

GOVERNMENT OF THE
CENTRAL PROVINCES AND BERAR



REPORT
ON THE
EXCISE ADMINISTRATION
OF THE
CENTRAL PROVINCES & BERAR
FOR THE
CALENDAR YEAR 1940

NAGPUR
GOVERNMENT PRINTING, C. P. & BERAR
1941

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GOVERNMENT OF THE
CENTRAL PROVINCES AND BERAR
SEPARATE REVENUE DEPARTMENT

Nagpur, the 13th December 1941.

READ—

Report on the Excise Administration of the Central Provinces and Berar for the calendar year 1940.

READ ALSO—

The District Reports.

RESOLUTION

The year witnessed a further extension of the prohibition of country and foreign spirit and of toddy to the whole of the Raipur district, except certain zamindaris and aboriginal tracts, the Warora and Brahmapuri tahsils of the Chanda district, and the town of Buldana in the Buldana district. With this extension the area under prohibition increased by 7,001 square miles with a population of 13.26 lakhs to 22,278 square miles with a population of 39.26 lakhs. The "dry" area now covers approximately one-fourth of the area and population of the province as against one-sixth in the preceding year. The "dry" areas have been made more watertight by their encirclement to a depth of 10 miles by a shopless zone. In 1939, 24,314 proof gallons of country spirit and 58,475 gallons of toddy were consumed in the area to which prohibition was newly extended in 1940. The total loss to provincial revenues from prohibition is now estimated to be in the neighbourhood of 8½ lakhs of rupees and consumers have been saved over Rs. 11 lakhs to spend elsewhere. Some part of these savings is now undoubtedly employed more fruitfully but, as the Commissioner of the Nagpur division observes, the chorus of enthusiasm for the benefits of prohibition is tending to become automatic, and should not be too uncritically received. The continuously rising tide of illicit distillation despite vigorous official counter-measures is only one of several indications that expenditure has not been entirely diverted into beneficial channels, and that a considerable part of it in fact is unproductive of anything except a new class of criminals. The attempted salvation of the many has certainly been at the cost of the deterioration of a few; and until the marked apathy of rural society towards prohibition, to which several of the district reports draw attention, is replaced by active support this distressing feature of prohibition cannot be expected to disappear. That old habits are not easily eradicated is evidenced by the sudden jump of 7,000 gallons of country spirit consumed in the few remaining shops outside the dry and shopless zones in the Raipur district.

2. The usual measures aimed at reducing the consumption of intoxicants were continued. In the wet areas the issue price of country spirit was enhanced in 11 towns and rural areas of 5 districts, and the rate of the tax on toddy trees was enhanced in two districts. The issue prices of opium, ganja, and bhanga were also raised. In the result, there was an all-round decrease in the consumption of all intoxicants, except foreign liquor and toddy. The increase in the consumption of foreign liquor is attributed to the large expansion of the military personnel stationed in the province. The continued restriction of consumption of liquor and drugs is producing reactions which are not all satisfactory. In the aboriginal tracts in particular two Commissioners of divisions draw pointed attention to the increase of crime in a comparatively law abiding population. In the Mandla district the high price of opium is held responsible for an increase in offences against property by addicts of that drug, and there was concerted resistance amongst the Gond to the substitution of warehouse for outstill liquor. It will need little short of a revolution in social customs in such tracts to achieve any abiding reform, and meanwhile much harm can be done by setting too fast a pace.

3. The total excise revenue slightly increased from Rs. 58.11 lakhs to Rs. 58.51 lakhs, largely due to improved economic conditions coupled with the increase in the issue price of intoxicants. It is gratifying to note that the total expenditure on the other hand declined by 8 per cent, from Rs. 8.24 lakhs to Rs. 7.58 lakhs.

4. The Excise Department has been entrusted with the duty of administering the Central Provinces and Berar Entertainments Duty Act, 1936, the Central Provinces and Berar Sales of Motor Spirit and Lubricants Taxation Act, 1938, and the Central Provinces and Berar Tobacco Act, 1939, which brought in a total revenue of Rs. 6,49,437.

5. In conclusion, the Provincial Government desires to thank Mr. Parmanand, who held the office of Excise Commissioner throughout the year, for his efficient administration of the department. It also desires to record its appreciation of the services rendered by those non-official bodies and individuals whose devotion to the cause of temperance and prohibition has been commended in the district reports.

ORDER.—Ordered that a copy of the resolution be forwarded to the Excise Commissioner, Central Provinces and Berar, for information and guidance, and that it be published in Part I of the *Central Provinces and Berar Gazette*.

By order of the Governor, C. P. & Berar,
 G. S. BHALJA,
 Secy. to Govt., C. P. & Berar, S. R. Dept.

No. SL-2158

FROM

PARMANAND, Esq., B.Sc.,
BAR.-AT-LAW, I.C.S.,
EXCISE COMMISSIONER,
CENTRAL PROVINCES AND BERAR.

TO

THE SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT,
CENTRAL PROVINCES AND BERAR,
SEPARATE REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

Nagpur, 28th April 1941.

SIR,

I have the honour to submit the report on the excise administration of this province for the calendar year 1940, together with the prescribed statements and the district reports.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient servant,

PARMANAND,
*Excise Commissioner,
Central Provinces & Berar.*

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