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This is a quarterly journal dealing with articles and research findings in various social sciences, developmental strategies and other co-related matters emphasising the problems of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. It also publishes reviews of books pertaining to the aforementioned subjects.

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Contributions based on Anthropology, Demography, Economics, Human Geography, Museology, Planning and Sociology with particular reference to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are invited. The articles should be type-written in double space on one side of half foolscap paper. Invariably two copies of the articles should be sent. The contributors should also not forget to send their bio-data in a separate sheet alongwith the article and its brief synopsis. No remuneration is paid to the contributors. Only twenty-five off-prints of the articles are supplied. Two copies of the books should be sent for purpose of review.

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Ecology and Technology of livelihood as determinants of tribal economy in Eastern India

L. K. MAHAPATRA

This is a partly analytical paper, seeking to expose some broad correlations, not necessarily to establish any causal relationship of deterministic nature. Of course, it will be quite in order, if any imputed deterministic relationship is shown to be invalid. For, it is easy to visualize a deterministic relationship between ecology and technology of "production" on the one hand, and the nature of economy on the other. At the outset, it may be considered whether "technology of production", faces the danger of being restricted. "Production" has precise and specific connotation in social sciences even in anthropology. We distinguish between food-gathering and food production economies. If "technology of livelihood" is used here to refer to the technology with the means of which a group's major food resources are gathered, harvested or derived, stored and reproduced for repetitive uses, there may not be any confusion, and moreover, this may be heuristically adequate. We may also note that in anthropological context "ecology" also includes social-cultural ecology. Then, there is the problem of delimiting the time and space for this paper. The recently introduced modern technology sponsored through the development institutions by the State may define the period which is out side the present consideration. While focusing on eastern India proper, it may be necessary to take into our ambit territories or peoples belonging, by many accounts, to north-eastern India. However, we may remember that at least since neolithic times, it is easy to point out cultural, inclusive of linguistic, continuities of eastern India with north-eastern India, even with south east Asian regions beyond. Again, we have to analyse the multiplex relationship not only between ecology and technology of livelihood on the one hand, and the nature and type of economy on the other, but also between

ecology and technology. In as much as the nature and type of economy are affected vitally by the presence or absence of the State and of individual property rights in land and other resources, the limitations of the co-relations may be exposed. The scope of this paper is further restricted to the societies, called "tribal" or "marginal" in India. We shall consider food gathering, swidden, irrigated terraces and low land cultivation as types of economies.

Food-gathering peoples of Eastern and North-eastern India are known in anthropological literature to be : Hill Kharia of Orissa, the Birhor of Bihar and Orissa, Parhaia of Bihar, and the Sulung of Assamachal Pradesh. Recent research by the Department of Anthropology, Utkal University, has identified the Ujia, at present included in the list of Scheduled Castes in Orissa, as basically in the same eco-technological status as of the Hill Kharia of Similipahar range of Mayurbhanj, and enjoying locally the same social status as the Hill Kharia, who claim the Ujia as their "brother" of the "Shabara" group. The Korwa of North West Orissa, South-west Bihar and the adjoining region of Madhya Pradesh, was long credited with a gathering economy. All these ethnic groups used to live in the hills and forests, depending on the forest-based resources for their major means of livelihood, at least before the recent ethnographic reports were available since the beginning of the twentieth Century. In technology there was a more or less uniform range of appliances and equipments; digging sticks, nets to catch wild animals, stunning fish in hill streams with wild berries with toxic properties, living in semi-nomadic existence in temporary huts while gathering forest produce, earthen cooking pots and a few other domestic tools.

When the economy of each of these groups is closely analysed, almost in all cases instability and dependency on the local tribes and castes, often under the supervising arm of the State, characterise their economy. The Hill Kharia, the Ujia and the Birhor seem to have entered the market economy of the respective regions since time immemorial, most probably before the colonial times. The Hill Kharia and the Ujia are marginal to small-scale farmers, when not landless and have developed almost a stable market relationship with low land traders, lately also with Forest Corporation of Orissa, to trade their commodities; wild honey, arrow-root and sal resin. A good number of fledgelings of some pet birds from the hills fetch good price during some seasons. The Birhor collect materials for ropes from the forest and sell the ropes in the weekly markets that dot the fringe of the hills. All these groups have come to evolve from a forest food-gathering economy to be largely a market-oriented economy compromised with State forest laws and officials. The Hill Kharia and Ujia alternate between forest-gathering and farming or day-labour, while the Birhor migrate to some other forest areas with ample materials for ropes and monkeys which they catch and eat with relish. The dependence of the Birhor on the market will be clearly established by determining the frequency of their cooking rice for food which they purchase. The Korwa had developed some strong tendency to depend on marginal farming.

If Surajit Sinha's hypothesis is taken into consideration, the Birhor may be Parhaia and some other hunter-gatherer groups of to-day may have relapsed into a more unstable "Marginal" economy. The Hill Kharia claim that they had chiefs among them and some forts in Simli Pahar range are alleged to be their strongholds. However, our limited observations confirm that food-gathering economy could be said to be directly and positively correlated with a specific ecological system and technology. But the moment the State makes inroads into their habitat or circumscribes their resource base, because of the urgency and value of the forest wealth, the economy becomes destabilized till it reaches a new compromise and new level of stability of interactions and inter-dependence with the State, the market system and the neighbouring ethnic groups. The Sulung in Arunachal Pradesh, who were good hunters and gatherers had existed in a Stateless society for centuries, there was no pressure from the State to change their economy,

which had taken to swidden cultivation in some measure; but their economy was dependent on that of the Dafia and Miji dominant neighbours, in a more or less analogous position as between the Negroes and Pigmy Negrillos in Central Congo of Africa.

If the Andamanese could be considered here, their ecology and technology could be said to be correlated almost perfectly with the nature and type of economy they had.

In all these groups there was no property right in land, forest resources or marine resources, except the right of discovery of the honeycombs among the Kharia and Ujia or similar rights of first appropriation at a particular place or time. Although sharing and co-operation in economic pursuits was not uncommon, the communal hut of the Andamanese was an exception. Hunting and Food gathering economy in Eastern India of historical times may not be credited with plentiful resources all the year round, as for example, one encounters among the acorn gatherers of California or stable fisheries of Northwest coast of U. S. A., the only exception being the Andamanese. We do not find any technology developed to store the gathered food materials among the forest-based groups; this may be due to the nature of food materials collected: the tubers, roots and fruits are not amenable to storing as acorn seeds are.

As for the swiddeners of eastern and north eastern India, we find them parched on hill slopes and spurs, even on hill tops, a few of them occupying the valley as well as the hill slopes in the mountainous region in monsoon India. There are two patterns of swidden cultivation. In north eastern India, which straddles the adjacent regions of southeast Asia, several varieties of crops are grown by planting seeds together in the dibbled holes in the swidden plot before the heavy rains. In the eastern Indian type, the field is hoed or the soil is turned up with pickaxe and major crops like paddy and pulses are sown broadcast, with the soil being turned over to cover the seeds. Among the Hill Bhuinya and Juang of Orissa the plough is used for cultivation of the soil along the contour, the hoe being reserved for the corners or rocky outcrops. So far as our knowledge goes, the Koya of Koraput also uses the plough in swidden fields, which are on slopes of low gradient. The Hill Bhuinya case could be taken as a case of carryover of the plough to the hill slopes, as numerous plains Bhuinya are low land agriculturists. But the

Mundari speaking Juang in similar ecological setting also use the plough and like the Hill Bhuiyan worship the goddess of Paddy, Laksmi. Ploughing among the Bhuiyan and the Juang of Orissa goes back to the local state system which imposed plough-tax of Rupee one per plough, which was traditionally fixed till the recent revenue settlement. Forest restrictions and shrinkage of the forest have reduced the area of swidden, and coupled with pressure of population, have forced them to shorten the following cycle. Many families have settled down to low land agriculture on lands given by the Government. But for several centuries, it appears, their technology did not change substantially, except substituting iron scrapers for bamboo ones in northeastern hills or using dibbles with iron point in place of a tapered bamboo point. What has most probably endured is the swiddeners entering into the local market system for selling their 'cash' crops, hill pulses, oilseeds, and for purchasing rice, cloth, spices, salt, tobacco, iron, etc. The next jump for swiddeners in Thailand and Laos, etc. is to grow and sell cash crops like opium and in parts of Indonesia, to grow and sell coffee, cloves, vanilla, etc., on individually held hill land.

Unlike the food-gatherers and hunters, the economy of the swiddeners from very ancient times, appears to be an adjunct to the market economy and the state system in eastern India. Metal technology has entered the swidden system since time immemorial. The Asur and the iron smelters (Agaria) and fabricators like Luhura of Bihar and Orissa were too close to the swiddeners and plough cultivators with too alluring a model to be avoided. The swiddeners who took to the plough adapted the ploughing technique to hill slopes; yet, ploughing the slopes might have eroded the soil more than the hoe or pick. However, the hills in Koraput (South Orissa) district are denuded of vegetation, but not so the hills of Bhuiyan and Juang habitat.

