

THE KANDHA OF ORISSA

THEIR SOCIO-CULTURAL LIFE AND DEVELOPMENT



Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Research and
Training Institute, Bhubaneswar

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Second (Revised and Enlarged) Edition

Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Research and
Training Institute, Bhubaneswar-751003

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**Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes Research and
Training Institute (SCSTRTI), Bhubaneswar, Orissa.**

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With deep gratitude the First Edition was dedicated to :

Shri S. M. Patnaik, I.A.S.
FORMER CHIEF SECRETARY, ORISSA

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FOREWORD TO SECOND EDITION

I am happy to note that Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Research and Training Institute is publishing the Second (Revised and Enlarged) Edition of the book on the Kandha, which has the highest population among the Scheduled Tribe Communities of the State of Orissa. The present monograph comprises three significant sections of the Kandha, such as the Desia, Dongria and Kutia, containing elaborate ethnographic accounts. The latter two sections constitute vulnerable ethno-cultural groups (officially designated as Primitive Tribal Groups) for whom Micro Projects are operating for multi-sectoral development.

I am of the view that the changing livelihoods of the members of the Scheduled Tribes in general and the Kandha in particular, need to be captured with due attention to their economy. There is a need for another study that can look into these aspects while taking into consideration the interventions made by the Government in areas of (a) Education, (b) Infrastructure including the income generation programmes and (c) Enforcement of the protective legal framework. I do hope SCSTRTI will bring forth such a publication, which will complement the present book.

Bhubaneswar
The 30th December, 2005

G.V. VENUGOPALA SARMA
Commissioner-*cum*-Secretary to Govt.,
ST & SC Development Department,
Govt. of Orissa

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

Government have been planning and executing development projects for the development of tribal communities who had lagged behind for copious geo-historical reasons. Since Independence Government have launched multiple welfare and development programmes to amalgam the erstwhile isolated, encysted and relatively deprived tribal communities on par with the mainstream population. As a result the implementation of socio-economic welfare measures, as delineated in the Constitution of India, have been designed and executed right from the First Five Year Plan. But during First Four Plans, no significant achievement was evinced in tribal way of life. In the Fifth Five Year Plan, a major thrust in tribal development was achieved by evolving the Tribal Sub-Plan concept, which even continues till now with ITDAs, MADA pockets, Cluster Approach Pockets and Micro Projects for Vulnerable Ethno-Cultural Groups (officially designated as Primitive Tribal Groups).

A good ethnographic account of any community has far reaching implications as it enables researchers as well as development practitioners to decipher the inherent growth-positive, growth-neutral and growth-negative values of the people for whom development intervention is intended. Further, such knowledge is also helpful in prioritizing economic, social and political problems in the specific context of the beneficiaries. It may be mentioned here that people may accept or reject certain programmes which may be adjudged by them as compatible or incompatible. It has been seen either people have rejected or have shown no interest in some programmes which run counter to their ethos, ideology and worldview. Culture has survival value and hence it should be assigned due importance in the context of State-sponsored development programmes.

The First Edition of the book did not contain ethnographic account of the Kutia Kandha, who constitutes a significant section / sub-tribe of the Kandha tribe and identified as one of the Primitive Tribal Groups of the State, like the Dongria Kandha. Therefore, in the Second (Revised and Enlarged)

Edition, a section on the Kutia Kandha, was incorporated. The First Edition was written by Dr. N. Patnaik, the then Director and Shri P.S. Das Patnaik, former Deputy Director with a Chapter on Health Profile contributed by Dr. Almas Ali, former Special Officer (Tribal Health) of the Institute. Shri H.S. Mishra, Research Officer prepared the write-up for the Kutia Kandha which was included in the Second (Revised and Enlarged) Edition. Besides, two new Chapters one on Dongria Kandha Youth Dormitory prepared by Prof. P.K. Nayak, former Director, Shri B.B. Mohanty, Deputy Director, and Smt. T. Patnaik, Research Officer and the other Chapter on Labour Co-operatives prepared by Prof. P.K. Nayak, former Director, and Shri T. Sahoo, Research Officer published in the Journal Adivasi earlier have been included in the Dongria Kandha Section.

I express my hearty gratitude to Professor (Dr.) N.K. Behura, Professor (Dr.) K.K. Mohanti and Professor (Dr.) S.K. Ghosh Maulik for their unstinted help in the preparation of the Second (Revised and Enlarged) Edition of the book. I am indebted to Prof. K.K. Mohanti for his painstaking efforts in thoroughly editing the manuscript. I thank Shri B.B. Mohanty, Deputy Director and Shri S.C. Biswal, Statistician for preparing the press-ready copy of the text. Finally, I also thank Shri F. Baque, Stenographer of this Institute in preparing DTP of the manuscript.

G.N. MOHANTY

DIRECTOR

Bhubaneswar

The 30th, December, 2005

Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes
Research & Training Institute, Bhubaneswar

FOREWORD TO FIRST EDITION

In the wild undulating plateaus and river valleys of the Eastern Ghat region lives a fascinating Kui-speaking tribe called, the Kandha who are numerically the largest among the 62 tribal communities of Orissa. Mr. Russell in his report of August 1836 was the first who brought to the notice of the Madras Government the barbarous practice of female infanticide and human sacrifice prevalent among the Kandha. On receipt of this information the British Government appointed immediately Colonel Campbell who was succeeded by Captain Mac Pherson as assistant to the Collector of Ganjam to extirpate these horrid practices.

These superstitious beliefs and practices made the tribe known to the administrative as-well as academic world. But the thorns and thickets of the wilderness and the unhealthy climate which was notorious for malaria and backwater were deterrent to any free access to the Kandha country and to have first hand knowledge about the tribe. However, as the time passed by and road communication was developed entry into the Kandha area and contact with the tribe became possible. Scholars like – Dalton, Risley, Thurston, Russell and Hiralal have left behind a few pages about the Kandha in their published works. But much of these writings has been reproduced over and over again. Thereafter there have come out articles and notes on some aspects or the other of the tribe in the census reports and scholarly Journals. But no full ethnographic work was available till this book was published.

The Kandha are at various stages of development. The Kutia Kandha of Belghar area and the Dongria Kandha of Bissamcuttack area represent the primitive sections and the Desia Kandha living in the plains of Phulbani district, and other districts represent the Hinduised Section of the tribe. In between these two polarities are various sections of the Kandha which are at

different stages of socio-economic development. Unlike the Kutia Kandha who are primarily shifting cultivators and unlike the Desia Kandha who have taken to plough cultivation in a large measure in the plains, the Dongria Kandha as mentioned above are basically horticulturists.

This publication deals with the Dongria Kandha in the first part, the Desia Kandha in the second part and health and nutritional status and developmental aspects in the third part. Numbering about 6,000 in population the Dongria Kandha inhabit the lofty *Niyamgiri* hill ranges in the district of Koraput. From the point of view of cultural peculiarities they occupy a very special place in the heart of Anthropologists. One can see in the *Niyamgiri* hills vast stretches of land in the hill slopes under banana and pineapple plantation amidst jackfruit trees which the master hands of the Dongria Kandha have grown. Expert horticulturists as they are the Dongria Kandha have proved that the skill, ingenuity and perseverance of Man can tame any rugged terrain without even the application of any improved technology for the prosperity of mankind.

With the development of road communication the Kandha have come in contact with others who live in the plains. In course of acculturation they have borrowed many cultural traits from their Hindu neighbours. They have given up many of their archaic practices and turned themselves into a class of peasantry in the low-land countries. Part II of this book deals in detail with the life and work of the acculturized section of the tribe which identifies itself as the Desia Kandha.

In this book both aesthetic and humanistic interests have been interwoven to present the thought-ways and work-ways of a people who lead a life of indigence and poverty in the midst of plenty. Though major portion of the book is devoted to socio-cultural aspects of anthropological interest the economics of axe-cultivation, horticulture and plough agriculture have been discussed in a detailed manner. Besides, problems of health and

approach and strategy for tribal development have been highlighted succinctly in this book. I have no doubt that scholars and administrators alike will find this book interesting and useful.

Rajpath, Bhubaneswar
31.3.1982

R.K.Bhujabal

PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION

Like any other tribe the Kandha form a species for themselves as far as their social organization and cultural pattern are concerned. Almost a century and a half back this tribe featured very prominently in the report of Mr. Russell for their heinous practices of female infanticide and human sacrifice. Thereafter short articles and papers on different aspects of the Kandha culture and social organization appeared in various magazines and journals. The Kandha are most numerous in the State and also one of the major tribes of the country. An understanding of the life and work of this important tribal community is not only of academic interest but also the same is essentially required to provide proper lead in formulating plans for their development. Keeping this objective in view we had undertaken intensive field studies among the Kandha in various parts of Orissa. The Kandha of Southern Orissa where they are found in large concentration were our main focus and this book is based on our intensive field work among them.

The Kandha have been of great fascination not only to us but also to many scholars who are interested in understanding the life styles of different ethnic groups. It is necessary to highlight a few of the salient features of the Kandha life and culture. Most of the people belonging to this tribe continue to live in the mountainous tracts away from main arteries of travel. The forms of Kandha villages are mainly of two types – shapeless cluster or agglomerate with no village street and linear cluster with two long and parallel rows of houses flanked by a wide and straight street. The lack of symmetry in settlement pattern of the former type is due to the rugged nature of the tract and the uniformity in the village forms of latter type is possible in such places where flat lands are available for human habitation. The diversity is noticed not only in the village pattern but also in the materials, which are used for the construction of houses. While in some areas the Kandha use wooden planks set horizontally one upon the other for constructing the walls, in other areas

they have walls made of lattice-twined wicker work or bamboo wattle work plastered with mud. In a large measure the settlement pattern and the housing architecture are in conformity with the terrain, environmental condition and material resources of their habitat.

The Kandha villages are in general screened around by several fruit-giving trees like mango, jackfruit and tamarind. In the centre of the village usually two shrines are present, one for the *Darani-Penu* (mother Goddess) and the other for *Kotiasal* (Her consort) and an open ground with seats of stone slabs earmarked for the meeting of the tribal court of panchayat. Another significant feature of a Kandha village is its *Adashbeta*, a dormitory for the spinsters of the village, which is located, near the hill stream on one end of the village.

Some of the aspects of their social organization are of special nature. The clan organization among them is one of such specialties. In this case the clan is not totemic as is usual in other tribes. It is rather derived from the *Mutha* system, a territorial unit which was devised for administrative purposes during the British rule. For example, Khambesi, a Dongria Kandha village near Bissamcuttack was formerly under a *Mutha* called *Wadaka* and according to the name of the *Mutha* the clan of the Kandha who live in Khambesi and other villages situated in the *Wadaka Mutha* has been named as *Wadaka*. This clan-territory is exogamous like a totemic clan. The Kandha families belonging to the *Wadaka* clan predominate and own all lands in Khambesi. All other clans living in Khambesi have recently migrated to this village and are considered outsiders.

The Kandha villages, ideally speaking, are as much social entities as they are politically with huge measure of cohesion and continuity. Every village continues to have its own tribal council. All the tribal adults of the village are members of the village council. The head of the village tribal council who is

also the headman of the village is called, *Saonta*. Parallel to the secular position held by the village headman is the religious head called, *Jani* who presides over all the religious functions organized by the people of the village. In some areas the headship of both secular and religious functions combines with one person, which goes by one term *Jani*. In addition to these secular and religious head there is a functionary called, *Dishari* who works as the medicine man in some areas and astrologer in other areas. In every village there is a peon called, *Barika* of the Domb community who plays an important role in the village life. He calls the people to the meeting place when the village assembly sits and contacts officials on behalf of the village and acts as an interpreter of the people. The tribal council enjoys considerable freedom in conducting its day-to-day activities.

To an outsider the Kandha particularly the Dongria and Kutia Sections of agency areas strike as a very important tribal community for their simplicity, quickness in observation and sensitivity. In almost all activities the people of the Kandha community reveal a corporate life. They help each other in economic activities, and drink, dance and sing all in congregation. Religious ceremonies and festivals are performed communally. Crime is rare and adultery is uncommon and the individual behaviour is marked by honesty and truthfulness. Ideally hospitable, exceptionally candid and remarkably simple, the primitive section of the tribe particularly the Kutia and the Dongrias live in Nature and fade away in its mystery. To the Kandha the nature is the greatest impeller, the scenery around forming the grand arena where the human drama of vicissitudes of the mortal life is staged.

Many people have helped us during our fieldwork among the Dongria and Desia sections of the tribe. We remember their help with a sense of deep gratitude. But due to lack of space we have not been able to mention all of their names individually in this place. While acknowledging persons for their help the name of the Social Worker Smt. Malati Biswal known locally as *Apa* is uppermost in our mind. She has introduced us to the tribals and helped us in collecting data from them. We remain grateful to her.

We are thankful to the Research staff of the THRTI particularly Shri Prasanna Kumar Nayak, Shri B.B.Mohanty, R.O., Shri Ananta Ch. Sahoo, J.R.O. and Shri B.B. Sahu, J.R.O. who worked with us during field investigation and carried out aspect wise analysis and processing of the data.

The name of Dr. N.K. Behura, Reader, Department of Anthropology, Utkal University, need special mention for the help which he had rendered by going through the first draft and offering his comments.

We owe a special debt to Shri R.K. Bhujabal, I.A.S., Commissioner-cum-Secretary to Government, H. & T.W. Department who gave all encouragement to bring out this monograph. We are deeply grateful to him for his sympathy and support without which, the publication of this work would have been impossible. He was kind enough to give the foreword of this book.

Our especial gratitude and thanks are due to our informants particularly the leading members of their society who opened their minds and gave us necessary information. We are much beholders for their cooperation and help.

Our colleague Dr. Almas Ali, Special officer, Tribal health of the Institute has contributed a chapter on health. The materials contained in the chapter were collected by him through clinical tests and medical examinations of many people of the Kandha community during his field trips. We express our gratitude and thanks to him for contributing this chapter.

The photographs which are included in this book were taken, developed and printed by Shri Sunil Kumar Roy, Photographer of this institute. We express our thanks to him for this work.

The maps which are provided in this book were drawn by Shri J.P.Rout, R.O. and Shri Ajit Kumar Maharana, J.R.O. of this institute. We express our thanks to them for their help.

We express our thanks to Shri T.G. Chacko, Stenographer and Shri I.C. Naik, Typist of this Institute for taking dictation and typing the manuscript.

Lewis Road,
Bhubaneswar
1st April 1982

N. Patnaik
P. S. Das Patnaik

BACKGROUND

Nomenclature:

The Kandha tribe is variously known. They are called the Khond or the Kandha or the Kond, according to the usage of the term in vogue in different places in which they live. But whatever be the terminology used, it refers to the same tribe. The people of that class call themselves the Kandha as a result of their contact with the Oriyas. So we refer to them as the Kandha in this paper. This nomenclature is believed to have come from the Telugu language in which the word '*Konda*' means a small hill as well as the hillmen. The territory in which the Kandha reside in large concentration is called, the Kandhamal, '*mal*' in Oriya signifying a hill tract. The other name of Phulbani district is Boad-Kandhamal, and the northern portion of the Ganjam district, which adjoins the Kandhamal, is called, the Kandha Maliah, meaning the hill tract inhabited by the Kandha.

Due to physical barriers the Kandha of different areas very rarely, if ever, come in contact with one another. In course of time they have formed themselves into separate endogamous units and have developed considerable cultural and economic diversity. Broadly, the Kandha are divided into three groups depending upon their habitat. The groups are;

1. The Kutia (hill) Kandha - This is the weakest section leading an isolated life of poverty and indigence.
2. The Dongria (hill) Kandha - This section is comparatively less primitive and is skilled in horticulture.
3. The Desia (lowcountry) The Kandha of this section have left their hill Kandha - fastnesses and settled down in the plains to pursue cultivation.

Kui is the language of the Kandha people and it has such local variations as described below.

1. The Kandha of Koraput Sub-division speaks the Kuvi language.

2. The Kandha of Baliguda Sub-division speaks the Kui language.
3. The Kandha of Gudari area speaks Kutia, which is a mixture of Sora and Kui dialects.
4. The Kandha of Rayagada Sub-division speaks Kuvi mixed with Telugu.

Many of the Kandha have lost their mother tongue and speak Oriya. Some have become bilingual because they speak Oriya in the interior areas of the State and Telugu in border areas. The somatoscopic and anthropometrics data of the Kandha relate them more closely to the Proto-Australoid racial stock with considerable Mongoloid admixture. Of the 62 tribal communities inhabiting Orissa, the Kandha is numerically the largest. According to the Census of 1991 the total population of the Kandha is 11,40,374 out of the State's population of 3,16,59,736 and the State's tribal population of 70,32,214. In other words, the Kandha constitute, according to the Census of 1991, 3.60 per cent of the State's population and 16.22 per cent of the State's tribal population. The main concentration of the Kandha population is in the Central section (Boud-Kandhamal), Rayagada section (Rayagada and Gunupur Sub-divisions) and South-western section (erstwhile Kasipur estates and Mahulpatna) of Eastern Ghat Region.

History:

The Kandha are widely known in the ethnographic world for their earlier pernicious practice of human sacrifice and female infanticide. Honourable Mr. Russell was the first who through his report of August, 1836 brought these horrible customs of the Kandha to the notice of the Madras Government. The entire region inhabited by the Kandha was then in a state of insurrection, disorder and violence. Added to this were the unhealthiness of the climate in all its unmitigated forms and the rugged terrain, and the

precipitous hill ranges covered with thorns and thickets of interminable wilderness which made the Kandha country difficult of access. One of the concerns of the British Government was to stamp out the barbarous practices and restore peace and order in the territory.

The practical measure, which Mr. Russell proposed to the British Government for achieving the objective was to revive the fairs, formerly held in different localities and to establish market in other places. His idea was that the Kandha would be attracted to such fairs and market centers where they would easily get their coveted articles such as salt, salt fish, brass utensils, scarlet woolen red blankets and coarse cotton clothes at a less cost. They used to get these favourite articles solely from their lowland neighbours either in the way of rapine or exchange at a high price. He further thought that the market centers would afford opportunities to the Kandha for seeing many new articles of foreign merchandise and tend greatly to promote new tastes and create new wants in them. The whole idea in setting up a network of marketing organizations was to create conditions under which the British authorities could have frequent and unreserved intercourse with the Kandha and such influence on them as to wean them away from their horrible superstition without applying any force.

The British officers sincerely believed that a law denouncing human sacrifice and remonstrating against cruelty to female children and providing punishment for the offenders would, as a general measure, prove abortive and involve a compromise of character. Therefore, their aim was to develop a friendly relationship with them and try to reclaim them from the savage practices using conciliatory measures and moral force rather than threat, violence and power. In fact, the British authorities such as Campbell and Macpherson who were entrusted with the responsibility of suppressing the practices of human sacrifice and female infanticide could stamp out such detestable superstitions by non-violent means.

More than half a century ago, the Kandha were most numerous of the tribal communities in erstwhile Kalahandi State. The Kandha claimed the right of installing the chief of the State on his throne (Gadi), and until this was done, they did not formally recognize the chief. The important feature of the ceremony was that the chief married a Kandha girl on this occasion. The marriage ceremony was performed by presenting a girl to the chief who immediately returned her to her parents and according to the Kandha system of divorce a fine was paid by the husband to the tribe for divorcing his wife.

SECTION - I
THE DONGRIA KANDHA



CHAPTER - I

Introduction

Orissa is one of the most fascinating ethnographic States of India. It has been the home of as many as 62 different tribal communities among which the Kandha top the list in numerical preponderance. Considering the levels of economic development the Kandha are divided into several sub-sections such as - Kutia Kandha, Dongria Kandha, Jharia Kandha and Desia Kandha.

This section of the book deals with the Dongria section of the Kandha community. They are found in the Niyamgiri hill ranges, which comprise 3 Community Development Blocks namely: Bissamcuttack, Kalyansingpur, Muniguda of Rayagada and Gunupur sub-divisions of Rayagada district. The ethnographic account of the Dongrias which finds place in this section relates to such villages as Kurli, Hundijali, Khambesi, Khajuri, Mundabali, Kadragumma, Batigumma, Uppergumma and Radang of Bissamcuttack Block, Bondeli and Tanda of Kalyansingpur Block. In addition to these villages where intensive field work was conducted for collection of data about the Dongrias, many neighbouring villages inhabited by the same section of the tribe were visited several times to check and cross check the data already collected from the core area.

The Dongrias stand separate from all other sections for their skill in horticulture. They inhabit the Niyamgiri hills of Rayagada sub-division of Rayagada district and grow pineapple in vast stretches of land in the hill slopes. These pineapples are planted in places where the jackfruit trees are present, so that the leaves of the trees provide shade to the pineapple plants. Dongrias are also skilled in banana plantation and turmeric cultivation. The terrain in which Dongrias live and its climatic conditions are most favourable for horticulture and therefore, Dongrias grow plenty of fruits of the types

mentioned above. But they do not gain much from this pursuit. The reasons are that the local Domb merchants expropriate the products from the Dongrias and there is no organized market for proper outlet of the fruits with reasonable profit to the producers.

Side by side the Dongria carry on shifting cultivation in hill-slope at a higher altitude close to the hill-top. The same rotational method as found among the neighbouring Saoras is followed in the cultivation of the clearings technically known as swidden, but the rotational cycle which is on an average five to six years in Southern Orissa is longer by one or two years among the Dongrias because of thicker forest cover in the Niyamgiri hills than elsewhere. Nevertheless the threat of the indiscriminate axe which is steadily stripping the country bare of its vegetational cover is as frightening and real in the Dongria area as elsewhere.

It is interesting to note that the Dongria depend upon both primitive and advanced means of livelihood. The shifting cultivation represents the prior stage of economic development whereas the horticultural plantation a higher stage of development. In fact, the former preceded the latter in the economic life of the Dongria in the earlier dispensation when the Dongria were under the administration of the Maharaja of Jeypore and they used to visit the royal palace in festivities. On one occasion the Maharaja gave them suckers of some pineapples, which he got from Burma, asking them to grow in their terrain. The Dongrias did as the Maharaja said and now the pineapple plantation has spread every nook and corner of the Niyamgiri hills. One reason which possibly explains coexistence of primitive and advanced practices of livelihood is that the shifting cultivation provides the Dongrias with minor millets, pulses and cereals on which they subsist whereas the fruits of horticulture give them ready cash with which they meet their other requirements such as clothes, ornaments and utensils.

The Kandha as a whole were widely known for their earlier practice of human sacrifice and female infanticide. Mr. Russell's reports show how the



A DONGRIA KANDHA FEMALE

British Government stopped this practice not by force but by moral influence and conciliatory measures. Other steps taken by the British officers for restraining the Kandha from the savage practices were the establishment of friendship with them through direct contact and by strictly interdicting the army and camp followers from entering their villages and meddling in any way with them or with their domesticated animals such as – fowls, goats, etc. Fairs and market centers which were discontinued for some reason or the other were revived and articles such as – salt, salt-fish, brass utensils, red blankets and all but the coarsest kind of cotton clothes which the Kandha were excessively fond of were made available on sale to them at these places at most reasonable rate.

In addition to these measures taken by the British Government, the Maharaja of Jeypore Jamindari to which the Dongrias belong introduced a festival called, *Jura-parah* during the *Meria* sacrifice. This measure succeeded largely in replacing the human beings with the buffaloes for sacrifice during the festival.

The dress and the ornaments which adorn Dongrias particularly their male members distinguish them from other sections of the tribe. In general a Dongria male puts on a narrow scarf wrapped around the waist and adorns his body with ornaments of various types. He shaves his head keeping a tuft of hair neatly tied to a knot at the back. Sometimes a leaf-rolled cigar is seen tucked in the hair-knot at the back and invariably every Dongria male carries an axe in his shoulder and a knife is kept hanging from his waist-belt.

Besides these peculiarities in dress and adornment the installation of *Darani-Penu* and her consort called, *Kattasal* in the centre of the village street is a typical feature of Dongria settlement. The maidens' dormitory which is invariably present in each Dongria settlement is another typical feature which adds to the specialities of Dongria social structure and culture.

Every Dongria village had and still continues to have its own traditional council as part of the political organization. With the abolition of the feudal

system in Orissa the Mutha system of administration which was in vogue in whole estate of jeypore, of which the Dongria area was a part, was replaced by an elective system. Under this arrangement statutory village councils were established in villages in the place of traditional political institutions.

In the case of the Dongria villages the traditional panchayat is still effective and runs along democratic principles as before and serves the people well in the matters of maintaining social control and enforcing social sanctions. The alien political structure, like statutory gram panchayat which Dongrias do not understand and do not feel it as theirs appear to be an unnecessary superimposition having no stake in Dongria political system.

What strikes most to a visitor to the Dongria country is their abject poverty. It is a paradox to see poverty in a resource-rich area. Dongrias are extremely laborious and are tenacious about rights over their land. They excel all other neighbouring communities in their acquisition of skill in horticulture plantation. But one of their draw backs is their dependence on the local Domb merchants for the purpose of the marketing of their products. There is a symbiotic relationship between Dongrias and Dombs which cuts across economic activities. Both the communities have been living together from the time beyond memory and even though Dongrias feel the cruelty of exploitation they have no other way but to endure it with limitless patience in the present circumstances because of their illiteracy and ignorance.

Dongrias have landed in the inaccessible areas of Niyamgiri hill ranges not by their own choice but by being pushed into these area by advanced non-tribal communities. Not until the end of the second half of the twentyeth century Dongrias did not come in direct contact with either administrators or social reformers or academicians. It was only after the Independence with the initiation of developmental works among them, scholars started visiting the area for carrying out scientific studies on them. Thereafter the State Government got interested in bringing about change in the economic life of the people by introducing several developmental schemes.

One of the schemes worth mentioning was the Purchase Sale and Fair Price Shop scheme which was implemented by the Tribal and Rural Welfare Department. The objective of this scheme was to procure all kinds of forest products collected by Dongrias at a fair price and provide daily necessities to them at a reasonable rate. It may be pointed out that all these developmental measures by and large were taken. No detailed ethnographic data were available to formulate any need-based plans for their development. This monograph seeks to fill the data gap and it is hoped that the findings presented in this book will be of use in formulating an integrated plan for the development of Dongrias.

CHAPTER - II

The Area and the People

The Dongria Kandha, a section of the Kandha tribe of Orissa, live on the top of the *Niyamgiris*, a rugged mass of hill ranges situated on the borders of Rayagada and Gunupur sub-division of Rayagada district. These hill ranges form the Rayagada-Gunupur section of the Eastern Ghats and rise steeply from 1,000 feet to a number of peaks, of which the highest is 4,970 feet above the sea level. Some of the peaks are *Tumudi Ghati*, *Kodkasil*, *Patrapokan Ghati*, *Patar Dongar* and *Sargikhaman*.

The *Niyamgiri* hills lie in 19.33°N Latitude and 83.25°E Longitude.

The *Niyamgiri* are situated at a distance of 21 kilometers to the North-West of Bissam Cuttack town. The nearest Dongria village is Kurli which is located at an altitude of 3,000 feet above sea level at a distance of 13 kilometers from Bissamcuttack. The first three kilometers of the road from Bissamcuttack to Kurli village are motorable and the remaining 10 kilometers are rugged and zig-zag running through the mountaineous terrain. The point at which the road becomes rugged and ascends the hills is the location of Chatikona, a Railway Station situated on the Waltair-Raipur railway line.

High altitude of the Dongria Kandha habitat has made the climate cool and pleasant. Humidity ranges from 92 per cent of saturation in August and September to 60 per cent in March, April and May. During the winter months (November to February) there is heavy dewfall. The rainy season (July to October) is extremely unhealthy. Rains are continuous and heavy and nearly 80 per cent of the annual rainfall is received from the South-West monsoon during the months of June, August and September. The periodicity of rain is neither uniform nor regular. But the area does not experience drought in any year.



DONGRIA KANDHA VILLAGE

No river flows in the Dongria country. A perennial stream called, *Gadgada Nallah* flows through a winding course all over the area and it is the only source of water supply to the Dongrias.

The Dongria Kandha have a good knowledge of the types of soil available in their habitat. According to them these are mainly of three types - (1) Stony clay (*Kankoda Birga*), found all over the hills, (2) Black soil (*Panka-Birga*), fertile soil found in the foot-hill and (3) Coloured clay (*Guudi-Birga*), found in the hills. Black-soil is considered very fertile and *Dongar*-paddy is sown wherever this type of soil is present. But the entire area predominately contains stony clay and therefore, production of crops is not up to the expectations.

The extensive practice of shifting cultivation and wanton destruction of forests have rendered the wild animals scarce in the area. However, some panthers (*Panthera Pardus*), leopard-cats (*Felis bengolensis*), spotted deer (*Muntiacus Muntjik*), Sambars (*Cervus unicolor*), wild boars (*sus-scrofa*), common monkey (*Preshytis Phayrei*), stripped squirrels (*Ratufa bicolor*), Indian percupines (*Atheruvus Mactourus assa mensis*), hares (*Caprolagus hispidus*), Bears (*Melursus-ursinus*) grey and red jungle fowls (*Phasianidae*), Peacocks (*Pavo cristetus*) and green pigeons (*columbidae*) are found in distant forests where people go for collection of forest produce and for communal hunt. The area is full of venomous snakes and cases of snake-bites are common. Wild birds and parrots destroy standing crops. The people ward of such animals by indigenous methods.

In the Rayagada division of the Eastern Ghats of which the Dongria country forms an important part, Sal (*shorea robusta*) is the dominant species and the common associates of Sal are Bija or Piasal (*Piera carpus, arcupium*), Teak (*Tectona grandis*), Mohua (*Madhuka Lotifolia*), Kendu (*Diaspyras melanoxylon*), Bamboo (*Bombax malabaricum*), Jackfruit (*Artucarpus-heperaphyllus*) and mango (*Mangifera Indica*) found both in the hills and in the vicinity of settlements. A kind of tall grass Birsa (*Imperate arundnancet*) grows luxuriantly in the area and it is used for thatching roofs.

Among the creepers, Siali (*Bauhinia vahlii*) is most common. Various kinds of edible roots and medicinal herbs are also found in the forests.

The Dongria Kandha belong to the Dravidian linguistic group. G.A.Grierson has written, "The Kandhas or Khonds are Dravidian tribe in the hills of Orissa and neighbouring districts. The name which they use themselves is Kui and their language should accordingly be dominated Kui". (Thurston, Edgar. 1909).

The language which is spoken by the Kandha appears to have mainly two local variations – 'Kuvi' spoken by a majority of the Kandha of Koraput, Kalahandi and Bolangir-patna and Kui, spoken by the Kandha who live in the Phulbani district. Kuvi appears to have original structural composition while Kui an acculturated and transformed form of Kuvi language. Besides the Kandha of Koraput, such other tribal communities as Kandhaa-Paraja, Konda-Paraja, Penga-Paraja, Jatapu Dora and Konda-Dora speak Kuvi with a little admixture with Telugu.

The Kandha are most numerous in Orissa. According to the 1991 Census their population numbered 11,40,374 out of the total tribal population of 70,32,214 lakhs. Thus, the Kandha comprise about 16 per cent of the scheduled tribe population of the State.

No separate census has been taken for the Dongria Kandha section of the Kandha. Alongside the Dongria Kandha live no other communities except the Domb, a Scheduled Caste, which migrated to the area from the neighbouring districts. History is silent about the exact date when the Domb came to the homeland of the Dongria Kandha. But as told by both, the Domb and the Dongria Kandha were *Khunt-Katidars* (that is, cut the forest together for habitation) and contemporary settlers of the area.

The villages which were included in the study comprised 453 Dongria families with 1564 population, that is on an average of 4 members per family. The Dongria villages are located in relatively isolated and inaccessible areas and such situations have enabled the Dongria Kandha to retain their traditional form of economy, social organization, ritual and belief.

CHAPTER – III

Economic Life

Settlement Pattern:

The villages of the Dongria Kandha are located in a tangle of thickly wooded hill ranges. The earliest ones are situated in the valleys and the later ones either in the hill-slopes or at the hill top. The suitability of a site for habitation is determined by the availability of sufficient land for shifting cultivation and a perennial source of water supply.

Apart from the availability of the resources, every construction of a house in a new site is preceded by a magico-religious divination to ascertain ritual worthiness or otherwise of the site. Both the person concerned and the medicine-man (*Dishari*) go to the site before dusk after taking bath. The former digs a pit at the middle of the site. Then the latter puts some unboiled white rice in the pit, covers the grains with a leaf-cup made of siali-leaves and at the end of the rite sprinkles water over the cup by reciting some magical formula. Thereafter both of them leave the place and proceed non-stop homeward without looking back. Next day both of them come to the spot to see what has happened to the grains. If the grains are scattered then they conclude that the ancestors of the person concerned do not want him to stay there and therefore, the site is considered inauspicious. On the other hand if they find that the grains are intact then it is concluded that the ancestors have indicated that the site is auspicious and therefore, approve the site for building the proposed house.

A village comprises in the minimum two separate wards, one inhabited by the Dongria Kandha and the other by the Domb. The houses are built close to each other conforming to a linear pattern. A narrow street runs from one end to the other of the village separating the two rows of houses.

When population increases in the village, some move out and build new houses in the proximity. The space in the main village is so much limited that it becomes difficult to accommodate beyond certain size of the population. It is for this reason that separate hamlets have come up around the main village. For all social and ritual purposes the village and its hamlets act as a compact and cohesive unit and are tied up together with mutuality of obligation in economic and other spheres of life.

In some cases there may be lanes and bylanes radiating from the main street and by the side of these alleys there may be houses behind those in the main street. The settlement pattern does not exhibit close cluster.

At the entrance of the village, which is marked by mango grove and jack-fruit trees, a shed thatched with bamboo splits is built to represent the shrine of the village deity called *Jatrakudi Penu* who is believed to protect the people from evil-eye. A straw-thatched shed called, *Kuddi* is built in the middle of the village street to lodge the Earth-Goddess (*Darani-Penu*). Close to the *kuddi*, there stands a small wooden post of 3 to 4 feet in height. It represents the husband (*Jhankad* or *Kotchali Penu*) of *Darani Penu*.

At the extreme end of the village opposite to that where the shrine of the village goddess is located, lies the girls' dormitory (*Hada Sala*) near the hill stream which flows close to the village. The idea is to allow the young boys and girls to mix freely to choose their mates. It is the responsibility of the young boys of the village to build this hut and it is here the young girls of the village sleep at night.

A wide space called, *Bateria* is set apart near the village for defecation and for dumping garbage. Every Dongria village has a sweeper (*Jhateni*) and any one of his family sweeps the village street and keeps the *Bateria* clean.



INSIDE VIEW OF DONGRIA KANDHA KITCHEN

House Types:

Generally the house of a Dongria Kandha is rectangular in ground plan. Earth is removed from the site on which the house is to be built. The floor of the house is made up of earth being rammed uniformly to make it leveled all over. A typical Dongria Kandha house consists of a spacious rectangular room, and another small room (*Dhapa*) at the back of the first room with a front verandah and a back verandah. All these parts are built under a two-sloped roof thatched with grass. The roof is made so low as to leave a space of two feet from the ground to crawl into the house. A low roof of this type does not allow cold wind to get into the house and keeps it warm for comfortable living. Except the four main walls of the house a small partition wall is built inside to separate the kitchen from the main room, and to keep it out of the sight of outsiders. The back room has also an enclosure on all sides to provide privacy to the ladies who use it at the time of menstruation.

The walls are made of lattice of bamboo splits and wattle of broom sticks plastered with mud and cowdung. A coating of coloured earth is applied over the wall to add beauty to the house. Well-to-do families use wooden planks for making walls. These planks are fixed upright on the ground linearly and later on plastered with mud.

The living room which is used for sleeping and dining is about 12 feet in length and 8 feet in breadth and 7 feet in height. The dimension of the kitchen room which is attached to the living room is 4 feet by 2 ½ feet. The back room, called *Dhapa* is 6 feet in length and 4 feet in breadth and 6 feet in height. The front verandah is wider than the back verandah. The size of the front verandah is 10 feet by 3 feet while that of the rear one is 5 feet by 5 feet.

A house requires 21 wooden poles (*Munda*) for construction. The central pole (*Tuli Munda*) among all the poles of about 10 feet in height is planted on the ground and other poles (*Dhapa Mundas*) of varying sizes are planted on either side of the central pole in proper places. Before the central

pole is fixed on the ground a small wooden post (*Hadada Munda*) is fixed in the ground in front of the central pole. This post represents the ancestral spirits (*Dumba*). After completion of the house a fowl is sacrificed at *Hadada Munda* and the house-warming ritual is performed. The details of the ceremony are furnished at the end of this section.

Now coming to the construction of the house, after the central pole is fixed, another pole of 15 feet long is laid horizontally on the central pole. Then smaller pieces of bamboos are placed in slanting position, side by side, on either side of the beam with a gap of 6 to 9 inches and are tied to it by means of fibres. Upon these bamboos, smaller bamboos are laid horizontally and are tied to them with fibres. This criss-cross bamboo framework forms the trellis of the roof, which is thatched with grass. Bamboo splits are laid on the thatched grass and tied with the bamboos of the trellis so that the wind and rain cannot cause any damage to the roof.

The house is provided with three doors one of 3 ½ feet long in front of the house, the other of 4 feet long at the entrance of the back room opening to the main room and the third one of 3 ½ feet long at the back of the back room opening to the back verandah. No windows are provided in the house to prevent the entry of wild rats and snakes. Well-to-do families provide a ceiling like platform below the roof of the main room to store food grains and other sundry articles of the house. Wooden poles are fixed in the walls across floor above head height forming a platform for storage purpose.

After day's work when the members of the family come back home the male members sit at the front verandah and spend time in relaxing and gossiping and the female members do the same thing in the back verandah.

There is no fowl-pen as such. A basket serves this purpose and this basket is kept in the back room. Goats are tethered in the back verandah. During rainy season they are given shelter in the back room. The Dongrias are fond of keeping pigs. The pig stay is built close to the back verandah. Cattle are tethered to the wooden posts in the cowshed (*Hada sala*), which

is built either on any side or at the back of the house. Pigeons are kept in a wooden crate and their place of stay lies in the space under the roof of the back verandah.

After the construction of the house is over a ritual is performed before the *Hadada Munda* to propitiate the ancestor-spirits (*Dumbas*) and seek their blessings and good wishes on the occasion of first entrance into and occupation of the newly built house by the owner of the house and his family members. The religious functionary of the village (*Jani*) sacrifices a fowl on the wooden altar. Thereafter the house-wife cooks some white rice and the consecrated chicken in a new earthen pot and offers the cooked food to the ancestral spirits. Then the head of the family, his wife and children partake the consecrated food and pray their ancestors for a happy and prosperous life in the new house.

Contents of a Dongria Kandha house:

The household equipments in a Dongria family are scanty and just serve the purpose of bare necessities. They are neither costly nor very durable.

The Dongrias sleep on the floor by spreading a piece of cloth. Use of pillow is out of question. Wherever cot is present it is made of wooden frame woven with rope. The cot is also used for drying food grains. The Dongria Kandha are mainly shifting cultivators but a few of them who have land at the foot of the hill slopes called *Penda* carry on wet-cultivation. A list of the important agricultural implements used by the tribe is given in the Table-1.

TABLE No. - 1
Agricultural Implements

Sl No	Local Name of the implement	English equivalent	Use	Materials used for construction	Particulars of use	Durability & price	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	<i>Kadali</i>	Big axe	Agriculture	Iron blade & wooden haft	For felling big trees	Rs 4-7-	Purchased from the market
2	<i>Simme</i>	Small axe	-do-	-do-	For splitting bamboos & cutting branches of trees and used on the should as an decorative implement	Rs 1-3-	-do-
3	<i>Nagal</i>	Plough	-do-	Wood collected from the forest	For ploughing	No cost	Hand-made
4	<i>Jahapa</i>	Hoe	-do-	Iron blade & wooden haft	For shifting cultivation i.e. for planting turmeric & other crops in the swidden	Rs 0.75 to Rs 1.50	Purchased from the market
5	<i>Kogdi</i>	Spade	Breaking clods of earth	Iron blade & wooden haft	For agriculture	Rs 2-3-	Purchased from the market
6	<i>Sabana</i>	Shovel & crowbar	Digging earth	-do-	For forest	Rs 5-8-	-do-
7	<i>Bega</i>	Sickle	Reaping	Iron	For agriculture	Rs 0.75-1.50	-do-
8	<i>Kati</i>	Bill hook	For cutting branches & twigs while felling trees in swidden	Iron & wooden haft	Agricultural purposes	Rs 3-5-	-do-
9	<i>Chhuri</i>	Knife	To cut twigs	-do-	-do-	Rs 2-4-	-do-
10	<i>Pipli</i>	Small knife	To reap	Iron & brass made haft	Agricultural purposes, decorative ornaments, use at the hair	Rs 0.50-1	Purchased from iron-smith (Muli)
11	<i>Kalu</i>	Wooden pole	For thrashing	Wood locally collected	Agriculture purposes	No cost	-
12	<i>Danda</i>	Big basket	For carrying crops	Bamboo made	For carrying different crops	Rs 2-3-	Purchased from Medra caste

13	<i>Kotara</i>	Flat basket	For drying grains	Bamboo made	For drying different crops	Rs. 1-2/-	Purchased from Medra caste
14	<i>Duli</i>	Small granary	For storing gram	-do-	For storing	Rs 5-8/-	-do-
15	<i>Heni</i>	Husking level	For grinding different grains	Wooden with iron socket	For grinding	0.50-0.75	Purchased from market
16	<i>Hippi</i>	Broom made of twigs	To collect grains after sweeping	-	-	No cost	-

All these agricultural implements are used for about 6 to 7 years and sharpened as and when required from Muli (Iron-smith). Only family belonging to Muli community is found to be living in the village, but he spends most of his time at Chatikona. For sharpening the implements payment is made either in kind or cash. Baskets and grain-containers are changed almost every year.

The following table indicates various implements used for hunting, fishing and trapping.

TABLE NO. - 2

Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Implements

Sl No	Local Name of the implement	English equivalent	Use	Materials used for construction	Particulars of use	Durability & price	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	<i>Belu</i>	Bow	Hunting games	Bamboo	Economic & for food	No cost. It is changed in each year	-
2	<i>Gundcha</i>	Arrow	-do-	Bamboo sticks with iron blade	-do-	-do-	-
3	<i>Munda</i>	Sticks	-do-	Bamboo poles	-do-	-do-	-
4	<i>Bana</i>	Country made gun	-do- wooden butt	Iron pipe with	-do-	Life long Rs. 80-110/-	Purchased from market
5	<i>Kora</i>	Gun powder	-do-	Gun powder	-do-	Rs. 5/- per 100 gr. As & when required	-do-
6	<i>Barida</i>	Deer & bear trap	-do-	Bamboo spits	-do-	No cost changed after 5 to 6 years	-
7	<i>Bare</i>	Clay ball	-do-	Clay made & dried up	-do-	-do-	-
8	<i>Jail</i>	Net	Catching fish	Net	-do-	10-15 years Rs. 7-9/-	Purchased from market

The following table indicates used of basketry in a Dogria Kandba household

TABLE NO. – 3
Basketry

Sl No	Local Name of the implement	English equivalent	Use	Materials used for construction	Particulars of use	Durability & price	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	<i>Topa</i>	Basket grams and forest collections	For carrying splits	Bamboo use	Economic year & payment is made according to size	Changed each	Purchased from Medri community
2	<i>Dunda</i>	Big basket	For carrying grams	-do-	-do-	Rs 2-3/- for one year	-do-
3	<i>Truhepa Topa</i>	Small basket	For collecting forest materials	-do-	-do-	Rs 0.75-Rs 1/- changed in each year	-do-
4	<i>Katara</i>	Flat basket	For drying grams	-do-	-do-	Rs. 1.50-Rs 2/- changed in each year	V
5	<i>Bhurki</i>	Round shaped small basket	For eating fried maize	-do-	-do-	Rs 0.25-0.50	-do-
6	<i>Duli</i>	Small granaries	For storing grains	-do-	-do-	Rs 5-8/-	-do-
7	<i>Bukusa</i>	Bamboo-made trunk	For keeping valuables of the house	-do-	For storing clothes etc.	Rs. 7/-	-do-

The following table indicates different articles used in the kitchen.

TABLE NO. – 4
Kitchen Utensils

Sl No	Local Name of the implement	English equivalent	Use is economic pursuit	Materials used for construction	Particulars of use	Durability & price	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	<i>Kaja daka</i>	Big earthen pot	For cooking gruel	Earthen pot	For cooking	Rs 0.80-2-3 months	Exchange in village
2	<i>Sarada & Pidpa</i>	Small flat sized earthen pot	For cooking Dal & curry	-do-	-do-	Rs 0.30-50 15 days or 1 month	-do-
3	<i>Maiga</i>	A big flat sized earthen pot	For cooking pata of rice	-do-	-do-	Rs 0.80-1- about a month	-do-
4	<i>Mutta</i> shaped small earthen pot	Round salt and turmeric powder	For storing	-do-	For storing	0.20-0.30 5-6 months	-do-
5	<i>Heet</i>	Ladle	For stirring	Wood	For stirring	No cost	Not purchased
6	<i>Duwant</i>	Gourd container	For serving gruel & water	Dry gourd	For serving	No cost, broken after 2-3 months	-do-
7	<i>Thola</i>	Big leaf cup	Gruel is served	Salt leaf	For serving gruel	No cost, daily leaf-cup is prepared	-
8	<i>Chipli Tandu</i>	Small leaf cup	Curry is served	Salt leaf	For serving curry	-do-	-
9	<i>Kata Tholi</i>	Big size plates	For taking rice	Alloy metal	Rice is served	Rs 40-60- Life long market	Purchased from the
10	<i>Ichkan Tholi</i>	Small size plate	For taking rice	Alloy metal	-do-	Rs 30-60- Life long	-do-

11	<i>Tabla</i>	Dekchi	For carrying food to the swidden	Aluminum	Food container	Rs.12-18/- 10-15 years	-do-
12	<i>Kalamb</i>	Small ridged container	For eating curry	Alloy metal	To serve curry	Rs.18-25/- Life long	-do-
13	<i>Bettini</i>	Straw bundle	For placing earthen pitchers	Straw	To place vessels	No cost, every weekly	Prepared by themselves
14	<i>Daka or gera</i>	Pitcher	For storing water	Bell-metal	For storing water	Rs.25-400/- Life long	Purchased from the market
15	<i>Gilasa</i>	Glass	For drinking water	Aluminum	Water is drunk	Rs.1.75-3/- 2-3 years	-do-
16	<i>Sipa</i>	Small container	For serving curry	-do-	Curry is served	Rs.0.75-2/- 2-3 years	-do-
17	<i>Juta</i>	Grinding stone	For grinding grains	Stone	Grinding all grains	No cost (Life long)	Locally made
18	<i>Wali</i>	Mortar & pestle	For grinding spices	Stone	For grinding spices	-do-	-do-
19	<i>Badti</i>	Kerosene lamp	For lighting	Tin made	For lighting	Rs.0.25 to 0.50, 1-2 years	Purchased from the market
20	<i>Jomba</i>	Wooden planks	For sitting	Wood	For sitting	No cost Life long	Locally prepared
21	<i>Kachha</i>	Bottle	For storing	Glass	For storing kerosene	Rs.0.50 to Rs.1/-, 4-6 months	Purchased from the market

In fact, the household appliances, though of little market value are of great use for the Dongria Kandha. Fishing and trapping are insignificant to the Dongria Kandha and therefore, they do not possess much of such accessories. All the wooden hafts, wooden plough, the yoke, carrying pole, slings, strings, bow and arrow, grinding stones etc. are made by the males. The leaf cups are prepared by the ladies. The hoe is more important than plough for the Dongria Kandha. Living primarily on gleaning economy, a

Dongria Kandha cannot part with his axe which is used both for chopping trees and as an inseparable decorative instrument used for personal safety on necessity. After the establishment of Fair Price Shops most of the well-to-do Dongria families have got many more modern articles for use. They now possess steel or tin trunks, lantern, torch-light, cotton umbrella, buckets, aluminum utensils etc.

Musical instruments like – big clappers (*Jhatgi* or *Talhara*), small clappers (*Gini*), big drums (*Dhapu*), small drum (*Lisari*), smallest drums (*Dudung*), flat drums (*Dadadi*), bell-metal rings (*Ghagadi*) etc. are communally owned and kept either in *Kuddi* or in some one's house in the village.

These are used when communal dances take place. Mouth organ (*Gaani*) and flute (*Bainshi*) are individually owned and used mainly by the young males in solitude.

Dress:

The clothes which the Dongria Kandha wear are very simple and scanty. A man wears a cloth called, *Kodi*, of 16 feet in length and one foot in width. It is wrapped round the waist several times and then passed between the thighs, so that one end hangs in front and the other at the back. The front end is decorated with coloured threads and embroidery work. Old men use an extra piece of small cloth called, *Ganda Kpada*, which is about three feet in length, and one and half feet in width, around the waist. Some men who are well-to-do wear a shirt when they go out to market or other places.

A woman uses two pieces of cloth (*Kapda-Ganda*), each, three feet in length and one-and half feet in width. The first piece is wrapped round the waist with a knot in the front. The second piece hangs around the waist and one end of it passes through the arm-pits and tied at the back to cover

the upper part of the body. A small piece of cloth (*Langota*) is always used by an adult women as an underwear. Children below the age of three years go naked.

Both men and women use a wrapper over their body in winter, women of economically better off families wear saris with red borders. Men of standing like *Mutha* Head, village leaders put on turbans.

The Dongrias use country-made umbrella or modern factory-made umbrella. They have no habit of wearing any foot-wears. Women mend and stitch torn clothes. Men are skilled in making hats out of Siali leaves.

They use ash to wash and clean their clothes and Kosla-rice powder (a starchy millet) to stiffen the clothes. Now-a-days, use of soap is common in almost all households.

Ordinary clothes are kept on a bamboo pole hanged against walls of the sleeping room. One or two pairs of washed clothes are kept in the bamboo-basket, which are used on ceremonial occasions.

One piece of cloth is used for a fortnight or so by a male. But a female uses two pairs alternatively during the same period. Dirty clothes are not cleaned with any detergent regularly or weekly.

On ceremonial occasions, clean clothes or new clothes are used. Men prefer to wear black-shirts and women have no such special choice. Along with the clothes, a conch-shell thread (*Kradli*) is used as sacred-thread and a bundle of peacock feather (*Tanya*) is fixed on the turban. The females put on saris who can afford. The rest part of the body is decorated with ornaments.

Ornaments:

The Dongria Kandha, both males and females, including children, are fond of ornaments which they adorn themselves ordinarily and look

attractive. It really becomes difficult to differentiate the sex from a long distance when both the sexes put on ornaments. Because, the Dongria males grow long hair as proverbially required by the mythical Niyam Raja to differentiate themselves from other sections of the Kandha and prepare braided locks like the females at their scalps. It is a fact that they cannot afford to put on golden ornaments, but usually ornaments made out of silver, brass, and alloys are used.

A wooden comb (*Kokuya*) is fixed at the hair knot irrespective of sex which adorns the hair-lock and keeps the hair tight. A tiny knife (*Pipli*) with two colourful thread balls at its bell metal handle, is used by the ladies at the hair-lock which too adorns the hair-lock and serves the purpose of cutting anything as and when required. Sometimes, the young girls use more thread balls at the *Pipli*.

Ear-rings and nose-rings (*Murma*) are used irrespective of sex but such ornaments are used more by the females. Along with the rings brass-made pointed sticks (*Kulti*) are used irrespective of sex, both for adornment and to take out thorns etc. if pierced into the feet while moving in the forest. A knife and an axe are inseparable companion of a male Dongria Kandha. A bell-metal or a wooden tobacco-pipe is fixed at the waist so artistically by a man that, it looks more like an ornament than utilitarian article. In fact, all these ornaments, stated above have both functional value as-well-as decorative value.

Other than these ornaments which are used by both sexes, the females put-on bead and coin necklaces (*Kekodika*) in bunches. Persons, who are economically better off put-on golden necklaces. Aluminium rings are put-on mainly by the young girls which they present to the young boys (*Dhangdas*) in the dormitory during courtship.

These ornaments are used on normal occasions. On ceremonial occasions, the ladies put on brass wristlets (*Khadu* or *Paja*) and silver anklets



DONGRIA KANDHA YOUTHS GOING TO MARKET

(*Pahari-Andu*), those who can afford. But generally, the ornaments mentioned earlier are used by many. The young girls on festive and ceremonial occasions, put on 5 to 8 numbers of scissors type hair pins in line at the hair lock which look like a crown. The males, put on conch shell threads (*Kradli*) at the back like sacred thread and a bunch of peacock feather (*Tanya*) at the turban on ceremonial occasions.

Elderly or married ladies prefer to put on more ear and nose rings and such ornaments which have more functional value. Children too, put on ear and nose rings. But the young boys and girls really look picturesque when they put on all sets of ornaments during feasts and festivals. In fact, no status complexion is found in putting on ornaments among the Dongrias.

Ornaments are kept in a tin-box, purchased now-a-days from the Fair price Shops by the Well to do families. But ordinarily, usable ornaments are kept in bamboo made baskets (*Hakusa*).

Food:

Generally the Dongria Kandha eat three times a day, in the morning at about 8.00 A.M. in midday at about 1.00 P.M. and in the night at about 7.00 P.M. As the people go out early morning to work in their Dongar fields they carry along with them the midday meals to the field. When they come back from field in the evening they take the night meal at home. The morning meal consists of only ragi-gruel and a pinch of salt. The same food is taken at midday with cooked green leaves. The night meal comprises either ragi gruel cooked with *Kosala* rice or unboiled rice and vegetable curry. The Dongria Kandha are fond of dried fish. They take it after baking directly on fire. It is usually taken with the night meal. Sometimes, boiled rice constitutes the night meal. The cooked rice is eaten with vegetable and dried fish.

Various creepers like-*Kating*, *Baila* and *Jhudang* are boiled or fried and eaten during winter. Pulse like- *Kandul* (red gram) is prepared as dal. Maize too, is fried and eaten while working in the farm land. Various types of

roots (*Impomoca batatas*) – *Rani Kanda* and *Langala Kanda* are boiled and eaten as morning tiffin and when one feels hungry. Comparatively better food is eaten in winter months. Green leaves and mushrooms are eaten more during summer and rains. Fish is eaten during summer, if there is any catch. Scarcity of food is experienced during lean months. Fruits, though available in plenty, are not consumed but marketed for ready cash.

In the field tiffin and lunch are eaten in buffet style, Parents and children sit down together for taking their food. The wife serves food to her husband and children first and afterwards she takes her food. The vessels containing food are kept near by and any one who needs more takes from the vessels by means of the ladle kept for that purpose. This is the manner of taking food while in the field. But at home the older members are served food first and next the head of the household and children. And women take their food at last, and when they finish eating, they sweep the floor and clean the place where the food is eaten. The cooking vessels are kept as such in the kitchen to be washed next morning.

Salt and turmeric paste are the condiments used for preparing curry. Green chilly is added for taste. Garlic is used when green leaves are cooked. Garlic, onion, ginger and dry chilly are used when fish or meat curry is prepared. The medium of cooking, both vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes, is castor oil. Ground nut oil is used in feasts. The Dongria Kandha do not observe any food taboo along sex lines. Both men and women eat whatever considered edible. Babies are fed ragi gruel from the age of six months. Except mother's milk no other milk is given to the babies. Milk does not constitute as an item of food in the diet of the Dongrias. The Domb sweeper of the village and the Domb who tends cattle are given food daily by all the families in a village for the service rendered by him. Whatever excess food remains is preserved to be taken next morning. The rotten food is fed to the domesticated animals.

It is the duty of women to cook food and children above 6 years of age help their mothers in cooking. Normally men do not cook, but when

women are in their menstrual period the burden of cooking falls on men. The custom of eating in the house of the neighbour during exigencies is in vogue among the Dongrias.

The Dongria Kandha relish chicken, mutton, buffalo meat, pork and beef. The latter two types of non-vegetarian stuff are the main items of food on festive occasions and marriage ceremonies. Animals killed in hunting trips are shared by all households in the village including the Domb families. All households in a Dongria village including the Domb households form a cohesive unit and the sharing of the product of the chase among themselves conforms to the social norm, that is, equity distribution.

The Dongria women do not participate in any ceremonial cooking. Food processing and cooking on festive occasions is the prerogative of men. During marriage ceremonies men and women are allowed to dine together. But on all other occasions it is only the men who dine together and food for women and older people is sent to respective houses.

Roots, fruits and vegetables are cut or peeled with the help of knife and then cooked. Green leaves are not cut, but simply washed and cooked. Mushrooms are soaked in turmeric water before cooking for half an hour. Salt, spices, and oil are used for cooking their food stuff. But anything collected from the forest is not directly cooked. The collected stuff is boiled first and the water in which it was boiled is thrown away. Then fresh water is added to the boiled stuff and then cooked. Salt, turmeric and oil are added as usual. Fish is cooked mainly with mustard-seeds and chilly. Dry-fish is simply baked on fire and eaten along with salt. To make it tasty oil is added sometimes. Animals of any type when killed or sacrificed are cooked without being skinned.

Regularity in eating is not maintained any time in the year. When there is heavy pressure of work during sowing and harvesting, the women

especially skip their tiffin and lunch. The men are also irregular in taking food during heavy agricultural season. But they are very particular about their drinking habits. They drink either the juice collected from the Sago-palm or Mohua liquor in the house of the Domb.

Collection of firewood is the work of both men and women. It is stored in the back verandah of the house and used for cooking food. The fire from the hearth provides light to the house. The well-to-do families use kerosene lamp and lantern. Use of lantern has been introduced after opening of the Fair-Price-Shops in the area.

Indigenous practices of fire-making include wood-friction and percussion. The former method includes drilling with a cylinder of wood in a passive piece of heath. In case of the latter method, that is, fire-making through percussion only a piece of flint and a piece of steel are required. The latter is rubbed fiercely against the flint and the sparks which are generated thereby come in contact with cotton which is held along side and that catches fire. The wooden holder in which the flint is kept at the bottom and the cotton at the top is called *Rug-Duna*. The piece of steel which is used in fire-making is kept hanging by the side of the container by means of a piece of thread. These indigenous practices of making fire are being replaced by matchbox, which is now readily available in Fair-Price-Shops.

Food Taboos:

People of Niska clan do not dine with those of other clans. It is believed that Niska is the founder clan and the people belonging to the clan are the direct descendants of the ruling chief of Niyamgiri. The members of Niska clan have given up taking beef and buffalo meat, where as members of other clans continue to take beef and buffalo meat.

The Dongria Kandha do not accept cooked food from the hands of the Domb who are considered lower in status. But uncooked and dry food

materials are acceptable from the Domb. Any fruit or vegetable fallen on the ground is meant for, they believe, regeneration of plants and therefore, not to be eaten. In case it is offered to any neighbour, the latter can eat after touching it in his left leg. It is believed that the touch with the left leg makes it free from evil touch, and consequently becomes edible. Women are not allowed to eat meat of animals which are sacrificed to propitiate deities on public festive or ritual occasions, because it is believed that the spirits of other clans will cause harm to them. But they can eat the meat of such animals, which are offered to their own ancestral spirits. Salt, chilly, onion and non-vegetarian food are not eaten by women during menstrual period and after delivery. The belief is that these affect the health of women. Any food made from *Kosla*, *arka*, *jana* and *ganthia* is taboo before the festival called *Punapadi*, which is observed in the month of *Kartika* (*Dewali-lenju*). Soon after harvest these crops are offered to the ancestral spirits first and then eaten. Such taboos, which are associated with food, are strictly observed by one and all as otherwise misfortune and calamity would befall them.

Intoxicants and Narcotics:

The high terrain upon which the Dongria Kandha live, the topography, the climatic factor etc. have shaped their living conditions and made them perpetual addicts. The very savour of Mahua liquor (*Irpi Kalu*) and Sago palm juice (*Mada-Kalu*) make the Dongrias almost wild.

Liquor is locally called *Kalu*. Various kinds of liquor are brewed domestically such as, *Irpi-Kalu* (Mahua liquor), *Kadali-Kalu* (Banana-liquor) and *Guda kalu* (Molasses-liquor). Sago-palm juice (*Mada-kalu*), an intoxicated drink is collected from locally available sago-palm trees.

Irpi-kalu is secretly brewed, but not in large scale. Domestic brewing being prohibited, the Dongria Kandha are afraid of local preparation and therefore, depend upon the market and their next-door neighbour, the Domb. The Domb are expert in brewing *Irpi-kalu* and make it a source of income.

On special occasions like – *Mandia Rani* and *Meria* festivals as-well-as on marriage ceremonies they brew Irpi-kalu secretly with the Domb. But they never brew for commercial purposes. Sago-palm trees, which grow wildly in the area are owned family-wise. These trees are considered as valuable possessions of the family. Trespassing into anybody's tree is seriously viewed.

The shoots of the tree come out only from the month of October-November and remain upto March-April without being withered away. Within that period ample juice is available from each shoot. To enrich its alcoholic content, various local roots like, *Kanikutra* plant, root of *kosla* plant etc. are added to it.

Use of liquor in any form is not socially prohibited to any sex and age. Taking liquor is a common practice and approved by the society as it has various ceremonial and religious usages. To get rid of the boredom of hard labour as well as for sake of pleasure it is drunk. It is used as medicine when anybody suffers from cold and headache. Liquor is indispensable for rituals. In almost all the rituals liquor is offered as oblation to satisfy different gods and goddesses and mainly the ancestral spirits. It has still more social value. It is customary to offer a cup full of liquor to a friend or relative or neighbour as a medium of social intercourse. It creates and sustains friendship. Thus Mahua liquor and sago-palm juice are considered more as food than as mere intoxicant drinks.

Liquor is also prepared from different fruits as mentioned earlier. It is seasonally prepared mainly by the young boys. The young boys when attend dormitory are presented with small bottles of seasonal fruit liquor by the young girls as a token of love.

Liquor is also purchased from the licentiate liquor shop established at Chatikona Railway Station. In almost all social functions, liquor is not purchased by the Dongrias themselves, but by the Domb, who purchase

directly from the shop and give delivery at the door steps of the Dongrias. The Dongria Kandha cannot pay net cash and therefore, mortgage cropped fields and fruit-bearing trees and thus become prey of the pernicious exploitation by the Domb liquor-vendors.

Narcotics and Stimulants:

The Dongria Kandha use various narcotics and stimulant, like – *Kara*, *Dhungla*, *Kundeli* and *Chunga*. *Kara* is prepared out of dry and raw tobacco leaf and fine ash. Raw tobacco is simply pressed and chewed which is known as *Dhungla*. *Kundeli* is otherwise known as *Pika*. Tobacco leaf is rolled in *Siali*-leaf and used as country made cigars. *Chunga* is tobacco-container pipe used for smoking.

Kara and *Dhungla* are chewed, but *Dhungla* and *Chunga* are used for smoking. *Kara* is kept in a small wooden container called *Dabi*. There are two varieties of *Chunga*- the smaller one is used by the women and the bigger one is used by the men. Both men and women chew tobacco and they have to depend on the market for this as they do not cultivate tobacco. The amount of narcotics consumed by a person depends on his or her personal taste and capacity to afford the cost.

Daily Life:

The Dongria Kandha are very early riser. Men leave their bed at about 3.00 to 3.30 A.M. and gather at *Kudli* (Shrine of village deity) where they relax with *Pika* and gossip. After an hour or so, when the cocks give first crow, they start dispersing one after another to attend to their field work in the Dongar lands. They keep themselves busy in various agricultural operations in their respective fields up to 8.00 A.M. when they taken their breakfast. Thereafter they resume their work up to 1.00 P.M. with half-an-hour or one hour break in the middle for drink. After taking their mid-day meal they take a little nap for an hour or so, and again they start their work. They also take drinks in the afternoon. After 4.00 P.M. they visit their orchard

and collect whatever fruits are ripe mostly for sale, and sometimes, for own consumption. On their return journey around 6.00 P.M. they take bath in the stream as they do not get time to take bath throughout the day. On coming back home after the day's toil the first work to be done is to cut firewood and kindle fire at home and sit around it with their children.

Women get up earlier than men. The first work which they do is to grind the millet (Ragi or *Suan*) and start cooking. They prepare both breakfast and lunch at a time and finish all domestic works before 6.00 A.M. and then go out to the Dongar fields carrying food and babies with them and join the male members there in the agricultural work. Among the Dongrias the whole family works in its Dongar land without strictly adhering to any division of work. During lunch break, all the members of the household present in the field sit down at one place and the house-wife serves food to all of them. She also takes food herself with them. After a little rest they resume the work till evening when they come back home. Men go to bed earlier than women because the latter eat later than the former at night.

Older members of the family also do some light works, such as, watching children and collecting minor forest produce from nearby forests. Children within the age-group of 7 to 14 years of age are also kept engaged in work both at home and in the field.

Sources of Livelihood:

The important sources of livelihood of the Dongria Kandha are : (1) Agriculture and horticulture (2) Forest collection, (3) Trade and (4) Animal husbandry.

Agriculture:

The entire tract of the Nimagiri hill ranges is situated on the Eastern Ghats. In view of the altitude, soil and climatic condition, the people are

forced to practise shifting cultivation as there is no plain land for wet-cultivation. All the socio-cultural and socio-economic practices therefore veer round the shifting cultivation of the Dongria Kandha.

The land in the Dongria region is divided into three categories- hill slopes or top of hills are called, *Haru*; land at the foot of hills, called, *Penga*; and lands adjoining the hamlets are called *Bada* (Kitchen garden). In view of the terrain, the Dongrias mostly possess *Haru*-type of land rather than other varieties of land which are very scarce. Again, of all varieties, *Penga* type of land is considered to be the best variety as regards fertility as it contains black soil (*Birga*). Some well-to-do families raise hill-paddy on this type of land.

The following table indicates the types of crops harvested from each type of land.

TABLE NO. – 5
Types of land and the crops harvested

Sl. No.	Types of land	Crops harvested according to their importance	Remarks
1	2	3	4
1	<i>Haru</i>	<p>Millets: Ragi or <i>Mandia</i>, <i>Kosla</i>- Stapelfood. Pulses: Redgram or <i>Kandul</i>, <i>Ganthia</i>, <i>Arka</i> and <i>Jana</i> are used as Dal. Legumens: <i>Jhudang</i> and <i>Baila</i> used as tiffin. Castor-seeds (<i>Kala-Manji</i>) produced as cash crop. Roots & Tubers: <i>Saru kanda</i>, <i>Langala kanda</i> and <i>Rani kanda</i> are produced mainly to be eaten and if any surplus are sold. Turmeric (<i>Hinga</i>), ginger (<i>Ada</i>) and arrow-root (<i>Palu</i>) are produced as cash crops. Vegetables: Pumpkin, bean (<i>Simba</i>) and <i>Dongar Mirchi</i> (Chilly) are produced. These are eaten and if any surplus remains then it is sold out. Fruits : Banana, orange, jack-fruit and pineapple are produced mainly as cash crops.</p>	
2.	<i>Penga</i>	<p><i>Dangar-Dhan</i> (Paddy) is produced</p> <p><i>Kosla</i>, <i>ragi</i> and tobacco leaf (<i>Dhuan</i>) are produced. If the land is fertile, maize is produced.</p>	It is sown if the land is fertile.
3.	<i>Bada</i> (Kitchen garden)	Gourd, pumpkin, bean, brinjal, chilly are produced. The kitchen garden contains mainly mango and jackfruit trees.	

Concept of Property:

As believed by the Dongria Kandha, property (*Majan*) is mainly of two types- movable and immovable. Hill plots (*Haru*), roof of the house (*Temberi*) and fruit orchards are considered immovable property and one must possess them any where in the *Niyamgiri* hills to claim himself to be a Dongria. Other assets, including the *Duna* (money container where currency notes are kept concealed) and the livestock are treated as rich valuables and are considered movable. These hill-slopes are divided according to *Mutha*. *Mutha* is an important feature of social organization among the Dongria Kandha. It consists of a group of villages treated as an administrative-cum-social unit. For example: the entire police station of Bissamcuttack (where the study was conducted) is divided into five *Muthas* such as – *Jakasika*, *Adaka*, *Pushika*, *Kadraka* and *Niska*.

Prior to the year 1961, particularly during British rule, under the supervision of a Dewan known as Peter Saheb, sent by the then King of Jeypore, the entire *Niyamgiri* hills was divided into five *Muthas*.

The *Mutha* leader, *Mandal*, in consultation with the village leaders like – *Jani*, *Bishmajhi*, *Pujari* used to distribute Dongar plots among the villagers. The Dongrias occupied hill fields on the basis of traditional *Mutha* divisions and within a particular *Mutha* among the constituent villages. After land survey and settlement operations by the State Government individual record of rights have been issued to occupants of the hill fields in the year 1961. Each such Dongar plot is so vast that there is no bar for its segmentation in future with the growth of population, because the land under the possession of a single Dongria cannot be cultivated at a time due to lack of adequate manpower. But even if a big patch of land is segmented the occupancy right will remain with its original owner as it has been settled in his name and his right on that land has been recorded. Now this land will be inherited only patrilineally; and in fact land in Dongria area is being inherited in this manner.

However, land in this area is owned individually. There are certain lands like-grazing land, obsequial land. Land relating to village shrines and land near the stream are owned communally.

As per individual ownership, the head of the family inherits the property patrilineally. During the lifetime of the father, property is distributed among all the sons equally after their marriage. The daughters are not entitled for any share after marriage. In case there is no heir, the brother of the deceased or his son inherits the property. Adopted son or the son-in-law too, inherits the property in case he is prepared to tolerate the authority of the owner of the house. But once he leaves the house, he loses his right over the property.

Techniques of Cultivation:

Each occupant at his own initiative and as per availability of manpower, selects the land for cultivation only after *Bihan-Parab*. Seeds are worshipped ceremoniously near Earth-Goddess by the *Jani* in the month of *Chaitra* (February-March). The land is cleared both by the males and the females. The males fell the big trees and the females cut the bushes and the shrubs. When these bushes get dry after a fortnight or so, these are collected at one place and then set with fire called '*Nai-Rundhi Manalsu*' (Setting the fire) ceremony. During this period the entire Dongria area appears to be dotted with brightly lit fire. Almost all the Dongar plots look white after burning and then the soil is prepared for sowing. Right from the bottom of the hill up to the hilltop both the males and the females dig the podu land to mingle and mix the ash with the soil. The ash is also spread equitably all over the plot to increase the fertility of the podu land. There is no scope either for application of chemical fertilizer or irrigating the land. The people after this operation therefore, wait for the rain. This cultivation is entirely dependant on monsoon.

Kandul (Red gram) plot is prepared separately. Red gram seeds are dibbled with perceptible gap from one seed to the other to encourage free growth. A separate land is prepared for sowing ragi, *kosla* and *jhudang*.

Other crops are mixed and broadcasted in a separate plot. Turmeric, ginger and arrowroot are grown in a separate plot. Big pits of about one and half feet depth are prepared for planting various types of roots in the banana yard. No other crop is grown in the banana yard. Pineapple is grown in a separate yard. Vegetables like-chilly, beans etc. are grown both in the kitchen as well as in the Dongar plot.

As soon as seeds are broadcasted in a field the Dongrias carry out extensive hoeing by means of an instrument called *Takape* so as to drive the seeds into the soil.

The task of weeding begins in the month of June when saplings are grown up. From August to January, crop fields are watched both by men and women in the small hut called *Ladi* prepared on the Dongar plot. A barn is also prepared before the *Ladi* where all crops are threshed and processed. The threshed grains are then brought home to be stored in the grainaries.

In August crops like – *Kosla, Arka, Jana & Ganthia* are ready for harvesting. Other crops are also harvested one after the other by November at the latest. Each crop is reaped with the help of a small knife both by men and women. Men dig out the roots of various millet crops and dry them in the barn yard. Both men and women dig out turmeric/ ginger and arrow-roots. Turmeric is boiled in large scale near the stream and then dried up in the sun both by men and women. In fact, all the crops are processed in the treshing floor prepared at the Dongar plot before being brought home for consumption and storing.

The Dongria Kandha use their shifting cultivation lands for only three to four consecutive years and grow same crops and leave it fallow for a period of 4 years. During this time they take up another clearing for shifting cultivation.

However, the following table indicates months and associated agricultural operations:

TABLE No. 6
Months and associated Agricultural operations

No	Types of land	Agricultural operations	Months when done
1	2	3	4
1	<i>Haru</i>	Felling of trees	February-March
	Burning		April-May
	Dibbling		May-June
	Sowing		July
	Weeding		August
	Watching		August
	Harvesting	August	
2	<i>Penga</i>	Crops grown in the <i>Haru</i> land are also produced in the same months in the <i>Penga</i> land. Only those who produce Dongar paddy plough the field in the month of May-June, sow paddy in the month of July and harvest it in the month of November-December.	
3	<i>Bada</i>	(Same as in <i>Haru</i>)	

The Dongria Kandha follow different methods for storing different types of seeds. Ragi and *Kosla* being staple food are stored in bamboo-made granaries (*Duli*). *Arka*, *Jana*, *Ganthia* are stored in different baskets (*Dunda*). Turmeric is stored openly on one of the corners of the sleeping room. Other minor seeds are stored in earthen-wares. These containers are sealed with straw and clay.

The well-to-do families, who have a tendency to hoard food-stuff on a large scale, purchase big granaries and keep them over the loft (*Attu*).

Division of Labour:

Dongar plots are individually owned. Hence individual families cultivate their respective plots. Both adult males and females of a family work in the field. A strict work routine has not been outlined either for men or women. No agricultural work is tabooed for women. Women, though are mainly engaged in domestic work, men too at times help them in cooking and regularly supply firewood for cooking. Agriculture, orchard keeping, forest collections, selling of surplus commodities etc. are done both by men and women, though arduous part of such works are done mainly by men. Felling of trees in the shifting cultivation land, cutting and transportation of big logs from the forest, digging of hard soil, digging out of edible roots etc. are done mainly by men. Both men and women do construction of house, and even women thatch the roofs.

Within the community, when labourers are contracted to do any short of work, both men and women participate in the pursuit mainly not with a view to earn wage but to help a person who belongs to their own group. Of course, the persons engaged are given food and paid a nominal sum of Rs.5/- to Rs.10/- for the labour. The person who engages them also works with others. In this way personal calls are attended and the amount thus collected is deposited with the Barika and spent in a feast.

However, the women due to biological factors are unable to participate always effectively in all sorts of work. They cannot undertake strenuous works. And further, grown up women suffer from regular periodical disabilities, but other than this, the women in the Dongria society are not tabooed to do any type of work. Secondly, men, though undertake hard work, do less work than the women mainly because; they like to loiter aimlessly without shouldering much responsibility. This may be due to their characteristic inebriety.

Consumption and distribution:

The Dongrias grow various crops mainly for their food as well as to earn cash to meet other expenditures. *Kosla*, *Mandia*, *Arka*, *Jana*, *Ganthia* and *Jhudang* are the crops for their consumption whereas *Baila*, Castor-seeds, Roots, Fruits, Turmeric, Ginger and Arrow-root are mainly cash crops in the Dongria society. Dongar paddy, if produced, is kept reserved for obtaining essential commodities like tobacco, cloth, dry fish, earthen pots and baskets through barter.

A family do not consume the entire agricultural produce. Immediately after harvest old or outstanding debt is repaid as per contract as almost all the families are in debt. Women peddlers, who often visit the village and sell dry-fish, bead necklace etc. on credit are repaid with interest immediately after harvest.

Outstanding dues in the licentiate liquor shops and in the weekly market are cleared in kind. After old debts and dues are cleared, payment is given to the Domb menials like *Barika* (Messenger of the village), *Goudia* (Cowherder) and the *Jhateni* (Sweeper) each with –6 *Ada* (About 5 and half kilograms) of *Kosla* rice or ragi and food for two times by each family for the rendered services annually.

Household requirements like earthen pots, baskets, iron-implements etc. are purchased on cash payment or on payment of paddy or other grains. To meet all these expenditures, a family has to completely exhaust its cash crops, and sometimes, food crops, and more often than not it becomes prey of the local Domb for getting loans.

The Domb act as middlemen between the Dongria Kandha and the outside traders who exploit the Dongrias outright. The Domb are landless and do not practice agriculture as a means of livelihood, and yet prefer to live with the Dongrias, because they know pretty well that they can eke out a smooth existence by merely veering round the Dongria society. They thrive

on the toil of the Dongrias through their manipulative activities. In fact, they take away a lion's share of the Dongria agricultural produces including yields of their orchards. Cases of forcible plucking of fruits and reaping of crops from the orchards and fields of Dongrias are not uncommon. Sometimes they completely seize the orchards and usurp standing crops for procrastination in repayment of petty loans. The Domb have other tricks to entrap the Dongrias. Quite often the Dongrias are enticed by the Domb to purchase liquor from them on credit, and the Dongrias become very easily gullible to this trick. Another modus operandi of exploitation by the Domb of the Dongria is the grant of small sum of loan by the former to the latter on exorbitant rate of interest.

Horticulture

The economic life of the Dongrias of the Niyamgiri hills hinges almost exclusively on fruit growing vast stretches of land in the hill slope. Right from valley bottom to the hill top, the area is covered with plantations of jack fruit, citrus, banana and pineapple, Turmeric is extensively cultivated in hill slopes stretching from the foot hill to an elevation of about 3000 ft. above sea level. It is also grown in the valley, formed between the hills and plain lands. Innumerable mango trees of different varieties grow wild by the people themselves and are common in the Niyamgiri hills.

It is a fact that the type of climate that prevails in a region determines the types of soil and vegetation in that region. Rainfall, temperature and humidity provide the basis for all agricultural and horticultural land utilization. The Niyamgiri hill conforms fully to the climatic influences on vegetation and its impact on cropping pattern. The main climatic factors, which have favoured fruit growing in the Niyamgiri hills, are high altitude/ good drainage and longer duration of low temperature period.

However, it goes without saying that climate alone cannot bring about development of horticulture unless the human factor comes forward to harness

the climatic and environmental potentialities for this purpose. In this respect the Dongrias are a noteworthy example showing how the teamwork of Man and Nature has brought extensive land surface in the rugged terrain of the Niyamgiri hills under fruit farming. The plantation of orchards and fruit trees, which have come up in the habitat of the Dongria Kandha as a result of this team effort, is discussed in the following paragraphs.

The Pineapple is probably indigenous to Brazil and seems to have reached India by 1548. The variety of Pineapple which the Dongria Kandha grow in the *Niyamgiri* hill ranges is called Spanish and as far as the people remember the fruit was introduced in the hills by the Raja of Jeypore long ago. The Dongria make holes less than 5" in depth by means of a crowbar in the hill-slope right from the foot-hill up to the middle region of the mountain and sometimes beyond this line and plant the suckers in rows from top to the bottom. As the plants are poorly rooted and have a tendency to fall, the Dongria do the close planting so that the plants support each other.

Before the holes are dug the hill-slopes are cleared of the shrubs and herbs. The suckers are planted in the months of March, April, and May and the plants take nearly two years to yield fruits. No cereals and pulses are grown in the place where the pineapple is planted. But banana and jackfruit trees are grown in the pineapple orchards. The pineapple plant is not able to bear very strong sunshine nor does it require complete shade. Therefore, the Dongrias grow pineapple under the jack fruit trees which protect the plants from direct sunlight and provide shade which is congenial to the growth of the pineapple plants. It is the experience of the Dongrias that the banana plants do not grow well with the pineapple plants and therefore they grow banana in a separate strip of land adjacent to pineapple plantation. In many places banana plants are grown at some elevation above the places where pineapples are planted. Moreover, in places at higher altitude where pineapple is grown the sunshine is less bright and in such mild climate pineapple plants grow very well.

Pineapple is grown in the Niyamgiri hills without irrigation. The plants get water from rain. The leaves of the pineapple plants are stiff and waxy on the upper surface, with stomata in furrows on the under surface protected by a thick growth of hairs. Transpiration is thus held to a minimum. The rosette of stiff leaves is so arranged that very little rain gets pass them to the ground. The leaves are slightly concave so that the water which falls by drops from the leaves of the jack fruit trees is settled at base. Heavy dew is collected in the same way. A slight amount of water accumulates in the pocket where these leaves clasp the short stem of the plant and only when these pockets over flow with water reach the ground. The soil retains moisture because of the shade of the pineapple plants and jack fruit trees. The hill-slopes where the pineapple is planted contain a coarse gravelly soil which is not sticky and can be more easily worked. The thick deposition of leaves which fall from the jack fruit trees and the dried leaves of the pineapple plants get decomposed and provide rich humus to this soil.

The fruits which the pineapple plants bear are of great flavour. The horticulturist who is incharge of fruit preservation unit located at Chatikona, a railway station at the foot of the *Niyamgiri* hill ranges is the same opinion that the pineapples grown by the Dongrias are of great flavour. It is the belief of the Dongrias that the flavour of the fruit is due to the lateritic soil in which the plants grow. Whatever may be the case good drainage, mild climate, lighter shade, less bright sunlight, medium altitude, all combine to help the plants grow luxuriant in the *Niyamgiri* hills.

The Dongrias do not take any other care of the plants except weeding the area under plantation twice in a year. They are not in the habit of applying either any fertilizer or any pesticide to the plants. They have estimated that they are able to get about 500 fruits from half an acre of land under pineapple plantation. Each fruit weights about 1 kg. In the first year and in subsequent years the weight is reduced to 1 kg. or less than a kilogram. But the yield in subsequent years increases to about 1000 fruits in the minimum and the

weight of each fruit varies from less than a kg. to 1 kg. Some plants yield large fruits while others yield small fruits. If the land under pineapple plantation is left unattended weeds grow and overpower the plants causing damage and death to the plants. But the Dongrias do not allow this to happen in any case.

It is a tradition of the Dongrias that they do not pluck the fruits for sale in the market. Every pineapple orchard is sold at a wholesale rate to the local Domb merchants who pluck the fruits and carry them to nearby weekly hats and market centers for sale. Plantation of 1 acre of land fetches to the grower 200/- to 300/- rupees. But the Domb merchants sell the fruits at Rs. 1/- or more per fruit. The Dongrias are in need of money to meet their expenditure on clothing, food and festivities. Before the plants come to fruition the orchards are hired out of the Domb merchants on payment of some advance and when the plants bear fruit the Domb make payment of the balance amount at the rate fixed at the time of giving advance and pluck the fruits for sale.

As a result of the contact of the Dongrias with development agencies of the government they are gradually realizing that the Domb merchants are not giving them a fair price and are exploiting them. Being aware of this situation many Dongria Kandha are now selling their fruits directly at the local weekly hats and market centers without depending any further on the Domb merchants for this purpose. A Co-operative society has been established at Chatikona where the weekly market is situated. One of the functions of the Co-operative society is to buy the pineapples from the Dongrias. In season a Dongria village comprising about 10 to 15 households produces pineapple worth Rs. 10,000/-. There are many Dongria villages located near about the co-operative society. But the co-operative society fails to buy all the fruits from all the villages. The Dongrias of Kurli village complain that the society is able to buy only Rs. 1,000/- worth of pineapples daily whereas they are in a position to produce pineapples worth more than Rs. 10,000/- per day. It is, for this reason that they have to sale the pineapples

to the local merchants and traders who pay them less what they get from the co-operative society.

It is the observation of the Dongrias that the mortality of the plants grown by the Governmental agencies in the Niyamgiri hills is very high. Though the Governmental agencies grow improved variety of pineapples, irrigate the plants, apply fertilizers and pesticides and take all possible care of the plants but these plants die out in large number. Compared to this the Dongrias grow their indigenous variety and take least care of the plants. But in their case the mortality of the plants is not significant. This is true in the case of all other plants such as mango, lemon, orange, etc. which the Dongrias grow extensively in their habitat.

