

REVIEW
OF THE
ASSESSMENT REPORT OF THE VILLAGES
INCORPORATED
IN THE
SRI PRATAP Singh PURA TAHSIL
FROM THE
OLD NAGAM TAHSIL.

BY
J. L. KAYE, MAJOR,
Settlement Commissioner, Jammu and Kashmir State.



Printed by:
THE "CIVIL AND MILITARY GAZETTE" PRESS,
Sole Contractors for Printing to the Punjab Government.
1904.

REVIEW
OF THE
ASSESSMENT REPORT OF THE VILLAGES
INCORPORATED
IN THE
SRI PRATAPSINGHPURA TAHSIL
FROM THE
OLD NAGAM TAHSIL.

BY
J. L. KAYE, MAJOR,
Settlement Commissioner, Jammu and Kashmir State.



Printed by:
THE "CIVIL AND MILITARY GAZETTE" PRESS,
Sole Contractors for Printing to the Punjab Government.

1904.

Review of the Assessment Report of the villages incorporated in the Sri Pratapsinghpura Tahsil from the old Nagam Tahsil.

1. This is merely a supplementary report in completion of the Assessment Report of the Sri Pratapsinghpura Tahsil, as now constituted. The estates comprised in the old tahsil of this name have already been dealt with. The 92 estates of the old Nagam Tahsil, which have now been made into 97 villages, were incorporated in the tahsil after the Assessment Report dealing with the older portion of the tahsil was written. It was not considered necessary to keep back the new assessments for 393 villages till the assessments for the other 92 estates could be prepared. Hence the necessity for this supplementary report.

The survey of the villages dealt with in the Report was mostly completed under the direction of Rai Bahadur Lala Narsingh Das, the measurement work was completed and a special *girdawari* made by Lala Pindi Das, by whom this report has been written.

To preserve uniformity in the old and new portions of the Sri Pratapsinghpura Tahsil, the Assessment Circles fixed for the older portion have merely been extended southwards. Though the villages irrigated from the Dudhganga River are to some extent somewhat better than those irrigated from other sources in the central belt of the tahsil, the difference is chiefly one of the sufficiency of the irrigation supply, consequently the Settlement Officer has not considered it necessary to split up the 37 villages contained in the Nagam Circle into two separate Circles on the lines of the Abi No. 1 and Abi No. 2 Circles in the older portions of the tahsil. Similarly there is no defined tract, like the Berua Circle of the old tahsil, which makes it necessary to differentiate between the 36 villages of the Kandi Circle. With his views in this respect I agree.

The Report follows the same lines as that dealing with the assessment of the villages of the old Sri Pratapsinghpura Tahsil.

2. The belt of the country in which these villages are situated runs roughly from north-east to south-west, from the Jhelum River to the Pir Panjal Range of mountains. Near the Jhelum River is the usual belt of lowlying area liable to inundation, which suffers when the river is in flood and in which the drainage from the higher portions of the tract, to some extent, collects. Thus portions of the eastern villages, such as *rakh* Shalina, Lajura, *rakh* Sonthu, Sotangu &c., are swamp lands where *nambal* water is always present.

This belt has corresponding characteristics to the rest of the Sailaba Circle of the tahsil and the villages situated therein have been placed in a separate Assessment Circle of the same name.

South-westwards of the Sailaba Circle comes an intermediate belt of lowlying land, elevated above the Sailaba Circle, generally level except for the Nagam Karewa safe from damage by floods, with a warm climate, and producing excellent crops. The irrigation is not uniformly good, but generally satisfactory. In this belt is the best rice-producing soil. The Circle has been named the Nagam Circle after the old tahsil head-quarters of Nagam which is situated in the Circle.

When leaving the Nagam Circle and travelling towards the western boundary of the tract, the land gradually rises till we get to the limit of cultivation under the Pir Panjal mountains. The surface of the land is uneven, depressed where *nars* carry the drainage from the higher ground and elevated where spurs run down from the mountains towards the plain. As one ascends towards the mountains the air gets colder and in the upper villages cold blasts from the snow injure the crops. The difference in capacity depends on the proximity of estates to the mountains. There is no defined belt corresponding to the Berua Circle of the rest of the tahsil, so the Settlement Officer has included all the estates in a single Circle, named the

Kandi, and relied on his village assessments to differentiate between the villages which enjoy a warmer climate bordering on the Nagam Circle and those nearer the mountains which suffer from the cold winds.

Though only 97 villages are dealt with in this Report, the total number situated in the tract is 98. The village of Nattipura, held by His Highness the Maharaja, having been excluded from measurement and assessment by the Settlement Department.

The Darbar, as in all parts of Kashmir, is sole proprietor of the soil.

There is no market of any size in the tract; in many villages, such as Nagam and Charar Sharif, there are shops. The north-eastern villages almost adjoin Srinagar and most of the produce finds its way to that market.