So, we find the technology of swiddeners adapted to the soil type, physiography and ecology of the hills, though the Bhuiyan and Juang exceptions with plough cultivation do not seem to be completely out of place with the hill ecology. The reason why there is no significant soil erosion in Bhuiya and Juang hills may be found in the practice of communal selection and distribution of swidden land. In local theory, the land belongs to the village, legally the state owns it. In South Orissa the

swidden land is parcelled into individually owned plots, which does not deter the owner from over cultivating the land, reducing it to degradation. In north-eastern India, communal ownership and control of land, respected by the State, coupled with higher rainfall and faster rate of recuperation of vegetation, have not allowed the swiddens to degrade and erode the land obtrusively. It is interesting to note that in north eastern India the tribal rights in land were retained because of the bloody fights with the British and because of the strategic location along frontiers and in the Bhuiya Juang areas, because these tribes were politically important and Rajas had to depend on their support and hence to respect their traditional rights.

There are a few tribal groups with terraces on hillslopes, irrigated by channelizing a hill stream. The terraces are constructed with meticulous care, often over two generations and yield permanent crop, usually paddy. There are also dry terraces depending on the rainfall as its water source. The Hill Saora of Ganjam and Koraput hills, the Apa Tani of Siang district, Arunachal Pradesh and the Angami Naga of Nagaland are the famous examples. Edmund Leach had once advocated the view that with head-hunting menace all around, only permanent terrace cultivation ensured safety and food security. While this fits nicely into the Naga case and more or less embraces the Apa Tani case, as the neighbouring Dafia were aggressive raiders all around, this is hardly applicable to the hill Saora. The Kondh are swiddeners and the hill-Saora are both swiddeners and terrace cultivators, even when living in the same village. If there was aggressiveness, it was indulged in by the hill Saora who sometimes raided the plains villages, not without sufficient or cumulative reasons. However, the very fact that under the same ecological conditions and constraints, the Saora are terrace-cultivators, whereas their nextdoor neighbour, Kondh, are swiddeners, points to the lack of congruence between ecology on the one hand and technology and economy on the other. But once the economy of terrace agriculture predisposes the family to cling to their hard-wrought terraces, there is no surprise in the Hill Saora having joint family owning the terraced property, while the Kondh have developed no joint family, the swidden land originally being held by the clan. The Hill Bonda, aggressive by nature, have maintained their relative isolation because of their hill terraces.

We may also note that the Apa Tani have irrigated terrace agriculture with hoe and no plough technology: so also the Angami. But the Saora have the plough for his terraces. It seems, hoe-cultivation of irrigated terraces was the most frequent south-east Asian trait.

The lowland agriculture in privately owned land with plough and other technological outfit of the ordinary Indian peasant characterizes the tribal groups of middle and eastern India, with dependence on a compliment of specialist castes like blacksmith. (The Hill Saora had developed even specialised groups of braziers, basketmakers, weavers and potters among them.) Here we have the Mundari speakers, the Santal, Ho, Munda, Kharia and some Saora, and the Dravidian speakers, the Gond, some Kondh, Oraon, Kisan and Mirdha. There is an interesting commentary on the ecological and technological factors when weighed against the cultural ones. The Hill Saora are swiddeners and terrace-cultivators, but the acculturated Hinduized Shuddha Shabara (called, locally Sudha Saora) won't have anything to do with swidden cultivation, which is a mark of low "Lanjia Saora" status. Thus in the same ecological zone on similar hill slopes, the Kondh and Lanjia Saora are swiddener and the Sudha Saora, terrace and low-land agriculturist.

If the economy of the hunter-gatherer is market-oriented because of internal inadequacy and instability and external constraints, the economy of the low-land agriculturist with mono crop harvest is market-oriented and cash-crop-based because of its very nature and

external relations of superordination and subordination. In Chotanagpur and elsewhere indigenous lift-irrigation and even tank irrigation is practised for irrigating the low-land fields, in the valley villages the Bhuiyan and others dam up the hill streams and train the water channel to irrigate their field. The ecological and technological opportunities are fully utilised with the technology borrowed from the neighbours. The Ho are low-land agriculturist. Their swiddening forebears, the Cerenga Kolha or Erenga Kol in Orissa (in Sundargarh district) have been observed to be very successful low-land agriculturist, using traditional co-operative mutual exchange labour to advantage.

In passing, we may take note of the very few pastoral groups like the Sherdukpen of Kameng district, Arunachal Pradesh, who migrated seasonally between India and Tibetan areas of the Himalayas, the ecological constraint is very palpable and strong. Their technology was adapted to this economy based on migration, which afforded them the opportunity to be middlemen and traders between Indian and Tibetan regions.

Therefore, we may conclude that inspite of the wide range of variation in ecology, technology and economy which the tribal people of eastern and north eastern India exhibited, there is a general interdependence between them. However, cultural orientations and opportunities may transcend ecological and technological deficiencies and constraints to result in an economy not logically or empirically deduced from ecological conditions or technological level.

End note :

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Impact of evolving forest policy and planned development on indigenous people in Orissa : The case of Pauri Bhuinyas

N. K. BEHURA

The Bhuinya is one of the most widespread tribes found in the States of Assam, West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The Bhuinya tribe can be classified into two broad sections on the basis of geographical area, such as, the Northern section and the Southern section. The Northern section has its main concentration in Bihar and the Southern section has its concentration in Orissa. The Bhuinya population in Orissa as per 1981 census is 207,793 (Male 103,048 and Female 104,745).

In Orissa the Bhuinyas mostly live in the districts of Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Sundargarh and Sambalpur. They mainly inhabit the Eastern-Ghat hill range which transverses through these districts in North-South direction. There are as many as fifteen types of Bhuinyas, and the Pauri or hill Bhuinya of Northern Orissa appear to be the most numerous and primitive section depending wholly or mostly on shifting cultivation. The present study is on Pauri Bhuinyas of Keonjhar and Sundargarh. Field investigation has been carried out among the Pauri Bhuinyas in four villages, two in each district during 1988.

Identity and self-image

As regards identity and self-image, the views of the Pauri Bhuinyas conform to the general pattern of creation stories of other tribes of the State. They believe that the creator, Dharam Devta, existed before all else on earth. From the ocean arose the earth and Dharam Devta created a man and woman out of the mud, the first couple was killed by a tiger created by the God and their blood was used to steady the earth. The ancestors of the Bhuinya emerged out of mother earth; and therefore the tribe is named as Bhuinya or earth-born. The appellation also

suggests that they are autochthones or children of the soil or *Bhumi* or *Bhuin*. The term Pauri refers to hill, and thus Pauri Bhuinya means the Bhuinyas that live on the hills.

As they lived in hilly and forest ecosystem, their dependence on forest was nearly complete. Forest not only influenced their livelihood, but also shaped their personality, world-view and ideology.

Forest and the tribals in Orissa

In the past relationship between the forest and the tribals was very intimate as the latter lived in or around forests. Tribals used to think that they were the owners of the forests because before the formulation of the forest policy they managed and freely exploited the forest resources. The traditional tribal mode of exploitation of forests has been halted due to rapid deforestation. The report of the National Remote Sensing Agency (N. R. S. A.), released in mid-1984, makes some disturbing revelations. It shows that while in 1972-75, 16.89 per cent of the total land area of the country was under forest cover, by 1980-82 it had dwindled to 14.10 per cent, that is, a loss of 2.79 per cent during the seven-year period. The total tree cover in 1972-75 was 55.52 million hectares, while in 1980-82 it came down to 46.35 million hectares, i. e., a total loss of 9.17 million hectares. This indicates that India has been losing on an average 1.3 million hectares of forests every year. During this period Orissa witnessed deforestation of 9 lakh hectares (Fernandes, 1988:3). In Orissa the *per capita* forest area is 0.2576 hectares (N. R. S. A., 1982: 8-9) only.

The impact of the massive deforestation may be seen in three sets of interdependent factors:

(a) the environmental factor, that is, the country is threatened with inevitable ecological imbalance (b) the human or social factor, that is, restricted access and non-availability of forest produce which brings misery to that section of population which traditionally depended on forests, and (c) development factor, that is, economic growth of the country is affected by the non-availability of forest based raw materials. However, environmental issue is more important than the development issue.

The availability of forests is decreasing everyday in India, while the requirements are mounting. For instance, nearly 80 per cent of the country's population use firewood as their principal domestic fuel, and it accounts for 70 per cent of all the varieties of fuel used for cooking.

Major causes of deforestation

Population pressure is a predominant factor of deforestation. It is often alleged that the local inhabitants destroy the forests for their various needs. No doubt they as forest dwellers collect timber, bamboo, firewood and minor forest produce, apart from hunting birds and animals from the forest. Some of the tribal communities do practise swidden or shifting cultivation and some persons mention this as a major cause of deforestation. Such people certainly underestimate the impact of industries which take to large-scale tree felling to meet their requirements of raw materials. This is being done with the approval of the government, and not only this, government also encourages reclamation of forests for revenue requirements, agriculture, for rehabilitation of displaced persons and for several development purposes. Thus deforestation is caused by a combination of factors. The forest dwellers get the brunt of the accusation most because they do not have access to the mass media so as to defend themselves. The Pauri Bhuinyas are also victims of depletion of forest resources and the evolving forest policy of the government.

