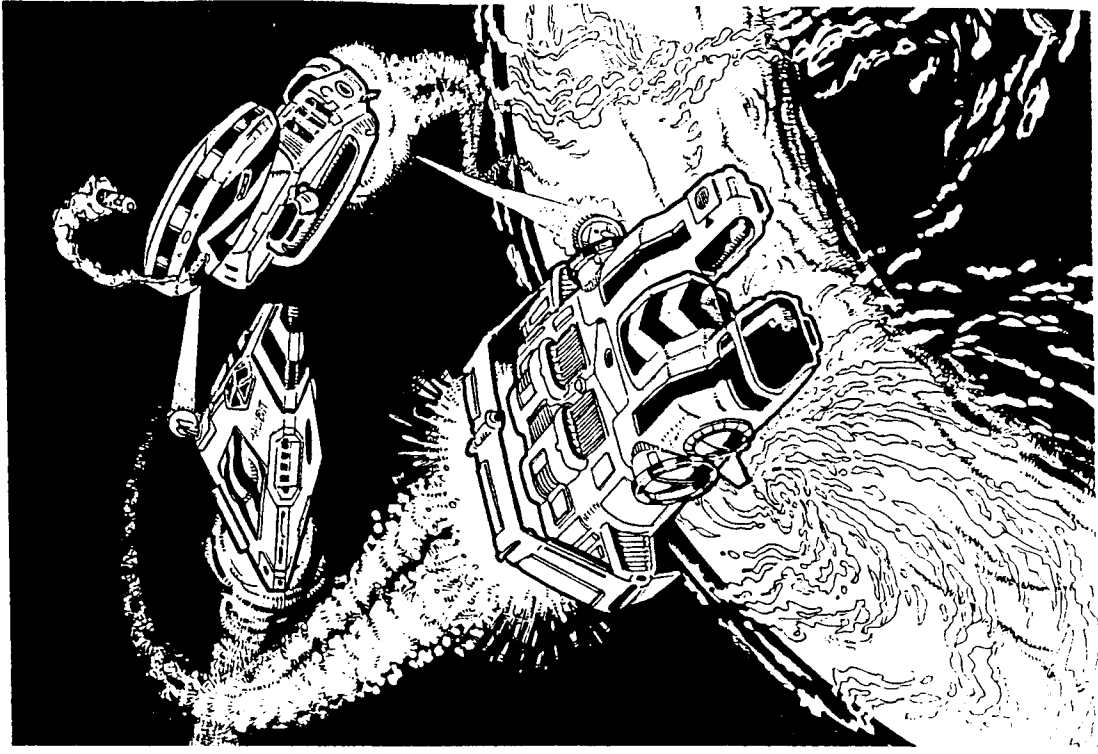
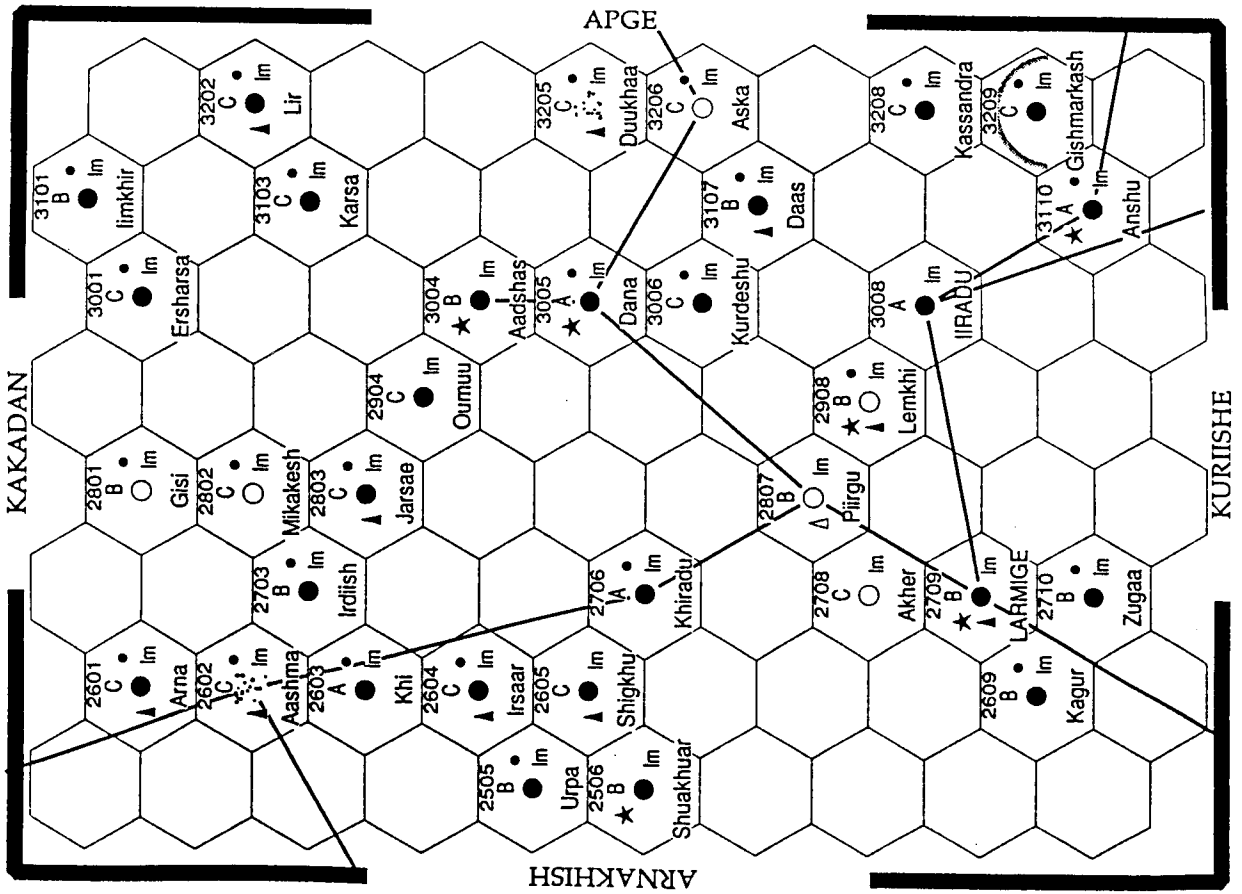
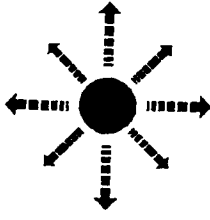


# IIRADU SUBSECTOR

[D]







## Library Data

LAST UPDATED 363-1115

### Aadshas/Iiradu

3004 B57187A-C N 200 Im M4 V

Aadshas is a medium sized desert planet relying on nearby Dana for nearly all its food. The relationship is complemented by the production of much of Dana's farming equipment in the Aadshas factories.

The population thrive in the many cities scattered across the planet. All of these are linked by super-fast rail systems making movement around the planet very quick and easy. As a result (and due to the first inhabitants' nomadic tendencies) the population is highly mobile and only relatively few stay in one place for long.

Industry relies on cheap labour, which is plentiful as the nomadic subclass is always willing to work for enough to enable them to fund their next move. Those few who can show intelligence and/or dedication quite often become the commercial elite in places where continuity of existence is essential. All of the senior positions are filled by permanent staff who have settled in one city, yet they hold the lower-paid, transient workers in equal regard.

This nomadic tendency has led to the enforcement of rigid, even draconian laws. Because an offender might move on to another city within a day, the criminal justice system is very quick in its duties. Spot fines and, for serious crimes, mutilation or execution is common. (Gaoi is usually a punishment frowned upon by all.) The civil justice system, however, is more akin to the adage 'ownership is 9/10ths of the law'. Those with property they wish to keep, employ guards; those without - and there are many - don't worry about such matters. This emphasises the divisions within the society between those who 'have' and those who wander.

There is a naval base on Aadshas. This is a major starbase, home to many large craft. Political reasons keep the base on Aadshas instead of nearby Dana. Lacking the latter's twin gas giants, the Aadshas base and orbital facility rely upon fuel 'cracked' from the world's oceans, with transports continually flying fuel up to the orbital port. In past history the industries on Aadshas were considered more important than the agricultural wealth of Dana and were thus blessed with the protection of the base (although the original decision was based upon the economics of building a base around a heavily industrialised planet, which was presented as the overriding factor by various interested parties).

Flora and Fauna on Aadshas are rare - not surprising given its barren nature and lack of water. Creatures similar to any desert world are typical and only the semi-rept/semi-lizard scavenger 'draakling' (now common as an expetive) has found a niche in the cities. Aadshas has no large predators - creatures over 75cm or so are extremely rare.

Travellers outside of the cities are advised to wear suitable clothing and protective face masks to ward off the dust carried by the winds. Within the cities this is not so much of a problem as high walls and/or residential blocks surrounding the town block out the worst of the elements - to such an extent that without the warnings, many visitors fail to realise the substantial difference between the sheltered city and the rest of the planet.

Governmental power is mostly on a city by city basis. Although grouped into greater blocs by district and answering to a particular capital, each city is self-regulating. Taxation, trade systems, even many laws are individual to a city. Certain things are universal however: the political system is a democracy of the rich (only those settled in a city with a senior position for at least 3 years may vote; 10 years residence is required before one can apply for the most important government posts) and universal travel and access rights apply. The cost of shared facilities is borne by private companies that bill each city they have dealings with.

Visitors should note that inhabitants are still surprisingly touchy about the global inter-city war which occurred some five centuries ago. It was this war which first brought a major imperial presence - in the form of the naval base - to the planet. There is still some bad feeling for the break-away Duukhaans (q.v.).

