

## CHAPTER - VIII

IMPACT OF LAND REFORM MEASURES WITH  
SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE IMPACT OF  
OPERATION BARGA PROGRAMME IN THE  
WESTERN DUARSSECTION 1 : INTRODUCTION

VIII.1.1 In this chapter we shall study the impact of land reform measures introduced by the Government of West Bengal with special reference to ~~the~~ "Operation Barga" (OB) programme on the agricultural productivity and land relations in six villages we have investigated in our region of study. It is based on a field investigation conducted during 1985-86.

VIII.1.2 The aims of land reform programmes are mainly two fold, viz., to bring about an egalitarian distribution of land and to raise agricultural productivity by giving title to land to the actual cultivators and providing security to their tenures. Among all states of India, in West Bengal, the largest amount of ceiling surplus lands have been declared vested and most of these lands have been distributed to the landless and land poor cultivators<sup>1</sup>. Security of tenure has been given to a large number of bargadars (sharecroppers, called adhiars in the Western Duars region) who were virtually tenants-at-will since long. However, doubts have been

raised from time to time as to the actual amount of benefits conferred upon them and questions have been raised regarding viability of the small farm economy of the bargadars who are generally marginal landholders<sup>2</sup>. It is often said that, although the first objective of land reforms has been achieved to some extent, the second objective has not largely been fulfilled<sup>3</sup>. It is argued that in the absence of credit and infrastructural facilities and a host of other supportive measures it may not be possible to confer any tangible benefit upon the bargadars and upon the farmers in general. In order to give a positive shape to the land reforms efforts, in West Bengal, a comprehensive piece of legislation enacted in 1979 (amendment to West Bengal Land Reforms Act, 1955) was followed by an executive programme called "Operation Barga" (OB).

## SECTION 2 : WHAT IS OPERATION BARGA

VIII.2.1 OB is a special drive to register the names of bonafide bargadars (to ensure their legal rights) undertaken with the active assistance of not only the bargadars themselves but also of peasants' organisations and self-governing institutions within a stipulated period of time with due sense of urgency and seriousness<sup>4</sup>. This programme was started at the latter half of 1978. It is not a new legislation. Although it may not be regarded as a "radical step", it can definitely be called a "bold step" to improve the plight of bargadars.

VIII.2.2 It has been laid down in the WBLR Act, 1955, that the name(s) of bargadars should be recorded in the village record-of-rights<sup>5</sup>. This work had been started in 1974, but till the end of 1977 the performance was not at all satisfactory. Typically bureaucratic method of recording the names of bargadars failed to achieve any significant success. The "camps" for recording the names of bargadars used to be held previously in a "comfortable" place within a village which was in most cases the house of the local landlord. The "beneficiaries", i.e., the bargadars and the peasant organisations, were never contacted, prior to setting up of such camps. The work of recording of names used to start during day time when most of the bargadars were at work in the fields. Consequently, recording was very poor. At last, when the bureaucratic machinery was made aware of the real situation in May 1978, two "re-orientation camps" were held in the districts of Midnapore and Hooghly, where a group of bargadars, agricultural labourers and poor peasants had free and frank discussions with the government officials for three days<sup>6</sup>. It was realised from these discussions that the bargadars were too much afraid to come forward to record their names due to possible future retaliation by the landowners. It was felt that this fear had to be overcome by continuous discussion with the beneficiaries prior to actual recording of names. The meetings had to be organised when bargadars were at leisure in the evenings and the camps would be held in public place, preferably in the school premises. In fact, the entire procedure of the OB as was followed later on was suggested by the actual beneficiaries<sup>7</sup>.

VIII.2.3 The process of OB had been divided into the following five stages<sup>8</sup>.

(i) To identify the priority pockets with large concentration of bargadars. This basic task was to be done in consultation with the local peasants' organisations.

(ii) To form squads comprising the Settlement Kanungos, Junior Land Reform Officers and experienced Amins and such other officials to conduct the whole work. Usually, the Additional District Magistrate (Land Reform) led these squads.

(iii) To organise evening meetings with the bargadars and owners of land. In these meetings government officials and workers of different local peasant organisations explained to the bargadars the advantages of recording their names. Through discussions bargadars were made to overcome their fear. These meetings were generally held in public places preferably at primary school premises as near as possible to the residence of bargadars. List of bargadars was usually prepared with incidental thereto on the basis of the information made available by the local people in the meeting. Enlisted bargadars were asked to be present in the next date on the plot or plots they cultivated for verification in public.

(iv) Reconnaissance and physical verification of the number of bargadars. Investigating officers kept systematic notes

on it. After completing the notes regarding actual bargadars, a draft list was prepared and published in a conspicuous place of the selected pocket for 24 hours inviting objection against any entry in the list. If any objection was filed, the dispute was decided by a Revenue Officer at the spot after giving an opportunity of being heard to the interested parties. The operation was completed within three days in small areas, and in larger areas within the time as may be prescribed by the higher authority.

(v) The recording of the names of bargadars in the record of rights. In most cases bargadars were given interim certificates of records at the end of "operation" after due verification.

VIII.2.4 The above method of recording the names of bargadars through OB is qualitatively different from the traditional revenue court approach. It was, indeed, a landmark in the history of evolution of rights of bargadars and in giving security to their tenures. In all intents and purposes, it was tilted in favour of the bargadars.

VIII.2.5 Attempts have been made in the past to estimate the probable number of bargadars in West Bengal. These estimates have been made on the basis of surveys and studies conducted by government and non-government agencies. There are conflicting views about the probable number of bargadars in West Bengal<sup>9</sup>. However, it appears

from different estimates that the number of bargadars in West Bengal is somewhere between 20 to 25 lakhs. The basis of calculation is to divide the area under barga cultivation by the average size of barga holding. The total area under barga cultivation is estimated to be 25 lakh acres by taking into account the Flood Commission's (1940) estimate of percentage of area under barga. The estimated average size of barga<sup>10</sup> holding is between 0.97 acre and 1.25 acres<sup>11</sup>. On this basis, the total number of bargadars in West Bengal is estimated to be between 20 and 25 lakhs.

VIII.2.6 Calculation of probable number of bargadars in the recent period before initiating the OB programme has been made in Jalpaiguri district in the following manner<sup>12</sup>. Area under modern irrigation has been excluded from agricultural land for the purpose of computing probable number of bargadars in a mouza (village), because it has been presumed that in irrigated areas capitalist trend of production has set in and in the process bargadars have been evicted. It is further assumed that approximately one third (30%) of non-irrigated agricultural land is under barga cultivation. It was apparent to the authorities "from records" that each bargadar has around 1.5 acres of non-irrigated land under barga cultivation. Under the above presumptions and assumptions, the probable number of bargadars have been found out by dividing 30% of non-irrigated agricultural land by 1.5 (the assumed average size of barga holding).

SECTION 3 : A SIMPLE METHODOLOGY FOR THE INVESTIGATION  
OF THE SIX VILLAGES UNDER STUDY

VIII.3.1 For our study we have selected six villages (namely, Talukertari, Parangerpar, Paschim Chikliguri, Baniagaon, Padamati and Churabhandar) from three Settlement Circles (namely, Falakata, Alipurduar and Maynaguri) of the Western Duars region of the district of Jalpaiguri<sup>13</sup>. All of these Settlement Circles have been divided into three categories : (a) Circle with the highest incidence, (b) Circle with the medium incidence and (c) Circle with the lowest incidence of recorded bargadars. Villages of each of these Circles have been arranged into two categories in accordance with the incidence of recorded bargadars. From each of these three Circles two villages have been selected, one with the highest incidence of bargadars and the other with the lowest. After selecting the villages, we have investigated all the bargadars (both recorded and unrecorded) of each village. Table VIII.1 below shows the position of the Settlement Circles regarding the recording of bargadars.

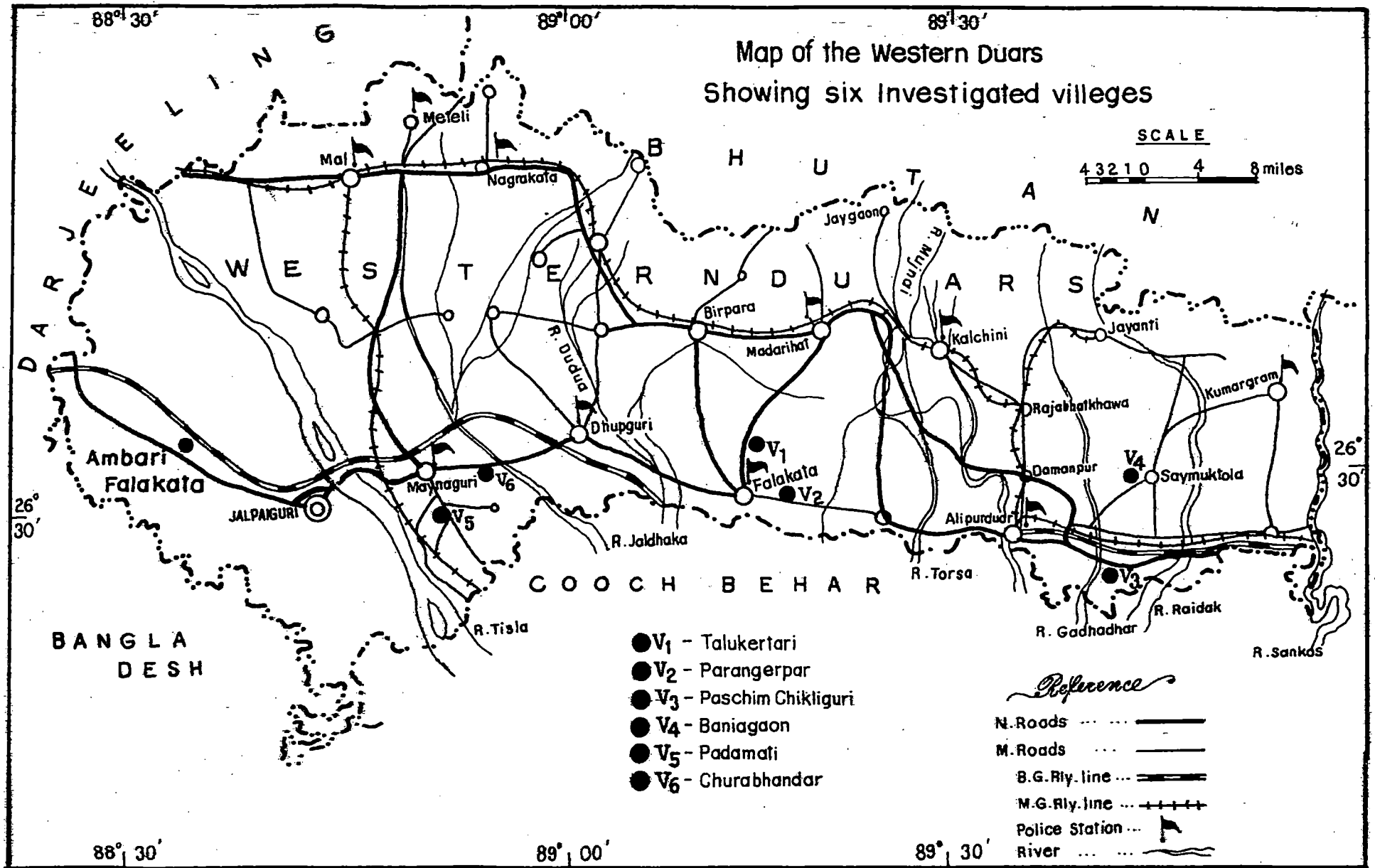
TABLE VIII.1 NUMBER OF BARGADARS IN VARIOUS SETTLEMENT CIRCLES  
OF THE WESTERN DUARS REGION OF THE DISTRICT OF  
JALPAIGURI : PROBABLE AND RECORDED :  
1985-86

Settlement Circles	Estimated probable number of bargadars	Number of bargadars recorded	Percentage of recorded bargadar over probable number
Maynaguri	11,022	3,474	31.52
Dhupguri	7,658	5,154	67.30
Mal	6,856	3,603	52.55
Falakata	8,806	8,593	97.58
Alipurduar	24,660	16,299	66.09
Total :	59,002	37,123	62.92

Source: Office of the Settlement Officer,  
(Cooch Behar, Jalpaiguri & Darjeeling)  
Cooch Behar, 1986.

VIII.3.2 From the table above, it can be seen that the highest number of bargadars have been recorded (97.58% of the probable number) in Falakata Circle. In Maynaguri Circle the lowest number of bargadars (31.52% of the probable number) have been recorded. Among the circles where percentages of bargadars recorded lie between the two extremes, Alipurduar Circle has been chosen.





Map. 4.