It is the tradition among the Dongrias that they share one another's labour in agricultural and horticultural works on a co-operative basis. When some one is working in the field of some one else and has with him a few seeds of jack fruit or some mango stones he may put them in the field in which he is working without any objections from any body. When the trees grow and bear fruit the person who has grown them enjoys the fruit from those trees. The man who has possessed the land in which such trees have been grown has no usufruct right over such trees. Though the grower has the usufruct right over the trees, he has no right to grow any crop in the land in which he planted the trees. One factor which goes in favour of such a tradition is that the Dongrias do not have any plain land. They have mostly dongar lands (lands in hill-slope), which have not been surveyed. The Dongrias claim ownership over such lands by virtue of their possession over a long period of time. In reality the dongar lands belong to the Mutha and as long as a person is in cultivating possession of a particular hill slope for growing cereals and pulses his right over such a hill-slope is not disputed. But the plantation of trees is considered in a separate vein and any Dongria irrespective of his clan or clan-territory enjoys the right of planting trees anywhere in his own village and outside his village.

Jackfruit:

As mentioned above the Dongrias have grown innumerable jackfruit trees in the pineapple orchards and also in other parts of their settlements. It is grown in the months of February and March and seeds are generally used for propagation. The humid hill-slope as-well-as the dry plain land seem to be congenial for the growth of the trees in the wooded country of the Niyamgiri hills which varies from 1,000 m. to 1,500 m. in elevation. Young trees give more fruits than the old ones. There are some old trees in the hills which are more than 15 feet in girth. They do not bear fruit any longer. Bearing starts in about 6 to 10 years and the average yield per tree is 30 kgs. with some trees giving more than 100 kgs.

The Dongrias depend upon the Domb merchants for disposing the jackfruits. Every year before a tree bears fruit a price is settled between the Domb merchant for the whole produce of the tree and the former receives some advance from the latter. When the jack fruits are ready for sale the Domb merchant pays the balance amount to the owner and collects fruit from the tree and sells them to the merchants at Chatikona. If the tree bears more fruit the merchant gets more profit and if the tree bears less fruit the merchant gets less profit. If the tree does not bear any fruit or negligible number of fruits the merchant does not ask the owner to give him back the advance which he paid long ago and meets the loss to compensate it from the profit he gets by selling the produce from another tree having substantial number of fruits.

Generally a jackfruit tree fetches Rs.15/- to Rs.40/- and a Domb merchant invests Rs.400/- to Rs.500/- in the business of jackfruit. Neither the Dongrias nor the Domb merchants know how to make curry out of raw jackfruits and therefore do not eat unripe ones. But they relish the ripe jackfruit. They also do not know how to prepare curry out of seeds of jackfruits other than eating the seeds by boiling. Therefore they dispose most of the seeds

for cash. Unripe jackfruit sells at 20 to 30 paise per kg. where as the seeds cost 10 to 20 paise per Kg. A Dongria earns about Rs.300/- to Rs.1,500/- per year from the sale of unripe jackfruits and about Rs.200/- to Rs.1,000/- from the seeds.

Banana:

The hill variety banana is wild in the Niyamgiri hills. Vast stretches of land in the hill-slope in the Niyamgiri hill ranges are covered with banana plantation. Both banana gardens and pineapple orchards and jackfruit trees coexist. The virgin forest soil with its accumulation of humus which is not very deep but well drained appears to have been very helpful for the growth of the plants in high altitude without manuring and irrigation.

Two varieties are mainly found in the hills – one variety is used when cooked and the other variety is used when ripe. The banana plants are grown from suckers and a plant attains a height of 8 ft. to 10 ft. giving on an average 10 to 20 bananas of about 2 kg. to 3 kg. in weight in a bunch.

The Dongrias do not use banana for cooking, not because of any superstitious belief but they do not know how to make curry out of green plantains. Therefore all the green bunches of banana are sold to the Domb merchants. However, the Dongrias eat ripe banana, but most of this variety also is sold for cash.

Orange and Lemon:

Orange (*Kamala*) and Lemon (*Kageji*) plantations are not very much extensive. Some Dongrias have grown them at places. These citrus plants are grown for seedlings and not for seeds. The seedlings of three years old are planted in the rugged lateritic soil near foot-hills close to hill-streams. The trees are thorny and grow tall and slender and take about 8 to 10 years to bear fruit. The fruits are neither very sweet nor very sour. The growers of orange complain that the trees after bearing fruits for about 5 to 6 years wither away and die.

Turmeric:

Turmeric is a very important cash crop in the Niyamgiri hills. The small hillocks and the lower parts of the high hills, where vegetational cover is scanty and fruit bearing trees are almost conspicuous by their absence, are used for growing turmeric. Planting of turmeric starts from March and goes till May. Plantation is stopped as soon as rain starts at the end of May and in the early part of June.

The turmeric takes two years for maturity. Harvesting starts from November and continues till March.

Like other crops the Dongrias sell turmeric in wholesale field-wise to the Domb merchants. On the basis of the growth of the plants in a particular patch of land and by taking into consideration the rate of the previous year the price of turmeric for the whole quantity to be produced from the land is estimated and the Domb merchant who buys the turmeric pays some advance to the grower. When the turmeric is ready for harvesting the rate prevailing then is taken into account and the price fixed already is revised on that basis. After the price is settled the Domb pays it either fully at a time or by instalments as per the demand of the grower.

As pointed out above the practice with the Dongrias is that they grow the crops such as - pineapple, banana, orange, jack fruit and turmeric but do not harvest them by themselves. They sell the crops wholesale by trees and fields to the Domb merchants who harvest the crops and sell them to bigger merchants at weekly hats or market centers. The men carry the fruits by means of carrying poles on their shoulders and women by head loads. The Dongrias are never in the habit of carrying their produce to market placed for sale.

In the changed context the Dongrias have started one by one harvesting their own crop and carrying them to markets for sale by bypassing

the Domb merchants. A change like this in the business transaction and particularly the activities of harvesting and carrying as taken up now by the Dongrias is ridiculed by the Domb merchants and subjected to criticism by them. A verbatim record of reaction of a Domb merchant is reproduced below in translated form.

“The Dombs were exclusively carrying banana to market places. Now the Dongrias are doing so no matter whether a bunch consists of a dozen or more bananas. They are now digging out turmeric and carrying on business with it, raw or processed. They are now selling raw turmeric. It is exchanged for paddy. We have no paddy and therefore are not able to transact with the Dongrias. Carrying anything that they produce was something like a taboo on the part of the Dongrias. They were busy round the clock in their swiddens and orchards and before they were getting plenty of everything. There was a time when some Dongrias were busy weeks together in harvesting *Kosala* and *Ragi*. Some of them were getting more than six or seven quintals of cereals and pulses. It was due to their hard labour that they were getting plenty of food and they were then well fed and well nourished. Now they have been educated and are carrying on business by themselves. In the earlier times they had no need for going out of their village. We were supplying their necessities such as dried fish, salt, chilly, etc. at their doorstep. Though they have taken to business, they have done so at the cost of their agriculture and horticulture which have rather deteriorated their economic condition and caused shortage of food”.

Mango:

Through ages, the mango has been acknowledged as an excellent fruit liked by adults and children. There is no locality in Orissa which does not have mango trees. In some areas they are found in greater number than in other areas. Of all the fruit bearing trees found in tribal areas the mango trees are most common. In lean months when the grain bins are empty and work in the field is hard and heavy mango provides food to the hungry mouths of the

tribals. The Dongrias are no exception to this situation. Down in the valley and near village site, uphill and in the hill-slopes, along the hill streams and by the side of the foot paths or roads leading to tribal settlements everywhere are mango trees young and old providing fruit and shade to the people.

No tribal causes any damage to the mango trees. Even those who practise shifting cultivation in the hill slopes spare the mango and other fruit bearing trees from the processes of cutting and clearing of the vegetational cover in the swiddens. These trees are jealously guarded and carefully protected from fire. Like other tribal communities mango growing has been so to say an inborn habit with the tribals. Trees grow from mango stones. After the pulp is eaten the mango stone is thrown away. Generally, the crows pick up such thrown away stones and carry them to any place, which they find convenient for the purpose of eating whatever amount of pulpy substance is left over the stones. Mango trees are found in dense forests and at hilltops and also in most inaccessible areas of the woodlands of tribal areas. The crows mainly and also tribesmen to some extent are responsible for the propagation of mango trees in such places.

The Dongrias eat both raw and ripe mango and also earn some income by selling them in local markets. A Dongria may have mango trees in his own land or in the land of a co-tribesman or in any other place in the locality. The man who planted a mango stone in the ground anywhere in his locality is recognized as the owner of the tree and he enjoys fruit from this tree. The Dongrias do not have any idea about making *Achar* or *Chatni* from the raw mangoes. But they are in the habit of using the kernel inside the stone as food at the time of scarcity of other types of food. The mango trees are found in plenty than all other fruit trees in the locality.

Fruit Preservation Unit:

A fruit preservation unit of the Directorate of Agriculture is functioning at Chatikona. The staff comprises one fruit preservation officer, and five

non-technical subordinate staff. The unit has a huge building and is well equipped. the officer informed that a sum of about Rs.30,000/- is spent on establishment. If the wear and tear is taken into account it would cost Rs.10,000/- towards machinery and Rs.5,000/- towards buildings and about Rs.5,000/- towards breakage, propulsion, cartage etc., the total liability of the unit comes to Rs.50,000/- per year.

The unit buys pineapple, mango, lemon, tomato locally from cooperative society and prepares juice and sauce, mango pickles and cold drinks. Last year the fruit growers cooperative society supplied 74 quintals of decrowned pineapple to the unit at the rate of Rs.1.50 per pineapple. 1.8 kg of pineapple will yield 750 grms of juice which makes one bottle. Out of 74 quintals of pineapple about 4100 bottles of juice were prepared. The bottle costs Rs..10 and the processing costs Rs.4.40 and one bottle of juice is sold at Rs.5.75 or Rs.6.00, the cost of 4100 bottles of juice comes to Rs.24,600/-.

The unit also prepared about 2000 bottles of tomato sauce. At the rate of Rs.5/- per bottle the unit got Rs.10,000/- as profit out of the sale proceeds of the tomato sauce. Leaving aside the breakage of some bottles which occurs in transit the unit produced juice and sauce of about Rs.30,000/- in the year 1980-81.

As mentioned above one bottle of tomato sauce costs Rs.5/- and one bottle of pineapple juice, Rs.6/-. If the establishment and maintenance charges are added to the cost, the price per bottle increases to Rs.12.50 to 15.00. in otherwords, the rise is in the proportion of Rs.2.50 per Rupee. The officer in charge of the unit explains that the unit is not entirely a business concern with the kind of a profit-motive which is met with in the professional business community. Therefore it meets a loss of Rs.50,000/- per year for the sake of consumers.

Apart from its business, it plays the role of a training Institute giving training to women at various centers in the techniques of preparing sauce,

juice and cold drink. If the social cost-benefit of the training component of the unit is taken into account the picture may be different. But the training programme is exclusively confined to the non-tribal population and has not yet reached any tribal women. On the whole as the situation stands the bell tolls negligibly for tribal communities and largely for the urban elites.

Fruit Growers Co-operative Society:

A Co-operative Society named as the Niyamgiri Fruit Growers co-operative Society is working at Chatikona since 1979. 16 Dongria villages came under this society and there were as many as 257 members belonging to the Dongria community in the society.

The society was functioning under the guidance of a Board of Directors, which comprised the Sub-Divisional Officer of Gunupur as Chairman, Special Officer, Dongria Kandha Development Agency as Vice-Chairman and Welfare Extension Officer as Ex-Officio Secretary. Assistant Registrar, Co-operative Society, Gunupur, Block Development Officer, Bissam Cuttack, Branch Manager, Tribal Development Co-operative Corporation, Assistant Technologist, Chatikona Fruit Preservation Unit are included as members of the board. There are also two Dongrias as members in the Board.

The supporting staff of the society is comprised of one marketing assistant, one weighman and watchman and one sales assistant.

The society advances loan to the fruit growers and is expected to buy the fruits at a fair price from the growers for marketing purposes. The following statement shows the advance and collection of loan during the year 1979-80 and 1980-81.

(in Rupees)

Year	Loan advanced	Loan collected	Balance
1979-80	Rs.27,495.00	Rs.10,450.00	
1980-81	1,500.00	4,806.00	
	Rs.28,995.00	Rs.15,256.00	Rs.13,739.00

The Co-operative Society has one fair price shop working at Kurli, about 10 Kms. from Chatikona where the society is located. It had another fair price shop at Khajuri, about 5 Kms. from Chatikona. But since 1980 it is no longer functioning, the reason being less sale of fruits at this place. The following statement gives the transaction of fair price shop at Kurli for two years 1979-80 and 1980-81 (up to February 1981).

(in Rupees)

Year	Stock supplied	Balance
1979-80	11,036.19	8,031.74
1980-81	29,324.10	24,625.06

Business:

The Co-operative Society collects forest produce from the Dongria Kandha of the Niyamgiri hills at a fair price and supplies them some of their daily necessities through the fair price shop at Kurli and at the head quarters. A statement is furnished below to show collections of different items of forest and agricultural produce for the last two years. The statement shows that the society purchased Q. 74.77 kgs. and 1250 number of pineapple worth Rs.12,030.60 in the year 1980-81. It has been mentioned earlier that a single Dongria village of small size of about 10 to 15 households produces pineapple worth of an average Rs. 10,000/- in a season. Apart from other villages there are 16 villages under the direct perview of the society and invariably almost every village produces pineapple worth round about the figure mentioned above. Therefore, to what extent does the society serve the pineapple growers in matters of buying their produce is very clear. Under

such circumstances there is no point on blaming the itinerant Domb merchants and lamenting over their exploitation of the innocent tribals.

One item of agricultural produce which is intriguing is turmeric. The society purchased Q.33.85 Kgs. of turmeric in both the years under review at a cost of Rs.20,093/- and sold only 13.56 Kgs. at Rs.8391/-. The balance amount of turmeric which is Q.20.29 Kgs. is lying in the stock unsold. The reason for this is not known.

The Dongrias were and still in majority are millet eaters. The millets grown by them are of limited quantity and therefore are in short supply to go round the whole year. But the fruits such as – banana, jackfruit, pineapple and mango supplement their food substantially. Of late the Governmental agencies have introduced paddy in the locality and some Dongrias have taken to paddy cultivation in valley bottom near hill-streams. Those who grow paddy do not either sell for cash or exchange for anything else. They have not only found a special taste for this food stuff but also have been identified in the society as rice eaters. Those who have no suitable land to grow paddy but have developed a craze for rice get the required quantity in exchange of turmeric.

The society has been able to purchase 21 kinds of fruits, seeds, roots, cereals, pulses and minor forest produce. Which variety of forest produce and agricultural and horticultural crops do the Niyamgiri hill ranges grow is clear from the statement. One wonders why the Dongrias who are the owners of this proverbial wealth continue to live a life of poverty and indigence. One point which is obvious is that improper functioning of whatever infrastructural facilities available in the area and lack of dedicated officers with imaginativeness, vision and feelings for tribals seem to be the most significant barriers to development of about 3 lakhs Dongria highlanders of this Rayagada section of the Eastern Ghat region.

**STATEMENT SHOWING THE BUSINESS TRANSACTION
DURING 1979 TO FEBRUARY 1981**

1979-80

		Purchase		Sale	Balance
1.	Pineapple	120.77 Kgs	Rs.17,863.50	Rs.18,742.10	-
2.	Pineapple suckers	1,25,400 Nos	Rs.10,032.00	Rs.11,180.00	-
3.	Banana suckers	7,200 Nos	Rs.4,370.00	Rs.4,800.00	-
4.	Jack seeds	1,380 Kgs	Rs.1,218.40	Rs.1,356.00	-
5.	Ginger	309 Kgs	Rs.625.40	Rs.703.50	-
6.	Orange	4,665 Nos	Rs.484.40	Rs.545.20	-
7.	Khamboallu	253 Kgs	Rs.153.80	Rs.176.00	-
8.	Narangi	140 Nos	Rs.10.00	Rs.16.00	-
9.	Small Chilli	6 Kgs	Rs.173.50	-	-
10.	Turmeric	26.85 Kgs	Rs.15,893.00	Rs.2,600.00	-
11.	Banana fruits	-	-	-	-
12.	Jhudungo	140 Kgs	Rs.343.00	Rs.265.00	-
13.	Paddy	750 Kgs	Rs.753.65	-	-
14.	Niger seeds	4.70 Kgs	Rs.1,314.00	Rs.1,060.00	-
15.	Kosola	92.00 Kgs	Rs.590.00	Rs.360.00	-
16.	Jinjili	400 Kgs	Rs.1,498.60	Rs.1,500.00	-
17.	Jowar	4000 Kgs.	Rs.3,458.20	Rs.3,760.00	-
18.	Ragi	100 Kgs	Rs.90.00	-	-
19.	Hill brooms	28,500 Nos	Rs.9,135.00	Rs.8,675.00	-
20.	Turmeric	1700 Kgs	Rs.1,308.00	Rs.1,308.00	-
21.	Castor seeds	328 Kgs	Rs.820.00	Rs.750.00	-

1980-81

		Purchase		Sale	Balance
1.	Pineapple	74.77 Kgs	Rs.12,030.60	Rs.12,538.00	-
2.	Pineapple suckers	1,250 Nos			
3.	Banana suckers	-	-	-	-
4.	Jack seeds	-	-	-	-
5.	Ginger	121 Kgs	Rs.272.75	Rs.302.00	-
6.	Orange	1050 Nos	Rs.128.00	Rs.175.00	-
7.	Khamboallu	43 Kgs	Rs.32.25	Rs.43.00	-
8.	Narangi	-	-	-	-
9.	Small Chilli	9 Kgs	Rs.225.00	Rs.455.00	1 Kg.
10.	Turmeric	700 Kgs	Rs.4200.00	Rs.5,791.00	20.29 Kg
11.	Banana fruits	12,840 Nos	Rs.705.50	Rs.836.50	800 Nos
12.	Jhudungo	-	-	Rs.96.00	-
13.	Paddy	46.00 Kg	Rs.4,830.00	Rs.600.00	47.60 Kg sent to Kurli for exchange of Turmeric
14.	Niger seeds	100 Kgs	Rs.280.00	Rs.170.00	-
15.	Kosola	810 Kgs	Rs.777.00	Rs.1130.00	-
16.	Jinjli	-	-	-	-
17.	Jowar	2,040 Kgs	Rs.2,135.00	-	20.40 Kg
18.	Ragi	220 Kgs	Rs.231.50	-	100 Kg to F.P. shop
19.	Hill brooms	-	-	-	2300 Nos.
20.	Turmeric	-	-	-	-
21.	Castor seeds	100 Kgs	Rs.280.00	-	128 Kgs

Gleaning :

The Dongria Kandha continue to maintain their traditional interest in wild fruits, tubers and nuts although in recent times there has been a steady

diminution of various forest produce owing to large scale deforestation due to the practice of shifting cultivation. In fact, their food is greatly supplemented by fruits, roots, and tubers collected from the jungle, and food collection is still an indispensable aspect of the Dongria Kandha economic life. Most of the poor families depend on forest collection for about six months in a year. The following table gives list of some of the edible items collected from the forest.

TABLE NO. – 7

Food materials collected from jungle

No	Main item	Specific items
1.	Fruits	<i>Amba, Kendu, Panasa, annala, Stadi, Koliari, amlī-fala, ankle-kuli, Koling-kuli and podikuli.</i>
2.	Green leaves	<i>Girli, Koliari-kuchha, Jaba-kuchha, Kopu-kuchha, Koti-kuchha, Gandri-kuchha, Barada-kuchha, Mali-kuchha, Kanta-hapka-kuchha, Chhatu-kuchha, Chhakunda-kuchha, Medrenga-kuchha, Kena-kuchha and Khiprti-kuchha</i>
3.	Roots and Tubers	<i>Rani-kanda, Nagal-kanda, Pita-kanda, Seabil-kanda, Saru-kanda, Chaul-Saru-kanda, Thoda-kanda, Khajrang-Saru-kanda, Alu-kanda and Rang-Saru-kanda</i>
4.	Mushrooms	<i>Amba-chati, Pansa-chati, Sargi-chati, Basa-chati, Kupa-chati, Manet-chati, Surubali-chati, Phuli-chati, Piyal-chati, Dunggu-chati, Medrenga-chati, Dakel-chati, Ghusra-chati, Mayurbhanda-chati, Jambu-chati, Tak-chati, Kunt-chati and Banj-chati.</i>
5.	Honey	<i>Bichhana, Satpuria, Dumni and Bagh are name of different bees and honey is named after different hives.</i>
6.	Birds	<i>Pandka (pigeon), Kugure (dove), Sari (Mayna), Kirang (Parrot), Kaju (Jungle fowl) Milu (Peacock) are caught</i>

and prepared as special dishes.

7 Animals

Garia (wild boar), *Sibda* (Sambar), *Kotra* (Kutra), *Mralu* (Rabbit), *Balu* (Bear), *Sranki* (Percupine) are hunted for special dishes.

8. Reptiles

Damna (A type of snake) and *Godhi* (Iguana) are hunted for using skins in musical instruments.

The food materials collected from the forest have seasonal variation. Fruits are plenty in summer, while green leaves and mushrooms are available during rainy season. Availability of roots and tubers is also purely seasonal during winter.

Activities connected with the collection of food items are exclusively confined to the members of the family. Both men and women participate in the pursuit. Chase-dog (*Kasing*) is the constant companion in the ceremonial hunting expedition which takes place in the month of Chaitra (March-April).

Animal Husbandry :

The Dongria Kandha domesticate various animals like – buffalo (*Kodra*), cow (*Kodi*), goat (*Adda*), Lamb (*Mendha*), pig (*Paji*), dog (*Neudi*), fowl (*Koyu*) and pigeon (*Parua*). Milk is never drawn from milch cows and buffaloes. The animals and birds that are reared for meat are cow, buffalo, goat, sheep, pig, fowl and pigeon. All these animals are also used for sacrificial purposes. Different sheds (*Hadda*) are prepared for different types of animals. The pigeons are kept in a box-like shed called *paru-kudda*. In small rituals fowls pigeons and eggs are sacrificed. Cows, buffaloes, lambs and goats are sacrificed in bigger feasts and festivals.

Ordinarily no special food is given to the animals. They entirely depend upon natural grazing. The village cow-herder (*Goudia*) takes everyday the animals for grazing. Sometimes, animals are also mortgaged to obtain loan from the Domb. About 50 percent interest is charged over the money borrowed. In case money is not refunded it is realized in kind, i.e. either in

turmeric or jack-fruit or pineapple by the Domb in lieu of loan advanced. Skins of the domesticated animals are also sold at the rate of Rs.60/- to Rs.70/- each to the outsiders. In fact, animal husbandry is not a major source of income of the people.

Wage-earning :

Wage earning is considered to be a derogatory economic pursuit by the Dongria Kandha as they claim to be the descendants of the Niyam Raja of the Niyamgiri hills. They rather prefer to work for the members of their own community either on nominal payment or on labour-exchange basis. Amongst them, there is no employer-employee feeling. They treat each other as equals. As such, no one asks for payment on the basis of employer-employee relationship.

The employee, as a token of labour, pays a nominal sum of Rs.10/- to all the persons engaged and the food. This labour is put forth, just as a token of mutual relationship. Thus, wage-earning too, is not a substantial source of income.

Domestic Trade :

The Dongria Kandha are renowned horticulturists who raise large scale of orange, jackfruits, pineapple and banana and at the same time turmeric and castor-seeds. But trading of all these are monopolized by the Domb, who in fact, thrive through this business. Each Domb is vigilant about his Kandha neighbour's assets, agricultural yields and the surplus and accordingly he spreads his net to capture as many Kandha families as he can be extending loan to them as and when required and by creating bond-friendship with them. Thus each Domb has his own circle of loanees from whom agriculture produces are procured and sold to outsiders in double or triple the cost of procurement price. Secondly, the Dongria Kandha by nature are lethargic in carrying headload of marketable commodities to the market. They rather prefer to dispose of the commodities at their doorsteps, which the Domb purchase.

To curb such Domb monopoly, the Government introduced Purchase-Sale and Fair Price Shop Scheme in the year 1964 to procure such commodities from the Dongrias by giving reasonable price to them and to extend to the latter interest-free loans. But the scheme could partially benefit the tribals as it became difficult to break the age-old relationship of the Domb and the Dongria Kandha.

However, a major portion of their surplus products is sold either to the Domb or at the Fair-Price-Shop Centre while visiting the weekly market at Chatikona Railway Station as a routine programme, the Dongria ladies carry banana and other fruits in small quantities in a basket on their head for sale. Their menfolk practically do not carry any thing. Hence the principal classes of traders in the market are the Domb, the Kumti, the Teli and the Desia Kandha who sell clothes, brass and aluminium utensils, groceries, dry-fish, kerosene and other articles.

Though money is the medium of exchange both in the village and in the market, both money barter and pure barter are prevalent. In the village, exchange of articles are made chiefly with grains, but grains and the articles to be bought are valued in terms of money. Paddy is collected from villages of Rayagada and Kalyansinghpur areas in exchange for turmeric by the Dongria Kandha. The paddy procured in such manner is subsequently exchanged in the village for purchase of baskets and earthenwares. Paddy, *Kosla*, *Suan*, and turmeric are also exchanged in the market for obtaining salt and dry-fish.

The Dongria Kandha though do not form a trading group or are not specialized in trade and commerce, a major portion of their salable commodities is taken away by the Domb who form a trading group:

This, in brief gives a picture of the economic life of the Dongria Kandha. Though, the Dongria Kandha are mainly shifting cultivators, they are also horticulturists. They raise a number of crops but still are crippled with deprivation due to exploitation, which needs to be checked as early as possible.

CHAPTER – IV

Labour Co-operatives

Introduction :

Tribal societies in general are known for their high sense of social cooperation among themselves. At various institutional levels people interact intensely and cooperate with one another. They exchange labour with collective and co-operative spirit. Labour cooperatives serve a great deal purpose of their socio-economic, political and religious life and living. In their case, the egalitarian mode of living based on the principle of reciprocity and equivalence prompts them to depend upon mutual help and cooperation. They organize themselves into multiple social groups and divisions, which facilitate the levels and contexts of their cooperation.

The Dongria Kandha claim royal ancestry. Individually they feel proud of their royal origin, and that in fact guides them not to work for others, mostly outsiders, as paid labour. The Dongrias are basically swidden cultivators. They grow crops in the hill slopes with the help of very small-scale technology. For swidden cultivation they needs more number of working hands. Family provides the labour to the labour cooperative and it constitutes the smallest unit of labour cooperative.

The traditional politico-religious institutions regulate the functioning of the labour cooperatives. Non-conformity to the norms of the labour cooperatives is severely dealt with. Any deviant or delinquent is subject to trial in the village/tribal Council. *Meriah*, a clan-community level festival requires expensive sacrifices of animals and fowls and the labour co-operatives contribute to meet the expenses on this occasion.

The Dongria labour cooperatives take cognizance of the fact that their children at an early age of 9 to 10 years can become bonafide members

of the labour cooperatives. Socio-economically they are treated quite mature. At this early age they come up and engage themselves in all sorts of labour activities. The children prefer to work under labour cooperatives rather than going to school and they feel nostalgic about it. This is one of the reasons why enrolment of tribal children in schools is low and dropout is high.

In recent years, the Dongria tradition of labour cooperatives is being mishandled by their neighbours and outsiders, there seems to be a shift from overt cooperation to covert exploitation. The value of mutual help and cooperation is getting eroded and slowly, labour goes to market through sales and purchases and through growing contractual relationships.

The system has its utility for the tribal society. On the one hand it serves the purpose of the society and on the other hand it nourishes strong bond of relationship and upkeeps social solidarity.

The Kandha is numerically a major tribe of Orissa, and the Dongria Kandha constitutes a 'primitive' section among them. Labour cooperatives are very effectively functioning among the Dongria Kandhas. The Dongria continue to uphold their traditional value of group solidarity and mutual help through exchange of labour.

Definitions and Explanations on Labour Co-operatives:

The *New Webster's Dictionary of Current English Language* (1981:523) defines labour as "Persistent, exertion of body toil for the sake of gain or economic production, those engaged in such toil considered as group or class". The labour force is that part of the population which is contributing to the production of goods and services, which is in the work force; as distinguished from the dependent population (Faris:1988). Labour force includes the totality of labour of a society or a community. The pattern of labour explains how labour force operates in a given society. Hence the labour cooperatives may be understood as a pattern of labour. Labour cooperative refers to an institutionalized, conventional and collective works

of tribal society, performed voluntarily on mutual exchange of help and labour. In other words, it may be defined as a combined work of a group of labourers in a tribal society traditionally governed by mutual help and exchange of labour.

The work of Horskovits (1974:88-108) pictured it as 'labour partnership' in works and activities or reciprocal willingness to work or even exchange labour for works. In his discussion on pattern of labour in pre-literate society, he gave different synonyms to labour co-operatives. They are 'work-group', 'feast labour', 'working-bees', 'labour-helper', 'reciprocity-labour' or 'exchange labour', 'guest-labour' and 'voluntary-workers'. The tribes experience it as a 'labour congress' in which the motive is mutual help, sustaining group solidarity. This tribal tradition and custom that governs the mutual help and obligation conforms to a 'pattern' which varies from society to society.

According to Horskovits, "the CO-OPERATIVENESS characterizes the activities of non-literate people constitutes one of the most striking aspects of their patterns of labour. Co-operative work is done by groups of all sizes, comprehends all kinds of tasks. we refer to that sort of co-operation which acts as a factor in furthering the productive processes- the voluntary association of a group of men or women where objective is the completion of a specific, definitely limited task, with which they are simultaneously concerned. Co-operative organizations of this kind, free or compulsory, temporary or permanent, organized or informal, are found every where in the non-literate world" (1974:99-100). Nayak says, "Labour co-operatives are nothing but collection of young men and women organized in groups to help each other at the time of strenuous work in each other's fields"(1989: 128-130).

Socio-cultural Significance of Labour Co-operatives :

Among the Dongria land is allocated in accordance with their traditional customary rules. Allocation of *dongar*, swidden land is customarily

made in the village council, which has remained very forceful even today. Individual households enjoy rights over land and at the same time discharge obligations towards the village community. Similarly, labour is governed by community rules and customary practices. The multiple of social groups and institutions help articulate the labour relationships.

The labour pattern of Dongria is much more influenced by their royal origin "the Dongrias claim to be the descendants of the Niyam Raja and consider it below their dignity to work as wage earners" (Aparajita, 1994:116). Factors like swidden cultivation which is labour intensive, hill terrain ecology, forest dependent economy and small-scale technological know how have also influenced the origin, development and sustenance of the pattern of labour relationship. The hilly and mountainous lands require more hands than a family provides to carry out widden cultivation. "Basically being widden cultivators they come to each other's help during various agricultural operations ... These tasks are not considered easy for a single household. Further they have to be performed as early as possible within the scheduled time as seasons and suitable weather do not wait for them" (Nayak, 1989 :128)

The cooperative system of management of labour can be said to have arisen out of the religious sentiment, the idea of self-governance and above all a feeling of strong bond of social relationship nurtured by a univalent ethnic identity of the Dongria. "They arise from tradition, sense of obligation coming out of one's position in a system of status relationship especially those of kinship and from religious consideration and moral motivations of many kinds" (Redfield, 1958:11).

"There is a sense of cooperation in that the neighbours and relatives always help out families that unable to do all the works due to illness or shortage of labourer" (Fernandes, 1987:74). "This system of labour organization shows the high degree of fellow-feeling the people have towards each other and also the idea of self government among them" (Nayak, 1989:28). Labour co-operatives, especially the "*Sahabati*" has a great

contribution into religious performance in *Meria* festival of the Dongria. The fund, *itinitaka* collected from the *Sahabati* are utilized to celebrate the *Meria* festival and other community rituals with traditional gaiety. This not only helps upholding the social status of the kinsmen but also of the entire village community and the *Mutha* organization. Thus the labour cooperatives are linked up with their religious, political as well as socio-cultural traditions besides being pivotally recognized as an institution serving the vital needs of economic activities.

The system believes in the principle of social equality. Every Dongria family can become a participant in several labour cooperatives. A member-family of one labour cooperative has equal rights to seek labour from other member-families and at the same time has obligations to render labour. In labour terms, children above 9 years of age and women are considered equal to that of adult males. They have the same and similar work output. Any able bodied person, irrespective of age and sex is allowed to participate in the activities of labour cooperatives. This basic value of equanimity and equality expressed in the membership of labour cooperatives facilitates the member-families in fulfilling the obligations by sending a representative of the family as a labour to the labour cooperatives. In economic terms the labour cooperatives cost less. The host Dongria family pays little, a nominal amount in cash. However, he has to feed the member participants of the labour cooperative, and at times supplies them drinks if the nature of work happened to be arduous or strenuous. One's personal economic gains are calculated not in pure economic terms, rather more in social terms on the basis of mutual obligation relationship. The payment made to the labour cooperative goes to common fund and it is spent for a common purpose. Dongrias are obliged to contribute labour to the labour cooperatives'. Any violation of the customary rules of the labour cooperative is amenable to the adjudication of the village/tribal council. Besides, deviations are subject to both positive and negative sanctions. Labour cooperatives are free for all, yet the definite cooperative has its mandates and the individual member exercises his or her choices and decisions.

In *bati* system, an individual labour becomes a member of a labour cooperative by virtue of his or her social group identity and affiliation which may be familial, lineal, affinal, ritualistic or may be formed by age-set and age-grade institutions of both the sexes. While a group or an institution, at a social plain collects its members to a common cooperative pool the community reinforces the cooperative ties at a the level of a decision-making body. The cooperative allows children, expectant mothers, nursing mothers, old men and women to participate in the work on equal footing.

Earlier references on Dongria Kandha Labour Cooperatives :

Studies on labour cooperatives existing in tribal societies are very few and far between. Scanty references are found on related topics like employment, labour-management, labour pattern, division of labour etc. That labour cooperatives are central to functioning of tribal societies and have structural features have not been dealt with incisively.

In his study on Dongria Kandha, Nayak mentions about labour cooperatives (1989,128-130). He used the concept of labour cooperative and described its function, purpose and significance. In Dongria language, labour cooperative is known as *punda*. Aparajita (1994; 117) referred to labour cooperatives and viewed it as '*Bhuti*' system. Patnaik and Daspatnaik (1982) and Nayak, Boal and Soreng (1990) in their respective work on the Kandha recognize labour cooperatives among the Kandha in general and Dongria in particular. Patnaik and Daspatnaik observed, "It is the tradition among the Dongrias that they share one another's labour in agricultural and horticultural works on a co-operative basis. . .within the community when labourers are contacted to do any sort of work, both men and women participate in the pursuit not with a view to earn wage but to help a person who belongs to their own group. Of course the persons engaged are given food and paid a nominal sum of Rs.5/- to Rs.10/- for the labour. The person who engages them also works with others. In this way personal calls are

attended and the amount thus collected is deposited with the *Barika* and spent in a feast" (1982:43:51).

Nayak, Boal and Sorenga referred to labour cooperatives as constituting a *Bati* system among the Kandhas. They discuss, "*Bati* system is commonly used, whereby the same people are employed for planting, weeding, harvesting and thrashing, and payment of workers is in sheaves of grain... Every village has its own rule regarding the provision of rice meal... This matter is predetermined by tradition and is rigidly observed" (1990; 210:211). They also pointed out the changes in *Bati* system and practice of wage labour.

Work Force in the study village, Kurli :

Village Kurli comprises 35 Dongria Kandha households. The Dongria population is 176, out of which 82 are males and 94 are females. The workforce or the labour force of the Dongria society includes persons of either sexes both adults and children above 9 years of age. The workforce comprises 118 (67% of the total population). In the workforce, 54 (66%) are males and 64 (68%) are females. It includes 44 (37%) children in the age group of (9-17) years and adults in the age group of (18-60) years. Among the child population in the workforce, 21 (48%) are boys and 23 (52%) are girls. Among the adult population in the workforce, 33 (45%) are males and 41 (55%) are females. The workforce is presented in the statement below:

Workforce								
Children (9-17 years)			Adults (18-60 years)			Total		
Boys	Girls	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
21	23	44	33	41	74	54	64	118
48%	52%	37%	45%	55%	63%	86%	68%	67%

The level of literacy in the workforce is at 16.64%. Among the males it is at 37%, among the female it is at 3% only. The literacy level among the child population and adult population is at 30% and 12% respectively. All adult-females are non-literate.

Labour Co-operatives: A Case Study of village Kurli :

Out of 35 Dongaria households, 30 have share in, and as member of labour co-operatives at Kurli village. As many as 25 households (71%) had availed the helps of Labour Co-operatives, like *Sahabati*, *Daashati*, *Dhangadabati* and *Gutta* during March-November, 2000. They utilized *Sahabati* for 60 workdays, *Daasibati* for 5 workdays, and only one household utilized *Dhangadabati* once for a workday.

The labour co-operatives was utilized in the farms (in the *dongar*) for the purpose of different agrarian activities. The table below indicates that *Sahabati* was utilized for 17 times for cleaning and cutting dangar, 20 times for hoeing and sowing seeds, 15 times for weeding and 8 times for harvesting. *Daashati* was applied for 5 times and all that are for weeding. For clearing of forests, *Dhangadabati* was utilized once and *Guta* four times. Besides, the latter was also utilized equal number of times for hoeing and sowing.

Utilization of labour co-operatives during March- November, 2000 at Kurli village is given below:

Types of Labour Co-operatives	No. of Households availed	No. of days Employed	Purpose			
			Cleaning of forest	Hoeing and sowing seeds	Weeding	Harvesting
<i>Sahabaati / Kutumbati</i>	25	60	17	20	15	8
<i>Daasbati</i> (Labour Group of Maiden)	5	5	-	-	5	-
<i>Dhangadabati</i> (Labour Group of Unmarried Boys)	1	1	1	-	-	-
<i>Pundabati</i> (Group)	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Dutarupunda</i> (Labour Group of Oldman)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gutta (Contract)	4	8	4	4	-	-
Total	3	74	22	24	19	8

Under all the above categories of labour co-operatives, 74 working days are invested out of which 27 days are invested for clearing of *dongers*, 24 days for hoeing and sowing of seeds, 19 days for weeding and 8 days for harvesting. It is conspicuous that *Pundabati* and *Dutarubati* were not utilized at Kurli village. The Dongria people said that both types of the Labour Co-operatives have been abandoned.

The following Table shows the utilization of service of members under different types of labour co-operatives of Dongaria at Kurli village for the period from March to November, 2000:

Name of labour co-operatives	No. of working days	Labour type	No of member- labour		
			Male	Female	Total
Sahabati (kutumbati)	60	*Guest labour	781	924	1705
		*Host labour	107	130	237
		Total	888	1054	1942 (79.15%)
Daasbati (Unmarried girls)	5	Guest labour	-	90	90
		Host labour	9	11	20
		Total	9	101	110 (4.48%)
Dhangadabati (Unmarried boys)	1	Guest labour	1	3	4
		Host labour	19	-	19
		Total	20	3	23 (0.93%)
Guta (contract)	8	*Guest labour	104	168	272
		*Host labour	31	76	107
		Total	135	244	379 (15.44%)
Total	74	Guest labour	904 (38%)	1182 (62%)	2086 (85%)
		Host labour	148 (29%)	220 (71%)	368 (15%)
		Total	1052 (43%)	1402 (57%)	2454 (100%)

**Host- labour: The labour of a member family who utilizes the labour co-operatives*

**Guest-labour: The membes of labour co-operatives who are invited to work for the host.*

According to the table the service of as many as 2,454 labour were utilized under labour co-operatives for various agricultural and horticultural

operations. Out of them 43% were males and 57% females. Out of the total member-labour who served under labour co-operatives, 79% were for *Sahabati* followed by 15.44% for *Gutta*, 4.48% for *Dhangadabati*. The helps of *Sahabati* were availed by the Dongrias mostly and frequently. *Guta* was utilized moderately while utilization of *Daasibati* and *Dhangadabati* were insignificant.

The sex ratio of members of the labour co-operatives was 1333 females per 1000 males. The labour co-operatives comprise of two types of member labour, host-labour and guest-labour, from both the sexes including the children. Out of the total member labour (2454), 368 (15%) were host-labour and 2086 (85%) were guest-labour. In all the types of labour co-operatives the females outnumber the males. Thus the females contribute more labour force to the labour co-operatives than that of their male counterpart.

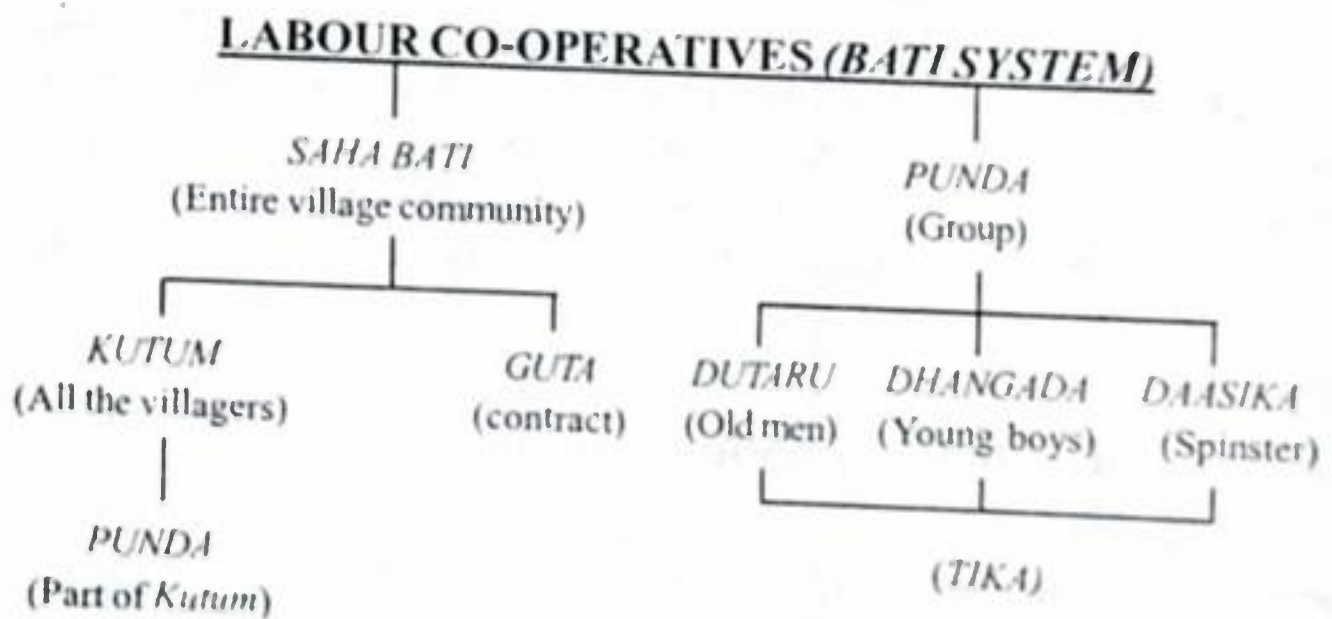
Nature and Types of Labour Co-operatives:

Buti system, labour cooperatives, operates at village level. It is more operational in mountainous agricultural and horticultural activities. The different types of labour cooperatives found in the Dongria society are: *Sahabati* or *Kutumibati*, *Pundabati*, *Dhangadabati*, *Daasibati*, *Kaddabati*, *Gutta*, *Tikka* etc.

Research innovation of Nayak (1989) and Aparajita (1994) reveal a four fold typology of 'Labour Co-operatives' among the Dongria. They are:

- (1) *Saha* or *Satra Punda* (the labour co-operatives taking all the Dongria households of a village as members)
- (2) *Dutaru Punda* (the labour co-operatives of an age set consisting of like minded old persons)
- (3) *Dhangada punda* (A group of young bachelor labour), and
- (4) *Daasi punda* (A group of dormitory based labour)

As per the study labour co-operatives may be grouped under two broad categories: *Saha* or *Kutumbati* and *Punda*. The former is labour cooperative for all the Dongria households in a village and the latter, small groups among the entire Dongria community of a village on the basis of sex, age-grade, and age sect. The typology of labour cooperative is diagrammatically placed below.



Sahabati:

Sahabati comprehends all the works of the entire Dongria villages or settlement. The etymology of the word '*Sahabati*' is a combination of two words, '*Saha*' and '*bati*'. *Saha* means the entire village and *bati* means labour group or workgroup. So *Sahabati* means the labour group or workgroup of an entire village. The Dongria also call *Sahabati* as *Kutumbati*. *Kutumbati* is like an extended family consisting of one member-labour from each family in a Dongria village. The members of the workgroup work in union in each other's swidden field for horticulture and agriculture purposes. The labour co-operatives consist of two types of labour. They are host-

labour, who invites other labour for their co-operation at work, and the guest-labour, who work in the field for one of the member-labour. So in *Sahabati* system every member of a labour co-operatives plays dual roles as a host-labour as well as a guest-labour.

The agreement of *Sahabati* is finalized in the *Kudi*, village community hous, early in the morning in the presence of village council. A member as per his requirement requests village council for availing the help of labour under *Sahabati*. In the preceding day to the work, an announcement about the place and time for the work of a member labour is made by the Domb messenger in the evening. The itinerary of *Sahabati* is chronologically arranged keeping the requests of all the members of a village and the urgency of the work in view.

Sahabati is availed by a member for his work for a day only. In no case it is employed in two consecutive days. It may be employed in alternative day, but for different members so that private work of each member can be attended during the intervals. In the allotment of works under labour co-operatives priority is given to widows, old persons and persons whose crop condition would be worse if remains unattended. For employment of labour under *Sahabati* each Dongria family of the village send a labour of either sex or even children above 9 years to work in the filed. If any member fails to send a labour for the *Sahabati*, the head of the family pays a fine of Rs.20/- per each day's work. Defaulters are asked to appear before the Tribal Council for adjudication of disputes and penal sanctions.

The *Sahabati* consists of both affinal and consanguineal relations of the Dongaria community and his neighbour. The host-labour and his family members including children participate in the work either as active or passive workers along with the *Sahabati* workers. The *Sahabati* workers leave village for the Dongar soon after the Sunrise and return to village just before the Sunset. In between, they work hard amidst joyous songs and a dinner break.

The host-labour arranges a feast comprising of rice, dal, curry and gruel for the workers of *Sahabati*. The feast is served among the workers at noon. The distribution of food is equal for all the workers and is of buffet type. At the end of the work *pejo* drink, a mixture of rice and *mandia* gruel is given to all the workers.

The host-labour pays a token money varying from Rs. 60/- to Rs. 200/- which is deposited at the fund of 'labour co-operatives and the amount along with the fine are kept with the tribal chief or any Dongria selected for the purpose. The cumulative deposits of funds are spent for *Meriah* festival and feast.

Case study: At Kurli village for the period from April to November 2000, 25 families availed 60 days work under *Sahabati*. As many as 1942 workers, 888 males and 1054 females, participated as member-labour. There were 1705 guest-labour, 237 host-labour and 38 absentee labour. The fine money collected (and to be collected) from the absentee labour amount to Rs.760/-. The money deposited in *Sahabati* fund amounts to Rs.12, 000/-. The total fund credited to the account of *Sahabati* fund is Rs.12, 760/-.

Out of 60 days of *Sahabati* work, 17 days invested for clearing of forests, 20 days for hoeing and sowing of seeds, 15 days for weeding and 8 days for harvesting. The service of *Sahabati* is opened only for its members. It is operating within the territorial limit of the village. In exceptional cases of *Guta*, contact with *Sahabati* for a piece of work at a high rate of wages, it works either for a member or for outsider. In case of latter the labour co-operatives charge high price, keeping the volume and magnitude of the work in view.

During the field investigation the following cases of *Sahabati* were observed:

Case Study-1: Jakesika Shyam had utilized *Sahabati* thrice and *Dhangadabati* and *Daasibati* once each for the agricultural year (March-November 2000).

Shyam, a member of *Sahabati* at Kurli village, requested the Naik, the village chief for the help of the *Sahabati*. The Naik in consultation with the village elders decided to extend the help of *Sahabati* to Sri Shyam on 8th November, 2000 in his swidden field for cutting *Kosla* crop and collection of *jhudanga*. A day before the work Shri Shyam in accompaniment of few children announced about the time, place and purpose of the work before all the members of the *Sahabati*.

On the scheduled date all the *Sahabati* members left the village after sunrise for the swidden field of Shri Shyam to help cooperate in his work. Besides all the 30 *Sahabati* members, two labour of the host family participate in the work. The composition of the workgroup was of multi-clan in nature. The members of clans like *Sikaka*(2), *Jakasike*(24), *Kadraka*(2), *Pusika*(1) and *Mandika*(1) formed the workgroup. The work group comprised members like 16 males and 14 females including 18 children and 12 adults. Out of 18 child members, 5 were literate and out of 12 adult members, 4 were literate.

The workgroup began the work, cutting *Kosala* crop and collecting *Jhudanga* at about 8 A.M. The female folk of the group while working sang an enchanting song. The translation of the song is placed below:

“O’ brothers and uncles let’s start a quick work,
For enjoying feast at noon and to resume the work,
And we have to complete it early to get home back”.

The host couple prepared food for the dinner in an open kitchen near the *dongar*. Two kids of the couple, the passive participants of the work, played beside the kitchen. The foodstuff for the feast comprised rice 3 *manas* (9.6 kgs), *kandula* (dal) 1 *mana* (3.2 kgs), *Mandia* 1 *mana* (3.2 kgs). The

host couple supplied the foodstuff and prepared food like rice, dal and gruel, and served the food items among the members of the labour cooperatives.

At noon they invited the guest labour for the feast. In the intermission of the work, the guests got down and enjoyed the food served in buffet. Some guest-labour consumed *salap* juice before taking their dinner and some of them baked their own dry fishes and ate them with the food. After lunch they resumed the work enthusiastically at 1 P.M. The work was finished by 4 P.M. Then once again all the member-labours gathered at the open-air-dinning space and consumed mixed gruel of *mandia* and rice. Then they got off for home.

Shyam had paid Rs.60/- as *Sahabatitaka* or *Kutumtaka*. The work was incomplete as it was voluminous which needed more labour for completion. The host decided to engage his family labour to complete the remaining harvesting of crops. The wife of Shri Shyam, who cooked and served the food to the guest-labour in the worksite, had delivered a baby girl in the very next morning.

Case Study-2: Sikaka Maguru had harvested his *kosala* crop with the help of labour co-operatives at Banakala dongar near Kurli village. It was a field of mixed crops measuring about 5.00 Acres of dongar land. The standing crops in the field were banana, castor, arhar, *janha* and *kosala*. Besides, there were fruit trees like pineapples and mangoes.

On 15th November 2000 Maguru requested a Dongria to make announcement (*Hata* or *Hulia*) for the work in accompaniment of the Dongria boys. The next day a *Sahabati* comprising of 28 members moved up to the dongar for harvesting *kosala*. The *Sahabati*, Labour Co-operatives comprised members from three clans such as *Sikaka*(4), *Jakasika*(23) and *Mandika*(1). Out of 28 member-labourers, 16 were males, 12 were females, 10 were children and 18 were adults. Besides, the host couple along with

their 5 month's old baby (the passive participant) were present in the worksite. Only two members of labour co-operatives were absent in the work who were charged with fine.

The members of the *Sahabati* began the harvesting of *kosal* crop at the dongar at 8 A.M. amidst the pleasure of song sang by the women. The work continued till noon. The host couple prepared the lunch down the dongar and near a stream. There was a lunch-break for half an hour. The lunch included rice of 3 *manas* (9.6 kg), mixed curry of *jhudunga* (2.4 *Ada*/1.5 kg) and pumpkin (1 no/3 kg.) and gruel (*Mandia* & rice powder (2 *Ada*/1.5 kg). The host couple distributed food among the member- labour in leaf cups.

The guest labour resumed the work immediate after the lunch. The work continued till 4 P.M. After the work, the host served gruel among the workers. Then all of them returned home. The *Sahabati* members decided that the *itinitaka* of Rs.60/- and the fine money of Rs40/- (@ Rs 20/- each x 2 absentee members) would be collected latter.

Case Study-3: In the agricultural year Wadeka Katru of the settlement Kuruvallipadar had engaged the *Sahabati* of village Khambesi twice. The *Sahabati* of village Khambesi comprises 65 members. Each Dongria family of the village was a member in the *Sahabati*. It was divided into two groups. This arrangement was done keeping in view the labour requirements of all the families and the smooth management of time and agricultural works.

Katru had utilized the helps of a section of the *Sahabati* of Khambesi village, once for weeding and cutting grass and another for harvesting *Kosala* crop in the swidden field at Aknajodi, Dongar (hill) near Kuruvallipadar settlement during July and November, 2000 respectively. Katru had approached the village council for the cooperation of the *Sahabati* and engaged the village *Barika*, a Dom, to make announcement about the time and place of the work.

A section of the *Sahabati* comprising of 23 guest-labours out of 30 members had participated for weeding and cutting grass in the *dongar*, at Khambesi village and 7 members were absent. Sri Wadeka had paid Rs.200/- as *batitaka*. The *Sahabati* members collected fine money for Rs.140/- (@ Rs. 20/- each x 7 absentee-members) and the amounts were deposited with the village head. The host-couple prepared a feast for the guest labour and distributed food like rice, mixed curry and mixed gruel among them at the interval of the work at noon. After the feast, the guest-labour resumed the work which went on up to 4 pm. The host couple once again gave *mandia* gruel to all the guest-labour at the end of the work before they return back home.

It was observed that for the second time Katru had obtained the help of the *Sahabati* for the harvesting of *kosala* crop. There were 21 guest-labour of *Sahabati* and 9 members were absent. Katru had paid a sum of Rs. 200/- as *batitaka* and the *Sahabati* members had collected Rs.180/- (@ Rs.20/- each x) as fine from 9 absentee-members. Like the previous work the host had given feast and a drink of mixed gruel to the guest-labour. The harvesting work continued from morning till Sunset with a lunch break at noon. Besides the helps of the guest-labour, 7 family members of the host participated in both the above work.

For the village is a big one, its *Sahabati* has been divided in to two separate *Sahabaties*, one for each group of the villagers. Help of *Sahabati* is taken for all the agricultural activities like for weeding, cutting grass, harvesting of crops etc. in the swidden fields.

The village council approves help of the *Sahabati* as per the formal approach of a member. The announcement about the work is still done by the village *Barika*, a Dom. At times the Domb neighbour also participates in the labour cooperatives work.

Pundabati

Punda means group. Unlike *Sahabati*, *pundbati* is a small labour co-operative. Each *Pundabati* comprises 10-15 members. As many as

10-15 like-minded persons of a particular clan or even more than one clan form *Pundabati*. *Pundabati* allows both male and female members to work together at the request of a member. If the required volume of the work would be less and the member had finished his quota of working under *Sahabati*, he could invite *Pundabati* to get this work done. The work involves agricultural or horticultural activities in the *dongar*. For a day's work the *Pundabati* money is Rs.50/-. Every member has equal right to get the services of *Pundabati*. The *Pundabati* workers are given a feast and paid *Pundabati* money. The absentee need not have to pay fine. However, if any one remained absent from work his counterpart would reciprocate the same way. *Pundabati* money is spent on feasts arranged by them.

Pundabati is no more seen operative in village Kurli. It is effectively functioning at Khambesi and Mundbali. Three *Pundabati* cooperatives are functioning at Khambesi and two *Pundabati* at Mundbali.

Case Study: Wardka Katru of Kuruvallipadar had availed the services of *Pundabati* of Khambesi twice during March-November, 2000: one *Pundabati* for cutting trees and clearing bushes and another for harvesting *Kosala* rice. The *Pundabati* composed of a 15-member team jointly with a 6-member host family participated in the work and cleared 4 acres of *dongar* land in 8 hours. The host gave them food at noon and drink of rice-millet gruel at the end of work. Rs.20/- was paid to the *Pundabati* fund. Services of one more cooperative were utilized for harvesting *kosala* rice. Three out of 15 members of the *Pundabati* did not attend the work. Thus among the 12 labourers, 4 were men and 8 were women. In the host family 2 were men and 4 were women. This family did not attend the work for the absentee labourers.

On both the occasions each of the respective host families had given provisions like rice (2 *manas* - 6 Kgs), *jhudanga*, dal (1 *adda* - 750 gm), pumpkin (one - 2.5 Kg) and *mandia*, millet (2 *addas* - 1.5 Kg).

Daasibati

Daasibati or *Dhangidibati* is the labour cooperative of the girl dormitory goers of 12 years of age or a little above. Girls of *Daasika*, the girls' dormitory can also become members of *Daasibati*, usually a small work-group of 5 to 15 Dongria young girls, either of one clan or of more than one. It operates within one clan territory only. Each member of *Daasibati* helps another in work on reciprocal basis. Since girls are of tender age, light but tedious works like weeding, cleaning, fencing and harvesting are given to them, but not hard works like cutting the trees, digging the soil etc.

Kajari, the chief of the *Daasika* and *Daasibati*, coordinates the work. A member of *Daasibati* may avail the services of the cooperative for his own or for his family. Rs.20/- to Rs.25/- is paid to the cooperative fund. The *Kajari* keeps the account. Absentees do not have to pay fine but obviously do not get help from his/her counterpart. *Daasibati*, if required may extend services to non-members too. In this case the cooperative is paid double.

They work in the farm singing. In the intervals they share some dry food and condiments. One would feel as if they work in a festive mood. Rice and *jhudung* are served at lunch. The food is served equally in leaf-cups. The gruel is served twice; once immediately after the lunch and another at the end of work. The *Daasibati* fund is spent on feasts. Often they spend the money on entertaining their respective partners from other villages attending festivals in the host village.

During March-November, 2000 *Daasibati* was engaged 5 times by 5 Dongrias in Kurli for weeding work. 110 boys and girls participated: 20 were host-labourers and 90 were guest-labourers, and 101 were girls and 9 were boys. All the guest-labours (*Daastes*) were girls. A sum of Rs.125/- was deposited in the *Daasibati* fund.

Jakasika Tenda of Kurli utilized *Daasibati* in Mitali Dangar for harvesting *kosala* in November, 2000. Ten *Daasis* participated in the work and 5 *Daasis* were absent. Tenda paid Rs.20/- instead of Rs.25/- to the *Daasibati* funds as 5 *Daasis* were absent.

In Khambesi and Hutesi *Daasibati* is not anymore functioning. In Kurli and Mundbali each only one *Daasibati* was functioning with 15 and 12 *Daasies* respectively. There could be no *Daasibati* without *Dhangdibasa* functioning.

A group of educated boys of Khambesi were opposed to the custom of visiting *Dhangadas*. Dongria boys to the *Dhangidibasa* in the night. They felt, it was encouraging immoral traffic. They refrained boys to sleep in the *Dhangdibas* in the night and threatened to get their head shaved and cropped to the root if any such *Dhangada* who dared visit the *Dhangidibasa*. They formed a vigilant squad and chased the boys visiting the girls in the dormitory. Keeping long hair is considered precious for men. So the *Dhangadas* from other villages stopped visiting the *Dhangadibasa* at Khambesi. Thus the *Dhangidibasa* ceased to function, so also the *Daasibati*. After a gap of four years two *Dhangidibasa* resumed functioning but no more *Daasibati*.

Dhangadabati

Dangadabati is the labour co-operative formed by Dongria young men, who are suitable for hard works like hacking trees, carrying logs, hoeing and digging pits in mountains etc. The *Dhangadabati* workers get food and Rs.50/- for a day's work. This cooperative is very important and seen functioning in most Dongria villages.

Kutumgutta

A Contract with the *Kutumbati* or *Sahabati* for a specific work is known as *Kutumgutta*. Keeping the volume of work to be done and the time that would be required the host family negotiates with the *Kutumbati* about the amount to be paid for the work. On an average, if a work that which requires 30 labourers for 3 days the price would be from Rs.1000/- to Rs.5000/-. The amount varies from village to village. There is no provision of giving food to the workers. The *Kutumgutta* work continues for two to three consecutive days or till its completion. After finalization of the contract with the *Kutumgutta* the amount is paid in advance.

Case Study: Wadeka Nabaghan of Khambesi had made an advance of Rs.500/- on 14th October, 2000 for fencing around his pineapple orchards which was scheduled to be done by *Kutumgutta* during January, 2001. Kadraka Rajis of the same village had made an advance for Rs.500/- on 10th October, 2000 to engage the *Kutumgutta* during December, 2000 for harvesting turmeric and sowing the seeds in the *dongar*.

Dutarubati

Dutarubati is the old men's labour co-operative. Likeminded old men, small in number, often form a labour co-operative to help each other in their respective swiddens over drinks.

Kaddabati

When any labour co-operative is invited by a person, who is not a member is called *Kaddabati*. Besides the feast and drink, the host has to pay double the money. In this case of *Kaddabati* the attendance of all the members of the cooperative is obligatory.

Tikka

The contract for any type of labour co-operative, except the *Kutumbati*, is known as *Tikka*. The cost of *Tikka* work for any labour co-operative varies from Rs.3000/- to Rs.5000/-. Money has to be paid in advance. Dongrias and Dombs can go in for *Tikka* work. Under *Tikka* work the labourers are not given any food and implements required for the work. It is a contract against the work. At the approach of festivals and ceremonies the Dongria get tempted to accept more number of such works under *Gutta* and *Tikka* to earn money to meet the expenses on those occasions. The Domb neighbours engage the Dongria on *Tikka* by luring them for buffalo meat and wine. The Dongria have strong weakness for meat and wine. Often for meat and wine they work in *Tikka* for a low price.

Kuli / Mulia

The royal affinity of the Dongrias with the Niyamigiri King, short supply of money and the tradition of labour co-operatives had kept the people away from getting engaged as *Kuli*, a paid labour. Nowadays, they engage *Kuli* and get engaged as *Kuli*. The prevalent wage rate for a *kuli* for 6 hours of work is Rs.25/- for men and Rs.20/- for women. The *kulis* are engaged usually in construction works of roads and buildings and the work in farms and fields. The Dongria and Dombs in the study villages work as *Kulis*. A few Dongrias often borrow cash and grains and accept advance payments against a future work in rush period. In such cases the cost of the labour becomes is less by Rs.5/-.

Cooperation within Family

In polygynous families co-wives perform household activities on the basis of mutual cooperation and sharing. In some cases, individual wives independently manage and maintain their own cultivated fields with the help of husbands. Often one wife does the household chores and another works in the field along with her husband and children.

After separation of an extended family bothers and sons continue to cooperate frequently in economic and ritual activities. New houses are built by the collective labour of the extended family. When more labour is required for house construction, labour co-operatives are invited. For house construction and for certain agricultural work kinsmen are also invited who do not take wages.

Labour Co-operatives: Change and Dynamics:

Kaddabati, Kutumgutta, Tikka and *Kuli* or *Mulia* are the examples to understand the dynamics of labour co-operatives among the Dongria Kandhas. Under the changing circumstances the Dongria have started working for money and the Domb neighbours engage them in various work. However, there seems to be some sort of continuity of the mechanism of traditional

labour cooperatives. Acceptance of advance payment for a piece of work during busy agricultural season is becoming more popular. Co-operatives on contract basis like '*Gutta*' and '*Tikka*' and purchase and sale of labour in the name of labour co-operatives leads to exploitations of the Dongria Kandha, which is beyond their control. The traditional value of mutual help and cooperation is slowly declining. Labour goes to market. Individual Dongria Kandha is working as *Kuli* and *Mulia*. At the same time of course labour co-operatives are still effectively and widely being practiced.

Using the institution of Labour Co-operatives as a development input

Social science research translates knowledge into formulation of plans, policies and their practices in development intervention. Social scientists in charge of development administration take advantages of the research findings on the institution of labour co-operatives among the Dongria society. The case study presented below explains how the institution of labour co-operative can be used as a development input which not only reduces the cost of the schemes but also ensures peoples' participation in the development process.

During the period (1982-87), a young Anthropologist as Special Officer of the Micro Project, DKDA, Chatikona, Rayagada district had effectively utilized almost all types of labour co-operatives in the development works mostly for the benefits of the community oriented infrastructure development schemes and income and employment generating schemes for individual families. The specific works for which labour co-operatives were utilized are nursery development, road cleaning and road construction and repairing, construction of *Gyanmandirs*, building and community houses, environmental sanitation and plantation of fruit orchards and horticulture development including spices like turmeric and ginger cultivation. The orchard works include plantations like pineapples, bananas, oranges, mangoes, jackfruits, lemons etc., and cleaning, fencing and weeding and maintenance of fruit orchards. The advantages of utilization of labour co-operatives are: (i) It is cheaper.

The surplus amount was reinvested by taking up more area on development of plantation or other development work for the Dongria. (ii) People participate in their own work, which not only ensures the good quality of work but also its timely completion. (iii) Traditional social value induces the development activities and helps in perpetuation of tradition and thus maintains group solidarity. (iv) Widows and invalid persons and the new settlers in the villages had availed the benefits of land allotment, labour co-operatives and the development process.

The idea of utilizing labour co-operatives as development input was very popular and well accepted in most of the Dongria villages. Plantation and horticultural operations were developed in about 8000 acres of *dongar* land effectively and successfully. The investment of labour cost for the development work varied from Rs. 100/- to Rs. 150/- per acre. The villagers were given assistance in cash, which were paid to the funds of labour co-operatives and the people contributed labour in a cooperative spirit. The other inputs like plantation materials, fertilizers etc. were provided by the DKDA. Food was also provided for the members of labour co-operatives.

The labour co-operatives have helped a lot in making the mountainous fruit orchards success. The *dongars* (swidden fields) of the Dongrias at that time earned the fame of 'Fruit Orchards of Rayagada' area.

Conclusion:

The varieties of labour cooperative in Dongaria society attest how people of different age-groups, social groups and the groups of young unmarried girls organize themselves to work, meeting the needs of labour by undertaking all kinds of task. The teamwork through labour co-operatives amidst feasts and songs speaks of the vibrant community spirit. The tradition of labour management is governed by the principle of equality and reciprocity. The rich and the poor work together in each other's field. The system does not discriminate the capacity of men, women and even children for work. There is strong positive sanction for all sorts of cooperative work. In case of dispute,

the village council arbitrates. As the swidden work is more labour intensive and the people do not have enough money to pay for the wages people depend upon exchange labour. Thus, the labour co-operatives in a big way help in the production process. Money deposited in the co-operative fund is spent on the *Meria* festivals, treatment of guests and other community functions. The labour cooperatives are valued more in socio-cultural than economic terms.

The labour co-operatives can be gainfully utilized as a development input. A society in which influence of money economy has yet to influence the livelihood of people, mutual cooperation at the level of social groups and institutions becomes an assured source of their economic strength. Development planners and policy makers are equivocal on securing participation of the people in the development process. Participatory development is considered an effective strategy and the goal of tribal development. The sponsored development schemes could accrue dividends to the Dongria if the institution of labour cooperatives were tapped. Self Help Groups (SHGs) could be help formed on a sustainable basis in the lines of the institutions of labour cooperatives.



LONGRIN KANDHA COUPLE

CHAPTER – V

Social Organisation

Family:

The family is the smallest social group consisting of parents and their unmarried children. Such nuclear type of family is most common among the Dongria Kandha. When a son is grown up and gets married he sets up his own house and lives there with his wife and children. Sometimes, if space permits a new room is added to the old house and the married son is accommodated in it. A survey in 7 Dongria villages shows that out of 157 families, as many as 124 families (79%) were of nuclear type and only 11 families (7%) are extended type. The extended family among the Dongria Kandha is always patrilineal in as much as persons comprising the family are related through the father only. The daughters or sisters after marriage leave their parental families and uterine brothers and leave the family of orientation. In this sense the Dongria family is strictly patrilocal. Since membership is counted patrilineally, that is, by relationship traced through the father alone, it makes the family both patrilineal and patriarchal.

The next form of the family depends upon the nature of marriage. In majority cases the marriage is of monogamous type, that is, a man has only one wife at a time. Cases in which a widower or a widow having children marries again and has offspring are also met with in the Dongria society.

A woman in the Dongria society is considered an economic asset and therefore, polygynous families, though numerically insignificant are not altogether uncommon. Out of 157 cases of marriage there were 22 (14%) polygynous marriages and in all such cases all the wives of a man lived together.

The family is not only a social unit but also an economic unit. All the able bodied adult members and even the children above 8 years of age toil in the field and contribute to the common economic pool of the family. Men do

the hardest part of economic activities, such as – ploughing and cutting trees and women do the cleaning of thorns and thickets in the fields, particularly in the hill slopes and make the field fit for growing crops. The men make holes in the fields and the women who follow them dibble seeds into them. Works like weeding and reaping fall primarily on the shoulder of the women. Similarly cooking food for the family is the work of women exclusively. A clear-cut division of labour is practiced along sex line in the Dongria family. In such a division women are allotted a large number of tasks than men. The formers are more hard working and are seen busy in doing some work or other continuously throughout the day.

Most of the agricultural activities are also done by women. Collection of firewood and minor forest produce are also their work. Other works which they do include weaving, fishing, and stitching. Felling of trees, cleaning of forest and carrying of heavy logs of wood and such other hard works are done by men. Collection of forest produce such as – honey, resin, arrow-root, roots and tubers etc. is the work of both men and women. Boys and girls above 10 years of age lend support to their parents in agricultural activities and in the collection of forest produce. They also work independently as *Bhatiyas* or contractual labourers on wage basis.

They take part in hunting expeditions and in setting traps for catching animals and birds. Old persons are no less active than the adult youngs. But those who are too old are not fit for any hard labour. Their main work is to watch the children at home while the adults are out in the field for agricultural activities.

The entire family expenditure is controlled by the house-wife in consultation with her husband and grown-up sons and daughters. Both husband and wife go to the markets and Fair Price Shops to dispose of their commodities.

The boys and girls enjoy greater sense of freedom and choice, and exercise it in matters of marriage, occupation and expenditure without any body's interference.

In a strictly patrilineal and patriarchal society unaffected by change to a great extent the unmarried sons and daughters remain under overall authority of their father even though they enjoy some autonomy in respect of their choice in some social and economic affairs. But as soon as the sons get separated from their parents after marriage the scope of their freedom in business of their living and managing their family gets widened and the parental authority gets diminished. So long as their parents are alive no one in the village recognizes the married sons as village elders entitled to deliberate in socio-political matters in the village meeting and their separate residential units as political distinct entities. The link with the parental household is broken completely and the nuclear family of the son is recognized as a full fledged separate entity after the death of his father and the partition of the parental property among the co-shares takes place.

The father-right of the Kandha society debar its women from propitiating own deities and participating in any family, village and clan rituals. It is only the male ancestors who are worshipped to the complete exclusion of the female ancestors. After marriage when a daughter leaves for her husband's house, her father ensures that the family deities do not desert the house with his daughter.

Family Relationship:

Life in a Dongria Kandha family is most peaceful and without conflict and tension. Husband and wife are partners in all walks of life. Both of them do not address each other by their respective names but as father and mother of so and so. The husband never shows any disrespect to his wife and seeks her advice in all social and economic matters. Both of them work together at home and in the field, one helping the other in such ways as per the custom of their society.

Among the Dongria Kandha the older people are highly respected by the younger people. The children obey their parents and act according to

their instructions. The relationship between the siblings is congenial and intimate. The seminal brothers and sisters are tied to one another by mutual help and obligation, such cordial relationship continues life long and the separation of the sibs after marriage does not dissociate them from their seminal brothers.

Nuclear Family:

The Nuclear family is the basic unit. The head of the family and his wife lead their conjugal life, bear children, rear them up, train them in economic activities and social moorings and help them grow to adulthood. Marriage of the offspring with those of similar nuclear units expands the sphere of relationship both affinal and consanguineal beyond village boundary resulting in formation of larger social groups.

Each nuclear unit has in its possession some property, both movable and immovable which all members of the unit enjoy equally to a certain stage. When the sons grow up and get married they settle down in separate places for want of space in their parental house. The youngest one who is likely to get married last lives in the parental house. The daughters after they are married leave their parents and settle down with their husbands in other villages.

Some times back, the institution of dormitory was functioning in every Dongria Kandha village most effectively. The unmarried boys and girls used to spend most of their time in their respective dormitories. It is in this institution they used to receive training under the stewardship of the senior ones in various aspects of social and economic life. But the dormitories have now become defunct and the family of procreation has been solely responsible for the enculturation and orientation of the children in life and work of the society. The family has also a major role to play in the realm of religion. The ancestral-spirits who reside in the house are propitiated regularly on many ritual occasions and the worshipping of these spirits and other deities connected

with health and happiness of the family members falls on the shoulder of the head of the family.

Extended Families:

Generally the size of an extended family is not very large varying from 10 to 12 members. Each such family constitutes parents and their married sons with their wives and children. The original house having only two living rooms lacks space to accommodate all the members of the family. Two more rooms are built adjacent to the old house where space permits for such expansion and all the members adjust themselves in the house. In the extended family old father exercises authority over the family members and after his death the eldest son takes his position.

Adoption:

A male child, but not a female child, is adopted by a childless-family in the Dongria Kandha society. In a patrilineal society like the Dongria Kandha any of the brother's son is adopted. No child is adopted from maternal side. Only after the child is brought to the family, a formal permission is sought from the village Panchayat.

After the death of the head of the family, the adopted son inherits the entire property and exercises authority over it as per prevailing custom of the society. In case he leaves and comes back to his own parents, he relinquishes his right over property and the entire property is seized and kept under the control of the village Panchayat.

Marriage:

The kuvi term for marriage is *Haidi*. According to the Dongria Society like all other communities marriage is an essential activity in life. A man marries to have children so that his family and lineage continue to exist and does not meet extinction. Those who can afford, marry more than one woman. In the Dongria Kandha society women are an economic asset and therefore source

of economic prosperity. Fecundity is a virtue and barrenness is ridiculed. The larger number of children a family has happier it is in the village. They prefer male children to female children because it is the former who are future fathers and procreators of children. Masculinity is a great virtue of man. It is proved by one's capacity of bearing children.

Marriage is an auspicious occasion; the day on which marriage takes place is a day of merrymaking. On this occasion both bride and bridegroom put on new clothes (*Khadi*) and guests and relatives come in their best attire to attend the marriage ceremony. Whenever boys of marriageable age want to attend any marriage they do so properly dressed with a black jacket, a touchlight, a sharp and costly knife kept hanging from the waist and an axé on the shoulder.

The village priest (*Jani*), assistant priest (*Pujari*), and the shaman (*Bejunt*) perform the marriage ritual and solemnize the union. The house where marriage take place is cleaned with cowdung and the ingredients required for propitiating the Earth-Goddess during marriage include vermilion, unboiled-rice, incense-stick, rice-powder and mango-twig. These things are used in the worship in accompaniment of incantations of ritual hymns. The rituals are performed in-order-to sanctify the marriage union and to ward off evil spirits and evil eyes which are believed to cause harm to the bride and bridegroom.

Status of Marriage:

Until marriage a boy or a girl is treated as a child having no responsibility and no voice of importance in the council of village elders. But after marriage the status is enhanced to a full-fledged adult member of the society. In the case of a man he is reckoned as one of the village elders bestowed with privileges of attending village council, adjudicating cases and participating in discussions concerning affairs of the village. In the case of a woman she becomes housewife having responsibility of managing her family and looking after the members of her family.



DONGRIA KANDHA GIRLS

Both the boy and the girl are after marriage different from what they were before marriage. Now they are married couple tied to each other with a bond of relationship as husband and wife. They are loyal to each other not only in sexual matters but also in matters of shouldering the burden by mutual help of running their household and bringing up their children and discharging their duties as adult members of their society. As indicated above, marriage is meant for procreating children. In case no child is born due to some physical disability the wife, she advises her husband to take a second wife so that the progeny is kept going.

If a boy and a girl like each other, they exchange presents and sweet words. The boy playfully snatches the cloth of the girl under a tree at a fair. Both sing songs and crack jokes with each other. Pre-marital relationship between the boy and the girl never leads to obscene act, such as fondling of breasts and sexual overtures. Such acts are never committed until the union between them is solemnized in marriage. The deviants are somehow tolerated with immediate pursuance of marriage. It is also the fact that such illicit sex play never takes place. However, the Dongria Kandha prefer arranged marriage to any other types of marriage because the former yields a good bride-price for the girl's parents and a good working hand for the boy's parents.

Incentive to Marriage:

As the children grow up they find out their age-mates of opposite sex and develop a longing for courtship and parenthood with them. Their life-ways and work-ways provide ample opportunities for their meeting in the village, on the way to the fields, in the forests and at the market places. These are the best chances for them to exchange gifts, jokes, and love with one another. Such informal relationships between a boy and girl grow into intimate bondship of love and affection culminating in marriage between them.

They know the chain of events that will take place after marriage and the status the couple will enjoy in society. Their longing for bearing children

and tending them with care to adulthood will thus be fulfilled. The burden of earning their livelihood will fall on their shoulder and as full-fledged members of the society they will be able to participate in different activities according to the norms of their society.

From the very moment of its birth, the infant is set in the cultural frame of the life-cycle. As time passes on it undergoes bodily transformation from childhood through adolescent and adulthood to old age. In the process it undergoes enculturation in its early hood and imbibes ideas and knowledge at every stage of life about the manners of behaving and techniques of living.

Regulation of Marriage:

The tribe is divided into number of clans, such as *Niska*, *Jakasika*, *Wadaka*, *Kadraka*, *Huiyaka*, *Sikoka*, *Bengeska* and *Praska*. This is not the exhaustive list of the clans. There are many more clans existing among the Dongria Kandha. Each such division is an exogamous unit within which marriage is prohibited. Each of these clans is non-totemic.

Whatever may be the fact, there is status hierarchy among these divisions. The *Niska* clan members claim to be the superior most in the hierarchy as they are tabooed to eat beef and flesh of buffalo. The *Jani* (Priest) belonging to this clan is only entitled to worship Earth Goddess during *Meria* festival. Since other clans eat beef and buffalo flesh, it is tabooed for the *Niska* clan to receive cooked food from the former. *Huiyaka*, *Praska* and *Bengeska* are considered to be the lowest in the category, because they eat snakes and insects. Other than *Sikoka*, *Wadaka*, and *Kadraka*, marriage relationship is not established with other clans by the *Niska* people. Even after marriage, either the boys or the girls have to abstain from eating beef and flesh of the buffalo.

Each division is strong and rigid. Boys and girls of each clan are considered to be brothers and sisters. A village in the Dongria society

constitutes number of clans. But boys and girls of the same village are also considered as brother and sister. Therefore, village exogamy is practised.

Again, the Dongria society is divided into number of *Muthas*. *Mutha* is an important feature of social organization. It consists of group of villages treated as an administrative-cum-social unit. All these *Muthas* are named after each clan according to their predominance. Marriage within the *Mutha* is permissible.

Marriage restriction is there from the point of view of clan consanguinity. Intra-clan marriage means marrying one's own sister, which is incestuous and may bring hazard to the family and drought in the area. Parallel cousin marriages are not prevalent.

The minimum age at marriage for a boy is 20 to 22 years but it is 16 to 18 years for a girl. But much earlier to this marriageable age, negotiation is pursued even when a girl is born in a Dongria Kandha house. Only when the girl attains puberty, the negotiation is finalized.

Mainly for economic reasons marriage is postponed. In fact, a girl in the Dongria Kandha society is bargained and poor people cannot keep pace with the high rate of bride-price demanded by the girl's parents. This invites clan feuds in the Dongria society.

Physically disabled persons like – deaf, dumb and blind are not preferred to be married. Persons with good physique and less indulgence in liquor are always preferred for marriage.

Similarly, working and capable girls are always preferred to be married. To ensure capability only, marriage negotiation is pursued from early childhood of the girl. If the first wife is proved to be barren or over burdened, the second wife is brought. If there is no issue from both the wives the male is ridiculed and teased by friends.

Ways of Acquiring Mates:

Marriage by capture is in vogue in the Dongria Kandha society. The boy captures the girl of his choice in a place where she is found alone and in this work the friends of the boy lend helping hand. Later the boy arranges a feast and entertains his friends for the help they had rendered.

As soon as the girl is captured she is carried to the house of the boy. The news of the capture spreads wide and the parents of the girl come to know about it. On getting the information the parents accompanied by their kinsmen rush to boy's house and confront his parents with a lengthy and heated discussion. However, everybody knows that this is all a matter of routine and finally both the parties calm down and settle the bride price to be paid by the boy's parents.

Generally the marriage by capture does not fetch a lucrative bride price. Knowing that they are looser in this case, the parents of the girl find no alternative but finally to agree to the proposal of marriage of their daughter with the boy. After the agreement is reached between the two parties drink is served at the end to the visitors and all assembled at the place enjoy the drink to their heart's content and disperse in a joyful mood.

Marriage by exchange is prevalent if, boys and girls of marriageable age group are present in both the households and they belong to different clans. In this type of marriage the question of payment of bride price does not arise. In case, the boy or the girl is physically handicapped, such type of marriage does not take place.

Marriage by service is also practiced in the Dongria Kandha society. When the boy's father is incapable to pay the requisite bride price, the boy serves in the bride's house for three to four years or more until the amount demanded as bride-price is compensated by the input of labour of the boy. Once the amount is adjusted, marriage takes place. Only poor people resort to such type of marriage. The boy in this case gets full support from his



A DONGRIA KANDHA GIRL MAKING EMBROIDERY

would be parents-in-law by proving his ability and sincerity in work. Although the boy lives in girl's house, he does not come in direct contact with the girl. The girl is well aware that the boy is her prospective husband and she would marry him after completion of the full tenure of his service which is adjusted towards the payment of bride price. She avoids mixing with other boys lest her prospective husband would take exception to it and there may be trouble for both of them.

Arranged Marriage:

Marriage negotiation is initiated either by the boy's parents directly or through a go-between belonging to the boy's clan. It is desirable that the mediator may be a resident of the girl's village. In most cases the boy chooses his wife and informs his parents about her. Thereafter the parents start negotiating the matter. The lineage members take part in the negotiation and help the boy's parents until the marriage is performed. Similarly the girl is at liberty to choose her partner and conveys it to her parents who thereafter carry on negotiation with assistance from the kinsmen.

Generally the marriage proposal is initiated first by the boy's parents. Among the Dongria Kandha women are considered a great economic asset and therefore the girl's father enjoys a superior status. Before the negotiation starts it is necessary to take the consent of the boy and the girl and seek approval of the members of the clan.

Infant betrothal is in vogue. When the boy is in infancy, the boy's father goes to the girl's house with the marriage proposal. The girl's father receives many such marriage proposals from various sources. He examines the pros and cons of each proposal and finally yields to one proposal. The acceptance of the proposal is symbolized by his acceptance of wine from the particular boy's father. Marriage is postponed till the girl attains puberty when the negotiation starts afresh. During the period from the selection of the boy to the day of marriage, exchange of gifts and presents take place between the

two parties. In the mean time if any other boy captures the girl and takes her away a serious dispute arises between them and heavy compensation is demanded both by the girl's father and by the father of the boy.

After the negotiation is resumed the boy goes to the girl's village and visits the girl's house. If the girl's father is determined to give his daughter in marriage to the boy he offers *peja* (gruel) to the boy. Giving *peja* to the boy is symbolic of accepting him as the son-in-law. If after this, the girl's father does not pursue the matter quickly for some causes or other, that is, does not come with his kinsmen with wine to offer to the boy's father for final negotiation, the boy becomes impatient for loosing his prestige and gets irritated and threatens the girl's father to behead him and set fire to his house by throwing an axe and bundle of wood collected from forest with the friends. Of course this is not a common feature.

However, after these events, the girl's father accompanied by his kinsmen and clan brothers proceed to the boy's house to settle the bride price. After a lot of haggling the amount of the bride price is settled. Generally it varies from Rs.500/- to 750/- in cash and two cows, 30 to 40 Kgs. of rice and five tins of liquor. Upon settlement of bride-price, the girl's father and his relatives are entertained with a feast. Sometimes, the betrothed mates meet there and give their consent for marriage. This is how the consent is taken. Both the boy and the girl are called to appear before the assembled parties and asked to stand before them. Some one of the group asks the girl if she is willing to marry the boy. The girl keeps quiet and does not utter a single word. This sort of silence is indicative of her willingness to marry the boy.