Uirpa was settled during the Rule of Man by the same genetic engineering company that was responsible for creating the Scanian's. Unlike Akiba/Argi, Uirpa was not a secret base and the first Uirpays were created as sterile androids. Before the Company pulled out, a decision was made locally to make the final batch (who would be staying behind as caretakers) fertile. No-one expected that the Company would never return. Although the base was not covert, the only knowledge regarding the origin of the race exists in an ancient archive computer disk on Terra and deep within the Uirpays' sacred temple where an ancient genetics lab is sealed behind the altar. Scanians would be able to identify the design as being extremely similar to the creation site on Akiba.

Uirpays characters may be generated as normal, with the following adjustments: -1 strength, +1 dexterity. Their skills include crafts, agriculture and any task requiring manual dexterity.

### Library Data provided by the following

#### BITS Contributors:

Kevin Berry Martin Blake Andy Bolstridge Andy  
Boulton Timothy Collinson Andy Goddard Ann  
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Andy Lilly Barbara Lucas Paul Radford Dave  
Robertson Megan Robertson Iain Rowan Neil Taylor  
Steve Wass Nik Whitehead

# For Your Eyes Only

## Referee's Information

### CyJac

Believed to be a female Lanciaan Datarunner using the tag 'CyJac', on 211-1113 the perpetrator successfully hacked into the Indliss main dataframe on Medurma and implanted personal comments onto certain library data entries. Unfortunately for Indliss, CyJac used a self-replicating computer virus to implant the data. Although the main dataframe was eventually cleaned and inoculated, several master memclips had already been sent to planetary offices for mass distribution. Given the fairly innocent nature of the comments (and the fact that many tourists have actually stated that they prefer the infected copies of the Encyclopaedia), Indliss has not made the eradication a high priority. In fact, word on the street is that Indliss may even have used the infection as an opportunity to add some comments of their own!

### Iiradu/Iiradu

A major smuggling ring operates from Iiradu undermining its efforts to raise its quality of life. The smugglers evade both import and export duties. Customs officials have so far been unable to halt this. Unknown to them, one of the chief trade committee members is receiving substantial bribes from the smugglers in return for assisting them in outwitting the authorities.

### Kassandra/Iiradu

There is an Ancient site in the system, but it is buried deep within the star's atmosphere. Recent research has suggested that the star may have two cores, produced by some form of collision far in the past between Sharik and a second, much smaller star. In fact, the mysterious 'second core' is the remains of the Ancients' device used to refuel the star - one of their early attempts at stellar engineering.

### Kassandritus

The head researcher from the University of Nimiakiin biochemistry department (Ergii Kaskil) is so wrapped up in attempting to solve the puzzle of Kassandritus, that he is turning to immoral (not to mention illegal) means to advance his research. Kaskil has been buying human test subjects from various sources throughout Dagutshang to help him test experimental vaccines. Exposing the subjects to the disease and trying the vaccines has only resulted in a number of corpses. Kaskil is getting increasingly desperate and so is resorting to even more shady means of acquiring his test subjects.

### Shuakhar

A common advertisement that might be found on Shuakhar: \*\*\* Razorback Mercenaries \*\*\* Want some combat experience? Join the biggest mercenary company on Shuakhar. Excellent training and fair rates of pay. (Most recruits earn enough with us to buy their own commission with a good company). Off-worlders also welcome. Apply to [recruitment@razor.merc.shuak](mailto:recruitment@razor.merc.shuak)

### Soreal Inc.

Hejan Kismilli, although retired to Daas, is still the active chairman of Soreal Inc. Soreal are a legitimate company and have clients throughout Iiradu subsector. However, unknown to those who are not part of the company special division, Soreal has many more clients than the recipients of their service would like. The 'special division' are a band of corsairs operating under the cover of Soreal Inc. Their base of operation is on the far side of Kurdeshu. With its tainted atmosphere and ownership rights by Daas, Kurdeshu provides an ideal base for the corsairs to operate from. They run several jump capable raiders distinct from Soreal's space fleet. This band operate throughout the subsector and have an intelligence network in place thanks to the parent company. As Soreal maintain the facilities on Kurdeshu, they are always looking to recruit new personnel from the dissidents sent there.

Kismilli is fully aware of the corsairs and has authorised token attacks on Soreal Inc. clients and shipping in order to remove the suspicions of Imperial investigators.

### Aashma/Iiradu

2602 C00056A-9 S NI As 703 Im M1 V G1 D

A small moon-sized asteroid, Aashma is a bureaucratic outpost of Arma though the two could not be more dissimilar. The Aashmae are extremely efficient, hard working and officious in the extreme. This latter is partly to ensure they extract the maximum amount in port taxes from traffic along the X-boat link but mostly because they are underpaid and 'trapped' on an airless rock with nothing better to do. Except for one thing - Sport.

The Aashmae are sports mad to the last woman and child. The only chance they get to relax is watching and gambling on sports. The huge sports domes for low-gravity events dotted all around the spaceport are a testimony to this though even the gambling is totally different to that on neighbouring Ama. The regulations are tight and the officious and logical minded Aashmae spend hours calculating new odds strategies. This is the side the Imperial airport authorities approve of... the flipside of this coin is the constant risk of Seaweed Influx from the much more liberal Arma. The families have tried to get the drug legalised on Aashma with no success, for the Imperial statutes for preclude such drugs from the vicinity of an X-boat link airport. However, enterprising souls continue to try and beat the Customs system (with varying degrees of success). The punishment, though harsh, is not as extreme as usual due to the weed's legal nature on Arma and the fact that the two planets often share or exchange governors. However, the fines are usually enough to put any would-be entrepreneur out of business.

Aashma is trying to attract more tourism through its sporting interests and has annual low-B sporting contests which attract entrants from many nearby systems. *(Unfortunately they haven't really got the hang of treating the tourists trade differently from the goods trade. - CJ)* However as Aashma's popularity grows, so the drugs market also grows and the fear in the Imperial-run port is that if they let down their guard there would be a huge influx of Seaweed from Arma (if they could keep up with demand) so ship-wide searches (with corresponding delays) are commonplace. *(But, hey, perhaps there's a pair of zero-g handball tickets you could interest the jackbooted official in... maybe? - CyJac 13)*

### Akher/Iiradu

2708 C420797-7 Na Po De 620 Im G3 IV

Human presence on Akher is primarily due to this system's location. As an integral part of the main J1 trading link between the industrial worlds of Iiradu and Larnige, Akher was settled as a fuelling/staging post early in the first Imperium's expansion through this subsector. Since the system lacks a gas giant and the small planet of Akher contains no standing water, fuel for vessels is brought to the airport at some considerable cost by diverting icy components of the system's distant asteroid belt into low planetary orbit. Once here, these bodies are broken up into 50m chunks, are sprayed with ablative heat shields and then de-orbited through the thin atmosphere to the planetary surface. These chunks are targeted into a concrete lined 1 km crater some 10 km from the airport, and arrive hourly with an energy equal to a small atomic weapon! Between "his" as the local population call them (and their impact can certainly be disturbing to visitors wary of seismic activity) the fragments are collected, melted and pumped to the C-class airport where further processing takes place.

The planetary atmosphere cannot support life, but does provide enough protection from cosmic and solar radiation for humans to work outside in normal cold weather clothing, using only oxygen tanks connected to simple face masks. Within Akher's cities, a full pressure atmosphere is maintained under several thin but tough transparent tents. All locals carry short duration oxygen masks in the event of a tent blow-out, but are confident that the risks are slim. The tent fabric is held in place by lightweight vacuum-sponged aluminium extrusions, a technology which the locals have developed to a high degree and for which a ready market exists in other low tech, low pressure environments.

It is interesting to note that the large amount of evaporated water caused by "his" creates a streable foggy haze for some km around the crater site. Some algae and simple plant forms, brought here accidentally by the inhabitants, have begun to flourish in this environment.

### Anshu/Iiradu

3110 A46769A-B N Ag NI R1 224 Im G3V, M4D

Anshu system combines a Naval base, modest shipyard and Class A airport with an R&R facility without par in the subsector - some would say in the whole sector. The climate is pleasant, there are many island chains and small continents offering a variety of conditions and facilities, and the local produce is excellent. Civilian visitors are welcome at all tourist facilities.

**Equipment and Resources:** Soreal, Inc. possess equipment from a variety of tech levels ranging from 12 to 15 although they do not have access to state of the art TL-15 military hardware. Their major ground force assets include 2 companies of TL-13 Grav Tanks. The company possesses 11 starships: 1 Scout ship, 2 Far Traders, 1 Destroyer Escort, 2 Patrol Cruisers, 1 Close Escort, 2 Bastion-class Liners, 1 SDB tender, and heavy lift capacity provided by a 4000-ton Freighter. Additionally, the company owns a number of SDB's.

## Urpa/Iiradu

2505 BT70565-D Ag NI 803 Im K4 V

A fascinating world, well worth a visit from anybody interested in the diversity of near-human races within the universe, Urpa is the home to the Urpayans. This race is virtually identical to Humankind save for their pink pigmentation, purple eyes and hair and their ability to breathe their homeworld's tainted air. Internal anatomy, although simplified, is almost identical to humans except Urpayans have an extremely efficient filter within their large lungs.

Urpa was first surveyed by a ship belonging to the Restryk Corporation, which regards the planet as its own property and treats the Urpayans as slaves, albeit well-treated ones. Urpayans are not permitted to leave the planet or to take employment with anyone other than the Corporation. However, outside visitors are welcomed. The main products of Urpa include sweet vegetables, handicrafts and mechanical locks of great beauty and effectiveness.

An Urpayan leaving Urpa will require dietary supplements and a breathing apparatus to supply trace gases - poisonous to other beings but vital for his survival.