VIII.3.3 Table VIII.2 shows the position of selected villages in respect of recording of bargadars against probable number of bargadars. It can be seen from the table that, there are 1289

TABLE VIII.2 POSITION OF SELECTED VILLAGES IN RESPECT OF RECORDING OF BARGADARS IN RELATION TO PROBABLE NUMBER OF BARGADARS : 1985-86

Settlement Circles	Villages	Probable number of bargadars	Number of bargadars recorded	Percentage of bargadars recorded over probable number
Falakata	Talukertari (V <sub>1</sub> )	172	160	93.02
Falakata	Parangerpar (V <sub>2</sub> )	197	39	19.80
Alipurduar	Paschim Chikliguri (V <sub>3</sub> )	141	166	117.73
Alipurduar	Baniagaon (V <sub>4</sub> )	277	16	5.78
Maynaguri	Padamati (V <sub>5</sub> )	380	261	68.68
Maynaguri	Churabhandar (V <sub>6</sub> )	122	30	24.59
Total :		1289	672	52.13

Source : Office of the Settlement Charge Officer, Jalpaiguri, 1986.

probable number of bargadars in total in all the six selected villages taken together. About 52% of the probable number of bargadars have got their names recorded in the record-of-rights. It can be

further seen from the table that although recording of bargadars in Alipurduar Circle has been 66%, one of the villages within this Circle, viz., Paschim Chikliguri has been curiously enough found to have recorded nearly 118% of the probable number of bargadars, whereas another village within this Circle, viz., Baniagaon has been found to have recorded only about 6% of the probable number of bargadars. Incidentally, this latter village holds the lowest rank in the matter of recording of bargadars among all the villages we have investigated.

VIII.3.4 However, calculation of probable number of bargadars in the method mentioned in paragraph VIII.2.6 above does not seem to be realistic, because exactly 30% of non-irrigated land may not be under barga cultivation in a village and the average size of barga holding may not always be 1.5 acres. Under such circumstances the probable number of bargadars in a village is bound to be different where these assumptions do not hold good. From the point of view of the probable number of bargadars calculated in the method noted above, the performance of recording of bargadars under the OB programme would appear to be different from the actual performance when the actual number of bargadars in a village is compared with the number of recorded bargadars. Table VIII.3 below shows the non-irrigated land, land under barga cultivation and average amount of land per bargadar in the villages of our investigation. It can be seen from the Table below that percentage of actual non-irrigated

TABLE VIII. 3 NON-IRRIGATED LAND, LAND UNDER BARGA  
CULTIVATION AND AVERAGE AMOUNT OF LAND  
PER BARGADAR IN THE VILLAGES INVESTIGATED :  
1985-86

Villages	Total non-irrigated land (in acres)	Total land under barga (in acres)	Percentage of land under barga	Actual number of bargadars	Average amount of land (in acres) per bargadar
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
V <sub>1</sub>	898.00	371.36	42.23	176	2.11
V <sub>2</sub>	988.00	107.16	10.85	57	1.88
V <sub>3</sub>	706.00	229.68	32.53	174	1.32
V <sub>4</sub>	1385.00	51.43	3.71	37	1.39
V <sub>5</sub>	1900.00	533.12	28.06	272	1.96
V <sub>6</sub>	611.00	108.65	17.78	41	2.65
Total :	6449.00	1401.40	21.73	757	1.85

Source : Field investigation.

agricultural land under barga cultivation and the average amount of land per bargadar is different in different villages. In some villages there are wide difference between the assumed area under barga cultivation (for the calculation of probable number of bargadars) and the actual area under barga cultivation and also between the assumed and actual average size of barga holdings. The

table, in essence, shows that the difference between the probable number of bargadars and the actual number recorded is smaller in those villages where the difference between the assumed amount of land under barga (i.e., 30% of non-irrigated agricultural land) and the actual <sup>amount</sup> of land under barga, and/or the difference between the assumed average size of barga holdings (i.e. 1.5 acres) and the actual average size of barga holding is smaller and vice versa. To be more realistic, a large amount of land to be under barga cultivation and the existence of a higher number of bargadars would depend upon : (i) the existence of larger number of big landholders, (ii) the presence of larger number of absentee landholders, (iii) widespread prevalence of non-capitalistic mode of production, (iv) existence of many alternative avenues of non-farm employment opportunities and (v) lower fertility and less suitable location of agricultural lands of the prospective lessors. Therefore, the adopted method of estimation of probable number of bargadars is only a rough and tentative one.

VIII.3.5 Thus, our investigation reveals that the position of selected villages in respect of recording of bargadars in relation to actual number of bargadars is a little different from what is revealed by official figures presented in Table VIII.2. The position of the selected villages in respect of performance of OB programme in recording the names of bargadars in relation to actual number of bargadars is as presented in Table VIII.4 below.

TABLE VIII.4 PERFORMANCE OF OPERATION BARGA IN RECORDING BARGADARS WITH RESPECT TO ACTUAL NUMBER OF BARGADARS IN THE SELECTED VILLAGES:

1985-86

Villages	Actual number of bargadars	Number of bargadars recorded	Percentages of bargadars recorded over actual number
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
V <sub>1</sub>	176	160	90.91
V <sub>2</sub>	57	39	68.42
V <sub>3</sub>	174	166	95.40
V <sub>4</sub>	37	16	43.24
V <sub>5</sub>	272	261	95.96
V <sub>6</sub>	41	30	73.17
Total	757	672	88.77

Sources : (i) Office of the Settlement Charge Officer, Jalpaiguri.

(ii) Field investigation.

It can be seen from this table that, actually there are 757 bargadars in total in the six villages of our investigation. Thus the overall recording in all the villages taken together has been 88.77% of the actual number of bargadars which is quite satisfactory. Our investigation also shows that for the individual villages too the recording has been satisfactory. The table above shows that

except village Baniagaon ( $V_4$ ) in Alipurduar Circle, the percentage of recording varies between 68% to 96% of the actual number of bargadars in all other villages. Nevertheless, the percentage of bargadars recorded over actual number as shown by official estimates follows the same pattern as revealed in our personal investigation. Through investigations we have found some reasons for higher recording in some villages and lower recording in other villages. These reasons have been analysed in the next section.

VIII.3.6 In the six villages we have investigated, altogether 757 bargadars have been interrogated of whom 672 were recorded and 85 were unrecorded. Bargadars comprise two categories of cultivators, viz., exclusively bargadars and owner-cum-bargadars (i.e., partly owners and partly bargadars). Though the main focus of our study was on bargadars, we have also interviewed three other categories of cultivators, viz., those who are exclusively owner-cultivators, those who are owners-cum-lessors (i.e., partly owners and partly lessors) and the landless agricultural labourers. Distribution of various types of cultivators and the agricultural labourers whom we have interviewed has been shown in Table VIII.5 below. It should be noted here that we have interviewed all the cultivator households of the six villages barring a very insignificant number who have entirely leased out their lands. Some of these persons were found to have been generally engaged in occupations other than agriculture and some of them could not cultivate lands due to physical disability

TABLE VIII.5 DISTRIBUTION OF CULTIVATORS IN THE VILLAGES  
INVESTIGATED BY OWNERSHIP STATUS : 1985-86

Villages	Exclu- sively owners	Exclu- sively bargadars	Owners-cum- bargadars	Owners cum lessors	Agri- cultural labourers	Total Number
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
V <sub>1</sub>	119	71	105	170	58	523
V <sub>2</sub>	146	8	49	49	44	296
V <sub>3</sub>	15	30	144	37	12	238
V <sub>4</sub>	77	2	35	32	33	179
V <sub>5</sub>	21	49	223	123	39	453
V <sub>6</sub>	78	5	36	40	55	214
Total	456	165	592	449	241	1903

Source : Field investigation.

or having no major cultivator member in the family. Distribution of area operated by different types of cultivators has been shown in Table VIII.6 below.



TABLE VIII.6 AREA (IN ACRES) OPERATED, LEASED IN AND LEASED OUT  
BY DIFFERENT CATEGORIES OF CULTIVATORS IN THE  
VILLAGES INVESTIGATED : 1985-86

Villages	Exclu- sively owners	Exlu- sively bargadars	Owners-cum- bargadars			Owners-cum- lessors			Totals of Cols. (2), (3), (6) and (9)
	Area owned and opera- ted	Area opera- ted	Area owned and opera- ted	Barga (leased in) land	Total area operated Col. (4)+ Co. (5)	Area owned	Leased out land	Area owned and operated Col. (7)-Col. (8)	
(1)	2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
V <sub>1</sub>	721.37	200.22	349.66	171.14	520.80	1334.50	357.36	977.14	2419.53
V <sub>2</sub>	919.80	12.24	99.12	94.92	194.04	453.25	107.16	346.09	1472.17
V <sub>3</sub>	65.70	73.10	307.10	156.58	463.68	381.84	204.68	177.16	779.64
V <sub>4</sub>	460.46	2.40	76.27	49.03	125.30	224.64	51.43	173.21	761.37
V <sub>5</sub>	107.52	134.26	644.78	398.86	1043.64	1175.88	527.12	648.76	1934.18
V <sub>6</sub>	468.95	13.25	64.44	95.40	159.84	324.40	108.65	215.75	857.79
Total	:2743.80	435.47	1541.37	965.93	2507.30	3894.51	1356.40	2538.11	8224.68

Source : Field investigation.

SECTION 4 : CAUSES FOR VARIATIONS IN RECORDING  
OF BARGADARS IN THE VILLAGE INVESTIGATED

VIII.4.1 We have enquired into the causes for variations in recording the names of bargadars in different villages. In our investigation we first made an attempt to see as to whether there is any relation between literacy of bargadars and recording of their names. Table VIII.7 below shows the percentage distribution

TABLE VIII.7 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RECORDED  
AND UNRECORDED BARGADARS ACCORDING  
TO LITERACY

Villages	Recorded bargadars			Unrecorded bargadars		
	Literate	Illiterate	Total	Literate	Illiterate	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
V <sub>1</sub>	40.00	60.00	100.00	37.50	62.50	100.00
V <sub>2</sub>	61.54	38.46	100.00	44.44	55.56	100.00
V <sub>3</sub>	46.99	53.01	100.00	37.50	62.50	100.00
V <sub>4</sub>	56.25	43.75	100.00	61.90	38.10	100.00
V <sub>5</sub>	61.30	38.70	100.00	54.55	45.45	100.00
V <sub>6</sub>	40.00	60.00	100.00	54.55	45.45	100.00

Source : Field investigation in 1985-86.

of recorded and unrecorded bargadars according to literacy. The percentage distribution of bargadars according to

literacy shows that in villages  $V_2$ ,  $V_4$  and  $V_5$  larger percentage of literate bargadars have recorded their names while in villages  $V_1$ ,  $V_3$  and  $V_6$  smaller percentage of literate bargadars have recorded their names; on the other hand, in villages  $V_4$ ,  $V_5$  and  $V_6$  a higher percentage of literate bargadars have remained unrecorded while in villages  $V_1$ ,  $V_2$  and  $V_3$  a lower percentage of literate bargadars have remained unrecorded. Therefore, no uniform pattern can be discerned between literacy of bargadars and recording of their names. It indicates that literacy has little to do with recording or unrecording. Recording was, however, found to be determined by other factors as discussed below.

VIII.4.2 We have categorised the recorded bargadars in accordance with the reasons assigned by them for recording their names. This is presented in Table VIII.3 below. It is evident from this table that in all the six villages, panchayat members played an active role in getting names of bargadars recorded. In three villages, viz., Talukertari ( $V_1$ ), Paschim Chikliguri ( $V_3$ ) and Padamati ( $V_5$ ), the peasants' organizations have played the most important part in recording the names of bargadars. In village Parangerpar ( $V_2$ ) and Baniagaon ( $V_4$ ) government officials were instrumental in recording the names of bargadars in most of the cases. In village Churabhandar ( $V_6$ ) majority of the bargadars and in village Parangerpar ( $V_2$ ) comparatively larger number of bargadars have got their names recorded at their self-initiative. Comparing table VIII.5 with tables VIII.2 and VIII.3 it can be said that overall

TABLE VIII. 8 CLASSIFICATION OF RECORDED BARGADARS  
ACCORDING TO REASONS FOR RECORDING AND  
THEIR DISTRIBUTION

Villages	Reasons for recording				Total No.
	Self-initiative	Initiative of government officials	Persuasion by panchayat members	Persuasion by peasants' organisation	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
V <sub>1</sub>	33(20.63)	10(6.24)	53(33.13)	64(40.00)	160(100.00)
V <sub>2</sub>	14(35.90)	18(46.15)	7(17.95)	-	39(100.00)
V <sub>3</sub>	35(21.08)	9(5.42)	60(36.15)	62(37.35)	166(100.00)
V <sub>4</sub>	-	12(75.00)	4(25.00)	-	16(100.00)
V <sub>5</sub>	51(19.54)	25(9.58)	74(28.35)	11(42.53)	261(100.00)
V <sub>6</sub>	13(43.34)	7(23.33)	10(33.33)	-	30(100.00)

Source : Field investigation in 1985-86.

