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Study of Customary Rights  
and Living and Working  
Conditions of Scavengers  
in Two Towns

OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR GENERAL, INDIA  
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## FOREWORD

In my general Foreword to the Village Survey series of the 1961 Census publications, I have briefly explained how the idea of the Survey unfolded itself and developed between 1959 and 1961. Towards the end of 1961 several distinguished scholars were invited to write special monographs for the Village Survey series. At the same time, the Social Studies Section of the Registrar General's Office, headed by Dr. B.K. Roy Burman, undertook experiments in various types of social study. Dr. Roy Burman stimulated his colleagues and assistants to go into great depth over specific problems of social change. His object was, apart from striking new lines in methodology and designs of schedules, new methods of tabulation and cross-tabulation, new lines of correlating apparently unrelated fields of social phenomenon, to train his colleagues and assistants rigorously in the science of social investigation. He took a wide range of problems and even a wider geographical distribution of them, throughout India.

This study of customary rights and living and working conditions of scavengers in two towns - Mathura and Bhiwani - is a testimony to Dr. B. K. Roy Burman's abilities in directing research and to the staunchness and probity with which the investigation was conducted, analysed and reported upon by Shri H.L. Harit and Kumari Suman Bhatia. This study has added to our knowledge of this community in some parts of the country and I wish to record my acknowledgements to my colleagues.

New Delhi  
November 10, 1966.

**Asok Mitra**  
Registrar General, India.



## P R E F A C E

In many towns of Northern India; specially in Western U.P., Punjab, Rajasthan and Gujarat, the scavengers claim to have customary rights to serve in the houses of their clients. In the annual reports of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, it has been reported several times, that unless the system of serving as scavenger as a matter of customary right is abolished, it would be difficult to improve the economic and social conditions of the scavengers.

In 1957, as the Officer-in-charge of the Cultural Research Institute, Calcutta and then in 1961 as Assistant Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Government of India, in-charge of Orissa Region, I had some opportunity to study the working and living conditions of the scavengers in different towns of West Bengal and Orissa respectively. In those towns though the scavengers do not claim to have any customary right to serve in the different households, their working and living conditions are by no means satisfactory.

I, therefore, always had a feeling that the customary rights of the scavengers should be studied in some detail, so that we may have a better understanding of the system.

In 1963, a rapid survey of the customary rights of the scavengers was undertaken at Mathura. It is a medium sized town in Western U.P. and also, the Investigator Kum. Suman Bhatia had earlier contact with the place.

In connection with the survey, a schedule was drawn up. It had the following parts:—A. General data B. Data to be collected from Municipality. C. Data to be collected from scavenger households. D. Data to be collected from non-official organisations working among the scavengers. E. Data to be collected from the leaders of the scavengers.

After the survey was completed at Mathura, it was felt desirable that for the purpose of comparison, a survey should be made at least in a small town in Punjab. Bhiwani in Punjab was accordingly selected for survey. At this stage Sri H. L. Harit, who was requested to undertake the survey at Bhiwani, drew my attention to the fact that the customary rights of the scavengers in the towns should be studied as a dimension of the *jajmani* system in the villages. Though this aspect was kept in view, even at the time of the survey at Mathura, it was not sharply formulated in the research design. In the light of the suggestion of Sri Harit, the schedule was slightly modified and a new part, *viz.*, part F, relating to structural link between *jajmani* system and customary rights of the scavengers, was added. A set of the schedule is furnished at annexure. Part C of the schedule, relating to households of scavenger caste was canvassed in 18 households at Bhiwani and 20 households at Mathura.

The data collected by Kum. Bhatia and Sri Harit were tabulated by Sri K. R. Kapoor according to a tabulation design drawn up by me.

The first draft for the first and second chapters were prepared by Sri Harit and the first draft for the third chapter was prepared by Kum. Bhatia. The drafts were substantially modified by me. The credit for data furnished in the report belongs to Sri Harit and Kum. Bhatia; the responsibility for the report as a whole belongs to me. Sri Harit assisted me in editing the report by checking the figures wherever any incongruity was found, and also by arranging both his and Kum. Bhatia's materials in a uniform order.

After the final draft was ready, I entirely depended on Sri Harit about the follow-up actions.

I am grateful to Dr. K. C. Pathak, Chairman of Mathura, Municipal Committee, Dr. Chaturvedi, Medical Officer, Mathura Municipality, Sri Mathur, Chief Sanitary Inspector, Mathura Municipality, Rev. Joshi, pastor of American Mission, for their ungrudging help to Kum. Suman Bhatia, during her field investigation. I am also grateful to Sri Raja Ram, a leader of the scavengers for the valuable information provided by him to Kum. Bhatia.

Similarly I am grateful to Sri Manohar Lal, Secretary Municipal Committee, Bhiwani, Sri Harlal Singh, Municipal Commissioner Bhiwani and Sri Melu Ram President of sweeper's union Bhiwani, for the assistance that they rendered to Sri Harit, during his field study at Bhiwani.

Sri S. N. Kapur, Steno-typist and Sri B. N. Kapoor, typist, who have typed the final draft, deserve special thanks. Sri Ramgopal, who has prepared the Index and assisted in the final stage of making the script ready for printing deserves mention.

I am grateful to Sri K. D. Ballal, Central Tabulation Officer, Office of the Registrar General India, for taking special interest for getting the monograph printed in time. Sri Bani Singh, who ably helped him also deserves my thanks.

I am grateful to Sri A. Mitra, Registrar General of India, whose encouragement made it possible to undertake such studies as an adjunct of Census operations. I am also grateful to Sri A. Chandrasekhar, Officer on Special Duty, in the office of the Registrar General of India, whose understanding and interest has been a source of great inspiration for me.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

In many places in Northern India, the scavengers and sweepers have customary rights to clean latrines and to do other scavenging and sweeping works in private households. In some places, they have also the right to sell the night-soil and refuse collected by them. Sometimes these rights are also sold or mortgaged. Exercise of these rights through ages, has created a net work of economic and social obligations, known by different names in different areas. Some of the more common names are *jajmani*, *gharaki* or *gharagi*, *dastoori*, *virat*, *jagirdari* etc. It is alleged by many that this system has created vested interests which stand in the way of improving the working conditions of the scavengers.

In 1957, the Government of India appointed a committee with Prof. Malkani as Chairman, to prepare a scheme for putting an end to the practice of removal of night-soil as headload in buckets and baskets. After a thorough study of the problem, the Committee observed as follows:

“We cannot expect any improvements in the method of scavenging or think in terms of putting an end to the practice of carrying night-soil as headloads or improve sanitary conditions of the towns as long as such (customary) rights continue in a large part of the country. The mere promulgation of Municipal bye-laws to carry out the duties of scavenging in a certain way will not carry us far. Such bye-laws are already in the Municipal Acts of many Municipalities etc., but are never enforced or cared for, as the private scavengers have control over the situation and the bye-laws have been virtually rendered infructuous.\*”

The Committee emphatically recommended that “customary rights must not in any case be allowed to continue, but be abrogated immediately.\*”

A study was undertaken by the Social Study Unit of the Office of the Registrar General, India to find out the nature of this right and how the right has been affected by various legislations and administrative

and other measures introduced by the Government and the local bodies. In this connection, existence of middle men and lease holders; terms and conditions on which the rights are transferred; caste and sex-wise specialisation; effect of mechanization (*i.e.* introduction of wheel-barrow and improved implements etc.) on the functioning of the system; trends of change in the attitude and life-way of the right holders as a result of spread of education and other factors, were specially taken into consideration. Some study was also made of the living and working conditions of the scavengers.

The study was based on field investigation in two towns, namely, Mathura in Uttar Pradesh and Bhiwani in Punjab. These two places were selected for study as according to Malkani Committee's report “customary rights in its peak and worst form exist in Punjab and western parts of Uttar Pradesh.”

Information was collected mainly by interview method. For this purpose 6 different types of schedules were canvassed, copies of which are furnished at Annexure 1.

#### Socio-economic context of the customary rights

The customary rights of scavengers and sweepers to clean latrines and do other sweeping works in private households in some towns and cities, should be examined in the light of the *jajmani* system (patron-client relationship) prevailing in villages. Wisner, in his study of Karimpur village in Uttar Pradesh (1932), established that in each North Indian Hindu village community, there is “an inter relation of services which carries with it certain responsibilities and rights”. These responsibilities and rights constitute the structure of the “Hindu *jajmani* System.” A brief outline of the system as observed by Wisner in his book “The Hindu *Jajmani* System” is given here.

“In a Hindu village in North India, each individual has a fixed economic and social status, established by his birth in any given caste. If he is born into a carpenter family, he finds himself related by blood to carpenters exclusively. All his paternal

\* Report of the scavenging Conditions Enquiry Committee (M.H.A.), 1960, P. 80.

and maternal relatives in that village or in other villages are members of the carpenter caste and that alone. The men folk in all these families earn their livelihood through the carpentry trade, sometimes supplemented by agriculture. Each carpenter has his own clientele, which has become established through custom, and which continues from generation to generation. Where the village is large enough, the clientele will be limited by the boundaries of the village. If the village is not large, or the members of carpenter families are too numerous to meet the needs of one village, the clientele extends to small neighbouring villages where there are no carpenters in residence. This relationship once established cannot be broken except by the carpenter himself who may choose to sell his rights to another carpenter. It is heritable and sometimes transferable. See Indian Law Reports Vol. XLIII p. 35. The relationship fixes responsibilities both on the carpenter and the one whom he serves. The carpenter during the sowing season must remove and sharpen the plough point once or twice a week. During the harvest he must keep sickles sharp and renew handles as often as demanded. He must be ready to repair a cart whenever called upon by a customer, or to make minor repairs on the customer's house. In exchange, he receives at each harvest, twenty eight pounds of grain, for every plough owned by his client." In addition to these he has also additional rights and responsibilities.

"This service relationship is established not only between carpenters and other residents of the village, but affects all castes. Each caste in the village at some time during the year is expected to render a fixed type of service to each other caste. There is no exact equivalent of this system in the West....The carpenter calls his entire clientele his "jajman" or "birt"\*—these terms being identical in meaning. The individual family or head of the family whom the carpenter serves is called the carpenter's 'jajman'+ The 'jajman' speaks of the carpenter's family and all other families that serve him as his 'Kam-wale' or 'Kam-karne wale' %

\* 'Virat' for scavenger right in Mathura.

+ Reference to the term *Jajman* or *Jujman* as it is spelled in older literature are found in Court records usually in reference to the employer of a Brahmin priest. The priest is referred to as "purohit" and his rights as 'purohiti haqq'. But Wiser in Karimpur (and the author in Bhiwani) found that the term *jajman* is used for all who have the employer relationship. And the rights involved in the employer-employee relationship, are popularly called '*Jajmani haqq*.'

% Osear Lewis has used "Kamin" word in his foreword of the book.

(i.e. workers), if they are of the serving castes, i.e., *Sudras* or lower. If the one who serves is a 'Pandit' (title for a Brahman priest), a "Bhat" (astrologer), or another from one of the three upper caste divisions, he is referred to by his caste name—"Pandit", "Bhat" etc. and not as a "Kam-Karne-wale."

"A social organisation, such as the Hindu caste system, which gives each occupational group a fixed standing within the community must of necessity have certain patterns of behaviour, which enable each caste to maintain his own status and satisfactorily engage in relationship with others. Among these behaviour patterns are marriage, social intercourse in matters of eating, drinking and smoking, conventions of untouchability and unapproachability and service<sup>inter</sup> relationship...." In the service inter-relationship, each caste renders service, within certain range "limited or unlimited to each of the other castes." The range reveals that all castes are jajman of each other. "In turn each of the castes has a form of service to perform for the others."

"In this manner the various castes of a Hindu village in North India are interrelated in a service capacity. Each serves the others. Each in turn is master. Each in turn is servant. Each has his own clientele comprising members of different castes which is his "jajmani" or "birt." This system of Inter-relatedness in service within the Hindu community is called the Hindu "jajmani system."

"In return for the various services rendered, there are payments in cash and in kind made daily, monthly, bi-yearly, per piece of work, and on special occasions, and in part on the good will of the jajman. The strength of the system depends, however, not on the actual payments made but on the concessions granted to the different occupational groups. These may be listed as:

- (a) Free residence site.
- (b) Free food for family.
- (c) Free clothing.
- (d) Free food for animals.

- (e) Free timber.
- (f) Free dung.
- (g) Rent free land.
- (h) Credit facilities.
- (i) Opportunity for supplementary employment.
- (j) Free use of tools, implements and draught animals.
- (k) Free use of raw materials.
- (l) Free hides.
- (m) Free funeral pyre plot.
- (n) Casual leave.
- (o) Aid in litigation.
- (p) Variety in diet.
- (q) Healthful location.

"These concessions do not apply equally to all, but vary according to custom. The value of the concessions to the average man in any group is so great that without hesitation he turns down a fixed cash income that may be offered to him by a mill employer in a neighbouring city."

As the various factors are analysed it becomes evident that we have here a system which is very similar to or identical with the religiosocio-economic plan of occupations outlined 2000 years ago by Hindu philosophers and law makers. "(It) has philosophical and religious sanction in the Laws of Manu\* which has served as guide for the Hindu social and economic organisation for almost 2000 years.

The *jajmani* system has within the past 150 years, been further strengthened by civil law. That which was formerly a custom sanctioned by religion has been recognised by the English courts in India."

#### **Place of *Bhangi* in *Jajmani* system of a rural community**

Wiser has included the *Bhangis* among the village servants of "Kam Karne Wale" (*Kameens*). Their responsibility to their *jajmans* consists of cleaning cesspools and privies and sweeping the roads, in front of the houses. The villagers do the sweeping within their own homes. Like so many of the menial services performed in the villages, the heaviest load of the work falls on the women. They clean the privies daily, and cesspools and drains once or twice a week. Sweeping of the roads in front of the houses is done by the males. But they do it only on special festive occasions, when there is a general cleaning

up of the *jajman's* house. To this is often added the sweeping of the threshing floor before the freshly harvested grain is brought in. The *Bhangi* males are also occasionally called upon by their *jajmans* to act as night watchmen when the *jajmans* stay outside the house overnight. They are also frequently called upon to act as messengers.

Because of the monopolistic nature of his work, a *Bhangi* is frequently in an advantageous position in his dealings with the *jajmans*. He can threaten to leave the *jajman* or to sell his right of serving the *jajman*. In the village community it is considered very derogatory for a *jajman* to be the subject of such a sale. In case of a dispute between a *Bhangi* and his *jajman* the word "Bechana" (sale) is enough to unnerve the latter and make him accept the claims of the *Bhangi*.

#### **Customary rights of scavengers in towns as continuation of *Jajmani* system in villages**

The studies at Bhiwani and Mathura reveal that in many respects the customary rights of the scavengers in these two towns are similar to the rights prevailing under *Jajmani* system in villages as reported by Wiser.

In both the towns scavenging occupation is done by the people belonging to a single caste, viz., Chuhra. It is thus the traditional occupation of a particular caste. At Bhiwani, in the past another caste, viz., Dhanuk, was also associated with scavenging. In course of time they dropped out, and the Chuhras monopolised the occupation. Not only that the caste has monopolised the occupation of scavenging in these two towns, but also individual members belonging to the caste have monopolised the right to serve particular households. As in villages, in these two towns also service relationship once established, cannot be broken except by the *Kam Karne Wala* himself. Further, in addition to economic bond, a sort of social bond exists between the *Bhangi* and his patron-client. The latter pays the *Bhangi*, daily or monthly remuneration as the case may be, in kind or cash for his services; but in addition he is under moral obligation to give presents to the *Bhangi* during festive occasions. At Bhiwani it was found that in one case, the patron-client who was a Bania, gave bad quality of rice to his *Bhangi* during Dewali festival. The *Bhangi* resented this; and later on, on intervention of the local

\* The Laws of Manu in "The Sacred Books of the East," Vol. XXV, Ed. by Max Muller).

Tahsildar, the Bania was forced to give better quality of rice to the Bhangi.

It has also been found at Bhiwani and Mathura that the ancestors of most of the Bhangi families were either serving as sweepers in these places before they grew up into towns or were serving as sweepers in near about villages under Jajmani system, before migration to the towns.

It is obvious from the above that the customary rights of the scavengers in towns have their roots in the age-old *Jajmani* rights prevailing in the villages. These rights have the sanction of old Hindu ethics which served as a guide for the organisation of Hindu community as a whole.

#### **Ethnographic details about the Chuhras**

As both at Bhiwani and Mathura the customary rights of scavengers are found to be exercised by only one community, viz, the *Chuhras*, some information about their origin and manners and customs would be of interest in this study.

In old published literature, the word *Chuhra* has been used for the sweepers of the plains of India. According to Rose, *Chuhra* seems to be a community from which a number of other low castes have sprung up. According to Hutton, "The *Chuhra* has been held to be the remnant of an aboriginal tribe, but in point of fact his physical type differs but little from that of other inhabitants." (Caste in India, p. 39). He further states that "when he turns Sikh he becomes a *Mazhabi* and . . . when he turns Muslim he becomes a *Musalli*." In urban sophisticated circles they go with other names like *Bhangi*, *Mehtar* or *Khakrob* etc. Among all these names '*Bhangi*' is more common. Now the *Chuhras* and other scavenging castes prefer to call themselves Balmikis, after the name of Rishi Balmiki of epic age.

*Bhangi* alone or along with some of the above synonyms, has been included in the list of Scheduled Castes in almost all the States of Northern India. They are considered to be at the lowest rung of the social ladder and the higher castes avoid their contact. Acceptance of food and water from them is a taboo for almost all the other castes.