Archaeologists studying the Urpayans have noted the absence of any other similar species, either now or in the past, in the Urpa ecosystem which would appear to contradict the possibility of parallel evolution at work. There had been some debate as to whether or not the Urpayans were in actual fact a highly adapted MHR (Minor Human race) brought to the planet by the Ancients, but the facts do not support this theory. In fact in 899, an archaeologist called Hirun Temple, published a book which revealed that no-one to date had successfully found any trace of the Urpayans existing on the planet much before the Rule of Man. The Urpayans were an extremely primitive race prior to their contact and did not keep any form of records which could explain this mystery.

## Zugaa/Iiradu

B96A8AA-A Ri Wa 212 Im M0 VIM1 D

Zugaa is governed by a civil service bureaucracy which evolved out of the increasing links between the seven large corporations which dominated the Zugaaan economy, and the official agencies of government. The government is known formally as the Office of Commerce and Government, ComGov for short, and informally as the Kurublish, which also happens to be the name of a large and extremely ponderous Zugaaan cetacean.

Zugaa's wealth is mainly founded upon the harvesting and export of Millions, a krill-like plankton which has renowned medicinal properties and which is exported for use in pharmaceutical manufacture throughout the sector. The Millions trade is carefully regulated and husbanded by ComGov, which has taken over many of the roles of the Zugaaan corporations such as Geshemirk and KuyperCorp which built their wealth on the Millions trade. Zugaaan government circles are continually buzzing with rumours about how one of the largest megacorporations are trying to muscle in on the jealously guarded trade. One of the largest scandals to hit Zugaa in recent years was when a senior economic planner in the Kurublish was found to have been leaking details of forward trade planning to a megacorporation.

In addition to the Millions farming industry Zugaa has a reputation for the production of high quality submersibles and diving equipment (exported to Oumnuu, for example). There is a very large industry manufacturing food products from kelp and farmed fish for off-world export; on Zugaa this occupation is regarded with some derision.

Many of the population of Zugaa live in arcologies built in the shallow water around the few islands which rise above the Ocean. The islands themselves are generally reserved as playgrounds for the very rich, and the very powerful. There is a strong and growing popular opinion that more of the islands should be opened up for the general public. Many of those involved in the processed food production industry live in arcologies in the deep ocean; there are those who have never seen the surface. The most excitedly discussed public project on Zugaa is the proposed construction of the world's first grav town, which will float in the air rather than on the waves. There is considerable manoeuvring by anyone who is anyone on Zugaa to be included in those who will have the right to live there.

However, the system government acts as if it were a civilian wing of the Fleet, and the high law-level reflects restrictions on civilians: certain areas are restricted to military access, and civilians may not bear arms. Locals do not object as they get rich pickings from running the R&R grounds. Indeed, the high Law Level has let Anshu boast that it is one of the most peaceful worlds in the sector. The government of Anshu is at pains to stress that the system is not under martial law; the Ruling Council merely takes appropriate counselling from the Navy.

Visitors considering skinning at the system gas giants are advised that Anshu III and Anshu IV are under Naval restriction, and that the brown dwarf Anshu V is categorised "Hazardous (Red)". Skinning is permitted at Anshu VII, but as this lies over 1200 AU out, beyond the orbit of the companion red dwarf, it is uneconomical for commercial visitors who should consider purchasing fuel at Anshu Main.

The massive combine-farms which dot the planet's surface are run almost totally automatically and, by tradition, are run quite separately from the main government by the Seam Board (Seam is a seed harvested for its oils, and a major export from Anshu). A wide variety of produce is exported throughout the subsector, with the delicacies (particularly fruits) most often shipped to the rich of Iiradu.

## Arna/Iiradu

2601 C8B8574-A S Ni Fl 703 Im M0 V M8 D

Arna is a world of sulphurous seas lashed by irregular sulphuric acid storms. The inhabitants live in a series of huge domed 'towns' each governed by separate families - descendants of the original colonists. Surprisingly, the system is extremely relaxed for such a harsh environment. The planet is relatively wealthy because of Anshu's reliance on it for a number of staples including water, oxygen and minerals extracted from ice layers trapped deep beneath the planet's crust.

This is Arna's reason for being - the Jump Station at Anshua needs its supplies and it knows that. The families also control the running of the Anshua recreation facilities as a single governing body making them more profit from the deal as Anshua attracts more traffic along the X-boat link.

There are two more reasons for Arna's overly relaxed attitude towards life. The surface may be harsh but there is rarely a need to go outside the domes and all the pump workings are automated to a large degree. The people have a lot of spare time and are very recreationally based so a huge gambling sports and drug culture has emerged. This is the second reason for Arna's relaxed 'state of mind' - the Seaweed. The Seaweed is the colloquial term for one of the plants that seems to somehow thrive in the oceans of the planet when dried and then eaten, acts as a mild euphoric. The drug is less addictive than alcohol and is, in fact, a boon in the enclosed spaces of the domes since it also has the side-effect of reducing claustrophobic emotions caused by long-term living inside. The drug is perfectly legal on Arna and very common.

All this does however have side-effects on the population's general attitude that can annoy visitors hugely. The repairs that would be done tomorrow may be delayed while the work crew go to the Casino or on an all night and day drinking and/or Seaweed session ("Seeing" in local banter). Costs are high but so are the salaries - some visitors come for the gambling. Others to earn the high wages but all are surprised by the cost of the journey back to Anshua when the Port taxes are applied. Taxes can rise astronomically if they've been delayed a week by a slack workforce with nothing to do but spend money...

[See Anshua]

## Aska/Iiradu

3206 C201752-8 Ic Na Va 603 Im M9VI M7D M1D

The Aska mainworld is the only planetary body in this system. The twin stars of Stumifok and Bedic occupy pride of place with three small gas giants orbiting them. The third star, Trehin, lies in orbit 14 and round this (a large distance out) orbits Aska mainworld.

This vacuum, ice capped world boasts a surprising population of over 60 million people who live in a number of large underground cities. Aska has to rely heavily on technology from other worlds, and regular shipments to keep the large scale life support systems operational. There are daily shipments arriving from Daas, the contract for which lies with the Sharushid megacorporation.

Much of the population spend their time in the sizeable employment complexes that house, feed, entertain and provide jobs for the populace. Space is at a premium in the cities, and as a result it is only the wealthy (or criminal/unlucky element) who live outside of the employment 'communes'.

Each city has its run-down, depressed areas. It is here that most of the action on Aska occurs, however there is the constant threat of the poorly maintained life support system failing. People who live outside of the communes are forced to scratch a living as temporary labourers, or take illegal work for local gang leaders (or perhaps even employment companies).

Life on Aska is complicated by the low level of self-control exercised by the population. Askans are very unstable, with severe mood swings and personality shifts being commonplace. The largest single employer on the planet is, surprisingly for such a low law level planet, the law enforcement agency who is constantly looking for people with more self-control than the average 'Joe Public' to join their ranks. However, their duties are generally quite limited and tend to involve policing residential areas to keep petty squabbles to a minimum.

Within the last year the Askan government initiated a global computer business network designed to link businesses and provide a number of useful services. Enthusiasm for the 'Buisinet' was far greater than the government imagined (even for the highly unpredictable Askans). Many management level staff wanted terminals installed in their accommodation as well as at the office. As the popularity of the 'Buisinet' spread, it became a status symbol; people had two, three or even four terminals in one living area.

Many trading houses recognised the sales potential and started to flood the market with a vast range of products. This effectively took the control of the 'Buisinet' away from the government, a fact they did not like one bit. Initial attempts to curb the flow of terminals and other peripheral devices into Aska failed, resulting in the introduction of a heavy tax on the sale of hardware. The 'Net Tax' was introduced, and over a few months was increased to 150%, such was the governments desire to control the technological imports.

Their tactics finally paid off, many small merchant houses ceased to trade computer goods with Aska, leaving only traders with a large stake in the Buisinet - most notably Makhidkaru. The last two months have seen an upsurge in the availability of black-market net goods as many usually honest businesses have found the 'Net Tax' too crippling to purchase Buisinet hardware legally.

## Colect (n.)

Sociological grouping on the planet Mikakesh, as well as the name for the building in which the grouping lives. Most colects are a mile or so long. They are single storey buildings usually 3/4 sunk in surface dust and containing 150-600 people. The inhabitants of each colect are divided into interior areas or dormitories according to age (rather than sexual or family divisions). The colects are usually divided length-ways with one half taken up with sifting, refining and packing machines concerned with the extraction of minute gen particles from the planet's dusty surface. The other half of the building is divided up in the following manner: about an eighth of the building is the area where infants live (including facilities for their care), the next eighth is where pre-adults live (including schooling), the next quarter is designated for adults, the next quarter for 'middles' and the final quarter for 'seniors'. Colects often define the exact boundaries of these sections differently (both the physical boundaries in the colect and the actual age boundaries). Sociologists note that during their lives, the inhabitants of Mikakesh 'pass through' their colects in a similar fashion to their gen dust.

Two factors should be noted by visitors to a colect. Firstly, everyone is dressed in a like manner, which can best be described as a set of yellow pyjamas with a floppy pillow-like head-dress. Secondly, because colect inhabitants do not have long-term male-female pair-bonding, sex is regarded as a sort of communal event which some visitors have described as a 'primitive orgy'. Unlike normal humans, the females of Mikakesh undergo significant hormonal changes during their ovulation period, causing a noticeable change in body scents. At the 'appropriate' time, any such woman is likely to be attended by a number of males. Occasionally, visitors have been known to join in. Perhaps thankfully, off-world females do not encede the appropriate scents to cause this reaction. However, some alien species do produce sufficiently similar scents to cause confusion in the colect!