Unmetalled roads are sufficient and in fair order; the main road is the Srinagar-Shopiyon Road. There are no metalled roads.

Carriage is mostly by land, the Jhelum River does not serve the tahsil for carrying purposes, except in respect of a few villages of the Sailaba Circle. The only other river, the Dudhganga, is not navigable.

General statistics. 3. The following are the details of area, cultivation and irrigation as ascertained at survey:—

Total area surveyed, excluding forests and mountains, 52,941 acres
= 82·7 square miles.

Of the above area, 57 per cent. is under cultivation, 16 per cent. is culturable waste and 27 per cent. is unculturable waste.

Of the area under cultivation 31·1 per cent. is irrigated and 68·9 per cent. is unirrigated.

In comparison with the older portion of the tahsil, the percentage of the cultivated area irrigated is very low. The corresponding figures are 66·4 irrigated and 33·6 unirrigated.

As stated in paragraph 3 of the Report, the figures of the Census enumeration of the years 1891 and 1901 are not available. No comparison of the density of the population nor incidence of the population on the area under cultivation can be made. सयमेव जयते

The population is, however, evidently sufficient as the number of *assamis* is stated to be 8,207, which gives an average area of cultivation of 3·7 acres per *assami*. These figures seem to indicate that the total population is dense for the tract, as the irrigated area is comparatively small.

The live-stock return is higher by comparison with the cultivated area than in the rest of the tahsil. The Settlement Officer calculates the market value of the live-stock at Rs. 2,69,534; excluding the value of calves and bullocks.

The tract is rich in fruit trees. The number of mulberry trees is insufficient for a general extension of Sericulture. There are only 8,741 mulberry trees, which number compares badly with the number of wild apricot (*hari*) trees, which is 24,575. The number of walnut trees is, by comparison, less than in the rest of the tahsil, while the number of *hari* trees is, by comparison, greater.

The area under *krishna* grass is not extensive. The whole of this area, 165 acres, is situated in the Sailaba Circle.

Willow plantations cover an area of 425 acres, but only in the villages near Srinagar is any considerable income made by the sale of willow wood. In the villages situated in the Sailaba Circle the area of *bedzar* is 355 acres.

The total number of water mills is 64. This is small as compared with the number of mills in the older portion of the tahsil. That the number of mills should be comparatively small is not surprising when the comparative percentages of area irrigated are considered.

4. The fiscal history of these villages is not given at length. The revenue history is stated in paragraph 16 to be similar to that of the old Sri Pratapsinghpura Tahsil. The assessment of the Regular Settlement, announced in 1948, was Rs. 61,226, which has since been enhanced to Rs. 70,381, the increase being chiefly due to the assessment placed on land broken up under Regulation No. 6.

Fiscal history.

The revenue demand is stated to have been realised without difficulty.

Appendix No. VIII shows that there are arrears of revenue outstanding to the amount of Rs. 4,006, of which sum Rs. 2,719 represent the amount suspended during the current year, chiefly on account of the damage caused by the late flood. It is not stated whether the balance of Rs. 1,287 is recoverable or irrecoverable. The Governor of Kashmir should see to the realisation of this small amount if recoverable, or to its elimination from the accounts if unrecoverable.

5. The average area of cultivation per holding (4.9 acres) is slightly larger than in the rest of the tahsil and in the Lal Phak District. But, considering the small percentage of irrigated area in the tract, the average outturn of produce per holding is undoubtedly smaller than in the tracts named. The average size of holdings is so small that these can be cultivated to the full capacity of the soil. Of the area held by State tenants the larger part is in the hands of *Suni* Muhammadans, whose holdings are represented by a percentage of 48.8, while the holdings of Pandits bear the percentage of 5.9 nearly. The proportion of the total area held by these two principal classes is, therefore, considerably lower than in the older portion of the tahsil.

Tenures and cultivating occupancy.

Of the total cultivated area 78.2 per cent. is cultivated by the *assamis* themselves as compared with a percentage of 82.5 in the rest of the tahsil. A very small area, represented by .4 per cent., is held by sub-tenants with rights of occupancy. While the area held by sub-tenants without rights of occupancy bears the percentage of 21.4, of this percentage 17.5 represents the holdings of tenants-at-will paying rents in kind and only .4 those of tenants-at-will paying cash rents.

The area held on cash rents is so insignificant in extent that the cash rents obtaining in the tract require no consideration, since no useful deductions can be made from these.

6. The classification of soils adopted is the same as in the remainder of the tahsil. The Settlement Officer explains that, owing to the minute areas returned as *labru* in the Sailaba Circle, and *abi I, labru* in the Nagam Circle, he has included these two soils in the *maidani* class in both Circles. In doing this I consider he was quite right, as the altered classification of 20 acres of soil can have no appreciable result on the assessments and unnecessary complication is avoided by thus diminishing the number of separate rates.

