



There are more than six lakh villages in India. They need road connections, water, electricity and other things. Sometimes they quarrel over land boundaries, water irrigation, etc. To maintain their land records and resolve conflicts there are revenue officers and police. To construct roads, canals, electric supply lines there is a network of government employees to manage the work. All these activities involved in managing the work of the government in villages is called 'rural administration'. The word 'rural' means 'related to villages'.

Maintenance of Law and Order

There is a police station to maintain law and order in certain area under its control. The people of that area report cases of quarrels, burglary, accidents etc. to the police. The SHO (Station House Officer) is the person in-charge of the police station. Along with the constables he/she is responsible for investigating all such cases in the area of a specific police station and taking proper action. The person who reports an incident has to register a report at the police station. It is called FIR (First Information Report).

Sometimes people tell a lie to the SHO. They report a minor conflict in high colours. The time of the police is wasted in the investigation of such reports. Therefore, at times, the SHO could not believe people. When some responsible and respected persons accompany them, then the SHO records their complaints.

Maintenance of Land Records

The government has appointed a village officer for a group of villages. The village officer is also known as the *Patwari* or *Lekhpal*. Measuring land and keeping land records and updating them is the main work of the *Patwari*. The records show who own what land in the village. In some places a long chain is used to measure the land (usually agricultural fields). For this purpose, the Patwari prepares a chart and a map of the village land which gives detailed information about the owner of each plot of land, its size, whether it is rented to some other

person, the area on which crops are grown and kind of crops etc. In case of a dispute the *Patwari measures* the fields and compare them with the measurements on the map in record. If they do not match then it would be clear that the boundary of the fields has been changed.

The *Patwari* is also responsible for organising the collection of land revenue from the farmers and providing information to the government about the crops grown by each farmer. This is done on the basis of the records. Therefore, it is necessary to regularly update the records. Farmers may change the kind or area of crops grown on their fields or dig a well or give a part of their plot on rent. Some farmers may buy a plot of land or divide his land among his children. All such changes have to be recorded. Senior officers in the revenue department of the government supervise the Patwari's work. They ensure that the records are maintained and settle any disputes.

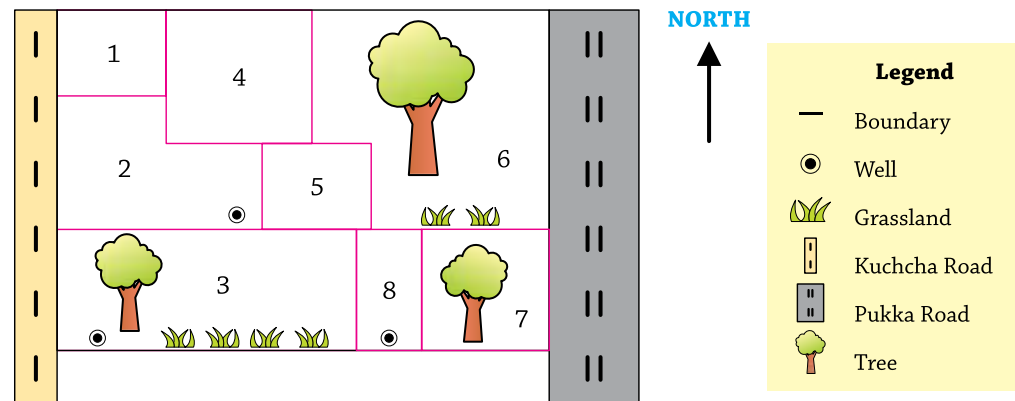
India is divided into States and Union Territories which are divided into districts. To manage land related matters, these districts are further subdivided. These sub-divisions of a district are known by different names such as *tehsil, taluka*, etc. At district level the District Collector is the head of revenue collection. The District Collector is also known as DM (District Magistrate) or Deputy Commissioner, who heads the district administration in all matters such as revenue, police, etc. Under the District Collector, there are revenue officers, also known as *Tehsildars*, one on each *tehsil*. They supervise the *Patwari's* work and ensure that records are properly kept at the *tehsil* and land revenue is collected.

