tail trailing on its back to the top of the head is a unique artifact by the potters of Sonepur which is displayed in an international exhibition in Sweden brought to Lokanath Rana (a potter) name and fame. But the question remains: why is that Lord Hanuman, worthy of worship as a Hindu deity, is dashed to pieces? Does it prove the hypothesis by historians that Subarnapur was ‘Swarna Lanka’ of the Ramayana which Hanuman once set on fire, and now through this annual festival the Lankans symbolically celebrate the revengeful funeral of their sworn enemy? Or, is it a fiery farewell to the latest form of the evolution of the humans – monkeys? Behind this practice, BM Sing Deo says, lies a deep mystery of tantric significance.
Karma puja is held on *Bhadra Sukla Ekadesi* known as *Barh Ekadesi*. On this day young boys and girls obtain two branches of Karam or Sal tree (*Nuclea Parvifolia*) and put them on a platform joined in matrimony as king and queen with the belief that this union will usher in a year of plenty and prosperity. The place for the platform is the middle of the village which they decorate with mango leaves and water – lilies. The *Jhankar* worships the sacred branches of Karma Raja and Karma Rani with liquor, the sacrificial blood of a fowl and rice and gur. With this offering made, he tells the story of Karmasani or Karmarani, while young boys and girls drink and dance round the Karna branches till dawn. They dance sometimes arm in arm, sometimes their hands on their neighbour’s waistband or shoulder, sometimes swinging backward and forward, more or less energetically in tune with the tempo of the dance, shouting, ‘Hai, hai’ to the rhythm of the *dhol* and *madal*. The drummers play *dhol* and *madal*, cymbal –players and singers join them with rhythmic steps. Each member puts on a red turban and a red shirt of local design, a scanty coloured cloth hanging up the knees, skillfully designed armlets, bangles and girdles made out of small conch-shells and ankle-bells to mark the time-beats. Each one holds a small mirror, perhaps to appreciate the rich costume. They dance the whole night and on the morrow carry in a procession the Karma branches for immersion in pond or stream.

Karma Puja which is performed in honour of Karma or Destiny is also held in times of crop-failure, cattle disease and natural calamities. It is a puja in which Binjhal, Kharia, Oraon, Kisan, Gingra and Kol tribes participate. All night the Gingras dance to the songs on Radha and Krishna to the sound of madals. Therefore, Birmitrodaya says, ‘It is a form of Krisna-worship’ (*Swarnapura Maharajagruha Krutya Chandrika*: 1937). This puja is also performed in the Rajbhawan on the *Vali Chaunra* where the *Bargai* plants the Karma branches for worship. The Raja takes to fasting on this day and the day after, distributes *lats* to the *Panuas* of Khadal, Dhoba, Kuli, Betra, Kandha and Chamar castes. Karma Puja is peculiar to Sonepur-Bolangir-Sambalpur region.

While Karma Puja is an open-air performance, Dhunkuli Osa is a closed-door worship performed by young, unmarried girls which male members are prohibited to witness. Dhunkuli Puja begins when Karma Puja ends, with *Vamana Dwadasi*, i.e. the 12th day of the bright fortnight of *Bhadra*. It ends on the 8th day of the dark fortnight of *Aswin*. This dance is also known as Rahul Gaur Puja or Rahila Osa. In the evening of day one, seven girls proceed, led by a pair of drummers, to the Bajrang Ghat of Satbandh,
carrying with them seven kalasis and seven tuplis (baskets) containing seven articles, namely, milk, nuts, wheat, mung, biri, kuluth and til seeds for worship of Sat Bahen (seven sisters). There offering is made by the Deheri or Kothi Naiken (the lady in charge of the dance chamber). The baskets are then filled with sand and carried back to the dance-chamber where the Deheri performs the worship of nine deities whose figures are painted by the Maharana on the wall. A pair of girls fasting for the day sit in padmasana, with branches of Ainla tree in their hands, their hair flowing, saris worn tight on the body, and on the feet tiny, tinkling brass bells. With the burst of music, they play what is called srichaura (dance in sitting posture) followed by dance in a bow-like pose, hands hanging loose. The dance goes on till dawn, one pair succeeded by another. On the sixth day the birth of Rahul and Gaur is observed, while on the tenth, two small girls guised as Siva and Parvati move from door to door. ‘Siva’ with a lota and an umbrella, and ‘Parvati’, a book and a plate where money is offered. On the eleventh day nine girls carry, in a ceremonial procession from the potter’s house, nine clay images each on a pidha (wooden seat) placed on the head under a paper umbrella back into the puja chamber. In the noon of the closing day the images are immersed in a river or a tank.

Dhunkuli dance, like Dandayatra, celebrates Siva-worship. It is based on the story of Tulsi and Dahana (plants whose leaves are offered to the gods). With her daughter Rahila and son Gaura murdered by her co-wife, Dahana, Tulsi Rani, propitiates Siva and Parvati who bring them back to life. But more than this story what strikes the spectator is the unique musical instrument used in this dance. It consists of a handi (earthen cooking pot), a kula (winnower made of bamboo), a bow and a staff with jingle bells, a thin, small brass plate and a handful of pulses. A simple, indigenous, innovative instrument that produces a soothing, lullabic music.

Besides Ganesh Puja, a festive occasion for school children all over India on Bhadrav Sukla Chaturthi with the forbidden moon of the evening—a theme for Maharani Ladi Parvati Devi’s kavya, Syamantaka Mani (1928), Navanna or Nuakhai is a great occasion for west Orissa which falls sometime in the first week of Bhadrav Sukla Paksha. It is an agricultural festival. On this day the first paddy of the season is cropped and offered to gods and goddesses. Kinsmen from near and far come home. There is a family bhetghat or get-together. New chura, gur milk, honey banana is ground together to make what is called nua. The eldest member of the family offers the nua first to the family deities on the Kurei leaf, then distributes it among members of the family sitting in a row in order of seniority—all in new clothes. Thereafter wishes are exchanged, temples are visited. Outdoor games like Dudo and Khoko are played in the afternoon. Thus Nuakhai is not only related to agriculture, it is also connected with the culture of western Orissa, a culture of unity and solidarity. It provides a forum to thrash out old feuds and cement new bonds of kinship and love. Dalkhai and Rasarkeli dances are performed in the afternoon to give this day of feasting and merry-making a grand finale.
On festive occasions like Bhai Jiuntia, Phagun Puni, Push Puni, Nuakhai, etc. Dalkhai dance is performed. Young Kandha and Binjal girls dance and sing merrily and rhythmically the Dalkhai songs on Radha and Krisna, while their male partners play the madal to the rhythm of their dance. The girls, at the outset, stand in a row or in a semi-circle, singing. This is followed by dance in a half-sitting position. The dhol-player dances with the party, while the other accompanists sit and play the music. The dhol, nisan, tamki, tasa and muhuri constitute the rich orchestra of this folk music, vigorous in rhythm, varying to the movements of the dance. Dalkhai is a dance of explosive vitality which involves seductive movements of hands and legs and knees and hips. The dancers put a piece of red cloth on the shoulders and hold both ends in both hands separately as they dance in gay abandon. The adjunctive forms of this folk dance are Rasarkeli, Jhumkujhuma, Mailajada, Vankijhulki, etc.

In the whole country we do not find a parallel to Baliyatra of Sonepur associated with so much tantric significance. It is held from Amavasya to Purnima in the month of Aswin in the midst of mantra and tantra and yantra. The Yantras used are Banadurga, Ugratra and Bhubaneswari. The Somlai temple, the Khamsiri temple and the Sureswari temple constitute the theatres of Baliyatra. The baruas or participants, maufidars of village Sakma, live on havisanna, offering their blood to goddess Somlai and Khamsiri, their family deities, within closed doors till Aswin Chaturdasi as preparatory for this parva.

On the Chaturdasi day, the baruas congregate at Somlai temple. Before the day dawns on Aswin Amavasya, the road that runs from the Bhagavati temple via Sureswari, Khambeswari, Barh Hanuman temples to Dilbahilpur jungle where stands Batuka Bhairava or Budharaja under a Bahira tree is furrowed with a plough and strewn with the feathers of a sacrificed fowl. At mid-day a pillar of Rohini wood is planted by the Mundajhulias in a hole dug by the Bargai. The Khamveswaria Purohit who is the keyman for this yatra cuts the torana of feathers and mango leaves with his sword before he offers his puja to Budharaja.

In the evening after the Bauti Chhatra is ceremonially shifted from the Durga Devi temple to Somlai temple, the Khambeswaria Purohit draws two yantras on the Somlai mandap in the presence of the Raja. The yantra is worshipped. The kaumaras or kuanris (initiates) are made to sit on the yantras. Dhols are beaten. Muhuris are blown. The Gaen sings gupta malasri to the tinkling of bells. The Khambeswaria Purohit chants mantras. The baruas tremble from head to foot. They fall, roll on the mandap from side to side, crawl to goddess Somlai, lick her image and return to the mandap. They are raised on their feet by the Charghariyas. Their hair is tied into a knot by the Raja. Goats and sheep are sacrificed. They drink
their raw blood. Pots of curd are poured on their heads. And then holding the Bauti Chhatra, rush in wild frenzy to Budharaja pitha. There their place is taken by another barua who is roused to frenzy through the same tantric process of deification. To this barua a goat is sacrificed. Its blood is stored in a telani (earthen pot with an open face). It is believed, goddess Bana Durga appears in the form of a tigress and laps up the blood. The spectators, therefore, rush back, Bali following. At Yodakhama (twin pillars) of Ghodaghatpara the Bali is showered with Dahana leaves. So this Bali is sometimes called Dahana Bali. The Bali’s feet are washed by Bhoi and worshipped by the Purohit in the palace after which he is taken to the Yodakhamb of the Somlai temple. Thus the Amavasya Baliyatra comes to an end.

In the midnight of Aswin Sukla Chaturthi we have the Khaul Bali. The theatre of Baliyatra shifts from Somlai temple to Khaulgad or BiramurtsnaGartta a tantric hole by the side of the Sureswari temple. Here the rituals of the Khaul Bali are performed in utmost secrecy. None except the Khambeswaria Purohit and the barua are allowed into the arena guarded by the Police and Mullicks. The barua (of Dangua caste), after the mantra is chanted, plunges his fingers into the tantric hole, collects a little earth in a state of trance and deposits it in two kundhis (small earthen pots). While digging into the hole, he sends three loud screams that ring through the night. There at home his wife, completely nude, sits ready to offer the head of a black female goat to goddess Kali with a single stroke before the third scream is heard. Failing she would lose the barua. With the kundhis thus filled with the mysterious soil, the barua rushes into the Sureswari temple where two goats are offered to the kundhis. Two baruas carry the kundhis to the beating of drums, one, to Khamveswari temple and the other, to Somlai temple. This Khaul soil plays an important role during the Baliyatra. It is smeared on the nave of the barua before he is laid on the yantra. While the Navami Bali is conducted at Khamveswari temple, the venue for the Dasahara Bali and Purnami Bali shifts back to the Somlai temple. Maharaja BM Sing Deo is said to have introduced the Upan Balis on the first, second, third and sixth nights of Aswin Sukla Paksha. On the Mahanavami night three balis converge – Dangua bali, Gaen bali and Navami bali. Solabharani baja, a variety of 16 beats of drums are played on dhols and Madals. Malasri is sung by the gaen to the goddess – a typical Sonepuri composition.

It may be mentioned here that one of the Rajas of Sonepur (Prthvi Sing?) once trespassed into the forbidden zone of the Khaulgad. Seated on a tree nearby, he is said to have witnessed the secret rituals on the occasion of Khaul Panchami. The barua, pointing in the direction of the Raja, demanded his life. The Raja was saved through the intervention of the priest, while the barua died on the spot. The Raja, in return, promised the priest kingship for a day. Since then on every Dassera day, the Raja customarily hands over the Patkhanda to the priest who rides the horse, performs the puja on the Ranajita field, shoots four arrows in four directions, imposes penalty on the Bargai as a symbol of kingship and returns ceremonially to hand over the Patkhanda to the Raja. This tradition is unique in the whole country, the tradition of handing over kingship by the Raja to a Praja, even though for a day.
To prevent such an untoward occurrence the Sonepur State Code envisages a provision:

There have been such religious worships instituted and provided and honoured by the State as are performed strictly in privacy according to the immemorial customs and orders of the State, and no persons other than those connected with the performance of such religious worships are allowed to witness it or observe the performance of it by any means; if any person in violation of the above rule observes the aforesaid religious performance he will be guilty of the offence under Sec. 297, Chapter XV, IPC and shall be punished according to the provision therein.

The baliyatra comes to a close in Aswin Purnima called Koumudi Purnima (full moon night of Aswin). Purnami bali is the last bali in the series. They go gambling the whole night for which it is also called Jua Puni. The third thing with which this eventful night is associated is Mudhasura Puja in Barh Hanuman temple of Majhipara. Have you heard humans worshipping a demon? Come here, and see. But the close is not yet. You can witness the bali walking on fire, his devotees following him. Unbelievable.

The Kailasiyatra or Kalisiyatra in Kartik is an adjunct to Baliyatra. The Churakhaiyatra of Risbandh of the Panchara area in Margasira is associated with the ancient tribal practice of Linga worship when the barua with his penis tied to a thread is guided round the village to the beating of drums and throwing of handfuls of chura on the barua.

The six-day-long Dolayatra of Phalgun is a great occasion for the people of Sonepur. From Sukla Ekadasi to Purnima, Lord Gopalji is taken to the mandap and seated on a well-decorated swing in the midst of dance and music. In the evening of Sukla Chaturdasi, there is a fire festival when heaps of firewood, straw, bamboo baskets are collected and erected into a templar structure at different places on the bank and bed of the Mahanadi. Such bamboo-straw-structures are raised on Limkudli, Hulpuda Tangar, at Gauri Ghat, Tikiripara Ghat, Kumbharpara Ghat, etc. The Deheri performs the puja usually with the blood of fowl and torches the heaps, while boys dance and sing vulgar songs as the flame rises: Hul kudi kudi paili mudi. These songs on the banks and the fire on the rocks make this evening highly enjoyable for the children. On the day of Phalgun Purnima Sonepur observes Gundikhai. Green mangoes, fried grams, mahua flowers, chara, sakarpati are offered to Laxminarayana. In the evening Dolotsava is celebrated on the Gopalji mandap all night with idols of Radha and Krisna seated on a silver swing in the midst of music and dance and sankirtan, while outside, a mela is held where elephants and horses, tigers and bears made of sugar are sold, where the Maharanas sell toys, and confectioners, sweets of all kinds. This festive night concludes with ‘Hari Hara Bheta’ on the Lal Bazar field.
Morning dawns on the *Phalgun Purnima* night with handfuls of colour. It is the
day of the Holi festival which is observed in Northern India with gaiety and gusto.
The Raja in spotless white moves in a *tamjan* three times from the Town Police
Station to Gundicha Mandap, the road on both sides lined with women of Keot and
Gingra caste, throwing handfuls of *phagu*, pink and blue and green, on the Raja.
Niladhar Sing Deo (1841-91) used to ride an elephant with his huge headgear. The
medium of exchange between him and the women were *murhiladdus* thrown from
one hand to the other. This was followed by *phagukhela* on the mandap. There in
the Rajbhawan the women of Keot caste would throw a fishing net on the Maharani
as a part of their custom. The Mahalik, Panua of the Keot community, is given the
new robes the Raja had worn on the occasion. This was a custom and a tradition
that brought the ruler close to the ruled.

These were memorable festive moments when everybody, irrespective of
whether they were, men or women or children, enjoyed life to the maximum,
forgetting temporarily ‘the thousand ills this flesh is heir to’. The Chauhan rulers
contributed to this gaiety and festivity of the people in a large measure. In fact,
these festivals and fairs, these *vratas* and *osas* either originated among the people
and then were absorbed into the royal religious practices and rites or vice versa.
Either way the Rajbhawan played a crucial role in this merry-go-round. Had there
been no patronage, no incentive, no initiative and no inspiration from the palace,
these occasions would have lost much of their social relevance and spiritual tempo.
CHAPTER VI
AGRICULTURE to PISCICULTURE

The entire district of Subarnapur lies in the watershed basin of the Mahanadi that takes semicircular path across Ulunda, Birmaharajpur, Binka and Sonepur Blocks. Two out of six Blocks viz. Dunguripali and Binka get irrigation from Hirakud Canal System for agriculture which is the most important economic activity in the district. Some portion of Birmaharajpur get irrigated by Harhar Dam Project. There are three District Agriculture Offices i.e. Sonepur, Birmaharajpur and Dunguripali for execution and supervision of different agricultural programmes.

This district comes under Western Central Table zone comprising two types of agro-climatic situations (1) Irrigated- Binka and Dunguripali. (2) Rainfed – Tarbha, Sonepur, Birmaharajpur and Ulunda. The climatic condition is extreme. Summer is hot and dry. Rainy season is characterized by good rainfall and high degree of humidity. Cold is equally severe in winter. Rain are caused by the southwest monsoon, which breaks in June, reaches its peak in August and retreats in the middle of October.

The temperature shows a wide fluctuation varying between 47° centigrade in summer and below 10° centigrade in winter. The mean maximum temperature is 43.3° centigrade and means minimum temperature is 13° centigrade. The annual rainfall of the district is 1418.5 mm in 61.6 days.

Out of the geographical area of 185409 Hects, the cultivated area is 129850 & cultivable area is 135415 Hects. (Appendix-I)

SOIL STATUS

Subarnapur is an agriculturally potential and prosperous district of the state. It comes under “Western Central Table Land” Agro- Climatic Zone.

The main soil types are Mixed Red & Black soil and Black soil. G.M. Bhattacharya, however, speaks of 12 types: Badmata, Khaliamati. Chhaumati, Rangmati, Rugudimati Pankapithiamati, Pankuamati, Khasmati, Makadbhangamati, Nunphutamati, etc. (Sonepur Rajyer Krishi). According to Water-retention capacity, Sonepur soil can be categorized into 4 types; Ata, Mal, Berna, Bahal. While Rabi crops are grown in Ata and Mal, rice is cultivated in Berna and Bahal land. The major crops suitable for the district are paddy, maize, pulses, cotton, oilseed crops, vegetables and fruit plantations.

Soil of the district is mostly neutral to alkaline in nature having low organic carbon content. Birmaharajpur and Binka Block soil is adequate in Phosphorous and Potash. However, status of micro nutrients like Zinc, Boron, Sulphur and copper are low to very low in some parts of the district. Boron and Zinc application is recommended to the soil as it is deficient mostly in all blocks. Sulphur is deficient in parts of Sonepur, Ulunda and Dunguripali Block and Copper is deficient mainly in Ulunda Block.
Cotton is predominantly grown in the Black soil of Birmaharajpur and Ulunda Blocks, which has a good market demand for its quality staples. Besides, the Mixed Red and Black soil favour cultivation of a variety of cereals, pulses, oilseeds, vegetables and fruits. Production and productivity of paddy is also much higher than in other districts.

One Soil Testing Laboratory has been made operational from August 2012 with an annual target of testing 10,000 soil samples. As such, more than 35,000 samples have been tested in this laboratory and Soil Health Cards distributed to the respective farmers.

The Soil Health Card contains the nutrient status of the soil sample field and nutrient recommendations for the next crop. A nominal processing fee of Rs 5/- is charged per soil sample for testing of soil pH, Electrical Conductivity, Organic Carbon, availability Phosphorus and Potash. Besides, there is facility for testing soil samples for micronutrients like Zinc, Boron etc.

Soil nutrient indices are calculated and soil fertility maps are prepared in every three years. These fertility maps also help in monitoring changes in soil fertility over the time. These maps will not only help in knowing the nutrient status of the soil but also act as a guiding tool for appropriate fertilizer movement plan and integrated nutrient management for sustainable crop production.

**Average Rainfall of the District-from 2011 to 2015**

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SOIL CONSERVATION

Soil

The soil of the district is alluvial and fertile in the basins of the Mahanadi, Tel and Ang fit for cash crops, the soil can be broadly classified as **Khailia** (Red and Yellow, 49%), **Balia or Pandakapithia** (Red & Black soil, 28%), **Badmattia** (Black cotton soil, 14%), **Pankua** (Brown forest soil 5%) and **Rugadia** (Laterite soil, 4%). The topography is undulating which leads to soil erosion. Soil slopes are strong and moderate; as a result, soil erosion is strong & moderate in maximum patches, gentle in a few patches.

Climate

The climate of Subarnapur district is characterised by a very hot dry summer and highly erratic distribution of south west monsoon rain. Temperature goes up to 46˚C during summer. The agro-climatic zone comes under west central table land with hot & humid climate.

Total Geographical area of the district is 2337 Sq. Km or 2.337 lakh hectares and annual average rainfall is 1.445 metre. The district receives 3.376 lakh ha. mt. water through rainfall (2.337 ha X 1.445 mt) out of which 21.25% (0.717 lakh ha.m) water is being evaporated, around 40% (1.35 lakh ha.m water is lost through run off to the sea and the rest 2.06 lakh ha.m water infiltrate into the soil.

Further due to run off of surplus water, the top 15-20 cm fertile soil is being eroded. The total soil erosion consists of sheet erosion 23% (i.e 0.56 lakh ha.), Rill erosion 15% i.e.0.37 lakh. Ha.), Gulley erosion 0.0005% i.e 0.001 lakh ha.), Rivine erosion 0.00005% i.e 0.0001 lakh ha.). In total 0.9011 lakh ha soil of the district erod per annum. So the productivity of soil is deteriorating.

The Soil Conservation Department under a Project Director, with the main objective of controlling soil & water erosion, by arresting runoff rain water. It adopts different Soil Conservation measures, like contour bunding, contour trench, Terracing, Loose boulder Check dam, Brush wood check dam, gulley control structure, creation of W.H.S, afforestation, thereby enhancing the ground water recharge and therefore increasing the productivity of the soil.

The Soil Conservation Sub-division, Sonepur started functioning with effect from January, 1995, with its range offices at Sonepur, Tarva, Birmaharajpur to carry out soil conservation activities under the scheme National Water Development Programme in Rainfed Area (NWDPRA) & Rural Area Development Programme (RADP). Besides from 1998 to 2012, District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) had been guiding and monitoring watershed activities under different schemes like (EAS), Drought Prone Area Programme, Integrated Water Development Programme, ACA, Special Plan (RLTAP). In addition to this, watershed activities are also taken up through MGNREGS.
Out of 245 Micro Watersheds identified in the district, 103 are saturated with a treatable area of 55,672 ha. Irrigation is provided to 3228 ha of crops through 919 WHS, 64 Check dams, 243 Farm ponds, 427 Open wells, and 31 Gully control structures. Besides, 1210 ha. of waste land has been brought under cultivation. Further Contour bunding/Trenching has been done in 60 ha land in Birmaharajpur Block, 30 ha land in Ulunda Block & 30 ha land in Sonepur Block Again, 650 LBCD, 475 BWCD and 100 Box type Gabion structures have been constructed so far to control the soil erosion as well as velocity of the rain water. Due to proper water harvesting and various soil and water conservation structures, ground water status of the project area has been enhanced. Soil conservation practices and adoption of improved crop varieties by stake holders result in the increase in productivity and cropping intensity which has changed the socio-economic condition of the people.

After creation of the post of Project Director, Watershed in May 2012, 36 watershed projects have been taken up in the district under the scheme IWMP, covering a treatable area of 22,254 ha. of land. An area of 558.75 ha. of additional area are brought under life saving irrigation till date by constructing 6 check dams, 18 percolation Tanks, 253 ground water recharge structure and 24 Water Harvesting Structures(WHS).

The Rain-fed Area Development component under the scheme National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) is operating integrated farming system (Fishery based) at Nuagaon cluster consisting of 6 villages of Ulunda Block during 2014-15 covering an area of 113 ha. Further, during 2015-16, Diary- based farming system has been taken up in Lastala Cluster covering villages like Lastala, Sindriabahal & Barpadar village of Ulunda Block under RAD, covering an area of 165.6 ha.

**IRRIGATION**

In Ex- State times the sources of irrigation were Kata, Munda, Bandha etc. Kata was an ordinary irrigation tank constructed by throwing a strong earthen embankment slightly curved at either end across a drainage line so as to hold up an irregularly shaped sheet of water. A Munda is an embankment of smaller size across a drainage channel. And a Bandha is a four-sided tank below a Kata from which it derived water by percolation. Besides big tanks and ponds called Sagara were excavated by Royal personages. Some of them were Rani Sagar of Kadodar, Birmaharajpur, Sonepur-Tarva road, Gosani Bandh of Saradhapali, Bisagara of the town. The district is now getting 85868 ha in Kharif & 56639 ha in Rabi from almost all sources i.e. Canal Irrigation, Lift Irrigation, Minor Irrigation, Medium Irrigation, Dugwell, Borewell & other sources like Check Dam, Cross Dam, Nala, Kata, Bandha. In Kharif Dunguripali and Binka Blocks are getting irrigation for 42854 hect. from Hirakud Command Irrigation Project. Sonepur, Birmaharajpur & Ulunda get irrigation for 14509 hect. from Medium Irrigation Projects. The Share of Minor Irrigation Projects is 5913 hect, Lift Irrigation Project is 18297 and dug wells & other...
sources are 4295 hectares respectively. During Rabi the share of Major Irrigation is 31656 hect, Medium Irrigation, 4238 hect., Lift Irrigation, 14045 hect., Minor Irrigation, 110 hect, dug wells and other sources is 6590 hect.

**Canal**

The command area of the district is 42,854.00 Ha, covering 240 villages in Binka & Dungripali Block which get water for the same in kharif and for nearly 31656 ha. in Rabi.

The command area of the district has been segmented into 87 Pani Panchayats and the secondary canal systems have been handed over to them for economic use and equitable distribution of water.

**Medium Irrigation**

While Sonepur gets irrigation from Ong Minor Irrigation Project for 5059 ha. Birmaharajpur and Ulunda Blocks get irrigation for 2600 & 6850 ha respectively from Hariharjore Medium Irrigation Project.

**Lift Irrigation**

There are 794 LI projects with designated ayacut area of 20213 ha out of which 751 projects are in operation and they irrigate 18297 ha.

**Bore wells and Micro River Lift Projects**

There are 1020 bore wells and 19 Micro River lift projects which provide irrigation to 2040hc and 38hc respectively. Lift Irrigation Corporation, as well as Agro-Industries Corporation of Odisha are the agencies engaged in construction of Lift Irrigation projects and bore wells in the district.

**Minor Irrigation Projects**

There are 50 Minor Irrigation Projects (MIP) in the district with designated ayacut of 5932 ha of land out of which Sonepur has 12 MIPs covering 837. Tarva 9 covering 2312, Birmaharajpur 11 covering 1125, Ulunda 18 covering 1008 Hcs ayacut area.

**Other Sources of Irrigation**

Dug wells, Katas, Bandha, Streams, Nalas, Checkdams and Cross dams are the primitive sources which provide irrigation to 4295 hectares of land. The block wise ayacut is; Sonepur-1310 hect., Tarva- 1028 hect, Binka- 269 hect., Dunguripali-298 hect., Birmaharajpur-777 hect. & Ulunda-613 hects.

**Crops grown in the district**

Paddy is the major crop grown in almost all irrigated ayacuts during Kharif except Att and some Mal land where vegetables, oilseeds like groundnut, pulses like mung and arhar are grown. But during Kharif, though paddy predominates in
canal irrigated ayacut of Dunguripali & Binka blocks as well as in Bahal land of medium irrigated ayacuts, in the tail end, pulses, oilseeds and vegetables are preferred.

**PADDY**

Subarnapur district is the rice bowl of the state called *Sunathali* (plate of gold) in popular parlance. Sonepuria rice is appreciated in Odisha and outside. The productivity of paddy here is the highest in the State.

Some farmers grow traditional varieties like Saria, Mahipal, Rajakarani, Kadalikenda, Kusuma, Kalakrushna, Jhumer, Magura, Langudi, Akaspatri, Ranisaheba, Tulasibasa, Jirafula, Harishankar (Red), Harishankar (White), Rat Ka Rani, BahalKainsu, Balpati, Bahalhira, Salekanthi, Mugadhi, Gangabhalu, Salekanthi (B), Bahalbuta, Jubafula, Lalkain, Jubaraj (B), Galehisuna, Padiaraja, Bhudokaker, Sunakathi, Kumbhakarka, DhobGaini, Kalasu, Magura (Lal), Luchi, Pabatajira, Basakamala, Pusabasamati, Karna, Kamala Shankari, Dahikhulkuli, Akula, Krishna, Bagrijhuli, Sarasbhog, Latia, Ranisiali, Buromal, Haradakashi, Bhajana, Malifulajhuli, Radhajugal, Lalsaria, Dumberphul, Kumarmani, Ramamani, Lalguri, Dengabari, Karnafula, Dhobasaria, Bijafula, Jhamula, Sursoful, Nagar, Malajhuli, Ranajit, Sunaharina, Bundebanko, Mainatuni, Jubaraj. They are different in size and smell, colour and quality. They are black rice like Krusnakala or Krusuma, red rice like Pansari, fine-grained rice like Sagarjhuli, Samudrabali, Sonapan, Chinamal, Vasmati, SukalSuasunthi, Parvatjira, swee-smelling rice like Karpurakanti, Radhaballabh while Kulhiakani, Hatidanta, Rengalkarcha were tough and coarse. In all, writes Bhattacharya, Sonepur produced 210 varieties of rice including a dhan that contained 2 grains of rice.

Some grow Ahinsak 10/15, Ahinsak 9/11, Ahinsak 12/44, Ahinsak 1, Ahinsak 2, Ahinsak 4, Ahinsak 5, Ahinsak 6, Ahinsak 7, Ahinsak 8, Kalabhata, Ahinsak 0, Kalakartikia, Chakakauna, Bhulufakari, Bainabe etc.

Most of the farmers grow high-yielding and hybrid paddy in both the seasons. The most preferred varieties are MTU-7029 (Swarna), Pooja, MTU-1001, MTU-1010, Lalat, Pratikshya, Swarna Sub-1, Kanchan, RGL-2332, Tapaswini, Nabin, Rani, Sahabhaqi & Khadagiri. Hybrid and high yielding varieties like Arise, Dhani, 6444, Silky, MTU-1001, MTU-1010, MTU-7029 (Swarna), Kanchan, Tapaswini, Nabin, Pooja, Lalat, Pratiska, 209, Kasturi, Sadhna Kanak+, Harshita, Uma, Rani, Sahabhaqi, Khadagiri, RIL-303, RIL-606, etc are now grown.

**PULSES**

**Mung**

Varieties grown are PDM-54, PDM-II, ODGG-52 (Durga), Dhaul, Tarm-1, Tarm-2, LGG-410, LGG-460, Sujata, Puja-353, etc. Local varieties of Mung-Sonepur Kala Mung, Methi Mung, Jhain Mung, Sonamung. Menda was famous for growing mung.
Biri

Normal varieties grown are: T-9, Sarala, KU-301, PU-26, LBG-17, Prasad, Ujala, PU-30 etc. Local varieties: Telia Biri, Pejua Biri

Arhar

Varieties grown are ICPL-88039, ICPL-151 (Jagruti) ICPL-81, ICPL-87091, ICPL-8863 (Maruti), ICPL-87119 (Asha), ICPL-85063 (Laxmi), R-60 (Mukta) Local variety: Kandula

OILSEED

Major oilseed crops of the district are Groundnut, Mustard, Til & Sunflower.

Groundnut

Grown both in Kharif & Rabi, Seeds varieties are AK-12-24, Kissam, Jawan, Smruti, TAG-24, TG-3, TVM-2

Mustard

Mostly grown as Pre-Rabi & Rabi crop. Varieties grown - Parbati, M-27, Anuradha, PT-303, Pusa Agrani, Pusa Bold, Barun, etc.

Til

The river belt alluvial Soil is very suitable for til crop. Farmers grow this crop in Pre Rabi and in Rabi (Irrigated Condition). Variety grown in the District : Binayak, Kalika, Kanaka, Uma, Prachi, Nirmala, GT – 1, Subhra, etc. The Kamsara Zamindari was well-known for Til cultivation.

Sunflower

Sunflower is grown in the irrigated pockets of all the Blocks during Rabi season. The varieties grown are KBSH-1, KBSH-44, PAC-36, etc.

Sugarcane

Ancient survey says that Sugarcane was grown in Jaloe Pragan and Tarva Block in the Tel River basin. Now only 500ha. area is under Sugarcane cultivation

Miscellaneous

Sonepur tobacco and betel, like its rice and mung were of export quality. They grow three types of betel: Mahata, Bijli and Belari. Belari was exported to Kalahandi in the west and Cuttack in the east. Besides, Sonepur farmers grow millet, masur, mahua, palm and date palm, cotton, jute, sabai grass, aboriginal crops like kudo, turmeric, tamarind, etc.

Areas under different crops during Kharif & Rabi

Though the total cultivable land of the district is 135415 hect. Kharif programme is taken up in 130150 hect and Rabi in 84400 hect. Paddy is the major
crop grown both in Kharif & Rabi. The Kharif paddy area is 96375 hect and Rabi area 28725 hect. During Kharif pulses area is 17300 hect, oil seeds- 2460 hect., fibre- 6100 hect., vegetables- 5950 hect etc. During Rabi apart from paddy, pulses (Mung, Lentil, Kulthi) are grown in 31295 hect, Oil seeds (Groundnut, Til, Mustard) in- 11365 hect., Vegetables & Spices in 11690 hect.

**SEEDS**

The district is a leading seed-producing district for which it can meet its own demand as well the demand of the State.

The seed replacement rate of paddy here exceeds the State average. Seeds were previously supplied to the farmers through agriculture departmental sale centre. Now Odissa State Seeds Corporation and Odisha Agro-Industry Corporation have taken the responsibility to supply seeds to the farmers through PACS and registered Private Dealers.

There are 66 PACS and 172 Private Seed dealers, 90 in irrigated Blocks like Binka and 82 in non-irrigated Blocks.

Farmers here are well aware of the seed production technology. High yielding seed is being produced in around 5000ha. in the district.

There are 2 Govt. & 6 Pvt. Seeds Processing Plant in the district, which process around 1 lakh qtl. of quality paddy seeds of different varieties.

**FERTILISER**

Subarnapur is a leading fertiliser consumer of the state. The district consumed around 26000MT of various fertilizers during Kharif with a per ha. consumption around 96 Kg. and during Rabi 4905.1 MT & 58.096 Kg per ha.

The drawback in supply of fertilizer to this district is non-existence of rake point. Normally this district gets fertilizer from the rake point of Bolangir, Bargarh & Sambalpur through PACS & Private dealers in times of acute need.

There are 10 Private fertilizer wholesalers and 333 retailers in the district, 58 retailers, in Sonepur 1 wholesaler & 60 retailers, in Tarbha, 3 wholesalers & 66 retailers, in Binka, 4 wholesalers and 88 retailers in Dunguripali, 2 wholesalers & 32 retailers in Birmaharajpur and 29 retailers in Ulunda Blocks.

**FARM MECHANISATION**

Use of machines in agriculture in this district has maintained its independent identity since long. Earlier all implements were mainly made of wood or bamboo.

Traditional farm tools and implements for self-sustenance have been developed/ modified through experience over generations to meet emerging socio-economic and farming challenges. The types of soil and topographic conditions largely influence the type, size and shape of particular tillage tools/implements.
Tillage is the basic operation in farming. It is done to create favourable conditions for seed placement and plant growth. This is done mainly with a plough. Farmers have been using plough since time immemorial. The primitive model might have been a crooked twig or a branch of a tree. The basic components of the plough are a shoe, a share, a body, a handle and a beam.

The shoe, used in the plough, can be of different shapes and sizes. Ploughs used in dry land have shoes which are generally of a triangular section while in wet land cultivation the shoes are of a flatter section.

The share is prepared from a mild steel bar, 0.6 to 7.5 m in length and 1.5 to 2.5 cm in width. It is fixed to the shoe or body by means of a U-clamp or ring shaped clamp. The share point projects beyond the shoe by 5 to 7.5 cm. Beams generally vary in length from 2.4 to 3 m.

This implement can be used with a pair of oxen to till fields before planting. It has a single bottom desi plough and the average depth of ploughing is 15 cm. It has a provision for adjustment of the hitching point according to height of oxen and the working depth. Tillage depth can be adjusted by applying manual force on the handle. Ploughs were made of wood and bamboo to help pull the plough. To connect juali with the plough isha is used. The juali and the bullock’s neck are connected through juta (made of jute). The joint between the shoe and the body is avoided to make the plough more rigid and robust, so that the implement can work on gravely soil with stones and other obstacles which are encountered during the course of ploughing.

In another type, the shoe and body feature as separate parts. This type is particularly preferred in soil with a greater proportion of sand particles. This type of structure facilitates the replacement of the shoe when it wears out due to the abrasive action of the sand. After ploughing, a rake of dimension 5 ft x 1 ft made of wood is attached to the bullock and along with it two small pieces of wood are attached to the Juali, one daura is also used for levelling the field (leveller). After ploughing, if this rake is pulled across the field, the field is levelled, resulting in no water logging in the field. This is called ‘mai’ or ‘pata’.

**Leveller**

The plank of the leveller is made of any locally available wood and the shafts are generally made of bamboo sticks. Extra weight is added to the plank by placing stones on it or riding on it. As the name suggests, levellers are used for levelling land.
Later, to sow the mal fields in line goji ploughs / spader are used.

**Spader (Plough)**

This is similar to *Langal*, without handle. It is mostly used for making furrow and covering the soil for making bund by manual pulling. These ploughs are generally smaller than the traditional ones.

**Yoke (juali)**

The yoke has a projection at the centre to which implements like plough, leveller and harrow etc. are secured by a rope.

**Harrow**

It is a wooden plank to which wood/iron pegs, handle and bamboo shaft are fitted. It is used for breaking soil crust after rain and also for uprooting weeds.

**Mallot**

It has a wooden block to which a handle is attached. Occasionally, one end of the block is tapering. It is used for breaking clods.
Paddy seedlings raised in a nursery for 3 weeks are generally transplanted to the main field. After the paddy grains reach maturity they are harvested manually. Sickle is the implement used for harvesting. It is made of iron and the middle portion of the sickle is dented, so it helps in cutting the paddy tillers. At its end, the wooden handle facilitates holding of the implement and harvesting becomes easy.

After completion of harvesting, the harvested paddy is sun-dried for a period of 5-7 days to reduce the moisture content of the grains for better quality and longer storage. It is then taken to the threshing yard otherwise called "khala" with the help of "suli", which is made of wood from sheesham tree. The middle portion is a bit flat to fit well with the shoulders and both the ends of the stick are a bit sharp so that two bamboo baskets are hung with the help of ropes, in which the harvested paddy bundles can be taken to the threshing yard easily.

The harvested bundles are kept on the clean threshing floor and are arranged one above the other. It is called 'kharigada'. Prior to this the threshing floor is coated with mud and cow dung slurry for sanitization and for avoiding direct contact with the sand and other impurities.

**Interculture operation tools**

1. *Khilna*: Its handle is made of branch of sturdy wood and the tool itself is made of iron and is shaped like an arrowhead. It is used for uprooting weeds.

2. *Kudali*: Used for digging and weeding operations, it is made of materials similar to the Khilna with the exception that the iron end is flat.

**Paddy harvesting procedure**

In the first phase in the middle of the threshing floor a wooden post called *meri khunta* about 5 ft high is fixed. To the pole one 6-inch iron ring and a rope is attached so that the heads of 6-7 bullocks can fit into the rope. Then paddy grains are spread called *bengala* and the bullocks move in a circular fashion on the grains spread and harvest the paddy. In the process, the grains get separated from the straw and remain at the bottom. The straw is then separated manually and grains are collected. The grains are again subjected to manual winnowing with the help of a winnower or 'kula', a round or U-shaped structure made of bamboo strips. It is
coated with cow dung paste to fill the gaps. The overall dimensions are 0.35 × 0.25 × 0.03 m and 0.40 × 0.03 m in case of u-shaped and circular *kula*, respectively. It is used in cleaning and winnowing pulses, cereals, millets and oil seeds etc.

**Harvesting tools**

The common type of harvesting implements are small sickle, big sickle, *darat*, *gandasa* and small axe etc.,

**Sickle (Daa)**

This is one of the most popular multi-purpose tools that our ancestors used in agriculture. Primarily designed for harvesting crops like cereals, pulses, millets and grasses. It is 'C' shaped/curved in order to ease the harvesting operation. Hence, it is preferred. It is a multipurpose cutting tool. With this the ear heads, branches or even the whole plant could be harvested. It is made of mild iron with one side cutting edge and fixed on wooden handle.

The hand sickle is used to harvest crops like wheat, maize, barley, pulses and grass etc. Big sickle (*Daa*) is used to harvest fodder from trees. Axe is used to harvest crops like sugarcane etc.

**Axe (Tangia)**

The axe has many specialized uses. Generally, consists of an axe head with a wooden/ bamboo handle of 0.7 m and working edge of 0.08 m. Axes used by the farmers are double levelled, i.e. symmetrical about the axis of the blade and is frequently used for cutting bamboo, branches of trees for firewood.

**Postharvest tools and implements**

**Wooden Pin**: is used to remove the outer covering of maize cobs and is fashioned out of a bamboo stick.

**Wooden Pole**: These are used to detach grains from the maize cobs and grains from other crops through beating.

**Paddy Spader**

It consists of a wooden plank to which a long bamboo handle is attached. It is used in spreading the paddy for drying. It is also used to collect and deposit paddy/pulses/wheat during and after threshing operation in one place.

**Dala**

It is small bamboo basket. It is made of bamboo sticks and is used for mud excavation to make *Hirda*. It has a depth of 0.20 m and diameter of 0.45 m. Both men and women use it. The smaller bamboo basket is used for carrying farmyard manure (FYM) and farm produce.
Hand mill /Hand stone mill (Janta)

This is used to grind flour and pulses. It is used for grinding and crushing. The top circular stone is rotated on a pivot by right hand using a fixed wooden peg, over the heavy circular base (0.32 m diameter and thickness of stone is 0.07 m each) while the left hand slowly pours grains into a hole on top half. The rubbing of the grains by the two flat stones causes splitting and removal of husk. The milling stone is also used to grind wheat, and whole pulses to make Dal.

Winnower or Kula: This separates the grain from the husk.

Sieveor Chalni: Made of bamboo, this is used for the separation of different types of grains for elimination of alien material

Miscellaneous tools

Hammer, jumper, wedge and shovel and hand-saw or kartaare also used from time to time in the various farm operations.

Though their use is widespread, even today, these indigenous implements/tools in general are not agronomically sound as they lower the efficiency and increase tiredness of the operator. There is an urgent need to improve upon these traditional implements so as to redress this serious limitation. The standardization of their design in accordance with the requirements of hill farming is overdue.

Other traditional equipment used in agricultural operations:

Sabal or crowbar

The simplest tool still in use in agriculture is the earth digging work. It is a solid iron rod (length 1.3-1.4 m) with a flattened end, used for making holes for plantation or digging holes to make fences/ houses.

Sila

Traditionally, this device consists of one large flat slab (0.40 × 0.25 × 0.075m) with slight depression mark on the surface and a hand-held cylindrical stone (0.20m length and 0.09 m diameter). It is used in grinding spices for making paste.

Dhulngi

It is a round-conical in shape made of bamboo strips coated with cow dung, often mixed with a strengthening material to fill up the gaps/ holes. The base diameter is 1.0 meter while the diameter at top is 1.2m. Its height varies from 1.2 to 1.5m. It is used to store food grain including pulses, cereals, millets and oil seeds etc. by farmers.
**Kuta**

It is cylindrical-vertical in shape made of clay soil, locally made by potter. It is used to keep the paddy in wet condition for 48 hours before boiling the paddy to make parboiled rice. The top diameter is 0.9 m and depth is 0.6m with parabolic base.

**Bankua/Bhara /Baungi**

It is used for carrying FYM/ planting materials/ plant leaves in the field. It consists of two bamboo baskets fitted with a shaft made of bamboo similar to a balance.

**Pankhi**

*Pankhi* is a cutting tool used particularly in eastern states of India. It is a popular and a convenient device used for chopping vegetables, meat, fish etc. It has a curved blade which is attached to a wooden platform. The platform is held down by the foot and the vegetable or meat is moved against the blade for cutting them, using both hands.

In any agriculture production system, improved tools and implements play an important role to increase the work efficiency and production. In India most of the tribal farmers have small and fragmented land holdings and they continue to use indigenous tools and implements as they are considered cheaper, economical and easily available in the local market. It is necessary to standardize these tools by blending traditional and modern scientific knowledge for doing the work in less time and less tiredness. Thus, these indigenous tools need to be documented so that they can help the making of need-based new tools/implements.

Now the agriculture scenario is changing rapidly with modernization and mechanization. Iron plough has replaced the wooden plough. Now we have tractors and power-tillers, which have encouraged the farmer to go in for large scale cultivation. Again attaching cage wheel and rotavator to it adds to its potential. If one acre used to take 2 days to cultivate earlier, it takes only a few minutes now. This has increased their inclination towards modernization. It has not only saved time, it has also reduced drudgery. In line sown or line transplanted fields power weeder is now used. Transplanters and drum seeders for line sowing are in practice. For harvesting they attach thresher to the tractors. Combined harvester accomplishes multiple operations in a short time. Mechanical winnowers have replaced traditional ones.

Hundreds of tractors, power-tillers, transplanters, reapers, threshers, rotavators, harvesters, pump sets, spraying machines and combined harvesters are in use in Subarnapur. This invites farmers from other districts to witness our development in the area of mechanisation of agriculture. We are still on the path of development. The govt. also supports this operation in the form of subsidy for
popularization of these implements to curb the manual labour as well as investment. So far as utilization of these modern tools and machines is concerned, Subarnapur district is the highest achiever in the state.

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VARIOUS GOVT. PROGRAMMES IN OPERATION IN THE DISTRICT

STATE PLAN SCHEMES

Intensive Agriculture Extension Campaign

Hoarding, Posters and Tin sheets highlighting the activities of agriculture department are being displayed from block level to GP level. Krushi Raths go round. Leaflets are distributed, Folk dances, Pala, Daskathia and street plays are organized to create awareness among the farmers.
Incentive to the farmers for line sowing and SRI:

Farmers are being incentivized for Line sowing/transplanting of paddy and non-paddy crop @ Rs. 500/- per acre. Likewise, for adopting of SRI method of paddy cultivation an incentive of Rs. 4700/- per hector is also being given to farmers.

Jalanidhi (Rural Infrastructure Development Fund)

Sources like bore wells, dug wells & surface lift irrigation to bring more land area under irrigation potential created.

Input Subsidy

To popularize certified high yielding recent varieties of seeds, subsidy is provided to farmers on purchase of seeds.

Capital Investment Subsidy

To encourage entrepreneurship and scope to unemployed youths this subsidy is provided for creation of large farms (agriculture based) to the entrepreneurs.

Promotion of Integrated Farming

This is a farming system approach to develop multi-fact agricultural activities like Crop Husbandry, Dairy, Poultry, Fishery, Floriculture, etc. in a compact, limited area. Financial assistance is given to support the effort.

Biju Krushak Kalyan Yojana

This is an ambitious programme wherein an agriculturally related person can get medical treatment free of cost in recognized hospital along with 4 other members of family.

Seed Treatment Campaign

Sonepur district is predominantly the farmers district. Use of HYV & Hybrid seeds and fertilizers brings infestation of pestsand diseases to the crop. Traditionally there was hardly any use of chemical fertilizer & pesticides. Gradually with the increase in pest load the use of pesticides also increased, thereby affecting the environment. Now the department is working hard to reduce use of pesticides through adoption of IPM (Integrated Pest Management) and seed treatment and organic pesticides.

Seed treatment campaign is in operation since last 2012-13 in order to achieve 100% treatment of seeds. Massive seed treatment campaign is being taken up since 2012-13. Moving in villages departmental officials train at least 100 farmers about the process of seed treatment using seed treating drums and clay
pots. Popularity of bio-pesticides has increased considerably and the farmers are now applying pesticide as and when required.

**Diseases & Pests**

Almost all types of crops are grown in the district. Paddy is the major crop and it is grown in both the seasons of the year. In canal irrigated ayacuts of Dunguripali&Binka Blocks & irrigated low land of other 4 Blocks stem borer, rice gall fly, rice hispa, case worm, swarming caterpillars are the common pests seen in the district. Blast, Bacterial Leaf Blight & Seath rot are the major diseases. In cotton pod borer was the major pest & angular leaf spot is the major disease.

Now farmers are well aware about the control measure. Training on IPM is being imparted to the farmers.

**E-Pest Surveillance**

Surveillance of pests & diseases and control measures was undertaken by field staff. Now the methodology has changed. The trained Krushak Sathis and other agriculture field officials are engaged in fixed plot survey work and the results are being uploaded in website. So that the occurrence of pest and diseases are brought to the notice of higher authorities very quickly.

**AGRICULTURAL FARMS**

There were three agricultural experimental seed farms in the district. These are Sonepur Farm, Rampur Farm (in Dunguripali Block) and Birmaharajpur Farm. Subsequently Sonepur farm has been handed over to OUAT for functioning Krushi Vigyan Kendra. So only two Government Seed Farms are there in the district.

**Rampur Farm**

Started in the year 1958-59 with an area of 8.68 Hectare for multiplication of paddy seed. The farm is fully irrigated. Presently the cultivated area is 7.5 hectares both in Kharif & Rabi.

**Birmaharajpur Farm**

The farm came into existence during 1956-57. It extends over an area of 20 hectares. Presently the cultivable area of the farm is 17 hectare and seed production is taken up only in Kharif.

There are two Agriculture Overseers managing both the farms.
AGRICULTURAL SHOWS & EXHIBITIONS

In Sonepur ex-State, Maharaja started an annual Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition in 1908 and declared prizes for four best exhibits. Now the Agriculture Department organises Block level, District level exhibitions every year. For the last 5 - 6 years the department is participating in State Level Exhibition.

National Mission on Agricultural Extension & Technology (NMAET)

NMAET previously known as Extension Reforms is in operation in the district. Deputy Director of Agriculture is the Project Director, Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) at district level where Collector is the Chairman. At block level Assistant Agriculture Officers are the Block Technical Team (BTT). The Convener and all line departmental officers are members. At district level, District Farmers Advisory Committee (DFAC) and at block level Block Farmers Advisory Committee (BFAC) comprising line departmental officials as well as 20-25 farmers prepare the Block Action Plan & bottom of approach is followed to carry out need-based agriculture programme.