Classification of soils.

7. In paragraph 14 the changes which have taken place since the Regular Settlement in the cultivated and uncultivated area are discussed.

Changes in area.

The differences in the total cultivated area and in the area irrigated are as shown for each Circle and the whole tract in the following table :—

CIRCLE.	INCREASE IN CULTIVATION.		INCREASE IN IRRIGATION.	
	Area in acres.	Percentage.	Area in acres.	Percentage.
Kandi	3,295	32.5	292	35.2
Nagam	892	8.9	325	5.9
Sailaba	1,432	32.2	1,406	13.7
Total	5,619	22.9	2,023	27.5

The total percentage of increase in the cultivated area is, therefore, 22·9 and the increase in irrigation is represented by 27·5. It is, however, noticeable that the largest increase in irrigation is in the Sailaba Circle, where the crops are precarious, and that the increase is small in the Nagam Circle, where the rice lands are most valuable.

A glance at Appendix No. IV shows that the most noticeable changes are—

Kandi Circle.—Moderate increase in the classes *abi III* and *wari*.
Enormous increase in *labru-khushki* and large decrease in the *maidani* area.

Nagam Circle.—Large increase in *labru-khushki* area.

Sailaba Circle.—Considerable increase in *abi III*, large increase in *abi-nambal* and considerable decrease in *nambal-khushki*.

The Settlement Officer calculates the waste area still available for the extension of cultivation at 4,542 acres. This permits of a further increase of the present cultivated area by 15 per cent.

The total increase in cultivation does not, however, come under assessment at once, owing to the period of the current assessment not having expired in the cases of certain lands. The increase in cultivation liable to re-assessment is 17·5 per cent. and the increase in irrigation 18·7 per cent.

Applying the Revenue rates of the Regular Settlement to the changes in cultivation in the lands now liable to re-assessment we get the following results:—



CIRCLE.	DETAILS.	INCREASES.					DECREASES.					Total increase.	NOTES.
		Classes of Soils.				Total.	Classes of Soils.				Total.		
		Abi.	Digar.	Khushki.	Rs.		Abi.	Digar.	Khushki.	Rs.			
KANDI	Area in acres	73	214	4,882	2,091	Rs.	Rs.	Abi of the Regular Settlement includes the following classes of soils as now fixed :— Matlari, abi I ; abi nambal, abi II.
	Rate per acre	4 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	Rs.	4 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs.	Rs.	
	Amount	292 0 0	642 0 0	9,764 0 0	10,698	...	...	...	4,182	Rs.	4,182	6,516
NAGAM	Area in acres	424	...	355	184	Digar includes abi III and abi I & labru.
	Rate per acre	4 7 6	3 0 2	2 0 0	Rs.	4 7 6	3 0 2	2 0 0	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs.	Rs.	
	Amount	1,895 0 0	...	710	2,605	...	403 0 0	...	403	Rs.	2,202	2,202	
SAILASA	Area in acres	572	228	224	Khushki includes wari, nambal, maylani, and labru.
	Rate per acre	4 7 6	2 15 7	1 15 2	Rs.	4 7 6	2 15 7	1 15 2	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs.	Rs.	
	Amount	2,556 0 0	678 0 0	...	3,234	...	...	...	436 0 0	Rs.	2,798	2,798
TOTAL OF TRACT		16,537	5,021	11,516	

In other words the increase which may be taken from this tract, merely in respect of changes of cultivation since the Regular Settlement and at the Revenue rates adopted at that Settlement, amounts to Rs. 11,516, which represents a percentage of increase on the current demand on land—Rs. 68,710—of 16·8 as compared with a percentage of 12·8 found, on a similar calculation, to be admissible in the older portion of the tahsil.

8. The crops cultivated and the average area under each, as ascertained during the *girdawaris* of three years, are discussed in paragraph 15 of the Report. I find, however, some difficulty in reconciling the details given in the statement attached to that paragraph and the details given in Appendices Nos. IV, V, VI and VII.

According to Appendix No. IV, the total cultivated area is 30,175 acres, of which 28,855 are now liable to revision of assessment.

In Appendix No. V, the total cultivated area is shown to be 26,792 acres.

According to the details given in Appendix No. VI, the average area cultivated, during the three years considered, was 29,468 and according to those given in Appendix No. VII 29,599.

While in the statement attached to paragraph 15 the total cultivated area is shown as 28,701 acres.

These various figures may be capable of explanation, but the differences in the absence of explanation are bewildering. From the details given in the Revenue Register, it appears that the cultivated area dealt with for purposes of assessment is 28,855 acres ; in other words the area on which the assessments have been based is that given in Appendix No. IV.