## Daas/Iiradu

B768834-A S 901 Im K1 V1 M1 D

Daas is ruled by the upper class elite of society known as the Sidarous. Entry into this group is restricted to a select group of rich families and nobles, consisting only of those individuals/families shown to have the appropriate manners, breeding and a substantial source of wealth. A few off-worlders have been known to relate to Daas to join the Sidarous and live out their years in a luxurious manner amongst like-thinking individuals.

## Shigkhu/Iiradu

2605 C643340-B S Lo Ni Po 820 Im G1 V

"We like to keep things quiet here on Shigkhu" is the official line from Representative House. Representative House is the core of all in-goings and out-goings of the planet. Apart from being the most impressive building on the world it boasts a elevator that joins up with the Orbital Docking Platform "Helena" above. This is made possible by the super strong cords that run from planet to station. The elevator ferries cargo and passengers from Helena to Shigkhu far more efficiently than any shuttle service and is far more breathtaking, especially given its mostly transparent construction!

Originally a colony from nearby planets, the progressive attitude of the inhabitants has not altered the fact that this is a friendly place to visit; even the criminal element have come to respect its "Haven" status in the sector. The famous Oval building has been the site of many Peace Talks over the years, where off-world representatives can come together in a neutral environment to solve inter-system political squabbles under the guidance (if desired) of counsellors from Representative House.

The atmosphere is tainted by the fragrance of Shigkhu's most prominent tree, the Arubu tree. This large black barked tree with white flowers that bloom for most of the year, has become a symbol of the planet and is used as a symbol of peace. Fortunately the fragrance is a pleasant one and has therapeutic properties. However, visitors are warned that some trees on rare occasions have the yellow fungus disease. This can be poisonous to the touch depending on the fungus maturity. A extravagant captain may pay to outfit his quarters with Arubu wood. It has excellent properties (appearance, flexibility and durability) and its pleasant smell has been found to last many years.

*( Trouble is unwanted here and anyone who may cause it may find themselves with a large bounty on their head. Alternatively the adventurer who likes to be well paid for his bounty work may find Representative House a handsome employer. - (Ylac '13 )*

## Shuakhaur/Iiradu

2506 B2728BD-B N 600 Im M2 V

The companies that operate on this planet date back many hundreds of years. During the planet's past these companies grew so large that it was deemed necessary to maintain their own armies. Some companies used local countries and even fought wars with them. Currently, a company's history is its pride and a company's strength is its army. Shuakhaur has a bloody past strewn with minor wars over its limited natural resources.

Company generals are regarded as heroes. The soldiers are rewarded with prizes and decorations. These decorations have social status attached to them and are worn with pride by recipients, the decorations for valour being the most prized.

Some companies have allegiance to one or more heads of state of the planet's countries and this can reflect favourably upon its inhabitants. Such links are especially useful for recruiting new army members during Gung Ho celebrations like the anniversary of the Mulkat Desert Campaign.

Shuakhaurians regards off-worlders with some suspicion and don't usually travel away from their home world. This is encouraged by companies as a significant rise in imported goods would effect their trade. Any merchant wanting to buy goods (for export) however, will be pampered and looked after.

A favourite animal on the planet is a large dog like creature that is quite intelligent and is able to understand some complex commands. These dogs (commonly referred to as 'Pulch') have been used extensively for combat purposes in the planet's history and have also been awarded decorations. The Pulch handler trade is a highly regarded and respected position in Shuakhaur society. Off-worlders are banned strictly from buying these dogs and/or exporting them.

## Soreal Incorporated

Primary product: Security services, mercenaries. Headquarters: Daas (3107 Iiradu) Major Shareholder: Hegan Kisinilli, holding 25% of total shares. Employees: 7,181

Background: Soreal Inc. specialise in providing all manner of security services ranging from bodyguard teams to planetary security. Only Daas has availed themselves of Soreal to provide planetary security. Soreal maintains a relatively large force of troops which are mostly licensed out to other organisations as security guards and mercenaries.

The ruling government is exclusively drawn from the Sidarous with little regard for the opinions of the lower classes. The lower classes accept the uneven distribution of society and the Sidarous as simply a fact of life. The idea that one day, one could enter this group, is a dream shared by many people. It is a dream subtly compounded by the Sidarous itself in order to help maintain order and dissuade possible dissidents from taking any serious actions.

Daas has achieved tech level A through the importation of technology and through gifts brought by prospective members of the Sidarous. The same applies to the class B startport, Daas Downport, where sufficient 'donations' have significantly raised the capacity for building in-system vessels. Daas has come to rely upon outsiders for advancing technology and bringing interplanetary trade to the planet. Additional profits come from supplying essential equipment and foodstuffs to Aska.

The ISS base here maintains a watch on the incoming goods and persons but has rarely intervened except, for example, when a major off-world criminal attempted to retire into the Sidarous under a false identity.

Daas maintains a small squadron of SDIs to protect planetary interests and the single gas giant present in the system. Daas contracts this squadron from a mercenary group, Soreal Inc. based on Daas. The leader of the group is one Heggan Kismilli, an off-worlder from Iiradu retired to Daas, and now part of the Sidarous.

There have been an increasing number of civil disturbances against the Sidarous over the past 20 years. This is due to the complacency demonstrated by the Sidarous regarding the future of the planet. One group (the 'Maaraagik') have pronounced themselves solely responsible for the civil disturbances and have threatened escalating events until the Sidarous provide direct finance to make Daas less reliant on others and begin distributing the planet's income more fairly.

The Sidarous have taken a hard line with the Maaraagik. Several hundred Maaraagik members have been incarcerated at the penal colony on Kurdesah.

## Dana/Iiradu

3005 A689576-F N N12 Im F0 V M9 D

Although not a large exporter of its agricultural products (and thus not rated as an Ag world), Dana enjoys a high turnover of various types of trade and also a thriving tourist industry. The native population is small, only a few hundred thousand, and most of these are nomadic wanderers on the vast oceans. The rest drive the farming machinery on those land areas able to support agriculture, the fishing ships that harvest the rich sea life, and the necessary support for interplanetary trade.

The majority of Dana is taken over by water, some 91% of its surface is ocean and some inhabitants have never even set foot on land. The seas teem with small, edible creatures, and are also host to a few large predators. The land areas are mostly cleared for crop production but a few inaccessible parts still accommodate the sprawling wet-wood forests that were so important to the first inhabitants. The way of life pioneered by these original colonists is still followed in the form of huge floating arcologies, though today these are composed of much higher tech materials. The atmosphere is perfectly breathable to humans though many find the humidity uncomfortable, especially in the hottest months.

The 3 main population groups usually do not mix. The arcology inhabitants prefer a semi-idyllic existence drifting about the planet. They make their incomes by catching the rare 'Quandos', a small fish-like creature noted both for its flavour and its mildly intoxicating effect. Tourist goods and other sea produce make up the rest of their income which is normally spent on equipment.

The land- and sea-based farming communities are very much small groups often located away from others. This has led to a sheltered, independent spirit amongst them. These people meet occasionally but never outside of their farming groups except when their produce is brought to Danorkas, the single city.

Danorkas is the centre of Dana's off-world existence. Built close to the startport it provides markets for Dana's produce and a centre for tourists. A major 'hardware' import is the specialised farming machinery produced by Aadsahas, in exchange for foodstuffs from Dana.

The tourist industry caters mainly for hunting expeditions for the large and fearsome 'kulaak', a solitary predator normally quite placid until enraged by electric depth-charges dropped to bring it to the surface.

Over the years it was found that the productivity of Sternmetal's operations was not enough to justify the resource expenditure, and the megacorporation decided to terminate its operations. By this point there had been several generations born on Ounuu from the original Zugaan employees, who considered themselves Ounuu, and who wished to stay. Sternmetal agreed to leave them most of the equipment and resources in return for a percentage cut of any future mineral exports. Business analysts noted that the equipment was largely tending towards the obsolete and agreed that the deal definitely favoured Sternmetal.

The new Ounuu still identified strongly with their parent company ties, and the three original settlements formed the basis for the mini-states that make up present day Ounuu. Relations between the three have often been uneasy, but are particularly troubled at present. The largest settlement, New Shurrupek is built on an island chain that is particularly threatened by new volcanic activity. The other two settlements, Imfrissiba and Kuyperon are extremely concerned that the Shurrupekians are planning to take over the Imfrissiba settlement which is one of the most geologically stable areas of the planet.

Kuyperon differs from the other two settlements in that it is not built on an island, but is rather a floating assemblage of many different floating factories, ships and dwellings that have been bolted together over the years, forming a tangled warren of varied designs, which, it is rumoured, not even the inhabitants know their way around completely.

## Pirgu/Iiradu

B200530 F Way Station NI Ya 600 Im M9V1

This system lies only 36 parsecs from Vland and it was first visited soon after the Vilani invention of jump drive around ten thousand years ago. These early explorers were disappointed with the system's cool, dim, M-class sub dwarf and were quick to name its distant (and only) accompanying planet 'Pirgu', after a frozen hell mentioned in Vilani mythology. The surface temperature has been known to reach 33 K during abnormal flare activity, but rarely moves from an average of 31 K, and the slow rotational period of 23 days results in the lit side baking under harsh stellar radiation. Other more choice worlds of the subsystem attracted initial colonisation efforts and it wasn't until the development of the X-Boat network through this area and growing trading links between Iiradu and Larnige that further thought was put into developing a human presence here. Today, the population of six hundred thousand are almost all employed within the scout way station and startport facilities and, due to reasons of environmental control, it was deemed to be safer to place these elements in low Pirgu orbit, rather than on the surface of the main world. The current structure has evolved into a roughly cubical six hundred metre assembly of variously shaped components and is capable of handling vessels up to around 5,000 tons in internal hangars. Vacuum docking connections are available for larger ships.