Traditional Economy

The traditional economy of the Pauri Bhuinyas is an undifferentiated one. It consists of a variety of activities, and includes gathering, collecting of edible items from the forest, hunting, fishing, pastoralism, shifting cultivation and plain land cultivation. In the past their dependence on gathering, hunting and shifting cultivation was more, because the environment was bounteous and there was no restriction on their use of the forest even a few decades ago. With the shrinkage

of vegetational cover, degradation of forests, depletion of forest resources and progressive imposition of restrictions on forests the Bhuinyas are very much hard pressed like other tribal groups with regard to gathering, hunting and practice of shifting cultivation. Due to the lack of alternative resources forest dwelling tribal communities are being impoverished. Fernandes writes: "It is estimated that during the last decade the number of Orissa tribals below the poverty line has increased from 50 per cent to 85 per cent (1988:21). About 60 per cent of the total population of Orissa lives below the poverty line compared to the national average of 48 per cent. Several factors can be attributed to this phenomenon. But an important factor is the imposition of growing restrictions on the use of forests. However, this is inevitable in view of the fact that India has been losing on an average 1.3 million hectares of forests every year. Therefore alternative sources of income will have to be provided to the tribals.

Shifting cultivation is mentioned by some people as a major cause of deforestation. Those who say so certainly ignore other causes. Shifting cultivation, commonly known as *Podu Chas* does exist in Orissa and perhaps it is true that today it contributes to deforestation along with other causes. In Orissa Bonda, Koya, Didayi, Jharla, Gadaba, Saora, Kandha, Pauri Bhuinya and Juang practise shifting cultivation in varying proportion.

In the past when man-forest ratio was high, tribals used to abandon their shifting cultivation patches for 12 to 15 years at the minimum. Now with increased population pressure and limited availability of hill slopes the cultivators are returning to their abandoned sites much sooner. This means that the cycle of rotation is shortened for non-availability of fallows. However, this approach is counter productive, because the land does not resuscitate its lost fertility so soon.

Approximately 32,000 or 55.85 per cent of Pauri Bhuinya families practise shifting cultivation even today. They select gentle slopes with thick sub-soil on the Eastern Ghat for the practice of shifting cultivation. Eastern Ghat at this point receives higher medium rain fall and maintains moderate temperatures. They cultivate a swidden plot for three years continuously. The first year plot is called *Biringa* and the second and third year plots are designated as *Kaman* and *Nala* respectively. In the *Biringa*

(first year plot) black gram, horse gram, and niger are mostly grown, in the *Kaman* (second year plot) millets, leguminous crops and vegetables are grown, and in the *Nala* (third year plot) they raise early variety of paddy if the slope of the land is gentle; otherwise millet cultivation is repeated. Practice of shifting cultivation is now confined to the nearby degraded forests only.

In recent decades some Bhuinya families have acquired plain land for rice plantation. The plain land patches are situated in the foot-hills and valleys. In the study villages 22.7 per cent families possess plain land and rest others are landless. And among the land owners 40 per cent are small farmers and the rest are marginal farmers. With the non-availability of suitable patches of hill slopes for shifting cultivation the urge for acquisition of plain land for rice cultivation has become very strong among the Pauri Bhuinyas. But no plain land is available in their hilly and forest habitat. Conversion of degraded forest land into rice fields is a stupendous task, the process is long and strenuous.

Plain Land Rice Plantation

The desire for acquisition of plain land for rice cultivation is gradually growing stronger among the Pauri Bhuinyas is an indicator of change. Although 27.7 per cent of the families in our sample own land, a total of 38.73 per cent of families are engaged in plain land cultivation now. By general consensus Pauri Bhuinyas consider it as a stable, dependable and independent economic activity.

They plough the paddy lands in a crude fashion. They fully depend on rain water and apply traditional inputs of rice plantation. They mostly grow paddy as the main crop in the monsoon season, and in the winter they either grow mustard or niger in the same fields. The productivity of the land is very low due to uneconomic holdings and undulating nature of the terrains. Sometimes the yield is not very much secured due to the trancy of monsoon and inadequate use of modern agricultural inputs. They have not yet learnt the technique of utilizing hill stream water for irrigation purposes.

In order to stabilize plain land rice plantation among the Pauri Bhuinyas, as a part of agricultural planning, terraces along the foothills are to be extensively built. This must follow development of irrigation facility, modern input

supply system and easy credit facility. All these agricultural infrastructure facilities must be backed up by intensive extension services, so that diversification of cropping pattern, crop rotation and multiple cropping system can be slowly achieved.

Some two decades back the dependence of the Pauri Bhuinyas on shifting cultivation and forest resources for survival was nearly totalistic, and today the situation is different. Education has made sufficient headway among them. And they are becoming increasingly aware that shifting cultivation is not a profitable and dependable economic enterprise. And in general terms they understand that it denudes and degrades the environment. They have not yet realised the indirect pernicious effects of the practice of shifting cultivation. Nevertheless, they cannot give it up unless they have alternative sources of livelihood. However, India as a welfare State, Government are making all efforts to develop these weaker sections of Indian society. Constitution of the country ensures protective measures for them. Ever since India became independent, it has oriented its administrative machinery for quick execution of welfare measures and development programmes.

Structure of Ground Level Welfare Administration:

The scheme of Panchayati Raj was introduced in India on 2nd October, 1959. But Orissa worked it out on the 26th January, 1961. It is a three-tier system of village republic, namely, Gram Panchayat at the village level, Panchayat Samiti at the Block level and Zilla Parishad at the district level.

The Gram Panchayat is manned by *Sarpanch* (President), a Naib Sarpanch (Vice-President) and 9 to 23 ward members, all of whom are elected by their fellow villagers on the basis of adult franchise for a period of 5 years. The Sarpanch, who presides over Panchayat meetings and regulates the activities of the panchayat, is assisted by an office secretary. The Gram Panchayat has both regulatory as well as development functions. It functions as the ground level local self-government.

For the smooth implementation of development and welfare programmes the State Government have divided each district into such number of local areas as they deem fit and each is known as a Block. The Block and Panchayat Samiti are coterminous. The Panchayat Samiti

consists of a Chairman, who is an elected non-official member, a Vice-chairman, an elected non-official member, local member of the State Legislative Assembly, local member of the Indian Parliament, all Sarpanchas of the Grama Panchayats within the jurisdiction of the Block, one elected woman member and the Block Development Officer (B.D.O.) who is executive officer of the Block. In the execution of all welfare and development schemes the B.D.O is assisted by various departmental extension officers, such as, Agriculture, Co-operation, Education, Gram Panchayat, Medical, Veterinary, Social Welfare, Industries, Engineering, Fishery and VAWs or VLWs. The Block or Panchayat Samiti is vested with the responsibility of planning, execution, and supervision of development programmes, public works and welfare schemes relating to community development. The Panchayat Samiti also manages, controls and expands primary education. The staff of the Block are responsible for implementing the schemes approved by the Panchayat Samiti.

The structure of welfare administration is uniform throughout the country. Therefore all sections of the rural and tribal population of the country come within its scope. The Panchayati Raj system has made tremendous impact on the tribal communities. It has nullified the influence of their traditional panchayats.

A Brief Survey of the Institutional Framework for Tribal Development

Protection of tribal interests and integration of the tribal communities into the mainstream of the nation necessitated the implementation of special development programmes through general as well as special institutions. While implementing the schemes and programmes, modifications were made in the development institutions on the basis of acquired experiences and recommendations of various Committees instituted to evaluate the implementation of Programmes. There major trends are seen in the approach to tribal development. After independence Multi-purpose Project Blocks were established in tribal areas with 'top-down approach'. These Blocks were sponsored by the Central Government, which provided necessary finances, guidelines and framework of administration. In course of time, centralised planning was found to be unsuitable for local needs and priorities of the tribes. Therefore, an attempt was made to involve people in their own development programmes through democratic decentralisation.

Panchayat Samiti consisting of selected representatives of the people were formed to design and supervise the work of Tribal Development Blocks. The staff of the Blocks were made responsible for implementing programmes and schemes approved by the Panchayat Samitis. Block plans became part of the District Plan, which was approved by the Zilla Parishad.

This was the 'bottom-up approach'. However, Tribal development Blocks failed to take cognizance of the growing imbalances between different regions and committees. This led the government to introduce a new strategy for area and group specific development planning from the Fifth Five-Year Plan onwards. The Planning Commission gave tribal development an integrated approach over larger areas than the TDBs. The tribal sub-plan was prepared during 1975 as a part of the larger plan, and the tribal belt within the State of Orissa was divided into 19 integrated Tribal Development Projects for operational purposes. During the Year 1979, two more such projects came into existence, and at present there are 21 such projects. Later on these have been renamed as integrated Tribal Development Agencies.

The ITDAs are expected to bring about an all-round integrated development of the particular region under a well-conceived sub-plan. Funds of different Departments and agencies are channelised through the Project authority, which spends them through different Blocks in its jurisdiction. A senior civil servant, designated as Project Officer co-ordinates the activities of different specialists and programmes at the project level. The ITDAs are advised by an Advisory Board consisting of heads of all departments at the district level, local members of the State Legislature and the Parliament. The District Collector is the Chairman of the Advisory Board while the Project Officer acts as Secretary.

Now the ITDA constitutes the unit of planning, fund disbursing agency and the supervisory body and the existing Block organisation is utilised for implementation of the programmes of the Sub-plan. At present two ITDAs, namely, Bonai and Keonjhar are serving the Pauri Bhuinyas and other local tribes. The ITDAs have been registered under the Registration of Societies Act, 1960. Each ITDA covered about 10,000 tribal families or 50,000 participants. The economic development programmes include tribal agriculture, land reclamation, horticulture, land development, soil conservation, control of

shifting cultivation, minor irrigation, development of animal husbandry, land restoration, land records and survey and debt redemption. The agency subsidises 50 per cent to 75 per cent of the capital requirement of each programme and the balance is met by tribal beneficiaries through loans from institutional and other resources.