Taking the average area cropped during the three years of which the details are given as the basis of calculation, we find the area under each of the main crops to bear the percentages shown below :—

Kharif.					Crops.	Rabi.					Crops.
Rice	...	...	...	...	21·5	Wheat	...	...	...	...	20·7
Maize	...	...	...	...	24·4	Linseed	...	...	...	...	17·5
Cotton	...	...	...	...	2·5	Rape	...	...	...	...	4·2
						Barley	...	...	...	...	2·3

A reference to the table attached to paragraph 15 shows the corresponding percentages which these crops bear to the area cultivated at each crop and which they bore at the Regular Settlement to be—

Crops.			Kharif.		Crops.			Rabi.	
			Revision.	Regular Settlement				Revision.	Regular Settlement.
Rice	...	...	29·2	35·2	Wheat	...	...	45·9	49·6
Maize	...	...	44·5	48·2	Linseed	...	...	38·8	26·5
Cotton	...	...	4·6	6·3	Rape	...	...	9·3	3·6
					Barley	...	...	5·2	16·6

From the above the chief points of importance to be noticed are the slight increase in the cultivation of rice, the considerable increase in the cultivation of oil-seeds and the comparatively little attention now given to the cultivation of barley.

As regards the area cultivated for the spring and autumn crops, respectively, the great attention paid to the spring crops is very noticeable. The conditions of cultivation differ considerably from those obtaining in the older portion of the tahsil and in the Lal Phak District. Further, the spring crops receive much more attention than they did at the Regular Settlement, as the following figures, which give the percentage of the *kharif* and *rabi* crops, respectively, show :—

	Percentage under Kharif crops.	Percentage under Rabi crops.
Tract dealt with	54	46
Sri Pratapsinghpura	79	21
Lal Phak	86	14
Regular Settlement	60	40

The average area left fallow is very small, being 3 per cent., the difference from the Regular Settlement, when the area left fallow was represented by 4 per cent., is small. This proves that the new land brought under cultivation is of as good quality as the old area.

The average percentage of the area sown but on which the crops failed is stated to be 4·5 for the year. The total percentage of the cultivated area sown and on which the crops ripened is, therefore, 92·5 per cent.

9. Owing to the unsatisfactory evidence adduced for the consideration of the prices which it was fair to assume for purposes of calculating the value of the State share of the produce in the old Sri Pratapsinghpura Tahsil, as also to ascertain that the standard of rates was similar in the portion of the tahsil now dealt with, it was necessary that further enquiry on this point should be made by the Settlement Officer. By consulting the entries in the shopkeepers' ledgers, where these were available, and discussing the prices which have ruled of late years with the *zamindars*, the Settlement Officer has done his best to ascertain what average prices have obtained in the past.

As already stated, there is no considerable local market from which statistics of value, as to the average rates obtained by the cultivators for the produce of their fields, could be obtained. The figures collected cannot be considered of much value; but there are no Government records of prices extending beyond the last two years, which could be consulted. The local prices recorded, even if correct, cannot be looked on as representing the true values obtained for the various staples, since, as noticed, the cultivators of the tract deal direct with the Srinagar market to a large extent.

The information collected, such as it is, was placed before me by the Settlement Officer, and the Schedule of Prices which it is proposed to assume for this tahsil and is attached to paragraph 20 was fixed by me in consultation with him.

It will be noticed that the prices assumed are on the whole slightly higher than those taken for the older portion of the tahsil; but the difference is very small, smaller perhaps than the continuance of high prices for the longer period really warrant. These certainly do not err on the side of severity, yet their application to the State share of the produce estimate shows that the present revenue demand may be enhanced to an extent which no Government could contemplate increasing assessments at one revision of Settlement, so to raise the assumed prices higher could serve no useful purpose.

Endeavours are now being made, and these, I hope, will be persevered in and be successful, to have the prices ruling during each fortnight of the year

and those obtaining at each harvest time, carefully recorded in each tahsil. These figures will be of incalculable value to the Settlement Officer at the time of future revisions of assessments. It is to be hoped that these records will be carefully preserved and that it may not be found ten years hence that many of these are missing. A carelessness in preserving old records is so often manifested that particular orders as to the preservation of these records should be issued.

