

CHAPTER X

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Introduction

IN the beginning of the century, public administration in the State largely consisted in providing security of person and property and realising the revenue necessary to maintain several departments. The Police, Prisons and Judiciary represented the security departments, while Land Revenue, Excise, Registration and Stamps formed the revenue part of the administration. The Public Works Department was an important limb of the Government confined to buildings required for the various departments and as years went by, the irrigation section was added on. With the passage of time and the gradual introduction of liberal measures, new nation-building departments emerged, like Education, Health, Agriculture, Co-operation, etc., which attained growing importance in the twenties and thirties of the century. With the introduction of provincial autonomy, the new Government attempted not only to expand the nation-building departments but also to create a Welfare State by paying special attention to the low-income groups and backward classes of society. After the attainment of Independence, an all-out effort is being made both to promote the welfare of the people and to build up a socialistic pattern of society.

Administrative Divisions

Bijapur district consists of four Revenue Sub-divisions located at Indi, Bijapur, Bagalkot and Jamkhandi and eleven taluks. The former Princely States of Jamkhandi and Mudhol were merged in Bijapur district in 1949. After the merger, Bilgi was added to these new taluks to create another Revenue Sub-division with headquarters at Jamkhandi.

The district of Bijapur is included in the Belgaum Division for purposes of administration. The Divisional Commissioner, Belgaum Division, is in over-all charge of all revenue matters pertaining to the four districts of Belgaum, Bijapur, Dharwar and North Kanara.

Regional Offices

In regard to Education, Forests, Public Works, Co-operation, Police, Industries and Agriculture, regional offices have been located in Belgaum and Dharwar from where officers exercise jurisdic-

tion over the district of Bijapur concerning their respective departments. The Deputy Director of Agriculture has his office in Dharwar from where he exercises jurisdiction over the District Agricultural Office in Bijapur. The Deputy Inspector-General of Police has his office in Belgaum and the Superintendent of Police in Bijapur is responsible to him. The Deputy Director of Public Instruction has his office in Dharwar from where he exercises his jurisdiction over the Educational Inspector in Bijapur. There is a Public Works Circle in Belgaum under a Superintending Engineer who has supervisory powers over the Executive Engineers, Bijapur and Bagalkot.

The other officers at the district level are given below. It is unnecessary to describe their functions here, as in the case of most of them, their designations give an idea of their functions while the functions of others have already been described in the appropriate chapters. The other officers in the district are :

Other Officers
at the district
level

1. District and Sessions Judge.
2. Superintendent of Police.
3. Executive Engineer, Bijapur Division.
4. Executive Engineer, Bagalkot Division.
5. District Agricultural Officer.
6. District Health Officer.
7. District Surgeon.
8. District Publicity Officer.
9. Assistant Director of Industries and Commerce.
10. Assistant Registrar of Co-operative Societies.
11. Educational Inspector.
12. Regional Transport Officer and Secretary to the Regional Transport Authority.
13. District Veterinary Officer.
14. District Statistical Officer.
15. Divisional Controller, Mysore State Road Transport Corporation.
16. Commercial Tax Officer.
17. Commandant, Home Guards.
18. Chief Executive Officers, Taluk Development Boards.
19. Divisional Soil Conservation Officer.
20. Sub-divisional Forest Officer.
21. Special Auditor, Co-operative Societies.

The Central Government has its own officers in the district for the collection of income-tax and excise duties and administration of postal, telegraph and telephone services. The Central Government Officers at the district level are :

Central
Government
Officers

1. Superintendent, Central Excise, Bijapur Circle.
2. Income-Tax Officer, Bijapur.
3. Superintendent of Post Offices, Bijapur Division.

4. Sub-Divisional Officer, Telegraphs.
5. Engineering Supervisor, Telegraphs.
6. Custodian, Archæological Survey of India, Bijapur. (This officer functions under the control of the Superintendent, Archæological Survey of India, South-Western Circle, Aurangabad.)