Once the engagement is final, both the parties inform their respective clan members about the marriage. The village *Barika* is employed to invite the relatives and agnates from different villages.

In between the final negotiation and the day of marriage only a month or so is left for making all arrangements for the marriage. The boy's father consults an astrologer (*Pathania*) at Chatikona for an auspicious day on

which the marriage is to take place. Generally Tuesday and Friday are considered auspicious for marriage purpose. Relatives arrive one after the other, each contributing about 5 Kgs. of rice, a fowl, and one bottle of liquor to the boy's father for marriage. The uncle (Mother's brother) contributes more than what others do. He gives 10 Kgs. of rice, a cow and 5 bottles of liquor. The ladies vigorously gear up their work. Some of them are engaged in processing different corns, others in making leaf-cups out of Siali-leaves, and some others in cleaning the house and setting things in order. Similar chores of activities are also performed at the girl's house.

On the appointed day groom's party reaches the bride's house to escort the bride's party to the groom's village. At the suspicious moment they start with a great procession of relatives and friends accompanied by the beat of drums.

On reaching the outskirts of the village, they retire for sometime and get themselves refreshed by taking some dry-food and water. The mother, sister and other female relatives of the boy then go with a brass-pitcher to the place where the bride's party has halted to receive and escort the bride. The bride takes hold of the pitcher and from there goes directly to the spring jodi in accompaniment of the musicians and drum-beaters to fetch a pitcher-full of water. With this water, the rice brought by the girl is cooked in three different earthen pots in front of the boy's house. In the mean time, the Shamans, who have assembled earlier, recite hymns and offer ritual to the ancestral-spirits (*Dumba*) in the sleeping room of the boy's house. The rice cooked by the girl is then offered by the Shamans to three main ancestors. With this, the bride is admitted into the groom's ancestry.

Then the bride is taken to the place (*Kuddi*) where the earth-Goddess (*Dharani-Penu*) resides. Before the assembled clan members, the *Jani* and the *Pujari* offer unboiled rice to the deity and sacrifice a black-dotted fowl. The blood is sprinkled over the rice and on the head of the bride with blessings for a happy and prosperous life of the bride.

From there she is taken to the threshold of the room where the groom is seated. There one leg of the younger sister of the bride, who stands for the bride is tied loosely to the leg of the groom's younger brother, who stands for the groom. Any leg will serve the purpose, but the legs would be symmetrical. The *Jani* sprinkles liquor over the cord tying the legs and kills a chick by thrashing it over the legs.

Thereafter the wife of the elder brother of the boy keeps a winnowing fan with unboiled rice over the head of the bride and leads her to the groom. Both the bride and the groom sit side by side and the winnowing fan is placed in front of them. The sister-in-law fills a measuring-pot with a handful of rice from the winnowing fan and empties it in the winnowing fan. The groom starts doing the same thing. If it is found that the rice falls short and the measure is not fitted to the brim, it indicates that the groom is to suffer. The same process is repeated by the bride also.

At the end of all rituals, the guests, relatives and friends assembled there are entertained with a grand feast. Young boys and girls of different clans get opportunity to sing and dance the whole night.

Next day, in the early morning, the bride is taken to the spring. The boy's relatives have a look at the bride ceremoniously and give her presents varying from 10 paise to 10 rupees according to their capacity. This becomes bride's property and no one has any share in it.

After this function is over, the *Jani*, makes an image in clay representing Goddess *Laxmi (Sita Penu)* at the bank of the stream and offers puja with unboiled rice. A white chicken is sacrificed and blessing is solicited both for the bride and the groom. While sacrificing if the mound cracks or breaks, it is considered inauspicious and indicates trouble in the economic life of both the bride and the bridegroom.

The superior Shaman *Pat-Bejuni* there after, chants a long series of incantations with the help of peacock feather and unboiled rice to ward off

malicious spirits, so that they do not create any trouble for the bride on her way to the groom's house. A fowl is sacrificed to appease the malicious spirits and some unboiled rice is also offered for this purpose. Then the bride cooks the consecrated rice and fowl at the spring and both herself and the groom eat it. The idea of eating this consecrated food is to enjoy good health and be free from any attack of evil-spirits. After this food is eaten a joking scene takes place. All young boys and girls belonging to different clans take bath in the stream along with the bride and the groom and splash water at each other in a joyful mood with obscene words and songs. Old men and women leave the place and the youngsters enjoy to the fullest extent.

After bath, both the bride and the groom accompanied by the *Jani* and the drum-beaters go near a mango tree and stand under it beside the spring. A new piece of cloth (*Gandapadi*), given by the groom's party is covered around three persons including the *jani*. The *Jani* recites mantras and the *Gurumeni* (another religious functionaries) sprinkles water over them twenty-one times with the help of a mango-twigg from a new earthen-pot. They go round and round the mango tree thrice and the audience shouts joyfully. This is recognized by twenty-one spirits dwelling in all directions including the mango tree. With this ceremony, the bride is believed to be incorporated into the clan of the groom. After this, a feast takes place which is shared by friends, relatives, and invitees of the *Mutha*. The bride's friends depart hereafter with tears in their eyes.

At night, the bride remains in a room along with the groom and his younger brother. In the Dongria Kandha society levirate marriage is permitted and therefore, the younger brother of the groom is considered potential husband of his elder brother's widow. It is for this reason the younger brother is allowed to stay with the bride and the groom in the same room.

After three days the bride escapes from her husband's house stealthily to her parent's house. This does not cause any anxiety in any body's mind as every body knows that she has gone to her parent's house as per the custom

of the tribe. After five days the bride is brought back either by her parents or by any other kinsmen to her husband's house. She comes back with 15 kgs. of rice and 5 to 6 kgs. of turmeric to please her husband and his relatives. On her return two buffaloes are killed, packets of flesh, rice and turmeric are distributed among all the relatives of the groom. This is how marriage is recognized and formalized. In fact, any individual function becomes a public function in the Dongria society.

Though the people who are well-off observe the marriage in an elaborate manner, the rituals to be observed and the customs to be followed remain the same irrespective of the rich and the poor.

Among the Dongria Kandha the honeymoon is observed in the *Dongar* (Hill), but not at home. *Dongar* provides the scenic surrounding and solitary environment – the conditions which are pre-requisite for the mating and courtship of the couple.

Termination of Marriage:

Marriage relationship is breached only when the husband deserts his wife or the vice-versa. Too much indulgence in liquor, lack of masculinity, carelessness and irresponsibility for the family may force a woman to desert her husband. Similarly barrenness, adultery and callousness in domestic work may force a man to divorce his wife. But such cases are very rare. If the wife deserts, the husband demands bride-price to be refunded to him. If the wife is divorced she goes back to her parents and seeks remarriage. The former husband demands the bride-price which he paid at the time of his marriage from her new husband.

In case the divorced woman has children, her relationship with them remains in tact, no matter whether she remarriages or not. It may so happen that in her old age, she is entitled to depend on any son of her first husband, whatever may be the case, any estrangement of relationship between husband and the wife is always looked down upon by the society.

Remarriage of Widow and Divorcee:

As pointed out earlier, the Dongria Kandha society is polygamous. It is not easy to get young and unmarried girls as second or third wife. Moreover, people do not prefer to give their daughters in marriage either to the widowers or to those persons who have divorced their wives. Naturally those who want to have multiple wives get in most cases the widowed and divorced ones easily.

In this type of marriage the amount of bride-price is less. The rituals are not observed in an elaborate manner. Relatives are not invited in a large scale for the purpose.

In case a man wants to marry a widow or a divorced woman, but cannot afford to pay any bride-price, the only way to achieve his objectives is to capture her. If the relatives of the woman pose any problem by way of retaliation they are pleased by arranging a feast for them.

Sororate and Levirate :

These forms of marriage are prevalent in the Dongria Kandha society but levirate is not practised in large scale. Though the elder brother's widow is a potential mate of her husband's younger brother, the latter does not like to inherit his deceased elder brother's widow if she has children. When the age difference between the two brothers is not much and she has no issue, in that case the younger brother may marry her. In case he does not inherit her, she has two alternatives either to stay on her husband's house and enjoy her husband's share of property or she to go back to her parent's house and seek remarriage, if she so desires.

Sororate type of marriage is largely practised. After the death of the first wife, man marries her younger sister provided she is not already betrothed and wants to marry her deceased sister's husband.

Irregular Unions:

Marriage in violation of incest taboo is not prevalent. The rule of exogamy is widely and rigidly followed. Apart from own sisters, village girls are considered to be own sisters and any irregular union with them is considered to be incest. Fear of divine punishment prevents any incestuous relationship.

That does not mean that there are no irregular unions. The dormitory organization in some of the villages in the Dongria society even encourages the married persons to mix with unmarried girls. In the Dongria society, after a child is born, the mother abstains herself from any sexual contact with her husband at least for two years for the health of her baby. During this period, the married men find it difficult to restrain themselves from sexual intercourse and therefore, commit various irregular unions in the dormitory. As a result some of the girls become pregnant. Of course, bachelors are no exception to such pre-marital sexual intercourse. Whatever may be the case, if after conception, such girls get married and the fact of their conception is known, the matter is not viewed so seriously. The child is accepted as the own child of the husband. But, if a conceived girl finds it difficult to get married and all her efforts of abortion fail, she remains unmarried throughout her life. In that case, she is married to a spirit called, *Kosambiri* to get womanhood. This is called spiritual marriage. Barren woman too, is given in marriage to *Kosambiri* to get child. In that case, a goat is sacrificed to the deity and the sacrificial meat is cooked and eaten by the concerned woman.

Celibacy:

Bachelors and spinsters are rare in the Dongria Kandha society. The desire to get married and procreate children and be one with other elders of the village is foremost in the mind of every Dongria Kandha boy. Similarly to be a housewife and run the family is the foremost desire of a girl.

Female children are valued most in the Dongria Kandha society, because women are a great economic asset and without them, no family is complete.

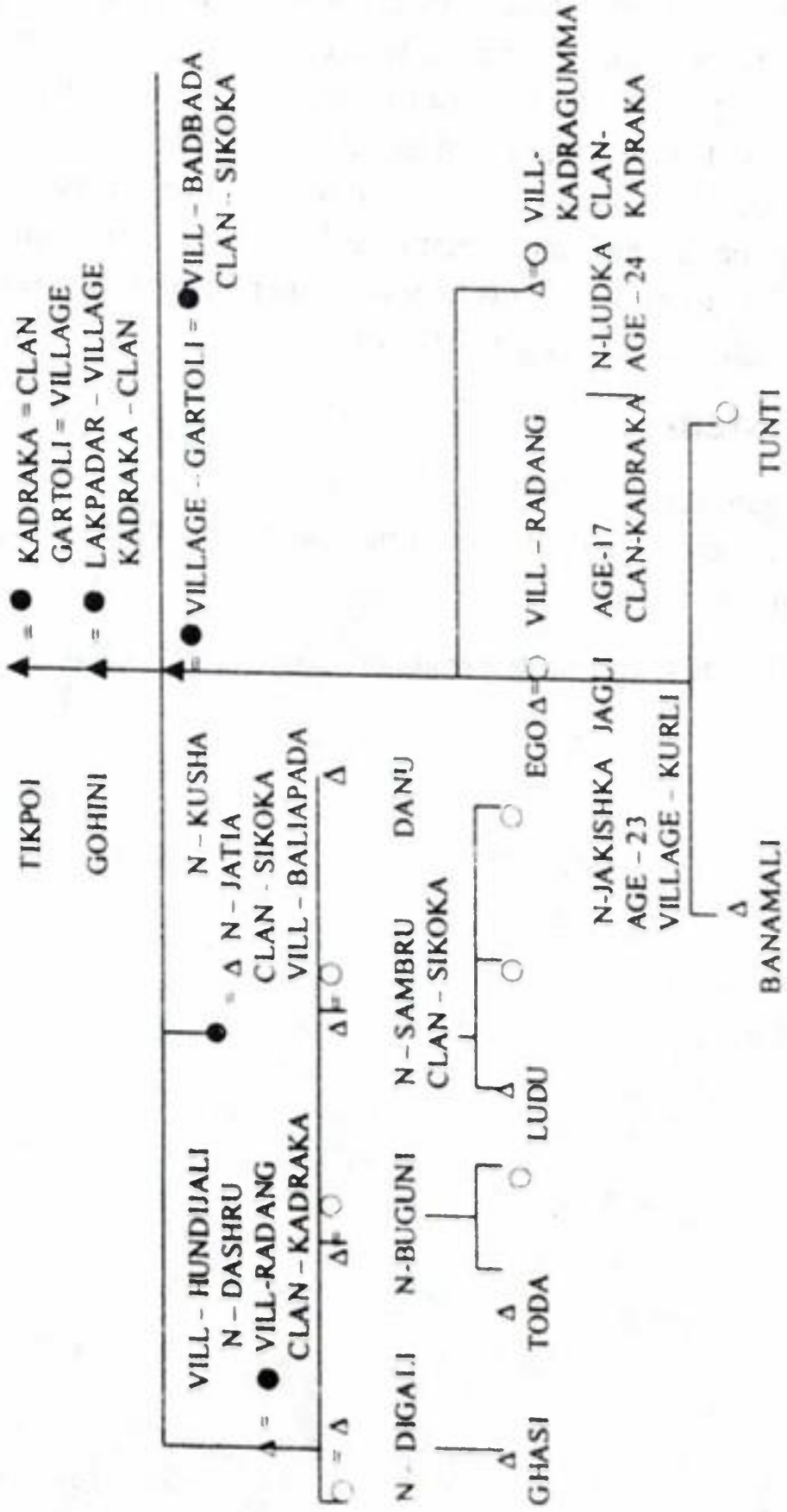
From the very earlyhood female child is betrothed and engaged. As soon as she attains puberty, she is given in marriage to the boy with whom she was engaged. The boy keeps waiting for this long period with patience and as soon as he comes to know that she attained maturity, he puts pressure on her father to arrange for marriage soon. The manner which pressure is brought on girl's father has already been mentioned earlier. If the pressure does not work and girl's father breaks his promise, the betrothal is disengaged. In such cases the girls generally lead a life of celibacy.

Kinship System:

Clan organization plays the pivotal role in the Dongria Kandha kinship system. Descent is traced in the male line, and marriage between persons of the same clan is tabooed.

The following tables show the genealogies of two families.

FAMILY NO.1



The Dongria Kinship Terms of Reference and Terms of Address:

Terms of Relationship	Terms of Reference	Terms of address
E go's father	Abba	Abba
E go's mother	Aya	Aya
Father's younger brother	Ichhan Abba	Ichhan Abba
Father's younger brother's wife	Ichhan Aya	Ichhan Aya
Husband	Dukra or Dakra	Wamu (you) or father of so and so
Wife	Dukri or Napenari	Wamu (mother of so and so)
Elder brother's wife	Abbale	Eh - Abbale
Father's elder brother	Kajaba	Eh - Kajaba
Mother's elder sister's husband		
Kajaba	Eh - Aba	
Mother's younger sister's husband	Ichhaba	Eh - Aba
Elder brother	Karja Tada	Eh - Tada
Elder sister's husband	Tada	Eh - Tada
Younger sister's husband	Ichhaba Tada	Eh - Tada
Father's elder brother's son	Tada	Eh - Tada
Father's younger brother's son	Tada	Eh - Tada
Father's elder sister's son	Tada	Eh - Tada
Father's younger sister's son	Tada	Eh - Tada
Mother's elder sister's son	Tada	Eh - Tada
Mother's elder brother's son	Tada	Eh - Tada
Ego's Elder's sister	Bwenda	Nana
Father's elder brother's daughter	Nana	Eh - Nana
Mother's elder sister's daughter	Nana	Eh - Nana
Wife's elder brother's wife	Nana	Eh - Nana
Ego's younger brother	Unam Nanju	Budda
Younger sister	Unam Nari	Boi
Elder daughter	Wenda Boi	Boi (called in her name)
Younger daughter	Unam Boi	Boi -do-

Younger brother's daughter	Boi	Unam Boi
Younger sister's daughter	Bhanji	Boi (called in her name)
Son's wife	Maga	Boi
Father's elder brother's daughter	Boi	Eh - Boi
Father's elder sister's daughter	Boi	Eh - Boi
Father's younger brother's daughter	Boi	Eh - Boi
Father's younger sister's daughter	Boi	Eh - Boi
Father's younger brother's daughter	Boi	Eh - Boi
Father's younger sister's daughter	Boi	Eh - Boi
Mother's elder brother's daughter	Nane	Eh - Boi
Wife's younger brother's wife	Boi	Eh - Boi
Elder son	Kajja Mila	Ade (or called in his name)
Younger son	Unam Mila	Ade (or called in his name)
Father's elder sister's husband	Mama	Mama
Father's younger sister's husband	Mama	Ade- Mama
Mother's brother	Mama	Ade- Mama
Mother's mother	Aji	Eh - Aji
Grand father	Tadi	Tadi
Grand father's wife	Aji	Aji
Grand father's elder sister	Amma	Eh-Amma
Grand father's younger sister	Amma	Eh- Amma
Great Grand father	Tadi	Tadi
Great Grand father's wife	Aji	Aji
Father-in-law	Abba	Abba
Mother-in-law	Amma	Amma
Elder brother-in-law	Mesenju	Eh - Abba

Clan exogamy and the recognition of kinship through the father's line, primarily govern the kinship.

The Kinship system of the Dongria Kandha is broadly speaking, of the kind known as classificatory. The fundamental feature of this system is the application of the same relationship term in addressing more than one person.

These kinship nomenclatures reveal that the Dongria Kandha prefix 'Eh', 'Ade' while addressing various relatives. Sometimes these words 'Eh' 'Ade' are prefixed or suffixed, but they are employed almost for all types of kins irrespective of age and sex. Some of these terms of address are also employed in addressing another, even unrelated persons of the same sex and generation as the relative or relatives to whom the term of address is appropriate. From the above list it is revealed that the Dongria Kandha apply the same kinship term in addressing a number of relatives of the same generation and sex.

Kinship and Its Extention:

Kinship has penetrated into the other aspects of culture in various ways but the institution of kinship has got closer connection with the other institutions like – the family, the marriage, economic organization and the institutional way of life.

At different levels, the kinship structure merges with marriage and family structures. For example: at the time of bride capture from a different clan, the clan brothers (clan-consanguineals) try to have the girl for their brother. On the other hand the girl's consanguineal kins try to protest the capture. Moreover, at the death ceremony or on the occasion of *Meria Parab* all the kins (Affinal and Consanguineal) come and join the feast and in the ceremony.

Besides this, family is the root of each kinship tie and the family members help a boy or a girl to establish relationships with other people.

Moreover, the closer the kin tie the closer is the interaction which ultimately helps in exploiting natural resources. Mutual exchange of labour, gifts and services become possible only through kinship tie.

Analysis of patterned mode behaviour can be made on the basis of gifts and counter gifts which embrace a wide field of situations, interactions and ceremonial activities besides, certain particular activities at the time of shifting cultivation and all other economic, political and ritual co-operations. Kinship

embodies co-operation and mutual help. All these can be interpreted in terms of the three principles of gift exchange.

- (a) Gift received for the gift given (reciprocity).
- (b) Motivation to extend gifts.
- (c) Motivation to receive gifts.

These three principles of Marcel Mauss can be analysed vividly in order to interpret the patterned kinship ties.

At the time of marriage it is obligatory for the maternal uncle to be present with his major gifts for the marriage of his nephew or niece. This includes either a cow or a buffalo or a goat, two to three number of hens, vegetables, pulses and one or two tins of country-made liquor. At the time of these ceremonies, the role of some kins are more patterned and the kinship behaviour is nothing but an obligation.

As is observed in all the phases of shifting cultivation, most of the members of a clan (*kuda*) join and work together in the field. Each man gets food for the whole day and the clan members participating get ten rupees for taking liquor. Thus, the *Kuda* relationship is another patterned relationship.

Besides this, the inter-clan patterned relationship is another type, where, at the time of *Kedu Parab* members of a clan organize the festival where other clan members participate and they are entitled to sacrifice the buffalo. This is wide type of patterned relationship at the level of the tribe as a whole. Presentations and counter presentations are involved here too.

Joking Relationship:

Jests and jokes and certain modes of speech suggestive of sexual familiarity are freely used between persons related to each other as grand parents and grand children (in jocking relationship) among the Dongria Kandha. It is also noticed that similar jokes are freely allowed between a man and his elder brother's wife where great lassitudes are permitted. It is

seen in the Dongria Kandha society that, a widow's deceased husband's younger brother has the first preference to remarry her. A man and his wife's younger sister come under joking relationship

Avoidance Relationship:

Avoidance relationship is found between a man and his wife's elder sister and also between a man and his younger brother's wife. The younger brother's wife addresses her husband's elder brother as 'Tada'. The elder brother of her husband is treated as her own elder brother and he is respected and avoided.

Behaviour Towards Non-Relatives:

The behaviour of the Dongria Kandha towards their community members who are neither affinal or consanguineal relatives is also not strange. They never misbehave, rather, consider them as members of the same community. This attitude towards every one binds them together both in day-to-day life and even in the level of social life as a whole.

In spite of this attitude, sometimes, dispute arises between clans regarding bride-capture and payment of bride-price. This feud goes to the extent of quarreling and assaulting between males. But no repulsive attitude is taken against the females.

The females therefore, become the mediators and play a greater role in solving and subsiding the feuds arising out of different situation.

Even though there is no kinship relationship, the non-relatives are treated as kin members and considered to be the members of the same ethnic group.

Bond Friendship:

Besides this, other kind of friendships are established in the Dongria Kandha society. People of same age group establish 'Sai' relationship for which ceremonial and occasional presentation are exchanged.

This is also prevalent among the females in the local name of 'Adi'. The bond friends call each other as 'Silurbani' though they are addressed differently by their parents.

To extend this kin relationship bond-friendship is also established with the people of the Domb community though the Domb are considered to be untouchables, the Dongrias treat them as members of their society because being neighbours. With this feeling, bond friendship is established ceremoniously with the exchange of gifts and counter-gifts. Though it is a fact that, the Dongria Kandha are exploited basing on this relationship, still it is pursued to encompass the Domb to be the members of their society as real occupants of the Niyamgiri hills.

Thus the non-relatives, whether the Dongria Kandha or the Domb are entangled by a type of friendship which is ritualized and known as ritual friendship. In wider sense the Dongria Kandha society has no non relatives and everybody is a relative to other.

Interpersonal Relationship:

Social Relationship and Groups:

This society, organized by the Dongria Kandha is based basically on interpersonal relationship. Some of these relationships are stereotyped basing on which the society functions and certain relationships are acquired in the day-to-day life. A Dongria Kandha born in his society learns first these stereotyped or standardized relationships which he exhibits in due course in the wider sphere of his society. Family is the smallest organization in the society from which a Dongria Kandha right from his birth learns the behavioural patterns. Through marriage the relationship is further widened and thereby a social relationship develops between the members of the villages and the *Mutha*. Family, clan, village, intra-village of *Mutha* and intra-*Mutha* are the various organizations in the society within which social interaction takes place and a stereotyped social relationship develops. Certain formal relationships

also develop beyond the fixed organization with other communities of the society and social interaction also takes place with these groups. Social interaction takes place with equal proportion both within the group and outside the group.

CHAPTER-VI

Youth Dormitory : An Agent of Development

Introduction:

Youth dormitory, otherwise, known as the institution of bachelor's house, is one of the most important social institutions found among many primitive societies of the world. S.E. Peal, the first English writer who examined the communal barracks of the primitive races drew attention to the fact that from Bhutan to New Zealand and from the Marquises to the Niger the system existed and was distinguished by certain persistent features" (Elwin, 1968: 19).

In tribal India as described by Majumdar, dormitories are found practically in all parts of the country where the tribal people have their habitation. The institution is found among most of the aboriginal tribes, such as the Munda, Ho, Oraon and Kharia of Chotnagpur plateau and Orissa, Gond and Bhuiya of Madhya Pradesh and Orissa, Konayak Naga of Assam, and among the Bhotia of Bihar. Many tribes of Melanesia and Polynesia are also known to have dormitories. In Southern India, the Muthuvena, Mannam and Poliyan of Tamil Nadu and the Kunikar of Kerala are reported to have the dormitory institutions (Majumdar, 1967).

Elwin observed that dormitories can be grouped into two types. The first one is semi-military barracks type supposed to aim at a strict segregation of boys connected with war, hunting and magic. The second type allows them to have relationship with the un-married girls by regulating pre-nuptial interests of the tribal youths (1969: 19). Majumdar holds that dormitories are

bi-sexual as well as mono-sexual. The men's dormitory is usually the largest building in tribal settlements since it serves as a meeting place of the villagers, as a guesthouse and a sleeping house of the men. Both types of dormitories fulfil important social and religious functions (1967).

The subject of origin of the dormitory is always controversial and remains obscure. There are different views regarding, how, when and under what circumstances the youth dormitories have originated.

- The youth dormitory is possibly, a survival of the communal house from which private dwellings split (Elwin:ibid).
- Hodson holds a similar view. He opines that there are three stages in the development of the home. At the initial stage, the whole village lived together in a communal house. In the subsequent stage, a group of individual houses were developed with the sexes segregated into unmarried boys and married men having their dormitory and a separate dormitory for un-married girls. And, thus, only the mothers and very young children lived at home. Finally, due to the economic pressure of modern systems of taxation, the husband shared the mother's house and the family house came into existence (1911:75). For Hodson "the dormitory institution would seem to be rather symptomatic of a definite level of culture than distinctive of any special ethnic group" (ibid).
- Hodson further holds that the object of the dormitory was to avoid incest and perhaps was instituted to prevent children from witnessing the primal scene and being an embarrassment to their parents. (Hodson, 1911: 86).
- In certain countries like Africa and Assam, the dormitory serves a military purpose.
- According to some other scholars, among certain primitive societies sexual intercourse is prohibited during the busy agricultural seasons and so a men's house is separately provided for and on the other

hand, the lonely women lived together in a separate house. Besides, menstruating women were also kept segregated in these houses.

- Moreover, among certain tribal communities like Maria and Muria, husbands are not allowed to sleep in the house with their wives so long as the naval cord of the newborn child has not fallen. Among many other tribal communities, sexual relationship is prohibited until the child weans.
- Elwin is of the opinion that there are practical and straightforward reasons behind the establishment of dormitory organization. In his view, it is a need everywhere for a rest house for visitors in a village and the organization of younger generation of the tribe to form a village workforce. Moreover, those societies that are based on age-grades need special clubs for the younger people and the un-married ones. He is of the view that the Bondo and some other tribal dormitories in Orissa, perhaps, aim at enabling girls to find suitable husbands and test their desirability (1968: 24).
- Elwin viewed the dormitory organization as a unique phase of human development. According to him "... the village dormitory elsewhere provides the most important evidence for any discussion on group marriage, ... group concubine, pre-nuptial chastity, pre-nuptials infertility, the value of rules of exogamy etc. to the anthropologist". On the other hand, to the non-anthropologist, the dormitory informs about "... co-education, the expediency marriage between those who have grown up together, the relegation of paternal responsibility, the relation of discipline and freedom and the elimination of jealousy. It opens up the widest problems of sex and marriage, ..." (ibid).
- The institution of dormitory forms an integral part of tribal society and its importance and vitality cannot be ignored. S.C. Roy while describing Oraon dormitory says that, the dormitory is an effective economic organization for purposes of food quest, a useful seminary for training young men in their social and other duties and at the

same time an institution for magico-religious observances calculated to secure success in hunting and to augment the procreative power of young men (1915:211).

It may be pointed out that under the impact of modernization primitive customs, practices and institutions have become disorganized and disintegrated beyond our imagination. The same is the case with dormitory organizations. Elwin is of the opinion that under modern conditions, when mankind is at every stage of development, the dormitory is suffering from drastic and rapid changes and one-day anthropology must become history or nothing. The socio-cultural characteristics are as valuable as their economic resources to adapt to a rapidly changing world. Information on customs, practices, art, culture, religion, etc. is of great practical importance and an indispensable pre-requisite for an effective administration and development. Mazumdar very strongly opines, "...the main purpose of education is to strengthen the feeling of responsibility in the people and to conserve the values in society which have stood the test of time ...that have helped them to survive. Any scheme of education devised for the tribal people must take notice of the indigenous methods of training and must be broadly based on what has been of abiding significance to their cultural life. The system of dormitory life, for example should be carefully studied. If oriented to suit the present needs, the youth organization of the dormitory is likely to prove a bull-work to these tribes who still jealously guard it as a treasure and a legacy" (1964:IX). Thus, the development of indigenous groups largely depends on the improvement of two basic resources, social-cultural and natural. These are mutually supportive of each other. As such before launching any development programmes/projects for tribal communities there is a need for understanding them, their cultures, values, traditions and institutions, which helps in achieving the development goal.

Nomenclatures used by different tribal communities

The institution of dormitory is differently known by different tribal communities. A list of some of which is given below.

Name of the State	Name of the community	Dormitory Nomenclature		
		<u>Mono-sexual</u>	Bi-sexual	
		Male	Female	
Assam	Konyak Naga	Ban	Yo	-
	Memiss	Ikhuichi	Iloichi	-
	Angami Naga	Kichuki	-	Arichu
U.P.	Bhotias	Rangang	-	-
	Munda and Ho	Gitiora	-	-
Chotanagpur and Orissa	Oraons	Jonkerpa/ Dhumkuria	Pelo-erpa	-
	Gond	Gotul	-	-
Chotanagpur	Ao and Sema	Morung	-	-
	Juang	Majang	-	-
	Bhuinya	Dhangarbasa/ Mandaghar/	-	-
	Orissa	Darbar	-	-
Bondo	-	Ingersion	-	-
Dongria	-	Da-She-	-	-
Kandha	-	hala/ Da- she-hada	-	-

Studies on Dormitory :

Scant attention has been given to the study of dormitory institutions among the tribes. Except a few, most of the ethnographers have made some sketchy descriptions of dormitories of a few tribes of India. C. von Fuerer-Haimendorf has given a detailed account on the Konyak Naga, S.C. Roy on Oraons and Verrier Elwin on the Muria Gond. The most exquisite description of a dormitory organization called "*Bukumutula*" is found in Malinowski's *Trobriand Islanders*.

In Orissa, youth dormitories are still in existence and found very functional among a number of tribal groups such as the Oraon, Paudi Bhuinya, Bondo, Juang, and Dongria Kandha. However, such dormitories or dormitory like organizations, which did exist among most other tribes of Orissa have dwindled away. The present paper is based on the study of the institution of bachelors' dormitory of the Dongria Kandha. The Dongria inhabit the Niyamgiri hills in southern Orissa. The focus of the paper is on delineating and understanding the structure and function of the institution of youth dormitories among them. It also traces the importance and utility of youth dormitory as a social institution, which can be tapped and harnessed for pursuing development programmes among the Dongria Kandha a primitive tribal group (PTG). It discusses the dormitories in respect of their structure and composition, constitution, management, rules and regulations, role of dormitory members, and change and transformation.

Earlier references on Dongria Kandha dormitory:

Literature on Dongria Kandha dormitory are scanty. Nayak while describing the girls' dormitory of the Dongria Kandha notes *da-sha-sika*, *da-sha* meaning a matured girl. The dormitory house presents a separate look from the rest of the houses because of its decorated walls. Their number varies from village to village. The young boys, *Dhangaras*, do not have any dormitory house and they sleep on some ones verandah in small groups and the sleeping place is known as *dhangrenga-duki*. Following the principle of village exogamy, young boys of the same village do not enter the *da-sha-sika*. Young men from the affinal clan villages attend the dormitory at late evening and leave before dawn. Each matured girl who is a member of the dormitory assumes a new name known as *Sahala* name. He further opines that it is a natural instinct on the part of the boys and girls to attend the dormitory. Even after marriage, a man visits the dormitory though he never allows his wife to revisit the same. The younger girls in the dormitory learn needlework from the elders. They are also taught the art of playing their



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traditional musical instrument, *Goani*. Besides, entertainments with exchange of jokes and gifts also take place among the dormitory mates. In the dormitory, sleeping partners are often changed and more importance is given to the relatively rich *dhangra*, identified by use of more ornaments, specifically *murma* and *murmum* (1989: 45).

Patnaik refers to the Dongria dormitory house as *Hada Sala* and also *Dhangadi Sala* or *Adasbetta*. It is smaller in size, located at one of the extreme ends of the village near the stream. In the youth dormitory, clan exogamy is strictly followed because there is a strong negative social sanction against clan incest. Cases of conception in the dormitory are of rare occurrence as they use indigenous herbal medicines as a protective measure. In their society pre-marital conception is not treated as a great offence. The institution is loosing its importance in some villages, as young girls are not present in these villages. However, the training that the institution used to impart has now become the family responsibilities for the enculturation and orientation of the children (1982).

Upali Aparajita opines that the Dongria Kandha dormitory is mono-sexual, known as *Da-sha-sika*. The dormitory houses are specially built located behind residential houses close to the hill streams. While visiting the dormitory, they follow the rules of clan and village exogamy. After nightfall, the un-married boys and girls spend the night in merry making, singing and dancing. Exchange of gifts like traditional sewed scarves, carved wooden combs is made among themselves. Now, these gifts are replaced by local made imitation jewellery and plastic combs. The author remarks that dormitory organization is thus a very integral part of the Dongria Kandha Society. However, the institution is loosing its importance under the impact of neighbouring Hindu culture. The development programmes also influence the social structure of the Dongria Kandha to a great deal. The boys who have education in the schools feel ashamed of visiting the dormitory (1994: 207).

The dhangadas and dhangidis form their respective labour cooperatives. Each group works as a unit. Their services are requisitioned by the villagers for specific work. The income is deposited in a common fund, which is utilized in arranging common feasts. The youth dormitories act as learning and training centres and the youth learn in practice their traditional arts and crafts, songs and dances etc.

R.K.Nayak and others mention that the number of the Dongria Kandha dormitories vary in a village from one to as many as five depending upon their population. For the young women, the dormitories became their social headquarters from the age of about seven until marriage. In all other aspects the young women remain fully a part of their households. The dormitory helps to relieve pressure on their family sleeping room. In addition, it serves as the beginning of both their community service and sex experiences. Dormitory practice can never to be viewed as promiscuity. The Dongria Kandha society does not approve free sex as the relation between young men and women is based on prescribed rules. They follow the principle of clan exogamy and also village exogamy. The young women do not dance in front of their elders. Their songs and dances reflect lyrics expressing love and devotion, narration of different aspects of their socio-cultural and economic life. Dormitory is a place where marriages are materialized. Alternatively, the young people of a village while go to the market or festivals or elsewhere also have the scope to choose their mates (1990).

Young men of other villages are entertained at the dormitory. In case, a second group of young men arrive, the former usually withdraw to avoid conflict. Non-Dongria persons are not allowed to enter the dormitory. Sleeping arrangement inside the dormitory is mainly made on mutual understanding. The young girls normally sleep in rows but when the young men visit them, those who wish to form pairs sleep in the centre. Those who do not wish to pair sleep in a corner or make another row.

Exchange of gifts like clothes, ornaments, rings, hair clips, etc. are made between both the sexes as a token of love. In case of a betrothed young girl, knives and traditional clothes are prohibited as gifts. The youths prefer their traditional dress pattern. In case they are differently dressed, the young women refuse to sleep with them.

Table 1 : Households, Population and no of Dormitories in the three study villages

Name of the village	No. of Households	Population		Total	No of dormitories	No. of dormitory members
		Male	Female			
Khambasi	98	189	229	418	6	36
Kurli	35	82	94	176	3	16
Kudubalipadar	5	7	14	21	1	5
Total :	138	278	337	615	10	57

It is evident from the table that in each of the three villages female population exceeds the male population. There are in all 10 *da-she-hada / Dhapa* with a total of 57 members. The village Khambasi has maximum number of *da-she-hada* i.e. six with 36 members followed by Kurli 3 *Dhapas* with 16 members and Kudubalipadar with 1 *Dhapa* and 5 members. It is found that the membership strength varies from 3 to 7 in the dormitories located in the study villages.

Dongria Dormitory:

The Dongria Kandha girls' dormitory is meant for the maidens only. It is known as *da-she-hada* or *da-she-hala*. It is named after *da-she* meaning an unmarried girl and *hada* or *hala* living house. They do not have any specific sleeping house for the young boys. The boys usually sleep in someone's verandah or in the house of a widower in small groups. This place is known as *Dhangrenga Duki*.

The Dongria hold different views regarding the *da-she-hada*. In the first place, they trace its origin back to the mythological period and hold it as a traditional cultural practice followed since generations. Some believe that a community house for the youth not only serves the purpose of accommodation at night but also separates grown up boys and girls from sleeping with their parents. There are other views, which support the fact that, the dormitory is a preparatory home for the girls before entering the family life. It might have been instituted to assign the older boys and girls the task of educating the younger children with the cultural practices, customs, economic pursuits, folklores, riddles and above all to teach them the art of social adjustment. Imparting education on these are the duty of the parents but for which they have neither time nor inclination and as such the responsibility is bestowed upon the dormitory.

The size of the dormitory varies from village to village depending upon the population of unmarried girls in a village. It is informed that some villages having no grown up girls do not have the dormitory institution. A list of *da-she-hada* in twelve villages of Kurli Gram Panchayat is given below.

Village-wise position of da-she-hada in twelve villages of Kurli G.P.

<i>Name of the Village</i>	<i>No. of Dormitories</i>	<i>Name of the Village</i>	<i>No. of Dormitories</i>
Mundaball	2	Khajuri	3
Hutasi	1	Radanga	4
Hundajali	2	Patalamba	1
Bandeli	2	Gandeli	1
Kirida	1	Gortuli	2
Kudigumma	Nil	Thuaguda	1

In village Kudigumma, at present no dormitory is functioning, as the village does not have any un-married young girls. In Patalamba village there is only one dormitory, but it was informed that there were more in the past.

Further, it is found that in some villages, dormitory has ceased to function for some reason or other. But, the institution by no means is extinct for the young girls of this villages sleep separately in groups in small rooms called *Dhapas* as found in the two of study villages namely, Kurli and Kudubalipadar. An account of the number of *Da-she-hada / Dhapa* in the study area and the enrolment position of members in each of these dormitories is given below.

A dormitory member or a matured girl is known by the name *da-she* and a group of them as *da-she-sika*. A young boy is known by the name *Da-we-yu* and a group of them *Da-we-ga*. The term *da-she* also refers to *dhangudi* and the *da-we-yu* to *dhanguda*.

A dormitory may be composed of girls belonging to one clan group or a number of clan groups. Previously, the villages were uni-clan in nature, for which membership in the dormitory was restricted to one clan only. But, now, with the increase of population and immigration dormitories have accommodated multi-clan members. The picture that emerges from the study villages reveals that in Kurli, the dormitory is uni-clan, composed of members of *Jakasika Kuda* only, in the other two villages they are multi-clan in nature, the dormitory members belong to *Wadeka, Kadraka, Sikoka, Kundika, Melka* and *Prasaka Kuda*.

It is found that, the age of dormitory members varies form 10 to 40 years or even above. Age group-wise distribution of 57 dormitory members is furnished below.

Table 4. Age group-wise distribution of Dormitory Members

Age group in years	No. of members in study villages			Total
	<u>Khambasi</u>	<u>Kudubalipadar</u>	<u>Kurli</u>	
10-14	6	-	7	13
15-20	11	3	7	21
21-24	2	-	2	4
25-29	2	1	-	3
30-34	5	-	-	5
35-39	2	1	-	3
40+	8	-	-	8
	36	5	16	57

The table shows that out of total 57 members, maximum (21) belong to age group of 15 to 20 years, while minimum (3) belong to age group of 35 to 39 years. It is interesting to note that quite a sizable number of dormitory members belong to age group of 40 and above.

Genealogy of the dormitory members shows that, sisters and their consanguineal kins can share the same dormitory. Besides, spinsters, divorcees and widows without children are allowed to visit the dormitory. Higher age grade is not a bar for continuing in it. Spinsters at higher age grades do not pair with *Dhangudas*. Selection of dormitory members is based on their mutual understanding and friendship.

The oldest member of a dormitory acts as the head and is known by the name *Kajari*. Every member is expected to obey her. It is the *Kajari* who more often selects the *Dhangudas* for pairing, makes distribution of works on festive occasions, fixes dance expeditions. Both male and female shamans (*Beju* and *Bejuni*) do not visit the dormitory as a customary prohibition.

In Dongria settlements, the dormitories are generally built at the backside of the rows of residential houses close to the streams. These remain separated from the residential house by a narrow path in between. Such location of the dormitory helps the girls to maintain privacy and secrecy. It is a convention that the parents are supposed to know nothing of what happens in the dormitory. A girl also does not let her parents see her when she goes or comes out from the *da-she-hada*.

Each *da-she-hada* is approximately rectangular in its ground plan. But all the dormitories are not of the same and similar size. There are degrees of variation among them. Generally a dormitory measures about 7 feet in length and 8 feet in breadth with a sloped low roof. It is a single roomed hut with a narrow verandah about 7 feet in length and 2 feet in breadth in the front. It is having only one front door and no windows. The height of the dormitory door is very short in size being about 3 ft and breadth being 2 ft. One has to enter the house by bowing down.

Dhapa is comparatively a small room than the *da-she-hada*, which is an extension of a residential house on the backside. It is connected with the main house by a narrow door. Besides, it is provided with another door at its back. The *Dhapas* are also having no windows. Out of the 3 *Dhapas* in Kurli, two are located near the stream.

The construction of dormitory is based on a skilled and co-operative work. It is done through mutual help and co-operation by work groups of both sexes. The boys do the technical and hard work required for the building like cutting and transportation of timber from the forest, raising wooden structure, making ropes from the jungle grass, making beams, roofs, etc. The structure is built on 9 bars made of Dhamara wood. After the structure is raised, the girls plaster the walls with mud and cow dung mixed with chaps of paddy. After plastering, the walls are polished with rounded stone.

Inside the house, along the borders of the walls there is a continuous platform meant for storing of food grains and belongings of the dormitory

members. Towards the eastern corner of the room, a place is left for the fire in a customary manner. From the roof, bamboo bars are hanged, where the clothes of the dormitory members are kept. Besides, they keep other belongings like hair clips, combs, oil, and necklaces in small baskets / earthen pots kept in the rope shelves hung from the roof of the house. Besides, one or two small sized mats are found to be hanging on the walls to be used for sitting and sleeping purposes. Now a days, photographs of the dormitory members and other outside visitors are hanged on the wall. There are also small containers kept in the dormitory used for spitting. On the floor, two to three small holes known as *Heni*, which serves the purpose of Mortar, fixed for husking food grains. Two to three pestles made up of round wooden bars fitted with iron ring at one end are kept in one corner of the room. In the dormitory, the members sleep with their feet towards the fire and use scanty or no beds for this purpose. Occasionally they use small mats made up of bamboo strips purchased from the local market.

Generally a girl after attaining puberty is eligible to enter the dormitory. But, there is no taboo on the younger girls to attend it, though they might not be allowed to sleep there at night. On the other hand, a young boy becomes a *dhanguda* only after he develops mustache. Admission into the dormitory does not require any special rites and rituals. There is also no specific initiation ceremony observed. It is a customary practice that 2-3 years after attending dormitory, the *dhangudi* is given a name known as *Sahala* name and then she became a full-fledged member. These names are of great importance to them, as until that time, they are not allowed to have mates in the dormitory. Their parental names are rarely used in the dormitory or by other mates. On the other hand, parents and close relatives hardly ever use the *sahala* name at home. The first word of the *sahala* name indicates the name of one of the local flowers, leaves, trees, food grains or activities and appearances of the *dhangudi* concerned, while the second one refers to the feminine form (*Wani*). A few of these names and their meaning are cited below.

Dormitory names

Meaning

Chichard Wani	The member is very active
Girulu Wani	Name of a flower which they eat
Pipad Wani	talkative
Wadala Wani	Who bends like a leaf
Putuk Wani	Short height
Porodi Wani	Name of a leaf
Lahi Wani	Rice or Lakshmi
Sakar Wani	Black gram
Palachi Wani	Leaf of Kurai tree
Biguru Wani	Straw

There are about 10 spinsters found in the *da-she-hada* of village Khambasi, while in other two villages, they are not found. However, Patnaik (1982) remarked that Bachelors and spinsters are rare in the Dongria Kandha society. In order to find out under what circumstances girls remained as spinsters in the village Khambasi, the life histories of few of them are cited below.

Case Study 1: In village Khambasi one Wadeka Timi aged 45 daughter of Wadeka Kalia is still found to be visiting the dormitory. She was engaged at her early age to a Pusika boy of village Gumma and her parents received one pair of buffaloes (Sambandh Podha) two tins of alcohol, rice, etc. from the groom's family as a customary gift. Wadeka Timi after maturity attended the dormitory. The groom's family asked for marriage. At this point, she firmly refused to marry the boy on the plea that he was an alcohol-addict. Her parents returned the gifts to the groom's family. Now, she is continuing as a spinster in the dormitory as she did not get any suitable match. However, she does not sleep with any *dhanguda* and she acts as the *Kajari* of that dormitory.

Case Study 2: Another example is Wadeka Saka, sister of Wadeka Timi, a widow of 43 years old who is still a dormitory member. In her early childhood she was betrothed to a Sikoka boy. Unfortunately, the bridegroom died at an early age and her marriage with any one else could not be materialized. As a result she remained a spinster.

Case Study 3 : One Wadeka Basiki, daughter of late Wadeka Sura, village Khambasi is 39 years old. Her parents died when she was too young leaving three other girls younger to her. In order to look after her sisters, she remained unmarried. Now, all her sisters have got married. But Wadeka Basiki remained as a spinster. She is attending the dormitory and happy with her life.

Case Study 4: Wadeka Manu, aged 35 years, daughter of Wedeka Lutuka, village Khambasi was negotiated to Jakasika Shyma, son of Jakasika Ghani of village Kurli twenty years ago. Later, Jakasika Shyma married to another Sikoka girl of village Khajuri. Now, he is blessed with two sons. Wadeka Manu disliked to be his second wife although he wanted to marry her. Though polygyny is prevalent among them, but in recent times, the girls are somehow opposed to such a practice. As stated by Wadeka Manu, "I don't want to marry in fear of ill-treatment from the in-laws. The husband will beat me in a drunken state under the plea that I am not working and a lazy woman compared to his other wife. What will happen, if I return to my parents with a child?" While narrating this she cited the case of her older sister, Sakar Wani who had married as the second wife to Prasaka Nara, son of Prasaka Bandhan. She was subjected to repeated physical assault from her husband on the ground that she was lazy and doing no work. Finally, her husband left her and now she is staying with her parents along with her daughter. According to their customary law, she is not allowed to attend the dormitory. So, Wedeka Manu is of the opinion that "life as a spinster in the dormitory is far better than such a type of married life".

It is observed that the present generation Dongria girls view marriage as the end of sexual and domestic freedom of life and friendship between

young people. Rather it burdens them with the economic responsibility, change in residence, and transformation in life-style. They confidently hold this view, for a Dongria girl as a daughter is never economically dependant on her parents nor as a wife on her husband. Rather, she is an economic asset to both as she works more than a Dongria male.

The Dongria clan system plays an important role in regulating their marriage and activities in the dormitory. All clans are grouped into two categories: *Bhai* clans and *Bandhu/Samandhi* clans. Those clans who permit marriage between them are known as *Bandhu/Samandhi* clans. Marriage ties among *Bhai* clans are prohibited as they form a single exogamous unit.

They follow clan exogamy strictly as there is a strong negative social sanction against clan incest. In pursuance with the clan rules, the boys and girls of one village are considered as brothers and sisters even though they belong to *Bandhu/Samandhi* clan groups. Thus, the *dhangudas* do not visit the dormitory of their own village. This practice of clan exogamy as well as village exogamy functions well as the Dongria Kandha lineages are not well developed. As such, according to Nayak, "Most of the Dongria Kandhas remember the names of their ancestors up to the grandfather's generation and rarely trace genealogical connection beyond that. . . beyond the extended family. A lineage may include a few other nuclear families living in other villages, all of which can be genealogically linked" (1989:307). Premarital relationship, which does not violate the clan rules, is not considered as an offensive act.

Mode of Acquiring Dormitory Partners:

The way of life of the Dongria Kandha and the work pattern provide ample opportunities for the meeting of boys and girls. They often meet at market places, Podu fields, forests, festive occasions, social functions like Siba Ratri etc. held at Chatikona. In these places selection of dormitory partners takes place. There, they talk, exchange jokes and gifts with one another. While mixing, they develop intimacy and a boy throws his traditional

cloth (Ganda) knotted in it food materials like Liya, dry fish etc. over the girl of his choice and asks for her partnership with him for the day. The other way to show his desire for companionship is to snatch the cloth of the girl. Sometimes, the boy also threatens the girl to kill, if he will see her with any other boy. If the girl reacts positively, they meet at lonely places. Afterwards, the boy visits the dormitory of that village where the girl is a member. However, they follow clan exogamy in selecting their dormitory mates.

Besides, the above practice, late at night the *dhangudas* visit the dormitory of their *bandhu* villages. On reaching there they blow mouth organs called *gani* at the door of the dormitory to inform about their arrival. The *Kajari* of the dormitory first collects information about their clan names and village name. Then only she allows them to enter the dormitory. According to rule, it is the *Kajari* who decides with whom who will pair. But in practice, generally, pairing is prefixed earlier on the above said occasions and accordingly the boys come. Once a boy is betrothed to a girl of a particular dormitory he is not allowed to visit that dormitory by strictest of the rule. Visit to the dormitory takes place during a particular season in the year. It mainly takes place during the period of ripening of Ragi, Kosala and watching of Dongar fields before harvesting.

The real life at the dormitory begins at night. As such, it may be termed as a nightclub. The girls work at the Podu fields during the day and return home at the sunset and make preparations for the night to be spent in the dormitory. The girls do little household work like fetching water in the evening. The mother or sister-in-laws mainly do the cooking. The girls wash themselves in the stream and start combing; they dress up by putting flowers in the bun and wearing ornaments, sitting in groups on the verandah of the dormitory. After early dinner, they assemble one by one in the *da-she-hada*. Thereafter, they sweep the house and lit the fire. In moon lit nights they dance for an hour or two, the smaller children playing game near by. Sometimes, they just sit round the fire and chitchat while the older girls engage themselves in knitting their traditional attire. While doing this and waiting for the boy friends from

other villages, they pass out their time by chewing pulses after being fried. Besides, they sit-down in groups and listen stories from any one of the colleagues, exchange jokes and tell riddles and talk about their boy friends. The dormitory is also used as a forum for expedition or allotment of duties at wedding and religious functions. The smaller girls return to their respective homes as the night grows. The boys generally visit the dormitory late in the evening. On their arrival, the girls receive them joyfully and all of them spend sometime in merry making. Thereafter, the boys and girls on the basis of their intimacy with one another form pairs and lie down facing each other and exchange talks. Besides, some of them also go out to lonely places with her mate for more intimacy. Very early in the morning, the boys leave the dormitory, so that their visits may be kept a secret from others. On the other hand, the girls also start preparing for the day's routine like husking of grains after the departure of the boy friends.

It is quite natural that pre-marital sex is possible in the dormitory, which sometimes leads to pregnancy. Among the Dongria Kandha pre-marital pregnancy is never regarded as a social offence. Instances of pregnancies in the dormitory were few in the past as the girls used indigenous herbal medicines. But, now such pregnancies are more often occurring and the girls are now going to the medical centre at Bissam-Cuttack for abortion. Besides, the problem arises, when a particular girl who is already betrothed to some other boy became pregnant. Such incidents lead to loss of life and intra-clan and inter-clan feuds. Besides, when a girl who is previously engaged elopes with her dormitory partner, intra-clan and inter-clan feuds also break. A few case studies relevant in this context are discussed below.

Case Study 1: Wadeka Pula, daughter of Wadeka Ranga of village Khambasi was a member of the dormitory. She has been negotiated to a Kadraka boy of village Jangjodi. During her membership in the dormitory, there were rumors regarding her sex relationship with many *dhangukas* and in course of time she became pregnant. She told that Kadraka Mandala, son of Kadraka Musur of village Kuduballipadar is responsible for this and she

came to stay with Mandala's family. This led to a clan feud between the villagers of Jangjodi and Khambasi. The people of Jangjodi demanded Rs.30,000/- towards their *jala* that they paid to Pula's family. In turn, her family asked Kadraka Mandala to pay the amount and his family paid the amount by incurring a loan. Kadraka Mandala in grief left Kudubalipadar. It is said that he is staying in Assam and saying that he is not responsible for this. She is not a good girl and mixing with many boys. Now, Wadeka Pula is blessed with a daughter and staying with her parents.

Case Study 2: Jakasika Meneka, daughter of late Jakasika Jagili of village Kurli betrothed to Kadraka Pada of village Kadragumma. They gave a presentation of two buffaloes, two bottles of alcohol and Rs.2,500/- towards bride price. Jakasika Meneka became pregnant in the dormitory by her mate Wadeka Rela of village Khambasi. Her brother Jakasika Tina was against her marriage to Wadeka Rela since he had received the bride price from Kadraka Pada. Jakasika Tina was angry with her sister and threatened to behead her. The family members with fear sent Jakasika Meneka to her paternal uncle's house at village Mundaballi. She was 5 months of pregnancy. She gave birth to a dead child. After that she was brought to Kurli. Her brother returned the bride price. She waited for Wadeka Rela to take her as a wife. But he never visited her and kept quite. Jakasika Meneka in her grief did not take food, became weak day after day and at last died.

Case Study 3: Sikoka Beri, 25 years old, belongs to village Bhatigumma. Her parents died when she was a child. She came to stay in village Khajuri with her paternal uncle. She was negotiated for marriage with Wadeka Laba, son of Wadeka Beri of village Khajuri who at that time was reading in the Kurli residential school. He was also engaged with more girls. After completing the school, he left for Puri. In course of his stay at Puri, he fell in love with a non-tribal girl. His parents when got this news brought him back to the village.

Meanwhile, Beri became pregnant in course of her dormitory life. She was sent to Wadeka Laba's house. But, Laba denied to accept her and left

the village un-noticed. It is heard that Laba is in Kerala and had got married. Now Sikoka Beri is blessed with a child and living at her father-in-laws house.

Case Studies on Inter-Clan & Intra-Clan Feuds:

Case Study 1: One Nisika Kalang of village Hingaballi was negotiated to Jakasika Buruchi of village Mundaballi. The bridegroom's parents had not given any kind of bride-price. In the meanwhile, the Jakasika Buruchi fell in love with Wadeka Barango in course of his visit to the dormitory at village Mundaballi. She became pregnant and eloped with Wadeka Barango. In consequence, it provoked the Jakesika to avenge the Wadeka. It was on one market day, held at Chatikona, both the clan groups were front to front, all heavily drunken. They attacked each other and many of them from both the sides were injured. At this point, the Jakasika men threw one Nisika boy of Hingaballi under a moving train. Luckily, he escaped death with serious injuries. He was admitted to the hospital at Bissam Cuttack and remained there for one month. The dispute became more acute as the recent act of violence remained fresh in their minds. Nisika clan waited for the revenge. However, the matter was somehow settled by the intervention of the than Special Officer, Dongria Kandha Development Agency, preventing further bloodshed. Wadeka group paid Rs.2000/- to the Nisika group and the case was settled.

Case Study 2 : Wadeka Nabaghana Bismajhi of village Khambasi was a regular visitor of the dormitory at village Harama in Bisam-Cuttack block. There, he fell in love with the daughter of Mandika Pakuru Jani. However, the girl was engaged formerly to a Pusika boy of village Dongmati in Singpur block. Wadeka Nabaghana brought one Mandika girl to his village Khambasi. The Pusika Kinsmen came in groups to village Khambasi and attacked Wadeka Nabaghana's house. They took the girl back to village Dongmati to her in-laws house. However, there she stayed for about 2-3 months from where Wadeka Nabaghana again brought her to Khambasi. He paid the penalty

money amounting to Rs.9000/- to the Pusika Kinsmen. But, the Pusika Kinsmen still awaited the opportunity to taking the revenge.

Case Study 3: One Jakasika Kasadi, daughter of Jakasika Jangu, of village Kurli was negotiated to Kadraka Babru of village Kadrabundelli at an early childhood. He had made a customary payment of two buffaloes, two tins of alcohol and Ragi towards bride price. Jakasika Kasadi after maturity began to visit the dormitory where she developed intimacy with one Kadraka Sukkla of village Khambasi. She eloped with him. Her parents brought her back and sent her to in-law's house at village Kurli. One night, Jakasika Kasadi escaped from her in-law's house and came to her relative's house at village Niskabondeli. From there, she sent information to her lover Kadraka Sukkla to take her away. Accordingly, he brought Jakasika Kasadi to his village Khambasi and informed her husband Kadraka Babru to take the amount of compensation for the loss of the bride and the amount spent by him in connection with the marriage negotiation. However, he and his clansmen did not accept the offer, they wanted to collect it from the girl's parents whom they had paid.

Thus, the issue turned to a feud between Jakasika and Kadraka clan groups. The matter was referred to the Police Station at Sampur by Kadraka clan. Since Sukkla belonged to Kadraka clan, Kadraka Babru happens to be his brother and it was illegal to take away brother's wife. This enraged Kadraka Babru's parents. The villagers of Khambasi (Wadaka Mutha) supported to Kadraka Sukkla. Thus about 30-40 persons from Khambasi village and about 100 persons belonging to 7-8 Kadraka villages met at the Police Station with arms and when both the clan groups were about to unleash a fight, some educated youths from village Khambasi and the Ward member Wadaka Madan interfered and tried to settle the matter amicably. Kadraka Babru's clans men demanded Rs.1,50,000/- from the girl's parents which at last agreed for Rs.18,000/-. It was decided on a meeting held at DKDA office Chatikona in the presence of a Police S.I., MPW of Bondeli and some

members from village Khambasi and Kurli. A written document was prepared and it was finalized that half of the amount i.e. Rs.9000/- each had to be borne by the girl's parent and by Kadraka Sukkla of village Khambasi. But at last Kadraka Babru's family did not take the amount in anticipation that the same incident might recur in future if any girl from their village did the same mistake.

Thus, the case studies illustrate the nature and involvement of the kinsmen in the combats. Thus, Nayak remarks rightly that feuds occur in the wider network of kinship relations, social customs and practices and, although, these were terminated sooner or later, that was only for a temporary period, for the kinship relationship and social customs associated with it may in future press for a fresh feud.

There is a natural desire among the youth to attend the dormitory. The parents do not interfere with the life and discipline of the dormitory. Rather, they motivate their boys to visit the dormitory which make them fit for acquiring a life partner and having a family. The following case study is relevant in this context.

Case Study 1: One Wadeka Pradeep, son of Wadeka Ranga, belong to village Khambasi. Being shy, even at the age of fifteen was not attending the dormitory. Frequently, his mother was telling him 'how could you manage with your future wife if you did not attend the girls' dormitory'. Wadeka Pradeep was negotiated to a Kadraka girl belonging to village Bandeli under the constant pressure from her mother; he went to attend the dormitory at village Panchakodi along with other boys. In course of his visit, he developed intimacy with one Sikoka girl of the dormitory who had been engaged to a Kadraka boy belonging to village Tebapada. The Kadraka boy had brought another wife who was also blessed with children. He had not taken the Sikoka girl until then. But, when he heard the news regarding the affair, he captured the girl and took her to his village, Tebapada. But the girl was unwilling to stay with him. One day she escaped and went to her relation's house at

Khambasi and continued keeping relationship with Wadeka Pradeep. Her in-laws again forcibly took her back. At this instance, she sent information to Wadeka Pradeep to elope her otherwise she would take poison. On an appointed day, he brought the girl to his house. This led to clan feuds between the Kadraka and Sikoka kinsmen involving village Tebapada and village Panchakodi. The people of Tebapada harassed the people of Panchakodi by destroying their cattle, birds, attacking the houses, beating the people etc. This feud did not take further violent form due to the intervention of the school teachers of both the villages who helped settle the matter amicably. It was decided that the girl's father would pay Rs.12,000/- to the boy's father towards the penalty (*tapu*). The girl's father, in turn demanded the amount from his son-in-law Wadeka Pradeep. He paid Rs.9,000/- to the people of Tebapada village and the matter was finalized with this amount. Now Pradeep is having a son and is living happily. But the Wadeka kinsmen of village Khambasi were still waiting for an opportunity to get back the amount from the Kadraka clan's people of village Tabapada. Thus, though it seems that the conflict has come to an end, in reality, it exists in their minds as the Dongria view and value the clan solidarity more than anything else.

Besides the cases narrated above, quarrels over the dormitory girls are also frequent between the Dongria Kandha clan groups.

Case Study 1: One Salia. Bismajhi, son of Jalia. Bismajhi was attending the dormitories regularly in villages, Sutarguni and Gulgala even after his marriage. One day one Salia. Bismajhi came to the girls' dormitory of village Gulgala and saw one Lumba Pujari sleeping with the girl whose Sahala name was Dundibani with whom he had slept previously. He became furious and abused the girl. Her friends told that she was perhaps in love with Lumba. Pujari who enticed the girl with some magic. This added fire to his anger. He along with his friends awaited for the opportunity to take revenge. One day when Lumba was on his way to his village with a piglet, Salia and his friends caught hold of him, beat and snatched the piglet. Later they killed it, roasted

and consumed. Lumba came to the village and told the incident to the villagers. The village council meeting was called. Salia and his friends were fined with an amount of Rs.20/- and a tin of wine. A village feast was arranged to bring about a mutual reconciliation between Lumba and Salia.

Rules and Regulations of Dormitory :

- The dormitory members maintain strict secrecy of their activities inside the dormitory.
- Outsiders (other than the Dongria Kandha) are not allowed to enter the dormitory.
- The dormitory girls belong to more than one clan and sub-clan groups.
- Selection of mates in the dormitory is governed by rules of clan exogamy and village exogamy.
- The boy once betrothed to a girl is not allowed to attend the dormitory in which the girl is a member. But each is independent to keep relationship with any other youth of the opposite sex.
- Partnership changes from time to time in some cases.
- When a girl's parents shift to another village she joins the dormitory of that village may retains her original dormitory name or may be given a new name.
- The girls are given dormitory names after attending the dormitory for two to three years.
- Visitors from other dormitories are always given warm reception.
- A boy visitor from another village is given a partner for the night.
- Often the girls put the boys to test by physically assaulting them.
- A boy or a girl without having put on his/her traditional dress is not allowed to enter the dormitory.

Dormitory Fund :

Customarily the Dongria Kandha clansmen or lineage-men make gifts of swidden land called *Kambudi* to the dormitory girls. They cultivate the land and the produce is kept in the dormitory. Besides, *dhangudis*, form their own labour cooperative called *da-she-brute* and earn some money by working in the farm of their fellow villagers. During agricultural season they work in farms and fields of a number of Dongria families. Each family, for this labour gives the team food two times a day and a token money of Rs. 10/- to 20/-. This money is also kept in their dormitory fund. Moreover, in marriage ceremonies they also collect money for rendering customary services. They spend this money and produce of grain on the occasion of the visits of dance parties of *dhangudas* to their dormitories/villages, especially on many a festive occasion in the off-season. Every occasion is celebrated with a feast to which they also invite all their family members. They make provision to serve buffalo meat and rice on these festive occasions.

Retirement from the Dormitory :

A member ceases to continue in the dormitory after she gets married. No specific function is observed during the retirement period. However, the departing member is given a traditional shawl (*Ganda*) and two or three packets of *dhungi* and is entertained with a feast.

Functions of Dormitory :

Collective behaviour and group action are found inbuilt the Dongria Kandha social structure. It is the institution of youth dormitory that regulates the interpersonal relationships between men and women a great deal. It strengthens social unity, cohesiveness and solidarity, even if for the dormitory maiden often fights ensue between groups.

Social functions:

- The Dongria Kandha dormitory plays an important role in regulating the inter-village and inter-clan relationships.

- The institution helps to maintain community as well as group solidarity as the youth work together during their stay in the dormitory.
- It facilitates the socialization of the Dongria youth and inculcates in them a sense of status relationship with junior-senior considerations. The young girls once enter the dormitory are taught by the seniors how to obey their superior, about their cultural and customary practices and the code of conduct.
- By providing sleeping accommodation for the young girls, it relieves the burden of the parent's sharing the same room with their grown-up children, as their dwellings are only one roomed. They want their children, irrespective of boy and the girl to be independent.
- In social functions like marriage ceremonies, the dormitory members in groups work from the beginning to end. At the early phase of marriage, they accompany the girl during her courtesy visit to her relative's villages. Further, through them the invitation for marriage is sent to the relatives. They form dancing parties in bridal processions on marriages and also in festive occasions. Besides, on the day of marriage, (*gota-arpa*) the dormitory girls bring water in seven vessels and keep these over burning hearths constructed earlier in front of the house. The water from these pots with turmeric paste is used to give a bath to the boy friends of the groom who have reached the bride's house in advance. The boys in turn put some coins in a leaf plate, which the dormitory girls take. The bride is also given a ritual bath after the girls apply turmeric to her. The make-up of the bride like putting ornaments etc. is also done by her dormitory girl friends.
- The same procedure is also repeated on the fourth day of the marriage at the groom's village in which the dormitory girls of that village perform the required rites and render necessary services to the bride's friends and in return get a token money.

- Acquiring mates by capture is part of the marriage practices among the Dongria Kandha. In case of a capture, the girl's parents and relatives do not speak out their mind rather they keep quiet. It is the dormitory girls who collect information from their dormitory-visitor friends and try to rescue her.?
- The dormitory also helps in slower development of the young girls awakening sexual curiosity to be satisfied step by step.?
- It is an important centre of recreation for the youth.
- Thus, the institution of dormitory has a pervasive social role to play towards initiating the growing generation to know and cope with the customs and traditions of their society.

Educative function:

- In the dormitory, the younger members learn from their elders discipline, social approbation and justice, reciprocity of obligations, customary laws of their own society. Besides, through folktales, folk stories, riddles and narration of past events they become able to know the relations between efforts and rewards, between crime and punishment.
- The dormitory is a forum where they learn how to regulate sex, have successful conjugal life. The seniors provide tips on sex education.
- Lessons on various agricultural operations and other minor economic pursuits are imparted in the dormitory through songs and mimetic dances depicting them.
- Besides, the dormitory mates get the scope to learn the rhythms of dance and music, and techniques of making art and crafts, often by imitating the seniors. It serves as a centre for preserving the cultural heritage and folk tradition, in addition to transmitting the same from generation to generation.

Economic function:

- The dormitory members form labour co-operatives known as *dash-bruti*. The group work in Podu fields of the landwoning households for which they get food two times a day and some money as token remuneration.
- Besides, each member works in her allotted Podu plot.
- Thus dormitories help in providing training to the youths in different economic pursuits. It is observed that the Dongria Kandha houses are homes for the married couples and their smaller children. The life and interest of the youth centres round the dormitory.

Persistence and Change:

The Dongria dormitories are functioning as living institutions forming the centre of chief attractions for the youth. They have survived the challenges of time and all external and internal forces acting on them. The dormitories are still found well maintained and well attended. The dormitory rules and disciplines are followed quite earnestly. However, in recent years the educated youth are averse to follow the dormitory traditions and practices.

The Dongria Kandha are under the impact of development and change. More and more outside contact and exposure to mass media have registered some changes in their socio-cultural life. The Dongria villages on the Niyamgiri hills are no more inaccessible. The two Micro Projects set-up in the Niyamgiri hills have brought about significant changes in the socio-economic life and living of the people. With the establishment of residential as well as non-residential educational institutions and non-formal education centres in the Dongria villages by the development agency, education has made some progress among the Dongria Kandha. In villages, where educational institutions are located and which lie at close proximity to urban areas, some boys in

particular have now started a movement voicing against the continuance of the dormitory organizations. It started from the village Khambesi and now spreading to other villages. The *Khambasi Yubak Sangh* organized meetings involving youths and parents of other villages and discussed the demerits of the dormitory life and its adverse effect on the youth. Some of the demerits as pointed out by these youngmen are discussed below.

- The intra and inter clan feuds that often takes place among the Dongria is mostly due to the practice of their dormitory life. According to their custom, in most cases, the negotiation for marriage of a girl takes place at a very early age much before she attends the dormitory. Latter, while attending the dormitory, if she falls in love with some other dormitory mate and in course of time get eloped, then, such a situation gives rise to quarrel and conflict between the girl's family and the family of the boy to whom she has been engaged from her childhood. That eventually leads to a serious clan feud resulting in murder and heavy financial loss to both the groups.
- In the Dongria society pre-marital pregnancy is not considered as an offence. Even the in-laws accept the bride saying that she has brought the *Mamar bija*. Since pre-marital pregnancy is attributed to dormitory living these young boys are no more in favour of continuance of such an institution. Now, they do not like to marry girls who are pregnant before marriage. Recently, there are instances where the girls have faced problems due to their pre-marital pregnancy. Such cases have been discussed in the foregoing chapter.
- They opine that due to the presence of the dormitory institution in villages the parents are least bothered about the marriage of their grown up girls. They believe that the girl will select her own mate during her dormitory living. But the girls who fail to get a suitable match while in dormitory grow older year by year and remain spinsters, life long.

- Similarly, if a boy already engaged to a girl at an early age elopes another *dhangudi* while attending the dormitory and does not accept the girl whom he has betrothed as his second wife, the girl cannot marry and has to remain a spinster, unless and otherwise some one proposes her. Such conflicting situations sometimes lead to clan feuds.
- According to their customary rule, even after marriage a boy can attend the dormitory but not the girl. Now, the young wives disapprove this practice and do not like their husbands attending the dormitory. In case, the husband attends the dormitory against the consent of the wife, quarrel and conflict takes place between the spouses that results in divorce. Recently, one such case is reported in the village Khambasi.

Case Study: Wadeka Jambu, 30 years old, daughter of Wadeka Gambu of village Khambasi married to Jakasika Bhima of village Kurli. However, it was all right for a period of 3-4 months of their marriage. The problem started when Jakasika Bhima began to attend the dormitory. There were frequent quarrels over this between the husband and wife. It was so acute that one day without any information Wadeka Jambu left Kurli and came to stay with one of her relative's house at village Singpur. After 3 months Jakasika Bhima got the news of her stay went to meet her. But she denied going with him. Rather, she returned to her parent's home at village Khambasi. Now, she is continuing as a dormitory member. Her husband had brought another widow as a wife.

- Due to cultural contact and growing of awareness, at present, they feel that the un-married boys and girls should no longer sleep together in the dormitory and mix freely which is not found in the neighbouring societies. Therefore, they consider such practice as a shameful and uncivilized act.
- The other important reason for abolishing the dormitory institution is the lack of interest among the young boys and girls towards education. Although, schools are functioning in this area, the enrolment position

of the school is very low added with large-scale absenteeism and dropout. This is because of the fact that boys and girls remain frequently absent from the schools due to their attraction towards the dormitory life. Therefore, they feel that unless until the dormitory organization is closed the enrolment position specifically of the girls in schools will not be improved and dropout and absenteeism can not be checked.

The above issues were discussed in the meeting attended by persons of different Dongria villages, where two views were emerged. Persons belonging to Kurli G.P. were in favour of closing down the dormitory institution while others belonging to villages like Nisikabundeli, Tenda, Duargadi, Baligumma, etc. advocated in favour of the continuance of this institution. However, the groups that were against the dormitory threatened the other group of dire consequences if they continue to visit the dormitory in future. Accordingly, they in small groups kept watch over different dormitory at night and the visitors to the dormitory are caught hold of and assaulted by cutting their hairs forcibly. As a result of confrontation between two groups, there were an atmosphere of panic and fear among the youths and dormitories were remained un-attended for about six months. However, the forcible closure of dormitories could not be continued for a longer period. Generally, more and more youths, particularly, the *dhangudis* could not resist their desire for attending the dormitory and created public opinion in their favour for revival of the dormitory institution. They started attending the dormitory and now the group, which opposed the continuance, has become a non-entity. Under such agitation, the dormitories in the village Kurli were broken. Now these are functioning in Dhapas.

Conclusion:

The dormitory organization, *da-she-hada* is an important traditional social institution of the Dongria Kandha. In spite of incursions of modernity the institution is still found in an active state; people value all its functioning in

The dormitory organization of the Dongria Kandha shows that it is one of the very important institutions which embraces a host of others. Development functionaries need to be aware of its utility. The institution is in the process of transformation. But to what extent the transformation is beneficial for the society remains an open question to all. The Dongria Kandha social structure is subject to two opposing forces acting upon it: one for continuity, conservation, apathy for the traditional institutions and the other for changes, showing dissatisfaction with the existing conditions, substitution of old values with new.

The tensions generated as a result of such confrontation between the younger generation, one believing in tradition, the other coming under the influence of new system of education and social intercourse with the outside culture are symptomatic of weakening social solidarity and group strength. Nevertheless, the traditional youth organizations can be mobilized and their potentialities can be harnessed for the betterment of the community.

CHAPTER-VII

Life Cycle

Reproduction:

After marriage pregnancy (*Milaya-mane-Futata*) is very much welcome, because according to the Dongria belief pattern, one of their ancestors is likely to be born. It provides physical evidence of a married couple's fecundity and inevitable parenthood in the society, and thereby the couple feels elated, as the husband and wife, would be attaining the status of *Abba* and *Aiya*. Pregnancy of a woman portends the addition of a extra member in the family who is expected to increase the manpower in the family which is essential for economic betterment in future. Birth of child is believed to be the outcome of the combined blessings of the Supernatural Powers. Longing for children, irrespective of any sex is very common in the Dongria society. Though a male child is preferred, baby of any sex is considered to be the blessed child of *Darani-Penu*. "Na wadi Dukri Milaya mane-Fututa" (it means my wife is pregnant, she will give birth a child and therefore, she is a rich woman now). This the husband speaks boastfully before others.

On the other hand, if a woman does not conceive even after two to three years of marriage, she is despised by her husband and members of his clan. The husband sometimes, takes recourse to the application of indigenous medicines purged with magical rite by the *Dishari* (Medicine man) for pregnancy. If it fails, she is suspected of being barren. Barrenness is regarded as a stigma and hence an unfortunate phenomenon. No scientific treatment is undertaken for its redemption. The only alternative for the issueless Dongria Woman is to make a vow that she will offer a goat or a lamb for sacrifice during *Ghanta Parab* before the *Dharani Penu* in the event of birth of a child

Cessation of menses, nausea, giddiness and vomiting are primary indications of pregnancy but later on the pregnancy is confirmed with the

usual abdominal protuberance. The last month of cessation of menstrual flow is taken to be the first month of conception and in-order-to calculate the date of birth of the child nine months more are added to the first month and during the last month offerings are made as-well-as feasts are given to friends and relatives before the impending delivery of the child. Though they neither perform any ritual to mark the conception nor observe any pre-natal ceremony, every care of the enceinte is taken to avoid miscarriage or abortion of the embryo or foetus. But the parturient is required to observe certain taboos and restrictions for instance:

1. She should avoid looking at the sun or moon during the eclipse. If she looks, the child will be physically deformed.
2. She must not visit the burial ground or come to its vicinage lest she may be bewitched which may harm the child in the womb.
3. She must not go to desolate or secluded places in the evening or night so as to avoid coming under the influences of evil spirits
4. In her advance stage of pregnancy she must avoid taking up arduous work like- carrying logs from the forest, cutting trees etc. as it is believed that hard work may lead to abortion or miscarriage.

All through pregnancy, the husband tries to shoulder more responsibility and takes care that his wife is not put to hardship.

Childbirth:

The delivery takes place at the husband's house. The first delivery as-well-as the subsequent ones takes place in the second room (*Dapa room*) of the house. As soon as she experiences labour pain, the second room is emptied. All the articles are temporarily shifted to the first room or to a neighbour's house to avoid pollution. An old lady of the community acts as a midwife and assists the parturient during the delivery. Excepting the husband other elderly men of own community attend the woman outside until the delivery is over. In case of difficult delivery services of the Shaman is sought

who performs an occult rite to waive the difficulty and cause easy delivery. A delivery in a family becomes the concern of the entire village. The villagers render physical, moral and economic help during this crisis.

Delivery takes place in sitting-posture with the help of three to four elderly women, who are neighbours. The midwife cuts the umbilical cord with a small knife (*Kati*) and places the placenta in an earthen pot and buries the same behind the house carefully.

After birth, the child is cleaned properly with a piece of cloth and the mother uses cloth pads. Both are taken out to be bathed in tepid water by the acting midwife. Baby is gently rubbed with ragi-power mixed with boiled turmeric paste to uproot if any hairs, from its body.

Post-natal care:

The post-parturient mother is not given any particular care. In a nuclear family it is not possible for the husband to keep himself engaged always with the care of the wife at the cost of his daily routine of work as-well-as seasonal pressure of agricultural work.

Therefore, the mother takes care of herself and that of the baby to the extent it is possible for her. She cooks the food for the family throughout the period of pollution. But for the first four days the midwife attends to the mother and the newly born baby. During this period she cleans the room, massages the body of the mother and the baby and attends to such other work as nursing the warming the newly born baby and the mother. On the 21st day, she gets a customary payment of 5 kilograms of ragi or 3 kilograms of unboiled rice.

The mother of the newly born child is not given any solid food on the day of delivery. Up to 21 days, she is not given ragi-gruel, but instead, is given boiled rice and vegetable-curry. She does not eat any green leaves as it may irritate her stomach. No salt is given to her during this period. A pinch of turmeric powder is added to the curry only. After 21 days, she is usually

given regular diet and redgram (*Kandul*). Until 21 days, the mother takes care of herself and her baby. She cleans all cloths in the stream, massages and nurses the baby etc....

The pollution period continues for 21 days. During this period the members of the household and other consanguineal kins of the ego are considered as polluted; and the villagers and other members of the community do not accept food or water from the polluted ones. They are also denied participation in any common social or religious functions of the village. The household itself observes certain restrictions in socio religious matters. Its members do not take non-vegeterian diet, including fish during the pollution period and do not participate in any communal feasts and festivals. The husband and other male members too, do not cur hairs, shave beards or pare nails. No clothes are also washed.

On 21st day, the purificatory ritual takes place. Elderly ladies of the own clan and some neighbours co-operate with the parturient to clean the *Dapa*-room with an emulsion of clay and cowdung. The mother cleans all clothes if she can or else it is done by other elderly women. The child is bathed in the stream for the first time with the anointment of turmeric paste. The mother also takes bath in the stream and carries water in a new earthen-ware after putting on a piece of new cloth. She cooks food with that water in a new earthen pot.

Jani (Priest), *Pujari* and *Gurumeni* (Assistant to the *Jani*) and a Shamanin are invited on this occasion to perform rituals and make offerings for the ancestor-spirits *Dumba*. The Shamanin draws 17 number of icons of linear-squares with sundried rice-powder before the main post *Tuli Munda* of the house. She arranges other puja accessories and invokes the ancestors one after the other with prolonged incantations. While invoking when she gets into trance, *Jani*, *Pujari* and *Gurumeni* also start reciting incantations. The *Gurumeni* drops wine on each of the sundried rice balls placed within the line images. When the Shamanin gets back to her senses, a fowl is cut by

the *Pujari* and blood is sprinkled over each rice ball. It is believed that the ancestors are appeased through this ritual.

The fowl is then cooked by the mother separately. Cooked rice and fowl are offered as ritualistic food to the ancestor-spirits by the *Jani*. This food is after wards taken by all the members of the family and the religious functionaries.

On that day, close affinal and consanguineal relatives, members of the lineage and some fellow villagers are invited to a feast, which is hosted by the family. A buffalo is killed in the evening for the purpose.

The relatives present 5 kilograms of rice, one fowl and a bottle of liquor each, excepting the mother's brother of the newly born, who presents a lamb and 10 kilograms of sundried rice. Members of the lineage and fellow-villagers do not present any thing. On the following morning invited relatives go back. After the departure of the relatives and guests the entire house is cleaned, its walls and floor are smeared with a thin emulsion of clay and cowdung. This frees the members of the household from pollution and thereafter there is no restriction on their social intercourse with others. Hereafter the family can participate in community religious functions and perform rituals.

After 21 days mother resumes her normal domestic work, but does not go to the forest nor to the agricultural field to assist her husband until the baby is four to six weeks old.

Name-Giving Ceremony:

When the child is about a month old, the name giving *Mila-Daru* ceremony is performed. On this occasion, rituals and feasts are not elaborate. Maternal uncle and maternal grand-parents are invited on this occasion.

The process of grain-divination is adopted to select the appropriate name for the child. The maternal uncle brings a leaf-cup full of water from the stream and places it on a grinding stone (*Wali*). The child is bathed neatly

with turmeric water and then its eyelashes are bedecked and embellished with eye cream prepared out of lamp-shoot and a dot is made on its forehead with the same. The baby is made to sit on the lap of its mother and is surrounded by the neighbours. If the child is a male then the maternal grand-father takes the lead to select the name. If the child is a female, then the maternal grand-mother takes the lead to select the name. Twelve numbers of paddy (*Kuli*) are kept in the left hand and thrown one after the other in the leaf-cup by uttering the name of the ancestors. Names are uttered as per the sex of the ancestors and sex of the child. And while uttering a name if two grains touch each other, that name is selected for the child. The paddy and the leaf-cup are thereafter thrown in the stream.

After the selection of the name, the mother first addresses baby only once by that name and thereafter others call the baby by that name.

On that occasion a small feast is held where the Domb functionaries like- *Barika* (Messenger), *Goudia*, (Cowherder) and *Jhateni* (Sweeper) also participate

When the child becomes six weeks old it is taken out of the home, as the mother is to move out to the agriculture field, forest, market, and other places out of necessity. So the child is taken out ceremoniously in a midday by two to three elderly boys (in case of male child) beyond the village boundary under the shade of an umbrella on payment of remuneration which varies from one rupee to fifty paise. Only the consanguineal relatives remain present. The child is kept under the shade of the umbrella for 5 to 10 minutes and returned back to its mother. After this only, the child can move with the mother to any place.

Ear-Lobe-Piercing Ceremony:

There is no formal ceremony for ear-lobe piercing. It is otherwise known as *Ki-Ka-Patpikamu*. Along with ear-lobe piercing, nasal septums are also pierced. This ceremony is held both for a male child as-well-as for a female child. When the child is six months old, a woman of the village, proficient in

the art of piercing is requested to pierce four places at the ear-lobes and septums of the child with help of thorns.

After piercing, four Nim-Sticks are inserted. To stop bleeding castor oil or baked-turmeric paste is applied at the injuries. After a fortnight when the wound is healed up the sticks are taken out and the holes remain in tact.

For ear-lobe and nasal septum piercing, the women is given 2 kilograms of ragi powder. On this occasion relatives are not invited and no ritual is observed.

There is no other ceremony during the childhood. The birth rituals are not so elaborate among the Dongria Kandha.

Excepting nursing and feeding relevant for the child, adult guidance and sponsorship are very informal. The parents remain busy throughout the day and practically get no time to guide the child. Occasionally, to mend the erratic behaviour guidance is given to the child. So far personality formation of the child depends much upon his or her perception of the activities of the members inside the house and outside the house. Grand-parents are rather helpful in this connection who find enough time to amuse and guide the child, the roles of neighbours are also too significant in this respect.

In the process of socialization, when the child gradually grows up to adulthood (18 to 20 years in case of a male and 14 to 16 years in case of a female) longs for life partner as per prevailing customs of the society. Thus, he or she is married which has been dealt with in the Chapter, "Social Organization".

Pubescent Ceremony:

There is no specific pubescent ceremony or rites for the girls when they attend their first menstruation. Nor there is any ceremony for the boys when they attend adulthood. Earlier, when the dormitory house (*Adisbetta* or *Hada-sala*) was functioning properly in each village the girl who attained puberty,

was exclusively kept for a week in that room and attended by her mother and her sister-in-laws, if any. But now-a-days, since the dormitory organization has lost its importance, the girl is confined in the second room of the hut (*Dhapa*) and attended by her female relatives.