10. A reference to Appendix No. 11 shows that in this tahsil where State share of the gross rents are paid in kind the share of the produce so paid is produce. in all cases one-half or more. The Settlement Officer has taken this into consideration in deducing what share of the total produce the State is entitled to take. His calculations are shown in the table attached to paragraph 23. As I have stated, when reviewing other reports dealing with the Valley of Kashmir, I do not consider that any such calculation is necessary. It has been definitely decided that the State share of the produce is one-half, less such portion as it is customary to distribute to menials from the gross produce before division between proprietors and tenants. The State does not demand a higher percentage and it is not content with a lower one. Further consideration of what an *assami* may get from a sub-tenant by way of rent in kind is, therefore, unnecessary. Obviously where, as a rule is the case, the *assami's* rent is represented by one-half of the grain produced on that portion of his land cultivated by a sub-tenant, the State cannot really in fairness take a half-share of the gross produce, since that would leave nothing for the *assami*. The theory that the State is entitled to a half-share is inconvenient, and in that the half-assets calculation must show a potential revenue demand which cannot be taken and soil rates deduced from that calculation must largely exceed the Revenue rates to be adopted; but so long as the fiction is maintained, a Settlement Officer has no need to concern himself as to the share of the gross produce to be taken as representing what would be the State due if rent was collected in kind—for the State being proprietor of the soil in Kashmir takes rent not revenue only.

Kamiana, i.e., the amount paid from the undivided produce to those menials whose co-operation is necessary in agricultural operations, has been calculated at the ordinary rate of 6·5 per cent.

The State share of the gross produce should, therefore, be half (100—6·5) = 46·75 per cent, instead of which the Settlement Officer has taken in the Kaudi Circle 48·75 per cent., Nagam Circle 48·75 per cent., and in the Sailaba Circle 46·875 per cent.

11. For fixing what may be considered fair average rates of yield for the various crops, we rely on crop experiments, comparison with the rates adopted for similar tracts for similar classes of soils and the statements of the cultivators, the latter as giving a minimum below which it is unnecessary to go, since the cultivators, in their own interests, will always state the average outturn at a figure below the truth.

In dealing with the question in regard to this tract we are confronted with the difficulty that in regard to the first and third methods no information is available. The Settlement Officer tells us that there are no statistics of crop experiments which he can put before us on which any reliance can be placed, and no statements of the cultivators have been recorded.

In regard to the absence of reliable crop experiments I exonerate Lala Pindi Das from all blame. He only joined the service of the State during last kharif harvest and the floods and heavy rainfall of last year made it impossible for reliable crop experiments to be conducted; but I must, in my own defence, animadvert in the strongest terms on the conduct of Rai Bahadur Lala Narsingh Das, the late Settlement Officer, and Sardar Amir Singh, the Assistant Settlement Officer, in this connection. I have frequently during the last few years issued the most detailed instructions about the manner in which these experiments are to be conducted and have repeatedly called for the results to be sent to me for inspection and criticism. My instructions have been disobeyed and my calls for the returns ignored. Luckily the tract dealt with possesses almost identical characteristics with the adjoining Circles of

the old Sri Pratapsinghpura Tahsil and the produce rates assumed for these latter are undoubtedly generally suitable for application to the tract. I should have been glad of corroborative evidence of the suitability of applying the rates of yield assumed for the Abi No. 1 Circle to the Nagam Circle, for I have no doubts as to the fairness of the others, but if there is any slight difference between the Abi No. 1 Circle and the Nagam Circle in favour of the latter it is not so large as to vitiate the calculations to a marked degree.

I consider the produce rates assumed generally suitable and do not propose any modification of them.

12. In Appendix No. XV the half-assets account is worked out in the usual manner, while the crop and soil rates per acre, deduced therefrom, are abstracted and recorded in Statement B attached to paragraph 23.

Half-assets accounts.

The results of the Settlement Officer's calculation are as follows :—

							Rs.
Kandi Circle	...	...	...	...	...	...	55,537
Nagam „	...	...	...	...	...	...	77,237
Sailaba „	...	...	...	...	...	...	24,980
Total	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,57,754

Taking the State share as 46·75 per cent. the figures come to—

							Rs.
Kandi Circle	...	...	...	...	...	...	53,258
Nagam „	...	...	...	...	...	...	74,068
Sailaba „	...	...	...	...	...	...	24,914
Total	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,52,240

The corresponding figures for the Regular Settlement in this tract, as given in Statement B attached to paragraph 26, though, as explained, these are not exact, are—

							Rs.
Kandi Circle	...	...	...	...	...	...	33,704
Nagam „	...	...	...	...	...	...	42,457
Sailaba „	...	...	...	...	...	...	15,062
Total	...	...	...	...	...	...	91,223

but it must be remembered that at the Regular Settlement no rates of yield were worked out for each separate tahsil. The rates of yield were based only on those framed for the Lal and Phak Tahsils.

Taking the value of the State share of the crops at Rs. 1,52,240, the enhancement of the current revenue demand on land permissible by this calculation is Rs. 83,530, equivalent to a percentage of increase of 122, which cannot possibly be taken.

Bachh rates of the Regular Settlement.