Most of them are Hindus and believe in Hindu

Gods and goddesses. But they have their folk deities as well. As already mentioned recently they have started to associate themselves with Rishi Balmiki. Both at Bhiwani and Mathura the *Chuhras* have Balmiki temples, where they perform *Balmiki jayanti* every year. Another important subject of their reverence is Lalguru (during Muslim period he used to be known as Lalbeg). Some of them are also influenced by Sikhism; at Bhiwani they worship Guru Granth Sahib and have their own Gurudwara. Previously some of them had formally become Sikhs; but now none admits himself to be a Sikh or a *Mazhabi*. At Mathura some of the *Chuhras* have become Christians; but conversion does not seem to have brought about much change in their way of life. There are cases where some members are Hindus and others are Charistians, in the same families.

The rites connected with birth, marriage and death are essentially similar to those of the other Hindus of the region. They spend extravagantly specially during marriage and death rites and give feasts to the entire community. Pork and liquor must be offered profusely on these occasions.

They have a few wasteful habits, which keep them in perpetual poverty. Many of them are addicted to drinking and gambling.

Educationally they are very backward at Bhiwani where only one person is reported to have passed matric examination. A few persons at Bhiwani have, however, read upto 8th standard whereas at Mathura, there were 2 Matriculates and 3 Intermediates among 20 interviewed families besides 9 and 6 persons who had read upto VIII and IX respectively. There is provision for free tuition and supply of text books, slates, etc., but many people from among the *Chuhras* have not taken advantage of this. Many of them put forward the plea that they are too poor and that their children do not have good clothes to go to schools.

Both at Bhiwani and Mathura, the housing condition of the *Chuhras* is deplorable. Most of them live in small mud huts; only a few have pucca houses. They live in separate clusters (mohallas) which are located in unhygienic surroundings, either in low lying areas or near the pail depots or dumping grounds of rubbish. The pigs and fowls which they rear make the condition worse.

They have well organised caste panchayats. Each residential cluster (mohalla) has its own headman. The caste panchayat consists of the headman of the different mohallas. Besides social disputes connected with marriage, divorce, illicit sex relation etc., the caste panchayats deal with matters relating to customary rights and other economic interests.

With the social situation described above, it is but natural, that few of the *Bhangis*, feel motivated to get away from the traditional way of life. Almost all the *Chuhra* families both at Bhiwani and Mathura practise scavenging and sweeping either as principal or as subsidiary means of livelihood. Many of them, however, have other means of livelihood as well e.g. labour, rickshaw pulling tonga driving etc.

The number of persons working as scavengers and sweepers at Bhiwani and Mathura are as follows:

TABLE -1

Place	Approximate No. of households of Chuhras	Approximate No. of scavengers and sweepers	No. of scavengers and sweepers employed by Municipality	Approximate No. of scavengers and sweepers employed by private house-holds
1	2	3	4	5
Bhiwani	350	850	172	678
Mathura	1,000	4,500	433	4,067

It is to be noted that the number of *Chuhra* households is much smaller than the number of scavengers and sweepers. This is accounted for by the fact that from most of the households, more than one member serves as scavenger or sweeper.

There are some sex-wise disparities in the employment as scavengers and sweepers under Municipalities and under private household. The position in respect of the Municipalities is indicated in the statement below:

TABLE--2

Place	Number of scavengers and sweepers employed by Municipalities		
	Total	Males	Females
1	2	3	4
Bhiwani	172	118	54
Mathura	433	298	135

The above statement shows that much larger number of males have gone for Municipal employment.

The exact figures of male and female scavengers and sweepers working in private households are not known. But it was stated by all the informants that work in private households is virtually a monopoly of the females and the children; grown up males generally seek employment under Municipalities or elsewhere. This means that among the *Bhangis*, mainly the females and the children, work under condition determined by customary rights; on the other hand the adult males work under altogether different sets of rules.

As the main focii of this study are the customary rights and the living and working conditions as determined by the customary rights, the salient features of the customary rights as observed at Bhiwani and Mathura will be discussed in this Introductory Chapter. Details about exercise of the customary rights and terms and conditions of work of all categories of scavengers and sweepers will be furnished in the separate chapters on Bhiwani and Mathura respectively.

### Salient features of customary rights

(a) **Extent of customary rights**—Except in the Cantonment area of Mathura, where the scavenging work even in private households is done by the scavengers of the Cantonment Board, in the other areas of both Mathura and Bhiwani the scavengers work under customary rights. There is not a single scavenger who serves in any household on other terms and conditions. In old localities of both the towns these rights devolve from generation to generation. In new localities a Bhangi claims his right to serve houses built on lands of his old clients. At Bhiwani a Bania purchased a piece of land from a Rajput and built a house. He employed his old sweeper serving in a different locality to work in this new house. But the old scavenger of the Rajput, who owned the land previously, objected to it. The panchayat of the *Bhangis* was approached to settle the dispute, and the panchayat decided in favour of the sweeper of the erstwhile Rajput owner. At Mathura, one scavenger household reported that, some lands at Dampier Park area previously belonged to the clients of the ancestors of the head of the household. Later on houses were built on those lands by different parties; and the right to serve those houses automatically devolved on the scavenger household concerned. They claimed that even if the Municipality wanted to make

arrangement for the new households to be served by its own employees, the Municipality could not do it without paying compensation to the scavengers attached to the original owners of the lands.

**(b) Nature of work**—There are some differences in the services rendered under customary rights at Bhiwani and at Mathura. At Mathura the work is restricted only to scavenging and sweeping; at Bhiwani other menial jobs which are generally rendered by the scavengers in villages, still exist. This difference has been due to the fact that Mathura is a very old town, whereas Bhiwani has grown up into a town only during the last 150 years.

At Bhiwani the scavenger cleans the latrine and removes the night soil to the pail depot. In addition, she sweeps the roof of the house, the premises and the cattle shed; she also removes the cowdung either to the "Pathwara" (a place where cowdung cakes are prepared) or to the roof of the house itself. In some rich and respectable houses she prepares dung cakes even.

**(c) Worker**—As already mentioned, work in private households is generally done by females. In case of necessity, however, the males help the females. When a woman is pregnant or sick her husband works on her behalf. It is also not uncommon for woman of neighbouring households to temporarily assist a woman, when she is incapacitated due to some reason.

**(d) Time of work**—Both at Bhiwani and Mathura, a scavenger woman generally leaves her house early in the morning and returns at about 12 noon. Then she goes out again to collect daily bread from her clients and returns at about 2 P.M. Sometimes she goes out again to clean the latrines or render other menial jobs like making dung cakes. Thus she remains busy practically the whole day.

**(e) Remuneration**—Both at Bhiwani and Mathura, the scavengers are given a bread daily by each household served by them. In addition they are paid monthly remuneration in cash. In the old localities of Bhiwani, the scavengers are also paid in grain once a year. Such payment is called "Bhadwa" and is considered to be carry over of the custom which prevailed in the same locality, when it was a village.

Both at Mathura and Bhiwani, the scavengers get additional remuneration on occasions like child birth, marriage, death etc. On such occasions they are given by their patron-clients food and food leavings, new clothes etc. The shrouds covering the dead bodies are also given to them.

The Bhangis do not consider it derogatory to accept shrouds of dead bodies; they cite the example of King Harishchandra, who used to wear shrouds of dead persons when he was under employ of a Dom or *Bhangi*.

At Mathura, there are a number of *Dharamsalas* (centres for pilgrims) and the scavengers have customary rights to serve in the *Dharamsalas* falling under their respective jurisdictions. They earn good income from it. Every pilgrim staying in the *Dharamsala*, makes some payment to the scavenger at the time of leaving. The amount of this payment however varies from person to person.

**(f) Sale or mortgage of customary rights**—Both at Bhiwani and Mathura, it is common knowledge that the *Bhangis* look upon their customary rights as properties and sometimes mortgage or even sell the same. But during field study much information could not be collected on the incidence of sale or mortgage, as the people are very reluctant to disclose information on such matters. At Bhiwani only one case was reported where one *Bhangi* mortgaged his right to serve a number of households to another *Bhangi*, when he was leaving the town for taking employment elsewhere. At Mathura a number of *Bhangis* were reported to have either sold or mortgaged their customary rights to meet expenses connected with construction of house, marriage, death rites etc.

An insight about the frequency of sale or mortgage of customary rights at Mathura can be obtained from the fact that out of 20 scavenger households studied at Mathura, 13 households acquired their customary rights through inheritance, 6 through purchase and 4 through mortgage, (infact 1 family had acquired customary rights through all the 3 methods and 1 family through 2 methods viz, inheritance and mortgage).

**(g) Intermediaries**—At Bhiwani, scavenging has not yet reached that stage of commercialisation, where intermediary right holders can function. At

Mathura however, intermediary right holders have come up, under a system called "adha-batai" (half share). If a scavenger family has customary rights over a large number of households, who cannot be served by the members of the scavenger family concerned, some of the households are leased out to a different scavenger family on "adha-batai" (half share basis). The lessee renders services to the households taken on lease and keeps for itself 50% of the cash remuneration, the remaining 50% is given to the lessor. Remuneration in kind received ordinarily is kept by the lessee but the major portion of remuneration in kind received during festive occasion goes to the lessor.

**(h) Attitude of the scavengers towards the system of service under customary rights**—This question was examined both at Bhiwani and Mathura from two aspects, viz. (1) attitude of the scavengers towards the occupation of scavenging (2) attitude of the scavengers towards their work under the terms and conditions determined by custom.

As regards the occupation of scavenging, all the persons interviewed both in Bhiwani and Mathura, stated that they considered it to be a dirty occupation but they were sticking to it, as they had no other alternative. At both the places night soil is collected in "tasla" or baskets and removed by the scavengers as head load. This is very unhygienic and derogatory; the scavengers are also conscious of the same, but still they continue to remove night soil as head load. Both the Municipalities have tried to put an end to this practice by administrative and other measures. Under the rules framed by the Municipalities, removal of night soil other than in closed lid buckets is prohibited; but this has not been effective. At Bhiwani, the latrines are situated on the roofs of the houses and the female scavengers state that they find it inconvenient to carry in their hands the heavy closed lid buckets full of night soil, from the roof of the house to the ground floor. Even on the level ground, it is more convenient to carry the night soil baskets on head, instead of carrying the buckets in hands. At Mathura, night soil is collected both from the house-top as well as the ground floor. Here also the female scavengers are reluctant to remove night soil in closed lid buckets because of the same reasons as at Bhiwani,

At Mathura an attempt was made in another

direction to improve the working conditions of the scavengers. About 15 years ago wheel-barrows were given free to the scavengers. These have been adopted to some extent, but have not been successful in stopping the practice of removal of night soil as headload. The wheel-barrows cannot be taken inside the narrow lanes; and besides, the female scavengers consider it risky to pull the wheel-barrow along the undulating roads of Mathura.

In sum total, inspite of the efforts of the Municipalities, the working condition of the scavengers remains repulsive. It is, therefore, quite natural that the scavengers both at Bhiwani and Mathura are not enthusiastic about their profession. But at the same time, they are jealous about their customary rights. Many of them are not in favour of the conservancy services being completely taken over by the Municipalities. The reasons given by them are summarised here.

- 1 Customary right of scavenging is a sort of property which most of the scavengers have acquired by inheritance. Like any other property the scavengers feel attached to this property.
- 2 Most of the requirements of the scavengers are met by the customary payments in kind. Daily they get bread from the households served by them; on special occasions they get clothes and sweets. Frequently their women are not required to cook food in their households. They therefore get more leisure.
- 3 If the conservancy services are municipalised, the orphans and the old women will find it difficult to earn anything. The customary system gives protection to them.
- 4 Some people feel that their daughter and daughter-in-law are more safe as independent workers. If they work as municipal employees they are likely to be exposed to many corrupt influences.
- 5 The intimate personal bonds between the scavengers and their patron-clients are also mentioned by some scavengers as important reasons why the traditional pattern should continue. In many cases, the scavengers are looked upon as family members of their patron-clients. In case of difficulties they can look upon their patron-clients

for help and support. In case of municipalisation of scavenging service, this personal relationship will be sundered.

Some scavengers at Bhiwani however consider that there is scope for improvement in the service conditions even under customary system. They feel that remuneration should be fixed according to the number of members in each household and that there should be some agency to ensure that the scavengers are paid regularly. Some scavengers even feel that all payments in kind should be commuted to payment in cash; they are however not many in number. At Mathura also there are some scavengers who feel in the same way.

(i) Influence of education on attitude towards scavenging under customary system—As indicated earlier there are only a few educated persons among the *Chuhras* both at Bhiwani and Mathura. Education does not appear to have effected much change in their attitude towards the occupation of scavenging under customary system. At both the places a few males, after receiving some education have taken to occupations other than scavenging but the female members continue to work as scavengers under customary system.

(j) Attitude of Caste Association and Trade Union towards customary services—At Bhiwani, an enquiry was made in this direction. At Mathura, due to shortage of time, this could not be enquired.

At Bhiwani there is a Trade Union of scavengers. There is also a Caste Association called Balmiki Sabha. Both these bodies are trying to improve living and working condition of the scavengers; but neither has crystallised its attitude about the customary services. During discussion with the leaders of these organisations, the Investigator gained the impression that they are not inclined to take the responsibility of taking decision in this matter, as abolition of customary rights would lead to unemployment among a large number of females.

(k) Attitude of Municipalities towards customary rights of scavengers—Both at Bhiwani and Mathura, it was found that the Municipalities were not interested in completely taking over the customary rights of the scavengers. Their reluctance in this matter is due to the following reasons—

- (i) They feel that they do not have enough financial resources to give compensation to the scavengers.
- (ii) If the scavenging services are completely municipalised, the Municipalities would have to employ more staff, which would involve extra expenditure.
- (iii) To meet the expenses the Municipalities would be required to lay conservancy taxes. Collection of these taxes would again add to the responsibilities of the Municipalities.

Though the Municipalities are not ready to take over the customary rights of the scavengers they have framed some rules to regulate the operation of scavenging. At both the places, the scavengers are required by the rules, to remove night soil in closed lid buckets of the prescribed type and to deposit night soil in filth depots approved or constructed by the Municipality concerned. On repeated infringement of the rules, a scavenger is liable to lose his right to work, both at Bhiwani and Mathura.

Besides the above rules, some rules have been framed at Mathura, assigning certain responsibilities on the house-owners as well. Owners of buildings having more than Rs. 125/- as rented value are required under law to construct water-borne type of latrines. Thus in case of such buildings the customary rights of scavengers to remove night soil, are automatically extinguished. They however have their rights to clean the latrines and sweep the houses.

The Municipal law at Mathura, also requires every householder to keep his latrines and cesspool in clean condition. If anybody is unable to arrange it, he can apply to the Municipality; and on his paying of charge at prescribed rates necessary arrangement would be made by the Municipality.

Neither at Bhiwani, nor at Mathura, it has been possible to fully enforce the Municipal rules in this respect. At Bhiwani, though the scavengers did not always work in a satisfactory manner, no householder lodged any complaint against them, as they knew that in that case they would be boycotted by all the scavengers. At Mathura, in a few cases of negligence of duty, the customary rights of the scavengers were forfeited by the Court and the Muni-



cipality arranged the rate payers concerned to be served by their employees. But the latter could not work, as they were harrassed and in some cases even beaten by the scavengers working under customary rights. The caste panchayat of the scavengers, also decided that no scavenger should work in place of those whose customary rights had been forfeited. As a result, ultimately, the customary right holders were allowed to resume their duties.

It is thus found that though formal attempts have been made by the Municipalities to regulate the operation of scavengers by the customary right holders, these attempts have not been much effective.

#### **Implication of scavenging under customary rights**

It has been mentioned earlier that Malkani Committee is of the view that the practice of removal of night soil as head load cannot be stopped unless the customary rights of the scavengers are abolished. It is found that even though the Municipalities under study framed certain rules for reducing the odium of removal of night soil by manual operations, the rules could not be enforced. But it is to be considered whether, it has been possible to stop removal of night soil as head load, in the areas where conservancy services are fully municipalised. Studies conducted earlier by the editor of this report in Orissa and West Bengal, show that even in towns where night soil is removed by employees of Municipalities, it has not

been possible to put a stop to removal of night soil as head load. In most of the places, the scavengers,— whether working under customary rights or as Municipal employees, — find it more convenient to carry the night soil buckets or baskets on head; wheelbarrows given to them by the Municipalities have not been able to make much difference in the situation as these cannot be used in narrow lanes and besides, the women scavengers do not find it convenient to pull or push them. It, therefore, appears that abolition of customary rights, does not have much relevance for putting a stop to the practice of removal of night soil as head load.

This however does not mean that scavenging under customary rights is not an undesirable system. It is. The system is based on the denial of human dignity of the scavengers. Under it, they are considered to be inferior beings, who should be satisfied with leavings of food, discarded clothes etc., in addition to paltry cash as their remuneration. In a democracy based on dignity and equality of men such a system should be abolished.

It is proposed to briefly examine in the chapter on conclusion, as to what steps should be taken for abolition of the customary rights of the scavengers; but before that the working and living condition of the scavengers at Bhiwani and Mathura respectively will be examined in some more details in the next two chapters.

## CHAPTER II

### CUSTOMARY RIGHTS AND LIVING AND WORKING CONDITION OF SCAVENGERS AT BHIWANI

#### Location

**Size and population:** Bhiwani is the headquarter town of the tahsil of the same name in Hissar district, Punjab. It is situated on Rewari-Bhatinda branch of Northern Railway at a distance of 38 miles from Hissar. It is linked with Delhi by a metalled road,—the distance being 75 miles.

#### History of Growth

The town comprises an area of 5 square miles and had a population of 58,194 during 1961 Census. Its population in 1911 was 31,000; thus during 50 years the population has increased by 88%.