During the seven days, she is considered to be a sick girl and uncleaned. She is tabooed to enter into the kitchen and touch other belongings of the house. She does not participate in any rituals, whether conducted at home or in the village.

On the seventh day, a Shamanin is called to invoke the spirit, *Gangu Penu*, only for the first time, who is supposed to entrap her during menstruation and cause physical injuries.

The girl is taken beside the stream where a ritual is offered by the Shamanin with half kilogram of sundried rice, a pinch of vermilion and a red-coloured chick. The Shamanin utters incantations and puffs intermittently from the girl's face up to her legs. It is believed, by this *modus operendi*, the spirit goes away from the girl's body. To appease the spirit from future attack, the chick is sacrificed and blood is sprinkled over the sundried rice and on the feet of the girl.

This operation is not repeated in future. After this the girl takes bath and gets free from pollution.

Death Rites:

It is believed that, life (*Jarmana or Jurma*) and death (*Hateyas*) are determined by the Supreme Being, *Darani Penu* who has created this world. To Dongria Kandha death has always an evil association. It is always feared and is believed to be the work of the malicious spirits, black magic or the wrath of gods and deities. The truth that death is unavoidable and no one can escape it in the mortal world is not unknown to the Dongrias, yet they cannot face the incidence of death boldly. They fight tooth and nail to save a person till his/her last gasp by administering their folk medicines and by

performing all sorts of magico-religious rites. Not with standing all their efforts, if death occurs, the Dongrias console themselves and make arrangements for proper disposal of the dead. Because the soul (*Ukoti*), which activates a person to grow, rests at heaven (*Petpur*) after death and this must be satisfied as per existing norms in the society.

When a man dies his female relatives including his wife and a few others from his clan rend the air with loud lamentation which continues till the dead body is taken to the cremation ground. If this is not done, it is believed that the departed soul would not realize the depth of sorrow of his relatives and would grumble in the other world. When a woman dies kinsmen also express their grief in similar manner.

Immediately after death the body is considered defiled and not touched either by any member of the deceased's household or members of the deceased clan. It is believed, the spirit is dissatisfied and moves round the house until cremated and may be harmful to any member. Hence, the Dongria neighbours belonging to other clans if any, are invited to dispose off the dead body. The Domb, though untouchables, extend their co-operation sympathetically in bringing firewood, digging pit in burial ground and doing other sundry work.

Four persons lift the corpse and carry it through the back-door and place it on a rope-knitting cot to be carried to the cremation ground. The corpse is not carried through the first room, as it is considered to be the abode of the ancestor-spirits. Above the cot, the deceased's personal belongings like-tobacco-container, axe, knife, utensils, agricultural implements, small quantities of various cereals and a handful of straw from the roof of the deceased are placed alongside and the bier is carried to the cremation ground in a procession of mourners. Two earthen-wares with water are also carried to the cremation ground.

After the party reaches the cremation ground, a few of the community members go for collection of fire wood, a few others remain watchful to the

dead body, lest it might be eaten by dog and jackle and the Domb dig the pit only after the eldest son gives first stroke. A pit about 4 cubits long, one and half cubits breadth and 2 cubits depth is made upon which funeral pyre is prepared.

The corpse is then circumbulated clock-wise around the pyre three time to exhibit the body to *Darani-Penu* for the last time so that the soul of the deceased may remain content. The corpse is then placed on the pyre in such a way that the face remains up-ward and the head remains towards the east. It is believed that the eastern side of the heaven is the abode of all ancestor-spirits. By placing the corpse in the manner it is believed that the face of the deceased is shown to the ancestor-spirits indicating thereby soul of the former is joining them.

Above the corpse again wood are piled up. All the belongings of the deceased are put on the dead body along with a-few coins (*Taka*). The eldest son first lits the fire with a bundle of straw and sets it to the pyre and others follow him. Until the body is cremated entirely, it is watched, lest it may be a ghost in future. After the body is burnt, water carried in the earthen-wares is poured to extinguish the fire.

The mourners' instead of going back straight to the deceased's house, take bath in the stream with bark of mango tree to get themselves purified. After reaching home old clothes are stripped off and clean clothes are put on.

The ladies too, purify the deceased's house by sprinkling an emulsion of clay and cowdung. The ladies too, take bath and get themselves purified clothes are washed by themselves. The mourning period continues for two days only.

The Dongria Kandha observe death pollution for two days. During this period the members of the deceased's household are expected to observe certain taboos. They do not take non-vegetarian diet during this period.

During this period oil is not used in cooking as-well-as for hair-dressing. Besides, the male members refrain from shaving and paring their nails. The community members who accompany the dead body to the cremation ground also observe pollution for two days. They are also not touched by the neighbours. No ritual is observed during this period. In the family of the deceased, spouses refrain from physical contact with each other. A bit of *Nim-leaf (Margosa)* powder mixed with the *ragi-gruel* is eaten during the pollution period. Ripe fruits and crops in the field are not touched. The second room is not used at all during the period. All the agricultural works are suspended for the two days. Villagers also avoid members of the deceased's family and do not accept any food or water from them.

On the second day, mortuary rite (*Dasha or Karja-ki-manamu*) takes place. *Jani* performs the purificatory rite at the altar of the ancestor-spirits. *Ghar-Dumba* and *Kandha Dumba* are mainly propitiated on this occasion. Two lumps of sundried rice representing two *Dumbas* are placed separately on two images drawn on the floor with *Arua*- rice powder. The *Ichan Jani* (Assistant to the *Jani*) fixes mango twigs and incense sticks upon the rice balls. While uttering incantations, the *Ichan Jani* waves a lighted lamp around the rice balls, and throws incense powders there a number of times, the *Jani* too, pours wine on the rice balls a number of times and a pig is sacrificed there.

Then both *Jani* and *Ichan jani* stand up and utter prolonged chants in chorus and circumbulate around the rice balls. Ultimately the *Ichan jani* sacrifices a goat there and sprinkles its blood over the rice balls. It is believed that the ancestor-spirits are satisfied through this rite, and as a result, they allow the deceased to be united with them. After that, it is believed, the spirit of the deceased does not further trouble or harass the members of his household.

Relatives, community members and neighbours are invited on this occasion to participate in a feast. The feast is arranged in the morning. A

buffalo is killed for this purpose. Half of its meat is cooked and distributed in the feast. From the rest half, chunks of meat are separately wrapped up in *Siali* leaves and sent to headman of other Dongria villages as token of death message. This is the way how the death news is circulated among all members of the community. In the evening all the relatives disperse. Thus, the ceremony comes to an end.

The unusual cases of death, such as, murder, suicide, persons dying of snake-bite, cholera, small-pox, labour-pain etc follow different rites. The Shamanins are invited on this occasion to trace out malignant spirits by the help of rice-divination and getting into trance. After knowing the spirit, responsible for such death, sacrifice is prescribed and the spirit is appeased accordingly. The dead bodies of such persons are never cremated but are buried unlike those who die a natural death. It is believed that persons who are killed by tiger are transformed into tiger-spirits. The children are usually buried.

Further, occurrence of repeated deaths in a family is ascribed as unnatural deaths and malignant spirits and ghosts are responsible for them. For that *Aejo-Arpi-manamu*, seeing the ghost ceremony takes place which involves lot of expenditure. About half a dozen expert Shamanins along with the *Jani* are utilized to traceout such malevolent spirits. When the *Jani* is engaged to appease the ancestor-spirits, the Shamanins trace out pernicious spirits in each corner of the village. Large number of sacrifices are given to appease these spirits. Most of the relatives are invited to participate in this function.

CHAPTER-VIII

Leadership Pattern, Deviant Actions and Social Control

Study on the leadership pattern of the Dongria Kandha throws light on their socio-political organization. The position of the leaders in a society is very important. The leaders not only enjoy status and high prestige in the society, but they also exercise considerable authority in getting things done in the most correct manner. Their opinion in settling quarrels and conflicts is decisive.

The leaders may be classified as traditional and modern depending on the antiquity of their offices, or on their roles. The head of the family fulfills the various essential functions and enforces the norms in accordance with the established customs and sanctions. The community at large is composed of such families and since this is more or less based on kinship ties, each family acts in conformity with an accepted mode. This mode, though authoritative is guarded by custom. This function is further centralized in an individual of higher prestige. These authorities are exercised at four level that is family, lineage, village and *Mutha*. The leaders shoulder all responsibilities, participate in all social activities and effectively influence the life of their fellowmen. In this process this becomes an institution and office turn into hereditary normally. The traditional leadership is based on hereditary status and position. The status is ascribed rather than achieved. This rests upon the formal arrangement of the society. In contrast to the traditional leadership, modern leadership is achieved. The function of modern leaders are diverse. They are more oriented towards development activities. They are progressive and make liaison between government agencies and the people. They held elective posts under the statutory panchayat system. Modern leaders are amorphous and unstable.

Notwithstanding the inroads made by the newly introduced statutory panchayat in the area of their habitat the Dongria Kandha still try to regulate their community affairs through traditional tribal council which is a fairly effective organ of social control. It is however, convenient to discuss the roles of the village leaders before switching on to the leaders of the wider organization.

Village Leaders:

Each village is a political unit having its own set of officers. These officers are in an informal way the leaders of the village and they have more voice in the village affairs than others. The leaders are of two types, namely-sacerdotal and secular.

Jani:

Jani, the priest, though religious head is also formal head of the village council. All important matters are brought to his notice for opinion and intervention. As the custodian of the norms and social sanctions, depending on the gravity of the matter, he may convene a meeting of the village council to decide the issue or may settle it himself.

He is the formal spokesman of the village. It is his duty to see that justice is done to the aggrieved person and breach of the norm is restored. He participates in all important village affairs such as- rituals, festivals, ceremonies etc. At the time of betrothal, marriage, funeral rites in any family of the village his formal presence as-well-as participation is indispensable. He is expected to protect the interests of his fellow-villagers. In the event of any of his fellow-villager having been offended or assailed by a person of another village he (headman of the distressed party's village) takes the issue to the headman of the other village (aggressor's). The date for the observance of various community festivals and worship of village and other gods and deities is fixed by him. Likewise the date for the communal hunting is also fixed by him in consultation with village elders. As the religious head, he officiates at both individual and community rituals. He can only and does

worship *Darani-penu*. He is the specialist mediator between the people on the one hand and the Dongria Kandha Supreme God and other deities. In order to command respect from his fellow villagers he observes the prescribed taboos connected with his duties. Thus the *Jani* as a secular chief as well as a religious specialist occupies a very important position in the Dongria Kandha village. By virtue of his important position and the roles he performs, he is highly respected by the people.

The post of *Jani* is hereditary. After the death of the father, the son, or in his absence any of his consanguineal relative becomes *Jani*. Though hereditary the aptitude and the capability to memorise the hymns and incantations are taken into considerations to become *Jani*. These hymns and incantations are learnt in the process of socialization by any one of the sons and then only he is selected as *Jani*.

No ceremony or function is held for selection. Only a declaration is given to that effect before the assemblage of persons in a meeting of the Panchayat organized by the village messenger.

In case the same person proves himself to be incompetent, he is substituted by any other adult member of his family with adequate competency. It is also declared before the public. But this sort of occasion has never occurred. Moreover, a *Jani*, once officiates is considered to be the incarnation of *Darani-Penu* and supposed to be of special nature with all goodness.

The *Jani* does not receive any honorarium for the services rendered to the people. He holds the highest post in the village and it is the prestige only he earns for his services. But during communal worships etc., he is given a major share and head of the sacrificial animals though he never demands.

Bishmajhi:

Bishmajhi collects revenue both for land and forest from each household of the village and functions as the custodian of the fund. He occupies the next position to *Jani* and presides over the village council meetings when

the latter is either ill or absent. In consultation with the *Jani*, he fixes up the rate of subscription for different communal feasts and festivals. As an assistant to *Jani* he together with the latter presides over all individual functions, *Jani*, in consultation with *Bishmajhi* levies fine as per the nature of offence committed by an accused. The amount realized in the shape of fine from the offenders is kept with him. His office does not carry any remuneration.

Barika:

Though *Barika* or messenger is a Domb, he holds a very key position in the leadership organization of the Dongria Kandha Community. By virtue of his role and functions he is not only obeyed but respected by all members of the Dongria community.

Barika, being the messenger, conveys messages and carries news around the village, summons people to the village meetings, informs the village officials about the same, collects cash or grains from the villagers on instruction from the headman, and informs the villagers about important events in the village, such as-death, birth etc. His presence is necessary in all meetings. He always remains with the *Jani* and *Bishmajhi* on all important occasions and in all village meetings and events.

He accompanies the villagers to deposit land and forest revenues at Bissam Cuttack. As per tradition, he wakes the villagers up from their bed early in the morning and enquires about their personal difficulties when they assemble in the *Kuddi* (seat of Darani-Penu). He as Oriya knowing man, is the liaison between the villagers and outsiders. He arranges petty loans for the villagers on request. He fixes rates for each commodity to be sold in the market by the villagers. He is supposed to safeguard the interests of the villagers.

He assists the village youth in the capture of bride. His views are taken into consideration in the matter of bride-price fixation. Whenever any dispute arises between the clan members he intervenes and tries to bring about an

amicable settlement as all are his masters. If any sort of criminal offence takes place in the village, he informs the police in consultation with *Bishmajhi* and *Jani*. He takes care of the Government officials or outsiders who visit the village. Thus, the *Barika*, though a menial, considered to be an untouchable, is a key person in maintaining integrity among the villagers.

For doing these jobs, the *Barika* collects about 5 kilograms of ragi or *Kosla* rice from each household during harvest. Besides, he also collects cooked rice every day from each household.

Apart from these secular leader, there are also sacerdotal leaders in each Dongria village who too, hold, more or less equally important positions in the village council. They are as follows:

Pujari:

He is one of the religious functionaries next to *Jani*, who has a specific role during *Meria*-festival only. During the *Meria*-festival procession he holds up an umbrella (*Chatri*) made of bamboo. He is the custodian of that umbrella and prepares the umbrella himself. He is the first man to strike at *Meria* animal ceremoniously with an axe, and thereafter others follow him. He too, is the custodian of all utensils utilized in *Meria*- festival. He does not get any remuneration for his services.

Dishari:

He is the medicine-men who practices occultism and folk-medicine in order to cure certain ailments and maladies. He performs recondite magical rites while uttering esoteric invocations to cure sick persons. His services can be sought by any person or by any family or by the whole village. In addition to these services, he imparts training in his art to those persons who are interested in it. For his services, the *Dishari* charges a nominal amount of 25 paise and takes those animals which are sacrificed in the magical rites.

Bejuni:

Bejuni is the Shaman who performs divinations through trance and recitation of incantations so as to decipher the Supernatural Agencies responsible for the malady or disease or death or distress of some sort. She is also the sorcerer and bewitched person. Her services are needed in individual families and communal festivals to ward off the evil-spirits.

In a village, there might be one or more *Bejunis*. The head of the *Bejunis* is called *Pat-Bejuni*, who is expected to be proficient in her art, and thus is treated as the top specialist *Bejuni*.

She accepts no remuneration other than the rice supplied for the purpose of divination and the head of sacrificial animals.

Except her specialist role she has no other definite role in village affairs.

Gouda and Jhateni:

Goudia and *Jhateni* are primarily menials appointed by the Dongria Kandha from the Domb community on annual contract basis to graze the cattle and sweep the village street respectively. Though they are menials, they play very important roles in the village affairs of the Dongria Kandha. They too, become the mediators between the Dongria Kandha and outsiders as they know Oriya, and work out the rates for different commodities through negotiation with the latter, before sale or exchange. Occasionally, they also function as commission-agents of the licentiate liquor-vendors in the village for sale of liquor.

Like the village *Barika* they also accompany the team that goes to capture a bride, and act as mediators to solve different disputes which arise out of long-standing clan-feuds. They are invited to participate in the village council meeting and their considered views are sought in various matters.

Modern Leadership:

The Panchayat Raj system in India has evolved out of the Community Development Programme introduced in October, 1952 for the development of the backward and neglected rural sector. In 1957, it was realized that the programme has not brought about the desired results and because of that the community development programmes and schemes could not make a satisfactory head-way. Hence in 1957, Balwantraji Mehta Committee suggested the remedy. The Committee recommended the constitution of a Three-Tier structure of local self-governing bodies from the village to the district level all over the Country.

Accordingly the village or the 'Gram' remained at the very bottom level from which a leader designated as 'Member' is elected for a specific term to represent the village at the Panchayat level. The Gram Panchayat functioned as a Corporate body of members from one or more villages whose Chairman is called Sarpanch—a prolific leader by direct election.

Member:

Thus apart from the traditional leaders in the village organization, members have been nominated as statutory leaders in the Dongria Kandha society. Each village has one ward member to work as its representative in the Panchayat. The member is nominated by his villagers. He is directly responsible to the immediate government agencies, for reporting important problems of the village. He has to mobilize cooperation of his villagers for developmental works in the village. The members are by far the most rich, prompt and clever persons in the village. The fact that the member is nominated by the village, presupposes that he must have some influence in the traditional system of the society, even if he holds no formal position in that system. By virtue of the fact that he is resourceful and opulent, his commands are obeyed and his views are final in decision-making. In some villages the traditional leaders, who are young and energetic are also nominated as ward members.

He has full freedom in deciding the important issues mainly the developmental measures of the village and it is noticed that in most villages, the voice of the members weigh more in settling disputes.

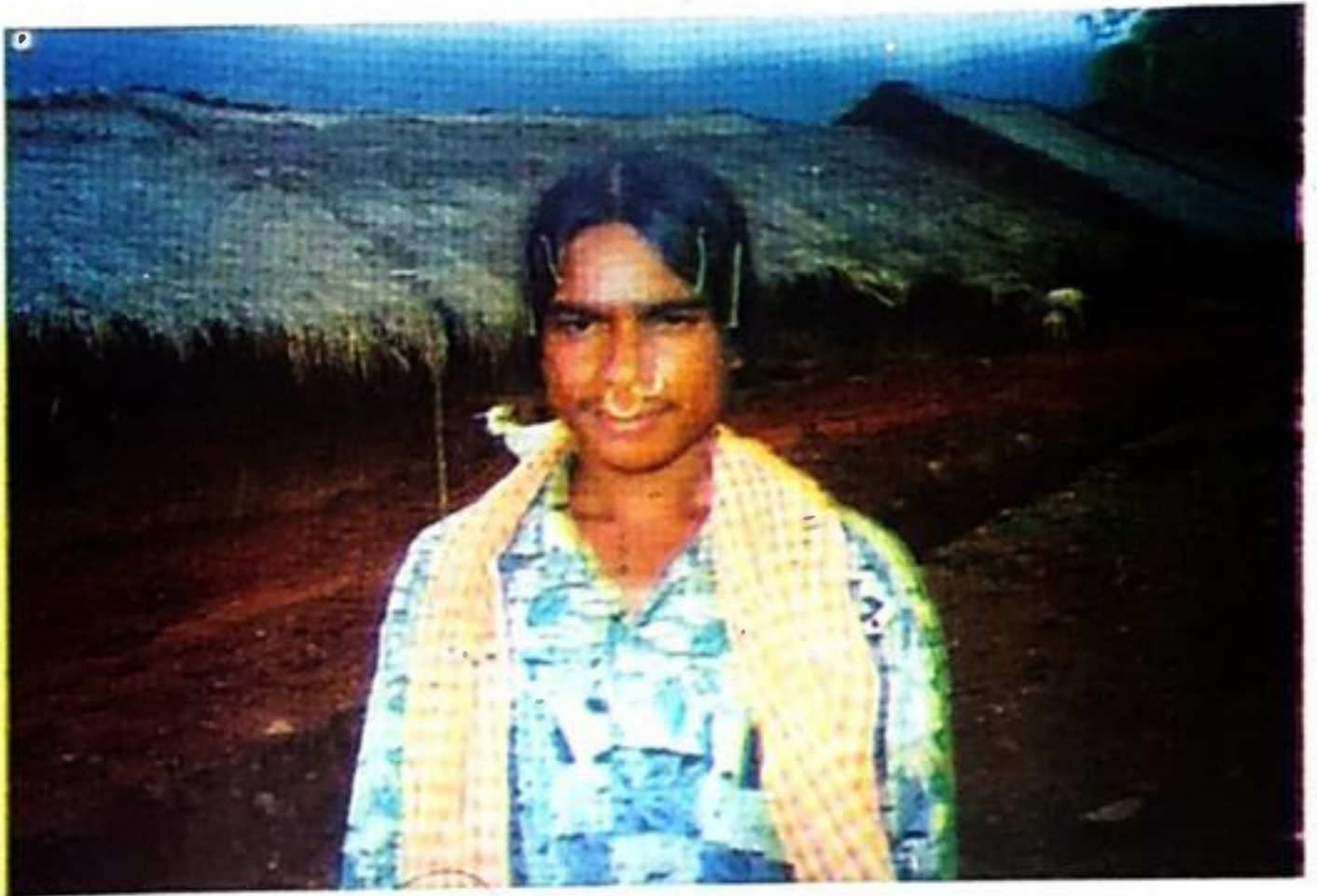
Village Council:

The village leaders, as men of experience, constitute the inner circle of the traditional village council, called *Sabha*. But as per the customary practice the eldest male of each household, who is usually the head of the family, is invariably invited to the village council meetings.

The *Jani* convenes the meeting of the village council whenever any necessity arises. The council discusses matters of common interest. All members freely participate in the discussion, which is free and frank. The discussion is generally led by the *Barika*, and thereafter arguments and counter arguments follow. The inconclusive discussions may continue for some days pending the collection of evidence by the *Barika*. The accused persons are called to the meeting and are given a chance to explain their positions. Proper hearing is given to all the aggrieved as well as accused persons. The council may depute the *Barika* and some other elderly persons to make further enquiries in the matter and attempt for a reconciliation if, that is possible. In all matters the council strives for unanimity among all the members. In no case division or factionalism among the members is allowed to be perpetrated by any one.

The matters discussed in the village council for decision include problems such as quarrel between two persons for breach of taboos, commitment of an offence under the influence of liquor, for instance, hurling of abuses on an innocent neighbour, partition of joint families, inheritance cases, irksome love affairs between boys and girls of different clans, cases of adultery etc.

The culprits or offenders are fined; the range of which varies from a bottle of liquor, worth Rs.2/- to Rs.10/- to heavy amounts worth Rs.40/-. The fine imposed is generally realized. In case of defiance, the matter is



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referred to *Mutha* council. When fine is collected generally on the spot or within a specified period, it is kept with the *Bishmajhi*, part of it is spent towards liquor by the members of the council and rest amount is kept as such, and when the accumulation swells up it is spent towards a feast arranged for all the villagers.

The cases of incestuous love affairs, cases of bride-capture, premarital pregnancy cannot be decided by the village council. These matters are referred to the *Mandal* (Headman of the *Mutha*), and the elders of all the villages of the *Mutha*, who are summoned to this meeting, decide the matter.

Inter-Village Councils:

Certain matters like land and boundary disputes between villages, divorce and desertion, bride-capture etc. are referred to *Mutha* council which cannot be decided by the village councils. Land disputes are very intricate problems which cannot be decided easily without a meeting of the *Mandal*. Similarly, as marriage partners normally belong to two different clans, members of which inhabit two different villages, divorce or desertion cases cannot be settled without the intervention of the *Mandal*. Similarly a dispute arises when a girl is captured from another village. The matter of bride-capture at times assumes the form of a riot. When a woman seeks a separation from her husband, her parents must return back the bride-price. Thus in all inter-village disputes *Mutha* meeting is summoned which is presided over by the *Mandal*.

Generally the venue of *Mutha* meeting is the village of the *Mandal*. *Barikas* of different villages intimate the concerned parties and village leaders about the date and time of the meeting. The offending parties first entertain the leaders with liquor. The fine imposed is realized either on the spot or afterwards, that is, within a week. Judgement of the *Mandal* in consultation with the village leaders is binding on both the accused and the aggrieved.

The amount realized in the shape of fine depends on the gravity of the offence. It varies from Rs.30/- to Rs.300/-. Maximum limit of fine imposed in the case of bride-capture is Rs.300/-, if the boy is found to be guilty. In case the girl is found to be guilty, the bride-price is not paid and the girl's father has to pay 1/10th of the normal bride-price to the *Mutha* council. The amount realized for different offences is kept with the *Bishmajhi* of *Mandal's* village and is utilized in the Meria-festival in which all the villages of the *Mutha* participate.

Mutha Organization:

'*Mutha*' is an important feature of social organization among the Dongria Kandha. It consists of group of adjoining villages and is treated as an administrative-cum- social unit. The entire Bissamcuttack Police Station, where the study was conducted, has been divided into five *Muthas* such as *Jakasika Mutha*, *Wadaka Mutha*, *Pushika Mutha*, *Kadraka Mutha*, and *Nishka Mutha*. Similarly, it is learnt that the entire Dongria area has been divided into 21 *Muthas*.

Each *Mutha* has one *Mutha* head, called *Mandal*, who before independence, was directly responsible to the *Raja* of Jeypore in the district of Koraput. He engaged people from different villages of his *Mutha* in various types of manual work of the *Raja* as '*Bethis*' or forced labour. In exchange, the *Raja* offered a turban to the *Mandal* ceremoniously as a symbol of ring-leader in his court during *Dasahara* festival and allowed the *Mandal* to enjoy right over lands and hillocks of a certain limited area consisting of a few villages. Later on, after the abolition of human sacrifice each *Mandal* was allowed to sacrifice two buffaloes near Goddess *Durga* of Bissamcuttack during *Dasahara* festival and the entire cost was borne by the King himself. That is otherwise known as *Jura Parab*. In fact, the *Mandal* was empowered to control all the villages under his *Mutha*. After the abolition of *Zamindari*, the *Mandal* formally became a judicial head at the *Mutha* level and people

respected him too. He still continues to be so. His authority is therefore, now unquestionably obeyed.

The post of the *Mandal* is hereditary and honourary.

Inter-Mutha Council:

No Inter-*Mutha* Council exists in the *Niyamgiri* area. Only when a problem arises on issues like-boundary disputes, land disputes, disputes over bride-capture and cases of bride-price etc. the concerned *Mutha* heads sit together and decide the cases by themselves.

However, in deciding all such cases, either at village level or at *Mutha* level (also inter-*Mutha* level) the traditional leaders do not function as autocrats. The delegates invited from all households and villages have equal voice in the council meeting. The village or *Mutha* council is still a formal organization. People accept and abide by their decisions for two reasons – firstly, no one wants to be boycotted and thereby lose the co-operation of the fellow beings in the society and secondly, everybody is afraid of supernatural punishment in the event of defiance. The Dongrias believe that an action in defiance of social norms is sure to bring calamity, adversity and mishap on the individual as well as on the family. Moreover, criticism, ridicule, and gossip are primary mechanisms to check or mend or counter anti-social measures. In the Dongria society the process of enculturation is carried on in such a manner that an individual normally remains norm-abiding and does not become a perpetual deviant.

It may be mentioned here that, in the statutory set-up of Gram-Panchayats in the area, the new leaders (Members) have emerged who have influenced the young mass to bring changes in the society in a positive way. No doubt, they have raised their voice, but the impact is too imperceptible in the age-old ideological frame of the Dongria Kandha. The traditional leadership is still very influential and effective and the emergent leaders have not yet gained ground as the activities of the political parties are not very effective in the area.

Deviant Actions and Social Control:

One aspect of common cultural patterns which are part of every system of social action and hence social system is always normative. There is an expectation of conformity with the requirements of the pattern and it implies the existence of common standards of what is acceptable or approved behaviour. But under certain circumstances resistances to conformity with social expectations or violation of normative behaviour and social action develop. It is these circumstance which make the problem of conformity and deviance a major axis of the analysis of social action and social systems.

In any situation of deviant action in contravention of institutionally integrated interactive system the mechanisms of social control start operating to counteract the deviant behaviour. The fundamental point of preference in the analysis of social control is the processes by which deviant tendencies and situations are forestalled and the stable equilibrium of the interactive system is restored.

Another point of reference is the interaction context and in the analysis of social control is the social sanctions. On the one hand there are the expectations which set standards for normative behaviour on the part of the actors. On the other hand there is another set of expectations relative to the reactions of others which are called sanctions. There are two sub-divisions of social sanctions- positive and negative. If an actor in an interaction context feels certain sanctions to be gratification – promoting then such sanctions are positive from his point of view. But if he feels them to be depriving then such sanctions according to him are negative. In this section a brief account of a few actions which constitute deviant behaviour, have been given, the social sanctions evoked under such circumstances, and the mechanisms of social control which operate to bring back the social system to the old equilibrium state.

The Dongrias in each village have a shrine in central place in the village street. It is the abode of village Goddess and it is at this place a festival called

Meria or *Jhakar-Puja* is celebrated. This festival is observed normally once in 3 to 4 years. Elaborate arrangements are made to perform this festival. Before the festival is observed the shed in which the village Goddess is installed is properly repaired. Relatives and guests are invited to take part in the festival and a buffalo is sacrificed at this place.

There is another shrine called *Kotiasal* installed at some distance from the village Goddess in the village street. The husband of the village Goddess is installed at this place. At the time of *Meria* sacrifice at the Mother goddess a similar ritual is observed at *Kotiasal*. No buffalo is sacrificed at this place but a goat serves the purpose.

The third sacred place is located at the outskirts of the village. It is known as *Jatrakudi*. Fowl is sacrificed on festive occasions at this place.

During her mense a woman is forbidden to pass through these places. In case any one violates this tradition there will be mishap in the village. The tigers will be active and kill goats and cattle. In addition to the menace of the wild animals the deities will be upset and create dreadful situation. When such cases and such situations occur the sorcerer (*Bejunt*) and religious head (*Jani*) will sense first these divine actions and offer and sacrifice pigeons at the shrine of the Mother Goddess to abate further divine disaster.

The Dongrias follow clan exogamy which means that marriage within the clan is strictly forbidden. The breach of this social taboo is a very serious offence. The contravention of clan exogamy brings not only disaster in village but also puts the villagers to great shame. The co-villagers will not look to the face of the person who has breached the social taboo, nor accept water from his hand and cut off all connection with him. Social boycott is not enough for such offence. They will drive him out not only from their village but also from the territory which is inhabited by the Dongrias. They publicly declare that the culprit is not their brother nor their son. The main reasons for driving him out of the Kandha country are that the offender has subjected the whole

community to great disrespect and has caused others to look down upon the community. In the cases of breach of clan taboo neither the deities get dissatisfied nor the wild animals kill the domesticated animals. In such cases the social prestige is at stake and the appropriate punishment for such offences is to drive the offender out of their country and treat him as dead and gone.

Cases of theft are considered social offence in the Kandha society. The person who commits theft is summoned to the village panchayat and the village headman as chairman and the village elders as the members of the panchayat adjudicate the case and levy a fine on the criminal. The fines which are collected from such sources are utilised in a feast for all the villagers of the *Mutha* to which the village in question belongs. For example, Kurli village belongs to a *Mutha* which comprises six other villages such as- Mundbali, Huttesi, Hundijali, Tuaguda, Bondeli and Raniganj. If a feast is arranged at Kurli out of the amount collected in the form of fines from the culprits the villagers of other six villages belonging to Kurli *Mutha* are invited to partake the feast.

There are cases of abduction in Dongria society, if a man kidnaps the wife of another man the amount of fine to be paid by the abductor varies from Rs. 300/- to Rs.400/-. In case the abductor does not pay the fine he is boycotted. During this period no one of the village will talk to the culprit, invite him to a drink and allow him to take part in festivities. He is also forbidden to go to the places of worship and to attend the village meeting.

The restrictions of social boycott are so severe that it is difficult on the part of the offender to live in the village. He meets the village headman and his assistants and village religious headman and other functionaries of the village and requests them to allow his readmission in to the village community. There after the village people meet at the village Assembly and decide the amount of fine which is to be paid by the offender. After the fine is paid the village headman upon the approval of the village elders declares his readmission in to the village community.

Practice of black magic is considered a serious social offence. If a person is found to be practising black magic his house is ragged to the ground and he is driven out of the village. Among many tribal communities development of maggots in the wound of a person pollutes not only the person concerned but also all his kinsmen. But among the Dongrias, such cases do not cause any ritual pollution. The Domb who live with the Dongrias in their villages observed this pollution very strictly. If anyone in their community happens to have such a wound in his body which was developed maggots he becomes ritually polluted and makes his kith and kin of his lineage group similarly polluted. Members of other lineage do not touch the members of the lineage which is polluted and do not accept food and water from them.

After the wound is healed an elaborate ritual is performed by the members of the lineage including the person who was affected to make themselves free from pollution. On such occasions the chief of the Domb community called *Mandal* is invited to preside over the function. The person who was afflicted provides a piece of new cloth, a little bit of gold, a fowl, one brass plate and a brass cup and a sum of Rs.20/-. On the appointed day the used earthen vessels are thrown away from all the houses of the lineage, and new vessels are used for cooking food. The person who was affected is shaved and given a fake ritual bath. His tongue is touched with a gold ring when it is hot.

Food is cooked in the house of the affected person and the *Mandal* of the community is served first with the cooked food in the new utensils brought for this purpose. After he has taken his food all others assembled at the house are provided with food.

Unless all these rituals are observed not only the affected person but also all others of his lineage group remain ritually unclean and people of other lineage groups do not touch them and accept food from them.

Though the Dongria and the Domb are living together in the same villages the former have not borrowed these social practices from the latter. According

to the Kandha tradition development of maggots does not require any ritual pollution. Hence no ritual purification is needed.

In every Dongria village there is a spinsters' dormitory which is generally located in the back of the village. Sometimes it is located close to the hill-stream which flows near the village. The unmarried girls of the village sleep in this dormitory at night. The bachelors belonging to near by villages who come on a visit to the village also sleep in the same dormitory.

The Dongria villages have become heterogeneous in clan composition. For example, Kurli village is composed of household belonging to such clans as *Wadaka*, *Kadraka*, *Sikoka*, *Miniaka*, and *Mandika* etc. The unmarried girls of this village who spend night in the dormitory belong to different clans. Similarly the bachelors who come from neighbouring villages to visit these girls at night also belong to different clans. Though they spend the night together in the dormitory there is no case of pregnancy resulting from pre-marital sexual relationship. It does not mean that there is no sexual union between the bachelors and the spinsters who spend the night together in the dormitory.

Among the Dongrias marriage negotiations start at an early age. Parents settle marriage of their children by receiving bride-price and accepting liquor from each other of the concerned parties. In this case a particular girl is already engaged with a particular boy from the very earlyhood. If this girl develops sexual relationship with another boy when they grow up, it is obvious that it would lead to difficulties. The parents of the boy who selected the girl would naturally get upset and not only demand the bride-price back to them but also seek opportunity to assault the parents of the girl.

It is but natural that pre-marital sexual union is unavoidable though it leads to all kinds of trouble and sometimes communal offence in case any pre-marital pregnancy takes place. In order to avoid these troubles the Dongrias apply indigenous herbal medicines to stop pregnancy.

In case a girl becomes pregnant during her dormitory life the boy who made her pregnant is likely to take her away to his village with a view to

keeping her as his wife. This particular girl is already betrothed to some other boy and in settlement of this betrothal the girl's parents had received the bride-price from the groom's parents. Under such circumstances according to the Kandha tradition the girl belongs to the boy with whom she was betrothed inspite of her illegitimate pregnancy.

In such a case the parents of the boy would seek the earliest opportunity to capture the girl and bring her to their house. The co-villagers assist the parents of the boy in this matter. When anything relating to such cases is discussed with the Dongrias they say with great emphasis that "we will catch hold of her and bring her to our house inspite of her being pregnant by some other boy. We have paid the bride-price and therefore, that girl is ours". However, the fact remains that the child (who was given birth by the concerned woman) when grows up can not speak big things and no one would attach any importance to what he say".

The life in the dormitory reveals that clan exogamy is strictly followed because there is strong negative social sanction against clan incest. But pre-marital sexual relationship which does not violate the clan exogamy is not an objectionable act.

Tribal councils are fairly effective organs of social control. The Dongrias regulate their community affairs through these traditional tribal councils. The village council and *Mutha* council are formal or institutionalised bodies which of course function in informal ways. Breach of social norms, particularly those relating to sex, divorce or separation, bride-price and bride-capture and such other offences occur mostly due to alcoholic addiction. These are dealt with by their councils and the offenders are punished as per the social sanctions and customary laws.

Further, the attributes of tribal status- namely linguistic, social, ritual and jural are conceived in terms of community sentiment, community authority and community life. Everything, which is of significance to the Dongrias derives its validation from their value system. The importance of the Dongrias as a

co-operative group partially emerges from the fact that about 55 percent of the kinship ties are distributed within the *vicinage* group. If all the real and fictitious kinship ties in a village are taken into account the whole village emerges as a close-knit kin group with only a few isolates. In fact, the atmosphere which prevails in the village is entirely egalitarian and community works like an organic whole.

It is through this composite and organic social life as well as through the process of socialization an individual learns socially prescribed modes of behaviour and accordingly internalizes the existing norms and mores of the society. He too follows the examples of his elders and shows eagerness to earn public reputation by conforming and adhering to the social norms, customs, mores, taboos and sanctions. In fact, public opinion in a cohesive society has a tremendous impact in shaping the personality of a person in the Dongria Kandha society. Criticism, ridicule and gossip are primary mechanism in curbing anti-social activities. In a grievous situation like adultery or marriage outside the tribe, the society punishes the transgressor to the extent of ostracism. Hence, any action in defiance of social norms is avoided and norms are adhered to.

Norms are obeyed as per prescribed codes of conduct lest one may earn the wrath and indignation of supernatural powers, which may cause sickness, suffering, wants, misery and even death. This fear of supernatural punishment makes a man more conscious of his duties and obligations for the society. In this connection the following case studies are cited below.

Case No. 1: In the year 1969, Gultu Jakasika, aged 35 years of Kurli village committed adultery with the wife of Adi Jakasika, aged 37 years of the same village. When Adi came to know about it he threatened to behead his wife. Despite this the illicit relationship continued.

In the month of December, the villagers in a group went to a distant forest for collection of grass used for making broomsticks. While returning Gultu and Adi's wife were found absent. Adi located them in a pit and became

enraged. He rushed to behead Gultu with his axe. Gultu retaliated and both were injured.

Next day, Adi sent his wife to his father-in-law's house. Gultu could not escape the public defamation. He was teased and hooted.

After four months of this incident, Adi's wife expired as a result of miscarriage which Adi did not know. Gultu's son too suffered from small-pox and died. Gultu completely lost his balance and vowed before *Pat-Bejuni* of Khambesi village to sacrifice a buffalo in the next *Ghanta Parab* in honour of the Goddess *Takrani* to save his second son. For this offence he spent Rs.430/- to appease the *Penu*.

Case No. 2: Kamlu Jakasika, aged 45 years of village Kurli is a drunkard and has a special taste for sago-palm juice. It is tabooed to take Sago-palm juice from a new tree until a ritual is performed in the month of October. There was one such palm tree which belonged to Jagli Jakasika of the same village. Kamlu stealthily climbed the tree one evening. While climbing he fell down from the tree. Since, it was dark at that time and there was no body on the *Dongar*, none could help him. He laid unconscious until his family members found him there. He was carried home and given treatment. Even though he cured, he became lame.

Therefore, it is ardently believed that Supernatural punishment is more severe than that is awarded by the tribal councils. Hence, people are more careful about their own conduct and their course of actions.

CHAPTER-IX

Religious beliefs and Practices

Religion, like the religion of other Orissan tribes centers round the propitiation of gods, goddesses, tutelary deities, spirits, manes and natural objects. The Dongria Kandha are animists and polytheists, and conceive of a large pantheon of Supernatural Beings who control their whole life. Religion has two inter-related constituents, beliefs and practices. Belief is the mode of conception and ritual is the mode of action. The rituals are the starting points of major actions of a society. They throw light on social relations expressing the structural arrangements of the society.

The whole life of the Dongria Kandha-economic, social and political is pervaded by their religion. Their religion consists of regular propitiation of gods, spirits and manes and performance of rituals. Propitiation is done through appropriate rites and sacrifices, charms and spells. They always remain submissive and dutiful to the supernatural entities, but invariably entertain some misgivings and mistrust towards the malevolent spirits.

To the Dongria Kandha everything above, below or around is animated either by spirits or by a spiritual energy of immense power. They believe that the spirits of the numerous native hills, forests and stream etc. are the ever multiplying spirits of dead human beings, all seeking food and drinks. In order to get rid of the evil intention and designs of these spirits, and in order to protect themselves and their scanty earthly possession the Dongria Kandha try to establish a friendly relation with the spirits through appropriate rites and rituals.

Dongria Kandha Pantheon:

The Supreme God:

At the top of all the Gods, deities and spirits stands the *Darani Penu* (Earth Goddess), the Supreme Goddess. She is respected with high esteem

as the creator of the world and does not ordinarily cause any harm to men, and enlivens as-well-as protects them from pestilence, depravity and evil.

She is installed in a hut in the front yard of each village, called *Kuddi*. She is represented by three elevated stones placed horizontally upon them. Sixteen other small stones which cropped up automatically in due course after the installation of *Darani Penu* represent Her disciples.

She is otherwise known as *Jhankar*. She is specially worshipped during *Bihan*- festival (*Bihan Laka*) and *Meria* festival (*Meria Laka*) by the *Jani* and *Lamba* respectively. During other feasts and festivals she is appeased with various sacrifices. No important matter relating to social, economic or political life of the Dongria Kandha is settled without an offering and a prayer to *Darani Penu*. All rituals start with the worship of *Darani Penu*, the Supreme Deity, for safeguarding the life of the Dongria Kandha. That is why utmost care is taken of her and she is profusely appeased. Women, if glance at Her during their menstrual period, suffer from spirit-possession. That is the main reason for which *Darani-Penu* is installed in an one-sided enclosure, generally not seen from outside.

Village Gods:

Next to *Derani Penu* are the village gods who are being described hierarchically according to their position in the society.

Kotebali:

Kotebali penu, a male deity, otherwise known as *Kotiasal* is believed to be the husband of *Darani Penu*, installed just at the back of *Kuddi*, in the middle of the common front yard of the village. He represents a big stone about 2¹/₂ to 3 feet long posted vertically with crossed wooden pole *Munda* at its back. This deity is nicely adorned. Two wooden combs with coloured thread balls are fixed at the two extreme ends of the horizontal piece of wood fixed on the cross bars. As a male Dongria Kandha uses comb always on his tuft of hair as a mark of adornment, *Kotebali* as the husband of *Darani*

Penu is also supposed to use the comb. At the back of *Kotebali* a wall of about 3 feet in height is erected to protect the deity from the sight of women during their period of pollution.

He is considered to be the sentry of the village and is supposed to keep constant watch on the villagers and protects them from any mishap. He too, is worshipped whenever *Darani Penu* is worshipped on various occasions.

Jatrukudi Penu:

Next to *Kotebali* is *Jatrukudi Penu*, a male deity, installed at the outskirts of the village. He resides under a bamboo shade (*Chhamunda*) at the western end of the village.

He is considered to be very arrogant and even for a trifling error or negligence. He brings drought and other natural calamities to the village. To cool down His temper Shamanin worships Him in each month with adequate sacrifices.

Apart from these gods and goddesses some other deities are also worshipped within and outside the village. They are placed hierarchically by the Dongrias.

Bima Penu:

A male deity, otherwise known as *Bima Penu*, is not represented by any image or object, but is worshipped at the eastern corner of the village by the *Jani* and the *Shamanin*. He is associated with agriculture and bumper crops.

Lahi Penu:

A male deity, otherwise known as *Dongar Penu* who does not have any shrine nor is represented by any object, and is worshipped appropriately by the Shamanins during April-May (*Baisakh Lenju*) after which trees are felled in the swidden. Prior to it, neither the trees can be cut nor logs can be brought home for firewood purposes. For the supply of natural manure and

increase of the fertility of the soil, He is worshipped with adequate sacrifices after which "felling of trees" ceremony (*Khotla-perpa*) takes place.

Takrani Penu:

She is an important female deity. She is supposed to reside at one end of the village, and responsible for occurrence of infectious diseases accidents and small-pox, cholera etc in the village and animal diseases. She, therefore, is communally worshipped in the month of November (*Pandu-Lenju*) with elaborate rituals and sacrifices. Votive offerings are made to Her by an individual who suffers for such diseases.

Niyam-Raja Penu:

He is a male deity, who is represented by a sword, worshipped during *Dasahara* and *Jura Parab*. In the temple of Goddess *Durga* at Bissamcuttack, this sword representing *Niyam Raja* is worshipped by the Dongria Kandha during *Jura Parab*. This festival has become obsolete. Now the *Niyam Raja* is worshipped at the village, who is supposed to save the people from unnatural deaths and accidents. This deity does not have any permanent abode in the village.

Other than these major deities there are minor deities who too are worshipped periodically.

Lada Penu:

She is the forest deity who resides under a banyan tree at the entrance of the forest, and is worshipped along with *Lahi Penu* in the month of May (*Saria*) before commencement of communal hunting. Customarily, the villagers go to the forest on this occasion, offer a leaf to Her as a token of reverence to be saved from any possible mishap in the forest. While going for and returning from hunting expedition, she is properly worshipped with adequate sacrifices by the *Jani*. She is believed to save the villagers from the wild animals and helps the villagers in getting games.

Hira Penu:

Hira penu is a female deity considered to be the maid servant of *Takrani Penu*. She inflicts pain on and tortures the children if not properly worshipped. Along with *Takrani Penu* she is worshipped.

Next in hierarchy are the household spirits, called *Dumba*. The *Dumbas* are appeased due to their benevolence and munificence, and are termed as *Penu* too.

Household Spirits:

It has been mentioned earlier that, a wooden post (*Tuli Munda*) inside the sleeping apartment of each house represents the "Ancestor Spirits". Household spirits are mostly named after their ancestors who are also considered as *Penu*, who can be dreadful if not appeased properly.

Lai-Penu:

A female spirit who brings property to the house if worshipped properly during the month of September (*Dela Lenju*) by the *Bejuni*.

Sita Penu:

Sita Penu is a female spirit who is represented by a dry gourd (*Tumba*), which is hung from the ceiling at the western corner of the sleeping room, containing various sorts of seeds. She is considered to be the Goddess *Laxmi* and worshipped during the full-moon-day in the month of December (*Push*) after all the crops are harvested. The housewife worships *Sita Penu* with all new seeds which are kept in the *Tumba* and the old seeds mixed with new seeds are sown again.

Danda Penu:

It is a female spirit who is represented by another small post in the sleeping room. She is the guardian deity of the granaries (*Duli*). After she is worshipped in the month of September (*Dela lenju*), the granaries are replastered and grains like *Kosla* and *ragi* are kept.



DONGRIA KANDHA VILLAGE DEITY

Chhatar Penu is a male spirit, who is represented by another post (*Munda*). He is worshipped by the *Bejuni* inside the house during *Meria* festival. He is very pernicious and brings diseases if not properly appeased. To please Him a buffalo is sacrificed.

Banjari Penu is a male spirit equally powerful like *Chhatar Penu*, and is represented by a *Munda* (post) and is appeased with the sacrifice of a cow to avert epidemic in the village. He too, is worshipped by the *Bejuni* in the month of January (*Magh*) when *Meria* festival takes place.

Banjarian Penu is a female spirit who is represented by a hanging wooden container which is fastened around the neck of a cow (*Lodla*) and it is kept hanging most often at the corner of the sleeping room. This instrument contains various kinds of seeds and is worshipped along with *Sita Penu*. This spirit is believed to ward off evil eyes on household possessions if properly appeased with a pigeon by the *Bejuni*.

Haru penu is a female spirit worshipped along with *Banjarain penu* to ensure good harvest. She is appeased with the blood of two chicken.

Ghungi penu is a female spirit, who resides in the stream, is considered to be an ancestor-spirit. She is worshipped in the month of August (*Sraban Lenju*) when the stream is turbulent. She is believed to tease the young girls and, therefore, appeased with a chick by the *Bejuni*.

Bhairo Penu is a male spirit and is very harmful and brings accidental deaths in the family if not appeased with a major sacrifice like a cow by the *Bejuni* during *Meria* festival. He is represented by a big wooden post in the sleeping room.

These ancestor-spirits are worshipped by the *Bejuni* mainly. But all these spirits are also invoked ceremoniously by the *Jani* during the *Meria* festival. For each spirit a separate icon is prepared with sundried rice powder and a lump of sundried rice is placed over which blood of a chick is sprinkled.

With this offering, they are supposed to remain satisfied and save the household members from odds and evils.

These ancestor-spirits, termed as family spirits are worshipped in each Dongria family. Besides, there are various other guardian-spirits of the *Bejunis* who are worshipped by the *Benjunis* themselves and provided with sacrifices (*Tapu*).

Each *Bejuni* has her own Guardian spirits. Such spirits are numerous. Some of them may be specially named as-*Jatiguru*, *Silkan Peju*, *Kaliapatu*, *Sundar Patu*, *Kasarani* etc. who are very much dreadful and pernicious. They are periodically invoked by the *Bejunis* and appeased with different types of sacrifices. Each *Bejuni* invokes her own spirits to be helpful in curing various diseases while attending to patients.

Apart from the benevolent spirits, who are appeased with periodical sacrifices there are dreadful spirits like *Mieli-Penu*, *Buru Penu* and *Suka Penu* who intentionally harass people with different diseases and cannot be satisfied by the Junior *Bejunis*. The Pat-*Bejunis* (Head of the *Bejunis*) are capable of appeasing them with their profound knowledge of the art.

Apart from these spirits, the Dongria Kandha believe in the existence of ghosts (*Mahane*). Bad persons die unnatural deaths. These persons become *Mahane* and whose souls move about here and there, specially near the cremation ground and in forlorn places. These *Mahanes* are not satisfied with sacrifices, they are controlled and contained by the *Bejunis* who are supposed to have knowledge.

The Dongria Kandha also believe in the effect of evil-eyes or in the efficacy of black magic called, *Pangna*. Any physical accident, loss of property, etc. are ascribed to the effect of black magic and to obliterate it, the help of *Bejuni* is sought. She through divination and magical rites ascertains the cause of mishap. In case it has been caused by a malevolent spirit she exercises it. She also nullifies the influence of evil-eyes.

Luck and Chance:

The Dongria Kandha are fatalists. Good or bad fortune of a person is ascribed to his or her attitude towards the impersonal powers. Everyone attempts to please all the impersonal powers, and in spite of this, if he suffers, he ascribes it to his luck and chance. In fact, belief in the chance factor or probability is less in the Dongria Kandha society. It is rather divine power which exerts mechanical control over the failure and success of a person. The degree of satisfaction of divine agents depends upon human action, and the results thereupon are considered to be in proportion to such actions, but not due to chance and probability. There is no method to control luck, excepting keeping the supernatural powers in good humour through propitiation with appropriate rituals and offering of sacrifices. Besides, one has to pay due respect to the social norms.

Sacred Objects and Places:

The Dongria Kandha believe in sanctity of places and sacredness of various objects. They are not believers of idols and fetishes, since most of their *pujas* are meant for impersonal powers in the Universe. But the stones which represent various *Pujas* are meant for impersonal powers in the universe. But the stones which represent various *Penus* are the result of their imitation of the neighbouring Hindus, the Domb/Shrines are considered as sanctified places, and hence not touched by any one unceremoniously.

Accessories used during *Meria*-festival, such as-iron-chain and plate (*Pada-Kont*), brass-ware (*Garia*), and wooden umbrella (*Chhatri*) are considered as extraordinary objects, which are supposed to contain supernatural powers, and as such, these are considered sacred objects, and hence are not touched by anyone other than the *Jani* or *Pujari*.

Kuddi (Sadarghar), *Koteasol*, *Jatrakudi Tulimanda* (Middle post), corner of the maiden's-dormitory, sleeping room of the *Bejuni* are considered to be sacred places as *Penus* are installed there. The hill at Hundijali village

is considered to be a sacred place as the seat of *Niyam-Raja*. All gigantic Nim and tamarind trees, caves, the hill at Hundijali etc. are considered as sacred objects.

The Dongria Kandha think about and practise religion in terms of immediate problems of their welfare and their families.

Religious Practices:

The Dongria Kandha perform certain rites and rituals to appease the supernatural forces in order to achieve peace and progress for the individual as-well-as for the entire community. The religious functionaries worship the gods and goddesses on behalf of the community in several occasions. These rituals or ceremonies express their social solidarity, and thereby maintain the existing sentiments that are necessary for the social cohesion.

Religious functionaries in fact, are the representatives of the people to propitiate gods, deities and spirits with a full sense of reliance. They invoke these divine powers through rituals, invocations, offerings and sacrifices and thereby solicit their blessings for the people. The religious functionaries invoke and invite the deities to action through incantations and songs. Invocations are sung in chorus by the *Bejunis*. These are the praises for the supernatural powers.

Animals, such as-buffalo, cow, goat, lamb, pig, fowl and pigeon are mainly sacrificed. Egg is also a sacrificial item. *Lia* (Puffed-rice), sweet-meats prepared out of molasses and wine of any kind are considered to be ritualistic food. Burning of incense powder and joss-sticks are very common features in any form of ritual. The Dongrias also quite often make votive offering to various gods and goddesses for fulfillment of desires or for curing of ailments. In any prolonged suffering, vow is taken by the sufferer to sacrifice an animal. But the nature of sacrifice differs according to gravity of suffering.

Religious shrines are purified with the application of or by smearing the floors with cowdung added with clay. In case there are no shrines, the

temporary structures are decorated with mango-twigs, banana plants as well-as with various flowers collected from the forest.

The ritual specialists get themselves purified after bath before attending to any sort of propitiation. They put on new washed clothes. It is essential for them to undergo fasting on the day of an important ritual.

The functions and responsibilities of the ritual specialists are as follows:

Jani:

Jani is the ritual head of the village. Each village has its own *Jani*, but at times one *Jani* may attend to functions in two to three villages. This post is hereditary, that is the office passes from the father to the eldest son. In case the *Jani* has no son, his younger brother get the chance. He performs all village rituals and is given a special share of sacrificial animals.

Lamba:

Lamba is also another nomenclature for *Jani*, who specially officiates at the rituals of *Meria* festival. The services of the *Lamba* are requisitioned from the villages like, Bondeli and Bongapadi etc. in *Nishka Mutha*. Only male *Lambas* are found in the Dongria society. The *Jani* of *Nishka Mutha* is supposed to have immense religious experiences and knowledge which he has acquired through his endeavour and panance. For performing the *Meria* rituals, the *Lamba* does not charge exorbitant remuneration but only takes one-fourth of the total quantity of grains collected for the festival, four heads of the sacrificial animals like-goat and lamb and a good share of the sacrificial meat. In return, the *Lamba* too, feeds the villagers in any day during the *Meria* festival.

Ichan Jani:

The assistant of the *Jani* is called *Ichan Jani* who sacrifices animals, arranges *Puja* accessories and if required, participates in the recitation of the incantations along with the *Jani*. This post is not hereditary but one of the

male members of *Jani's* lineage holds the post at the pleasure of the village council. For doing his job, he gets about 3 kilograms of sundried rice and head of a sacrificial animal in a major ritual.

Pujari:

This post is hereditary. In each village there is a *Pujari* who presides over *Meria* festival along with *Jani*. But he plays different role. He prepares an umbrella out of a bamboo collected from the forest in the dead of night, unnoticed by anybody. In the *Meria* procession he dangles that umbrella to ward off the evil-eyes of the pernicious spirits. He too, chants spells with *Lamba* and other *Janis* of the *Mutha* in the *Meria* festival. He is the man who first strikes at the head of *Meria* (sacrificial animal) and then others follow. In other religious functions, the *Pujari* also presides along with *Jani* and *Ichan Jani*.

Bejuni:

Bejunis are shamanins who are specialists in divination. In each village there are two to three shamanins. There may be shaman also. But in the Dongria society shamanins are more. Each shaman or shamanin has his/her own spirit to whom he/she regularly worships and appeases to get help during his/her occult practices. Through divination, prayer and rites, the shamans/ shamanins get into trance, during which they are believed to visualize and talk to the spirits who are responsible for causing harm to the people. During trance, the shamans/ shamanins talk with the spirits and request them on behalf of the victims to free them from troubles. When they regain senses, they adopt rice-supplication process called, *Puchma* through which they ascertain various types of sacrifices required to appease different spirits. Through rituals and sacrifices the spirits are appeased and thereby the shamans/shamanins are supposed to save people from various odds and evils.

Thus the role of a Shaman/Shamanin is very important in the Dongria Kandha society. On the one hand he/she acts as a religious functionary, by

presiding both in individual as-well-as communal function, on the contrary, too, he/she practices both black and white magic.

Generally a woman becomes a shamanin who undergoes training for long period systematically until she attains proficiency and spiritually marries to her spirit, leaving aside her own husband. When she attains the perfect stage of divination, she is called *Pat-Bejuni*.

While practicing her art, she puts on a red Sari (*uchitrai Gandha*) and uses metal bell at her ankles. She waves a bundle of peacock feather (*Tanya*) over the head of a sufferer to the accompaniment of dance and music.

As black magician, her services are secretly sought. As white magician, her services become socially essential. She is highly respected as diviner. As white magician she charges a nominal amount of Re. 1/- but takes 1/3 share of the meat of the animal which is sacrificed for the purpose. As black magician she takes Rs. 10/-. While presiding over any communal festival she takes 5 kilograms of sundried rice, and two heads of the sacrificial animals.

Dishari:

He is medicine man. He applies herbal medicines which are charged with magical powers.

His post is not hereditary. Any body who learns the art may become a *Dishari*. He does not preside over any religious function but is considered to be a leader in the village. He charges a nominal amount of 25 paise for any type of minor treatment. For prolonged treatment, he takes a lump-sum amount of Rs. 5/- and about 5 kilograms of unboiled rice.

Family Head as Priest:

The head of each family also acts as a priest for propitiating his manes, who benign and hence are not dreaded and thus are easily appeased. The *Jani* and *Bejunis* too worship ancestor-spirits of others during certain crisis when required.

Regulation and Divination:

In religion proper, the attitude of the Dongria Kandha towards the Supernatural Powers is one of the reverential fear in the presence of certain mysterious Supernatural Powers. Dependence, conciliation, propitiation and prayerful submission are various means to appease such Supernatural powers regularly to get food, remain healthy, live a normal life for themselves, their progenies and their livestock. The religious functionaries-*Lamba or Jani, Pujari, Bejuni* are the specialists and intermediaries between gods, goddess, spirits and such other entities on the one hand and men on the other.

The materials and objects required in connection with all rituals are almost standardized. These consist of such simple materials, as-turmeric powder, husked rice, vermilion, incense powder, wicks, molasses, liquor, leaf-cups, flowers and birds and animals for sacrifice depending on the nature of the ritual.

The procedures in a ritual may vary from complex to simple rites, but the general trend is almost standardized. For divination, the ritual procedures include such steps, like-smearing of the ritual spot with cowdung and water, drawing of geometrical designs of squares with sundried rice-powder, placing of rice balls within each square mark and putting of vermilion in each such squares, burning of the wicks and joss-sticks and incense, and offering of liquor and cooked rice. For sacrifices the steps include propitiation the animals by sprinkling water over it, putting up of vermilion on the head of the sacrificial animal, making the animal eat some of the rice grains out of those offered to the deity, pulling out of some feathers or hairs from their body and, slaughtering them; and finally offering the detached head of the sacrificial creature to the God or Spirit. The final step of the rituals is to bow down and sometimes, lay prostrate and pray for health and happiness of the people.

The procedure and nature of the Dongria Kandha rituals are stereo types. This is amply proved from the materials used in rituals, the procedures followed and the personnels involved in each ritual. There is very little variation in the observance of rituals.

Annual Festival Cycle of the Dongria Kandha

Sl No	Name of the ritual	Date of observance	Purpose	Offering	Deities worshipped	Who worships	Communal or Individual
1	Ghanta Parab	Baisakh Sarni April-May	Fulfillment of vows and to improve economic condition	As per the capacity of vow takers different animals are sacrificed. Lamb-1, Liquor-80-90 bottles	Sita Penu Takani Penu Hirapenu Jatrakudi Penu	Bejunts	Communal
2	Sabangi	Jaishti (Jet) May-June	To save cattle from diseases & epidemics	Fowl-2, Pigeon-1 Liquor-15 bottles	Ancestors	Head of the family	Individual
3	Mandia Rani	Shravina (Saba) July-August	For bumper harvest of rayi	Buffalo-1, Fowl-1, Liquor-110 bottles	Kotiasal	Jani / Bejuni	Communal individual
4	Dhan-Sukhia	Bhadra (Bhadra) (August-September)	First rice offered in honour of Jhankal Vegetables purchased individually	Fowl-1, Pigeon-1, Pig-1, New rice, Fruits.	Jhankal and other evil spirits	Jani	Communal
5	Padika	Ashni (Dasahara) Sept-Oct	For ample growth of castor seeds and to save them from insects	Buffalo-1, Fowl-3, Pigeon-1	Jatrakudi Penu	Jani / Bejuni	Communal
6	Punapadi	Kartik (Devuli) Oct-Nov	First eating of Kola, Kandul, Arka, Jana and other seeds and fruits	Buffalo-1, Pigeon-1, Fowl-2	Jatrakudi Penu	Bejuni	Communal
7	Dongar Puja	Margasira (Pandi) Nov-Dec	To get more crops	Pig-1, Fowl-1	Haru Penu	Bejuni	Individual
8	Meria festival	Magha (Maghe) Jan-Feb	For betterment and prosperity of the village	Buffalo-1, Fowl-1, Goat-5 sacrifice of animals of various types by the vow-takers	Penu i.e. Jhankal	Lamba, Jani Putari Bejuni	Communal
9	Bihan Puja or Sandrangi Laka	Chaitra (Sitar) March-April	Before sowing season	Fowl-1, Pigeon-1	Darani Penu, Sita Penu, Haru Penu	Jani / Bejuni	Individual

Ghanta Parab:

It is observed communally in the month of *Baisakh* for three days. *Ghanta* menas earthen pot, and each such pot with flour cake is offered to *Takrani-Penu* along with a sacrificiaal animal by the vow-taker who suffers from small-pox and cholera.

Accordingly various ancestor spirits, like *Hira-Penu* and *Sita-Penu* are worshipped individually and *Takrani-Penu* and *Jatrakudi Penu* are worshipped communally.

On the first day, the young boys and girls of the village prepare a temporary structure at the front yard of the village with wooden posts and leaves of *Tamberi* (local name of a tree) and under this a clay altar *Duki* of 4 feet in length and 3 feet in width is made. Over that altar a small branch of the *Bel*-tree is posted which represents *Takarani Penu*. On both sides of this two other small altars are constructed which repreasent *Hira Penu* and *Sita Penu*. All these altars are nicely decorated with banana plants mango leaves and twigs.

The *Ichan-Jani*, *Bejuni* and vow-takers assemble there with *Puja* accessories. The *Pat-Bejuni* and other *Bejunis* sit in a row, each with a winnowing fan for divination. The *Pat-Bejuni* draws three squares representing three *Penus* with sundried rice powder and piles up a heap of rice ball in each of the three squares. Thereafter all the *Bejunis* start singing in chorus and invoke three *Penus* while offering rice to them. It is believed, immediately when any of the *Penus* is visualized, the *Pat-Bejuni* gets into trance. Until that, the *Bejunis* continue to dance chanting incantations in chorus.

After all the *Penus* are visualized, the *Bejunis* along with drum-beaters go round the village and its outskirts for seven times waving a bunch of peacock feather over their heads to ward off the evil-spirits. This event takes place on the second day. While going in the procession, the *Pat-Bejuni* throws water with a mango twig from the earthen pot (*Ghanta*) over her

head to purify the house from pollution and in return collects sundried rice presented to her by each housewife.

On the third day, as per prescription the vow-takers assemble each with a new decorated earthen pot (*Ghania*) full of rice-flour cakes along with their respective sacrificial animals. The Domb prepare another altar before the deities where these *Ghantas* are placed. *Bejunis* perform rituals like the one that are observed on the first day. The *Pat-Bejuni* frantically dances over a lamb bought from communal fund and gets into trance. It is believed that she is possessed by the *Takrani Penu* and thereafter she behaves like the *Takrani*. When she regains her senses the lamb is sacrificed by the *Ichan Juni* and blood is sprinkled over the piles of rice for three *penus*.

Thereafter vow-takers sacrifice their votive animal on that altar one after the other and sprinkle blood over the cakes in the *Ghanta*. The *Bejunis* simply touch those *Ghantas* in order to purify that.

When all the sacrifices are over, the *Pat-Bejuni* along with her team of *Bejunis* and the drum-beaters goes in a procession to the western outskirts of the village. While the procession goes on, the villagers, irrespective of age and sex roll on the ground to get touch of the feet of the *Pat-Bejuni* who is supposed to be the *Takrani-incarnate*. This gesture, it is believed will save them from any attack of small-pox and cholera in future. After arrival of the procession at the outskirts of the village, the *Pat-Bejuni* performs a ritual at the *Jatrakudi* in a manner similar to earlier ones and sacrifices a pigeon by piercing a sharp bamboo shaft through its rectum.

After this the ritual comes to an end. The vow-takers take away their respective ritualistic food and offer only the head of the animals already sacrificed to the *Bejunis*. The *Pat-Bejuni* alone receives the lamb. All the *Bejunis* distribute rice and head of the animals equally.

It is believed that after this ritual the people may not suffer from small-pox and cholera in future.

Salangi Puja (Hada Puja):

Domesticated animals are to be saved from the predations of wild animals and ravages of diseases. To save them, *Sala-Penu*, the deity of the Cowshed (*Hada sala*) must be worshipped in the month of *Jet* (May-June) by the head of the household.

A clay idol of either a snake or an elephant or any other wild creature is prepared by the head of the household which represents *Sala-Penu*. The *Penu* is considered to be a male spirit. He is installed at one corner of the cowshed. After being ritually purified, the head of the family worships the spirit with *Puja* accessories by uttering the names of his ancestors. A fowl is sacrificed to appease the spirit.

The same procedure is also adopted on the day it is celebrated collectively. For communal observance, funds are collected through public contribution from all the villagers.

On the first day, in the evening, *Jani*, *Ichan Jani* and six *Bejunis* come with *Puja* accessories and sacrificial animals. The young girls prepare a corn bunch out of the sheaves of ragi, red-gram and other millets and hang it in front of the *Jhankad* or *Kuddi* after cleaning it with cowdung and water. The *Pat-Bejuni* along with her five other assistants starts supplicating rice in winnowing fan to know the existence of *Sita-Penu*. In her trance she knows the existence of *Sita Penu* either in the *Kuddi* or in any one of the house in the village and accordingly leads the team to that house when she regains her senses with the drumbeaters.

Reaching that house on the same day the *Jani* draws rice powder in the kitchen before the *Tuli-Munda*, representing ancestor-spirits. The meat of all the sacrificial animals are cooked with rice and part of it is given to the animals first to be eaten. A little of it is also offered to the ancestor-spirits. The rest is shared by the inmates of the house.

It is believed, after this ritual, the domesticated animals do not suffer from any disease.

Mandia Rani:

This festival is observed individually and also communally in the month of *Shravan* (July-August) before harvesting of ragi. The objective is to get a bumper yield of ragi and other varieties of millets. It is observed for two days-on the first day, it is observed communally and on the second day individually. On the first day a big square and ten small squares are drawn on the ground of the *Kuddi* out of rice-powder which represent *Sita-Penu* and her disciples, in which rice balls are piled up by the *Jani*. The *Jani* recites mantras and others follow him and oblates incense powder on each such pile. The whole night is passed like that. Just at the day break, the *Ichan Jani* brings the bunch of ragi sheaves keeps it on the pile of rice and cuts 11 fowls one after the other for all the eleven deities, and sprinkles blood over each heap of rice. It is believed that, *Sita Penu* is appeased with that. Each household receives two to three sheaves from the bunch and mixes the ritualistic grains with ragi after harvest.

After the *Puja* is completed the *Jani* moves from house to house to appease ancestors in each house. A chick is sacrificed on this occasion by each household..

Finally in the evening all the functionaries reach near *Kotebali Penu* (Husband of *Darani Penu*) for a communal worship. To be spirit-possessed, the *Pat-Bejuni* dances frantically and becomes senseless which is indicative of the fact that she is spirit-possessed. After her recovery, the *Jani* draws an icon and offers rituals to both *Darani Penu* and *Kotebali*. In the meanwhile, the young boys reach there with a bunch of sheaves of ragi and other millets from the swidden of the *Jani*. This is put in the icon by the *Jani* and worshipped with long chant of mantras. Finally the head of a buffalo is severed by *Ichan jani* and blood is sprinkled over the rice to appease the *Penus*.

The meat of the birds sacrificed earlier and the buffalo are cooked and eaten ceremoniously by all the villagers amidst dance and songs.

Nuakhia or Marangi Laka:

This festival is a new addition to the annual festival calendar of the Dongria Kandha which was not traditionally observed as paddy was not the main food item of the people. It is perhaps an adoption from the Hindu neighbours particularly from the Domb. The well-to-do families still utilize a patch of their *Dongar* plot in cultivating paddy with which this ceremony is associated. Therefore, along with the paddy other new roots, fruits, green leaves and vegetables etc. obtained either from the forest or from the *Dongar* are also eaten ceremoniously for the first time.

This festival is observed under a mango (*Marangi*) tree for which it is called as *Marangi Laka*.

Jani and *Ichan-Jani* collect handful of new unboiled rice and other roots etc. from each house and pile them up in a large square drawn around a mango tree at the eastern outskirts of the village. No *Penu* is worshipped on that occasion. But, it is believed that malevolent spirits who reside in a big mango tree must be appeased. Therefore, under a big mango tree, this ritual takes place. Usually the *Jani* recites invocations by throwing burning incense and pouring liquor over the pile of rice inside the square. A pig and a pigeon are sacrificed to appease the spirits.

After the rituals, the youngmen participate in the communal cooking and all the villagers share that food.

The same festival takes place in the month of *Chaitra* (March-April) before mango is eaten for the first time. After this festival only communal hunting takes place.

Pidika:

Insects are locally called *Pidika*, who are harmful to the free growth of castor plants. For eradication of the insects a ritual is observed in honour of

Jatrukudi Penu who is believed to save plants if, properly appeased. Due to the economic importance of castor seeds more emphasis is given to satisfy the deity with a buffalo, three fowls and a pig.

As usual, three *Bejunis* including the *pat-Bejuni*, invoke in a chorus while offering rice in the winnowing fans in order to get themselves spirit-possessed in the middle of the village. If they are not spirit-possessed, it is believed that there are no malevolent spirits in the vicinage. Ultimately they reach near *Jatrukudi* for completion of the ritual.

The young boys post a small wooden pillar at the shrine to tie the buffalo, and thereafter the floor of the shrine is purified with cow-dung. The *Jani* and the *Ichan-Jani* jointly draw a big square and other small eleven squares with rice powder which represent *Jatrukudi* and Her disciples. The *pat-Bejuni* first starts dancing until she is spirit-possessed. Once she is in trance, the *Jani* starts propitiating the *Penu*. He oblates a burning wick around all the piles, and places burning incense near each spirit while reciting invocations. When the *pat-Bejuni* regains her senses, she again resumes her rituals, sacrifices a pigeon and sprinkles blood of it over all the piles of rice excepting the bigger one. After an hour or so, two fowls are sacrificed and blood is sprinkled over all the piles of rice within the squares, which represent the spirits.

The young girls, in the meanwhile reach the spot with a garland of *siali*-leaf within which insects are kept after having been collected. This is placed around the neck of the buffalo, which is already tied to the post by the *Barika*. The *Barika* holds the tail of the buffalo and the *Ichan-Jani* strikes at the head of the buffalo with an axe. Others present there follow him immediately and the animal is killed in no time. The head is severed and placed on the bigger pile of rice and the *Jani* recites invocations along with *Ichan Jani* and *Bejunis*. With this sacrifice, the *Puja* comes to an end, and hence forward, no insect is believed to cause harm to the growth of castor-seeds.

A communal feast follows the ritual.

Punapadi:

Millet crops, like-*Kosla, Arka, Jana, Ganthia* etc. are eaten ceremoniously for the first time after harvest, and for that this festival is observed. Before eating, these crops are ceremoniously offered to *Jatrakudi penu* and to the ancestors. This is observed for a day in the month of *Kartika (Dewali-Lenju)*. The *Bejunis* propitiate the *Jatrakudi penu* on this occasion.

A day before the observance of the ritual, the temporary thatch of *Jatrakudi penu* is repaired and new bamboo-splits are replaced by the *Dhangdas* (Youths) of the village. Three of the *Dhangdis* (Maiden) go from door to door for collection of new crops and pile them up in front of the *penu* and watch them for the whole night.

Next morning, after the arrival of the *Pat-Bejuni* along with three other *Bejunis*, three *Dhangdis* carry three new pitcher-full of water from the stream and place them separately on the pile of various crops. The *Bejunis* start their chorus and the *Pat-Bejuni* gets into trance alternately. She gets into trance three times, and each time she regains consciousness, she pours unboiled rice from her winnowing fan into the water pitchers. It is believed that three dreadful disciples of *Jatrakudi penu* are satisfied by that. Ultimately the *pat Bejuni* is spirit-possessed for the fourth time indicating the presence of *Jatrakudi penu*. Other *Bejunis* then start reciting invocations forcefully and throw burning incense on the pile of crops. The *pat-Bejuni* after regaining her senses, sacrifices a pigeon and two fowls one after the other in the name of *Darani-penu Jatrakudi penu* and for Her disciples respectively.

The relatives, who are present on the spot, also give animals called, *Bolani* to be sacrificed.

Ultimately a buffalo, brought for sacrifice, is tied at a tree by the *Barika*. The *pat-Bejuni* stands over it and starts dancing. In the meanwhile, three other *Bejunis* throw crops from the pile at the buffalo. While dancing the *pat-Bejuni* is again spirit-possessed, which is indicative of the fact that the



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Jatrakudi penu is asking for food. Immediately after she gains back her senses, the buffalo is cut by the *Barika* and blood is sprinkled over the pile of crops.

The meat of all the birds sacrificed and buffalo is cooked separately which are eaten by the villagers in a feast. After this, usually crops can be sold or eaten.

Dongar Puja:

Before crops are harvested *Dongar Puja*, which is otherwise known as *Lahi-penu Laka* is observed for a day in the month of November-December in each household. It is conducted only by the *Bejunis*, who move in a procession with drum-beaters from house to house to ward off the evil-spirits by means of peacock feathers. From there they observe certain rituals. They draw two squares representing *Lahi-penu* and *Indra penu* (God of rain) and place sheaves of each crop on the drawn squares. Rituals are observed in the same manner as specified earlier and a pigeon and a fowl are sacrificed respectively on two lumps of rice to satisfy the *Penus*.

After this ritual is observed, crops are harvested.

Meria Festival:

It is the biggest festival observed communally in any one of the villages of a *Mutha* for 8 days in the month of *Magha* (January-February) where all people of a *Mutha* and people of other *Muthas* too, participate. If there is no bumper crop, the festival may be postponed to the next year as it involves lot of expenditure.

The purpose of this festival is mainly to appease the Supreme Goddess, *Durant Penu*, and Her disciples. At the same time steps are also taken to appease all other deities and spirits of various clans present in the *Mutha*.

To observe this festival, a decision is taken by the elders of all villages under the leadership of the *Mandal*. Decisions are also taken with regard to

the date and place for observance, contribution to be given by each household, selection of volunteer, and collection of necessary articles. *Bejunis* are invited, services of the *Lamba* and *Janis* are requisitioned and list of invitees from other *Muthas* is also prepared and specific responsibilities are assigned.

All these decisions are taken and necessary arrangements are made at least a month in advance. Until the festival is over, all the works are suspended and all the people remain agog with pleasure and happiness for the forthcoming festival.

Function of the *Pujari*:

Before four days of the celebration of the festival, the *pujari* along with four persons proceeds to the forest being unnoticed by anybody to cut a bamboo pole of about 14 feet in height to prepare *Meria* umbrella, called, *Chhatri*. This he cuts being completely nude, as it is reported. If the bamboo is cut in this manner the spirit who resides in the bamboo clamps may not do any harm to him. To make the bamboo pole strong, it is soaked in the stream for two days after which it is used as a stand for the umbrella. Before the day of the festival, a coloured cloth is spread over which different coloured glasses are fitted. The entire set is fixed on the bamboo pole and posted before the *Jhankad* and dangled by the *Pujari* in the *Meria* procession.

It was a traditional system and was in vogue when *Jura Parab* used to be observed. This system is being continued now.

Coming of the Invitees:

Four days before the date of observance the *Meria* festival invitees reach the houses of their respective relatives in the village with gift articles, like-five bottles of liquor, five kilograms of Kosla rice or paddy and one sacrificial animal, either a goat or a lamb or a fowl. *Bishmajhi* in each village collects them and keeps them for use in the festival.

Observances:

Darani-Lamba, usually takes the lead in organizing the ritual, who propitiates *Darani Penu* on this occasion. He is assisted by *Janis*, *Ichan-Janis* and *Pujaris*. Friday of the week is selected as an auspicious day for the festival.

On the first day *Mandal*, and other religious functionaries accompany the *Lamba* with the drum-beaters and musicians to a banyan tree to take out the *Meria* utensils. Reaching there, the *Lamba* gets into the hollow of the tree with vermilion, incense-powder, unboiled rice and a bottle of liquor. After doing certain rituals there two iron-chains, and a thick iron-plate are taken out to be used in the present festival. These accessories are being used from the time immemorial, probably from the time when human sacrifice was in vogue. After use these are again kept in a secret place which no one knows excepting the *Jani* and the *Pujari* of the village where the festival takes place.

The *Dhangdis* in the meanwhile decorate the *Kuddi* (*Jhankad*) with banana plants, mango twigs and branches. The floor of the *Kuddi* is also besmeared with clay and cowdung and a new *Sari* is spread over the deity and Her disciples.

After the procession reaches the village, the *Lamba* places those articles in the *Kuddi*. He draws twelve square diagrams with rice-powder, piles up rice on each diagram, fixes burning joss-sticks and invokes all deities and spirits by reciting mantras with other *Janis* for the whole night.

On the second day morning the *Bejunis* along with *pat-Bejunis* reach the *Jhankad* in batches. The *Lamba* and *Janis* retire to take rest. But the *Bejunis* along with *pat-Bejunis* start dancing in batches to appease *Darani penu* and Her disciples. Immediately when the *Pat-Bejuni* gets into trance the *Lamba* is informed who comes to the *Jhankad* immediately to take note of the presence of the spirit. A fowl and a pigeon for each smaller pile or

rice, and a goat for each bigger pile of rice are sacrificed and blood is sprinkled over all the piles. This is done for 12 times to satisfy all the twelve disciples of the Earth Goddess. In the evening the meat of all the animals sacrificed is cooked along with rice to entertain all the invitees.

After the feast, when all retire, the third sitting starts with *Lamba*, *Ichan-Janis* and the *Pat-Bejuni*, together invoking the *Darani-penu*. In the dead of night three young girls (who have just attained maturity and have not been captured) are sent to bring three brass-wares (*Meria* accessories) from the *Pujari's* house. After coming back, three of them go straight to the stream to bring three pitcherful of water without looking back. It is believed, they may be bewitched by the spirits, who are supposed to be inside the pitchers, if they look back. The *Pujari* too, accompanies them brandishing a bunch of feathers to ward off the evil-spirits.

- With water they reach the *Meria* animal (A big buffalo who is called *Meria*) and bathe it with that water. This *Meria* animal is tied to a big wooden post and is considered to be purified after the bath. Then, they come to the *Lamba* to ask for "*Podu-Kandi*" (Iron-chain and plate). Forelegs of the buffalo are tied with the chain, which is indicative of the fact that the *Meria* would be sacrificed within a short time.

The villagers, invitees, friends, relatives and all others reach the *Jhankad* and get ready with their axe and knives to strike at the animal. While invoking both the *Lamba* and the *Pat-Bejuni* get into trance with the beating of drums. The time following this is considered appropriate to satisfy *Darani-Penu*. Immediately after regaining senses they make arrangements for the sacrifice of the animal.

A big procession consisting of all males, irrespective of young, old and children, the religious functionaries, batches of *Bejunis*, drum-beaters and the vow-takers with various sacrificial animals start to the eastern outskirts of the village. The *Dishari*, the *Pat-Bejuni* and the *Ichan-Jani* carry these brass-wares with water. The *Pujari* dangles the umbrella before the

procession to ward off the evil-eyes of the spirits. The *Bejunis* rejuvenate their energy and dance rhythmically with the beating of drums. The young boys howl and ululate in chorus. The stalwarts both from the Dongria Kandha and the Domb community catch hold of the ropes tied at the *Meria* animal. The *Lamba* and the *Janis* lead the procession and reach at the outskirts little before the dawn. The *Meria* animal is tied to a big wooden-pole. Other vow-takers too, tie their animals.

Just at the break of dawn, the animal is sacrificed and the first blow is given by the *Pujari*. Other blows fall one after the other on various parts of the animal and thus the animal is hacked to death. Even when blows are being showered, the entire belly of the buffalo is torn apart and its intestine etc. are pulled out nibbled and rubbed over the body out of joy and revelry by the participants. It is believed, more the animal is tortured more the *Penu* is satisfied.

Simultaneously, the vow-takers kill their animals one after the other on the *Meria* spot to please *Darani-Penu*. With the sacrifice of a large number of animals, the entire field is flooded with blood.

After that, the *Meria* head is brought back in the procession by an outsider (*Padria*) other than the *Mutha* clan-members. It is tabooed for the *Mutha* clan-members to touch the *Meria* head.

Reaching at the *Jhankad*, the *Lamba* draws a big square diagram on which the head is placed. The *Lamba* offers it as ritualistic food to *Darani-Penu* by putting on vermilion over it and pouring five gourdful of wine over it. With this the ritual part of the observance comes to an end. A portion of the *Meria* animal after having been skinned is given to the *Lamba* as a major share for conducting the ceremony, a portion of it is cooked with rice and shared by all the members present on the spot, and the rest portion is parceled into small pieces and sent with the relatives and invitees to their villages as a token of publicity as-well-as to ensure better crops in their area too.

On the fifth day, outsiders (*Padriyas*) customarily assemble near *Lamba's* house and approach him to part with a portion of *Meria*-animal which must have been kept ready by the later on the previous day. On this issue, mock acrimonious exchange take place between them and the *Lamba* ultimately gives a portion of the meat to everyone.

The outsiders cook it with 35 to 40 kilograms of rice at their own cost and feed the host villagers. This is how the outsiders oblige their hosts. After the feast they disperse.

For the rest two days, the young boys and girls get the opportunity to sing and dance before *Darani-Penu*.

On the 8th day, *Lamba* himself kills a goat, cooks about five kilograms of rice and offers it to *Darani-Penu* and Her disciples as ritualistic food. This food is distributed among all the households of the *Mutha as Lamba-Begu* (Ritualistic food of *Lamba*). The *Lamba* too, as an outsider obliges the hosts in this way.

In the evening the young boys and girls exchange rice as a token of apology for offending each other by way of jokes. The young boys touch the hands of the parents of the young girls and beg excuse and offer a bottle of liquor to satisfy the latera.

Thus, the festival is observed to ensure good harvest and prosperity for the *Mutha*.

Bihan Puja:

It is the last festival of the year, observed communally and individually for two days in the month of *Chaitra* (March-April) before the showing of crops.

On the first day, *Jani* and *Ichani-Jani* move from door to door to collect all varieties of seeds from all the households. After collection, they take bath in the evening and assemble with drum-beaters at the *Jhankad*.

Twelve square diagrams are drawn there and the seeds are piled up in each diagram. Rituals are performed by oblation of wine, burning incense and by chanting invocations. A pigeon and a fowl are sacrificed separately to appease the deity. The crops are kept in a basket which is hung above the head of *Darani-penu*.