RASHTRIYA KRUSHI VIKASH YOJANA (RKVY)

BGREI

This is a special scheme where Eastern Indian states including Subarnapur are involved Under this scheme line sowing and transplanting is introduced.

The different interventions in practice are:-

i. Demonstrations
ii. 50% subsidy on micronutrient, pesticides, gypsum, weedicide.
iii. Training
iv. Sale of farm equipment.
v. Surface lift irrigation.
vi. Construction of Threshing floor.
(a) **ICRISAT** Up-scaling of Pigeon Pea (Arhar): ICRISAT has undertaken demonstration & trials & seed production in Arhar to improve the performance of arhar crop.

**NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY MISSION (NFSM)**

Sonepur district is covered under National Food Security Mission under Pulse scheme. Different interventions are in use to improve the pulse production in the district. Interventions are – Subsidy on Seed sale, Block Demonstration, Line Sowing, Subsidy sale of micronutrient, pesticides, implements, Sprayers, rain gun, machinery, etc. Threshing floors are constructed under the scheme and training imparted.

**CENTRALLY SPONSORED SCHEMES**

a. **Mini Mission-II (Technology Mission on Cotton)**

Under the mission different interventions like pest surveillance, pheromane trap, Bio-agents, frontline demonstrations, etc are undertaken to minimize pest insurgence and increase yield.

b. **National Mission on Oilseeds & Oil Palm (NMOOP):**

Under the scheme interventions like minikit, block demonstration, training, subsidy sale of seeds, sprayer, sprinkler, soil emeleanorants, pesticides, micronutrients, IPM are used to boost the yield of oilseeds.

**Achievement**

Smt. Khsitisuta Mishra of Khambeswaripali and Smt. Anita Patel of Khairtikira, Subarnapur were awarded the prestigious ‘KRISHI KARMAN PURASKAR’ at VigyanBhawan, New Delhi for the years 2012-13 and 2014-15 for production of paddy of 93.26 qtl/ha and 106.004 qtl/ha respectively.

**Agricultural credit**

During the ex-State days’ farmers were left in the hands of merciless money-lenders. With the professed intention to protect them against these Shylocks, BM Sing Deo (1902-37) started grainolas at a distance of every five KM. But here, too, the rates of interest were exorbitant. The farmers lost their mortgage, even land in the process. After merger the farmers gradually attained self-sufficiency and their dependence on external credit source decreased.

With the growth of Cooperative Societies, the fate of farmers improved. Farmers started availing credit at lower interest rates and could repay it in time. How many credit institutions are coming forward to help farmers with seeds, fertilizers, medicines etc. Many banks like rural banks and other nationalised banks, Private Banks and financial institutions like Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) and Export Import Bank of India (EXIM) and some Service Cooperatives like Indian Farmers Fertilizers Cooperative Limited (IFFCO), Krishak
Bharati Cooperative Limited (KRIBHCO), National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC), National Dairy Development Board (NDBB), under institutions like the Reserve Bank of India, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) are lending them easy credit facilities at lower interest rates.

**Marketing**

Agricultural marketing is mainly the buying and selling of agricultural products. In earlier days when the village economy was more or less self-sufficient the marketing of agricultural products presented no difficulty as the farmer sold his produce to the consumer on a cash or barter basis in the weekly market.

Use of measuring instruments like 'mana' and 'tambi' was a common practice. One 'tambi' can measure about 1250 g of produce and 'mana' about 300g. One 'tambi' equals four 'manas'. Vegetables like drumsticks, brinjal, tomatoes, guords, fruits like lemon, guava etc. could be obtained free. When a girl went to her in-law's place after marriage, the agricultural produce formed a major share of her goods and were transported by means of bullock cart along with the bride. The 'tambi' and 'mana' were considered major weighing equipment then. Now electronic weighing machines are used for more accuracy. Today's agricultural marketing has to undergo a series of exchanges or transfers from one person to another before it reaches the consumer. Numerous interconnected activities are involved in doing this, such as planning, production, growing and harvesting, grading, packing, transport, storage, and food processing, distribution, advertising and sale. Marketing activities cannot take place without the exchange of information and are often heavily dependent on the availability of suitable finance.

In India, there are several central government organisations involved in agricultural marketing like Commission of Agricultural Costs and Prices, Food Corporation of India, Cotton Corporation of India, Jute Corporation of India, etc. There are also specialised marketing bodies for rubber, tea, coffee, tobacco, spices and vegetables. Under the Agricultural Produce (grading and marketing) Act of 1937, more than forty primary commodities are compulsorily graded for export and voluntarily graded for internal consumption. Although the regulation of commodity markets is a function of state government, the directorate of marketing and inspection provides marketing and inspection services and financial aid down to the village level to help set up commodity grading centres in selected markets. Organizations like RMCS/ MARKFED/ ADCS/ RCMS/ Regional Cooperative Societies were formed. They directly started procurement from the farmer and reduced the involvement of middlemen, thus increasing farmers' profit.

Restoring water bodies and water harvesting, forming Small Farmers Agri-business Consortium (SFAC) and opening Website of Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Website of Agmarknet, Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority, Farm Produce Price Policy by Department
of Agriculture and Cooperation, Farmers' Portal of India by Department of Agriculture and Cooperation etc.

Processing

Agro-processing could be defined as a set of techno-economic activities carried out for conservation and handling of agricultural produce and to make it usable as food, feed, fibre, fuel or industrial raw material. Hence, the scope of the agro-processing industry encompasses all operations from the stage of harvest till the material reaches the end users in the desired form, packaging, quantity, quality and price. Ancient Indian scriptures contain vivid account of the post harvest and processing practices for preservation and processing of agricultural produce for food and medicinal uses.

Paddy, green gram, black gram, sesame, mustard, ragi etc. whatever produce was obtained it was harvested with proper methods adopting the best post-harvest handling practices. People were honest; the motive was to maintain quality in produce rather than to make maximum profit. Adulteration was minimum. Now things are different, whatever we consume is contaminated and adulterated. In earlier times, processing started at very initial stage i.e. from harvesting. In the threshing yard with the help of natural wind, winnowing was practised to remove impurities and chaffy grains from the harvest. ‘Kula’ was used for this purpose. It was held at a height and slowly grains were released in a 10 ft area when the wind was blowing, so that light weighing chaffs and impurities were blown away leaving healthy grains on the ground. Then a farm woman would spread the grains and clean it all. Now hand-fans, tractor-operated threshers, combine harvesters are in use. It is time-saving, less labour intensive and are cost effective in the long run.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, common agro processing industries included hand pounding units for rice, water power driven flour mills, bullock driven oil ghanies, bullock operated sugarcane crushers, paper making units, spinning wheels and handloom units for weaving became functional. Earlier, hand pounding, pedal operated system and Engleberg huller units were common for milling of paddy.

Storage

Storage means the post-harvest phase during which the products are kept in such a way as to guarantee food security. In old times, ‘benti’/straw rope prepared out of straw/nada was used to store grains. One traditional storage structure called ludar or mugi made of bamboo is coated with mud and cow dung slurry and used for storing grains like paddy, green gram, black gram etc. Out of benti one pura is prepared in which nirgundi leaves, neem leaves etc are kept with grains for longer storage. Inside homes bhadis or shelves are made 3 feet above the floor with wooden planks supported by poles planted on the floor. Here pura/ ludar/ mugi are
kept to reduce spoilage and below the bhadi, onions, garlic etc. can be stored for months together. All these arrangements were made inside a store room. It was very cost-effective and quality of the stored product was also maintained.

Different conventional storage structures in use are: Straw Storage Structures, Bamboo/Reed Storage Structures, Masonry Storage Structures, Earthen Storage Structures, Underground Storage Structures,

Earthen pots and bamboo baskets are the most commonly used storage devices, available with almost every household mainly for short-term storage. Grains are stored in tall mud pots or bins popularly called Kuthli or kuta, made of burnt clay and plant fibres. The height of the bin ranges from 1-3 m.

Rectangular mud storage structures called Kothi and Kuthul are used to store grains like wheat, maize, paddy. These structures are kept about 30 cm high from the floor so that moisture does not affect it. The Adi tribes of Arunachal Pradesh with their years of wisdom have been using an indigenous method of rat proof granary called Nahu.

Use of stone pad at the bottom, wooden plate at the middle and airtight compartment at the top makes it a unique and innovative storage structure. Capacity of a Nahu varies from 5.0–8.0 tonnes depending upon the size of land holding of the farmer (Sarangi et al., 2009). The tribes of Koraput district of Odisha have their own indigenous way of storing crop seeds and grains called Dhoosi and Khaniki. Dhoosi is made of long straw rope twined spirally (Arunachalam et al., 2006). Garo tribes of Meghalaya, use grain storage structures made of thatch grass, bamboo, and wooden poles (De and Sarangi, 2006). In Punjab, square shaped structures are constructed with mud or with bricks and cement with an outlet at the ground level called Bukhari. The upper portion is plastered with mud and straw. The structure covered with polythene sheet prevents moisture loss. Bharola is an egg shaped earthen storage bin. It has opening at the top and is a portable structure. Its storage capacity is up to 40-80 kg (Dhaliwal and Singh, 2010).

**Improved grain storage structures**

Pusa bin is one of the important improved methods of storage developed by Indian Grain Storage Management and Research Institute (IGSMRI). One design consists of the floor and lower part of the walls burnt with a layer of plastic sheeting inserted between two bricklayers. This protects the grain from moisture and prevents air from entering. A separate tacked rook around on top provides protection from sun and rain(Proctor, 1994). The other design of Pusa bin is made of double walls of masonry each 4.5-inch-thick with polythene sheeting in between. The outer layers have steel reinforcement and the sides are plastered with cement (Jelle, 2003). PAU bin is a galvanized metal iron structure designed by Punjab Agricultural University. Its capacity ranges from 1.5 to 15 quintals (Acharya and Agarwal, 2004).
Another improved structure known is Hapur Tekka. It is a cylindrical rubberised cloth structure supported by bamboo poles on a metal tube base. A small hole in the bottom facilitates grain removal (Jelle, 2003).

**Commercial grain storage structures**

In India, surplus food grains are accumulated in the warehouses owned by the Food Corporation of India (FCI), the Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) or the State Warehousing Corporation (SWCs). They have a network of storage depots strategically located all over India (Singh, 2010). These depots include silos and an indigenous method developed by FCI, called Cover and Plinth (CAP). CAP storage is a term given to storage of food grains in the open with adequate precautions such as rat and damp proof plinths, use of Dunnage and covering of stacks with specially fabricated polythene covers etc. FCI has 30.52million tonnes (owned & hired) of storage capacity in over 1820 godowns all over India (Debashis et al., 2006)

**Warehousing**

Warehouses are scientific storage structures especially constructed for the protection of the quantity and quality of stored products.

**Warehousing in India**

**Central warehousing corporation (CWC)**

This corporation was established as a statutory body in New Delhi on 2nd March 1957. The Central Warehousing Corporation provides safe and reliable storage facilities for about 120 agricultural and industrial commodities.

**State Warehousing Corporations (SWCs)**

Separate warehousing corporations were also set up in different States of the Indian Union. The total share capital of the State Warehousing Corporations is contributed equally by the State Govt. and the Central Warehousing Corporation concerned.

**Food Corporation of India (FCI)**

Apart from CWC and SWCs, the Food Corporation of India has also created storage facilities. The Food Corporation of India is the single largest agency which has a capacity of 26.62 million tonnes.

**Organisitional Set-up**

The head of the agriculture deptt. of the district is the Deputy Director, Agriculture, there are three District Agriculture Officers under him at Sonepur, Bir Maharajpur and Dunguripali. There are Asst Agriculture Officers to assist them. Besides, there is a VAW in each Panchayat.
HORTICULTURE

The agro-climatic conditions of Subarnapur district are immensely suitable for growing fruit crops like Mango, Guava, Banana, Bael & Pomegranate. They provide livelihood support to the people. The district thus enjoys a natural comparative advantage for various fruit crops whose potential has not yet been fully exploited.

Mango

Mango, king of fruits is the major fruit crop in this district. During the Chauhon rule mango groves were created on the outskirts of villages. Sonepur had a special quality of mango called *kanchasuadi*. It tasted sweet while raw. Now Amrapalli, Mallika, Dashehari, Neelum, Himsagar, Bombay Green, Langra etc. are grown here commercially. There are large areas planted under MGNREGS. Further, the technology of canopy management & rejuvenation are being perceived by the progressive farmers to increase productivity.

Banana

Banana ranks second in both area & productivity among the fruit crops grown here. Farmers use suckers as the source of planting materials. However, popularization of tissue culture plantlets are now being done through National Horticulture Mission & Rastriya Krishi Vikash Yojana to increase production.

Citrus

Limes are being cultivated throughout the district. These are found in the backyards of rural households to meet the daily requirements. However, only a few commercial orchards are found in the district. Papaya, Pine apple, Sapota & Aonla are being cultivated commercially by a limited number of farmers in the district. A melon called *phuti*, peculiar to Sonepur was produced in summer.

Vegetable Production

The soil and climate of the district is favourable for growing a variety of vegetables throughout the year. Major vegetables cultivated in the district are brinjal, tomato, cole crops, okra, cucurbits and watermelons. In Biramaharajpur Block farmers are getting better price by exporting watermelon to Ranchi, Calcutta and New Delhi. The traditional farmers used to preserve their own seeds & some also get it by barter system. This process is feasible in case of open pollinated varieties.

The progressive farmers of this district are using hybrid vegetable seeds and can increase the vegetable production per unit area manifolds. It is not possible on the part of the farmers to produce hybrid seeds and they have to purchase every year, since the hybrid seeds segregate in the next generation.
Now-a-days the Director of Horticulture, Odisha is providing subsidy for cultivation of hybrid vegetables.

**Single Line Trellis**

Growing on a Single Line Trellis increases plant density since each plant will find expansion surface vertically. As the plant grows vertically, besides benefits of increased aeration and sun exposure, the plant’s flowers and fruits are protected from accidental crushing due to the worker walking along the furrows, There is also a greater rate of flower pollination since the flowers are more exposed to insects as leaves will not tend to grow over flowers completely covering them. By taking care of the plant from accidental damages one extends the life span of the plant and increases the number of fruits harvested during a longer period. In the district bitter gourd, spine gourd, ridge gourd, pointed gourd, cucumber are grown in single line trellis system.

**Onion Cultivation**

Among vegetables onion plays a unique role as vegetable and as spice with its unique characteristic of pungency. During last 10 years it is observed that in Subarnapur district the area has increased but productivity has only reached 12.34 tonnes / hact, which is low. The major problems on onion cultivation in this district are many like small holdings, large proportion of small and marginal farmers, use of local seeds, inadequate irrigation facilities, poor credit facilities, improper post harvest management and also traditional method of cultivation. Now-a-days certified seeds are provided to the farmers at subsidized rate. Training on use of inputs and adoption of modern cultivation practices is being conducted. Onion storage structure is constructed to store onion, which can be utilized during off season.

**Floriculture**

In *Sonepur Rajyer Krisi*, GM Bhattacharya mentions a large variety of roses for which Sonepur soil is favourable. Niladhar Sing Deo (1841-91) used to wear in summer pugri, necklace, robes made of *malli* flowers. Use of flowers which was largely limited to offering in temples in the past, now has got a pride of place among all types of people. The flowers due to their diversity in beauty, texture, colour and fragrance touch the heart. Today floriculture has transformed into a viable agribusiness. It has emerged as a prominent and attractive sector in view of high returns per unit area and for creating new employment opportunities. The produce can be processed in aroma, essential oil extraction, in pharmaceutical companies as a value addition which has a greater export potential.

Jasmine is a dominant species in this district known for its aroma and fragrance. It provides livelihood support to small and marginal women farmers of nearby villages of Sonepur town. The flower growers are motivated through demonstrations planting materials offered by govt. Based on demand four major
flowers i.e. rose, marigold, tuberose and gladiolus are being commercially cultivated in our district. The floriculture sector has the potential to be viable if necessary investment is made on construction of green house, micro-irrigation and cold chain infrastructure. There is provision for such facilities under National Horticulture Mission.

**Oil Palm**

Palm oil is a highly efficient, high-yielding source of food and fuel. Oil palm is the highest oil-yielding plant among perennial oil-yielding crops. Palm oil is used for culinary and industrial purposes. It can also contribute substantially to the nutritional and energy requirements of the masses. Oil palm is a crop for diversification, value addition, health and nutrition. It is eco-friendly and sustainable.

Govt. of Odisha has executed MoU with M/S Ingaran Bio-tech Pvt Ltd, Kakinada, A.P. to plant 2500 hect. under Rastriya Krishi VikashYojana in Subarnapur district.

**Protected Cultivation**

Green house: - Green house is a covered structure with transparent material that protects plants from vagaries of weather or environment i.e. wind, precipitation, excess solar radiation, extreme temperature and attack of pest and disease. Green House technology protects plants from adverse climatic conditions and provides optimum condition of light, temperature, humidity, carbon dioxide and air circulation for best growth of plants to achieve maximum yield with good quality. In the district 20,000 sqm. of Shadenet House and 1000 sqm. of Poly Green House are constructed in the farmers’ field to produce vegetables & flowers.

**Plastic Mulching**

Plastic Mulch is a product used, in a similar fashion to mulch, to suppress weeds and conserve water in crop production and landscaping. Certain plastic mulches also act as a barrier to keep methyl bromide, both a powerful fumigant and ozone depleter, in the soil.

**Micro-irrigation**

Micro-irrigation is an artificial application of water to soil by supplying sufficient soil moisture to the root zone of the crop for proper growth which saves water upto 40-50 %, maintains soil-air-water relationship, increased plant vigor and crop yield, decreases weeds growth, ensures less evaporation and pest problem, less energy and labour consumption has been adopted in this district.

Vegetables, mango, banana are grown by installing drip and sprinkler irrigation system as traditional method of irrigation needs more water, labour, energy and expenditure.
Horticulture mechanization

Most of the horticulture activities are labour intensive. To reduce the cost of cultivation, to decrease drudgery, to carry out timely farm operations and to enhance productivity horticulture mechanization is being promoted. Assistance under power operator machines like power sprayers, power weeder, brush cutter, power saw are being provided to farmers for smooth operation of horticulture activities.

Training

Exposure visit of farmers are conducted in outside the state, inside the state & inside the district to acquire knowledge regarding the improved horticultural practices. Unemployed youths are trained in HTI, Kandhamal, HTI, Sambalpur & School of Horticulture, Khordha for self employment in horticulture sector.

Development of Nurseries

One Govt. Horticulture Farm at Sonepur and 7 private nurseries have been developed with required infrastructural facility. The district has now become self-sufficient in production of quality planting materials of mango.

Strategies

The Horticulture Department is taking the following strategies for the growth of the sector in the district.

a) Horticultural implements are being supplied to the farmers at subsidized rate to ease their farm practices as well as reduce the cost of production.

b) Pack house is being promoted under National Horticulture Mission for sorting, grading and packaging of fruits and vegetables to fetch better market price.

c) Formation of fruit and vegetable grower’s society for better coordinated production and marketing.

d) Emphasis in dissemination of new technologies to growers through field demonstration, publication and exposure visit.

e) Cold chain management practices will be introduced for fruits and vegetables.

f) Value addition of fruits and vegetables through establishment of integrated pack house and processing unit along with sorting, grading, disinfecting and packaging facilities.

g) Intercropping of perennial fruit orchards with pineapple, vegetable and flowers for effective utilization of inter space and getting higher return.

h) Enhancement of productivity of existing orchards following improved management practices & rejuvenation.
ANIMAL RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

Livestock productions have always been an integral part of rural livelihood system in Subarnapur district. The predominant farming system in Subarnapur is mixed crop, livestock farming system and over 90% of farms of all categories conform to this farming system. The livestock wealth in Subarnapur is impressive in number across all species constituting a natural resources base with immense livelihood implication, with growth in productivity level. Since 80% of rural household own livestock of one species or other or a combination of some of them, goat & sheep are the most popular and therefore the predominant species. The sector has ample scope to substantially enhance the production to meet the domestic market demand, create employment and income generating opportunity for the rural poor and enhance their food and livelihood security. The climatic condition prevailing in the district is suitable for small scale commercial livestock farming since the natural calamities such as cyclone, flood etc. have less impact compared to other parts of the state.

Policy adopted to maximize Livestock returns

a) The input delivery service of the Department is redesigned to serve the small producers and their subsistence farming systems.

b) Emphasis is being given on two most important services under animal husbandry sector such as health care (Animal health camp, de-worming camp) and breeding services (natural & artificial).

c) Mobile Veterinary Vehicles are operating within each block to provide door-step services in remote & inaccessible areas.

Organisational Set-up

The ChiefDistrict Veterinary Officer is the apex supervising and monitoring authority in ARD sector of the district and is situated at Subarnapur district headquarters.

There is one office of the Sub-Divisional Veterinary Officer functioning at each sub-divisional headquarters to monitor and supervise the activities of Veterinary Institutions. These institutions provide veterinary and animal husbandry services to the livestock farmers of the district at Block/GP levels.

Prevailing Animal Diseases

Important diseases affecting the livestock in the district are mostly of two types such as Bacterial diseases like Hemorrhagic Septicemia, Black quarter, Anthrax and Viral diseases like Foot and Mouth disease, Ranikhet disease, Fowl pox and Rabies. These are all contagious in nature. Vaccinations against these diseases are going on every year in the district by the field functionaries. As a result, during
the last 3 years there is no outbreak of any diseases reported from any part of the district.

Animal Health Camps

Health camps of different types such as (a) Intensive GP level health camps (b) Fertility Camp (c) De-worming camps (d) ASCAD health camps organised periodically.

Development in Animal Husbandry Programmes

Dairy Development

Centrally sponsored Dairy Entrepreneurship Development Scheme and State sponsored scheme such as Promotion of Dairy Entrepreneurship, Small term Interest sub-vention and Long term interest sub-vention are being implemented in the district to enhance the milk production.

Kalyani activities

For the dairy development in the district a programme named Kalyani under BAIF was inaugurated on 2.3.2016 to (a) create opportunities of gainful self employment to rural poor by producing cross breeds /improved breeds from non-descript cattle and buffalo (b) impart training to farmers on scientific management of CB cattle (c) support calf rearing and animal health care.

There are 10 cattle Development Centres in the district covering four Block, 34 GPs and 269 villages.

National Livestock Mission (NLM)

It is a government of India programme which is being implemented in this district. It is designed to cover all the activities required to ensure quantitative & qualitative improvement in livestock production system and capacity building of all stakeholders. It is concerned with livestock development, pig development in north-east region, feed-fodder development, skill-development, technology transfer & extension and cattle insurance.

Fodder-Development

Previously the livestock of the district mainly depended on traditional fodder like green fodders, indigenous grasses from the jungle and paddy straw. Now fodder farming plays an important role in livestock rearing.
The enhanced technology uptake by target beneficiary is possible by conducting training & demonstration on enrichment of paddy-straw, chopping of crop residue, concentration preparation & use of maize Stover among lead and fellow farmers as animal feed in the district.

Mobile Veterinary Unit (MVU)

Previously veterinary aids were not possible in remote areas. Livestock owners mainly depended on traditional method of treatment. Now Mobile Veterinary Unit (MVU) service has started in all 06 blocks of this district on 10th July, 2011 under RKVY Scheme. MVU is designed as an alternative model of rural animal health care delivery for a specified area with earmarked team of veterinary professionals with supporting equipment & drugs. It is envisaged to provide preventive, curative services as well as breeding facilities in the inaccessible areas & difficult terrains which are un-served/underserved under normal circumstances.

National Mission for Protein Supplement (NMPS)

NMPS under RKVY is being implemented from the year 2012-13 in this district. The objective is uplift of the economic status of the livestock owner by encouraging goat farming to create employment. It also envisages nutritional balance for consumers in terms of animal protein intake ensuring growth in meat production and eradicating malnutrition.

BACK-YARD POULTRY DEVELOPMENT

The habit of keeping desi poultry birds in rural areas has been changed by introducing improved poultry varieties like Banaraj and Giriraj birds which yield more meat, egg in comparison to desi birds. A desi poultry yields around 40-60 eggs/year whereas Banaraj/Giriraj yields 160-180 eggs/year. An adult desi poultry bird weighs around 1.5kg maximum in comparison to Banaraj/Giriraj around 2.5-3.5kg.

Commercial Agribusiness Entrepreneurship

Animal husbandry is a major activity in rural areas in Odisha. Livestock plays a vital role in rural employment & livelihood. This sector has potential for rural self-employment generation in both men & women. The land unsuitable for Agriculture purpose can be best utilized for livestock & poultry based enterprise.
National Animal Disease Reporting System:

This involves computerized network, which brings about a linkage between each block, district, state with the centralized Animal Disease Database at national level which helps to analyse and interpret data regarding the incidence of various diseases of livestock and poultry. NADRS not only witnesses’ occurrence & diagnosis of contagious diseases in the district but also creates awareness among farmers, entrepreneurs for early dispatch of samples to the DDL, Subarnapur/ADRI, Phulnakhara, Cuttack for prompt diagnosis & immediate control measures. Besides, paired serum samples from all species of apparently healthy animals are routinely collected through field functionaries as well as by ADRI team for screening against different zoonotic & contagious diseases. All the six blocks of this district are connected to the NADRS portal.

PISCICULTURE

Rich heritage of Pisciculture

Subarnapur is a land–locked district having Mahanadi, the largest river of the state, Tel, Ong and Suktel Rivers as its boundary. Keots along with bhulias were called Sunamunhi praja as they were able to generate and contribute maximum revenue to the state treasury. Keots along with Jharas, Gingras and Dhibars were unexcelled in fishing of fresh water fish for which Sonepur was famous. For machha (Fish) is one of the eight Ms. of Sonepur. Jharas normally ventured into the river from Asin Puni to Push Puni with ghanta, drums, incandescent sticks and earthen lights to worship fish for rich harvest particularly of Chanajhuri fish.

The fish species found here are unique and abundant. The implements used for fishing are also typical.

They catch fishes in river with different kinds of net called phikajala, phasijala, phujjala, with fishing rods know as girikanta. While in tanks they use Thapa, Thapi, Kumna, Dhaunr, Jan, etc. fishing devices, big and small, made of polished bamboo sticks woven in conical form to catch fish. Unja is another device conical in shape and made of bamboo sticks. The bottom is fully opened (0.20 M diameter) and the top has a small opening (0.5 M diameter). Its height is 0.7 M. It is used in shallow water. The fishes trapped are put in the khalui tied to the waist.

Dhar is a local fishing net used only when the river is full and flow is high for fishing Dhua Chingri (small size prawn), Patia, Chanajhuri, Tengni. It is fixed by tying one end strongly to pillars in a circular path. Good enough to catch fishes of all sizes, big and small. Benda is used for Chingra (prawn), Thumbei and Bainra as well as crabs of bigger size. Dandar is used for big size fishes during the rainy season only.

Fishermen who use chandi net are called Chandi Ber. The leader of the fishermen is known as Beriha. Chandi net is used for deep water fishing along with
an iron ankush for Singar and Katrang. The fisherman has to follow the fish by dipping himself deep under the water level.

*Kumna* is used for catching fish in agricultural fields.

Previously Matla was caught by **Matul sol** during night, using **hula** and **unja**. Jharas had mastery over this art.

With Sonepur situated on the confluence of Tel and Mahanadi, one typical practice is followed during rainy season. When Tel overflows, Mahanadi remains comparatively calm and fishing becomes easy and abundant in Mahanadi. Similarly, when Mahanadi overflows fishermen gather in Tel.

Kanachi and Ghuruch are the most delicious fish among scaled fishes. Similarly, Jalang among non-scaled fish and Chanajhuri, Jarda and Matla are among small fishes. Matla is available only at Binika, Sonepur and Boud area.

**Present Position**

Present fish species found in the district are **Mirkila** (*Cirrhinus mrigala*), **Kalanchi** (*Labeo calbasu*), **Singari** (*Mystus seenghala*).

Species of fishes found in Mahanadi include Banjo, Bhadra, Benga, Bhekta, Budla, Chenga, Chiltha, Chingra (prawn) Dumbila, Gajri, Ghesra, Gaudkela, Ghuruch, Jalang, Jalha, Janha, Jorda, Kanachi, Katrang, Khangia, Kukia, Kusura, Lay, Ludhi, Mahurali, Matla, Mirkali, Muser, Patharbutu, Phali, Parjapati, Rethua, Rulu, Singra, Senna, Thumbei, etc.

Fishes like Jhimo, Khaksa, Tengni, Putia live in shallow water, while Pursa, Singhari live in deep water and Bainra, Bhangar, Jain, Turu, Singhi live in mud.

**Fishery Profile**

Subarnapur has freshwater resources in forms of tanks/ponds, river, canals and reservoir. Mahanadi, the largest river of the state, flows through the district along with small rivers viz Tel, Ong, & Suktel with 168 km stretch which plays a major role in fishery.

**Water Resources**

The district is having 3778 Gram Panchayat tanks (3422.42 hc), 102 Revenue and other tanks (105.35 hc.), 572 private tanks (179.21 hc.) totalling 4452 tanks having 4696.99 hc. A major reservoir Hariharjore is having 1000 ha water spread area.

There are three primary Fishery Cooperative Societies working in the district, river-based Sonepur with 60 members, tank-based Sukha with 65 and reservoir-based Rameswar with 52 members.
Fish Production last 2 years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No</th>
<th>Block</th>
<th>Production(MT) During 2014-15</th>
<th>Production(MT) During 2015-16 As on 1.1.2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sonepur</td>
<td>1300</td>
<td>696.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tarbha</td>
<td>1102.48</td>
<td>464.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Binika</td>
<td>1170</td>
<td>605.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dunguripali</td>
<td>1110.72</td>
<td>556.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Birmaharajpur</td>
<td>1244.5</td>
<td>588.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ullunda</td>
<td>1147.3</td>
<td>425.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>7075</strong></td>
<td><strong>3336.6</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sonepur Fish Farm

Sonepur fish farm is a major fish farm under Research and Development scheme of Govt. of Odisha, Fisheries & Animal Resource Development Department for production and distribution of quality fish seeds to the fish farmers. Its total area is 76.672 ac. There are 25 nursery tanks (area of 3.57 ac), 10 rearing tanks (4.69 ac), 3 brood stock tanks (5.10 ac) and thirteen stocking tanks (32.25 Ac.).

There is a massive proposal for renovation of derelict tanks through NFDB funding. Simultaneously the major part i.e. 34.2 Ac will be leased out to private entrepreneurs w.e.f. 2016-17.

Presently some fishermen are adopting explosion method by using dynamite, pesticides etc. for easy harvest of fish, which needs awareness to preserve rich natural Pisciculture.
### Appendix-I

#### Use of areas (in Hect)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Area (Hect)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Geographical Area</td>
<td>185409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Cultivable area</td>
<td>135415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cultivated area</td>
<td>128318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Kharif Paddy area</td>
<td>107638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Forest Land</td>
<td>12545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Misc. Trees and Grooves</td>
<td>3452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Pasture &amp; Other grazing land</td>
<td>12854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Land put to Non-Agriculture use</td>
<td>1019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Barren and uncultivable waste</td>
<td>12189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Cultivable waste</td>
<td>7925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Old Fallow</td>
<td>7079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>No. of DAO circles</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>No. of AO/VAW circles</td>
<td>12/75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>No. of Villages</td>
<td>959+22=981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>No. of PACs</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>No. of AAO circles</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>No. of Agriculture Farm Families</td>
<td>83310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small Farmers</td>
<td>27911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marginal Farmers</td>
<td>37341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Big Farmers</td>
<td>18058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>No. of Fertilizer Dealers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wholesalers</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Retailers</td>
<td>379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>No. of Pesticides Dealers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Retailers</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>No. of Seeds Sale Centers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Govt. (PACS)</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Privati</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Population as per 2011 census (Provisional)</td>
<td>652107</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix-II

Livestock

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Animal Type</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cattle indigenous</td>
<td>122316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle Cross Bred</td>
<td>42745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cattle</td>
<td>165061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buffalo</td>
<td>10388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep</td>
<td>52787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goat</td>
<td>95340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pig</td>
<td>1327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poultry (Indigenous)</td>
<td>136066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of layer farms with capacity</td>
<td>2 nos. 64 thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of commercial layer birds reared (Backyard)</td>
<td>143325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Broiler farms</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total No. of duckery</td>
<td>4146</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix-III

ARD Infrastructure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CDVO Office</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDVO Office</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of vety. Dispensary/ veterinary hospital</td>
<td>9/01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of livestock aid centre</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of mobile A.I. centre</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District poultry farm</td>
<td>02 (not started)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Layer farm: Hota Poultry farm, Ainalchhat under Ullunda Block (CAE)</td>
<td>02 nos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sahu Poultry farm, Pandakital Dunguripali Broiler farm: Janata Broiler farm, Kulipali, Sonepur block (Private)</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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CHAPTER-VII
COTTAGE INDUSTRIES

Handicraft: Post Patronage & Present Position

B. M. Sing Deo (1902-37) started in 1908 an annual Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition at Sonepur where he declared medals to the four exhibits. E. C. Gibson writes on 08.02.1934 “I was much surprised with the high standard of workmanship of which the exhibits in the industrial exhibition are evidence”. Says A.S. Meek, while opening the Exhibition in the Sonepur town on 31.10.1934, “It is all to the good that the ruler should endeavour as he does to give it a progressive tendency for the benefit both of the people and State’s revenue and welfare.

The Kalavidya Fund Biramitrodaya instituted was intended to benefit the Bhulias and Kustas and Dheras who with their aesthetic sensibility and artistic skill could create beautiful designs on the silk, tussar and cotton fabrics for which Sonepur was famous. It was intended to benefit the Maharanas, skilled in making colourful Ganjpa cards and in stone-cutting, wood-carving, etc.

B. M. Sing Deo had planned an Industrial School where Agricultural Science could be taught. Unfortunately, this could not materialize.

Today the scenario has changed. The District Industries Centre imparts training to artisans under Master Craftsman or Gurushishya Parampara Scheme, Craft Village Programmes after formulation of Self-Help Groups. On completion of training programme, the craftsman is bank-linked to sustain their livelihood. Bank loans are provided to interested artisans with provision of subsidy @ 20% of the project cost under ceiling up to Rs. 1,00,000.00 and 35% of project up to 25 lac for up-gradation, modernization of the existing units. Artisans are also encouraged to participate in different district level exhibitions in the state and outside for sale of their products. Artisan credit cards are provided in selected crafts to facilitate credit linkage through banks.

The artisans of Subarnapur district adopt different crafts for their livelihood: stonework, iron work, brass and bell metal, woodwork and bamboo craft, wall painting and patta painting, fishing and boat-building, jewellery and ornaments, terracotta craft and clay toys, dhokra casting, paddy craft, leather works, handloom and tassar etc. fishing and boat-building

Stonework

Sonepur is a town of temples. There are temples, temples, all the way. The existence of mediaeval temples from 10th to 14th centuries shows that there must have been a large number of skilled workmen carving and engraving on stone and these workmen were not confined to any particular area. Temples exist from Ranipur-Jharial in the south to Sonepur in the north. The stone carvings scattered at Basasankar near Kamsara also prove the presence of stoneworkers in
Subarnapur. The images installed in the niches were mostly carved by the Sahasias who used stones, black or green, to sculpt small images or used red sandstone called Dalima to cut large figures on.

**Ironwork**

Availability of *lalmati* or red soil in some parts denotes the presence of iron ore in the state but no attempt was made to found here an iron industry by the British Government, though it was the chief item of export to the coastal districts. The story of Neuli Sahu and the Subarnameru temple confirms it. However, the ironsmiths of Khandahata used to make iron implements and weapons and country-made guns. They were called Luhuras or Khatis.

**Brass & Bell Metal**

Copper, Zinc and Tin are used for producing utensils and artefacts of various sizes at Binka, Tarva and Sonepur Blocks. As hygienic food value is maintained, utilisation of these utensils is popular. At least 50 artisans are at present engaged in this profession.

While the Kansaris and Kharras of Tarbha and Binka made brass and bell metal utensils, the Sunaris of Tarbha were known for the gold ornaments and filigree works which got a fresh lease of life under royal patronage. B.M. Sing Deo had set up kalasas locally made on the tops of temples and had engaged Jharas called Sonjharas to collect gold dust from the bed of the Mahanadi. The numerous brass images in temples here also reveal the presence of Kansaris in Subarnapur. There is a Kansaripada in the town.

**Woodwork & Bamboo craft**

Badheis and Kunderas are woodworkers of Champamal, Birmaharajpur and Sonepur town who make wooden elephant with the king, horses, penstands, babyriders, candlestands, birds etc. The 24 *avatars* of Lord Visnu carved on the entrance door and the wooden *vimana* in Gopalji Mandap are rare samples of fine workmanship. While the Patna Group of States together had 03 Kunderas, Sonepur alone had 34 (Census 1891).
Toy-making was a trade. With soft simuli wood, paper and husk they make beautiful figures of animals, birds, monkeys, bears, elephants, tigers, parrots, frogs, snakes etc. These figures resemble neither ‘the light and linear traditional folk-toys of Kalighat’ nor ‘the tiny models produced at places in U.P.’ They had an originality of their own, uninfluenced and unaffected by external models.

(Wooden Toys)

The Betras of Chinginali and Beipali of Birmaharajpur Block, Beheramal in Dunguripali Block, Lastala of Ulunda Block made bamboo baskets and mats, *lundis* to carry grains and manures, *dhulingi* to store grains, *kula, dala, chidi, pedi, changdi, bhuga, bhugli, tupa, talei, tupli*, fans etc. Besides, the Betras of Lachhipur prepare beautiful designs in bamboo like bed lights, flower vases, pen stands, wall hangings etc.

The Maharanas & Ganjp Cards

Ganjp is a *patta chitra* type of painting prepared by the Maharanas of Sonepur and Champamal of Birmarajpur Sub-division. They are used like playing cards. Ganjp prevailed as an indoor game having 144 circular cards in 12 colours. This game centres around the epic episode of Ram-Ravan fight in the *Ramayana*. The Ganjp cards of Sonepur are distinguished from their counterparts in Ganjam or Puri not only for the mythic battle between Ram and Ravan they depict, but also for the unique sense of colour. The ingredients of these colours are *geru* (red ochre), *haritala* (yellow ochre) and paste prepared by rubbing conch-shell and soot collected from lamps. Long before the computer colour combinations revolutionised
modern painting, the indigenous colour invented by the Sonepur Maharanas was itself an achievement. The method of preparing these cards is highly complex. Pieces of thin cloth are pasted in three layers with gum prepared from tamarind seeds. It is then trimmed into a circular shape, polished with stone and then pointed. The backs are painted with lacquer to make them more thick and less susceptible to dust. A pack of these ganjpa cards gifted by B. M. Sing Deo and preserved in the British Museum still proclaims the glories of the Maharanas masterful brush.

The Maharanas drew paintings on doors, walls and pieces of cloth on ceremonial occasions. They made wooden elephants, frogs, snakes, parrots of paper and husk, gods and goddesses, cards on cloth, pattachitras on palmleaves. Painters by profession, they are scattered all over Subarnapur: Champamal, Nimna, Dasrajpur, Tarbha, Dungripali etc.

The main potential appliqué craft pocket of the district is Ghodaghatpada of Sonepur town and Champamal of Birmaharajpur Block. Around 50 artisans are working on the craft.

**Fishing & Boat-building**

The fishermen and boatmen of Sonepur outnumbered their counterparts in Patna group (Kalahandi, Bolangir, Rairakhol and Sonepur) as evident from the census report of 1891. Here Dhibars numbered 388, Gingras 743, Keots 13,757 against 6,343 and 9,900 respectively in the Patna States taken together. Boat-building was an industry as it was on demand in this port town.

**Jewellery and Ornaments**

The gold and silver ornaments of Binka and Tarva Blocks have made a mark in the province. The gold and silversmiths of Tarbha are famous for filigree works. They have specialized in spider web designs, in folk silver ornaments like khagla on the neck, boat-shaped anklets and gold ornament like armlets, necklaces, nose buttons and ear-rings.
Terracotta Craft & Clay toys

Terracotta which has a high degree of demand among urban customers are generally produced in various shapes and designs through different stages of intervention from creation to completion. The main potential terracotta craft pockets of the district are Kuhibahal, Silati of Binka Block, Sargul of Dungripali Block and Kumbharpada of Sonepur Block.

Apart from a wide range of domestic pottery like handi, sara, patli, kundhi, kanchi, kuta of different shapes and sizes for cooking and storing things flower vases and lamp stands. The Kumbhars of Sonepur prepare kitchen sets for children on festive occasions. The terracotta Hanuman images made for Saptapuri Amavasya of Bhadrav have drawn international attention and admiration through Joana Williams who displayed it in the Art-Exhibition at Copenhagen. One Kumbhar Lokanath Rana from Sonepur had been to Sweden with this singular exhibit on invitation. The cover page of the 1993 March issue of the Indian Literature published by the Central Sahitya Academy, New Delhi carried the picture of such a Hanuman, this monkey god with a demoniac look, this terracotta Hanuman with its crown, its bushy moustache, its protruding teeth and its tail raised
over its head is a figure beyond the wildest imagination of any artist or artisan. The other artifact is Kamadhenu with a female face.

![Lankapodi Hanuman in Terracotta](image)

**Dhokra Casting Metal Craft**

The Dhokra casting metal craft is an old & antique craft of Odisha. It is practised by Sitlia communities of Jampali and Narayanpur of Binka Block. About 50 artisans are engaged in the production and marketing of the crafts. Which include *mana, tamvi* to measure solid and liquid substances, images of Mahalaxmi sitting on a lotus flanked by elephants on both sides.

![Dhokra Castings](image)

**Paddy Craft**

Paddy craft which has a high demand among young customers are generally produced in various shapes & designs. The main potential paddy craft pockets of the district are Chingerkata and Bandhapali of Dungripali Block. Paddy seeds of different sizes and colours are crafted in a beautiful manner.
Leatherworks

The Chamars made chapals, dhols, madals and leather saddles for the royal horses and camels.

Handloom

In the early medieval period the handloom industry of west Odisha seems to be flourishing as revealed by the sculpture of the period. The designs and patterns observed in the clothing of the amorous couple of Baidyanath temple is an instance in point.

It is further interesting to note that Sonepur claims to be the originator of Tie and Dye style of weaving. Mrs. Chattopadhyay describes the technique of tie and dye as found in western Odisha as Patola, while ethnologists call it ikat. Ikat is supposed to be of Malayan origin, but actually the technique gets its name from
Indonesia and is considered equivalent to the Indian *bandhan*. In fact, ‘bandhan’ is really suggestive as the technique is widely known in the locality as ‘Bandha’ or ‘Kama’.

The saris of Sonepur are now given a generic name ‘Sambalpuri’ through Padmasri Krutartha Acharya of Bargarh. But it must not be forgotten that Krutartha had learnt his first lesson in weaving in the Birmitrodaya Weaving Factory of Sonepur during the regime of Sudhansusekhar Sing Deo (1937-48). Sonepur had a long history of weaving and it played its part in exporting these fine, colorful clothes abroad, while there was riverine traffic.

Sonepur has unique handloom product, *Ganda Pachhra*, a typical cotton shawl woven by Harijans of Kamsara and Sargaj. Its thickness, its coarseness and is circular design in the middle with two broad borders on two sides are its distinctive features. Another typical product is the *gamchha* of Subalaya weavers.

Describing the cotton cloth produced by the Bhulias as “fancy cotton fabrics”, F.C. King observes that the industry was in a flourishing state even as late as 1930. Some pieces were displayed at the British Exhibition in Wembley in 1924 and 1925 and were much appreciated and orders obtained through the Department of Industry.

**Cotton art fabrics of the past**

Reporting about the excellence of cotton fabrics the *Imperial Gazetteer* writes “The flower-bordered saris of Sambalpur are called Phulia and peculiar to Subarnapur district are the saris known as hansbali bordered or striped with fantastic animal design. Saptapadi has dice board motif and is used by post-wedding couple. There are also many ornamental fabrics such as Muktajhari, a design of unique contribution and contrast.

**Names of Saris produced in the Satyanarayan Vastralaya Weavers Co-operative Society Ltd., Sonepur started in 1964.**


TASSAR SILK INDUSTRY

The district is famous through centuries for the Bhulias and Kosthas, master craftsmen who work excellent motifs on the cotton and tassar fabrics. The handloom industry of Subarnapur comprises artistic fabrics made out of superior cotton, tassar fabrics, while the third pertains to utility production the demand for which is basically local.

The Bengal Gazetteer, Feudatory States of Orissa writes, “The states are not remarkable for any special manufacture. At Kantilo in the Khandapara State and in the Narsinghpur State a considerable manufacture of brass utensils is carried on; …the next important industry is weaving of tassar cloth at Sonepur and Binka.”

Major Cumberlege identified five big villages or towns engaged in the manufacture of tussar cloth. According to his estimate a minimum of 1000 thans are produced annually by each centre and Sonepur town.

By the end of 19th century however, the industry seems to throw signs of decline because of lack of adequate and qualitative cocoon. Sericulture experiments were conducted in 1869, 1876, 1895 and 1905, but all efforts failed because complete domestication of tussar silk worm was considered impossible.

N. G. Mukherji writes in 1905. “The cocoon rearing industry is almost dead. The worms nearly all die off, from diseases and cocoon rearing is no longer worth doing”.

The families of weavers who could produce tassar textiles so rich in texture and super in design have migrated to other commercially important centres like Barpali and Sambalpur, because their handicrafts didn’t find an adequate market in Sonepur whose population was on the decrease and where, too, the synthetic fabrics because of their texture, glamour and cheaper cost replaced the hand-woven textiles.

CASTEWISE DISTRIBUTION OF WEAVING POPULATION

Of all the small enterprises, the Handloom industry was carried on by a large population of Bhulias, Kulis and Gandas. The bhulias wove beautiful designs of flowers and creepers, fishes and swans and peacocks, alpanas and temples through the Tie & Dye method. While the Gandas cultivated silk worms on Sahaj trees, the Kosthas specialized in Tassar fabrics. They not only met the local needs,
they also exported these materials abroad. They lived in huts where there was no air to breathe and no light to see, but they made Sonepur self-dependent in clothes.

The Bhulias have been specialising in artistic cotton cloth, the Gandas and Maharas in coarse cottons cloth, and the Kosthas in tassar silk fabrics.

The Census 1901 gives the castewise distribution of weavers of Sonepur State along with its proportion to the total population. The Gandas numbered 22, 203 with 6.94 per cent, the Pankas 5 with 0.001, the Doms 18 with 0.005, the Bhulias 7527 with 2.35, the Kosthas 599 with 0.18, and Mahars 806 with 0.25 percent.

There are 5761 weaver families. Out of the total weaver population of 41,286, the SCs are 12, 546, STs are 390, OBCs (Bhulia) are 28, 350. There are 5851 looms and the number of Weavers Co-operative Society is 99.

Places & Persons (Handloom)

Subarnapur district has very highly skilled weavers, weaving with traditional pit looms to produce very costly traditional tie and dye and Bomkai cotton/silk sarees, dress material on demand by customers in India and beyond. The weavers work as job workers through Weavers Co-operative Societies/SHGs. They also work under Master weavers or as individual entrepreneurs. There are 5671 weaver families in the district. The weaver population is about 41,286 out of which S/C weavers number is 12,546, ST 390 and OBC (Bhulia) 28,350. Total number of working looms in the district is 5851.

Subarnapur district is a major weaver concentration area in the State of Odisha, providing employment to a sizeable number of handloom artisans where weaving is an age-old tradition. The weavers have spread all over the district in small or big pockets. The main handloom products here are silk/cotton saris, shirting, wall-hanging and dress materials woven with silk and 2/100s & 2/120s mercerized cotton yarn which cater to the clothing needs of middle segment of consumers. The average wage of a weaver ranges from Rs. 6500/- to Rs. 9000/- per month. The weavers villages are Sagarpali, Hariharpur, Baghapali, Sahajpita, Khajura, Haradakhhol, Baidyanath, Lachhipur, Balpur, Sonepur, Chepapal of Sonepur Block, Menda, Sagartala, Rugudipali of Tarva Block, Digsira, Dhanabasa, Hariharnagar, Sahala, Sukha, Rampur of Dunguripali Block, Binka, Nakatamunda of Binka Block, Jagannathpali, Nimna, Dasarajpur, Chadeipank, Udepadar, Matikhai of Ulunda Block, Subalaya, Amsarbhata, Tikrapara, Kendupali, Hanumanpali, Kamalpur of Birmaharajpur Block. Subarnapur is a land of art & artists where weavers produce fabrics of various designs. Due to their creative designs, weavers are also awarded/felicitated at State and National level. Some of the silk saris commonly produced in the district are 1) Buti design plain silk Bomkai sari, 2) Bichitrupuri design silk sari, 3) Ek-fulia silk sari, 4) Tissue silk sari, 5) Nartaki design silk sari, 6) Fodakumbha tassar sari/joda, 7) 45-kothi/19-kothi silk sari, 8) Dhadi sakta cotton sari, 9) 4-butti cotton sari, 10) Dhadiffara cotton sari, 11) Silk joda
Some of our national awardees are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name of the weavers</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Year of Award Received</th>
<th>Product for which Award Received</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Late Mohan Meher</td>
<td>Nuapada, Sonepur</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Binod Bihari Meher</td>
<td>Sonepur</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Natabar Meher,</td>
<td>Nuapada, Sonepur</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Vegetable Dyed Silk Bandha Saree</td>
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<td>Pitabas Meher,</td>
<td>Badabazar, Sonepur</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sankar Kumar Meher,</td>
<td>Nuapada, Sonepur</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Pancha Debata Upasana Saree</td>
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<td>Gunanidhi Meher,</td>
<td>Dherapada, Sonepur</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Jhuti Bandhan Saree</td>
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<td>Laba Meher,</td>
<td>Kendupali, Kamalpur</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Basanta Bahar T &amp; D Vegetable Dyeing</td>
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<td>Prahllad Meher,</td>
<td>Padmabati Niwas, Sonepur</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Wall Hanging (Lord Ganesh)</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Padmashree Chaturbhujia Meher</td>
<td>Badabazar, Sonepur</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>For exclusive tie &amp; dye design</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Besides, Sarat Meher of Sagarpali, Biswanath Meher of Tikripada and Gauri Meher of Badabagicha, Sonepur have received State awards in 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14 respectively. Padmasri Kailash Meher is another artist of international repoute that Sonepur has produced.
Geology and Mineral Occurrences

**Geology:** Different litho units belonging to the Eastern Ghat Super group are exposed in Subarnapur district. They include quartz-garnet-sillimanite-graphite schist, garnetiferous sillimanite quartzite/quartzite, calc silicate rocks, basic, intermediate and acid charnockite, biotite granite gneiss and garnetiferous granite gneiss. The Eastern Ghat Super group of rocks is intruded by anorthosite, quartz
and pegmatite veins of proterozoic age. Sandstone and shale of Talchir Formation of Gondwana Super group were deposited above these rocks during Carboniferous to Lower Permian period. Out of all, the garnetiferous granite gneiss is the most dominant and persistent rock in Subarnapur. Graphite occurs mostly in the form of disseminations, thin bands in pockets in the highly siliceous gneissic rocks in several locations. The district is also rich in minor mineral resources such as river sand, road metals, morum, laterite etc.