The number of households in 1961 was 11,349. The town is considered to be about 150 years old. It was an insignificant village, when it was selected in 1817 by Mr. Frazer, the then Political Agent at Delhi, as the site of a mandi (free market). It rapidly became the most important commercial town in Hissar district and in 1867 the Municipality was set up to look after its civic affairs.

The town has grown up in three distinct stages. The original village Bhiwani was bounded by a continuous wall with four gateways. When the *Mandi* was set up, it was at first confined to the space bounded by the wall of the original village; later on with increase of population another wall with 12 gateways was constructed. More than three fourth of the population of the town live in this walled area. This is called the old town. In the post independence period, the area of the town has spread beyond the wall. A number of administrative, educational and medical institutions of the Government, one refugee colony, one textile mill of Kirorimall, three labour colonies and one officer's colony of Kirorimall, in addition to a few commercial and other establishments are situated in the newly occupied area. This is called the new town.

#### Social milieu of customary rights

The residential patterns, the social and cultural

lives in the old town and the new town are not identical. In the old town, the houses are generally constructed round a courtyard and are several storeys high. They are separated from one another by narrow lanes with open drains on both sides. There is no public latrine inside the old town. The private latrines are generally constructed on the roofs of the houses. On the other hand, the houses in the new town are spacious and well arranged by sides of broad roads and lanes and by-lanes.

The bulk of the population in the old town are residing there for generations; many of them used to live in the same area even before the town was set up. They are orthodox in their outlook and economic and social relations among them are considerably guided by tradition. On the other hand most of the people in the new town are recent migrants; some of them are sojourners. Their social and economic relations are guided by modern ideas of rationalism and market values.

The original settlement of Bhiwani was founded by a Rajput, named Nim. Even now the Rajputs are the major land-holding caste at old Bhiwani. There are 16 *panas* or localities at old Bhiwani, demarcated by streets, lanes and by-lanes. These localities are named after the descendents of Nim. There are about 25 other castes at old Bhiwani, e.g., Bania (Shopkeeper), Mali (gardener and florist), Lohar (Ironsmith), Khati (Carpenter), Kumhar (potter), Koli (weaver), Chamar (shoe maker), Churha (sweeper and scavenger). Most of these castes stick to their traditional occupations and render service under *jajmani* system. Most of the castes have their own headman in the different *panas* and also have caste panchayats with jurisdiction over the entire town to safeguard their service interests. It is this social milieu that provides congenial ground for persistence of customary rights of the scavengers.

Previously the service relationships were mainly organised on *pana* or locality basis. The patron clients and the serving people generally belonged to

the same *pana*. Now rigidity of service obligation at the *pana* level has been considerably relaxed; but it is observed with reference to two broad divisions of the old town, viz. Loharh area and Halu area. Most of the community activities of the town are organised on the basis of rivalry between these two divisions. Each division has its own cremation ground, Ram Lila ground, *Dharamsala* etc. The people are expected to have strong loyalty towards their own division; and the service relations must be confined within the respective divisions. Thus the scavengers living in Halu area cannot have *jajmans* (patron-clients) at Loharh and *vice versa*.

#### Sanitary condition and conservancy service at Bhiwani

The town is situated on a slightly higher level in relation to the vast depression around it. Water is a major problem for the town. In olden days ponds were the only sources of water. Now-a-days, the town has water supply from Delhi branch of Western Jamuna Canal where the Municipal Committee has installed a water plant.

Due to shortage of water, it has not been possible for the Municipality to introduce septic tank latrines in large number. There are only 8 septic tank latrines in the town; out of them 2 are public latrines and 6 are private latrines. There are altogether 6,811 service latrines, out of which 6,800 are private latrines and 11 are public latrines. 4,549 houses are without any latrine in the town. The inmates of these houses go to the open fields to ease themselves.

In the old town, the service latrines are mostly situated on the roofs of houses. These are simply walled enclosures, about 5 ft. × 5 ft. in dimension with a narrow entrance on one side. There may be one or two narrow seats. The night soil falls directly on the floor and is covered with ash or sand. When dried, it is swept away by the scavenger. Generally the females only use these latrines; the males prefer to go to the open fields. Among the higher castes however, the males also prefer to use this type of latrine.

In the new town, the latrines are constructed on the ground floor. There is a raised seat and below it is placed a rectangular piece of tin. The night soil is deposited on it. There is an opening at the back of the latrine and the scavenger collects the night soil through it.

Arrangement for cleaning the private latrines is the concern of the houseowners themselves. The Municipality has however formulated certain rules in this matter. The Municipality has also provided 7 pail depots and 3 dumping grounds for the disposal of night soil and refuse of the town. The cultivators of the adjoining areas purchase night soil and refuse as manure. From the sale of these, the Municipality earns good income. Frequently however the scavengers do not take the trouble of carrying the night soil and refuse to the pail depots; they carelessly throw the same near their own localities. Recently, the Municipality has introduced trolley system in place of fixed pail depots; but even this has not been successful to improve the position much. The trolley comes at specified time in a particular area and the scavengers do not always find it convenient to keep to the time schedule.

For sweeping the streets, cleaning the drains and serving in the pail depots and dumpage grounds the Municipality has employed the following conservancy staff:

TABLE—3

#### Full time

	Males	Females	Total
Sweepers	39	54	93
Drain cleaners	44	—	44
Water carrier	12	—	12
Cartmen	13	—	13
Tractor sweepers	4	—	4
Trencher	2	—	2
Zamadar	6	—	6
	120	54	174

#### Part time

	Males	Females	Total
S. I.	2	—	2
M. H. O.	1	—	1

The entire conservancy staff of the Municipality work on monthly wage basis, on terms and conditions prescribed from time to time by the Municipality.

#### Caste affiliation of the scavengers and sweepers

All the scavengers serving in private households are *Chuhra* by caste. Previously a few *Dhanuks* were

also found in this occupation. Now they have given up scavenging occupation altogether and have taken to agriculture and labour only. Among the conservancy staff of the Municipality, all excepting 2 zamadars, 2 S.Is and 1 M.H.O. are *Chuhra* by caste. In recent years, there is a tendency among the *Chuhras*, to return themselves as *Balmikis*, rather than as *Chuhras*.

#### Demographic and other details of the *chuhra* of Bhiwani

There are approximately 350 households of *Chuhras* at Bhiwani. As already mentioned, 172 *Chuhras* (118 males and 54 females) are employed in conservancy services under the Municipality. In addition, 678 scavengers work in private households. These scavengers working in private households are all females and work under customary rights. In many cases, the Municipal employees and the customary workers belong to the same households. It is not known exactly how many *Chuhra* households are engaged in scavenging; but it has been suggested by various sources that at least 90% of the *Chuhras* at Bhiwani are engaged in scavenging and only about 10% have taken to other occupations.

Demographic and other particulars were collected from 18 *Chuhra* households, 2 of them are original inhabitants of the town, 13 came from other villages of the same district, 1 came from an adjoining district of Punjab and 2 came from Delhi, Union Territory.

Altogether, there are 88 males and 83 females in the 18 households, 42 of the males and 36 of the females are workers. Their age-wise break up is as follows:

TABLE—4

Age-group	Workers		Non-workers		Total	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
0-14	2	6	41	34	43	40
15-59	38	28	4	12	42	40
60 and above	2	2	1	1	3	3
	42	36	46	47	88	83

If examined in further details, it is found that there are 7 males and 10 females in the age-group 10-14 and out of them 2 males and 6 females are workers. Hence while a small proportion of the males

become economically active below the age of 14, majority of the females become economically active after they attain the age of 10. All the female workers work as scavengers in private households; besides, a few of them are also working as Municipal employees. 13 male workers are employees of Municipality, the rest are found in the following occupations:—preparation of dyes, general work in factory apprentice as turner, cultivator, gatekeeper, shoe shiner, peon, tonga driver, labourer, rickshaw puller, water carrier, fruit and egg seller, painter, running of laundry. Except in two cases, in all the remaining cases the above occupations of the males are subsidiary means of livelihood for the households concerned,—the main source of livelihood being scavenging by the female members. Two households have other than scavenging as the main source of livelihood. In these two cases the occupations are preparation of dyes and fruit and egg selling. In these two households none does scavenging at all.

Slight occupational mobility is found among these people. 2 cultivators, 1 tonga-driver, 1 peon, 1 fruit and egg seller and 1 labourer were previously scavengers. They later on changed their occupations. On the other hand 1 person who is now working as scavenger once earned his livelihood by playing musical instruments in a band party.

Among the male non-workers 4 are students, 1 is blind, 39 are dependants and 2 are seeking job. Out of the last two, one was an employee of the Municipality and was recently discharged; the other one was a servant of a trader. Among the female non-workers, 1 is student, 1 is aged and disabled, 10 are engaged in household activities and 35 are dependants. A table showing distribution of male and female non-workers by age-group and nature of activity is furnished below:

TABLE—5

Age-group	MALES				FEMALES			
	Student	Seeking job	Retired & disabled	Others	Student	Seeking job	Retired & disabled	Others
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0-14	3	..	..	38	1	..	..	34
15-59	1	2	..	1	..	10	..	1
60 and above	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..
	4	2	1	39	1	10	1	35

It is further to be noted that 1 or more members from 6 families out of the 18 studied, were working outside Bhiwani at the time of the survey. Altogether 8 persons were working outside—3 of them are sweepers, and one each is a cook, peon, painter, driver and worker in a lime factory.

The fact that a considerable number of *Chuhras* have taken to occupations other than scavenging at Bhiwani and outside, shows that the *Chuhra* caste as a whole is not inextricably tied to the occupation of scavenging as a customary right. This is further confirmed by the statements of 16 scavengers about what they want their sons to be. 12 of them stated that they wanted their sons to be anything but scavenger; 1 wanted his son to be a cultivator and 3 wanted their sons to be Government servants. One of the last three wanted his son to be a big Government Officer.

The opportunities for switching over to new jobs are however limited by the level of literacy among the *Chuhras*. Out of the 88 males and 83 females only 31 males and 4 females are literate. None of them is a matriculate. A table showing the break-up of the population by age sex and literacy is placed below:

TABLE—6

Age-group	Literate		Illiterate	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
1	2	3	4	5
0-5	..	...	20	23
6-10	8	1	8	6
11-14	3	2	4	8
15-34	12	..	14	28
35 and above	8	1	11	14
	31	4	57	79

It is obvious from the above that in spite of the perceptible trend among the scavengers to take up new types of occupations, it will be difficult for them, specially their womenfolk, to completely give up scavenging for a long time to come.

As already indicated in all the scavenging families almost all the grown-up males and females are economically active. This seems to have kept to the minimum the clash of economic interest in family life and as a result large sized families are quite frequent among them. The average number of members in the 18

households covered by the present study is 9.5. There are 3 households with 4 to 5 members each, 6 households with 6 to 7 members each and 9 households with more than 8 members each.

#### Customary rights of the scavengers and working condition

All the 16 households reported that they served private households under customary rights. In Municipal records such rights are mentioned as *Dastoori Haqook*. The scavengers describe their right as 'thikana' and their clients as *jajmans*.

It has earlier been noted that out of the scavenger households covered by the survey, only 2 are the original inhabitants of Bhiwani, the rest are immigrants at different periods. An enquiry was made how the customary rights devolved on the immigrant households; only in one case definite information was available. In this household the right was acquired through purchase from a *Dhanuk* household about 50 years ago. In other households how the right was originally acquired is not known. It is not unlikely that the right developed as seepage effect of the general pattern of social and economic relationship prevailing in the area.

Whatever may be the process of origin of the customary rights of the scavengers, these are rigidly enforced at Bhiwani. Each scavenger household has the right to clean the latrines of a number of households falling within its jurisdiction. The scavenger household has also the right to remove refuse and sweep the 'nora' (cowshed) of its 'jajman'. In some cases the scavengers prepare cow-dung cakes for the *jajmans*. In return for all these services, a scavenger gets daily one piece of bread and annually 2 srs. of grain per member of the jajman's household. Such annual payment in grain is called "Bhadwa". The scavenger is entitled to some additional payments during ritual occasions. During child-birth, the scavenger removes the "maila" (dirt) and in return gets Rs. 2/- and 'tihal' which is usually brought by the maternal uncle of the newly born baby. During marriage, the scavenger gets Rs. 5/- and 'tihal' and food packets. During death, the scavenger is entitled to get the 'kafan' clothes either wholly or partly in addition to some cash payment. The amount of payment varies to a certain extent, depending on the caste

and economic condition of the *jajman*. Number of members in the household of the *jajman* is also taken into consideration.

The system of payment differs to some extent in the new town. Customary rights of scavengers are recognised in the new town also, but frequently the remuneration is paid in cash only rather than in kind.

The right to serve the *jajman* is inherited by the scavengers in the male line. On death of the father, the *jajman* households are equally distributed among the sons.

Information about the number of *jajmans* served by the scavengers has been collected from 16 households. The same is indicated in the statement below:

TABLE—7

Number of jajmans served	Number of scavenger households serving
8-12	5
13-15	3
16-20	Nil
21-25	2
26-30	3
31-35	1
36-50	1
51-75	Nil
76-80	1

It is found from the above that there is a wide range of variation in the number of *jajmans* served by the scavenger households. The minimum is 8 and the maximum is 78.

Out of the above 16 households, 6 households have *jajmans* in more than one *pana* or locality, the remaining households have *jajmans* in one locality only.

7 households reported that their *jajmans* belong to high castes only; 9 households reported that their *jajmans* belong to all castes. The implication of the first statement was not however examined in detail. The scavengers who serve the high castes only were not asked whether they would not serve a lower caste, if he latter occupies one of the houses of the higher castes. It was also not enquired whether the scavengers serving the high castes only, enjoy a higher status than the scavengers who serve all castes. It however appears that there is no difference in status among

the scavengers on the basis of the caste of the *jajmans* served by them.

The scavengers look upon their customary rights as a form of property which can be sold or mortgaged. One scavenger sold the right to serve 20 households for Rs. 600/-. Another scavenger mortgaged the right to serve 27 households for Rs. 27/-.

The sale or mortgage is always done through written deeds on stamped papers in the court of the Tehsildar. In case of mortgage, the mortgagee cannot charge any interest; on the other hand the mortgager is not entitled to any share of remuneration from the *jajman*. The mortgager is required to pay back the amount taken by him within a stipulated period; in case of failure he is required to transfer his *thikana* (right to serve) permanently to the mortgagee. Cases of transfer by sale or mortgage are however very rare. Previously the Rajput landowners would not allow their scavengers to involve them in transfer deals. It was considered that the *jajmans* suffered loss of prestige if their scavengers sold the right to serve them to other scavengers. To prevent such transfer they used to meet the monetary needs of their respective scavengers.

At Bhiwani, though some scavengers have rights to serve a large number of households, no middleman class seems to have emerged among them. None is reported to have leased out his rights wholly or partly; all serve their *jajmans* directly.

As noted earlier, scavenging in private households is generally done by females. In case of necessity the male members of the family help them. Sometimes assistance is rendered by the females of the neighbouring households as well.

The females go out for their scavenging work early in the morning. They collect bread from their *jajmans* at noon and bring the same home for being shared among the different family members. Rarely they cook food at home. In the afternoon again they go out and make cow-dung cakes or undertake other activities in the house of their *jajmans*.

They remove night soil as head-load in baskets. No attempt has been made by the Municipality to introduce closed lid buckets, wheel—barrows and other improved appliances among the scavengers

working in private households. The Municipality has however provided these improved appliances to its employees. But these have not become much popular because of the reasons described in the first chapter.

#### Income from various sources in *Chuhra* households

Particulars of income from various sources were collected from 18 households. The same are furnished at annexure II. It shows that two households earn their livelihood through other than scavenging, the rest earn their livelihood through scavenging as well as other occupations.

One of the two households which do not do any work connected with scavenging has three workers. All are males. They work in B. K. Factory and earn Rs. 100, Rs. 85 and Rs. 65/- respectively. The other household of the same category has one worker. He is engaged in egg and fruit selling and on average earns an income of Rs. 75/-p.m. This household had 8 *jajmans*, but the head of the household has relinquished his right to serve the *jajmans* in favour of his brother.

All the scavenging households have at least one source of income in addition to customary services in private households. For their customary services, the scavengers are paid in kind. It is difficult to make exact estimate of the cash value of the receipts in kind. Very roughly, it can however be estimated that the scavengers earn Rs. 2/- (in cash value) per family of *jajman*, per month.

Distribution of the scavenger households with reference to income from customary services is indicated below:

TABLE—8

Size group of income from customary services alone	No. of households
Rs. 16-30	7
Rs. 31-60	5
Rs. 61-100	2
Rs. 101 and above	1

One household, from which one male member is working as Municipal sweeper but none is working in private household under customary system, is not included here.

Another statement indicating income from other than customary services is also furnished in the following table:

TABLE—9

Size group of income	No. of households
Rs. 40-75	3
Rs. 76-100	2
Rs. 101-150	3
Rs. 151-200	5
Rs. 201-300	2
Rs. 300 and above	1

It is obvious from the above that income from the other sources is much higher than income from customary services. Income from other sources includes employment as sweeper under Municipality. The monthly remuneration of a sweeper employed by Municipality is Rs. 92.50 p. This is much higher than the average income from customary services which is estimated to be Rs. 56.00 p. per month.

A statement showing distribution of households by income both from customary services and other sources is also furnished below:

TABLE—10

Size group of income	Number of household
Rs. 60-80	1
Rs. 81-120	2
Rs. 121-180	3
Rs. 181-220	5
Rs. 221-280	3
Rs. 281-320	1
Rs. 321 and above	1
(actual amount is Rs. 525)	

It shows that there is a wide range of variation in the total income of the scavenger households. The lowest income is Rs. 66 and the highest income is Rs. 525.