When Jani remains busy in propitiating the *Darani-Penu*, the *Pat-Bejuni* along with her party goes to individual *Dongar* fields to appease *Hiru-penu* and *Sita-Penu*. There similar rituals as mentioned above are performed with the crops and blood of the chicken sacrificed is sprinkled over the crop to satisfy the *Penus*. These ritually treated grains are kept in an earthen pot by individual house owner.

On the second day, the villagers along with *Jani* and other religious functionaries proceed to the forest for communal hunting with bows and arrows. After five days, they come back with game, which are cooked and shared by all villagers excepting the females. Any sort of animal killed beyond the village boundary is tabooed to be eaten by the female. It is believed that they become aggressive.

On the sixth day, the villagers assemble near the *Kuddi*. The *Jani* counts eight number of seeds from each variety of crop and hands it over to a young man who enters them in the ground in front of the *Kuddi*. After wards each householder is offered a handful of seeds. These seeds are mixed with other seeds and kept by each house owner in an earthen pot in his house. These are sown first ceremoniously and then other seeds are sown.

Thus, it is evident from the above descriptions that most of the rituals of the Dongria Kandha are associated with their annual agricultural cycle. The rituals are either performed to mark the beginning of the important agricultural activities or harvest of crops or intended to restore the lost fertility of the soil.

Excepting the *Kuddi*, where *Darani-penu* is enshrined, the Dongrias have evolved no temples or shrines or special shelter to install their gods and

goddesses. It has already been described, the Earth-Goddess resides on the earth, *Kotebali* resides in the forests and on hills.

The Dongria Kandha are not quite unfamiliar with Hindu gods and goddesses. They are aware of Goddess *Laxmi*, *Durga*, and *Mahadeb*. They say, *Sita-Penu* represents Goddess *Laxmi*, who brings wealth and prosperity to the family if she is properly worshipped. On various occasions, therefore, she is worshipped specially on *Nua-Khia* ceremony, *Takrani* represents Goddess *Durga* who saves people from diseases and epidemics. On the day of *Sivaratri* most of the Dongria Kandha visit the Siva temple at Chatikona to get Darshana and spend the whole night there. In fact, they have gradually started borrowing many traits of Hindu religion in course of their contact with the neighbouring caste people with the development of communication in the area.

Taboos:

Other than the methods applied to appease the divine powers, some protective measures are also adopted to escape from fear and anxiety. The Dongria Kandha believe that taboos are productive, protective and prohibitive. They believe that unless they are prohibited from doing certain things, dreadful adversity may befall them. Taboos associated with the process of cultivation are designed to be productive. Those like-keeping women and children away from certain places, actions and objects are protective. In case of a priest or a chief, a magician or a menstruating woman, it is prohibited to do certain things. If they do not obey the taboos, misfortune will come to them.

The children wear amulets (*Tabla*), put-on eye-shoots (*Kaji*) to escape from evil eyes. The elderly males use knife, bill-hook and an axe not only for adornment but to escape from evil eyes. The ladies too, use knife and amulets to avoid evil eyes.

Similarly there are food taboos, totemic taboos, reproductive taboos, mortuary taboos etc. which are observed strictly to avoid mishaps. The taboo

is used to designate all the restrictions, communicated through verbal dos and donots, and generally associated with ritualistic behaviour which a member of the community has to submit to.

Omens:

Omens are used and interpreted to ascertain auspiciousness and inauspiciousness of certain objects whether animate or inanimate. Certain local birds-*Kuguria*, *Kumbhatal* and *Gundru* are considered auspicious if seen on the way while going to capture a bride. The crowing of wild fowl (*Joda Kayu*) is auspicious as it brings more cash for a man if he sells anything. If, while coming to the groom's house the bride sees the bird *Harada*, it is considered to be auspicious. It is believed that the bride is sure to bring more happiness to the family. Pitcher-full of water (*Daka*), burning lamp (*Dipi*) and corpse (*Mada*) on the way are considered good omens. Among bad omens, may be mentioned-sight of a barren woman, fox crossing path from the left to the right, the sight of an empty vessel etc. similarly Tuesday and Friday are considered to be auspicious and therefore, almost all ceremonies are celebrated on those days. Journeys are undertaken normally on those days and also on the full-moon day (*Puniya*). Journey is avoided during the day following the full-moon day.

Dreams:

Dreams are locally termed as *Hapna*. Ordinarily dreams are interpreted either as good or bad. Site-seeing, talking with the Government officials, making transactions in Fair-Price-Shop Centres and going in the train-such dreams bring cash to the person concerned. Dreams like-eating of ceremonial food, fried rice and sweetmeats bring good health for the person concerned. A person suffers if he dreams of visiting forest, climbing hills, sleeping in a cave and taking bath in the stream. It is believed that spirits residing in the above mentioned places may like to harm the person concerned. To avoid

any suffering the person stops going to such places at least for a day. Sometimes, a person who died recently though becomes a *Dumba* if, appears in the dream, is again considered to bring economic prosperity in the family. Thus, different values are attached to different types of dream in the interpretation.

Magicians and diviners:

Religion and magic are two ways of tiding over crises. The magic and religion are very close to each other in their roles as tools of adoption when common skills and capabilities are of no avail.

Strictly speaking there are no magicians in the Dongria Kandha society. The *Bejunis* who are specialists as diviners bring fortune to the people by curing them from various diseases etc. But these specialists do not use such techniques to create rain or bring good harvest if there is drought. The only technique employed by these diviners is to appease their respective guardian spirits by performing appropriate rituals and sacrifices.

Further, due to compactness of the area and unity of the people, the shamanins do not use any black magic even if, some of them know the art. Through the guardian spirit only, black magic is used. In that case, the shamanin is to take the risk of her life as it may be leaked out through village gossip or a more expert shamanin may know it.

In fact, other than religious devices, occult devices are not utilized to bring either good results or bad results into the society.

To conclude, it can be said that the Dongria Kandha do not worship the gods and goddesses, deities and spirits or placate the spirits and ghosts from philosophical point of view or from the devotional outspring of their heart. They are very practical in their temperament and the purpose to worship or placate the spirits etc. is to get economic benefits, safety and security.

CHAPTER-X

Environmental Sanitation, Hygienic Habits, Disease and Treatment

Environmental sanitation:

The Dongria Kandha keep their main street, lanes and by-lanes fairly neat and clean. The *Jhateni* (Sweeper), appointed from the Domb community sweeps the streets everyday and dumps the garbages at a spot not far from the dwelling. During rains water accumulates on the lanes and the area becomes muddy and filthy. The dwellings are not kept tidy as the inmates practically do not get time to look after their houses and household belongings as they spend most of their time on the *Dongar*. Only on festive occasions, houses are cleaned and walls are plastered with clay mixed with fresh cowdung. The yard utilized as defecation ground, is not far from habitation but it does not pollute the environment due to haunt of pigs in a large scale. Water for consumption is fetched from the perennial stream, *Gadagada nallah*, flowing beside most of the villages. During rain, muddy water is drawn from the stream for all purposes. During summer, water level too, goes down though not completely dries up.

Hygienic habits:

The Dongria Kandha lack modern scientific sense of hygiene. Bath is not taken everyday and no schedule time is there for that. During summer, bath is taken if time permits, but for months together bath is not taken daily in the winter. Once they climb hills in the morning to reach their *Dongar* plots and start working. They do not feel to climb down again to the stream to take bath. Only when they come back home after the day's toil, on the way, they wash their limbs and face instead of taking a full bath.

No regularity is maintained to wash teeth and face. As and when required teeth are cleaned with mango twigs. After defecation, the excreta is cleaned with any green leaves readily available and water is rarely used. The ladies too, do not use water after defecation or after urination. If time permits, castor-oil is used for dressing hair of the head by the ladies, and thereafter hair is combed. But the males do not use oil for months together but comb hair everyday during leisure time. Only during festive occasions, oil is used and proper care is taken to trim the hair.

Apart from a few well-to-do families, soap is not used for cleaning clothes or body by others. *Chili-mati* (*Chili*, a local variety of clay) is used both by men and women for cleaning hair as and when time permits. With the help of fine ash dirty clothes are treated with warm water and then rinsed and cleaned once in a month by the ladies in the stream. Males never wash clothes, since it is considered as a feminine job and hence derogatory for men.

Nails are pared after a month or two. Hair too, is cut after two months or so. They cut each other's hair as there is no professional barber.

The mother remains awefully busy for the whole day and does not get time to take special care of her babies other than swaddling and breast-feeding. The father, though remains busy, spends his leisure hour either in taking liquor or strolling here and there aimlessly. In fact, the ecological setting and the nature of work shape their daily habit and compel them to be neglectful of good health; and this also precludes development of hygienic consciousness.

Disease and Treatment:

It would seem that almost all the Dongria Kandha are a superstitious folk who believe that the disease are mostly caused due to the wrath or displeasure of a deity or ancestral spirits. Even any mishap or accident is ascribed to the indignation of different *Penus* (Gods) and *Dumbas*. They, therefore, make every effort to appease these supernatural agencies who are associated with different deities, spritis etc. A functionary known as the

Dishari who normally belongs to their own community and plays an important role in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases. On the basis of certain symptoms or divination he diagnoses the disease. On the other hand, the *Bejuni*, who is a shamanin and who is also supposed to cure diseases, traces out the deity behind the disease. In order to do this she performs necessary rites, gets into trance, realizes hallucinatory revelation, sacrifices animals as per the demand of the deity or spirit. Thus, when the *Dishari* diagnoses diseases with local herbs and roots perforated with divination, the *Bejuni* diagnoses the disease only through necessary rituals and divinations.

Medical Therapy:

Though all the diseases are considered to be the outcome of the wrath of deities and spirits, the Dongria Kandha still consider some of the minor diseases like-fever (*Numberi*), headache (*Kapda Nai- Mamjane*), cough (*Tanha*) and stomach pain (*Pato Bish*) etc. to be the result of natural causes and skin diseases to be due to contagion. But diseases which are incurable and prolong for number of days are ascribed exclusively to the obsession of spirits and deities. It is believed that due to commitment of immoral action or complete violation of the social norms a person is destined to suffer.

However, the *Dishari*, who mostly uses herbal medicines collected from the nearby forests, applies them in following manner for different diseases.

Accidents are often faced, injuries are sustained regularly by the people due to heavy indulgence in liquor. To stop bleeding *Latchiri*-creeper is made paste and anointed over the wound. Immediately after the preliminary aid, paste of leaves of *Drayakala* plant or *Luhataarchi* plant is applied at the wound. For quick recovery from a fatal injury warm turmeric paste is also applied.

In any sort of burn injury immediately cowdung is applied. Later on the bark of *Manda* tree is soaked in water for a day and then ground to prepare a sort of paste which is applied on burn bruises for healing up.

In order to alleviate the pain of a sprain, castor-oil is boiled with turmeric paste and applied three to four times a day over the sprain. Sometimes a paste prepared out of *Bishalyakarani* is applied over the sprain after heating it up. And upon this sort of balming a tender banana leaf is covered and tied up with a piece of cloth for a day or two in case of bone fracture.

In the Dongria Kandha society, there are no snake charmers. Roots of *Patal Garuda* and *Fapana* plant are ground together and applied over the wound caused by either a snake or a poisonous insect. As an antidote to the poison, caused by venomous snakes, root of a creeper, locally called *padda*, is ground and orally administered.

For healing up of fractures, *Hadsikala* creeper is also used by the Dongrias. A tender portion of the creeper is collected and then it is ground to a thick paste which is evenly applied over the fractured bones, which is then tightly fastened by placing two pieces of split up bamboo on either side of it.

For cure of eye-sores the Dongrias use turmeric paste. It is wrapped up in a small piece of cloth and then frequently heated up for giving hot compression to the eyes for healing. In case of vomiting, *Bhusana* (Roots of *Patal Garuda*) is ground up and then orally taken. For cure of diarrhoea pulverized root of *Kundi* plant is taken along with water.

Roots of *Anahinga* plant, *Bachha* or *Daja* plant and arrow-root (*Badhra*) are ground together and diluted with Mahua liquor (*Irpi Kalu*) in order to prepare a lotion which is anointed over the entire body to get rid of fever.

Seeds of *Tralu* tree are collected. The skins of the seed are taken out. Root of *Ketkaya* plant is mixed with the skins of the *Tralu* seeds and ground together. The entire substance is diluted with water and used twice a day to get rid of cold.

For cure of indigestion, root of *sarumaricha* plant and roots of *Bhusana* (*Patal Garuda*) plant are ground together and taken with water three to four times a day.

For amelioration of rheumatism, the outer skin of dried-up broom sticks are collected, burnt, made powder and dissolved in castor-oil and then boiled for sometime and this oil is rubbed on the rheumatic portion of the body.

Roots of *Kumdi* plant and roots of *Bhusana* plants are pulverized together and then mixed with water. It is taken three to four times a day. It is a curative for any sort of gastro-intestinal disease.

Modus Operendi of *Dishari* :

Each Dongria Kandha, more or less, knows certain remedial measures when he is susceptible to minor sufferings. His open-air movement, less liking for confinement in his house and frequent movement in hills and forests tend him to pick up basic knowledge of certain medicinal herbs and roots which either he gathers or brings immediately for treatment. Only when his personal knowledge fails he approaches the practitioner. In almost all the big villages there are one to two *Dishari* who are consulted even in odd hours.

The practitioner verifies certain symptoms after checking the palpitation of the right wrist of the female and accordingly diagnoses the disease. Eyes and tongues are not tested; only stomach is pressed. After due checking the practitioner determines the disease and prescribes the medicine.

The practitioner is the custodian of indigenous herbs and roots. He, after due checking, takes out appropriate herbs or ready-made medicine, utters some magical spells solemnly and puffs on the medicine as-well-as on the patient three to four times. It is believed that the *Ghungi Penu* and *Lai-Penu* are worshipped by the *Dishari* and appeased with adequate sacrifices so as to acquire the knowledge of the art.

A *Dishari* is supposed to know the medicinal effect of required roots and herbs available in the area along with charms and spells. The post becomes hereditary if the son is competent. If not, any man who develops the art becomes *Dishari*. A woman *Dishari* is not found in the area.

Dishari does not demand any fee for the treatment. The patient pays only a nominal fee of 25 Paise for the medicine, and when cured, he pays what he likes as gift either in kind or cash.

Dishari does not undergo any formal training to learn the art. The post is also not hereditary. If the son likes, he learns some spells and charms to appease the *Penus* in connection with different treatment.

The status of a *Dishari* is in no way inferior to those of other religious functionaries of the village. As a folk doctor of the village, he is highly esteemed and given higher status in the society.

Mental Therapy :

Therapeutic treatment through magic is practised by individual effort in the area. *Bejuni* the shamanin, through white magic takes up treatment of mental illness. People also believe that through magical diagnosis the diseases can be cured and therefore, attach importance to it.

It may be stated at the outset that, shamanin as such, is actually a part of religious nexus because it is through a ritual process the end is achieved. The key idea is to ward off the evil spirits and deities as-well-as to appease them with appropriate rites and sacrifices. Through this appeasement when the desired end is achieved, it may be called sympathetic white-magic.

For harming an enemy also the services of a shamanin is sought. The type of occultism which she uses for infliction misfortune and harm on a target person is called '*Peshini*'. Such an art may be termed as contagious or black magic. It is not public but secretly practiced lest the party may be bewitched by more experienced practitioner.

However, only when medical therapy fails, the people take recourse to magical therapy, that is, they approach the shamanin to take up the treatment.

Shamanins are organized on the basis of their respective tutelary spirits, whom they worship. In each group the *Pat-Bejuni* or the chief shamanin

takes the lead in divinations or in the performance of rites, who supposed to have gained proficiency in the art after rigorous training. Though there are male shamans, their number is much less. When they act, they adorn themselves with ladies garments.

Modus Operendi of the Shamanin:

First symptoms of the disease are ascertained by the shamanin. The *Pat-Bejuni* tests the external symptoms of the patient. From the very look of the patient, she can guess the type of disease which the patient is suffering from, and then determines the main causes of suffering. Afterwards she resorts to the procedure of divination and invokes appropriate spirits and *Dumbas* of the ailment leaving aside other spirits and *Dumbas*.

The *Pat-Bejuni*, along with her assistants, starts supplicating sundried rice balls separately in winnowing fans with magical spells and charms so as to trace out the concerned spirit which has done the harm. In case, the spirit remains unidentified even after long recitation the *Pat-Bejuni* jumps off and starts dancing, immediately the disciples follow her. While dancing she is possessed by the spirit. It is believed, the real spirit who is causing harm gets into her body. She ultimately gets into trance and starts talking to the spirit on behalf of the patient in that state of trance. She vows to placate and appease the spirit with whatever sacrifices the spirit desires to have. After that she gets back her senses and prescribes for ritualistic articles to be offered to the spirit. Accordingly rites are performed and sacrifices are given.

If, even after this, the patient is not cured, a more efficient *Pat-Bejuni* is consulted, who performs rites more elaborately and offers more sacrifices. And if after this the patient is not cured, the matter is left to be decided by the Earth-Goddess (*Darani-Penu*).

Shamanins are generally paid nominal fees. At the individual call she collect about 250 to 500 grams of sundried rice given by the head of the household, heads of sacrificial animals, that is head of a chicken, a fowl or a

goat and a nominal fee of Rs.1.25. On communal worship, a group of shamanins participate and the entire mass of sundried rice and the kills are equally distributed. In terms of money, each shamanin gets about Rs.55/-, if she participates in the communal festival. In exercising white magic a shamanin is rewarded as per the nature of benefit received by the beneficiary. For performing black magic a shamanin is paid about Rs.60/-.

Medical Care :

No special attention is given to a patient by the inmates of the house as they remain busy always. The patient usually sleeps on the floor covering the body with a piece of cloth. Mainly the housewife cooks food for the patient. No special diet is given other than ragi gruel. Rice is not usually given when patient suffers, but it is given when the patient recovers. In case, any one visits market, buys cheap biscuits and loaves for the patient. During convalescence, the patient is not given liquor to drink.

From the account given in the preceeding para, it seems that the Dongria Kandha in spite of culture contact still continue to rely on indigenous method of diagnosis and treatment. Recently, however, they have started availing of the allopathic treatment available in the dispensary installed in the village Kurlj. But due to inaccessibility, the dispensary is not functioning properly. It is also a fact that the people are not apathetic towards allopathic treatment.

Out of 25 adults (male, 16+ Female 9) interviewed from 4 villages of *Jakasika* and *Wadaka Muthas*, it was found that almost all persons opined in favour of taking up allopathic treatment. Each adult again came to the dispensary varying from 16 to 31 times during the year 1967-68. But from the next year, the trend decreased because, the dispensary was not systematically managed and no care was taken for timely supply of medicines. From the year 1970-71, the dispensary was completely in ramshackle and the people lost all hopes. Further, the males approached the dispensary mainly when they suffered from malaria, stomach pain and sustained injuries. The

females approached the dispensary mainly for malaria. During the year 1969-70, the midwife, in charge of the dispensary attended only 4 delivery cases. Thus, it is found that, when most of the people groan of malaria and cripple in injuries, they come to the dispensary. It is also a fact that, the ladies, even if face prematured death, do not like to come to the midwife for delivering child.

The Dongria Kandha are never health-conscious nor take proper care of their health. Even when they are sick, they either work or stroll. But only in acute stage, they seek for treatment. The acute stage is only ascribed due to wrath of the deities and spirits. Normally when indigenous efforts are failed, they prefer to succumb to the alien medicines like allopathic. But illness or death during old age is not accounted for the evil effect of deities and spirits. Family planning devices have not been adopted by the people.

CHAPTER-XI

Changing Scene

“We are *Paroja Logu* (subjects), like *Dongar-chasa* (Hill cultivation) and hate *Pada Desia* (outsider)” - these are the real feelings of the Dongria Kandha which have kept them isolated for generations. But after the establishment of Community Development Blocks in the Dongria Kandha area, introduction of Purchase-Sale and Fair Price Shop Scheme in the year 1964 and with developed communication facilities, the Dongria Kandha are frequently coming in contact with the Government Officers. Fairs, markets, and liquor shops have attracted many a Dongria Kandha to come in contact with various types of people, and thereby have facilitated culture contact. The forces of Hindu culture and Hindu ways of living have influenced the Dongria Kandha due to close contact with the Domb community to a greater extent despite the fact that they are still in the mooring of their traditional way of life.

The Dongria Kandha have been living in their original land for centuries. The few Domb people living in the Dongria villages in the Niyamgiri hills are the tenants of the latter. They have little or no independence what so-ever in exercising their powers and privileges. As occupants of the lands of the Dongrias, they pay their annual land revenue regularly in cash to the Dongrias for village rituals, and contribute towards other contingent expenses of the village. In general the Domb living in these villages contribute money, grains, buffalo, cow, goat, lamb and other votive animals for the Dongria Kandha rituals. If any Domb goes against the decision or commits any wrong to the village he is liable to be punished by the village council of the Dongria Kandha. The Domb observe the Dongria Kandha festivals, rituals, taboos and prohibitions for the safety and security of the village. They too, share the entire belief system of the Dongria Kandha. In this area, however, there is very little scope for the elements of an alien culture being thrust upon the

Dongria Kandha. The Dongria Kandha have no doubt been influenced by their caste Hindu neighbours. On the other hand they have also been able to diffuse some of their own cultural traits among the Domb as the latter are economically dependent on the former.

As they are a peace-loving people, the problem of harmonious adjustment is not so difficult, despite the fact that the Domb are exploiters. They have an intense desire to establish friendly relations with the Domb and the Desia Kandha at the foot of the Niyamgiri hills by making them *Sai* or *Adi*. But the persons from the plains are taking undue advantage of the Dongria Kandha friendship and honesty.

Culture Change :

Change is the inevitable phenomenon of nature as-well-as of life. Man has to adapt himself to the conditions which confront him. It may be rapid or slow, good or bad and complete or partial. Culture itself is never static. Since culture is dynamic, the life of a person cannot be static. The Dongria Kandha culture is also in a transitional phase and is passing through the process of acculturation in many respects.

'The process of normal social interaction, does not bring insignificant structural change, for instance, the young couples seek partition and live separately immediately after marriage without carrying the parents and unmarried siblings. The practice of seeking separation from the parents after marriage is not unusual on the part of a son, but it is not a common feature of Dongria society. All sons do not seek separation from their parents immediately after marriage. Bride-capture which was a casual phenomenon, has become a regular feature because one becomes sure of getting a girl. The rate of widow remarriage has increased. The dormitory life and the associated youth organization, which continued to flourish even in half-hearted form, have lost their charm. This has led to more commitments of premarital sexual laxity and adultery. The young people are now found to give more emphasis on the feast aspect of almost all the social functions rather than

ritualistic aspect. Not only that, but a sense of status competition has also emerged in elaboration of the feast. The most remarkable thing is that, in most of the social functions, the neighbours are rather preferred to be invited than the distant agnates and affines, and most of the uterine relatives are ignored. The *Barika* (village messenger) does not feel obligatory to call the relatives as per social custom even if he is annually remunerated. In fact the set of old values now seems to be threatened.

Technological Change :

Though the technology has not been developed in this region, the people are not unaware of the essential things of daily use. Now, the people prefer hurricane lanterns instead of burning the wood for light. Similarly, they use safety razors for shaving, umbrella in rainy season, torches for night journey, soap for washing clothes, steel trunks, aluminium utensils and so on. Houses are well built, double roofs (*Attu*) are properly made with thick wooden planks and coloured properly to hoard more load of grains and to protect those from eating by insects. Decorative doors, prepared by the local carpenters are fitted to the house.

Modernization :

The Dongria Kandha are getting acculturated. They possess a sense of beauty, both natural and artificial. A large number of young boys and girls have a touch of modernity in their taste in matters of dress and ornaments. The girls prefer more to put on dress of various colours other than black colour. They also prefer mill-made clothes and slippers now-a-days. Wooden combs are gradually being replaced by plastic combs. More alloy-metal and golden ornaments are preferred than simply bead necklaces. The young girls are more attracted to the dazzling glass and plastic bangles.

Economic Change :

The Dongria Kandha eke out their living mainly by shifting cultivation and by collection of roots, fruits, greens and other edible jungle products.



HEALTH CAMP FOR CATTLES IN D. K. D. A., PARSALI AREA

This is partly due to their primitive agricultural practices and partly to the rocky and hilly area they inhabit. Although the Tribal Development Blocks and Integrated Tribal Development Agency and Dongria Kandha Development Agency etc. are taking steps to ameliorate their economic condition by phasing out different developmental programmes, the effects of these measures are not perceptible and adequate.

As regards the agricultural scene there is not much development in the use of new agricultural implements, modern fertilizers and pesticides. Of course, the area of paddy cultivation has increased after obtaining final settlement records during the year 1973 but the result is very disappointing. Due to lack of proper irrigation facility and rocky soil the yield is too low.

The younger generation is now gradually veering round to the view that the Dongar lands will give them much better return if put under fruit-trees. They have therefore, started accepting green variety of pineapple, *Singapuri* type of banana etc. as supplied by the Block and ITDA authorities. In the meanwhile, the Government have installed various Demonstration Farm Orchards in the holdings of the natives which, when grow up will be possessed by different occupants.

The old attitude to tolerate the torture of exploitation of the Domb is further remonstrated by the young people. They now want to breach the age-old relationship with the Domb and instigate their group members to cooperate fully with the Government. The *Padar* type of land which was once cultivated by the Domb in connivance with the old people is taken away by the young people after the settlement operation.

Political Change :

The tribal and *Mutha* councils have not undergone any changes and the voice of the traditional leaders is not yet questioned. It is a fact that the Dongria Kandha do not like to bring any case to the court of law lest their

own secrets should be leaked out. For that they even instruct the *Barika* not to inform any matter to the police even if there occurs any casualty.

Now-a-days adult Dongria Kandha realize the value of their vote. They are keen to cast their votes during the general election and Panchayat election. People are interested to know their rights. The new Ward Member is equally respected by the villagers and holds high status.

Religious Change :

The religious life of the Dongria Kandha has been least affected. They observe the same rites and rituals with great details to avoid the displeasure of their deities. With the introduction of paddy cultivation, *Nua-khia* (First new eating) ceremony has been adopted. Young people have minimized their expenditure on liquor and do not like to spend much for liquor as-well-as for feasts and festivals. They believe that the Hindu gods and goddesses are more powerful. Therefore, some of them visit the *Siva*-temple on *Sivaratri* at Chatikona railway station and offer sweetmeats as ritualistic food in case they are sick.

Thus, it can be concluded that the Dongria is in a state of flux. Old customs, beliefs and values still hold good. In spite of several changes, the social structure of the Dongria Kandha has retained some of its basic characteristic features.

SECTION - II
THE KUTIA KANDHA

CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

Even now primitivism persists side by side with the modernity. To day also there exists some societies, which are extremely backward and are still in search of the basic survival technique. They are mostly in the state of nature, utilizing the natural resources for their survival. They know the details of their environments and have a very clear idea about the flora and fauna near their forest habitats. The means of livelihood mainly hinge upon their primitive technology. Profit motive, accumulation of wealth, market economy, advanced instruments of production have not fully penetrated into these societies.

To assess the gap between them and the civilized society, we have to study these tribal societies in details. Only then we can determine the extent of their backwardness, assess their needs and problems and extend to them facilities to remove their constraints and rehabilitate them to emerge as an organized and developed human society. The Kutia Kandha of Belghar area in Phulbani district of Orissa was studied with this objective in view.

CHAPTER – II

Study Area

The Kutia Kandha, one of the primitive sections of the Kandha tribe found largely in Belghar, Gumma, Lankagarh, Jhiripani Gram Panchayats in Tumudibandh block and few villages of Subamagiri area of Kotagarh block in Phulbani district. This sub-tribe is also found in the Lanjigarh block of Kalahandi district.

Location of the Study Area :

The present study was undertaken in the Belghar and Gumma area of Tumudihandh block in the Phulbani district. The study area is situated about 2500 feet above the sea level and lies between $19^{\circ}45'N$ and $20^{\circ}5'N$ Latitudes and between $83^{\circ}30'E$ and $83^{\circ}45'E$ Longitudes.

Communication :

Belghar is connected with the block headquarters Tumudibandh through a 30 Kms. all weather road, out of which 25 Kms are made black top and the remaining 5 Kms. Are metalled road. The block headquarters, Tumudibandh is connected with the district headquarters Kandhamal through the State highway. Belghar is connected with Gumma with a fair weather road of 8 Kms. There is regular, every public bus services from Phulbani to Belghar. Besides the bus service, private jeeps also ply once or twice in a day from sub-divisional headquarters, Baliguda to Belghar. But from Belghar to Gumma there is no public transport system.

Flora and Fauna :

The study area forms a part of the Belghar range of Balliguda forest division of the Phulbani district. The total estimated forest area is 23628.5

hectares which is about 78.76 per cent of the total geographical area of the area. Category-wise break up of the forests is given below:

1. Reserve Forest : 10648 Hect. (35% of the total land)
2. Proposed reserves: 4948.75 Hect. (14.8% of the total land)
(not yet notified)
3. Other forests: 8031.76 Hect. (28.7% of the total land)
(Revenue land with forest)

Source – Development Hand Book, 1996

The total geographical area is estimated to be around 300 Sq. Kms.

Besides a large number and varieties of species of trees the most common is Sal, Bamboo and cane are found in the area. On the upland and hills the trees, like mango, mahua, tamarind are found and they have importance in the economy of the Kutia Kandha. The forest provides wood for household, agricultural and hunting implements, tools and apparatus, thatching grass, bark, fibre, numerous wdible roots, leaves, mushrooms, fruits, plant, herbs and roots for indigenous medicines and leaves for household utensils. The forest is also inhabited by a number of species consisting of big and small animals and birds.

From the areal study it is revealed that the drainage pattern is dentritic. The run off from the area is drained to the river Mahanadi in the north and north-east and to river Vansadhara in the south and south-west.

Two rivers, Utei and Chauldhua have originated from this area and finally merge with Tel river in Kalahandi. Besides these two rivers, number of hill streams and nal, such as Talki jore, Lagali, Batilima, Guduguda, Kaugadi, Tasughati have originated from this area. But the rivers and hill streams flow deep down below the steep banks and this characteristic make the streams and rivers not useful for irrigation. But in the natural bed of some hill streams

cultivation is practised by the Kutia Kandhas. Over some hill streams MIPs and diversion weirs have been constructed for irrigation purpose.

Climate and Rain Fall :

The climate of this area is warm, humid and sub-tropical. There is no rainfall recording station in the study area. The nearest rainfall recording station is at the block headquarters, Tumudibandh. The average rainfall of this area is estimated at 1360 mm. The winter, in this area, continues from October to February. The minimum recorded temperature is 6°C, which goes upto 35.3°C in May (Source – Block Office, Tumudibandh).

CHAPTER - III

Demographic Profile

In the study area, Belghar and gumma Gram Panchayats of Tumudibandh block covers 61 revenue villages and 13 hamlets. But of these 61 revenue villages 2 villages, such as Pukuru and Turli are un-inhabited and the inhabitants of Sipidika village have shifted to other villages. The Gram Panchayat-wise list of villages and hamlets with number of scheduled tribe and scheduled caste and other caste population, percentage of literacy (as per the survey conducted by KKDA, Belghar) is given below:

Belghar Gram Panchayat

Sl. No.	Name of the villages	No. of house holds	Population				Total literacy	% of literates
			ST	SC	OC	Total		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.	Deogada	26	133	-	-	133	32	24%
	Hamlet - Talangpadar	5	27	-	-	27	3	11%
2.	Kadapana	16	83	10	-	93	16	17%
3.	Tuakela	28	128	-	-	128	18	14%
4.	Santuakela	5	31	-	-	31	2	7%
5.	Germeli	43	215	5	-	220	8	4%
6.	Dahabali	6	38	2	-	40	1	3%
7.	Badakumali	14	56	-	-	56	2	4%
8.	Batipada	42	183	12	-	195	10	5%
9.	Taragabali	10	43	6	-	49	4	8%
10.	Gurlimarka	14	65	3	-	68	2	3%
	Hamlet- Gunurupa	23	101	-	-	101	6	6%

11	Adalanga	8	41	-	-	41	2	3%
12	Sadangi	17	65	-	-	65	8	12%
	Hamlet- Girisasa	11	42	3	-	45	8	18%
13.	Sanakumudia	8	34	-	-	34	4	11%
14.	Kusumunda	17	66	-	-	66	10	15%
15.	Rangaparu	60	262	-	-	262	44	17%
	Hamlet-	26	106	-	-	106	16	15%
	Pandamaska							
16.	Burlubaru	30	137	5	-	142	42	30%
17.	Madalakana	10	42	-	-	42	9	21%
18.	Rajam	22	89	4	-	93	12	13%
19.	Saperibhata	13	51	-	-	51	6	12%
20.	Galabada	9	42	-	-	42	3	7%
21.	Muskasaru	4	17	2	-	19	2	11%
22.	Dhumamska	21	100	-	-	100	8	8%
23.	Karlange	5	22	-	-	22	3	13%
24.	Mundimaska	19	74	20	-	94	11	72%
25.	Kranjikona	25	94	-	-	94	11	12%
	Hamlet-Samruli	5	25	-	-	25	3	12%
	Hamlet- Mechadbaru	1	8	8	-	8	-	-
26.	Garang	25	111	25	-	136	9	7%
27.	Ambidikala	7	34	-	-	34	1	3%
28.	Gumapadar	8	30	-	-	30	3	10%
29.	Bikapanga	17	69	4	-	73	8	11%
30.	Paskadi	7	38	-	-	38	3	8%
	Total :	627	2784	104	-	2888	331	11.4%

Guma Gram Panchayat

Sl. No	Name of the villages	No. of house holds	Population				Total literates	% of literacy
			ST	SC	OC	Total		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.	Pikusi	21	90	-	-	90	7	8%
2.	Ushabali	20	95	15	-	110	8	7%
3.	Guchuka	13	74	-	-	74	17	23%
4.	Tidipadar	11	43	3	-	46	11	24%
5.	Saperi	18	87	18	-	105	24	23%
6.	Gambhari	8	37	25	-	62	4	7%
7.	Dupi	36	169	30	-	199	26	13%
8.	Pringel	19	60	-	-	60	15	25%
9.	Ralangada	14	72	-	-	72	6	9%
10.	Gumma Colony	25	125	10	-	135	25	10%
11.	Bariguda	4	13	-	-	13	2	15%
12.	Kanibhata	1	5	3	-	8	1	12%
13.	Pedam	17	94	-	-	94	42	45%
14.	Nuamunda	21	98	4	-	102	5	5%
15.	Kranja	15	83	25	-	108	22	20%
16.	Sipidika Inhabitants have shifted to other villages							
17.	Kanibaru	27	115	10	-	125	5	4%
	Hamlet- Sindhibali	6	37	8	-	45	2	4%
	Hamlet-Parimal	7	32	5	-	37	3	8%
18.	Lidrang	14	58	25	-	83	3	4%
19.	Bhalugada	17	69	5	-	74	6	9%
20.	Sukherpadar	7	32	-	-	32	3	9%
21.	Bhandarsal	8	41	-	-	41	2	5%
22.	Golapanga	18	75	8	-	83	11	13%

23	Kineri	16	66	-	-	66	8	13%
	Hamlet- Mathaghathi	3	15	-	-	15	-	-
24	Jamuguda	2	9	-	-	9	1	11%
25	Susabhata	15	75	30	-	105	6	7%
26	Pagerpadi	16	78	-	-	78	7	9%
	Hamlet-Kanapadar	6	27	-	-	27	4	15%
27	Salapati	6	35	-	-	35	3	9%
28	Radang	22	105	10	-	115	13	11%
29	Tulangpadi	2	12	-	-	12	-	-
30	Pukuru					Uninhabited		
31	Turli					Uninhabited		
	Total :	435	2026	234	-	2260	292	13%

Gram Panchayat-wise population figure with Literacy Rate

Name of the G.P.	No. of house holds	Population				Total literacy	Percentage of literacy
		ST	SC	OC	Total		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Belghar	627	2784	104	-	2888	331	11.46
Gumma	435	2026	234	-	2260	292	13.00
Total :	1062	4810	338	-	5148	623	12.00

CHAPTER – IV

Origin of the Tribe

The origin of the Kutia Kandha dates back to the day on which the first human beings and water sources emerged in the earth. A place called, Sapangada near the Gumma village is venerated as sacred by the Kutia Kandha for they believe that it is from there that the first human being emerged out of a hole in the earth. According to the local term, *Sapano* means birth and *Gadda* means hole.

The myth state that in the creation, two heavenly male deities, namely *Beta Mangera*, *Pramlu Mangera*, who happened to be two brothers, descended on the earth and came in contact with two earth Goddesses who are sisters, namely *Narandali* and *Kapandali*, near Gumma village. The union between the heavenly deities with the earth Goddesses resulted in producing 14 eggs in a hole, called *Sapangada*. When the eggs got hatched, people of 14 different clans of the tribe emerged out of the hole (*Sapangada*). But the people of those 14 different clans did not get any water to drink as there was no water on the earth. Then all the people of 14 clans went on searching for water. Two persons, namely *Udu Rengana* and *Pena Rengana* of the first born clan *Nondruka* (from the egg which hatched first) reached near *Gunji Nanu*, where there were four bushes called (1) *Raacheli Daki*. Near these four bushes *Udu Rengana* and *Pena Rengana* met the God *Beta Mangera*, God. *Beta Mangera* informed them that water would be available near those four bushes. Then *Udu Rengana* and *Pena Rengana* rooted out those four bushes by their arrows and immediately water oozed out of *Gunji Nanu*. Then *Nenandali*, the earth Goddess instructed the people of 14 different clans to take the water from *Gunji Nanu* to different "Padar" (plain land down the hill slope) and establish their own clan villages. From that day

Kutia Kandha villages for each clan was established and every village has water sources. Previously the Kutia Kandha villages were uniclan. But now a days multi-clan villages are found in the study area, due to influx of people of other clans.

Significance of the Tribe's Nomenclature:

The origin myth of the tribe suggests that the first generation of Kutia Kandha emerged out of a hole (*Sapangada*). As per the local term *Kuti* means a big hole on the earth, the tribe which emerged out of a hole is known as Kutia Kandha.

It transpires from the above origin myth, which is a documentation pertaining to the self-definition of their social identity, that it is, no doubt, a fictive narration backed by logical arguments. It reflects their ethos, ideology, worldview and value orientations in the contextual frame of their simple society and culture. The origin myth of the Kutia Kandha needs social-structural interpretation and analysis.

The heaven and the earth, the two diametrically opposite realms or entities are conjoined, united and combined for the creation of human life. Moreover the union of heavenly gods and earthly goddesses does not directly produce humans, but through hatching of eggs in a hole. It presupposes a primeval or primordial stage, i.e. oviparous reproduction, which precedes viviparous reproduction, producing living young directly. The myths usually are beyond spatio-temporal limitations. The Kutia Kandha logical arguments overshadow the inconsistency, that is, the reproduction of humans through eggs.

The earth becomes a repository of water as it contains under ground water reserve. The uprooting of bushes through arrow results in bringing water to the surface. Moreover, water is vital for human sustenance.

The social solidarity of a tribal community is maintained through segmentary opposition. The clan as a social institution is exogamous

everywhere. The division of the Kutia section of the Kandha tribe into 14 clans regulate marital union in their community.

From the above myth, we notice four opposite elements such as (i) Celestial/ Heavenly versus Earthly; (ii) two brothers versus two sisters; (iii) Oviparity versus viviparity; and (iv) Surface of earth versus subterranean hole, so neatly conjoined with each other for discovering a hidden message and also confirming to a universal structural arrangement, as is found in other myths.

Physical Feature of the Kutia People:

The Kutia Kandha are strongly built. The muscles are well developed. The skin colour is generally dark-brown with different shades. The cheek bones are prominent. The nose is moderately broad, the lips are thick and eye (iris) colour is dark brown. The Kutia Kandha have dark brown hair of low wavy type. Long hairs are tucked in down, especially by women.

Language:

The Kandha are divided into two linguistic groups i.e. "Kui" and "Kuvi", both belonging to the Dravidian linguistic family. The Kutia Kandha speak the "Kui" language while "Kuvi" is spoken mainly in the eastern part of the Koraput District.

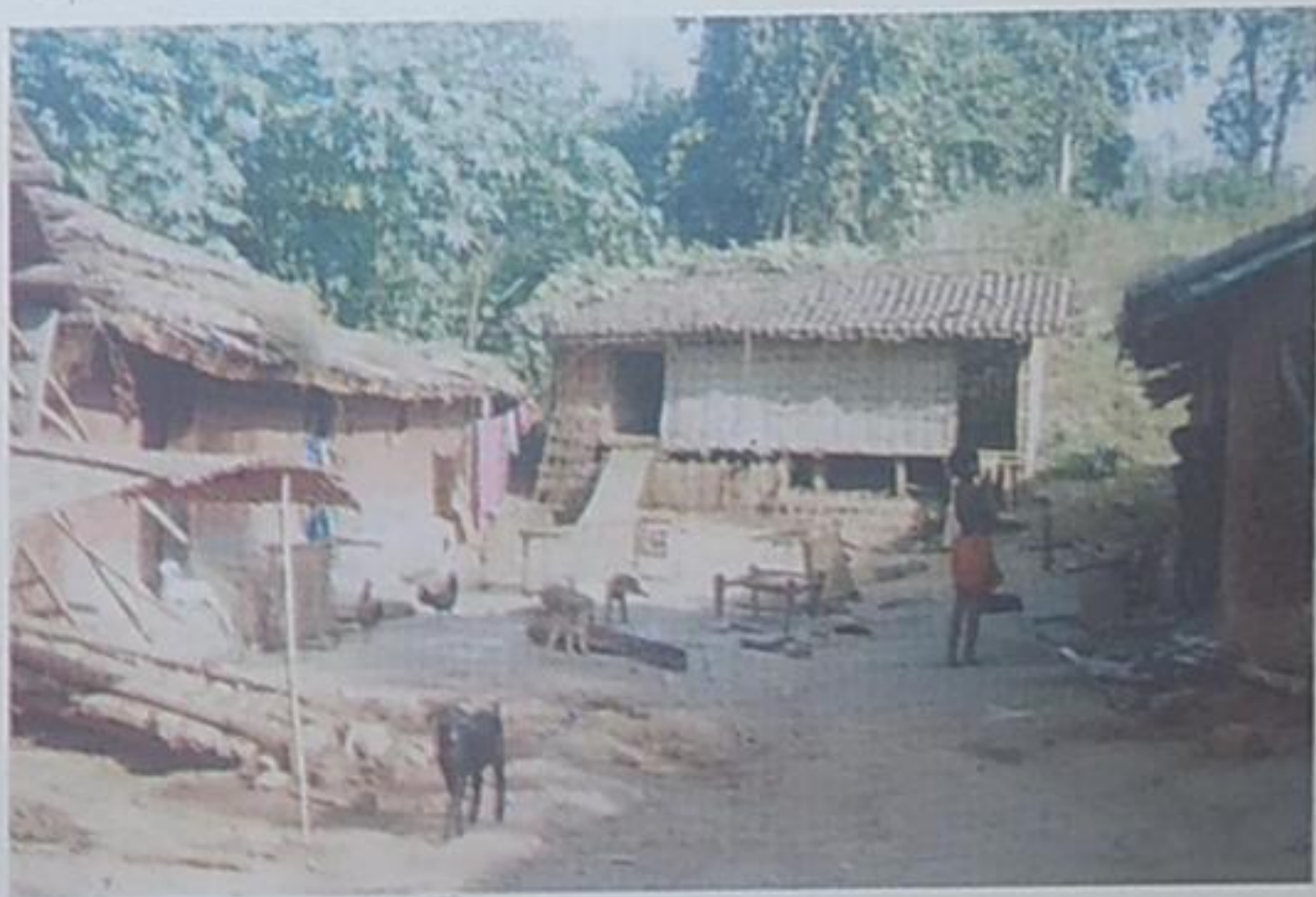
CHAPTER – V

Settlement Pattern

The Kutia Kandha live in small settlements. The Kutia Kandha villages stand on the out skirts of forest and are generally screened around by mountains. Houses are built closed to each other in two rows separated by a broad street about 15' to 20' in width. The village street is usually situated in the east-west direction. The villages comprise 5 to 50 households. There is only one village in the study area, Rangapam which has more than 100 households. In the center of the village the shrine *Dharani Penu* (Earth Goddess) is installed with seats of stone slabs earmarked for the meeting of the traditional tribal council.

The clan organisation plays an important role in the Kutia Kandha life and it determines the character of the village. It was a tradition that one particular clan group settle in a particular village. But during the study it was observed that people belonging to two or three different clans have settled in one village. There are some pure Kutia Kandha villages, whereas two ethnic groups, like Kutia Kandha and Pano (SC) have settled together in one village. But the Pano built their separate dwellings at the out-skirt or at the backside of the village. It may be construed that in the recent past, some villages were uniethnic as well as uniclan; but currently we come across multiethnic and multi-clan villages.

In each village, a tiny house with grass covered conical roof, supported on wooden pillars is erected at the out-skirt. This structure is dedicated to the Goddess *Deopenu*. About 10 to 15 years back, in each village there were two separate houses, one as girl's dormitory (*Kude*) and other as boys dormitory (*Kude*), where the unmarried boys and girls of the village sleep and spend their night.



KUTIA KANDHA VILLAGE

Establishment of a New Settlement:

The divinations pertaining to the settlement of a new village and selection of site for construction of new house are almost the same. For the settlement of a new village the *Kutaka* (sorcerer) plays an important role. The *Kutaka* with some elderly persons goes to the nearest *Dharani Penu* (earth goddess) of the site selected for the settlement of the new village and near the *Dharani Penu* the *Kutaka* places 14 pairs of rice on a *Siali* or Sal leaf and covers the rice by another *Siali* on Sal leaf and places a small stone over it and returns back. In the next day morning again *Kutaka* with some elderly persons goes to the spot. If the *Kutaka* observes that the 7 pairs of rice are intact, then and there the *Kutaka* declares the site as suitable for the establishment of new village. But if the *Kutaka* notices that there is shortage of a grain of rice then again he places the 7 pairs near that *Dharani Penu* and like wise he tries for three times. If in all the three times the shortage of rice grains are noticed then he rejects the site for the settlement of the new village. But, in any one chance if the rice remains intact then the *Kutaka* declares the site as suitable for establishment of the new village.

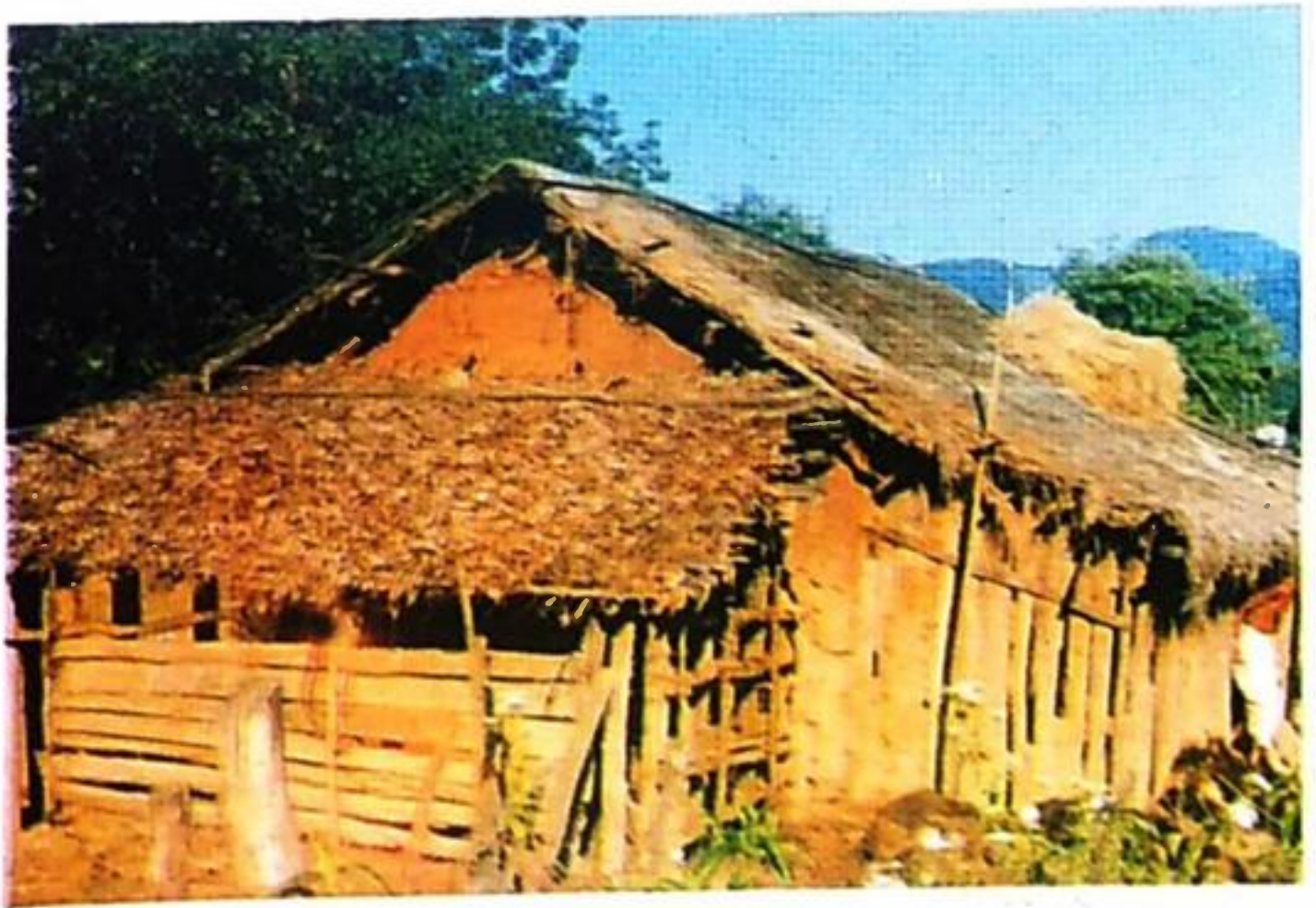
For the selection of site for establishment of a new village, availability of plain land and perennial water sources are taken into consideration. In the beginning of the establishment of the village, *Dharani Penu* (earth goddess) is installed in the center of the village. *Beda Penu* is established in the entrance of the village and *Deo Penu* is established at the outskirts of the village. The construction of the houses starts on any Sunday or in month of Kartika (October-November). The houses are built close to each other in two rows in east-west direction. The entrance of the village always faces to the east.

House (Ellu) Structure:

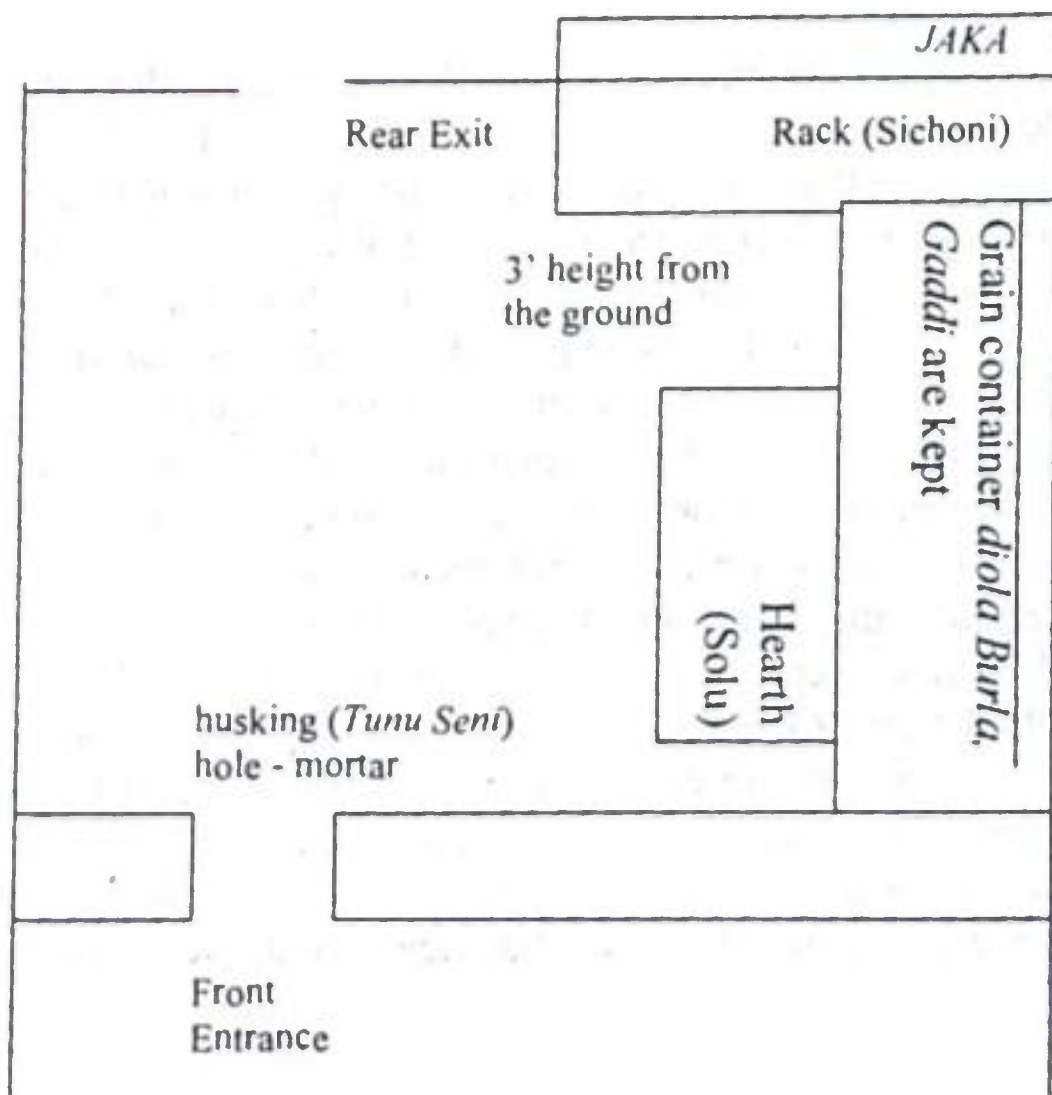
The ground plan of the house of the Kutia Kandha is rectangular. The houses are strongly built, but very low in height. The roof of the house never exceeds more than 8' to 9' and the height of the entrance being only about

4'.6" to 5' from the ground. The objective is to ensure resistance to the violent storms and ice cold wind that prevail during the monsoon and winter, respectively.

The main house consists of a single living room with one back varendah. Some houses have both front and back varendah. In some houses the walls of the front varendah are raised up to the roof level, so that it provides additional accommodation. In the back varendah an enclosure forms a small room, known as *Jaka*. The main room serves such purposes as living, kitchen and storage. The living room provides accommodation for the parents and small children of the family. Previously about 10 years back, the grown up boys and girls were sleeping in the village youth dormitories (*Kude*) maintained separately for the boys and girls. Now a days grown up boys and girls sleep in the front enclosed varendah or a separate room is built for them. Usually maize, other millets and *siali* leaf cups are kept hung from the roof of the living room for future use. The agricultural and hunting implements are also normally tucked into the roof. At the corner of the main living room, a mud platform is raised which serves as the hearth and there the fire is kept burning throughout the day and night during the rainy and winter seasons to keep the room warm. Just in front of the main entrance a hole is made on the ground with a iron ring inside and it serves the purpose of husking grains. A portion of the rear varendah is enclosed which is called *Jaka*. The *Jaka* serves as goat and pig stay. *Jaka* is also used as living room for the ladies during the seclusion period of the menstruation and child birth. The front wall is elaborately painted with figures of human beings, birds, animals and other attractive icons. These paintings and icons are prepared by the elderly female members of the family with coloured clays. The cow-shed is built in the back-yard of the house where only cow, bullocks and buffaloes are kept.



KUTIA KANDHA HOUSE

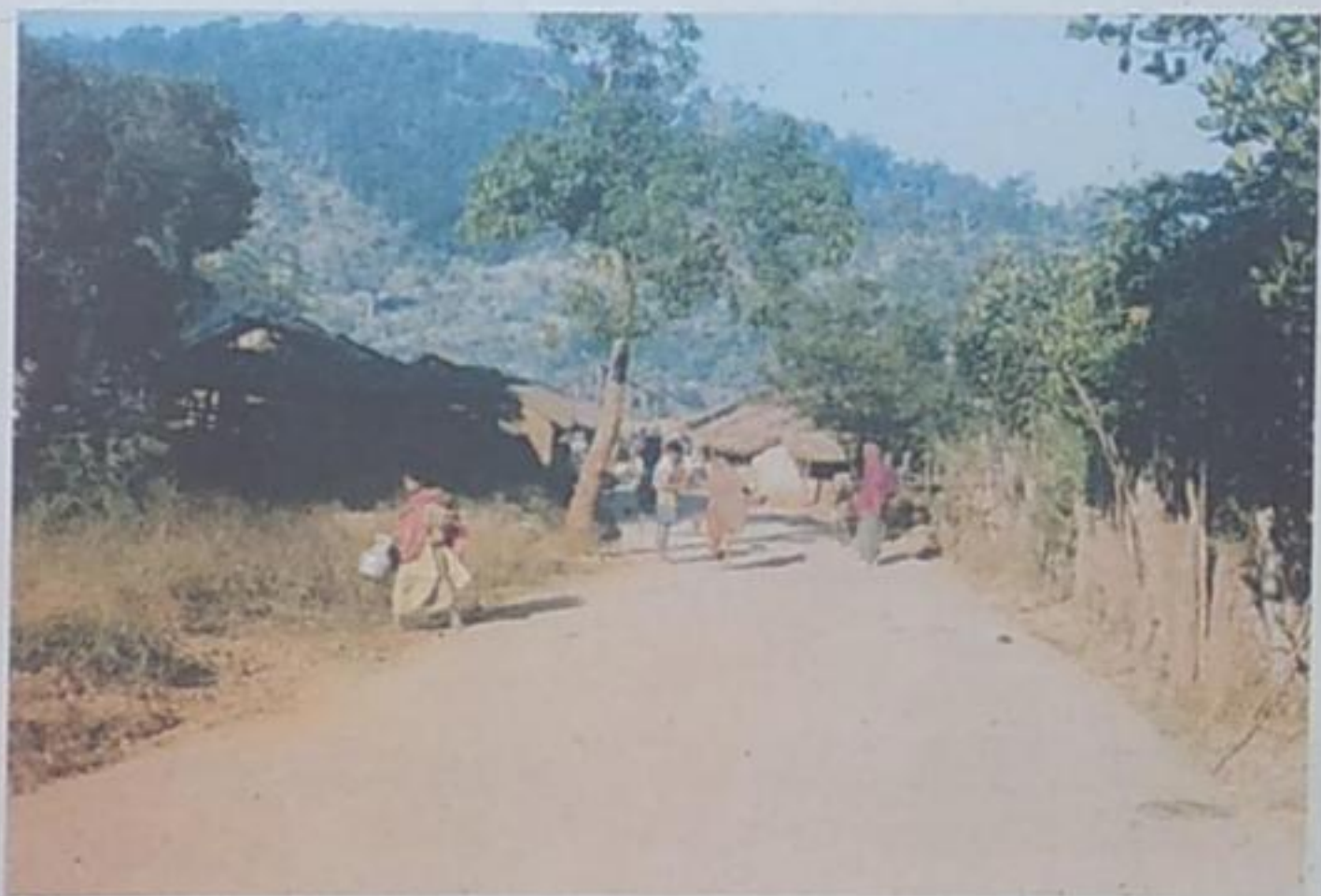


Rituals for Construction of the House:

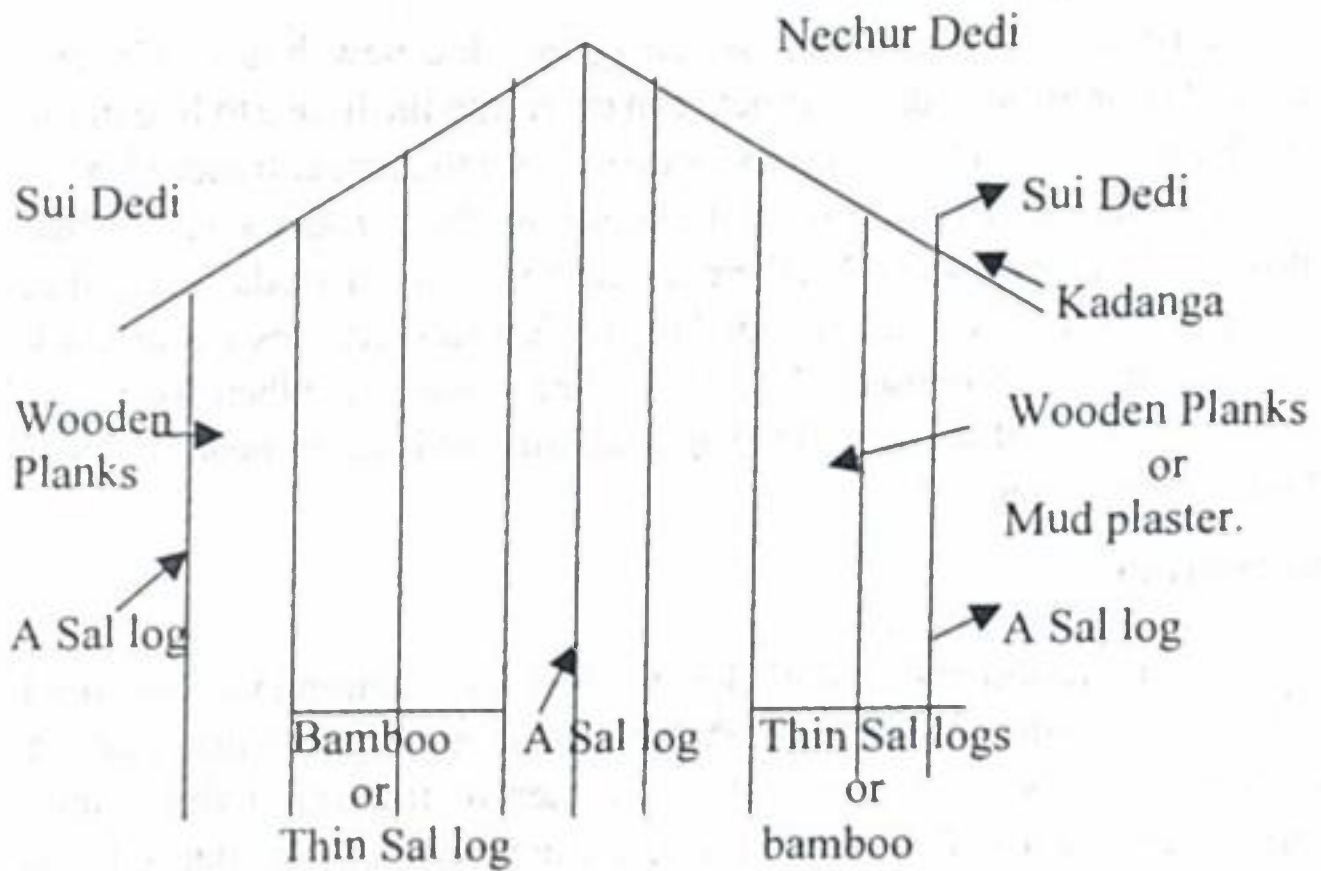
The house of the Kutia Kandha is constructed of broad Sal logs, plastered over with mud and thatched with jungle grass (*Chhana/ Vika*) or *Khajuri* (palm leaves) or *Khapari* (earthen tiles). Now-a-days cemented tiles are also used for thatching the house.

For construction of a new house, the head of the household (Male person) first pots a Sal log on the selected site. This Sal log happens to be the middle pillar of the house which is known as *Nechur Dedi*. Near this *Nechur Dedi* the head of the household places 7 pairs of rice on a *siali* or sal leaf cup which is also covered by a sal or *siali* leaf cup and a small stone is placed over the cup. On the next day the head of the household visits the spot and if finds the 7 pairs of rice intact then he concludes that the site is suitable for house construction. If one or more rice is missing from 7 pairs then he considers it as inauspicious and consults with the *Kutaka* (Sorcerer). The *Kutaka* in some other day goes to the selected spot and places a pinch of rice over a *siali* or sal leaf near the *Nachurdedi*. Then *Kutaka* counts the rice by reciting "whether this spot is suitable for this man (in name) or not" thrice. If the counting comes to 14 then the site is considered suitable for the house construction. But if the rice counts less or more than 14 the site is considered un-suitable for the house construction. This ritual known as rice divination is called *Jaga Dedi*.

On a Sunday the initial work of the house construction starts. First the pillars are posted and then the roof poles are placed. After that the walls are plastered with mud and the roof is thatched with *Vika* (jungle grass), which is beyond the reach of white ants or thatched with *Khapari* (earthen tiles). Now a days cemented tiles and corrugated tin sheets are used for the roof. To start with the construction the head of the household, now a days, breaks a coconut near the *Nechur Dedi*. There is no elaborate or any traditional or indigenous ritual for the starting the construction of the house.



APPROACH TO A KUTIA KANDHA VILLAGE



The construction of the house is exclusively house owner's job. No villager co-operates with the house owner without any remuneration. The remuneration is Rs.20/- in cash and cooked rice in kind per person. The walls of the house are covered by wooden planks or with mud. If the walls are made of with wooden planks then the sal logs are posted at a distance from one another. But if the walls are covered with mud then the thin sal logs and bamboos are posted close to each other. The digging of plinth is not generally done. The posting of poles and framing of the roof are done by the adult male members of the family. The plastering of mud on the wall frame, finishing of the flooring is exclusively done by females. But the male members of the family and children cooperate for preparation of mud. The thatching of the roof and construction of the floor are done jointly by male and female. It is tabooed for the women to climb the roof top but during the thatching work they help the male members by way of supplying the roof materials from the ground.

No ritual is observed for entering into the new house. On any Wednesday or Sunday the members can enter into the house to live in the house permanently. There is no specific ritual for the first entrance into the house. If at the time of selection of the house site the *Kutaka* (Sorcerer) had instructed the house owner that there should be a *Puja* on the day of the first entrance to the house, then on that day the *Kutaka* sacrifices a goat/ cock near the *Timba Dedi* (household Goddess). The house owner then distributes the cooked meat of the sacrificed animal/ bird and rice to near and dear relatives of the village.

Dormitory:

The institution of the youth dormitory is found among various tribal communities in our country. Some tribal communities even today have retained the dormitory system in their villages. Generally there are two separate dormitories, one for the unmarried boys and another for the unmarried girls of the village. So these dormitories are called bachelor's dormitory, where the unmarried boys and girls above 12 years of age spend the night in their respective dormitories.

In the Kutia Kandha area the bachelor's dormitory, both for boys and girls are called *Kude*. There are no exclusive houses for the purpose of *Kude* in the village. The houses which are newly constructed by a unmarried male is used temporarily as *Kude*. When that male youth gets married then he starts living in that house and then the *Kude* is shifted to another bachelor's house. Generally the marriageable son of the family (except the youngest son) builds a separate house of his own before he gets married but stays with his parents till his marriage. During this gap period his house is used as boy's or girl's *Kude*.

In the boys dormitory the unmarried boys spend nights with an elderly person or widower of the village. The girls spend the nights in their *Kude* under the guardianship of an elderly woman or an elderly widow. The married

people are generally not allowed into the *Kude* but special consideration is shown to the widows, widowers and divorcees.

In the festive occasion or during marriage ceremony the girl's dormitory is visited by the bachelors of other villages. In the *Kude* clan exogamy is strictly followed in free mixing of boys and girls. *Kude* is also a place to select the life partners. This place is also serves the purpose and venue for merry-making. The Kutia Kandha houses are mostly one roomed. So *Kude* solves the problems of accommodation by allowing the bachelor youths of each household of the village. In *Kude* the bachelors are imparted lessons in tribal discipline, customary laws and taboos, reciprocity of obligations, economic pursuits, etc. from the aged guardians of the *Kude*.

But now a days a very few Kutia Kandha villages have bachelor's dormitory. About 10 to 15 years back the *Kude* system has started declining in many Kutia Kandha villages, because they thought that the *Kude* system led to sexual corruptions.

CHAPTER – VI

Social Organization

Family:

Family is the basic social unit of the Kutia Kandha. Family is the foundation of their social organization. In the Kutia Kandha society, the family is the basic unit, controlling the social behaviour of its members and controlling the use of the cultivated land in its possession. Generally in the Kutia Kandha society nuclear family type is predominant. Polygynous families are also found in many Kutia Kandha villages whereas joint family system is almost nil.

Their nuclear family consists of parents and their unmarried children. In their society, it is customary that the old or widowed parents stay with the youngest son irrespective of his marital status. Among them the father/ husband is the formal representative of the family and considered as head of the household, where as in the family consisting of old parents and the youngest son, the youngest son becomes the head of the household. The Kutia Kandha family is patriarchal. The head of the household exercises authority over all members of the family but also complies with the individual rights and needs of each individual member. The head of the household takes socio-cultural decisions in consultation with other adult members of the family. But in case of economic matters, the head of the household in many cases consults with his wife before taking the final decision.

Inheritance:

In the Kutia Kandha community generally the property is distributed equally among the sons except the youngest son. The youngest son gets the lion's share as he takes the responsibility of maintaining the old parents till their death. The daughters do not get any share from the parental property. Even as a spinster or as a divorcee, if she stays permanently with the parents

then also she does not get any share from parental property. But if the parents have only daughters and the parents have not adopted a son, then each daughter gets equal share but the youngest daughter does not receive the lion's share, like the youngest son. So the Kutia Kandha family is patriarchal as well as patrilineal.

Adoption:

The parents without a child can adopt son from others but the first preference is given to own brother's son-in-law (*Ghar-Join Sachenje*).

Kinship:

The members of Kutia Kandha society are tied together in groups by blood and by marriage. The clan organisation, clan exogamy and patriliney are the main features of Kutia Kandha kinship organisation. The descent is counted in the male line and marriage inside the clan is tabooed.

Kinship Terminology

English Term	Terms of reference
Father	Aba
Mother	Iaa
Son	Apu
Daughter	Api
Younger brother	Nai tambera
Elder brother	Tada
Grand father	Aka
Grand mother	Aji
Younger sister	Nai tangi
Elder sister	Nana

Father's elder brother	Pemba
Father's younger brother	Koku
Father's sister's husband	Aku
Father's sister's son	Bhanja
Father's sister's daughter	Bhanji
Mother's father	Aku
Mother's mother	Aji
Mother's brother	Mama
Mother's brother's wife	Amma
Grand son	Nati
Grand daughter	Natini
Son's wife	Kudua
Father-in-law	Pattonja
Mother-in-law	Paja
Wife's brother	Michu
Husband's younger brother	Serunja
Son's wife's father	Parenja
Son's wife's mother	Paradu
Daughter's husband	Jabe
Sister's husband	Michu Maja

Joking and Avoidance:

In Kutia Kandha society joking relation exist between a man and his wife's unmarried younger sister; between a man and his grand father and gand mother; between younger brother and elder brother's wife; and between uncle and his unmarried niece.

Like-wise avoidance is observed between a man with his younger brother's wife and wife's elder sister and even the distant relatives of such relations. For a woman the avoidance is observed with her husband's elder brother and even the elder cousin brother of her husband.

Clan Organisation:

Kutia Kandha are divided into a number of social groups, known as *Gochhi* or *Bansa*. The *Gochhi* includes all persons unilineally descended from a common ancestor. Every Kutia Kandha is recognized as a member of his patriineal exogamous *Gochhi* (Clan). Each *Gochhi* is given a distinct name which further emphasizes their distinct identity. *Gochhi* distinction serves as an important aspect for mate selection in their society. In keeping with the belief that all members of a clan have descended from a common ancestor and are therefore brothers and sister, clan exogamy is strictly enforced by them. Kutia Kandha are divided into a number of clans (*gochhi*) but these clans are non-totemic. So they do not observe any taboo relating to totems. They simply claim their descent from fictitious ancestors, who cannot be genealogically traced.

The Kutia Kandha Clans:

1. Nundruka
2. Saraka
3. Timaka
4. Sukbicha / Sukbichaka
5. Adanga
6. Rodamaka
7. Urlaka
8. Kadraka

CHAPTER – VII

Marriage

Marriage (*Sedi Tatam*):

Monogamy is the predominant form of marriage among the Kutia Kandha but in some villages polygyny is also noticed. Adult marriage is the rule. The marriageable age in case of males is between 20 to 24 years and in case of girls it is 17 to 20 years. The clan exogamy is strictly followed in all types of marriages. There are generally four types of marriages in Kutia Kandha society, such as:

1. Arranged marriage (*Sadi Bengana*)
2. Marriage by capture (*Reja nona*)
3. Marriage by elopement (*Guisat Sedi*)
4. Marriage by service (*Ghar-Join Sachenja*)

Arranged Marriage (*Sedi Bengana*):

When a Kutia Kandha youth attains the marriageable age the boy's father searches for a suitable bride for him. After the selection of the bride one day the boy's father along with two to three bottles of mahua liquor, accompanied by the village *Majhi* (traditional secular village headman) and *Jani* (village sacerdotal head) go to the girl's village on a Wednesday. They go to the girl's house and place the proposal before the girl's father about the marriage of their son with his daughter. After mutual consent is given boy's father and girl's father *Janis* and *Majhis* both of the villages share the liquor brought by the boy's father. Then the boy's father, with his accompaniments, returns to his village after declaring to the girl's father that this negotiation is not known to many persons of both the villages so he will come again along with his own villagers.



A KUTIA KANDHA FEMALE WITH TATOO MARKS IN HER FAÇE

Again on a Wednesday the groom's father along with all the adult males and females (except the would be groom, small children and pretty old and disabled persons) go to the bride's village. The groom's father takes with him one buffalo and 15 to 20 litres of mahua liquor. All the groom's villagers gather in front of the bride's house. Both the villagers share the mahua liquor offered by groom's father and the bride's father takes the possession of the buffalo. Then the bride's father requests the groom's father to go back to his village with his accompaniments and to come again with the *Karanga Luganga* (bride- price) for the final fixation of the marriage. For their return journey, the bride's father offers the groom's parents a piglet and some rice for preparation of meals, which the groom's villagers share in a feast on the way or after reaching their own village.

In another Wednesday on the month fixed by the bride's father, again the groom's father, accompanied by his villagers including few male and female members, goes to the bride's village with the *Karanga Luganga* (bride-price) consisting of two chadar (*shroud*), two bell-metal vessels, one buffalo, one goat, 4 numbers of arrows and 15 to 20 litres of mohua liquor. Again the groom's villagers gather in front of the bride's house and there both the groom's and bride's villagers share the liquor offered by the groom's father. Then the groom's and bride's parents take on oath that the marriage is finally fixed between their son and daughter. After the oath, the bride's father offers some rice with cock / piglet to the groom's villagers for their return journey meal. If there is much distance between groom's village and bride's village the feast is taken on the way or else after reaching the groom's village.

Again on another Wednesday the groom's parents accompanied by two to three youths and *Jani* and *Majhi* of the village go to the bride's home with 3 to 4 bottles of mohua liquor to have final talk with the bride's parents as to when they will leave their daughter with them. Then the bride's father fixes a "Tuesday" of any month except "Phaguna" (March-April) for groom's father to come to their village and take with them the bride on the next day i.e. Wednesday.

On the fixed Tuesday, the groom's parents with all the able-bodied males and females of their own village and groom's near and dear relations of other villages, except the groom, go to the bride's village with 10 to 15 litres of Mahua liquor. The liquor is shared by both the villagers. Then the bride's father gives feast to the groom's villagers. After the feast is over the young boys and girls of both the villages sing and dance (*Basagani*) throughout the night till the bride is handed over to the groom's parents on the next day (Wednesday). On the Wednesday morning the groom's villagers are offered with rice and goat / pig for the morning meal by the bride's father.

Before handing over the bride to the groom's parents, one Sal pole is posted at the outskirts of the village. The bride is taken to this place, surrounded by the girls and young women of her own village. Then the bride holds tightly to the pole while her village girls and women surround her from all sides. Then the girls and women of groom's village forcibly clear the way to the bride and snatch her from the pole and then and there the groom's parents and villagers along with the bride make their return journey. Besides this, there is no elaborate marriage rituals in Kutia Kandha society.

After the bride reaches the groom's village she is taken to the groom's house. That night the bride is served with rice and chicken. From this Wednesday till the next Wednesday the bride stays in groom's house surrounded by groom's unmarried younger brothers and sisters. The groom sleeps in the village *Kude*, the bride is not allowed to come in contact with the groom. Even the groom is served with food in *Kude* by his mother or sister. But the bride does all the household works in groom's house. On the first Tuesday, after the bride's arrival at groom's house the bride's parents, accompanied by their relations and villagers reach groom's place. Then the groom's father gives a grand feast to both the villagers. In this feast buffalo, goat and chicken meat are cooked and served. This feast is known as *Dal Mamuli*. In this feast, the bride's and groom's parents are served first, then the villagers of both the villages follow. After the feast, the young boys and

girls of both the villages sing and dance throughout the night. On the next day (Wednesday) morning the bride's parents and villagers are also entertained with mahua liquor, rice and goat/ buffalo meat by groom's father. Then the groom's village *Jani* goes to the bride and performs one short ritual uttering that "you (the bride) have stayed well for 7 days in our village (groom's village) so also you (bride) stayed well in your own house". Then the groom's father gives 2 to 3 bottles of *mahua*, one buffalo, one goat to bride's parents and allows the bride to accompany her parents to her own village. Then the bride's parents along with the bride and associates return to their village.

Then after six months to one year again the groom's parents along with few villagers go to the bride's village on a Tuesday. That night the groom's parents spend the night at bride's house and the groom's villagers (mostly youths) spend the night by singing (no dance) in the *Kude* (dormitory). On the next day (Wednesday) after the morning meal at bride's house, the groom's parents return to their own village along with the bride. This time also the bride is not allowed to come in contact with the groom. As before, the bride sleeps with the groom's younger brother and sisters for seven days. After a week, on Wednesday, the groom's parents accompanied by some village youths take the bride to her parents' house. This time the bride's parents do not come to take their daughter. Again after one or two months on a Tuesday fixed by the bride's parents, the groom's parents with some village youths reach bride's house. Usually the groom's parents take with them few bottles of mahua liquor. On that Tuesday the youths of the groom's village spend the night by singing in the *Kude* (dormitory). On the next day, i.e. Wednesday, after the morning food offered by the bride's parents the groom's parents and the youths of groom's village return to their own village along with the bride. On the Wednesday night the women of the village take the bride from the groom's parental house to the groom's newly constructed house and leave her inside the house. From that night the marriage is consummated and the groom starts his conjugal life with the bride.

This is the system of marriage in Kutia Kandha community. No ritual or puja for the marriage is performed. From the day the bride's first coming to groom's village till her final union with the groom, it takes more than one year. During this period the sexual union of the couple is prohibited and the bride is taken to her parental house frequently. The inner idea of this system is that if the bride does not cope up with the groom's parents or if she witnesses something very much adverse about the groom then she can refuse the marriage or can run away with another youth. In this case, the former groom's parents get back the entire expenses incurred by them from the bride's new groom.

Marriage by Capture: (Reja Nona)

A Kutia Kandha youth by the help of his friends may forcibly take with him a Kutia Kandha girl to his home for marriage from the weekly market, jungle, way side etc. The youth can capture the girl on any day of the week. If the girl is known to the boy earlier and willing to be his wife then she sleeps with the boy from the day of the capture. On getting the information, the girl's parents, relations and villagers go to the boy's village on the next day of the capture and seek the willingness of the girl for the marriage. Generally the girl agrees to become the wife of the youth who has brought her to this home. After the consent is taken the boy's father entertains the girl's parents, relations and villagers with a feast containing rice, buffalo/ pig meat. Then with the consent of both the parents a day is fixed for handing over of *Luganga Karang* (bride-price) to the girl's parents and *Dal Mamuli* (feast for both bride and groom's villagers) by the groom's parents. On the appointed day, the girl's parents with their relations and villagers come to the groom's village and the groom's father gives the *Luganga Karang* to the bride's parents and also a grand feast (*Dal Mamuli*) to both his own and girl's villagers. Then the girl's parents, relations and villagers return to their own villages. In this type of marriage the paraphernalias are very limited.

In this type of marriage, if the girl is not captured by the groom, but by his relations or friends or even if captured by the groom himself but not acquainted with the girl previously then in such case on the captured night the girl does not sleep with the boy (groom). She sleeps surrounded by younger sisters and brothers of the groom. On the next day when her (bride's) parent and villagers come to the boy's village and seek the girl's willingness for the marriage, if that time the girl shows reluctance for the marriage then she is handed over to her parents and sent back to her own village. In some cases the girl captured against her willingness for the marriage flies away to her own village on the next day of the capture.

Marriage by Elopement:

In love marriage, generally, the boy and the girl run away together to a different village and take shelter in the house of a close relation of the boy. On then next day the parents of both of them are informed by that relative. On getting the information both the boy's and girl's parents alongwith some of their villagers reach the place where the boy and the girl have sheltered. There both the boy's and the girl's parents assure their son and daughter that they will give their consent if both of them will marry each other. Then both the parents alongwith their son and daughter return to the boy's village. There the boy's parents arrange feast for the girl's parents and her villagers. During this feast date is fixed as to when the boy's parents will give the bride-price (*Luganga Karang*) and *Dal Mamuli* to the girl's parents and her villagers. After the feast the girl's parents and villagers return to their own village leaving the girl in boy's house. From that day the boy and girl are considered to be man and wife. On the appointed day the boy's parents alongwith villagers go to the girl's village to handover the bride-price (*Luganga Karang*) and on the same day *Dal Mamuli* is also given by the grooms's parents as promised earlier.

Marriage by Service: (*Ghar-Join Sachenja*)

In this type of marriage, if both the parties agree for marriage but the groom's father is very poor and unable to pay the bride-price and *Dal Mamuli*, in such case the groom with his parents and village *Majhi* (secular headman) and *Jani* (Sacerdotal head) go to the bride's house and express their inability to pay the bride-price and *Dal Mamuli* within a short time but give their consent that the groom will stay in bride's house as son-in-law (*Ghar-join Sachenje*) at least for two to three years and the groom will assist with all the household and agricultural work and assurance is given by the groom's parents to give the bride-price and *Dal Mamuli* (Community feast) as soon as possible. Then and there the marriage is finalized and there is no formal ritual for the marriage and from that day the groom stays in bride's house but his parents and villagers return back to their own village. But in bride's house the groom is not allowed to lead his conjugal life with the bride until his father gives the communal feast (*Dal Mamuli*) to the bride's villagers. After the communal feast (*Dal Mamuli*) is given the groom is allowed to keep relation with the bride as husband and wife. In this type of marriage the groom serves in bride's house for a maximum period of three years.

Divorce :

If the husband gets any information that his wife is entangled with somebody else or if she is lazy and does not co-operate fully in agricultural and household works or if she is quarrelsome, then the husband divorces the wife.

In case of woman, if her husband is lazy and unable to maintain her properly or after the marriage the husband mixes with other women without the consent of the wife, then she can divorce her husband. There is no rule or ritual for the divorce. In case of husband, he simply drives her away from the house and in case of wife, she simply goes back to her parents' house. But the matter must be placed before the traditional village council and the approval of the council is obtained before the final separation and dissolution of marriage.



KUTIA KANDHA WOMEN

Breaking of the Marriage Proposal:

In case the final proposal of the marriage is violated from the groom's side then no penalty is imposed on him. But if the girl marries another man (2nd suitor) but not the 1st suitor then the second suitor has to pay the 1st suitor double the amount what the 1st suitor had spent in the process of negotiations. It is also the same in case of a woman who leaves her husband and marries another man.

Remarriage of the Widow or Widower and Divorcee :

In Kutia Kandha society the widow can remarry. She can marry the younger brother of her deceased husband or other person of her choice. The widower also can marry the younger sister or his deceased wife. The male or female divorcee, widow, and widower can remarry with less elaborate ceremonies.