**Minerals**

The important economic mineral resources of Subarnapur district include precious and semiprecious stones and dimension stones.

The precious and semiprecious stones reported in the district are mostly Beryl (aquamarian heliodor). These minerals are localized within zoned pegmatites intruding into rocks of Eastern Ghat Super group. These are often reworked from their host rocks and get deposited in alluvial and colluvial zones. The gembelts identified in this district are Naktamunda-Siali, Badmal-Mursundi and Binika-Sonepur belt. The varieties of gemstones of precious and semi-precious nature recorded in the district include Rhodolite and Almandine garnet, aquamarine, topaz, chrysoberyl cat’s eye etc. The diamond occurs in Mahanadi and Tel river channels.

**Dimension stones**

Massive, compact, medium to coarse grained charnockite occur in the eastern part of the district i.e. in Birmaharajpur subdivision. These rocks are found to be suitable to be used as dimension stones.

The important occurrences are Gaurghat, Mahukhandi and Sarasdadar with a total reserve of 15 lakh cubic metre.

**Status of Minerals**

The mineral occurrences in the district belong primarily to non-ferrous and non-coal industrial mineral. But the mines are non-operational.

Gopinath Mohanty, Jnanpith awarded, who happened to be a student of Maharaja High School, Sonepur in the early part of 20th century recalls, some Britishers approached Niladri Sing (1841-91) for permission to trial dig the bed of Mahanadi where they suspected a gold mine existed. And besides, they had the technical know-how which the people of Sonepur naturally did not have. The Raja smiled and said, the mine belonged to the people and they would wait till they knew how to dig. The Britishers had duped the Mughuls and had obtained orders to run the business remained to rule. But, here they failed. Nor has Sonepur succeeded yet to tap the source of this invaluable treasure. The best the people are doing to help themselves is to send Sonjharas to sieve the sand for a few grains of gold. While there somewhere the fabulous mine lies unexplored (Srotaswati 1969).
Labour Law and Relation


Labour Welfare

There are about 21000 construction workers such as Masons, Construction Labour, Painters, Plumbers, SEM, Carpenters, Electricians, Rod Binders, Rod Cutters etc. registered under Odisha Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board. They have been provided assistance such as Education Assistance for their children, Marriage assistance for their daughters, Bicycle Assistance, Working Tools Assistance, Safety Equipment Assistance, and Funeral Assistance etc.

There is provision for construction workers to impart training at their work place (On the Job training) as per Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) scheme. More than 30 rice mills operate in this district.

Administrative set-up

The Circle Mining Officer, Balangir was established for administrative control of Mines & Minerals of the undivided Balangir and Kalahandi district in the year 1962 by the Government in Mining & Geology Department, Government of Odisha, Bhubaneswar having its headquarters at Titilagarh which was subsequently shifted to Balangir on 13.7.1963. The Ex-Mining Section of the Collectorate, Balangir was amalgamated with the Circle Mining Office on 4.7.1966 as per G. O. No. 3710/MG dated 12.5.1966 of the Mining and Geology Department, Odisha, Bhubaneswar. The Circle Mining Office is working under the Mining Officer as Head of Office subject to general supervision of the Collector, Balangir and Subarnapur and overall control and administration of the Director of Mines, Odisha, Bhubaneswar. The Jurisdiction of the Circle Mining Office is Balangir and Subarnapur district.

Existing Status of Industrial Estates/Areas/Growth Centres in the District

IDCO has acquired 5.410 acres of land at Babupali to set up a saw mill. Besides, one spinning mill is in dormant state which employed more than 200 workers during earlier days.

Khadi and Village Industries

For the spread of Khadi Industry two Co-operative Societies are operating with two sales counters located in the Sonepur town.
Industrial Scenario

Category of Product wise number of registered MSME set up with investment & employment in the DIC: SONEPUR by end of 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>No. of SSI unit set up</th>
<th>Investment in plant machinery (Rs. in lakh)</th>
<th>Employment generated</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>FOOD AND ALLIED</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>838.2</td>
<td>1015</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>CHEMICAL &amp; ALLIED</td>
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<td>RUBBER &amp; PLASTICS</td>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>311</td>
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<td>2818</td>
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INDUSTRIAL POTENTIAL

Micro, Small, Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)

Taking into consideration the availability of raw materials, Subarnapur has the industrial potential in the field of Rice/ mudhi / chuda mill, oil mill/extraction unit, mini sugar mill, stone crusher, food processing, manufacture of agricultural implements, aluminum utensils, diary product, packaged drinking water, processing of paddy husk /cattle feed, bakery / confectionery, ice slab / candy, fabrication / steel furniture, dal processing/packaging, cocoon reeling, Seed processing, PSC poles & cement product, fly ash brick, leaf cup and plate, Tie & dye, readymade garments, stabiliser and electronic product etc.

There is every scope for service enterprises with respect to handloom sector as handloom is a prominent activity of the district.

In service industry which requires less capital and more labour, there is a vast scope for the following fields: Cycle/auto/two-wheeler repairing unit, agro/tractor servicing centre, re-treading/resoling of tyres, reconditioning of battery, electrical repairing shop and motor winding ,cyber cafe ,diagnostic centre, digital photo studio , mechanised dry cleaning/laundry, audio and video shooting ,restaurant /hotel , mobile/laptop repairing , DTP and screen printing , flex banner ,silk twisting , textile dyeing , knitting , jari work etc.
Scope for IT sector

Incentives are provided for setting up IT Kiosks and small scale industries through cluster development approach under Industrial Policy Resolution, 2015.

Samples of Sonepur Handloom
CHAPTER-VIII
COMMERCE AND COMMUNICATION

The Allhabad Pillar Inscription\(^1\) of Samudragupta provides, at a glance, the land route between eastern and southern India. Samudragupta led his *Dakshinapatha* expedition from Allhabad to Kośala and Kalinga\(^2\). During the second quarter of the 7\(^{th}\) century AD Hiuen-Tsang visited Wu-tu-(Odra) from Karnasuvarna. From Tamralipti or the modern Tamluk, he travelled north-east for over 700 li to Karnasuvarna and then travelling south-west above 700 li he reached the Odra country\(^3\). Here he visited Pushpagiri (Pu-sie-po-ki-li) monastery. The pilgrim also names a place called Charitrapura (Che-li-ta-lo) which stood near the sea-shore to the south-west of Wu-tu\(^4\). From Wu-tu Hiuen-tsang made a journey in the south-westerly direction over a distance of 1200 li and reached Kangoda\(^5\). From Kangoda he travelled south-east through dense forest for 1500 li to reach Kalinga. From Kalinga he went to South Kośala and from South Kośala to the Andhra country\(^6\).

This road map shows that Kalinga was connected with Tamralipti and Karnasuvarna in the north, South Kośala in the west and Andhra in the south probably by extremely rough roads passing through dense forest. Obviously such communication could not facilitate inland trade. To get rid of such problems, the traders preferred the riverine course as the most convenient and safest link of communication. It needs to be noted here that the Buddhist as well as the Jaina texts reveal the courses of the riverine and maritime trade initiated from the following port-towns of Kalinga and South Kośala.\(^7\)

1. Dantapura  
2. Pithunda  
3. Chelitalo  
4. Tamralipti  

Maritime Trading Centres of Kalinga

1. Sirpur  
2. Hirakhanda  
3. Suvarnapur  
4. Tarapurgad  
5. Khadirapadra  

Riverine Trading Centres of South Kośala

The Buddhist literature mentions that Dantapura was one of the important political-cum-commercial metropolis of Kalinga\(^8\). Pliny locates this place at a distance of 625 miles southward from the mouth of the Ganges\(^9\). It should be remembered in this connection that Ptolemy names a place called Allosygne situated below Paloura in the Gangetic Gulf as the starting point for ships bound for Khryse or the Land of Gold i.e., Suvarnabhumi.\(^10\) Prof. Sylvain Levi identifies Dantapura of the Buddhist literature with Paloura of Ptolemy.\(^11\) It is thus evident
that Paloura-Dantapura was a famous emporium of Kalinga through which the country maintained its maritime relations with the outside world, particularly South East Asia.\textsuperscript{12}

Pithunda seems to be another capital of Kalinga located by Ptolemy between the Godavari and the Mahanadi\textsuperscript{13}. A port named Pithunda is also mentioned in the Jain literature\textsuperscript{14} and Hatigumpha Inscription.\textsuperscript{15} It thus appears that Dantapura and Pithunda were two important urban centres which were instrumental for Kalingan maritime relations with South East Asia.

Another famous sea-port of ancient Kalinga was Che-li-ta-lo which Hiuen-Tsang places near the sea shore in the south-east of the Odra country.\textsuperscript{16} It is said to have been a “Resting place for sea-going traders and strangers from distant lands”. Alexander Cunningham\textsuperscript{17} identifies it with Charitrapura i.e., Puri. Mr Waddel\textsuperscript{18}, however, transliterates it as Chitratole and locates it somewhere on the bank of a branch of the river Mahanadi-Chitroptala.

Tamralipti, yet another sea-port of Kalinga was located off the coast of the Bay of Bengal. It is identified with the modern Tamluk. It appears that it was the starting point of the sea-voyage from Kalinga to the distant South East Asia as evident from the sea route taken by the Chinese traveller, Fa-Hien in 413-414 AD\textsuperscript{19}. He is said to have made his voyage from Tamralipti on board of a large merchant vessel and passed through Srilanka, Andamans, the strait of Meleca and North-West Borneo, to complete the voyage to China.\textsuperscript{20} Similarly, the Chinese monk I-Tsing who came to India by sea route in the second half of the 7th century, left Canton on the north-east monsoon and reached Sumatra. From there, taking advantage of the south-west monsoon, he came to Malaya and finally crossed the Indian Ocean during north-east monsoon and reached Tamralipti.\textsuperscript{21} Thus it appears that the early sea-voyages obviously took advantage of the pattern of monsoon and wind circulation in the Bay of Bengal sector of the Indian Ocean. The ships from Eastern India generally sailed to South East Asia in one monsoon and returned in the other.\textsuperscript{22} Both the Periplus and the Geographike Huphegesis of Ptolemy confirm this fact.

The Periplus\textsuperscript{23} states that large quantities of cotton goods and muslins found their way to the markets beyond the Bay of Bengal. Further it speaks about ivory called ‘Dosarenic’ and diamonds as two prime items of export to South East Asia. Ptolemy, however, specifically tells us that Kalinga was rich with the former but deficient with the latter and hence procured the same from the Sabarai region identified with Hirakhand or Sambalpur region.\textsuperscript{24} It obviously takes us to the riverine trade of the Middle Mahanadi Valley.

The Mahanadi which is very often regarded as ‘The Ganga of Orissa’ played a crucial role in extending logistic support to the maritime commerce between Kalinga and South East Asia during the ancient and medieval period. Basically the area which is denoted as the Middle Mahanadi valley extending from Sambalpur
to Boudh appeared to have outstanding reputation in the field of exporting diamonds, gems, and precious stones down the river Mahanadi up to the sea ports off the Bay of Bengal. It needs to be recalled that medieval Orissa was divided into three kingdoms namely Kalinga, Kosala, and Utkala. As a matter fact, the kingdom of Kalinga comprised the undivided districts of Ganjam and the kingdom of Utkala comprised the undivided districts of Cuttack, Puri and Balasore flourished in the coastal plains of the Bay of Bengal. Topography provided natural infrastructure to the navigators of Kalinga and Utkala to develop maritime commerce across the Bay of Bengal while the kingdom of Kosala excelled in riverine trade at the same time. The major hypothesis thus is to establish inter-dependence between maritime commerce of Kalinga and the riverine trade of the Upper Mahanadi valley, i.e., Kosala. It has been a matter of consistent negligence by the historians to bypass the significance of the latter which, in the long run, frontline the former singularly. The objective therefore, is to present a transparent picture of the riverine trade in the Upper Mahanadi Valley and its impact on the Kalingan maritime commerce.

Suvarnapur is well-known as one of the distinguished capital headquarters of South-Kosala under the Somavamsis during the medieval period. Located on the confluence of the Mahanadi and the Tel, it fulfilled all the characteristics of a strategic place. The Somavamsis, after leaving Sirpur, treated Sonepur as a shock-absorber against the impending invasions of Kalachuris and Teluguchodas. In course of time, they enriched this land of legends by extending royal patronage to its growing trade and earned for the tract the eulogized designation “Suvarnapur Pattana”.

Prior to the Somavamsi occupation of Khinjali Mandala the over-all prosperity of Suvarnapur seems to have been fostered by a powerful merchant association known by the name “Kamalvana Vanika Sthana”. It is unfortunate for the posterity to bring them to the limelight of Orissan History due to paucity of source materials. The only alternative, therefore, is to develop hypothesis over and above the available sources and cross-examine the sequences of riverine trade of contemporary Orissa flourishing between Suvarnapur Pattana and the neighbouring kingdoms.

At the outset, reference may be made to Sonepur Plates of Janamejaya issued from Arama-Kataka during his 17th regnal year. Interestingly enough, this epigraphic record exclusively highlights the reputation of the “Kamalvana Vanika Sthana” as the receiver of royal donation in the form of a villageGottaikela located in the Luputtarakhanda in Kosala from Janamejaya Mahabhavagupta. The grant proceeds to record that the merchant association bestowed the same village, after having registered it as a deed, to two temples, one dedicated to Lord Kesava and the other to Lord Aditya. In some form or the other, this epigraphic evidence establishes the reputation of the merchant association as an outstanding agency for sponsoring even non-commercial projects of public importance. It is indeed a matter of utter surprise that the contributions of such a commercial organization

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were not communicated either to history or literature by the successors of Janamejaya. One cannot deny that medieval despotism might have prevented the princes to let the leading traders supersede the so-called unsurpassable royal authority in the socio-economic fields and if it is a fact then Janamejaya appears to be an exception in at least giving us the clue about Kamalvana Vanika Sthana and allied subjects.

Moreover Sonepur Plate does not specify the area of operation opted by the concerned association and simply identifies the merchants of this association as “Immigrants from Khadirapadra and residents of Suvarnapur”. 31 This induces historians to represent them as mere local merchants roaming in the streets of Sonepur. But latest researches in the field of medieval trade and commerce of Orissa supplement logistic support to the much wider range of riverine trade of Suvarnapur piloted by the Kamalvana Vanika Sthana.

During 5th century AD the terms Mahavana and Mahakantara denoted the undivided Kalahandi district as revealed by the Allahabad Pillar Inscription of Samudragupta. Later on, a new nomenclature entitled this tract as Kamalvana which remained in vogue throughout the medieval period which is amply testified by the Narla Siva Temple Inscription.32 The inscription speaks about Kamala Mandala ruled by Madan Mahadev in Rama33 Vana34 Rudra35 Samvatsara. The chronogram mentioned above corresponds to 1153 Saka Era or 1231 AD. N.K.Sahu believes that the name of Kalahandi might have been derived from the term Kamala Mandala.36 On the basis of these epigraphic evidences, it appears reasonable to identify the merchants of Kamalvana Vanika Sangha as immigrants from Kalahandi who subsequently preferred to settle down at Sonepur as it was a unique venue of riverine trade. Thus what the author of Sonepur charter speaks about these merchants as “Immigrants from Khadirapadra” may be safely identified as immigrants from Rajpadar or Belkhandi situated on the confluence Tel and Utei. J.D.Beglar who visited Belkhandi in 1874-75 regards the place as “an abode of ruins of great interest and undoubted high antiquity”.37

The formation of a merchant association comprising the traders of undivided Kalahandi and Balangir districts with Sonepur as their commercial headquarters was probably a topographical necessity as far as riverine trade was concerned. In the Maranjamura Charter38 of the Somavamsi king Mahasivagupta Yayati II dated the 11th century AD the Pattana Suvarnapur figures. The word Pattana added to Suvarnapur obviously implies that the present town of Sonepur was nothing short of a port-town during the medieval period.39 As a matter of fact, riverine trading centres supplemented maritime trade and no wonder acquired parallel importance of a sea-port. The river system of the Middle Mahanadi Valley places Sonepur at the centre. The major rivers of the valley such as Tel, Suktel and Ang join the mainstream, the Mahanadi in and near Sonepur. While the Mahanadi emerging from Amarkantaka constituted the life-line of South-Kosala, its tail end did the same job for Utkala and Kalinga throughout the medieval period. The tail-end as such
merging in the Bay of Bengal appears to have added additional splendour to Che-
li-to-lo,\textsuperscript{40} the famous sea-port of international fame. Moreover, the Kalingan traders
who were specialists in maritime contact with South East Asia via Bay of Bengal
perhaps were professionally backed by the riverine traders of South-Kosala. But
historians, while assessing the prospect of maritime commerce of ancient and
medieval Orissa, pin-point their attention to the Kalingan maritime traders only and
accredit scant justice to the riverine traders of South-Kosala sponsored by the
Kamalvana Vanika Sthana which possibly extended consistent logistic support to
the Kalingan traders in connection with the export of pearls, precious stones and
diamond. Ptolemy refers categorically to the “Territory of Sabarai” which is
reasonably identified with the region of Sambalpur (Hirakhand) as an important
place containing diamonds\textsuperscript{41}. Of late, the discovery of Gopalpur grants\textsuperscript{42} dating back
to the Somavamsi king Mahabhavagupta Janamejaya reveal that Suvarnapur did
“shine with shops full of conchshells, sea-shells, pearls, gems, corals, and gold”\textsuperscript{43}. It
is worth mentioning that this grant uplifts the status of Suvarnapur as
“Mahakatakavara”. In contrast we find no authentic reference to Kalingan territory
as a source of gems and diamonds. Then wherefrom did the Kalingan traders get
the same and exported them to distant South East Asia? B.C. Mazumdar, on this
score, rightly remarks that diamond as an article had no source in Kalinga but it was
another valuable commodity of sale in Kalinga\textsuperscript{44}. Thus a correlation between South
Kosala as a territory rich in diamond deposit and Kalinga as a diamond exporting
zone makes it clear that the former supplied the article through the Mahanadi and
the latter exported the same to South East Asia. Moreover the description of Che-
li-ta-lo given by Hiuen-Tsang appears incomprehensive as it misses the one and
only mainstream Chitrotapala while shaping the topography of the great sea-port. It
is on account of this lacuna that Mr. Wadel tends to transliterate Che-li-ta-lo as
Chitratole identified with the Mahanadi river\textsuperscript{45}. Nevertheless, the Chinese pilgrim
locates Che-li-ta-lo near the sea-shore in the south east of the Odra country and
refers to it as a “resting place for sea-going traders and strangers from distant
lands”\textsuperscript{46} Alexander Cunningham, on the other hand, identifies it with Charitrapura
and locates the same somewhere near Puri.\textsuperscript{47} But from the view-point of
topographical accuracy, it must be located at the point where the river Mahanadi
mingles with the Bay of Bengal as per the commercial coordination between
Suvarnapura Pattana and Che-li-ta-lo. It is a matter of regret that neither the periplos
nor the Geographike Huphegesis of Ptolemy\textsuperscript{48} highlights the transparent river
system of the Middle Mahanadi Valley for which the riverine trade of the tract has
been cast into oblivion.

During the medieval period, diamond was found in abundance from the river-
bed of the Mahanadi covering a wider area from Sambalpur to Boudh. Of all these
places Suvarnapur commanded a unique place in procuring this article from the
river-bed due to the role of a specialised professional called Jhara who still
constitute a major community in Sonepur\textsuperscript{49}. They appear to have been employed
by the Kamalvana Vanika Sthana to extract raw diamonds from the river-bed and
process them to finished product. Apparently therefore, they did possess, as they do now, sufficient skill and knowledge about navigation. As the Mahanadi is not suitable for navigation during the summer, the Jharas desperately remained engaged during this period in looking for diamonds from the river-bed and sailed for Che-li-ta-lo only during the winter for selling them there.

The river Tel, rising from Navarangpur district and joining the Mahanadi at Sonepur, played a major role to accelerate the riverine trade of Suvarnapur. In fact, it rendered the same service to Suvarnapur Pattana as the Mahanadi did for Che-li-ta-lo. The Tel otherwise known as Telavaha in Buddhist Literature and Tailavahi in the epigraphic records of the Somavamsis tell us the tales of riverine trade during the early time. The Sera Vanija Jataka speaks about the merchants sailing in the Telavaha with their merchandise. Further; Panini in his Astadhyayi refers to Titalaka Janapada, a territory to the west of Kalinga as famous for brisk trade in rhinoceros hide. Doubtlessly, the Janapada mentioned above cannot be other than the territory centering round Titilagarh. Supplementing these evidences we may cite the archaeological findings from the excavation of Asurgarh in the district of Kalahandi in 1973 to understand the economic stability of the Tel Valley. The first layer of the excavated site belonging to 5th century AD brought as many as 539 punch marked silver coins to limelight. Such coins were in circulation in India in 4th-5th century AD as known from the works of Buddhaghosa. The excavation also disclosed terracotta figures of animals, terracotta ornaments, and pieces of bluish glass bangles. It goes without saying that such a prosperous civilization could not have been possible without the leading role of a trading community. The Tel is by far the longest and the most important river in the district of Kalahandi. Fed by perennial hill streams like Sagada, Ret, Raul, and Utei, the Tel carried a large flow of water in the winter. It seems that the merchants of Kamalvana found it feasible to carry articles most of which were precious stones and rhinoceros hide through the river up to Suvarnapur Pattana. After availing transit, they seem to have made joint-ventures with the merchants of Sonepur down the course of Mahanadi upto Che-li-ta-lo.

It is desirable from the above analysis to deduce that the breeding grounds of Kamalvana Vanika Sthana were the Tel Valley, Maraguda Valley of Kalahandi, and the river-bed of the Mahanadi bordering Sonepur. All these were extremely rich with precious stones of unique standard which provided stimulus for centuries to the riverine trade from Suvarnapur Pattana to Che-li-ta-lo.

The field study was chiefly concentrated in Sirpur in the district of Raipur, Suvarnapur (Sonepur) and Tel valley in the district of Kalahandi. In fact, the result of the above study proves to be very positive. Moreover, the antiquities encountered in Sirpur are extremely genuine. It may be mentioned here that this historical site is located at a distance of 15 kms. from the NH 6 and the diversion falls between Pithora and Mahasamund located on the bank of Mahanadi. This site houses the ruins of many Buddhist monasteries and many medieval temples. Taking the
historical importance of the site, the Archaeological Survey of India has installed two museums that preserve valuable medieval sculptures and ruins of architectural and numismatic evidences. The great Somavamsís of South Kośala had their capital headquarters around 8th century AD. Later on, they shifted their headquarters to western Orissa along the down-stream of the Mahanadi. Accordingly, antiquities provide doubtless evidences about four new capital headquarters such as Arama-kataka, Vinitapura-kataka, Sunapura-kataka, and Yayatinagara. All these sites have been identified on the banks of the Mahanadi. It appears the field study that the Somavamsís played a vital role in widening the scope of the riverine trade of South Kośala by patronizing the navigators of Vinitapura, Sunapura, and Yayatinagara.

The field study undertaken in the Tel valley of Kalahandi also reveals that the river Tel which falls into the river Mahanadi at Suvarnapur i.e., modern Sonepur, supplemented the riverine trade of the Middle Mahanadi Valley. It appears that the identical geological and topographical features of the Upper Mahanadi Valley and Tel Valley in regard to rich diamond deposits brought the traders of undivided Bolangir and Kalahandi Districts together. Primary sources collected from the State Archives, Bhubaneswar, State Museum, Bhubaneswar, N. K. Sahu Museum, P.G. Department of History, Sambalpur University, Raipur Museum, and Sirpur Museum bear adequate imprints about the formation of a prosperous commercial association called “Kamalavana Vanika Sthana” having its venue at Suvarnapur. The interpretation of data has revealed immense clues regarding the contribution of this association to the medieval economy of Orissa.

Of all the historical sites in the Middle Mahanadi Valley, that of Tarapurgad appears to be the most striking virgin-site of archaeology because of its unique reputation as a medieval riverine trading centre. Located on the bank of the river Mahanadi near Vinitapura, i.e. modern Binika in Suvarnapur district this site has been alluring the attention of the research scholars all over India and abroad to squeeze more facts relating to the history of South Kosala in particular and medieval Orissa in general. Unfortunately, however, the Somavamsi epigraphic records are strangely silent about Tararpurgad despite the site being the possible military headquarters of the Somavamsis along with its historical status as a centre of Tantric Buddhism and the venue of riverine trade.

At the outset, the nomenclature of Tarapurgad seems to be a genuine deduction from the name of the Buddhist-Tantric Deity Tara. The Sonepur Darbar literature frequently refers to Tarapurgad as the venue of goddess Tara installed by the followers of Tantric Buddhism much before the Somavamsi occupation. It also tells us that the icon of the goddess Tara was shifted to the nearby village Charda during the Ganga period and was installed as a Parsvadevi in the outer part of the Kapilesvara temple. Be that as it may, Tarapurgad appears to have been a famous Buddhist site during the early medieval period which thrived on the financial support of the riverine traders of Vinitapura. C. L. Fabri, in his magnum opus The History
of Art of Orissa maintains the view that the location of the holy shrine of Tara on the river bank obviously indicates the existence of a riverine port as the riverine traders of South Kośala and maritime traders of Kalinga invariably sought Her blessings for ensuring safety in navigation.62

The advent of the Somavamśis to South Kośala around 9th century AD appears to have transformed the site Tarapurgad to a military headquarters bearing the name of Vinitapura-kataka as revealed by the issue of many copperplate grants from here by the Somavamśi king Mahasivagupta Yayati I 63. In fact, Tarapurgad maintained its status as a natural port town as distinct from the political metropolis, Vinitapura-kataka. The pacific current of the Mahanadi at Tarapurgad seems to have added additional splendour to this port as a busy venue of riverine trade dealing with the export of bell-metal and precious stone64. In addition it was the resting place for the navigators sailing from Sirpur and Hirakhand i.e. Sambalpur.65

Of late, Sila Tripathy,66 a researcher of the Marine Archaeological Centre of the National Institute of Oceanography, Goa strives to underline the importance of the riverine ports of the Upper & Middle Mahanadi Valleys especially that of Manumunda as a remote agency of sponsoring the maritime commerce between Kalinga and South East Asia. Moreover, the learned scholar bypasses the fact that Manumunda was located on the right bank of the confluence between the Mahanadi and the Tel rivers and was the off-shoot of Suvnapura Pattana existing on the left bank. The former was utilized as a service station for repairing the boats and supplying sandalwood, precious stones etc. from the dense forest complex of Baud and Phulbani region67.

In course of the prolonged commercial intercourse, the riverine traders of Suvnapur Pattana appear to have prepared the ground for the commercial unification of South Kosala with Kalinga and Utkala in the same way as the Zollverein68 did for the German states. No wonder, it became sheer logic of history for the Somavamsis to accomplish their political unification with minimum aggression and confrontation. Thus it goes without saying that the riverine traders of the Middle Mahanadi Valley not only boosted the economy of Orissa in general and that of South Kosala in particular but also indirectly triggered the political unification and fostered Buddhism in and outside Orissa.

To conclude, the decline of the glorious riverine trade between the Upper and Lower Mahanadi Valleys became inevitable shortly after the fall of the Somavamśis of South Kosala towards the 1st decade of the 12th century AD. Moreover, it appears that the Kamalvana Vanika Sthana might have lost the royal patronage after the eclipse of their Somavamsi patrons and accordingly, they could have opted for a limited area of operation instead of sailing for Che-li-ta-lo from the security viewpoint.

The beginning of the end of riverine trade reached its climax during the reign of the Imperial Gangas. The Hundred-Year-War between the Gangas and the
Kalachuris appears to have done a great deal of damage to the economy of Subarnapur. The glory and glamour of this medieval metropolis became the tales of yester years. The Marathas and the Chauhans who succeeded the Gangas could not transform pristine tales into reality due to increasing importance of land routes and to some extent railways. Even farmers of Binka and Dunguripali preferred Bolangir while those of Birmaharajpur preferred Sambalpur to Sonepur for communication facilities and market opportunities. On this score, P.M. Nayak rightly remarks “Thus Sonepur has been reduced to a big village with some government offices. The officials of Durbar Administration have left in quest of ‘fresh woods and pastures new’. The families of weavers who produced tusser textiles rich in texture and superb in design, migrated to other commercially important centres like Barpali and Sambalpur, “since Sonepur remarks, P.M.Nayak, “with its dwindling population and deteriorating economy provided no adequate market for their handicrafts. Besides, the synthetic fabrics with their polished texture, glamour and cheaper cost replace the hand-woven textiles. Lack of mechanization of the weaving industry of Sonepur made it incapable of competing with the handloom fabrics of Andhra Pradesh.” To the un-employment of the Keots was added the underemployment of the weavers some of whom were forced to seek other professions outside Sonepur.

Transport and communication in and around Subarnapur were influenced by political and geographical considerations. It is true that its geographical inaccessibility was considered indispensable to ensure safety and security. Its location rivers and streams made it a highly strategic place. In fact, communication with Subarnapur was exclusively confined to the riverine routes. Contemporary sources indicate its status as a famous port-town. Tarapurgarh Cheli-talo (identified with Pradeep) the confluence of the rivers Tel and Ang with Mahanadi at Sonepur naturally contributed to this medieval port town as Subarnapur pattanam even if it is far away from the Bay of Bengal. The Somavamsi charter speaks about a Merchant Association called “Kamalabana Banika Sthana” with its headquarters at Sonepur. Thus trading community comprised un-divided Bolangir and Kalahandi District having monopoly on diamond trade adequate command over Kalingan maritime commerce with South East Asia.

Old Time Trade Routes

According to Dr. V. S Agrawalla, the present Sonepur was a centre of trade, connected with a number of good roads with different part of India. A notable trade route connected Titlagarh with Sonepur, where punch-marked coins of Pre-Maurya period are found in large numbers.

During the medieval period Sonepur town, located at the confluence of the Tel and Mahanadi, was a seat of political importance. It was the head-quarters of royal dynasties like Somavamsis, Kalachuris and the Telugu Chodas and was connected by roads with Ratnapur in the west, Jaipur in the east and Barsur (headquarters of Naga rulers of Baster) in the south.
Towards the last part of 18th century, there was a regular road from Cuttack passing through Banki, Baidyeswar, Boudh and Sonepur to Nagpur and it was followed by Elliot in 1750 and Leckie in 1778. This road which bifurcated at Sarangarh, one leading to Sambalpur, the other to Sonepur was taken by T. Mottee in 1766. In 1790 Leckie followed the same route from Cuttack as far as Sonepur, but from Sonepur took a shorter route through Salebhata to Nagpur. We struck off the usual road to Nagpur, write Leckie at Sonepur, and the road was "shorter by six stages". Leckie must have proceeded from Sonepur via Bankbijia, Lachhipur, Salebhata, Sarangpur, Borasambar, Surmul, Kansebera, Khuttari, Balisura, Bajipur, Ratanpur to Nagpur. Another route passed through Sonepur to Bhojpur and, leaving Sambalpur on the left, ran through Chhotanagpur, Amarkantak, Bundelkhand and Chhatarpur towards Nagpur. This route was suggested by Mudoji Bhonsla to Governor of Bengal for James Anderson and captain Campbell seeking the way from Cuttack to Nagpur.

JDM Beglar, the first Archeologist who visited Sonepur in 1875-76 during the reign of Niladhar Sing Deo followed the pilgrim Road known as Jagannath Road along the right bank of the Mahanadi. This road, too, was taken by RD Banerjee who visited Sonepur in 1929, while BC Mazumdar took the direct road from Hugli to Mayurbhanja, and Bamada States. There was another road from Sonepur via Tarbha, Kalahandi, Rayagada, Ganjam to Mukhalingam. This was the trade route for pack-bullock traffic. For movement between neighbouring states, there were separate roads from Sonepur to Boud, to Rairakhol and to Bolangir. Sonepur was linked with Sambalpur via Dharmasala, via Rajnagar and via Dhama across the Mahanadi and through Binika-Turum, Rampur-Barpali and Binka-Dunguripali roads. But the Mahanadi primarily remained the highway to east Orissa, for traffic of men and transport of materials.

The construction and maintenance of the communication system in this ex-state rested with the rulers, but the Mahanadi flows on via Raipur and Sonepur to Cuttack and that was the greatest gift of the gods to this Subarnapattanam. Cobden Ramsay writes:

The greater part of the export trade of the State is carried by the Mahanadi and a considerable export of rice and pulses is carried on with Cuttack and Sambalpur.

The Tel is comparatively free from obstruction and during the monsoon months there is some boat traffic from Patna and timber is also floated down from the upper reaches of the river in the Kalahandi State.

In the Mahanadi, just opposite Sonepur, there are dangerous rapids, which render navigation difficult. There is a good road, the Cuttack-Sonepur-Sambalpur road on the right bank of Mahanadi connecting with Dhama in the Sambalpur
district and passing through important villages of Binka, there are bungalows every ten miles from Cuttack up to Baudh-Sonepur border and at Dhama. A new road is under construction from Dhama, the northern bank of the Mahanadi in Sambalpur district, to the border of the State on the northern bank of the river and from there a State road is being constructed to a place opposite Binka and in future the traffic between the State and the Sambalpur District will cross the Mahanadi at Binka., a far easier crossing than at Dhama. There is an excellent road on the western border of the State forming the connecting link between Sambalpur, Bargah and Barpali in the Sambalpur District and Salebhatta on the main road to the Patna and Kalahandi States. There is a rest House on this road at Dunguripali in the Sonepur State, 12 miles from Barpali. There is a surface road from Sonepur to Tarbha, an important mart on the border of Sonepur State.

This depicts the state of communication in the ex-State during the early part of this century. The Durbar administration was making annual budgetary allotments or construction of new roads and maintenance of the old ones.

Road Transport

Before creation of the district, there was only 185.95 km of PWD roads with single lane in damaged condition. In the meanwhile Works Department has increased its PWD road to 295.30 Km after handing over 30 km of Sonepur-Balangir road length to National Highway Authority. At present the district has

1) National Highway (NH) – 30 Km
2) State Highway (SH) – 48.25 Km
3) Major District Road (MDR) – 59.86 Km
4) Other District Roads (ODR) – 187.19 Km

The Works Department has substantially increased its infrastructure on construction of bridges and roads. As many as 30 bridges have been constructed so far and the PWD roads have been developed (a) Intermediate Lane 144.40 Km (b) Double Lane – 41.18 Km out of State / Central Govt. scheme in a phased manner.

**Length of different categories of Roads from 2008 to 2011.**

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<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Categories of Road</th>
<th>2008-09</th>
<th>2009-11</th>
<th>2010-11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Major District Roads</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Other District Roads</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Forest Roads</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Grampanchayat Roads</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>2621</td>
<td>2616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>P.S.Roads</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>655</td>
<td>629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Village Roads</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>438</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vehicles**

In the ex-State of Sonepur, bullock-carts constituted the main bulk of conveyance. Now bullock-carts have been replaced by bicycle, bicycles by bikes. The number of motor cycles has gone up from 640 in 2009 to 5532, LMV car from 29 to 80, tractor from 25 to 169, scooter from 10 to 320, moped from 6 to 650, autorickshaw from 2 to 14 etc. The total number of vehicles has increased from 776 to 7045 (source : RTO, Subarnapur)
Public Transport

Prior to 1945, the management of the motor transport services in the State was with private operators. In 1948, the Govt. of Odisha introduced the state transport services in the district. The routes from the town of Balangir to Cuttack, Sambalpur, Jharsuguda, Sonepur, Lathore, Tarbha, Bhawanipatna, Tusra, Baudh and Belpara were nationalized.

Waiting rooms and rest sheds have been constructed at important stations. The frequency of bus service to different places has increased in many routes according to the density of the traffic. Express services have been introduced on long routes with a view to enabling passengers to catch corresponding trains and bus services of different places. Advance booking is available in some places. Special buses on demand and buses on reservation with special facilities for students, athletes and delegates are also provided.

After 1980s lots of private operators started operating in the route Bhubaneswar-Balangir via Sonepur, Sonepur-Sambalpur via Binka, Sonepur-Baudh, Sonepur-Balangir, Sonepur-Dunguripali, Sonepur-Bargarh, Sonepur-Phulbani, Sonepur-Bhabanipatna, etc.

After the construction of the Mahanadi Bridge at Sonepur in 1993, the direct communication from Sonepur- Sambalpur, Sonepur-Birmaharjpur started.

Rail Roads

There is no railway station in Subarnapur district except at Dunguripali, which is on the way to Bhubaneswar-Sambalpur-Bargarh-Dunguripali-Balangir broad gauge. For a distance of 12.13 km. only. The only train that halts at Dunguripali is the Balangir- Bhubaneswar intercity.

The proposed Khurda-Balangir Broad Gauge is going to connect Bhubaneswar to Sonepur town and is presently under construction.

Waterways and Ferries

The Sonepur ex-State had a number of ferries.

The types of boats used for these ferries are called Dangas which are dug-outs, Patwas which are long narrow boats made of Sal Planks fitted with iron nails and Kuslis which are broader than Patwas. The ferry service across the Mahanadi is very dangerous on account of boulders, but the boatmen know from years of experience how to avoid rocks. The ferryghats on the rivers Mahanadi and Tel at Sonepur and on the Ang on Binka-Rampur-Dunguripali road were managed by Public Works department.

Now- a- days waterways have given way to roadways.

There was proliferation of roads and bridges after Sonepur was declared a district. While the Sonepur-Binka-Dungripali-Rampur Road, Dharmasala-Subalaya-Gariamunda Road, Arigaon-Bishalpali Road, Sahajbalal Bhimtikira-Siali canal...
Road, Dungripali-Kapasiva Road were converted into intermediate lane from 2005 to 2015 with assistance from CRF, NABARD, FDR, SHDP, ULB, KBK SARCA for different projects. Sonepur-Sambalpur Road was converted into Double Lane under CRF assistance in 2010-11.

Bridges over Bishalpali Nullah, Domini Nullah, Dungripali Nullah Salepali Nullah, Singhijuba Nullah, Chauki Nullah, over Mahanadi, Surabali Jore, Murmuri Nullah on Sonepur Binka-Dungripali Road, Taraikela Nullah on Khari-Taraikela Road, Mahada Nullah, Gariamunda Nullah on Dharmasala-Subalaya-Gariamunda Road, Sanjore Nullah, Badjore Nullah, Murmuri Nullah on Arigan-Bishalpali Road, Baiganjuri Nullah, Kabattalai Nullah on Sonepur-Sardhapali Road under financial assistance from NABARD, KBK, CRF, ULB, etc. have been completed with effect from 1999 to 2015. The longest bridge in the district however, in the Biju Pattnaik Setu, 45.82 mtrs. in length over the Mahanadi built on NABARD assistance of Rs. 3910 lac was the fulfilment of a long-felt need of the people of the district. This along with the bridge over Surubali jore has established all-weather link with Sambalpur and Rairakhel.

Postal and Networking

The postal service in Sonepur is one of the oldest of its kind among the garjats. Cobden Ramsay writes: The imperial post runs from Sambalpur to Sonepur and on to Baudh : there is a sub-post office at Sonepur and letter-boxes at important villages in the state.

Sonepur has a Head Post Office with 12 sub-post offices and 85 branch post offices. The sub-post offices, too have speed post services. While the number of sub-post office in Sonepur is 4 and Tarva and Dunguripali 2 each, there are 13,17, 19, 17, 10 and 9 branch post office at Binka, Birmaharajpur, Dunguripali, Tarbha, Ullunda and Sonepur respectively.

TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES

In 2010-11 the number of fixed landline was 1317, PCOs 9, and broad band connections 578. The number of mobile users stood at 55680.
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25. Sirpur located on the bank of the river Mahanadi in Chhatisgarh State was the oldest capital of the Somavamśis.
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28. Vidya Dehjia, Early Stone Temples of Orissa, p.17
29. Ibid
30. Arama-kataka is identified with Rampur in the district of Suvannapur. S. R. Nema, Political History of the Somavamśi Kings of South Kośala and Utkala, p. 199.
31. Dehjia, n.28, p.17
33. In Chronogram, the term Rama denotes 3.
34. Vana denotes 5
35. Rudra denotes 11. The year 3511 is reversed to get the Saka Era 1153 which is equal to 1231 AD.
36. N. K. Sahu, n.32, p.129
38. N.26.p.52
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41. Ibid, p.253
42. OHRJ, Vol. XXXIX, p. 92 f.
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47. Shah, n.39,p.109
49. Field study undertaken in Sonepur during the month of August 1996 revealed that the Jharas worship goddess Manikesvari as their presiding deity for procuring plenty of Manikyas i.e. gold from the river-bed.
50. Ibid
51. n.37, p.42
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55. Ibid
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69. Chief Engineer, National Highways, Bhubaneswar
70. Chief Engineer, Rural Works, Bhubaneswar
71. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Odisha, Bhubaneswar.
72. Panchayatrad Department, Bhubaneswar.
73. Chief Engineer, R&B, Bhubaneswar.
74. Housing and Urban Development Deptt.
CHAPTER-IX

ECONOMY AND BANKING

Introductory

The district of Subarnapur which extends over an area of 2337 sq. kms. ranks twenty eighth among the thirty districts of the State in area. The density of population of the district is 261 persons per square km while the State average is 270 (2011 census). Its per capita income was Rs. 25,266/- in 2009-10 as compared to the state averages of Rs. 33,029 (at current price). Structurally its economy is predominantly dependent on agriculture. While there is rare presence of manufacturing industry, service sector is growing in the district. The principal crop paddy which covers over 79 percent of the district’s cultivated area had an average yield rate of about 33 Qntls. per Hect. in 2011-12 against state average yield rate of 23 Qntls. The district is less affected by flood than drought which occurs periodically due to insufficient or uneven distribution of rains and lack of systematically widespread irrigation facilities.

About 80 percent of the population derive their means of livelihood from agriculture whereas about 50 percent of the total income comes from agriculture. Dunguripali and Binika blocks are fed by the Hirakud canal System and the remaining areas mainly depend on rainfall.

There are few small industries existing in the district but mostly the unorganized cottage industries like handloom have survived till today.

The district is not endowed with rich minerals like iron, coal, manganese, graphite etc. which mainly provide large scale industries. Hence industrially Subarnapur is at a disadvantage. However, it district provides ample scope for establishment of agriculture-based industries.

The district has a meagre 12 kilometers railway on the Titlagarh-Sambalpur line. A rake loading point is proposed at Dunguripali railway station to facilitate transportation of agricultural products to neighboring states and delivery of major PDS items like Kerosene oil and other evacuation items.

Livelihood Pattern

About 80 percent of the total population are agriculturists and the rest, weaving community, field labourers and workers in other spheres. There is no major manufacturing unit here.

According to 2011 census, the total population of this district is 6, 10, 183 of which 4, 88, 146 (80 percent) are agriculturist along with their dependents, 73, 243 (12 percent) engaged in production other than cultivation like weaving and in small manufacturing units. Only a handful are engaged in commerce, transport and miscellaneous occupations.
The census 2011 classifies the total population into two categories, workers and non-workers. In the category of workers there are 2,86,661 (47 Percent) persons and in the category of non-workers 3,23,522 (53 percent) persons. Further the persons in the category of workers are divided into four broad categories consisting of cultivators (74,005), Agricultural Labourers (1,39,413), workers in Household industries (18,756) and other workers (54,487). The census data reveal that cultivators and agricultural labourers have the highest concentrations in rural areas, a fact which indicates great dependence of the people of the district on agricultural operations.

**Prices**

Grain is cheap for a month or so after harvest throughout the district when the producer is obliged to sell in order to procure the means to pay the rent and to liquidate his debt.

From 2008-09 to 2010-11 the variation in wholesale price of some important crops is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name of the Crop</th>
<th>Wholesale prices in Rs. Per Qtl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Paddy</td>
<td>868.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Mung</td>
<td>3467.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Biri</td>
<td>3429.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Maze</td>
<td>1200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Groundnut</td>
<td>1855.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Til</td>
<td>3960.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Potato</td>
<td>700.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Paddy</td>
<td>868.00</td>
<td>997.22</td>
<td>1008.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Mung</td>
<td>3467.00</td>
<td>4272.00</td>
<td>5500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Biri</td>
<td>3429.00</td>
<td>3835.00</td>
<td>4111.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Maze</td>
<td>1200.00</td>
<td>1050.00</td>
<td>900.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Groundnut</td>
<td>1855.00</td>
<td>2406.67</td>
<td>2570.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Til</td>
<td>3960.00</td>
<td>3591.67</td>
<td>4000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Potato</td>
<td>700.00</td>
<td>741.58</td>
<td>800.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It may be seen that while the prices of major crops per Qtl. have increased during the period, the price of maize has decreased continually which may be attributed to lack of demand for the crop.

The variation in rural retail prices of some important commodities in the district from 2008-09 to 2010-11 is given below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>13.85</td>
<td>14.90</td>
<td>17.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Atta/Flour</td>
<td>70.52</td>
<td>19.02</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Moong Dal</td>
<td>45.79</td>
<td>77.21</td>
<td>72.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Arhar</td>
<td>49.27</td>
<td>77.02</td>
<td>68.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Mustard Oil</td>
<td>77.50</td>
<td>68.35</td>
<td>75.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Groundnut oil</td>
<td>75.21</td>
<td>67.71</td>
<td>77.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Coconut oil</td>
<td>86.31</td>
<td>88.96</td>
<td>110.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Potato</td>
<td>8.21</td>
<td>13.15</td>
<td>9.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Onion</td>
<td>12.67</td>
<td>15.69</td>
<td>18.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>22.48</td>
<td>36.10</td>
<td>32.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Gur/Molasses</td>
<td>25.31</td>
<td>38.73</td>
<td>38.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Salt (Iodised)</td>
<td>6.60</td>
<td>8.52</td>
<td>8.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Labour situation and Wage system**

In the ex-state the skilled and half-skilled workers earned 8 annas and 6 annas respectively, the unskilled labourer earned 5 annas a day. The field labourer was paid 2 2/2 Khandis (1 maunds and 10 Deers) of dhan (unhusked rice) and a nistar (relief) of 2 pudugs and 4 khandis (10 maunds) a year, the khamari (headguti) got 3 khadis (1 maund and 20 sers) a month and a nistar of 3 pudugs (12 maunds) (Bengal Gazetteers). Most of the labour in the district continue to be based on agriculture and they include both male and female. In some places like Binka and Dunguripali Block we have double crop agriculture. So agricultural labourers are found in those areas throughout the year.

Most of the labourers are paid on daily basis and in compliance with the minimum wages of the Govt. Male and female labourers get equal wages as per the equal remuneration act but in a very few cases agricultural labour gets less than their counterparts. Female labourers are called “Reja” and male labourers, “Kuli”. The daily wages is called “Vuti”. In some cases some labourers take advance from the employees which is called “Bahaband” and do work for a year and pay the rest amount monthly. They are called “Halia”. There are some contractual labourers in agriculture also and they are called “Mulla” i.e. a verbal agreement regarding the cost of the job decided by the employer and the employees.

Besides Binka and Dunguripali area, single crop agriculture is found in other areas of the district where they get 4 months job only. Disorganised cottage industries like handloom operate in some places of the district. About 150 Bidi Workers are engaged in Bidi Rolling works as home workers and they are getting wages as fixed by the Govt. as piece rate system.
Due to lack of industrialisation and irrigation in some areas of the district people advance-booked migrate to Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu, Karnataka mostly for brick making works after “Nuakhai”.

The Subarnapur district is industrially most backward. The only industry that
is M/s GanapatiBalaji Spinning Mill situated at Sonepur which employs more than
200 industrial labourers has gone to sleep now.

Besides agricultural and industrial works more than 20,000 construction
workers like masons, electricians, carpenters, construction labourers, painters etc.
have registered in the Office of District Labour Officer, Subarnapur under Odisha
Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board. These construction
workers are engaged in construction of roads and buildings, both private as well as
government. Most of them are MGNREGS workers. These construction workers
get different financial assistance from Odisha Board and Construction Workers
Welfare Board. Both male and female labourers are engaged in construction work.
However, there is a high demand for skilled labour here but most of the labourers
are unskilled or semi-skilled. On the job training programmes for these construction
workers to uplift their skill are conducted by the Welfare Board. Some of the skilled
workers are getting higher than minimum wages fixed by the Govt.

Wages

The variation in average daily wages of different classes of rural labourers
between 2008-09 and 2010-11 is given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Type of Rural Labour</th>
<th>Average daily wages per man day (in Rs.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Skilled Labourer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>180.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii.</td>
<td>Mason</td>
<td>175.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii.</td>
<td>Tractor Driver</td>
<td>142.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Agricultural Field Labourer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>54.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii.</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>43.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Other Agricultural Labourer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>58.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii.</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>47.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pulses, maize and oil-seeds are grown in the district in plenty. Different
kinds of vegetables such as brinjals, pumpkins, radish, potatoes and tomatoes are
raised more or less throughout the district. Cauliflowers, cabbages and other winter
vegetables are also grown and cultivation of these crops is becoming increasingly
popular. Sonepur is famous for its betel leaf (Belari Pan) and handspun cloth. The
weavers of the district are very skilful. Dhotis, Sarees, bed-sheets, napkins,
shirting, table-cloth, purdahs, dusters and other cotton articles or daily uses and tussar articles are manufactured. The products are also in demand in foreign countries and the weavers have received certificates of merit in several exhibitions held in India. One of the prominent personalities in the textile sector is Padmashree Chaturbhuja Meher, who has popularized the “Bandhakala” i.e. the art of tie & dye. All over India and beyond. Nowadays, these textiles are also used to create fashionable wear and it has great potential to effectively compete in the fashion industries. The creativity in the silver ornaments or Tarbha is greatly appreciated by the people of Odisha and other bordering States.