Note : Figures in parentheses show percentages of total.

recording has been higher in those villages (V<sub>1</sub>, V<sub>3</sub> and V<sub>5</sub>) where panchayat members and members of peasants' organisations have persuaded the bargadars to record their names. On the other hand, overall recording has been smaller in those villages (V<sub>2</sub>, V<sub>4</sub> and V<sub>6</sub>) where one of these two factors were either absent or did not play so important role and recording was done in most cases at the

self-initiative of the bargadars and at the initiative of the government officials. Thus, it comes out that the most important determinant factor for recording of a higher number of bargadars was the persuasion by members of peasants' organisations. It was found that bargadars, very often, had the apprehension of displeasing their landowners in the event of recording their names. Bargadars feared that once they got their names recorded, landowners would retaliate by denying financial and other kinds of material and non-material assistance to them. In many cases, panchayat members and members of peasants' organisations have played a very vital and active role in such a situation. They persuaded the bargadars to overcome their fear-psychosis by making them understand the advantages of recording their names. It can be found from table VIII.7 that field-level government officials took initiative and persuaded bargadars in many cases in villages V<sub>2</sub>, V<sub>4</sub> and V<sub>6</sub> to record their names. In village V<sub>4</sub>, as many as 75% of the bargadars were recorded at the initiative of the government officials. 9% ~~may be~~ noted that V<sub>4</sub> is a tribal village. In this village, no bargadar was found to record his name at his own initiative. Role of the peasants' organisation was also absent and persuasion of the panchayat members did succeed in recording only 23% of the bargadars. It thus comes to light that most of the bargadars in this village would have remained unrecorded if government officials did not take the initiative for recording their names.

VIII.4.3 We have also enquired into the causes of not recording their names by some bargadars. Classification of unrecorded bargadars according to causes for unrecording and their distribution has been shown in table VIII.9 below. The most important reason for non-

TABLE VIII. 9 CLASSIFICATION OF UNRECORDED BARGADARS  
ACCORDING TO CAUSES OF UNRECORDING AND  
THEIR DISTRIBUTION

Villages	Causes of unrecording			Total Number
	Avoiding confrontation	More advantagecus	Loyalty	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
V <sub>1</sub>	4(25.00)	9(56.25)	3(18.75)	16(100.00)
V <sub>2</sub>	5(27.78)	10(55.56)	3(16.66)	18(100.00)
V <sub>3</sub>	2(25.00)	4(50.00)	2(25.00)	8(100.00)
V <sub>4</sub>	14(66.67)	5(23.81)	2(9.52)	21(100.00)
V <sub>5</sub>	4(36.36)	5(45.46)	2(18.18)	11(100.00)
V <sub>6</sub>	3(27.27)	6(54.55)	2(18.18)	11(100.00)
Total	32(37.65)	39(45.88)	14(16.47)	85(100.00)

Source : Field investigation in 1985-86.

Note : Figures in parentheses show percentages to total number of unrecorded bargadars in respective villages.

recording, for all the villages taken together appears to be the fact that, bargadars preferred to remain unrecorded as it was more advantageous to them. One of the inducement to recording the names of bargadars was that if they got their names recorded they would possibly get the benefits of institutional finance. Panchayat and peasant organisation members succeeded in many cases to convince the bargadars with such arguments, but not in all cases. In some (45.88%) cases bargadars thought that to remain unrecorded would be more advantageous from the point of view of getting financial assistance from their landlords as credit availability from financial institutions, they felt, to be limited. The second important reason for unrecording was the avoidance of confrontation of bargadars with their landlords. As noted earlier, bargadars were afraid of igniting the wrath of their landlords in the event of getting their names recorded. Bargadars being generally financially weaker than landowners, preferred to avoid any dispute or confrontation with their landlords and hence abstained themselves from recording their names. Moreover, in some cases, bargadars were dissuaded from recording their names by their landowners. There are, however, some bargadars (16.47%) who remained unrecorded due to their loyalty to their landowners. This group of bargadars generally comprised of those type of bargadars who were cultivating lands on barga from their landlords for several generations. Due to their age-old loyalty to their landlords, they felt it unethical to record their names, and remained unrecorded with the firm belief that landlords would not evict them.

SECTION 5 : BARGADAR-LANDOWNER RELATIONSHIP

VIII.5.1 We discuss below the various aspects of the bargadar-landowner relationship from the information we could have collected by interrogating all the bargadars (both recorded and unrecorded) of the six villages we have studied.

VIII.5.2 The main pillar of the bargadar-landowner relationship is the mode of division of the produce. Table VIII.10 below shows the modes of sharing the produce between recorded bargadars and their landowners in the villages we have investigated. It is evident from

TABLE VIII. 10 DISTRIBUTION OF RECORDED BARGADARS ACCORDING TO CROP-SHARE RATIO (RECORDED BARGADAR: LANDOWNER)

Villages	Crop share ratio				Total Number
	75:25	67:33	50:50	100:0	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
V <sub>1</sub>	-	8(5.00)	152(95.00)	-	160(100.00)
V <sub>2</sub>	4(10.26)	-	30(76.92)	5(12.82)	39(100.00)
V <sub>3</sub>	21(12.55)	10(6.02)	106(63.85)	29(17.48)	166(100.00)
V <sub>4</sub>	-	-	16(100.00)	-	16(100.00)
V <sub>6</sub>	3(10.00)	2(6.67)	22(73.33)	3(10.00)	30(100.00)
Total	71(10.57)	61(9.08)	492(73.21)	48(7.14)	672(100.00)

Source: Field investigation in 1985-86.

Note: Figures in parentheses show percentages to total number of recorded bargadars in respective villages.



this table that, the predominant mode of sharing the produce was 50:50 and this mode comprises 73.21% cases of recorded bargadars. It may be noted here that this 50:50 mode is also widely prevalent in other parts of Bengal<sup>14</sup>. But in North Bengal and in Jalpaiguri district in particular, it is more common<sup>15</sup>. Widespread prevalence of this mode in the Western Duars is a tradition since very early times. The term "adhjar" (meaning sharecropper) which was in vogue throughout the Bhutia and the British periods in the Western Duars, literally meant 50:50 sharing of the produce by the landowner and the sharecropper (i.e., adhjar or bargadar).

VIII.5.3 It is seen from table VIII.10 that in 10.57% cases, the recorded bargadars were getting 75% of the produce - the legally allowed share. In 9.08% cases, the recorded bargadars were getting two-thirds share of produce and in 7.14% cases bargadars were not giving any share of produce to their landowners and appropriating the entire produce. It may apparently seem to be rather strange. Our investigation, however, revealed that it happened in cases where either the landowners were absentees or where there appeared to be lack of bonafideness in the claim of landowners' ownership of barga lands and bargadars thought that those lands were ceiling surplus vested lands of the owners. Absentee landowners were found to be residents of the nearby urban areas and engaged in some non-agricultural occupations, and hence control over the bargadars was not possible. Moreover, bargadars were found to have been in

advantageous position when they were politically organised.

VIII.5.4 Modes of sharing of total costs of cultivation seemed to us to be another reason for the prevalence of different modes of produce sharing between recorded bargadars and their landowners. Table VIII.11 below shows that 17.71% of recorded bargadars were

TABLE VIII.11 MODES OF SHARING OF TOTAL COSTS OF CULTIVATION  
(RECORDED BARGADAR : LANDOWNER)

Villages	Cost-share ratios				Total number
	100:0	67.33	50:50	40:60	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
V <sub>1</sub>	-	8(5.00)	137(85.63)	15(9.37)	160(100.00)
V <sub>2</sub>	9(23.08)	-	27(69.23)	3(7.69)	39(100.00)
V <sub>3</sub>	50(30.12)	10(6.02)	97(58.43)	9(5.42)	166(100.00)
V <sub>4</sub>	-	2(12.5)	13(81.25)	1(6.25)	16(100.00)
V <sub>5</sub>	54(20.69)	41(15.71)	153(58.62)	13(4.98)	261(100.00)
V <sub>6</sub>	6(20.00)	2(6.57)	20(66.66)	2(6.67)	30(100.00)
Total:	119(17.71)	63(9.37)	447(66.52)	43(6.40)	672(100.00)

Source: Field investigation in 1985-86.

Note : Figures in parentheses show percentages to total number of recorded bargadars in respective villages.

sharing 100% of the total costs. It was found that bargadars who appropriated the full share of the produce shared 100% of the total costs. Besides, bargadars who were sharing 100% of the costs received 75% share of the produce which, it should be noted, is the legal share. Thus, these two groups, comprising 17.71% of the total recorded bargadars were actually those, 10.57% of whom were getting 75% share of the produce and 7.14% were appropriating total share of the produce. Table VIII.11 further shows that in 9.37% cases, cost was shared in 67:33 ratio, but table VIII.10 shows that in 9.08% cases produce was shared in 67:33 ratio. Therefore, it comes out that 0.29% of the bargadars, inspite of sharing higher (i.e., 67%) costs were sharing the produce in the ratio of 50:50. This happened in village V<sub>4</sub>. It appeared to the reason that bargadars were custom bound and loyal to their landlords in these cases. It is further revealed from table VIII.11 that in 6.40% cases landowners shared 60% of the total cost, whereas table VIII.10 shows that they were sharing 50% of the produce with their bargadars in these cases. According to legal provision, landowners are required to contribute 100% share of the total cost to share 50% of the produce. Table VIII.10 exhibits that in 73.21% cases produce is shared in 50:50 ratio. But the cost was not shared in 50:50 ratio. It was revealed to us that among the bargadars who shared produce on the basis of 50:50 ratio, 66.52% shared the cost also on 50:50 basis, but in the remaining 6.69% cases; 6.40% shared the cost on a 40:60 basis and 0.29% on a 67.33 ratio. It is thus clear that in

each of such cases, according to legal provision, landowners should have to actually contribute 100% share of the total cost to get 50% share of the produce which they have actually received. Thus, our field investigation reveals that in majority of the cases the legal provisions in favour of bargadars, regarding division of the produce, have by and large, remained ineffective. It also comes to light that the days of absentee landlordism is over and in future it may not be possible to retain agricultural land by absentee owners. In such a situation, it appears that "land to the tiller" slogan is going to be true. But, as our study reveals, though in most cases right and security of tenure of bargadars has been legally established, they have been mostly remained unable to secure their right share of the produce.

VIII.5.5 From our interviews with the bargadars and their landowners it was possible to deduce several reasons for such a state of affair. Classification of bargadars according to reason for not getting legally allowed shares and their distribution is shown in table VIII.12 below. It can be seen from this table that the most important reason was the honouring of the custom and tradition of sharing the produce in 50:50 ratio by bargadars with their landowners. In 68.35% cases bargadars could not secure the legally allowed share for this reason. It transpired from our field investigation that in a situation where bargadars are accustomed largely to observe the tradition and custom, it is difficult to implement the provisions of laws favourable to them. Another reason for inability to secure

the proper share of produce was the weaker bargaining power of bargadar. "Weaker bargaining power" here means that a bargadar's

TABLE VIII. 12 CLASSIFICATION OF RECORDED BARGADARS ACCORDING TO REASONS FOR NOT GETTING LEGALLY ALLOWED SHARE OF PRODUCE AND THEIR DISTRIBUTION

Villages	Reasons for not getting legally allowed share of produce				Total number
	Debt obligation to land-lord	Honouring tradition and custom	Bargadar's weaker bargaining power	Reasons not specified	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
V <sub>1</sub>	22(13.75)	91(56.88)	37(23.12)	10(6.25)	160(100.00)
V <sub>2</sub>	3(10.00)	21(70.00)	4(13.33)	2(6.67)	30(100.00)
V <sub>3</sub>	16(13.79)	67(57.76)	33(28.45)	-	116(100.00)
V <sub>4</sub>	1(6.25)	10(62.50)	2(12.50)	3(18.75)	16(100.00)
V <sub>5</sub>	33(15.94)	154(74.40)	13(6.28)	7(3.38)	207(100.00)
V <sub>6</sub>	6(25.00)	13(54.17)	5(20.83)	-	24(100.00)
Total	81(14.65)	356(64.38)	94(17.00)	22(3.97)	553(100.00)

Source : Field investigation in 1985-86.

Note : Figures in parentheses indicate percentages to total number of recorded bargadars in respective villages.

position is financially not so sound, politically not so organised and powerful and socially not so influential as to create effective pressure on their landowners and secure the legally allowed share, though in such cases the bargadar may not be financially obligated or their loyalty to their landowners may not be great. The third factor responsible for the traditional 50:50 sharing of produce was the debt obligation of bargadars to their landlords. It was found that some landlords did not charge any interest or charge a nominal interest for the advances and loans given by them to their bargadars. In such cases, bargadars were found to be very much loyal to their landlords and agreed to the traditional sharing of the produce, though the landlords in these cases did not contribute 100% share of the total cost of cultivation. In a small number of cases, however, the reason could not be specified.