#### Living condition of the scavengers

The scavengers of Bhiwani live in four different mohallas (residential clusters). These *mohallas* are situated in low lying areas in the outskirts of the town. The hygienic condition in these *mohallas* is deplorable. There are rubbish heaps here and there and sometimes even night soil is deposited near the houses of the scavengers instead of the pail depots. The scavengers explained that night soil deposited by them near their own houses serves as feed for the pigs and fowls reared by them. Another reason why the localities inhabited by the scavengers remain always dirty is that none is prepared to serve in their own areas.

Out of the about 350 *Chuhra* households, about 50 live in rented private houses, the rest live in houses owned by themselves. No quarter has been provided by the Municipality.

The houses owned by the Chuhras in two Mohallas, viz., Bopana Gate *Mohalla* and Hanuman Gate *Mohalla*, are mud built hovel type. In the other two mohallas, viz., Committee *Mohalla* and Halwas Gate *mohalla* there are a few pucca houses. But these pucca houses are also very crudely built and small in size. As mentioned earlier average number of members in a *Chuhra* household is 9.5. Hence there is great congestion in the houses inhabited by them and hardly there is any privacy.

#### **Attitude of the Municipality about the working and living conditions of the scavengers and about continuation of their customary rights**

Out of the 18 elected members of the Municipality only 2 are harijans. One of the two harijans members is Bhangi, the other is Dhanuk. The harijan members do not have any effective voice about the affairs of the Municipality and it appears that the Municipality has not paid much attention to the problems of the scavengers. It does not consider the improvement of the working and living condition of the scavengers working in private households to be its responsibility. But even for the sweepers employed by it, much has not been done. No quarter has been provided for the sweepers; no attempt has been made to encourage the sweepers live in more hygienic surroundings.

An insight about the attitude of the Municipality can be obtained from the study of the Municipal budget. The total income of the municipality in 1903-04 was 0.50 lakh; in 1964-65 it was 8.81 lakh. On the other hand the expenditure on public health increased from 0.20 lakh to only 0.35 lakh during the same period. It is understood that the municipality has always a surplus budget. It, therefore, seems that had the municipality so willed, it could have spent much more for improving the living condition of the sweepers, and scavengers both under its employment and employment of the private households.

It appears that it is also not beyond the means of the Municipality to completely take over the responsibility of servicing the private latrines by paying compensation to the scavengers for surrendering the

customary rights. The municipal officials who were questioned in this matter, however stated that the Municipality was not in favour of taking over the servicing the private latrines, as it apprehended opposition of the scavengers to any such move. It is difficult to say how much the lack of initiative of the Municipality in this matter is due to genuine concern for the attitude of the scavengers and how much the alleged attitude of the scavengers is used as a pretext to evade responsibility.

#### **Attitude of the scavengers about their customary rights**

It seems that the scavengers have conflicting feelings about their customary rights. As indicated earlier, nobody likes the occupation of scavenging. But at the same time they are conscious that for a long time to come, it will not be possible for them to completely give up scavenging.

It seems that if they are asked to indicate their choice between work under municipality and complete abolition of their customary rights, it will be very difficult for most of them to make up their mind. Employment under the Municipality confers certain advantages as laid down in the Bhiwani sweeper's, Service Rules. The sweepers employed by the Municipality are entitled to benefit of provident fund, earned leave, maternity leave and weekly holiday for one day. Besides, the monthly remuneration of Rs. 92.50 that they are entitled to, is much higher than the average income from customary services, which is estimated to be near about Rs. 56.00 per month. Most of the Chuhras at Bhiwani would like to have employment under the Municipality. At the same time they find it difficult to reconcile to the idea of abolition of their customary rights. The customary rights give them a sense of security, ensure work for all of their females—minor, adult and old; free their women from the drudgery of cooking food every day and reduce the channels of sexual lapses on the part of their young daughters and daughters-in-law, who under the present system are required to work only in families which are known to them for generations.

As regards improvement in their living and working condition, most of the scavengers, specially of the older generation do not appear to bother. Among the younger generation however new aspirations are taking shape and these find expression in the deliberations



of the Trade Union and other organised forums of the scavengers.

#### Role of caste panchayat

There is a caste panchayat of the Chuhras of Bhiwani, called Balmiki Panchayat. The Panchayat is in favour of continuation of the customary rights of the scavengers, but it is eager to change the terms and conditions of work under customary rights. In 1962, the panchayat brought out a pamphlet suggesting that the scavengers working in private households under the customary rights should be paid at the following rates.

Household with 1-5 members	Rs. 3.00 p.m.
Household with 5-10 members	Rs. 5.00 p.m.
Household with more than 10 members	Rs. 7.00 p.m.
Additional charge for removing cow dung	Rs. 0.50 P. per cow
	Rs. 0.75 P. per buffalo.

It may be noted that the Balmiki Sabha of Hissar had earlier fixed similar rates and the Balmiki Sabha of Bhiwani followed the lead given by their counterpart at Hissar.

The Balmiki Sabha issued a notice to all the households at Bhiwani, that if any body did not accept the above rates within 15 days, he would be boycotted by the scavengers and none would serve him. This step by the Balmiki Sabha created quite a sensation in the town and a meeting was held to discuss to what extent the demand of the scavengers could be accommodated. Unfortunately, as the negotiation was in progress, national emergency broke out as a result of Chinese aggression. The scavengers thought it inopportune to press their demand at that moment and withdrew their notice. Since then nothing has been done to revise the rates of payment for the customary services. But the caste panchayat is alert to safeguard the interest of the scavengers under the existing terms and conditions. Sometime back, a Brahmin of the town failed to give customary due of Rs. 2/- and a pair of clothes to his scavenger during the birth of his son. The scavenger concerned stopped work in his house. At the instance of the panchayat other scavengers also refused to serve him. He is now going without any scavenger. Another Brahmin quarrelled with his

scavenger about the 'Bhadwa' or annual payment of grains and also about the perquisite to be paid at the time of a marriage held in his family. He asked his scavenger not to work in his house. But then at the instance of the Balmiki Sabha, no other scavenger agreed to serve him. He approached the Municipality to arrange a scavenger for him. The Municipality informed him that he would have to pay the municipal sweeper at rate fixed by the Municipality. It was too high; and the gentleman has not yet been able to find a substitute for the scavenger whose services he has dispensed with.

#### Role of Trade Union

The sweepers employed by the Municipality Hospital and other public bodies have formed a Sweepers' Union. It was organised even before the second world war, but was registered and affiliated to INTUC only in 1960. The Municipality accorded recognition to it about 3 years ago.

The Trade Union does not appear to have very strong view either in favour of continuation of the customary rights or against it. The younger leaders of the Union however feel that the terms and conditions of work under the customary system are derogatory and that it will not be possible to bring in radical change in the working and living conditions of the scavengers so long as the customary system continues. But they are also aware that abolition of customary rights may cause unemployment of a large number of scavengers—specially the females scavengers. Hence it is difficult for them to categorically come out in favour of abolition of the customary rights. But it appears that if not entangled in the responsibility of taking decisions, many of them will welcome the abolition of customary rights.

Though the Trade Union has remained aloof from the controversy about the continuation of the customary rights, it has taken strong stand for improving the working and living conditions of the scavengers. In 1960, the Union made the following demands to the Municipality on behalf of the scavengers.

(a) Bathrooms with tap and bathing materials should be provided in the mohallas of the sweepers. Soap, oil and towel should be supplied to all.

(b) Every sweeper should be provided with a pair of shoes every two years.

(c) Medical facilities should be provided to the scavengers and their families.

(d) There should be nine national and other festival holidays in a year. In case a sweeper works on any of these holidays, he should be paid three times the daily wage.

(e) Sweepers should be allowed sick leave for one month in a year and the same should be allowed to be accumulated for three years.

(f) Municipality should supply books and slates free of charges to all children of the sweepers. In addition, scholarship should be given to all deserving students.

(g) Every sweeper should be provided with a furnished quarter with adequate accommodation. For this purpose a colony should be set up in a suitable locality. In the meantime, house rent allowance at Rs. 10/- p.m. should be given to each sweeper.

(h) Allowances of certain categories of conservancy staff, *e.g.*, 'jharuwala,' 'naliwala,' cartmen, 'maski' *etc.*, are not adequate. There should be an ad-hoc increase of Rs. 5/- in each case.

(i) There is no proper arrangement for piling up the refuse and rubbish in different mohallas: Every mohalla should be provided with covered drums and cabins.

Most of the demands of the union are still to be accepted by the Municipality; but in the meantime as a result of the agitation by the union, a new attitude towards life and livelihood is gaining ground among the scavengers.

The union is also in favour of supplying improved appliances like wheel barrows, closed lid buckets, long handled scrapers *etc.*, to all the scavengers and sweepers. The leaders of the union are aware of the fact that at present these improved appliances are not very popular among the scavengers but they think that with greater awareness about the need for hygienic condition of their work and about their own dignity, the improved appliances will be better appreciated by scavengers.

### Role of Welfare agencies

There are two non-official organisations at Bhiwani which are interested in the welfare of the Scheduled Castes in general. One of them is Harijan Sabha—a purely local organisation, to which the panchayats of the various Scheduled Castes are affiliated.

It was formed in 1948. The other organisation is a branch of All India Dalit Varg Sangh. It started work at Bhiwani in 1953. Both the organisations are carrying on propaganda for removal of untouchability and for assertion of social rights of the so called low castes. They are also interested in spreading education among the Scheduled Castes and improving their economic condition. None of these two organisations has however done anything specifically for the scavengers. They think that if the condition for better way of life can be created for the Scheduled Castes in general, the scavengers will be automatically benefited. The Secretary of Dalit Varg Sangh, however admitted that the special problems of the scavengers should receive greater attention.

The office bearers of the above two non-official organisations as well as some other public men of Bhiwani pointed out the following harmful effects of scavenging under customary system.

(a) Neglect of children—As almost all the adult males and females remain out of home the whole day, the children are neglected. The very young ones are frequently carried by their mothers on their laps, even at the time of removal of night soil. This practice is very injurious to the health of such children. In the alternative, the children are left at home under care of their slightly more grown up brothers or sisters. As a result they grow up without proper care and they suffer from a sense of deprived throughout their life.

(b) Non-enrolment in school—As the children aged 5-10 are required to look after the homes in the absence of their parents, they do not get any opportunity to go to school.

(c) Denial of human dignity—The system of paying remuneration in kind has a bad psychological effect. As they are considered untouchables, their patron clients literally throw pieces of bread in their baskets. They, therefore, do not feel that they have been paid for their labour which is socially useful. They

more feel like beggars and look down upon their work as well as themselves.

They also feel that the customary rights have outlived their social purpose. Previously the Rajputs, who were the dominant caste in the town bore the social responsibility of keeping the scavengers and other menial castes satisfied. In the changed disposition, it is not possible for the Rajputs or any particular segment of the society to bear such responsibility. As a result, the scavengers also do not feel any social obligation about their work. When they are not satisfied with their clients, they stop work and do not allow others also to work. Thus the relation between the scavengers and the clients is frequently marked by bitterness.

In view of the above abuses of the system, most of the social workers of Bhiwani are of the view that the customary rights of the scavengers should be abolished as early as possible and at the same time to prevent break down of their economy, their employment opportunities should be diversified.

In addition to the voluntary agencies, the Government has also undertaken certain measures for welfare

of the scavengers along with other Scheduled Castes, though the immediate impact of the same cannot be considered to be much. The Government is subsidising the Municipality for supplying wheel-barrows and other improved appliances to the scavengers. As already indicated, the Municipality has supplied the improved appliances to its own employees only. Again, among the Municipal employees, the improved appliances have found only partial acceptance. Another scheme of the Government is to allot agricultural lands and house sites vacated by evacuees to the Scheduled Castes on priority basis. Only two scavenger households are reported to have obtained agricultural land under this scheme. Similarly two or three households have obtained loan from the Government for purchasing house sites.

Quantitatively speaking, the benefits derived by the scavengers under the Welfare Schemes of the Government are meagre. It however appears that as a result of the cumulative effect of these small benefits, as well as the changes in the social climate of the country, a new awareness is growing among the younger generation of the scavengers. There are many among them who would discard the traditional pattern of life and living with no regret.

## CHAPTER—III

### CUSTOMARY RIGHTS AND LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS OF SCAVENGERS AT MATHURA

#### Location, size and population

Mathura is the headquarters of the district of the same name in Uttar Pradesh. It is situated on the west bank of the river Jamuna.

The city, (leaving out the Cantonment) is about 3 sq. miles in area and had a population of 116,959 in 1961. There were altogether 22,759 households in the city at that time.

#### History of growth

According to the District Gazetteer, Mathura is mentioned in ancient literature under the name Madura. The place first rose to prominence during the lifetime of Buddha or during the later half of the 5th century B. C. At present there is no means to determine whether even before it became a great Buddhist centre, it was a big town. From 500 B.C. upto the end of the 7th century A.D. Mathura remained a Buddhist stronghold.

First authentic contemporary record about Mathura is connected with the ninth invasion of Mahmud of Gazni in 1017 A.D. From this date until the time of Akbar, the history of Mathura is almost a total blank. Probably the city was unable to recover from the destruction inflicted on it by Mahmud. In 1805 began a period of undisturbed peace and rapid prosperity for the city of Mathura with its being selected as a military station. In 1832, Mathura became the civil headquarters of the district. It assumed with certain exceptions, its present dimensions almost at that time. The localities which grew up in recent years are Vijaynagar, Krishnapuri, Brij Nagar, Guru Nanak Nagar, Krishna Janam Bhumi, Govind Nagar, Jagannathpuri, Radha Nagar, Krishna Nagar. These localities are called new localities. The rest of the city constitute old localities.

The Municipality of Mathura was established in 1868 to look after its civic affairs.

#### Social milieu of customary rights

Being associated with the life of Lord Krishna,

Mathura is a famous pilgrim centre. Thousands of devout pilgrims throng the city throughout the year, specially during the Janam Ashtami. There are a number of sacred places, woods, groves, ponds, wells, hills, temples, etc. There are also a number of educational institutions in the city. Its long history has created a climate which is congenial for traditionalism and traditional way of life. It is, therefore, natural that the scavengers continue to render their services here under customary system. However, as will be shown later, some changes in their outlook are taking place in recent years due to the impact of various factors.

#### Sanitary condition and conservancy services

The city is divided into 5 Sanitary Wards, each being under the supervision of one Sanitary Inspector. Each Sanitary Inspector is assisted by a number of Jamadars. There are altogether 24 Jamadars (9 Harijans and 15 non-harijans) in the city. In addition there are 433 persons of the conservancy staff. Scavenging in private households is done by the scavengers under customary system. They are not the employees of the Municipality. Most of the latrines in the town are dry-servicing type. Flush-out latrines are found mainly in Dampier Park, Civil Lines and newly grown localities. The exact number of dry-servicing latrines and flush-out type of latrines are not known. The Municipality has provided 30 public latrines in the city. Out of these 30 latrines, 6 are flush-out type, 5 are septic type and 19 are servicing type. These latrines have 10-20 seats each. The servicing of the public latrines provided by the Municipality is done by the scavengers employed by the Municipality. Other conservancy staff of the Municipality work as main road sweepers, drain sweepers, trenching ground sweepers, *Bhishtis*, sullage cart drivers and rubbish cart drivers, etc. There are 3 pail depots in the city out of which only one is in use. The other 2 pail depots are out of use due to scarcity of water. There are also two trenching grounds, which are located far away from the habitation,—one is at Mahavidhya and the other at Sadar. To transport the refuse and sullage to the trenching grounds, the

Municipality has provided 5 trucks, 1 tempo, 5 tractors, 10 trailers, 9 sullage carts and 10 rubbish carts. There is a conservancy godown and garrage at Deeg Derwaja. Municipal Committee has a good income from the manure prepared in the trenching ground.

Nearly three fourth portion of the city is served by underground drainage. Some of it has been converted into sewer which falls into Jamuna river. Recently the Municipality has laid down 8 new sewage lines in the city but it is reported that very few people have made use of the sewage lines even though in the bye-laws of the Municipality it is mentioned that every owner of a building which is within 100 feet of the sewer, shall connect the privies and sullage drains in the building with the sewer.

#### Caste affiliation of the scavengers and sweepers

There are nearly 1,000 households of sweepers and scavengers in Mathura including those working under the Municipality. All of them belong to one caste, namely, Chuhra. They are also called Bhangi and Mehtar. In recent years there is a tendency among the people of this caste to call themselves as Balmikis, rather than Chuhras or Bhangis. Some of them have become Christians. But the Christians and the non-Christians live side by side. Sometimes they even intermarry.

#### Demographic and other details of the Chuhras

20 scavenger households living in different localities of the city and belonging to different economic statuses were specially studied. Their demographic and other particulars are furnished below.

(a) **Place of origin**—Out of the 20 households, 13 households belonged to Mathura proper and 7 migrated from outside. One household belonged to Nasiti village of Mathura District and 5 belonged to different districts of Uttar Pradesh. Only one household came from outside the State. It belonged to the Bharatpur district of Rajasthan State.

In these 20 households the males and females are found in equal number of 76 each. Among the males 31 are workers and 45 are non-workers. Among the females 40 are workers and 36 are non-workers. The age-wise distribution of the workers and non-workers is as follows;

TABLE—11

#### Classification of population by workers and non-workers

Age-group	Workers		Non-workers	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
1	2	3	4	5
0-14	2	3	29	27
15-59	29	34	11	6
60 and above	..	3	5	3
	31	40	45	36

It is found from the table that below the age of 15 very insignificant number of males and females become economically active but from the age of 15 onward most of the females become economically active. Many of the males also become economically active at the same time.