**Employment Exchange**

The District Employment Exchange was established in year 1993 with its headquarters at Sonepur to cater to the needs of the unemployed. The following statement indicates the number of registration, the number of vacancies notified and the number of placements made during the recent years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of registration</th>
<th>Number of placements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>14340</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>16579</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>17001</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>17061</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>15381</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>14272 (up to August 2015)</td>
<td>08 (up to August 2015)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BANKING**

The first bank in Sonepur, in the organized sector was Sonepur Central Cooperative Union Ltd., established in 1949 and the first commercial bank was the Sonepur branch of State Bank of India in 1967. Prior to that the monetary economics of the region was completely in the unorganised sector. It consisted of Mehers (Bhullas), Sundhis and rich agriculturists who lent money to the farmers, artisans and others. Money-lending was carried on by the rich along with their main business. The people of the region were too poor to afford any saving and the money-lenders did not receive any deposit from the public. As a result there was no practice of indigenous banking.

The interior area of Sonepur was opened to outside commercial world after 1933. Businessmen from outside Odisha established themselves at different market places and at different rural market centres (Hats) of Sonepur, Binka, Tarbha, Dungripali etc. These businessmen were engaged in procurement of agricultural commodities like paddy, rice, pulses, oil-seeds, kendu leaf, bamboo, timber and other minor forest produce and were exporting them to different places outside the district. In the process of procurement, they were also advancing money to poor cultivators and obtaining their crops at very low rates in the harvesting season. They were importing consumer goods like salt, kerosene, cloth and other
general merchandise and selling these to village shop-keepers at wholesale rates. Many of these businessmen were functioning as short-term money-lenders to the producers and petty traders. They were mostly operating in urban/semi-urban areas. The opening of the Titilagarh-Sambalpur railway line from 1964 opened further new markets mostly in Sonepur sub-division.

The *Wazib-ul-Urz* (1937) provides that “cases of sublease which are for more than one year and in which the rents are alleged to be paid in advance at a time shall be treated as cases of usufructuary mortgage”. This shows that businessmen and money-lenders were keeping mortgage of landed property. Other mortgageable assets were gold and silver ornaments, utensils, agricultural implements, household goods and furniture and sometimes house-sites. The short-term loans by the businessmen were usually at prohibitive rates of interest if the debtors had no assets to be given on mortgage. Lending money at discriminative rates of interest prevailed. It ranged from 18.5 to 300 per cent. The lower the loan, the higher the interest. One rupee carried 25 paisa interest a month. Paddy-lending was adopted by many Agharias and Bhulias. The paddy-loan was repaid during harvest at 25 per cent rate of interest.

The Bolangir District Central Co-operative Bank Ltd. (BDCC) came into being on 4 July 1956 vide registration No.1/B 1956 after amalgamation of the two ex-state Central Cooperative Banks viz. Bolangir Central Cooperative Bank Ltd. of 1934 and Sonepur Central Cooperative Union Ltd. of 1949. The area of operation of the bank covered the whole of the revenue districts of Bolangir and Sonepur. At present, seven branches of the BDCC Bank including one women’s branch are functioning in Subarnapur district. After formation of this Bank many Cooperative Societies sprang up and their activities have been expanded to 72 Societies. But the amount of loan available through these agencies does not fully meet the volume of rural credit needs.

The State Bank of India opened its Sonepur branch on 28 March 1967 to cater to the banking needs of quite a vast area. It was the first bank in the region performing all modern commercial banking functions for its customers. Over a period of time the State Bank opened 12 branches and extended banking facilities to the rural parts of the district. Besides accepting deposits, it has granted credit limits to various small-scale industrial units and to mercantile firms. It has also given finance to holders of warehouse receipts granted by the Orissa State Warehousing Corporation. Financing the co-operative institutions have also been taken up and remittance facilities availed. The branch also maintains the Government Currency Chest and Small Coin Depot and has taken over the Government work of the Treasury.

After passing of the Regional Rural Bank (RRB) Act, 1976 Bolangir Anchalik Gramya Bank (BAGB) sponsored by SBI was formed and it opened many branches in Sonepur. In 2012 the Utkal Grammeen Bank (UGB) was formed with the amalgamation of the BAGB, Rushikulya and Utkal RRBs. At present, Subarnapur district has 20 branches of UGB catering to the financial needs of rural people.
Primary Land Mortgage Co-operative Banks had been established at Sonepur in 1966 and subsequently renamed as Cooperative Agricultural Rural Development Bank. Presently it has become defunct.

In the public sector, Subarnapur District had 7 branches of BDCC, 18 branches of UGB and 10 branches of SBI by 2006 to handle the banking requirements of the people. With the opening of a branch of Andhra Bank in the year 2007 at Sonepur other nationalized commercial banks opened their branches in the district.

Now Private Banks have come up. Axis Bank is the first private sector bank which started operation in the district in February 2012. ICICI Bank, DCB, Indus Ind Bank and HDFC Banks have followed, besides, 41 Business Correspondents (BCs) are providing banking services to the rural people at their door step.

The branch position of the banks year-wise has been indicated in Table-1

The Co-operative Sector

There are 64 Primary Agriculture Cooperative Societies (PACS) having 78821 active members out of whom are 24463 are loanee members. There are seven other cooperative credit societies with 445 members. Besides, 02 primary House Building Co-Op. Societies with 1556 members, there is 01 Employees Consumer Co-op Store and 02 Students Consumer Co-Op. Store with 53 and 115 members respectively. There are also 02 Regional Co-Op. Marketing Societies with 166 members and 2 other marketing societies with 245 members.

The Present Scenario

At present the district has a network of 64 branches comprising 36 Commercial Banks, 20 Utkal Grameen Banks, 7 DCCBs and 1 LDB. The Bolangir District Central Cooperative Bank has migrated to CBS platform. From 2000 onwards there has been a sea change in the banking arena of Subarnpur district.

Further, new banking outlets like Automated Teller Machines (ATMs), Kiosks, (Business Correspondents) BCs, Customer Service Points (CSPs), Point of Sale (POS), Internet Banking, Mobile Banking etc. have been created for easy access to banking transactions on 24 x 7 basis for the customers. Gradually a good number of other banking players both from public sector and private sector have opened branches not only at Sonepur town but also at Blocks and at GP level.

For details of the number of branches (bank wise) including other banking outlets of Subarnpur District see Table-3.

Overview of key indicators of performance of banks in Subarnapur District

Annual Credit Plan

The Ground Level Credit flow under priority sector increased by 34% from Rs. 257 crore during the year 2013-14 to Rs. 344 crore in 2014-15. As against the target of Rs. 445 crore. The ground level credit flow under Priority Sector, during the year
2014-15 was Rs. 344 crore which stands at 77% of the target and 34 % growth over last year’s achievement. A target of Rs. 535 crore has been fixed for the current financial year 2015-16.

Deposit

The average growth in deposits of all the banks during the past 03 years has been 18% in the district. As on 31 March 2015, the total deposit of the district stands at Rs. 1141 crore which has shown a growth of 17% over the previous year (Rs. 975 crore). Agency wise position reveals that Commercial banks have the largest share in deposits (73%), followed by RRB (16%) & Cooperatives (11%).

Loan & Advances Outstanding

The average growth in loans & advances outstanding in all the banks during the past 03 years has been 15 % in the district. As on 31 March 2015, the total loan & advances outstanding is Rs. 815 crore which shows a growth of 15 % over the previous year (Rs. 710 crore). The share of Commercial Banks, RRBs and Cooperative Banks stands at 39%, 17% and 44% respectively.

Credit Deposit (CD) Ratio

The Credit to Deposit ratio of all the banks in the district as on 31 March 2015 stands at 71%. Agency wise analysis reveals that CBs, RRBs and all Cooperative Banks have CD ratio of 38%, 77% and 172% respectively.

Kisan Credit Cards/ Ru Pay Kisan Cards

As on 31 March 2015, 80,855 KCC have been issued in the district with an outstanding balance of Rs. 328.96 crore. The banks have initiated up scaling of KCC to ATM enabled Ru Pay Kisan Cards in the district. As on 31 March 2015, 9,000 KCC have been upscaled to ATM enabled Ru Pay Kisan Card in the district, enabling 24 x 7 access to banking facility to the farmers.

CHANGES IN APPROACH TO BANKING

The service area approach has been adopted to bring an orderly and planned development of specific villages earmarked as “Service Area” for each bank Branch, on the basis of local conditions. The approach also contemplates continuous monitoring of progress in the implementation of credit plan in their respective service areas. Now the service area approach is applicable to Govt. sponsored schemes. While the commercial banks/RRBs are free to lend in any rural/semi-urban area, the borrowers will also have the choice of approaching any branch/bank for their credit requirements.

The Lead Bank scheme was formulated in Dec 69, under which each district had been assigned to different banks (Public/Private) to act as consortium leader to coordinate the efforts of all credit institutions in the allotted district particularly in
matters like branch expansion and credit planning. The role of Lead Bank in Bolangir District has been given to State Bank of India.

The District Credit Plan is under Lead bank System which aims at overall development of a district through the coordinated efforts of Banks acting in unison with the developmental organs of the State Government at the district level. It makes the credit institutions and the Government departments fully conscious of their respective role and responsibility in the formulation as well as implementation of the credit plan. The implementation of the credit plan is being reviewed in quarterly interval at Block level and DCC meeting.

It was observed that banking facility is enjoyed by a small group of people having sound means. To cover all and to extend banking facility to all, different schemes were launched under Financial Inclusion which includes meeting the credit needs of the people belonging to the low income group, giving access to the payment system and providing remittance facility to them. In order to ensure that these people do not encounter difficulties in opening bank accounts the ”Know your Customer” or KYC procedure has been simplified.

Govt. is taking steps to open at least one brick and mortar branch in each unbanked Gram Panchayat during 2014-2019. In Subarnapur district, out of 96 G.Ps, 72 are unbanked G.Ps.

Further, to expand the availability of banking service in rural areas with the objective of ensuring greater financial inclusion and increasing the outreach of the banking sector, RBI in public interest permitted banks to use the services of Non-governmental organizations /Self-help groups, Microfinance institutions and other civil society organizations as intermediaries in providing financial and banking service through Business Correspondent (BC) and Business Facilitators (BF) model. This facilitates banks to open S.B accounts and to do cash in/cash out transactions (Up to Rs. 10,000/-) at a location much closer to the rural habitation through the BCs /BFs.

In order to educate the people of rural and urban areas with regard to various financial products and services available from the financial sector and to make them aware of the advantages of being connected to that, free financial literacy counseling has been taken up by the banks at the instance of RBI. A Financial Literacy Centre was established on 21.09.2012 by State Bank of India in the district with an objective to provide free financial literacy/ education and credit counseling to the public. Till date, 61 camps, 1 seminar and 7 work-shops have been conducted by FLCC covering 2931 participants.

A Bharat Nirman Volunteer (BNV) is an individual who comes voluntarily from a rural household to act as a link between a group of families and hosts of various line departments with a purpose to ensure the unreached households to access benefits under various government sponsored programmes. In other words, they are “the last mile human connectivity between programmes and the
unreached”. Till date 31,000 volunteers have enrolled as BNVs in different states of the country and the target is to enrol around one lakh sixty thousand by March 2016.

**State Bank Rural Self Employment Training Institute (SB- RSETI)**

SBI has set up Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs) across the country as institutions to mitigate unemployment and underemployment problem among the youth in the country. RSETIs are non-profit institutions established with the support of State and Central Governments. The objective of this institute is to generate self-employment in rural areas through training for capacity building and by facilitating in settlement in vocations. RSETIs are imparting comprehensive quality training in personality and skill development areas to the rural youth. They enable candidates to launch profitable micro enterprises either with or without the credit linkage from financial institutions. They are also facilitated to secure wage employment in their skill areas elsewhere. As on date, SBI has established 116 RSETIs across the country and most of these RSETIs have been established in geographically and socially challenging areas.

In Orissa there are 17 RSETIs set up through SBI. In Sonepur District it has been functioning since dt. 11.06.2012. In Sonepur 1527 candidates in 58 batches have already been trained in different activities. Out of which 1020 candidates (68%) have been settled.

**Differential Rate of Interest (DRI) Scheme**

Under the DRI scheme, banks provide individual loans up to Rs. 15,000/- at a concessional rate of interest of 4% to the weaker sections of the community for engaging in productive and gainful activities. However, for persons with disabilities (PWD) a sum of Rs. 5,000/- for purchase of aids, appliances and equipment can be granted apart from the loan amount of Rs. 15,000/-. In order to ensure that persons belonging to SC/ST also derive benefit under DRI scheme, banks have been advised to grant such advances to SC/STs to the extent of not less than 40% of total DRI advance. The target under DRI scheme continues to be 1% of the previous year’s total advances.

**BENCH-MARK FOR ADVANCES**

The followings are some of the prescribed norms to be followed by the banks:

a) The credit deposit ratio of the banks should be 60%

b) The priority sector advance should be minimum 40% of the total advances.

c) The agriculture advance should be minimum 18% of the total advances.
d) The share of weaker section advances to be minimum 25% of total priority sector advances.

e) DRI advances should be minimum 1% of previous years gross bank credit.

REFINANCING INSTITUTIONS

- Agricultural finance: NABARD
- Industrial finance: SIDBI
- SBF finance: MUDRA

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN THE ROLE OF BANKING

(i) PRADHAN MANTRI JAN DHAN YOJANA (PMJDY)

On 15\textsuperscript{th} Aug 2014 the Prime Minister announced Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) which is a National Mission for financial inclusion as 2 out of 3 adults in India do not have a bank account. This is important for attracting people left out of the mainstream of the financial system.

The PMJDY is executed in the mission mode to achieve its objectives in two phases basing on the following six pillars:

1) Universal access to banking facilities—mapping of each district into Sub Service Area (SSA) catering to 1000-1500 households in a manner that every habitation has access to banking facilities within a reasonable distance of 5 Kms.

2) Providing basic banking Accounts with overdraft facilities and \textit{Rupay} card to all households.

3) Financial literacy programme Creation of credit guarantee fund.

4) Micro insurance.

5) Unorganized Pension scheme.

Under the mission, the first 3 pillars were given thrust in the first year.

In the second phase of Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, three ambitious social security schemes pertaining to the insurance and pension sectors, namely Pradhan Mantri Jiban Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) for life insurance, Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Jojana (PMSBY) for accident insurance and Atal Pension Yojana (APY). Pension plan for unorganized sectors was launched by the Prime Minister on 9.5.2015 to move towards creating a Universal Social Security System targeted especially to the poor and the underprivileged.
PMJDY in the district

The number of unbanked GPs in the district is 72. The number of households within the banking fold is 53,550 out of 1,51,136 which comes to a meagre 35%. The rest 65% stand out of the banking services. This is a poor picture, and this must improve. There must be universal access to banking facilities PMJDY provides basic saving deposit accounts with Ru Pay card with 1 lakh accident insurance cover an overdraft facility up to Rs. 5,000/-. 

Status of BC/ CSP/ BF

The number of unbanked villages with population of 2000 and more is 16. So the banks have opened 101201 PMJDY accounts out of which 74077 Ru Pay debit cards have been issued and 14831 accounts are AADHAR linked. Details in Table-3 (Appendix).

As on 31 March 2015, out of 829 villages in the district, 829 have been covered through services of 128 Banking Correspondents (BC)/ Bank Mitras. As on 31 March 2015, 101201 accounts were opened under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) of which 74077 (73 %) have been issued RuPay Cards. Banks have taken up enrolment under the Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Yojana (PMSBY), Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) and Atal Pension Yojana (APY) in a big way. The progress under the schemes as on 31 July 2015 stands at 33967, 7119 and 369, respectively.

(ii) Roll out of Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY)

Micro Units Development & Refinance Agency limited (MUDRA) was launched by the Prime Minister on 8.4.2015 as a new financial entity for developing financial institutions through refinance to those lending to micro enterprises engaged in manufacturing, trading, and service sector up to Rs. 10 lakh. It is aimed at increasing the access of small borrowers to credit from formal financial sector. There are three categories of MUDRA loans: Sishu covering loans up to Rs.50000/-, Kishor covering loans above Rs. 50000/- and up to Rs. 5 lakh and Tarun covering loans above Rs. 5 up to Rs. 10 lakh. Presently MUDRA is functioning as an offshoot of SIDBI.

(iii) Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)

As per the policy of the Government, any financial assistance given by different schemes is to be deposited in the beneficiary’s bank account directly to obviate the chance of misappropriation. Accordingly, as on 31.03.2015, banks have opened 86717 accounts through which Govt.’s financial help is directly credited to the beneficiaries’ account.
SELF HELP GROUPS AND MICRO FINANCE

1. Introduction

Self Help Groups are informal groups which come into existence either on their own or through the efforts of an SHPI. Its main purpose is to extend help to its members through thrift and savings. SHGs are promoted mainly by ICDS, NGO, Officials of Block and DRDA and Banks. To make the credit requirement more demand driven and ensuring its fruitful utilization in the year 1992, NABARD launched SHG-Bank linkage programme on a pilot basis. Under the SHG-Bank linkage programme, SWORR and Global Green are acting as SHPI in the district. Scheme for promotion of Women SHGs in LWE districts through Anchor NGO is being implemented from the year 2012-13. NRDC, Peoples’ Forum and SWORR are the Anchor NGOs for this programme in Subarnapur District. This project is an attempt at having NGO-SHPI to work as Business Facilitator (BF), for banks to enable them to serve not merely as an SHPI for promoting and enabling credit linkage of these groups with banks, but also serving as a banking/business facilitator, tracking, monitoring these groups and also being responsible for loan repayments. On the International Day for Women on 8th March 2001, Government of Orissa launched a special programme called “Mission Shakti” under which 1,00,000 women SHGs are to be formed in the State during 2001-2002 to 2004-2005. The Mission’s approach is to strengthen the socio-economic status of women in the state through creation of economic assets. Each revenue village is to have a SHG with credit linkage. A programme known as “Swayam Siddha” supported by Government of India has been launched in the State for implementation in 36 Blocks of KBK including Boudh district. The Scheme aims at capacity building of women SHGs through training for income generating activities and it is implemented through ICDS. A special scheme named ‘TRUPTI’ has also been launched by Govt. of Odisha to strengthen the SHG movement.

The Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) programme has been restructured as National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) w.e.f. 01.04.2012. This programme aims to reduce poverty by enabling the poor households to access gainful self-employment through building strong grass root institutions for the poor. Odisha Livelihoods Mission (OLM) is the nodal agency to implement NRLM in the State. NRLM is designed to mobilize the poor into functionally effective community owned institutions, speed up their financial inclusion & strengthen their livelihood through capacity building.

A pilot project has been taken up for persons with disabilities for Tarva Block for one year to provide them capacity building, training and financing for sustainable and gainful activities, etc.
## OLM year wise status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>711</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2. Status of SHG-BLP

The SHGs are considered the most effective and supplementary credit delivery method for linking the poorest of the poor with the banks. All commercial banks, Utkal Gramya Bank and Bolangir District Central Cooperative Bank have participated in SHG-Bank linkage programme. As on 31 March 2014, a total of 5824 SHGs have opened their SB accounts out of which 4653 were credit linked with loan outstanding of Rs 2274.73 lakh. Under LWE scheme, a total of 571 SHGs have been formed and 415 SHGs had opened their SB accounts. Out of the above, 35 SHGs have been credit linked with a loan amount of Rs. 9.75 lakh. During 2014-15, a target of 1000 SHGs is to be credit linked with financial target of Rs 10 crore under OLM. The average credit per SHG works out to be Rs. 1.00 lakh. Recovery under LWE scheme is 100% due to constant follow up of Anchor NGO. The overall recovery percentage of SHG in the district is 50%.

### 3. Issues related to micro finance

Seven MFIs are operating in the district. The NGO, BISWA has been provided with loan assistance under MFDEF by NABARD. Though there is good growth in SHG-BLP programme, due to rise in NPA, the banks are now hesitant to finance the SHGs. Particularly, the SHGs financed under SGSY become defaulters. It is further noticed that the SHGs financed with higher amount of loan become defaulters as they lack in entrepreneurship. Lack of follow up by the bankers is the main cause of rise in NPA. Further, duplication of membership is also a cause of concern. Around 30% of the groups do not exist now. Proper nurturing of groups was the missing link in early years. The target oriented approach is the main building block of quality SHG. The major issues hampering the growth of SHG-Bank Linkage Programme in the district are: focus on group formation for availing subsidy from Government, absence of handholding support from Self Help Promoting Institutions (SHPIs), irregular monitoring / supervision by banks, no proper credit appraisal or rating of SHGs before extending bank loan, inadequate training to bank staff and SHPIs and widespread prevalence of middlemen / agents.

### 4. Roadmap

In order to have a meaningful impact of SHG-BLP, capacity building of the partner agencies like NGOs, Banks, and Govt. Officials is undertaken. Training / MEDP is conducted for capacity building of SHG leaders/members. Field visits to nearby SHGs for officials of Block Level Banker's Committee are arranged. GRLTP,
NABARD impart training on book keeping and other aspects of SHG. Consolidated SHG registers are distributed free of cost to participants for the benefits of SHG. NABARD had conducted 5 GRLTPs and 25 MEDP in the district for capacity building of SHG members, which would facilitate more number of SHGs credit linked to banks. It is necessary to identify the SBI and UGB rural bank branches, whose presence is widespread, to participate in SHG-BLP and ensure their active involvement. Revival of SHGs which have become dormant due to inadequate support from SHPIs/ banking system and other extraneous factors may be done on priority basis. Training and capacity building of stake holders is carried out in NRLM. In the absence of quality/adequate number of SHPIs, efforts may be undertaken to leverage the services of other SHPIs operating in neighboring districts, PACS, DCCB branches and RRB, individual rural volunteers, Anganwadi workers, Farmers’ Clubs, Federations of SHGs as SHPIs. Convergence with Government programmes like NRLM is needed to maximize the benefits to SHG members, SHG-BLP and to gradually shift from providing access to banking services to livelihoods for SHG members. Community based organizations are to be encouraged as nodal points for promoting livelihood activities of members of SHGs. We may leverage Information Technology to improve quality of book keeping at SHG level. Additional financial literacy drive at SHG level may be required to eliminate over-indebtedness at members’ level.

5. Estimation of Potential under SHG-BLP

All eligible poor rural households in the district need to be covered under SHG-BLP by 31 March 2017. Accordingly, all the blocks in the district need to be saturated with SHGs by 31 March 2017. Considering the total poor rural population of 5.60 lakh in the district, it is estimated that there is a total potential for promotion and saving linkage of 7240 SHGs in the district. So far, 5824 SHGs have been promoted in the district, thereby leaving a gap for promotion of further 1416 SHGs. The block wise detail of potential available for promotion and savings linkage of SHGs in the district is furnished in Table-4. Similarly, the potential for credit linkage of the SHGs is furnished in Table-5.

6. Financing through Joint Liability Groups (JLGs)

The JLG mode of financing serves as collateral substitute for loans provided to the small, marginal, tenant farmers, oral lessees, share croppers, etc. It enables the banks to reach farmers through group approach, adopt cluster approach and facilitate peer education and credit discipline. Hence, the banks in the district may extend funds to the small, marginal, tenant farmers and oral lessees through JLG mode of financing. Considering an estimated number of 65252 small and marginal farmers, there is potential for financing of 6525 JLGs here. So far, a cumulative number of 305 JLGs have been financed to the tune of Rs 1.96 crore by UGB and Bolangir DCCB.
INSURANCE

For Life insurance a satellite office of LIC of India has been functioning at Sonepur since 26.11.2007. In addition to LIC, SBILIFE, METLIFE, BAJAJ ALLIANZE, MAX YORK are operational here for life insurance and health insurance.

For General Insurance New India, Oriental, United India, National, SBI General, Tata AIG, ICICI Lombard, Royal Sundaram are functioning without any office in the district.

CROP INSURANCE

National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (Rashtriya Krishi Bima Yojana) is being implemented for crop insurance.

Crops covered under NAIS Kharif 2015

Paddy is covered in all Blocks, cotton in Birmaharajpur and Tarbha, banana in Birmaharajpur and Sonepur Blocks:

### TABLE-1

**BANKING OUTLETS IN THE DISTRICT AS ON 31.03.2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name of Bank</th>
<th>Brick &amp; mortar Branches</th>
<th>ATMs</th>
<th>BC/ CSP /Kiosk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>State Bank of India (Lead Bank)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Andhra Bank</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Bank of Baroda</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Bank of India</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>Central Bank of India</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>Indian Overseas Bank</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>ICICI Bank</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>Punjab National Bank</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>UCO Bank</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>United Bank of India</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Axis Bank</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Canara Bank</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Union Bank of India</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>63</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Syndicate Bank</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>IDBI Bank</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>HDFC</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Indian Bank</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>DCB Bank</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Indus Ind Bank</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Total of Commercial Banks**  
36 54 128

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name of Bank</th>
<th>Brick &amp; mortar Branches</th>
<th>ATMs</th>
<th>BC/ CSP /Kiosk</th>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Utkal Grameen Bank</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Balangir DCCB</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>CARD</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL**  
64 54 128
### TABLE-2
PMJ DY IN THE DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Bank’s Name</th>
<th>PMJ DY</th>
<th>RUPAY CARD ISSUED</th>
<th>PMJJBY</th>
<th>PMSBY</th>
<th>APY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Andhra Bank</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Axis</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bank Of Baroda</td>
<td>6006</td>
<td>4804</td>
<td>691</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bank Of India</td>
<td>3900</td>
<td>2730</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>1300</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Canara Bank</td>
<td>531</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>C B I</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>24</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>HDFC</td>
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<td>1215</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>405</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
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<td>144</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I O B</td>
<td>732</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>244</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I D B I</td>
<td>1440</td>
<td>1308</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>P N B</td>
<td>17553</td>
<td>14542</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>5851</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Syndicate Bank</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>1609</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>UCO Bank</td>
<td>792</td>
<td>654</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>U B I</td>
<td>1509</td>
<td>1256</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Union Bank</td>
<td>1758</td>
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<td>278</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>UGB</td>
<td>28078</td>
<td>10795</td>
<td>980</td>
<td>9426</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>D C B BANK</td>
<td>1350</td>
<td>1350</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>SBI</td>
<td>32365</td>
<td>30052</td>
<td>2116</td>
<td>10955</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>INDUS IND Bank</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL 101201 74077 7119 33967 369

### TABLE-3
Block wise details of potential available for promotion and savings linkage of SHGs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name of the block</th>
<th>Total potential for promotion of SHGs</th>
<th>No. of SHGs linked on 31 March 2015</th>
<th>Balance potential as on 31 March 2015</th>
<th>No. of SHGs to be promoted and savings linked during 2016-17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Binka</td>
<td>1604</td>
<td>815</td>
<td>789</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>B M Pur</td>
<td>1195</td>
<td>875</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Dunguripali</td>
<td>1495</td>
<td>1223</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sonepur</td>
<td>1113</td>
<td>806</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tarva</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ullunda</td>
<td>833</td>
<td>695</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dist. TOTAL 7240 5039 2201 1100 1101
### TABLE-4
Blockwise potential for credit linkage of SHGs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name of the block</th>
<th>No. of SHGs (credit linked) as on 31 Mar. 2015</th>
<th>SHGs to be credit linked during 2015-16</th>
<th>SHGs to be credit linked during 2016-17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Fresh No.</td>
<td>Fresh Amoun't (Rs lakh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Binka</td>
<td>1098</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>129.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>B M Pur</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>138.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Dunguripali</td>
<td>1103</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>152.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sonepur</td>
<td>703</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>148.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tarva</td>
<td>665</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>102.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ullunda</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>116.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dist. TOTAL</td>
<td>4815</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>785.00</td>
<td>30</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER-X
LITERACY TO LITERATURE

Historical Background

There was no light of formal education on the Ex-State of Sonepur during the first half of 19th century. It was only on 01.01.1886 that one Primary School was started. This single teacher Primary School was upgraded to Anglo-Vernacular School in 1890. On 1-11-1893 Prataprudra Sing Deo (1891-1902) set up Prataprudra Jublee Middle English School with Pt. Laxman Mishra as Headmaster. It was upgraded to the status of High English School during the academic session 1911-12. Goura Mohan Bhattacharya joined as Headmaster on 1st July 1913. Prataprudra also established a Sanskrit Toll for students interested in Sanskrit. He set up a primary school each in Binka and Rampur, a Rajkumar school in the palace for princes. He set up pathsalas in many villages.

A.H.L Fraser Chief Commissioner of Central Province observes that by 1891 there were 11 Schools with 484 students on roll. The number almost doubled. More than one thousand students were on roll. ‘Your Middle English School’, Fraser commented, ‘is a successful institution, and I have never seen better display of indigenous athlete that I have seen at Binka and Sonepur during my present visit’.

Maharaja Biramitrodaya Sing Deo (1902-37) established 16 new schools & enhanced the number to 38. Among them 25 were Lower Primary, 4 Upper Primary, two Middle English Schools, two Sanskrit Tolls, 3 Girls’ Schools & 2 special schools for lower caste pupils. Besides, there were ten Elementary Schools called chatsali. The number of school-going children that year was 2117 boys and 471 girls.

On 1st July 1913 the Middle English School set up by Pratap Rudra Sing Deo was upgraded to a High English School. B.M. Sing Deo also provided Rs 1, 62,000 in Sonepur Trust Fund for its management. A hostel called boarding house was started for students of Boudh, Patna and Redhakhol. The Raja was of opinion that the students of Sonepur must first know the history of their place. So he set to compile a separate textbook titled Bibidha Siksha.

The first batch appeared the Matriculation Examination held under Calcutta University in 1915. In 1918 it was affiliated to Patna University. That very year Somabhusan Sing Deo Middle English School was started at Binka. Again he set up a school for Karmakanda in front of the Boarding House, Kabiraji School in the east and Jyotishi School in the west. These along with the Sanskrit Toll founded by Pratap Rudra made the Chatuspathi complete.

By 1921 there were 43 schools and 45 Pathsalas built up across Sonepur State in different places like Sonepur, Birmaharajpur, Murusndhi, Subalaya, Baidyanath, Tarva, Binka, Rampur, Panchara Rajnagar, Sindurpur, Ulunda, Kotsamlai, Ufula, Jaloa, Menda, Lachhipur, Dunguripali, Sukha and Kartang etc. In 1931 a Middle English School at Tarva was opened. By 1937 about more than eighty schools (both girls & boys) and 60 pathsalas came up. Education was free.
and compulsory except in High Schools. There was a special School for the Rajkumars and an Inspector of Schools for the state.

There were 5 Secondary Schools in the Ex-State of Sonepur in 1940-41 and one Elementary Guru Training School. Total numbers of students in the Secondary schools was 351 and in the Elementary Guru Training School was 10 in 1941-42. The Gurus had free instructive excursion to Baidyanath, Binka, Khandhata etc.

Modern Education System

It was in the year 1874 Babu Prasanna Kumar Mishra, B. A., Ex-headmaster of Sambalpur Zilla School was appointed to teach Niladhar English. Nowhere in the Sambalpur tract and Garjat Mahals of Odisha, writes B. C. Mazumdar was there any attempt by any Chief to impart English education to the Rajkumar so early as 1874.

The Single Teacher Sonepur Primary School was upgraded to Anglo-Vernacular School in 1890. This indicates the initiation of western education in Sonepur. English was introduced as a compulsory subject from class IV. Thus western education through English language was started in 1890. At the secondary stage all subjects except mother tongue were taught in English. The textbooks were also written in English. Candidates appeared under Calcutta University and then Patna University from 1915 to 1943. From 1944 when Utkal University conducted Matriculation examination the curriculum underwent a radical change. Textbooks were printed in Odia. English had two papers carrying 100 marks each. Now one paper carries 100 marks only. With the implementation of the National Flagship Programme Sarva Siksha Aviyan, English has regained its importance. It is taught from class -III.

An English Medium School named Little Flower School came up in 1991. Now it carries the name, St. Annes Convent School. There are 17 such English medium schools functioning in the district by now, including Jawaharlal Navodaya Vidyalaya at Tarva founded on 12-12-2006 and a Kendriya Vidyalaya at Sonepur on 2010. Six Model Schools have been proposed one in each Block.

Organisational Structure

The schools of Sonepur were under the administrative control of Inspector of Schools, Bolangir Circle as well as District Inspector of Schools, Bolangir. The office of District Inspector of Schools, Sonepur was started on 19.08.1977, covering all the 6 Blocks namely Sonepur, Binka, Tarva, Dungripali, Ulunda and Birmaharajpur. A separate District Inspector of Schools, Birmaharajpur was created on 28.10.1998.

The District Education Office, Subarnapur started functioning from 05.07.2012 and with six Education Offices one for each Block working since 30.07.2013. Subarnapur was covered under the 2nd phase District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) from 21.12.2000 and mainstreamed to Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan 2003. The district is also covered under the Rastriya Madhyamik Siksha Aviyan (RMSA).
Growth

Significant progress has been made in the field of education in the district after independence. A Single Teacher Primary School started in 1886 in the ex-State increased to 644 including both Primary and Upper Primary in 1993 when Sonepur became a new district.

There are now 579 Primary Schools, 354 Upper Primary Schools in Sonepur. There was only one High School in 1913. The number has increased to 128. We have at present 135 Primary, 31 Upper Primary and 14 Secondary Schools per lakh population.

There are also six KGVBs meant for drop-out girls functioning in six Upper Primary Schools namely at Sonepur, Seledi, Mayabarha, Atasingha, Subalaya and Sindhol under Sonepur, Binka, Dunguripali, Tarva, Birmahaarajpur and Ulunda Blocks respectively, having 100 seats in each with residential facilities. The enrolment of students is 54055 in the Primary Schools, 31783 in Upper Primary Schools and 29251 in Secondary Schools of the district.

The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) per hundred is 94.89. For Primary it is 94.89 and for Upper Primary 107.55. The Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) per hundred is 85.92 in the age group 6-11 and 81.15 in the age group 11-14. Again the dropout rate is 0 for all categories except 1.11% in case of Scheduled Castes.

Sarva Siksha Aviyan is being implemented in the district since 2002. Steps have been taken to bring down the dropout rate through opening of new Primary and Upper Primary Schools in every village and habitat, appointment of Sikhya Sahayak in all Primary and Upper Primary Schools providing incentives like free textbooks, school uniform to SC/ST and girl students, constitution of School Management Committee in every school, regular supervision and monitoring through Sarva Siksha Aviyan, and Rastriya Madhyamik Siksha Aviyan. These activities have been reinforced by the recent Right to Education Programme.

Literacy Mission

In 1901 the rate of illiteracy was hopelessly high. The male literacy in every 1000 individual was 31 and 83 in Patna and Kalahandi respectively whereas in Sonepur it was only 21 (Impact, P.506).

The National Literacy Mission (NLM) was launched on 5th May 1988 while inaugurating NLM, Rajib Gandhi the then Prime Minister said, “This is not the mission of one particular ministry, department or agency. This is the concern of the whole nation. Literacy should be viewed as important as drinking water and immunisation”. Total Literacy Campaign started in the undivided Bolangir district and was launched afresh after Subarnapur was declared a district on 1st April 1993.
The literacy status of the district as per Census is

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Census</th>
<th></th>
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<th>Subarnapur</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Odisha</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42.84</td>
<td>49.09</td>
<td>42.62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>52.74</td>
<td>63.09</td>
<td>61.48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>32.17</td>
<td>34.68</td>
<td>23.38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>65.38</td>
<td>63.61</td>
<td>64.04</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>75.85</td>
<td>75.94</td>
<td>80.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>54.16</td>
<td>50.97</td>
<td>47.28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>74.5</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td>74.42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>82.14</td>
<td>82.4</td>
<td>84.78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>65.46</td>
<td>64.4</td>
<td>63.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In literacy Sonepur District as per the Census -2011 is ranked 15th in the state. Sakshar Bharat is a centrally sponsored scheme implemented here along with other eighteen districts of Orissa where women literacy is below the national rate. Zilla Saksharata Samiti with Collector as Chairman is functioning to implement this scheme along with. Block level & G.P level Loka Siksha Samiti.

**Female Education**

During the period of Prataprudra (1891-1902) there were two Girls Schools one each at Sonepur and Binka. B. M. Sing Deo (1902-37) established 3 Girls Schools with 471 girls on roll. In 1908 he inaugurated a Girls School named “Amulyamani Balika Bidyalaya” A hostel was built along with accommodation for teachers on the campus. A provision for stipend of Rs. 5 was made for each girl in order to encourage female education. He also made an endowment of Rs 17000 under Sonepur Trust Fund. A.D. Young husband commended the Raja’s enlightened policy in regard to female education The Sambalpur Patriot in its report on 01-04-1897 says, out of 200 students on roll there were 60 girls in the capital town and 15 at Binka. Today the scenario has changed. Out of 80413 students enrolled in different primary and upper primary schools of the district 47352 are girls whereas out of 29251 students in different High Schools of the district their number is 13226. There are 5 Women’s Colleges along with 47 co-education colleges in different parts of the district.

**Education for Backward Classes**

Prataprudra was the first ruler who started a school for the untouchables. B.M. Singh Deo established another at Binka. Out of 80413 students enrolled in different Primary Schools of the district 30930 students belong to SC and ST communities.

The tribal welfare department provides Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarships and residential schools for tribal students.

**Higher Education**

Although there was no college established during the regime of B. M. Sing Deo he was providing scholarships to brilliant students of his state to pursue higher
education. In this regard Bijay Chandra Mazumdar says. To educate his subjects
and to get fully qualified officers for the state itself, the Maharaja is spending a large
amount of money every year for the college education of the deserving boys of the
state and a large number of scholarships has been provided for.

Sonepur College was founded in 1964 with provision for Arts with subjects like
Logic, Sanskrit, Economic, Political Science, History Oriya Mathematics English &
General Knowledge. The teaching staff consisted of nine lecturers. Forty-nine
students were on roll. The college is housed in Mitrodaya Bhavan, the onetime
royal guest house built by B. M. Sing Deo. Now it is a full-fledged graduate college
with Science and Commerce faculties.

There are here thirty-two +2 Colleges, 15 Degree Colleges and 5 Women's
Colleges at present.

**Professional / Vocational Education**

An Elementary Guru Training School started 1941-42. It was upgraded into a
Secondary Training School in 1972. And elevated to the status of District Resource
Centre (DRC) in 2008-09. In the year 2015 it was declared District Institute of
Education and Training (DIET).

**Technical Education**

The first Industrial Training Institute (ITI) at Hikudi, Sonepur and the first
Polytechnic (School for Diploma Engineering) in the district headquarters was
inaugurated in 2012. At the Khari High School of Sonepur block vocational
education is provided on three trades namely Information Technology, Agriculture
and Electronics with effect from 2015.

**Physical Education**

During the Durbar days B.M. Sing Deo Athletic Club used to invite players
from Raipur, Raigarh, Bilaspur, Kalahandi, Cuttack, Ganjam and even Calcutta.
Football used to get royal patronage from Yuvaraj Prataprudra Sing Deo. He was
a lover of football and music. Birpratap Sing Deo, his grandson formed four football
teams namely Town Team (Badbazar, Dadhiba ban Team (Ghodaghatpara), M.R.
High School Team and Officers' Team. Royal Field was the centre of activity. It was
a pleasure to see the famous Mohan Bagan participating in the tournaments. With
India's independence the Royal Field went to sleep in a valley of silence till it took
off in 2010.

The District Sports Office has been working since 9th September 2010 working
for sports and youth related activities. Seven players so far have been selected in
the State Level Competition in the discipline of Kho-Kho, Kabaddi, Volleyball,
Archery and Athletics to represent the State at the national Level. The State Level
Youth Festival was organized in 2011 at Subarnapur from 14th December to 18th
December 2011. Again during the year 2012 from 11th to 14th November State Level
Women’s Sports Competition in Kabaddi, Kho-Kho & Volleyball was organized
wherein 921 sportswomen from different parts of Odisha participated. Snigdhashree Mishra, a student from Sahara Trust High School, Subarnapur represented the state in the National Level Hand Ball Championship held at Hyderabad in the year 2012. Construction of an indoor stadium with an estimated cost of Rs. 142.00 lakh is on in the district headquarters.

The Nehru Yuva Kendra an initiative of Govt. of India managed by Nehru Yuva Sangathan, an autonomous body of Ministry of Human Resource Development Department of Youth Affairs and Sports was started on 8th February 2012 for the promotion of sports and youth activities in rural areas.

Lalmoni Inter- State Cricket Tournament, one of the mega sports events of the district has completed 30 glorious years. It was started in the memory of Late Sibnarayan Sing Deo popularly known as Lalmoni who was a famous footballer, musician and painter. He was also a great supporter of cricket and promoted cricket in those days.

EFFLORESCENCE OF LITERATURE

If the Royal Field contributed to the growth of games and sports, the exotic environs of Subarnapur no less encouraged its phenomenal advancement in the field of literature.

Subarnapur situated on the colourful confluence of the Mahanadi and the river Tel (Telavaha of the Buddhist Jatakas) is a veritable poet's paradise. Bijoy Chandra Mazumdar writes:

In natural beauty this tract must have attracted the poetic sense of the Hinduised newcomers, for we find very old temples built exactly where the vast ranges of hills and forests alternate with fertile valleys. The streamlets run on in the rains through the hills and valleys and flash and gleam under the powerful sun of the hilly region. Even in the dry season, the river Mahanadi rushes down through roaring cataracts ... indented boulders and dangerous rapids. The Keots ply their boats all round the year, though from January to June the river threads its way in a narrow channel through a dreary waste of sand stretched at the foot of a long and irregular chain of weather-beaten boulders (Sonpur in the Sambalpur Tract: 1911).

Into the Raj family of this veritable heaven on earth was married Laxmikara, propounder of the Sahajayana cult of Buddhism sometime in the 8th century. Her Adwaysiddhi was the first known Sanskrit work produced by Subarnapur. The only way to attain felicity or Mahasuha is from sex to salvation, she asserts. The esoteric verses of Charyapada are said to be the first literary products of Odia language composed by the mystics of the Natha cult some of whom like Hadippa, Darippa, Machhindranath had made Sonepur their home.
Inscriptional Literature

The Somavamsis who appeared in this tract sometime in the 9th-10th century were champions of Sanskrit language and literature. The Mantritilaka of Janmejaya Mahabhavagupta, first monarch among the Somavamsi kings who established his reign in this region was Sadharana comparable to Bruhaspati in his mastery over Vedas and Vedangas, Smritis, Kalpas, Arthasastras, history and literature:

\[ Jneya sesarthasastrasmutraladhiya vedavedangavidya \]
\[ Siksakalpethasaprakatasurangurupraprabhuyistadhamna. \]

Janmejaya Mahabhavagupta’s Kalibhana plates lyrically depict the flight of pigeons frightened by the tinkling anklets of many a dancing damsel:

\[ anekabarabilasinijana-charananupurarabatraparabatapunja. \]

Janmejaya’s son Yayati Mahasivagupta, who has been described in the charters as a brave king whose glory was sung in all the three worlds..., whose sword had its sharp edge made rugged with pearls coming out of the foreheads of the elephants rent asunder had also a well-known, well-read Sandhivigrahika. He was Singhadatta, minister for war and peace, a great diplomat and an erudite scholar who had surpassed Bruhaspati and Sukra in wisdom. He was one who had Nyaya and Bikrama, right and might as his friends ‘yasyasinnyayavikramadwayamapi sreyan sakha sarbada’

Among the Somavamsi kings was Yayati II alias Chandihara whose coronation had taken place at Suvarnapura. It was here that he was ‘sanctified by the holy water of the confluence of Mahanadi and river Tel’: (nimalajala pabitrikruta) and issued his Maranjmura charter.

The charter not only depicts the holy waters of the confluence lit up by the moon and decked with flowers of foam and the little, liquid ripples (tarala tarangamala), it also describes the metropolis beautified by majestic mansions, temples and viharas and pleasure-gardens full of sweet-scented flowers fallen from trees trembling in the wind and visited by enticing maidens with their sweet, smiling lotus-faces and sidelong glances (samullasita bhrubhangabiksepa) and regaled by the twitter of birds and shrill call of peacocks. Another charter describes the Mahanadi from Vinitapura in words of crystallised romanticism, the Mahanadi that removes the fatigue of women enjoying conjugal caresses in absolute abandon by the breeze surcharged with particles of water sent up by the breaking and swelling of its high waves:

\[ Mahanadi tunga tarangabhanga \]
\[ Spharochchhalat sikaravatbhirarat \]
\[ Yasmin ratasikta madangananam \]
\[ Sramopanadah kriyate marudbhih \] (JASB, Vol.1)

Chandihara’s grandson, Kumara Someswara, described as Somakulatiaka-bikasabhaskara (Sun to Somavamsis) styles himself as Paschimalankadhipati
Paramamahaswara, Paramabhattaraka, Kumaradhiraja, Parameswara. Yajati’s queen Kalavati has left behind her the Brahmeswara temple inscription composed by the court poet Purusottama Bhatta, which depicts her son, Udyotakesari, father of Kumara Someswara as the ‘Sun of the eastern mountain illuminating the earth’. Here is another Sun who had conquered ‘the earth like Mandhata, Pruthu and Bharata’, he had won Dahala, Chola and Gauda as if it was a child’s play Balakridabhireva. It also means he conquered the countries when he was a boy. An example of exaggeration and equivocation in which Sanskrit literature abounds.

Someswaradeva III alias Bhujavala of the Teluguchoda dynasty who ruled Subarnapur from AD 1095 to 1114 calls himself Baidyanathapadapankajabhraramar (bee on the lotus feet of Lord Baidyanatha). He was completely routed by Jayalladeva I who destroyed ‘Bala as Indra killed Brutra’. Bhujavalam avalam chakre. Through the mythological parallel Sheorinarayan plates builds up the picture of the devastation Jayalladeva-I wrought on the Raja of Subarnapur. The queens and ministers were all captured and then released on the request of Rajalla, mother of Jayalladeva (Epigraphia Indica, XXII). Here Bala is Bhujavala. Bala also implies Indra. Bhujavala became ‘avala’ (incapacitated).

The Teluguchodas ruled Subarnapur for half a century, and when they left, they left a visible impact on the language of the people. Words like Ata (father’s sister), gudi (temple) are borrowed from Telugu. The Teluguchodas gave way to the Kalachuris or Chedis or Haihayas who waged a hundred-year-war with the Gangas, rulers of Utkala. While Chodagangadeva was defeated by Ratnadeva II, depicted as a fierce cloud extirpating the continuously raising flames of the valour of Chodagangadev (EI, XXII). His son Jateswara alias Madhukamarnava was overthrown by Prithvideva II who to the hostile lords of the earth was what Garuda is to the serpent chiefs, whose lotus feet were objects of worship (by princes) bent down with the weight of jasmine wreaths (mallikamalyabhareih) glittering with the great splendour of their chest-jewels, a high pleasure mount for the glorious victory won by his own arm (nijabhujavijaya), a tree for the creeping plant of fame of excellent royalty.

It was sometime before AD 1220 that the Gangas succeeded. Visnu, commander of Anangabhimadev III (1211-38) inflicted on the bank of the river Bhima Vindhyadreradhismabhimatatinunjatayonidhe a crushing defeat upon the Tummana king, Pratapmalla Deva to whom it appeared as though the whole world was full of Visnu: Viswam Visnumayam yatha parinatam tummanaprutvihipateh (EI, XXIX).

Thus the Kalachuris gave way to the Gangas. Bhanudeva-I, grandson of Anangabhimadeva III became the ruler of Utkala in 1264. During his reign (1264-78), Sankaradeva was the Visayapati (Governor) of Sunupura Kataka (Subarnapur). He had made an offering to Lord Baidyanath (Kosaleswar) on 7th March, 1268 recorded on an inscription, now preserved in the Sambalpur University
Museum. Herein Sankaradeva has been described as *Paschimadesadhikari-Samanta Padiraya-Visayapati*. This Stambheswari inscription (*EI*, XXXII, *OHRJ*, X) is one of the earliest records of Odia script.

The Chauhans have left behind them more than 30 inscriptions, some in copper plates and some on rocks and stones and slabs of marble. But they have hardly any literary value barring a couple of inscriptions. Yet their role in the evolution of Odia language has made them so significant.

Divya Sing Deo’s (1749-66) copperplate inscription the Godhaneswara stone inscription on the back of the dancing Ganesh image during Prithvi Singh’s (1781-1841) reign, the Baghamarakud rock inscription of 1884, the Lupursingha Siva temple rock inscription of 1879 carry on them proto-Odia script. During the tenure of Prataprudra (1891-1902) we have two marble inscriptions along with another inscribed on the pedestal of the massive brass image of Lord Laxmi-Nrusimha. The poetry on the pedestal reminds us of the colourful language of the Somavamsi inscriptions.

\[ Varadabaramamandandanandasandohadoham \\
Surabararanasingham sthapayamasas devam. \]

Biramitrodaya Sing Deo (1902-37) had the maximum marble inscriptions installed in the state all in Sanskrit language in Odia script.

**Durbar Literature**

Among the Chauhan inscriptions mention may be made of Gundicha temple brass inscription, Bhairava temple inscription, Gopalji temple inscription where B. M Sing Deo has been described as the very source of pleasure to the sea of the lunar race (*somavamsamvunidhi sukhasudhadidhiti*), the Parvatipati temple inscription where this ruler is depicted as a source of delight to the forest of lilies of the lunar dynasty or as a dazzling jewel on the crown of the Indian kings (*bhrajat-bharatabhumipalamukutalankara ratnallasat*). Even inscriptions like the Ghikundhi charter written in Odia provide interesting reading: *gaccha machha pada pankala phala kasta pasana taru truna chhaya upachhaya sahite*. The village, Ghikundhi is donated to one Mukunda Padhi with all its appurtenances – trees, fishes, fields, tanks, fruits, fuel, boulders, bushes, grass and shade, everything. Though written in prose it exudes poetry.