VIII.5.6 It is revealed from Table VIII.11 above that in no case any landowner was found to bear 100% of the cost of cultivation after their bargadars have recorded their names. But during our investigation we were reported both by landowners and bargadars that before recording their names some percentage of bargadars were getting 100% of the total costs of cultivation from their landowners. In such cases, landowners used to take 50% of the produce. These facts indicate that some percentage of bargadars have lost their landowners' favour in terms of cost sharing. The tables VIII.10 and VIII.11 show that after bargadars have recorded their names, landowners have

stopped sharing any part of the total cost in 10.57% cases and are getting 25% share of produce as provided by law. In 82.29% cases, however, they are getting 50% share of the produce (which is logically a undue higher share) without sharing the 100% of costs (the due share prescribed by legal provision) due to the reasons discussed above.

VIII.5.7 We shall now depict below the mode of sharing of produce between unrecorded bargadars and landowners. This is shown in Table VIII.13 below. It can be seen from this table that as in the case of

TABLE VIII.13 DISTRIBUTION OF UNRECORDED BARGADARS ACCORDING TO CROP-SHARE RATIO : (UNRECORDED BARGADAR : LANDOWNER)

Villages	Crop-share ratio		Total number
	60:40	50:50	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
V <sub>1</sub>	4(25.00)	12(75.00)	16(100.00)
V <sub>2</sub>	2(11.11)	16(88.89)	18(100.00)
V <sub>3</sub>	-	8(100.00)	8(100.00)
V <sub>4</sub>	3(27.27)	8(72.73)	11(100.00)
V <sub>6</sub>	2(18.18)	9(81.82)	11(100.00)
Total	11(12.79)	74(87.21)	85(100.00)

Source : Field investigation in 1985-86.

Note : Figures in parentheses shows percentages to total number of unrecorded bargadars in respective villages.

recorded bargadars, in the case of unrecorded bargadars too the most common mode of sharing of the produce was 50:50. In case of unrecorded bargadars 50:50 sharing was found to prevail in 87.21% cases but 60:40 mode was prevalent only <sup>w</sup>12.79% cases. It is also noticeable that unlike the case of recorded bargadars where modes of sharing of produce altogether was found to be four, in case of unrecorded bargadars only two modes were found to exist.

VIII.5.8 For an explanation of the causes of existence of these two modes of sharing of produce we may look at table VIII.14 below, where modes of sharing of total costs of cultivation between

TABLE VIII.14 MODES OF SHARING OF TOTAL COSTS OF CULTIVATION (UNRECORDED BARGADAR: LANDOWNER)

Vill- ages	Cost-share ratios					Total number
	100:0	60:40	50:50	40:60	0:100	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
V <sub>1</sub>	2(12.50)	4(25.00)	7(43.75)	1(6.25)	2(12.50)	16(100.00)
V <sub>2</sub>	3(16.67)	3(16.67)	10(55.55)	-	2(11.11)	18(100.00)
V <sub>3</sub>	-	2(25.00)	6(75.00)	-	-	8(100.00)
V <sub>4</sub>	2(9.52)	2(9.52)	14(66.67)	1(4.77)	2(9.52)	21(100.00)
V <sub>5</sub>	1(9.09)	3(27.27)	4(36.37)	3(27.27)	-	11(100.00)
V <sub>6</sub>	-	3(27.27)	6(45.45)	2(18.18)	-	11(100.00)
Total	8(9.41)	21(24.71)	47(55.24)	8(9.41)	6(7.06)	85(100.00)

Source : Field investigation in 1985-86.

Note : Figures in parentheses show percentages to total number of unrecorded bargadars in respective villages.



unrecorded bargadars and their landowners have been shown. This table reveals that total cost was shared between them in five different ratios. Total cost was entirely borne by unrecorded bargadars in about 9.41% cases and that by landowners in 7.06% cases. But since only two modes of produce sharing are prevalent, it means that bargadars and landowners involved in these cases shared the produce either in 60:40 ratio or in 50:50 ratio. It was found that bargadars who shared 100% of the total cost received 60% of the produce, i.e., 15% less than the legally allowed share to bargadars. But it was found that in 7.06% cases, landowners who shared the 100% of the total cost, got produce in 50:50 ratio. In these latter cases, it becomes evident that unrecorded bargadars were also getting the proper share of produce according to legal provision. It appeared that in such cases landowners were tradition bound and following the custom of the earlier days. The patron-client relationship between landowners and bargadars are still present in these cases. Landowners, who shared 60% of the total costs of cultivation in 9.41% cases (shown in Table VIII.14) were also found to share 50% of the produce (shown in Table VIII.13) with their bargadars. Some reasons, as in the case of landowners who contribute 100% of the total cost and share 50% of the produce, apply in this case. It can further be seen from Table VIII.14 that in 24.71% cases bargadars contribute 60% of the total cost but share the produce in 50:50 ratio. Probably here, due to competition for barga land, bargadars, who had agreed to bear 60% of the total cost

got land under barga cultivation. Truly speaking, it appeared from our survey that in our areas of investigation landowners who want to lease out land (prospective lessors) were a very few in number while cultivators who want to lease in land (prospective leases, i.e., bargadars) were many. This is so because as we have shown in Chapters VI and VII that the number of medium and large categories of landholders are either remaining more or less constant, or decreasing, the number of marginal categories of landholders are rising rapidly over time. As a result, there are keen competition among the latter two groups of cultivators to get land under barga which consequently moves the terms of bargadari contract to the disadvantage of the unrecorded bargadars. This is a qualitative change from the earlier days of the Bhutanese as well as British administrations with reference to the bargadar-landowner relationship. It also came to be known from our investigation that most of the landowners who could not cultivate a portion of their lands during one or more agricultural seasons for some reason or the other, preferred to keep it fallow than to lease it out under barga due to the apprehension that once a plot of land was leased out under barga, the bargadar would get his name recorded and it would be almost impossible to resume the land so leased out under the personal cultivation of the landowner amidst the recent socio-political situation in the rural areas. Under such circumstances, a landowner, unable to cultivate his lands for some time, preferred either to keep it fallow or lease out only to a bargadar whose allegiance was beyond question. For the same

reason, sometimes it so happened that landowners leased out same plot or plots of land to different bargadars in alternate years so that no bargadar could cultivate a plot of land for consecutive years and get his name recorded.

VIII.5.9 It may be noted here that different constituents of costs were found to be shared in different ratios between recorded bargadars and their landowners. Table VIII.15 shows the modes of sharing of

TABLE VIII.15 MODES OF SHARING OF THE COSTS OF SEED  
(RECORDED BARGADAR : LANDOWNER)

Villages	Cost-share ratios				Total Number
	100:0	60:40	50:50	40:60	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
V <sub>1</sub>	35(21.88)	-	109(68.12)	16(10.00)	160(100.00)
V <sub>2</sub>	10(25.64)	3(7.69)	25(64.10)	1(2.56)	39(100.00)
V <sub>3</sub>	60(36.14)	-	95(57.23)	11(6.63)	166(100.00)
V <sub>4</sub>	2(12.50)	-	11(68.75)	3(8.75)	16(100.00)
V <sub>5</sub>	91(34.87)	16(6.13)	134(51.34)	20(7.66)	261(100.00)
V <sub>6</sub>	9(30.00)	3(10.00)	16(53.33)	2(6.67)	30(100.00)
Total	207(30.80)	22(3.27)	390(58.04)	53(7.89)	672(100.00)

Source : Field investigation in 1985-86.

Note : Figures in parentheses show percentages to total number of recorded bargadars in respective villages.

seed costs between recorded bargadars and their landowners. It is exhibited in the table that, as in the case of produce sharing and total cost sharing, seed costs were also shared in the 50:50 ratio in most cases. This mode constituted 58.04% cases of recorded bargadars. In 30.80% cases, cost of seed was entirely borne by the bargadars. Only in 3.27% cases seed cost sharing took place in the 60:40 ratio and in 7.89% cases the prevalent mode was 40:60. It can also be found that in no case landowners shared 100% of the entire cost of seed. The reasons behind the prevalence of different modes of sharing the costs of seed are not far to seek. Bargadars who did not give any share to the landowners were found to bear 100% of the cost of seed. Bargadars having a relatively strained relationship with landowners after recording had to bear either 100% of the seed cost or 60% of it. Cases in which 50:50 sharing mode is followed, bargadars and landowners obeyed the custom and tradition. Landowners shared 60% of the cost of seed where cordial relationship prevailed between landowners and bargadars and the former showed patronage to the latter.

VIII.5.10 All bargadars, as revealed from our field investigation, were not found to use chemical fertiliser in their lands. It was found that for all the six villages taken together about 48% of the bargadars used chemical fertiliser. Some of the reasons for not using chemical fertiliser were found to be either want of capital or apprehension of adverse effect of the application of

chemical fertiliser, or sufficient availability of organic manure or lack of initiative or a combination of all these. The most important reason for not using chemical fertiliser in most cases seemed to us to be the lack of capital of the bargadars. However, in a sizeable number of cases it was also found that bargadars did not use chemical fertiliser as they thought that its continuous application would ultimately tell upon the productivity of their lands and hence they refrained themselves from using it. The other two causes as mentioned earlier appeared to us to be less important. Number of recorded bargadars in different villages who used chemical fertiliser during our period of survey and the modes of sharing its cost have been shown in Table VIII.16 below. It can be seen from this table

TABLE VIII.16 MODES OF SHARING OF THE COST OF CHEMICAL FERTILISER (RECORDED BARGADAR : LANDOWNER)

Vill- ages	Cost-share ratios					Total number
	100:0	60:40	50:50	40:60	0:100	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
V <sub>1</sub>	17(19.60)	8(7.33)	68(62.39)	5(4.59)	11(10.09)	109(100.00)
V <sub>2</sub>	3(23.08)	1(7.69)	6(46.16)	2(15.38)	1(7.69)	13(100.00)
V <sub>3</sub>	21(29.58)	4(5.63)	37(52.11)	1(1.41)	8(11.27)	71(100.00)
V <sub>4</sub>	1(16.67)	-	3(50.00)	1(16.67)	1(16.67)	6(100.00)
V <sub>5</sub>	13(12.04)	-	78(72.22)	9(8.33)	8(7.41)	108(100.00)
V <sub>6</sub>	3(17.65)	1(5.88)	11(64.71)	-	2(11.76)	17(100.00)
<b>Total</b>	<b>58(17.90)</b>	<b>14(4.32)</b>	<b>203(62.65)</b>	<b>18(5.56)</b>	<b>31(9.57)</b>	<b>324(100.00)</b>

Source : Field investigation in 1985-86.

Note : Figures in parentheses show percentages to total number of recorded bargadars in respective villages.

that in case of nearly two-thirds of the total number of recorded bargadars using chemical fertiliser, the cost was shared in the 50:50 ratio. As in the cases of sharing of total costs, sharing of seed costs and sharing of produce, the 50:50 sharing of the costs of chemical fertiliser has also become a custom in most cases. In 17.90% of cases, bargadars shared the entire (100%) cost. This group of bargadars who shared the 100% of the cost of chemical fertiliser comprises those bargadars who get 75% of the produce and those who did not give any share to the landowners. The special feature of the bargadar-landowner relationship that is discernible from this table is that in 9.52% of cases, landowners shared the entire cost of chemical fertiliser. It was found that in such cases, landowners having better means of finance, either from own source or from market source could easily afford to bear a relatively higher share of the cost of chemical fertiliser. This was done by them in the interest of higher production that would bring them higher amount of produce within the existing mode of produce sharing. The simultaneous existence of other two numerically less important modes of sharing of the cost of chemical fertiliser could be explained in the same way as that in the case of modes of sharing of the cost of seed.

VIII.5.11 Our investigation showed that all bargadars used some amount of organic manure in their lands. In most cases, they used cowdung as organic manure that was gathered in their farm-yards and in some cases they used ashes as organic manure that was obtainable from burnt dry cowdung, herbs and straws which are often used as

fuels. Landowners generally used the organic manures in their own cultivated lands and in a few cases, applied a part of it to bargadars to use in the lands leased out to the former. Bargadars applied organic manure in the barga lands mainly from their own source. They rarely used purchased organic manure, since market for it hardly exists in the rural areas of Duars. Doses of application of organic manure, therefore, depended upon the possession of cattle population by bargadars and the amount of ashes gathered and to a little extent on the amount supplied by their landowners. Modes of physical sharing of the use of organic manure between recorded bargadars and their landowners can be seen from Table VIII.17 below.

TABLE VIII.17 MODES OF PHYSICAL SHARING OF ORGANIC MANURE  
USED (RECORDED BARGADAR : LANDOWNER)

Villages	Physical share ratios		Total number
	75:25	100:0	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
V <sub>1</sub>	12(7.50)	148(92.50)	160(100.00)
V <sub>2</sub>	5(12.82)	34(87.18)	39(100.00)
V <sub>3</sub>	23(13.86)	143(86.14)	166(100.00)
V <sub>4</sub>	-	16(100.00)	16(100.00)
V <sub>5</sub>	26(9.96)	235(90.04)	261(100.00)
V <sub>6</sub>	-	30(100.00)	30(100.00)
Total:	66(9.82)	606(90.18)	672(100.00)

Source : Field investigation in 1985-86.