Out of these 20 households, in 11 households the male and female members are engaged in scavenging and sweeping only and in 9 households while the female members are engaged in scavenging, one or more of the male members are engaged in other occupations as below:

Postman	2
Munshi in Octroi	1
Labourer in Petrol Pump	2
Cleaner in U. P. Roadways	1
Gateman in Railways	1
Pointsman in Railways	1
Jamadar	3

It has been found that two persons, namely one postman and one labourer in petrol pump, never served as scavenger or sweeper before taking up their present occupation. The rest served as scavengers or sweepers at some time or other. Again it has been found that among the persons engaged as scavengers or sweepers, there are 2 persons who previously were engaged in other occupations. Later on they switched over to their traditional occupation. One of these 2 persons was a labourer in iron factory and the other was a labourer in petrol pump.

Among the male non-workers, 4 are students, 9 are seeking job, 5 are retired or disabled and the rest are dependents. Among the female non-workers,

1 is student, 1 is seeking job, 3 are retired or disabled and the rest are dependents. A table showing distri-

bution of male and female non-workers by age-group and nature of activities is furnished below:

TABLE—12

*Nature of activities of non-workers*

Age-group	Male Total	Male non-workers				Female Total	Female non-workers				
		Student	Seeking job	Retired disabled	Others		Student	Seeking job	Household activities	Retired disabled	Others
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
0-14	29	2	2	...	25	27	1	..	..	..	26
15-59	11	2	7	...	2	6	..	1	..	..	5
60 and above	5	—	—	5	..	3	..	..	..	3	..
	45	4	9	5	27	36	1	1	..	3	31

In these 20 households 3 males were found to have attained some vocational skill. One of them knows motor driving, 2 know electrical fitting work. One female also has attained vocational skill. She knows tailoring and knitting.

The fact that a good number of persons belonging to scavenger families have taken to other occupations and also acquired skill in different vocations is of great significance. It shows that notwithstanding the pressure of tradition, some amount of mobility is taking place among the scavengers.

The scope for occupational mobility has been further enhanced by the fact that a good number of scavengers in Mathura are literate. Out of 76 males 47 are literate. Similarly out of 76 females, 15 are literate. A table showing distribution of males and females by literacy and age-group is furnished below:

TABLE—13

*Education*

Age-group	Literate		Illiterate	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
1	2	3	4	5
0-5	2	..	8	12
6-10	6	6	2	8
11-14	9	2	3	3
15-24	17	4	5	15
25-34	4	..	2	8
35 and above	9	3	9	15
	47	15	29	61

It is to be noted that out of 20 males of school-going age *i.e.* 6-14, 15 are literate and out of 19 females of school-going age, 8 are literate. This shows that among the coming generations, literacy is spreading quite rapidly. In this connection it is further to be noted that in these 20 families covered by the survey there are 3 Intermediates and 2 Matriculates besides 9 & 6 persons who have read upto VIII & IX respectively. The exact number of Matriculates and above among the *Chuhras* of Mathura as a whole is not known, but it is reported that their number would be quite considerable.

The spread of education seems to have influenced their aspiration pattern to a great extent, and undoubtedly this will have impact on their traditional services. 20 persons were asked what they wanted their sons to be. One person stated that all his sons were already working as scavengers and hence the question of aspiration for the future did not arise. Out of the remaining 19, 8 stated that they wanted their sons to be engaged in any occupation other than scavenging or sweeping, 4 wanted their sons to be in Government service, 1 wanted his son to be a driver and another wanted his son to be a Jamadar in the Municipality. The remaining 4 did not have any particular choice. Out of them, 3 did not have any objection to their sons taking up the occupation of scavenging or sweeping.

An enquiry was made about the number of *Chuhra* families that have completely given up scavenging or sweeping work. Among the 20 households covered by the survey, there is not a single one which has

completely given up the scavenging or sweeping work. As already mentioned male members from 9 households have taken up other occupations but even in these 9 households the female members are engaged in scavenging. It was, however, reported that there are about 50 Chuhra households in Mathura city who have no connection with scavenging or sweeping work at present. They entirely depend on other sources for their livelihood.

As at Bhiwani, at Mathura also fairly large sized families seem to be the normal pattern among the Chuhras. It seems that this is a function of their economic organisation characterised by diversification of occupation and separate source of income for almost all adult males and females. Out of the 20 households covered by the survey, 2 households had 2-3 members each, 4 households had 4-5 members each and another 4 households had 6-7 members each. There are 10 households having 10 or more members each. Only 3 out of these 20 households are nuclear type of families; 15 households are joint families and one is other type of family.

#### Customary rights of the scavengers and their working conditions

Out of the 20 households, 19 households reported that they served private households under customary rights. The household that reported to be without any customary right, had such right in the past; but had mortgaged out the same.

Even the 7 households who have migrated from outside had their customary rights of scavenging at the time of the survey.

The customary rights of the scavengers of Mathura is known as 'virat' and the persons in whose houses the scavengers serve are known as their 'jajmans'. Under the customary system the scavengers are required to clean the latrines and remove the night-soil. They deposit the night-soil in the pail depots set up by the Municipality. Though these scavengers have got right for servicing the latrines of the private households, they do not have right over the night-soil. From the pail depots the Municipality transfers the night-soil to the trenching grounds where it is converted into manure. It is reported that the Municipality earns good income by sale of the night-soil, converted into manure,

Under the customary system, a scavenger cannot be turned out from his 'virat' until and unless he is prosecuted thrice in a Court on grave charges of neglect of duty. Even when a scavenger is deprived of his customary rights, the caste panchayat of the Chuhras sides with him and no other scavenger would agree to work in his place. Thus the scavengers are virtually in a position to dictate their own terms on the households served by them.

The remuneration from 'virat' varies from locality to locality. In Dampier Park, Krishnapuri, Arjunapura, Manoharpura, Krishna Janam Bhumi, Govind Nagar and Jagannath Puri and other parts of the city where officers or rich businessmen live, the rate of payment to the scavengers is high. It varies from Rs. 2/- to Rs. 5/- per family depending on the size of the house and number of members in the family. In addition to cash payment, food is also generally given, but it is not compulsory. On festive occasions, such as, Holi, Diwali, special food known as 'tyohari' is given. In addition, some extra payment in cash,—normally one rupee,—is given. On birth of a child in a 'jajman's' family in these localities, Rs. 1.25 P. in cash and a new *saree* is generally given. At the time of marriage in a *jajman's* family, Re.1/- to Rs. 2/- in cash are given. In addition, *saree* and blouse or *dupatta* and sweets are given. Leavings of the feasts are also given to the scavengers. At the time of marriage of a scavenger's daughter, the 'jajmans' are expected to render some financial assistance. Generally they give in cash Rs. 2/- to Rs. 3/- and in addition, sometimes they give a *saree* or a set of new clothes.

Majority of the scavengers, however, do not have the opportunity to serve in such coveted areas. In the ordinary type of localities where they generally serve, the rate of remuneration is much lower. It varies from 0.25 P to Re. 1/- per family depending on the size of the house and the number of members in the family. In addition, many of the families give a piece of bread to the scavenger every day. Usually families paying more than 0.75 P do not give bread or any other food. Other families give it. On festive occasions, food is generally given by all the families but not extra payment in cash. On the birth of a child in a *jajman's* family, the scavenger is given some amount of cereal. If the child is a boy, they are paid in addition Rs. 1.25 P. If the child is a girl, they are

paid only 0.62 P. At the time of marriage of a son of a 'jajman', the scavenger gets sweets, a new saree and Re. 1/- in cash. At the time of marriage of the daughter of the 'jajman' only sweets, leaving of the feast and 0.62 P. in cash are given to the scavengers. At the time of marriage of the daughter of a scavenger, the 'jajman' renders some financial assistance. Usually he gives 0.50 P. to Re. 1/-. Sometimes a liberal 'jajman' may also give a saree or a dupatta.

The scavengers, working in the localities inhabited by lower classes, get remuneration at further reduced rates. In some of the lower class localities, especially those inhabited by the Chamars and Khatiks, there are no private latrines. In these localities there are only public latrines, which are served by the Municipal employees. Chuhras are not required to do any scavenging work in the houses situated in these localities. They only collect the domestic refuse and sweepings from the houses of their 'virats.' Their remuneration is very meagre in these localities. They usually get 0.12 P. per month and one piece of bread daily from each household. Even some families do not make any cash payment at all and some pay it very irregularly. From these families the scavengers seldom receive any present in kind on festive occasions and the question of receiving extra payment in cash does not arise at all.

In addition to customary rights to serve in private households, the scavengers in Mathura have customary rights to serve in 'Dharamshalas' and hotels. There are about 50 'dharamshalas' in Mathura. Scavengers demand payment from all the persons who come to stay in these 'dharamshalas' and hotels. The amount of payment varies according to the economic status of the person. They get very good amount when rich persons belonging to the business community come to Mathura from different parts of India for pilgrimage.

Out of the 19 households who have customary rights, 10 households serve in one locality only, 4 households serve in 2 localities, another households serve in 3 localities and one household serves in 4 localities.

An enquiry was made about the number of 'jajmans' served by the scavengers. The data are furnished below

TABLE—14

No. of 'jajmans' served	No. of scavenger households serving
8-20	8
21-40	5
41-60	4
61-100	1
above 100	1

The minimum number of 'jajmans' served by a scavenger household is 8 and the maximum number is 560. This wide range of variation is quite striking. It is, however, to be noted that the 560 'jajmans' served by one household include about 500 'jajmans' in Chuna Kankar area which is a lower-class locality. These 500 households do not have any latrine and in these households the members of the scavenger family concerned are required to remove the domestic refuse and sweepings only. Leaving out these 500 households, the maximum number of 'jajmans' served by a scavenger household is 83.

It is to be noted that the numbers indicated above do not include the 'dharamshalas,' hotels and offices served by various scavenger households covered by the survey.

Out of the 20 Scavenger households surveyed 11 households (including the one which had mortgaged out its right) had acquired their customary rights through inheritance only, 5 households through purchase only and 2 households through mortgage only, out of the remaining two households, one acquired rights through all the three methods and another through inheritance and mortgage.

The rates of payment for acquiring the customary rights differ from area to area. One household purchased the right to serve 8 *kothis* in Dampier Park by paying Rs. 1500/-. On the other hand, in *Kathoti* area one scavenger purchased the right to serve 15 households by paying Rs. 300/- only. A statement indicating the payments made by different scavengers for purchasing their customary right in different localities is furnished below;



TABLE—15

Sl.No. of scavenging house-holds	Locality	Category of 'jajmans'	No.	(Rs.) Amount paid for acquiring customary right by	
				Purchase	Mortgage
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Dampier Park	Kothi (house of rich 'jajman')	8	..	1500
2 (a)	Korian Mohalla	Ordinary houses	20 (appr)	..	500
(b)	Tulsi Chabutra	—do—	15	400	400
(c)	Jhina Mandir	—do— Dharamshala	25 } 1 }	3000	..
3	Chowk Bazar	Ordinary houses	20	1000	..
4	Kathoti Kuan	—do—	15	300	..
5	Satghara	—do—	20	..	500
6	Mega Mathura Gali	Kothi (houses of rich 'jajmans')	3	..	350
7	Manoharpura	Ordinary houses	20	400	..
8	Mata Gali	—do— Dharamshala	35 } 1 }	1030	..
9	Matiya Darwaja Thateran ki Gali and Nagarchi Tila.	Ordinary houses	50 (appr.)	3000	..

In addition to sale and mortgage of customary rights, there is another system of transfer of customary rights at Mathura which deserves mention. Under this system some scavengers lease out their right to serve a number of 'jajmans' on half-share basis. This system is called 'adha-batai' system.

Out of the 20 households covered by the survey, one household has leased out its right under this system. This household has the right to serve 8 kothis at Dampier Park. As the members of this household are working as scavengers under the military and the Municipality, they do not have any time to serve their 'jajmans.' They have, therefore, leased out the right to another scavenger. The total income from the customary services in the 8 kothis is Rs. 45/- per month. Half of this amount is taken by the lessor and the remaining half by the lessee. Bread and leavings of food normally given by the 'jajmans' are taken by the lessee only but the lion share of the presents given by the 'jajmans' at the time of birth or marriage in their families, is taken by the lessor.

The exact extent to which 'adha-batai' system pre-

vails in Mathura is not known. But through discussions with the representatives of the scavengers, the Municipal authorities and others interested in the scavengers, the Investigator gained the impression that it is quite considerable.

The customary services are generally rendered by the female members of the different scavenger households. Only occasionally, in case of necessity, the male members assist the female members. Very frequently rather than the male members of own household, the female members of the neighbouring scavenger households render assistance. Generally the females go out for scavenging work in private houses early in the morning. They come back at noon. Those who have the right to serve in *dharamsalas*, shops, hotels, etc., go out for sweeping again in the evening. The scavengers who have got 'virat' in Dampier Park and Krishna Puri also serve their 'jajmans' twice a day,—once in the morning and again in the evening. Scavengers having 'jajmans' in other localities work only once in a day. In the afternoon they remain free but they visit their 'jajmans' at that time for collecting food.

The working conditions of the customary scavengers is generally very unsatisfactory at Mathura. Being an ancient city, Mathura is very congested and densely populated. In most of the old localities, latrines are constructed on the upper storey of the houses. Night-soil drops down from the upper storey to the ground floor where there is a small chamber with an opening towards a narrow lane for removal of night-soil. Receptacles are never provided in these latrines. This night-soil dropped from the top of the house is scattered on the floor as well as the side walls. The opening to the chamber in the ground floor is very small and the scavenger is required to enter it by crawling. He carries a bamboo basket in one hand and a small piece of tin for being used as a scraper in the other. The night-soil is collected with the scraper. While collecting night-soil in such an inconvenient position, the hands of the scavenger are completely covered by night-soil.

In some localities as in Holi Gate area the latrines are constructed on the upper storey and the night-soil also drops on the upper storey itself. In such localities the scavengers are to go up for cleaning the latrines. In these latrines there is more space for the operation of the scavengers and they can remove the night-soil without touching the same by their hands. But they find it inconvenient to come down from the top of the houses by steep stair-cases with baskets full of night-soil. They carry these baskets on their waists.

After collecting the night-soil from a house the scavenger carries the same as head-load to the night-soil depot. About 15 years ago some wheel-barrows were provided by the Municipality to the customary scavengers. Now most of these are broken and unusable. Besides, it is not always possible to take the wheel-barrows inside the narrow lanes.

The distance to be covered by the scavengers from the latrines to the night-soil depots varies from 2 furlongs to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles. To reduce the frequency of to and fro movements, the scavengers try to carry as much night-soil as possible in the basket at a time. Sometimes they carry as much as 30 seers of night-soil in the basket. As a result, it is not infrequently that night-soil carried by a scavenger on the head drips down on her head. During the rains the condition of the scavengers becomes more pitiable, when

their bamboo baskets leak and they are badly smeared with night-soil.

The investigator enquired of many scavengers why they did not carry the night-soil on their waist or in their hands. All of them stated that they found it a little difficult to carry such a heavy load other than on their head and hence even though they disliked it very much, they did not have any alternative to carrying of night-soil as head-load.

#### **Working conditions of scavengers and sweepers engaged by Municipality and other public bodies**

As mentioned earlier, there are altogether 433 scavengers and sweepers under the Municipality. The exact number of scavengers working under the Municipality was not recorded during the study but as there are only 30 public latrines under the Municipality, the number of scavengers is obviously not many. The exact number of persons working as scavengers and sweepers under the Railways, Cantonment and other public establishments is not known, but it is estimated that their number would not exceed 50.

The Municipal scavengers and sweepers are not required to carry night-soil or sweepings as head-load. They have been provided with wheel-barrows. The total number of wheel-barrows in use in the city is about 90. At the time of the survey the Municipality had invited tenders for purchasing another 25 wheel-barrows. In addition to the wheel-barrows, the Municipality provides brooms, scrapers and other tools and implements to the scavengers and the sweepers. Their condition of work is much better than that of the scavengers working under customary system, but the Municipal sweepers at the pail depots and trenching grounds have to come into direct contact with night-soil. There is no water facility at the trenching ground but there is a water tap near the trenching ground. A *bhishti* is on duty at the water tap and serves the scavengers who work at the trenching grounds.

The Municipal sweepers or scavengers are given a pay scale of Rs. 25-1-35 + D.A. per month and the *jamadars* are given a pay scale of Rs. 30-1-40 + D.A. per month. The consolidated starting pay of a scavenger or a sweeper under the Municipality is Rs. 44/- and the consolidated starting pay of a *jamadar* under

the Municipality is Rs. 60/- per month. They are entitled to casual leave for 14 days, earned leave for 10 days medical leave for 15 days and festival leave for 12 days per annum. The female workers get festival leave for one day more; they are also entitled to 1 month's maternity leave. All scavengers and sweepers are given one set of woollen uniform each, consisting of woollen jersy and one apron, every year. There is no provision of Providend Fund for them. The Municipality has, however, adopted some new schemes for the benefit of the scavengers. In 3 localities inhabited by the scavengers, namely, Bharatpur Darawaja, Rani Mandi and Antapara, sports articles like volley-ball, basket-ball etc. have been provided. At Rani Mandi a library has been provided for the sweepers. It is, however, not kept in proper condition. Sometimes the sweepers keep their pigs in the library. Recently a few big utensils have been purchased by the Municipality for being used by the sweepers and scavengers during their marriage and other festive occasions.