As the Pauri Bhuinyas are a primitive tribal community for micro level planning and implementation, two Micro Projects are also functioning under the I. T. D. As. Each Pauri Bhuinya Development Agency looks after approximately 650 families. In addition to the above mentioned development programmes, which the Micro Projects directly implement, they also execute schemes relating to the supply of drinking water, promotion of education, health and sanitation. The micro projects are headed by Special Officers, who are assisted by agriculture, soil conservation and welfare extension officers apart from ministerial and field staff.

Besides the above institutions, the Tribal Development Co-operative Corporation is also operating in the Bhuinya area, as in other tribal areas of the State, to cater to the needs of the Bhuinyas. Primitive tribal communities who live in inaccessible forest and hill terrains are subjected to exploitation by the rapacious traders and usurious money lenders. One of the propitious conditions which favour the unscrupulous merchants and money lenders to exploit the tribals is the lack of proper marketing facilities. As a supplementary measure to their main economy of shifting cultivation the Bhuinyas collect various minor forest produce from the nearby forests and walk long distances to reach the market centres and weekly markets to dispose of their goods and buy their necessities. As a measure to stop exploitation T. D. C. C. has been set up and registered as a co-operative corporation in the year 1972. The main objective of the corporation is to purchase the surplus agricultural produce and the minor forest produce from the tribals at a reasonable price.

In order to protect the interests of the Bhuinyas and other tribes of the area two T. D. C. C. centres have been set up in the Bhuinya traditional habitat, namely, one at Lahunipada of Sundargarh district and another at Suakati of Keonjhar district.

Tribal Development Co-operative Corporation were established to play a key role in bringing about a new relationship between the tribal and market economy through an integrated credit-

cum-marketing service. The T. D. C. C. is engaged in purchase and sale of agricultural products of the tribal producers, including the Bhuinyas and supplies them with necessities of daily life.

Apart from T. D. C. C., Large-sized Agricultural Multipurpose Co-operative Societies (L. A. M. P.) also operate in the tribal areas, including that of the Bhuinya. The LAMP provides production as well as consumption credit to the tribals and undertakes marketing of agricultural and minor forest produce. It supplies fertilizer and other agricultural production requisites to the tribals at a subsidized rate.

Besides these there are rural banks in the Bhuinya area to provide soft credit to the tribals. These Banks combine the good features of both Co-operative and Commercial Banks and exclusively provide credit to small and marginal farmers, agricultural labourers and rural artisans.

The Rural Bank has floated a 'Crop Loan Scheme', which seeks to replace the money lending system by shifting the emphasis from real property to crop as security and this attracts more tenants as potential borrowers. Secondly the scheme relates the size of the loan to the requirements of business or crop production and a borrower is assured of his full credit requirement.

Special Programme for Rural Development

In order to provide gainful employment and for creating infrastructure to help generate income for all the Scheduled Tribes among others the following programme are in operation since 1978-79 in the State as well as in the Sub-plan area. These programmes are meant for the rural poor and almost 90 per cent of the tribals, including Pauri Bhuinyas, come within its scope. These programmes aim at resource development on an individual community or area basis. To provide supplementary employment opportunities to the unemployed in rural areas these programmes have been designed. Thus the Sixth Five-Year Plan of the country launched a direct attack on the basic problems of rural poverty and unemployment.

Integrated Rural Development Programme (I. R. D. P)

Progressive reduction and ultimate eradication of poverty has been one of the major goals of India's economic policy. I. R. D. P. is a

poverty alleviation programme. Its target groups consist of the poorest of the rural poor, small and marginal farmers, agricultural and non-agricultural labourers, rural artisans and craftsmen, and Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe families who live below the poverty line.

Among the Bhuinyas a very small percentage comes within the definition small Farmer (S F) and another small percentage comes within the scope of Marginal Farmer (M F) and the rest are landless.

The I. R. D. P. schemes envisage development of minor irrigation (individual and community), land development, soil conservation, soil reclamation, distribution of milch and other animals, supply of bullocks and bullock carts, promotion of horticulture, fisheries, sericulture farm forestry, small industries, small scale trade and service.

The role of subsidy admissible under I.R.D.P. for tribals is 50 per cent of the capital cost subject to a maximum of Rs. 5,000 within the project period. The selection of I. R. D. P. beneficiaries which is expected to be made by the Village Level Worker (V. L. W.), by following the *antyodaya* principle, i. e., selecting the poorest of the poor first, is often pretentious. This is due partly to some genuine difficulties in following this principle and partly to some deliberate defaults on the part of the V. L. W. The genuine difficulties include reluctance and/or inability of the poorest of the poor to be able to purchase and manage one of the assets identified for him at the time of household survey with bank loans and I. R. D. P. subsidy. This is also partly due to the lack of managerial ability of the beneficiary and partly to his inability to bear the risk involved in purchasing a loan financed asset. This certainly means that we need to identify and formulate bankable projects that would suit the managerial and risk bearing ability of the poorest of the poor among the tribals.

However, because of the wilful defaults of the concerned V. L. Ws. in the selection of beneficiaries only a negligible percentage of Pauri Bhuinyas have been benefited. This has happened so because the Scheduled Tribes have been clubbed with Scheduled Castes, and the total number of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes beneficiaries in our sample comes to 30 per cent. There is of course another factor which comes on the way. The I. R. D. P. employs the cluster approach to select villages

for implementing various components of the programme, the *antyodaya* approach to select beneficiaries within the selected villages, and the package approach to assist the selected beneficiaries. The cluster approach ensures that the supporting infrastructure is either already available in the selected villages, or can be made available at a relatively low cost, the *antyodaya* approach makes sure that the poorest of the poor are selected first, and the package approach assures the beneficiaries full benefits from the complementarity between various inputs and services.

National Rural Employment Programme (N.R.E.P.)

To eradicate the problems of rural unemployment and under-employment, what is required is a multi-pronged strategy which should aim on the one hand at resource development of vulnerable sections of the population, and on the other, should provide supplementary employment opportunities to the rural poor, particularly during lean periods, in a manner which can at the same time contribute directly to the creation of durable assets for the community. Programmes like Small Farmers Development Agency (SFDA), Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers (MFAL) Scheme, Hill Areas Development Programme and I.R.D.P. aim at resource development on an individual and area basis. To provide supplementary employment opportunities to the rural areas, special programmes are needed. The Rural Works Programme (R.W.P.) which was introduced in 1971, was the first major Public Programmes aimed at providing employment to the unemployed particularly in the lean season.

The ERRP has made a positive impact on the rural poor and on the tribals. About 90 per cent of tribals come within the scope of this scheme. A poorest family is defined as one with an annual income of less than Rs. 1,200 p.a. and cultivable land within one acre.

A number of Pauri Bhuinya families have drawn benefits from Employment Guarantee Schemes (EGS), Food for Work Programme (FFWP), National Rural Employment (NREP) and Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP). About 38 per cent of Pauri Bhuinyas in our study villages have drawn benefits from these schemes. The main problem with most of them is that their awareness level is extremely low.

The EGS guaranteed employment in the field of unskilled manual work to all adults above eighteen years of age within fifteen days of the demand for work. In the implementation of the scheme the worker did not have any choice about the nature of work. The programme aimed at producing durable community assets, which would increase the growth as well as employment potential of the economy. The FFWP which was implemented by the development administration directly, was a good scheme. It however ended up in 1980.

The NREP, which was introduced during the Sixth Five-Year Plan (1980-81), was an anti-poverty programme. The basic objectives of the programme are: (i) generation of additional gainful employment for the unemployed and under-employed men and women in the rural areas, (ii) creation of durable community assets to strengthen the rural infrastructure.

From the present study it is evident that IRDP and NREP have made positive impacts in respect of the growth of rural economy. The income level of some rural poor has risen and likewise the nutritional status and living standards of a sizable population have improved.

Rehabilitation of Bonded Labour

The scheme of rehabilitation of bonded labourers is being implemented in the State of Orissa from 1978-79. In the districts of Keonjhar and Sundergarh about 400 Pauri Bhuinya bonded labourers have been identified and freed till 1987. Nearly 300 of them have been rehabilitated through the provision of gainful employment or self-employment and the rest others are awaiting rehabilitation.

Education

As education is a prelude to economic development and modernization, it constitutes a priority sector in tribal development in India. Besides enabling the tribal communities to comprehend national development programmes and mix freely with their neighbours, it increases their capability to cope with the pace of development.

Elementary, middle, non-formal, and girls' education are being given prominence. Special type of educational institutions such as Sevashrams (Primary), Ashrams (Middle) and Higher Ashrams (High School) are being run by the State Government. There are *Kanyashrams*

exclusively for girls. Most of the schools are residential in nature. By 1981 educational progress of the Bhuinyas was quite satisfactory. There were 45,006 literates, 1288 Matriculates, 191 Graduates, 7 Post Graduates and 230 persons with technical qualifications among the Bhuinyas.

Non-formal education has also made sufficient headway among the Bhuinyas. By 1981 about 1849 persons (both men and women) had received non-formal education and vocational training among them, and by now another record number of individuals must have got this benefit. In the dissemination of non-formal education, the Integrated Child Development Scheme has been playing an important role.