Note : Figures in parentheses indicate percentages to total number of recorded bargadars in respective villages.

It is exhibited that in about 90% cases, bargadars used 100% of the organic manure from their own source and only in about 10% cases their landowners supplied 25% of the physical amount of organic manure used.

VIII.5.12 It was found in our investigation that many of the bargadars received loans from various sources and for various purposes. Percentage distribution of recorded and unrecorded bargadars who received loans from various sources is presented in Table VIII.18 below. It is seen from this table that, all the six villages taken together, on an average 78.87% of the recorded

TABLE VIII.18 PERCENTAGE OF DISTRIBUTION OF LOANEE  
RECORDED AND UNRECORDED BARGADARS IN  
THE VILLAGES INVESTIGATED

Villages	Category of bargadars	
	Recorded	Unrecorded
(1)	(2)	(3)
V <sub>1</sub>	71.88	62.50
V <sub>2</sub>	82.05	61.11
V <sub>3</sub>	83.73	75.00
V <sub>4</sub>	93.75	80.95
V <sub>5</sub>	78.93	63.64
V <sub>6</sub>	76.67	54.55
Total :	78.87	67.06

Source : Field investigation in 1985-86.



bargadars and 67.06% of the unrecorded bargadars received loans from different sources. The percentage figures in different villages vary from 71.88% to 93.75% for recorded bargadars and 54.55% to 80.95% for unrecorded bargadars. It is, therefore, evident that on the whole, recorded bargadars have received loans in larger percentage of cases than that of the unrecorded ones. This difference arises due to the fact that recorded bargadars have received loans from institutional sources in higher percentage of cases than that of the unrecorded ones as shown in Table VIII.19.

VIII.5.13 Table VIII.19 below shows the percentage distribution of recorded and unrecorded bargadars who received loans from various

TABLE VIII.19 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RECORDED AND UNRECORDED BARGADARS RECEIVING LOANS FROM INSTITUTIONAL SOURCES

Villages	Category of bargadars	
	Recorded	Unrecorded
(1)	(2)	(3)
V <sub>1</sub>	33.75	18.75
V <sub>2</sub>	15.38	22.22
V <sub>3</sub>	60.84	25.00
V <sub>4</sub>	31.25	28.57
V <sub>5</sub>	47.89	27.27
V <sub>6</sub>	20.00	36.36
Total	44.20	25.88

Source : Field investigation in 1985-86.

financial institutions. It is revealed that about 44% of the recorded bargadars received loans from institutional sources while nearly 26% of the unrecorded bargadars received loans from these sources. It, therefore, shows that recorded bargadars received loans in larger percentage of cases than that of the unrecorded bargadars. The reason is not far to seek. One of the inducements to the bargadars for recording their names, as noted earlier, was that, if they got their names recorded, they would receive loans from institutional sources which were directed and persuaded by the government to provide the bargadars with loans where the government would provide guarantee and pay subsidies for such loans. It may be argued that mere recording the names of bargadars to give them secured barga rights is not adequate enough to ameliorate their poor economic plight. One of the follow up tasks, as a measure to free the bargadars from the clutches of money lenders, is to make available the facilities of institutional credit system to as many bargadars as possible. It is, however, apparent from our study that only 44.20% of the recorded bargadars (as shown in Table VIII.17) have received the facilities of institutional credit system. It, therefore, indicates that the financial institutions and the government have still to do much to make the institutional credit facilities available to the recorded bargadars. Nevertheless, our general impression was that bargadars who have recorded their names were now getting institutional credit facilities in larger numbers during our period of survey than in the pre-recording years. The sources of borrowing by recorded bargadars can be seen from Table VIII.20 in

which percentage distribution of loanee recorded bargadars according to sources of loan has been shown.

TABLE VIII.20 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF LOANEE RECORDED BARGADARS ACCORDING TO SOURCES OF LOAN

Villages.	Sources of loan				Total
	Institu- tions	Land- lords	Mahajans	Others	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
V <sub>1</sub>	46.96	20.00	11.30	21.74	100.00
V <sub>2</sub>	18.75	12.50	21.88	46.87	100.00
V <sub>3</sub>	72.67	13.67	5.04	8.62	100.00
V <sub>4</sub>	33.33	20.00	26.67	20.00	100.00
V <sub>5</sub>	60.88	16.50	8.74	14.08	100.00
V <sub>6</sub>	26.09	30.43	13.04	30.43	100.00
Total	56.04	16.98	9.81	17.17	100.00

Source : Field investigation in 1985-86.

VIII.5.14 It is evident from the table above that the largest percentage of recorded bargadars received credit facilities from financial institutions which included commercial banks, regional rural banks (granin banks), co-operative banks and co-operative societies. In 56.04% cases loans were made available from such institutions. Thus, it can be said that the scope of institutional finance has been largely extended to the bargadars in recent times.

These financial institutions are now increasingly participating in the task of rural development. With the larger availability of institutional credit, exploitation of bargadars by their landlords through credit mechanism has decreased considerably. The table above also shows that, in the villages we have investigated, only 16.98% recorded bargadars took loans from their landlords. The role of Mahajans (money lenders) also appear to be less important now. Mahajans met the credit needs of only 9.81% of recorded bargadars. Our investigation showed that loans advanced by mahajans were always associated with an exorbitant high rate of interest of even 120% per annum. The source categories as "others" which included creditors like neighbours, friends and relations of bargadars, appeared to be a relatively important one. In as much as 17.17% cases, loans were obtained from this source.

VIII.5.15 The importance of various sources of loans in case of unrecorded bargadars was a little different. Table VIII.21 below shows the percentage distribution of loanee unrecorded bargadars according to sources of loan. It is revealed in this table that like the recorded bargadars, unrecorded bargadars also obtained loans in largest percentage of cases from the source categories as "institutions". But, where as loans were obtained from this source in 56.04% of cases for recorded bargadars, in case of unrecorded bargadars the percentage figure stands at 39.29% only. The reason for this difference is that, unrecorded bargadars could not get the credit facilities specifically meant for the bonafide bargadars as

TABLE VIII.21 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF LOANEE UNRECORDED BARGADARS ACCORDING TO SOURCES OF LOAN

Villages	Sources of loan				Total
	Institu- tions	Landlords	Mahajans	Others	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
V <sub>1</sub>	30.00	40.00	100.00	20.00	100.00
V <sub>2</sub>	36.36	36.36	-	27.28	100.00
V <sub>3</sub>	33.33	16.67	-	50.00	100.00
V <sub>4</sub>	35.29	41.19	11.76	11.76	100.00
V <sub>5</sub>	42.85	28.57	14.29	14.29	100.00
V <sub>6</sub>	66.66	16.67	16.67	-	100.00
Total	39.29	33.33	8.77	19.30	100.00

Source : Field investigation in 1985-86.

the former had no certificate of bonafidencess as bargadars. Whatever loans the unrecorded bargadars could procure from financial institutions were not loans meant exclusively for patta holding (i.e., recorded and hence treated as genuine) bargadars, but as small farmer doing agricultural business or other rural economic activities. It can also be found from Table VIII.21 that compared to recorded bargadars, unrecorded bargadars received loans from their landlords in larger percentage of cases. It indicates that the relationship between unrecorded bargadars and their landlords was more cordial

and close compared to that between recorded bargadars and their landlords, as far as credit relation was concerned. In case of loans obtained from mahajans the percentage figures show that there was no marked difference between unrecorded and recorded bargadars. But in case of loans taken from the source termed "others" it can be seen that the percentage figure for unrecorded bargadars is a little higher than that for recorded bargadars. This implies that this source was also an important one in case of the unrecorded bargadars.

VIII.5.16 It would be pertinent here to discuss the nature of interest payments involved in loans obtained from various sources. It is to be noted that loans obtained from institutional sources was always associated with a rate of interest which may be called "market rate of interest", fixed by the financial institutions at the direction of the central bank. Rates of interest charged by different financial institutions, however, varied slightly. But, loans obtained from "landlords" and "others" were not always associated with high rates of interest, rather those loans sometimes carried high rates of interest and was often available free of interest. Table VIII.22 below shows the distribution of recorded bargadars receiving loans from "landlords" and "others" according to nature payment of interest thereon. It is evident that in case of loans received from landlords, recorded bargadars had to pay high rates of interest in nearly 59% cases while in about 41% cases loans were found to be interest free. "High rates of interest" varied from 5% p.m. to 10% p.m., i.e., from

TABLE VIII.22 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RECORDED BARGADARS RECEIVING LOANS FROM VARIOUS SOURCES ACCORDING TO NATURE OF PAYMENT OF INTEREST

Villages	Sources of Loan					
	Landlords			Others		
	With high interest	Without interest	Total	With high interest	Without interest	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
V <sub>1</sub>	56.52	43.48	100.00	52.00	48.00	100.00
V <sub>2</sub>	75.00	25.00	100.00	46.67	53.33	100.00
V <sub>3</sub>	63.16	36.84	100.00	33.33	66.67	100.00
V <sub>4</sub>	33.33	66.67	100.00	66.67	33.33	100.00
V <sub>5</sub>	61.76	38.24	100.00	41.38	58.62	100.00
V <sub>6</sub>	57.14	42.86	100.00	28.57	71.43	100.00
Total	58.89	41.11	100.00	43.96	56.04	100.00

Source : Field investigation in 1985-86.

60% to 120% p.a. Loans obtained from "others" were interest free in 56% cases and high rates of interest were required to be paid in about 44% cases. That landlords did not charge any interest from loans given to their recorded bargadars is not at all a strange fact. Interest free loans were often associated with some ulterior motives. Landlords, in fact tied their bargadars in the bond of loyalty and dependency through such loans. Bargadars had to perform some economic and extra-economic functions<sup>16</sup> without any remuneration

due to this type of debt obligation. In the process, bargadars lost their independence and paved the way for their exploitation by the landlords. Our finding in this respect is corroborated by some other studies also<sup>17</sup>. There is generally an informal social bond and relationship between bargadars and their neighbours, friends, relatives etc. They have mutual interdependence among them. They often help each other in times of need. The fact that a large part of loans obtained from the source named "others" were interest free is largely explained by the existence of these informal social and human relationship. Loans obtained from "landlords" without interest is also explained to some extent by these factors. On the other hand, the percentage of cases in which high rates of interest were to be paid for loans received from "others" were due to the lack of these human relationship or were due to the existence of a business motive of creditors.

VIII.5.17 The credit relations between unrecorded bargadars and their landlords was a little different. This would be evident from Table VIII.23 below which shows the percentage distribution of unrecorded bargadars who received loans from landlords and others according to nature of payment of interest. It can be seen that in case of unrecorded bargadars, landlords gave loans in larger percentage of cases (68.42%) without charging any interest compared to the recorded bargadars (41.11% cases). This indicates a better relationship between unrecorded bargadars and their landowners



TABLE VIII.23      PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF UNRECORDED  
BARGADARS RECEIVING LOANS FROM VARIOUS  
SOURCES ACCORDING TO NATURE OF PAYMENT  
INTEREST

Villages	Sources of loan					
	Landlords			Others		
	With high interest	Without interest	Total	With high interest	Without interest	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
V <sub>1</sub>	25.00	75.00	100.00	50.00	50.00	100.00
V <sub>2</sub>	50.00	50.00	100.00	33.33	66.67	100.00
V <sub>3</sub>	-	100.00	100.00	66.67	33.33	100.00
V <sub>4</sub>	42.86	57.14	100.00	50.00	50.00	100.00
V <sub>5</sub>	-	100.00	100.00	-	100.00	100.00
V <sub>6</sub>	-	100.00	100.00	-	-	-
Total	31.59	68.72	100.00	45.45	54.55	100.00

Source : Field investigation in 1985-86.

compared to the recorded bargadars and their landowners. However, at the same time it implies a greater dependence of unrecorded bargadars on their landowners than that of recorded bargadars on their landowners. In case of loans received from others, percentage figures indicate that there was no significant difference in this case between recorded and unrecorded bargadars.

VIII.518 It is also important to analyse the purposes for which bargadars took loans. This would indicate as to in how many cases loans were utilised for productive purposes. In this respect we have not shown the figures separately for recorded and unrecorded bargadars, rather we have shown the figures for recorded and unrecorded bargadars taken together. This is because the purposes of taking loan is influenced and determined by the socio-economic condition of bargadars and not by their recording status. Table VIII.24 below shows the percentage distribution of loan receipt

TABLE VIII.24 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF LOAN RECEIPT BARGADARS\* BY PURPOSES OF TAKING LOAN

Villages	Purposes of taking loan			
	Consumption	Production	Contingencies	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
V <sub>1</sub>	34.40	47.20	18.40	100.00
V <sub>2</sub>	32.56	39.53	27.91	100.00
V <sub>3</sub>	11.72	73.10	15.17	100.00
V <sub>4</sub>	28.13	53.12	18.75	100.00
V <sub>5</sub>	19.25	56.81	23.94	100.00
V <sub>6</sub>	31.03	41.38	27.59	100.00
Total	22.66	56.56	20.78	100.00

Source : Field investigation in 1985-86.