#### Income from various sources in chuhra households

Particulars of income from various sources were collected for 20 households. The same are furnished at annexure III. It shows that 9 households had other sources of income in addition to sweeping or scavenging. It also shows that for their customary services in addition to cash payment, all of them receive some payment in kind. It is difficult to estimate the exact value of the receipts in kind. On a very rough basis it is estimated that except in lower class localities each scavenger receives food and other articles in kind, of the cash value of Rs. 2/- per 'jajman' per month. In lower class localities cash value of food and other articles received in kind would not be more than Re. 1/- per 'jajman' per month. On the basis of these estimates, distribution of the scavenging households with reference to income from customary services is given in the statement below :

TABLE—16

*Distribution of scavenging households with reference to income from customary services*

Size group of income from customary service only	No. of scavenging households
1	2
21-50	5
51-100	6

101-150	5
151-200	1
201-250	1
251 and above	1

The minimum income from customary right for a scavenger household is Rs. 22/-. This household, however, does not render customary services itself. It has leased out the houses on which it has got customary right, to another scavenger on half share basis and Rs. 22/- per month is received by it from the lessee as its share. This household does not receive any food ordinarily from the 'jajmans.' Leaving out this household, the minimum income for a scavenger household from customary services is Rs. 34/- The maximum income from customary services is Rs. 650/-.

A statement showing distribution of persons with reference to income from other than customary services is also furnished below:

TABLE—17

*Distribution of households with reference to income from other than customary services*

Size group of income from other than customary services	No. of scavenger households
1	2
Nil	1
1-20	1
21-50	4
51-100	4
101-150	5
151-200	4
above 200	1

The table shows that there is one household which does not have any income from other than customary services and there are 19 households which have income from other than customary services also. The minimum income from other than customary services is Rs. 9/-. The maximum income from other than customary services is Rs. 268/-. It is obtained by a family the members of which are working as sweepers under the military.

A statement showing distribution of the scavenger households with reference to income both from

customary sources and other sources is furnished below:

**TABLE—18**

*Distribution of scavenger households with reference to income both from customary sources and other sources*

Scavenger household no.	Income from customary service	Income from other sources	Total
1	2	3	4
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1	70	65	135
2	650	184	834
3	22	145	167
4	110	71	181
5	85	90	175
6	..	25	25
7	115	30	145
8	48	150	198
9	34	186	220
10	171	147	318
11	236	68	304
12	60	50	110
13	115	190	305
14	55	175	230
15	110	...	110
16	106	147	253
17	66	9	75
18	90	140	230
19	46	265	311
20	50	40	90

The table shows that there are only 3 scavenger households having total monthly income of less than Rs. 100/-, 4 scavenger households with monthly income of Rs. 101-150/-, 4 scavenger households with monthly income of Rs. 151-200/-, 3 scavenger households with monthly income of Rs. 201-250/-, 1 scavenger household with monthly income of Rs. 251-300/-, 4 scavenger households with monthly income of Rs. 301-350/-. There is one scavenging household with monthly income above Rs. 350/-. The estimated actual income of this household is Rs. 834/-.

It can also be seen from the above statement that whereas there is one household with no income from customary sources, there is another household without any income from other than customary sources.

Leaving out these 2 households, out of the remaining 18 households, 9 households earned more from customary sources and 9 households earned more from other than customary sources.

It is to be noted here that all the above estimates of income are based on the statements of the scavengers themselves and these have not been verified otherwise.

#### **Living condition of the scavengers**

As the scavengers and sweepers employed by the Municipality belong to the same families as are engaged in serving the private households under customary rights, there is no difference in the living condition of these two categories of scavengers. Most of the *Bhangis* of Mathura live in the following localities—Bharatpur Darwaja, Rani Mandi, Antapara, Khatik Mohalla and Bahadurpur Mohalla. There are a few other *Bhangi* localities in Sadar Bazar, Matiya Darwaja and Dhauri Piau but in these localities only few *Bhangis* live. The Investigator visited four localities, namely, Bharatpur Darwaja, Khatik Mohalla, Antapara and Bahadurpura. Her observations are briefly noted below;

**Bharatpur Darwaja**—It is one of the dirtiest localities of the city. More than 50% of the *Bhangis* of Mathura live here. There are about 500 *Bhangi* houses out of which 30-40% are pucca built. The rest are kuchha. Compared to other localities, percentage of pucca houses is high in this locality. Mostly the scavengers live in houses owned by themselves; only a small number live in rented houses. Some of the pucca houses are well built and spacious. But the surrounding is filthy and unhygienic. The lanes of the locality are pucca, but are in a dilapidated condition. The drains and the lanes are not cleaned properly. There are one public bathroom and 2 sets of latrines;—one for males and the other for females. The first set consists of 14 seats and the second set consists of 20 seats. The walls around the public latrines are broken at many places and have not been repaired. Latrines are cleaned once in the morning by the Municipal scavengers. Due to scarcity of water in the locality, latrines are not cleaned properly. The drain of the latrines is low and steep and filth flowing in the drain spreads and accumulates in the lane. Adjacent to the latrines is the only working

water tap of the locality and this is the main source of drinking water for the people. The filth and the refuse flowing in the drain overflows the boundary of the water tap. It was reported that cholera and other infectious diseases occur very frequently in this locality. Lighting arrangement is very inadequate in the locality. There are 5 electric poles in the whole area but only 3 are in order.

**Khatik mohalla**—There are 30-40 houses of *Bhangis* in this locality. All the houses are *kuchha*. The lanes are also *kuchha* and the locality is full of filth and dirt. There is no public latrine in the locality and as usual among the *Bhangis*, there is no latrine in any of the private houses also. A big drain is flowing through the locality. The filth and dirty water coming from the adjoining Dhauripiau locality pass through this drain. It, therefore, always stinks badly and breeds mosquitoes and flies.

**Antapara locality**—There are about 65-70 *Bhangi* houses in the locality. Out of them 5 or 6 are pucca. The rest are *kuchha*. Most of the *kuchha* houses are in dilapidated condition and about 15-20 houses had collapsed due to heavy rains during the monsoon. The surroundings are extremely dirty and always there is a bad stink in the area. The lanes of the locality are *kuchha*. There are no drains, and dirty water and filth are accumulated here and there in the pits that have been formed on the lanes. The sanitary condition of the locality is further aggravated by pigs reared by the scavengers. There are two sets of public latrines in the locality and each set consists of 10 seats. One is for males, the other is for females. These are cleaned only once in the morning by Municipal scavengers. The condition of the latrines is horrible. Perhaps, they are never properly washed. There are 3 water taps in the locality but only 2 are in working order. Lighting is also inadequate. There are only 2 poles in the locality and as a result the lanes are almost dark in the night.

**Bhadurpura**—This is the cleanest locality of *Bhangis* in Mathura. There are 10 houses in the locality, out of which 3 are pucca and 7 are *kuchha*. The lanes of this locality are pucca. There is one water tap in the locality which is, however, not sufficient for all the families, but the problem of water is not as acute as in other localities. There are two sets of public latrines in this locality. One set consisting

of 20 seats is for females and the other set consisting of 14 seats is for the males. A Municipal scavenger is employed for cleaning these latrines and the latrines are cleaned properly twice a day. The main problem of the locality is the existence of a big drain on one side. During rains the drain overflows and the whole area is submerged in water. The economic condition of the *Bhangis* in this area is better than that of the *Bhangis* living in other *Bhangi* areas. The main reason is that the *Bhangis* living in this area have got their 'virat' in areas where mainly officers and businessmen live. Some *Bhangis* of this locality are educated and have been converted to Christianity. They are employed in jobs other than sweeping and scavenging; though in many cases their females are engaged in scavenging.

Summing up the observations made in the 4 localities, it can be stated that about 30% of the houses of *Bhangis* are pucca and some of these houses are well built and quite spacious; but the houses of the remaining 70% of the *Bhangis* are mud-built and small in size. Except in one locality in other localities they live in extremely unhygienic and unsatisfactory conditions.

No house or housing site has been provided by the Municipality even to its own employees. But it is understood that a proposal for giving housing facility to the sweepers working under the Municipality is under consideration.

#### **Attitude of the Municipality about the working and living condition of the scavengers and about continuation of their customary rights**

During the discussion with the officers of the Municipality it was found that they are conscious of the undesirable aspects of the working condition of the scavengers, especially those who are serving in private households under customary system. About 15 years ago the Municipality tried to improve the position by giving wheel-barrows even to the private scavengers. The scavengers made some use of the wheel-barrows but in this matter they found two difficulties. Firstly, the wheel-barrows could not be taken inside the narrow lanes. Secondly, the women scavengers found it inconvenient to pull the wheel-barrows in the areas with steep ups and downs. The officers of the Municipality, however, agreed that

there is scope for expansion of the facilities by giving more wheel-barrow to the private scavengers but they were of the view that they could not do this in the immediate future because of paucity of financial resources.

As regards improvement of the living conditions of the scavengers, till now practically nothing has been done by the Municipality but as already indicated a scheme to provide improved houses to the scavengers and sweepers working under the Municipality is under their consideration.

As regards customary rights of the scavengers, the officers of the Municipality who were interviewed felt that existence of such rights has made the problem of sanitation more acute in the city. Municipality has no direct control over the private scavengers nor it can take direct action against them in case of negligence of their duties. There is a provision under Section 201 of the Municipal Act that if a customary sweeper or a scavenger does not work properly, he or she can be prosecuted in the Court. But the Municipality finds it very difficult to enforce the provision of this Act. Firstly, the rate-payers, who have grievances against the scavengers, are not always prepared to go to the Court. Secondly, if the scavenger is prosecuted and convicted in the Court, his caste fellows stand by him and it becomes very difficult to find a substitute to serve his 'jajmans.' As a result of this, the private scavengers look upon their work as a sort of monopoly right and are frequently careless in the performance of their duties.

According to the officials of the Municipality the scavengers working under the customary system create other types of problems as well. Sometimes these scavengers throw the night-soil collected from private households in the drains, creating serious problem of public health. Under the rules they are required to carry the night-soil to the pail depots but it is not infrequently that they avoid it because they are reluctant to cover the distance of going to the pail depots. One section of the scavengers is further coming up with the claim that they have got a right over the night-soil as well. Hence, they are not under any obligation to deposit the night-soil in the pail depots.

Because of all the above unsatisfactory conditions, the Municipal officials are in favour of abolishing the customary rights but they feel that they cannot do

it immediately because their financial resources will not permit. If they get subsidy from the Government, they would like to abolish the customary right by paying compensation to the scavengers.

#### **Attitude of the scavengers about their customary rights**

As indicated earlier, many persons belonging to the Bhangi families in Mathura have taken up occupations other than scavenging and sweeping. Again there are many males and females who are working as scavengers and sweepers under the military. The investigator was impressed by the great urge among the Bhangi youths to get regular jobs under various public concerns. If they can get good jobs other than scavenging or sweeping, they would prefer that. If they do not get such jobs, they are eager to work as scavengers or sweepers under the Military, the Rail ways or the Municipality, but at the same time all of them want that their customary rights should continue as a source of standing income. They feel that if the customary rights are abolished, it will be difficult to find work for all their women. At present even the minor girls and very old women can earn something by serving in the houses of their 'jajmans' but if scavenging is municipalised, they will not be able to earn anything.

It appears from the above that the objection of the scavengers to the abolition of the customary rights is mainly due to their sense of insecurity about what will follow if the customary rights are abolished. They look upon it as purely economic proposition. The social dimension of the question does not appear to be an important factor. If, therefore, adequate arrangement for their rehabilitation is made, many of the Bhangis, especially those belonging to the younger generation, may not continue to have a negative attitude about the question of abolition of customary rights.

As regards working and living conditions, most of the scavengers seem to be dissatisfied. They are particularly bitter about the callousness of the Municipality. They feel that if the Municipality so wanted it would have forced the ratepayers to build improved types of latrines. They also feel that though wheel-barrow is of limited utility, at least in the areas where the lanes are broad and not much undulating, the Municipality could have provided more wheel-barrow to the private scavengers. As already mentioned they

supplied a few wheel-barrow about 15 years ago, but these were quite inadequate in number and have now become unusable.

In addition to their other grievances, many of the scavengers complained that they were frequently harrassed by the Jamadars and other sanitary staff of the Municipality on false charges.

As already mentioned some of the scavengers are claiming that they have got a right over the night-soil removed by them from the private households and that they should get the share of the sale proceeds of the night-soil. During discussions with the Investigator, some of the representatives of the scavengers pressed this point quite strongly

The scavengers strongly feel that the Municipality has discriminated against them in the matter of providing various amenities in the localities inhabited by them. The lanes are not repaired timely. The drains are in such a condition that filth and dirty water are bound to accumulate. Supply of drinking water is utterly inadequate. Lighting condition is very unsatisfactory. They feel that had they belonged to the higher castes, the Municipality could not have dared to ignore their requirements in the above manner.

#### **Role of caste panchayat**

The Bhangis of Mathura have a caste panchayat consisting of the Headmen or Chaudharis of the different localities. Altogether there are 10 Chaudharis. Usually the meeting of the panchayat is held once in a year at Bhangipara of Bharatpur Darwaja. In addition to cases relating to social disputes among the caste people, harrassment of *Bhangis* by the Municipality and other official and semi-official agencies, conviction by Court and other matters relating to their professional problems are discussed in the meeting of the panchayat. Representatives of the Trade Union of the Bhangis also participate in the meetings of the panchayat. In recent years some factionalism has developed in the caste panchayat. One faction is vehemently opposed to the Municipality. The other faction is more moderate in its approach. But the majority of the *Bhangis* seem to be behind the first faction.

The Investigator met some of the leaders of the caste panchayat. Just like other Bhangis, they feel

that the customary rights of the scavengers should be continued. They do not have much confidence in the Municipality and they feel that if the scavenging rights are completely municipalised, they may not get fair deal from the Municipality. As regards the removal of night-soil as head-load, they agreed that it is unhygienic and undesirable from the point of human dignity. But they feel that in the present circumstances there is no alternative to it.

#### **Role of trade union**

There is a Trade Union of the scavengers and sweepers working under the Municipality. The Trade Union works in close co-operation with the caste panchayat. It is mainly interested in improving the serving condition of the employees of the Municipality. Previously, there was no maternity leave for the female scavengers employed by the Municipality but due to the efforts of the Trade Union one month's maternity leave is granted to the female scavengers now-a-days.

The Trade Union has not given any lead about abolishing the system of night-soil as head-load or about discontinuation of the customary rights of the scavengers. It seems that the Trade Union will not like to take any initiative in this matter separately from the caste panchayat of the *Bhangis*

#### **Role of welfare agencies**

For about 80-90 years one Catholic Mission of America is working among the scavengers of Mathura. As mentioned earlier some Bhangis in Mathura have become Christians but they have not given up their traditional occupation. The Mission is mainly trying to spread education among the Bhangis. The Mission has started one primary school for girls and one high school for boys. Children of the *Bhangis* converted to Christianity get free admission in the Missionary school. They are also sent outside Mathura for higher education. But the Mission has done nothing for improving the working and living conditions of the *Bhangis*. Also the Mission has no definite opinion about the desirability of continuing the customary rights of the scavengers.

There is another voluntary agency in Mathura interested in the welfare of the scavengers along with

other Harijans. This is Harijan Sewak Sangh. The Sangh is primarily interested in removal of untouchability and in improving the economic condition of the Harijans. It generally works in the rural areas. It has undertaken some activities in Mathura city also. The organiser of the Sangh claims that it was due to efforts of the Sangh that 'Dalaos' (rubbish/night-soil depots) were constructed by the Municipality at different places in the city. Provision of bathrooms, latrines and water taps by the Municipality in *Bhangi* localities is also claimed by them to be due to per-

suasions by the Sangh. He, further, stated that the Sangh has made some propaganda for stopping the practice of removing night-soil as head-load but he could not state what could be the practical alternative in the near future. The organiser of the Sangh was asked by the Investigator whether he considered it desirable that the customary rights of the scavengers should be abolished. From his answer, the Investigator gained the impression that he had not applied his mind to the problem.

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## CHAPTER—IV

### CONCLUSION

It has earlier been mentioned that the system of removal of night soil as customary right is based on the denial of human dignity of the scavengers. Sociologically speaking, their right consists of the right to receive patronage of their clients. Under this system they are to remain satisfied with leavings of food, discarded clothes *etc.*, in addition to paltry cash as their remuneration. Whatever may be the monetary value of their remuneration, it is the shadow of inferiority, associated with their work, euphemistically called customary right,—which should be a matter of grave concern to a nation, striving to organise its economic and social structure on democratic principles.

Both at Bhiwani and Mathura it has been found that there is not much consciousness among the scavengers or among the Municipal officials, the social workers and others concerned, about the indignity of removal of night soil as a customary right. Even among the educated persons belonging to the scavenger community, there is only a vague uneasiness about the system. They have hardly given any serious thought to the question of abolition of the system. They look upon customary right of scavenging, as a secure source of livelihood. Hence, while in most of the scavenger households the males have taken up employment under Municipality, Railway and other employers or have taken up the occupations of rick-saw pulling, hawking *etc.*, the females continue to work as scavengers as a matter of customary right.

It is therefore obvious that the question of abolition of customary right of scavenging should not be considered in isolation. It should be related to the more fundamental question of change in outlook. Otherwise, by legislation or by paying compensation to the scavengers, the system can be abolished, but that may not bring in any change in their working

condition or in their social relation. It has been indicated earlier, that the scavengers having customary right to serve, work under most unsatisfactory conditions both at Bhiwani and Mathura. They remove night soil as head load; and the method of collection of night soil is such that physical contact with night soil is frequently inevitable. There is no reason to believe that simply by abolishing the system of scavenging as customary right, the working conditions will improve. In many parts of India scavenging has been municipalised, but the working conditions or the scavengers are hardly better.