Several thousand people are employed on the surface of Pirgu, however, and are used to mine cryoaltron-hard ammonia and methane ices from within sealed and insulated crawler/rigs so that pure hydrogen can be extracted and sent up to orbit by shuttle. Both merobans and the Scout service rely on commercial fuel within the Pirgu system, and the local ice-miners earn high rates of pay in one of the Imperium's most unforgiving environments. As accidents on the surface are frequent (and are invariably fatal), stress levels are high. Since the bars around the startport area are often full of off-duty miners returning from the planetary surface, travellers should be aware of the associated problems that this can entail.

## Respirovest (n.)

A type of high-collared strait-jacket wound with multiple wire coils that, when properly energised, creates a magnetic motor-field which pumps oxygen into the wearer. The molecules are impelled into the nostrils and/or mouth and pushed down into the lungs. Carbon dioxide molecules (inversely magnetic) are pushed the other way. The 'vest will maintain breathing functions even for a badly injured person. Uses include victims of cracked ribs or lung diseases and firemen and rescue workers who are investigating its use as a gas mask in smoke and fumes.

## Shampka (n.)

Religion found largely on Jarsae and Mikakesh but has adherents on other worlds in the subsector. The followers subscribe to belief in One God, creator of the Universe. They are 'lively' in their worship and produce works of art that are widely admired (mostly wood carvings and tapestry work but other items as well) and often sought after. The religious URK code is 48305 but the religion's exact aims and means vary widely across the subsector, making it difficult to classify precisely. Advocates are not restricted to humans and include a number of alien species.

**Signal-GK 12**

Dana also hosts a naval training facility. This teaches advanced techniques for marine personnel involving (waterworld) planetary assault and various submarine and survival activities.

Dana is rare in that it holds members of the law professions in high regard. The 'wilderness' communities rely upon travelling lawyers to assist local judges elected by ballot in the progression of justice.

Minor ecological problems have recently come to a head with the creation of a Free Sea Movement (q.v.).

## Duukhaa/Iiradu

3205 C000668-B S Na Ni As 114 Im K1 V M6 D

Nearly five centuries ago the balkanised cities of the world of Aadshaas were involved in a bitter, pan-global and almost totally devastating war. Peace was eventually enforced by Imperial military forces: a peace which led to the development of a naval base within the system and also to the foundation of a world council as a common forum for the discussion of international grievances. In an attempt to bond the disparate nations together and remove the more extreme elements from the planet, the fledgling council (under its first leader Haako Duukhaa) focused on an uninhabited system two parsecs away as prime colonisation territory.

The Duukhaa colony is based within an asteroid belt orbiting twin central stars. Over millennia, gravitational forces and the shepherding nature of four large gas giants have broken up and sorted asteroids within the belt, to provide rich opportunities for miners.

Following Duukhaa's death in 650 the system was renamed in her honour, but today Duukhaa is usually used to refer to a 15 km nickel-iron asteroid situated as the largest member of the "trailing Trojans" of the innermost gas giant. Large parts of this asteroid have been fused, tunneled by miners and these, combined with natural fissures within the body of the rock, provide extensive and comfortable accommodation for the majority of the one million inhabitants of this system.

Much of the area surrounding the starport is devoted to the "UPB" (the University of Planetary Bodies) with a campus comprising over fifty thousand students and staff drawn from across the subsector. The University has widely renowned research facilities in the fields of asteroid and planetary creation, mapping and mining with associated courses in geology, metallurgy, astronomy and astrology (run in conjunction with the local scout base). The UPB is a fitting symbol for the peaceful diversity of this system's homeworld, although relations with Aadshaas are still occasionally troubled.

## Ersharsa/Iiradu

C89A644-B Ni Wa 802 K3V

Ersharsa orbits a gas giant, well outside the habitable zone of the star Ershaanur, but intense tidal friction has melted the rocky core and original icy outer layers turning it into a literal world-of-water under an icy crust and intensely frigid atmosphere.

The Ershaanur system was explored early on by Vilani prospectors but ignored in favour of better prospects elsewhere. Some 600 years ago a Scout Survey made a more complete study, and reported the unusual liquid body of the planet. Establishing a research base showed that the world was truly extraordinary, possessing unusual native life and free oxygen trapped beneath the crust. Many of the native fish-worms are edible to humans: an export trade supports nearby systems, and sends delicacies and exotica far across the sector. Tourists come from far and wide to see the fantastic displays of bio-luminescent life in the dark waters, and the atmosphere geysers where giant air bubbles accumulate sufficient energy to burst through the ice crust.

Electromagnetic and sonar sensors suggest that there is some form of intelligent life around volcano communities deep in the 'oceans' on the core surface. However, all attempts to communicate have failed distantly - with no signs that the signals even reached their targets. Very little is known about the "deep ones" as the pressure 1000 km down is over 30,000 atmospheres and has crushed all probes sent to investigate, long before they near the core.

## FracFix

Brand name for stickers, clothing fabric and other fasteners produced on Jarsee (q.v.). Using the same principal as the seize on a gecko's foot (fine flexible hairs) FracFix is covered with a carefully graded mixture of fibres. The coarsest fibres pack as closely as they can; finer fibres fill the gaps between them; between them are finer fibres still - and so on down to fibres of almost molecular fineness. Pushed against a surface, the coarse fibres fit themselves into its large-scale contours; the smaller fibres fit round them to fill smaller irregularities; those smaller still flow into the still finer gaps, and so on. The FracFix sticker makes intimate contact with any surface; as clothing fabric it gives a positive cling (it and brings new security to strapless gowns and even more daringly unsupported or fragmentary creations).

The planet Kassandra (q.v.) holds a small research base operated by UIUSS. This base is responsible for the control and data-collection from a series of space-borne telescopes at various points in-system.

The university maintains a class C starport there, mainly for the use of transporting researchers to and from the station and for the delivery of supplies from off-world. All profits from spaceport duties are then fed back into the funding of further research work.

The current Principal, Count Shannash Elhodiri, holds the post not for his research history (impressive though it is), but more for his uncanny ability to drum up research funds. The Vilani megacorporations Naasirka, Shorushidi and Makhikaran all fund research there, together with various chairs. The Vilani are happy to do this as the university's research does not generally lead to anything patentable.

## Lir/Iiradu

3202 C476002-A S Lo Ni 401 Im M3 IV M6 V

Lir is something of a mystery world. Since its first discovery by the ISS, it has been quarantined from off-world contact due to the virus-rich atmosphere which is lethal to humans. Colonisation has never been attempted and the only occupants of the system are an ISS base which enforces the quarantine and performs research into the atmospheric viruses.

There is a limited range of flora and fauna on the planet, but study has been limited by the need to use remotely-operated drones and robots to reach the surface safely and few samples have been brought off planet for fear of viral contamination.

In-system travel is permitted but landing on Lir is not. Sceptics, noting the irregular presence of unusually large naval ships in the vicinity, have at times claimed that the virus warning is in fact a cover for some dark secret that the Imperial authorities are hiding on Lir. Naturally, the authorities deny this and the ISS base treat any enquiries into this matter as a joke.

## Mikakesh/Iiradu

2802 C300664-B Na Ni Va 304 Im M3v

Mikakesh would ordinarily have been something of a backwater with its airless, waterless wastes. Rocky outcrops of its surface poke through ancient layers of dust that range from several tens of metres in some places to just a few inches in others.

The world was rescued from obscurity by the discovery of tiny gem-like particles spread extremely sparsely through the surface dust. Now the inhabitants of Mikakesh are, for the most part, engaged in recovering this valuable commodity through a time-consuming filtering process. The end product is used widely from high class wall decorations to furniture and clothing; depending upon the fineness and colour, it is sold under a variety of names but is generally known as "star dust".

The population of Mikakesh are almost all descended from the original colonists that arrived from Jarsee (q.v.). Originally from the country of Kamasta, they were religious migrants of the Shampka religion (q.v.) who felt compelled to leave their homes due to clamp downs on their freedoms by the government. Oddly enough they have maintained many of their ties to the homeworld and are still ruled by the government of Kamasta. Some observers have suggested that this is in name only, but the relationship between the two is quite incestuous and the inhabitants of Mikakesh would strongly deny that they are an independent world.

All the inhabitants live in some 10,000 colects (q.v.) scattered across the surface of this planet. Physically, each colect is similar but inside, large differences can be found. Colects have little physical contact with each other except on holidays and 'high days' but communication via holo is extremely common.

## Oumuu/Iiradu

C97A575-7 Ni Wa 900 Im M0 VI

There is considerable volcanic activity on Oumuu, which has led to the existing sulphurous taint in the atmosphere which gives the Oumuu ocean its distinctive yellowish hue, and which leads to the spectacular sunsets for which Oumuu is famous, and which many subsector wits describe as the only reason why anyone should wish to travel there.

Oumuu was originally settled by employees of three of the major corporations of Zugaa, who had been brought in by Stemmical as sub-contractors to exploit the newly discovered mineral resources of Oumuu. The Zugaa corporations were used for their renowned expertise in waterworld operations. The volcanic activity on Oumuu had produced a large number of sea bed 'black smokers', volcanic vents where the innards of Oumuu were vented under conditions of extreme pressure. The Stemmical mineral operations were begun to exploit these resources.



Enforcers - a sub-class of Priest - act as police, ensuring all laws are followed and criminals are punished. At the bottom are the Citizens. It is usually possible to tell how important a person is by the colour of their clothes: the Larmiss wears white, signifying enlightenment, with lower classes wearing progressively darker shades (particularly devout Larmiss wear only grey, although many others wear caste-approved colours, particularly greens and blues).