The style of life of the educated Bhuinyas has undergone modification. They harbour rising aspirations and prefer a happy life, and indeed strive for it. Their dress pattern, food habit, utensils, furniture, observance of rituals, etc. have undergone change.

Changes in Health care and concept of Hygiene.

Spread of education, extension of communication facilities and expansion of audio-visual mass media facilities have created a sense of health awareness among the Bhuinyas of younger generation. They have developed a secular orientation towards health and sickness. However, the traditionally minded Bhuinyas think that they have a natural right to normal health, and they suffer from sickness only at the intervention of supernatural entities. But the educated Bhuinyas think about human health and hygiene in a different way. They think that human body is naturally susceptible to various diseases which are caused by a multiple of extraneous factors. Therefore man must take appropriate care of his health.

Bhuinyas living in the interior of hills and forests are being covered by Governmental Primary health care and family welfare programmes. The personnel of the Integrated Child Development Scheme move door to door to educate the people about proper maternity care, child health and family welfare programmes.

Now-a-days about 60 per cent expectant Pauri Bhuinya mothers go to the nearby primary Health Centres for periodical health check up. Similarly about 68 per cent of the Pauri Bhuinya

parents in our sample have immunized their babies at the nearby Primary Health Centres. Health consciousness has also brought another significant change in Pauri Bhuinya habits. Formerly they were fully depending on hill stream water for all purposes. Having become health conscious educated Bhuinya families have started taking boiled water. Others of course do not boil water always, but collect water for drinking purposes from the tube-wells provided by the government in several of their villages. Initially the Bhuinyas were repugnant to the use of tube-well water partly for their superstitious beliefs and partly for its repulsive taste.

Change in House Pattern :

Well-to-do Bhuinyas in recent years have built cement-mortar houses with modern elegance. Formerly they used to live in single-room dwellings without any ventilation. Now-a-days about 50 per cent of Pauri Bhuinyas live in two-roomed houses with tiled roof. The rooms are spacious and well ventilated. Sleeping accommodation for the grown-up boys and girls of the family is provided within the household. No longer they are required to go to the village dormitories for sleeping during the night. Dormitories have become dysfunctional and hence have disappeared.

Bhuinya villages by and large have been electrified. But only a few well to-do families here and there have taken electrical connection. But the trend is that with the rise in the income level more and more families will go in for electrical installation in their houses.

Occupational Mobility :

With the imposition of more and more restrictions on the practice of shifting cultivation, the Pauri Bhuinyas are economically very much hardpressed. Although they are permitted to go in for the collection of minor forest produce, they are unable to make a complete living by it as there is more competition among themselves. And, moreover, it is seasonal activity. Under severe economic constraints landless Bhuinya families have taken to wage-earning. In the past, wage-earning was an abominable economic pursuit for them. In those days they had free access to virgin forests in their neighbourhood and the nature was also bounteous. Now their environment is degraded and resources are scarce.

Some Bhuinya Youths have entered into the new occupation of *bidi* (country made cigar) rolling in the nearby towns. Each of them earns about 12 to 15 rupees per day. Salaried service is also a new occupation for the Bhuinyas. Educated Bhuinyas hanker after salaried jobs, and they also get such jobs without much endeavour because of the Reservation Policy of the State. Now-a-days in almost all Pauri Bhuinya villages quite a few salaried employees are found. Bhuinya women also have taken manufacture of leaf-plates in a big way for augmenting family income. Manufacture of leaf-plates has turned out to be a cottage industry for the Pauri Bhuinyas.

Weakening of the Traditional Political Organization.

The traditional political organisation of the Bhuinyas was two-tier system-one at the village level and the other at the inter-village level. The village headman, designated as *Padhan*, looked after the village problems and discipline. The inter-village organisation, called *Pirha*, was headed by a tribal chief, designated as *Sardar*. The position of *Sardar* has considerably been impaired as there is no inter-village or *Pirha* organization. However the position of the *Padhan* or village headman continues to be functional with diminished powers and functions. He only looks after the social and religious matters of his fellow Pauri Bhuinya villages, and thereby maintains social solidarity. His traditional position has conspicuously been impaired due to the extension of State administrative machinery onto all the tribal communities. Although the Pauri Bhuinyas, like other tribal communities, enjoy the privileges of State Protective measures, yet they are slowly and steadily assimilated in the national mainstream through the macro socio-political process of the country.

The Pauri Bhuinyas, like other tribal communities, have been subjected, in a progressive manner, to various welfare and development. From the Fifth Five-year Plan, that is, from 1975-76, onwards area and group specific development programmes were formulated and implemented. Since this time tribal communities have responded to development Programmes and have registered some change in the economy and social structure. Last two decades also witnessed rapid growth in communication facilities. This in turn meant their gradual exposure

to forces of modernisation. What is disturbing in this respect is that there has been unequal progress among the Pauri Bhuinyas.

A high priority has been accorded to strict implementation of protective measures. The areas of exploitation in tribal areas which happened to be liquor vending, land alienation, money lending and collection of agricultural and forest produce continue to be there. The State has enacted laws and formulated regulation to prevent transfer of land from tribals to non-tribals but there are loop-holes, and the non-tribal buyers escape with impunity.

Conclusion

From the foregoing discussion it is evident that since early fifties India has been concerned with the development of its varied masses including the tribes in a massive way. Indeed economic growth and social development have been the fond ideals and cherished goals of the Government of India. The sole objective of development has been to improve the quality of life of the rural masses, particularly those of the weaker sections. Indian Constitution, which is a very powerful document of planned social change, entails special provisions for the development of *weaker sections* that is, the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. There are several safeguards enshrined in the Constitution for the all round development of these communities. While setting them on the path of planned socio-economic development Government of India strove to preserve their diverse priceless cultural heritage, and this is evident from the policy enunciation of Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India. Nehru in his foreword to Verrier Elwin's *The Philosophy for NEFA (1957)* has delineated the tribal *Pancha Shila* or five Principles of tribal welfare administration in India, which continue to guide governmental approach to development of the tribals. The quintessence of Nehru's *Pancha Shila* is the development of the tribes according to their own genius and preservation of their respective cultures. However, the State Policy has been not to keep them isolated from the national mainstream. Therefore, all of them have been made to participate in the post-independence political culture of the country. And in fact the process of democratic decentralisation and the structure of party-based politics have pulled the tribal communities, in varying degrees, into the ambit of the national political culture.

As a result of this and the special development effort which is being made by the Government of India as well as by the various State Governments all the 414 different tribes have registered unequal socio-economic progress. There are several factors responsible for this phenomenon. The scope of the paper does not permit an elaborate discussion on all these. However, an important factor which needs mention is that all the tribes were neither in the past nor now at the same stage of the technological and educational parameters. Hence the present differential progress is noticed among them. Not only that under the impact of welfare and development administration internal socio-cultural differentiation among several tribes has become conspicuous. The homogeneity and egalitarianism, which were the hallmark of the tribal communities some four decades ago, are fast vanishing. This is the case among the Pauri Bhuinyas too. This accounts for the fact that either all the Bhuihya beneficiaries have not been able to derive the benefits of development uniformly or the fruits of development have not reached the intended beneficiaries at a more or less similar rate.

Planned development has generated the phenomenon of restlessness too among the tribal societies. These erstwhile placid and complacent societies are now stirred by a generation of newer demands which engender competitiveness and rising expectations' particularly among the members of younger generation. Their individual needs steadily multiply and their urge for novel consumer goods sharpen disproportionately. Therefore, the young literates and all those who have succeeded in participating in the neopolitical culture of the country grab any benefit or opportunity that comes on their way with all the skill and manipulative ability they have mastered. They are the elites, and they are the representatives of their fellow tribesmen. They are responsible for the economic and social well-being of the people they actually or nationally represent. But in reality they are self-seekers under the camouflage of community well-being. They have earned these status positions and therefore make constant endeavour to perpetuate them. Some of them have taken to salaried jobs and thereby have improved their economic condition and others have internalised the political culture and operate as local political leaders or activists.

The tribal political leaders or activists, who have direct linkages with the political party-in-power wield more influence in their respective

localities. Tribal masses look to them as their benefactors. But indeed they are not. The political leaders, activists and the elite all have been alienated from their own tribesmen and traditional culture. They were insiders' who have gradually turned as outsiders' or at least behave as outsiders. These men are referred to as *babus*, who are believed to have personality traits characteristic of a superior culture. This is a change that has come over not only the Bhuinya society but also over other tribal societies in India. Spread of formal education, market economy, the political process of democratic decentralisation, implementation of the various welfare measures undertaken in a big way by the government, growth of population and the increasing differences of wealth within the community are some of the more important factors which have given rise to the emergence of a privileged class which is a variant of Park's (1928) formulation of the concept of 'Marginal Man'. Without entering into any conceptual wrangle one can say that the emerging elites or insider-babus' in the Bhuinya society are the real beneficiaries of the poverty alleviation programmes and not the more deserving ones.

Those who are below the poverty line continue to remain deprived and neglected because of their ignorance and lack of ability to articulate with welfare administration and financial institutions. Our study attests that these elites

(insider-babus) have drawn maximum benefits from the anti-poverty programmes of the Government, namely, Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Economic Rehabilitation of Rural Poor (ERRP), National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) and Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) than the poorer sections of the Pauri Bhuinyas. They adroitly exploit their non-literate and credulous fellow tribesmen. They pretend to be the natural and legitimate spokesmen of their fellow tribesmen. They not only maintain this position, but also deliberately cultivate an image of altruistic stance.