\* Recorded and unrecorded taken together.

bargadars (recorded and unrecorded taken together) by purposes of taking loans. It can be found from the table that 56.56% of bargadars

took loans for productive purposes. It was found that bargadars used this type of loans for the purposes of raising agricultural production which in turn helped to raise their income and also to repay the loans in time. Our investigation revealed that bargadars also took loans for the purpose of consumption to maintain their families in times of need and specially in lean periods. It can be seen from the table that in nearly 23% cases loans were taken for the purpose of consumption. A close examination of this purpose of taking loans showed that it sometimes contributed indirectly to raise the incomes of bargadars' households. With this type of loans, bargadars could often manage their families during the gestation periods of the agricultural or non-agricultural projects undertaken by them. It appeared that if consumption loans were not available, bargadars would have to spend a part or whole of the loans taken for productive purposes for consumption and would have lead to the failure of the schemes undertaken by them. Hence, in many cases, bargadars appeared to be very much in need of consumption loans. But it should be noted that consumption loans were found to be procured by bargadars from "landlords" and "others" and not from any institutional sources, since no financial institutions give loans to bargadars for the purpose of consumption. Loans obtained for "contingencies" were found to be mostly used for non-productive purposes like expenditures for different kinds of social functions, illness, litigation etc. Loans taken for contingencies therefore, often damaged the household economy of the bargadars. Our data show that in nearly 21% cases loans were taken by bargadars for contin-

gencies. This type of loans was found to be often associated with very high rates of interest. During our investigation it appeared to us that in some cases loans, specially those sanctioned by the government and obtained through the financial institutions, were not made available in time due to bureaucratic delays and hence those loans could not be gainfully utilised by bargadars.

VIII.5.19 One of the important facets of credit relations is the repayment of loans by bargadars. There can be no denying the fact that smooth functioning of the institutional credit system depends upon the regular repayment of loans. Table VIII.25 below shows the percentage distribution of bargadars (both recorded and unrecorded taken together) according to nature of repayment of loans. It is exhibited that about 67% of the borrower-bargadars were repaying their loans regularly, whereas about 21% were repaying irregularly

TABLE VIII.25      PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF BARGADARS\*  
ACCORDING TO NATURE OF REPAYMENT OF  
LOANS TAKEN FROM INSTITUTIONAL SOURCES

Villages	Nature of repayment of loans			Total
	Regular	Irregular	Not at all repaying	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
V <sub>1</sub>	66.67	12.28	21.05	100.00
V <sub>2</sub>	70.00	20.00	10.00	100.00
V <sub>3</sub>	51.46	33.01	15.53	100.00
V <sub>4</sub>	54.55	36.36	9.09	100.00
V <sub>5</sub>	80.47	13.28	6.25	100.00
V <sub>6</sub>	80.00	20.00	-	100.00
Total	67.40	20.69	11.91	100.00

Source : Field investigation in 1985-86.

\* Recorded and unrecorded taken together.

and nearly 12% were not repaying at all, during the period of our investigation. The last two groups taken together form as large as 30% of the total number of borrower-bargadars. This is, indeed, a discouraging feature. Irregular repayment and non-repayment of loans by such a large percentage of borrowers is a problem, since, financial institutions, for obvious reasons, become reluctant to advance further credit to the defaulting borrowers and to the irregular repayers and also feel shaky to finance prospective borrowers.

VIII.5.20 It could be found that bargadar-borrowers could not and did not repay their loans for several reasons. These reasons demand a close scrutiny. Table VIII.26 exhibits the percentage distribution of loanee bargadars (recorded plus unrecorded) according to non-

TABLE VIII.26 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF LOANEE BARGADARS\*  
ACCORDING TO CAUSES OF NON-REPAYMENT AND  
IRREGULAR REPAYMENT OF LOANS

Villages	Causes of non-repayment and irregular repayment			Total
	Poverty	Misutilisation of loan money	Wilful defaulter	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
V <sub>1</sub>	68.42	-	31.58	100.00
V <sub>2</sub>	66.67	33.33	-	100.00
V <sub>3</sub>	56.00	18.00	26.00	100.00
V <sub>4</sub>	20.00	40.00	40.00	100.00
V <sub>5</sub>	52.00	32.00	16.00	100.00
V <sub>6</sub>	50.00	50.00	-	100.00
Total	55.77	19.23	25.00	100.00

Source : Field investigation in 1985-86

\* Recorded and unrecorded taken together.

repayment and irregular repayment of loans by reasons. It is revealed that nearly 56% of the defaulters were not repaying loans taken from various financial institutions due to poverty, about 19% of them could not repay on account of their misutilisation of loan money, and 25% of them did not repay wilfully. Bargadars, who could not repay due to their poverty were found to have consumed away a part or whole of the amount of loan or their schemes could not bring sufficient income so as to repay the loans. Moreover, sometimes the loans had been spent for unproductive purposes. The group of bargadars who could not repay on account of misutilisation of the loan money were found on investigation to have mostly diverted their loan money in some uses other than the originally planned one and the new venture was a failure. In some cases, a part or whole of the amount of loan was used for consumption purposes or spent in unproductive business. The wilful defaulters were not repaying for some unspecified reasons. But from our investigation, it appeared that, it was their hope that in some future year the loans, especially those sanctioned by the government, would be written off fully or partly and so they did not repay.

SECTION 6 : PRODUCTION AND PRODUCTIVITY IN  
BARGA AND NON-BARGA LANDS

VIII.6.1 One of the twin objectives of land reforms is to raise agricultural productivity. Security of tenure has been given to the bargadars through the recording of their names in the record-of-

rights with the anticipation that guaranteed barga rights would induce and actuate the bargadars to cultivate the barga lands properly and would make it possible to raise the productivity of land. It is therefore very important to see as to whether due to the confirmment of security of tenure, after the OB programme, productivity of barga lands has increased compared to the non-barga lands in the villages of our investigation.

VIII.6.2 Table VIII.27 shows the production and productivity of rice in barga and non-barga lands. It is to be noted that while

TABLE VIII.27 PRODUCTION AND PRODUCTIVITY IN BARGA LANDS AND IN NON-BARGA LANDS

Vill- ages	Total barga lands (acres)	Total non- barga lands (acres)	Production of rice in barga lands (quintals)	Production of rice in non-barga lands (quintals)	Producti- vity in barga lands (quintal/ acre)	Producti- vity in non-barga lands (quintal/ acre)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
V <sub>1</sub>	371.36	2048.17	2822.34	15361.28	7.6	7.5
V <sub>2</sub>	107.16	1365.01	696.54	9009.07	6.5	6.6
V <sub>3</sub>	229.68	549.96	1378.08	3244.76	6.0	5.9
V <sub>4</sub>	51.43	709.94	329.15	4756.60	6.4	6.7
V <sub>5</sub>	533.12	1401.06	3465.28	9527.21	6.5	6.8
V <sub>6</sub>	108.65	749.14	749.69	5468.72	6.9	7.3
Total	1401.40	6823.28	9441.08	47367.64	6.74	6.94

Source : Field investigation in 1985-86.

calculating total barga lands, lands of those who are exclusively bargadars (i.e., exclusively leasees) and those who are owner-cum-bargadars have been added together. On the other hand for calculating total non-barga lands (i.e., land under own cultivation), own lands of "exclusively owners", own lands of "owner-cum-bargadars" and own lands of "owner-cum-lessors" have been added together. Table VIII.27 shows that productivity in barga lands was 6.74 quintal per acre while that in the non-barga lands was 6.94 quintal per acre. This implies that there was no significant difference between the productivities in barga and non-barga lands during the period of our survey. Therefore, it can not be inferred that one system of cultivation is superior to the other.

VIII.6.3 Table VIII.28 exhibits the production and productivity of lands of exclusively bargadars (recorded and unrecorded taken together) and those of exclusively owners. It can be seen that productivity of rice in the lands of exclusively owners was 6.85 quintal per acre while the productivity in the lands of exclusively owners was 6.67 quintal per acre. This reveals that productivity in the lands of exclusively owner cultivators was a little higher than that of the exclusively bargadar cultivators. The productivity difference might arise due to a little more intensive use of inputs in case of exclusively owner cultivators.



TABLE VIII.28 PRODUCTION AND PRODUCTIVITY IN THE LANDS  
OF EXCLUSIVELY OWNERS AND IN THE LANDS  
OF EXCLUSIVELY BARGADARS

Villages	Area (in acres) opera- ted by exclu- sively owners	Area(in acres) opera- ted by exclu- sively bargadars	Production (in quin- tal of rice in the lands of exclusi- vely owners	Produc- tion of rice (in quintal) in the lands of exclu- sively bargadars	Produc- tivity in the lands of exclu- sively owners (quintal/ acre)	Produc- tivity in the lands of exclu- sively barga- dars (quintal/ acres)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
V <sub>1</sub>	721.37	200.22	5698.82	1401.54	7.9	7.0
V <sub>2</sub>	919.80	12.24	5886.72	79.56	6.4	6.5
V <sub>3</sub>	65.70	73.10	394.20	445.91	6.0	6.1
V <sub>4</sub>	460.46	2.40	2900.90	15.36	6.3	6.4
V <sub>5</sub>	107.52	134.26	709.63	872.69	6.6	6.5
V <sub>6</sub>	468.95	13.25	3235.76	90.10	6.9	6.8
Total	2743.80	435.47		2905.16	6.86	6.67

Source : Field investigation in 1985-86.

VIII.6.4 We have also calculated the productivity differences between the lands of recorded bargadars and unrecorded bargadars. This has been shown in Table VIII.29 below. It is evident from this table that there was almost no difference in productivities of lands of recorded and unrecorded bargadars. Productivity of rice in the lands

TABLE VIII.29 PRODUCTION AND PRODUCTIVITY IN THE LANDS OPERATED BY RECORDED BARGADARS AND UNRECORDED BARGADARS

Vill-ages	Area (in acre) operated by recorded bargadars	Area (in acre) operated by unrecorded bargadars	Production (in quintal) of rice in the lands of recorded bargadars	Production (in quintal) of rice in the lands of unrecorded bargadars	Productivity in the lands of recorded bargadars (quintal/acre)	Productivity in the lands of unrecorded bargadars (quintal/acre)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
V <sub>1</sub>	305.60	39.84	2200.32	274.90	7.2	6.9
V <sub>2</sub>	65.83	31.68	429.90	212.26	6.5	6.7
V <sub>3</sub>	225.76	20.48	1331.98	122.88	5.9	6.0
V <sub>4</sub>	22.08	35.07	141.31	217.43	6.4	6.2
V <sub>5</sub>	524.57	22.11	3304.79	139.29	6.3	6.3
V <sub>6</sub>	78.90	29.48	536.52	197.52	6.8	6.7
Total	1222.74	178.66	7942.82	1164.28	6.50	6.52

Source : Field investigation in 1985-86.

of recorded bargadars was 6.50 quintal per acre whereas that in the lands of unrecorded bargadars was 6.52 quintal per acre. Hence, from the data presented in the above three tables, it can neither be inferred that productivity of barga lands have risen after the confirmment of secured barga right on bargadars, nor can it be concluded that barga cultivation is either superior to or inferior

to ownership cultivation.

VIII.6.5 In our opinion, the reason for the no marked differences in productivities in ownership cultivation and barga cultivation and between the lands of recorded bargadars and unrecorded bargadars, lie in the fact that lands in all these cases were cultivated with the similar archaic technique of production, with almost equal doses of labour and capital, and under the condition of non-availability of any irrigational facilities. Thus, our study reveals that one of the very important objectives of land reform measures, namely, raising of agricultural productivity through the conferment of secured barga rights to bargadars, has not been fulfilled in our region of study. This finding unequivocally points out to the fact that land reform measures as an effort to raise agricultural productivity can be achieved only if it is combined with other aspects of agrarian reforms, namely, creation of irrigational facilities, adequate and timely provision of credits and other agricultural inputs to bargadars, consolidation of small and fragmented holdings of bargadars along with some technological and improved agricultural practices.

#### SECTION 7 : BARGADARS AND AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS

VIII.7.1 In the absence of any income data on the bargadars, we have made an attempt to describe their economic plight through our investigation in which we addressed ourselves to the questions as to

how many bargadars possess both bullocks and ploughs, how many of them do not possess either of these and how many of them partly possess these, how many are to work as agricultural labourers to supplement their incomes from their own and/or barga lands, for how many days they are employed as casual agricultural labourers and whether the bargadar himself or some of his family members are employed as part time or full time workers in non-farm jobs. We have also investigated as to whether the pure agricultural labourers received wages equal to the minimum wages fixed by the government. In the following paragraphs we would describe these aspects of the economic lives of bargadars and agricultural labourers.