13. In Statement A attached to paragraph 24 the revenue and *bachh* rates of the Regular Settlement are given.

The chief interest in these figures is the evidence they give that the cultivators of the two upper Circles considered that the irrigated soils were lightly assessed in comparison with the unirrigated classes of soil, consequently a portion of the *jama* assessed on the latter was thrown on the former, whereas in the Sailaba Circle they held that the value of the moist *nambal* soil in comparison with the irrigated soils, susceptible to damage from floods, had been under-rated as the greater portion of the culturable area is unirrigated, the result of working out the revenue on the present cultivated area calculated at the *bachh* rates of the Regular Settlement would show that a smaller percentage on increase was permissible than by the Revenue rates of the Regular Settlement. The latter calculation has been given in paragraph 7, *supra*. I do not consider it necessary to work out the *bachh* rates calculation.

To examine the *bachh* rates a little more closely, it will be seen that in the—

Kandi Circle, *abi III* soil (*digar* as it was then styled) was held to be too highly rated at 75 per cent. of the value of *abi* soils and at 150 per cent. of the value of *khushki* soils;

Nagam Circle, the ratios between the soils as shown by the Revenue rates seem to have met with general approval;

and in the Sailaba Circle, *abi III* soil was rated as of the same value as the rice producing soils, *abi I*, *abi II*, and *abi-nambal*. The Revenue rates on *abi I*, *abi II*, and *abi-nambal* were considered proportionately too high and the *khushki* rate, by comparison, low.

14. In Statement B attached to paragraph 24 the Settlement Officer has given a new method, not previously adopted in any Assessment Report, of calculating what might be considered a fair rate of assessment. His system is to take the same percentage of the half-assets calculation for a Circle as the percentage of the same calculation taken in Circles exhibiting similar conditions. The idea is a clever one, and the results which it gives are worthy of consideration. A mistake, as it seems to me, is to include miscellaneous items of the revenue demand in the calculation, as the half-assets are worked out from the produce of the cultivated area only and the variations in miscellaneous items of revenue in different parts are considerable. At the same time to omit the miscellaneous items is difficult as the revenue fixed on land is often proportionately decreased if the revenue taken from miscellaneous sources is large.

Taking the proportion of the half-assets which represents the new demand in the corresponding Circles of the older portion of the tahsil as 60, 68 and 62 per cent., the Settlement Officer shows that an assessment at similar proportions of the half-assets would be—

						Rs.
Kandi Circle	...	...	...	...	...	33,822
Nagam „	...	...	...	...	...	52,521
Sailaba „	...	...	...	...	...	15,488
Total						1,01,331

The enhancement of the current demand to this extent would mean, however, taking a percentage of increase of 43. To take this large enhancement would not be unfair, as explained by the Settlement Officer in paragraph 25, in view of the general prosperity of the country and of the cultivating classes and of the fact that the half-assets calculation now made is 73 per cent higher than the same calculation made at the time of the Regular Settlement. At the same time the Government of India have lately communicated to the Darbar remarks on the new assessments sanctioned for the older portion of the tahsil, in which the percentage of increase taken therein, *viz.*, 33, is stated to have struck Government as distinctly high. Under these circumstances, I agree with the Settlement Officer in considering that the increase to be taken should approximate 30 per cent. only, though on the basis of the prices assumed the increased demand to be taken from this portion of the tahsil, supposing the average incidence of the old assessments to be similar, should be at a slightly higher percentage than in the portion of the tahsil of which the assessments were lately revised.

15. With this object of keeping the enhancement of the revenue demand to a figure which would give an increase of about 30 per cent., the Settlement Officer has proposed his Revenue rates. These if applied in full would give a percentage of increase of 27. As the miscellaneous items of revenue represent a further increase of about 5 per cent., the Revenue rates proposed show a sufficient margin to allow for the assessment of weak estates below full rates. The rates proposed follow very closely those sanctioned for the corresponding Circles of the older portion of the tahsil. A difference of annas 2 per acre only occurs in the following soils:—

Kandi Circle.—*Abi III* soil increase of annas 2 owing to the higher soil and crop rates.

Sailaba Circle.—Increase of annas 2 in the rates proposed for *abi III* and *wari* soils and decrease of annas 2 in *nambal* soil.

The increase in *wari* is due to the high crop and soil rates, that in *abi III* is merely in sympathy with the *wari* rate, as it is unnecessary to raise the latter above that of the irrigated soil named. The decrease in *nambal*, a very large area, is due to the lower soil and crop rates.

The method followed in working out the proposed Revenue rates, as given in the statement attached to paragraph 25, is self explanatory, the various rates as stated in annas have been subjected to a close scrutiny by proportions. The rates are low, as judged by the results of the half-assets calculation, expressed as soil and crop rates. The reason for fixing them so low has been explained in the last paragraph. The system of calculation is merely referred to as proof that the comparative values of the different classes of soils have been carefully kept in mind.