The *Tehsildars* hear the cases of land disputes. They make sure that the farmers can easily obtain a copy of their record, students can obtain their caste certificates etc. The farmers often require a copy of their land's record together with a map. They need the copy of the land records to buy, sell or divide a plot of land, to get a loan or get subsidy

Kharsa 7

No.	Area in hectares	Name of Owner, Father or Husband's name	If it is rented to some other farmers, their names and rent received	Area cultivated this year			Area not cultivated - fallow land	Facilities
				Crop grown	Area	Second crop grown		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1.	1.25	Rajpal, son of ripa Ram, village Malakpur, owner	No	Wheat	0.75 hectares			
2.	4.00	Ram Gopal, son of Khacheru Singh, village Malakpur, owner	No	Rice Wheat irrigated	3.50	2.75	0.50	Well - 1 Working
3.	7.50	Uttar Pradesh Government Grassland	No					Well - 1 Working Grazing

on the purchase of fertilizers for their fields, etc. The farmers have a right to this information. They may have to pay a small fee for this. Now, the land records are being computerised and also kept at the *Gram Panchayat* office so that they are regularly updated and are more easily available.




VILLAGE MALAKPUR PATWARI RECORD – 24

A New Inheritance Law (Hindu Succession Amendment Act 2005)

Till recently in some states of India Hindu women did not have a share in the parental and family agricultural land. After the death of the father his property (house and agricultural field) was divided equally only among his sons. With a new law, called the Hindu Succession Amendment Act passed in 2005, sons, daughters and their mother get an equal share in the land. The government has ensured that this law will apply to all states and union territories of the country. Thus, the women may live with the assurance that if she ever has a problem she can always depend upon her share of the land. This has come as a great relief to the women because often the sons would not look after their mother or unmarried sister or widow sister well, after gaining access to the property of the father. The sons were happy enough to get a large share of the property but were never ready to take on the additional responsibility that came along with it.

In spite of the new law of succession, daughters, that is, sisters of the sons often do not demand a legal share. They feel that the relations with their brothers and sister-in-laws will not remain good because of the demand. This is because the daughters feel insecure in their in-law's houses. Moreover, most of them are not earning so they are not confident enough of themselves. If the share of the land is small, it will not give enough income.

Besides the police and revenue department, there are other departments of the government for the welfare of the rural people such as supplies (providing ration), Health (providing health centres), Education (providing schools and colleges), etc. There are some public services which run with the help and control of the government such as milk society.

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- The _____ is in-charge of collecting land revenue from the district.
 - Land records have to be _____ updated.

C. Match the following :

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| 1. In-charge of a police station | a. Police station |
| 2. In case of theft people go to | b. Patwari |
| 3. Head of the revenue collection in a district | c. Tehsildar |
| 4. Land disputes are heard by | d. SHO |
| 5. The agricultural land is measured by | e. Collector |

D. Write true (T) or False (F) against the following statements in given brackets :

- The Collector functions as the highest police officer of the district.
- The Lekhpal is the highest officer at tehsil level.
- The officer in-charge of the district is called a Deputy Commissioner.
- The States and Union Territories are divided into districts.
- Land records are not required to buy or sell a plot of land.

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E. Answer in one word or one phrase :

- Who maintains the land records in the village ?
- Who heads the district administration ?
- Who hears the land disputes ?
- What is another name for a tehsil ?
- Which Act was passed in 2005 which ensured equal share for the daughters and mother in the agricultural land ?

F. Answer these questions briefly :

- What is the work of a SHO ?
- List two things that the work of a Patwari include.
- What is the work of a tehsildar ?
- How is the new inheritance law important and necessary ?
- Why have land records been computerised in some states ?
- State the importance of police stations in rural areas.
- How does the new inheritance law benefit women ?
- From where and how farmers can get a copy of their land records ?

G. Answer these questions in detail :

- Explain how the work of collecting land revenue is distributed in a district ?

PROJECT WORK

- Meet a Patwari and take a look at the maps showing details of the land owned by some people in the village.
- Find the women in your neighbourhood who own property. How did they acquire it ?