Birmitrodaya had a galaxy of Sanskrit scholars in the Durbar, and they hailed from different branches, from music to metaphysics, ayurved to astrology, *nyayasstra* to *tarkasstra*, literature to grammar. They were Krupasindhu Mishra, Jyotisalankara, Gobinda Rath, Jyotischandra, Bhagaban Mahapatra, Rajjotisa, Dwarkanatha Mishra, Jyotisaratna, Nilamani Rath, Jyotisatirtha, Ramchandra Padhi, Siddhantatilaka, Gopinath Panigrahi, Vidyaratna, Damodar Mishra, Sastri, Aditya Prasad Guru, Kavyatirtha, Devaraj Mishra, Sahityopadhyaya, Chintamani Nanda, Vidyabhusana, Brusabha Mishra, Panditaratna, Chandrasekhar Mishra, Vidyalankara, Srikrusna Mishra, Tarkapanchanana, etc.
There was a plethora of Sanskrit literature produced and patronised by Birmitrodaya Sing Deo. *NladrI Mahodayah* (1929), which at once means Niladri, B.M. Sing Deo’s grandfather and Lord Niladrinath, is an anonymous, voluminous work on Lord Jagannath’s *Pujapaddhati*. *Virasarbaswam* (1922) collected from Manjusa Library and corrected by Muktimandap Sabha, a compendium of 27 scriptures of India, compiled by Raja Gopinath Tunga of Tiriria is a monumental work in the whole country, *Kosalananda Mahakavyam* by Pt. Gangadhar Mishra, court poet of Raja Balaradeva of Sambalpur is a third historical Sanskrit Mahakavya of the country after Ramapalcharitam by Sandhyakara Nandi of Bengal and Rajatarangini by Kalhana of Kashmir is at oncea history of South Kosala and a heritage of Jagannath cult in highly decorative poetry. *Asirvada Slokamala* (1925) is a cluster of benedictory verses by Pt. Gopinath Panigrahi. *Stotratarangini* (1893) contains a treasure-trove of Sanskrit hymns composed by Raja Udit Pratap Dev of Kalahandi and Raja Niladhar Sing, Prataparudra and B.M. Sing Deo of Subarnapur. *Utsavatarangini Champuh* (1910) by Mahamahopadhyaya Jagannath Mishra of Puri and *Panigrahanapadapah* (1918) by Pt. Biswanath Rath of Balasore, one on Yuvaraj Somabhusan’s thread ceremony and the other on his ill-starred marriage are great Sanskrit Kavyas. *Syenagirih* (1920) and *Purascharanavarana Champuh* (1921) by Pt. Aditya Prasad Guru, one on the description of a hillock associated with sage Parsuram and the other on the valediction of one crore rounds of Gayatri mantra chanted in Gopali temple, Pt. Damodar Sastri’s *Swarnapuragunadarsah* (1921), on the historical geography of Sonepur, *Ratnasimhasanaprasastih* (1918) on the installation of the Ratnasimhasana obtained from Benaras, *Maharudrayajnakavyam* (1921) on the Maharudrayajna conducted by BM Sing Deo at Kasi Biswanth temple are outstanding contributions of Sonepur Durbar to Sanskrit literature. *Sri Subarnamerusatakam*, a series of hundred slokas by BM Sing Deo sings the glory and greatness of Lord Subarnameru. While his *Swarnapuramahajaranagruhakrityachandrika* (1937) in 3 volumes is a rare *smrutiisastra* on the fairs and festivals of Sonepur compiled in consultation with distinguished Sanskrit scholars of the country like Mahamohapadhya Sadasiba Mishra, Kavyakantha, Pt. Chintamani Mishra, Tarkapanchanana, Pt. Madhusudan Mishra, Tarkvachaspati, Pt. Krupasindhu Mishra, Jyotisalankara, Pt. Ramachandra Padhi, Sidhantatilaika Pt. Nilamani Rath, Jyotisatirtha, Pt. Dwarkanath Mishra, Jyotisaratna and above all, Chakrabarti Rajgopalachari. Besides, the passages of highly ornamental Sanskrit prose in *Krushnapremodayachampukavyam* (1933) the vighotsarana verses, the commemorative slokas inscribed on images, lintels and walls of the temples of Sonepur composed by the court poets speak eloquently of the rich tradition of Sanskrit culture and literature patronised by Sonepur Durbar.

**Works in Translation**

B. M. Sing Deo who had command of Sanskrit literature and language has been described as a bee hovering over the sweet scented flowers of Sanskrit and
Odia literature: *Sakala sanskruta sahityotkalabhasahityavanakusuma saurabhachancharika*. Had it been an exaggeration, he would not have undertaken Odia translation of Sanskrit classics so quantitatively and qualitatively for the first time in Odisha. They are Sri Harsa’s *Ratnavali* (1894) and *Naisadhiya charita* (1921), Kalidasa’s *Rutusamhara* (1915), *Abhijnana Sakuntala Nataka* (1898) and *Vikramorvasi* (1910), Magha’s *Sisupala Vadha* (1928) and Bhavabhuti’s *Uttara Rama Charita Kavya* (1930). And with this endeavour were associated eminent writers of Odisha like Nilakantha Dash, Madhusudan Rao, Pt. Fakir Mishra, etc. Lady Parvati Devi, too, had transmitted Bhattacharyya and Pt. Gopinath Panigrahi, Malatimadhavam and Mruchhakatikam into Odia.

**Works in Odia Language**

It has already been said that B.M. Sing Deo appeared at a time when Sanskrit was dying and Odia was beginning to assert its existence. Therefore, even though he got commemorative Sanskrit slokas inscribed on slabs of marble on temple walls, the script was Odia.

The contributions of Sonepur Durbar to different branches of Odia literature were no less significant than those of any garjats of Odisha.

In the field of poetry the name of Pt. Bhubaneswar Panigrahi deserves mention. He was well-versed in *Ritiyuga* poetry of Upendra Bhanja, Abhimanyu, Bhaktacharan, etc. His *Chandravati Parinaya* (1914) composed in *chakaradyaniyama* is an outstanding work in the name of Raja Prataprudra. His *Chaturdasapadi*, attributed to Prataprudra, *Astrapadi* to B. M. Sing Deo exhibit his technical excellence in the composition of Poi poetry. *Prematarangini* (2016), edited by P.M. Nayak and published by Sambalpur University is, however, his *magnum opus*. Besides, he had composed hundreds of Odishi songs most of which have been published in the name of his royal masters. Among other poets mention may be made of B.M. Sing Deo who is said to have composed *Chandraprabha Kavya* (1900), *Anangarangini* (1925) and half a dozen books of Odishi songs, namely, *Sangita Kusumanjali* (1900), *Sangita Ratnahara* (1925), *Sangita Ballari* (1931), *Krusnapremodaya Champu Kavyam O Sangita Sudhasagara* (1933) and *Sangita Mitrodaya* (1934) on Radha-Krishna amour. His *Krusnapremodaya Champukavyam* can comfortably compare and compete with the well-known *Kishorachandrananda champu* by Kabisurya Baladev Rath. Pt. Aditya Prasad Guru’s *Kutirabasini* (1931), Pt. Gopinath Panigrahi’s *Kumara Janmotsava* (1927), *Ekadasi Udyapana* (1928) are mythological and occasional kavyas. In Gopinath whether it is *Annaprasanotsava* or *Ratnasimhasanotsava*, the text celebrates a royal occasion but the context is the history of Subarnapur. While *Syamantakamani* (1928) by Lady Parvati Devi, Rani of Maharaja B. M. Sing Deo is based on the story of robbery of the jewel in *Debi Purana*, Yuvaraj Somabhusan’s *Gajendra Moksana kavya* (1908) relates the mythical struggle between the crocodile and the elephant in the form of a dance drama and his *Sri Dama Daridrya Bhanjan* is a mythological
play based on the ideal friendship between Krusna and Sudama. In the midst of all this, Kabiraj Lokanath Mishra’s *Haripriya* (1932), a short kavya or a long poem, whatever you may call it, is a remarkable fictional creation of Sonepur Durbar singularly composed with Subarnapur as its background. Subarnapur here is just Subarnapur. No history surrounds it, no myth. It is a place on the bank of a river, and that is that. Yet the story the poet weaves has a perennial emotional appeal.

All said and done, the publication of *Sasisena kavya* by Pratap Rai of Raipali near the well-known Khallapali of Subarnapur a year before Arttaballab Mohanty brought it to light in 1929 is a great achievement of Sonepur Durbar. Its fluid, lucid language in an age of highly decorative poetry of the Riti School and its fantastic story against the tantric background of Subarnapur of Jnanadei Maluni has a magic that holds the reader spell-bound. Another distinguished poet of the Durbar days was Kaibalya Charan Nayak, State Forest Officer whose *Marudhara Sandhyatara* and *Mahapathara Yatri*, Collections of religious lyrics which are as much spiritual as they are intellectual.

Subarnapur known for its musical nights and the moon-lit Mahanadi, its Kalamandal and Kalaparishad was also known for its theatrical performances, its plays ‘Chauhanagaurava’ or ‘Jayadeva’ or ‘Maya Sabari’ or *Sri Dama Daridrya Bhanjana*, a drama said to have been written by Somabhusan, published in 1918, the year of his untimely death.

Not music and poetry, dance and drama alone, the Durbar had made maiden ventures into prose in an age of rare prose pieces. Gopinath Panigrahi’s *Brata Charita* (1915) is a signal achievement in prose like B.M. Sing Deo’s *Bharata Brhamana*, now extinct. They were travelogues at a time when travel literature went unheard. Lady Parvati Devi’s *Puranakathasara* (1932) is a string of stories in prose, mythological in character and didactic in tenor.

B. M. Sing Deo is said to have authored two novels, one historical, the other sociological – *Bhagna Kankana*(1920) and *Nilakuntala* (1927). *Bhagna Kankana* is the only novel in Odia against a Jaina background.

The Durbar’s greatest achievement, however, is its Odia translation of Sanskrit classics. No Durbar in contemporary Odisha had undertaken translation works on such a huge scale. Literature was no luxury for Sonepur Durbar, it was a necessity. At a time when Odia language was searching for its identity, Maharaja B. M. Sing Deo established the Post-Graduate Chair of Odia in Calcutta University with Nilakantha Dash and Vinayak Mishra as Professors. When no textbooks were available for the PG Department, Sing Deo got *Typical Selections from Oriya Literature in* three volumes edited by Bijoy Chandra Mazumdar and when Calcutta University pleaded inability to publish the volumes, he came forward to finance the publication. Even a mythology like *Kalika Purana* was spun out of *Markandeya Purana* (1929). B.M. Sing Deo also financed the publication of Harihar Rath’s three volumes of the *Mahabharata* musically rendered and titled *Biramitrodaya*.
Mahabharata, (1914-15) after they were revised and recommended by Viswanath Kar and Gopal Chandra Praharaj. Birmitrodaya Mahabharata is unique in the history of Odia literature in the sense that all the 18 cantos of the Mahabharata have been telescoped into 3 volumes and what is more significant, they have been put to an infinite variety of metres. Sing Deo also brought to light the translation and publication of sastras on astrology like Satpanchasika and Chakrasaram in 1921 by Pt. Nilamani Rath.

Sonepur Durbar patronised important publications in Bengali and English. Gita Govinda (1913) by B.C. Mazumdar and Sonepur Rajyer Krisi by G.M. Bhattarcharya in Bengali and Sonepur in the Sambalpur Tract (1911), Chohan Rulers of Sonpur (1925) and Orissa in the Making (1925) by B.C. Mazumdar, and Life of Rani Amulyamani Devi (1915) by Bipin Bihari Dasgupta in English.

Folksongs

Subarnapur where 40% population are tribal is quite rich in folklore. Its folk songs reflect and reinforce its folk culture. Not only were most of its gods and goddesses assimilated into the Hindu fold, but also its fairs and festivals, its songs and dances became a part of our culture. Koili, Jaiphula, Baula, Baidhana, Rasarkeli, Dalkhai, Jhumukujuma, Sajani, Chatka, Chhatka, Daika, etc. constitute some of the popular forms of folk songs Subarnapur produced. Sadasiba Baxi, Kastu Padhan, Brusabha, Kuber Charan Naik, Chintamani, Baikuntha Padhan, Baisnaba, Balakrishna, Balamania, Butu Kabi, Ajatna Kabi, Kaibala, Pitabas, Rajhansa, Jogidas, Narana, Chintamani, Achyuta Deheri, Harsa Nag, Krupasindhu are some of the folk singers of Subarnapur. Some of them are Danda dancers. They do not have to wait for the songs. They do not need any previous preparation for compositions. They come. They stand and sing. The words arrange themselves automatically and alphabetically in a chautisa form in the Sabara-Sabaruni, Kela-Keluni, Chadheia-Chadheiani, Diara-Bhauja duets. One wonders how. These forms are so powerful and popular with the people that Rajakavis like Prataprudra and Birmitrodaya have attempted some of these popular folk forms included in SangitaOLokagita (2009) published by Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre, Kolkata. Characters like Binakaria, Bandibotal, Bhalua, etc. who figure in the dances hail from the tribal society, they speak their language and they place their problems, their pains and their pleasure. The words are the people’s words which ensure their full comprehension and participation. There is no room for the so-called polished, civilized, chiselled, scholarly expressions. No room for the artificial and the pretentious. They spring from the heart unobstructed and uncoloured.

Santha Sahitya

It may sound strange but it is true that three great poets of the 18th -19th century associated with Subarnapur were worshippers of Sunya Brahma. They believed in neither casteism nor idolatry. They were Chaitanya Das, author of Nirguna Mahatmya and Bisnugarbha Purana who was born in Khariar,
Chandramani Das born in Boudh and Bhima Bhoi born in Subarnapur. Born in a caste-ridden, idol-infested society, they strove for one God, one law, one universe. Chandramani crossed the Mahanadi and settled down at Baghapali near Kotsamalai in the first-half of the 19th century. Bhima Bhoi crossed Harihar Jor and walked down to Khaliapali where he set up his ashram and propagated the Mahima religion or Alekhism.

Of the works of Chandramani like Tandaba Nrutya, Srikrusna Sudhamruta, Sudhasara Gita, Narada Gita and Bhavataraka, the last two have been edited by P.M. Nayak and published by Sambalpur University. While his Sudhasara Gita is a yogasastra turned kavyasastra, Bhavataraka is the first model on Rama Das' Dardhyata Bhakti which is next in popularity to Jagannath Das' Bhagavata in the whole of Odisha. It opens the gate of moksa to all and sundry- Hindus, Muslims, even to animals and reptiles. In one of the episodes from Bhavataraka Kurubira Sabara on a shooting spree sees a bird sitting on a branch. He aims his arrow only to find the bird fill the universe. He has no feet, no beak, no eyes, no ears. Kurubira looks within and finds the bird. This beautific vision is comparable to what the Astapatavamsis see in Srikrusnasudhamruta (1993) from the back of the flying Garuda. They look below and see Sri Rama building the Setubandha here and there lord Nrusimha tearing the entrails of Hiranyakasipu, here the boar bearing the burden of the earth and there Balarama uprooting the earth with his plough, here they see Krisna with Radha under the Kadamba tree and there behind them on the back of Garuda, sitting and smiling.

In Chandramani, God is at once transcendent and immanent, sakara and nirakara, saguna and nirguna, but in Bhima Bhoi he is nameless and formless and bodiless. Discard all idols and you will attain moksa. Moksa is not the prerogative of the Brahmins. The sastras are not the only way to God. The temple is not his abode. Look within and you will find him. Chant his name and he will come and carry you across the great flood. Dismantle the walls. Remove distances and differences. All are one. All are branches of the same tree; children of immortality. If God is one, how can men be many? This is his message and this was his mission a castless, classless society under the sovereignty of a bodiless Brahma. To attain this fatherhood of God and brotherhood of men, Bhima Bhoi, this saint of Khaliapali, is prepared to stake his life, even stake his dharma. Let dharma perish, but let the world live. Hurl me into hell, but save the world. Not only the world of men and women, but the whole universe, birds and animals and insects, even stars and planets, whatever God has created must be salvaged. This is what Bhima Bhoi says in his Nirbeda Sadhana, Srutinisedha Gita, Adianta Gita, Astaka Bihari Gita, Brahma Nirupana Gita, Stuti Chintamani, Bhajanamala and Chautisa Madhuchakra. He uses an infinite variety of metres in his bhajans. He mixes Odia with Sanskrit in Manusabhamandala, Odia with Bengali in Mahima Vinod. Mahima Vinod is perhaps the first poetic biography of Mahima Swami, the first poetic biography in the country, on the one hand and the first travelogue in a mixed
language, on the other. Mahima Swamy initiated Bhima Bhoi into *Mahima dharma* and Bhima Bhoi became its *Adikabi*, the mouthpiece of Mahima Swamy, the voice of Mahima Dharma.

**Post-Independence Literature**

The post-independence Subarnapur has witnessed a number of writers who have maintained the literary tradition of Subarnapur in different branches of literature.

Harishankar Badpanda is a notable writer of the district, author of *Padmatolara Kavya*, *Tinipada Prithvi*, *Udayotsava*, *E Rasta Mandiraku*, *Sabu Parichita Pruthibi*, *Padachinhara Mahaka*, *Ambureir Gan*, etc. He has been honoured by various organisations including Sahitya Academy, Odisha, Sambalpur University, Prajatantra Samiti, Sarala Sahitya Sansad, etc.


Late Dr. Umesh Patri, is the author of *Beda O Bibel*, *Jisu O Jagannath*, *Baulara Chithi*, *Dhulimatira Jiban*, *Prachya Drustirer Paschatya*, *Paradise under the shades of the sword*, *Keunthi thae Kabit* etc. He was an Academy Awardee.

Dr. Ramesh Patri is author of *Jhul Hati*, *Banda Ghatira Baghuni*, *Gahana Banara Katha*, *Kandhamalara Lokakatha*, *Sonapurara Lokakatha*, *Mati Hela Saraga*, etc. The Patri brothers have produced lots of children’s literature.

Atal Bihari Panda, author of *Phata Kapal*, *Phata Mandal*, *Bandu Ubacha*, etc. is an actor and writer in Koshali Language.

Kapileswar Mahapatra, author of *Sala Budha has been* honoured by the Sahitya Academy, Odisha.

Besides, D.B. Misra, B.B. Misra G.N. Sahu, Kedar Mishra, A.N. Nayak, S. Naik, Purusottam Mishra, Sadanand Agrawalla, Meena Maharana are some of the present writers of Sonepur.

**Literary and Cultural Societies / Organisations**

The following literary and cultural societies are formed in different parts of the district engaged from time to time in cultural activities in order to keep alive the
undying fame and flame of Subarnapur: Mahanadi Sahitya Sansad, Sonepur, Bhima Bhoi Kala Parishad, Sonepur, Paenri, Sonepur, Bapuji Club, Sonepur, Sanskrutik Sansad, Birmaharajpur, Saptadeepa Sahitya Sansad, Birmaharajpur, Bhima Bhoi Samadhi Peetha Trust, Khaliapali, Sahitya O Sanskruti Sansad, Dunguripali, Chherchhera Sanskrutik Sansad, Binka, Kosala Sahitya Academy, Tarbha, Sri Kala Sansad, Tarbha, etc.

Newspapers / Periodicals

Newspapers published in the district ran into a few editions but died a premature death for lack of financial support. Fortnightly publications like *Abahuda Shara* edited by Niranjan Tripathy, *Chetana Bartta* by Sabyasachi Mahapatra, *Kosal Pradesh* by G.N. Sahu which respectively ran from 1993 to 1994, 2005 to 2007 and from 2011 to 2013 walked the same way into oblivion. A monthly *Subarna Bhumi* met the same fate.

Mention may be made of periodicals like *Mahima, Pranab, Megha Mallhara, Subarna, Banamali, Nupur, Nibrutti, Baichadhei, Ankur, Saktaswara, Nadi O Nadi*, etc.
# APPENDIX

## SONEPUR DURBAR PUBLICATIONS

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<td>6. Gita Govinda</td>
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<td>7. Typical Selections from Oriya Literature, 3 Vols.</td>
<td>BC Mazumdar</td>
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CHAPTER-XI
HEALTH

Background

In the past, Ayurved was the only indigenous system of treatment in Sonepur state and the then rulers were patronising the Ayurvedic system. However, the first dispensary of Sonepur was started by Niladhar Sing Deo (1841 – 1891) around 1866 during the period of Naanka Durbhikha, when thousands from neighbouring states streamed into Sonepur to fight hunger and disease.

Prataprudra Singh Deo (1891-1902), his son and successor, set up a hospital in his name in the town and a dispensary at Binka in the name of Rani Amulyamani in 1897. It was called Victoria Diamond Jubilee Dispensary.

Subarnapur was a chronic victim of Cholera and Smallpox which used to claim the lives of hundreds of patients every year. Chaturbhuja Raiguru and Kashinath Panigrahi of Sonepur were noted Kavirajas. Chaturbhuja Raiguru who died a centenarian in 1959 was the Raja Baidya of Sonepur for a long period. He took the reputation of Ayurved to Sambalpur and Patna where he saved hundreds of lives from the deadly epidemic Cholera.

In 1902, Birmitrodaya Sing Deo (1902-1937) started one Ayurvedic Dispensary and an Ayurvedic Ausadhalaya in the capital town. He arranged two travelling Dispensaries one each at Ulunda and Tarva, one allopathic dispensary at Birmaharjpur for rural patients. An Ayurvedic School was established and a herbal garden grown near Manikeswari temple to the south of the town.

In 1907, Cobden Ramsay writes: There are dispensaries with accommodation for indoor patients both at Sonepur and Binka. The Medical Officer of the State possesses the qualifications of an Assistant Surgeon and there are two Civil Hospital Assistants in direct charge of the two dispensaries. The number of outdoor patients treated in 1907-1908 was 16,433 and the number of indoor patients treated was 62.

There was one Maternity and Child Welfare Centre functioning at Sonepur. This centre was exclusively taking care of the health of mothers, expectant mothers and children. The Family Planning Centre at Birmaharajpur, with a Lady Health Visitor and an Ayah, started functioning in March 1958. Maharaja B. M. Sing Deo (1902-1937) was the only ruler in Bihar and Orissa provinces to have been nominated Vice President of Child and Maternity League of India.

The Zenana Hospital started in 1936, just one year before B. M. Sing Deo’s death, was specifically meant for women’s treatment. It was unique in the sense there was no women’s hospital and there was no structure of its kind in the whole of Odisha. B. M. Sing Deo had brought it to its lintel level by 1936 and it had to wait 36 years more for a roof. The Maharaja had provided Rs. 40,000/- for the Ayurvedic
Hospital, Rs. 3300/- for the Kaviraji Ausadhalaya, Rs. 40,000/- for the Kaviraji Dispensary, Rs. 1500/- for vaccination and Rs. 47,000/- for the Epidemic Relief and Travelling Dispensary in Sonepur Trust Fund established in 1925.

Prior to April 1, 1993, Sonepur Hospital was under the administrative control of Civil Surgeon Balangir. The Medical Officer here was declared Sub Divisional Medical Officer. After 01.04.1993, it became District Headquarters Hospital under the administrative control of Chief District Medical Officer, Subarnapur.

The National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) has been in operation since June 2005. NRHM subsumes all existing programmes like Reproductive Child Health, Immunization, National Disease Control Programme, and Integrated Disease Surveillance Project etc. From the financial year, 2013-14, NRHM has got a new identity in the form of National Health Mission (NHM) which comprises both Urban and Rural Health. All the programmes are functioning under the umbrella of NHM headed by CDMO-cum-District Mission Director.

**DISTRICT HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE**

The district has one District Headquarters Hospital at Subarnapur, one Sub-Divisional Hospital at Birmaharajpur, one Community Health Centre each at Dungripali, Binka, Tarva, Naikenpali and Ulunda, one hospital each at Charbhata and Mahadevpali, eighteen Primary Health Centres, eighty nine sub-centres, one Multi-Purpose Health Workers (Female) Training Centre at Subarnapur, twentyfive Rogi Kalyan Samitis, seven hundred and eightyfive Gaon Kalyan Samitis (Village Health & Sanitation Committee). There are five hundred and ninetysix accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) working as a link between the Health system and Community.

**DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS HOSPITAL**

A lot of infrastructural development have been made to the existing building to provide quality health services.

Various services of the hospital, like cleaning service, laundry service, Bio Medical Waste (BMW) Management service, Plumber service, Attendant service and Dietary service etc are outsourced to various agencies to provide the best service in the interest of the public.

The hospital is monitored by a society, namely ROGI KALYAN SAMITI (RKS), established in 2009 by the Society Act. The DM & Collector is the chairman, eminent persons of the society are members. It has a Governing Body and an Executive Body.

All national health schemes including Rastriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) and Biju Krushak Kalyan Yojana (BKKY) are operationalized in the hospital. The beneficiaries are getting cashless treatment through these schemes.
The Special Neonatal Care Unit (SNCU) of District Headquarters Hospital was awarded the best SNCU of Odisha in the year 2014. The SNCU has twelve functional beds.

ANNADATRI operating in the district hospital is a unique canteen in the whole of Odisha. It provides meals @ 5/- to the patients’ attendants. It is running with the help of the Rice Millers Association, Subarnapur.

NIRAMAYA

The “Niramaya” scheme was started in the District Headquarters Hospital on 1st May 2015. Initially two Drug Distribution Centres (DDC) operated under the scheme i.e one at Outdoor (DDC-1) which functions 24 x 7 and another at Indoor (DDC-2). DDCs are also functioning at Sub Divisional Hospital, Birmaharajpur and at all the Community Health Centres.

FAMILY WELFARE SERVICES AND IMMUNISATION

Along with the District Headquarters Hospital, Sub-Divisional Hospital, Birmaharajpur, all the five Community Health Centres and Post-Partum Centre, Sonepur are providing Family Welfare and Immunisation services. The facility of service has been extended to all 89 sub-centres and 18 Primary Health Centres in the district. There are also 23 Delivery Points (DP) identified out of the above Health Institutions where Family Welfare services are provided. Out of these 23 Delivery Points, 08 are functional.

Under the Universal Immunisation Programme, vaccination against six killer diseases is going on. Immunisation of Hep-B vaccine has been introduced in the district in the year 2011-12 and Pentavalent vaccine with effect from 7th October 2015. The Rotavirus vaccine will be introduced soon as a part of National Immunisation Programme.

Maternal Health

As per the 2012-13 Annual Health Survey (AHS) data, Sonepur Dist Maternal Mortality, Ratio (MMR) is 234 for the year 2012-13, whereas the State MMR is 230.

Village Health and Nutrition Days are being observed to provide basic Ante Natal Care (ANC) and Post Natal Care (PNC) care at the Aganwadi Centre (AWC) level with referral services in case of identification of risk factors where the target groups are: Pregnant Women, Lactating Women and Children upto 60 months.

There has been a decline in Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) in Subarnapur in the recent years.

The Neonatal Mortality Rate is a key outcome indicator for newborn care and directly reflects prenatal, intra partum, and neonatal care. Post Natal visits within 48 hours and ensuring stay of mother and baby in institutional care at least for 48 hours after birth, can be a very important measure in early diagnosis and early referral for saving many neonates.
Malnutrition in children

There is one ten-bedded NRC (Nutrition Rehabilitation Centre) in the district at Community Health Centre, Ulunda.

NATIONAL LEPROSY ERADICATION PROGRAMME (NLEP)

NLEP is functioning through general health care system headed by District Leprosy Officer (DLO). All ASHAs are trained to refer the suspected leprosy cases to health institutions. Multi Drug Treatment is available free of cost at all health centres. Disability Prevention and Medical Rehabilitation (DPMR) Clinics are functioning at all Community Health Centres. Re-constructive Surgery (RCS) are done at camp mode at District Headquarters Hospital.

NATIONAL VECTOR BORNE DISEASE CONTROL PROGRAMME

NVBDCP is the nodal agency for the prevention and control of vector borne diseases like Malaria, Dengue, Lymphatic Filariasis, Kala-azar, Japanese Encephalitis, Chikungunya. The District Malaria Officer as Programme Officer operationalises the programme with the support of District Vector Borne Disease Consultant. At CHC level Malaria Technical Supervisors (MTS) are working under the Medical Officer – in – charge.

Malaria Sunday, an innovative programme of our district, is carried out in two rounds in each CHCs where each ASHA of each village visits door to door for active surveillance of fever. Each fever case is tested with bivalent Rapid Diagnostic Kit (RDK) at the door-step.

NATIONAL AIDS CONTROL PROGRAMME (NACP)

NACP was started in the district to prevent and control HIV/AIDS by educating the people. District Integrated Counselling & Testing Centre (ICTC) is functioning at District Headquarters Hospital, along with other Community Health Centres except CHC, Naikenpali and Binka.

REVISED NATIONAL TUBERCULOSIS CONTROL PROGRAMME (RNTCP)

RNTCP was launched in the district in March 2004 using the Directly Observed Treatment in Short course (DOTS) strategy with a goal to decrease mortality and morbidity due to TB and cut transmission of infection until TB ceases to be a major public health problem. Under this programme seven Designated Microscopy Centres (DMCs) are functioning at Community Health Centre, Sub Divisional Hospital and District Headquarters Hospital. Sputum examination and Anti TB treatment are done free of cost. All the TB control activities are monitored by District TB Control Society headed by District TB Officer.
DISTRICT BLINDNESS CONTROL SOCIETY

To provide proper eye care service, an Eye Hospital has been established on the premises of District Headquarters Hospital. One Non-Government Organisation i.e Mahanadi Netra Chikitshalaya, Pandapali, Birmaharajpur is doing Cataract Surgery in the district.

INTEGRATED DISEASE SURVEILLANCE PROGRAMME (IDSP)

IDSP is a decentralized state based surveillance programme in the country since November 2004. It is intended to detect early warning signals of impending outbreaks. It also provides data to monitor progress of ongoing disease control programme and helps allocate health resources more effectively.

VITAL STATISTICS

Vital Statistics (V.S) wing deals with Birth and Death occurrences in the district and provides Birth and Death Certificates to the public.

BLOOD BANK

One Blood Bank at District Headquarters Hospital and two Blood Storage Units at Sub Divisional Hospital, Birmaharajpur and Community Health Centre, Dungripali are functioning in the district.

DRINKING WATER FACILITY AND SANITATION PRACTICES

The Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Scheme (RWSS) is responsible to supply safe drinking water and strengthen sanitary habits in rural habitations. Although the district is graced with two perennial rivers, they are not adequate to address the needs of the people. However, RWSS has taken all possible steps to provide safe drinking water to the entire 2877 habitations through 8818 tube wells and 225 pipe water supply systems. The district has been covered with 163 overhead tanks for supplementing pipe water supply to the habitations through the PWS projects. Steps have been taken for construction of 21 overhead tanks to the left out PWS projects to ensure timely water supply. Similarly, 87 solar-based dual pumping systems have been covered in 87 small habitations. The district has supplied 4876 household connections and 5785 stand posts. Till the month of March, 2015, the pipe water supply has almost covered 35% of the total population.
CHAPTER-XII
ADMINISTRATION
GENERAL

Stamps evolved by Sonepur Durbar under BM Sing Deo

Historical Background

The States of Patna, Sonepur and Sambalpur were conquered by the British in course of the Second Maratha war early in 1804. But these States were restored to the Raja of Nagpur in 1806. After the Third Maratha war, Patna and Sonepur along with Sambalpur and other neighbouring States came under permanent possession of the British. In consequence of this, a new administrative division was created in 1819 called the South Bihar and Chotanagpur Mahals which included the Sambalpur group of States. In 1821 the British Government annulled the feudal supremacy of the Raja of Sambalpur on its dependencies including Patna and Sonepur. Accordingly, separate sanads were granted to these States that year. By regulation III of 1833, the South-West Frontier Agency was organized under an Agent to the Governor-General with headquarters at Ranchi. Patna and Sonepur along with other States of Sambalpur group were included in the South-West Frontier Agency under the control of the Agent. The Agency was abolished by Act. XX of 1854 and the Chotanagpur Province was constituted under a Commissioner whose jurisdiction extended over Patna, Sonepur, Sambalpur and other neighbouring States. In January 1861, the management of Patna, Sonepur and Sambalpur which was then no longer a princely State was transferred to the Superintendent of Tributary Mahals, Cuttack, but when the Central Province was constituted in November the same year these States with Sambalpur formed part of the new Province. In 1863, Patna and Sonepur along with Rairakhol, Bamra and Kalahandi were declared Feudatory States and in 1867 Sanads were granted to them giving the Rulers powers of life and death over their people, subject to confirmation of the Local Government. Thus from this time onward, the Feudatory Chiefs of Patna and Sonepur administered their own States with laws and regulations promulgated by themselves. In 1905, Sambalpur together with the States of Patna, Sonepur, Kalahandi and Rairakhol were taken from the Central Provinces and amalgamated with Orissa, while the States of Bamra and Gangpur were also taken from Chotanagpur and placed under Orissa. The privileges and status of the Feudatory Chiefs of these States were fully defined and recorded.
Thus the Feudal Chiefs of Patna and Sonepur were the supreme heads of the respective States in all branches of administration and were known as Maharajas. The pattern of administration in these two states was almost the same. Each of the Maharajas vested in the Dewan the powers necessary to pursue day-to-day administration, reserving to himself the decision of all important matters of the State. In case of Sonepur, the Dewanship was abolished in 1912 when a State Secretary was appointed to manage administration and in Patna State a Chief Minister was appointed in 1936. A cabinet system of Government was introduced in Sonepur in 1942 when the post of State Secretary was abolished and a Chief Minister appointed. In each of the two ex-states, important matters of administration were referred to the State Cabinet of which the Maharaja and the Chief Minister were President and vice-President respectively. There were Ministers for Revenue, Judicial Administration and Development works. In 1947 the Maharaja formed a new cabinet consisting of four Ministers, two of whom were his nominees and the other two representatives from each of the political parties, Krushak Dal and Praja Mandal. After Independence, the Government of India took up the question of merger of Orissa States and subsequently all the States except Mayurbhanj merged with Orissa on the 1st January 1948. On that day the district of Balangir-Patna was formed comprising the ex-States of Kalahandi, Patna and Sonepur. But as this district was found unwieldy for purposes of administration the ex-States of Patna and Sonepur were separated on the 1st November, 1949 and the new district Bolangir was formed comprising these two ex-States.

The State of Sonepur was divided into two subdivisions. The subdivisions were Sonepur Sadar, Binka and Birmaharajpur. The subdivisions were under Sub-Divisional Officers who exercised both executive and judicial functions. The States had their respective High Courts and Sessions Courts, and in both the States the corpus of many British Indian laws were adopted while the spirit and principles of many others were followed with some modifications to suit local conditions.

In Sonepur, a Vichar Samiti or Advisory Assembly was established in 1931 consisting of 16 members of whom 8 were nominated and 8 elected. The Durbar amended the Vichar Samiti Order in 1943 to represent different interests viz., agricultural, social, commercial, etc. and to bring the people into close touch with the administration. There was also the village Panchayat system in the State through which the people could convey their grievances.

On the 1st April 1994, Subarnapur became a district.

Present Administrative Set-up

Rudimentary Administration

The general administration of the district is now vested in the Collector who also functions as Magistrate. He combines in him the responsibilities of the revenue administration as well as maintenance of law and order. The Collector is
assisted by an Additional District Magistrate who is also empowered under several laws to function as the district head. The present revenue administration of the district is not different from that prevailing in other districts of Orissa. The Collector is responsible for collection of land revenue and cess in his district as well as for correct and up-to-date maintenance of revenue records. For the purposes of revenue administration, the district has been divided into six Tahasils. The Tahsil is the basic unit of revenue administration and is placed invariably under a Gazetted Officer designated as Tahsildar. He belongs to the cadre of the Orissa Administrative Service or Subordinate Administrative Service. Besides collection of revenue and maintenance of records, the Tahsildar has the powers of a Revenue Court for settlement of Nayabadi lands, lease of Government land, mutation, encroachment certificate and miscellaneous revenue cases. Each Tahsil is divided for the purpose of collection of revenue into a number of circles each under a Revenue Inspector. A revenue circle comprises several revenue villages. In every Tahsil one or two revenue supervisors have been posted to supervise the work of Revenue Inspectors in the field. The Collector who is the head of the land revenue department at the district level is subject to the general control and superintendence of the Revenue Divisional Commissioner with headquarters at Sambalpur and of the Board of Revenue. He has also appellate powers in matters of miscellaneous revenue cases arising out of a lower court of the Tahsildar or of the Sub-divisional Officer. But as the Collector has many functions to perform, he transfers most of the appeal cases to the Additional District Magistrate retaining only a few important ones. For co-ordination of various aspects of Revenue Administration as well as for effective control over the field officers, there is a Revenue Section in the Collectorate under the charge of an Officer of the Orissa Administrative Service. This is an important section of the Collectorate which needs constant and careful attention. But as the Collector is generally engrossed with a multitude of problems relating to general and developmental administrations, the Additional District Magistrate has been kept in over-all charge of the revenue matters in the district.

**Maintenance of Law & Order**

The Collector, as stated earlier, also functions as the Magistrate of the district. He is primarily responsible for the maintenance of law and order in his area. He was the head of administration of criminal justice in the district. But after separation of Judiciary from the Executive on 1st May 1967, the District Magistrate has lost most of his criminal powers enjoyed since the time of Warren Hastings. Yet he retains all powers under the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code for prevention of breach of peace as well as for maintenance of law and order. Though limited, the powers are nevertheless most vital as they are designed to preserve peace in the area. The District Magistrate is also the general head of the Police Administration in the district, though there is a Superintendent of Police who is the departmental district head. Although the Superintendent of Police has
independent powers and functions, it is his duty to apprise the District Magistrate, from time to time, of important matters pertaining to commission of crimes as well as to the problems affecting law and order situation in the district. The Collector is the pivot of the general administration in the district.

Developmental Administration

The Collector has also been made responsible for the implementation of all development schemes and has been given full control over officers of various departments posted in the district. He is required to check their work and ensure that their work is purposeful. He has power to co-ordinate the activities of various departmental district heads so as to ensure an integrated and all-round development of the area. He also has the power to make an assessment of the work done by the district heads of some of the departments at the end of the year.

Panchayati Raj

The present scheme of developmental administration is a three-tier system comprising the Grama Panchayat the primary level, the Panchayat Samiti at the secondary level and at the Zilla Parishad at the top. Development works are to be done through the agency of the Panchayat Samiti and the Zilla Parishad. The Zilla Parishad is also required to distribute various allotments received from Government from time to time and to indicate the lines along which a particular scheme should be implemented: This system, no doubt, goes far in associating the public with the development administration of the area, but the role of the Collector becomes even more onerous, particularly in a backward district like Subarnapur. He is required to make various local bodies discharge their functions properly without appearing to be authoritarian. He has, no doubt, retained powers of control over these bodies but these powers are exercisable in exceptional cases only. An officer belonging to Class I of the Orissa Administrative Service functions as the Executive Officer of the Zilla Parishad, whereas the Block Development Officer functions as the Executive Officer of the Samiti. The Collector not only assesses their performances annually but also supervises their work and takes steps to remove difficulties which they experience. The Ministerial staff of the Parishad and Samiti, however, belong to the same cadre as the Ministerial staff directly under the Collector and it is he who has powers of appointment and transfer of the staff. It has been mentioned earlier that the Collector has general control over the working of other departments in the district. Yet some departments work directly under him. For example, the Gram Panchayat matters are dealt within a section of the Collectorate under the charge of an Officer of the Orissa Administrative Service known as the District Panchayat Officer.

Collectorate

The office of the Collector is known as the Collectorate. It is the nerve centre of the district administration. It consists of several sections, each under
charge of a Deputy or a Sub-Deputy Collector. At times, an Officer is also kept in charge of more than one section. For the facility of supervision, some of these sections are under the ADM while others are directly under the Collector, although in matters of policy and over-all control, the Collector is deemed to have authority over all sections. The Government has sanctioned duty posts of six Deputy Collectors and four Sub-Deputy Collectors in the District Office but this number varies from time to time. Some of the important sections of the Collectorate are Revenue, General, Judicial, Development, Election, Census, Record Room, Library, Forms and Stationery, Nizarat, Loans, Land acquisition, Welfare, Publicity, Gram Panchayat and Land Records. Each section is kept under the charge of a senior assistant and there is an Office Superintendent for the entire Collectorate whose duty it is to co-ordinate and control the activities of various sections in the District Office. The Office Superintendent is the head ministerial officer of the Collectorate. The ADM who is generally a stationary officer looks after the internal administrative affairs of the Collectorate subject, of course, to the general control of the Collector. The routine matters are disposed of by the ADM who refers important matters to the Collector for his decision.

Sub-Divisional Administration

For administrative convenience, the district has been divided into four subdivisions, each under charge of a Sub-divisional Officer who belongs to the cadre of the Orissa Administrative Service. At times, Junior Officers of the Indian Administrative Service are also kept in charge of subdivisions. Like the District Magistrate, the Sub-divisional Officers also used to function till recently as Sub-divisional Magistrates. But after separation of the Judiciary from the Executive, they now function as Magistrates First Class with powers under preventive sections of the Criminal Procedure Code. They are responsible for the maintenance of law and order in their respective areas. There are 36 Revenue Inspectors who are the main collecting agents. Besides collection of land revenue and maintenance of records, the Revenue Inspectors are also entrusted with the responsibility of enquiring into miscellaneous Revenue petitions.
Community Blocks

There are six Community Development Blocks in the subdivision with headquarters at Tarbha, Ulunda, Birmaharajpur, Binka, Sonepur and Dungripali. The cadre strength of the Gazetted Officers is four besides the Sub divisional Officer. Each Block is kept under the charge of a Gazetted Officer known as Block Development Officer. The office of the Sub-divisional Officer is a miniature Collectorate. He has practically all the sections of the Collectorate in his office. The Subdivisional Officer represents the Collector in his Subdivision and has general control over the Sub-divisional staff of the other departments as well as of the Panchayat Samitis and Gram Panchayats in his subdivision. His powers correspond to the Collector’s in respect of the subdivision, although the Collector has certain additional powers which cannot be delegated to the Sub-divisional Officers. He is directly responsible for the smooth implementation of the programmes of the Panchayat Samitis and proper land revenue administration by the Tahsildar. The Sub-divisional Officers, in addition, have the responsibility under the Orissa Merged States Laws Act to enquire into every petition by a member of any Scheduled Tribe praying for permission to transfer whole or part of his holding to a non-member of the Scheduled Tribe. He is the competent authority under this law either to permit the transfer or reject the application. He may also, on his own motion or on the application by the heirs of any previous transferor, enquire into the authority of transfer and restore it to the person he considers eligible to it. In respect of his subdivision, he has powers of control and supervision over the Police.

Excise Administration:

The Excise Administration of the district is directly under the Superintendent of Excise but the Collector or the Additional District Magistrate on his behalf functions as the head of the Excise Administration.

Public Relation

The Publicity department has been placed directly under the Collector in view of their relative importance. An ex-Cadre Officer designated the District Public Relations Officer is in charge of the Publicity Wing of the Collectorate. Similarly, ADM functions as Collector except in matters of policy which are attended to by the Collector himself.

Financial Administration

There is a District Treasury at Sonepur under the charge of an officer of the Odisha Finance Service (Senior Branch) and an Additional Treasury Officer. There are two sub-treasuries at Birmaharajpur (a Sub-Divisional level) and at Dunguripali (at Block level). The work of the cash section of all sub-treasury is managed by State Bank of India. Collector looks into all the affairs under his jurisdiction. After the implementation of Integrated Odisha Treasury Management System (IOTMS) and Integrated Financial Management System (IFMS), all the
business viz e-disbursement, e-Challan, e-receipt and accounting procedures are conducted with efficiency and accuracy in a comparatively short span of time. This system is interlinking Govt. to Business, Govt. to Citizen and Govt. to Govt. Help desk system facility is readily available to help the citizen, pensioner as well as Govt. employee to have their business/ transaction through online system.

Registration

The ADM is the ex-officio District Registrar. He is assisted by a District Sub-Registrar with headquarters at Sonepur. There are local offices of the Sub-Registrar at Birmaharajpur, Binika and Rampur.

There are several other offices of the Government of Odisha which function under immediate control of their district level heads.

OTHER DEPARTMENTS

Food & Civil Supplies:

The Civil Supplies wing is to ensure smooth distribution of PDS commodities such as Rice/Wheat/ Kerosene to the eligible beneficiaries. Another main objective of this section is to prevent distress sale of paddy and to purchase paddy from the farmers through different PACS by paying minimum Support Price as fixed by Govt. from time to time. At present there are 4 ACSOs, 7 Inspectors of Supplies and one CSO working in this district to monitor the work of PDS & Paddy procurement. There are 64 PACS working in different blocks to purchase paddy from the farmers. Similarly, through 114 retail centres PDS commodities are distributed among the consumers.

At present flagship programme of govt. i.e. implementation of national Food Security Act (NFSA) -2013 is implemented in the district. The district is given a target of 488203 individuals to be covered in the NFSA-2013 and as on date 476845 eligible persons have been included in this scheme. The process of identification of eligible beneficiaries and deletion of ineligible persons is going on to cover the balance beneficiaries of 11358 persons.

The Paddy procurement during the KMS 2015-16 is on and as against the target of 20,06,705 quintals of paddy so far 18,84,000 quintals have been purchased from the farmers through 64 designated PACS.

CO-OPERATIVE DEPARTMENT

It is a well-known fact that during the colonial rule and for a considerable period after independence, the money-lenders had remained the main source of rural credit in Orissa. In fact, in the absence of any other convenient sources of credit in the countryside during the colonial rule, the money-lenders not only enjoyed monopoly in the business of money-lending but also had earned notoriety
for demanding and extracting usurious rates of interest from the cultivators. To save
the poor cultivators from the exploitation of the money-lenders, the Co-operative
Movement started in Orissa as early as in 1903. Co-operative institutions play a
vital role in socio-economic uplift of the rural people. These institutions have been
assigned a place of paramount importance in the process of planned development.
A separate Sonepur ARCS Circle was created bifurcating the Bolangir ARCS Circle
in the year 1970 consisting of 73 co-operative institutions including 64 PACS Circle
in 06 blocks under 02 sub-divisions namely Sonepur and Birmaharajpur covering
85432 agricultural families with a membership of 74381 of which 55322 KCC
holders till 31.01.2016.

Sonepur is predominantly characterized by an agrarian economy. No
development strategy would be effective and pragmatic without development of
agriculture. Since agriculture has been given priority for the cause of economic
development, co-operatives constitute an integral part of the agricultural
development programme. The Short-Term credit advanced by the Co-operative
Societies in the district accounts for about 70% of the total short-term credit given
to the farmers. This shows that Co-operative Bank and Primary Agricultural Co-
operative Societies (PACS) have taken the load of much larger share of short-term
credit vis-a-vis Commercial Banks and RRBs in the district. In the year 2014-15 the
total loan amount of Rs.7901.64 lakhs of credit support was given to 18676
members with a target of Rs.8100.00 lakhs with 98% achievement during Khariff &
Rabi crop season.

The market share of Co-operative Bank vis-a-vis Commercial Banks and
RRBs in disbursement of crop loan in the district is 64%. Interest subvention
schemes announced by Government of India to provide crop loan at 7% rate of
interest to farmers along with an additional 2% subvention granted by the State
Government has been adopted in the State. There is also an additional 2% interest
subvention if there is timely repayment.

Since Sonepur is primarily a paddy-growing district sale of paddy by the
farmers at minimum support price has been a matter of serious concern. The
farmers were prone to distress sale of paddy. Short-Term Credit Cooperatives have
taken the initiative of market intervention and participated effectively in
procurement of paddy. Sixtyfour PACS have actively participated in paddy
procurement through Paddy procurement Automation System. To the tune of 3.2
lakhs M.T. of paddy was procured by PACS during the year 2014-15. Paddy
procurement initiatives by PACS have helped the PACS to improve their financial
position through a huge amount of commission at the rate of Rs.31.25 per Quintal.

In the marketing sector the MARKFED at the apex level is functioning for
distribution of fertilizer through buffer godowns, depots and sale points. During Rabi
2015-16 till date 6800.00 quintal of fertilizer has been supplied to the loanee
members through the PACS under this district as B-component of the Short term
Credit finance. Besides this, high-yielding variety seeds have been supplied to farmers by Odisha Seed Corporation through PACS.

As a measure of infrastructure development particularly in construction of storage godown for paddy/fertilizer most PACs have been selected to get financial assistance by the govt. under RIDF & WIF schemes as well as under RKVY & KBK schemes. In order to improve the output, Soil Testing Labs are being installed in some selected PACS to examine the Soil Health, as the Govt. is taking initiative for One Stop Solutions at PACS point.

As per the recommendation of the Vaidyanathan Committee Report, the Recapitalization Assistance under Revitalization package had been released to 64 PACS. This revival package has strengthened the financial position of PACS in the district, as a result the PACS are in a position to carry out short-term credit operation mainly for the farmers in the district.

There had been tremendous expansion of co-operative societies both in membership as well as working capital, but they had not been able to replace completely the non-institutional sources of credit in the district. Nevertheless, with their growth and expansion the stranglehold of the money-lenders over the cultivators had slackened considerably by the time.

**Electricity and Power Department:**

Sonepur Electrical Division was established with a vision to maintain quality & uninterrupted power supply to consumers in the district. So three Sub-divisions have been created under Sonepur Electrical Division, i.e. Sonepur, Birmaharajpur and Binka to monitor and fulfil the requirement of consumers towards stable electricity supply. Sonepur sub-division maintains the quality distribution power system for consumers in Sonepur and Tarbha Blocks. Birmaharajpur sub-division for Birmaharajpur & Ulunda Blocks, and Binka sub-division for Binka and Dungripali Blocks.

**Rajiv Gandhi GrameenVidyutikaranYojaya(RGGVY)**

Under this project the department has provided electricity to 59034 BPL beneficiaries of the district. It has upgraded the 33/11 KV Sub-station capacity and 11 KV feeder lines.