Off-worlders must identify themselves by wearing red armbands, but are otherwise subject to the same laws as the local population. One important fact is that artificial sentiments - self-aware computers and uplifted races (including Vargr) - are considered property rather than people. Off-worlders should also be aware that the use of non-medical drugs, including alcohol, is prohibited.

## Larmiss

The official religion of Larmiss (q.v.), named after its founder Makkhii Larmiss. It is unusual - although far from unique - in that it is pro-science. The foundation of the religion is simple: the belief that God and the Universe are one and the same; in every plant, animal, or grain of sand is a fragment of God. It therefore follows that the more one learns about the Universe, the more one learns about God, and the closer one comes to Enlightenment.

The University of Larmiss is highly regarded, and Larmiss science textbooks are used throughout the Sector. The religious hierarchy also assumes the functions of government. The ruler of Larmiss, the Larmiss, is the head of both Church and State; she is High Priestess, and keeper of the Book of Larmiss - this is a combination of holy book and constitution, and only the current Larmiss may alter it.

A strict caste system is observed. Below the Larmiss are several grades of Priest, who also function as government officials. Enforcers - a sub-class of Priest - act as the police and beneath them are the Citizens. Caste determines the allowed clothing colour: the Larmiss wears white, signifying enlightenment, with lower classes wearing progressively darker shades (particularly devout Larmiss wear only grey, although many others wear caste-approved colours, particularly greens and blues). Many interactions - including marriage - are only permitted between people of the same caste.

## Lemkhi/iradu

2908 B200651-F A Na Ni Va 812 Im M0 II M6 D

The barren world of Lemkhi is more than just a research base - it is a university in its own right, dedicated to the study of the space sciences (see Lemkhi Imperial University of Space Sciences).

The university maintains a class B starport, mainly for the use of transporting researchers to and from the university and for the delivery of supplies from off-world. All profits from starport duties are then fed back into the funding of further research work.

Most of the habitable areas on Lemkhi are dug into the surface of the planet, rather than in domes on the surface. There are several buildings on the surface, mainly astronomical observatories and the like used for the direction of space-borne telescopes. The dominating effect of the university means that most of the population are fairly casual and laid-back about life. University members are always ready to welcome outsiders who are interested in their work.

There are five main campuses, each linked to the others by a subrail system. The main starport is at Illusheke, the capital and largest of these, at the rotational north pole. The other four - Rupake, Ionaa, Surashii and Vaalidhiri - are almost equidistant around the equator.

Because of the wide variety of scientific devices in the surrounding space and the need to prevent disruption of observations and measurements, the space lanes around Lemkhi are very strict and must be obeyed. Ships failing to follow these instructions may suffer exceptionally heavy fines or be impounded, hence the amber zone warning for this system.

## Lemkhi Imperial University of Space Sciences

The Lemkhi Imperial University of Space Sciences (LIUSS) was granted an Imperial charter in 1013 when the number of academic and related personnel exceeded the non-research personnel on what had once been a small Imperial research base. It is known primarily for its studies in astronomy and astrophysics, although there are also groups working on theoretical jump mechanics.

## Free Sea Movement

Dana's floating arcologies have given rise in recent years to a faction opposed to the commercial farming of the planet. Nominally titled the 'Dana Free Sea Movement' several terrorist attacks have been carried out on remote fishing vehicles. A major incident involved a bomb exploded near the starport, which claimed 37 lives including 12 tourists. However, the bomb could not be verified to be the work of this group which remains an underground movement despite vocal support from some of the arcology inhabitants.

## Gishmarkash/iradu

3209 536114-9 I.o Ni 825 A Im K8 V

The Gishmarkash system is owned and ran by GISHMARCO Test & Development (q.v.), a wholly owned subsidiary of GSBAG, who specialise in starship systems testing and development.

The abundance of common planetary bodies in the system (five gas giants and two planetoid belts) make for an ideal testing ground for starship systems and completed starships. Two or three projects are generally ongoing at any one time and so areas of the system are frequently prohibited from unauthorised vessels, particularly the mainworld, gas giants and belts - hence the Amber Zone status.

Gishmarkash is used as the final testing ground for products. Teams come from other research/manufacturing facilities within the GSBAG group with the products ready for test. There are no high tech research or repair facilities in the system so the teams are required to be self-sufficient in terms of specialists, spare parts, etc. GISHMARCO provides accommodation, in-system transport, co-ordination of test areas, administration and other such activities required by the research teams. A large recreation facility is also run on the mainworld, which is frequented by long-standing project members needing well earned R&R.

Early projects suffered from in-system industrial espionage. In order to counter this, GISHMARCO has two separate defence systems: a standard SDD squadron stationed at the mainworld and a unit of high speed, high stealth, non-jump-capable interception craft. These craft patrol the perimeter of the test areas, using high tech passive sensor suites to monitor for intruding craft/drones which may be collecting data on the products under test. Any suspicious result in a rapid interception and impounding of suspect craft.

## GISHMARCO Test & Development

A wholly owned subsidiary of GSBAG, GISHMARCO T&D is based on Gishmarkash. Registered in 655, GISHMARCO provides a vital testing service to developers of starship products. Controlling the Gishmarkash system (under Imperial edict 9827-488-AQP2) allows sections to be allocated for extended testing of all manner of starfaring products, including potentially dangerous systems which could not be safely evaluated elsewhere. Such testing is not only necessary in developing new technology, but also required in order to obtain the correct Imperial safety certificates for any new starship or component thereof.

The facilities provided by GISHMARCO are generally only available to companies within the GSBAG Megacorporation. However, it has been known for other companies to hire the facilities for testing and development of their own products, but this is an expensive rarity. Ships transporting new top secret devices for testing at Gishmarkash can be found throughout iradu subsector and beyond.

## Gisi/iradu

2801 B43079D-D Na Po De 704 Im M7 IV

Attached to one of the larger mains in the subsector, Gisi is nevertheless a bit of a backwater for Jump-1 ships, removed from X-boat communication. It also doesn't have an abundance of natural resources, another reason for the lack of people queuing to live there.

A cold small world with a very thin atmosphere, Gisi is tectonically stable. At some point in the planet's past, volcanic activity formed stratovolcanoes, and crustal rifting led to the formation of massive canyon systems, some of which stretch for 1000 km or more. Most are over two km deep, and it is here that the first cities were constructed. The planetary component of Gisi's starport is located in the caldera of one of the larger stratovolcanoes, now thankfully extinct. The peak is high enough to protrude from the planetary atmosphere, protecting the vessels berthed there from the fine grit that plagues everything on the surface.

Movement for the 73 million inhabitants of Gisi is difficult, to say the least. Most centres of population formed around industrial complexes, and the planet is divided into sectors.

The sectors are further divided into Zones. Movement between Zones requires passes and much paperwork/ bribery, and movement between sectors is uncommon. A thriving black market exists for such papers and also for certain goods which may be common in one area but not in another.

The planetary surface is inhospitable to humans without pressure suits, and prone to severe dust-storms. The canyon systems are very extensive, and almost impossible to monitor with any success. At least one terrorist group is believed to be active on the planet, operating out of a remote region. However, unless their activities are scaled up or affect the population at large, they are unlikely to attract enough attention to be eradicated by Imperial authorities.

'Cabin Fever' is a problem for long-term workers, and there are many tales of people walking off into the desert in search of alien artefacts, etc. There have even been rumours of evidence that humans were not the first to live here, though no concrete evidence has as yet been brought forward. Much of the tunnel and canyon system has yet to be thoroughly explored.

Major industry on Gisi is the manufacture of refining equipment and electro-optical gear for starships. Much of this manufacturing is carried out in robotic complexes on the surface.

### Gushki Mining Corporation

The Gushki Mining Corporation was founded in 792 by a consortium of independent asteroid miners. Having analysed the situation on Iimkhir (q.v.), the miners had realised that the inefficient 'government' was having substantial difficulties in selling its iridium due to the constant inter-group bickering. Gushki stepped in and began buying iridium and shipping it off-world, gradually developing over the years into the major shipping route for the iridium, using their business skills to find customers and acting as 'insulation' between these customers and the volatile politics of Iimkhir.

Gushki makes a good profit from their work but are not overly greedy. They are well-known for providing their employees with excellent working conditions, pay, health care and other benefits. Jobs with Gushki are much sought after by miners from Iimkhir, who are rarely provided with such good conditions under their company charters.

### Iimkhir/Iiradu

3101 B552576-C NI Po 203 Im M2 V

Iimkhir's atmosphere is unusual in that it appears to have been accumulated after the planet was captured by the gas giant Ullike which orbits the system's primary. It is proposed that Iimkhir was originally covered in ice but that in the capture process the planet burned its way through or close to the atmosphere of Ullike, vaporising the ice and creating a thin but surprisingly breathable atmosphere. A small research base has been established to investigate this process since it offers possibilities for new methods of terraforming other planets.

The planet's population work predominantly on mining iridium, a rare metal on most worlds but found in abundance beneath the planet's dusty surface. However, a lack of management and investment means that the necessary refining equipment has never been brought in and the metal is processed off-world, taking the majority of the potential profit elsewhere.

Although there are some independent miners working on the planet, most have grouped together to form co-operatives and corporations. Overall control of the planet is by means of consensus among these balkanised 'states' and it is the petty feuding between groups which has stalemated any attempts to improve the mining operations.

The starport is operated by the Gushki Mining Corporation (q.v.) which, despite its name, performs little actual mining, but acts as a unified front for off-world groups buying the iridium. Most of the spacecraft traffic consists of freighters transporting high tech goods to the planet (which has little industry itself) and then picking up a contract to take the iridium off-world.