From the foregoing discussion it may be concluded that man is selfish by nature, and he does not miss an opportunity whenever the scope comes on his way. Thus the State Policy that development along with social justice' is defeated. Success of planned economic development depends on effective participation of common people. This objective can be better realised if the present level of people's awareness rises and they acquire the necessary ability to articulate with the administrative machinery that implements the anti-poverty programmes. Therefore the new imperative for socio-economic development is to educate the intended beneficiaries through a vigorous literacy and awareness campaign. In this context the right approach should be to involve the people in the decision-making process at the village level.

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TRIBAL SOCIETY, CULTURE AND EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN ORISSA

K. K. MOHANTI
and
B. CHOWDHURY

Background

Educational development among the weaker sections of society is an essential pre-requisite for their social development and is one of the most useful media to enable them to avail the benefits of the various facilities provided to them. It is in recognition of this basic need that in the Constitution of India in the Directive Principles of State Policy, the promotion of educational interest of the Scheduled Tribes with special care has been made a specific responsibility of the Governments at the Centre and in the States. To fulfil this objective, efforts have been made to achieve the end by utilizing considerable amount of money and manpower during the last forty years. It is now time to take stock of the situation in the field of educational advancement among the tribal people and to find out how far the gap in the educational levels which existed between them and their neighbours has been shortened. If not much headway is made, what are the factors which are responsible for the slow progress and what possible steps that have to be taken to accelerate the progress. With this end in view, it is worthwhile to know as to who are the Scheduled Tribes and what are the salient characteristic features of their society and culture and then to assess the educational status and the various possible factors influencing its elevations.

Who are the Scheduled Tribes ?

It is true that the tribal societies are relatively less hierarchic, simple and homogeneous from the point of view of ethnicity and culture. Such societies with their unique

characteristic features stand out distinctively from other societies which attract the attention of all us when we think of tribes their of society, and culture and their social development. The term 'tribe' has been derived from its latin root 'tribes' (equiv. 'tribu' (fr.), 'Phule' (Gr.), meaning a social group. "A social group may be defined as an aggregate of individuals in which (i) definite relations exist between the individuals comprising it and (ii) each individual is conscious of the group it self and its symbols. in other words, a social group has at least a rudimentary structure and organization (including rules, rituals etc.) and a psychological basis in the consciousness of its members." (Bottomore, 1962 : 92)

In the imperial Gazetteer the term tribe has been defined as "a collection of families bearing a common name, speaking a common dialect, occupying or professing to occupy a common territory and is not usually endogamous though originally it might have been so".

It may not be out of place to discuss the concept and definition of the term 'tribe' in the language of Anthropologists and administrators of India or of those who worked in India. Before the constitution of India (1950) empowered the President in Article 342 to "specify the tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities which shall for the purposes of this Constitution be deemed to be Scheduled Tribes.....", the Indian Census had been dealing with them under the religious heading of 'Animism' though some of the renowned commissioners of Censuses were

not satisfied with the procedure. Subsequently this term 'Animism' was changed into 'Tribal Religions' to distinguish the tribal people from the non-tribals including the Hindus. Dr. J. H. Hutton the then Commissioner of the Census of 1931 while distinguishing Hinduism from the Tribal Religion very emphatically said that the latter cannot be included under the former as long as they "have not reached the stage of accepting Brahmans as priests or of attaching any sanctity to the cow or of worshipping in Hindu temples in their own villages".

J. A. Baines, the Commissioner of Census 1801 termed the aboriginals as "Forest Tribes" under the category of Agricultural and pastoral Castes while dealing with the Castes, Tribes or Race of Indian people. In Ethnography he referred to these people as "Hill Tribes" and "Forest Tribes". In the Censuses of 1901 and 1911, Sir Herbert Risley and Shri E. A. Gait included the Animists in the table of castes. In 1921, Mr. Marten followed the same pattern only changing the heading 'Animism' to 'Tribal Religions'. In his report Mr. Marten dealt with them under the category of 'Hill and Forest Tribes'. Dr. Hutton used the term 'Primitive Tribes, for the aboriginals.

Prof. G. S. Ghurye observes that these Tribal people are neither 'aborigines' nor 'adibasis'. They are 'the imperfectly integrated classes of Hindu society' and may be called 'Backward Hindus'.

In unfolding various conflicting definitions of tribe, T. B. Naik suggests the following criteria for a tribe;

(1) A tribe to be a 'tribe' should have the least functional interdependence within the community. (The Hindu Caste System is an example of High interdependence.)

(2) It should be economically backward, which means;

- (i) the full import of monetary economics should not be understood by its members;
- (ii) Primitive means of exploiting natural resources should be used;
- (iii) The tribes economy should be in an undeveloped stage, and
- (iv) it should have multifarious economic pursuits;

(3) There should be a comparative geographic isolation of its people from others.

(4) Culturally members of a tribe should have a common dialect which may be subjected to regional variations;

(5) A tribe should be politically organized and its community Panchayat should be an influential institution;

(6) The tribes members should have the least desire to change. They should have a sort of psychological conservatism making them stick to their old customs;

(7) A tribe should have customary laws and its members might have to suffer in a law court because of these laws;

A community to be a tribe must have all these attributes [in Vidyarthi (ed), 1968:85-86].

According to Professor Majumdar, the tribe may be defined as follows;

"A tribe is a social group with territorial affiliation, endogamous with no specialization of functions, ruled by tribal officers, hereditary or otherwise, united in language or dialect, recognizing social distance from tribes or castes but without any stigma attached in the case of a caste structure, following tribal traditions, beliefs and customs, illiberal of naturalization of ideas from alien sources, above all conscious of a homogeneity of ethnic and territorial integration" [Naik in Vidyarthi (ed) 1968:86].

Professor Ehrenfels hints on smallness, isolation, common dialect, common belief, common occupational practices, feeling of belonging to a group, own customary laws and practices etc, as characteristic features of tribe (Naik, 1968:88-89).

Professor Dube emphasizes on the following characteristic features of tribe.

(1) Their root in the soil dates back to a very early period; if they are not original inhabitants, they are at least some of the oldest inhabitants of the land.

(2) They live in the relative isolation of the hills and the forests.

(3) Their sense of history is shallow for, among them, the remembered history of five to six generations tends to get merged in mythology.

(4) They have a low level of techno-economic development.

(5) In terms of their cultural ethos, language, institutions, beliefs and customs, they stand out from the other sections of the society.

(6) If they are not egalitarian, they are at least non-hierarchical and undifferentiated". (1977:2)

Professor Vidyarthi states, "The tribals as a whole are technologically and educationally backward" (1972:33).

According to Professor Sinha, "They are isolated in ecology, demography, economy, politics and other social behaviour from other ethnic groups" (quoted in Vidyarthi, 1971).

Professor Bailey states, "Tribal people live in the hills: They are not Hindus, but animists; They are economically backward. They are autochthones. They speak tribal languages. But none of these criteria are in themselves satisfactory and even taken together they will not include all the peoples who are labelled as tribes by the Administration or by ethnographers" (1960:263).

According to Roy-Burman those people who have not been assimilated in the main body of the population but have remained primitive or backward with their separate entity may be termed as tribe. The tribes which are included in the President's Scheduled Tribes Order, are regarded by the Central and State Government as Scheduled Tribes.

Society and culture

A society, whether tribal or otherwise, is characterised by the fundamental features, such as definite territory, sexual reproduction, comprehensive culture and independence. It is a territorial group within which members are by and large, recruited by means of sexual reproduction, although other means of recruitment are through adoption, enslavement, conquest or immigration. Society and culture are inseparable as obverse and reverse sides of the same coin and one is not comprehensible without the other. A society has a comprehensive culture because the group is culturally self sufficient and it enables the group to fulfill all the requirements of social life. In this context it is apt to recapitulate some definitions of culture from sociological view point. English anthropologist, Sir Edward Burnett Tylor (1871) states "Culture, or Civilization is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals custom, and

any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of Society". Some other definitions may also be taken into consideration.

"By Culture we mean all those historically created designs for living explicit and implicit, rational, irrational, and non-rational, which exist at any given time as a potential guide for the behaviour of man". (Kluckhohn and Kelly, 1945).

"Culture is generally understood to mean learned modes of behaviour which are socially transmitted from one generation to another within particular societies and which may be diffused from one society to another." (Steward, 1950).

'Culture is the man made part of the environments". (Herskovits, 1948). Further,

✓ "A Culture is the way of life of a people; while a society is an organised, interacting aggregate of individuals who follow a given way of life. . . . a society is composed of people; the way they behave is their culture.

"Culture is an organisation of phenomena: material objects, bodily acts, ideas and sentiments which consists of or is dependent upon the use of symbols". Further, "it is an extra somatic, temporal continuum of things and events dependent upon symboling". (Leslie A White, 1943).

"An organization of conventional understandings manifest in act and artifacts, which persisting through tradition characterizes a human group". (Redfield, 1940).