**Odisha Distribution System Strengthening Project(ODSSP)**

Under this project, the department proposes to create another 9 nos. of 33/11 KV grid sub-stations. Kalapathar 33/11 KV grid & Deulpadar 33/11 KV grid. Dubula 33/11 KV Grid will improve power supply stability in Tarbha block. Raxa 33/11 KV Grid & Ainlachhat 33/11 KV grid will improve power supply stability in Ulunda block. Subalaya 33/11 KV Grid & Mursundhi 33/11 KV grid will improve power supply stability in Birmaharajpur block. Seledi 33/11 KV Grid & Bisalpal 33/11 KV grid will improve power supply stability in Binka block.
Revised Long Term Action Plan (RLTAP)

It aims at department aims at improving the electrical infrastructure by upgrading the existing 33/11 KV grid and 33/KV line of Subarnapur district so as to provide stable power supply to consumers.

Biju Gram Jyoti Yojaya (BGJY) & Biju Saharanchal Vidyutikaran Yojana

Aims at electricity supply to BPL beneficiaries in rural and urban areas.

Deendayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana (DDUGJY)

It aims at strengthening the existing electrical infrastructure of rural areas keeping in view the future load growth so as to provide quality & uninterrupted power supply to consumers with the separate agriculture feeder.

Integrated Power Development Scheme (IPDS)

It aims at strengthening the existing electrical infrastructure of urban areas of the district.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Development and maintenance of an extensive road network is a major pre-requisite on which the pace and pattern of growth rests. Public Works like construction of roads, bridges, Cross Drainage work on nullahs, buildings including public health and electrical works etc. are being executed by the Works Department so as to improve the accessibility of rural areas to markets and facilitate better delivery of services.

The Executive Engineer at the Divisional level is the executive of the Department assisted by two Sub-Divisional Officers in the rank of Assistant Engineer and Assistant Executive Engineer.
Natural Calamities and Disaster Management

MULTIHAZARD MAP OF SUBARNAPUR DISTRICT

DISTRICT HEADQUARTER
\( \checkmark \) DISTRICT BOUNDARY

\( \text{W. C. VH}(B) \) = Wind and Cyclone Very High damage risk Zone B (50 m/s)
\( \text{W. C. H} \) = Wind and Cyclone High damage risk Zone (47 m/s)
\( \text{W. C. M(A)} \) = Wind and Cyclone Moderate damage risk Zone A (44 m/s)
\( \text{W. C. M(B)} \) = Wind and Cyclone Moderate damage risk Zone B (39 m/s)
\( \text{EQ_H} \) = Earthquake Moderate damage risk Zone II
\( \text{EQ_L} \) = Earthquake Low damage risk Zone II
\( \text{FLZ} \) = Flood Zone
\( \text{NFZ} \) = No Flood Zone

Source: Vulnerability Assessment published by BMTPC Government of India

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Subarnapur faced severe famine in 1899-1900. Rainfall was only 36.05 inches (the average being 50.53 inches) and was badly distributed. It was too insufficient to fill the tanks and in consequence the fields could not be irrigated. Fifty percent of the rice crop on the first class irrigated land, 70 percent on second class land, 85 percent on third class and 30 percent of the upland rice crop were damaged. Winter crops failed to germinate owing to want of moisture in the soil. Wheat, however, was sown by about 30 percent of the cultivators and this crop was of very great assistance. The price of rice which stood at 20 seers per rupee at the beginning of 1899 dropped in 1900 to 8 ½ seers. Relief works like Annachhatras or public kitchens were opened at all the important centres in the State and the Zamidars also maintained public kitchens at their headquarters. Seventeen annachhatras all over the state were opened. Gratuitous relief to respectable poor and taccovi loans to cultivators and weavers were given. The total amount of loans thus extended was Rs.27,628 to 8,239 recipients. There was food for work for important centres in the State and the Zamindars also maintained kitchens at their headquarters. Seventeen kitchens in all were opened, gratuitous relief to respectable poor and taccovi loans to cultivators and weavers were given. The total amount of loans thus given was Rs. 27,628 to 8,239 recipients. There was food for work for 2,979 persons and the expenditure, including assistance to the dependents of the workers amounted on this account to Rs. 15,322. The number of persons fed at the 17 kitchens was 14,674 at a total cost of Rs. 13,549. The paupers mostly came from members of the Ganda, Gaura, Sahara, Dumal, Kewat and Khadal castes. The late rains however saved the situation in a large measure and the later varieties of crops were harvested to some extent.

Drought (1965)

In the year 1965 rainfall was inadequate, erratic and uneven. Sonepur was in the grip of a severe drought, the worst in the preceding half a century or more. There was only 34” of rain during the year as against the annual average of 56”. Even this little rainfall was so erratic in nature that cultivation could hardly derive any benefit and as a result, towards the end of October 1965, the paddy crop failed leaving behind withered stumps. There had been a continuous process of decay in the forest wealth either by extensive illicit felling or by frequent forest fires, accidental but mostly wilful or illegal deforestation by the coupe contractors without any simultaneous schemes for forestation or soil conservation. This loss of forest vegetation also contributed to a decrease in the capacity of the soil to retain moisture.

The extent of damage to the principal paddy crops was between 50 per cent and 75 per cent. The paddy crop was completely damaged. The two Community Development Blocks of Binka and Dunguripali in Sonepur subdivision which have perennial irrigation facilities from the Hirakud Canal system, however, could escape the damage.
The worst sufferers were the landed gentry. They could neither reap the harvest nor could do manual labour to which they were never accustomed. They, too, were shy enough to accept Government relief because of the social status they enjoyed and of a social and even religious stigma attached to free relief which was branded as “Chhatar”. Food stuffs completely disappeared from the market mainly because of failure of crops and partly due to the hideous activities of hoarders and smugglers. The pastures lost the greenery and even the hill slopes with thick vegetation presented a bleak and barren picture. The cattle population, therefore were equally starved. Everywhere there was an acute shortage of water and the rural population had to face thirst and hunger.

Droughts

About two-thirds of the total cultivated area being rain-dependent, drought poses a serious threat at regular intervals due to failure of monsoon. Occurrence of severe droughts has been registered in the year 2004, 2007, 2009, 2010 & 2011.

Floods

Sonepur has been a regular victim of recurring floods in the Mahanadi. Between 1868-1967, i.e. during a span of hundred years, there were 262 flood inundations in the state of which 68 were high floods, 77 medium floods and 117 low floods. However, the scale of grimness of the floods of 1881, 1894, 1896, 1907, 1920, 1926, 1927, 1934, 1940, 1941, 1943, 1955, 1960, 1961 surpassed the previous ones. To add to the plight of its people, in between 1967 to 2003, floods of periodic nature occurred almost every year in between 1967-1975, 1977, each year between 1980-82, 1990, 1992, 1994, 1995, 2001, 2003 2006, 2007 2008, 2009, 2011 and 2014 due to heavy precipitation. During these periods Sonepur suffered 187 human casualties and damage of about 5738 houses (Memorandum of Govt. of Odisha). In 2010 there was unseasonal rain and the harvested paddy germinated, causing heavy loss.

Fire Accident

Fire accident used to be common in Sonepur, which occurs round the year. During 2012-13, about 97 fire accidents had occurred and 77 villages were affected. Two deaths in the year 2005, 1 in the year 2007, 3 in 2009, 1 in 2011 and 1 in 2013 were recorded.

Present Practice of Disaster Management

The Government of India appointed a Commission to enquire into the administration of relief during famine of 1899-1900. In the light of the recommendations of the Commission, the then Provinces took steps either for framing or for revision of their famine Codes. The Bihar and Odisha famine Code, 1913, having provisions mostly to meet situation arising out of famine and flood, was revised in 1930. By the time Odisha was separated in 1936, this Code was in force. Government decided to frame a fresh Relief Code after the catastrophic cyclone of 1971.
General Principles Regulating Relief Measures

The general principles under which relief measures are now regulated are provisions of the state relief code which include relief works, gratuitous relief, nutrition supplementary feeding programme, relief measures by non-official organization, care of orphans and destitute, strengthening of public distribution system, health measures and veterinary measures, provision of credit supply, special relief to weavers and artisans, arrangement of food stuff and stocking of food grains in strategic places, provision of drinking water, provision for immediate irrigation facilities, remission and suspension of collection of land revenue and loans, grant of educational concessions, enquiry into starvation cases and prompt action on such reports, and press report.

Vulnerability of the district:

Subarnapur district is vulnerable to high floods, sunstroke, whirlwind, droughts & hailstorms. In recent times death toll due to sunstroke has increased in the district as the temperature remains above 45 degree centigrade for a longer period. The river Tel is largely responsible for most of the flooding & inundation in the district.

Therefore, the state government decided to build elevated structures to withstand very high wind speeds, proof against flooding and resistance to moderate earthquakes. Two types of drawing and design have been developed by IIT, Kharagpur; one for 3000 capacity & another for 2000 capacity.

Accordingly, flood shelters are being constructed above High Flood Level (HFL) with raised platform & stilted floors in different vulnerable areas of Birmaharajpur, Dunguripali & Ulanda Blocks and Binka NC & Sonepur Municipality of the district basing on the recommendations received from the district administration.

Use of the shelter buildings:

Almost all the shelter buildings are mainly constructed inside the school premises or adjacent to the school so that it can be used as class rooms during normal time and potential shelters at the time of disasters. The ground floors of these buildings have been designed to be used as shelters for livestocks during emergencies. Relief materials and medicines can be stacked for emergent situations. Additionally, these shelter buildings can be used as community halls and can be put to various other community uses like Anganwadi centers, training centers, marriage mandaps and for other social gatherings etc. with payment of agreed user charges. Therefore, the shelter buildings are known as Multipurpose Flood Shelters (MFS).

Features and facilities available in the MFS buildings:

All the MFS have separate hall & toilets for men and women, special room for the sick, labour room, one store room, drinking water supply through submersible pump, internal electrical wiring with all fittings, ramp of 1:12 slope &
separate toilets for disabled persons, 5 KVA noiseless diesel generator, shelter level emergency equipment etc.

**Community based management & maintenance of the shelter buildings and Capacity Building of community:**

To ensure the sustainable maintenance of these shelter buildings, community-based Flood Shelter Management & Maintenance Committees (FSMMC) are formed. They impart suitable orientation trainings. In addition, shelter level taskforce volunteers have been identified and they are being oriented, trained and involved regularly. Further, the shelter level Mock Drill on disaster preparedness is also conducted at each shelter on 19\(^{th}\) June every year. The minor repair works of the shelter buildings are taken up by the FSMMC whereas the responsibility of the major repairs lies with the authorities. All the FSMMCs have been provided with corpus fund to the tune of Rs. 5.00 lakh each for regular capacity building of the local community out of the interest generated per year.

**Different Schemes for construction of MCS & MFS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name of the Scheme</th>
<th>MCS / MFS</th>
<th>No. of Shelters</th>
<th>Period of construction</th>
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<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>Chief Minister’s Relief Fund (CMRF) by RD Dept.</td>
<td>MFS</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>2011-12</td>
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<td>ii.</td>
<td>Chief Minister’s Relief Fund (CMRF)</td>
<td>MFS</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>Post Phailin (2013-14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
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<td>06</td>
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**Availability of Block-wise shelters in Subarnapur district:**

Out of five Blocks each has a shelter except Sonepur which has two.

**Construction of MFS under Chief Minister’s Relief Fund (CMRF):**

After Phailin, visualizing the requirement for more cyclone/flood shelters in Odisha, the State Government has decided to construct 06 MFS out of the Chief Minister’s Relief Fund in Subarnapur district.

**Photo of MFS in Subarnapur district:**

![Sonepur Municipality adjacent to Panthaniwas MFS in Sonepur Municipality under CMRF](image1)

![Mundghat MFS in Ulanda block under CMRF](image2)
REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

The Sambalpur garjats which included Sonepur became tributaries under the Marathas of Nagpur in 1755 A.D. They were ceded to the British government by the Treaty of 1803 with Raghuji Bhonsla but were restored to the Marathas in 1806. In 1818 they were reverted to the British government. They were under control of Bengal government till 1861 and were thereafter included in the Central Provinces. On 16th October 1905, they were transferred from the Central Provinces to the Orissa Division which included 26 Oriya-speaking ex-States. A Political Agent was appointed for the first time to assist the Chiefs.

Thus with the partition of Bengal, the Garjat states of Patna, Kalahandi, Bamra, Rairakhol and Sonepur merged with the Orissa Division. From the control of the Central provinces, they now came under the Lt. Governor of Bengal. Lord Minto II (1905-1910), Governor General of India, raised them to the rank of Feudatory States. And the Rajas were known as Feudatory Chiefs. All the 26 garjats were categorized into three types - A, B and C. While Athgarh, Athmallik, Badamba, Bonai, Daspalla, Hindol, Khandapara, Kharsuan, Nilgiri, Narsinghpur and Talcher came under Group B and Ranpur, Pallahara and Tigiria under Group C, Bamra, Boud, Dhenkanal, Gangpur, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Nayagarh, Sareikela, Sambalpur, Kalahandi, Patna and Sonepur fell under category A. The revenue of Bamra, Kalahandi Patna, Rairakhol and Sonepur was raised Sone paid Rs. 9,000/- with effect from 1888 (Mahtab: 318).

Sonepur ex-State comprised the present Subarnapur District and 66 villages of Manninda P. S. comprised in Panchra, an ex-Zamindari of Boudh.

The revenue system of the ex-State differed widely due to existence of its own set of Revenue Laws called “Bhumibidhi”

Land Revenue System

Prataprudra (1891-1902) sent his son to the fields to gather practical experience under a capable Dewan like Dinabandhu Pattnaik during the first ever survey and settlement in the Sonepur state.

This settlement continued into B. M. Sing Deo’s reign till 1905. The experience gleaned from this operation crystallised in The Sonepur State Code, Vols. I and II in 1907 which was revised in 1915, 1925, 1929, 1939 and 1940.

In the preamble to The State Code, Vol. I or Bhumibidhi, BM Sing Deo says that he had merely authoritatively codified the rules and regulations governing the rights and liabilities of the zamindars down to the common tenants that were in practice in the Sonepur state from a dim past. They consist of classification of villages, tenants, village management, rules applicable to the zamindars and the towns, etc. the Bhumibidhi and Bibidhabidhi promulgated in 1907 became guidelines even to the administrators posted at Sonepur after 1947. The Bhumi Bidhicategorises villages into seven types : Devottar Mauti or land enjoyed by the
sebaits free for performance of religious duties relating to the deities, *Brahmottar Maufi* or land granted to Brahmans, *Khorak-Poshak Maufi* or land given towards maintenance grant to Babu Bhayas or royal relations, *Naukaran Maufi* or land granted for services rendered, *Birti* or land donated to Brahmans, *Garhti* or land given to Gartias like those of Subalaya, Bagbar, Mursundhi, Khandahata, Kotsamalai, Baidyanath, Menda, Lachhipur, etc. for performance of police duties for the ruler or military duties for the state, and *Gaunti* land given to Lambardars or Gauntias (village-holders).

The purpose behind this frequent land settlement in both Khalsa and Zamindari areas appears to progressively increase the revenue.

*Bhumibidhi* has 83 Articles described in 9 Chapters. Some of the salient features are

**Article-1**  
*Bhumibidhi* does not say why *Sarkar* has kept apart Forest, River, Nala, Mines and Towns of the State and divided the rest of land into villages.

**Article-2**  
Classification of villages as per Status and Duties:


Rules applicable to towns are dealt in Chapter-8

**Article-3**  
*Thica Gaunti*

**Article-4**  
*Dakhal Rakhasil Gaunti*

Only Maharaja could grant the *Dakhal Rakhasil Gaunti*

**Chapter-8**  
Rules for Transfer of *Lambardar* status after death of *Lambardar Gauntia*.

**Chapter-9**  
Temporary tenure of Bhogra Land by the sharer or Lambardar is not illegal transfer. No foreign person was allowed possession of bhogra land. Read rules (a) (b) and (c) of Article -9

Regarding the history of revenue administration in the ex-State of Sonepur it is recorded in the *Feudatory States of Orissa* that prior to 1887 bhogra land of a village was put to quinquennial auction and the Thicadars deposited the amount in the State treasury in a lump sum. This system of quinquennial auction of bhogra lands, service lands of the lessee of the village, automatically conferred the right on the Thicadars or Gauntias to hold the village for 5 years. After 1887 the leases became annual. This system enabled the
Gauntias to reap the benefits of land reclaimed afresh and brought under cultivation by tenants until the next settlement. The Gauntias were also empowered to re-allow abandoned land for which they used to receive nazarat (succession fee) from the new occupants. But the Gauntias were not allowed to sell or mortgage their villages or bhogra land.

Wazib-ul-Arz

The Zamindari Wazib-ul-arz promulgated on 12 Dec. 1910 contains the guidelines for the zamindars and officers of the state. Since the loyalty of the zamindars was a sine qua non for the smooth functioning of administration, the succession of the zamindari was incumbent upon recognition by the ruler, not merely upon the law of primogeniture. The zamindar at each succession used to pay a certain nazarat for the latpatta granted. This system of nazarat, however, was dispensed with by the British government on the occasion of the Coronation Durbar in Delhi in 1911.

The full proprietary right, thus, did not inhere in the zamindars. It came from the ruler. The zamindars had no right on the forests, mines, quarries, rivers, etc. except that they could obtain timber and fuel for domestic use. They were not allowed to take loan or lease their khamar land or home farm without prior sanction by the state. Besides the profit from the khamar land, the zamindars were entitled to ferry income and to the income from ladabi property or sale of unclaimed cattle under the Cattle Trespass Act.

The Zamindari Wazib-ul-arz also specifies the services the zamindars were to render to the state besides the customary annual payment of takoli and pattis like haldian patti, payment on the occasion of birth, thread ceremony, marriage, etc. in the Raj family. They maintained a fixed number of sepoys who used to be present in the capital on specific occasions like Pusyabhiseka, Sravanabhiseka, Dassera, etc. They accompanied the ruler during his journey outside the state. They were posted as guards on some formal semi-religious occasions.

The zamindari was the largest and the village was the smallest administrative unit. The village-holder was known as gauntia or lambardar or numberdar. Between the gauntia and the zamindar stood the garhtia. The garhtia circle was bigger than the gauntia. But with the passage of time the gartias were reduced to gauntias when the necessity of defending the state was no more felt with the ascendancy of the British Raj in India. It was customary for the Maulidars and holders of village as it was for the zamindars and garhtias to appear on the Dassera day offer dhulia tika and receive lat from the ruler.

Land Tenure System in the Ex-State

(a) Zamindars: Most important of the tenures in the ex-State were the 5 zamindaris, namely Rampur, Kamsara, Barapali, Sukha and Panchara. Besides, there were six other zamindaris consisting of one or two villages each. All the
zamindars were members of aboriginal races, such as Khonds and Binjhals. The zamindaris were created by the ruler in return for military services and became heritable as a matter of grace. Succession had to be recognised by the ruler on payment of nazaran. The zamindars had to pay takoli (tribute) which was fixed by the ruler basing on the actual income of zamindars. Takoli was liable to revision at each settlement. At the first settlement takoli was fixed at 18%. But in course of the two subsequent settlements, no uniformity appears to have been maintained and fixation of takoli as high as 50% was aimed at. After the third settlement, fixation of takoli varied from 33% in case of Barapali to 50% in case of Kamsara. The zamindars appointed Gautias within their respective jurisdictions, but such appointments were formally approved by the ruler who charged nazaran from the new Gauntias. Dismissal of such Gauntias also required sanction of the Ruler. The zamindars used to bear the cost of settlement. They directly collected rent from their khamar villages and could not lease out their home-farm or khamar without sanction.

All except Kamsara were under the management of Court of Wards when the State merged with the State of Orissa.

(b) Gauntias: Similar to the ex-State of Patna, here also the Gauntias were village headmen. Some of these Gauntias were granted protected status by the ruler and were holding the village on a permanent basis, while others were only thica-gauntias holding their villages on a terminable lease. These tenure-holders were allowed to collect rent from tenants and were also held responsible for general management of official affairs relating to the village. For the service rendered by them, they enjoyed bhogra land, which according to Bhumibidhi belong to government. In villages where the bhogra land was considered to be in excess of what was necessary for the village management, the village holder was paying rent for the occupation of the excess bhogra land. They were also obtaining the benefit of all new land brought under cultivation by the tenants until there was a settlement. The gauntias had also authority to allot house sites to needy tenants or non-agriculturists. For the land abandoned and then transferred, thicadars were permitted to receive nazaran from the new occupants. Thicadars with protected status were allowed to lease out the bhograland in their possession temporarily for one year.

The gauntias were held responsible for payment of rent to the ruler or zamindars as the case may be. No transfer, sale or gift of their holdings was allowed. Bhumibidhi provided for eviction of Thica-gauntias for non-payment of thica-jama of Thica-gauntias, non-performance of the duties of the village holders and damage to the agricultural land and villages. The gauntias with protected status were not liable to be ejected except according to the provision of law.
The holdings of protected gauntias were impartible but heritable. The new successors to the holdings were charged a *tika* or *nazarana* on expiry of lease of *thicadari gaunti pattas*.

Gaunti system has been abolished in Sonepur and *bhogra* land attached to the office of gauntia have been settled as rayati with the person who were found in possession on the 1st April, 1955. No *salami* was levied for conferring occupancy rights either from the Gauntia or from his co-sharers or persons in possession of *bhogra* land as a result of illegal transfer.

(c) **Garhtias:** Garhtias were on the same footing as the Gauntias except that the villages held by them consisted wholly or mostly of Paiks (*Sipahis*) or the old feudal militia. Rules of gaunti tenure applied to the Garhtias also. The Garhtias were required to attend to the ruler with Paiks when he was on tour and on Dashara day. The Paiks also acted as guards of the palace in absence of the ruler. The Paiks enjoyed jagirs for rendering military service and usually paid a quit rent. The Paiks repaired Thanas and schools situated in their locality and roads passing through their villages. In some of the Garti villages there were two classes of tenants, namely- ordinary tenants and sipahi tenants. The ordinary tenants were assessed in the same manner as tenants in the gaunti villages.

Garhtias have been considered village officers under the Orissa Merged Territories Village Offices Abolition Act, 1963 which has not come into force in the district.

d) **Birtias:** These tenure holders were all Brahmins, who were gifted with/ received their villages on special terms. In some cases, they or their ancestors were the original founders of the villages. Their duty was to offer coconuts and threads to the Chief on Shraban and Pausa Purnima and to render other religious services. These tenure-holders were paying school cess and *kar* (Payment in kind) on a reduced rate and had rights to appropriate a portion of the rent collected by them and enjoy the *bhogra* land. The right of the holder was heritable and partible. The *bhogra* land of *birti* villages therefore, could be partitioned, sold and the profit thereof shared among co-sharers and mortgages were permitted with the sanction of the ruler.

Provisions were made to evict the rayats in *birti* villages for non-payment of rent, want of loyalty to the ruler, damage to the village land or forests, non-acceptance of assessment, transfer, etc.

The office of the *Birtias* has been considered a village office under the Orissa Merged Territories Village Offices Abolition Act, 1963 which has not yet come into force.
(e) Maufi: Maufi grants were of several kinds viz., Debottar maufi, Brahnoottar maufi, Khorakposak maufi, Naukaran maufi. Incase of Debottar maufi villages, the deity concerned was recorded as the holder of the village and the person who was managing the affairs of the deity was known as sebayat. He was also the marfatdar. Hereditary status was granted by the ruler to some sebayats. The income of the village was to be first applied to the worship of the deity and the rest was appropriated by the sebayat. Debottar maufi villages were held free of all rent. But in cases of some such villages quit rent was paid. Brahnoottar maufi villages were held by Brahmmins for religious services. There were Brahmmins in Brahnoottar maufi villages. They held land but paid no rent. Khorak-posak or maintenance grants made by a ruler could be resumed by another and the conditions of such grants could be changed from time to time. Adoption required sanction of the ruler. Maintenance grants made in favour of the ruler's relatives were also known as Babuan maufi. Naukaran maufi villages were held for services rendered. Services were mostly nominal. The maufidars collected rent and appropriated the same, but they paid simply cess. In a few cases, quit rent was paid. Rights and liabilities of the maufidars were usually embodied in Sanad which was granted by the ruler.

Debottar maufi, Brahnoottar maufi, Babuan maufi, Khorak-posak maufi and Naukaran maufi (excluding Debottar and Naukaran) have been abolished under the Orissa Estates Abolition Act with effect from 7th September 1965.

(f) Pattidars and Sub-pattidars: In the vested estates of Kamsara and Sukha in Sonepur, there existed a peculiar type of tenure not to be found in the rest of the district. They are pattidars and sub-pattidars. There are altogether 11 pattidars and 64 sub-pattidars. The Bhumibidhi does not recognise sub-tenures. In actual practice, pattidars and sub-pattidars were functioning as a sort of intermediary between the Gauntias and the Zamindar's family for the purpose of rendering military service to the Zamindars. These tenures were hereditary in nature. But they were impartible and inalienable. Each pattidar holds a group of villages comprising the Patti. Under him, either there are sub-pattidars holding a smaller number of groups of villages or gauntias as per usual practice. The gauntia was responsible for the payment of land revenue to the sub-pattidar or pattidar under whom he holds. Likewise, the sub-pattidar was responsible to the pattidar and pattidar to the Zamindar. The Record-of-Rights of the last settlement of Sonepur indicates that this arrangement of intermediary system had the recognition of the ruler.

This practice was in vogue up to the 31st of March, 1956 when the gauntiai system was abolished in Sonepur and collection of rent was taken over by the State. Thereupon the pattidars and sub-pattidars claimed the remuneration from
the government. This matter is still under the consideration of the State government and it is pertinent to state that this tenure has not yet been abolished in pursuance of the broad principles embodied in the Orissa Estates Abolition Act of 1951.

(g) **Rayati Holdings**: Tenants were divided into (i) Bhogra Tenants (ii) Rayats holding service tenures (iii) Occupancy rayats (iv) Sikim Rayats (v) Thica tenants.

(i) **Bhogra tenants**: Rayats settled with bhogra land of the village holders for a certain period were treated as bhogra tenants. They were liable to pay such amount for their possession of the bhogra land as was settled by the lessors and accepted by the lessees and were subject to ejection after expiry of the term of lease. There were some such tenants who, due to length of possession and improvement made to the bhograland, were granted protected status by the ruler and were eligible to hold land permanently.

(ii) **Service tenures** - Village servants like Choukidars, Jhankars etc. holding land for rendering services to the village come under this class. They did not pay rent, but were liable for cess and other dues. They were eligible to settle their service land in sikim rights.

(iii) **Occupancy Rayats**: Tenants recorded as such or tenants of occupancy holdings were occupancy rayats. This tenancy was heritable according to the laws of inheritance. For transfer of land by sale or mortgage, they had to take the permission of the gauntia. They were eligible to create sub-lease, but were not allowed to transfer their land by way of gift or dowry. Besides produce, they had also right to enjoy the trees, wells, mundas and such other water reservoirs standing on their holdings. Partition among more than one successors was subject to the permission from ex-State authorities. They were liable to pay rents, cesses and other dues regularly and were safeguarded from arbitrary eviction.

(iv) **Sikim Rayat**: Tenants of the bhogra land of the naukaran tenures and of the land of the occupancy tenants were sikim prajas or sub-tenants. They were liable to pay their dues to the principal tenants as contracted and were subject to ejection after expiry of the term of the lease.

(v) **Thica tenants**: The land which was not included in village areas and was in direct possession and control of the ex-State was given
on thica lease by the ex-State authorities. These thica tenants were eligible to hold the land for a time.

Most of the tenants of this ex-State had occupancy rights and the tenants of other categories were very few. The tenants belonging to all the above classes were liable to be ejected if the agricultural land in their possession was made by them unfit for cultivation or was converted by them to use other than agriculture.

(vi) Collection of Rent and Cess

(a) Rent: Recovery of land revenue was made from gauntias by certificate procedure. Zamindars had to sue in a court of law for recovery. Arrest and detention were avoided and standing crops were not attached, crops on thrashing floor were attached. Movable property other than agricultural implements, seeds and similar articles were attached. gauntias and other holders of villages used to file rent suits against defaulters for recovery. All State dues were made a first charge on the property of the defaulter.

(b) Cess: Besides rent, cesses were also realized.

Education cess at the rate of one anna for rupee rental, nistar cess for forest products, one anna and six pies for acre of paddy land and one anna for acre of up-land, road cess one anna and six pies per rupee of rental. Since merger, all the cesses were abolished and a general cess of two annas is charged for rupee rental which has since been increased to four annas after the passing of the Orissa Cess Act, 1962. Nistar cess varying from two annas to three annas is charged for acre of land taking into consideration the class of land and situation of the forest.

Land Settlement

The first regular settlement of the cultivated area of the State was taken up by Trayambak Rao Sathe, Extra Assistant Commissioner of the C. P. Government and was completed in 1907 by the then Dewan Raisahib D. B. Patnaik, who was Assistant Settlement Officer of the adjoining British District of Sambalpur. After this, there were two revisional settlements under the guidance of L. Pujhari who joined the State Service after having worked as Assistant Settlement Officer in Sambalpur and Settlement Officer in Patna State and P. Babu who had worked under the aforesaid officer as Assistant Settlement Officer. The system of settlement operations is based on the C. P. system which prevails in the district of Sambalpur. The rent compares favourably with that prevailing in Sambalpur.
Though the term of the last settlement expired in the year 1937 and in the year 1940 in the southern and northern sides respectively, settlement operations have been kept suspended by special order of the Ruler during these days of general hardship and turmoil caused by war.

The acreage of cultivated land since the first settlement is 260193.02 in the first, 339612.40 in the second and 347040.54 in the third settlement. While the demand in 1942 was Rs. 193,151-5-11, a sum of Rs. 185,323-4-3 was realized and Rs. 13,585-14-7 was remitted.

A nominal road and public works cess was levied in the State with effect from the year 1939-40 for public roads and works.

The ex-State of Sonepur merged with the State of Orissa in 1948 and the 4th settlement operations were initiated in 1954 under the provisions of Bengal Survey Act, 1875 according to Revenue Department Notification No. 2506/LRS dated 29th November 1954 with headquarters at Cuttack. Subsequently the settlement operations were controlled by a Settlement officer with headquarters at Sambalpur from 1960. Besides, Sonepur Bhumibidhi, which was the revenue law in force, was followed. When settlement operations had reached the attestation stage the areas were divided into two settlement zones, irrigated and non-irrigated. A portion of Sonepur Sub-division had come under the ayacut of Hirakud canal system. 103 villages of Binika Police Station, 123 villages of Dunguripali police station were compromised in the irrigated zone and the rest 819 villages of all six police stations of Sonepur sub-division including 65 villages of Manamunda police station (Panchara ex-zamindari) in non-irrigated zone. De novo operation in respect of the villages of the irrigated zone was taken up. Settlement operations came to an end in February 1965 when final publication of record-of-rights in respect of all the villages of irrigated zone was done and parcha distributed.

System of Assessment

"To return to the early history of the States", describes R. K. Ramadhyan about the origin of land revenues in Orissa and Chhatisgarh ex-States, "the petty rulers who hewed out kingdoms for themselves though they imported a higher civilisation into these backward areas, do not at first seem to have taken any steps to introduce any organised system of management, and it is very likely that the old tributary system of villages, managed almost entirely by village headmen, survived undisturbed for a considerable period. All that the early rulers were interested primarily was to obtain sufficient revenue for themselves and for the purpose of settling up defence against neighbouring monarchs, whose ambition could at any time result in an attempt at enlargement of their territories at the expense of neighbouring princes. Under the old Hindu system as devised and expounded by Manu, proprietary right in land of the persons who settled on that land and made it fit for cultivation was recognised by the king who claimed only a portion of the revenue; but it is doubtful if this
principle was ever recognised in the Orissa states though most of the rulers claim Rajput origin. The question cannot in any case have been troublesome one in those days when the sword was the final arbiter in most matters, and almost certainly, the revenue system was simply that of making certain demands upon the village headmen who were left to distribute the burden of the demand upon the cultivators in their village in any manner they considered suitable, this being more or less on a par with the Takoli or quit-rent payable, by Zamindars or the tribute paid by the chief to the paramount power, in which a detailed consideration of how the amount was raised does not find place. Thus there was no system of assessment of revenue by the State. Each villager was called upon to pay as much as he would bear and agreed to pay, without, of course any understanding that there would be no additional demand for special reason but probably the villager agreeing to original demands must have anticipated that this was not the only burden”.

As regards the distribution of the burden of a village among the cultivators, he continues, though a village might have consisted of cultivators as well as agriculturists and other artisans the burden would naturally be borne by agriculturists proper only. In those days there can have been extremely few agricultural labourers, and the artisans who formed a part of the village organisation were almost entirely maintained for their purposes by the cultivators of the village and consequently it was only the cultivators who could bear the burden of taxation. This, incidentally, seems to be the origin of the rent-free holdings enjoyed by such people as blacksmiths, braziers, carpenters and others.

There was no systematic distribution of the assessment among the individual agriculturists and areas where cultivation was more or less settled, the seed capacity of a field was the unit according to which assessment was made. After the conquest of Marathas in A.D. 1755, the ex-State followed the Maratha system of land revenue assessment known as “from aggregate to detail”. In this system the demand on a village was fixed according to the nature of season and the total demand was then distributed among the cultivators by the village headman.

For collection of taxes and maintenance of villages, there were five other types of revenue- villages like Khudkas Maufi, Bidhi Maufi, Raiti Hak Maufi, Sikmi Hak Maufi, Thicca Hak Maufi and Zamidari Maufi.

The lambardars or, in their absence, makaddams were responsible for the maintenance of tanks, roads, protection of forests and pastures, supervision of the duties of Jhankars, barbers, sweepers, etc. The Chowkidars and Jhankars were
given one bundle of paddy at the reaping time and one kula of dhan at the threshing
time by every tenant.

Other Taxes

There were two Treasuries, namely, Bahari Bhandar under Gobinda Bohidar
and Bhitri Bhandar under Ishwar Bohidar. The revenue from the land forest, court
fee, excise etc. was deposited in Bahari Bhandar, while the income from Khamar
land, tika, patki tax etc., was accounted for in Bhitri Bhandar inside the Gopalji
temple. The huge deposits in the Bhitri Bhandar subsequently resulted in the
institution of the Sonepur Trust Funds in 1925.

After the establishment of British rule, settlements in the line of Central
Province system were conducted in Sonepur for assessment of land revenue and
the soil factors and village units were taken into consideration.

Relationship between landlord and tenants

During Durbar administration, the Ruler was the supreme landlord of his
territory and Zamindars, Thicadars and Gauntias were intermediaries. Thicadars
and Gauntias were regarded as headmen of their villages and in all important
matters, their guidance by rayats were sought and followed. Once upon a time,
these intermediaries were most powerful and corruptions like extracting more
from the rayats, neglecting to issue proper rent receipts to them, utilising the
services of rayats as bethi for their personal cause and putting them in trouble
in many other ways were common. Gradually the powers of these
intermediaries were curtailed by the Rulers and strict measures were taken to
deal with the breaches when detected.

Besides rent on land, the rayats were forced to pay in cash different cesses
and in kinds like magan, rasad, etc. The rent and cesses were subject to
frequent change by the authorities. The bethi system was prevalent up to forties.
Customs duty was charged on necessary articles brought from outside the ex-
State. It shows that there were always attempts to increase the income of the ex-
State, no matter what happened to the peasantry.

Estate Abolition and Past & Present Administration System

The estates of Kamsara and Sukhawere vested in the Government with effect
from the 1st December, 1952. Rampur Wards estate vested in Government with
effect from 31st May, 1965. Only the estate of Barapali has not vested in
Government so far.

Administration Set-Up

The Ruler of the ex-State was the highest authority in all revenue matters. He had the powers to appoint or remove the village headmen. He had also the
powers to hear appeals from the orders of their subordinate officers in revenue matters. He also exercised criminal and civil powers. The Ruler of Sonepur was assisted by one Dewan, three Subdivisional Officers and two Tahsildars. The Subdivisional Officers and the Tahsildars in the ex-State mostly looked after the collection of land revenue in addition to doing civil works.

Subarnapur has been divided into two sub-divisions namely, Birmaharajpur and Sonepur and six Blocks namely Binika, Tarbha, Sonepur, Dungripali, Birmaharajpur and Ullunda.

The Tahsildars are the Chief Revenue Officers of the tahsils whereas the Sub-divisional Officers are the Chief Revenue Officers of the subdivision. Tahsildars and the Sub-Divisional Officers are controlled by the Collector of the district.

SONEPUR TAHASIL

Sonepur Tahasal started functioning with effect from 1.9.1963. The total geographical area of this Tahasil is 196.925 Sq. K.Ms. There are 5 R.I. Circles in this Tahasil namely Sonepur, Bishimunda, Khari, Khaliapali and Lachhipur, having 162 villages under its jurisdiction. This Tahasil covers Sonepur Police Station fully and Dungripali Police Station partly. The total population of this Tahasil as per Census 2011 is 77,911, out of which 13,219 are S.C., and 6,127 are S.T. In 2008 Tarva Tahasil was carved out of this Tahasil.

No major irrigation projects are operating here. However 11 MIPs and Ong Irrigation Project is active in Lachhipur and Khaliapali R.I. Circle.

This Tahasil with Mahanadi on the North and Telnadi on the South has sand quarry as Major Sairat sources. There are five R.I. circles namely, Sonepur, Bishimunda, Lachhipur, Khaliapali, and Khari.

BINKA TAHASIL

This Tahasil started functioning w.e.f. 09.12.1982 being bifurcated from Rampur Tahasil. All the 8 Circles comprising 117 villages are covered under the command area of Hirakud Dam. The total geographical area of this Tahasil is 28,374,674.692 hec, out of which agricultural land is Ac 67681.582 dec. and ayacut area is Ac 50508.750 dec. It is surrounded by three rivers on three sides i.e. the Mahanadi, the Ong river and the Jira river. There are 8 (eight) R.I. circles namely, Binika, Kaudiamunda, Bankighirdi, Singhjuba, Sindurpur, Mahada, Meghala and Seledi.

RAMPUR TAHASIL

Rampur Tahasil was established in 01.01.1977 under the administrative control of the Sub-Divisional Officer, Sonepur. Now this Tahasil is functioning under the administrative control of Subarnapur district with effect from 01.04.1993 after creation of the new district. The Tahasil Office is functioning at Rampur in its own building which is at a distance of 55 kms from the district office Subarnapur. The
entire Tahasil is irrigated under the command area of Hirakud Dam Project. There are 8 Revenue Inspector Circles namely, Rampur, Dunguripali, Sukha, Andharibanji, Pandkital, Bhatbahali, Beheramal, Cherupali comprising 104 revenue villages and 06 jungle villages.

Seven Sairat sources are there in this Tahasil, out of which 4 sources are functioning viz- Chanabeda under Andharibanji R.I. Circle, Chhanchani under Sukha R.I. Circle, Bhatabahali and Dahukbud under Bhatabahali R.I. Circle.

TARBHA TAHASIL

Tarbha Tahasil was inaugurated on 26/05/2008 after being bifurcated from Sonepur Tahasil as per Notification No.14913 Dt. 29/03/2008 of Revenue & DM Deptt, Odisha, Bhubaneswar. There are six RI circles namely, Tarbha, Menda, Kamsara, Charbhata, Brahmani, Badbhainro, out of which 03 were created on 01/04/2013. Tarbha tahasil has 189 revenue villages including two (Tel & Suktel) river villages and 22 jungle villages.

BIRMAHARAJPUR TAHASIL

The Tahasil office situated at Birmaharajpur town started functioning in 1963 with 184 revenue villages. Birmaharajpur Tehsil is bounded by Sonepur and Ulunda Tehsils to the west, Boudh Tehsil the east, Rairakhol on the North and Mahanadi on the south. Rivulets namely Harihar Jore and Surubali Jore are the main tributaries of river Mahanadi. Harihara Jore is the Medium Irrigation Project situated at about 20km from Birmaharajpur town towards north out of which more than half area of this Sub-Division is getting irrigation facility. It is in the 160 m elevation (altitude) with co-ordinate of 20°51'57"N 84°2'38"E. The distance from District Headquarters i.e. Subarnapur is 25 km.

This Tahasil started functioning w.e.f. 01.06.1963. Its geographical area is 893.4 Sq. miles. This Tahasil consists of 186 Revenue Villages covering 05 Revenue Inspector Circles namely, Ufula (27 villages), Mursundi(24 villages), Kenjriapali, (63villages), Khandahata (42 villages), Subalaya (30 villages).

ULUNDA TAHASIL

This Tahasil came into existence being bifurcated from Birmaharajpur Tahasil in the year 2007 under Birmaharajpur Sub-Division of Subarnapur District and named Ulunda Additional Tahasil. This Tahasil was formerly under the ex-Zamindari area of the ex-State. In the year 2009 vide notification 14913 dated 29.03.2008 of Revenue & Disaster Management Deptt., Odisha Bhubaneswar read with Notification No. 2935 dated 21.04.2008 of Collector, Subarnaur the Additional Ullunda Tahasil declared full-fledged Tahasil. This Tahasil is coming under the jurisdiction of Birmaharajpur Sub-Division comprising two police stations namely Birmaharajpur and Ulunda in one Block. Ulunda has four Revenue Inspector circles covering 211 revenue villages including one river village and 29 jungle villages.
After reorganization, two new more R.I. circles namely, Sindhol and Kalapathar, came into existence being bifurcated from Ulunda R.I. circle and Birmaharajpur Tahasil respectively from 1st April, 2013. Now this Tahasil comprises six R.I. circles and 223 revenue villages including jungle & river villages.

PRESENT LAND LAWS

With the merger of various princely States and tracts from various provinces, the State inherited a complex and diverse revenue system. In such a post independence scenario, the State was required to administer nearly 32 different revenue laws and to codify a uniform system and to evolve a pattern of administration to secure socio-economic justice to all. Such land laws are;

1. Orissa Estate Abolition Act: to provide for the abolition of all the rights, title & interest in land of intermediaries and to make provisions for other matters connected therewith.

2. Orissa Land Reforms Act: to enact a progressive legislation relating to agrarian reforms and land tenures consequent on the gradual abolition of intermediary interest & to confer better rights on agriculturists.

3. Orissa Government Land Settlement Act: to provide for settlement of Govt. land in the State in favour of landless and home-steadless persons.

4. Orissa Prevention of Land Encroachment Act: to provide for prevention of unauthorized occupation of lands, the property of Govt.

5. Orissa Survey & Settlement Act: to consolidate & amend the laws relating to survey, Record of Right & settlement operation in the State.

6. Orissa Consolidation Holding & Fragmentation of Land Act: to provide for CH&FL for development of agriculture in the State.

7. Orissa Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorized) Occupants Act/Rules: to provide for the eviction of unauthorized occupants from public premises.

8. Orissa Merged State Act: to provide that certain laws should be extended to and by virtue of such extension, be in force in the said areas;

9. Government Grant Act: explains the Transfer of property Act, 1882, relating to grants from the [Government] and to remove certain doubts as to the powers of the [Government] in relation to such grants.
Settlement / Consolidation operations:

Notification for undertaking fifth settlement / Consolidation made in phased manner during 1995. Broadly Consolidation of holdings was taken up in Rampur, Binika Tahasil, being irrigated under Hirakud command area and some portion of Sonepur in Ang irrigation project.

Meanwhile, dedicated staff for both consolidation and settlement were withdrawn and posted at different tahsil as well as at Collectorate for which there was a stalemate for almost ten years.

Again during 2011-12, in order to facilitate the Hi-Tech survey both the settlement / Consolidation work resumed in all the notified villages and completed by 2015.

Only RoRs of Mahanadi “GA” and Gania under Birmaharajpur Tahasil for both fourth and fifth settlements are not available till date.

Modernization of Land Records:

In the way of modernizing and bringing efficiency to the land revenue administration as well as to make it citizen-centric, technological intervention has been envisaged under the centrally sponsored Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme. Major focus of the Programme is on citizen services. Various components of the programme are under way in the district which in brief have been outlined below.

Under this programme, all textual data of records of rights are being updated and computerized. Data conversion of all textual records has been completed in respect of all Tahasils of the District and has been hoisted in the Bhulekh website. Computerized RoRs are being issued to the citizens. Re-entry of RoR data is being done on continuous basis for further updation. Cadastral map-sheets of all the villages of the district have been digitized and mosaicised. All those maps have been integrated with the textual RoR data of bhulekh website for public view and official use. Steps have been taken to make the mutation process transaction based in which notices of all transactions registered in the registration offices are sent by the registering officers to the tahasil offices for initiation of mutation proceedings. There has been sharp decline in the application based mutation cases during the last 2-3 years. Further all Tahasil dars have been instructed suitably to dispose all un-contested mutation cases within a maximum period of three months. People have been greatly benefited due to quicker updatation of land records.

Tahasil level computer cells have been made functional in all Tahasils of the district. Information technology is used for maintaining village wise property records and for providing services to citizens in a better way.

All the Tahasil offices have been provided with broadband internet connectivity. In addition, virtual private network over Broad Band (VPN) has
been provided in the Tahasil offices for secure data transmission. The VPNoBB connectivity is being used to transmit the updated RoR data from the tahasils concerned to the NIC headquarters is through File Transfer Protocol (FTP) for reflection of the same in the bhulekh website. Steps have been also taken to provide connectivity through Odisha State Wide Area Network (OSWAN) to all Sub-Collectorates, Tahasils and Registration offices of the district. The district headquarters is already connected with OSWAN.

In order to replace the existing system of physical storing and maintenance of land records modern Record Rooms in Tahasil offices are being created under DILRMP where valuable revenue case records shall be stored electronically through document management system software after scanning. Maintenance of land records in the dematerialized format shall go a long way in long-term storage of the valuable revenue case records as well as in providing better citizen-centric services.

Under DILRMP, all the Registration Offices of the district have been computerized with adequate hardware / software. All the Registration offices are connected to the Central Server at the State level through a dedicated software on Virtual Private Network (VPN) mode. Bio-metric authentication system has already been put in place in all the Registration offices. Data Entry of Valuation details, legacy encumbrance Data and scanning of old documents in respect of all records from 1995 to date has been accomplished. Citizens are being provided immediate services such as Encumbrance Certificates (E.C.) and Certified Copies (C.C.) at the Registration offices.

Hi-Tech survey operation using Aerial Photography followed by Ground Truthing by Electronic Total Station (ETS) and Differential Global Positioning System (DGPS) has been started in the district under DILRMP. All areas except those declared as urban areas and as forest areas are being covered under the programme. Necessary Ground Control Points have already been installed in the district for the sake of accuracy and uniformity. One private agency namely M/s IIC Technologies Ltd. has been engaged by the State Government to undertake Hi-Tech Survey operation in the district. Digital map preparation depicting the ground reality in most accurate manner under Hi-Tech survey is expected to bring paradigm shift in the land record management and shall bring efficiency in the public delivery system.

**e- District Project**

Subarnapur is one of the leading districts in the state to provide online service to the citizen by e-district project. The project started on 25.11.2013. One e-district manager is exclusively appointed to monitor the proper functioning of the project.

Delivery of service through e-district project involves the following process
a. A citizen can apply at respective Public Facilitation Centre or Common Service Centre through e-District Portal.

b. The application is automatically forwarded to the dealing assistant of the respective Tahasil.

c. The dealing assistant forwards the same to the respective Revenue Inspector for field inquiry report.

d. The Revenue Inspectors prepare the report by field visit and submit it report on the e-District Portal.

e. The report of the RI then is forwarded to respective Tahasildar for approval or rejection.

f. If the Tahasildar approves it, the certificate of the applicant comes to the PFC or CSC concerned. If the Tahasildar rejects, it, the applicant can know the ground of the rejection and apply again.

The applicant is to get all the service from PFC/CSC.

Six types of services are provided through e-District Project to the citizen of this District through e-District portal such as Residence Certificate, Caste Certificate, OBC Certificate, SEBC Certificate, Income Certificate, Legal Heir Certificate.

The following figure shows the number of certificate delivered from the date of inception till date.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Name of Tahasil</th>
<th>Total no. of Applications Approved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sonepur</td>
<td>17104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tarbha</td>
<td>13741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Binka</td>
<td>16471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Rampur</td>
<td>20283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Birmaharapur</td>
<td>14717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ulunda</td>
<td>17434</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**e- REGISTRATION**

E-Registration through computer is implemented here since 4.1.2010. Five data entry operators employed by OeSL are working in this registration district. After implementation of the e-Registration project all documents are registered through the system and digital thumb impression, digital photo, digital signature are
taken by the electronic devices by the operators. Fee receipt, Valuation report, Fee Book, Certified Copies, ECs and endorsements are generated through computers to the satisfaction of the registrant public. The documents completed in all respect are scanned and uploaded to be stored in the computer system for future references. Due to introduction of e-Registration system the general public is getting prompt and immediate service from the registration offices of this district. OeSL is providing all the technical support for the smooth management of the system. The data entry operators are working sincerely by operating the computers to the satisfaction of the authorities. After the implementation of right to public service Act. 2012, it has become easier to provide the timely service to the registrant public through e-Registration system. Under this project on line mutation in possible as the Tahasil offices of this district are connected on line for transmission of Form No. - 3 after the completion of the registration process of the transacted documents.

ABBREVIATIONS used:

Global Positioning System (GPS)

VPN-Virtual Private Network (VPN) on your iPhone, iPad, or iPod touch

TS-Terminal Services, a component of Microsoft Windows operating systems
CHAPTER-XIII

LAW & ORDER

Law and order in a princely state was somewhat different from that of a province, so far as the exercise of judicial powers is concerned. By virtue of various Acts passed by the British Parliament from 1773 to 1947, the princely states enjoyed a wide range of executive, legislative and judicial powers in comparison to their provincial counterparts. Moreover, the Act of 1935 made the princely states independent units of the proposed All India Federation.

Protection and Legislation during Pre-merger period

The Introduction to Sonepur State Code, Vol. II or the Bibidhabidhi reads:

"Ever since the assumption of suzerainty of British Power over the State of Sonepur, it has been the rule, having the force of law, that for fair judicial adjudication the rulers of the State should be free to pass laws and administer law in the State, consistent with the principle of equity and good conscience."

But while the Bhumibidhi has an originality of its own, i.e. the rules have been framed independent of the Bibidhabidhi, the substantive laws in force in British India served as models of standard legal provisions. Many British Indian enactments have either been adopted or modified in consideration of various local customs and conditions like the Indian Penal Code, Criminal Procedure Code, Gambling Act, Cattle Trespass Act, Police Code, etc.