Removal of night, soil as headload and scavenging as customary right, are two sides of the same coin. Both are based on negation of human dignity of the scavengers. Unless the scavengers themselves become conscious of their human dignity, legislation or executive action will not improve their position.

It is of utmost importance to organise an intensive programme of social education of the scavengers—specially scavenger females. They should be made conscious of new values and they should also learn new vocational skills. Simultaneously reorientation course should be organised for the leaders of the scavengers, specially the leaders of the Trade Unions of the scavengers. They must press for immediate stoppage of removal of night soil as head load; and for this purpose construction of latrines of improved type by the municipal rate payers should be made compulsory and conservancy services should be increasingly mechanised. It is only after the appropriate social climate has been created through these initial steps, that steps should be taken to abolish the customary rights in scavenging, otherwise premature steps will disrupt the economy of many scavenger households, without any commensurate benefit.

## ANNEXURE—I

### *Questionnaire on Study of Customary Rights and Living and working conditions of scavengers*

#### PART A—GENERAL DATA

- 1 Name of town.
- 2 How old and brief history.
- 3 Particulars of (a) old localities  
(b) newly grown localities.
- 4 Size.
- 5 Population.
- 6 No. of households.
- 7 Whether servicing of latrine has been municipalised.

#### PART B—DATA TO BE COLLECTED FROM MUNICIPALITY

- 1 When the municipality was established.
- 2 Has servicing of latrines been municipalised.
  - (a) fully? Yes/No if yes when? Whether any compensation was paid for Ghāraki.
  - (b) Partly? Yes/No If yes when? why not fully?
  - (c) Not at all? If so, why?
- 3 No. of households.
  - (a) With water borne or septic latrine.
  - (b) With service latrines.
  - (c) Without latrine.
- 4 No. of public latrines.
  - (a) waterborne or septic type.
  - (b) Servicing.
- 5 Is there any system of rebate for water borne or septic latrine.
- 6 If latrine service has been municipalised.

Particulars of employees	No.
	┌───────────┐
	Male: Female

  - (i) (a) Scavengers.
  - (b) Sweepers.
  - (c) Other conservancy staff.
  - (ii) Whether the scavengers, sweepers etc. are directly under the pay roll of the municipalities.
  - (iii) If not how and through whom their service is organised.
- 7 Is there any gharaki system or customary rights of scavengers in cleaning latrines? If yes,
  - (a) Brief outline of the system.
  - (b) Do the scavengers themselves have the customary rights or are there middlemen who have the rights and the scavengers function as lessee?
  - (c) Who are the leading gharakidars.
- 8 (a) Has there been any attempt to introduce wheelbarrows close lid buckets and other improved appliances in the matter of removal of night soil?
  - (b) If so, give the particulars of the same.
  - (c) To what extent the attempt has been successful.
  - (d) What is the attitude of the male and female scavengers respectively about the innovations.
  - (e) Has gharaki system or customary rights of scavengers in any manner affected the implementation of the improving the working and living conditions of the scavengers? If so how?
- 9 The residential quarters of the scavengers are inhabited at what distance from.
  - (a) Pail depot.
  - (b) Depot of carts and buckets for removal of night soil.
  - (c) Dumping ground of night soil and/or rubbish.
- 10 Hygienic condition of surroundings of the scavenger's quarters.
- 11 No. of scavenger:
  - (a) Given quarters/land by municipality.
  - (b) Given quarters by Gharaki Jagirdars.
  - (c) Living in privately rented houses.
  - (d) Living in privately owned houses.
  - (e) Other (specify).
- 12 Other aspects of living and working conditions of scavengers and sweepers etc.
- 13 A Is there any trade union of the scavengers?
  - B (i) If so, name of the trade union.
  - (ii) Its affiliation.
  - (iii) Since when it is functioning.
  - (iv) Which category of scavengers are generally its members.



## PART C—DATA TO BE COLLECTED FROM SCAVENGER HOUSEHOLDS

( Interview with 15-20 scavengers and sweepers )

1 Name of the household.

(2 Place of origin of the family)

2 Particulars of the family members including head.

Name	Age	Sex	Religion	Caste	Clan or gotra	How related to head	Place of birth	Education	Skills known
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Occupation history and present place of work	Present employer	Income	Marital status	Remarks
11	12	13	14	15

3' Since when the family is residing in this town.

(1) In case the family was staying in a rural area before migration to this town, did the family have

- Jajmans in that village.
- The Jajmans belonged to which castes?
- What were the services rendered to the Jajmans?
- What were the perquisites?
- Were there certain rituals in which they played special roles in the households of the Jajmans?
- Could they transfer their right to serve the Jajman? If so, how was it affected? What was the attitude of Jajman to such transfer (give case studies).
- Could Jajman remove them from service and engage others?  
If not, how and by whom the opposition was effected.

(2) In case, the family was staying in this town from before.

- Did it have Jajmans as is found in the village? Give particulars of the jajmans.
- Does the jajmani relation still persists?
  - Give particulars of the system as practised at present and also of the jajmans.

(ii) Can they transfer right to serve jajman? (Case study).

(iii) Can jajmans remove them from service and engage others? (case study).

(c) Is there any similarity between jajmani system and Gharaki system?

(d) Is jajmani system and gharaki system are different. In what respects are they different?

4 (a) Whether the family has any Gharaki right?

(b) If so, particulars of the same.

(i) How the family acquired the right.

(ii) Area covered by the right.

(iii) Number of households over which the right is exercised.

A If possible indicate castes of the households.

B Are there households of certain categories (e.g. caste) where they do not like to have gharaki rights.

If so:

(i) What is actually done in case of such households.

(ii) Is the mortgage or sale rate lower in case of such households than in case of other households.

(iii) Do they lose status by serving households of lower castes or disrespectful occupation groups?

(iv) Nature and time of service.

A Are there certain rituals in which they play special role in the households of the persons served by them.

If so, give particulars.

Name of ritual	Caste of Household	Nature of performance	Remuneration
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(v) Remuneration.

A Are there special occasions when in addition to normal remuneration they get gifts from the households of the persons served by them.

Occasion	Castes of household	Nature of gift received	Remark
----------	---------------------	-------------------------	--------

(vi) Whether the right has been sublet to any other family? or person?

If so (i) Particulars of the family or person to whom the right has been sublet?

(ii) Terms and conditions on which the right has been sublet.

(vii) Whether the right has been affected by any legislation or by activity by municipality, Govt. or private agency.

5 If the family is employee or lessee of a person or family having Gharaki right.

Particulars of the person in family who has the Superior right.

Particulars to be collected on the items as in 4(b) 1-VI.

(b) If so particulars of the same.

(i) How the family acquired the right.

(ii) Area covered by the right.

(iii) Number of households over which the right is exercised.

(iv) Nature and time of service.

(v) Remuneration.

(vi) Whether the right has been sublet to any other family? or person?

If so (i) Particulars of the family or person to whom the right has been sublet?

(ii) Terms and conditions on which the right has been sublet.

6 (a) Is it desirable to abolish Gharaki system.

(b) If yes, why?

(c) If not, why not?

7 (a) Was any attempt made to abolish Gharaki system?

(b) If so, by whom?

8 (a) Is there sex-wise division of labour in the works of scavenging and sweeping?

(b) How is night soil removed and by whom?

(c) (i) If it is removed on head, why?

(ii) Can any alternative method adopted with introduction of some tools and appliances? If yes, what are they?

(d) (i) Has any attempt been to introduce wheel barrows?

(ii) If so, when?

(iii) Did any body among the members of the family or among the friends and relations of the family use the wheel barrow?

(iv) If so, was it found convenient? In what matters it is more convenient?

(v) If it was not convenient, why not? What are the disadvantages? How can the disadvantages be removed?

(vi) Are these still in use?

(e) (i) Has any attempt been made to introduce other improved appliances, or other practices, for improvement of the condition of scavenging work?

(ii) If so, what are they? and When were they introduced and by whom?

(iii) What was the response of the scavengers?

(iv) Is any change or adjustment required?

(v) Are these still in use.

(f) (i) What was the attitude of the Gharakidars to the introduction of improved practices and appliances?

(ii) If yes, were they opposed to the innovation? why?

9 (a) Are there educated persons among the scavengers and sweepers in the town?

(b) Are they employed in scavenging and sweeping?

(a) personally

(b) In supervising capacity

(c) Has there been any move from among them for improving the working and living condition of the scavengers and sweepers?

(i) Non-official

(ii) Municipality

(iii) 3-4 leading persons among the scavengers

## 10 Particulars of the leading gharaki Jagirdars in the town.

Name	Caste	Occupation	No. of households over which has Gharaki right			No. of households served by himself or members of his family	No. of households given out on lease on		Remarks		
			Absolute	Mortgaged in	Mortgaged out		Term 1	Term 2			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9			
No. of households taken on lease on											
Term 1		Term 2		No. of households take a mortgage on		Office if any held in					
Term 1		Term 2		Term 1		Term 2		T.U.	Caste Panchayat	Other institutions which can influence the community life	
10		11		12		13		14	15	16	17

11 Does Gharaki right exist among all the castes? If not give particulars as follows:

- (a) (i) Castes which have gharaki right.  
(ii) How the right accorded to the caste.
- (b) (i) Castes which do not have gharaki right.  
(ii) Why the caste does not have the right.
- (i) Is there any difference castewise in the extent of adoption of:  
(a) closed lid buckets.  
(b) wheel barrows.

(c) Other new appliances.

(ii) If yes, give the particulars castewise.

(iii) Has castewise differential response led to increase Inter-caste tension among the scavengers, and sweepers? If so, give particulars.

- 12 (a) What the head of the family wants his son to be  
(b) Particulars of reform movements if any among the scavengers and sweepers.
- 13 Any other aspect of the problems of the scavengers and sweepers not covered by above.

PART—D NON-OFFICIAL ORGANISATION WORKING AMONG SCAVENGERS

- 1 Name of organisation.
- 2 Since when working.
- 3 Nature of activity.
- 4 Comments on
  - (a) The method of removal of night soil and other conditions of work.
  - (b) Attempts made to improve the condition.
  - (c) Result.
  - (d) In case of resistance of scavengers, reason thereof.
- 5 Comments on
  - (a) Living conditions of the scavengers etc.
  - (b) Attempts for improvement.
  - (c) Result.
- 6 Information, if any, on
  - (a) Existence and origin of Gharaki system in the area.
  - (b) Salient features of the system.
  - (c) Its effect on the social and economic life of the scavengers.
- (d) How much this system is a factor for retarding progress.
- 7 Special note, if any.
- 8 A If there any trade union of the scavengers?
  - B (i) If so, name of the trade union.
  - (ii) Its affiliation.
  - (iii) Since when it is functioning.
  - (iv) Which category of scavengers are generally its members.
- 9 A Is there any caste association of the scavengers?
  - B If so,
    - (i) What is its name.
    - (ii) What is its jurisdiction.
    - (iii) Particulars of offices.

Name of post	Name and address of incumbent	How attained the post	Remarks
--------------	-------------------------------	-----------------------	---------

Category	Appr. number	Appr. proportion of members of T. U.
1	2	3

Those who actually remove night-soil for latrine.

Night soil cartmen.

Sweepers.

Trenchers.

Other workers.

Supervisors.

(v) What is the attitude of the union about:

(a) Gharaki system.

(b) Introduction of wheel-barrows.

(c) Introduction of closed lid buckets.

(d) Introduction of other improved appliances.

(iv) What is the attitude of the association about

(a) Gharaki system.

(b) Introduction of wheel barrows.

(c) Introduction of closed lid buckets.

(d) Introduction of other improved appliances.

10 (a) Is there any reform movement among the scavengers?

(b) If so, particulars of the same.

11 Particulars of the households belonging to scavenger and sweeper castes in the area.

Name of caste	Area of origin	Approximate No. of h.hs.	Appr. No. employed under Municipality as			Appr. No. working as self-employed Gharakidars	Appr. No. earning from Gharaki lease given to others	Appr. No. working as self-employed Gharakidars as well as having income from lease given to others	Appr. No. working as Gharakidars on lease	Appr. No. engaged in other occupations	Remarks
			Scavengers	Sweepers	Others						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

## PART E—LEADERS OF THE SCAVENGERS

(In addition to Family Schedule)

1 A Is there any trade union of the scavengers?

- B (i) If so, name of the trade union,  
 (ii) Its affiliation.  
 (iii) Since when it is functioning.  
 (iv) Which category of scavengers are generally its members.

Category	Appr. number	Appr. proportion of members of T. U.
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Those who actually remove night-soil for latrine.

Night soil cartmen.

Sweepers.

Trenchers.

Other workers.

Supervisors.

(v) What is the attitude of the union about:

- (a) Gharaki system.  
 (b) Introduction of wheel-barrows.  
 (c) Introduction of closed lid buckets.  
 (d) Introduction of other improved appliances.

2 A Is there any caste association of the scavengers?

- B If so,  
 (i) What is its name.  
 (ii) What is its jurisdiction.  
 (iii) Particulars of offices

Name of post	Name and address of incumbent	Now attained the post	Remark
President (Pradhan)		In the Panchayat of the	
Vice President (Up Pradhan)		Balmiki almost un-animously	
General Secretary.			
Joint Secretary.			
Khazanchi.			

(iv) What is the attitude of the association about:

- (a) Gharaki system  
 (b) Introduction of wheelbarrows.  
 (c) Introduction of closed lid buckets.  
 (d) Introduction of other improved appliances.

3 (a) What would happen as the client terminates his arrangement with the scavenger who has Gharaki right over the household and employed some other scavenger?

(b) Has there been any such case? If so, give particulars.

4 Is there any hierarchy of status among the scavengers according to the nature of households over which this have Gharaki right (just as in some villages the scavenger serving the headman of the village is considered to be headman of the scavengers of the village)?

If so, give particulars.

5 (a) Is there any difference between Chuhra/Bhangi/Balmiki/Mehtar/Lalbegi.

(b) If so, please indicate the difference and their hierarchy of status.

6 (i) Particulars of reform movement among the scavengers.

(ii) If the reform movement influencing the Jajmani system in the villages particulars of same.

(iii) If the reform movement influencing the Gharaki system in the urban areas, particulars of the same.

7 Particulars of the households belonging to scavenger and sweeper castes in the area.

Name of caste	Area of origin	Appr. No. of h. hs.	Appr. No. employed under Municipality as			Appr. No. working as self-employed Gharakidars	Appr. No. earning from Gh raki lease given to others	Appr. No. working as self-employed Gharakidars as well as having income from lease given to others	Appr. No. working as Gharakidars on lease	Appr. No. engaged in other occupations	Remarks
			Scavengers	Sweepers	Others						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12



## PART F — STRUCTURAL LINK BETWEEN JAJMANI AND GHARAKI SYSTEM

*Take genealogy of five families covering three generations and with reference to each member in the genealogy take the following particulars*

Name of head of Household:

Name	Relation to the head of the household	Age (even if dead, give age at present had the person been alive)	Sex	Place of birth	Residence (if dead last place of residence)	Caste	Religion	Education	Occupation	Particulars of jajmani relation	Particulars of Gharaki relation	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13



(contd.)

## FROM 18 HOUSEHOLDS BELONGING TO BALMIKI CASTE IN BHIWANI TOWN

cash at various occasions. These figures will therefore not tally with the figure of total income indicated in the text )

On special occasion (kind)				Other Work					Other source of Income		Total Income (fixed)	House hold No.
Child birth	Marriage	Death	Festival etc.	Total cash (fixed)	No of workers. Occupation	Male	Female	Salary or Income per month.	Source	Rs.		
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
Old & new cloths.	Pattal of food.	Kafan.	..	..	Sweeper in M.C.	1	..	81-00	..	..	221-00	1
					P.K. Factory	1	..	70-00	..	..		
					P.K. Factory	1	..	70-00	..	..		
..	..	..	..	..	P.K. Factory	1	..	100-00	..	..	250-00	2
					"	1	..	85-00	..	..		
					"	1	..	65-00	..	..		
					Bhiwani							
..	..	..	..	..	Part-time Sweeper in P.O.	1	..	34-00	Scholar ship, as furner in T.I.T.	40-00	74-00	3
..	..	..	..	..	Sweeper in M.C.	1	..	92-50	..	..	152-50	4
					Cultivation on 'Batai'	1	..	60-00	..	..		
Some garment.	Some 'pattal' of food and leaving.	..	Special food is cooked by them.	..	Gate keeper in Talkies	1	..	62-00	..	..	156-00	5
					Jamadar in M.C.	1	..	94-00	..	..		
..	..	..	..	..	Cultivation	1	..	Not Specified	..	..	247-50	6
					shoe shiner	1	..	45-00	..	..		
					Sweeper in M.C.	1	..	92-50	..	..		
					Painter	1	..	110-00	..	..		