These rates were carefully considered by me in consultation with the Settlement Officer and still appear to me quite suitable. As the rates are almost identical with those discussed by me at length in the review of the Assessment Report of the old Sri Pratapsinghpura Tahsil, it seems unnecessary to enter into a detailed defence of them again.

An assessment at full Revenue rates would give a demand on land of Rs. 87,058, which, as already stated, would mean taking a percentage of increase of 27 on the current revenue demand.

Miscellaneous revenue. 16. The items of miscellaneous revenue in the tract are as follows:—

Walnut trees.—These are 5,015 in number, of which 3,205 trees come under assessment, the remainder being immature or non-fruited trees. The rates per tree applied in the corresponding Circles of the old portion of the tahsil have been taken. These are in all respects suitable. The total demand permissible by the application of these rates is Rs. 1,045.

Fruit trees.—For the same reasons as given in paragraph 7 of my review of the Assessment Report of the Sri Pratapsinghpura Tahsil, it is only proposed to tax the produce of the grafted apple, pear, quince and almond trees and exclude the more perishable forms of fruit from assessment.

The number of each species of the above-mentioned trees is—

Grafted Apples	...	...	{	Bearing trees	...	...	4,525
				Immature „	...	...	1,420
Grafted Pears	...	...	{	Bearing trees	...	...	4,355
				Immature „	...	...	589
Quinces	...	...	{	Bearing trees	...	...	134
				Immature „	...	...	6
Almonds	...	...	{	Bearing trees	...	...	29
				Immature „	...	...	19
Total	...	...	{	Bearing trees	...	...	9,013
				Immature „	...	...	2,079

From the total number of bearing trees 146 trees have to be deducted as situated in areas which do not come under re-assessment.

For assessment purposes the rates per tree sanctioned for the older portion of the tahsil and given in the paragraph of the review already mentioned have been applied. These are fair and show that a total demand of Rs. 1,677 may be taken as revenue on fruit.

Apricot trees.—The *hari* trees growing in the area which comes under revision number 23,910, of which no fewer than 21,167 are situated in the Kandi Circle. An assessment at the same rates per tree as adopted for the

rest of the tahsil would give Rs. 1,170. These rates are fair, but in view of the very large number of these trees in the Kandi Circle, where damage by bears is a common occurrence, some reduction from a full demand is made in the village assessments.

As stated in paragraph 9 of the Report, a *Telsiyah* demand of Rs. 2,215 is justified by the rates, as compared with the amount of Rs. 1,131 placed on walnut trees and *haris* at the *bachk* of the Regular Settlement.

Willow plantations (bedzar).—The willow plantations situated in the villages of the Sailaba Circle within a few miles of Srinagar are very valuable properties. The remarks in connection with the value of willow plantations recorded in paragraph 4 of my review of the Assessment Report of the Lal Phak tahsil should be read. Since those remarks were recorded the value of willow wood has continued to rise, and to assess so low as Rs. 8 per acre of *bedzar* is in consideration of the large profits derived, no longer necessary. Last autumn I heard of single willow trees selling for as much as Rs. 7 each.

In paragraph 11 the Settlement Officer shows that in the four villages from which the sale of willow wood is common and the income considerable, the area under *bedzar* is 355 acres. He proposes to take a rate of Rs. 5 per acre on this area. This rate is purely nominal in amount as a portion of the income derived from *bedzar*, but in view of the facts that the villages in which the *bedzar* area is situated suffer severely in years of flood, and that it is suggested to limit the enhancement of the revenue demand to an increase of about 30 per cent., I accept the proposed rate for purposes of assessment. To double the rate would not, in my opinion and in view of the value of the produce, be excessive.

Mills.—There are now 64 mills working, of which 62 are flour mills and 2 rice husking mills, in the area which comes under re-assessment. Of these 5 mills at present pay no revenue and the remainder a total revenue of Rs. 160 only.

These mills have been classified, according to income derived, period of working, sufficiency of power, &c., by the Settlement Officer as follows :—

1st Class	...	...	...	...	...	28 mills.
2nd "	...	...	...	...	...	9 "
3rd "	...	...	...	...	...	10 "
4th "	...	...	...	...	...	17 "

The same class rates as adopted in the older portion of the tahsil, *viz.*, Rs. 8, 6, 4 and 2 per mill have been applied. These rates appear to me fair and give a total demand on mills of Rs. 352.

This demand will be a fluctuating assessment, as in the old tahsil and in the Lal Phak Tahsil. If mills fall out of use the revenue assessed in respect of those mills will be remitted.

Details of the assessment on mills are given in the register which accompanied the Report.