CHAPTER – VIII

Other Life Cycle Rituals

Puberty:

After getting the sign of puberty (first menstruation) the Kutia Kandha girl informs her mother *Anu Kato Ata* means, "I will stay out". Then the mother understands that her daughter is in menses and takes her to the *Jaka*, an enclosure in the rear varendha of the house. The girl in menses is prohibited to enter into the house. She stays in the *Jaka* during her menstrual period. She wears a piece of cloth for soaking of the out flow of blood. The piece of cloth is known as *Topaha*. The *Topaha* was traditionally woven by them but now a days any piece of cloth serves the purpose of *Topaha*. This *Topaha* is cleaned by water and used again.

At the first menses of the girl the Kutia Kandha observe no rituals. The girl or any woman in menses stays in the *Jaka*. She is not allowed to enter inside the house or cow shed. The food is served to her in the *Jaka*. She is not allowed to go near the shrine of any deity. She is not allowed to touch any adult member of the family. But the nourishing mother in menses is allowed to keep her child inside the *Jaka*. The menstruating girl/ woman is allowed to performed agricultural work and can go to the market but she is always cautioned not to touch others. The girl/ woman stays in the *Jaka* and obey the restrictions till the blood stops flowing. The day the blood flow stops, she goes to the nearby stream and takes a purificatory bath with turmeric paste. She also washes all her clothes and materials used inside the *Jaka*. Then she is considered purified and becomes an usual member of the family. There is no food restrictions for the woman during the menstrual period.

Pregnancy:

When the monthly menstruation stops from that month the Kutia Kandha woman thinks that she is pregnant. The woman counts nine months from the

day of stopping of menstrual blood for the childbirth. If the woman does not fall ill during the pregnancy then the Kutia Kandha do not bother. But if the woman becomes ill during the pregnancy then the *Kutaka* (traditional medicine man / sorcerer) is called for. The Kutia Kandha believe that the illness of the pregnant woman is due to some evil spirit (*Duma*). Then the *Kutaka* sacrifices a pig-let at the nearby stream to appease *Linga Penu*. They believe that if *Linga Penu* is appeased then the evil spirit can be ward off.

The pregnant woman is not prevented to do any household or agricultural work till she is capable of doing so. There is no food taboo for the pregnant woman during her pregnancy. Even she is allowed to have alcoholic drinks during the pregnancy. There is no sex taboos during the early period of pregnancy. The sex act can be performed occasionally but precaution is taken by the husband not to give pressure over the woman's belly. The Kutia Kandha do not show any sympathetic behaviour during pregnancy up to seven months. After seven months the pregnant woman is prohibited to perform any strenuous household or agricultural work.

Child Birth:

When the pregnant woman feels that the time of delivery is very near then she informs her husband and immediately goes to the *Jaka*. Then her husband informs about the delivery to the old women of his relation or the village. Some old women come immediately to the *Jaka* to attend the maternity. Except two or three old women none even the husband is allowed inside the *Jaka*. One of the old woman massages the belly of the pregnant woman for easy delivery. If the delivery becomes difficult, the *Kutaka* is called for who administers some herbal medicines through the old women present in the *Jaka* to the pregnant woman and then and there the husband of the pregnant woman takes vow to sacrifice a piglet/ goat/ cock before *Linga Penu*. This vow is taken by the husband as per the instructions of the *Kutaka*.

The woman delivers the child in half sitting and half standing position, holding a rope hanging from the roof of the *Jaka*. Generally the mother

receives the baby (new-born). If the mother is too ill after the delivery then one of the old woman present inside the *Jaka* receives the baby. After the birth the baby is placed on a banana leaf. The mother herself cuts the umbilical cord by means of an arrow in case of a male child, but in case of a female child she cuts the umbilical cord by a scythe. If the mother becomes ill after the birth of the baby then the umbilical cord is severed by an attending old woman. Just after the umbilical cord is cut the mother immediately carries the placenta and the arrow, in which the umbilical cord was cut to the backyard of the house and buries the placenta in the hole previously dug by her husband and places that arrow on that spot. The arrow is kept there till the remaining portion of the umbilical cord is detached from the navel of the child. Then the mother returns to *Jaka* and holds the newborn on a banana leaf and again go to the backyard with the child. There the mother bathes the child with lukewarm water and turmeric paste. She also takes bath in that water with turmeric paste and then returns to *Jaka* with the child.

Unusual Birth:

If the child is born dead or dies immediately after the birth then dead body and the placenta are buried together at the outskirts of the village. The dead child and the placenta are carried by the mother herself and she places the dead child and the placenta in the pit dug by her husband. The husband fills the pit by earth. For unusual birth the *Kutaka* is sometimes consulted to appease the evil spirit (*Duma*).

The *Kutia Kandha* have no idea about twins. If the child bears a black spot (male) on the left side of the body, specially on the left cheek, they believe it to be a good sign. If any distinct mark is seen at the right side of the body then the *Kutaka* is consulted to drive out the bad omen by performing rituals before *Linga Penu* at the nearby stream.

Post Natal Care:

Just after the birth the mother disposes the placenta and with the child takes bath with luke warm turmeric water. Then the child is allowed to suckle

mother's breast. After the child's feeding the mother applies turmeric paste on her private part of the body and also over the navel of the baby. Some persons also apply the ash of the immediately burnt cloth on the navel of the child. Then the mother is fed with hot ragi gruel and /or hot rice.

Seclusion:

The mother confines herself inside *Jaka* for two months if the baby is a girl but if the baby is a male child then she confines herself in *Jaka* for one month. The day the remaining portion of the naval cord is fully dried-up and detached from the navel of the child the mother goes to the nearby stream with all the clothes used inside *Jaka* and washes all those. Sometimes soap is used for certain clothes. After the cleaning of the clothes and taking her bath she again confines herself in *Jaka*. During her confinement in *Jaka* when the woman feels that her body has become normal and the blood flow stops she again washes all her child's clothes used inside *Jaka*. After the stipulated confinement period is over again she washes all the clothes those were used inside *Jaka* and takes a bath with turmeric paste. Then she is considered purified and is allowed to enter into the house. While the mother enters inside the house along with the child, a chicken is sacrificed by the father inside the house. Then the mother is allowed to lead a normal life in the house.

Abortion:

In Kutia Kandha society, cases of abortion are not given importance but are taken easily. But some take it seriously and believe that abortion is caused by a bad spirit (*Duma*). So they consult the *Kutaka* to appease *Linga Penu*. The *Kutaka* performs rituals at nearby stream and sacrifices a chicken / piglet to appease *Linga Penu*. For treatment of abortion the Kutia Kandhas use herbal medicines suggested or given by *Kutaka*. But if the patient becomes serious then the allopathic doctor is consulted at Belghar or Tumudibandh dispensary.

Name-giving ceremony of the child:

From the time the child begins to sit till he / she is 3 to 4 years of age, during this period the name-giving ceremony of the Kutia Kandha child is performed. During this period, if the child suffers from some sorts of diseases the name-giving ceremony is not performed. The Kutia Kandha believes that the illness is caused by the *Duma* (spirit of the dead ancestor). So *Kutaka* (the sorcerer) is consulted and *Kutaka* declares that whether *Duma* wants a pig / goat / buffalo to cure the child. Then the father of the child takes a vow to sacrifice a pig/goat/buffalo to appease the spirit. When the child is about to recover fully from the illness the name-giving ceremony is performed.

The name-giving ceremony is observed in a Wednesday. On the previous day of the observance of the ceremony i.e. on Tuesday, the *Jani* (the sacerdotal head) of the village is informed about the observance of the ceremony. On the same day in the evening the village *Jani* accompanied by another villager goes to the child's house whose name-giving ceremony will be observed. Inside the house the *Jani* places three *Siali* leaves in a line and places some rice grains over the leaves. Then a hen is brought by the child's father. The *Jani* allows the hen to eat some rice grains from the *Siali* leaves. While the hen eats the rice from the *Siali* leaves the *Jani* invokes the *Duma* (spirit of the dead ancestor) saying, tomorrow (Wednesday) the name-giving ceremony will be observed at 3 P.M. So your good spirit please come tomorrow and present yourself during the ceremony and we will sacrifice this hen before you. Then the *Jani* covers the remaining rice grains over the *Siali* leaves and the hen separately by two *burkies* (bamboo baskets). Then that day's ritual is over.

On the next day, at 2 P.M. the father of the child, requests the *Jani* to perform the rituals for the name-giving ceremony. The father ties the animal as per the vow taken previously at the time of child's illness, at the backyard of the house. Generally for female child one buffalo / goat and for male child one pig is sacrificed. Then the *Jani* reaches the house of the child and

immediately goes to the place where he had performed the ritual on the previous evening. There he replaces the old *Siali* leaves with rice and places three fresh *Siali* on the same spot with the hen and allow the hen to eat some rice grains from the *Siali* leaves. While the hen eats rice grains from the *Siali* leaves, the *Jani* utters the names of the dead ancestors of the family one by one. Then immediately the hen is sacrificed at the spot and the head of the hen is saved at the middle portion of *Siali* leaf and the body is kept aside the ritual place. During the performance of this ritual inside the house the father, mother and the child remain present on the spot.

Then the *Jani*, father, mother and the child go to the backyard of the house where the animal for sacrifice is tied up. Then the *Jani* throws some rice over the animal, calling the names of the dead ancestors (spirits) of the family. After invoking the spirits, the *Jani* sacrifices the animal by an axe. One new cloth is covered over the dead animal. The child is made to sit on the body of the dead animal, facing to the east. Then the *Jani* washes the entire body of the child by turmeric water, uttering the names of the dead ancestors (*Dumas*). *Jani*, then tells the child that "now your name will be given and you live long with no diseases". Then the father of the child brings a *Sechu* (a digging implement used in shifting cultivation) from the rack of his house and gives to the *Jani*. *Jani* applies blood of the sacrificed animal on the iron portion of the *Sechu*. Then the child is directed to hold the *Sechu*. While the child holds the *Sechu*, the *Jani* takes out a bit of blood from the *Sechu* and applies that blood on the forehead of the child. While the *Jani* applies the blood on the forehead of the child at that time he gives the name to the child as suggested by the child's father. Generally the deceased grandfather or great-grand-father's name is given to the male child and in case of the female child the deceased grand-mother or great-grand-mother's name is given. After the name is given to the child, he is taken inside the house by the father while the *Sechu* is held by the child in the right hand. The child is then lifted by his father up to the rack at the corner of the house and the father says to the child that "keep the *Sechu* on the rack. When you are

grown up you will cultivate the shifting land (bagada) with the help of this *Sechu*.

Then the sacrificed animal's meat is cooked but the head of the animal is preserved raw for the next day. Then the father of the child serves the cooked meat and rice in three *Siali* leaves and keep those in a line at the same place that were on the previous day and on this day ritual is performed inside the house. The cooked meat and rice are offered to the spirits of the dead ancestors. Then, first the child is served with cooked meat and rice. The same food is then served to *Jani*. After the child and *Jani* finishes their food, the cooked meat and rice is distributed to each household of the village by child's parents. On the next day, the sacrificed animal's head is cooked and *Jani* is invited to the house to take meal first. After that all the households of the village are served with the cooked meat of the head portion and some rice by the child's parents.

This is all regarding the name-giving ceremony of the Kutia Kandha. This ceremony is not followed by song and dance.

Death Rites:

The Kutia Kandha believe that after death the soul goes out of the body by *Linga Pemu*. They believe that the soul after death turns into a spirit (*Duma*) and goes away from the earth.

The announcement of death is made by family members. Then the male head of the family informs his relations in the village and others for the disposal of the dead body. After death the dead body is placed on a *Khata* (Cot) and carried to the backyard of the house. The clothes used by the dead are placed over the dead body. In case of woman, all her ornaments, except those made of gold and silver are placed over the dead body. But a bit from the gold and silver ornaments are placed on the month of the dead woman. Then two persons tie the dead body with the *Khata* (Cot) by *Siali* rope. Then those two persons carry the dead body with the *Khata* (Cot) to the

cremation ground. Some relations of the dead and some villagers accompany the dead body to the cremation ground. But the deceased person's son and father are prohibited to accompany the dead body to the cremation ground. After the dead body reaches the cremation ground, the accompanied persons collect wood and pile those in a place. Then the dead body with the *Khata* (Çot) is placed on that pile of wood. The dead body's head is placed to the east direction with face up. Those two persons who had carried the dead body to the cremation ground lit the wood, one from the head side and other from the leg side at a time. No ritual is observed at cremation ground. After lighting the dead body all return to the village taking a dip bath in a stream on the way. After reaching their village all go to their respective houses. On that day the family members of the deceased do not come out of their home, except for urination and defecation.

On the next day morning, all those who had accompanied the dead body for cremation, gather at the backyard of the house of the deceased. The family members of the deceased hand over to one among them some gruel of rice or ragi in a earthen pot, previously used by the deceased. With that gruel pot the corpse carriers and their accompaniments again go to the burning ghat and place the gruel pot at the burning place of the deceased. After that all return to the village, taking bath on the way. Reaching the village one of them go to the deceased person's house to enquire the day fixed for the family to observe the purification rites. Generally the purification rite is observed on the 3rd or 7th day of the death. The deceased person's family give some money for liquor and goat / pig for the persons who had accompanied the dead body to the cremation ground. The animal is slaughtered and liquor is purchased and distributed equally among the persons who had gone to the cremation ground.

Purification Rites (*Dadi Eju Mina*):

As death is believed to cause pollution for bereaved family members and kin members the purification rite is observed by the family of the deceased

on the 3rd or 7th day of the death. On that day in the morning, all the persons who had accompanied the corpse to the cremation ground gather at the backyard of the deceased. One among the corpse carriers enter into the house of the deceased and collects a few utensils, axe, arrows (in case of male deceased) earthen pot used by the deceased. In case of female deceased utensils, ornaments and earthen pots are collected. One of the corpse carriers cook rice with turmeric powder at the backyard of the house. After the cooking is over all present there go to the cremation ground carrying the cooked rice, some raw rice and *Kueri* (a kind of millet) in two bamboo split containers (*Burki*), few utensils, axe and arrows/ornaments used by the deceased. One of the corpse carriers hold the earthen ware pot containing turmeric mixed rice, and the other hold two bamboo containers (*Burki*), containing rice and *Kueri*. The other villagers hold the articles used by the dead. After reaching the cremation ground the earthen pot containing cooked rice is placed at the eastern side (head side) and the materials used by the dead are placed at the western side (leg side) of the cremation spot. Then the two corpse carriers, one holding the rice container, other holding the *Kueri* container goes round the burning place throwing *Kueri* and rice on the ground. Then the empty bamboo containers are kept at the eastern side (head side) of the *Nanie*. Before throwing rice around the *Nanie* by the corpse carriers, some portion of the rice is kept aside. All the villagers present there hold little rice and one by one throw the rice at the western side (leg side) of the *Nanie*, uttering the words, " we burnt your body by the help of wood and leaves. If by burning your dead body we committed any wrong then you please pardon us". Then after taking bath on the way all return to the village. At the cremation ground no ritual is performed by *Jani / Kutaka* .

After taking bath on the way the villagers go to the backyard of the deceased person's house. There one buffalo / goat / sheep / pig is tethered in a peg by the deceased family members. One of the corpse carriers sacrifices the animal. Then the village *Jani* goes inside the deceased person's house

and bring some castor oil and two arrows. The *Jani* then applies a bit of castor oil and blood of the sacrificed animal on the two arrow heads. The two corpse carriers, then, stand facing to the *Jani*. *Jani* fixes the arrows on the ground at the place between the thumb and first toe of the right leg of those two persons. While fixing the arrows on the ground the *Jani*, utters, "Oh spirit,! These two persons had carried your corpse. Do not do any harm to them and to their cattle". Then the corpse carriers take with them the arrows. The meat of the sacrificed animal is distributed among the deceased person's family and villagers present there.

On this day the family members of the deceased wash all the clothes and utensils of the house in the nearby stream. The house is plastered over with cow dung. They also share the liquor brought by their relations. The shaving of head/cutting of hair and paring of nails are not performed in Kutia Kandha society.

The close relations of the dead visit the deceased person's house one day before the purification rite is observed and also remain present on the purification day. They come with the gifts, like bottles of liquor, goat/pig. The animals given as gift by relations are also slaughtered on that day. The raw meat of the slaughtered animals and liquor are distributed to each household of the village.

Final Ritual for the dead: *Dukli Arna (Sradha)*:

The final ritual for the dead is known as *Dukli Arna* and is performed once for all in Kutia Kandha community. Depending upon the ability of the family of the deceased, between six months of the death and two years, on any Wednesday this final ritual for the dead is performed. One day before the selected Wednesday, the entire house is plastered over by cowdung. Then in the evening the *Jani* is called to the house. In the room the *Jani* places three Siali leaves in a row and places some rice on the leaves. A hen is brought and the *Jani* allows the hen to eat some rice grains, while the hen

is busy in eating the rice grain the *Jani* invokes the spirit by name (the dead man's name) and tells that " your spirit (duma) you stayed for so many days out of the home. We were unable to invite you as one had some difficulties. Now please come and stay in our house". The Kutia Kandha believes that the souls of their dead ancestors stay in the house they live. Then the *Jani* covers the *siali* leaves with remaining rice and the hen separately in two bamboo baskets.

On the next day, i.e. on the Wednesday, the *Jani* is called at about 2 to 3 P.M. The *Jani* goes to the same place where he had performed rituals in the previous day evening. He replaces the old *siali* leaves with three fresh leaves and puts some rice on those. Again the same hen is allowed to eat some rice from the leaves. At the same time the spirit of the dead is invoked. Then the hen is sacrificed. Thereafter a pig /goat is sacrificed. A portion of the meat of the sacrificed animal and rice is cooked by the deceased household. *Jani* keeps cooked rice and meat on those three *siali* leaves and calls the spirit by name (dead person's name). Here the ritual is over. *Jani* is first offered with liquor and eats the rice and meat. Some portion of the cooked meat and rice along with some raw meat is sent to each household of the village. Then the family members and the guests in the house dine together.

Death of Children:

The dead bodies of the young children are buried but male or female child above 10 years are cremated. For the death of the child less than one year of age no purification rites are observed but for the death of the child above one year same purification rites are observed, but very limited number of relations or villagers participate in it. But the final death rites "*Dukhi Arna*". is not observed. But if a unmarried youth dies both the purification rites, *Dadi Eju Mina and Dukli Arna* are observed.

CHAPTER - IX

Religious Beliefs and Practices

The devine powers have been identified by Kutia Kandha with a group of powerful deities and spirits which control and influence the way of life of individuals as well as the community. All these deities and spirits have their influence. Some deities are held responsible for illness, misfortune and unusual happenings in the village. They believe that the spirits live in native hills, forests, streams and inside the dwellings and their number increases by the additions of the dead ancestors or by the death of persons.

Gods and Goddesses :

Dharani Penu:

Dharani Penu, the earth Goddess, is considered the supreme Goddess in Kutia Kandha religious beliefs. She is installed in the centre of each Kutia Kandha village and also on some nearby hills, represented by three stones vertically posted on the ground. At the back side of these stones stands the *meriah* post. In the past the Kutia Kandha sacrificed human beings to *Dharani Penu* with the belief that victim's blood would fertile the earth and reward them with bumper harvest. Now-a-days human sacrifice no longer exists. *Dharani Penu* is worshiped during *Korubiha Dakina* (*meriah* sacrifice festival), *Bicha Dakina* (seed sowing festival), *Takukalu Dakina* (first eating of the crop) festivals. The *Jani* (religions head) officiates the rituals before *Dharani Penu*. This Goddess is offered with blood of buffalo, goat, pigeon, chicken, depending upon the nature of festival.

Soru Penu:

The *Soru Penu* is directly related to *Dharani Penu*. This Goddess stays on the hills and is worshiped just before the first clearing of the hill for

shifting cultivation. The *Jani* officiates the rituals before *Soru Penu*. A goat or a chicken or a duck is sacrificed to appease this Goddess.

Piju Penu:

The *Piju Penu*, a male deity resides in the nearby stream of the village. This deity is worshiped collectively by the villagers just one day before the *Korubiha Dakina* festival. On that day besides collective worship, the individual vow takers offer a pigeon / chicken / buck / buffalo for sacrifice before the deity for the fulfilment of their wishes. The deity has no image or shrine. The rituals before *Piju Penu* is conducted by the *Jani*.

Besides this festival, individual family performs worship to cure the illness of their family members. In this ritual the *Kutaka* (Sorcerer) sacrifices a bird or animal and the *Jani* officiates the ritual.

Mamli Penu:

The *Mamli Penu* stays inside the home. This Goddess is worshiped in marriage occasion, before starting any auspicious journey, to win over the legal proceedings and in all ceremonial eating of the new crops. No shrine is constructed nor any image is made for this Goddess. Animals, like black buck, pigeon, chicken are sacrificed to appease this Goddess. The *Jani* officiates the rituals.

Jaka Penu:

This deity is a male God and resides on the roof of every *Kutia Kandha* house but not represented by any object or image. This God is worshiped for the fulfilment of any vow made by the head of the household relating to the cure of disease of the family members. The ritual for this deity is performed by the *Kutaka*. Goat / hen / pigeon is sacrificed to appease this deity.

Kuti Penu:

This Goddess resides near the stream and does not have any image or shrine and is worshiped for joint and waist pain. The *Jani* forecasts to the

diseased person that in which stream the particular *Kuti Penu*, who has administered the disease resides. Then the *Kutaka* accompanies the diseased person to that particular stream and performs puja. A pig is sacrificed for that purpose.

Bhima Penu:

This is a home Goddess and is worshiped by every Kutia Kandha household on *Chaitra Purnima* (fullmoon between March and April) day for the economic stability of the household. It is believed that the *Bhima Penu* resides inside the *Burla* (grain container). A chicken /goat is sacrificed on the *Burlangkalu Dakina* festival. The ritual for *Bhima Penu* is officiated by the *Jani*.

Baburai Penu:

This Goddess resides inside every Kutia Kandha house and is worshiped by the *Kutaka* on the occasion of *Badabiha Dakina* festival, for the overall betterment of the family. This deity is also not represented by any image.

Linga Penu and Janan Penu:

Linga Penu and *Janan Penu* stay together. These deities reside inside every Kutia Kandha house. *Linga Penu* is responsible for the death, whereas *Janan Penu* is believed to be deity of birth. Kutia Kandha believe that *Linga Penu* who presides over the region of the departed soul (*Duma*), is responsible for diseases of pregnant woman and the new born. To cure the diseases of the pregnant woman and the new born, rituals are performed with pig / goat /chicken / pigeon sacrifice. The *Kutaka* officiates this ritual.

Timba Dedi:

This is also a home Goddess and is worshiped by the *Kutaka* to cure a person from fever. Only chicken is sacrificed to appease this deity.

Deo Penu:

At the outskirts of every *Kutia Kandha* village, a grass covered conical shaped structure supported by wooden pillar is erected. This shrine is dedicated to "*Deo Penu*". But inside the structure there remains no image of the deity. Worship of this deity is done in *Korubiha Dakina* and *Taku kahi Dakina* festivals, *Jani* officiates in the rituals before *Deo Penu*.

Beda Penu:

Beda Penu stays at the entrance of the village but there is no image for this deity. On the *Korubiha Dakina*, *Punikahi Dakina* and *Takukalu Dakina* festivals this deity is worshiped by the *Jani*.

Besides the above mentioned Gods and Goddesses numerous hill Gods, one for each hill constitute a large portion of the *Kutia Kandha* pantheon. During *Bicha Dakina* and *Dedusina Dakina* festivals those deities are worshiped.

Religious Festivals:

Punikalu Dakina:

This festival is observed once in a year on a Sunday which falls just after *Push Punei* (full-moon between Dec.-Jan.). On this occasion the *Dharani Penu* (Earth Goddess) is worshiped, specially with *Kutuli* (a type of local brew) by *Jani* accompanied by *Majhi* of the village. All the adult male members of the village participate in the ritual. One chicken is sacrificed before *Dharani Penu*. Besides this, individual vow takers also offer goat / sheep / pig / pigeon to get rid of any threatening calamity on them. This is mainly a festival observed each year for ceremonial eating of *Katuli* (Kueri rice beer), *Jhata* (cow pea), *Kandula* (arhar), *Anaka* and *Kanda* (wild root). The *Katuli* is not drunk on the every day during the festival but on the day following. The ritual is followed with singing, dancing and drinking of *mahuli* liquor.



A GROUP OF KUTIA KANDHA CHILDREN

Korubiha Dakina:

Korubiha Dakina, otherwise known as *Meriah Puja*, is the biggest festival observed at community level in any one of the villages of the Mutha organization. This festival falls once in every five years. This festival is held on the 1st Sunday or on the subsequent Sunday which comes after *Phaguna Punei* (fullmoon between February and March). But the festival starts from Saturday and ends on Monday. The *Jani* of the village assisted by *Mandal Majhi* and *Majhis* (traditional secular head) of the participating villages officiate the ritual. In the past the Kutia Kandha were sacrificing human beings in this festival but now a days the human being is substituted by buffalo. Some portions of the flesh, bone and bit of skin of the sacrificed animal is sent to each participating villages by the host villagers. But the blood of the sacrificed animal is collected by the villagers of the participating villages and taken to their respective villages by themselves. Flesh and blood of the sacrificed animal is offered to the *Dharani Penu* with the belief to ensure better crop, immunity from the diseases and to save the community from unforeseen calamities.

Burangkalu Dakina:

This festival is observed once in every five to ten years on a Sunday which comes before or after *Chaitra Punei* (fulmoon between March – April). The *Jani* of the village decides on which Sunday this festival is to be observed. On this day, the *Jani* visits every household of the village and offer puja to *Bhima Penu*, who is believed to stay inside the *Burla* (grain-container). In each household a chicken is sacrificed, followed by a goat or pig or a buffalo, depending upon the capability of the family. The flesh of the sacrificed animals are distributed in the community. The festival is followed by drinking, singing and dancing.

Dediusina Dakina
or
Bangosina Dakina

This festival is also held on a Sunday which comes just before or after the "*Phaguna Punei*" (full-moon between February and March). This festival is observed on a selected patch of a hill slope on the occasion of clearing a patch in the hill slope for the first time for the purpose of shifting cultivation. One chicken and one pig is sacrificed before *Dharam Penu* and *Soru Penu*. This festival starts at 12 noon and finishes at about 5 P.M. In this festival the young boys and girls only sing songs but do not dance. On the spot a communal feast is arranged, containing rice and the flesh of the sacrificed animal.

Bicha Dakina:

Bicha Dakina is observed each year on a Sunday which comes just before or after *Jyestha Purnima* (full moon between May-June). The Kutia Kandha observe this festival for ceremonial sowing of seeds in the newly ploughed area of the shifting cultivation. In the morning at about 9 A.M. each household places a basket containing varieties of seeds before the village *Dharani Penu*. For each family *Jani* of the village sacrifices a chicken and sprinkles its blood over the seeds with a belief that each seed will germinate and grow as a healthy plant. At about 3 P.M. the respective households collect their seed container and go to their shifting cultivation land and sow a hand-full of seeds. This festival is not followed with communal feast, singing and dancing

Takukalu Dakina and Butipaji Dakina:

Takukalu Dakina and *Butipaji Dakina* are correlated with each other. *Takukalu Dakina* is observed on the Sunday which comes before or after the *Sravana Punei* (the full moon between July and August). This festival is

observed for three consecutive days i.e. from Sunday to Tuesday. *Batipaji Dakina* is observed on the Wednesday. In *Takukalu Dakina*, the mango kernel is offered to *Dharani Penu* and also eaten ceremonially for the first time. This festival is also observed to avoid diseases in the standing crops. A pig and chickens supplied by each household of the village are sacrificed before the village, *Dharani Penu Jani* of the village officiates in the ritual. After the rituals a communal feast is arranged with drinks followed by dance. This dancing and merry-making continues till late in the night of Tuesday. On Wednesday the villagers go to a particular nearby hill slope. The *Jani* of the village leads the group. Near the *Dharani Penu* on the hill slope, the *Jani* performs some rituals with newly harvest *gurjee* (a kind of millet), maize, *putty Kanda* (a tuber) and *napakanda* (a tuber). A goat and a pig are sacrificed on the occasion. After the rituals the villagers return to their village where a communal feast is arranged with the flesh of the sacrificed animals and newly harvested maize, *gurjee*, *putty Kanda* and *napa Kanda*, Maize, *gurjee putty Kanda* and *rapa Kanda* are ceremonially eaten for the first time in this festival.

Badabiha Dakina:

This festival is observed to cure a serious disease of a person. It is observed on a Monday on the month of *Chaitra* (March – April). The festival is observed by the individual household of the village who has taken a vow to appease the goddess *Kamati Penu* to cure the serious illness of a member of the family. The *Kutaka* of the village performs the ritual in front of the house of the vow taker. A goat or a sheep is sacrificed to appease the deity during the ritual . The flesh of the sacrificed animal is distributed to each household of the village.

CHAPTER – X

Economic Organisation

The Kutia Kandha pursue many occupations, like forest collection, shifting cultivation, settled cultivation, wage-earning and domestication of animals etc. But the economic organization of the Kutia Kandha is predominantly agricultural. Inter dependance and co-operation of male and female are found in all the economic pursuits from production to consumption.

The economy of the Kutia Kandha a primitive tribal community has the following characteristic features:-

- (a) They have a meagre possession of settled cultivable land. The average settled land per family comes to 1.11 Ac. (as per the socio-economic survey,2002). So the Kutia Kandha resort to shifting cultivation to supplement their livelihood.
- (b) They have a economy based on simple division of labour based on age and sex.
- (c) Barter economy still exists in Kutia Kandha society, although monetization has already made in road.
- (d) The implements used are indigenously produced and are very simple in nature.
- (e) They have a very simple technology with traditional out look resulting in lower productivity.

Because the productivity is low, the rate of savings for future is low. Whatever surplus remains in the family is largely spent at the time of birth, death, wedding and religious ceremonies. Therefore, many households are indebted by taking loan from private money-lenders. So the main characteristics of Kutia Kandha economy is that its annual out-put of goods and services

are not sufficient to give its members a descent living rather it is mostly a subsistence economy of hand to mouth existence.

The main occupation of the Kutia Kandha is agriculture. As the settled cultivation land is limited, they mostly depend upon swidden land. Besides agriculture they also domesticate animals and birds for economic purpose. If available, they also work as wage-labourers to supplement their income.

Land type:

The cultivated land in Kutia Kandha area is divided into five categories, i.e., (1) Kitchen garden (backyard of the house), (2) Bada land (Plain land adjacent to the village boundary or inside the village boundary), (3) Up land, (4) Wet land or low land and (5) Swidden or shifting cultivation land.

(1) Kitchen garden (*Padagiri*):

The patch of land just at the back side of the homestead land is known as *Padagiri* and in this land vegetables, like pumpkin, beans, chilly and tobacco are grown. But all the Kutia Kandha backyards are not cultivated. The cowshed is built in the backyard and some backyards remain barren throughout the year.

(2) Bada Land :

The land cultivated adjacent to the village boundary or inside the village boundary and fenced in all directions are called the *Bada land*. In *Bada land*, generally vegetables, banana and tobacco are grown.

(3) Up land:

The land at the foot hills are called *Bata* (up land), where oil seeds and pulses are chiefly produced. Mustard, Niger are the main oil seeds and Black-gram, Green gram, Horsegram, *Kandula* are the variety of pulses grown in up land. In some places *Kunda Dhana* and *Gurjee* are also produced in up land.

(4) Low land:

The low land or paddy land are locally called *Mera*, found in the narrow vallies between the mountains. In most of the *Mera* land perennial hill streams cut through or pass by the side. Only paddy is cultivated in this type of land and after the harvest the land remain fallow till the next sowing. But in some villages, now-a-days, cabbage, cauliflower, brinjal, radish and chilly are cultivated in Rabi season.

(5) Shifting Cultivation:

The cultivation practiced on a patch of hill slope for consecutive three years on a patch and then abandoned for a period of 6 years is known as shifting cultivation, locally called *Nella*. Shifting cultivation, a primitive method of agriculture is predominant form of crop cultivation among the Kutia Kandha. It is practiced on hill slopes by slash and burn method and the cultivation is done with the help of digging instrument called *Sechu*. The forest on the hill slopes selected for cultivation is cleared by the adult male members of the owner family in the months of February. The fruit-bearing trees like, mango, jack-fruit, tamarind and mahua are spared. In the month of March and April those are cleared for cultivation. The seeds are dibbled on the ash covered soil. In the 1st year bumper crop is harvested. The crops in the second and third year are yielded in a diminishing rate. On the fourth year the patch is abandoned for recuperation. After abandoning the old patch a new patch on the hill slope is selected for cultivation. The family returns to the previous site after 6 to 7 years. The Kutia Kandha build a hut on each *Nella* which serves as a rest shed during working hours and guarding the crop from the wild animals.

Process of shifting cultivation:

After selection of a patch on the hill slope (*Dangar*) the Kutia Kandha perform a ritual/festival called, *Dedusina Dakina*. On the day of observance of the ritual, the first tree in the selected patch is fell down by the *Jani*

(Sacerdotal head) of the village. Then just after 7 days of the ritual, clearing of the patch starts by the owner of the plot. After felling of the trees big logs and branches are collected for household use the small branches and shrubs are spread on the ground to dry. Towards the middle week of March to 1st week of April, they set fire to the dried leaves and branches of the fallen trees and shrubs of the cleared patch. Just after first shower the soil is dug with *Sechu* (a digging stick). After the second shower of the monsoon they sow seeds by the method of dibbling and broadcasting. A ritual called, *Bicha Dakina* is observed for ceremonial sowing of seeds. Towards the middle of June, when the plants grow upto the size of six inches, they weed cut the unwanted growths. From the first week of August the watching and protecting the crops start. The harvesting starts from the middle week of August and continues and till the second week of January, depending upon the variety of the crop. Maize, *suan*, *gurjee* and *Jhari* are harvested from August onwards and castor is harvested thereafter. During the harvest period two major festivals, *Butipaji Dakina*, and *Punikalu Dakina* are observed for ceremonial eating of newly harvested crops

In the second year, the Kutia Kandha do not dibble or broadcast the seeds other than pumpkin and cucumber in the same patch. After the outbreak of the monsoon the plants like castor, arhar, kueri, suan, katting, automatically germinate and grow from the seeds fallen during the harvest in the first year. From the stumps of the castor plants new tree grow after the first shower. Then the cycle of weeding, protecting, harvesting is followed as usual like the first year.

In the third year also seeds are sown but plants like *suan*, *kueri* and castor automatically grow from the fallen seeds and castor stumps. From the fourth year the patch is abandoned consecutively six years for new vegetation to grow. On the seventh year, the Kutia Kandha family return back to the same patch for cultivation. In this process of shifting cultivation the Kutia Kandha cultivate 30 varieties of crops in the swidden land.

The names of the crops produced in podu land is given below:-

Oriya version	English equivalent term	"Kui" equivalent term
1. <i>Chhota Dhana</i>	Drought paddy	<i>Nella Kulinga</i>
2. <i>Malla</i>	Maize	<i>Takaunger</i>
3. <i>Suan</i>	-	<i>Saaba</i>
4. <i>Jhudanga</i>	Cowpea	<i>Jhudanga</i>
5. <i>Kueri</i>	-	<i>Mas</i>
6. <i>Tila</i>	Nizer	<i>Tidanga</i>
7. <i>Biri</i>	Black gram	<i>Masanga</i>
8. <i>Mung</i>	Green gram	<i>Muganga</i>
9. <i>Kandula</i>	Arhar	<i>Kaanga</i>
10. <i>Jada</i>	Castor	<i>Kalanga</i>
11. <i>Kakudi</i>	Cucumber	<i>Mundara</i>
12. <i>Lau</i>	Gourd	<i>Lahunga</i>
13. <i>Dangar Rani</i>	Kattings	<i>Kaudaka</i>
14. <i>Kangu</i>	-	<i>Arka</i>
15. <i>Mandia</i>	Ragi	<i>Mande</i>
16. <i>Jahna</i>	-	<i>Krodanga</i>
17. <i>Kathia</i>	-	<i>Koteng</i>
18. <i>Dhulia</i>	-	<i>Maranga</i>
19. <i>Sankara</i>	-	<i>Sankananga</i>
20. <i>Simba</i>	Kidney bean	<i>Berenga</i>
21. <i>Kakharu</i>	Pumpkin	<i>Kumda</i>
22. <i>Lanka</i>	Chilly	<i>Rajeni</i>
23. <i>Langala Kanda</i>	-	<i>Kana basanga</i>
24. <i>Saru Kanda</i>	-	<i>Sabka basanga</i>
25. <i>Rani Kanda</i>	-	<i>Rani basanga</i>
26. <i>Phala Kanda</i>	-	<i>Napunga</i>
27. <i>Khursa</i>	-	<i>Tapaanga</i>
28. <i>Alukanda</i>	-	<i>Mera basanga</i>
29. <i>Sirisakanda</i>	-	<i>Napabasanga</i>
30. <i>Dangar Baingana</i>	Hill brinjal	<i>Nana banganga</i>

Animal Husbandry:

The Kutia Kandha domesticate cow, bullock, buffalo, pig, goat, sheep, poultry and pigeon. Both the bullock and cow are used for ploughing and drawing cart. Buffalos are kept for ploughing and drawing cart and religious sacrifices. Goat, sheep and poultry are kept for both commercial and sacrificial purposes. Pigs are mainly kept for commercial purposes and ritual sacrifices. Traditionally the Kutia Kandha do not milch the cow. But now-a-day some Kutia Kandha who reside near the central places milch the cows for commercial purpose.

Wage Earning:

Both the Kutia Kandha male and female go for daily wage earning. Generally they work as labourers in the unorganized sectors, Govt. departmental works and under contractors. The daily wage is Rs.40/- per day. Besides they also work as labourers in the construction work and agricultural work undertaken in and around the village by well-to-do persons. In this type of wage earning they get cooked rice and dal per person plus Rs.20/- in cash per day.

Division of Labour:

The family in the Kutia Kandha economy is the unit of production. All the adolescent members of the family form the production unit. The pattern of labour in this tribal family is based on simple division of labour according to age and sex. The boys and girls are allotted different jobs suited to their age. The grown-ups shoulder all strenuous works but women are usually given light works as compared to men. The participation of male and female in different works is given below:

Agriculture : (both swidden and settled cultivation)

Items of work	Division of labour
Felling of trees	Men
Piling of shrubs and branches above 8 years of age.	Both the sexes and children
Ploughing	Men
Levelling	Men
Manuring men.	Both the sexes, but mostly by men.
Sowing	Both the sexes
Weeding	Both the sexes and children above 10 years of age.
Watch and ward (Day)	Both the sexes
Watch and ward (Night)	Men
Harvesting	Both the sexes and children above 12 years of age.
Reaping	Both the sexes
Threshing	Both the sexes
Winnowing	Both the sexes
Storing	Both the sexes
Bringing fencing materials men	Both the sexes but mostly by men
Fencing	Both the sexes
House Construction:	
Items of work	Division of labour
Plinth digging	Male
Bringing wooden poles and bamboo from the forest	Male
Fixing of wooden poles male.	Both the sexes but mostly by male.
Mud plastering of the wall	Both the sexes
Roof framing	Male

Bringing thatching grass from the forest	Female
Making of racks inside the house	Both the sexes
Thatching of roof	Male
Preparation of floor	Both the sexes
Floor finishing	Female
Wall finishing	Female
Making and fixing of door	Male
Icons	Female

Household Works:

Items of work	Division of labour
Husking	Female
Peeling of some of the agricultural and forest products	Female
Preparation of food	Female (occasionally by men during the pollution period of the single adult female in the family)
Sweeping and cleaning of the house	Female
Cleaning of the utensils	Female
Bathing of infants	Female
Nurshing of children	Female
Preservation of seeds	Both the sexes
Selling of agricultural and forest products	Both the sexes
Marketing	Both the sexes

Forest Collection:

Items of work	Division of labour
Hinting	Male
Collection of fuel wood	Both the sexes
Collection of edible roots, tubers, and green leaves	Mostly by women
Collection of flowers and fruits	Both the sexes but mostly by female
Fishing	Both the sexes and children above 12 years of age.
Honey collection	Male
Collection of resin	Male

Animal Husbandry:

Items of work	Division of labour
Tending of cattle	Both the sexes
Clearing of cattle shed/ pig and goat stay	Female
Feeding of domesticated animals	Both the sexes but mostly by female
Milching	female



KUTIA KANDHA YOUTHS SITTING BEFORE THE FIRE

CHAPTER – XI

Political Organisation

The primary goal of this chapter is to describe the dynamics of traditional leadership of the Kutia Kandha community. What is most striking fact about Kutia Kandha is its village community. It is traditionally a well organized and integrated society based on self regulation and self Government. Self Government does not, however, mean the modern Panchayat system with adult franchise, but the traditional village official who form the village council. The traditional village leadership is based on status with some obligations and duties.

Prior to the British era, a group of non-tribals including Gonds and Panos and some artisans had started penetrating into the Kutia Kandha area with an intention of trade and commerce. The higher caste-groups established trade and commerce including money-lending in the area. They procured the agricultural and forest products from the Kutia Kandha and in return they supplied the latter with tobacco, clothes, ornaments and grocery. The artisans supplied their respective products, such as agricultural implements and household articles and in return collected the agricultural products. This exchange procedure was based on barter economy. The Scheduled Castes, the Panos took up the occupation of basket-making and sweeping the village. The clean castes and Gonds established themselves in the central areas of Belghar. But the Panos lived in some Kutia Kandha villages. Initially the Kutia Kandha did not oppose to the immigration of these outsiders as the latter rendered some services to them. Gradually the Panos who were very close to the Kutia Kandha settlement quickly picked up the local Kui language and became the mediator between Kutia Kandha and the non-tribals. In the process, the Gonds and the non-tribals also became well conversant with the local Kui language.

With no knowledge of Kui language, the Raja of Sanakhemundi faced practical difficulties to rule over the Kutia Kandha. So the ruler thought it convenient to appoint some people as the local chiefs who had both the knowledge of Kuli and Oriya language. The King found it suitable to appoint local officials from among the members of Gond and Paika caste. The Kutia Kandha did not resent to this move since they were unable to represent themselves before the King in Oriya. Thus the King of Sanakhemundi divided the entire Kutia Kandha high land of Belghar into three administrative units for administrative convenience, each being called a *Mutha*. Those Muthas were (i) Belghar Mutha, (2) Gumma Mutha and Jhiripani Mutha. The Mutha heads were from among the Gond community. The Mutha heads were assisted by a group of officials, such as *Karjee*, *Bebhari*, *Dalet* or *Dandia*. The *Karjee* served as judicial minister, the *Bevari* was the revenue accountant and the *Dalei* or *Dandia* was heading the militia of the mutha administration. The *Dalei / Dandia* were taken from the *Paika* community.

The Britishers during their regime did not abolish the *Mutha* administration rather reoriented the *Mutha* organisation by further dividing the *Mutha* into several sub-*Muthas* to establish more effective control over the Kutia Kandha. Each Sub-*Mutha* was kept under the direct supervision of a Kutia Kandha origin known as *Mutha-Majhi* or *Mandal Majhi*.

The entire Mutha organisation started from the village as a unit. At the village level there were traditional village officials who formed the village council. The village headman known as *Majhi* was appointed from among the Kutia Kandha to look after the administration of the village. In the traditional hierarchy next to *Majhi* was *Jani*, the sacerdotal head of the village. The traditional sorcerer of the village known as *Kutaka* was also an active member of the village council. The *Majhi* was assisted by *Ganda* or *Pesuni* who was selected from the Pano community. All these official posts of village organisation was hereditary.

Though the functions of the traditional village council are sandwiched by the introduction of local self Government and present system of revenue administration, still the village level traditional political organisation exists and plays a vital role in matters of intra-village and sometimes functions of the Mutha head, Karjee, Dalei and Bebbabri are defunct now-a-days.

Traditional Village Functionaries:

Every Kutia Kandha village has a set of traditional village functionaries, such as Majhi, Jani, Kutaka and Ganda/ Pesuni. The traditional village functionaries and some elderly persons from the village council.

Majhi:

At the village level the village headman is called Majhi, a hereditary post based on clan and lineage. The Majhi continues in his post till he has a good moral character and enjoys the confidence of the villagers. After the death or impeachment of a Majhi, his eldest son or a suitable person from his clan is selected by the village elders to succeed to the office of the Majhi.

In olden days, the chief duty of Majhi was to collect *Sistu* or *Mamul* (land tax), *Vetti* (gift) and arrange *Bethi* (free labour) for the king and the Mutha head and also to settle dispute in the village. In case he failed to settle any dispute, he was referring the case to Mutha Majhi or Mutha head for further necessary action.

At present, this traditional leadership of Majhi continues. Now a days also some amount of authority is vested on Majhi to maintain law and order in the village. The chief function of Majhi is to settle quarrel between persons, disputes relating to marriage, land, theft, breach of social norms etc. Whenever the above mentioned disputes arise in the village the Majhi is first informed. Then he summons a meeting of the village council through *Ganda*, the village messenger. Majhi presides over the village council meeting. The Majhi is the real spokesman in the village council meeting.

Besides judicial powers the Majhi also plays an important role in all socio-religious functions. The Majhi in consultation with "*Jani*" fixes the date and time for the performance of the religious festivals in the village. In some religious festivals, Majhi slaughters the animal and Jani makes the offerings to the deity. All types of marriages are performed through the leadership of Majhi. In the name-giving ceremony also the Majhi plays an important role. He is the formal spokesman of the village. Except enjoying the status, the Majhi gets no remuneration for the post.

But now-a-days in some villages personal quarrel, land disputes are referred to the police. In some cases the Majhi's leadership is over thrown by personal efficiency and influence.

Jani (Village Priest) :

Jani is the sacerdotal head of the Kutia Kandha. The post of "*Jani*" is hereditary. When the Jani dies or becomes disable, the eldest son of Jani is selected by the village council to become the new Jani of the village. If the Jani has no son then an efficient person from the former's clan is selected by the village council to become the new Jani. The Jani officiates in all the religious rituals of the village. The Jani also plays an important role in the name-giving ceremony, death rituals and marriage ceremony of the Kutia Kandha. In the village council meeting the Jani's position is next to the Majhi. In the religious ceremonies the Jani gets some amount of grain and the head of the sacrificed animal as a token of respect to the post.

Ganda / Pesuni / Chhatia :

The next official in the traditional village leadership pattern is Ganda / Pesuni / Chhatia, who is always selected from the Pano (SC) community. The Ganda acts as a liaison person and interpreter between Kutia Kandha and outsiders. He is also an important man in the village council. All the disputes and breach of social norms are brought to the notice of the Ganda. He acts a messenger of the village and particularly for the Majhi of the village.

He conveys message in the village and summons people to the village council meeting on behalf of Majhi. He realizes the fine from the accused, imposed by the village council. Customarily, the Ganda supplies all the sacrificed animals to the villagers. His presence is compulsory in all socio-religious rituals. He is the main negotiator in the arranged marriage. The post of Ganda is hereditary. In the religious festivals he receives grain from each household as a remuneration for his post. Besides this he is entitled to take the skin of the sacrificed animal.

***Kutaka* (The Sorcerer) :**

Kutia Kandha consider that anything harmful to man's health and fortune is due to the activities of certain evil spirits. So they are the traditional believers in the efficacy of magico-religious rites. The magico-religious rites are generally performed by the sorceres. The sorcerer in Kutia Kandha society is called *Kutaka*. When a Kutia Kandha suffers from any sort of illness, he first consults with *Kutaka*. The *Kutaka*, first of all finds out the cause and the spirit responsible for the disease. Then he starts treatment by means of some magical rites followed by sacrifice of a bird (chicken/ penguin/ duck) or an animal (goat/ pig/ sheep/ buffalo) as per the gravity of the disease and the spirit. The *Kutaka* also plays an important role in the name-giving ceremony of the Kutia Kandha. He is also an important member in the traditional village council meeting.

Traditional Village Council:

The village secular headman, the *Majhi*; sacerdotal head, the *Jani*; sorcerer, the *Kutaka*; messenger, the Ganda and some elderly male persons of the village form the village council. Majhi is the president of the village council meeting. Disputes relating to marriage, land, quarrel between persons, theft, adultery, breach of social norms and orders are brought before the village council. First the Majhi of the village is informed by the aggrieved party or any member of the village about the incident. Then the Majhi summons

the council meeting through the Ganda. Majhi fixes the date and time for the council meeting. Then Ganda, the village messenger, communicates all the council members and some elderly persons of the village about the date and timing of the council meeting. The meeting of the village council is generally held in the evening hours. The venue is fixed near the village seat of *Dharani Penu* (Earth Goddess). The meeting is generally attended by the Majhi, Jani, Kutaka, Ganda and some elderly persons of the village and the concerned parties in the conflict. The females are not allowed to attend the village council meeting. All the members freely participate in the discussion and the witnesses of both the parties are cross-examined. The members of both the parties are examined.

The members of the council hear and adjudicate the fact and communicate their views to the Majhi. At last, the Majhi on behalf of the council gives the final verdict. The council generally tries to settle the dispute by mutual compromise between aggrieved parties. Sometimes fine is imposed by the council on the accused in shape of liquor, some amount of rice and a goat or a sheep. This fine is shared communally in a village feast.

Inter-village Organisation:

Mutha Majhi / Mandal Majhi :

The Mutha Majhi, otherwise known as Mandal Majhi was next in the hierarchy to the Mutha head in the Mutha administration. In the beginning of the formation of the Mutha organisation an efficient person from the dominant clan was selected as Mutha-Majhi in a meeting attended by the Majhis of each village within the territory of the Mutha. The subsequent post of Mutha Majhi continued as a hereditary one. Prior to the independence, the Mutha Majhi was controlling about 10 to 12 villages. His chief duty was to assist the Mutha administration of *Sishtu* (land tax), *Vetti* (gift) and *bethi* (free labour) for the King of Sanakhemundi. He was also responsible for the comfort of the Government officials who were visiting the area within the Mutha Majhi's

jurisdiction. Besides this he was to look after the law and order problem of his area. He was also a guardian of the traditional social norms. The cases which were not solved by the Majhis of concerned villages and Mutha Majhi were referred to the Mutha head for settlement. But now a days the post and function of Mutha Majhi is totally defunct.

Mutha Head:

As discussed earlier, the Kutia Kandha area of Belghar region was divided into three Muthas, namely Belghar Mutha, Gumma Mutha and Jhiripani Mutha. For each Mutha the administrative head was called Mutha head. As the chief of the Mutha administration, the Mutha head was directly responsible to the King of Sanakhemundi. The post was hereditary in character. The Mutha head of Belghar Mutha was from Gond community. He was looking to the general administration of his Mutha. He was exercising his judicial power in deciding cases, like homicide, dispute relating to the marriage, divorce witch-craft, dispute on land and boundary between two villages etc. for such cases inter-village ceting was held at the Mutha headquarters participated by Majhi, Jani, Ganda and some elderly persons of the concerned villages and the Mutha Majhi. In the inter-village council meeting the Mutha head was presiding over the meeting. In deciding the cases all the participants had the equal voice. But finally the Mutha head, in consultation with the Karjee and the delegates was giving the final verdict. The offender was fined in shape of rice, goat, sheep and cash for liquor. The realization of fine was vested on *Dalei* of the Mutha administration and Majhi and Ganda of the accused's village. The fine realized from the offender was spent in a feast.

Besides a judicial person he had revenue powers. He was collecting land revenue and *vetti* for the king from the Mandal Majhi and Majhi of each village within his jurisdiction through *Bevari* and *Dalei*. He was the local chief to organize the visit and look into the comfort of the king and Government official visiting to his Mutha.

Now a days the powers and function of the Mutha head is defunct. On the whole, in the present situation the Mutha head, Mandal Majhi, Dalei, Bevari have lost their powers and prestige but still the village level traditional official, such as Majhi, Jani, Ganda have retained their prestige as the village leader and command tremendous authority over village administration.

Modern Panchayat System:

It is evident from the preceding paragraphs that the Kutia Kandha had distinctive community life with strong traditional village organisation. They had been managing their affairs without outside interference. The framers of Indian Constitution emphasized upon local self Government. The Directive Principles of the State Policy in the Indian Constitution envisages the formation of the village Panchayats as the basic unit of local self Government. The Balvantray Mehta committee in 1957 also recommended to take away more and more powers from the center and the State and rest them with the local units of administration. In the early sixties the statutory Panchayat system was introduced in this area with two-tier system, the Panchayat at the village and Panchayat Samiti at the Block level. With the introduction of new Panchayati Raj system many changes in the indigenous village organisation have taken place. The traditional Mutha organisation have dwindled away because of the Revenue and police administration.

In the system of Panchayati Raj every village has its own statutory leader, called Ward member. The Ward member is elected through adult franchise. In the Panchayat level the Sarapanch is elected also through adult franchise. But the Samiti Chairman is elected by the Ward members and Sarapanchs. The Ward-member is associated with all the village level development programmes. He is also responsible to report any problem of the village to the concerned Government agency. He is the go between the Government functionaries and the village.

In most of the Kutia Kandha villages in Belghar area the traditional secular headman, the Majhi is elected as Ward member. On or two days before the election for the post of Ward member in the traditional village council meeting the name of the traditional secular headman of the village is declared unanimously to be their new statutory leader. The Majhi submits his nomination for the post of Ward member and then he is elected as Ward member uncontested. But in case the villagers do not like the activities of the traditional secular head or he is quite old to shoulder the responsibility of the post of Ward member then another suitable person is chosen for the post of Ward member in the village council meeting. In some cases the post of Sarapanch is also unanimously selected by some Majhis and elderly persons of the area and that person is finally elected uncontested. But the post of Chairman for the Samiti is filled up through adult franchise.

CHAPTER – XII

Status of Women

Although the Kutia Kandha society is based on the patriarchal principle, the women folk have their distinct status. The Kutia Kandha women are tabooed from certain religious and traditional administrative functions but their economic status is very high. The Kutia Kandha women are not permitted to participate in the village council meeting unless personally accused. In religious practices the women are not the direct participants in rituals, except in dance. After marriage the chief duties of the women are to care of the household, prepare the meal and participate in household chores. Besides these, they pursue work to supplement the family income by collecting minor forest products and wage earning. In agricultural activities they perform works, like clearing, burning, sowing, weeding and harvesting. All the produce earned by them remain in their hand and they control and make proper use of the products. Marketing for the household is preferably done by the women folk. Mostly the violation of the social norms is brought to the notice of the male members through them.

There are mainly two things which a Kutia Kandha women must not do, these are, she should not plough the land and climb to the roof of the house for thatching. During her monthly courses there is some interruption in her regular work. During this period she is not allowed to enter into the cowshed and the main living room of the house. She is forbidden to do any sort of household activities except nourishing the infants. She is not allowed to visit the relatives and market place. During menstruation period she is confined inside the *Jaka*. During child birth also she stays secluded in the *Jaka* and some taboos are followed as in case of monthly courses. The cow's milk is generally, tabooed for women to drink. But girls below 7 to 8 years of age are allowed to drink cow's milk. The women and grown up girls are forbidden to eat egg and pork.

CHAPTER – XIII

Material Culture

Food :

Generally three principal meals are taken by the Kutia Kandha, one in the morning at about 7 A.M., then at about mid-day between 12 noon to 1 P.M. and lastly in the evening at about 7 to 7.30 P.M.. The items for the morning meals are preferred from the previous evening and kept near the hearth for morning use. The rice prepared in the previous night is taken without water is called, *Basi bidi*, but with water is called *Basi Simba*. *Basi bidi* or *Basi Simba* is taken with previous night's curry or fry or dal or only with chilly and salt. The mid-day meal is prepared at the swidden in the working site. The mid-day meal consists of rice with gruel (*Kuli Simba*) or *Kueri* rice with gruel (*Mosa Simba*) or liquid *ragi* (*Manda Simba*) with salt and chilly. The evening meal is *Kueri* rice without gruel (*Mosa bidi*) or paddy rice without gruel (*Kuli bids*) or *ragi* not in liquid form (*Mande Duru*) is taken with vegetable curry or some pulses (dal) or green leaves. In the evening meal, sometimes meat or fish or dry fish is taken depending upon the availability. Roots and tubers are taken boiled or baked at about 4 to 5 P.M. puffed rice, puffed maize, *janha* and baked jack fruit seeds or maize are also taken between 4 to 5 P.M. The main food stuff of the Kutia Kandha are listed below:

Cereals : Paddy, millets, such as *Suan*, *Kueri*, *Janha*, *Kathia* and maize.

Pulses : Greengram, blackgram, horsegram, *Kandula*, *Judanga*, and *Cutting*.

Vegetables : Brinjal, pumpkin, cabbage, bean, field bean, radish, cow-pea, green banana, papaya, potato, tomato, onion, cauly flower, onion and chilly.

Green Leaves: *Kaapa Kusa, Siti Kusa* (collected from the forest)

Edible flowers: Pumpkin flower, *Jargi Maredaka, Irpi, Ganjeri Punga, Kaapu Punga* (collected from the forest).

Drinks :

Liquor is the most important and essential for a number of socio-religious functions and ceremonies. The Kutia Kandha take four types of liquor i.e. (1) *Madanga*, (2) *Ankinga*, (3) *Katuli*, and (4) *Pranga Ankinga*. But they generally take *Salap* and *Mahuli*. *Madanga* is the juice of Sago palm tree. *Akinga Kalu* is the fermented liquor prepared from mahua flower. *Akinga Kalu (Mahuli)* is procured from the liquor vendors. The vendors belong to the Pano (SC) community of the locality. *Katul / Katuli* is a kind of beverage prepared by fermenting *Kuiri* (a kind of millet) into brew in a indigenous method. *Pranga Ankinga* is the rice-bear.

Narcotics :

Topari (pika), *Dua* (raw tobacco) and Bidi are the main narcotics of the Kutia Kandha. The raw tobacco rolled in a *Sal* or *Siali* or *Kendu* leaf is known as *Topari (Pika)*. A Raw tobacco in powder form is known as *Dua*. *Dua* is kept between the lower lip and incisor teeth for sometime and then spit out. *Dua* is kept in indigenously and beautifully made thin bamboo container (*Dua Duna*) or small tin or plastic container. *Dua* is taken both by male and female and they are addicted to it. The females very rarely take *Katuli* liquor except in festive occasions. *Dua* is made by themselves or procured from the market. *Bidi* is purchased from the market.

Dress :

There is perceptible difference between dress or clothings of males and females.

Male dress :

The traditional dress of Kutia Kandha men is a loincloth (*Batada*). In the recent past, the upper portion of the body was left bare but in cold season they were covering it with a *chaddar*. The male were using a head gear known as *Kapda Gaspa*. The male were also keeping long hair with a knot behind. They were fixing a number of combs (*Sireni*) on the head. In the hair knot they were fixing a rod like ornament, known as *Jude Kila* made out of aluminium. For ear decoration they were wearing *Kotu Kichad* which was made out of gold or brass or silver or aluminium. In the neck they were wearing a necklace made out of beads which was called, *Sasha*. Though the finger ring was not a traditional ornament of the Kutia Kandha men, still some were wearing rings made out of brass or aluminium.

Now-a-days a few older generation males and a very few young of the remote hilly region of Belghar and Gumma Gram panchayats are adorned with their traditional dress and ornaments and keep long hair. But the majority of male now a days, wear *dhoti* and shirt or full pant and shirt and cut their hair like the plain area people and wear no head, ear and neck ornaments.

Female dress :

The traditional dress of the Kutia Kandha women is *Retang* and *Uromi*. The *Retang* is a band of cloth worn by the female which covers from the lower portion of the waist to the upper portion of the knee. The front portion of the body is covered by *Uromi* which hangs from the neck upto the abdomen. The lower portion of the *Uromi* is tied by a cotton string worn round the waist. Under the *Retang* the female wear a loin cloth known as *Topa*. Every Kutia Kandha girl and woman above the age of 5 to 6 years of age wear *Topa*. The girl or woman wears *Topa* always whether she is in menstruation period or not. The *Retang* and *Uromi* are indigenously woven by them-selves. The girls from 5 to 9 years of age wear only *Topa* and the upper portion of the body remains naked.

Now a days the *Retang* and *Uromi* are replaced by two towels. Married women above middle age wear two towels, in a way the older generation women were wearing *Retang* and *Uromi*. The young girls and women are now used to wear saree, saya and blouse. The girls above 6 to 10 years are wearing frocks purchased from weakly markets.

Ornaments :

The Kutia Kandha women wear a number of aluminium, iron, silver and gold ornaments. Beads also adorn their neck.

Head :

- (1) *Sireni* – (made out of plastic and wood)
- (2) *Vinanga*- made out of aluminium or iron.
- (3) *Motanga*- made out of aluminium.
- (4) *Jhaptang*- iron hair clip.
- (5) *Talmotang* – leaf ball used inside hair knot.
- (6) *Beni* - made out of local grass worn on the forehead.

Ear :

- (1) *Kiu kichadaka* – made out of aluminium or iron, worn on the upper portion of the ear.
- (2) *Olanga* - made out of aluminium, silver/gold and worn on ear lobe.

Neck :

- (1) *Saska* – beads necklace.
- (2) *Kagdanga* – brass or iron or aluminium ring.
- (3) *Lebu sikding* – glass beads.

Arm :-(1) *Baatanga* - made of aluiniun or silver

Wrist :

- (1) *Muapajanga*- made out of brass.
- (2) *Paola pajanga*- made out of aluminium or Silver.
- (3) *Sadang pajanga*- glass bangles.

Finger : (1) *Kaju mudinga* – made out of aluminium or iron or brass.

Waist :

- (1) *Japi Saska*- beads.
- (2) *Tedi Siki dinga*-waist band made out of aluminium.
- (3) *Toderi*- waist band made out of aluminium.
- (4) *Dumonaka* – waist band made out of collon string.

Ankle: (1) *Koda baning* – made of brass / aluminium

Toes : (1) *Kalu Mudinga* – made of brass/ aluminium.

Tattooing (*Tikanga*) :

The Kutia Kandhaa female tattoo on their body. They do not believe in any reason or superstition for totooing. They do it only for beautification. The tattooing (*Tikanga*) is done only on the face and arms of the female. The unmarried girls tattoo three spots on the both sides of the upper cheeks. Some females tattoo on both the arms. The Kutia Kandha male do not tattoo. The tattooing is done by the Pano women (Scheduled Caste), who go from village to village for this purpose. The tattooing is done by the help of a niddle. After punching the cheeks and arms by the needle, turmeric paste, castor oil and black paste meant for the eyes (*Kajal*) are applied on the wound. Within a week to fortnight the wounds are healed, leaving the tattoo mark on the skin surface.

Toilets :

Both the Kutia Kandha male and female apply a type of soil (*Kine birah*) on the head at the time of bath. They apply this soil once or twice a month. But now a days they use soap, occasionally during bath. They apply mustard/nizer/caster oil after bath. But they do not apply oil on hair and over body every day. But applying oil on hair and body is a must if they go to any relative's house or to the weekly market of distance place. Previously they were washing the clothes by banana plant ash but now a days soap is used. Previously the male Kutia Kandha were cutting hair and shaving with a kind of indigenously made iron sharp blade known as *Sura* but now a days they use scissors and razor or blade. They cut the hair among themselves.

Piercing of ears and nose :

In the Kutia Kandha society, piercing of the ears and nose of the children of both sexes were a must. But now-a-days some parents do not pierce the ears and nose of their male child. When a female child becomes one year old, the upper portion of both of the ears and earlobes and both sides of the nose are pierced. But in case of the male child, at the age of 4 to 5 years, his both the ear lobes and only right side of the nose are pierced. The piercing of nose and ears are done by the parents by the help of a thorn of a local plant, known as *Golasopu*. After piercing the ears and nose, turmeric paste only is applied over the wound. They observe no rituals for piercing of the nose.

Icon (*Tikanga*) :

The inside and outside walls of the Kutia Kandha houses are painted with icons. In a newly constructed house icon is a must. Once in a year in *Barlong Kalu Dakina* festival each Kutia Kandha household paints the walls of his house with a type of red clay. After the walls are painted, icons are drawn mainly by the female members of the family. Sometimes the male also draw the icons. The ingredients for the icons are(1) *Sandani Binga* (a type

of white clay) (2) *Sunduri Binga* (Red clay), (3) *Surma Binga* (Black clay) (4) *Sainganga* (Charcoal) and (5) *Pranga Junda* (rice powder liquid). The icons are drawn by the finger tips and chewed bamboo branch stick, to turn as a brush. The icons are drawn to decorate the house. No belief is attached to the icons. The menstruating women and unpurified mothers are prohibited to draw the icons.

Song, Music and Dance :

Kude (Youth dormitory) is the place where both the young boys and girls learn the art of singing. The songs were composed from the time immemorial and transmitted from generation to generation. New songs are composed and added from time to time. The songs (*Gam*) are sung separately by the boys and girls in their respective *Kude*. When the group of boys and girls of a village go to another village they sing song in their host's house or in their respective *Kude* of the host village. In the marriage feasts the young boys and girls sing and dance. In all the major festivals, like *Karubiha Dakina*, *Puni Kalu Dakina* and *Takukalu Dakina* the young boys and girls also sing and dance. During the dance, the girls join their hands at the back of every individual participant and step forward and back ward jointly in a chain and sing song while their male counterpart play musical instruments. During the festive occasions and marriage ceremony the singing and dancing continue for hours together. During the dance, the participants exchange words among themselves.

Musical Instruments :

There are a number of traditional musical instruments which are not played at the time of every dance and music. In the marriage occasions, the music and dance is accompanied by lighter musical instruments, like *Basi*, *Gani Lauri* and *Muang Lauri*. But in the major religious festivals, like (1) *Korubiha Dakina*, (2) *Punikalu Dakina* and (3) *Takukalu Dakina* most of the traditional musical instruments are played.

The Kutia Kandha musical instruments are:

- (1) *Dapakari*: This is made out of a wooden frame, covered by goat skin and indigenously made by them.
- (2) *Madatopka*: The frame of this musical instrument is made out of a pretty old bottom of a Salap tree trunk. The frame is covered with tanned cow hide. This is also indigenously made by themselves.
- (3) *Timi Dini*: This musical instrument in a iron frame covered with tanned cow hide. The iron frame is purchased from the weekly market or from a local balck-smith.
- (4) *Jajinga*: Two brass plates which are purchased from weekly market.
- (5) *Basi*: This is a bamboo flute made by themselves.
- (6) *Koma*: This is a wild or domesticated buffalo horn. But wild buffalo horn is preferred because it produces better sound than the domesticated buffalo horn.
- (7) *Gani Lauri*: This is made out of wood or bamboo and is indigenously made by themselves.
- (8) *Muang Lauri*: Made of iron only and is procured from the local black-smith.

Household appliances, tools and implements :

The Kutia Kandha household appliances are made, mostly by themselves. The handle of the tools and implements are made out of wood and bamboo. Though canes are plentifully available in the nearby forest, but they do not use cane for making appliances, tools and implements. A few

Kutia Kandha make the body of the sleeping cot (Khot) by cane string plates. Besides bamboo and wooden appliances they also use aluminium, bell-metal, brass made utensils, containers and iron implements which they purchase from weekly markets. The list of appliances, tools and implements which are used for different purposes are given below:

(a) Household Appliances :

Sl No	Name	Purpose	Made of
1	<i>Kadeh</i> (Cot)	Sleeping	Wood, cane <i>nana</i> (Sial rope)
2	<i>Sakusa</i>	Keeping regular use cloth	Bamboo
3	<i>Pide</i> (Tin box)	Keeping cloth & valuables	Tin (purchased)
4	<i>Mani Duna</i>	Keeping money	Bamboo
5	<i>Natra</i> (Lantern)	Light	Tin (purchased)
6	<i>Dihet</i>	Lamp in a bottle	Purchased or made
7	<i>Birga Bandi</i> (Earthen Pot)	Storing water/ cooking/ food container	Earthen ware (purchased)
8	<i>l Pola Bandi</i> (Aluminium pot)	Storing water	Aluminium (purchased)
9	<i>Biadi Bandi</i> (Bell-metal pot)	Storing water	Bell-metal
10	<i>Eju qura</i>	Storing water	Aluminium (purchased)
11	<i>Naki</i>	Food container	Aluminium (purchased)
12	<i>Kara</i>	Food container	Bell-metal
13	<i>Pola gna</i>	Food container	Aluminium (purchased)
14	<i>Pola tade</i>	Food container	Aluminium (purchased)
15	<i>Barki</i>	Grain container	Indigenously made out of bamboo
16	<i>Barpu Barki</i>	-do-	-do-
17	<i>Kandara Barki</i>	-do-	-do-

18.	<i>Sechi</i>	Winnowing fan	Bamboo
19.	<i>Madanga Binjuli</i>	Extraction of <i>Salap</i> juice	Indigenously made out of bamboo
20.	<i>Kapa</i>	Indigenous medicines given by the sorcerer are kept	Indigenously made out of bamboo
21.	<i>Dua Duna</i>	Keeping tobacco	Indigenously made by themselves
22.	<i>Burlu</i>	Storage of grain	-do-
23.	<i>Kachung</i>	-do-	-do-
24.	<i>Gada</i>	-do-	-do-
25.	<i>Kacha</i>	For carrying pole	Bamboo and rope

Agricultural Implements:

Sl No	Name	Made of
1	<i>Gatara</i>	Iron and wood
2	<i>Tangi</i> (axe)	-do-
3	<i>Basuli</i>	-do-
4.	<i>Kist</i>	-do-
5	<i>Sechi</i>	-do-
6	<i>Kare</i> (scythe)	Iron and bamboo
7.	<i>Nangeli</i> (Plough)	Iron and wood
8	<i>Jusi</i>	Wood
9.	<i>Jushi</i>	Wood
10.	<i>Kasena</i>	Iron and wood

Hunting Tools:

Sl No	Name
1	<i>Willu</i> (hoop)
2	<i>Anba Mati</i> (arrow)
3	<i>Tangi</i> (Axe)



KUTIA KANDHA MALE DRINKING WINE

Traps for Animal:

Sl. No.	Name	Made of
1.	<i>Nana Pandoli</i>	<i>Salt rope</i>
2.	<i>Jhunu Pachu</i>	Wood
3.	<i>Malalu Pandolaka</i>	Iron string
4.	<i>Kujinga</i> (bird trap)	Root of <i>Salap</i> tree and bamboo

Fishing Implements:

Sl. No.	Name	Made of
1	<i>Guem</i>	Bamboo
2	<i>Dituri</i>	Bamboo

House building and repair tools:

Sl. No.	Name	Made of
1	<i>Basuli</i>	Iron and wooden handle
2	<i>Budhana</i>	-do-
3.	<i>Tangi</i>	-do-
4	<i>Kare</i>	-do-
5.	<i>Gatare</i>	-do-
6.	<i>Kare</i>	Iron
7.	<i>Khust</i>	Iron blade and wooden handle

CHAPTER – XIV

Development Intervention

The Kutia Kandha Development Agency (KKDA) started functioning with headquarters at Belghar on 16th June, 1978 for the overall development of the Kutia Kandha inhabiting in Gumma and Belghar Gram Panchayats of Tumudibandh Block in Kandhamal district of Orissa. The Kutia Kandha Development Agency (KKDA) comes under the jurisdiction of ITDA Balliguda. The main objective of the Agency is to develop the Kutia Kandha with appropriate infrastructural as well as family-beneficiary oriented schemes.

There are 18 upper Primary Schools under Education Department functioning in this project area. Besides the Primary Schools, one Residential Sevashram at Belghar and two High Schools, one is at Belghar and other is at Gumma under Welfare Department are also functioning in this area.

There is one six-bedded dispensary located at Belghar. Under Belghar dispensary three A.N.M. Centres are also functioning at Gumma, Bilamal and Belghar. Besides these, one Para-medical worker is posted at Belghar.

There is a good network of road communication in this project area. The roads in this project area are constructed and maintained by five agencies, i.e. (1) P.W.D., (2) KKDA, (3) ITDA, (4) Forest Department and (5) Panchayat Samiti.

As many as 27 Nos. of Diversion weirs, 5 M.I.Ps. and 8 check dams and two irrigation wells are existing in this project area. Besides, these two lift hand pumps have been distributed to the Kutia Kandha by the Agency.



A KUTIA KANDHA OLD LADY WASHING UTENSIL NEAR THE TUBE-WELL

There are altogether 58 tube wells, 23 sanitary wells existing in this project area. Besides this number of small ponds (*chhuas*) have been constructed by the KKD Agency.

Banking and Cooperation :

There exists a branch of Kalahandi Anchalika Gramya Bank at Belghar The Kutia Kandha. Scheduled Castes and other persons have deposits and loan transactions with the bank. The loan transactions are agricultural term loan, cash credit and gold loans.

Previously LAMPCS with its two branches, one at Dhudusi and other at Jhiripani and AMCS were functioning in this project area. But now both the LAMPCS and AMCS have been defunct.

One veterinary dispensary is located at Belghar. Under this dispensary three Livestock Aid Centres, headed by Livestock Inspector are functioning in this area.

Under I.C.D.S. schemes, 11 Anganwadi Centres are functioning in this area. The I.C.D.S. supervision Centre is located at Belghar.

The statement below shows the amount spent on the Individual Benefit Oriented Programmes and Community Benefit Oriented Programmes by the KKDA, Belghar since its inception till 2001.

**Expenditure incurred by KKDA under IBO, CBO
Programmes and Establishment from its inception till 2001**

Sl. No.	Year	I.B.O.P (in Rs.)	C.B.O.P. (in Rs.)	Establishment (in Rs.)	Total (in Rs.)
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	1978-79	21,000.00	-	1,10,842.52	1,39,842.52
2	1979-80	1,10,869.04	1,21,854.03	98,716.55	3,26,934.62
3	1980-81	2,03,933.26	22,823.89	1,49,884.39	3,76,641.54
4	1981-82	2,48,780.35	48,590.37	1,95,537.39	4,92,958.01
5	1982-83	3,42,343.39	33,264.34	2,25,316.11	6,00,923.84
6	1983-84	31,668.83	1,13,939.14	1,84,542.55	3,30,200.52
7	1984-85	91,611.00	36,949.55	2,13,949.13	3,42,054.62
8	1985-86	93,616.56	54,069.45	2,59,663.02	4,07,349.03
9	1986-87	6,000.00	88,752.05	2,46,983.18	3,52,683.23
10	1987-88	68,737.50	99,829.24	2,55,679.00	4,24,245.74
11	1988-89	21,239.86	7,47,620.52	2,77,075.22	10,45,935.60
12	1989-90	7,606.45	73,031.90	2,81,448.87	3,62,087.22
13	1990-91	63,753.96	94,243.25	2,75,459.50	4,33,447.71
14	1991-92	9,74,933.50	2,26,861.99	5,09,448.80	17,11,241.29
15	1992-93	3,60,994.65	1,96,028.95	3,51,433.77	9,08,457.37
16	1993-94	6,34,961.00	2,43,960.00	3,39,396.98	12,18,317.98
17	1994-95	6,14,795.00	2,88,496.00	3,51,869.00	12,55,160.00
18	1995-96	5,93,325.00	2,74,796.00	4,34,230.00	13,02,351.00
19	1996-97	5,38,697.75	2,34,337.83	4,93,032.74	12,56,268.32
20	1997-98	6,01,188.00	9,684.62	4,07,566.49	10,18,439.02
21	1998-99	5,82,393.00	2,50,429.00	4,87,447.20	13,20,269.20
22	1999-2000	5,95,396.00	73,319.00	4,40,939.00	11,09,654.00
23	2000-2001	3,60,797.00	1,41,714.00	4,53,481.00	9,75,992.00
		71,88,841.10 (49.59)	34,75,910.12 (19.62)	70,40,948.32 (39.79)	1,77,10,979.54 (100.00)



A NURSERY IN KKDA, BELGHAR AREA

From the above table and preceding discussions it transpires that there has been purposive efforts at multi-sectoral development in the KKDA area over a period of little more than two decades. It is not that nothing has been done through development inputs. But our expectations and achievements are not in consonance with each other. The positive achievements are; creation of a new horizon of awareness, promotion of literacy and education, availability of health care services for humans as well as animals, agricultural development and the like. As one of the most Primitive Tribal Groups or Vulnerable ethno-cultural groups, the Kutia Kandha no long suffer from isolation and inaccessibility, in the true sense of the terms. With continued efforts for their development, let us hope for their sustainable development with popular participation.

SECTION - III

THE DESIA KANDHA



DESIA KANDHA WOMAN

CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

Among the 15 major tribes numbering more than one lakh population each, the Kandha with 11,40,374 population according to the census of 1991 top the list. Though its main concentration is in southern Orissa the Kandha are spread in an uneven manner throughout the State. Their distribution in different geographical zones is given below.

Sl. No.	Zones	Places covered
1.	Northern Plateau	Sundergarh, Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar districts; Bamra and Kuchinda portion of Sambalpur district, interior plains of Balasore district, and pallahara region of Dhenkanal district.
2.	Central Table Land	Whole of the Brahmani and the Baitarani basins.
3.	Eastern Ghat Region (a) Northern Section (b) Central Section	Starting from Nilgiri in Balasore district stretches upto border in Puri district. Boud, Balliguda, G.Udayagiri areas of Phulbani district.
	(c) Rayagada Section	Parlakhemundi area of Ganjam district and Rayagada area of Koraput district.
	(d) South-Eastern Section (3000 ft. Plateau)	Koraput sub-division including Pattangi plateau of Koraput district.
	(e) South-Eastern Section (2000 ft. Plateau)	Jaypore and Nawarangpur sub-division of Koraput district
	(f) Malkangiri Region	Malkangiri sub-division of Koraput district.
	(g) Southern-Western Section.	(a) Plains area and (b) Dongar area of Kalahandi district
4.	Coastal Region	Eastern Sea-board plains stretching from the mouth of the Rushikulya river to the Subarnarekha river.

The Desia are the Hinduized section of the Kandha tribe and as the table shows they are found in large number in the northern plateau, central table land, Northern section of Eastern Ghats and the coastal region and comprise approximately 39.4% of the Kandha population. Those who live in close proximity to this primitive section of their tribe particularly in Koraput and Phulbani districts have been able to preserve most of their pristine cultural traits while those living among the non-tribal majority in the plains have changed a great deal and have become almost indistinguishable from the Hindu peasantry.

Like their non-tribal neighbours the Desia have taken to plough cultivation and with it have adopted Hindu pantheon and associated ritual practices and belief system. They have given up hunting and food-gathering activities which their primitive brethren pursue and the axe cultivation as the advanced section among the primitive group does to earn their livelihood. The Desia have completely forgotten *Kiri* or *Kiri* which is the mother tongue of the Kandha and speak Oriya like their Oriya neighbours.

In some parts of Orissa the Desia grow special crops like turmeric, corns and vegetables in an extensive scale. As these products are prized by the more prosperous non-traditional neighbours and merchants they have been drawn into a complex monetized marketing organization. But a careful observation of their cultural life reveals that their economic symbiosis with the non-tribal neighbours and trading communities have least influenced some of the subtleties of their traditional cultural core.

This is not the whole story of cultural change among the Desia. Some institutions and aesthetic aspects of the tribal cultural have undergone considerable attenuation and a few others have completely disintegrated and disappeared under the impact of Hinduization.

The custom of *Merta* sacrifice may be cited to illustrate the point. In the olden days a human being was sacrificed on this occasion. After the human

sacrifice was stamped out the human being was replaced by a buffalo and with it the name of the festival changed from *Meria* to *Kedu*. But other items of the rite such as the number of days observed, rituals performed, solemnity with which the rite was observed and the joyous congregation of people remained unchanged. In course of time the non-tribal people looked upon the buffalo sacrifice with hatred and in some places like the ex-state of Nayagarh the slaughter of the buffalo was prohibited by law. At present the Desia Kandha who live in Nayagarh manage the festival with a billy-goat and in some places with even a cock. In such places the term *Kedu* has been replaced by another term *Jantal* which conveys an atmosphere of feasting, eating and jockned gathering rather than the horrid atmosphere of human or buffalo sacrifice.

Unlike the above case where the change has been gradual, the institutions of traditional tribal council and dormitory system have completely disappeared in the Desia villages. In the earlier dispensation there was a tribal council in every Kandha village and the tribe used to manage its own internal affairs through this council. Similarly the institution of dormitory was of immense help in fostering cohesion and corporate living in the Kandha society. But these institutions have disappeared all together among the Desia Kandha, particularly among those who live among the Hindus of the coastal region. One adverse effect of Hinduization is the fading away of certain picturesque customs like the dance of men and women together which takes place every evening in accompaniment of song and music. More pitiful is the loss of their artistry and colourful ritual practices which made them ever joyful and gave their lives a meaning and significance. In this Part, a brief account of the socio-economic life of the Desia has been given indicating different factors which impinge upon them to change their social life and cultural tradition.

CHAPTER - II

Economic Life

House Type :

Generally a new house is constructed in the months of *Magha*, *Phalguna*, *Baisakha* and *Jestha*. The sorcerer finds out an auspicious day and time for this purpose and performs some ritual and sacrifices a hen and offers blood to Mother Earth before the work begins.

The construction of a Kandha house is very simple. The walls are made of planks of *sal* trees covered with mud and the trellis made of bamboo splits are thatched with grass collected from the nearby forest. The house is made very low, not exceeding 10 feet in height and the caves are at a height of about 4 feet from the ground level.

The lay-out of the house consists of a bed room (*Dapanidu*), a kitchen (*Bajanidu*), a shed (*Gaheli*) attached to the bed room and a youth dormitory (*Danganidu*). The granary (*Deyba*) is provided at two corners of the main room. A narrow verandah is provided in the front as-well-as in the back of the house.

The front verandah is always kept clean and used as a meeting-place where leisure hours are spent on recreational activities. The back verandah is used for keeping fire wood and forest produce. Two doors are provided—one in front and one at the back of the house. They are about 2' to 2'6" in width and 4' in length. The front door which is the entrance opens to the bed room. The back door is fixed just opposite to the entrance door. Now window is provided in the house. An oven is provided to keep the room warm during winter. The kitchen is attached to one side and the cattleshed to the other side of the bed room. Passage is provided to the kitchen on one side and to the cattle-shed on the other side of the bedroom. The kitchen room intercepts



A ROW OF DESIA KANDHA HOUSES



A DESIA KANDHA OLD MAN

between the room for the unmarried youths and the bed-room. The door to the *Danganidu* is provided at the backside of the house. A mortar is fixed on the floor in the bed room and food grains are husked here with the help of a pestle.

The wall is coloured red by using red earth and made polished by means of a smooth large pebble. Sometimes a shed is made without any wall at the back of the house to keep fire wood and agricultural implements.

Agricultural Implements :

The Table I gives a list of the agricultural tools and implements used by the Kandha.

TABLE-I
(Agricultural tools & implements)

Local name	English name	Approximate price in Rs.	From where procured
<i>Nangeli</i>	Plough	16	Local market or made by oneself.
<i>Fauda</i>	Spade	8	Lohara (Blacksmith)
<i>Juali</i>	Yoke	3	Local Market or made by oneself.
<i>Sabal</i>	Crowbar	5	Blacksmith
<i>Kele</i>	Sickle	1	Blacksmith
<i>Kati</i>	Cutting implement	3	Blacksmith
<i>Tangi</i>	Axe	3 to 4	Blacksmith
<i>Pata</i>	Leveller	1 to 2	Made by oneself
<i>Rape</i>	Spade	10	Blacksmith

The iron materials of the implements are either purchased from the local market or obtained ready-made from the blacksmith who visits the Kandha villages periodically. The wooden parts are prepared by the Kandha themselves. Most of the Kandha are skilled carpenters and can make whatever wooden objects they need at home or in the field.

The important household articles are aluminium vessels, earthen pots, and brass utensils which they purchase from the local markets on payment of cash. Clothes and ornaments are also purchased from the local markets on payment of money.

A list of domestic articles is given in Table-2.