**Divisional
Commis-
sioner**

The Divisional Commissioner performs a sort of decentralised function in all revenue matters and looks after the developmental activities initiated by Government. He is the highest local executive authority to organise and supervise the administrative machinery in his division and for implementing the policy of Government and as the Joint Development Commissioner of the Division, he is responsible for the progress of all development and community project works. Not only is he the head of the Revenue Department in his division, but in so far as the needs and exigencies of the divisional administration are concerned, he is expected to supervise the working of the offices of the other developmental departments also. In short, he is a guide who wields tremendous influence over the districts which have been brought under his jurisdiction. He holds periodical conferences of district officers to instil in them the paramount need to expedite urgent developmental programmes and to ask them to help the people in times of distress. The Divisional Commissioner constitutes a link between the people and the administration. Whenever policies are laid down by the State Government to develop the moral and material needs of the people, the Divisional Commissioners are invited to Bangalore to confer with the Chief Secretary or the Chief Minister. The Deputy Commissioners of the districts in the Division keep in close touch with the Divisional Office and obtain suitable guidance with reference to affairs connected with the district administration.

**Deputy
Commis-
sioner**

In the general pattern of the district administration, the Deputy Commissioner is the custodian of Government property in land (including trees and water) wherever situated, and at the same time the guardian of the interests of members of the public in land in so far as the interests of Government in land have been conceded to them. All land, wherever situated, whether applied to agricultural or other purposes, is liable to payment of land revenue except in so far as it may be expressly exempted by a special contract (*vide* section 45 of the Land Revenue Code). Such land revenue is of three kinds: (1) agricultural assessment, (2) non-agricultural assessment and (3) miscellaneous. The Deputy Commissioner's duties are in respect of (1) fixation, (2) collection and (3) accounting of all such land revenue. The assessment is fixed on each piece of land roughly in proportion to its productivity. This assessment is revised every thirty years. The collection of land revenue rests with the Deputy Commissioner who has to see that the revenue

due is recovered punctually and with the minimum of coercion and that the collections are properly credited and accounted for. The Deputy Commissioner is also responsible for the collection of fees and taxes under various other Acts in respect of irrigation, stamps, courts, tolls on roads and bridges, prohibition, etc. He is also responsible for the collection of dues declared as arrears of land revenue.

The Deputy Commissioner's duties, as a District Magistrate, are mainly executive. As a District Magistrate, he is the head of all other Executive Magistrates of the district.

The Deputy Commissioner is the statutory authority dealing with the Prohibition Act, the Tenancy and Agricultural Lands Act (1948), the Agriculturists' Loans Act (1884), the Land Improvement Loans Act (1883) and the Court of Wards Act (1905). He has other quasi-judicial functions in revenue matters like hearing of appeals from the decisions of the Revenue Sub-Divisional Officers under the Land Revenue Act and various other Acts.

The Deputy Commissioner is also the *ex-officio* District Registrar and *ex-officio* Chairman of the Regional Transport Authority of the district. He is also the President of the District Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmens' Board. Besides, by virtue of the fact that he is the head of the district administration, he has to preside over several official and non-official institutions and committees like the Wilson Anti-Famine Institute, the District Probation and After-Care Association, the District Anti-Leprosy Committee and the District Red Cross Society.

As regards the control over the essential commodities, the Deputy Commissioner is enjoined to give effect to the notifications issued by the Government under the Essential Commodities Control Order, 1957.

Besides being the head of the Revenue Department, the Deputy Commissioner is also the co-ordinating authority between various officers of the other departments in the district except the District Judge. He presides over the District Co-ordination Committee's meeting to which all the officers in the district except those belonging to the Judicial Department are invited.

There is a District Development Council for the district of which the Deputy Commissioner is the *ex-officio* Chairman. The District Development Council has to supervise and co-ordinate the developmental activities of all the departments in the district and those of the Taluk Development Boards, which are looking after the implementation of the Community Development Programmes in the rural areas within their respective jurisdictions. There are

**District
Development
Council**

eleven Taluk Development Boards in Bijapur district. The chairmen of these boards are elected non-official members of the District Development Council.

**Assistant
Commissioners**

The four Assistant Commissioners who are in charge of the Bijapur Sub-Division, the Bagalkot Sub-Division, the Indi Sub-Division and the Jamkhandi Sub-Division assist the Deputy Commissioner in revenue administration and are responsible to him. In revenue matters, these officers are appellate authorities over the orders passed by the Tahsildars. They exercise such of the powers as are conferred upon the Deputy Commissioner under the Mysore Land Revenue Act. Their powers and duties have been specified in the Mysore Revenue Manual. They are also *ex-officio* First Class Magistrates.