17. In ~~the~~ Statement A attached to paragraph 26 are given the results of applying the Revenue rates and rates of assessment of miscellaneous revenue in full. From which I abstract the following details :—

CIRCLES.	ASSESSMENT ON					
	Land.	Willow Plantations.	Walnut and A pricots.	Grafted Fruit.	Mills.	Total.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Kandi	25,759	...	1,852	1,313	130	28,854
Nagam	46,235	...	530	288	222	47,275
Sailaba	15,064	1,775	33	76		16,948
Totals	87,058	1,775	2,215	1,677	352	93,077

Including cesses the total enhancement of the current demand will amount to Rs. 25,027 and the percentage of increase taken 33.

20 The area held by chakdars under Regulation No. 6, in regard to Area excluded from re-assessment. which the period of progressive assessment has not yet expired, consists of 1,671 acres, of which 1,026 acres are at present under cultivation. When this area is re-assessed at full rates it is calculated that the current demand on this will be enhanced by Rs. 553. A list of the *chaks* and the dates on which the current demand should be revised will be supplied to the Revenue Department.

The area held by jagirdars whose *jagirs* were assessed with the Mian *jagir* villages and on which the current demand will not be revised for two years to come, amounts to 417 acres, at present assessed at Rs. 623.

An area of 378 acres is held by the State *amani*. Such area consists of State gardens, &c., and has been excluded from assessment. Leases for such land are arranged by auction.

The area under *krisham* grass is reported (*vide* paragraph 10) to be 163 acres in extent and to be situated in six villages of the Sailaba Circle. Leases for this produce will be separately given in accordance with the orders contained in the Resolution of the State Council No. 5, dated 25th September 1903.

21. As sanctioned by the Resolution of the State Council No. 8, dated 25th September 1903, the concession allowed to old Chakdars of non-cultivating classes. chakdars and chakdars under Regulation No. 6, who are not members of the regular cultivating classes and are *safed-posh*, not cultivating the land themselves, should be extended to these villages and a remission, to the extent of $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the revenue assessed on such holdings in accordance with the *bachh* rates, granted. The area of such *chaks*, as given in the statement attached to paragraph 33, is—cultivated 1,654 acres, uncultivated 338 acres, at present assessed at Rs. 4,523.

The amount of the concession to be granted is roughly calculated at Rs. 700 (*vide* paragraph 26).

22. In Appendices XVI and XVII attached to the Report will be found a list of the *muafi* grants at present existing in these villages. Aliations of revenue. The number of grants is eight, the area held by the muafidars consists of 467 acres cultivated and 212 acres uncultivated. The amount of revenue alienated is Rs. 1,583.

The area held in *jagir* by Mians of Sogam is mentioned in paragraph 19, *supra*. In regard to the conditions under which these *jagirs* are held, as to which the Settlement Officer is in doubt (*vide* paragraph 31), the orders contained in the Resolution of the State Council No. 12, dated the 27th February 1897, apply.

23. The proposals, in regard to improving the distribution of the available irrigation, made in connection with the water-courses of the old portion of the tahsil and sanctioned by the State Council in their Resolution No. 1, dated the 25th September 1902, should be considered applicable to this portion of the tahsil also.

24. I agree to the proposals made in paragraph 35 in regard to zaildars and *safedposh inams*. At the present time there is one zaildar, Haji Ahmad of Charar Sharif, who has rendered me useful service, and two *safedposh* inamdars alive (*vide* Appendix No. XIX).

25. The proposals in regard to *malikana* follow those sanctioned by the Resolution of the State Council No. 20, dated the 25th September 1903, and are correct. The amount which the State will receive as *malikana* in respect of revenue alienated in *muafi* will amount to something over Rs. 100. *Malikana* will not be taken in respect of revenue alienated in *jagir* till the Mian *jagir* villages are re-assessed, in accordance with the decision of the State Council recorded as Resolution No. 29, dated the 21st February 1902.

26. I agree that the same rules as applied to the rest of the tahsil in regard to the cultivation of waste areas should apply to this portion of the tahsil' also.

27. Provided orders are passed on this Report in a month or so, I see no reason why currency should not be given to the revised assessments with effect from the *rabi* harvest of Sambat 1961. As it will be inconvenient to have the period of Settlement expired at a different date from that on which the assessments of the old tahsil will expire, I propose that the term of Settlement be not fixed at ten years, but to expire concurrently with the assessments of the old Sri Pratapsinghpura Tahsil. I differ, therefore, from the proposals made in paragraph 39 of the Report.

28. I agree that the revenue be collected in the same number of instalments and that these be on the same dates as in force in the rest of the tahsil.

29. The Report, which is commendably brief, is full of the data necessary to enable His Highness the Maharaja in Council to judge of the fairness of the proposed assessments. It has been presented in a workmanlike manner, and I commend Lala Pindi Das for the satisfactory manner in which he has prepared his first Assessment Report in Kashmir.

SRINAGAR :
26th March 1904.

}

J. L. KAYE, MAJOR,
Settlement Commissioner,
Jammu and Kashmir State.