TABLE-2
Domestic Articles

Local Name (Kandha)	English Equivalent	From where procured
<i>Mudha</i>	Small jug	Local Market
<i>Ghura</i>	Water Vessel	Local Market
<i>Teki</i>	Earthen pot	Potter
<i>Batki</i>	Metal cup	Local Market
<i>Tabala</i>	Aluminium pot	Local Market
<i>Takuk</i>	Spoon ladle	Blacksmith
<i>Dihtri</i>	Lamp	Local Market
<i>Katery</i>	Cot	Made by oneself
<i>Laaka</i>	Stick ladle	Made by oneself
<i>Devba</i>	Basket for storing paddy	Domb (Scheduled caste)

<i>Bihari</i>	Fish trap	Domb (Scheduled caste)
<i>Danga</i>	Cistern	Made by oneself
<i>Sitkee</i>		Domb
<i>Baaga</i>	Small basket	Domb
<i>Badi</i>	Grinding stone	Made by oneself
<i>Katuri</i>	Bamboo work	Domb
<i>Tata</i>	Chisel	Blacksmith
<i>Koadu</i>	Pestle	Made by oneself
<i>Pata</i>	Leveller	Made by oneself
<i>Duda</i>	Carrying pole with baskets	Made by oneself

Food :

Paddy, Maize, *Gangeti* and Ragi are the staple food of the Kandha. Food is in short supply during summer season which is referred to as 'Days of Starvation' by the Kandha.

Generally the Kandha take meals three times a day-the first meal (*Benda eju*) at about 10 A.M after ploughing *Badi* land, the second meal (*Tila Bela eju*) at 2 P.M. and the third meal (*Nadang eju*) at 8 P.M. after coming back home from field work.

The poor people cannot afford to take three meals a day. They drop the morning meal for want of food.

The housewife prepares food for the family. Rice is not washed before cooking and rice water is not thrown away. Gruel is made from ragi powder mixed with rice. Turmeric, chilli and tola oil and mustard are used for preparing curry. The Kandha are inveterate smokers. Tobacco is generally grown in

the backyard and care is taken to grow a good crop. They prepare their own cigars by wrapping the tobacco with the *Sal* leaf. A cigar is about 5 inches in length. The Kandha are very much addicted to drinking. Three types of drink are in use, Mohua liquor (*Irpi Kalu*), Sagopalm juice (*Mada kalu*) and Date-palm juice (*Kajuri kalu*).

Irpi Kalu is distilled by the side of a stream in a hidden place in the forest. It is used by the Kandha on all occasions. Sometimes they purchase the liquor from licenced shops or from the local agents who are *Sundi* or *Pana* by caste.

Mada Kalu is extracted from Sago palm and *Kajuri Kalu* from date-palm. Some herbs and roots are added to the juice to make it intoxicating. Fermented liquor is prepared from rice, maize and ragi. It is the common drink for all people and is used to make libation to their deities for abundance and prosperity.

Dress:

The children move about naked upto three to four years. There after they start wearing loin cloth. Previously the male folk were using a loin cloth in the lower portion and a wrapper on the upper portion of their body.

The Kandha women like to wear deep coloured sarees and blouses. Red and blue are their favourite colours. Young women are fond of printed sarees which are now readily available in local markets and bulbs and beads of different colours are used as necklace and sliver and gold ornaments are used by well-to-do women. Tattooing is most common among the Kandha women. They get their faces, hands and legs tattooed with line and dotted with geometrical designs. There is a movement going on now among the Kandha prohibiting the practices of tattooing and many women of younger generation are found now without any tattoo marks.



INSIDE VIEW OF DESIA KANDHA HOUSE

Occupational Pattern:

The economic life of the Kandha and their struggle for earning a livelihood mainly centre around agriculture. They practise both shifting cultivation on the hill tops and hill-slopes and plough-cultivation in valleys and low lands. Collection of edible roots, tubers and leaves from forest: hunting of wild animals, fishing in the hill streams and tanks and water logged paddy fields and wage earning by daily labour supplement their income from land.

Forest Economy:

The tribals are known as the forest people and the Kandha are no exception to it. Forest is their treasure-house and an important source of their livelihood. It gives them food in the forms of nutritious fruits, edible leaves, mushrooms, roots and tubers, nourishing honey and wild game and fish.

Forest produce supplements their meager income from land. The important forest collections include timber, firewood, bamboo, *Siali* creepers, *Kendu* leaf, *Sal* leaf, etc. The timber and bamboo are used for construction of house and for making agricultural and hunting implements and fishing traps. The Kandha collect fire-wood for their own use and also for sale. *Siali* creepers are used in the construction of houses and for making ropes. *Kendu* leaves and *Sal* leaves are an important source of cash income. The former are sold to *Kendu* leaf society established at various centers and the latter are used for making plates and cups which are sold to Cooperative Societies.

The seeds of *Karanja* (*Pongamia Glatera*) and *Mohua* (*Bassia Latifolia*) give them oil which they sell for cash and use them for cooking food. The sago-palm (*Caryota Urens*) provides plentiful sap which is the chief solace of their life.

Similarly the spirit distilled from corollae of *Bassia Latifolia* gives them relief from anxiety and pain and supplies nutrition to their body.

Forest provides them with material to build their houses and to practise their arts. Their folk-tales speak of their relationship with the sylvan spirits and their myths and legends emphasize the deep sense of their identity with the forest.

Hunting :

Now-a-days hunting is not a regular feature of the Kandha economy. Much less importance is attached to it. There are mainly two reasons for this. Firstly, the people have taken to wet cultivation on increasing scale, and, secondly, the forest has been destroyed to a large extent and is now at a great distance from the settlement. However, the people go for hunting when they are not busy with agricultural work. The wild birds and animals which are found in the neighbouring forest are barking deer, sambar, wild buffalo, bison, spotted deer, duck, fowl and peacock. The hunting is done either individually or in a group and the hunting implements include bow and arrow and gun. The animals which are killed are eaten rather than sold.

Fishing :

Fishing is occasional pursuit. So also is hunting. Water-logged paddy fields and hill streams are the only source from which they catch fish. Fishing is largely an individual action and not a group action like hunting. Fish is caught both by hand and by trap and net. Generally the fish caught are used for their own consumption and rarely for sale.

Agriculture :

The Kandha practise four types of cultivation namely, (1) shifting cultivation on the hill-slopes and hill-tops, (2) *Dedu* cultivation on the flat hill-

tops and foot-hills (3) Dry and Low land cultivation, and (4) backyard cultivation. The techniques involved and crops grown in for the different types of lands are discussed below.

Shifting cultivation (*Sauru*):

The Kandha term for shifting cultivation is "Sauru Chasa". According to the tribe Sauru stands for hill and 'Chasa' is an Oriya word for cultivation.

The Kandha practise shifting cultivation both on the hill-slope and the hill-top. Every Kandha village has its own territory and the hills located in it belong to the village. It is on these hills that shifting cultivation is undertaken. Formerly the recuperative cycle was 15 to 20 years, but it has been reduced to 7 to 10 years.

The result of this reduced cycle has all along been diminishing return from the swiddens. The crops raised in the swiddens must have been nutritionally deficient also.

In the month of October and November the people assemble at their village meeting-place to decide which hill they would take up for cultivation. On an appointed day they all meet at the foot of the selected hill and distribute plots of land on the hill-slopes among themselves for cultivation. As long as a person is in possession of a swidden he continues to cultivate it and after his death his sons use the same swidden. If any family has no heir, the swidden cultivated by it reverts back to the village and the village elders allot it to the person who needs it. The hills which are located within the village boundary are cultivated by rotation, the period of cultivation ranging from 2 to 3 years on each hill. Lands under shifting cultivation are neither sold nor mortgaged.

Technique of Cultivation :

In the month of November the Kandha start felling trees and cutting brush woods and low thickets. This work is done by both men and women. After a month or so, the branches of the felled trees are chopped off in to a

small pieces-the hardest part the month of November the Kandha start felling trees and cutting brush woods and low thickets. This work is done by both men and women. After a month or so, the branches of the felled trees are chopped off into small pieces.. The hardest part of the forest clearing is cutting down the trunks of big trees and it is always done by men. The trees are cut down and stumps of about 2 ft. high from the ground level are left over. The young shoots which grow on the stumps are broken and throw on the ground to dry and decompose. The Kandha do not cut the fruit-bearing trees such as-Mango, Jamoo, Guava, Tamarind, Mahua and Sago-palm. Trees located in demarcation lines separating one swidden from the other are left out. Two implements, namely *Kirudi*, an axe, and *Kela*, a sickle, are used for felling trees and clearing grass and brush wood.

After the arduous work of forest- clearing is over the logs of wood and branches are left to dry. Towards the end of March fire is set to the dried-up stuffs and the ashes are spread evenly over the swidden.

The swidden is now ready for sowing. After the first shower of rain in the month of May the Kandha sow the seeds of *Kandula* (*Cajanus cajan*) and *Biri* (*Phaseolus aurgus*) by dropping them in holes dibbled in rows by means of a stick called *Meana*. After these seeds sprout they sow the seeds of *Kalha* (*panicum miliare*) by scattering them over whole area. Both men and women participate in sowing.

The weeding takes place in the month of June and July and the work is done by both men and women.

From the end of July till the end of December the crops are guarded against wild animals. A temporary field hut is built at a strategic point in the swidden where one spends the night scaring away the animals.

In the month of November and December crops are harvested in succession. The red grams and the green grams are plucked either by hand or by a knife Millets are harvested by means of sickle. The grams are beaten

with a stick and threshed in that fashion. Sometimes men and women form a ring and go round and round treading corn with their feet.

Two important rituals are performed in connection with shifting cultivation. One is *Saurupenu* and the other *Banipenu*. The former ritual is meant for worshipping the hill-God and the latter for worshipping minor deities residing at the foot of the hills. The hill-God is worshipped so that all the operations connected with shifting cultivation may be performed without any trouble and that the people may get a bumper crop, similarly the *Banipenu* is worshipped so that people may get plenty of food.

***Dahi* Cultivation :**

Dahi cultivation is another form of shifting cultivation practised by the Kandha. The land used for this purpose is known as *Nela*. The flat hill-top or the plain land located at the foot of the hill below the swiddens are selected for such cultivation. Turmeric and paddy are grown through *Dahi* cultivation. It may be mentioned here that the Kandha of Phulbani district are famous for growing turmeric in a large scale. But the production of turmeric has been considerably reduced after the Kandha were forbidden to carry on shifting or *Dahi* cultivation.

Dahi cultivation is different from shifting cultivation in many respects. In the former case the branches of trees grown on lands at a higher level are cut and left to dry. In April when the branches are sufficiently dried, they are dragged down to the *Nela* lands at the lower level. Fire is set to the leaves. When rain comes the ashes get mixed up with the soil. The *Nela* land is then ploughed with the help of a plough drawn by cattle.

When the land is ready for growing turmeric, holes are dibbled in rows and in each hole a piece of the turmeric root is planted. Turmeric takes two years to grow. The whole area under turmeric plantation is covered with leaves of *Sorea Robusta*. The leaves supply not only warmth but also manure

to the crop after they are decomposed. Turmeric is an important cash crop of the Kandha.

The Kandha have abandoned shifting cultivation in many places. There are many reasons for this. The forest staff have been very strict and vigilant and have planted permanent trees rendering the swiddens unfit for shifting cultivation. By repeated cutting and burning the forests, the nearby hills have been made bare of vegetation. Now the forests are lying at a great distance from the villages. To take up cultivation on distant hills is not possible, because most of the time is spent in walking the distance and very little time is left for real work in the hill-slope. Watching crops at night is a tough problem as no one likes to spend the night on the hill-slopes at a distance. In many cases physical barriers like river and hill streams which flow between the hill-slope and the village stand in the way of carrying on swidden tillage on distant mountains.

Non-availability of plain land near the habitat where most of the crops which are grown in the swiddens can be grown makes one disinterested in shifting cultivation. It has been pointed above that a variety of crops is grown in the swiddens. Most of these crops can also be grown in the plains. A list of the crops grown in swiddens and in the plains is given in Table-3.

TABLE-3
(Crops grown in Swidden and Plain land)

Sl. No.	Crops grown in <i>Dahi</i> and Swiddens	Crops grown in Plains
1.	<i>Dahi</i> paddy (upland paddy)	X
2.	<i>Kandula</i> (<i>Canjanus cajan</i>)	X
3.	<i>Kalaka</i> (<i>Penicium italicum</i>)	X
4.	<i>Kangu</i> (<i>Penicium Miliare</i>)	X

5.	<i>Mandia</i> (Eleusine corocana)	X
6.	<i>Janha</i> (Sorghum Vulgare)	-/
7.	<i>Koiri</i> (millet)	-/
8.	<i>Gunji</i> (millet)	-/
9.	<i>Kolatha</i> (Dolichos Biflorus)	-/
10.	<i>Maka</i> (Maize)	-/
11.	<i>Biri</i> (Green gram)	-/
12.	<i>Rasi</i> (Sesamum Indicum)	-/
13.	<i>Sorisa</i> (Mustard)	-/
14.	<i>Haladi</i> (curcuma Longa)	-/
15.	<i>Kauria</i> (Hibseus cannabinus)	-/
16.	<i>Jhudanga</i> (Pulses)	-/
	X = means not grown -/ = means "grown"	

The above list shows that the change from hoe cultivation on the hill-slope to plough cultivation in plains has not affected very much the variety of crops grown by the Kandha. The upland which was brought under *Daha* cultivation at the foot-hill has been replaced by the paddy grown through wet cultivation in the plains. It has not been possible to grow *Kandula* (*Cajanus Cajan*), *Kangu* (*Penicum Miliare*) and Ragi (*Eleusine corocana*) under conditions of wet cultivation and such kinds of cereals and pulses do not form part of food stuff of the Kandha who have given up shifting cultivation. As no data are available about the nutritive value of the crops grown in the swiddens nothing can be said about the injury made to the nutritional status for want of these food stuff in their diet.

No improved agricultural practices such as application of fertilizer and pesticide are used for growing paddy. The Kandha once applied pesticide to

their crops but they found that it did more harm than good to agriculture. The adverse effects of the use of the pesticides were that the earthworms which loosen the soil enabling luxuriant growth of plants were killed. Similarly different fishes which lived in paddy field were also killed.

The Kandha grow both the early variety and the late variety of paddy. The former type is grown in uplands and the latter type, in low lands. Transplantation of paddy plants rather than sowing seeds by scattering them is most common among the Kandha and cowdung manure is applied to the paddy fields. Transplantation takes place in the month of June and the paddy is harvested from September to November.

Ragi is grown in dry fields and no manure is applied to these lands. The lands are ploughed more than once, and the ragi seedlings are transplanted after one or two showers of rain. Transplantation takes place in the months of May and June and the crop is harvested in the months of September and October. Mustard is grown after ragi is harvested. The Kandha are aware that such rotation of crops held in maintaining fertility of the soil. The other crops grown in the uplands where ragi is grown are horse gram (*Kulthi*) and till.

However the Kandha did not feel bad about abandoning the practice of shifting cultivation because the ecological conditions prevailing in their habitat are favourable to growing most of the swidden crops in the plains. There was very little economic diversification among the Kandha when they used to practice solely shifting cultivation for their livelihood. With the stoppage of swidden cultivation the tribal economy has been diversified. Business in *Kendu* leaf, *Sal* leaf plates and cups and *Sal* seeds supplement the income from plains cultivation. Similarly sale proceeds of charcoal which they make by burning fire wood are now an important source of income. Ropes made of grass called *Samba* which is available in the forests sell well in the locality. The rope is used for making the bed of the cots. Mats prepared from the *Khajur* leaf fetch also a good income. The Kandha have also taken to



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wage-earning and with the added income from these sources they have been able to improve their economic condition to a great extent.

Plough Cultivation:

The Kandha carry on plough cultivation in low lying areas. There are two types of such lands called *Jodi Ketang* and *Dhepa Ketang*. The former type of land is at the lowest level and the latter type at the higher level in the plains. Bullock-drawn plough is used for tilling the soil and local varieties of paddy are grown in these lands.

The Kandha believe that a deity called *Sandi-Mauli* resides in the paddy fields which is worshipped before paddy is harvested. Every household performs this ritual. On an appointed day the head of the household sacrifices a fowl in one of his paddy fields where the deity is supposed to live. If the ritual is not observed it is believed that the deity would get angry and the crop will taste bitter.

Kitchen Garden

Every Kandha household has a well-maintained kitchen garden on one side of the house. Various types of vegetables such as-brinjal, chilli, pumpkin, cucumber and sweet potato are grown in the kitchen garden. Maize is also grown in the backyard extensively. If there is more space *Kandula* and *Jhudanga* are also grown with other crops.

Division of Labour

There is a well-marked sex division of labour in the Kandha society. Works like hunting tree-felling, ploughing cattle-tending, priestly activities, building of houses and thatching roofs are done by men and work of cooking, husking and collection of minor forest produce and *Sal* and *Kendu* leaves, making of leaf-planters and bowls are the monopoly of women. Generally men do heavier work and women lighter works. Both men and women co-operate and work hand in hand for all economic activities.

Annual Cycle of Work

Different activities are pursued in different months. The monthly routine of activities is presented in Table-4.

TABLE-4
(Monthly routine of activities)

Sl. No.	Month	Kandha equivalent	Works
1.	January	<i>Magha dahanju</i>	Collection of fire wood and honey, ploughing in wet and Dry land, thatching houses.
2.	February	<i>Phaguna dahanju</i>	Harvesting of turmeric, collection of honey, ploughing in the wet land.
3.	March	<i>Chaitra dahanju</i>	Collection of Mahua (<i>Basia Latefolia</i>): Setting fire to dried matter in swiddens; ploughing and manuring.
4.	April	<i>Batsakha dahanju</i>	Collection of firewood; sowing in swidden; ploughing in wet and dry lands.
5.	May	<i>Jestha dahanju</i>	Preparation of seed beds and sowing in swiddens, collection of Mango, jackfruit etc. from the forest, works in kitchen garden.
6.	June	<i>Asadha dahanju</i>	Transplantation of paddy and collection of Mushrooms.

7.	July	<i>Saban dahanju</i>	Transplantation of paddy and weeding and collection of Mushrooms.
8.	August	<i>Buda dahanju</i>	Weeding in wet and dry lands; work in kitchen garden. Harvesting of <i>Maka</i> and <i>Kuari</i> . Collection of roots and tubers.
9.	September	<i>Sin dahanju</i>	Harvesting of paddy and ragi from Dry lands, watching crops in swiddens, sowing mustard in dry lands.
10.	October	<i>Kartik dahanju</i>	Harvesting paddy from dry land; watching crops in swidden. Harvesting of green gram, Ragi, Kulthi (<i>Doli-chos Biflorus</i>) and Kalka harvesting til from dry land.
11.	November	<i>Magsir dahanju</i>	Harvesting of paddy from lowland; repairing and thatching of house, harvesting of Mustard; Collection of firewood.
12.	December	<i>Pusa dahanju</i>	Repairing of houses and fencing of kitchen garden; cutting of grass for rope making and thatching of houses.

Live Stock :

The Kandha rear such domestic animals as cow, bullock, buffalo, goat, pig and fowl. The cattle are used for ploughing. The goats, pigs and fowls are reared for sale, sacrifice to deities and food on festive occasions. The cattleshed, pig stay and fowl pen, forms a part of their domicile. A cow-herd

either belonging to their community or to a milkman or any other caste is employed by the people of a village to lead their cattle.

Every household pays two *khandis* (40 kgs) of paddy to the cattle-herder at the time of harvest and contributed something daily in the form of food for him and his family.

Land Tenure:

It is difficult, if not impossible to generalize about the use of land and the occupational pattern that prevailed among the Kandha. At one extreme there is a section of the Kandha who carry on swidden tillage including hunting and food gathering from the nearby forests. They live a hand-to-mouth existence in forests. At the other extreme there are Kandha who have fine houses and a highly developed civilization and who are settled agriculturists. They have become so acculturized and have lost so much of their culture, language and art in the process that there is little to distinguish them from the neighbouring Oriya population. In between these two polarities there is an endless variety in the occupational pattern, the economic status and the degree of cultural development. Therefore, discussion of land revenue system areawise and in retrospect appears to be important.

Kandhamal is predominantly inhabited by the Kandha. It was formerly a part of the Princely State of Boudh. Later when Angul was constituted into a district it was linked with it. In Kandhamal the general system of administration was enforced through the traditional headman of the village called, the *Malika* and the headman of a group of villages called, *Mutha Sardar*. No land revenue was assessed and this exemption from assessment of land revenue was considered purely personal to the Kandha. However, plough-tax calculated on the number of ploughs possessed by individual Kandha families was realized from them with their consent.

In the earlier dispensation the administration of Koraput district depended mainly on the administrative machinery of the Maharaja of Jeypor

Zamindari. The system of rent collection prevalent in the district was locally known as Mustajari. Groups of village called *Mutha*, were leased out by the Zamindar to individuals called *Mustajars* who collected rent from the tenants either in cash, as in the case of the Rayagada division, or in both cash and kind, as in the case of Koraput and Nowrangpur divisions.

In Kalahandi district the Kandha used to claim to be the real owners of the soil and when questioned about their rights the answer invariably given by them was that they were the real proprietor of the soil. The wilder section of the Kandha did not pay any regular land revenue. But they paid and still pay a nominal fee for the area under shifting cultivation.

In the Agency tracts of Ghumsur-Udayagiri Taluk and Agency portions of Suruda the Kandha who lived above ghats held land free of rent. Similarly, in Balliguda and Rangiri-Udayagiri Taluk and a portion of Parlakhemundi Agency, land was held by the Kandha free of rent. However, this area was split up into several *Muthas* and each *Mutha* was in charge of a *Mutha-head*, *Patra* who owned land on service tenure for services like execution of Agency civil works and maintenance of law and order. The Kandha living in *Rayatwari* tract enjoyed all privileges which any *Rayat*, regardless of caste and tribe enjoys in relation to land, payment of rent and sale and mortgage of land.

Abolition of intermediary interests came into effect between 1952 and 1962. The result that followed was that the *Muthadars* and *Mustajars* and other categories of intermediaries like *Zamindars* and Chiefs lost all superordinate hold on the peasantry of their *Muthas*, Estates, States etc. and became such ordinary citizens as others are in the country. Such land reforms have not altered the relationship of the Kandha to lands under shifting cultivation which continue to be the common property of the village community and no rent is paid to anyone for such lands, except in Kalahandi district where a nominal fee is paid on area basis by the Kandha to the Government.

Lands on a hill slope are distributed among the villagers in a common village meeting, and as long as a Kandha cultivates his share of lands on the hill-slope, his possession over such lands remains undisturbed. Lands which are not cultivated are reverted to the village. Lands which are under cultivation and possession of a family are handed down from father to son and are rarely mortgaged because except the Kandha none else are skilled in slash-and-burn type of cultivation.

The Kandha of the plains having permanent plots of cultivated land come under the *Ryotwari* land tenure system. Such lands have been covered under land survey and settlement, and *Patta* has been issued in favour of the owners in respect of their lands. The Revenue Inspectors in charge of different circles collect land-revenue and cess from the land owners as per the assessment determined for each category of land survey and settlement.

Sons of a Kutia Kandha do not claim for partition of land or for a share in any other property of the family until they are married. Generally partition takes place among the co-sharers after the death of their father. Property is divided in equal shares among the sons. In some cases the eldest son gets a little more than what his younger brothers get. It is the responsibility of the eldest son to arrange the marriage of the unmarried daughters and all the sons contribute to the expenses of the marriage of their sisters. Among the Kandha polygamy is prevalent, and the sons of all the wives have equal right to their parental property.

When a man dies without a male issue, his land passes to his nearest male relations and is divided equally among them. They must support the widow and the daughters, if any, and get the latter married when they grow up. Women in Kandha society cannot hold land. But they can claim only maintenance. Daughters who are supposed to get married and leave the family, are debarred from acquiring any right to the ancestral property. It has been pointed out earlier that with regard to the ownership of land the joint

community system prevails amongst the hill Kandha. The people of each village, on a larger scale, and those of a *Mutha* own them jointly. Individual possession is not recognized and, in exceptional cases, it is permitted by the community for the sake of convenience. Outsiders cannot acquire land in a *Mutha*, let alone a village within the *Mutha*, to the exclusion of a members of the sept. Each *Mutha* is generally composed of a single sept, and therefore, acquisition of land in the *Mutha*, therefore, amounts to an admission of only consanguinal members to exclusion of alien people.

An outsider who is not related by blood to the people of the *Mutha* is looked upon as an interloper, and, in no case, he is allowed to acquire any permanent right of occupancy in their holdings. Wherever anyone has leased out a portion of his land to an outsider or to a poorer relative on the basis of share cropping can eject him whenever he likes. In such cases the leaseholder or the under-tenant is not permitted to perform the rite of sacrifice to the earth-goddess residing in the holdings and participate in the annual worship of the earth-goddess (*Dharani puja*) in the village.

Clan homogeneity of *Muthas* is not now strictly kept up in the region inhabited by the Kandha. Various factors have contributed to the heterogeneity of the clan composition of the *Muthas*. Growth of population and scarcity of land for cultivation have been largely responsible for mixed clan composition of the Kandha *Muthas*. In some cases a son-in-law is allowed to stay in the house of his father-in-law if the latter has no son. He looks after the ancestral property and after the death of his father-in-law, acquires the right to it. In other cases persons settle down in *Muthas* other than their own on acquiring by purchase the land of a family having no legal heir to inherit it. This happens in the cases of the servants of the *Sardars*. Some of the domestic servants of the *Sardars* may not be necessarily inhabitants of their masters *Muthas*. If any one of them, particularly the older ones among them, wants to settle down in the village of his *Sardar* whom he serves the latter finds out land in his *Mutha* for him and helps him to acquire such lands and builds a residential house in his village.

In spite of heterogeneity in the clan composition of a *Mutha* a distinction is always noticed between the outsiders who are called, *Koda Tana* and the original settlers who are known as *Jombo Tana*. The Kandha may not have any objection to such acquisition of land by an outsider of their village. But they accept him with much regret and think that he has, as though, taken away their wives and held them in his possession. The verbatim remark of a Kandha upon the acquisition of land by an outsider in his village runs as "*Nam Kudani pati Dihindi pati*". It means that the outsider who lives in his village has, as if, his wife in his keeping. A person of *Koda Tana* category may contribute either in cash or in kind to the worship of *Dharani Penu* (Earth Goddess) but is forbidden to take part in the worship. Whenever any marriage takes place in the family of a *Koda Tana*, that is, an outsider, persons of *jombo tana* category, that is the original settlers of the village, do not make any contributions either in cash or in kind to the expenses of the marriage. Whenever any one dies in a Kandha village, not only the family of the deceased is considered to have been ritually polluted but also the whole village is regarded to have been contaminated by it. But the outsiders residing in the villages are not affected by such pollution, and therefore they do not observe any ceremony of purification as the other inhabitants of the village do.

In brief, the Kandha used to hold land directly under the Government and claim permanent right on the soil. They did not own any landlord until the *Mustajari* or *Muhari* system was introduced. Even after these intermediaries came into power the Kandha continued to hold that they were the landlords. The villages where the Kandha resided were grouped into several *Muthas*, and each *Mutha* was strictly homogenous in clan composition. In earlier days there was more land in relation to population and the Kandha were in possession of extensive holdings.

When someone had difficulties in utilizing all his land for growing crops the profitable course open to him was to lease out the same land to some of his relatives on the basis of produce rent which varied from one third to half of the yield.

With the passage of time the region inhabited by Kandha opened up by degrees and many outsiders infiltrated into it as military adventurers, agents of local chiefs and of Government, and domestic servants of the *Mutha* heads. Later on liquor vendors, brokers peddlers and money lenders found their way into these hill fastnesses for the purpose of carrying on business. Every class of intruders tried to grab land from the Kandha by some means or other and exploited them beyond measure. Particularly the Oriya *Sundis*, who rendered the Kandha poorer by pandering to their taste for liquor, were the exploiters of the worst type. They made the Kandha alienate their lands into their possession. When the matter went from bad to worse the Government passed the Agency Tracts Interest and Land Transfer Act 1 of 1917 prohibiting all transfers from the tribals to the non-tribals without express permission of the Authorities. Subsequently the protective legislation was amended several times to plug the loopholes in the laws. But the resulting benefits are only nominal and that the tribal lands have been continually passing into the possession of the non-tribals. The important reasons why the protective machinery of the State has been ineffective are the several ways by which protective legislation is circumvented, and due to the ignorance and illiteracy of the tribals are exploited by the land grabbers who are superior to them in monetary, legal and technical transactions.

Nutrition:

Nutrition as a biological process is more fundamental than sex. Of all the needs food is the most important and recurrent want in the life of the individual organism. All activities in tribal and non-tribal societies pivot round the problems of getting food. Nutrition is dependent for its fulfillment on food seeking activities which are governed by the ecological factors and environmental conditions. Man's adjustment to a habit through his various food-getting activities, particularly in a tribal community, is a strong disincentive to leaving his own habitat. This explains why certain tribes show considerable doggedness in sticking to their native places in spite of limitations set by the terrain for better production of foodstuff.

of Sankeraï and Sundijuba drink the juice from sago-palm and other palm trees whereas those of Tumkur have given up drinking under the influence of Christianity. The nutritional loss caused by abstinence from alcoholic drinks in Tumkur village has not been compensated by taking any other nutritive substitute. One of the significant findings of the study is that no protein-yielding crop is grown in the plain lands and terraced fields. But the millets and pulses which are grown in shifting cultivation are protein-rich. It is important to note that any plan which discourages shifting cultivation without providing alternative sources of vegetable protein will deteriorate the protein deficiency further and consequently do more harm than good to the shifting cultivators.

CHAPTER - III

Social Organization

Family and Kinship Pattern:

Family is the smallest social unit. All tribal communities as a rule live in simple or nuclear families. The Kandha is not an exception to it. A nuclear family comprises parents and their unmarried children. The joint family which consists of old parents and their married sons is very rare in the Kandha community. It is the practice among the Kandha that as soon as a boy gets married he builds a house of his own and lives separately from his parents. The reason for this is that a Kandha house is small and there is no space for more than one couple to live in such a small house. A Kandha cannot afford to build a big house for financial reasons. Moreover, there are ecological constraints. In a hilly terrain and on a sloping topography big houses are out of the question.

The next bigger unit is lineage which comprises a number of remembered blood-related families. Members of a lineage live together in different hamlets of village or in a group of villages. Many consanguine families constitute together an exogamous division called, *Klambu*, the members of which claim descent from a common ancestor and occupy a distinct territory called *Mutha*, *Klambu* may correspond to a clan or sept while *Mutha* to a clan-territory. A clan group goes by the name of the territory. A clan-territory is heterogeneous in ethnic composition with the Kandha of a particular clan forming the core community and the warrior and the washerman and the Brahman and the other non-tribal people forming fringe communities. According to the views of some Kandha these non-tribal castes were in their home land on sufferance. The other view was that they were there on invitation to lead them in war and act as interpreter in their dealings with the British Officers.

The largest unit is the Kandha tribe which is rather a de jure entity. Based on different levels of development the Kandha have been divided into several sub-tribes. The most backward section which lives in relatively more inaccessible and unhealthy hilly areas and carries on incipient agriculture with hunting and food-gathering as primary source of livelihood is known as Kutia Kandha. The most advanced section which lives in the low lands and fertile valleys and practices primarily wet cultivation is known as Desia Kandha. In between these two polarities there are various other sections which go by such names as Jharia Kandha and Dongria Kandha. These intermediate groups are neither as badly off and indigent as the Kutia Kandha nor are they as well off and prosperous as the Desia Kandha.

There is all the difference in the world between a Kutia Kandha leading a hand-to-mouth existence in the forest and speaking Kui language and a Desia Kandha having irrigated and fertile paddy fields and speaking Oriya language. Other differences lie in the subtle aspects of belief and value system. The more primitive sections follow their traditional religion, practise tattooing and perform buffalo sacrifice during *Kedu* festival. But the more advanced sections have been either Hinduized or Christianized. There is a great variety in economic status and degree of cultural development. These differences and physical separation have made them different from one another. As a result each sub-tribe has been a cultural isolate and an endogamous group.

Kinship:

Kinship is defined as relationship which is determined, and can be described, by means of genealogies. According to this definition, Kinship differs from relationship set up by membership of the clan. The kins of a man are all his known relatives, both on the father's and the mother's side, who belong to two different clans. In this way the Kinship relationship is wider than the relationship set up by common membership of the clan which is unilateral. On the other hand, members of the clan to whom one cannot trace relationship would only be clan not kin.



A DESIA KANDHA OLD LADY

There are mainly two modes of denoting relationship; the classificatory system and the descriptive system. The system of relationship in which a group of relatives is addressed by a single term is called, classificatory system. In this case relatives are grouped in classes. This is not so in the case of the descriptive system. It is a system of relationship in which a relative is addressed by a kinship term which is not used to address any other relative. In the case of descriptive system relatives are not grouped into classes, they are distinguished from one another by separate terms of address. A few selected terms of address are given in Tale-10 to discuss the kinship system among the Kandha.

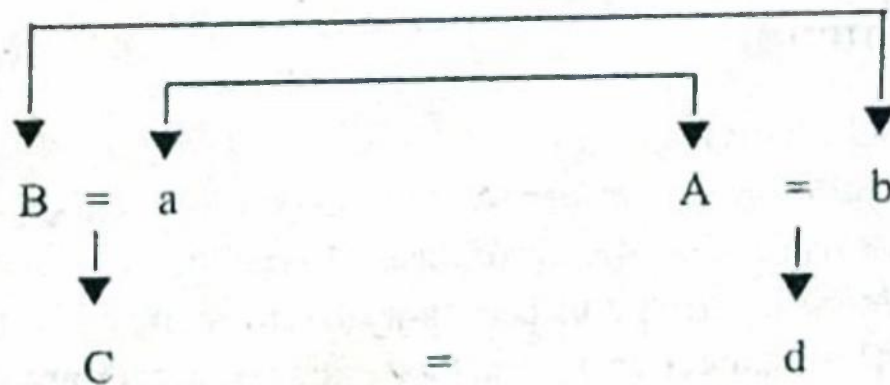
TABLE-10
Kinship Terms

Sl.No	Relative	Kandha Terms of Address		
		Kutia	Dongria	Desia
1.	Father <i>Aba</i>	<i>Abale</i>	<i>Bapa</i>	
2.	Mother <i>Ajja</i>	<i>Ayale</i>	<i>Ma</i>	
3.	Father's Father	<i>Aku</i>	<i>Tadile</i>	<i>Aja</i>
4.	Father's Mother	<i>Aji</i>	<i>Adile</i>	<i>At</i>
5.	Father's Sister	<i>Amna</i>	<i>Ammle</i>	<i>Ata</i>
6.	Father's Brother (elder) (Younger)	<i>Pesuba</i> <i>Manale</i>	<i>Kaku</i> <i>Badu</i>	- <i>Daddi</i>
7.	Elder Sister	<i>Nana</i>	<i>Nanale</i>	<i>Nani</i>
8.	Younger Sister	<i>Api</i>	<i>Baile</i>	-
9.	Elder Brother	<i>Taja</i>	<i>Tadale</i>	<i>Bhai</i>
10.	Younger Brother	<i>Apu</i>	<i>Buddale</i>	-
11.	Mother's Brother	<i>Mamma</i>	<i>Mamma</i>	<i>Mamtu</i>

12.	Mother's Sister		<i>Makaki</i>	<i>Mausi</i>
13.	Elder Brother's Wife	<i>Abya</i>	<i>Awale</i>	<i>Bau</i>
14.	Younger Brother's wife	<i>Kudya</i>	<i>Baile</i>	-
15.	Mother's Father	<i>Aku</i>	<i>Adile</i>	-
16.	Mother's Mother	<i>Aki</i>	<i>Adile</i>	-
17.	Father's Sister's Husband	<i>Mama</i>	<i>Mamale</i>	<i>Mamu</i>
18.	Father's elder Brother's Wife	<i>Per</i>	<i>Makugaya</i>	<i>Baddi</i>
19.	Father's younger Brother's Wife	<i>Kaki</i>	<i>Maikunaya</i>	<i>Kaki</i>
20.	Elder Sister's Husband	<i>Michu</i>	<i>Tadala</i>	-
21.	Younger Sister's Husband	<i>Jaway</i>	<i>Buddale</i>	-
22.	Mother's Brother's wife	<i>Anma</i>	<i>Anmale</i>	-
23.	Brother's Son	<i>Bhanja</i>	<i>Buddale</i>	<i>Patra</i>
24.	Brother's Dugther	<i>Bhanji</i>	<i>Baile</i>	<i>Jhiari</i>
25.	Sister's Son	<i>Apo</i>	<i>Buddalè</i>	-
26.	Sister's Daugter	<i>Api</i>	<i>Baile</i>	-

A glance at the Kinship nomenclature shows that while some relatives are classed together and given a single kinship term other relatives are each denoted with a distinct kinship term. Both classificatory and descriptive system of relationship are met with in the Kandha society. For example, *Mamma* is applied to a man's mother's brother, the husband of his father's sister and father-in-law while his father's sister, his mother's brother's wife and mother-in-law are grouped together by denoting them with a single term *Anma*. The custom of classifying the relatives by marriage with near kin at once suggests marriage of a certain kind which makes the mother's brother and father's

sister's husband and father-in-law one and the same person. The same kind of marriage is also responsible for classifying the father's sister with the mother's father's wife and mother-in-law.



In the above diagram capital letters stand for men, small letters for women. Suppose C marries d. In this case it is evident that A, the mother's brother, or father's sister's husband becomes C's father-in-law, while b, the wife of the mother's brother or father's sister becomes mother-in-law. It shows that the study of kinship terminology can throw light on different forms of marriage prevalent in a society. Elaborate analysis of a larger set of classificatory kinship terms will give a full picture of both the past and present organization of the society in question.

Inter-Community Relationship:

In no village of the Kandha there is cent percent homogeneity. Besides one or more clusters of hamlets of the Kandha there may be clusters of hamlets in which the Oriyas and the Panos reside. The main castes of the villages of the Kandha are the Brahman, the Oriya, the Gouda (milkman), the Barika (Barber), the Kamara (Black-smith), the Dhoba (Washerman), the Sundis (liquor vendor), the Siala (toddy tapper), the Pano (Scheduled Caste), and the Ghasi (Scheduled Caste). Most of these castes provide

some service or other to the Kandha and receive payments in kind during harvest every year. The relationship which exists between the Kandha and the service-castes corresponds to a patron-client relationship in many ways. The nature of services offered and payments made are mentioned below.

The Brahman:

The Brahmans bearing surnames of '*Panda*' '*Sahu*' and '*Nanda*' are found in Kandha clan territories. A Brahman serves a Kandha at the time of marriage for tying up the hands of the bride and the groom ritually, and he performs *Homa*, a purificatory ceremony to remove death pollution. During harvest the Brahmans collect some food grains from each and every Kandha household.

The Oriya:

The Oriyas bear surnames such as- '*Bhakta*' and '*Bissoi*'. The Oriya musicians participate in Kandha marriages not as a rule but on personal requests and out of fellow feeling. The Kandha live in the house of the Oriyas but the reverse is not true.

The Gauda:

One section of the Gauda caste is known as '*Padhan*' and '*Naga*' which terms are their surnames, the other section is known as '*Tela*' and '*Bagarti*' which are their surnames. The former section occupies a higher position in social status than the latter section, and therefore, the superior group does not accept cooked food from the inferior group. But the Kandha eat in the houses of all sections of milkmen.

The occupation of the gaudas is tending of cattle. A Gauda is paid in paddy at the rate of one '*Khandi*' per head of cattle annually during harvest. Besides, he collects some food called '*Gundi*' from each house daily.

The Kandha Gauda:

The Kandha Gaudas stand separate from their Oriya counterparts and the two communities, in spite of similarity in name and occupation do not intermarry and inter-dine. The Kandha Gauda are inferior to the Oriya Gauda. People of the high Oriya castes accept water from an Oriya Gauda but not from a Kandha Gauda. The latter accepts not only water but also cooked food from an Oriya Gauda but this is not reciprocated. The Kandha accept water and cooked food from both the Oriya and the Kandha Gauda

The Kamars:

There are two sections among the Kamar. The superior section bears the surname '*Guru*' and the inferior section is called '*Lohar*'. Both the sections are black-smith, and despite their similarity in occupation they do not intermarry. A Lohara accepts cooked food from a Kandha but this is not true in the case of a Guru Kamar. Similarly a Lohara accepts food from Guru Kamar but this is not reciprocated. From the information gathered about these two types of smiths, it is known that the Kamars represent the Oriya smiths and the Loharas their Kandha counterparts. However, both the sections provide their services to the Kandha, but the Kandha smiths do so regularly, and the Oriya smiths rarely.

A Lohara receives 10 '*tambis*' of paddy per plough annually from each Kandha household to supply a plough share and sharpens all types of agricultural implements.

The Dhoba:

The washermen are distinguished from other castes by their occupation of washing clothes and by their surnames such as- '*Setti*' and '*Behera*'. Though washermen serve the Kandha at the time of purificatory ceremonies they are not dependent upon the latter for their living through any '*Jujmani*'

service. A Dhoba receives payment in cash for his service rendered to a Kandha but he does not accept any food from the latter.

The Sundi:

There are two groups of the Sundi community, Mata Sundi and Cherua Sundi. Though both the sections bear the same surnames such as – ‘*Padhan*’ and ‘*Sahu*’ they neither intermarry nor interdine. The Sundis are primarily liquor vendors and many of them carry on business in grocery and forest produce. There is no *Jujmani* relationship between the Kandha and the Sundi. The main work of the Sundis is to prepare liquor and sell it to the Kandha. Alcoholic drink is a great favourite of the Kandha. The local “Sundis have reduced the Kandha to indigence and poverty by pandering to their taste for liquor. One of the factors which favours land alienation and indebtedness is the habit of drinking. Most of the lands belonging to the Kandha have passed into the hands of the Sundis.

CHAPTER - IV

Life Cycle

Birth:

It is the belief among the Kandha that a person passes through five stages in his life-infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood and old age. A pregnant woman does not sit idle at home. She does her work as usual. As soon as labour pain starts she comes to the main room of her house and delivers the child without any assistance from anybody. However, her husband has to stay in the room as she may need his help. It is the duty of the father to cut the umbilical cord of the child. If it is a male child his cord is cut with an arrow head. If it is a female child then a knife is used for the purpose. The dirty matters including the placenta are buried in a safe place in the kitchen garden. Among the Kandha birth pollution is observed for 11 days. All the lineage members including the members of the family in question have to undergo ritual purification which takes place two times- once on the 12th day and the other after a month from the date of birth of the child.

On the 12th day the villagers assemble at the door of the family. The mother comes out of her house with the baby and an earthen pot full of water over her head. There must be a bow and arrow on the pot or some bamboo to signify the sex of the child. The mother goes straight to the nearby stream, takes bath and comes back home. From this day the birth pollution is partially gone.

When a month is completed the full purificatory rites are observed. On this occasion the lineage members and also the relatives by marriage take part in the ritual. A feast is prepared and the assembled relatives and kin members are offered food and drink.

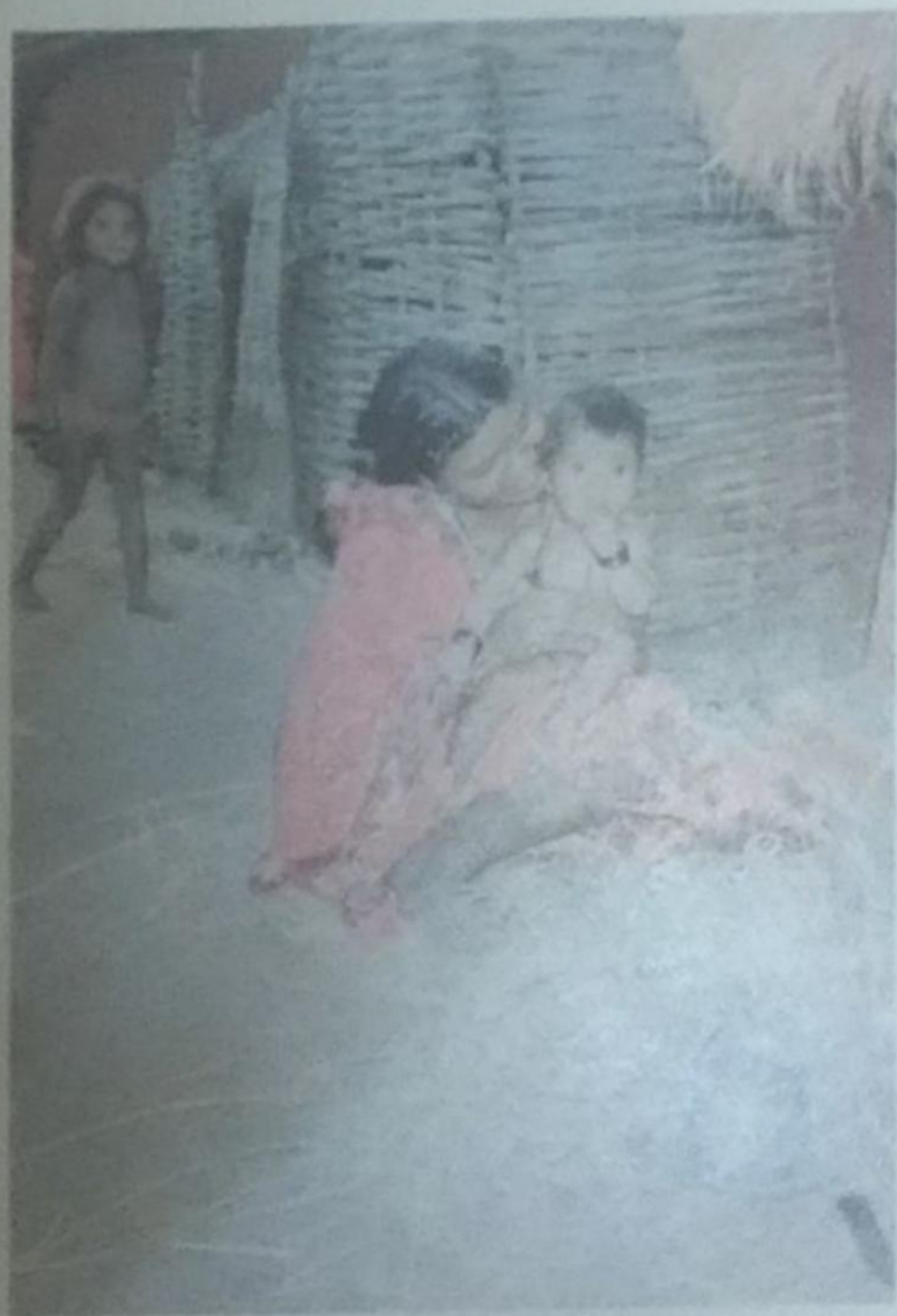
Marriage:

Marriage is one of the important social functions among the Kandha. Adult marriage is practised among them. A boy marries when he is between 21 and 25 years of age. But a girl marries at a low age which varies from 15 to 18 years. According to the rules of exogamy a man cannot marry within his clan or *Mutha*. Monogamy is rather the rule than the exception. But polygyny is prevalent in case the first wife does not bear any child. Some preferential types of marriage such as-sororate, widow-marriage and cross-cousin marriage are prevalent in the Kandha society. Besides, love marriage, marriage by force and marriage by exchange also take place among the Kandha. But arranged marriage is by far the best and most of the marriages are of this type.

Payment of bride-price is prevalent and the amount of the bride-price is settled through a go-between. Bride-price is paid either in cash or in kind or both. After negotiation is settled and the bride-price paid, the would be bride-groom visits his would-be-father-in-law's house and participates in the agricultural field work along with the members of the family of her father-in-law. The idea of taking part in field work is to show that he is capable of doing hard work and maintaining his family. Thereafter a day is fixed on which the marriage takes place and the newly married couple take up a house of their own separately. Divorce is allowed in the Kandha society. Both husband and wife are at liberty to divorce each other. Divorced persons are also allowed to remarry.

Death:

The Kandha believe that death is a natural phenomenon and beyond one's control. As soon as a person dies, the members of the family start crying and the dead body is kept in the north-south direction with the head towards north.



A DESIA KANDHA LADY WITH HER KID

On hearing the news the lineage members assemble at the door of the house of the deceased and take out the corpse to the cremation ground. A new cloth is wrapped over the corpse and the ornaments used by the person are not removed. The corpse is set over the pyre and the fire is set to it.

Persons who die of small-pox, chicken-pox and cholera are buried in an isolated place. It is the duty of the Ghasi who is attached to the family of the deceased to supply firewood and collect ornaments from the ashes and take them for his own use. After the cremation is over the lineage members take bath and return home. The family of the deceased and the lineage members observe death pollution for 11 days. On the 12th day the members of the family of the deceased and their lineage members undergo ritual purification which comprises cleaning of houses, clothes and all other materials used by them. They also shave their hair and moustache and beard and cut their nails. A feast is arranged on this occasion at the house of the deceased and all the assembled guests and relatives take part in the feast which marks the end of the ceremony.

CHAPTER-V

Territorial and Political Organisation

Territorial Organisation:

The smallest territorial unit is the hamlet. A village may comprise, on an average, three to four hamlets. Some villages do not have any hamlets. The largest territorial unit is called *Mutha* which, like the village is an administrative unit, formerly in charge of a hereditary official, the *Sardar* and his assistants, the *Paiks*. A *Mutha* may consist of 10 to 12 villages on the average. Each *Mutha* has a name and a distinct boundary. It is in existence since time beyond memory and the Government since British rule has recognized this unit for administrative purposes.

A *Mutha* can be used in several contexts. It is an administrative unit composed of the Kandha and people of different Oriya communities and Scheduled Castes. Of all the communities the Kandha are in great majority. They have either their own village or hamlets exclusive to themselves or they live along with the Oriyas and the Scheduled Castes in other villages in a *Mutha*. The name of the *Mutha* coincides with that of the clan to which the Kandha inhabitants belong. The term *Klambu* is the *Kul* equivalent of clan and it is to this *Klambu* and not to the Oriyas and other castes that the soil of the entire *Mutha* belongs.

The composition of a particular *Mutha* is given below for the sake of illustration. The *Piranga* is one of the 50 *Muthas* located in Kandhamals. The *Piranga Mutha* comprises the following settlements.

Sl.No.	Settlements	Composition
1	Taragabali	The Kandha
2.	Majhi para	The Kandha and the Oriya
3.	Nedi sahi	The Kandha and the Milkmen
4.	Madhurga	The Kandha and the Oriya
5.	Kasnipada	The Kandha the Oriya and the Pano
6.	Ladepanga Burunginali	The Kandha
7.	Glaisnga	The Kandha
8.	Chhitakapataki	The Kandha
9.	Kambapada	The Kandha
10	Uparpada	The Kandha and the Pano
11.	Oriya Sahi	The Oriya

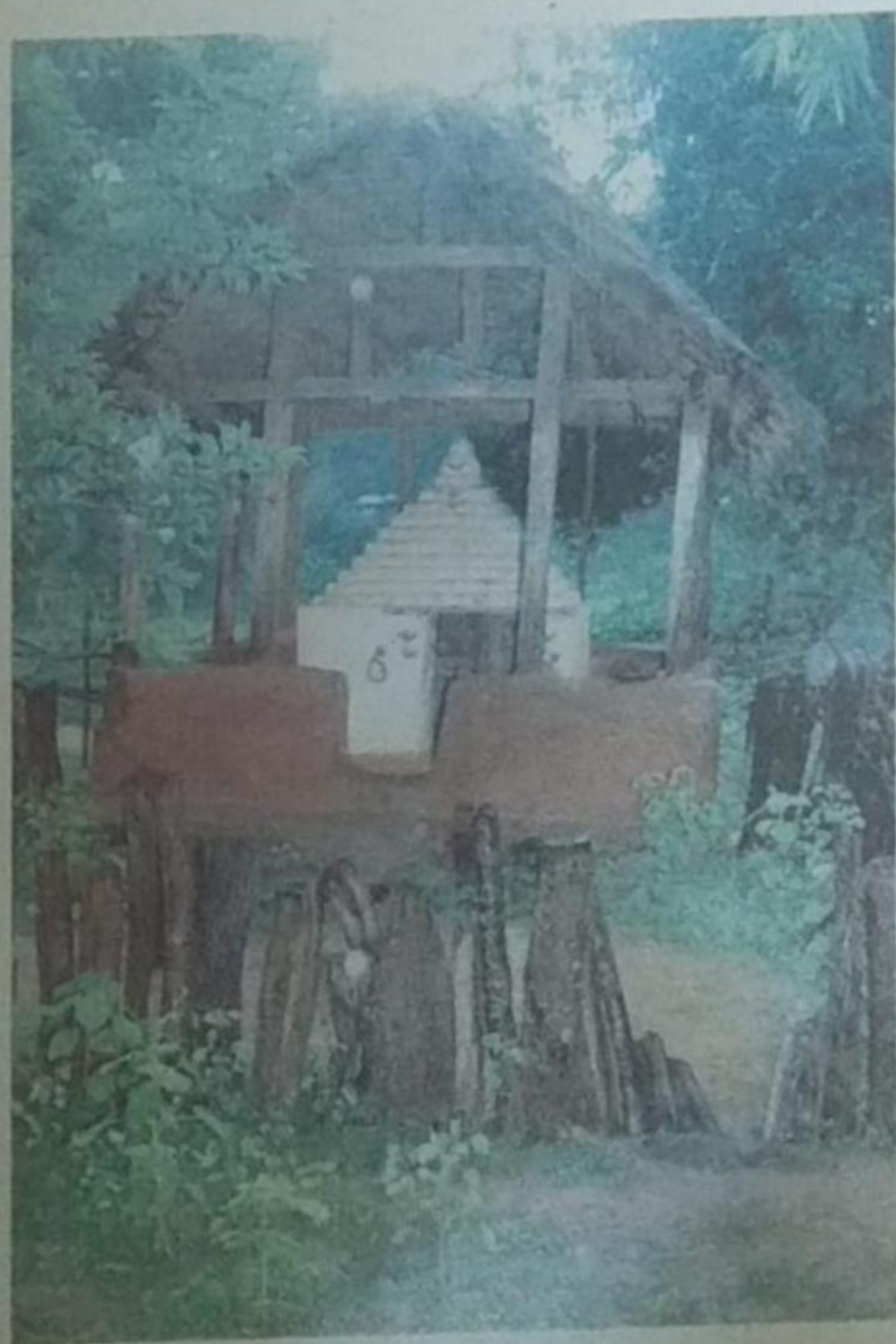
The story is that there were two brothers *Pagu*, the elder brother and *Pira*, the young brother. *Pagu* settled down in a *Mutha* called *Jurapanga* while *Pira* in *Piranga Mutha*. The latter stayed first in a place called *Gambergada* and later shifted to *Uparpada*. From this place his descendents spread to different settlements of *Piranga Mutha*.

It may be observed that *Piranga Mutha* includes not only the Kandha but also the Scheduled Castes and the Oriyas. The land of *Piranga Mutha* belongs to none except the Kandha of the *Mutha* who are exogamous. In other words, *Piranga Mutha* works as an *exogamous* clan for the Kandha who are related to one another by consanguinity. In the sense of heterogeneity of composition of the Kandha the Pano and the Oriya who are not united by any bonds of kinship the *Piranga Mutha* stands for an administrative division. But in the sense of exogamy among the Kandha who have descended from

a common ancestor, that is *Pira* and therefore, related to one another by blood, the *Piranga Mutha* stands as a clan for its Kandha inhabitants, in short, *Piranga* means not only a clan when referred to as a social organization of the Kandha out also a clan territory when referred to as a geographical and administrative division.

It has been pointed out earlier that formerly no Kandha of any other clan-territory was allowed to settle down in *Piranga Mutha* (In the test both *Mutha* and clan territory are used interchangeably in geographical sense). But now-a-days the homogeneity of the clan territory has been breaking down and people of other *Muthas* are found living in *Piranga Mutha*. The same heterogeneity is also noticed in other clan-territories. It has already been mentioned that these alien elements are not recognized as owner of the land of the *Piranga* clan and, therefore, no right to worship of *Dharani* (Earth-Goddess). Similarly any type of ritual pollution of the original Kandha (*Jambo Tana*) does not affect the alien Kandha (*Koda-Tana*) and vice-versa.

Following the social customs of the Kandha the non-tribal communities such as- the Panos and the Oriyas, avoid marriage within the *Mutha*. Any incestuous offence committed by a member of any community-tribal or non-tribal residing in a *Mutha* pollutes the whole *Mutha* and endangers the life and property of all people of the *Mutha*. The remedial measures taken in such cases are excommunication or expulsion of the offenders from the *Mutha* and ritual purification and worship of Goddess *Dharani*. As long as the offenders who commit incestuous union are in the *Mutha* they spell danger to the whole *Mutha*. Once they leave the *Mutha* and stay elsewhere the evil effects of the incest fails to influence it. Mention may be made of the relationship between *Piranga Mutha* founded by the younger brother and *Jurapangia Mutha* founded by the elder brother. No marriage takes place between the Kandha of *Piranga* clan and *Jurapangia* clan. But the ritual pollution in one of the agnatic clans does not effect the other so seriously



DESIA KANDHA VILLAGE DEITY

because it defiles them exclusively. One of the purificatory items observed by the Kandha when polluted ritually is to throw away all old earthen wares used at home and replace them with new ones. This custom which is called *Tenginga Mraspa* is observed by all among the Kandha of the *Mutha* where pollution occurs, but it is not observed by their agnates living in a distant *Mutha*. However, in the case of death pollution all agnates from far and near gather at the house of the deceased and take part in the non-vegetarian food cooked on this occasion for the assembled relatives.

From locational point of view there exists among the Kandha two kinds of clanship. One may be called as the localized clan existing within a larger group of heterogeneous composition such as- the Kandha the Oriya and the Pano in a clan-territory. The other may be called blood-linked clan dispersed in two or more than two clan-territories. A localized clan enjoys exclusive ownership of the land of its *Mutha*, worships its own Earth-Goddess and is affected directly by any incestuous offence committed by any one of its *Mutha*. It also makes a political unit and fulfils jointly with others of the *Mutha* all obligations concerning administrative matters. A related branch of its clan resident living in another *Mutha* has nothing to do with any of the matters mentioned above. It is sought to participate only on social occasions and marriage with one of its members is forbidden.

Political organization:

Every *Mutha* had a *Sardar*, generally known as the *Mutha Sardar*. He was of the Kandha tribe and his post was hereditary. He was responsible for maintaining peace in his *Mutha*. He used to engage porters to carry the luggage of the officers during their tour from village to village. He was personally responsible to Government for plough contribution from each *ryot*. He used to collect some amount at a fixed *ryot* from the *ryots* towards his perquisite. He also received other perquisites on the occasion of widow's marriage or on the death of a man without heirs.

The village police:

There was a police or chowkidar in each *Mutha*. His job was to watch the *Mutha* and keep the criminal activities under check. He used to engage labourers for the construction of roads which were allotted to him by the Government for execution. For the payment of the village police a collection of paddy, calculated on the extent of each Man's cultivation was made annually and paid to him by the *Mutha Sardar*. The post of village police was hereditary.

The *Deheri* and the *Jakeri*:

The two other important persons holding religious offices at the *Mutha* level were the *Deheri* and the *Jakeri*. The *Deheri* was entrusted with the work of worshipping the Hill-Gods and the *Jakeri* was in charge of worshipping the Earth-Goddess. These two religious heads now continue to offer their services and perform the rituals without any attention to their sacred functions. The posts of the *Deheri* and the *Jakeri* are not necessarily hereditary. Any man of their family having knowledge of the rituals of worship is chosen to act as the religious head.

The *Sardar* of *Mutha* Confederacy:

A group of six or more *Muthas* formed a bigger territorial unit and there was a head *Sardar* in charge of the administrative unit. For example, the *Muthas* such as- *Firingia*, *Jurapangia*, *Baddingia*, *Saitingia*, *Gupnigia*, and *Bhaburgaon* formed an administrative unit and there was a head *Sardar* in charge of this confederacy. The head *Sardar* of a group of *Muthas* was mostly of the non-tribal Oriya caste, but in some *Muthas* dignitaries were of the Kandha tribe. The responsibilities of the head *Sardar* was to maintain law and order in this area; collect revenue or plough contribution from different *Muthas*, engage labourers in public works such as-construction of roads and buildings and repairing of Bunglows, schools, etc. and cases of adjudication were referred to him by his subordinate *Mutha Sardar*. The business of the Siali is to tap the juice from palm trees and sale toddy. A Siali

pays Rs.5/- per tree to the tree owner and is a license holder for carrying on business in toddy. The Panos are untouchables. There are two classes of Panos- the Kandha Pano and the Oriya Pano. In the past these two sections were each endogamous and did not dine with one another but they are now in marital relationship with one another. They bear surnames such as-*Digal Naik, Mahananda* and *Dehera*. The Kandha Pano eats beef and removes carcass from the village and throw it away. He acts as a go between for the Kandha in marriage ceremony and serves as a messenger. In the past the Kandha used to utilize the services of the Kandha Pano for cremating the dead bodies. But it is no longer in vogue.

The Pano is inextricably interlinked with the life of the Kandha. According to the traditions of the area the Panos were brought from outside to the Kandha hills to serve many needs. As indicated above they serve as scavengers. They remove carcass from the village and play on pipes and drums for music at the time of marriage. They serve as a plough-servants and casual labourers in the farm of the Kandha.

All Panos in the land of the Kandha are much ahead of their Kandha masters in all respects and exploit them in many ways. They have always been their middlemen. They visit markets in the plains and acquire cattle at cheap rate and sell them to the Kandha at a high price. The Panos have a monopoly of cattle in the land of the Kandha. They also supply jewellery and ornaments to the Kandha at a high cost. At harvest time they are in the habit of wheedling some amount of paddy from the threshing floor of the Kandha. At every festival they visit every Kandha house and ask for food. They are so shrewd and cunning that they flatter the Kandha as their Raja and give them opportunity to demonstrate superior status. This sort of attitude is assumed for no other purpose than exploitation.

The Panos do not stand on their own right. They live as parasites and thrive at the cost of the Kandha. They make capital of the ignorance and superstition of the Kandha. They act as brokers, peddlers and sycophants to cheat them.



A DESIA KANDHA MALE

have water from the hands of weavers, washermen and distillers whom they consider untouchables. The Kandha themselves are not untouchables. The clean castes freely go into their houses, and come in physical contact with the Kandha without any ritual pollution. From the untouchables the Kandha always expect such behaviour as is due to a superior caste from an inferior caste. As regards the relationship between the clean caste Oriyas and the Kandha the former do not accept food and water from the Kandha still then the latter do not make any attempt to assert their superiority by refusing to have food and drink from the people of the higher castes.

In the earlier dispensation the Kandha were dominant in all respects. But things have changed now, and the Kandha no longer enjoy any dominant status. In the by-gone days the Kandha were the original settlers of the territory which they now inhabit. Kandhamals, the northern promontory of the Eastern Ghats, has been the stronghold of the Kandha. It was surrounded on almost all sides by a number of Oriya Kingdoms which were classified until 1948 as the feudatory or tributary states of Orissa. These Kingdoms and the smaller Chiefdoms which were located within them were at constant war with one another for expanding their kingdoms and subduing the weaker one's among them. There was continuous struggle to rearrange the ladder of kinship and chiefship and dependency.

In the process of colonization and struggle for power many Oriyas infiltrated into the frontier areas which were occupied by the Kandha. But in spite of their numerical preponderance the Kandha came under the rule by the alien Oriyas. At present the Kandha occupy fewer positions of power and responsibility in commerce and in the administration than the Oriyas. The fertile valleys are now under the occupation of the Oriyas where many large Oriya villages and towns and business centers have come up. The Kandha have been pushed into foot hills and the smaller valleys. It is needless to say that the more fertile wider valleys which are more suitable for rice

cultivation have made the Oriyas wealthy and prosperous whereas the narrower and remoter valleys which are less fertile and, in most cases unsuitable for rice cultivation, have made the Kandha indigent. Oriya villages earn more from the diversified economy than the Kandha villages. Added to this, the processes of mounting land alienation have rendered the Kandha landless and the Kandha now, in many cases, have become wage earners and agricultural labourers. This change from proprietorship to agricultural servitude in the economic life of the Kandha has affected adversely the other aspects of their life. This applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to the whole of the Kandha territory.

The Kandha Rebellion:

Generally the Kandha may be regarded as a bold and fitfully labourious mountain-peasantry of simple and dignified manners. They are upright in their conduct, sincere and faithful to their superstitions, proud of their position as landholders and tenacious of their rights. Veracity is a notable quality of the Kandha. Too much addiction of liquor is one of their weaknesses. Because of this bad habit, the most valuable portions of their land have passed into the possession and enjoyment of Sundi liquor vendors and the Pano Saowkars or money lenders by way of payment of loans, the greater portion of which was spent in drink.

Human sacrifice and killing of female children which prevailed among the Kandha was inhuman and barbarous practices. The British Government took all measures to suppress these horrible acts. The Kandha rose in revolt against them and there were several encounters between the troops and the rebel tribals, and in the long run, the savage practices were stamped out fully.

In the hill tracts inhabited by the Kandha and other tribal communities there were many chiefdoms ruled by *Zamindars* and *Rajas*. Goomsur was one of such kingdoms. In 1836 the *Raja* of Goomsur refused to pay his *Peskash* to the British Government and disturbances broke out in the kingdom.

Mr. Russell, first Member of the Board of Revenue, was given the power of supreme control of affairs. The *Raja* fled to the hills with his treasury. The troops followed him. The *Raja* took refuge in a Kandha village and from rights of hospitality the Kandha of the whole area refused to give him up. The Sepoys attacked the Kandha who paid them back in their own coin and massacred many soldiers. Even after the death of the fugitive the struggle between the Kandha and the troops continued until the Kandha leader Dora Bissoyi was shot dead. A near relation of the deceased leader called, Onkaru Chokro Bissoyi led the Kandha in 1836 as "champion of the *Meria*". They were supported by *Paikas* and *Bissoyis* of some *Muthas*. Detachments of troops had to be scattered all over the country to keep order. Chokro Bissoyi finding himself hard pressed in the hills led his followers into the plains to burn villages, and finding but few to help him there, he set up a child as the son of the late Goomsur Raja.

With the spread of British rule in the hill-tracts many developmental schemes such as roads, rest-sheds, schools and dispensaries were constructed there and with the opening up of the interiors, many people of the plains infiltrated into these areas as contractors, money-lenders, merchants and brokers. The Kandha suffered in many ways at the hands of these exploiters. In 1865 a general rising of the Kutia Kandha took place having its root in a dispute about payment for construction of certain roads which the Patro of Subarnagiri had contracted to execute. At times the Kandha had risen in revolt against police excesses. In 1872 the Hochiponga Kandha of Chandragiri *Mutha* rose in masses to rescue two of their fellow villagers who had been arrested by the police.

In some erst-while feudatory states the Kandha were in ritual and symbolic relationship with the ruling families. The states like-Kalahandi and Nayagarh fall into this category. Whenever any trouble arises regarding succession or mismanagement in these states, it affects the Kandha most. For example, in 1881 a dispute as to the succession arose in Kalahandi

state. The Kandha broke into open rebellion and committed many excesses attended with bloodshed. The disturbance was repressed and in 1882 a British Officer was appointed as political Agent, with Headquarters at Bhawanipatna to manage the state. A similar rebellion took place in 1894 in Nayagarh state. The call for revolt is disseminated in an indigenous fashion. The news of an intended rising is circulated by means of a consecrated knot or 'Ganthi' which is quickly passed on from village to village.

CHAPTER - VI

Education

Primary Education :

Orissa, in general, was very backward till the dawn of independence. But there has been considerable institutional expansion of general education in the period following independence. This is more so in the rural and urban areas than in the tribal areas. According to the 1971 Census the percentages of literacy among the urban, rural and tribal population are roughly 48.28 and 10 respectively. Compared with this overall percentages, the Kandha recorded only 8 percent of literacy in 1971 Census.

The educational survey undertaken in 1979 by the Directorate of Education of Orissa, in Koraput district shows that the percentage of literacy among the Kandha in Koraput district is only 5. Among the major tribes of Koraput district the Kandha occupy the first position. The survey shows that in 24 out of the 42 blocks the Kandha emerge as the major tribe. In 2441 (46.73%) habitations out of 5224 habitations of these 24 blocks more than 50 percent of the population in each settlement belong to the Kandha. In 850 (35.23 percent) such habitations, primary schools have been established and in 5498 more habitations there are primary schools within a distance of 1.5 kms. Thus, in all 1458 or 59.73 percent of the habitations predominantly inhabited by the Kandha are provided with facilities of primary education, the corresponding figure for the whole district being 70.59 percent.

The analysis of educational status in blocks of Narayanpatna, Bandhugam, Kolnara, K.Singpur and Chandrapur where Kandha population ranges from 71 percent to 82 percent reveals that out of a total of 968 inhabitations in those blocks 852 are predominantly inhabited by the Kandha and of these habitations 498 (58.45 percent) have schooling facility either in

the habitation itself or within a distance of 1.5 kms. In the case of Narayanpatna where the Kandha constitute 82 percent of the population the percentage of habitations served by schooling facility is 68.55 and in the case of Chandrapur where all the 180 habitations are predominantly inhabited by this tribe the figure is 42.22 per cent. A substantial proportion of the population in Chandrapur (56.52 percent) is yet to have schooling facility within walking distance.

Enrolment and Wastage :

As regards enrolment and wastage the above mentioned educational survey shows that out of 50,902, the Kandha children in the age-group of 6-11 in the blocks where Kandha constitute as the major tribe, 28,337 (15.57 percent) attend primary schools. The percentages of total enrolment in classes I,II,III,IV and V are 34.89, 33.55, 24.47, 4.75 and 2.40 respectively. Taking enrolment in class I at 100, the enrolment figures for the subsequent four classes are 96.31, 70.26, 18.63 and 6.90 respectively. This shows that the relative position for the Kandha is better than the overall district position (75 percent and 54 percent) in class II and in class III, but in the upper primary classes the figures are nearly 30 percent short of the district-level figures (20 percent and 10 percent).

In the last quarter of the 19th century the British officers had observed that the attendance of the Kandha children in schools was solely due to the pressure of personal influence applied by the *Patras* and stimulated by constant inspection, any relaxation of which was at once followed by a disappearance of the Kandha element from the benches. It was their experience that the large increase in the number of children in schools and the desire for new schools were stimulated by prospects of employment in masonry work of road construction in taluk and sub-assistant agent's offices of those Kandha who could read and write. It was also their observation that the Kandha were anxious for their children to learn Oriya. In fact, what they had found was that the mixed school of Kandha and Oriya children was

more satisfactory in educational development and more profitable to the Kandha. One of the British officers had noticed that the *Malikas* and *Pradhans* were vehement in insisting on the Kandha master of the purely Kandha school at Kalingia to teach their children in Oriya. Some British officers pointed out that whatever attendance had languished it was largely due to the incubus of the very inferior teachers. In the inspection note one of the British Officers had mentioned that the average attendance for the quarter ending November 30th, 1880 had fallen to 8 at Ramgiri and a fraction over 3 at Udayagiri notwithstanding the fact that there were over two hundred children running wild at each place. This had led him to think that no one would expect any very great improvement in the desire of the people to educate their children for many years to come. The survey of the Directorate of Education shows that the months during which attendance abruptly falls are June, July, August, November and December. In some cases April has also been reported. The causes of poor attendance are cultivation and harvesting in which children are employed. The main reasons for dropouts are poverty, lack of parental guidance, and non-availability of reading and writing materials and absence of teachers and non-availability of quality teachers.

In 1978 an indepth study on work pattern was taken up in Sundijuba, a Kandha village in Kalahandi district, by the Tribal and Harijan Research-cum-Training Institute. The working hours were distributed under five categories of activities namely-1. shifting cultivation, 2. Wet cultivation, 3. Pasturage, 4. Hunting, food gathering and fishing and Leisure time activities and the time devoted to these activities in different time-intervals month after month for nine months was recorded. Month-wise distribution of time devoted to the different activities is presented in the Table-11.

TABLE-11

Month wise distribution of works in hours (Children workers)

Months Seasons	Categories of work (in hours)							
	Shifting cultivation and walking	Wet/plain cultivation and wage earning	Pasturage	Hunting Fishing etc.	Leisure etc.	Total Col +2+3+4 +5+6	Sleep in hours	Total Col (7+8)
March								
April	1292 (26.11)	106 (2.14)	261 (5.27)	461 (9.32)	2829 (57.16)	4949 (100%)	1675 (25.29)	6624 (100%)
May	325 (13.29)	12 (0.30)	203 (5.14)	480 (12.15)	2731 (69.12)	3951 (100%)	1809 (30.41)	5760 (100%)
June	788 (16.53)	264 (5.54)	224 (4.70)	446 (9.35)	3045 (53.88)	4767 (100%)	4453 (33.79)	7200 (100%)
SUMMER	2605 (19.06)	382 (2.80)	688 (5.03)	1387 (10.15)	8606 (62.96)	13667 (100%)	5917 (30.21)	19584 (100%)
July	1686 (21.71)	246 (8.92)	243 (4.86)	524 (10.48)	2902 (58.03)	5001 (100%)	2775* (35.69)	7776 (100%)
August	492 (19.52)	223 (8.85)	71 (2.82)	257 (10.20)	1477 (58.61)	2520 (100%)	1224 (32.69)	3744 (100%)
September	856 (18.75)	116 (2.54)	114 (2.53)	340 (7.45)	3139 (68.76)	4565 (100%)	2347 (33.95)	6912 (100%)
October	126 (17.52)	19 (2.64)	41 (5.70)	41 (5.70)	492 (68.44)	719 (100%)	433 (37.59)	1152 (100%)
RAINY	2560 (19.90)	604 (4.72)	469 (3.66)	1162 (9.08)	8010 (62.55)	12805 (100%)	6779 (34.61)	19584 (100%)
November	864 (23.15)	395 (10.52)	62 (1.65)	306 (8.15)	2122 (56.53)	3754 (100%)	2006 (34.83)	5760 (100%)
December	752 (23.70)	249 (7.77)	50 (1.56)	116 (5.18)	1979 (61.79)	3203 (100%)	1981 (38.21)	5184 (100%)
January								
February								
WINTER	1620 (23.40)	644 (2.26)	112 (1.61)	472 (6.78)	4101 (58.95)	6957 (100%)	3987 (36.43)	10944 (100%)
ANNUAL	6793 (20.32)	1630 (4.88)	1269 (3.79)	3021 (9.04)	20716 (61.97)	33429 (100%)	16683 (33.29)	50112 (100%)



ASHRAM SCHOOL, BATAGUDA, BALLIGUDA AREA

The data show that the busiest months for the children below 14 years are April, July, August, November and December, when they are required to help their parents in economic activities.

Another study was taken up by the Tribal and Harijan Research-cum-Training Institute to assess the extent of dropouts and stagnation at primary level in Koraput district. Some of the causes of dropouts and stagnation which the survey revealed are long distance lack of companion, bad road communication, want of opportunity for utilization of reading and writing in practical life, helping parents at home, lack of cultural activities including tribal dance and music disliking of the routine of the school, dislike for staying in hostel, harassment and rough behaviour of the teachers, heavy manual work, parents apathy towards children's education, language difficulty in following lesson, failure in examination and late disbursement and supply of Government aid in the form of scholarship and reading and writing materials.

Middle School in Kandha dominated villages:

As it has been pointed out earlier, the Kandha emerge as the major tribe in 24 out of 42 blocks. There are 5224 habitations with a total population of 3,96,142 in these 24 blocks. The number of habitations in which Middle school has been set up and the number of habitations which are served with this facility within a radius of 3 km. are 29 and 374 respectively. Thus, in all 403 or 16.51 percent of Kandha dominated habitations with a total population of 93,649 (23.64 percent) have been served with facilities of Middle school education within walking distances.

The above mentioned survey of Directorate of Education revealed that in the blocks of Bandhugam, Kudumulguma, Lamptaput, Nandapur and Semiliguda not a single Kandha village has the Middle school facility. In three other blocks, namely-Chandrapur, Kasipur and Pattangi more than 90 percent of the habitations go without this facility. The survey has further found out

that only 24.97 percent of habitations has been provided with Middle school facility in Koraput district as a whole. Despite all their backwardness the Kandha habitations come close to the district average.

Secondary Education:

There were 67 High schools in the district as on the 31st December 1973. Taking the total population of the district into consideration the ratio of High school to population comes to 1 : 30,000. The corresponding ratio for Cuttack district is 1:7,300. It shows to what extent Koraput is educationally backward as compared with the Coastal district.

Educational improvement is a tri-dimensional phenomenon. The three dimensions are children, parents and teachers. The survey undertaken by the THRTI reveals that there is no interlinkage between the parents and teachers with the result that the former are quite in dark about the usefulness of education. The teachers also do not make any special effort to adjust the children to the environment and discipline of the school. These factors explain why the parents do not take any interest in educational improvement of their children and contribute to heavy dropouts, wastage and stagnation in school education.

CHAPTER - VII

Potentials of Tribal Region and Problems of Development

Kandha Land:

The areas of Kandha concentration in the State are comprised of various sections of the Eastern Ghat Region. This region covers an area of about 17,198 square miles, that is, 29.2 percent of total land surface of the State. The hill ranges which vary in height from 500ft to 5,500ft. run from north to south and are no where more than 50 miles from sea. They constitute a series of undulating plateau divided by fertile valleys of various sizes. It is necessary to give an account of the geophysical features of this region to assess its potentiality and problems.

Geology :

The Eastern Ghat Region consists of six different rock systems.

- (1) **Kandhamal division:** It consists of Gondwana system containing grey, black and white shales with ferruginous rocks on the top.
- (2) **Balliguda division:** The higher slopes consist of a highly metamorphosed sediment of Khondalite.
- (3) **Kalahandi division:** The rocks are of Archaean age and consist of gneisses and schists. Soils in Kalahandi approach to black-cotton type with lime concretions or alternating with red gravel in Dharampur area, and Bauxite-laterite in Bhawanipatna area.
- (4) **Parlakhemundi division:** It consists of Charnochite rocks and are a massive eruptive dark coloured hypersthene granatoid gneiss. It is

igneous plutonic rock and varies in composition from basic to acidic. There are also biotite gneisses. Laterite capping is common towards the eastern border near Pathpatnam.

- (5) **Koraput and Pottangi division:** This consists of alternating bands of charnochite and Khondalite rock. The charnochite rocks furnish good building stone and the Khondalite consists of quartz, garnet and sillimanite with lesser quantities of felspar, graphite, manganese and iron ore.

Jeypore and Nawangpur Plateau :

The rocks of this area belong to the great Archaean system and consist of a series of metamorphosed sediments which have been intruded successively by granites, charnochites and debrites. In the Nawarangpur plateau near Umakote the rocks of the Hirapur hill consist of banded hematite quartzite and carry iron ores.

Climate :

Orissa lies in the sub-tropical belt of medium pressure and the chief characteristics of its climate are high temperature and medium rainfall. But topography (climate is discussed by taking rainfall, temperature and humidity into consideration) significantly alters the climate of a region.

Rainfall :

The Eastern Ghat division receives its greater part of the rainfall from the Arabian sea branch of the monsoon current which usually sets in the first week of June, a few days earlier than the Bay of Bengal current. Jeypore valley situated on the windward side gets as much rain as 76.70 inches while Rayagada which lies on the leeward side gets only 40 inches of rainfall. The district of Koraput is affected by cyclonic storms in the Bay of Bengal. It causes heavy fall on the Ghats. Winter and Summer precipitation is practically negligible and drought hazards are very little.

Temperature :

The Eastern Ghat region except Malkangiri is the coldest part of Orissa in all seasons of the year. In general, an increase in altitude of 300ft, is equivalent to a fall in the average temperature of 10F. the maximum temperature reaches 104'2 F. during May and the minimum temperature falls as low as 36'8F during December and January. High grasses are coated with thick frost-like particles in the morning of these two months.

Humidity:

Humidity is the most important factor that affects the role of transpiration. The lower the relative humidity at a given temperature the more will be the transpiration of loss of water from the leaf. On high mountains excessive water loss result in a stunted and gnarled growth of plants. There is a great variation in the humidity in the different sections of this region. In Koraput, the humidity ranges from 92 percent saturation in August and September, the wettest months, to 60 percent in March and 61 percent in April and May. Koraput is the dampest part of the State during rainy season.

The type of climate that prevails in a region determines the type of soil and vegetation of that region. Climate complex which includes rainfall, temperature and humidity sets limits beyond which certain crops cannot be grown. A crop-pattern is found to be associated with climate as described below. The climatic conditions prevalent in the Eastern Ghat Region is not suitable for cultivation of Jute but most favourable for growing Mesta (*Hibiscus Subdyariffa L.*) The regours in the soil make it possible to grow cotton as a Kharif crop. High altitude, good drainage and long duration of the period of low temperature favour growth of citrus fruits, such as-lemon and orange. Parlakhemundi Agency, Thuamul Rampur block, and Pattangi valley provide such climatic conditions and therefore, are suitable sites for growing citrus fruits. In fact the Deomali hill range which is the highest peak in Orissa (5406

ft. above sea level) contains the finest valley like Pattangi which may be compared with the Lombardy plain of the Alps which is suitable for cultivation of citrus and other temperate fruits. The deep loamy soil of Rayagada area with a drier and hotter climate and longer summer days and well-distributed rainfall in June and July is most favourable for plantation of sugarcane. In fact, Rayagada, Aska, and Bargarh have been the centre of sugarcane cultivation.

Soil :

Investigation of the properties of the soils is a task of very great importance to utilize land according to its capability. Soils are the product of environment and are related to the climatic condition and the parent rock. The eastern Ghat Region presents the following soil type.

(1) Skeletal soil on the upper portion of the slope, (2) Laterite, (3) Grey brown podzol and (4) Valley soil.

Above 4000 ft. plateau very little deciduous tree growth is found with stunted bushes of Terminalia Chebula, bamboo or dendrocalamers strictus type and grass type vegetation is generally found to cover the land in the plateau. Chemical weathering is very much limited and there is more of physical weathering. The soil prevailing in the plateau is of endo dynamic skeletal type and is composed of rock debris, gravel, quartz and sand. The hill tribes practise shifting cultivation in the area.

The laterite soil occurs above 800 ft. altitude. The Eastern Ghat Region is semi humid and sub-tropical and under this condition there is downward movement of water through the soil as a result of excess of rainfall and over-evaporation. Continual leaching by water containing very little organic matter removes silica and kaolin downwards while iron oxide and aluminium oxide remain behind. Therefore the soil locks red with various tints of brown and yellow colour. The soils are loamy in structure and at places full of ferruginous

concretions. Due to peculiar granular condition, the soils can be cultivated immediately after heavy rain as otherwise the surface gets hardened.

Grey brown earth is found in the Khondhmal agency which is a plateau varying in altitude from 1500 ft. to 2000 ft. with dense Sal (*Shore robusta*) forest. There is a layer of raw humus. The humic acid formed in the upper horizon moves downwards. The iron oxide get protected by the humus colloids is leached down and therefore the horizon loses colour and below it, a brownish black and then a rusty brown horizon is formed. All the nutrients are washed down. But the trees having deep roots recover the plant food lost by leaching. For cultivated crops the soil is low in fertility.

Vegetation :

From vegetational point of view the land surface of Orissa can be divided into hills, plains, marshy lands and coastal tracts. In all these areas different types of forests and grasses of economic importance are found. There are mainly four well marked vegetation zones in the southern-eastern section of the Eastern Ghat Region, (1) The Rayagada region, (2) Pottangi and Koraput Plateau, (3) Jeypore Plateau and (4) Malkangiri Plateau. The south-western section which covers Kalahandi stands separate in many respects of vegetation from the south eastern section.