Tahsildars

There are eleven Tahsildars in charge of the eleven taluks in the district. Their duties and powers are such as are specially conferred upon them under the Mysore Land Revenue Act and the Land Revenue Rules. The Tahsildars are the key-men in the revenue set-up of the taluks.

There are thirty-six circles in the district and each such circle is under the charge of a Circle Inspector (equivalent to Hobli Revenue Inspector). The Circle Inspectors assist the Tahsildars in the revenue administration of the taluks.

**Village
Administration**

The village establishment in the Bijapur district consists of (a) the Revenue Patels, (b) the Police Patels and (c) the combined Patels; the 'talatis' (previously known as *kulkarnis*) equivalent to Shanbhogues in the old Mysore area and the set *sanadis* or *walikars*, *talawars* and *mahars*.

In a large number of villages, there are two posts of patels for each village, one for revenue work and the other for police work. Not infrequently, these two functions are combined in one, either because both the hereditary offices are enjoyed by one and the same family or because such combination is administratively convenient. The practice of appointing one patel for two or more villages has been discontinued. In most places, the patels are appointed on a hereditary basis. There are also stipendiary patels. These patels have no watan or inam lands while the hereditary patels have watan lands given to them in return for the services they render. The stipendiary patels are remunerated in cash for the services they render and normally, they are not to be appointed for more than five years at a stretch.

Prior to 1st June 1951, the village accountant (Shanbhogue) was known as *kulkarni*; it was a hereditary post. But with the abolition of *kulkarni* watans, the hereditary posts of *kulkarnis* were

abolished and 'talatis' were appointed in their place as whole-time Government servants on a salary basis with leave and pension benefits as are available to Government servants. The village or group of villages in charge of a talati is known as 'Saza' and the talatis are required to furnish a security of Rs. 500. Certain minimum educational qualifications and age limit are prescribed for the posts of *talatis*.

The organisation of 'inferior' village servants consists of hereditary as well as non-hereditary offices of various categories, viz., *set sanadis*, *talawars* or *walikars* and *mahars*. These servants assist the village officials in the execution of their duties and are remunerated by grants of lands on reduced assessment and/or cash allowances.

The functions of the District Judge have been described in the appropriate chapter on Law, Order and Justice (Chapter XII). He has a separate and independent sphere of work and as Sessions Judge he exercises appellate powers over all the Judicial Magistrates in the district. **Functions of other Officers**

The Superintendent of Police and the police force of the district of Bijapur are under the control of the Deputy Commissioner in so far as their functions regarding the maintenance of law and order are concerned. As regards discipline, training and other administrative matters, they are under the control of the Deputy Inspector-General of Police, Northern Range, Belgaum.

The Executive Engineer stands a little apart. Since his work is purely technical he is not directly subordinate to the Deputy Commissioner though in a sense he plays a part subsidiary to the general administration of the district of which the Deputy Commissioner is the head, and he is expected to help the Deputy Commissioner whenever required to do so. The Deputy Commissioner can ask the Executive Engineer to investigate the utility of minor irrigation works likely to help the rural population. According to Section 11 of the Famine Relief Code, the Executive Engineer arranges, in consultation with the Deputy Commissioner, for the inclusion in the programme of expansion of public works of the plans for special and current repairs to roads and other useful work suitable for scarcity areas.

At present, there are two Executive Engineers in Bijapur district; one in charge of Bijapur Division and is stationed at Bijapur and the other is in charge of the Bagalkot Division and is stationed at Bagalkot.

The District Surgeon has also a separate and independent sphere of his own, but must place his professional and technical

advice and assistance at the disposal of the general administration whenever required.

The Sub-divisional Forest Officer of Bijapur district is stationed at Bagalkot and he is responsible to the Conservator of Forests, Belgaum Division, Belgaum.

There is also a District School Board at Bijapur. It is a non-official body and looks after the problem of primary education throughout the district except Bijapur city, where it is in the hands of the Municipal School Board. The Administrative Officer of the School Board is its chief executive.

There are eight municipalities in the district constituted under the Mysore Municipalities Act. They are looking after local administration in their respective jurisdictions.

This is, in short, the general pattern of the administration of the district. A detailed description of each department has been given in the relevant chapters.