The Administration Report for the year 1942-43 of Sonepur State depicts the following facts.

a) The State has adopted the important British Indian enactments with slight modifications to suit local conditions. The special Revenue Law and Tenancy Act of the State have been codified under the title of Bhumibidhi (1907). Some special laws of the State have been incorporated in the Bibidhabidhi. (The codified laws and enactments were revised and amended in 1939 according to changing circumstances).


The Report on the Administration of Feudatory States, 1907-08 says that there were 5 Sub-Inspectors, 3 Head Constables or Habildars, 149 constables under the Inspector. In addition, there was a contingent of 30 armed police. The SP was paid
Rs.300/- the Additional SP, Rs.53/- an SI, Rs.40/-, an ASI Rs.7/-, and a constable Rs.5/- a month.

There was no military force in the State. The State, however, passed the Joint Police Military Act and joined the scheme of the Joint Police Force established for the Eastern States Agency. In 1942 the Police staff consisted of 148 personnel. There were 1 Inspector, 1 Addl. Inspector, 1 Drill Inspector, 2 Buglers, 6 Sub-Inspectors, 12 literate constables, 23 head constables, 32 Armed constables and 69 constables.

There was one police officer for every 7 miles area and for every 1,682 persons. The Police Force was armed with 25.410 muskets, 6.476 bore guns, and twentyfour muzzle-loading guns.

The cost of maintaining the Police Department came to Rs. 37,048/- in 1941-42 as against Rs.34,152/- 1940-41. The police force of the State is regulated by the State Police laws and regulations.

The Inspector of Police, the Additional Inspector of police and 5 Sub-Inspectors were trained in Police Training Colleges in British India. Out of the 5 Sub-Inspectors one who was undergoing training at Hazaribagh Police Training College had come out successful. Two Assistant Sub-Inspectors were sent for training at the Police Training School, Angul.

The number of offences reported was 367 against 308 and the number of persons arrested was 429 against 304 of the previous year.

The value of the stolen property was Rs. 7,154/- and that of property recovered was Rs. 2,590/- as compared with Rs. 5,422/- and Rs. 2,513/- respectively, in the preceding year. The percentage of recovery was 41.1% as against 46.3%.

Chowkidars and Jhankars

In every village there were Chowkidars and in most of the villages there were both Chowkidars and Jhankars. They were all service-tenure holders. They performed the duties of the village police and the village watchman. These tenures were heritable and the next successor was generally recognized as Chowkidar or Jhankar unless dismissed on the recommendation of the village Panchayat and the Chief Police Officer.

BM Sing Deo(1902-37) set about strengthening the police department as an essential part of the law and order machinery. Out of 15 Police Outposts in the whole of Sonepur, he had set up 14 by the year 1915, observes Pt. Gopinath Panigrahi. The number further increased by the time the Maharaja died. He established four Police Stations with barracks for constables in the zamindaris, for Rampur and Sukha at Dungripali, for Barapali at Baidyanath, for Panchera at
Besides, there were Police Outposts at Kamsara, Rampur, Barapali, Sukha. For every 30/40 villages there was one Outpost and for every 4/5 Outposts, one police station. The Outposts at Subalaya, Uphala, Kotsamalai and Hingma were under Jaloe Police Station, those at Sindhol, Rampur, Sukha, Digsira, Lachhipur under Binka Police Station and those at Menda, Tarbha, Kamsara, Mallikmunda, and Dahya were under the Sonepur Police Station.

The Sonepur Police Station had barracks for constables. Its first Police Inspector was Chakradhar Mishra. Birkalap SingDeo, commonly known as ‘Police Saheb’, uncle to Birmitrodaya, continued to hold the post of Superintendent of Police whose double-storey residence still stands close to the palace. The post of Additional SP was held by Tripurari Bohidar and the two Sub-Inspectors were Gauri Shankar Mishra and Balaram Tripathy.

Theft was almost unheard of due to exemplary punishment. One Bhuban Mohan, Khananchi or Manager of Rampur Treasury, was arrested for embezzlement of State funds. Dhanawanta Mallik, Nazar of Birmaharajpur Tehsil was jailed for alleged leakage of confidential information. Once three gold Chattras were stolen from Gopalji Math. A dozen pujaris of the Math were arrested on suspicion. Their wives were made naked. Yet no clue was found. Tripurari Bohidar suspected one Dinabandhu Mishra of Ghodaghatpara who had just released 14 cows mortgaged to Nagapali Gauntia. Mishra had sold the chattras to one Kasi Sunari (goldsmith) who had already melted one and had hidden the rest under the staircase. The gold lost was recovered. Mishra died in jail and the pujaris were released after two months confinement.

POLICE IN PRE-MERGER SONEPUR

While Prataprudra Sing Deo (1891-1902) set up the Police outposts at Sukha, Lachhipur, Digsira in 1901, his son, Birmitrodaya (1902-37) established the police station at Tarbha in 1906, Sonepur in 1907, Binka in 1910 and Uphula in 1920. Sudhansusekhar set up the Kamsara Outpost in 1947.

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Crimes Profile of the District

There is communal harmony no doubt, but there have been sporadic agitations for a separate Koshal State, demonstrations by political parties, Cease work by Bar members for a High Court Bench etc.

To contain the Left Wing Extremists (LWE) Ulunda, Subalaya, Birmaharjapur P.S. a District Voluntary Force (DVF) has been formed and 02 Units of Special Operation Groups (SOG) stationed in the district.

POLICE ADMINISTRATION DURING POST-MERGER ERA

At present Subarnapur Police District is headed by the Superintendent of Police. There are 02 Police Sub-Divisions i.e. Sonepur & Birmaharjapur and 09 Police Stations including Energy Police Station centrally located at Sonepur with area and jurisdiction extending throughout the district.

SONEPUR POLICE SUB-DIVISION

Sonepur Sub-Division is headed by an SDPO. He has jurisdiction over Tarbha, Binka, Dunguripali and Rampur police stations.

BIRMARJAPUR POLICE SUB-DIVISION

Birmaharjapur Sub-Division is headed by an SDPO with jurisdiction over Ulunda and Subalaya Police stations.

OTHER WINGS OF POLICE ADMINISTRATION:

The following wings are functioning at District Hdqrs. under direct control of the Superintendent of Police.

1. District Intelligence Bureau, Subarnapur headed by one DSP.
2. District Crime Records Bureau headed by one Inspector
4. District Cyber Cell, Subarnapur headed by an Inspector, DCRB
6. Anti Naxalite Cell headed by one Deputy Commandant of Police.
7. Reserve Office headed by one Reserve Inspector
10. Village Policing and Village Defence Party
Community Policing ‘Ama Police’

Community policing scheme is operating through people-friendly policing practices and community participation. It aims to integrate policing into the fabric of the community, so that people and the Police collaborate before serious problems of law and order arise. It develops friendly relationship with law-abiding people in the community and involves them in efforts to improve overall quality of life in their area.

Crime & Criminal Network Tracking System (CCTNS)

Odisha Police is implementing Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS) which is a Mission Mode Project of Government of India. Under CCTNS Project all police stations and higher police offices in the State and across the country are being computerized and networked. All police posts and its wings are interconnected. This Project is launched to trace unknown criminals by way of various scientific techniques like call tracking, Geo positioning system and other modern scientific methods.

In order to provide quick services to citizens, Odisha Police has launched online "Citizen Portal" under CCTNS Project. "Citizen Portal" will enable citizens to access information, request Police services, lodge complaints as well as to track the status of different services provided to the citizens.

Cyber Crime Cell

Cyber Crime which has become a headache for governments of all the countries and law enforcing agencies is a modern phenomenon developed by technically qualified experts in software and modern methods of computer technology. Hence, one Cyber Cell at District headquarters has been set up. It is functioning in coordination with State Cyber P.S., Bhubaneswar to detect cyber crimes like hacking/transfer of funds from ATM / through freezing mails/ from personal Bank Accounts / Corporate Sectors/ uploading and circulating obscene multimedia service for blackmailing, sexual exploitation, financial extortion, kidnapping of minor girl child for ransom etc. A few cases of such crime like hacking of ATM, uploading of MMS to Mobiles etc. in the recent past have been detected in the district.

JUDICIARY

As per the Administrative Report of Sonepur State for the year 1942-43, Judicial Administration was run with the following main courts.

(a) The High Court  
The Chief Judge is Mr. M. R. Roy, M.A., B.L., who is a retired Additional District and Sessions Judge of the Province of Bengal.

(b) The District and Sessions Court
(c) **Subordinate Courts** - Three Courts of the Sub-Divisional Officers, two Courts of Tahasildars, Court of the Munsiff and Magistrate (All the above courts exercise civil and criminal powers.)

(d) **Huzur Court of the Ruler**

The system of judiciary in the past was considered to be quite effective. It has been the rule having the force of law that for the judicial adjudication with equity and good conscience, the rules of the State were free to pass law and administer law in the State. The State of Sonepur conducted judicial Administration by passing laws for the State. In course of time, the spirit of laws in force in British India has been followed to ensure fair trial and some laws in force in British India have been expressly adopted or have been adopted with certain modifications. In Sonepur State, a separate code *Bibidhabidhi* and the laws of the land *Bhumibidhi* were in force despite the despotic and tyrannical rule of the king, who was the fountainhead of justice and administration. The local litigants had the privilege of having a District Judge Court. The ruler of the Sonepur State was vested with power of the Hazur Court, which exercised the power and function equivalent to that of High Court and Supreme Court. There was a hell and heaven difference between the judicial status and facility enjoyed by the people of Sonepur State during the pre and post merger period. After merger, the facility of the Hazur Court suddenly reduced to the Munsif Magistrate Court at Sonepur. The people felt more secure under the rule of a benevolent dictator in the past. Maharaja, Sonepur has also enacted a law for the employees of the Sonepur State as regards Retirement (*Bidaya*), Pensionary benefit (*Bhatta*) and Superannuation (*Sarbabidhi Abasara Grahana Bisayaka*).

Still there was a dark side to the past system. Rajas took advantage of the absence of the middle class who could have prevented them from being oppressive and overbearing. There being no intermediate class between the Rajas and Royats, the former was looked upon as *ma-baap* of the latter, and could imprison them for every offence not exceeding 2 years. The proceeding in the Civil and Criminal cases were not recorded in writing so that they might be subsequently revised or taken notice of by higher authorities. For, the Rajas were empowered by Government Order No.3364 of September 1858 to try all criminal cases viva voce.

Sonepur before merger had a hierarchy of judicial courts and after creation of Sonepur District, the Additional District Judge Court and District Judge Court were established.

Prior to 1948 the feudatory States of Patna, Sonepur and Kalahandi were administered by three different Ruling Chiefs. After their integration with Orissa, they constituted a new district called Bolangir-Patna with a new Judgeship and Sessions Division styled as Balangir-Patna Judgeship and Sessions Division. On the 1st November 1949, the ex-States of Patna and Sonepur together formed a separate district. The Dahia outpost area of Sonepur Sub-Division was transferred to Baudh-Khondamals district. After the formation of Balangir district, the Judgeship
and Sessions Division came to be known as Balangir-Kalahandi Judgeship and Sessions Division with headquarters at Balangir. The District and Sessions Judge held circuits at Bhawanipatna and Sonepur for disposal of cases.

After merger, there was only a Munsif Magistrate Court at Sonepur, which was functioning in a small cabin-like room in a part of the Munsif’s Residence at the back of the Samalei Temple. The first Munsif was one Kumarendra Nath Sarkar.

Shyam Sundar Mishra was the first Law Graduate of Sonepur.

In 1948, the Sub-Divisional Office, Sonepur was vested with the power of Sub-Divisional Magistrate, who was taking cognizance of criminal cases and trying them. He used to transfer criminal cases to his sub-ordinate Magistrates and also to the Munsif & Magistrate First Class.

The separation of judiciary from the executive came into force w.e.f. 18th May 1967 and the Munsif & Magistrate First Class was vested with the power of Sub-Divisional Magistrate.

In 1956, the Munsif Court was shifted to the new building originally constructed for Industrial School. The said building was converted to Munsif Court by Hon’ble Chief Justice Sri R.L. Narasingham during his visit to Sonepur. In 1973, the Sub-Judge Court after a long, arduous struggle was inaugurated by Hon’ble Chief Justice of Odisha High Court Sri Gati Krushna Mishra on 1st May 1973. The Chief Judicial Magistrate Court was established in 1993 after creation of the new Revenue District Subarnapur. After a long public agitation the Additional District Judge Court was established on 1st May 1999. The new District Judge Court at Sonepur came up on 23rd June, 2012.

BAR COUNCIL

The present strength of the Bar is 200. Though small, it has produced legal luminaries like Jagneswar Dash, Chittaranjan Dash, Satrughna Pujari, Justices of the Odisha High Court and eminent politicians like Niranjan Pujari, at present, Speaker, Odisha Assembly.

In the month of February, 1982 a Court of Additional Munsif-cum-Judicial Magistrate First Class was established at Birmaharajpur. In 1987, a separate Sub-Division, Birmaharajpur was created after bifurcation from Sonepur Sub-Division. In the year 1997, the Additional Munsif & Judicial Magistrate First Class was re-designated Civil Judge, Jr. Division & Sub-Divisional Judicial Magistrate. Also a Court of Civil Judge, Jr. Division & Judicial Magistrate First Class was established at Rampur before creation of the new Subarnapur district.

Adalati Panchayat

In accordance with the Orissa Grama Panchayat Act, 1948, an Adalati Panchayat was constituted in the district. The criminal jurisdiction of Adalati Panchayat covers simple cases, the maximum punishment of which involves fine up to Rs.5 or imprisonment for a period not exceeding fourteen days. No appeal in
criminal cases against the order of the Adalati Panchayat sentencing a person to fine is admissible except that Sub-divisional Magistrate holds revisional powers.

Besides criminal jurisdiction, the Adalati Panchayats also have exclusive civil jurisdiction over suits for money due on contracts, suits for recovery of movable property or its value, suits for compensation for wrongfully taking or injuring movable property when the value of the suit is within Rs.25. Government might also give to certain Adalati Panchayats additional jurisdiction for trying suits of higher money value.

Presently, the following courts are functioning in the district.

**Sonepur:**

1. District & Sessions Judge
2. Additional District Judge-cum-Sessions Judge
3. Chief Judicial Magistrate-cum-Assistant Sessions Judge
4. Civil Judge, Sr. Division-cum-Assistant Sessions Judge
5. Registrar, Civil Courts-cum-Assistant Sessions Judge
6. Civil Judge, Jr. Division-cum-Sub-Divisional Judicial Magistrate
7. Judicial Magistrate First Class
8. Family Court

**Birmaharajpur:**

1. Civil Judge, Jr. Division-cum-Sub-Divisional Judicial Magistrate.

**Rampur**

1. Civil Judge, Jr. Division-cum-Judicial Magistrate First Class.

Recently the government of Odisha have notified for establishment of a Court of Civil Judge, Senior Division at Birmaharajpur and a Court of Civil Judge, Junior Division-cum-Judicial Magistrate First Class at Binka.

In the district headquarters, a District Consumer Dispute Redressal Forum is also functioning to render justice to the consumer.

**JAIL**

**Jail during Pre-Merger Period**

As per the Administrative Report for the year 1942-43 of the then Sonepur State, the total number of prisoners admitted was 122 as compared to 81 of the previous year. The average cost of dietary charges per prisoner per day came to Rs. -/-2/-9 as against Rs. -/-2/- in the preceding year. There are separate blocks for male and female prisoners. There is a jail garden where vegetables, viz., cabbages,
cauliflowers, carrots, turnips etc., are grown. The main jail industry is weaving and for its improvement a local weaving master has been appointed during the year under report. The general conduct of the prisoners has been satisfactory.

It is also important to mention that there was increase of Rs.378/- in income of the ex-state during 1942-43 due to better sale of jail products.

While the Sambalpur chiefs had the power to imprison criminals for 7 years, their coastal counterpart’s power was limited to 5 years. They had also the power to hang murderers unlike the Orissa Chiefs. The tree on which heinous criminals were hanged at Sonepur was known as *phasigachha*. Gopinath Panigrahi who was Tehsildar and Magistrate First Class is said to have passed orders for the execution of a couple of flagrant criminals.

**Present status**

Sonepur jail building started by Niladhar Sing Deo (1841-1891) was completed by Prataprudra Sing in 1892. Sonepur Sub-Jail is situated in the middle of the Sonepur town. The entire jail has 12,483 acres of land and the building is constructed over 1.90 acres with a capacity for 150 prisoners. There is a separate female ward and a 10-bedded hospital on the premises.

About 2 acres of land are utilized for cultivation purposes. During the financial year 2014-15, Rs.1, 98,000/- (One Lakh Ninety Eight Rupees) has been earned towards the revenue receipt such as sale proceeds of garden vegetables and paddy, internal supply of vegetables to the prisoners, auction of dead stock articles. During 2015-16, Rs.14, 000/- (Rupees fourteen thousand) has been earned towards sale proceeds of vegetables and internal supply of vegetable to the prisoners till 30.09.2015. It is expected to earn more than two lakh during the current financial year. The 16 prisoners of this jail are engaged in different works such as sweeping, cooking, gardening, etc. and they earn Rs.40/- per day.

**Prisoners’ Welfare**

Prisoners are provided with volley ball, carrom board, ludo, T.V. etc. Spiritual programmes are organised. Lectures by Prajapita Brahma Kumari, weekly prayers of Sri Satya Sai are arranged. Daily newspapers are provided to the prisoners. Different types of competitions like sports, songs and quiz are held. During the financial year 2014-15 an amount of Rs.5000/- has been paid to one convict named Padu Khamari towards financial assistance for self-employment of his family members.

The convicts are also availing parole.

The son of one convict named Nursingh Sahu has been sent to Madhurmayee Adarsha Sikha Niketan, Bhubaneswar on 13.05.2015.
Medical Facilities

There is a contractual Medical Officer and one regular Pharmacist. The prisoners are referred to outside hospitals as per advice of the jail medical officer when necessary. Every fortnight there is a health check-up.

VIDEO CONFERENCE HALL

A Video Conferencing hall is now under construction.

FIRE SERVICE

There is a fire station functioning in each Block.

RECENT MAJOR HAZARDS

A major fire in village Gobindpur occurred on 28.05.2012. Four units (man & machine) of fire service worked 30 hours to extinguish the fire, 122 families were affected and 288 houses burnt down.

In 2013 two units (man and machine) were sent to Chhatrapur during Phailin and to Bisakhapattnam in 2014 during Hudhud for help.

CHILD WELFARE AND JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

The Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) is being implemented in the country for protection of child rights and interests. The existing institutions and programmes for child protection in India primarily stem from the provisions under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000 and National Plan of Action for Children 2005. ICPS brings several existing child protection programmes under one umbrella and integrates interventions for protecting children and preventing harm. It does not see ‘child protection’ as the exclusive responsibility of the DWCD but stresses other sectors that have a vital role to play. ICPS is expected to function as a Government-Civil Society Partnership Scheme under the overall direction and responsibility of the government. The scheme visualizes a structure for providing services as well as monitoring and supervising the effective functioning of child protection system.

Target Group

The target group consists of children in need of care and protection, children in conflict with law, children in contact with law.

ICPS came into force from February, 2013.

The District Child Protection Unit functions with the Collector as Chairperson and D.C.P.U. as head of the unit.

Besides, the following statutory bodies are functional in the district to ensure proper care and protection of children and juvenile: Child Welfare Committee, Juvenile Justice Board & Special Juvenile Police Unit. Committees have been formed to monitor proper implementation of the programme:
1. District Child Protection Committee.
2. District Level Sponsorship and Foster Care Approval Committee.
4. District Advisory Committee/District Inspection Committee.

The Juvenile Justice Board is sitting outside the court premises as per the orders of the Hon'ble High Court in order not to injure the tender feeling of the children.

Thirtyseven CNCP children have been supported with Rs.2000/- each Month/Child (Preventive-18, Rehabilitative-9) to create support environment for all round development of the children.

Fourteen children registered under POCSO Act 2012 have applied for compensation under POCSO with the help of DCPU Section.

Sixtyone child labourers have been produced before CWC, Subarnapur and 6 children have been trained on income generation trade like Diary, Computer and two-wheeler repairing.

Thirtyfive children have been provided financial support of Rs.4, 43,000/- for nutrition, education and health. Fortytwo children have been rescued as child labour under operation Muskan and Smile with the help of Sonepur Police. Ten children have re-enrolled at school for continuation of education till date.

Consumers' Protection

The District Forum has been functioning here since 1996. Since its inception 678 cases have been filed by different persons under different service sectors out of which 665 cases have been disposed of. The World Consumers Rights Day & National Consumers Day are observed on 15th of March & 24th of December every year.

VIGILANCE POLICE

Vigilance Unit in the district has been functioning since 05.08.2008. The sanctioned strength of this Unit is one DSP, one Inspector and three Constables under the jurisdiction of S.P., Vigilance, Sambalpur Division, Sambalpur. The operational jurisdiction of this vigilance unit office coincides with the area of Subarnapur revenue district.

The main mission is to combat corruption through enforcement, prevention, public education and community support. The vision of Vigilance is to ensure personal and organisational integrity, educate the public in fighting corruption, ensure public co-operation to eradicate corruption, to protect the honest, to detect the dishonest and to deter the fence-sitters from wrong doing.
The main functions of Vigilance are to investigate cases under Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, collection of intelligence on possession of disproportionate assets, forest offence cases, Sales Tax evasion cases etc, to conduct secret enquiry into petitions against state govt. officials as directed by the authorities.

Since opening of this office at Sonepur, 63 cases have been registered under Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, out of which 3 are Disproportionate Assets cases, 32 are Trap Cases and rest are corruption of misc. nature. In these cases, 10 officers of Class-I, 13 class-II, 58 Class-III and 48 private persons are involved. Most of the cases ended in conviction and some cases are sub-judice in the court of Special Judge Vigilance, Bolangir.

This unit is observing vigilance awareness week every year as per the direction and programme of State Vigilance Directorate, Odisha, Cuttack. During this period public meetings, rallies are organized. Leaflets/posters are circulated to create awareness among the general public against corruption. In order to create awareness among the school and college students, debate competitions, cartoon competitions and essay competitions are conducted at district level. The winners of these events also represent at the state level competitions at Bhubaneswar. To encourage the public, the vigilance organisation is awarding the best complainant prize to the person who submits quality report against corrupt public servants.
CHAPTER - XIV
LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT TO SOCIAL WELFARE

Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)

Subarnapur Municipality

Sonepur Municipality is one of the oldest in western Odisha. It was constituted on 1st April 1951 vide Govt. Notification No. 56/LSG dt.03.01.1951. It is bounded by Mahanadi on the north, River Tel on south, River Mahanadi and Tel on the east and Haladipali, Chhanchhan Dunguri, and Panisiali on the west. The geographical area of the municipality is 13.67 sq.k.m. with a population of 20,7777 as per census 2011. Male population is 10,737 and female population 10,047. The Municipality has been declared class II Urban local body vide Urban Development Resolution No.10209/UD dt.11.6.1968. It consists of 15 wards.

The Municipality has 91.30 k.m., roads out of which B.T. road is 16.216 k.m., C.C. road 43.061 k.m., earthen road 26.323 k.m., moorum metalling 6.320 k.m., The length of the drain is 57.90 k.m., out of which pucca drain is 48.20 k.m., and kuchha drain 03.12 k.m.,

There are 893 light posts out of which semi high mast is 53 and 20 metres high mast 10 S.V. fitting 525, other fitting 341,T-5 24 watt 592 and spot light 19 in number.

Property of Sonepur Municipality

There are 17 ponds, 2 daily markets, 1 weekly market, 2 parks, 1 kalyan mandap, 1 town hall and 1 Bhima Bhoi Mandap. We have 194 stalls, 11 vending zones maintained by this municipality.

Installation of statues at different chowks

Eleven statues of prominent leaders, legends of the country as well as State and district, singers, social workers have been installed in different chowks of the town. Besides, there is a proposal to install statues of Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi and Netaji Subhas Bose.

Naming of roads and chowks

Sixteen roads and eleven chowks have been named after prominent persons of the locality and reflective road information sign boards have been installed.

Sculpture works

Seven abstract statues of different sizes have been installed in various prominent chowks of Sonepur town and 15 modern art sculptures have been procured for installation.
Tarbha N.A.C.

Tarbha NAC was established vide Govt. in Housing and Urban Development Department Notification No. 1766/ HUD dt. 31.10.1967 of Government of Odisha. Its total area is 12.95 sq. km. Its total population is 8315 out of which 4209 are male, 4106 female, 2251 SC and 36 ST. There are 12 wards in the NAC. The total number of households is 1900 consisting of 1425 APL and 475 BPL. The number of slum pockets is 9 and slum population is 2818 comprising 1407 male and 1411 female.

Roads – The earthen roads cover 7.48 km. metal road, 1.96 km. cement concrete road 14.13 km. There are no black topped road. The total roads cover 23.57 km.

Drains- The pucca drains in the NAC cover 4.50 km. and kuchha drains, 2.35 km. The total comes to 6.85 km.

Water supply status- Pipe water supply covers 8 wards. Existing stand posts are 24 and tube- wells, 110. There is only 1 overhead tank with a capacity for 2 lakh litres.

Waterbodies- There are 5 tanks namely Badabandh, Siddhabandh, Barpudugia, Dharanibandh and Brahmanibandh.

Binka, NAC

The Binka NAC was constituted on 1.7.1977 vide Govt. Notification No- 16297/UD Dated 06.06.1977 of UD Deptt. Government of Odisha. It is spreads over total area of 21.42 sq. K.m. comprising 12 wards. Its total population is 15765 with 8110 and 7655 females. The number of household is 3785 with 1765 APL 1473 BPL. There are 12 slum pockets and 1327 slum households. The slum population comes to 6543.

Road- metal roads covers 8.14 k.m., B.T. road 1.4 k.m. C.C. road 20.88 k.m. and earthen moorum road 16.13 k.m.

Drain- Pucca drain covers 7.30 k.m. and Kuchha drain, 1.25 k.m.

The NAC has 90 stand posts and one overhead tank with a capacity of 1.5 lakh litres. There are 12 government water bodies.

Zilla Parishad and Panchayat Samitis

With the enactment of the Orissa Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Parishad Act, 1959 (Orissa Act 7of 1959), the Zilla Parishads and the Samitis came into existence with effect from the 1st April 1961. It has given complete shape to the Panchayati Raj administration in three tiers, the Zilla Parishad at district level, the Panchayat Samiti at Block level and the Panchayat at village level.
Sonepur Zilla Parishad comprises 06 Panchayat Samitis. The Zilla Parishad consists of 13 non-official members including 06 Chairmen of the Panchayat Samitis. Under the original Act, the Members of Legislative Assembly and Members of Parliament having their constituencies partly or wholly in the district were also members of Zilla Parishad but with the amendment of the Act in 1961 (Act XXIV of 1961), they are no longer members although they are entitled to participate in the discussions even though they do not have the right to vote. The Zilla Parishad meets once in three months. The general meeting of the Parishad takes place in the months of January, April, July and October. Special meetings are also convened according to special need and urgency. Out of 06 Panchayat Samitis 4 are in Sonepur Subdivision, and 02 in Birmaharajpur Sub-division.

As per Gazette Notification No. 792 dt. 03.08.1996, the Orissa Zilla Parishad (Conduct of Business Rules), 1996 came into force. Prior to this Notification Sonepur Sub-Division was under the Zilla Parishad, Bolangir. The district has been divided into 13 Zilla Parishad Zones wherefrom one Zilla Parishad Member is elected directly by the rural electors. From among 13 elected Zilla Parishad Members, one President and one Vice-President are elected by the Zilla Parishad members through secret ballot. Project Director, DRDA is the Ex-Officio Executive Officer and the Collector is the Chief Executive Officer of the Zilla Parishad. The MP(s) and MLA(s) of the district also attend Zilla Parishad meetings as members. Chairmen of the 06 Panchayat Samitis are also members of the Zilla Parishad. The Zilla Parishad is the apex body in the three tier system, the Gram Panchayat at ground level and Panchayat Samiti in the middle.

The 1st Zilla Parishad was constituted in the year 1997. It is renewed every five years.

Standing Committees

As per in Notification No. 9082/GP dtd. 19.06.2000 the following standing committees are constituted Viz:

(a) Planning, Finance, Anti-Poverty Programme and Co-ordination Standing Committee.

(b) Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Soil Conservation, Horticulture, Watershed Development and Fisheries Standing Committee.

(c) Works, Irrigation, Electricity, Drinking Water Supply and Rural Sanitation Standing Committee.

(d) Health, Social Welfare including Women and Child Development Standing Committee.

(f) Handicrafts, Cottage Industries, Khadi and Village Industries and Rural Housing Standing Committee.

(g) Education, Sports and Culture Standing Committee.

The tenure of these committees is two years. The Chairman and members of the Standing committee shall be elected by and from the elected members of the Parishad. The Secretary of the Parishad is the Ex-officio Secretary of all Standing Committees.

**Gram Panchayat**

According to 2011 Census, there are 13 Gram Panchayats under Birmaharajpur Block with 23602 households. Out of 95,429 population 22,879 (23.97%) are SC and 4986 (5.22%) are ST. Binka Block consists of 15 GPs. The member of households is 23,327. The total population comes to 91,118 out of which 23,846 (26.17%) are SC and 12,164 (13.35%) are ST. While Dungripali Block comprises 21 GPs with 31,441 households and 1,23,838 population, the SC are 28,403 (22.94%) and ST 28,403 (12.80%), Sonepur Block consists of 13 GPs, 19,348 households and 80,775 population. Out of this, 19,846 (24.57%) are SC and 6995 (8.66%) are ST. The Tarbha Block contains 18 GPs with 20,512 households and 84,374 population out of which 23401 (27.73%) are SC and 7101 (8.42%) are ST. Lastly, Ulunda Block contains 16 GPs with 22,345 households and 89780 population out of which 26013 (28.97%) are SC and 822 (9.16) are ST. Thus out of the rural total of 5,65314 population the SCs number 1,44,388 and STs 55,321, while out of the urban total of 44,869 population, 11,831 are SC and 1871 SCs. The urban and rural population taken together comes to 6,10,183 population out of which 1,56,219 are SC and 57,192 are ST.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl No.</th>
<th>Name of Block</th>
<th>Name of GP</th>
<th>Organised since</th>
<th>No. ofward</th>
<th>No. of Primary School</th>
<th>No. of Upper Primary School</th>
<th>No. of High School</th>
<th>College</th>
<th>No. of AW Centre</th>
<th>No. of Health Centre</th>
<th>No. of Public properties</th>
<th>Livelihood of local people</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<td>Jalo</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Agriculture &amp; cattle rearing, timbering, collecting forest produce, cattle rearing and jhum cultivation</td>
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<td>Jaunrabhaunra</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>Kamira</td>
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<td>1966 14 8 2 1 1 8</td>
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<td>Birmaharapur</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Birmaharapur</td>
<td>Hilung</td>
<td>04.03.1952 22 10 5 2 1 24</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>Birmaharapur</td>
<td>Bagbar</td>
<td>1966 22 8 3 1 1 18</td>
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<td>30</td>
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SOCIALWELFARE

A Welfare State is a concept of government in which the State plays a key role in the protection and promotion of the economic and social well-being of its citizens. It is based on the principles of equality of opportunity, equitable distribution of wealth, and public responsibility for those unable to avail themselves of the minimal provisions for a good life. The general term may cover a variety of economic and social organizations.

There is separate wing called Social Welfare Section in the Collectorate. It looks after the schemes for child welfare, women’s welfare, welfare for the disabled and for senior citizens and other vulnerable groups.

Child Welfare

Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS)

ICDS in India is the world’s largest integrated early childhood programme. The Anganwadi Centre forms the focal point for delivery of services like Supplementary Nutrition, Immunization, Health Check up, Referal Services, Pre-School Education, Nutrition & Health Education.

Six ICDS projects are functioning under the District Social Welfare section. 1571 Anganwadi Centres (AWCs/Mini AWCs) are sanctioned under 6 ICDS projects. The pregnant women, nursing mothers, children from 6 months to 3 years and 3 years to 5 years are being provided with supplementary Nutrition by Govt. The children from 3-5 years are being provided with pre-school education in AWCs.

One District Child Protection Unit is running in the Collectorate to provide safe and secure environment for overall development of the children in need of care and protection and children in conflict with law.

One Child Care Institution named “Children’s Home, Sonepur” is functioning at District headquarters which provides maintenance grant for 25 orphaned, destitute, abandoned, and neglected children. The NGO, Yuba Jyoti Yubak Sangha is managing the Home.

Rules are framed to prevent child marriage and Child Development Project Officers are declared child marriage prohibition officers.

Women’s Welfare

Women’s Self Help Groups (WSHGs) have been created to provide self-employment and regular income to the women folk. Government have provided financial assistance to the WSHGs to adopt income generation schemes like micro credit support, seed money, revolving fund and drudgery reduction scheme. The income generation schemes adopted by the SHGs of the district include. Rice processing, Terracotta, Bamboo works, Goatery, Diary, Dal processing, preparation of Badi, Papad, Arisha Pitha, Chhatua production, Weaving, Mushroom preparation and Vegetable cultivation.
In the district 5090 WSHGs were registered up to the year 2012-13 out of which 22 WSHGs are preparing and supplying chhatua and egg to pregnant women, Nursing mother and 6 months to 3 years children are under 6I CDS projects of the district.

There are two Swadhar Grihas operating in the district to provide legal and clinical aid, food, shelter, clothing, counseling, livelihood training to destitute women. One Swadhar Griha managed by an NGO, National Rural Development Corporation (NRDC) is functioning at Sonepur town. Another Swadhar Griha managed by Yuba Jyoti Yubak Sangha is working at Champamal, Birmaharajpur.

Social Security Schemes such as payment of pension to unmarried women after 30 years with personal annual income not exceeding Rs.24,000 are eligible under this social welfare scheme and pension amount is disbursed to the beneficiaries at G.P/Municipality level on the Janaseva Divas i.e. 15th of every month. The pension is provided under Madhu Babu Pension Yojana (MBPY) by the State Government. Similarly there are National Pension Schemes such as Indira Gandhi Widow Pension, Indira Gandhi Disability Pension schemes for the purpose.

Under National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) on the death of the primary bread-winner of BPL family, the dependents such as spouse, minor children, unmarried daughter, dependent parents etc. are provided with one time (lump sum) financial assistance. NFBS and National Pension Schemes came into force w.e.f 15th Aug 1995. G.P wise camps are held and applications processed.

Protection of Women from Domestic Violence (PWDV) Act-2005 came into force on 26th Oct-2006. It includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, verbal and emotional abuse. A woman can directly approach the court for relief or through protection officer, service provider or police. In Odisha, the programme officers under ICDS programme are declared protection officer at district level. The officer assists the magistrate in granting relief to the victims. Relief under the Act is provided through A) residence orders, B) protection orders, C) monetary relief orders, D) compensation orders, E) Custody orders, F) Interim ex-parte orders.

Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace, (Prevention, Prohibition & Redressal) Act-2013 is implemented through local complaint committee at district level & internal complaint committee in all subordinate offices.

Subarna Nari Jagarana Kendra, Sonepur has been organizing awareness programme for women.

Welfare of the Disabled

State Government as well as Government of India have introduced for Persons With Disabilities (PWDs) a number of schemes such as supply of aids and appliances, Bhima Bhoi Bhinnyakya Samarthya Sibira, Banishree Scholarship, Mission Kshyamata, Marriage incentive, Scholarship to children of disabled parents, Supply of free laptop, National e-scholarship, DDRC, DRI Loans, National Trust Disability Welfare Schemes are being implemented in the district.
One District Disability Rehabilitation Centre (DDRC) is running at Sonepur to provide different services to the physically challenged. Every month the District Medical Board sits to identify PWDs. The PWDs are being included under Mo Kudia, Indira Awas scheme on priority basis.

Reservation facilities are provided to the PWDs in education, 3% reservation in service. Special schools are established to impart proper education to PWD students (VI, HIMR/CP categories).

BPL members with annual income up to Rs.24,000 having 40% or more disabilities, age 5 years or above are eligible for Madhu Babu Pension Yojana (MBPY) in G.P./Municipality headquarters under State govt. PWDs.

Under Indira Gandhi National Disabilities Pension a person of BPL family, age 18 years & above with 80% disability or more having multiple disabilities is entitled to monthly pension in G.P./Municipality headquarters.

Central and State governments have launched scholarship schemes for physically challenged students from Class -1 to university level for vocational education etc.

From Oct. 2012 onwards a normal person who marries a PWD would get incentive of Rs.50,000/- (Rupees Fifty thousand). In Subarnapur District 13 persons have so far availed it.

Till now 53 persons with disability have been provided financial assistance under Chief Ministers Relief Fund (CMRF) to start business with.

Govt. have been providing financial assistance to organise Bhima Bhoi Samarthya Abhiyan (BBSA) camps to identify PWD persons since 2007. The identified PWDs are being covered under different schemes and provided with Pension, Bus-Pass, Train Pass, Scholarship, Special aids and appliances, Financial Assistance under CMRF, DRI (Differential Rate of Interest) Bank loans.

Other NGOs are running child care institutions and Special schools like District Handicapped Welfare School, Panisiali, Sonepur, Blind, Deaf & Dumb School, Sibtola, Tarbha, Grace Children’s Home, Sonepur, Bhima Bhoi Sishu Sadan, Matiapali are serving the cause of the handicapped.

Research Academy for Rural Enrichment (RARE), Tarbha, working since 1993 for mentally disabled patients has identified 547 PLWIMs who are supplied medicine at 40% subsidy since 2008. It provides a maintenance package of Rs.1000 per month to 100 vulnerable orphans.

Welfare of the Senior Citizens

National Social Assistance Programme under Social Security Schemes:

NSAP which came into effect from 17th Aug, 1995 is a significant step towards fulfillment of the Directive in Article 41 of the Constitution. It includes Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAP), Indira Gandhi Widow
Pension Scheme (IGWPS), Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS) and National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS). The programmes introduced a national policy for social assistance for the poor and aimed at ensuring minimum national standard for social assistance in addition to the benefits that states are currently providing or might provide in future. At present Rs.300/- per month is paid to all beneficiaries under this scheme. However, persons above 80 years of age are provided Rs.500/- per month. The beneficiaries under IGNOAP number 2915 above 80 years and 27234 below 80 years.


Welfare of the SC & ST

As per 2011 census report, Subarnapur has an SC population of 1, 53, 898 i.e. 20.6% of the total population whereas ST population is 63,777 i.e. 9.78% of the total population of the district.

There are 8 Ashram schools which provide boarding facility to students of class I to VIII, two Sevashrams for students from class I to class VI. There is one Higher Secondary school at Charbhata exclusively for ST and SC.

They are Ashram schools of Asurmunda, Kunjapali, Khairbhadi, Panimura, Badbhairon, Manda, Makundpur and Ichhapur. Further this district has sevashram schools at Sagarpali and Daldaba.

These schools have each a 40-seated Girls Hostel. Of them Kunjapali Manda, Panimura have each a 180-seated Girls Hostel. While Kunjapali and Charbhata have each a 100-seated Boys Hostel. While Kunjapali and Charbhata, Charbhata has a 300-seated Girls Hostel.

During the year 2015-16, 22 victims of atrocity cases have been paid Rs 4.95 lakh as compensation.

In order to encourage inter-caste marriage; Govt. is providing incentives to the tune of Rs.50, 000/- to each couple. In 2015-16 four applications have been received and placed with Govt. for sanction.

The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Right) Act, 2006

A Forest Right Committee was constituted for each such village. 1561 claims were received and 394 claims were approved by the Sub-Division level Committee (SDLC) for conferment of land rights to the eligible tribals.
CHAPTER-XV
SPOTLIGHTS
ON
PLACES OF INTEREST

TOURISM MAP OF SONEPUR DISTRICT

LEGEND
- Mahima Shrine
- Temple Town
- Religious Centre
- Historical Site
- Block Headquarter
- Major Road
- Block Boundary
- District Boundary
Situated on the confluence of rivers Tela and Mahanadi, Subarnapura (modern Sonepur) is rich in historical heritage. Its political history is replete with miraculous events. Sonepur has also been the meeting ground and nourishing field of different faiths and sects since hoary past leaving behind to the posterity a galaxy of religious monuments, cults of bewildering variety and folk tradition which significantly bear the cultural efflorescence of the past societies. Its religious history is an interesting account of the mainstream of Odishan religions in a chronological order indicating their rise, spread and blending under the benign royal patronage of different dynasties. Now it is the headquarters town of the Subaupura district. The town is a place of considerable antiquity, Punch marked silver coins attributed to the 4th century B.C., a number of Kalachuri gold coins Ganga Ganga and large number of copperplate grants have been discovered from this place. The name Sonepur is derived from Subaruapura. It was for some time the Capital of South Kosala under the Somavamsis and the Telugu Chodas. The famous grammarian Panini (5th/4th century B.C.) in his Astadhyayi makes mention of a territory named Taitilika Janapada flourished to the west of Kalinga and was famous for its trade. Most probably Taitilaka Janapada comprised the modern Titilagarh, Sonepur regions and a part of Kalahandi district situated on the Tel river valley.

In the tantric map of medieval period Sonepur region is mentioned as Lanka. In the Somavamsi king Somesvaradeva's Kelga copper plate grant the region is called Paschima-Lanka with the head quarters at Subamapura the capital of Kosala. Again the Mahada copper plate grant of Teluguchoda king Somesvara II mentions Lankavarttaka in the river of Chitrotpala may be identified with the Lankesvari Darha where Devi Lankesvari is still worshipped by boat men.

A poetic work 'Sasisena' written by Pratap Ray, describes an interesting story regarding the tantric tradition of Sonepur. In the memory of Sasisena a temple without opening has been constructed by Chauhan king B. M. Singdeo on the ruins of an old temple. The story has already been elaborated in a special chapter of this book basing on tantricism and need not be repeated here.

Sonepur was no doubt a prosperous town in the past. The town criers even to-day ask in a traditional manner the fifty-two thousand residents of Sonepur to listen to the proclamation, indicating that the town was very populous in bygone days. Trial excavations in the vicinity bear out the fact that the town was far more extensive in area than the present town. The 'Kosalananda Kavya' written by pandit Gangadhar Mishra court poet of Chauhan king Balian Singh of Sambalpur dated 1663-64 A.D. declares Sonepur as another Benaras with its numerous sacred shrines of Siva and Parvati. The town in fact contains large number of temples, most of which were built by the Chauhan chiefs. It is however undeniable that many stone sculptures of old temples have been either fitted to these temple walls or kept in the premises. Large number of stone pieces of old temples have also been

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used in the stone embankment of the right bank of river Mahanadi. One can notice some finely sculpted pieces near Dasamati ghat, which were once upon a time adorning the different portions of temples. The door lintel (Dvaralalatabimba) of many temples have been adorned with Gaja-laxmi and Anantasayi Vishnu motifs which may certainly be assigned to the rule of Somavamsis. Notable among the temples are those of Suvarnameru, Rameswara, Gokarneswara (Gokuleswara), Paschima Somanath, Lokanath, Dadhibaman, Jagannath, Narasimhanath, Gopalji, Ramji, Brundabanbehari, Gopinath, Khambeswari (or Stambheswari), Sureswari (said to be the mother of Parasuram), Manikeswari, Samaleswari, Durga Debi, Budhisamalei, Ramchandi, Bimalakhi and Hanuman, The highest among them is the temple of Narasimhanath built by Rani Gundicha Dcvi in the early part of the 19th century and improved by Maharaja Biramitrodaya Singh Deo(1902-37A.D). It is about 80’ in height. The temple of Subamameru is said to have been originally built by one trader named Neulisa. There is a belief among the local people that on the occasion of consecration of Subarnameru Siva there was a shower of gold pieces for two and half prahars (36 hours). The people of Sonepur occasionally find at present Ganga gold fanams in the earth and they attribute these finds to the legendary shower of gold. It is again said that from that day the town was known as Subarnapuram (city of Gold), which is not at all tenable, because the name Subanapura has already been found mentioned in the charters of Somavamsis and Teluguchodas (9th to 12th century A.D.). Sonepur is also a famous Pitha for housing Astachandi, Astasambhu and Astavishnu. It is pertinent to mention here that eight Matrukas are housed in niches inside the Jagamohana of Samalei temple. Most are riding on their mounts and each were a garland of skulls. The Matrukas are accompanied by Mahisamardini and Hanumana, rather than Virabhadra and Ganesaha. Mention may be made here that Saptamatrika panels are found throughout the length and breadth of Odisha.

In the past the population figure was decreasing steadily from census to census probably due to economic reasons and threaten of Tikarpara and Manibhadra projects. In 1941, the total population was 9,065 while in 1951 and 1961 the figures decreased to 7,356 and 7,108 respectively. But after the formation of new district Sonepur is growing rapidly. The textile industry on which its prosperity once depended was at a time on the wane. But now it is also thriving.

Balijatra held during the month of Aswina and Lankapodi.latra, held on Bhadrapada Amabasya (locally called Pura-uans) are two most popular local festivals of Sonepur.
Baidyanath

This historic place is picturesquely situated 14 km. from Sonepur town on the left bank of the river Tel. It is celebrated for its temple of Lord Kosaleswar decorated with rare sculptural excellence. In place of the main temple now stands the mandap with marvellous images of dancing Ganesh, dancing Siva (Nataraj), Hari-Hara, the two-handed Karttikeya riding a peacock, Arddhanarishwara, Alasakanyas, a flying Gandharva couple, Matruka (mother with child), Mithuna (lover couple), etc. A striking feature of the decoration of the shrine doorway is a series of knotted snakes making their way up the door jamb. These specimens of medieval art suggest that it was perhaps built not earlier than the 9th century. Pt. Gopinath Panigrahi assigns this temple to Janmejaya Mahabhavagupta (850 – 85) who, he claims, constructed this sanctum on the stones obtained from Basasankar on the left bank of the river Tel. And he might not be wrong. For, he called himself Lord of Kosala or Kosaleswara.

The Baidyanath Temple is one of the earliest temples made of large-sized bricks, polished and well-set mortar with intercolumniation and isolated niches to hold individual images in. The iron bars used in the temple are reminiscent of the Simhanath temple of Cuttack district assigned to a date not earlier than 9th century AD. The Navagrahas depicted on the lintel of the doorway like the one in Champseswar temple appears a later addition.

It is one of the earliest Buddhist structures converted into a Hindu architecture. The beautiful stone images of Alasakanyas in several graceful postures carved on the pillars and pilasters of the temple which include the image of a lovely lady Darpanikanya adjusting the jewel on the forehead while looking at the mirror held in her left hand are carved in sensuous elegance. The charming beauty of the standing lover, the gentleness and tenderness with which the lover holds the lovely foot of the beloved exhibits exceptional craftsmanship which even overwhelmed the aesthetic sensibility of a foreign art critic like Charles Fabric.

Nothing now remains of the Vimana of the old temple but its Mohana (porch) still stands in a precarious condition. Not far from the Kosaleswar temple once stood the Mahakaleswar temple on whose walls were carvings of geometrical
design, but they are all gone now downstream the river Tel, and the embankment constructed by Prataparudra Sing Deo (1891-1902) could not protect the temple from erosion.

A stone inscription which contains one of the earliest records of Odia script originally placed here wherein Barapali Pragana had been donated by a feudatory Sankara Deva for the health and well-being of his Ganga master Bhanudeva I was shifted to Stambheswari temple of the Sonepur town. This important inscription well-known as the Stambheswari stone inscription is now preserved in the N. K. Sahu Museum of the Sambalpur University.

Thus Baidyanath temple is a monument of unageing sculptural beauty and it is not for nothing that Someswaradeva of the Telugu Choda dynasty who succeeded the Somavamsis in Subaranapur called himself a bee on the lotus feet of Lord Baidyanath: Baidyanathapadapankajabrahamar.

Binka

It is an NAC situated on the right bank of the Mahanadi. It is connected by all-weather road with Sonepur (23 miles), Rampur (12 miles) and Dungripali (22 miles). It is sometimes linked with Bilanka of Sarala Das.

The name Binka is derived from Binitaswapur of puranic reputation. It is named after Binitaswa, one of the three sons of Ila-Sudyumna. The puranic tradition says, Baitabswata Manu, one of the earliest monarchs of India, had ten sons, including a Kimpurusa a eunuch named Ila-Sudyumna who was androgenus, one who could become a male and a female alternately. As Ila she became mother to Pururaba, while as Sudyumna he became father to three sons named Utkala, Binitaswa, and Gaya. Utkala got the territory known after him as Utkala Gaya a portion of Bihar and Vinitaswa the Binitapura tract.

Binitapura figures prominently and poetically in the Somavansi copperplates where the particles of water in contact with the rise and fall of the high waves of the Mahanadi (Mahanaditungatarangabhanga) used to cool the fevered brow of young maidens indulging in excessive sex (sramaponadah kriyate marudbhiih). It is from this famous metropolis that Mahasivagupta Yayati-II issued at least 15 charters which brim with ecstatic verses on the eternal charms of this capital city.

Under the Chauhan regime Binka became the second capital of Subarnapur (dwitiya rajadhaniba) with a Municipality and a court. Now the Municipality has become an NAC.

Binka was an important trade mart in the past. It was well-known for its diamond trade to eastern Orissa, its brass and bell metal industry.

Binka has an ancient Jagannath (Dadhivamana) temple and a temple consecrated to Lord Bisweswar.
Baghapali

It is a small village near Kotsamalai but its importance is great. It contains the Sadhana and Samadhi Pitha of one of the greatest saint-poets of the 19th century Odisha, the well-known author of Sudhasara Gita. While Srikrusna Sudhamruta is perhaps the most moving Krsnakavya this province has produced, Sudhasaragita turns a yogasastra into a kavyasastra which was the poet’s singular achievement. This saint poet, it is said, was capable of Kayaprabesa for which Sankara was so famoused. People celebrate Kadambayatra every year here on the 11th day of the bright fortnight of Bhadrav and Baulayatra on Pausa Amavasya, the day of Baba’s Mahaprayana. Chandramani was a great influence over Bhima Bhoi’s poetry and philosophy.

There is a small temple here at B agora p ali where the kathaus (a pair of wooden sandals) he used to wear and a chimuta he used to hold are preserved and venerated.

There is a hole on the samadhipitha into which devotees pour fresh, unboiled milk and lia (puffed rice) as offerings to Baba.