VIII.7.2 Traditional method of cultivation is practised by farmers in the villages of our investigation. It requires possession of at least a plough and a pair of bullocks by a farmer in this method of cultivation. Lack of any one of the constituent parts or both of it makes him unable to undertake cultivation in his own capacity. A bargadar has either to hire in plough and/or bullocks or to lease out to other bargadars or to keep the lands fallow in the event of non-possession or dispossession of plough and/or bullocks. Table VIII.30 shows the distribution of bargadars on the basis of possession of plough and bullocks. It can be seen from this table that 88.39% of the recorded bargadars possessed both ploughs and bullocks, while 8.48% of them possessed neither bullocks nor ploughs. Bargadars who

TABLE VIII.30 DISTRIBUTION OF RECORDED BARGADARS ON THE BASIS OF POSSESSION OF PLOUGHS AND BULLOCKS

Villages	Possession of a recorded bargadar				Total number
	Both bullocks and ploughs	Ploughs only	Bullocks only	Neither ploughs nor bullocks	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
V <sub>1</sub>	142(88.75)	-	4(2.50)	14(8.75)	160(100.00)
V <sub>2</sub>	36(92.31)	1(2.56)	-	2(5.13)	39(100.00)
V <sub>3</sub>	133(80.12)	8(4.82)	-	25(15.06)	166(100.00)
V <sub>4</sub>	15(93.75)	-	-	1(6.25)	16(100.00)
V <sub>5</sub>	240(91.95)	8(3.07)	-	13(4.98)	261(100.00)
V <sub>6</sub>	28(93.33)	-	-	2(6.67)	30(100.00)
Total	594(88.39)	17(2.53)	4(0.60)	57(8.48)	672(100.00)

Source : Field investigation in 1985-86

Note : Figures in parentheses show percentages to total number of recorded bargadars in respective villages.

possessed either ploughs or bullocks only constituted 2.53% and 0.60% respectively of the total number of recorded bargadars interviewed. Many of the bargadars in the groups who possessed plough only and those who possessed neither ploughs nor bullocks were likely to become landless in the near future and to become pure landless agricultural labourers. Landowners are likely to resume barga lands from such bargadars who do not possess either ploughs or

bullocks. This is because of the legal provision that in the case of failure of a bargadar to cultivate barga lands without proper reason or failure to cultivate it properly and/or personally, the landowner would be able to resume the barga land under his self-cultivation<sup>18</sup>. Thus, it appeared that some of the recorded bargadars not owning ploughs and bullocks were waiting to join the rank of landless agricultural labourers. Therefore, the mere guarantee for secured barga cultivation is not much meaningful to such bargadars.

VIII.7.3 Our investigation revealed that a good number of bargadars (both recorded and unrecorded) had to undertake the work of agricultural labourers in the field of other farmers in their own villages or in the neighbouring villages for earning additional income to maintain their families. Table VIII.31 below shows the distribution of bargadars (recorded and unrecorded taken together) who casually worked as agricultural labourers to supplement their incomes from land. We may name these bargadars as "Bargadars-cum-Agricultural Labourers" (BACL). It is evident from this table that as many as 402 out of 757 bargadars we have interviewed (i.e., 53.10% of the total number) were working as casual agricultural labourers in addition to cultivating their own and/or barga lands. These figures, therefore, suggest that a large chunk of the bargadar households could not earn sufficient income from their lands and hence had to work as agricultural labourers to earn additional incomes.

TABLE VIII.31 DISTRIBUTION OF BARGADARS (RECORDED PLUS UNRECORDED) WHO CASUALLY WORKED AS AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS (BARGADARS CUM AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS-BACL)

Villages	Total number of bargadars interviewed	Number of bargadars casually working as agricultural labourers	Percentage of bargadars casually working as agricultural labourers
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
V <sub>1</sub>	176	107	60.80
V <sub>2</sub>	57	27	47.37
V <sub>3</sub>	174	102	58.62
V <sub>4</sub>	37	18	48.65
V <sub>5</sub>	272	131	48.16
V <sub>6</sub>	41	17	41.46
Total	757	402	53.10

VIII.7.4 But it is natural that augmenting and supplementing the landed income would also depend on the sufficient availability of works in agricultural operations throughout the year. It may be possible only if agricultural operations become diversified through the introduction of high yielding varieties of crops by creating necessary infrastructure, multiple cropping etc. Unfortunately, agriculture in our villages under study is very much traditional,

mono-cropped and lack diversification of the type as mentioned above. Hence, it could be found that in majority of the cases, the BACLs did not find employment for the whole year. Distribution of BACLs who worked for more than or less than six months i.e., 180 days per year is presented in Table VIII.32. It is evident from this table that only 29.60% of the BACLs could find casual employment for more

TABLE VIII.32 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF BACLs EMPLOYED FOR MORE THAN OR LESS THAN 180 DAYS PER YEAR

Villages	BACLs Working for less than 180 days per year	BACLs Working for more than 180 days per year	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
V <sub>1</sub>	68.22	31.78	100.00
V <sub>2</sub>	74.07	25.93	100.00
V <sub>3</sub>	78.43	21.57	100.00
V <sub>4</sub>	72.22	27.28	100.00
V <sub>5</sub>	64.12	35.88	100.00
V <sub>6</sub>	76.47	23.53	100.00
Total	70.40	29.60	100.00

Source : Field investigation in 1985-86.

than 180 days per year, while 70.40% of them were employed for less than 180 days per year. It was apparent from our investigation that the group of BACLs who did not find employment for "180 days or more" per year could hardly manage to be employed for 90 to 120 days, i.e.,



3 to 4 months in a year. On the other hand, the other group of bargadars who were found to be employed more than 180 days per year appeared to be employed very marginally above 180 days.

VIII.7.5 We have also presented in Table VIII.33, the distribution of bargadar households on the basis of employment of at least one member from each household. From this table it is evident that, of the total 757 bargadar households, only from 269 households (35.71%

TABLE VIII.33

DISTRIBUTION OF BARGADAR HOUSEHOLDS  
FROM WHERE AT LEAST ONE MEMBER IS  
EMPLOYED IN NON-FARM OCCUPATIONS

Villages	Total number of households	Number of households from where at least one member is employed in non-farm occupations	Col. (3) as percentage of Col. (4)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
V <sub>1</sub>	176	77	43.75
V <sub>2</sub>	57	24	42.11
V <sub>3</sub>	174	66	37.93
V <sub>4</sub>	37	10	27.03
V <sub>5</sub>	272	79	29.04
V <sub>6</sub>	41	13	21.71
Total	757	269	35.71

Source : Field investigation in 1985-86.

of the total) at least one member was employed in non-farm jobs during the period of our survey. Like the job of agricultural labourers, these non-farm jobs also help bargadar families to raise their level of income. But, it should be noted that compared to ~~the~~ demand, the availability of non-farm job opportunities, as the data in Table VIII.33 reveals, were extremely meagre.

VIII.7.6 Landless agricultural labourers are the most vulnerable section of the agrarian rural population. Legislations have been passed in favour of the bargadars. Some parts of these legislations have also been implemented. But very few legislations have been passed in favour of the agricultural labourers. The minimum wages legislation enacted in 1948, to be realistic, has largely remained in the pages of law books and has hardly been implemented in practice. Wages of agricultural labourers, in fact, depend upon the demand for and supply of their number. It would, therefore, be interesting to review the position of agricultural labourers in regard to their receipt of minimum wages fixed by the government in peak and off agricultural seasons. Table VIII.34 below shows the percentage distribution of agricultural labourers on the basis of their receipt of minimum wages (cash and kind taken together) during "peak" and "off" agricultural seasons. It is evident that in peak seasons 48.96%; i.e. nearly half of the total agricultural labourers received wages which was less than the minimum. On the other hand, in off seasons, 91.70% of them received less than minimum wages and only 8.30% of

TABLE VIII.34      PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF AGRICULTURAL  
LABOURERS ACCORDING TO THE AMOUNT OF  
WAGES RECEIVED DURING PEAK AND OFF SEASONS\*

Vill- ages	Seasons of receiving wages					
	Peak season			Off season		
	Approximate to minimum wages**	Less than minimum wages	Total	Approximate to minimum wages	Less than minimum wages	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
V <sub>1</sub>	62.06	37.94	100.00	10.34	89.66	100.00
V <sub>2</sub>	47.73	52.27	100.00	11.36	88.64	100.00
V <sub>3</sub>	33.33	66.67	100.00	8.33	91.67	100.00
V <sub>4</sub>	45.45	54.55	100.00	6.06	93.94	100.00
V <sub>5</sub>	41.03	58.97	100.00	5.13	94.87	100.00
V <sub>6</sub>	47.27	52.73	100.00	7.27	92.73	100.00
Total	48.96	51.04	100.00	8.30	91.70	100.00

Source : Field investigation in 1985-86.

\* "Peak" seasons indicate the periods when agricultural operations are in full swing. "Off" seasons are the periods when agricultural operations are few. In our region of study, peak seasons are approximately the periods from May to August and then from mid-November to mid-March. The rest of the periods are the off seasons.

\*\* Minimum wages was Rs. 12.01 (cash and kind taken together) for an adult male labourer during the period of our field survey.

them received wages approximately equal to the minimum. The reasons are not difficult to understand. Agricultural labourers are mostly unorganised and could not raise their wages through collective action. Moreover, as non-farm employment opportunities are limited, their supply far exceeded their demand, specially in off agricultural reasons. These are the reasons for which minimum wages legislation could not be implemented in practice.

#### SECTION 8 : SUMMARY AND SOME SUGGESTIONS

VIII.8.1 In regard to the success of the OB programme in respect of recording the names of bargadars in the investigated villages it could be found that the programme has achieved a fair degree of success when recording of bargadars is compared with the actual number of bargadars. But the recording of bargadars, when compared with the estimated probable number of bargadars, the performance of the programme does not appear to be satisfactory. The official calculation of the probable number of bargadars, however, in the method discussed earlier, is not realistic for the reasons already noted. Therefore, it may be inferred that the overall performance of the OB programme in recording the names of bargadars in relation to the actual number of existing bargadars in the villages of our investigation has been up to the mark.

**VIII.8.2** From our study, it did not come into view that there is any functional relation between recording and literacy of bargadars. The determinant factors were - persuasion by panchayat members and peasants' organisations and initiative of government officials. Among these three factors, the most important was the second one. It can be found that on an average, the highest percentage of recording (35.27% of the total) had taken place at the persuasion of the members of the peasants' organisations. It can be observed that wherever the peasants' organisations had played an active role, the overall recording had been higher. On the other hand, the villages in which comparatively larger cases of recording had taken place at the own initiative of bargadars, the overall recording had been lower. These two factors largely explain the higher recording in some villages and lower recording in other villages. However, in all the villages, it had been possible to record a considerable number of bargadars at the persuasion of panchayat members. Bargadars in most cases were afraid to come forward to record their names. But when they were backed by panchayat members or peasants' organisations or government officials, they were able to overcome their fear and hesitation and came forward to record their names.

**VIII.8.3** In regard to sharing of produce and costs between land-owners and bargadars, we have found that even after the execution of the OB programme, the legal provisions have hardly been effective in changing the traditional 50:50 sharing of produce and costs. In

most cases a recorded bargadar got 50% share of the output. He had to bear the major share of all costs. Thus, though barga rights have been guaranteed to bargadars, it has not been possible to secure the legally allowed share of produce for bargadars due to several reasons. The main reason is the observance of tradition and custom both by bargadars and landowners in this respect. The other two reasons, viz., bargadars' weaker bargaining power and bargadars' debt obligation to landlords, are not less important. The existing law appears to be inadequate in so far as it does not provide for mixed cost-sharing which is widely practised in the Duars region of Jalpaiguri district as well as in other parts of West Bengal<sup>19</sup>. However, from the relevant section of law it logically follows that landowners, in cases of mixed cost sharing where they bear less than 100% share of the costs of cultivation, should share less than 50% share of produce. But our study reveals that inspite of bearing less than 100% of the costs, the landowners got 50% of produce in most cases. This indicates that bargadars were largely deprived of their legitimate shares. The relevant legal provisions have not been fully implemented in practice due to the observance of custom by landowners and bargadars and also due to the vulnerable socio-economic condition of bargadars. The case of unrecorded bargadars, in respect of sharing of produce and costs was a little different from that of the recorded bargadars. The 50:50 mode of sharing of produce took place in higher percentage of cases for unrecorded bargadars than that of the recorded bargadars. In respect of cost sharing, the 50:50 mode was prevalent in smaller number of cases for unrecorded bargadars.

than those of the recorded ones. The special feature in case of unrecorded bargadars in regard to cost sharing was that in a small percentage of cases, landowners did share the entire cost of cultivation but shared 50% of produce with their bargadars. This happened due to the prevalence of old patron-client relationship with the landowners and their unrecorded bargadars.

VIII.8.4 In regard to the availability of institutional finance to recorded bargadars our study shows that though the Government has taken steps in this direction, much remains to be done still now. Only about 44% of the recorded bargadars received institutional finance. This implies that a large number of them are still to be covered by this facility as a "follow up" operation and after recording their names. Nevertheless, recorded bargadars were found to be in a privileged position than the unrecorded ones, so far as the provision of institutional finance was concerned.