Thus, it may be concluded that a social group having all or most of the characteristic features enumerated below may be identified as a tribe;—

- (a) Common name
- (b) Common territory and common place of origin
- (c) Common language of their own
- (d) Non-hierarchical or relatively less hierarchic
- (e) Strong kinship bond
- (f) Endogamy with distinct taboos
- (g) Presence of exogamous divisions
- (h) Presence of social boundary
- (i) Presence of social identity defined and re-defined from time to time

- (j) Existence of youth dormitory/sodalities
- (k) Their religious beliefs and practices can be subsumed under 'animism' although animatism, naturism, magic and occultism exist with distinctive moral codes
- (l) Communal ownership of land and forests with strong emotional and spiritual attachment
- (m) Simple economic pursuits at subsistence level
- (n) Low level of technology and very little specialization
- (o) The mode of production is family-oriented or kin-based
- (p) The exchange is simple and barter system continues
- (q) The concept of capital is rudimentary
- (r) There is lack of entrepreneurial skill
- (s) Mechanisms of social control are effective
- (t) Customary laws are in operation
- (u) High incidence of illiteracy
- (v) Absence of the concept of pollution and limited world view

Orissan Tribes

The Orissan ethnographic scenario includes as many as 62 Scheduled Tribes enlisted in the Presidential Orders, numbering 5,915,067 persons in 1981 Census constituting 22.43 per cent of the total population of the State (26,370,21).

Distribution of tribal population in the districts during 1981 Census was uneven. Their number was more in inland districts like Koraput, Mayurbhanj, Sundargarh, Keonjhar and Phulbani than in the coastal plain consisting of Balasore, Cuttack, Puri and Ganjam. Taking the total Scheduled Tribe population of the State as a whole Koraput district alone claimed more than one-fifth, Mayurbhanj slightly less than one-sixth, Sambalpur and Sundargarh more than one-tenth each. These four districts taken together claimed more than 60 per cent of the total tribal population of the State. In other words the tribal people are found in less populous districts.

Comparing the percentage of tribal population to total population in different districts Mayurbhanj district continued to hold the top

position with 57.67 per cent, followed by Koraput district with 55.21 per cent and Sundargarh with 51.25 per cent.

The growth rate computed for the whole State for the period 1971—1981 was 19.72 per cent for the general population. In case of Scheduled Tribes, the decennial growth rate had gone down to 16.68 per cent in 1971—81 from 20.08 per cent in 1961—71.

The proportion of urban population to total population in the State had increased from 8.41 per cent in 1971 to 11.82 per cent in 1981. The Scheduled Tribes had 4.61 per cent of their population in the urban areas of the State.

During the Census 1981, the proportion of females per 1000 males in the general population had further gone to 982 from 988 in 1971. Among the Scheduled Tribes, there had been an increase in the number of females in 1981 over 1971. It has improved from 1007 in 1971 to 1012 in 1981.

The population size of different tribal communities of the State varies from a few persons among the Chenchu to about ten lakhs among the Konh. There are 15 tribal communities numbering each more than one lakh population. Ten tribes among them, viz, Bhuinya, Gond, Kisan, Munda, Kharia, Oraon, Santal, Kolha, Bhumij and Bathudi are found almost exclusively in northern and western Orissa and the remaining five tribes viz., Saora, Konh, Shabar or Lodha, Paraja and Bhattada are largely confined to southern Orissa.

There are 13 tribal communities whose population varies from 10,000 to less than 1,00,000 each. Except Juang and Ho who are mainly found in Keonjhar, Dhenkanal and Mayurbhanj districts, all these communities are mainly confined to southern and western Orissa. Similarly there are 23 communities whose population varies from 1,000 to 10,000 each, 7 communities having population more than 100 and less than 1,000. The remaining 3 communities have population less than 100 each.

The State has quota of some of the most populous tribes of the country. These are the Gond, the Santal, the Oraon and the Kondh. On the other hand, there are several tribal communities which are typical to Orissa and they are the Juang, Bhuinya, Saora, Bonda, Bathudi and Sounti.

The tribal communities of Orissa are now at different levels of development. At one end there are food gatherers and hunters and at the other end there are acculturated and advanced communities. According to 1981 Census, about 90 per cent of the tribal population are dependent on agriculture, while the remaining 10 per cent are engaged in occupations such as hunting, gathering, pastoral life, trade and business, service and industrial work. Economically the tribes of Orissa can be classified into five categories: (1) Hunter-gatherers, (2) Pastoral, (3) Shifting cultivators, (4) Settled or Plains cultivators and (5) Industrial and mining workers.

(1) *Hunter-gatherer*—The tribes who live in the forest are exclusively dependant on forests for their livelihood by practising hunting, gathering, food-collecting etc., fall under this category. The Birhor, the Chenchu, the Mallar, the Korwa and the Hill Kharia, mostly found in Mayurbhanj and Sundargarh districts possess this type of economy.

(2) *Pastoral*—None except the Koyas of Malkangiri area of Koraput district may be described as pastoral. They are by nature evince great interest in cattle-breeding and animal husbandry. They eat beef, pork and other types of meat. But they do not milch cow and do not drink milk or eat milk products. In addition to cattle-breeding they carry on slash and burn type of cultivation in comparatively plain forest land.

(3) *Shifting cultivation*—A large number of tribes who dwell in the hills and forests are dependant on shifting cultivation coupled with food-gathering and hunting. The important tribes practising shifting cultivation are the Dongria Kondh and the Kutia kondh, the Lanjia Saora, the Koya, the Bondo in southern Orissa and the Juang and the Bhuinya in central Orissa. It is known as Bagad or Barun among the Lanjia Saora, *livang* among the Bondo of Koraput, *Podu* or *Haru* among the Kondh, *Dahi* or *Toila* among the Juang and *Koman* among the Bhuinya.

(4) *Plain cultivation*—The major bulk of tribal population in Orissa constitutes agriculturists, though they supplement their economy by hunting, gathering and fishing. But tribal agriculture, however, is characterised by unproductive and uneconomic holdings, land alienation and indebtedness, lack of irrigation in the undulated

terrains and primitive method of cultivation. Invariably tribal agriculturists grow one crop during the monsoon and have to supplement their economy by several subsidiary economic pursuits. Under this category, the Santal, the Ho, the Munda, the Bathudi, the Gond, the Kisan, the Bhattada, the Paroja and the Plain Bhuinya and the Kondh may be included.

(5) *Industrial and Mining Workers*—Industrial, mining resources have been explored in some of the tribal pockets of the State. New industrial and mining establishments have come up in these areas. This has resulted in displacement of local inhabitants including the tribals and incoming of outsiders for employment. The Oraon, the Munda, the Ho and the Santal of Northern Orissa are now found working in such establishments in larger number.

Basing on the guidelines issued by Government of India as many as 12 tribal communities/sub-groups have been identified as primitive tribes for the purpose of bringing them within the ambit of special development programmes. These communities have pre-agricultural level of technology and low level of literacy and are found occupying inaccessible hilly tracts and having diminishing trend or stagnation in population growth. The list of primitive tribal communities includes, (1) Juang, (2) Hill Bhuinya, (3) Hill Kharia, (4) Mankidia, (5) Birhor, (6) Lodha, (7) Didayi, (8) Saora, (9) Lanjia Saora, (10) Dongria Kondh, (11) Kutia Kondh and (12) Bondo.

TRIBAL EDUCATION

During post-independence period facilities in various shapes for the promotion of tribal education have been provided in accordance with the Directive Principles of State Policy under Article 46 of the Constitution for educational interest of Scheduled Tribes as a special responsibility of the Central and State Governments. Generally, the facilities have been extended by providing special residential and non-residential schools, school buildings, free studentship, scholarship and stipend, free dress, reading and writing materials, mid day meals etc. It might be instructive and illuminating to compare and see how the incidence of literacy among the tribal people of the State has grown during the last three decades in comparison with that of the general population. Table-I given below indicates the district-wise percentage of literacy among the tribals and general population during the Census, 1981.

TABLE I

District-wise percentage of literacy among Scheduled Tribes and total population, 1981

District (1)	Percentage of literacy among total population			Percentage of literacy among the Scheduled Tribes		
	Total (2)	Male (3)	Female (4)	Total (5)	Male (6)	Female (7)
Sambalpur ..	40.02	47.98	19.67	19.89	32.65	7.16
Sundargarh ..	36.17	47.34	24.12	22.70	32.88	12.52
Keonjhar ..	29.89	42.61	16.95	15.26	25.78	4.86
Mayurbhanj	25.47	37.01	13.82	14.50	24.59	4.52
Balasore ..	41.84	45.07	28.32	11.21	19.36	2.90
Cuttack ..	45.33	58.00	32.30	10.78	18.45	2.93
Dhenkanal ..	36.70	51.40	21.39	14.65	25.18	4.02
Phulbani ..	26.61	41.96	11.26	18.59	32.98	4.74
Balangir ..	25.78	39.92	11.54	15.30	27.39	3.50
Kalahandi ..	19.35	31.18	7.65	11.54	21.25	2.14
Koraput ..	15.83	23.17	8.44	6.31	11.05	1.65
Ganjam ..	30.78	45.15	16.87	10.82	18.29	3.67
Puri ..	45.71	59.48	39.38	19.32	32.71	5.81
ORISSA STATE ..	34.12	46.90	21.11	13.96	23.27	4.76

It is seen that the percentage of literacy among the Scheduled Tribes was 13.96 per cent as against 34.12 per cent in the total population. In all districts the literacy status of the tribal population is far behind that of the general population. It is interesting to note that the literacy status of tribal males (23.27 per cent) is more or less equivalent to that of the females (21.11 per cent) in the general population. It is also seen that in all districts the percentage of literacy for the total population, males and females among the Scheduled Tribes is far behind as compared with that of the general population. The percentage of literacy among tribal females is 4.76 per cent against 21.11 per cent for their counterparts in the general population.