The dominant species in the upper reaches of the Vansadhara basin in the Rayagada division is *Sal* and in the Nagavali basin the forest is mainly of semi-deciduous type. The hills in Pattangi and Koraput plateau now support deciduous species such as *Lagarstaemi parvi flora (Dhaura)* and *Terminalia tomentosa (Sahaj)*. Bamboo is common locally, and *sal* is rarely found above 2500 ft. In Koraput *Mangifera indica*, *Tamarindus indica*, and *Madhuka latifolia (Mohua)* are common. The Jeypore plateau is covered with *Sal* forest of a moist peninsular type. The common associates are *Terminalia tomentosa*, *Madhuka latifolia* and *Adina cardifolia* mixed with creepers such as *Bauhinia vahli* and *Butea superba* and grasses such as *polliuidum angusti*

folium (*Sabai*) and *Imperata arundinacea*. In Malkangiri plateau *sal* disappears about 18°30' latitude and Teak is common. In the lower plateau deciduous species are found.

Altitude plays an important part and five altitudinal zones are met with in the distribution of flora. The vegetation in the plateau of 1000ft. 2000ft. consists of dry mixed deciduous forest, in which *Sal* is accompanied by *xylia xylocarpa* (Taub) and mixed with grasses of various types. The main plateau of 2000ft-6000ft. is cultivated but the narrow belt of land on both sides of hill streams is covered with forest vegetation. The ravines between 2500ft. and 3500ft. are covered with damp evergreen flora and ferns. The upper slope of 2500ft-3500ft represents '*Dangar ehas*' region which is almost bare of vegetation. It is so because of repeated cutting and burning of forests for shifting cultivation. The hill-top of 3500 ft.-4500 ft. consists of flat laterite plateau covered with grasses and is used as pasturage during monsoon months.

The Eastern Ghat Region is in general, subjected to destructive practices of shifting cultivation extensively. The hills in all places have become almost bare of vegetation. The desiccation of forests is so colossal and extensive that the forest area may not exceed 10 percent of the land surface in this region. It is necessary that more than 25 percent of the area should be under forest to prevent soil erosion and conservation of soil fertility and plant nutrients. Thus, the land utilization in the Eastern Ghat Region demands highest priority in schemes concerning afforestation, control of grazing, formation of grass reserves and modernization of shifting cultivation and mechanization of terraced cultivation.

Pisciculture :

Like the tribes of other parts of the country those of Orissa are fond of eating fish. The Kandha in general and the Dongria Kandha in particular, are very fond of dried fish. They walk miles to weekly market centers to get the dried fish. The rivers which flow in the tribal areas, thousands of hill streams,

and innumerable stagnant pools of water are stocked with fish of various types in the Eastern Ghat Region. Paddy fields are also an important source of fish in rainy season. An artificial tank created by damming up a river which flows between two hills becomes a reservoir fit for pisciculture. Such sites are numberless in tribal areas.

There is a very big reservoir of this type near Firingia in Phulbani district. It is full of fish and it is so big that it can supply fish in plenty to Phulbani town and nearby places throughout the year. But there is difficulty in catching fish from this reservoir. The stumps of the trees which stood on the site were not cleared before the dam was constructed. Nets used for catching fish get stuck up in these stumps and get torn while dragging them out. The stumps need to be removed if pisciculture is to be developed on a commercial basis. The reservoir is located in such a beautiful place that it is suitable not only for a large-scale fish industry but also for a tourist spot.

The Kandha use various types of traps for catching fish. They also take to angling for this purpose. Their knowledge about the use of nets is limited because, they get little scope for using nets. Modern methods of pisciculture are unknown to them. It is necessary to impart training to the Kandha on work like clearing of weeds, de-silting, eradication of predators and maintenance of embankments, culverts, sluices, application of manures, culture and propagation of fish, development of hatcheries and stocking of fingerling. The panchayats located in Kandha villages may be encouraged to take up pisciculture. Facilities may be provided to them to dispose of fish by cheap and speedy methods for maximum benefit.

Horticulture :

The habitat of the Kandha extending over Belghar, Balliguda, Chandrapur, Niyamgiri, Rayagada, Koraput and Pattangi belt is located in high altitude and enjoys good drainage and mild climate. These geophysical and climatic conditions are most favourable for horticultural development. In fact, the

Kandha belt has favoured the growth of mango, jack fruit, pine-apple and citrus fruits. The Kandha of Pattangi plateau have been cultivating wheat since time immemorial. It is the experts view that wheat grows very well in high altitude with 60 inches rainfall. The local Malis grow peas, cabbage and cauliflower and tamoto extensively throughout the year. The Kandha do not grow such vegetables, the reason for which is not lack of interest but want of sufficient land for vegetable-growing. Whatever land they have in the plains, is used for paddy cultivation. They grow ginger, and turmeric and as many as 40 kinds of cereals, millets and pulses in hill-slopes and hill-tops.

There is an experimental station at Pattangi town. Coffee, black pepper and cardamom are grown. Silver oak grown in the station provides support to the creeper plants of black pepper. There is also a seri-culture station there. Worms, silk worms (yielding white and yellow silk fibres) are reared with success. Worms feed on leaves of castor plants and silk worms on leaves of mulberry. The result of these demonstrations has not yet been made known to the tribal villages although the environmental conditions favour carrying on such experiments with success. The reason for the lack of appreciation on the part of the local tribals for growing coffee etc. and rearing silk worm is the lack of land in plains and heavy expenses involved in the such experiments. Cultivation of citrus fruits such as-orange has been successful in Ramgiri-Udayagiri of Ganjam Agency.

The programme of horticulture has been taken up on a large scale in Phulbani, Ganjam and Koraput districts. The podu-ravaged areas in the high altitudes and foot-hills were selected for horticultural plantation. Mango and citrus fruit trees which the tribes were already raising are taken up for plantation. Though the indigenous methods of horticulture are quite scientific the tribes had no knowledge about pesticides to cure plant diseases. The extension agents provided this knowledge and helped the tribals in solving the problem. A simple technique which goes by the name 'crow technology' was adopted for in situ plantation of mango trees. At a subsequent stage selected mango

varieties are grafted on the indigenous root-plants giving the resultant plant vigour of the locality and the quality of the exotic. The new scheme is taken up with active participation of the beneficiaries at every step of the programme. Plantation has taken place on large compact areas of State-owned lands. The beneficiaries will have private ownership on the trees grown by them with Government's financial assistance. Subsequently the lands under such plantation will be assigned to individuals for specific purposes. The tribal youths who are involved in this scheme are provided with technical know-how such as-plant life, plant disease techniques of grafting etc. They are also responsible for the protection of the plants and development of plantation. The main objective of this endeavour is to turn some of the depleted forests and podu-ravaged hill-areas of today into flourishing garden-colonies of tomorrow.

The success of the scheme depends upon successful transformation of collective ownership which is characteristic of the tribal land tenure system into private ownership and well managed marketing organization free from all kinds of exploitative elements.

It has been the experience elsewhere that the growth of a cash crop economy has resulted in malnutrition and impoverishment of soil. The development of road communication, a measure taken to facilitate timely marketing of the perishable fruits has only encouraged further deterioration of nutritional status. The plantation of orange trees in Ramgiri-Udayagiri is mentioned here for the sake of illustration. The tribals of this area are traditional pioneers of plantation of orange and lemon trees. With the help of technical agency they have recently expanded plantation on a large scale. The local Pano merchants are their traders. They pluck fruits at a nominal rate and sell them at local and distant markets at a high price and get a huge profit. The development of roads in the area has helped the Pano merchants transporting the crop with ease to distant market centers and in getting more profit. The local tribal development agency took it upon itself to market the produce by

eliminating the intermediary traders with a view to giving the tribals maximum benefit. There developed a competition between the Pano merchants and the development agency. In the struggle the former out-witted latter, picked most of the fruits unripe without their full complement of nutrients by paying a low price to the growers and sold them at a high price at Berhampur town. The case shows that the oranges growers in the hills did not get reasonable price for their produce and the orange consumers did not get the full complement of nutrients from the fruits. Unless the marketing system is taken care of properly the local tribal will not derive the desired benefit from the programme of horticultural development.

Agriculture :

Most of the agricultural land in the Kandha belt is utilized for production of food; cash crops are of secondary importance. The shifting system of cultivation is extensively practised by the Kandha. The *Dogar* lands situated in hill slopes and hill-tops are used for shifting cultivation. Land is not ploughed but hoed by means of a spade called *Kuduki*. Except ashes of the trees which are cut and burnt in the process of forest-clearing no other fertilizer is applied in the swiddens. Growing of mixed crops is rather the rule than exception. Sowing by broadcast is common. But the seeds of *Kandula* (*cajanus indicus*) are dibbled in holes dug with sufficient interval of space all over the swidden. The seeds of bean are also dibbled in holes around the dead trees that still stand over in the swiddens.

The crops which are grown in the swidden consist of coarse cereals of various types of millets such as-ragi (*Eleusine corcane*), *bajra*, (*Penisetum typhoideum*), Jower (*Andropogon sorghum*), *Kangu* (*Setaria italica*) and *Suan* (*Echinochola frumentaceas*). A kind of sorghum called Jawar or *Johna* is grown in the swiddens. These crops are sufficiently drought-resistant and can grow in hill-slopes under rain fed condition. They constitute the staple food of the Kandha.

Dahi cultivation is practised in lands situated in the lower reaches of the hill-slope. These lands are variously called as *Neda* by the Kandha of G.Udayagiri and Firingia and *Bata Jami* by the *Penga* Kandha of Kashipur. Different kinds of millets as mentioned above and upland paddy are grown in such land. The land near the foot hills is called *Penga* universally by all sections of the tribe. It is in other word, *Padar* or upland in which paddy, ragi, *kosala*, *suan*, *mung*, *biri*, *kolatha*, turmeric and ground-nit are grown.

The land close to the homestead land goes by the name of *Bada* among the Kandha of G.Udayagiri and Firingia and Dongria Kandha of Niyamgiri hills; *Ijata Badi* among the *Penga* Kandha of Kasipur; *Gharbari* among the Kandha of Kalahandi and *Padar* among the Kandha of Kotagarh. It is used for growing maize, Johna, and mustard, turmeric and vegetables. Tobacco is also grown in *Bada* land. *Bada* land is generally fertilized with Cowdung manure. Location of these lands favours good drainage and plants grow well under these conditions.

The land at the bottom of the valley is called *Kita* or *Bila* or *Berna* or *Bahalpani* by the Kandha of Phulbani, Koraput and kalahandi district. It is most suitable for paddy cultivation. Only a few rich families may have such land.

In addition to the above mentioned crops grown in various types of lands the Kandha agriculture also includes small grained crops, root crops, oilseeds crops and fibre crops. Wheat is one of the small grained crops which requires rigour soil. The Kandha grow it in forest soils of the Eastern Ghat Agencies. It has been mentioned already that the Kutia Kandha of Pattangi plateau have been growing a special variety of wheat since time commercial.

The important root crops which the Kandha grow are sweet potato (*Impomoea batatas*), potato, tapioca (cassva roots) and arum (*Colocacia*).

Sweet potato is a supplementary food adding variety to the diet of the Kandha. Arum is called the poor man's potato. If it is so, the whole of Andhra Pradesh may be called as the "Poor man's land". Arum is cultivated under swampy situation where potato and sweet potato cannot be grown. The Dongria Kandha grow arum extensively and relish it very much.

Oil seeds Crops :

The oil seeds crops which feature prominently in the tribal agriculture are niger, mustard and castor. *Mohua* and *Karanja* seeds provide oil to the Kandha. The oil seeds are important cash crops and are grown extensively.

Fibre Crops :

Mesta is an important fibre crop grown in some areas by the Kandha. As water requirement of Mesta is lower than that of Jute the former is grown by the Kandha in fertile land and also in swiddens. Cotton is grown by the Kandha of Kalahandi not in the *Dongar* area but in the plains which contain black cotton soil.

Cash Crops :

Turmeric and ginger are the two most important cash crops grown extensively by the Kandha of Phulbani. The sites where these crops are grown are situated at a height of about 3000 ft. above sea level. It is generally grown on hill-tops and hill-slopes and in valleys. The cultivation of turmeric has been very much restricted as a result of the ban imposed on shifting cultivation, and therefore, the production has been reduced considerably.

System of manuring :

A Kandha of the hilly region is primarily a shifting cultivator and uses as manure the ash which he gets by burning trees and scrub growth on the hill-slope. He uses cow-dung manure in homestead garden lands and in rice

fields. The annual production of cowdung is very poor. Although number of cattle maintained is very high, the quality of cattle is poor and the by-product received from such poor quality of cattle is meager. The Kandha are not particular about keeping cowdung in pits, and therefore, there is much less of nutrients from cowdung. Application of chemical fertilizer is not wide spread. Only the rich farmers among the Kandha having low lands in the valley apply fertilizer on a limited scale.

Plant Protection :

Modern methods of plant protection are repulsive to most of the Kandha.

In the neighbourhood among the non-tribals application of pesticide is popular whereas, it is the reverse among the Kandha. The Kandha pray their deities to guard insects, pests and plant disease and also apply many indigenous medicines to keep their crops healthy. The "Silver Shoot" of paddy is a serious pest, not only in the plains but also in the hilly areas. The disease is due to the attack of a fly known as "Paohydriosis Oryzae". But the formation of the pale or bluish yellow shoots of the plant resulting from the irrigation of the maggot is regarded as something supernatural, and certain ceremonies are performed in the field and at home to ward off this trouble. When a swarm or locust fly over a trap it is taken as a divine act and certain rites are performed to propitiate the angry Gods who are believed to have sent these insects to destroy the crop.

As regards the indigenous practice followed to protect the diseased plants the Kandha use twigs and barks of certain trees in paddy fields. These barks being bitter in taste are allowed to rot in the paddy field. This prevents rice hispa (*hispa armigera*), rice case worm, and (*Nymphuli dupuncialis*) and other bugs. Leaves of *Begonis* and *neem* (*Melia Azadirachta*) are used for storing grains, cowdung ash mixed with pulse seeds are used to prevent attack of poests on a grains. It is astonishing to note that when effective chemical pesticides are available and are placed within easy

reach of the Kandha they do not accept them and prefer their indigenous practice to the modern methods of plant protection. Why? The case of application of pesticide by the Kandha of Firingia block throws light on this problem.

Some years back the Kandha of Firingia applied in their paddy plants. The source of drinking water of the Kandha is the wells which are dug in some convenient places in paddy fields. Sometimes, the water in the fields and in the wells is at the same level and the pesticide applied to the affected plants got mixed up with well water. The extension agency cautioned the Kandha not to use water from these wells and thereby the people were put to great inconvenience. It was the feeling of the Kandha that the inconveniences and loss which the pesticides caused to them outweighed the benefits which the practice, promised to give to them. The loss which the people had sustained was that the fish and snail in the paddy fields were killed. Some of the Kandha who are known in their society as progressive farmers complained that they did not mind very much the destruction of the fish. That which was considered great loss was the large scale killing of earth worms which loosened and fertilized the soil. According to them the harm done to their paddy cultivation by the application of pesticide was irreparable.

Irrigation :

It goes without saying that irrigation farming permits greater control of production factors than any other system of farming. Nature is bountiful, but she is not dependable. Agriculture in our country is a gamble with monsoon. Most of the hill streams in the tribal areas are perennial, but they are of little benefit to the tribals. All the lands which the tribals use for growing crops are all on the hill-slopes and the hill-tops and these lands are beyond the reach of the stream water. Deforestation caused by unlawful felling of tree by the contractors and by the destructive methods of shifting cultivation has affected rainfall to a great extent. The tribals every where in the State are the worst sufferers on account of the vagaries of weather.

Irrigation works in Orissa may be divided into four classes (1) canals, (2) storage reservoirs, (3) tanks and (4) wells. In some places lands in Kandha areas of Rayagada sub-division are irrigated by means of lift irrigation and new crops like wheat and double cropping of paddy cultivation have been successfully taken up in these areas. Minor irrigation schemes have been successful in some areas and have failed in other areas. Firingia, a Minor Irrigation Schemes has acquired a vast catchments area formerly cultivated by the Kandha. But on account of shortage of water the reservoir area remains dry most of the year. At Kotagarh a minor irrigation scheme was intended to supply water to the lands of the Kandha of the neighbourhood. But the people could not grow crops on account of the depredation of wild animals. In fact, the Kandha of a group of villages in Kotagarh block deserted their villages and shifted to some other place. Dugwells have been of great help to the Kandha in irrigating their lands and growing both kharif and rabi crops. Some Kandha families of Ramchandrapur colony in Kotagarh block have taken to potato cultivation after having dug-wells in the lands and have been able to improve their economic condition. In some cases the scheme has ruined the farmers, not because of the fault of the dug-wells but because of the defective execution. In a Kandha village in Firingia block a farmer used to grow all kinds of vegetables. He was the only person in the area who grew vegetables on a large scale and was able to meet the demands of the Firingia town. He used to irrigate his vegetable plots by an indigenous method of lifting water from hill stream at a lower level through several points upto his homestead garden lands which lie at a higher level. The Co-operative Extension Officer approached him and advanced him a loan for a dug-well. The vegetable grower excavated the well in his garden land, but due to defective construction the well caved in and served no purpose. Finding no other alternative the

grower reverted to his old practice of lift irrigation. That was not the end of his trouble. His property was attached by the Cooperative Society to recover the loan and it cost him his wife's necklace to clear the dues of the Society.

Implements :

The main implement which is used by the Kandha for growing crops is a hand hoe. In some places, particularly in the plains, a wooden plough is used for tilling the soil and growing crops. But essentially the agriculture of the kandha may be called Hoe-culture. Some of the accessory tools used in various agricultural operations are harrow, leveller, and sickle which are made locally either by themselves or by the blacksmith. Modernization of agricultural processes such as-application of fertilizer, use of improved seeds and control of water and mechanization of agriculture are not possible in most of the Kandha areas on account of ecological limitations.

Soil Erosion :

Soil erosion is the most spectacular result of bad land management. Erosion by water is most common throughout Orissa. There are mainly three types of soil erosion caused by water, (1) sheet erosion (2) rill erosion and (3) gully erosion, Sheet erosion is universal in all-bare and fallow land, whose grass cover have been completely destroyed over grazing and burning. Gully erosion is common in mountainous regions. The numerous hill streams carve out gullies on bare lands and erode the land very badly.

Almost all the hill areas in Orissa have been bare of vegetation by the practice of destructive method of shifting cultivation and therefore, the Eastern Ghat Region, particularly the Rayagada division and Kalyansinghpur area, are the worst eroded tracts in the State. Rivers, hill streams and rain water have washed away all the top soil making many hill-slopes bare of vegetation and unproductive. Soil erosion makes the soil empty of plant nutrients and therefore the crops grown in such poor soil do not contain adequate nutrient.

People who are accustomed to food grown in poor soil show a high incidence of leprosy and yaws. These diseases are widely prevalent among the Kutia Kandha of Belghar area. The Dongria Kandha of Niyamgiri hills are relatively free from such diseases.

Soil erosion is very much severe in the Belghar area than on the Niyamgiri hills. Therefore the crops which the Kutia of Belghar grow are not only poor in quantity but also poor in quality. Albert Howard has suggested that crops and livestock raised in soils of good fertility and with organic manure attain a high measure of immunity from infective and parasitic as well as from degenerative diseases such as malaria and framboesia. He also stated that maintenance of soil fertility is the basis of health. It is now clear that the susceptibility of the Kutia Kandha of Belghar area to leprosy and yaws is due to the diet which is poor in nutritive elements. Nevertheless, it is necessary that soil conservation experts should examine the intensity of soil erosion and the problems which demand immediate solution and draw up a satisfactory programme of soil conservation and use of land for the establishment of balanced agriculture in Belghar and in equally affected other areas.

Financing and credit facilities :

Like other tribal people most of the Kandha are indebted to non-tribal traders, merchants and money-lenders. The important reasons for their indebtedness are: (a) unproductive agriculture, (b) expensive festivals and rituals, and (c) the habit of drinking liquor. Being exceedingly trust worthy a Kandha believes it as his sacred obligation to pay his debts whatever might be the burden. But his creditor never wishes payment in cash but aims at the produce raised by him in settlement of the debts. The rate of interest is never stipulated in terms of money. For each rupee advanced a specific quantity of produce in the form of paddy, cereal pulse, millet, tamarinds, turmeric is asked towards interest for the stipulated time.

The non-tribal merchants provide the Kandha with their requirements such as in salt, kerosene, onion, molasses, dried fish, cattle, goat poultry, tobacco chilli and cotton cloth and collect the cost of the things in kind at the time of harvest. The price fixed by the merchant is always high and, therefore, he has to pay very heavily in kind. In many cases the produce offered by him is found insufficient for the price charged by the merchant. The reasons for this are the high price charged for the things provided and the use of false weights and measures in business transactions. The money-lender adopts other dishonest methods such as blank promissory notes in which thumb impression of the Kandha debtor is taken without any mention of the amount of the loan and in which the amount of loan is inflated according to discretion. The Kandha is thus kept indebted to him in perpetuity. The resources of the debtor being limited his indebtedness increases month after month and finally a situation is reached when the Kandha has to offer his land for sale or for mortgage to the merchant or the money-lender. He has also to take further loans in cash from the money-lender to meet unforeseen expenditure on account of illness, death, etc.

Being unable to pay the loans received from the merchant or the money-lender the Kandha offers himself as agricultural labourer in the farm of his creditor. Thus the *Goti* system (Serfdom) and *Khandagata* system (a system of land mortgage) has developed. Once a Kandha gets into this vicious circle of economic exploitation it is an impossibility for him to get out of it. The amount of his debt goes on mounting year after year making him serve the merchant in perpetuity.

Necessary regulations have been promulgated in the tribal areas under the special provisions of the constitution to tackle the problems of (a) land alienation (b) bonded labour (c) indebtedness, (d) marketing of agricultural and minor forest produce and (e) supply of essential consumer commodities. These regulations are :

- (i) Orissa Debt Bondage Abolition Regulation, 1948.
- (ii) Orissa Scheduled Area Transfer of Immovable Property (by Scheduled Tribes) Regulation, 1956.

- (iii) Orissa Scheduled Area Debt Relief Regulation, 1967.
- (iv) Orissa (Scheduled Areas) Money Lenders Regulation, 1967.

In addition to these Regulations promulgated by the Governor of Orissa the following general laws have continued to be in force for furtherance and protection of tribal interests:

- (a) The land improvement Loans Act, 1883.
- (b) The Agriculturists Loans Act, 1884
- (c) The minimum wages Act, 1948.
- (d) The Orissa Land Reforms Act, 1960
- (e) The Orissa Co-operative Societies Act, 1962.

Moreover, the Orissa Land Reforms (Amendment) Act, 1973 provides that 70 percent of the surplus lands vested with Government shall be settled with persons belonging to the scheduled tribes or scheduled castes in proportion to their respective populations in a village in which the lands are situated and the remaining lands shall be settled with persons not belonging to the aforesaid categories.

Towards the end of 4th Five-year plan when the new strategy of Sub-plan approach was ushered for development in areas of tribal concentration the above mentioned Regulations and Acts were strictly enforced. For example, on the strength of Land Alienation Act many illegal transactions were detected and cases were instituted in the Court of law for restoration of lands to the tribal owners. Similarly on the strength of the Debt Bondage Act serious attempts were made to identify Gotis and free them from the clutches of the merchants and the money-lenders and rehabilitate them suitably in colonies. The collection of cases of illegal transfer of land and debt bondage is always a difficult affairs. The tribals who have sold their lands or are in debt bondage are reluctant to reveal their identity for fear of economic intimidation. Even if they give their names to the enquiring authorities, they deny having done so before the magistrate. There is another difficulty from the other side also. The non-tribal buyer, in many cases does not get the land

recorded in his name. He holds it as a usufruct. In spite of these difficulties, a substantial number of cases of illegal land transfer have however been brought before the court of law and recovery of land has been made in many instances. But it is found that in many cases the tribal to whom the land was restored does not come forward to take possession of the land for fear of harassment by the executes. Another difficulty is that no follow-up action is taken to implement the courts decree in some cases. As a result, the executes continue to enjoy the benefits of the land which they had acquired from the tribals. In such a situation the tribals remain as poor as before and their condition becomes worse day after day because of the rising cost of living.

Apart from the legal measures against exploitation, the Government have established Tribal Development Cooperative Corporation in the tribal areas with a view to buying agricultural and forest produce from the tribals and supplying them their daily requirements at a fair price. According to the recommendations of Bawa Committee, Large-sized Multipurpose Societies, 'LAMPS' have been established in each block in the tribal areas to provide to the tribals a package of services, the main component of which are credit (production as-well-as consumption credit), supply of seeds and other agricultural inputs, supply of consumer goods, and marketing of both agricultural and minor forest-produce. It is through these LAMPs that the tribal beneficiaries are provided with necessary financial assistance to sink dug-wells. In many cases it is found that the tribals have put extensive areas under cultivation for growing potato, chilli and vegetables by using water from the dug-wells and have derived considerable benefit from this programme.

In spite of these governmental measures the grip of the local merchants and the money-lenders on the tribals has not been loosened completely. Some of the important lacunae in such measures is the complicated procedures which the tribals do not understand and therefore do not take advantage of credit and marketing facilities placed within their reach. The other difficulty is the official red-tape which causes considerable delay in disbursing loans or

agricultural inputs. As a result, the purpose of the loan or other facilities is not served and therefore, whatever is received untimely is spent on something else. Thus, the tribals are left with no other choice than to borrow either in cash or in kind from the local merchants with whom they continue to maintain an unbroken economic relationship.

The TDCC and the LAMPS do not function properly in many places in respect of purchase of the forest and agricultural products. The tribals collect forest products and take them to the nearest market centers for selling. More often than not the merchants, on the market days walk upto the tribal villages, and before the tribals reach the market-places, they stop them either in their villages or on the way by coercive methods and take hold of the products on paying a very nominal price to them. Even those few tribals who succeed in bringing their products to the market centre eluding the merchants on the way are literally swarmed by the merchants at the market and whoever has the necessary physical strength, virtually grabs the products and thrusts into the hands of the tribals some arbitrarily fixed price. Here, too, the tribals are deprived of their legitimate income. The Kandha are thus, subjected to different kinds of pressures from the merchants because of long-standing economic relationship that has been existing between them. The Kandha do not like to hurt the feelings of the merchants lest they forego the financial help that they get from them in times of need. There is a long-standing intimate economic relationship between the tribals and local merchants which always has been working to the disadvantage of the Kandha and subjecting them to continued economic exploitation at the hands of the merchants.

To remedy this situations and help the Kandha to get fair prices for their goods, it is necessary for the Government-sponsored marketing organization to function legally and effectively as the sole buyer of the commodities at the doorsteps of the Kandha.

SECTION-IV

**HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENTAL
ASPECTS**

CHAPTER - 1

Health Profile

The Tribal communities living in different eco-systems face health and genetic problems of varying nature. Nothing is known about the health and nutritional status and also about the medico-genetic problems which are prevalent among the primitive sections of the Kandha tribe as no comprehensive study of this nature has yet been undertaken among these sections of the tribe. The present study centers round this problem and its coverage is limited to two different sections of the Kandha tribe, one residing in Burlubaru village of Belghar area, Phulbani district and the other residing in Kurli village of Bissamcuttack area, Koraput district. The main objectives of the study are:

- (i) To assess the health status and disease profile of the tribe;
- (ii) To find out their dietary habits and assess the extent of malnutrition among them;
- (iii) To study the medico-genetic problems among them and
- (iv) To get an insight of their belief system regarding diseases, their traditional methods of treatment and attitude towards modern system of medicine.

Methods of Study :

20 Kandha households comprising 52 males and 53 females and 25 Kandha households comprising 53 males, and 69 females were selected for a door to door survey in Burlubaru village and Kurli village respectively. All the 225 persons, that is 103 persons from Burlubaru village and 122 persons from Kurli village were examined physically, clinically and the blood samples

were tested for malarial parasite, (*Plasmodium falciparum*), sickle-cell gene and G-6-PD (Glucose-6-Phosphate Dehydrogenase), deficiency. The overall nutritional appearance of each case was appraised to find out whether a person is grossly underweight or has generalized skin lesion or other indications of unsatisfactory health, possibly due to nutritional imbalance, Changes in hair, eyes, skin, neck, mouth, teeth, knee and ankle jerk reflexes and oedema of lower extremities suggesting possible nutritional deficiency were evaluated.

Data on hygiene, sanitation, religious belief about health practices, traditional methods of treatment, present health condition and health facilities and medical care available in these villages were also collected by observation and by interviewing people of both the villages.

Haematological investigations with special reference to genetic diseases such as-sickle-cell disease and red-cell enzyme G-6-PD deficiency were carried out with the help of following method:

- (i) For detection of sickle-cell disease the simple sickling test was conducted using sodium-metabisulphite.
- (ii) For detection of G-6-PD deficiency Breinstins method was adopted using 2-6 Dichloro-Phenol indophenol and Phenacine-methasulphate.
- (iii) For detection of malarial parasite thick and thin blood films were taken and examined.

MAJOR FINDINGS

Health status and disease profile :

From the present study the following health problems have emerged. In the matter of health and sanitation the sections of the Kandha residing in Belghar area are mor backward and primitive. Their knowledge regarding health and nutrition is rudimentary. Their isolation and backwardness and

their faith and reliance on the traditional magico-religious methods are the main reasons for the low degree of awareness about modern medical practices. Other factors which attribute to poor health are the lack of environmental sanitation and personal hygiene, poor living condition, including improper ventilation and the like. Consciousness regarding bodily cleanliness is lacking among the Kandha of Burlubaru particularly among the children and women. Lack of personal hygiene causes skin diseases and other infections. They do not take bath for days together and most of them do not brush their teeth and therefore dental and skin diseases are most common among the Kandha of Burlubaru. As regards the personal cleanliness the Kandha of Kurli are not so unclean as compared to the Kandha of Burlubaru.

There is no well in both the villages and the people drink water from the hill streams. Water of the hill stream is used in both the areas for multifarious purposes such as- washing clothes, bathing, washing their body after defecation, scrubbing their cattle, cleaning their utensils and also for cooking food and drinking. This explains why water-borne disease viz; diarrhoea, dysentery (amoebic and bacillary), and other gastro-intestinal disorders are very common among the Kandha of both the areas. Moreover, water of the hill-streams in Belghar area is not only polluted but also has high content of graphite which causes irritation in gastro-intestinal tract resulting in gastric discomfort abdominal pain, hyperacidity and constipation. The incidence of helminthic (worm) infestations viz; *Taenia solium*, *Taenia bovis* and *Ascaris lumbricoides* (tape worm, round worm and hook-worm) is comparatively high among the Kandha of Burlubaru which may be attributed to their food habits. However the common gastro-intestinal disorders prevalent among the Kandha of Kurli are gastritis, colitis, and dyspepsia. The common diseases of the respiratory system which were diagnosed in both the areas were bronchitis (acute and chronic), asthma and diseases of the upper respiratory tract. Cases of influenza, cold and cough were also observed in both the area. Tuberculosis is prevalent both among the Kandha of Burlubaru and the Kandha of Kurli. Most of the patients were suffering from cough with

expectoration for more than a month sub-febrile temperature moderate haemoptysis, loss of appetite and breathlessness. Semi-starvation, inferior diet and unhygienic living conditions attribute to the prevalence of tuberculosis. Their houses generally have no windows and hardly any light gets into the hut. Poor ventilation and close contact with infected members of the family are largely responsible for wide spread contagion.

Only 3 cases of leprosy were detected in Burlubaru village. But in Rangaparu, a village located at a distance of about 3 ½ Kms. from Burlubaru, leprosy was rampant. Though no thorough investigation was conducted in Rangaparu but during our preliminary visit as many as 23 cases of leprosy, were detected in this village. They were not segregated from their society and the disease spread widely as a result of close contact with the infected patients. However, not a single case of leprosy was detected in Kurli. Yaws was absent in both Burlubaru and Kurli villages. However, five cases of Yaws were detected in Kadragumma, village located at a distance of about 2 Kms. from Kurli. Skin diseases are very common among the Kandha of Burlubaru and Kurli villages. However, five cases of Yaws were detected in Kadragumma, a village located at a distance of about 2 kms from Kurli. Skin diseases are very common among the Kandha of Burlubaru village and scabies tops the list among all the skin diseases. Venereal diseases viz; syphilis and gonorrhoea are not common among the Kandha of both the areas.

One of the most significant findings among the Kandha of Kurli was the wide prevalence of arthritis and allied rheumatic disorders. 18 cases of rheumatoid arthritis with prodromal symptoms of malaise, weight loss, vasomotor disturbances (Paresthesias, Raynauds, Phenomenon), and vague periarticular pain and stiffness were detected. In all the cases there was characteristically symmetrical joint swelling with associated stiffness, tenderness and pain. Pain and stiffness were prominent in the morning and subsided during the day while they were busy with their work. In most of the cases stiffness became much more severe after strenuous activity. The proximal interphalangeal and metacarpo-phalangeal joint of the fingers, wrists,

knees, ankles and toes were most often involved. Thus in most cases the onset was insidious and in small joints and progression was centripetal and symmetrical 4 cases of idiopathic ankylosing spondylitis (Mariestrumpell disease) with chronic backache were detected in Kurli. However, not a single case of arthritis and allied rheumatic disorders was detected among the Kandha of Belghar area.

Most causes of morbidity and mortality seen in the present civilization like atheros-clerotic cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases, diabetes mellitus and cancer are rare among both the sections of the Kandha. Hypertension (High blood pressure) is very rare among the Kandha of Burlubaru, on the contrary hypotension (Low blood pressure) was very common, this may be because of their low salt culture.

Malaria is also very common among the Kandha of Belghar area and more so in the study village and manifests its typical clinical symptoms. All the blood samples were tested for the detection of malarial parasite, with the help of thick as-well-as thin blood films. The incidence of positive cases with malarial parasite in the blood smear was not very high (only 14 positive cases). All of them belong to the species *Plasmodium falciparum*. But clinically with the help of past history of the illness (anaemnesis) and through clinical examination it was found out that at least 63 persons were suffering or had suffered in the recent past, from malarial infection. This was also evident from a very high incidence of hepato-splenomegaly (enlargement of liver and spleen). 18 persons were suffering from malaria when the survey was undertaken. Mostly children were suffering from typical symptoms that is high fever of intermittent type, with shivers and profuse sweating even though the clinical and laboratory investigation for the identification of malarial parasite did not tally always. But it can be explained by the fact that at the time of collection of blood samples presumably, the parasites were absent, though in reality the persons may be suffering from malaria. Among the inhabitants of Burlubaru village the incidence of malaria is reasonably high but the mortality rate from malaria is comparatively low.

The incidence of plasmodium falciparum malaria in Kurli was comparatively low. Only one positive case with malarial parasite in the blood smear was detected. Clinically only 4 persons were suspected to be suffering from malaria.

Diet and nutritional status :

The food habit of the Kandha of both the areas does not present a monotonous picture. But it is rather more varied depending on seasonal variations and availability of food materials. There is no regulated menu for their daily diet. The Kandha of both the areas practise shifting cultivation and the production of food from this source is scarce and therefore, not sufficient for the whole year. The cereals and millets hardly last for four months and the rest of the eight months they depend on wild roots, tubers, fruits and leaves of edible plants. The diets of the Kandha of Kurli contained more of millets, while the diets of the Kandha of Burlubaru were mostly based on rice and wild tubers. In case of the Kandha of Kurli, kosla rice and ragi were predominant food. However, consumption of pulse was very rare in both the areas. It was interesting to observe that the consumption of green leafy vegetables by the Kandha of Kurli was considerably more as compared to the Kandha of Burlubaru. Consumption of milk and milk product among both the sections of the Kandha was found to be very low. The Kandha of both the areas are non-vegetarians. They eat buffalo meat, beef, pork, chicken and other fleshy foods mostly on festive occasions which are limited in number. Oil is used for cooking purposes in a small quantity. Consumption of sugar and jaggery is also very rare. Use of salt in case of the Kandha of Burlubaru is very low. All kinds of edible fruits available in the habitat are eaten by the Kandha of both the areas. The Kandha of Burlubaru have a special liking for the mangoes, and jackfruits, where as the Kandha of Kurli like pineapples and oranges. The Kandha of both the areas are very much addicted to alcoholic drinks. The common drinks are Mohua and *Salap* liquor. These alcoholic beverages are taken to get relief from fatigue after hard days work.

In general, the consumption of all foods in both the areas is much less than recommended amount and the survey shows that the diet of Belghat Kandha is nutritionally more deficient than that of the Kurli Kandha. However, the diet of the Kandha of both the areas is all balanced throughout the year and lacks several essential nutrients. Deficiency in diet is both qualitative. Basic caloric requirements are not met. Intake of protein is very marginal while intake of vitamins and minerals, falls far short of the desirable level. There is not enough food and the food gap for the majority of households is considerable. Health conditions under such gross dietary deficiency can never be satisfactory. Morbidity pattern of a community depends mostly upon its nutritional status and on intake of food. The survey in both the Kandha villages show a high incidence of diseases caused by nutritional deficiency. Thus among the health hazards present in both these Kandha areas nutritional diseases occupied a unique place. High incidence of frank nutritional deficiency was present specially among the vulnerable segments of population, viz; infants children, pregnant women and nursing mothers. For every case of frank nutritional deficiency there were several cases of sub-clinical or "twilight" zone of malnutrition in these areas. The relationship between malnutrition in one hand and infection as-well-as worm infestation on the other is two fold. Infection and worm infestation lowers the nutritional status. Therefore, widens the gap of deficiency and aggravate malnutrition. Malnutrition coupled with lowering resistance makes the child more vulnerable in infection. In most of the Kandha children who die early of gastro-intestinal and respiratory infections, the real cause of death is the underlying malnutrition. The infection merely acts like the last straw.

However, it is very difficult to ascertain and confirm clinically the cases of protein caloria malnutritional (P.C.M) in adults. But these clinical signs are quite apparent in infancy or childhood. Moreover, insufficiency of one or the other nutrient in smaller quantity, does not necessarily lead to a clinically defined nutritional disease. Symptoms of illness and disease caused by nutritional deficiency is a rule rather than an exception. The population

surveyed showed physical signs of deficiency of one or more nutrients to a varying degree with its clinical manifestations.

On clinical assessment 43 cases among the Kandha of Burluharu and 31 cases among the Kandha of Kurli showed one or more signs or symptoms of nutritional deficiency. Most common deficiencies observed were:

1. **Under-nutrition**
 - a) Low weight in relation to height
 - b) Diminished skin folds
 - c) Lethargy-especially in children
 - d) Exaggerated skeletal prominence
 - e) Loss of elasticity of skin
2. **Protein-caloria deficiency:**
 - a) Oedema
 - b) Muscle wasting
 - c) Moon face etc.
3. **Vitamin 'A' (Retinol) deficiency:**
 - a) Xerosis of skin
 - b) Xerosis conjunctivae
 - c) Keratomalacia
 - d) Bitot's spots
4. **Vitamin B1 (Thiamine) deficiency**
 - a) Loss of ankle jerks
 - b) Calf muscle tenderness
5. **Vitamin B2 (Riboflavin) deficiency:**
 - a) Angular stomatitis
 - b) Cheilosis
 - c) Magenta tongue
 - d) Corneal vascularization

6. **Vitamin C (Ascorbic acid) deficiency):**
 - a) Spongy and bleeding gums
 - b) Petechiae
7. **Vitamin 'D' deficiency:**
 - a) Active rickets in children
 - b) Healed rickets in children and few adults
 - c) Osteomalacia in adults with local skeletal deformities.
8. **Iron deficiency:**
 - a) Pallor of Mucous Membrane (Anaemic)
 - b) Koilonychia

The prevalence of protein calorie-malnutrition among the Kandha of Burlubaru was more compared to the Kandha of Kurli. The prevalence of the signs of Vitamin 'A' deficiency in the Kandha of Kurli was much lower than that seen among the Kandha of Burlubaru. As in the case of Vitamin 'A' deficiency signs were comparatively less among the Kandha of Kurli. The considerably lower prevalence rates of Vitamin 'A' and Vitamin 'B' complex deficiency signs seen among the Kandha of Kurli may perhaps be attributed to the practice of including green leafy vegetables in their diets, which would have contributed fair amounts of both B carotene and riboflavin.

Medico-genetic problems :

The chief genetic problem among the Kandha of Burlubaru village is sickle-cell haemoglobinopathy and G-6-PD (Glucose-6-Phosphate-Dehydrogenase) deficiency.

Haemoglobinopathy :

The term Haemoglobinopathy encompasses clinically and genetically a heterogenous group of hereditary anaemias resulting from the abnormality in the Haemoglobin molecule.

Haemoglobin (Hb) is a protein which contains a prosthetic group in the form of a flat disc containing iron in its centre. Each molecule of Haemoglobin contains four Haem groups and therefore four atoms of iron. The globin or protein part consists of four polypeptide chains. In normal adult Haemoglobin (Hb-A) there are two types of chain termed alpha and beta. The alpha chains consist of 141 amino-acid residues and the beta-chain of 146 residues, the molecule therefore contains a total of 574 amino-acid residues. The term sickle-cell disease is applied to all hereditary (genetic) disorders in which the red-cells contain Haemoglobin-S (Hb-S) instead of normal adult Haemoglobin (Hb-A) and Hb-S are different. Hb-S contains in the beta-chains a glutamine residue in position 6 instead of a valine residue.

When oxygenated, Hb-A and Hb-S have the same solubility but Hb-S is much less soluble in the reduced state and the solubility of Hb-S falls by about one hundred times as much as that of Hb-A. Thus the Hb-S in the red-cell will remain in solution as long as the cells are in a rich oxygen environment, but when the oxygen is reduced either artificially-exposure to high altitude or in the tissues, the Haemoglobin crystallizes out and distorts the red cells to the sickle cell shape. The sickle-cells in circulation are easily broken up producing an anaemia, while some of the more rigid sickle-cells block small vessels, cutting off the blood supply to the tissues. This blocking of small vessels causes the crisis periods from which many die. Sickle-cell disease is inherited as a Mendelian dominant. The common sickle-cell diseases are sickle-cell trait, sickle-cell anaemia and sickle-cell thalassaemia.

The incidence of sickle-cell disease is quite high among the Kandha of Burlubaru village. Out of 103 individuals 22 persons i.e. 21.36 per cent possessed sickle-cell Haemoglobin. Out of 22 individuals 17 were heterozygous and 5 apparently homozygous for sickle-cell Haemoglobin. These apparent homozygotes included two males, one of them was a child aged 6 years and three females. All the female homozygotes had delayed puberty, but female heterozygotes followed the normal pattern of sexual development.

Sickle-cell disease chiefly affects the development of the bones and glands in the body, because of localized is chemia. Some of the patients had suffered from periodic painful crisis. It is also known that infraacts due to sickling of red-cells appear at different ages. In small children the growing bones of hand and feet seem to be particularly affected. A six year old Kandha boy of Burlubaru village presented with joint pain starting with swelling of fingers preceded by fever. There was history of jaundice about three years prior to evaluation. The spleen and liver were not palpable. Investigations revealed the boy to be a case of sickle-cell anemia with both parents showing sickle cell trait. However, most of the homozygotes at sometime or other suffered from splenomegaly. All the three females had spleens palpable at a mean distance of 3.6 cm. below the left coatal margin. One male had a palpable spleen where as the other did not.

Sickle-cell disease is a major public health problem among the Kandha of Burlubaru village. It is also believed that certain diseases like malaria, infections (viral and bacterial), infestations (hook-worm) and dietary deficiencies (iron and folic acid) can influence the course of the disease, prognosis therefore, depends mainly on a satisfactory standard of nutrition and prompt treatment of infections.

However, not a single case of sickle-cell disease (sickle-cell anemia and sickle-cell trait) was detected among the Kandha of Kurli village.

G-6-PD Deficiency :

The red-cell enzyme G-6-PD deficiency is a genetically transmitted disorder by a sex-linked gene of intermediate dominance. Full expression of the trait occurs in hemizygous males, in whom the single x-chromosome carries the mutant gane and in homozygous females in whom both sex chromosomes (XX) carry a mutant gene. Intermediate expression is found in heterozygous females in whom expression is variable. Among the Kandha of Burlubaru 16 cases with G-6-PD deficiency were detected. Such a high incidence of G-6-

PD enzyme deficiency calls for immediate remedial attention. The abnormality of this gene exposes them to (i) Drug induced as-well-as other forms of haemolytic anaemias and (ii) Congenital malformation.

Malaria and genetic disorders :

Presumably the hilly areas of Belghar region are hyperendemic for malarial infection. The Kandha of Burlubaru have been possibly exposed to malarial infection for the last several hundred years and as a result such mutation might have occurred in them. The heterozygous advantage in affording protection against malaria, particularly against *Plasmodium falciparum* is known and this possibly must be the genesis of such a high incidence of sickle-cell disease and red-cell enzyme G-6 PD deficiency among the Kandha of Belghar area.

Other side of the problem is still more interesting and at the same time alarming which calls for immediate attention of health authorities in particular. In eradication of malaria the role of red-cell enzyme G-6-PD deficiency should be given due emphasis. Moreover, we know, that malaria is treated with anti-malaria drugs like Chloroquine, Camoquine, Primaquine etc. which in turn can induce acute haemolytic anaemia in persons having this deficiency and in some cases this may be fatal. So, instead of saving them from the grip of malaria we can do great harm by administering anti-malaria drugs to persons who are G-6-PD deficient. So, this may lead to some serious complications resulting in severe jaundice and anaemia.

By the help of this survey a thorough screening for G-6-PD deficiency was done in Burlubaru village, inhabited by this primitive section of the Kandha tribe. Record has been made regarding the frequency of the incidence of G-6-PD deficiency among the Kandha of Burlubaru village. Hence indiscriminate use of antimalarial drugs for treatment as-well-as prevention has to be given with precaution taking into view of this particular factor. Thus, this phenomenon

not only becomes a problem for the geneticist but also to the Public Health authorities and the Tribal Development authorities.

Belief-system regarding diseases and traditional methods of treatment :

The Kandha of both Belghar and Bissamcuttack areas generally believe in the prevalence of benevolent and malevolent spirits which influence the life in many ways. The most important functionary which concerns us most in the context of health culture is the witch-doctor, who is called "*Kutaka*" in Belghar area and "*Beju/Bejuni*" in Bisamcuttack area. The witch-doctor knows the techniques of counter-acting the evil effects of black magic and appeases the malevolent spirit which cause disease and death. The Kandha also follow several taboos concerning social and religious customs. They also believe that any breach of such taboos causes illness and death.

However, things are changing in the Kandha community with considerable rapidity. Though their faith on their traditional medicine man has changed least the Kandha of the study areas have shown inclination towards modern medical practices. During the field work in both the villages it was apparent that the Kandha are becoming favourably oriented towards modern medical practices and there is no significant cultural resistance to acceptance of these practices provided they are efficacious and are available and accessible to them. Infact, apart from initial inhibition the major handicap is poverty which does not afford a tribal to seek medical help when he is ill.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) Most of the diseases afflicting the Kandha of both the villages viz-Burlubaru and Kurli are mainly due to poor nutrition, lack of safe drinking water, poor environmental sanitation, lack of personal hygiene and ignorance.

- (2) Health education seems to be one single most important factor in keeping the Kandha healthy. Therefore, health education should receive adequate attention and should become an integral part of general education. Health education in these areas may be imparted to them by introducing topics on health in the curriculum of studies and through adult education.
- (3) One of the most significant findings among the Kandha of Kurlu is the wide prevalence of arthritis and allied rheumatic disorders. However, such pathologies are absent among the Kandha of Burlubaru.
- (4) The other major diseases prevalent among the Kandha in both the areas are upper respiratory tract diseases viz; tuberculosis, malaria, skin infections and gastro-intestinal tract disorders.
- (5) Most causes of morbidity and mortality seen in advanced societies like atherosclerotic cardio-vascular and cerebro-vascular disease, diabetes mellitus and cancer are rare among the Kandha of both the areas.
- (6) Incidence of leprosy among the Kandha in Rangaparu village of Belghar area, is quite high. They are not secluded from their society and live in close contact with family members. Therefore, a leprosy asylum will stop spreading this disease.
- (7) In the constant struggle for daily survival health is accorded a low priority. The chief concern of the Kandha of both the areas is with problems of acute illness, childbirth and trauma which interferes with their daily work. Preventive medicine and its long term benefits have little meaning for them whose only concern with health is the treatment of illness which prevents them earning their livelihood. Even pain and fear of major chronic diseases like leprosy and tuberculosis seldom bother them to come forward for early

diagnosis and early treatment until they become disabled and reach a stage of gross debility.

- (8) Malnutrition is one of the major Public Health problems among the Kandha of both the areas. The incidence of malnutrition is comparatively high among the Kandha of Belghar area especially among the vulnerable segments of the population viz; infants, children, pregnant women and nursing mothers.
- (9) Nutritional needs should be solved by the community itself through a better utilization of its own resources that is locally available, cheap but nutritious food. Specific objective should therefore, be to test at the village level how locally acceptable and available food can best meet the nutritional needs of vulnerable section. It is therefore necessary to analyse the food value of such food stuffs which are locally available and popularize such nutritious food as to provide a balance diet to the Kandha.
- (10) The Kandha of both the areas have a strong habit of drinking alcoholic beverages. Before any attempt is made to stop this habit, it is necessary to analyse all types of alcoholic beverages chemically and find out if they contain any nutrients, minerals and vitamins. Any proposal for liquor should include suggestion of substitute which will supply the same nutrients.
- (11) Detailed knowledge about various types of herbal medicines and their medicinal efficacy is over due. Therefore, the nature and value of the herbal medicines used by the Kandha should be studied, understood and analysed in order to assess their scientific worth and efficacy.
- (12) The incidence of sickle-cell disease (sickle-cell trait and anaemia) and the red-cell enzyme-(G-6-PD) deficiency is quite high among the Kandha of Burlubaru. However, such genetic diseases are absent among the Kandha of Kurli.

- (13) An investigation into the prevalence of sickle-cell trait and anemia in other sections of the Kandha tribe residing in various pockets located at different ecological settings is a pressing necessity.
- (14) Studies on G-6-PD deficiency among other sections of the Kandha are also equally important as these groups mostly live in areas which are endemic to malarial infection and this gene often co-exists in the same population. It thus, poses an added health problem when drug challenge exists.
- (15) Genetic and patho-genetic mapping among the tribals in general and among the Kandha in particular with a view not only to detect abnormalities but also to chart lines of future development seem called for.
- (16) Genetic counselling could be given to the Kandha of burlubaru village to prevent marriages between carriers of homozygotes of sickle-cell gene and G-6-PD deficiency to help a process of dilution and elimination of these dreadful disorders.
- (17) There is no cultural resistance among the Kandha to acceptance of modern medical practices as long as they are efficacious and are available and accessible to them. Actually his resources do not permit him to avail of it.
- (18) To set aside the inertia if there is any among them in regard to the adoption of improved medical practices, the first step is to make such practices available at their door step and spread health education among women and then among men.

CHAPTER - II

Tribal Development and its Administration in Retrospect

For a general review of the approaches to tribal development from the time of British rule in India the area inhabited by the Kandha may be divided broadly into three Zones namely; (1) Koraput district (2) Ganjam Agency and (3) Ex-Eastern States Agencies.

Koraput District :

The district of Koraput which was constituted on creation of Orissa as a separate State on 1st April, 1936, was formerly a part of the Vizagapatnam district. It was at that time under the *Maharaja of Jeypore*. The inhabitants of Jeypore *Zamindar* were governed under a land revenue system known as '*Mustajari*', appointed by the *Zamindar* to collect rent from the *ryots* and look to miscellaneous administrative works in the villages which were leased out to him for this purpose. In some places rent was collected in cash and in other places in both kind and cash. Use of money at that time particularly among the tribal people was very much limited on account of lack of marketing and communication facilities. In such a situation a system of cash rent should have been burdensome on the part of the *ryots* in those days. It appears that the system of kind rent would have been of greater advantage to the *ryots* in payment of their rents. But both the systems, particularly the one of cash rent were fraught with malpractices. The *ryots* were completely at the mercy of the *Mustajaris* and were forced to pay whatever amount of rent was demanded by them.

Ganjam Agency:

As regards the Ganjam Agency which included Ghumsur, G.Udayagiri, Balliguda, R.Udayagiri, and Parlakhemundi hill tracts, a different

situation was prevalent. The Agency was extremely hilly and rugged and the climate there in was most unhealthy. The Kandha and the Saora who were the predominant tribal communities of this area were extremely turbulent. Under these conditions the British Government was not in a position to bring it under any regular settlement and as such, as a stop-gap arrangement asked the *Zamindars* to pay a fixed amount of annual *Peskush* to the Government.

In 1836 disturbances broke out in Ghumsur when the *Raja* refused to pay any *peskush*. Mr. Russell, the first member of the Board of Revenue was appointed to control the situation. Mr. Russell's report on the Ghumsur rebellion drew attention of the Government to the barbarous rite of human sacrifice known as '*Meria*' which commonly prevailed among the Kandha. In order to stamp out this horrid practice Captain Campbell was appointed as Assistant to the Collector of Ganjam with special charge over the Kandha Tribe of the Agency tract.

To effectively deal with the emergencies in the Agency areas the Government removed the Agency from the jurisdiction of normal administration and put it under the special control of the Collector as Agent to the Government with Assistant Agents to help him in running the day-to-day administration in the Agency.

It may be mentioned here that although both Koraput and Ganjam were brought under the agency administration the only difference between these two areas was that the former was brought under the permanent settlement and almost all the laws which were in force for revenue administration were also in force there where as the latter was kept outside the purview of any regular settlement and also the laws which were in force in the plains.

British action against the practice of human sacrifice and introduction of an administrative system which was rather unknown in these tracts had upset the Kandha who expressed their dissatisfaction and resentment by rising

many a time in revolt against the Government. The hill Zamindars and their Patros and Bissoiys who were named as wardens of Marches, had also a hand in such disturbances and it was one of the reasons why the British Government did not like to bring the Ganjam Agency under any permanent settlement and to confer proprietary right in the soil on the Zamindars.

In the whole of the Agency tracts both in Koraput and Ganujam the Kandha used to hold land rent free and pay mammul to the Hill Chiefs in kind as well as in cash. Through a proclamation issued in 1846 the Government made it known to the public not to levy any tax on the Kandha. What happened as a result, most of the lands belonging to the Kandha and other tribal communities passed on to the non-tribals by the process of alienation. To put a stop to this process the Agency Tracts Interest and Land Transfer Act-1 of 1870 was passed prohibiting transfer from the tribal people to the non-tribal people without express permission of authorities.

Ex-States :

There was a sizable Kandha population in the ex-states, known as Eastern States Agencies. Being pushed by the advanced non-tribal people, the Kandha and other tribal communities who occupied first the fertile Mahanadi belt retreated and settled down in the secluded hills and forests of the ex-States. This retreat of the tribes had taken place much earlier to the formation of these areas as States.

During disturbances resulting from Muslim incursion and changes in Kingdom in Upper India many princes and persons of nobility migrated to Orissa and infiltrated into these isolated pockets. Being skilled in warfare and having superior technology at their command they fought with aboriginal forerunners, subjugated them and established kingdoms for themselves. Eventually during the British regime they were recognized as the ruling chiefs of their respective kingdoms, which were known as tributary states. Most of these ruling chiefs had no interest in improving the socio-economic condition

of the indigenous population. As a result the old tribal system of social organization, economic life and political organization continued with least change.

Partial Exclusion Policy :

The province of Orissa was created in 1936 and many changes had come about in different spheres of life of the people since then. The Government of India Act had earlier provided for partial exclusion from its operation of certain backward areas principally inhabited by primitive tribes. By the force of this Act the districts of Koraput, Sambalpur, Angul, Kandhamals and Ganjam Agency tracts were declared as 'Partially Excluded Areas'. The outcome of this Act was nothing but storms of criticisms which swept over the whole Country. Typical of the bitter criticisms of this Constitutional provision was that of the Indian Legislative Assembly in February, 1936. The members condemned the exclusion as a trick of the Anthropologists to preserve the aboriginals as museum specimen for the exercise of their "Blessed Science". In the same year, the Indian National Congress meeting at Faizpur, denounced exclusion as "yet another attempt to divide the people of India into different groups with unjustifiable and discriminatory treatment, to obstruct the growth of uniform democratic institutions in the country" and as intended to leave out the larger control, disposition and exploitation of the mineral and forest wealth in those areas and keep their inhabitants apart from India for their easier exploitation and suppression".

Both officials and politicians criticized the special measures for aboriginals. Their plea was that it was unfair and inadequate to single out the tribal communities for special treatment, when there were other backward communities. Others who were in favour of special constitutional measures for the tribal communities had ready answers in stock to these criticisms. According to them the tribal communities were the most backward and worse exploited communities in India, and the least adapted to the impact of modern

conditions. Moreover, the tribal communities had their own distinct culture, languages, social organizations and cultural traditions, which did not apply to the untouchables and other backward castes. Further, all other communities were politically far less backward than the tribal communities.

Lastly, the argument of some section of the population was that even in the partially excluded areas there were untouchables and backward Hindu peasant classes living among the tribal communities while in other areas the tribal minority was always in close symbiosis with non-tribal majority. Therefore, their plea was that it would be impossible to confine the working of the developmental measures to the tribals alone or to the Partially Excluded Areas. There was vast work to be done for the betterment of all people of the country irrespective of caste and creed. Measures which would be taken for the betterment of the tribal communities living in the Partially Excluded Areas would also equally help the non-tribal communities who live with the tribal communities in the same areas for their development.

The policy of exclusion clearly revealed what was in the mind of the Britishers in regard to the tribal problems. Many British Officers held the view that the tribals were a contented and happier people and therefore there was no need for interfering in their way of life. Moreover, it was not an easy task to carry on administration in the thickets of inaccessible regions which are dreaded for their unmitigated forms of unhealthy climates. Being influenced partially by these conditions and partially by concern perhaps of keeping the tribals away from any political infection the British authorities followed the policy of least interference with the tribal communities.

Developmental Efforts in Agency Tracts :

The policy of partial exclusion does not mean preclusion of developmental activities from the tribal areas. In this context Verrier Elwin's interpretation of the policy of exclusion as the Policy of "Leave Them Alone" should be taken with a pinch of salt. The Hill-Tracts Administration report

which have been left behind in the Collectorate of Ganjam by the Agents who were in charge of the administration of the Agency areas amply prove that considerable efforts were made during the British time to develop these areas.

A net-work of administrative arrangements was set up in the Agency areas with the Agent to the Collector of the district at the top and principal, senior and special Assistant Agents posted at various stations at the local level to maintain law and order, promote peace and good Government and execute developmental schemes in the Agency tracts. The reports of these officers show that road, bridges and buildings including bungalows, rest houses and market sheds were built at several places and were kept under proper repair. Military roads connecting strategic places were built to deploy army in emergencies to keep the disturbances in check and restore tranquility in the area. The local Kandha, Saora and non-tribal elements from the plains were employed as labourers in these developmental works.

Census was regularly taken to record death and birth statistics and other demographic aspects of the population. In one of the reports Mr. C.F.MAC CARTIE, Special Assistant Agent, Ganjam, dated Balliguda, 7th April 1881 had reported thus, "the Daringbadi census shows 1229 Kandha girls as compared to 1127 boys. It is the conclusive evidence that there is no infanticide where 30 years ago not a single girl child was to be found". The census enumerators were the school teachers.

As the Agency areas were endemic to malaria and blackwater the administrators were very particular to control these diseases. Repeated occurrences of small pox were also one of the unhealthy features of the terrain. Vaccinators were posted at various places in the Agency tracts to carry on vaccination on a large scale. Sometimes required medical staff working in the plains were deployed in Agency areas to take health measures at the time of epidemic. Lanoline Lymph was supplied from Bangalore fortnightly

to the Tahasildars who distributed them among the vaccinators as per their requirements.

Considerable measures were taken to spread education among the tribal people. Schools with preparatory classes and higher classes were established in different parts of the Agency. The Rule of Three which include Grammer and Dictation, History and Geography as the main subjects of the curriculum was in vogue in these Institutions.

Dedicated teachers belonging to the locality were posted in these schools and there was strict supervision of their performances not only by educational staff but also by the administrative staff of the Government. The teachers were held responsible for any lack of progress in any school and those who did not show good performance were dismissed from service. For example, one of the Assistant Agents had reported that there was a school at Linepada in Balliguda area and it had the largest attendance, 58 out of 92 names on the roll, being exclusively of Kandha community. His observations were that the upper classes of this school were very well taught, but the preparatory classes were in a backward condition. What he did was to dismiss the assistant master who was incharge of preparatory classes as a measure of discipline which yielded better results later on.

There were schools exclusively for the Oriya children and for the tribal children. It was the observation of the Assistant Agents that the Oriya schools were unusually efficient. This was attributed in part to the higher scale of intelligence observed among the pupils who consisted chiefly of the sons of high caste Oriyas including Brahmins and local merchants and in part to the exertions of the masters who were mostly descendants of chieftain lineage.

There were also a few mixed schools where both tribal and non tribal children received education. In such schools the attendance of the tribal children was generally more satisfactory than that of those schools which were exclusively meant for the tribal children. Invariably, Arithmetic was very weak among the Kandha children, but in other branches they were

doing excellently well. There were schools to which the epithet of stationery was those which were handicapped by the incubus of very inferior teachers.

Periodic reviews of the over all progress by the concerned officers of the Agency schools had shown that there was no cause of despondency although progress had not been by leaps and bounds at any rate. It was not the expectation of the authorities to see any very great improvement in the desire of the people to educate their children for many years to come.

For the benefit of education from a subjective point of view no tribal cared a straw. But the principle of self-interest was in operation to foster the popularity of the schools atleast among the Oriyas owing to the facilities which they afforded to their children of attaining to the dignity of mastership provided they could get through the normal classes. The indifference of all classes of Oriyas towards tribal education was too openly displayed to leave room for argument. The hill chiefs and *Mutha* heads all had been shorn for their influence while the parents of tribal children had never exerted themselves further than to "assent with civil leer" to the warnings and exhortations which had been lavished upon them.

The British Government had employed liquor vendor on contract basis to carry on business in liquor in Agency tracts. For example, Messrs Minchin Brothers & Co. had contracted in 1871 to supply liquor to the Goomsur Maliahs where the Oriya Sundis and Panos had been reducing the Kandha to indigence by pandering to their taste for liquor. In 1873 the system was introduced into other hill tracts, but smuggling and illicit distilling were so much prevalent that in March 1883 the system was abandoned. Thereafter licenses were sold by public auction to distill and sell liquor, but no liquor shop keeper was allowed to hold land. This condition was found necessary in order to keep the liquor vendors in check and had to some extent stopped the alienation of Kandha land into their hands and also induced many of them to leave the Agency tract.

The British Officers had marked that the Kandha were very much inclined to enlist themselves in the Police force. In fact, the Governor in council had pointed out that among the numerous scheme which had to be implemented for the development of the Kandha and their native country, that which was regarded by Mr. Mac pherson, the then great authority on the Kandha as one of the most important proposals was in respect of the employment of the Kandha on public services which were suitable to their character and liking. Without considering the acquisition of the Kandha and their usefulness many Assistant Agents had taken many Kandhas on appointment in the police force. It was their observation that the Kandhas were more inclined, if they had a chance, to bully their fellow on the strength of their police uniform than the low country police. In the long run enlistment of the interested Kandhas in the police force had a good effect on the Kandha at large. One good thing was that the Kandha in general became very friendly to the local officials and were found always useful as interpreters.

A series of disturbances of the worst type had taken place when attempts were made by British authorities to stamp out the practice of human sacrifice. Towards the end of last century *Meria* sacrifices had passed off without any bloodshed other than that of the unfortunate buffaloes which were hacked in to shreds as usual at the demand of the Earth Goddess. But there were other factors which were responsible for disturbances and breach of peace.

Throughout the last half of the last century the whole Agency was in a state of insurrection and rebellion. Every part of the Agency tracts was in a state of disorder and violation. The hill chiefs and *Mutha* heads were fighting with one another on issues concerning boundary disputes, family quarrels, and succession inheritance of property. Many chiefs did not obey the Government orders and refused to pay any peshkush. They also instigated the tribals to rebel against the Government. Lacking any permanent settlement and record of rights rack-renting by *Mutha* heads known as Bissoiys and Patros was oppressive beyond measure and when the tribals found it

living in the Partially Excluded Areas and suggest remedies for their improvement. The Committee known as Partially Excluded Areas Enquiry Committee, Orissa consisted of Shri A.V.Thakar of Harijan Sevak Sangh as its Chairman and three other members of Orissa Legislative Assembly as its members.

The enquiry Committee had within its scope a very wide coverage not only in terms of geographical area but also in sectoral development. Its recommendations included reorganization of administrative jurisdiction, enforcement of prohibition, elimination of shifting cultivation, strengthening of veterinary services, improvement of road communication, education, and public health; abolition of bonded-labour, modernization of agricultural practices, plantation of coffee, tobacco and sugarcane and introduction of such other programmes which would protect the tribals against exploitation and improve their socio-economic condition. The Committee submitted the report to the Government in 1940-41 but because of war emergency, the recommendations of the committee could not be implemented and the tribal problems remained unchanged.

In fact, it was only after independence that some concrete steps were taken to ameliorate the tribal condition. To remedy the situation a new policy was evolved by the Government of free India. This post-Independence policy disparaged thoroughly the approach of assimilation which was followed by the missionaries and aimed instead at activating and developing all that was good in the tribal society and culture. In a number of speeches, late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had expressed his attraction towards the tribal people and was filled with great concern about the dangers of their disintegration resulting from imposition of alien way of life upon them. He insisted that the Government should take suitable steps to develop them and extend all help to them to grow according to their own genius and tradition.

Special Multi-Purpose Tribal Development Blocks (SMPT) :

Following from this concern and intensions of the leaders of the nation, special safeguards were provided in the Constitution of India. Article 46 of the Constitution lays out thus. "The State shall promote with special care the weaker section of the people, and in particular of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation ". In accordance with this policy special schemes were prepared to set up Special Multi-Purpose Tribal Development Blocks (S.M.P.T) which were later converted into Tribal Development Blocks(T.D.B) in the undeveloped areas of tribal concentration. Through these special schemes many developmental programmes covering agriculture, irrigation, soil conservation, road communication, health, education, village industries, cooperation, housing and rehabilitation were implemented in the tribal areas.

During the 4th Five-year plan several committees were set up to review the working of such special schemes. Some of the weaknesses in policies and programmes of tribal development which were dictated by the review committees are, (a) since many sectoral programmes were dependent on the limited resources of the Back-ward classes welfare Sector they got atrophied financially and physically, (b) there was failure to comprehend distinctive characteristics of the tribal areas and Scheduled Tribes, and (c) the policies and programmes as-well-as the administrative machinery therefore were hardly moulded to their needs.

Tribal sub-Plan Approach :

From the lessons learnt in the past a new strategy was evolved for planning development of the tribal areas and tribal communities. This strategy is called Tribal sub-Plan which was grounded from the 5th plan period. Three basic principles were recognized in the formulation of the strategy. First, that there is variation in the social, political, economic and cultural milieu among

the different Scheduled Tribe communities in the country. Second, that their demographic distribution reveals their concentration in parts of some States and dispersal in other. Third, that the primitive tribal communities live in isolated pockets. Hence, the broad approach of tribal development has had to be related to their level of development and pattern of distribution. In predominant tribal regions area approach with focus on development of tribal communities has been favoured while for primitive groups community oriented programme has been preferred. The dispersed tribals found in pockets have to avail of the programmes of rural development. For execution of programmes having integrated thrust, pooling of finances from all sectors has been regarded as an essential requisite.

Based on these guidelines the area having more than 50% tribal concentration was carved out for the operation there in of the tribal sub-plan. This area was split up into smaller areas called Integrated Tribal Development Agencies (ITDAs). Each ITDA serves as the unit of planning and execution of developmental programmes and there are 21 such ITDAs in the State. [A list of the ITDAs with other details is given in Annexure I]. The Kandha population is predominant in as many as six ITDAs.

The Tribal sub-plan aims at comprehensive development with focus on the individual family. The families living below the poverty-line, whether belonging to Scheduled Tribe communities or not are identified and their felt-needs and problems assessed and suitable programmes for their development are executed. Apart from core economic sectors like agriculture, animal husbandry, horticulture, etc. sufficient emphasis is given on development of education. In fact, improvement of education has been taken as the key sector in the 6th plan.

The idea of integration in terms of sectoral programmes and pooling of resources is fundamental in the concept of tribal sub-plan. In the past, the tribal areas had been deprived of their due share of funds. The infrastructure was poorly developed and therefore, capacity for the absorption of funds

was very low. This situation explains why there was inhibition in investment in the tribal areas. All these factors resulted in stagnation of infrastructural facilities in tribal areas. This vicious circle is now being broken by quantified investment in the tribal areas for infrastructure and individual family development from the Central and State plans as-well-as institutional finance. This effort was initiated in the 5th plan and is now carried out systematically and thoroughly.

Development of Primitive Tribes :

At the time of review of tribal development programmes on the eve of the 5th plan it was recognized that special programmes for the extremely backward tribal groups known as primitive groups should be taken up on the basis of proper identification on the lines suggested by the Shilu Ao Team and Dhebar Commission. It was also considered that the programmes meant for the development of these primitive groups would be financed cent percent by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

In the identification of primitive groups three norms are generally followed.

- (1) Pre-agricultural level of technology
- (2) Low level of literacy and
- (3) Stagnant or diminishing population.

On the basis of these norms 13 tribal communities have been identified as primitive. They are (1) Bondo (2) Chuktia Bhunjia, (3) Didayi, (4) Dongria Kandha, (5) Hill-Kharia, (6) Mankidia, (7) Birhor, (8) Juang, (9) Kutia Kandha, (10) Lanjia Saora, (11) Lodha, (12) Paudi Bhuinya and (13) Saora

The area inhabited by each of these primitive groups is delineated and project reports for their development have been prepared. As the aptitudes, felt-needs and aspirations are different from one primitive group to the other the programmes of development are specific to each group. Moreover, the

ecological setting of each group is taken into consideration while formulating the projects for the development of primitive groups.

The problem of primitive groups is not mainly economic. Though raising of the economic level is undoubtedly an important aspect, some of the recent studies on primitive groups show incidence of genetic abnormalities like sickle-cell anemia, and G-6-PD deficiency and sexually transmitted diseases.

Special Projects which are formulated for the development of the primitive groups are known as Micro projects. These Micro Projects are in operation in seventeen different areas inhabited by primitive groups. The list of Micro Projects with other details is given in Annexure-II.

Development of Tribals in MADA Pockets :

The ITDAs and the Micro-Projects cover about 63 per cent of the total tribal population of the State. In other words, there are 37 per cent of the total tribal population which are scattered in some areas in lesser concentration outside the Tribal Sub-plan area. In pursuance of the guidelines issued by the Government of India in the Ministry of Home Affairs, 30 tribal pockets of lesser concentration have been identified outside the present Tribal Sub-plan area of the State. The criterion adopted for delineation of such pockets is that each pocket should have a minimum of 10,000 total population out of which not less than 50% should be Scheduled Tribe population. The villages within a pocket should be contiguous to one another to qualify their inclusion in the pocket. These pockets are known as Modified Area Development Approach (MADA) pockets. The total population of these 46 identified pockets is about 10,48,588 out of which the tribal population is 5,67,071. Roughly 8.06 percent of the total tribal population of the State is covered under MADA pockets as per 1991 Census. In addition to these MADA Pockets, 14 Cluster Approach Pockets have been identified for the development of Tribals. (Annexure III & IV)

All these special projects including proposed MADA and Cluster Pockets which have been evolved under the new strategy for tribal development in the fifth and sixth Five Year Plans cover roughly 73.74 percent of the total tribal population of the State. There are still 26.26 percent of tribal population which do not come under special plan. These tribal communities may be in a scattered form in some areas and in some concentration in other areas. There may be broadly two categories of distribution.

1. Concentration of tribal population between 2000 and 3000 in a particular settlement situated in dominant non-tribal locality and
2. Dispersed tribal population below 2000 in a specified locality above 50Sq. Kms.

For the first category of tribal distribution community approach with emphasis on individual benefit schemes will be most suitable whereas the approach suitable for the other two categories of distribution will be of the integrational type. The tribal people living widely scattered among non-tribal majority in larger area may not be able to utilize the help that will be extended to them for their development. In such places the non-tribal majority who are dominant numerically, economically and politically are likely to expropriate the benefits from the special schemes meant for the tribal communities. In such a situation tribal population should not be considered a part society in a larger society, rather the correct approach should be to view the tribal population as part and parcel of the larger society. Unless a feeling of inter-ethnic emotional intergration forstered in the locality in question no harmonious development can take place there. The tribal people and the equally needy non-tribal people will be treated alike in the matter of administration of development in this locality.

ANNEXURE-1

List of ITDAs in Orissa with other details

Sl. No.	Name of the ITDA	Area of operation including the district to which it belongs	Total geographical Area (in Sq. Kms)	Total population	Total Scheduled Tribes population	Predominant Tribe (S)
1.	Bripada	Baripada sub-division of Mayurbhanj dist	2993.82	930367	497677	Santal, Munda
2.	Rairangpur	Rairangpur sub-division of Mayurbhanj dist.	2144.33	443341	292030	Santal, Ho
3.	Karanjia	Karanjia sub-division of Mayurbhanj dist	1798.18	371630	224918	Santal, Kolha, Bathudi
4.	Kaptipada	Kaptipada sub-division of Mayurbhanj dist.	1460.08	328065	218675	Santal Munda, Bathudi
5.	Nilgiri	Nilgiri block of Balasore dist.	224.16	110232	61902	Bathudi
6.	Sundergarh	Sundergarh sub-division of sundargarh dist	3647.66	630139	400959	Oraon, Kisan, Munda
7.	Panposh	Panposh sub-division of sundargarh dist	1785.75	378195	241993	Oraon
8.	Bonai	Bonai sub-division of sundargarh dist	2259.06	277001	187471	Bhuinya
9.	Keonjhar	Keonjhar sub-division of Keonjhar dist	5532.12	704950	401798	Juang, Bhuinya

10	Champua	Champua sub-division of Keojanjhar dist.	1190.37	300589	155244	Gond, Santal
11.	Kuchinda	Kuchinda sub-division of Sambalpur dist	1930.08	241773	138574	Kisan, Oraon
12.	Koraput	Koraput sub-division of Koraput dist.	3359.44	532552	316197	Kandha, Paroja
13.	Rayagada	Rayagada sub-division off Koraput disdt	2641.91	357281	229092	Kandha
14.	Jeypore	Jeypore sub-division of Koraput dist	2263.68	458111	239359	Gadaba, Paroja
15.	Malkangiri	Malkangiri sub-division of Koraput dist	4409.07	469582	284371	Koya, Bonda, Bhattada
16.	Nawarangpur	Nawarangpur sub-division of Koraput dist	3912.23	972902	558756	Gond
17.	Phulbani	Phulbani sub-division of Phulbani dist	2162.26	153830	85327	Kandha
18.	Thuamul Rampur	Thuamul Rampur and Lanjigarh blocks of Kalahandi dist	1328.50	140912	74543	Kandha
19.	Paralakhemundi	Paralakhemundi sub-division of Ganjam dist	2980.11	347022	237489	Saora, Kandha
20.	Balliguda	Balliguda sub-division of Phulbani dist	6283.48	450277	245210	Kandha
21.	Gunupur	Gunupur sub-division of Koraput dist	2941.29	388022	223760	Saora
			56242.58	8985773	5315345	

Source : Baseline Survey of SCSTRTI

ANNEXURE-1I

PTG Population, Literacy and number of Households of Micro Projects in Orissa (2001-2002)

Sl. No	Name of the districts	Name of the PTG	Name of the Micro Projects	Blocks	No. of GP	No. of village/hamlet	No. of House-holds	PTG Population			Literacy %
								Male	Female	Total	
1.	Angul	Paudi Bhuyan	PBDA, Jamardihi	Pallahara	3	27	1192	2593	2445	5038	29.60
2.	Deogarh	Paudi Bhuyan	PBDA, Rugudakudar	Barkote	5	32	851	1714	1687	3401	20.46
3.	Ganjam	Saora	TDA, Tumba	Patrapur	3	58	850	1876	1847	3723	22.13
4.	Nuapara	Chuktia Bhunjia	CBDA, Sonabeda	Komna	2	12	519	1085	1089	2174	34.87
5.	Sundargarh	Paudi Bhuyan	PBDA, Khutgaon	Lahunipada	3	22	918	1873	1893	3766	12.64
6.	Malkangiri	Bonda	BDA, Mudulipada	Khairput	3	38	1493	2563	2967	5530	6.35
		Didayi	DDA, Bayapada	Kudumul-guma & Khairput	4	37	1320	2706	2903	5609	5.84
7.	Rayagada	Dongaria Kandha	DKDA, Kurli	Bissam Cuttack & Muniguda	6	62	1253	2462	3115	5577	8.19
		Dongaria Kandha	DKDA, Parsali	Kalyan-singhpur	2	40	551	996	1379	2375	9.26
		Lanjia Saora	LSDA, Puttasing,	Gunupur	1	21	767	2221	2326	4547	30.99

8.	Gajapati	Lanjia Saora Saora	LSDA, Seranga SDA, Chandragiri	Seranga	3	21	1241	2502	2612	5114	23.90
9.	Kandhamal	Kutia Kandha	KKDA, Belghar	Tumudi Bandha	2	67	1148	2527	2714	5241	17.13
10.	Kalahandi	Kutia Kandha	KKDA, Lanjigarh,	Lanjigarh	2	17	557	1240	1202	2442	30.55
11.	Keonjhar	Juang	JDA, Gonasika	Banspal	6	35	1496	3501	3619	7120	19.12
12.	Mayurbhanj	Lodha Hill-Khadia & Mankurdia	LDA, Moroda HKMDA, Jashipur	Morada & Suliapada Jasipur & Karanjia	6	8	695	1312	1158	2470	13.68
12 Districts		13 PTGs	17 Micro Projects	20 Blocks	69	547	16,361	34,425	36,232	70,657	19.08

Source : Baseline Survey of SCSTRTI

ANNEXURE-III

Existing Modified Area Development Approach (MADA) Pockets in Orissa MADA - Wise Total and ST Population as per 1991 Census

Sl. No	District	Name of the MADA Pocket	Name of Block (Pt)	No. of villages covered	Total population as per 1991 census	ST population as per 1991 census	% of ST population to Total population
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Jajpur	1 Sukinda-I	1 Sukinda	33	23543	13552	57.56
		2 Sukinda-II		12	14375	7339	51.05
		3 Sukinda-III		24	19161	9931	51.83
		4 Dhangadi	2 Dhangadi	23	24189	13268	54.85
2.	Khurda	5 Banapur-Ranapur	3 Banapur 4 Ranapur	41 41	9531 7521	7229 3101	75.50 41.23
3.	Nayagarh	6 Nuagaon 7 Gania	5 Nuagaon 6 Gania 7 Dasapalla	107 30 166	11248 2582 26324	7863 2003 11152	69.91 77.58 42.36
4	Balasore	8 Jaleswar	8 Jaleswar	31	24259	13588	56.01
5	Keonjhar	9 Anandpur 10 Anandpur 11 Hatadihi	9 Anandpur -do- 10 Hatadihi	55 29 28	24362 23623 20199	19633 13952 10673	80.59 59.06 52.84

		12	Ghasipura	11	Ghasipura	33	20978	13022	62.07
6	Anugul	13	Pallahara	12	Pallahara	145	51034	24434	47.88
		14	Athamallik	13	Athamallik	56	15933	7755	48.67
7	Dhenkanal	15	Kankadahada	14	Kankadahada	52	36482	17614	48.28
8	Ganjam	16	Turubudi	15	Turubudi	90	12611	5981	47.43
9	Gajapatu	17	Kashinagar	16	Kashinagar,	34	11.290	6847	60.65
10	Boudh	18	Boudh	17	Boudh	149	17458	8179	46.85
11	Bolangir	19	Khaprakhol	18	Khaprakhol	56	26216	13118	50.04
		20	Tureikela	19	Tureikela	22	13202	6818	51.64
		21	Tentulikhunti	20	Gudvela	38	15824	7863	49.69
		22	Deogaon - Patmagarh	21	Deogaon	11	5015	2944	58.70
		23	Saintala - Muribahal	22	Patmagarh	20	11122	5907	53.11
				23	Saintala	17	5697	2449	51.76
				24	Muribahal	30	14993	7779	51.88
12	Sambalpur	24	Dhankouda	25	Dhankouda	24	19430	11031	56.77
		25	Jujumura	26	Jujumura	92	47947	25363	52.90
				27	Rengali	24	21105	12249	58.04
13	Jharsuguda	26	Kolabira-Rengali	28	Kolabira	17	12853	6767	52.65
		27	Lakhanpur	29	Lakhanpur	19	14793	8042	54.36
		28	Jharsuguda-Lakhanpur		Lakhanpur	10	8010	4438	55.41
		29	Laikera - Kirimira	30	Jharsuguda	25	13268	5956	44.89
				31	Laikera	22	14045	9357	66.62
				32	Kirimira	23	15643	9692	61.96

14	Baragarh	30	Paikmal	33	Paikmal	30	16779	8445	50.33
		31	Paikmal- Jharbandha		Paikmal	36	28433	13749	48.36
				34	Jharbandha	9	5868	2972	50.65
15	Deogarh	32	Barkote	35	Barkote	44	18696	8004	42.81
		33	Tileibani	36	Tileibani	162	35184	19301	54.86
16	Kalahandi	34	Bhawanipatna	37	Bhawanipatna	94	19781	11298	57.12
		35	Kesinga	38	Kesinga	17	13995	7727	55.21
		36	Junagarh	39	Junagarh	41	14160	8234	58.15
		37	M. Rampur	40	M. Rampur	157	24710	14218	57.54
		38	Jaipatna	41	Jaipatna	24	19064	11144	58.46
		39	Narala	42	Narala	23	11219	5504	49.06
17	Nawapara	40	Komna	43	Komna	73	48923	27465	56.14
		41	Boden	44	Boden	50	38931	20881	53.64
		42	Nawapara	45	Nawapara	36	19531	9761	49.98
		43	Nawapara		-do-	41	32316	16330	50.53
		44	Khariar	46	Khariar	16	12277	7208	58.71
		45	Khariar		-do-	27	14248	7618	53.47
		46	Sinpalli	47	Sinpalli	44	18607	9823	52.79
					Total :	2553	1048588	567071	54.08

Source : ST & SC Development Department, Govt. of Orissa

ANNEXURE-IV

Cluster Approach Pockets in Orissa

District	Year of Starting	ST	Name of the Cluster Pocket	No. of Vill	Total Population of the part block	S.T. population of the Part Block	% S.T. to the total population	% of S.T. to total S.T. of all Cluster pocket
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Jajpur	Nov.96	1	Barachana	7	5234	3010	57.51	5.70
Dhenkanal	March,87	2	Dhenkanal	23	8402	4574	54.44	8.66
Angul	-do-	3	Angul	35	7770	3884	49.99	7.36
Sambalpur	-do-	4	Naktiduel	31	7018	3831	54.59	7.26
Bargarh	-do-	5	Padmapur	10	6953	3495	50.27	6.62
Bolangir	-do-	6	Belpada	12	6523	3143	48.18	5.95
Ganjam	-do-	7	Suruda	42	5799	2355	40.61	4.46
-do-	-do-	8	Sanakhemundi	29	7064	3928	55.61	7.44
Boudh	-do-	9	Kantamal	34	7262	3452	47.54	6.54
Kalahandi	Aug '90	10	Kokasara-I	9	10353	5123	49.48	9.70
-do-	-do-	11	Kokasara-II	5	7486	2494	33.32	4.72
-do-	-do-	12	Jaipatna-II	5	8431	5115	60.67	9.69
-do-	-do-	13	Bhawanipatna	11	8197	4631	56.50	8.77
Nuapada	-do-	14	Nuapada	17	7365	3758	51.03	7.12
			Total	270	103857	52793	50.83	100.00

Compiled by Statistics Section, ST & SC Development Department, Govt. of Orissa

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