

CHAPTER X

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

The district of Pithoragarh (formerly a tahsil of Almora district) was created in 1960 and was one of the three districts of the erstwhile Uttarakhand Division and since 1968, one of the three districts of Kumaon Division the charge of which is held by a commissioner whose headquarters is at Naini Tal. He is the link between the district under him and the government.

District Sub-divisions

The district is divided into four sub-divisions—Pithoragarh (which is the district headquarters), Didihat, Dharchula and Munsyari—each comprising a tahsil of the same name and being conterminous with a *kanungo* circle in charge of a *kanungo*. These circles are further divided into 24 permanent *patwari* circles, 10 being in the Pithoragarh, 7 in the Didihat, 4 in the Dharchula and 3 in the Munsyari tahsil. One of the special features of the administration in these hill districts is that the *patwari* has been conferred with police powers as well.

District Staff

The district is in the charge of an officer who is designated district magistrate and deputy commissioner. As district magistrate he performs the duties and exercises the powers conferred on a district magistrate under the Code of Criminal Procedure and many special Acts. He holds a key post and is the pivot of the district administrative machinery. He is the highest authority in the district for the maintenance of law and order, in which he is assisted by the magistracy and the police. As deputy commissioner, his most important duties are the collection of government revenue and other dues recoverable as arrears of land revenue, the maintenance of the land records of the district and providing assistance to the rural population in times of natural calamities. He is also responsible for the due accounting of all monies received in and paid by the treasury. He is in overall charge of the execution of schemes of planning and development in the district, his main function being the co-ordination of the activities of different nation-building departments. He is also the president of the district soldiers', sailors' and airmen's board, which looks after the welfare of ex-servicemen and their families. In order to assist him in the work of administration, there are under him 4 sub-divisional officers of the provincial civil service, each holding charge of a sub-division, and 4 tahsildars, each in charge of a tahsil and assisted by a *naib* tahsildar. The deputy commissioner is also assisted by a treasury officer and a district supply-cum-town rationing officer, who also functions as the rent control and eviction officer and the district relief and rehabilitation officer.

The police organization in the district is headed by a deputy superintendent of police, who is vested with the powers of a superintendent of police. For purposes of police administration, the district has been divided into two circles, each under the charge of a circle inspector, one with headquarters at Pithoragarh and the other at Dharchula.

In this district the executive has not been separated from the judiciary and the district and session judge, Kumaon, has also jurisdiction over this district. For registration work, the district magistrate is also the district registrar. To dispose of civil cases of Pithoragarh and Chamoli there is only one *munsif*, who takes up the case work of both the districts in turn.

Other District Level Officers

The designations of other officers who have their offices in the district and work under the administrative control of their own heads of department are listed below:

Assistant General Manager, Roadways
Assistant Registrar, Co-operative Societies
Civil Surgeon
Deputy Superintendent of Police
District Agriculture Officer
District Employment Officer
District Horticulture Office
District Industries Officer
District Information Officer
District Harijan and Social Welfare Officer
District Live-stock Officer
District Medical Officer of Health
District Organizer, Prantiya Rakshak Dal
Executive Engineer, Local Self-government Department
Executive Engineer, Irrigation Department
Executive Engineer, Public Works Department, Askot
Sub-divisional Officer, Hydro-electricity Department
Superintending Engineer, Public Works Department

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES

Income-tax—For purposes of income-tax the district comes under the jurisdiction of the income-tax commissioner, Lucknow. An income-tax officer posted at Naini Tal used to look after the work of the district till 1969. However, an income-tax officer has been posted at Almora now and he looks after the work of this district also.

Central Excise—There is in the district an inspector who is designated as border examiner (land, custom and central excise). He is under the administrative control of the assistant collector, central excise division, Bareilly. A sub-inspector is also posted in the district.

Indian Posts and Telegraph—The district comes under the jurisdiction of the superintendent of post-offices, Almora division, which comprises the districts of Almora and Pithoragarh (with its headquarters at Almora). A postmaster is in charge of the head post-office of the district which is located at Pithoragarh town. Sixteen sub-postmasters, each in charge of a sub-post-office are posted in different parts of the district, and two inspectors are posted at Pithoragarh and Bering (Didihat tahsil).