### Iiradu/Iiradu

3008 A542A9A-F HI In Po 900 Im M3 V

Iiradu is the capital of the Iiradu subsector of Dagudashaag, but beneath its glossy high-tech exterior, it is now crumbling and decaying after the many centuries of growth and prosperity which brought it local renown and respect.

In accordance with its status, Iiradu maintains an 'A' starport in orbit with a shuttle service to the surface. Surrounding the starport is a massive orbital megacity of 20 billion people living in excessively overcrowded conditions. The cost of living is high and the quality of life low, with crime rampant in some areas. Most of the people in the orbital city support the bureaucratic systems that control the population below.

### Khiradu/Iiradu

2706 A542886-E Po 314 Im G2 V

The domes of Khiradu support 300 million xenophobes who spend much of their economy on the high-tech support needed to sustain them against their environment: cold, dark, thin air and a constant blast from the radiation belt around their gas giant primary.

It is not clear why the settlers founded their colony on this moon well outside the habitable zone - it is thought they were exiled from some other world but they keep that aspect hidden. Their energy and industry have raised their population, and let them spread across their world, but it is an inner drive and outsiders are not welcomed on-planet. They have a gloomy religion which portrays a despot overlord who frowns upon mortals (and especially those non-believers who fail to appease it).

Far above the surface of Khiradu, Khiradu Orbital offers a class A starport on the X-Boat run through the sector, with excellent orbital facilities: repairs, supplies and stopover facilities. Scouts from the bases in adjacent systems can often be found here swapping tales and living in the atmosphere. Gambling is encouraged along with other pursuits to divert and entertain. The elite bureaucrats from Khiradu may be found here too, distinguished by their formal-cut grey suits and ornate swords, supervising the running of the station. There are specific Members-only clubs and establishments which cater directly to their tastes and into which off-worlders are not allowed.

### Kurdeshu/Iiradu

3006 C544265-9 Lo NI 815 Im M1 V K9 D

Kurdeshu is a world owned by the government of Daas (3107 Iiradu). On acquiring their first Free Trader 120 years ago, Daas began a colonisation effort of the neighbouring system of Kurdeshu. A chartered survey discovered a rich deposit of lanthanum ore. A mining colony was set up to extract and process the ore. Daas technology while able to process the ore, was unable to do so safely. There were a number of severe environmental accidents, and combined with extremely eco-unfriendly processing practices a large quantity of photo reactive chemicals were released into the thin atmosphere. The thin atmospheric ozone layer has become degraded and is now only 60% intact. Surface UV exposure is extremely high and highly dangerous to anyone not wearing appropriate protective clothing on all areas of the skin and eyes.

When the lanthanum source was exhausted 25 years ago and no other deposits had been discovered, Daas closed down the mining facility save for a skeleton crew to mind the facility. Five years later Daas decided to reopen the class C starport and the mining facility as a penal colony for political dissidents. The company Soreal Inc. were contracted to run the prison and provide system security in the form of 3 SDBs to watch over hydrogen fuel sources and any ships that might attempt to land in a restricted area of the colony. There are currently 327 prisoners being held in the colony.

### Larmige/Iiradu

2709 B7759DD-C A HI In 610 M0 V

Orbiting close in to the star Essen, Larmige's short (11 hour) days are one of the most difficult factors for visitors to acclimatise to. Larmige has two satellites: Ramada, the site of the system's naval base, and the smaller X'loni, home to a small Scout installation. Both moons are rented to the Imperial government, who in return provide the armed forces for the system under a 100 year contract to the Larmige government. As such, these are not deemed standard Imperial bases.

There has been significant terraforming - including weather control - over the last few centuries, mostly directed towards bringing down the surface temperature (originally close to 50 degrees C). This is now coming to an end, and purification of the atmosphere (excessively rich in nitrogen and some minor contaminants) is the next goal.

Rich in natural resources, Larmige - formally known as Rotini'ith - was a factory world of the First and Second Imperia. When the Second Imperium collapsed, and the Long Night began, the world was cut off from the interstellar community. Society collapsed, and for many years the world was wracked by civil war, until -951, when it was finally united by Makkhii Larm, a wandering priest, and founder of the religion of Larmism. In -890, the year after Larm died, the world was renamed Larmige in his honour, with a university dedicated to continuing his work.

The planetary ruler, the Larmess, is the head of both Church and State; she is High Priestess, and keeper of the Book of Larm - this is a combination of holy book and constitution, and only the current Larmess may alter it. Below her are several grades of Priest, who also function as government officials.

## Kagur/Iiradu

2609 B628567-C NI 803 Im G3 V M1 D

Although Kagur is noted as being a fairly well-populated planet, the majority of its inhabitants would happily swap their current abode for somewhere off-world. In fact, anywhere off-world. Of the few worlds in the system, three are bled by close proximity to the main sun Tamaran, while Kagur sits far out in the system toward the second sun Ynitar. The planet's frozen surface is composed mostly of methane ice containing large amounts of cyanide compounds and typically has a dull bloody hue from the sun's weak rays. As a result, few inhabitants venture onto the surface and all of the habitation domes have extremely tight decontamination regimes.

However, Kagur's orbit is sufficiently elliptical that every 37.4 years it passes close enough to Tamaran to heat up its surface, causing geysers of methane and cyanide to erupt. This period lasts for 2.6 years and is known as the Misting because of the clouds of gas that briefly give the planet a thin toxic atmosphere and then gradually escape the planet or freeze again.

During the Misting the planet gets its only tourism - generally the rich or the foolish who want to see the eruption of one of the geysers. As the surface is under a great deal of seismic stress at these times there have been many instances where individuals or entire parties have been lost when a geyser erupted underneath them. This just seems to add to the experience, as it hasn't stopped the tourist trade.

## Karsa/Iiradu

3103 C7AA8A8-8 F1 Wa 302 Im K6 IV

Karsa is fondly known throughout the subsector as the Planet of Dreams. The exotic composition of chemicals in the world's atmosphere is breathable by human beings, although many may find themselves short of breath if attempting any physical activity. After about two hours however, any off-worlder breathing the air without some form of protection will find themselves beginning to get very light-headed and giggly. After about another hour they will start to experience striking aural and visual hallucinations, which will last for approximately another hour. Exposure after this time starts to inflict serious damage to the lungs, and any off-worlder exposed to the atmosphere without protection for more than eight hours will begin haemorrhaging inside their lungs, leading to a swift if messy death.

The exact cause of these effects is not widely understood off Karsa, and the Karsans are very keen to keep it this way, for reasons of defence and of the burgeoning tourist trade. Karsa is a popular stop-off point for jaded tourists who wish to seek a new thrill, and religious disciples who feel that a few hours taking in the air will help them communicate with their Higher Being. There are a number of tourists killed every year - when they begin to hallucinate wildly, remembering to mask up after four hours is not always top of the list of priorities. This element of risk does not deter the visitors, and many would speculate that it perhaps encourages them.

Native Karsans do not suffer these ill-effects. Speculation is that some kind of scientific procedure takes place during the Ceremony of the Holy Breath that all Karsans undergo three days after birth. All Karsan births take place in a sealed and purified environment.

Karsa is governed by First Person Jumar Haoo, a former priest of the Church of the Holy Breath who led a coup against the ruling Demi family some 50 years ago, and declared himself First Person Among Many rather than Ruler of All. Under Haoo, Karsa has begun to prosper, and he is well loved by the majority of the population. Haoo would dearly love to preserve the secret of the Planet of Dreams, whilst spreading its fame amongst the thrill seekers of the sector.

## Kassandra/Iiradu

3208 C898000-A Lo Ni Ba 612 Im K7 III

The low population rating for the world is based upon the true resident population - a few scientists based at a mostly automatic D-class starport on the surface. The planet itself supports a wide variety of flora and fauna and, until a few decades ago, a significant human population. Various diseases (some airborne) among the native animals, though originally countered by the human immune system, became increasingly virulent and harmful until the Kassandrans were required to evacuate the planet. The remaining scientists are part of a large research project initiated by the biochemistry department of the University of Ninlakin, in an attempt to identify the cause of the sudden changes in the diseases, the most potent of which is known as 'Kassandritus' (c.f.).

Kassandra occasionally finds itself a target for news crews from nearby planets, concentrating on the emotional human side of the Kassandritus mutation but asking awkward questions: 'Why, in the high tech Imperium, can't seemingly routine virus and micro-organism mutations be controlled and cured?'. This is a question that leading biomedical researchers appear

## Irsaar/Iiradu

2604 C884869-9 S RI 102 Im M4 V

Irsaar is believed to have been originally colonised by a generation ship from Terra, back before the days of true galactic exploration - although this is a matter for myth rather than historical record. As far as can be determined, the planet suffered a decline, a dark age, and has developed once more until fusion power was independently developed. A few 'primitive' spacecraft had been built, and the home system explored, before contact was made by Imperial forces.

Of interest is the governmental system which has evolved over many centuries - a form of feudalism, in which each Irsaarite on reaching his or her majority (20 standard years) is required to choose an overlord and declare lifelong allegiance. The choice is made freely - it is a crime punishable by death to seek to influence someone's choice - but once it has been made it is irrevocable. Breach of allegiance also attracts a death sentence; however there are wide interpretations of what a breach in allegiance actually entails - you often find individuals working for a different overlord from their own. Taxation is, however, paid half to the overlord where you live and half to your personal overlord.

Visitors are welcomed, but those who wish to settle are obliged to choose an overlord within 150 days of arrival. Weapons are not permitted outside of private property unless a permit from one's overlord is held. These are difficult to get, and rarely if ever granted to off-worlders. Law enforcement officers, in the service of the local overlord, are normally armed; and will not hesitate to shoot transgressors (usually with the intent to disable and bring to trial rather than to kill, unless unavoidable).