Chadramani had three ashrams which suggest the three stages of his life, boyhood, manhood and ripe old age. They are Baghbar ashram, Barigan ashram and Baghapali ashram. Of the three Baghapali ashram is the most famous and frequented. It proclaims Baba's Sunyasadhana.

Chandlipat

Sixty km. from Sonepur town, Ushakothi of Pujadungri is a historically significant place where goddess Chandhipat is worshipped. It is situated amidst natural environs which bring peace and tranquility to nature lovers. It is a range of hills where one can see hard granite rocks, rock caves and pre-historic rock paintings. These paintings have unique geometrical and irregular lines, circles, triangles, parallels and rectangles. The rock bears figures of boar and deer indicative of the primitive man’s love for hunting. There are also figures of the Sun-god and footprints. The most striking feature is the engraving of a hole that resembles a Yoni suggestive of the fertility cult of the pre-historic age. On the occasion of Chaitra Purnima, a three-day-long mela is held here every year.
The Puja Dungri Rock Art on which the primitive man has left his signature sends us back to tens of thousands of years when the early man’s subsistence economy was primarily based on hunting. After this discovery a new chapter on pre-historic life has been added to the glorious annals of Subarnapur.

**Champamal**

It is a village 2 km. from Birmaharajpur famous for wood-carving, painting and making of brass and silver images. The Ganjpa cards painted by the Maharanas here represent the traditional folk-painting of Odisha. Of the three schools of traditional painting, namely, Puri School, Ganjam School and Champamal School, the third is distinguished for its aesthetic originality, its fine touch and sharp edge. It has a striking similarity with Indonesian art which shows the link of Subarnapur with Indonesia through maritime trade.

The Champeswar temple with its images of Gajalaxmi, Navagraha, Ganes and Kartikeya are reminiscent of the 11th and 12th century sculpture. The Gajalaxmi image of Baidyanath, Godhaneswar and Champeswar closely resemble one another.
There is a legend about Champeswar temple. Champa Hota, a birtia (Brahmin headman) of the village Champamal used to cover 17 km. daily on foot for a darsan of Lord Rameswar on the confluence of Mahanadi and the river Tel. Once during Monsoon, Hota, unable to cross the Mahanadi in high flood, waited on the left bank fasting. The Lord appeared in his dream that night, and asked him to go back home and look for him at dawn on the outskirts of the village on a spot where a black cow would be bathing a Lingam with a flood of milk. And, lo and behold, Champa Hota found the cow and the Swayambhu Lingam exactly on the spot indicated, announcing to the amazed villagers the arrival of Lord Rameswar. From that day the presiding deity of the village was known as Lord Champeswar.

The Champeswar temple was built during the reign of the Chauhans in the 17th century. Two pieces of roughly hewn sandstone representing Champa Hota and his wife are placed to the North and South of the temple respectively. And the devotees of Lord Champeswar offer their homage to this couple before they enter the temple. Apart from the sanctumsanctorum, the shrine has a Jagamohana a natamandap and a bhogamandap.

It may be mentioned here that the Mahada charter issued by the Teleguchoda King Someswaradeva II refers to Champamal.

Charada

Charada is a village 30 km. from Sonepur town on the outskirts of Binka. It is known for the Kapileswar temple situated on a hillock. Of all the temples of Subarnapur, Kapileswar temple of Charada bears a strange sculptural resemblance with the Kosaleswar temple of Baidyanath. Like the Baidyanath temple, people attribute it to Anangabhimadeva III (1211 – 38). However, Donaldson traces it to the 10th century AD. Thus both these temples appear to have been contemporaneous, the products of the Somavamsis. There are images of indolent maidens, lovely dryads and sylvan nymphs in several graceful postures delineated on the walls of the temple. There is a Nataraj image on the pilaster of the Mandap, performing tandava dance on a lotus in full bloom. All these, including the four pillars of the Mandap, the knotted snakes, Nataraja in suchipadamudra of the Odishi dance carry it close to the Kosaleswar temple.

About one km. from where the temple stands, there is an ancient rock known as Nabagraha Kunda having nine holes from which water is found gushing forth even in the hottest days on the year.

The image of goddess Chardei to the south of the temple is datable to 5th or 6th century BC.

The Kalasiyatra of Kartik is a special feature of Charada.

Godhaneswar

Two km. from Subalaya stands the Godhaneswar temple on the left bank of the Mahanadi. The Swayambhu Lingam appears to emerge from a rock which carries the hoof-marks of a cow. Like the legend surrounding the appearance of
Subarnameru and Champeswar, the arrival of Godhaneswar is associated with the Lingam and the black cow. And yet it tells a slightly different tale. This temple was built by Prithvi Sing (1781 – 1841), may be in the last lap of the 18th century.

Legend has it that Prithvi Sing on his way to Cuttack by boat had a stop-over here when he plucked a dry twig and planted it and had a stray thought in his mind that if on his return the dry twig grew into a tree he would build a temple to Lord Siva on the spot. It came to pass and Prithvi Sing is said to have seen a cow flooding a Lingam under the very tree where he had planted a twig. The temple was built and an 8-line inscription left on the back of a dancing Ganesh icon. The lines are now blurred. Yet the first line this author had deciphered years ago read: Saranagata Raja Prithvi Singha Deva. This disproves the hearsay that the temple was the handiwork of Laxman Panda, Dewan to Raja Prithvi Sing.

The Gajalaxmi image and the navagraha images on the lintels of the temple, the Ganesh and Karttikeya icons show the antiquity of its architecture. Its scenic situation on the Mahanadi is an added attraction to the tourist.

Harihara Jore Project

Just 30 km from Sonepur town and 5 km from Kotsamalai flows Harihara Jore. The Jore has been dammed to create a reservoir for irrigation purposes. The dam is one and a half km long, flanked by blue hills on both sides. The vast expanse of water, the long dam and the hills make it a poets paradise. With its sylvan setting, it is a beautiful picnic spot for weekend visitors.

There is an IB at one end of the dam.

Kadodar

Kadodar is about 15 km from Kotsamalai and 50 km from Sonepur town. It is known for its rare brick temple consecrated to Umadevi. It holds a brass image of Mahisasamardini Durga installed by Maharani Lady Parvati Devi. The icon of Umadevi, it is said, was enshrined by Raja Raj Sing (1709-29).

There is a legend about Umadevi. It is said she was originally worshipped at village Liplei of Athmallik. One Sadargi family is reported to have transported this image from Liplei to Kadodar. The man who carried this image came prostrating at every six feet or so. Devotion could be so difficult!
Lady Parvati Devi has excavated a tank called Ranisagar here at Kadodar.

One Padhi family of the village are the traditional worshippers of this unique Umadevi image.

A sohalasuanga dandayatra is held here in April every year.

**Kamsara**

It was a Zamindari predominantly inhabited by Kandhas. The name is derived from Karmasarai or Kamasarai which means the home of stone workers, sculptors, architects who once built Sonepur's numerous temples. There is a place nearby, Basasankar where unfinished stone images are lying scattered. And a hill with a huge cave called Ranighula where Raja Prithui Sing (1781-1841) kept Rani Laxmipriya while he fought, like Ranapratap of Mewar, the guerrilla war with the Marathas in the jungles of Subarnapur.

**Khaliapali**

The forest –clad, hill-bound Khaliapali, 30 km from Sonepur town is the sadhana, siddhi and samadhi Pitha of the world's one of the greatest saint-poets, Bhima Bhoi. It is considered a place of pilgrimage for the Alkhists, next only to Joranda. The sprawling ashram has the samadhi mandir sunya mandir paduka mandir where the silver-coated wooden sandals of Bhima Bhoi are worshipped. In 1877 Bhima Bhoi with his spiritual consort Annapurna, and his disciples, Hari Panda and Basu Panda made his maiden appearance at Khaliapali and lived here till his mahaprayana in 1895. Since then Khaliapali has remained another Joranda and Bhima Bhoi another Mahima Swami. It is here that Bhima Bhoi brought about a synthesis between life temporal and life spiritual. It is here that he prayed and preached, composed and sang for the liberation of mankind in Bhajanamala, Chautisa Madhuchakra, Brahma Nirupara Gita, Stuti Chintamani, etc. It is here that he wielded his pen against the prevailing social inequality and injustice, religious bigotry and caste discrimination. It is here that he preached a unique world-view that embraced men and women, birds and beasts, stars and planets. It is here that he squatted and dictated at a time four bhajans to four scribes-Hari Panda, Basu Panda, Markanda Das and Dharmananda Das—an exercise that has no parallel in world literature. It is here that this fiery revolutionary and passionate humanist transformed the codes of conduct of the Mahima cult from a dry cerebration into an emotional realization expressed in words at once bold and mellow, plain and profound. And it was here that his bones were interred in the soil on the 14th day of the dark fortnight of Phalgun, i.e. 18 Feb 1895, the same month his Guru, Mahima Swami, was laid to rest at Joranda in 1876.
The Samadhi Mandir remains open on four days of the year—Rathayatra, Nabanna, Dassera and Phalguna Purnima—for, on these days Bhima Bhoi used to go round the village with Annapurna in a ceremonial procession.

The ashram which stands on a plot of around 2 acres has 3 store rooms and kitchens each, 8 living rooms, 5 cowsheds a garden and a well. The Magha mela is held with pomp and ceremony here every year for 3 days beginning with the 14th day of the month on which almost half the income of the year is spent. On the day of Magha Purnima offering is made through the eastern door, on other days the western door remains open for the devotees. The ashram has 32 acres of land at Khaliapali and 23 at Raipali. The successive care-takers were Annapurna, Hari Panda, Sumedha, Sriyamata, Naga Mistri, Paramanand Sahu, Abhimanyu Das etc.

Khaliapali stands a symbol of the worship of the Void. It is a cluster of tombs. If you stand facing the samadhi mandir, you can mark the tombs of Hari Panda and Labanyabati to the left and those of Basudev and Kapileswar to the right. When the tombs of Sumedha and Saraswati were damaged in the field, they were shifted to the side of the main temple. Khaliapali ashram which was the seat of Bhima Bhoi’s creative life still resounds with the chantings of bhajans in the morning and snatches from Stuti Chintamani in the evening.

Kotsamalai

Hardly a couple of km. from Baghapali is Kotsamali (Kutasamalai of Madalapanji), a garthi village with the towering Trikuta hills in whose cave was worshipped Lord Jagannath by the Sabara king Indrabhuti, propounder and preacher of Bajrayani Buddhism. Here is a cave about 45 ft. wide and 30 ft. long (Damodar Misra: Swarnapuragarunadarsah, 1921), known as Ranikhol which was the original seat of ‘Sir Jeo’ while Yayati Mahasivagupta was ruling Dhaksina Kosala from his capital, Subarnapur. And from here he shifted Lord Jagannath and enshrined him in the Puri temple. The story of the idol / idols concealed in the Trikuta Cave: girimadhyavartinah (Panigrahi: Swarnapurarajavamsacharitam) for protection from Yavana attack (Mogala gola hollaru: Madalapanji) is a later event which took place during the reign of Raja Lal Sai Deb (1660-89).

This cave which sheltered Prithiv Sing’s Rani during the Maratha depredations (1700-1802) was called Ranikhol.
Kotsamalai figures in the Mahada copperplate grant of Telugu Choda King Someswaradeva II as Kokkatideva which suggests a devasthanam. It is indeed a confluence of three cults: Shaktism, Buddhism, and Vaisnavism.

Just there where Lord Jagannath was concealed there is a trijunction of hills. Look below into the abysmal blue depth and your head will reel. You will get a feeling of the Kalinga ghat of Koraput. What an enticing sight! There is a thin blue mist which your eyes cannot penetrate. It is a rare sight which will leave any tourist of the world hungry. And yet this tourists paradise lies unexplored. It is indeed difficult to believe such a spot exists in Odisha. Incredible Odisha!

Lachhipur

Lachhipur near Khaliapali is an old garhti village. The name comes from Lachhmanpur. Here was a stronghold during the regime of Purusottama Sing (1689-1709). There was a tribal unrest when Prithivi Sing (1781-1841) came to power. The tribes under the leadership of Adali Rai of Mohangiri refused to pay taxes. The Raja sent Ananta Sing Babu, Muchha Mallik, Giri garhtia to quash this rebellion. It was called Mohangiri Ladhai. The fight was over. The Raja’s men won. Giri Garhtia came home with his bleeding back pierced by an arrows. The women welcomed him with hulhuli. Someone shouted, Kahin hulahuli deuchha rande, Giri garhtia pithire kande. Stop whistling, you widows! See the arrow on Giri Garhtia’s back!

Lachhipur still remembers the unparalled heroism of its great Garhtia—gratefully and tearfully. Lachhipur is also known for its bamboo bed lights, pen stands and wall hangings. Lupursingha celebrated as Luputturakhanda in the Somavamsi charter, is a big village on the Sonepur-Lachhipur road. It has an old Hanuman temple of the 18th century for whose chakulipitha bhoga a copperplate was donated by 500 people in May, 1743 AD. Five hundred donating a copperplate! This is unique in the country. It has big brass images of Rama—Sita reminiscent of Ramji temple of Sonepur town. There is a sprawling Kasiviswanath temple with a rare stone inscription in Odia verse and script.

Menda

Situated on the left bank of river Suktel with Suktimatipur of history. It is the Meranda of Janmejaya Mahabhabagupta’s Bakratentuli grant. There is a temple of an ancient tantric deity, Mendasuni, a dancing Bhairava image. There are loose sculptures of Ganesh, Gajasimha, etc. which show the antiquity of this big village.

Metakani

Metakani is an ancient tribal goddess originally worshipped in the recesses of the Kutmenda jungle, later enshrined in a temple by the side of Ulunda-Sambalpur highway. It is 21 km from Sonepur town. During Aswin Purnima and Chaitra Purnima people come here seeking the blessing of this tribal goddess, Mother
Metakani. Metakani is a terrifying deity. Buses playing this road must stop here to offer their obeisance.

The site is a beautiful picnic spot in the midst of enchanting forest beauty.

**Papakshaya Ghat**

This ghat is located on the bank of the Mahanadi near Binka town, 32 km. from Sonepur. This place is both holy and historical. Legend has it that Anangalohima dev III (1211-38), Gajapati of Puri took a holy dip in the Mahanadi on a solar eclipse day and was cured from a dread disease or *brahmahatya dosa* for killing a Brahmin General during the war with the Kalachuris, then rulers of Subarnapur. It is further said that the Gajapati, dream-directed by Lord Jagannath came all the way with his retinue, building *Yojanika* Siva temples (temples built every 12 miles or a *yojana*) from Puri to Subarnapur, the remains of which can still be found here and there on the right bank of the Mahanadi. This author has seen one at Harbhanga, another at Dhalpur. To mark this event, the Gajapati donated Chandi (Champamal), Achandi (Achanda), Mandi (Menda), Kumundi (Kumursingha), Shandi (Sandha), Deulmundi (Deulmunda) and Jharkumendi (Jharkumunda) villages to Puri Brahmins (*The Voice of Silence*: 2001) Siba Prasad Das adds that the Gajapati on his long pilgrimage from Puri built on the way 60 temples, 10 bridges, 40 wells, 152 revetments and 450 brahmin settlements. He donated Sindurpur and Rahila to one Sadasiba Panda of Puri and excavated the *Satbandh*, the remnant of the Somavamsi fort (*Sambalpur Itihas*: 1964). The name Rahila which means remained or ‘stopped’ is, therefore, connotative.

From that day on, people come from far and near on solar and lunar eclipse days and take a holy dip here at Papakshaya or Papanasini Ghat in the midst of a *mela*. There is a passage between the roots of an ancient, big banyan tree. Pass through the passage, if you are sinless, they say.

**Rampur**

It is an old Zamindari of the Sonepur State. Its Zamindar belonged to the Binjhal Community who enjoyed a pride of place among the Zamindars of Subarnapur. It may be recalled that with effect from the days of Ramai Deb, first Chauhan Raja of Patna, it was customary for the Chauhan Rajas to receive the *Rajatilaka* from the hands of the Binjhal Zamindar at the time of coronation. And this was the place of the Rampur Zamindar in the scheme of things. During the reign of the Somavamsi King Janamejaya Mahabhabagupta Aramakataka or Rampur was the capital of South Kosala. The genealogy of the Rampur Zamindars collected by the author contains the name of one Bhujabala who perhaps was taken prisoner by Jajalladeva of the Kalachuri dynasty and his capital was devastated. As the inscription says, *Bhujavalam avalam Chakre*. The Somavamsi charter mentions Aramakataka as a prosperous city.
**Sindhol**

Sindhol stands between Dhama and Dharmasala on the Sambalpur-Sonepur road between two hills. The word Sindhol, as Pt. Damodar Misra avers in his book *Swarnapuragunadarshah* (1921) is derived from *Singhadhola* (the drums that roar like a lion). A pair of massive drums were placed on the hill-top which used to announce to the tribals inhabiting the tract the arrival of the enemy. Thus Sindhol played a strategic role in the past as the gateway to Uphuladesa. There is a forest stream a little way away known as ‘Budha Jore’ where the first Chauhan Raja of Sonepur faced Budha Sing, a ferocious Gond and killed him. In a village on the Mahanadi nearby, he put on the vermilion mark of victory and called it Sindurpur.

Recent excavations have revealed heaps of old bricks on the hill-top and bricks lying about at the foothills.

On the hillock on the other side of the road is a Siva temple called Gupteswar established by BM Sing Deo (1902-37).

**Subalaya**

Near Birmaharajpur lies this mythical place of Ramayana reputation, a place known for its Subalagiri with its mysterious, wide wheel tracks on the hillock and, of course, its handloom products like napkins with decorative Kumbha design and bell metal works. There is a place Khamar Dungri near Subalaya where *akhhandanama sankirttana* is held over the last half a century interminably.

Not very far from Subalaya is a village Khamsiripali known for its worship of goddess Stambheswari or Khambeswari from which the name of the village is derived. It is a village located on the left bank of the Mahanadi. Recent archaeological excavations reveal here the remains of a chalcolithic civilization, the first of its kind in the upper Mahanadi valley. The excavation was conducted by the Sambalpur University under the leadership of Prof. PK Behera.

**Tarapurgarh**

It was the ancient seat of the Somovamsi monarchs. It had a fort with a moat connected with and fed by the Mahanadi to the north. It was the original Vinitapura of the Somavamsi fame. There was a Tara image worshipped here from which the name Tarapur might have been derived. Maybe it was associated with Buddhist Tantra. Historians maintain that it was an antique place connected with the maritime trade of ancient Odisha, specifically with diamond trade. Thus it is a place known earlier than the Somavamsis of the 9th and 10th centuries.

It was here that Raja Purusottama Sing Deo (1689-1709), grandson of Madangopal, founder of the Chauhan rule in Sonepur had established a fort and a cantonment. Of the 18 garhs he had set up, Tarapurgarh was *numero uno*. It continued to be a garh till the time of Prithiv Sing (1781-1841) where Gobind Dewan resisted the Maratha onslaught for long three years until it was raised to the ground. Since then it has been lying quietly as a grazing ground for goats.
Prof P.K. Behera of Sambalpur University excavated the site and discovered relics of the Iron Age and remains of a circular fort with two gates, one facing the Mahanadi and the other village Urle. Further excavations may possibly reveal an early historic urbanisation in the middle of the Mananadi valley.

In a village called Urle nearby there is an old Raghunath temple, the image imported from Banaras. One Panda who was founder of the temple left quietly and desperately when a horde of Brahmins came seeking his hospitality. Lord Ram, it is said, appeared in his guise and entertained the guests (KC Nayak: *Mahapatara Yatri* 2015).

**Tarbha**

Tarbha is an NAC, 30 km. from Sonepur town on the Sonepur–Bolangir road. Once well-known for pack bullock traffic, it is now famous for silver filigree works. It has temples dedicated to Sureswari, Patanewswari, Nilakantheswar and Dabhibamana. The Dabhibamana temple is the most celebrated of them all. Pt. Damodar Misra in his *Swarnapuragundarsah* (1921) claims it is a substitute for the Jagannath temple of Puri. If a pilgrim too tired to traverse the formidable distance to Puri, on foot, stops here for a darsan of Lord Dadhibamana, he obtains an equal measure of punya, he avers.

There is mosque at Tarbha well-known for its Ursh festival. It is the samadhipitha of a centenarian Muslim sadhu, Abdul Shakkur Saha, popularly called Fakir Baba who, it is said, hailed from Kabul. People of all castes and communities visit this holy place and offer chadar/shawl to the tomb for the fulfillment of their wishes.

Close by Tarbha is Degan where a *triphali tamvraphalaka* issued by Mugdhaagandoladeva, a Rastrakuta feudatory of Janamejaya (850-885 AD) was discovered in 1978. Broken temple pillars, an image of Vinsu, a Mithuna couple and a royal figure have been found here. Agrawal claims these sculptures were part of a 9th century temple and the royal personage is possibly Janamejaya.
The Temple Town of Sonepur

Sonepur is one of the most picturesque towns of Odisha, a unique temple town of tourist importance, a poet’s paradise, a veritable Varanasi of Odisha as Kosalanandam has it. Like Ganga with many ghats at Varanasi, here is Mahanadi with its Gokarneswarghat, Machhindraghat, Gaurighat, Dasamatighat, Rajghat, Khandadhuaghat, Tikiripadaghat, Tentlighat, Kumbharpadaghat, Amghat, Dhobighat etc. Its beauty is its location on the confluence of the Mahanadi and river Tel. The boundless blue sky, the dim, distant horizon dotted with hills, the grey rocks and brown sands, the murmuring stream and the twittering birds in shady trees and the tinkling bells of hoary temples help create a land of dreams. While Siva Prasad Das compares this town with the landscape between rivers Sindhu and Madhumati in Bhavabhuti’s drama Malatimadhavam, N. K. Sahu discovers in it Swarnapuri Lanka surrounded by measureless waters and B. C. Mazumdar stands overwhelmed by its monsoon beauty: When the Mahanadi is in full flood and flows with a deep groan washing the parapet walls of the Maharaja’s palace, a romance of sight and sound charms the town of Sonepur (Sonepur in the Sambalpur Tract: 1911), N. R. Mukherjee in Feudatory and Zamindari India, 1935 observes:

The town of Sonepur (old Sunitpur) lying nestled in a cosy bower surrounded by long lines of sky-blue, forest-crowned cliffs forming pre-eminently the base of a triangular plot washed by the perennial flow of the Mahanadi and Tel whose confluence forms the apex harbouring this tiny town, the vital portion of the state still resounding with its pristine glory.
This is Sonepur, a tourist's heaven, the once glorious capital of South Kosala, a prosperous centre of maritime trade that linked it through Paradip to Indonesia and China. Pt. Jagannath Mishra in *Utsavataranginichampuh* (1910) wonders whether this ancient city was designed by a tantric town-planner, Stambheswari standing right at the centre of a Saiva triangle. Look closer, and you will find a sakta triangle within this Saiva Triangle: Stambheswari-Sureswari-Bhagavati within Gokarneswar-Rameswar-Subarnasambhu. No coincidence. Sonepur in Odisha is the most ancient land of tantra.

This is not all. Sonepur, down the ages, has been the melting pot of a variety of religious cults and creeds like Jainism, Buddhism, Saktism, Saivism, Vaisnavism and Mahimaism. The Baghmarakud Rock inscription of 1885 for the first time describes Sonepur town as the abode of Astachandis and Astasambhus. The Astachandis consist of Bhagabati Panchamvari Bhadramvika of Chandihara’s times, Sureswari in Mahisamardini form standing uniquely on sarpayantra, the one-time guard and guardian of the Somavamsi fort, Stambheswari who first figures in the 5th century Terasinga charter of Maharaja Tustikara and later in the charter of Ranabhanja, *Stambheswarilabdhabaraprasadah* now represented as Vanadurga, tutelary deity of the Dumals obtained by the Rani of Raj Sing (1709-29) from Khemidi and enshrined here. They include Durga Devi of the Rajbhangan installed by Niladri Sing’s *Pat Rani*, Durgakumari Devi, Vimala set up by Prithvi Sing (1781-1841) on the premises of Jagannath temple, Samlai, the tutelary deity of the Chauhans established at *gadadwara* by Madangopal (1650 – 60), Budhi Somlai by Prataprudra (1891 – 1902), and, above all, the tribal deity Dasamati. Over and above the Astachandis, we have goddess Narayani adjacent to Gopinath temple, goddess Ramchandi on the premises of Gokarneswar temple, goddess Manikeswari to the south of the town, tutelary deity of the Gangas now worshipped
by the Kaibartas. Now worshipped by the Kaibartas is another deity, Lankeswari of
the Ramayana fame, Lankavartaka of the Telugu choda charter, presiding deity of
Paschima Lanka (Sonepur).

The Astasambhus of the town include Lord Subarnameru and Lord
Rameswar. Subarnameru stands on a sprawling campus with two courtyards, the
outer courtyard with 2 gates, one to the north and the other to the west along with
a tall boundary wall erected by B. M. Sing Deo (1902-37). The inner courtyard
contains the sanctum sanctorum with the mandap attached. There goes a legend
about Subarnameru.

One Neuli Sahu, an iron merchant from coastal Odisha carrying a cartload of
iron ores stopped on the right bank of the river Tel near a village called Subarnapali
in order to repair his gunny bags. While sharpening his damphana (big needle) on
a piece of stone, he found to his amazement, the needle turning gold. Neuli rubbed
his stock of iron and all the iron transformed into gold, praying, Lord, make me
issueless so that no successor could proudly proclaim his father had founded this
monument. A peculiar prayer whose only echo we hear in Indradyumna’s
supplication to Lord Jagannath. Neuli died but the legend lives. The temple lives.
And no one knows for certain who completed the temple. While N. K. Sahu claims
it was Vaijal Deb, the second Chauhan Raja of Patna, the builder of the famous
Nrusimhanath temple of Borasambar, P. Gopinath Panigrahi, Vidyaratna attributes
it to the first Chauhan Raja of Sonepur, Madangopal (1650 – 60). P. Panigrahi
further claims that the mandap, constructed by Daksinakabata, Senapati to Baliara
Deva, Raja of Sambalpur, elder brother to Madangopal was rebuilt by Niladri.
Interestingly we have the statues of Prataprudra and Birmitrodaya at the western
entrance and the statues of Niladri and Prataprudra on the outer eastern wall of the
Mandap. Niladri is said to have dug a pool to the west of the temple whose water
has digestive power.

It is sometimes claimed that Anangabhimadev III and Kapilendra Dev had
visited this temple on different occasions, Anangabhimadev during the Ganga-
Kalachuri war and Kapilendra Dev on his hot pursuit of Mukunda dev.

While the appearance of Lord Subarnameru on the Sonepur soil was greeted
with showers of gold from the sky, says the legend, historians maintain that gold
coins were minted at Subarnapur and distributed among the people on the occasion
of the victory of the Gangas over the Kalachuris in the Hundred Years War (1114
– 1220). They call it Ganga fanams.

Besides the Baneswar temple established by Raja Prataprudra, the Parvati
temple in the inner courtyard is another tourist attraction. Here is a rare marble
Parvati icon in dhyanamudra obtained from Benaras and enshrined in 1918 in place
of an old, withered stone image. We have the image of Lord Buddha, too, in sitting
posture on the premises.
There are two Sanskrit inscriptions in Odia script in the Parvati temple. A Ganesh image of rare green stone lying uncared for beneath a tree to the right of the temple is now preserved in the N. K. Sahu Museum of Sambalpur University. It is datable to 8th century AD.

The Rameswar temple is another ancient monument of the town whose attraction lies in its mythical associations with the Lanka of the *Ramayana* and in its lyrical location. It stands face to face with the one and a half km. long mysterious mound Asuragarh identified with Ravana's Lanka across the river Tel. Lord Rameswar stands right on the confluence of the Mahanadi and river Tel. When the two rivers are in full flood, the Tel. with its fierce flowing stream even stalls the great wide Mahanadi and the resultant expanse of the waters is too vast to be measured by human eyes. You cannot see the other bank of the Mahanadi even by a binocular. Water, water everywhere, and it will give you the illusion of the sea illimitable.

On this magnificent confluence stands Lord Rameswar in a primordial temple, whose beginning even the historians do not know.

The structures of Subarnameru and Rameswar temples are strangely similar and similar are their erotic images on the outer walls and the *Anantasayi* images on the lintels of the *garvagruha*. An *Anantasayi* image of Lord Vishnu in a Siva temple which makes historian J. K. Sahu observe that it was a Vaisnavite temple turned Saivite. On the other hand, this could be symptomatic of religious syncretism in a place where a Paramamaheswar could be Paramavaisnava, chanting, ‘*Om Namo Bhagabate Basudevaya*’.

On the premises are worshipped images of Ganesh and Karttikeya and a ten-armed Durga.
Outside the temple is a mandap with a huge Brusabha image in black facing the Mahanadi.

There are a few scattered broken images waiting for identification.

The other Saiva temples like the tall Chandrasekhar temple of Thanapatipada, Paschim Somanath temple of Ghodaghatpada, the Gokarneswar temple near Sonepur College and the Pancharatha temple near the present Bus Stand are constructions by the Chauhans of Sonepur. The Paschim Somanath temple with a Brusabhamandap and a Chandanmandap to the west of the town which lay incomplete for long was known as ‘Khandia Deula’. It is significant in the sense that it was built by locals, not by the Rajas. Yet while Niladhar added the Yajnamandap, his son Prataprudra instituted the Bat Hanuman temple and his daughter-in-law, Rani Amulyamani built the Bhairava temple with an inscription on a red sand stone. Goddess Parvati in the north, Ganesh in the south and Karttikeya in the west are worshipped as Parswadevatas.

The attractive architecture of Gokarneswar temple built by B. M. Sing Deo (1902-37) with the temple of goddess Ramachandi by his father Raja Prataprudra (1891-1902) are, no doubt, worthy of attention, but the most sculpturally significant is the Somabhusana memorial Pancharatha Siva temple standing magnificently and artistically in the heart of this town.

Somabhusana memorial Pancharatha temple is ‘Pancharatha’ in shape and style. It is five-in-one. Five chariot-like structures in a single inter-connected sanctum. Lord Siva takes the centrestage with Ganesh to the south, Parvati to the north, Karttikeya to the west and Nandi or Brusabha to the east. There is a four line sloka on a slab of stone at the entrance to the garvagruha which caused the construction of this memorial temple.
Maharaja Birmitrodaya had a son, Somabhusan - a man among princes. Born in 1896, he passed away in 1918, just six months after his marriage. His sudden death threw a shadow of sadness over Sonepur. The monumental expression of this mournful feeling is the Somabhusana memorial Pancharatha temple. Our saddest thoughts do not necessarily bud forth into sweet music, wrote B. C. Mazumdar in a mournful mood, but they did bud forth into this singular sanctum which is a challenge to death. It is the most ornamental temple in the whole of west Odisha, yet it lay unenshrined for half a century. This temple which started in 1919, one year after the premature death of the prince took ten years to complete in 1929 and only in 1979 came the stone images from Kantilo for installation. The figures of gods and humans, angels and saints beautifully sculpted on the walls of the temple make this magnificent monument death-defying.

One year before the Pancharatha temple was complete, B. M. Sing Deo erected another memorial temple - the Sasisena temple exactly on the spot where, as the love legend goes, Ahimanikya disclosed his identity. Ahimanikya, Minister’s son elopes with Sasisena, Princess of Amarabati, Cuttack to Kamantapur (Sonepur) where he is turned into a sheep by day and a youth by night by the magic touch of Madana Maluni for her sex sport. Here he is transformed into a youth by the orders of the king, leading to the reunion of the lovers on the same spot where this faceless monument called ‘Nimuhin Mandir’ stands today. There are symbolic sculptures of garlands and snakes and rhinoceros, the garland that turned a snake and the snake into a human form-Ahimanikya, and the rhino Sasisena had killed in the guise of a soldier – all mute narrators of a magic, romantic tale so famous in eastern India. Incidentally, the year this memorial was erected, Sasisena Kavya was published by Sonepur Durbar in 1928, the first publication of this work in Odisha.

We hear of Astachandis and Astasambhus of the town. But where are the Astavishnus. They are Gopaljis, Gopinath, Jagannath, Nrusimhanath, Dadhivaman, Brundabanbihari, Ramji. While the last three were built by public initiative, the rest were raised by the Rajas. The Gopalji Math, the oldest among the Vaisnava temples here was set up by Bansigopal, brother of Madangopal (1650-60), first Chauhan Raja of Sonepur. The Mandap was built by BM Singh Deo in 1925 and the Dolamandap by Sudhansusekhar (1937-47). It is here that Phalgun Purnima and Jhulanyatra are held with gaiety and festivity.
The Jagannath temple was built by Raj Sing Deo (1709-29) on the model of Puri temple amid chartings of a rare Vishnuyajna. Like the Jagannath temple of Puri there is a cluster of temples within this temple. While the sun-temple, the Vimala temple and the Ganesh temple the Lokanath temple are credited to Prithvi Sing (1781-1841), the Laxmi temple and the Saraswati temple were built by Amulyamani Devi and her grandson Somabhusan respectively. The resemblance does not stop here. The tall boundary wall with four gates on four sides throws a parallel to the Puri temple. The Rathayatra is celebrated here on Asarh sukla dwitiya when after the pahandi the images are installed in the chariots at gadadwara and drawn on a trajectory to Gundicha mandap. A Gundicha mandap here, too.

There is a small Vishnupada temple on the premises.

The Nrusima Temple popularly known as Gundicha temple is the tallest in the entire west Odisha. It took 20 years to complete, this commemorative temple erected by Gundicha Devi, Rani of Prithvi Sing (1781-1841) on the occasion of the birth of Niladri Sing in 1837. Originally, it contained a wooden image of Lord Nrusima which was later substituted by a massive brass image of Lord Laxmi-Nrusima with Laxmi on his left thigh and the traditional attributes of Lord Visnu in his four hands-Sankha, Chakra, Gada and Padma. While this image of this height is a rare sight in the country, an inscription on the right outer wall of the garvagruha is rarer still. Here Prataprudra holds in his hands the flowing robe of Raja Niladri and just below these royal figures are engraved four lines of Sanskrit verse in Odia character.

Befitting the height of the temple and its image is the mandap built by BM Sing Deo in place of a thatched one. This mandap built of baulamala stones obtained from Sambalpur is remarkable for its art and its architecture.

The tall brass images of Ram-Laxman-Sita installed in the Ramji temple of the town during the time of Prithvi Sing too are excellent examples of special Sonepur brass work in which Tarbha, Binka and Champamal had earned a name.

This is Sonepur. A town of hardly a couple of km. radius, yet teeming with temples more than BM Sing Deo’s list in Swarnapura Bedha Parikrama (1910) contains. For, it makes no mention of the temples of Lord Barahanath, Sri Aditya and Kesaba constructed by the Kamalvana Merchants Association of Janmejaya Mahabhavagupta’s time (850-85 AD).

Not only Astasambhus, Astachandis and Astavishnus, Sonepur is also the land of Astamakaras or Eight Ms : Mahanadi (with great volume of water here) Mandira (temples); Mantra, Manga (loom), Matha (tassar), Mung, Malli (most sweet smelling jasmine) and Maipo (beautiful women)

Besides, Sonepur town is called the mythical land of sage Parasuram the holy ashes of whose yajnakunda the Paikas of the past used to smear on their bodies
before they went to war. Syenagiri, popularly known as Chhanchhan (Chhanchana) dungri where his ashram once stood is hardly one km. to the west of the town. Sureswari (like Banki’s Charchika Devi on the Mahanadi) is sometimes identified with Renuka Devi he had killed at the behest of his father Sage Yamadagni. Here is Amghat near Rameswar where he is said to have thrown down the bell (Janughanta) and resolved to eliminate the Kshatriyas. Here is maragadia (pit of the dead) where he consigned their corpses and last but not least, here is Khaulgad where he spilt their blood or buried his mantrapothi. All these point to Sonepur town as the one time abode of Parasurama. The mysterious soil of the Khaulgad had the potency to predict fire or famine through its changing colour from year to year, the strange power to send the fierce-looking barua of Aswin’s baliyatra into a spiritual swoon, hence called Biramurtsna or Biramurchcha Garta (Swarnapuraganadarsah: 1921). While to the unbelieving eyes of historian NK Sahu, it appears Kuliragartta or the tortoise hole which phonetically comes close to Khaulgad on the bank of a pool from which skulls had been recovered, to some others, it is symbol of Yoni worship of yore. Incidentally, 80 km away at Sambalpur we have goddess Samlai in the conjoint form of Linga and Yoni (the vast vagina has been made by human hands to look like a long face distorted with ornaments), now modernized.

Sonepur town is the proverbial land of four. It has char bat (four pathways), char ghat (four tantric ghats), char tikra (four tantric uplands), where secret-tantric midnight puja used to be performed on Sukla Saptami of Aswin. The town has four Hanumans, Bat Hanuman (Paschim Somanath temple premises), Ghat Hanuman (on the bank of Satbandh), Barh Hanuman (in a temple built by Palau Mallick near the district hospital). It had four bhadis or watch towers, Maharaj Bhadi to the north, Chandal Bhadi to the south wherethrough the Maratha army secretly entered and took Prithvi Sing prisoner in 1802, Hanuman Bhadi to the east and Daroja Bhadi to the west.

Sonepur-Patna tract was known as Kaunri Patna, once the abode of Sat Bahen or Seven Tantric Sisters whose presiding deity was Lankeswari Devi called Kaunri Kamachandi in whose name the gunia, in order to exorcise the spirit, used to chant: Go, spirit, go! For this is the command of Kaunri Kamachandi, Madana Maluni, Nitai Dhobani, Sukuti Chamaruni, Lohakuti Luhurani, Gangi Gauduni, Ptrapindhi Saurani, Sua Teluni. Go, for Iswar and Parvati command you on oath a crore of times to go. The tribals, the aboriginals, the low-born here ruled the roost, they dictated terms, the milkmaids, the launderer’s maid, the ironsmith’s maid, the shoemaker’s maid etc. People still fondly believe that Sat Bandh (seven tanks) was the habitat of these tantric sisters (in Kalahandi they call them Jhal Bahen or water nymphs). They were associated with Dhunkuli and Bliyatra. Jagabandhu Sing in Prachina Utkala (1929) tells the tale of Chodagangadeva who, on his way to the conquest of Odisha, saw Nitai Dhobani at Sonepur, a foot planted in the fireplace, a baby floating on a boiling cauldron. Unearthly phenomena! The Sat Bahens are worshipped in the bed of the Mahanadi at Binka, here at Tikiripada and on the
Lankesawri Rock in the mid-stream of the Mahanadi. *Saptamatrukas* transformed into Sat Bahen in Sonepur, they say.

But we know Lankeswari who as their presiding deity is still here in the midst of *Lankavartaka*. She stands surrounded by unfathomable waters sparkling in summer moonlight where the tourist can go cruising or amid wild waves dancing in monsoon flood its tandava dance-a roaring, thundering thing. WB Yeats might have said, a terrible beauty is born! When the water level sinks low in summer one can see five fathoms deep a twin lingam on a rock. Lingam deep in water! Another strange sight, stranger than fiction. It was here that Paschimalankadhipati *Somakulakamalakalika-vikasabhaskara* (a sun to open the lotus buds of the lunar dynasty) Kumara Someswara donate the Kelga Charter.

There is an inscription on the rock which, withered by waters, is unfortunately undecipherable.

But this is not all for which the tourist should 'stop here or gently pass'. Not only for its temples and tantra, its architecture and sculpture, its mantra, yantra and tantra, but also for its handloom and handicraft, its art and craft, its tie and dye and terracotta, its fairs and festivals, its exotic landscape, its verdant valleys, it's amazing flora and fauna, its vibrant social life and cultural diversity for which it has been for long the tourists favoured destination. The bandha artists of Sonepur, the Bhulias apply the tie and dye technique or what they call *ikat* to a wide variety of fabrics and with a harmonious blending of colours create poetry on thread. They weave wall-hangings of gods and goddesses, of *kaliyadalana* and *boitabandana*, even of the Konark, pride of Odisha-all on thread. The terracotta Hanuman of the Kumbhars which defies the wildest imagination of the artist, the epic episodes of the *Ramayana* which come aggressively alive through the masterful strokes of the Maharana’s brush are wonders of the world. And yet this is not the journey's end. You must stand and stare at the *Baliyatra of Aswin*, the *Lankapodi of Bhadlab*, the Dhunkuli dance of Kartik, the Dandayatra of *Chaitra*-folk festivals which will transport you into a world away from this world of ‘sick hurry and divided aims’ as Matthew Arnold would have it.
Approach

Subarnapur is 50 km. from Bolangir railway station and 80 km each from Sambalpur and Rairakhol by road. The nearest Airport is Biju Pattnaik International Airport, Bhubaneswar (320 km).

Accommodation

Kotsomolai: Tourist Reception Centre (Ph: 7894263859), DRDA Guest House (Ph: 7894263859).

There are a number of hotels in Sonepur town, namely, Panthasala, Yatriniwas, Circuit House (Contact No. 06654-220353), Hotel Pravas (Ph: 9861951751), Hotel Koshal Residency, Hotel Progress Inn (Ph: 06654-221234), Hotel Kasturi etc.

Language: Most widely spoken is Odia / Koshali
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Glossary Word</th>
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<tr>
<td>angthha</td>
<td>a type of silver ornament on toes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>angchhi</td>
<td>napkin of about 3 ft. length.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anna</td>
<td>1/16 of a rupee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>barhmata</td>
<td>sticky and moist soil fit for paddy. A kind of thorny plant called Bamar grows in this soil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bahasuta</td>
<td>silver ornament on the arm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>balchhati</td>
<td>tender mushroom of small size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baliyatra</td>
<td>a dance performance by a barua in Aswin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bandria</td>
<td>Spiked bracelet made of silver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bargai</td>
<td>an assistant to a barua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>barua</td>
<td>one possessed with the deity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>basni</td>
<td>an ornament made of gold for the nose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baulkadhi</td>
<td>head ornament the shape of a baula bud made of silver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bautichatra</td>
<td>a small umbrella with a long handle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bhuga</td>
<td>a bamboo container</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bhugli</td>
<td>a diminutive bamboo container</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>benti</td>
<td>an ornament of gold for the ear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bethi / begari</td>
<td>free labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bhaijuntia</td>
<td>osa by sisters for the brothers well being prevalent in west Odisha. This is held in the 8th night of the bright fortnight of Aswin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bichhuan</td>
<td>a silver ring for the toe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bidamala</td>
<td>a kind of chain made of gold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>binakaria</td>
<td>one who plays the lute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bindhenchhati</td>
<td>a kind of wild mushroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bhokta</td>
<td>bhakta or participant in dandayatra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chakhna</td>
<td>semi-solid boiled mung added with salt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chanda/bheda</td>
<td>subscriptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>changdi</td>
<td>a small bamboo container</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>charmundi</td>
<td>a sort of ornament on the head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chargharia</td>
<td>four persons engaged in the service of the barua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chaumati</td>
<td>soil with the colour of the anthill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chidi</td>
<td>an oversized bamboo container</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chiticamati</td>
<td>clay used for making images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chingrijhupa</td>
<td>a silver ring with hangings for the toe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chirmudri</td>
<td>a silver ring on the small toe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chhurki</td>
<td>a silver ornament for the toe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chhurri</td>
<td>chariot or chhuri tax for divorce</td>
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<tr>
<td>dandayatra</td>
<td>a folk dance of chaitra</td>
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<tr>
<td>dandi</td>
<td>a gold ornament between the nostrils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>darha</td>
<td>a deep stretch of water, gorge</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
deheri or dehuri : low-caste priest for the village deify
dhanmali : a chain of gold in the shape of dhan
dhol : double-faced, cylindrical Indian folk drum made of wood, length 1.5 to 2 ft., diameter 1 to 1.5 ft., one face is played with a stick, the other with palm and fingers.
dhunkuli : a dance by unmarried girls in Bhadrad
duamali : a gold chain with beads depressed in the middle
dulduli : drum that produces a deep sound
tagunpuni : the full-moon day of Phalgun famous for Rasayatra	fasia : a gold ornament for the ear
futkel chhati : wild mushroom in the shape of small balls
gaen : one who sings hymns ringing a bell rhythmically
gajband : a thickset chain of gold
gamchha : a napkin about 3 ft. in length
gansana : a ceremonial bath with turmeric on the occasion of thread ceremony or wedding
ganthia : a gold ornament for the ear
garti : related to garh (fort)
gartia : headman of the garh
ghatual : the barua who plays Mangala in Chaitra
gojakathi : a stick with a sharp edge with a bunch of hangings on the top used as hairpin
guna : an ornament of gold for the nose
gunchi : waist chain of silver or brass make
gundikhai : new green mango, fried gram, sakarpati and pink powder or phagu are offered to Lord Krishna on Phalguna Purnami
gunia : exorcist
gutimali : A chain of small gold beads
haldianpatti : tax on functions in royal household
hendua : small bits of bamboo shoots
hudmva : fried pressed rice
jajmani : on regular personal service with monthly payment
jalsai : ceremonial bathing of the Lingam
Jhadua brahmins : here indigenous brahmins
jhalka : gold ornament for the ear with pendants
jhankar : low-caste worshipper of the village deity
jharkhath : a stick with a sharp end with silver pendants on top used as hairpin
jharpapna : a drink prepared out of palua
jodakhamb : twin tantric pillars
kalari : a kind of silver bracelet
kandul : a type of local arhar
kanteikoli : a kind of small, sweet, sour berry grown on a wild thorny plant
kardi : tender bamboo shoots cut in long pieces
kasurkanda : a kind of conical spiked root grown in tanks and is taken boiled and peeled
katria : a type of silver bracelet
khadu : a heavy brass bracelet with a sharp slope in the middle
khagla : a heavy necklace of silver
khaliamati : brown-coloured soil. Hard on the surface soft beneath. Khalui : a container of bamboo sticks tied to the waist to keep small fishes in
khamar : Village under private possession
khendi : a measure of 20 tamvis
kharchani : cattle
khasmati : unmixed soil
khatia : small cot
khusa : hair bound in a roundish shape
kudo : a type of wild rice
kuta : a measure of 8 tamvis
lambardar or numberdar : village headman
latpatta : a piece of red cloth in recognition of one's possession of land
latpati : a small napkin
lia : puffed rice
Madal / mandal : a cylindrical drum with two faces, one smaller than the other. Made of wood or clay. Played by using palm and fingers only. The faces are coated with a mixture of iron dust, burnt clay and boiled rice paste. Both the faces are tightened by leather straps. Length: 2–2.5 ft.
magan : demand
mahuphena : rice paste baked and soaked in milk mixed with gur
makaddam : representative of the village headman
malikadhi : a hairpin in the shape of a jasmine bud
mana : a measure made of brass or burnt clay. It can contain a quantity of about 300 grams.
mandla : millet (eleusive coracana)
marjimanibhar : unforced contribution in kind
matha : tassar
mathi : laddu of small, hard balls of wheat flour prepared in boiled gur
maufidar : free-holder
mugsijha : boiled mung mixed with gur
mundajhulias : men with long hair engaged to assist the bali
**muhuri**: blowing instrument made of brass found with six holes. The blowing hole, called pikka is made of small hollow bamboo stick in which a piece of palm leaf is fixed to produce vibration.

**murhi**: fried rice

**nakputki**: a small round piece of gold worn on the nostril holed

**nariha**: sweeper

**natha**: ornament of gold hanging from the divider or the nostrils

**Naukaren maufi**: tax-free land for service

**nazara**: succession fee for zaminsars, garhtias, gauntias, etc.

**nisan**: a sort of small drum of 1 ft. height desked with 2 deer horns. It is a unifaced and conical drum made of iron covered with skin. It is played with 2 rubber sticks. Face diameter 1.5 ft.

**nistar**: (monetary) relief

**nuakhai**: a festive occasion for West Odisha in the bright fortnight of Bhadrav when members of the family get together and share in new clothes the food prepared out of the fresh grain reaped

**nunphutamati**: a morrum type of soil not fit for cultivation

**pakhal**: boiled rice in water

**Panakapithiamati**: soil grey like the feather of the partridge

**panjhal**: silver chain worn on the ankle

**panlakanthi**: a chain of big-sized gunja worn on the neck

**panpatra**: a betel-shaped hairpin of silver make

**panua**: head of a caste-guild

**parajapati**: a butterfly-shaped silver hairpin

**patkhanda**: chief sword of the ruler

**patrimali**: a gold chain of leaf shaped beads

**patti**: tax

**patua**: rice paste mixed with ripe palm fruit juice boiled in leaf folds

**peskush**: tribute

**pie**: 1/64 of a rupee

**pualchhati**: mushroom grown on straw

**pushpuni**: a tribal festival of cakes and ale on the last day of Pausa, the reaping month

**rangmati**: Red soil used for smearing walls with

**rasad**: ration

**rugudimati**: morrum

**sakarpati**: a sweet item prepared with gur

**salami**: a type of cash-gift

**sara**: a container of burnt clay wherein pakhal is served
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
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<td>sarsatia</td>
<td>a round-shaped sweet item prepared out of ganari (a wild plant with sticky juice) juice with rice paste</td>
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<tr>
<td>sebatiphula</td>
<td>a silver hairpin in the shape of a sebati flower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sikim or sikmi</td>
<td>a sub-tenant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>singragharia</td>
<td>same as sarsatia except that its shape is triangular, not round</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>solahapuja</td>
<td>sodasopachara puja 16 rounds or types of puja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tada or tudal</td>
<td>a silver ornament worn on the arm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>takabi loan</td>
<td>a sash loan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>takoli</td>
<td>tax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tambi</td>
<td>a terracotta or brass container to measure grains of about 1250 grams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tamjan</td>
<td>a open palanquin made of silver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tamki</td>
<td>a sort of flat-faced drum carried and beaten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tasa</td>
<td>a unifacial cone-shaped drum made of wood covered with goat skin. Played with thin bamboo sticks. Leather face. Diameter 1 ft. wooden base diameter 4 to 5 inches. Height about 8 inches.</td>
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<tr>
<td>thicajama</td>
<td>tenure deposit</td>
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<tr>
<td>tirtira</td>
<td>a small ear ornament made of gold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tupa</td>
<td>a bamboo container</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tupli</td>
<td>a small bamboo container</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>udia brahmin</td>
<td>a Brahmin from coastal Odisha, Utkali Brahmin</td>
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<tr>
<td>umrah</td>
<td>headman whose status is between the Zamindar and the gartia</td>
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