VIII.8.5 Besides institutional source, bargadars procured loans from other sources as well. The new feature that was discernible in this respect was that dependence of bargadars on their landlords had lessened considerably. But their dependence on mahajans (money lenders) was still great. Loans taken from mahajans were always and invariably associated with very high rates of interest. Bargadars also took loans from "others" which included relatives, friends neighbours etc. It was found that in a big percentage of cases, loans

obtained from "landlords" and "others" were interest free. But the interest free loans were sometimes associated with certain ulterior motives of "landlords" and "others". Through interest free loans, landlords in fact tied their bargadars in the web of dependency. Bargadars had to perform some economic and extra-economic functions in lieu of interest free loans. Due to debt obligations of this type, bargadars were often bound to accept less than the legally allowed shares. The distinguishing feature of credit relations between landlords and their unrecorded bargadars was that, unrecorded bargadars obtained loans from their landlords in larger percentage of cases than that of the recorded bargadars and also those loans were interest free in larger percentage of cases of unrecorded bargadars than that of the recorded bargadars. This implies, on the one hand, the prevalence of more cordial relationship between unrecorded bargadars and their landowners than that between the recorded bargadars and their landowners, and a greater dependence of unrecorded bargadars on their landowners compared to the recorded bargadars.

VIII.8.6 Bargadars had to take loans for various purposes. The most important of these was the purpose of agricultural production. The other two purposes were - loans for consumption purposes and contingencies. The last mentioned purpose sometimes damaged the viability of the household economy of bargadars, as these loans were often used for unproductive pieces of business.



VIII.8.7 Position of repayment of loans taken from institutional sources appeared to be unsatisfactory. It could be found that nearly 12% of the bargadars were not repaying at all, while about 21% were repaying in an irregular manner. It could be found that majority of the bargadars could not repay due to poverty. Some one fifth of them could not repay due to the misutilisation of loan money. There is another group, which form as large as one fourth of the total number, who did not repay wilfully inspite of having the necessary means. The reason appeared to be their notion that those loans would be written off in some future year.

VIII.8.8 A comparison of productivity of barga lands and non-barga lands showed that there was no significant difference in productivities in the two types of lands. Differences in productivities in the lands of exclusively owner cultivators and that of exclusively bargadar cultivators was also insignificant. Moreover, a comparison of productivities in the lands of recorded bargadars and unrecorded bargadars also showed that the difference was negligible. The main reason for such a state of affair appeared to be the fact that, in all cases, lands were cultivated with similar traditional and archaic techniques of production, almost equal initiatives, absence of improved agricultural practices and non-existence of irrigation facilities. Therefore, it can not be inferred that barga cultivation is either superior or inferior to ownership cultivation, and that productivity of barga lands has risen in the lands of recorded bargadars than that of the unrecorded bargadars.

VIII.8.9 Condition of poverty, vulnerability and precarious existence of a section of bargadars is exhibited by the fact that about 8% bargadars have neither ploughs nor bullocks. Another 3% have either ploughs only or bullocks only. At least some of the bargadars from these categories were waiting to join the ranks of agricultural labourers. Guaranteed barga rights are not much meaningful to such bargadars.

VIII.8.10 It is revealed from our study that more than half of the bargadars have also to work as agricultural labourers to supplement their incomes from land. Not only the bargadars themselves, but some of their family members also have to work as casual agricultural labourers. But, though such large number of bargadars as well as some of their family members seek employment in agricultural operations, they did not get employment throughout the year. Agriculture is not a perennial and diversified occupation here, rather it is mainly mono-crop, seasonal and traditional in nature. Hence, most of the casual workers did find employment only for some months in a year. It was found that about 70% of the bargadars intending to work as casual agricultural labourers got employment for less than six months in a year. Although avenues of non-farm employment appeared to be very meagre, still a certain percentage of the family members of the bargadars' families were employed in non-farm jobs. It was also found that, only in case of one third of bargadars' households, at least one member was employed in non-farm occupations.

VIII.8.11 The most neglected section of rural people are, however, the landless agricultural labourers. They are numerically greater than that of the bargadars. Security in their economic lives are very much lacking. As they are dependent on the wage income and since employment opportunities in the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors are meagre at present, it is certain that most of them live below poverty line. Due to various unfavourable conditions prevailing in the countryside, minimum wages legislation could not be implemented. Moreover, due to the unorganised nature of agricultural labourers, they are unable to secure the minimum wages fixed by the government. Our investigation reveals that, though during busy agricultural seasons ("peak" seasons) majority of agricultural labourers were able to receive wages equal to or sometimes a little above the minimum wages, still a considerable percentage of them could not secure wages equal to the minimum wages. In the slack seasons ("off seasons") when agricultural operations are few, a negligible part of them got wages equal to minimum wages and most of them (91.70% of the total agricultural labourers interviewed) received wages which were much below the prescribed minimum. It was felt that to ensure the stability in the rural structure it is imperative to take necessary measures to protect the interests of this class of people.

VIII.8.12 We have failed to investigate the incidence of eviction of bargadars for want of reliable data. On the basis of approximate information collected from various categories of cultivators, it appeared to us that there were certain cases where there had been

eviction of bargadars both before and after the recording of bargadars through OB. It was found that a certain number of exclusively owner cultivators owning small amounts of land and some of the agricultural labourers were erstwhile bargadars. These erstwhile bargadars did not record their names on good faith, but, the landowner evicted them prior to or just after launching of the <sup>OB</sup> programme. In most cases, eviction had taken place without and in some cases, with very small amount of monetary compensation to the bargadars by their landowners. Similar cases were found in case of owner-cum-bargadars. Sometimes, eviction was made in lieu of writing off of the loans of the bargadars. Some exclusively bargadar farmers were evicted just before recording their names. In such cases, it was stated that, landowners paid a nominal amount of money to the bargadars and debarred the latter in recording their names. This sort of eviction with the payment of a lump sum amount to the bargadars has taken place in a few cases even after recording of their names by submitting "istafanama" (withdrawal) by bargadars to the government authorities. Evictions in all cases, as it appeared, had been made unlawfully. It is very difficult, indeed, to stop eviction of the kind mentioned above by any piece of legislation when bargadars themselves yield to the pressure (both economic and extra-economic) of the landowners. It can be stopped, if and only if, bargadars can build up a strong economic base of their own and minimise their economic dependence on the landowners. During the time of our investigation, it occurred to us that the position regarding

the eviction of bargadars has stabilised and no new case of eviction came to our notice. Perhaps, both recorded and unrecorded bargadars and their landowners are now interested to maintain the status quo after the OB programme.

VIII.8.13 It may be relevant to make some general comments and observations on the success of the OB programme and the implementation of the recent land reforms legislations in the Duars region of North Bengal.

VIII.8.14 It may be recalled that the movement for security and better terms of sharecropping has inherited a legacy of strength and continuity from the British period, specially since the late 1940's. At that time concern was voiced not only against the eviction of bargadars and emphasis was placed on building up active resistance to eviction but also a strong movement was launched for securing a better (two-third) share to the bargadars. But, the setting up of a viable production organisation has always received inadequate attention. The land reform measures in general and the OB programme in particular may be said to have achieved a partial success. This is revealed by the fact that though barga rights have been guaranteed, there is widespread persistence of the traditional mode of sharing of produce irrespective of recording and presence of political awareness and organisation in most of the villages. To eliminate the old patron-client relationship between landowners and tillers, it may be

necessary to make the small and marginal farms of bargadars economically viable.

VIII.8.15 Our study highlights the fact that in changing and shaping the agro-economic condition, the role of the two facets of the productive forces, i.e., both the technological and institutional forces, are important and interdependent. The improvement of one without changes in the other can not bring about significant progress.

Agriculture is undertaken with an archaic technique of production by the farmers in our region of study. There are no facilities of irrigation provided by the government. Use of this vitally important input in private initiative appeared to be quite inadequate. Without the application of proper doses of fertiliser, without the introduction of high-yielding varieties of seeds, and without the diversification of cropping pattern etc. agriculture can not become a remunerative pursuit. In the absence of all these conditions, level of production has remained at a very low level. It is easily discernable that whatever might be the pattern of landholding and whatever measure of land reforms be introduced and implemented there is no possibility of raising productivity of land and improving the quality of life of the farming population if some technological and biological innovations, at least at a moderate scale, are not applied. Along with these, the creation of irrigation and other basic infrastructural facilities are vitally necessary. In the absence of such facilities, farmers in the region of our study would not be able to keep up with those in the areas having these necessary pre-requisites for agricultural development.

VIII.8.16 Moreover, it is often held that the number of persons falling in the category of landless labourers is far greater than the number of bargadars and no attempt has been made to extend the benefits of land reforms to such people<sup>20</sup>. There can be no denying the fact that landless agricultural labourers, apart from bargadars, are in worse condition than bargadars, and need attention. Solutions for ameliorating the poor economic condition of the poor agricultural labourers may be sought in redistributive justice, elimination of inefficiency in the agrarian system by developing it in scientific lines, urbanisation, expansion of non-farm employment opportunities and a host of other packages.

VIII.8.17 It may be suggested that consolidation of holdings and co-operative farming should be adopted to give vigor and viability to the small and marginal farm economy of the bargadar and non-bargadar cultivators. However, in West Bengal, of all reform measures, achievements in land consolidation have been the poorest<sup>21</sup>. In the post-land redistribution phase little efforts have been made towards consolidating the holdings of the beneficiaries and bringing them under one compact block. But as long as the agrarian economy is marked by the presence of a sizeable number of rich and middle peasants having proprietary rights on land, it may also be suggested that the small and marginal farmers, agricultural labourers and poor artisans should have "communal" ownership of land and other means of production, where these small producers' co-operative with government

support may be helpful towards raising the productivity of land of the latter group of people. For this it may also be necessary to usher in technological improvements in the agricultural front crowded by the small and marginal farmers.



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2. The estimated average size of barga holding is between 0.97 acres and 1.25 acres in West Bengal, and 1.5 acres in the district of Jalpaiguri. See paragraphs VIII.2.5 and VIII.2.6 of this chapter and notes 10, 11 and 12 below. In the six villages we have investigated the actual average size of barga holding is 1.85 acres. See table VIII.3 of this chapter. All these figures indicate that bargadars generally belong to the small farmer category. It is to be noted that farmers holding land 0-1 hectare have been categorised as marginal farmers in the Agricultural Censuses.
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4. Ghosh, R., "Agrarian Programme of Left Front Government", Economic and Political Weekly, June 20-27, 1981, Review of Agriculture, p. A-50.

5. Ibid.
6. This was done by a government circular dated July 5, 1978. The camp in Midnapur district was held in village Belda under Narayangar P.S. and the other camp in the district of Hooghly was held in village Halusai under Polba P.S. Cited in Rasul Abdulla, Krishak Sabhar Itihas (in Bengali), Calcutta, Nabajatak Prakashan, 1982, p. 381.
7. Ghosh, R., op. cit., p. A-50.
8. West Bengal Government Memorandum Concerning Operation Barga, Memo No. 12304(23) GE dated Calcutta, the 5th July, 1978.
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12. The relevant information have been collected from Settlement Charge Office at Jalpaiguri.
13. An introduction to the selected villages is given in the Appendix to the present chapter. A detailed description of demographic and socio-economic characteristics of these villages has been given in this Appendix.

14. Studies by Ashok Rudra (in 1976) and N. Bandopadhyaya (in 1982) also revealed that this 50:50 mode of sharing the produce is the most common mode. See Rudra, Ashok, Paschim Banger Bargadar (in Bengali), Calcutta, Kathashilpa, 1982, p. 2 and table 1 in p. 45. Bandopadhyaya, N., op. cit., p. 122, p. 144.
15. See Rudra, Ashok, op. cit., p. 2. Bandopadhyaya, N., op. cit., p. 144.
16. Bargadars have to perform certain works for their landlords without any remuneration, such as supply labour for agricultural operations in the field of landlords, assist the landlords in marketing of goods, perform some household works of landlords etc.
17. Rudra, Ashok, op. cit., pp. 17-18.
18. Section 17(1a) and 17(1b) of the West Bengal Land Reforms Act, 1955.
19. That mixed cost-sharing arrangements are prevalent in other parts is also revealed by other studies. See, Basu, S.K. and Bhattacharyya, S.K., Land Reforms in West Bengal - A Study on Implementation, Calcutta, Oxford Book Company, 1963, pp. 33-37. Rudra, Ashok, op. cit., pp. 5-9, pp. 46-47 (tables 3 and 4).
20. Rudra, Ashok, "One Step Forward, Two Steps Backward" in Economic and Political Weekly, Review of Agriculture, June 20-27, 1981, pp. A-64-A-68. Bandopadhyaya, N., " 'Operation Barga' and Land Reforms Perspective in West Bengal - A Discursive Review", in Economic and Political Weekly, Review of Agriculture, June 20-27, 1981, p.A-42.
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