## ANNEXURE II

## PARTICULARS OF INCOME FROM VARIOUS SOURCES, COLLECTED

(The total income shown in the last column include only fixed monthly income and not such income which they get in kind or

THIKANE															
House- hold Number	Total Num- ber	Workers		Work done					Remuneration						
		Male	Fe- male	General	On special occasion				General		On special occasion (cash)				
					Child birth	Marriage	Death	Festival etc.	Cash	Kind	Child birth	Marri- age	Death	Festi- val etc.	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
7	78	1	6	To clean the latrines and drains. To sweep the open places of his house. To collect the cow dung in case of Rajput & Brahmans. To clean the floor etc. with water in case of Punjabi.	Remove the maila and to clean some times plaster the -room with the food cow dung.	To sweep the place for ga-thering. To collect and remove the fuel etc.	May assist in the fuel etc.	..	Monthly Rs. 0-50 to Rs.1-00 cash household of Punjabi (36).	Daily one bread except Punjab H.H. yearly 'Bhadhana'	2-00	5-00 to 10-00	..	..	..
8	8	..	1	Sweep the courtyard clean the latrines and drains etc. Collect the cowdung and sweep the cattle shed.	In case of 'Dai' is not there the sweeper work will give 'Ghutte' to the child and work the dirty cloth.	..	..	..	Monthly 0-50 only (5)	One bread daily from each H.H. 'Bhadhawa' annually or Rs. 2/-.	2-00	10-00	..	..	..
9	29	..	1	Sweeping the courtyard and cleaning of latrines and drains. Remove the refuse and cowdung. To do other menial jobs on festive occasion. To remove the dead cattle.	To remove the maila and to clean and remove on the day of 'Bâhar'.	To remove the leavings and help in other works of menial type.	..	..	Monthly cash from Punjabi (5).	One bread daily except on Amavashya and 'Bhadhawa' yearly.	2-00	5-00 to 10-00	..	..	..
10	12	..	1	—do—	—do—	—do—	..	..	Monthly Rs. 1-00 to Rs. 0-50(6)	—do—	2-00	5-00 to 10-00	..	..	..
11	29	1	2	To do any work which a Kisan wants a 'bhanghi' to do. To sweep	To remove the 'maila' and to clean and	To do any work assigned by them and	..	..	Rs. 0-50 to Rs.2-00 from Punjabi	One bread from each H. Hold 'Bhadhawa'	2-00 to 5-00	5-00 to 10-00	..	..	..

(contd.)

## FROM 18 HOUSEHOLDS BELONGING TO BALMIKI CASTE IN BHIWANI TOWN

cash at various occasions. These figures will therefore not tally with the figure of total income indicated in the text)

On special occasion (kind)				Total cash (fixed)	Other Work			Other source of Income		Total Income (fixed)	Household No.	
Child birth	Marriage	Death	Festival etc.		Occupation	Male	Female	Salary or Income per month	Source			Rs.
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
Some cloth.	Some cloth.	..	--	27-00	Sweeper in M.C.	1	..	92-50	..	..	359-50	7
					Sweeper (Part time)	1	..	30-00	..	..	..	
					Sweeper in M.C.	1	..	92-50	..	..	..	
					"	1	..	92-50	..	..	..	
					Sweeper in K.N. Bagh	1	..	25-00	..	..	..	
A saree according to their capacity.	'Tihal' pair of new cloths and pattal of food in case of 'Brahman'.	Kafan	One or two pieces and grain mixture with old cloths.	2-50	Sweeper in M.C.	..	..	92-50	..	..	145-00	8
					Tonga Driver	1	..	50-00	..	..	..	
Some garments.	Many 'pattal' of food as the members of the sweeper's family.	Kafan.	Pots, food & cash 0-50 to 1-00	2-50	Labourer in construction.	1	..	40-00	..	..	42-50	9
--do--	--do--	--do--	Special food as they cook.	4-50	Labourer	1	..	40-00	..	..	44-50	10
Some garments.	Some Pattal of food.	--	Nobody gives any thing on eclipse day now a days.	16-50	Sweeper	1	..	40-00	..	..	81-50	11
					Rekshaw puller.	1	..	25-00	..	..	..	

## ANNEXURE II

## PARTICULARS OF INCOME FROM VARIOUS SOURCES, COLLECTED

(The total income shown in the last column include only fixed monthly income and not such income which they get in kind or

THIKANE															
House- hold Number	Total Num- ber	Workers		Work done						Remuneration					
		Male	Fe- male	General	On special occasion				General		On special occasion (cash)				
					Child birth	Marriage	Death	Festival etc.	Cash	Kind	Child birth	Marri- age	Death	Festi- val etc.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
11	<i>contd.</i>			to clean the latrines & drains. To remove the dead cattle.	remove on the day of 'Bahar'.	removing of refuse and food leavings.				household annually (22).	annually.				
12	15	..	2	To clean the latrines, to sweep the home courtyard etc. To remove the cow dung in case they have the cattle.	However some extra work is done on certain occasion like child birth, marriage etc.	..	..	..	..	One bread daily 'Bhadhawa' annually.	2-00	10-00	..	..	
13	50	..	2	To clean the latrines. To sweep the home courtyard etc. To remove the cow dung in case they have.	To remove the 'maila'.	To sweep the place for gathering of barat etc. 2 or 3 times to remove food eatings.	..	..	1-00 or 0-50 per H.H. from Punjabi family (45)	One bread daily.	Not fixed.	Not fixed.	..	..	
14	10	..	1	Sweeping of the courtyard in front of the house. Cleaning of latrines to wash the dogs.	To greet the occasion by singing of 2 or 3 ladies.	—do—	To go with the funeral party sharing the grief and to unload the wood etc.	..	..	One bread daily 'Bhadhawa' annually.	2-00	5-00	..	..	
15	8	Given to his brother.		To sweep the open space of the house. To clean the latrines and drains etc. To sweep the cow shed and to re-	To remove the maila.	To sweep the place of gathering of 'Barat'. To remove the food	..	..	..	One bread and some subzi daily. 'Bhadhawa' annually.	2-00	5-00 to 10-00	..	..	

(contd.)

## FROM 18 HOUSEHOLDS BELONGING TO BALMIKI CASTE IN BHIWANI TOWN

cash as various occasions. These figures will therefore not tally with the figure of total income indicated in the text)

On special occasion (kind)				Total cash (fixed)	Other Work			Salary or Income per month	Other source of Income		Total Income (fixed)	Household No.
Child birth	Marriage	Death	Festival etc.		Occupation	Male	Female		Source	Rs.		
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
now a days.												
One Dhoti (never is given in full). Some cloth brought in 'Babar'.	..	..	..	..	Sweeper	1	..	92-50	..	..	200-50	12
					Water carrier	1	..	68-00	..	..		
					Labourer	1	..	40-00	..	..		
Not fixed.	Not fixed.	..	..	33-75	Peon in Power house.	1	..	90-00	..	..	123-75	13
Saree (old or new) Some sweet.	One 'pattal' of sweet about 4 seets.	Kafan.	One or two pieces, cerials with salt, kheel patash sweet. Toru coloured cloth.	..	Sweeper in M.C. Laundry and Dry cleanings.	..	1	92-50	..	..	192-50	14
—do—	'Tihal' a pair of new cloths (No body gives Tihal now-a-days as it proves to be very costly).	All clothes of dead body (Bhan-gis have stopped bringing it at home now-a-days).	..	..	Fruit & eggs seller	1	..	75-00	..	..	75-00	15

## ANNEXURE II

## PARTICULARS OF INCOME FROM VARIOUS SOURCES, COLLECTED

(The total income shown in the last column includes only fixed monthly income and not such income which they get in kind or

THIKANE														
House- hold Number	Total Num- ber	Workers		Work done					Remuneration					
		Male	Fe- male	General	On special occasion				General		On special occasion (cash)			
					Child birth	Marriage	Death	Festival etc.	Cash	Kind	Child birth	Marri- age	Death	Festi- val etc.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
15	<i>contd.</i>			move the cow dung and prepare the cakes etc.		leavings etc.								
16	22	1	1	To sweep the open space of the house. To clean the latrines and drains etc. To sweep the cow shed and to re- move the cow dung and prepare the cakes etc.	To clean of the floor of the room & the con- finement.	To remove the leav- ings. To collect the refuse.	..	..	..	One bread daily except on Amavashya and Shivratri.	2-00	5-00 to 10-00	..	..
17	22	..	3	To sweep the house and cattle shed. To clean the latrines etc. To remove the cowdung and re- fuse etc. To pre- pare the cakes.	To remove the 'maila' To clean the room on the day of 'Bahar' Punjabi.	To remove the leav- ings and other manial work.	..	..	Re. 0-50 to Re. 1-00 from Punjabi (5).	Daily one bread except on Amavashya.	1-00 to 2-00	5-00 to 10-00.	..	..
18	11	..	1	—do—	—do—	—do—	Carry fuel some- times.	—	0-50 to 3-00 per H.H. from Punjabi (6).	One bread daily and 'Bhadhawa' annually or Re. 1/-.	1-00 to 2-00	5-00 to 10-00.	..	..



(contd.)

## FROM 18 HOUSEHOLDS BELONGING TO BALMIKI CASTE IN BHIWANI TOWN

cash as various occasions. These figures will therefore not tally with the figure of total income indicated in the text)

On special occasion (kind)				Total cash (fixed)	Other Work			Other source of Income		Total Income (fixed)	Household No.	
Child birth	Marriage	Death	Festival etc.		Occupation	No of workers.		Source	Rs.			
16	17	18	19	20	21	Male	Female	24	25	26	27	
								Salary or Income per month.				
Some cloths.	Some cloths and food.	Kafan.	Some chhatak of grain.	..	Sweeper.	1	..	92-50	..	..	92-50	16
Some garments.	Some 'Pattal' of food.	Kafan and food as prepared.	..	3-75	Working in lime factory.	1	..	100-00	..	..	143-75	17
					Labourer	1	..	40-00				
—do—	—do—	—	They may give anything if there is any marriage at sweeper's house.	4-50	Labourer	1	..	40-00	..	..	179-50	18
					Labourer	1	..	60-00	..	..		
					Labourer	1	..	50-00	..	..		
					Labourer	1	..	25-00	..	..		

## ANNEXURE III

## PARTICULARS OF INCOME FROM VARIOUS SOURCES

Sl. No.	Total family members		Total No. of workers		Total No. of family members in virat		Total No. of family members in sweeping/scavenging (other than virat)		Total No. of family members engaged in other occupations	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	4	6	2	3	1	3	..	..	1	..
2	7	6	3	4	..	4	2	..	1	..
3	5	3	1	1	..	..	1	1	..	..
4	3	4	1	2	..	2	..	..	1	..
5	3	1	2	1	1	1	..	..	1	..
6	1	2	..	2	..	..	..	2	..	..

## COLLECTED FROM 20 HOUSEHOLDS IN MATHURA

Cash income from virat	Other remuneration from virat	Cash income from sweeping/scavenging occupation	Cash income from other sources	Remittance	Total family income (cash only)	Remarks	Sl. No.
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	1
Rs. 40/- p.m. in all @ Re. 1/- to Rs. 2.50 nP. p.m. per Kothi.	Food clothes and tips on birth, marriage and festival etc.	..	Rs. 65/- p.m. (postman)	..	Rs. 105/- p.m.	..	1
Rs. 150/- p.m. Great variation in income. From 2 annas per member p.m. to Rs. 2/- to Rs. 5/- per household.	Food, clothes infrequent on festival. On marriage and birth food clothes and tips one loof per day per family.	Rs. 94/- p.m. (Sweepers in Municipality)	Rs. 90/- p.m. (labourer in petrol pump).	..	Rs. 334/- p.m.	..	2
Rs. 22/- p.m.	Food clothes at birth and marriage etc.	Rs. 145/- p.m. (Sweepers in Military & Municipality.	..	..	Rs. 167/- p.m.	This family has sub-let its Gharaki rights to another family. Cash income from virat is Rs. 45/- p.m. which is divided equally between this family and the lessee family. Daily food is taken by lessee where as remuneration on birth and marriage is shared by this family as well as by lessee.	3
Rs. 50/- p.m. @ 4 annas to one rupee p.m. from per family.	One loof per day per family. On festivals and marriages, special food and leavings and also old clothes.	..	Rs. 71/- p.m. (cleaner in roadways)	..	Rs. 121/- p.m.	..	4
Rs. 25/- p.m. @ 4 annas to one rupee p.m. per family.	One loof per day per family. Special food on festivals. On marriage and birth, tips, sweets etc.	..	Rs. 60/- p.m. (Munshi in octroi).	Rs. 30/- remittance sent by son.	Rs. 115/- p.m.	..	5
..	..	Rs. 25/- p.m. (Sweepers in Cantonment area).	..	..	Rs. 25/- p.m.	Family has no 'virat'.	6

## ANNEXURE III

## PARTICULARS OF INCOME FROM VARIOUS SOURCES

Sl. No.	Total family members		Total No. of workers		Total No. of family members in virat		Total No. of family members in sweeping/scavenging (other than virat)		Total No. of family members engaged in other occupations	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
7	2	3	2	2	1	2	1	..	..	-
8	3	3	1	2	-	1	-	1	1	-
9	5	4	3	1	1	..	2	1	..	..
10	4	4	2	1	-	1	2	..	..	..
11	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	..	1	..
12	3	3	1	2	1	2	-	-	-	-
13	8	5	1	4	..	4	1	..	..	..
14	7	7	2	2	..	2	..	..	2	..
15	3	3	1	2	1	2	..	..	..	-

(contd)

## COLLECTED FROM 20 HOUSEHOLDS IN MATHURA

Cash income from virat	Other remuneration from virat	Cash income from sweeping/scavenging occupation	Cash income from other sources	Remittance	Total family income (cash only)	Remarks	Sl. No.
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	1
Rs. 15/- p.m. @ 4 annas to 8 annas p.m. per family.	One loof per day per family. On festival, special food, On birth and marriages, sweets, clothes.	Rs. 30/- p.m. (Sweeper in Municipality).	..	..	Rs. 45/- p.m.	..	7
Rs. 8/- p.m. @ 4 annas to 8 annas p.m. per family.	One loof per day per family. On festival, special food. Leavings and sweets on marriage. Also clothes.	Rs. 55/- p.m. (Sweeper in Municipality).	Rs. 95/- p.m. (Labourer in petrol pump).	..	Rs. 158/- p.m.	..	8
Rs. 4/- p.m. @ 4 annas to 6 annas per month per family.	—do—	Rs. 186/- p.m. (Sweepers in Military and Municipality).	..	..	Rs. 190/- p.m.	..	9
Rs. 85/- p.m. @ Rs. 7/- & Rs. 16/- p.m. from two offices; & Rs. 2/- to Rs. 5/- p.m. from each Kothi. Ten annas to 12 annas p.m. from per family.	Daily food from 'Kothis'. On festivals, tips from each Kothi & also special food. Also new clothes on marriages etc.	Rs. 147/- p.m. (Sweepers in Military & Municipality).	..	..	Rs. 232/- p.m.	..	10
Rs. 70/- p.m. @ Rs. 2/- p.m. per Kothi and 4 annas to 6 annas p.m. from each family.	From Kothis, special food and even tips on festivals. On marriage and festival, tips, new clothes, sweets and leavings of the feast.	..	Rs. 68/- p.m. (Jamadar in Municipality).	..	Rs. 138/- p.m.	..	11
Rs. 15/- to Rs. 20/- @ 4 annas to 8 annas p.m. per family.	One loof daily from per family. Food on festivals, sweets, new clothes or old clothes & cereals on marriage and birth.	..	..	Rs. 50/- p.m. (Remittance)	Rs. 70/- p.m.	..	12
Rs. 65/- p.m.	—do—	Rs. 150/- p.m. (Sweeper in Railway).	..	Rs. 40/- p.m. (Remittance)	Rs. 255/- p.m.	..	13
Rs. 25/- p.m. @ 4 annas to one rupee per family.	—do—	..	Rs. 135/- p.m. (Jamadar in Muni. Gateman in Railway).	Rs. 40/- p.m. (Remittance)	Rs. 200/- p.m.	..	14
Rs. 30/- p.m. @ 4 annas to 8 annas per family.	—do—	..	..	..	Rs. 30/- p.m.	..	15

## ANNEXURE III

## PARTICULARS OF INCOME FROM VARIOUS SOURCES

Sl. No.	Total family members		Total No. of workers		Total No. of family members in virat		Total No. of family members in sweeping/ scavenging (other than virat)		Total No. of family members engaged in other occupations	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
16	6	6	3	3	1	3	--	--	2	..
17	2	1	..	1	..	1	--	--	..	..
18	4	5	2	2	..	2	1	--	1	..
19	2	2	2	2	..	1	2	1	..	..
20	1	6	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..

(concl.)

## COLLECTED FROM 20 HOUSEHOLDS IN MATHURA

Cash income from virat	Other remuneration from virat	Cash income from sweeping/scavenging occupation	Cash income from other sources	Remittance	Total family income (cash only)*	Remarks	Sl. No.
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	1
Rs. 35/- p.m. @ 4 annas to 8 annas p.m. per family.	One loof daily from per family food on festivals, sweets, new clothes or old clothes and cereals on marriage and birth.	..	Rs. 147/- p.m. (Jamadar in Muni. Pointsman in Railway)	..	Rs. 182/- p.m.	..	16
Rs. 16/- p.m. @ 4 annas to 8 annas p.m. per family.	—do—	..	..	Rs. 8/- or Rs. 9/- p.m.	Rs. 25/- p.m.	..	17
Rs. 20/- p.m. @ 2 annas to 12 annas per family.	One loof daily per family. Pilgrims staying in Dharamshala may give some food and tips.	Rs. 55/- p.m. (Sweeper in Municipality).	Rs. 85/- p.m. (Postman)	..	Rs. 160/- p.m.	..	18
Rs. 6/- p.m. @ 4 annas p.m. per family.	One loof per day per family. On marriage of a boy one Dupatta, one rupee and four annas; on marriage of a girl, 10 annas; on birth of a boy, one rupee; on birth of a girl; 10 annas, sweets/leavings on festivals/marriages. Also old clothes.	Rs. 265/- p.m. (Sweepers in Military).	..	..	Rs. 271/- p.m.	..	19
Rs. 10/- p.m. @ 4 annas to 8 annas per family.	Very insignificant remuneration in kind in the Virat of this family. Family gets only leaves daily.	..	..	Rs. 40/- p.m. (Remittance)	Rs. 50/- p.m.	.	20

\* Total family income given here is fixed cash income and it will not tally with the total family income given in Table No. 18 because in that table, the remuneration received in kind has also been taken into consideration.





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