## Jarsae/Iiradu

2803 C-569776-A S RI 913 G0v M4d

Jarsae is one of six balkanised worlds in Iiradu sub-sector but the only that qualifies as a 'rich' planet. This is not surprising considering the abundance of resources easily available in the system. Ores, radioactive materials, crystals, compounds and agricultural resources are all easily obtainable; agroproducts and metals account for most of Jarsae's processed resources.

Geographically the planet has two areas worthy of note. Firstly, the only major land mass (of about 6.5 million square miles) situated in the northern hemisphere and roughly diamond shaped. Secondly, a series of islands scattered around the equatorial regions of the world with none to be found outside the tropics (the axial tilt of Jarsae is 19 degrees). Some ten island groups make up the remaining 300,000 square miles of surface area on the planet.

Politically the planet has three distinct governments. Because of the significant differences in type and law level, it is worthwhile for visitors to know where they will be travelling and whether they must cross any borders. Almost all the population is located on the main land mass which is divided very roughly in half. Kamasta is the eastern portion with a population of 30 million run by a charismatic oligarchy with a detailed law level of 6-A96A5. Axc is the western portion, containing 60 million people in a feudal technocracy similar to that practised on Irsaar (q.v.), though less extreme. The Axc detailed law level is 6-44A96. The third political entity is called Diflannu and comprises all the island groups with 990,000 people in a self-perpetuating oligarchy (detailed law level 6-5645C) - an off-shoot of the Kamasta government and now considered a 'minor player' by the two more northerly countries.

Kamasta and Axc are old enemies but avoid outright conflict at present. Instead they settle disputes (mostly border disputes) with an interesting form of armed battle where no weapons or armour over tech level 2 are allowed. The resulting pitched battles are the real thing and not 'mocked' up in any way. It is useful that the countries have developed a medical technology in advance (level C) of their 'high common' figure to deal with some of the injuries sustained, such that it is unusual for very many to die in these battles. It is considered an honour in either society to carry scars from such battles.

The two countries also compete in developing technology that can be exported to other worlds of the Iiradu sub-sector. For example Kamasta recently introduced Fracfix (q.v.) and Axc introduced their recently invented Respirovest (q.v.) in efforts to demonstrate that their technology and production was superior.

Diflannu stays well out of the arguments of their neighbours and instead have a very relaxed and sub-tropical type of laid back culture. They are only interested in technology for example when it relates to yachting and yacht design. Each year the top boats and crew hold a race around the equator which attracts spectators from all over the sub-sector. Using the latest (TL A) technology some of the yachts used are almost works of art. The highly automated craft only require a crew of one and the endurance needed to compete (respectably) in the 60 day race is phenomenal; many start, few finish.

Between the port and the surface however are floating pleasure domes and private orbital port facilities which provide a stopover point for the rich, who can mingle with the ruling elite. Beneath their feet, the surface of Iridath is heavily over-populated with a further 3.5 billion inhabitants according to the last census, though this is woefully out of date.

The poor of the planet struggle to keep the planet running, working in sweatshops or in the heavy mining operations on the surface of the world. Centuries of manufacturing operations on a huge scale and the impersonal bureaucratic government have gradually led to the current deplorable situation on Iridath.

Much of the surface of the world suffers with the remnants of run-down industrial sites or non-biodegradable rubbish. The thin atmosphere has been polluted to the extent of contamination, requiring all citizens to wear filter masks when venturing out of doors. The small seas, once a bountiful reservoir of food, have been tainted with pollution and now give rise to a variety of mutated inedible life forms. Weather control is practised to reduce the effect of acid rains.

Outsiders might suggest robotics to help out with hard labour, and control the planet's tainted atmosphere, but there is a strong anti-robot sentiment throughout the population - many say they would be left with nothing if their jobs were stolen by machines. There have been riots where attempts were made to introduce significant amounts of automation; instead the manufacturing centres have ultra-complex machinery supervised and tended by large numbers of humans...

Life is rendered more pleasant for rich Iridathians by the flow of imported produce from Anshih, which exports substantial quantities of delicacies, and offers a peaceful pleasure world for those who wish to leave Iridath for a while.

Iridath's whole populace depends on vast food imports for survival. In return it exports much of its manufactured and raw materials, especially minerals, software, vehicles and robotics. There is now little profit in many of its trades, leading to little re-investment in research or development. Taxation is indirect and is levied on all imports and exports.

The government consists of several large committees. The members of each committee are career bureaucrats who have risen to the top through administrative skill, leadership potential or (more commonly) bribery and corruption. The ordinary population is largely apathetic and disinterested, struggling to survive in their overcrowded and complex technological society. Communal living is the norm.

## Iridish/Iridath

2703 B64946A NI Im 903 M1 V

This world is aquatic with all major cities based on floating pontoons or underwater. The floating cities move freely around the planet on the tides, but are powered to avoid grounding on shoals/land. Most of the world flooded when the ice caps melted due to an increase in the sun's average temperature. Iridish is unusually close to its sun (0.2AU) and suffers quite variable weather; during the 28-hour day the surface of the sea steams, at night there is a continual downpour. At dawn and dusk there are fierce storms that last about an hour, often with typhoon-like violence.

As a result of the freak weather conditions, much of the planetary transport is by submersible but even surface craft are required to be capable of submersing in case of trouble.

The space port is in geostationary orbit about the planet, associated with a lift-slide station in the sea below. This sea port is nearly on the seabed about 200 m down, but has a huge sealed hangar on a hydraulic platform which transports ships between the surface and the sea port. The platform can only accommodate 2,000 tons of ships at any one time, and moving from sea to surface and vice-versa is a slow operation, thus severely limiting the port's usage. Ideally the majority of goods would be shipped direct from the orbital port by shuttle, however the weather makes atmospheric travel hazardous and thus most goods have to pass through the sea port and use the safer underwater transport. Scheduling is thus very important.

The main exports of the planet are fish and algae which are used as live stock protein supplements. The sea water has a relatively high sulphur content (from sea-bottom volcanic activity) which, although not dangerous, results in a powerful atmospheric taint. *Is there's a strong smell of rotten eggs permeating the whole planet? - Gylac '13*

Despite the hazardous nature of the planet, Kassandra is orbited by a research base operated by the Lemkhi Imperial University of Space Sciences (I.U.S.S.) which has grown to include some hundred or so academic and support personnel. The base was set up in 956 to study the system's rather unusual primary star (see Kassandra Imperial University of Space Sciences).

Kassandra's primary star - named Sharik after the captain of the Vilani ship that first discovered the planet - is a K7 subgiant, a large but fairly cool star with a rather unusual spectrum. Anomalies in the spectrum - a very low metal to hydrogen ratio - suggest that this star is far older than it seems, and may have been refuelled at some time in the past. No ancient sites have been found in the system, even though it is the only large body remaining, the only other bodies being a large asteroid ring within Kassandra's orbit.

Astronomical observatories and the like are situated both on and off the station, with sensor-packed satellites at various points around the sun. A single observatory used to be located near the planet's rotational north pole but is now unmanned and is rarely used since it can only be serviced by personnel in full environmental suits, due to the atmospheric contaminants.

## Kassandritus

Kassandritus is the name given to the disease caused by micro-organisms found airborne on the planet Kassandra. The micro-organisms attack the human respiratory system, attaching themselves to the lung tissue and extracting oxygen from the breathed air. The disease spreads throughout the human body, depriving the blood of oxygen, resulting in a slow death as the victim's brain cells begin to die off.

The first symptoms of Kassandritus are lack of energy and forgetfulness, leading to complete lack of mobility and eventual seafly, before the unfortunate individual slowly slips into unconsciousness and then death. The whole process from initial exposure to death takes between two and ten days, depending on the amount of Kassandra air breathed and the overall fitness of the inhaled.

Currently there is no universal treatment for Kassandritus. Once it is in the individual's respiratory system it is the beginning of the end, as the micro-organisms spread at an alarming rate throughout the body, carried by the bloodstream. Various cures have been formulated, however only limited success has resulted from experiments and terminal case usage. One problem is that the Kassandra micro-organisms seem to be undergoing an extraordinary metamorphosis period. This appears to have been going on for the past 150 years, which finally resulted in its lethal current state and the evacuation of the native Kassandra population.

There is a full time genetic science team based on Kassandra from the University of Nimitlakim that is constantly working on a vaccine for Kassandritus. Recent findings have been promising, but further long term work is needed before a prototype antidote is ready for trials. The most pessimistic of the researchers believe that no cure can match the constantly mutating micro-organisms - another plague more deadly than Kassandritus might spring up at any subsequent point. However, there is great political pressure to get the planet recolonised in the near future.

## Khi/Iradu

2603 A685202-F Lo NI Im 804 M6 D

This is an Imperial Research planet having several labs studying advanced sensor systems.

There are 2 orbital stations conducting research into the effects of a fairly generic system (i.e. Khi) on sensor operation - for which they are collecting extensive amounts of stellar data and such like. They are also studying the effects of high power sensors on space phenomenon and on the flora and fauna of the planet of Khi itself. The base's results are used for setting safety levels throughout the Gushemage sector and for verifying the safety of new sensor systems.

Two further stations are located on the planet, one surface installation associated with the sensor work, the other a subsurface unit dealing with some form of archaeological and/or geological survey. Exact details of this latter station are restricted. The surface station has service and supply domes and low quality landing facilities for ships up to 400 tons; anything larger than this has to dock at the larger of the orbital stations which provides high quality services (but can only handle a few craft at any time).