Table II given below shows how literacy has grown during the last two decades among the Scheduled Tribes. At the State level it has increased from 7.36 per cent in 1961 to 9.46 per cent in 1971 and then to 13.96 per cent in 1981. In other words, growth of literacy was 2.10 per cent in 1961—71 and 4.50 per cent during 1971—81. All districts excepting Sundargarh and Keonjhar had shown discouraging growth rate in literacy during the decade of 1961—71. Comparatively the growth rate of literacy in almost all districts was somewhat better during the decade 1971—81 than that of the preceding decade (1961—71). At the district level in Sambalpur, Sundargarh, Keonjhar, Phulbani and Puri there was higher growth rate of literacy than the other districts during 1971—81.

TABLE II

Percentage growth of literacy among the Scheduled Tribes during the last two decades
(1961—71 and 1971—81)

Sl. No.	District/State	Percentage of literacy			Percentage of variation	
		1961	1971	1981	1961—71	1971—81
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1	Sambalpur ..	12.60	14.84	19.89	+2.24	+5.05
2	Sundargarh ..	10.21	16.04	22.70	+5.83	+6.66
3	Keonjhar ..	5.98	10.05	15.26	+4.07	+5.21
4	Mayurbhanj ..	7.10	9.63	14.50	+2.53	+4.87
5	Balasore ..	5.70	7.03	11.21	+1.33	+4.18
6	Cuttack ..	8.75	7.86	10.78	-0.89	+2.92
7	Dhenkanal ..	10.14	11.06	14.65	+0.92	+3.59
8	Phulbani ..	11.82	12.37	18.59	+0.55	+6.22
9	Balangir ..	8.31	12.16	15.30	+3.85	+3.14
10	Kalahandi ..	5.75	7.73	11.54	+1.98	+3.81
11	Koraput ..	3.17	3.24	6.31	+0.07	+3.07
12	Ganjam ..	6.09	6.79	10.82	+0.70	+4.03
13	Puri ..	10.26	13.80	19.32	+3.54	+5.52
ORISSA STATE ..		7.36	9.46	13.96	+2.10	+4.50

Educational advancement among some of the tribal communities recognised as 'Primitive' during the last two decades (1961 to 1981) as shown below gives an appalling picture as indicated below:—

Primitive tribes	Percentage of literacy		
	1961	1971	1981
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1 Birhor ..	6.9	4.1	12.7
2 Bondo ..	2.1	1.8	3.6
3 Didayi ..	2.7	0.8	3.2
4 Juang ..	4.5	5.8	8.0
5 Lodha ..	8.1	7.3	8.4
6 Mankidia ..	4.3	4.5	2.9
7 Saora ..	7.7	10.1	14.5
Total ..	7.4	9.5	13.3

Among the Birhor, Didayi and the Mankidi not a single person has achieved educational qualification beyond Matriculation. On the other hand, persons who have prosecuted their studies beyond Matriculation among other groups, excepting the Saora, can be counted on finger tips.

Growth of literacy during the last two decades (1961 to 1981) among the numerically preponderant tribes (having population above one lakh) is indicated in the statement below. Among them the Paroja and the Kolha are far behind the State average of 13.96 per cent for the total tribal population of the State. In addition, the Kondh, Shabar, Bhattoda and the Bhumij are still below the State average. Moreover, the Paroja, Kolha and the Bhattoda

have shown low rate of growth in their literacy. The Bathudi have improved their literacy decade after decade comparatively at a higher rate.

Sl. No.	Tribes	Percentage of literacy		
		1961	1971	1981
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1	Kondh	7.1	7.9	12.3
2	Gond	10.7	13.5	18.7
3	Santal	6.4	9.1	14.3
4	Saora	7.7	10.1	14.5
5	Kolha	5.2	5.8	8.8
6	Shabar	8.0	8.6	13.0
7	Paroja	3.4	2.5	4.8
8	Munda	8.6	13.3	16.2
9	Bhottada	4.2	4.4	7.5
10	Bhuinya	10.3	14.9	22.5
11	Kisan	8.9	11.4	17.3
12	Oraon	9.7	16.3	23.7
13	Bhumij	6.2	7.9	12.1
14	Bathudi	8.3	13.3	20.7
15	Kharia	9.0	12.0	17.9

The educational level of literates and educated persons among the Scheduled Tribes at State level during the Census of 1961 and 1981 is given below in the statement:—

Educational level of literates and educated persons among the Scheduled Tribes

Sl. No.	Educational level	1961			1981		
		Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
1	Literate without any educational level.	2,67,479 (100.00)	2,34,140 (87.54)	33,339 (12.46)	4,83,619 (100.00)	3,92,545 (81.17)	91,074 (18.83)
2	Primary and Middle	41,590 (100.00)	37,298 (89.68)	4,292 (10.32)	2,91,520 (100.00)	2,44,584 (83.90)	46,936 (16.10)
3	Matriculation or Secondary.	1,720 (100.00)	1,646 (95.70)	74 (4.30)	20,239 (100.00)	17,959 (88.73)	2,280 (11.27)
4	Above Secondary and below Graduation.	..	..	..	3,997 (100.00)	3,558 (89.01)	439 (10.99)
5	Graduation / Post-graduation.	16 (100.00)	14 (87.50)	2 (12.50)	2,869 (100.00)	2,622 (91.39)	247 (8.61)
6	Non-Technical Diploma.	30 (100.00)	30 (100.00)	..	159 (100.00)	129 (81.13)	30 (18.87)
7	Tech. Diploma	60 (100.00)	60 (100.00)	..	2,882 (100.00)	2,502 (86.81)	380 (13.19)
8	Tech. Degree	11 (100.00)	11 (100.00)	..	185 (100.00)	130 (70.27)	55 (29.73)

* Percentage is given within brackets

The above statement indicates that the percentage of female literates (Sl. 1) has shown an increased trend, whereas in case of males it has declined. Almost similar trend is indicated in Sl. Nos. 2 and 3. In Sl. No. 5, i. e. at the graduation and post-graduation level, the percentage for males has increased, whereas it has decreased for females. In educational levels in Sl. Nos. 6, 7 & 8, the percentage for males has decreased but more significantly percentage for females has increased from zero.

Impediments in the spread of Education in Tribal areas:

Discussion conducted at various levels and several studies and surveys undertaken by different agencies have highlighted that several factors responsible for slow progress in educational development among the tribes. These factors can broadly be classified under two broad groups, i. e.

(1) institutional and administrative factors and (2) socio-economic factors, under the first category following observations have been made.

(1) Early authorities (Elwin-1963, Srivastava, 1967) have observed that inadequacy of educational institutions in the tribal areas is a major impediment in the progress of education among the tribes. Although special yardstick has been prescribed to have a primary school in tribal areas, there are still many sparsely populated tribal villages/basti having no school. According to Universal Bench-Mark Survey conducted in 118 Blocks of the Sub-Plan area of Orissa in 1979 about 50 per cent of the hamlets/villages have no primary schools within their habitations, further, 27.85 per cent still depend on primary school in other habitations located at a distance of below one Km. and 13.00 per cent between 1 to 3 Kms.

(2) The dual, sometimes multiple approach to the system of education (Elwin-1963) created confusion among the tribal students. There are traditional schools and special schools besides several other types with different curriculum and sets of facilities provided by the management. The special schools meant for the tribals indicate discrimination and discourages the tribal students seeking admission.

(3) Studies conducted by T. H. R. T. I. and other agencies and the findings of the Dhebar Commission (1960) and Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have revealed that inadequacy or non-availability of

suitable infrastructural facilities like school building, hostel, teacher's quarters, equipments, water-supply, etc. are responsible for slow progress of education among the tribal people.

Absentism of teachers and non-availability of right type of teachers who are familiar with tribal language, customs and modes of life (Ambasht 1970) are also stated to be the reasons for slow progress.

(5) Curricula and methods of teaching and the text books prescribed which are not familiar to them do not encourage tribal students.

(6) Lack of supervision and inspection at regular interval and if at all any inspection is done and silent over taking appropriate and prompt actions for removal of bottlenecks is responsible for slow progress in the advancement of education in tribal areas.

As regards socio-economic and its allied factors hindering progress of education, following facts may be mentioned.

(1) Language is said to be one of the major impediments for the spread of education. Medium of instruction in Oriya is not easily intelligible to the tribal students speaking their own mother tongue. Most of the teachers appointed also do not understand the language of the students. This causes communication gap between teacher and his pupil. Imparting education through books in tribal language is also difficult as many tribal languages have no script and can not be prepared properly in some other languages. In order to eradicate this hinderance some States have adopted tribal languages which have script as medium of instruction at primary level.

(2) Lack of motivation, enthusiasm and knowledge of the utility of education among the tribal parents stand as barrier in educational advance.

(3) Because of economic hardship, they have a subsistence economy in which all members of a house, irrespective of age and sex, have to work according to the capacity for earning their livelihood. As a result of this, tribal parents engage their children in some household work in stead of sending them to school.

(4) Moreover lack of congenial environment of institutions do not attract the tribal children.

(5) Unsuitable atmosphere like space and light or reading, lack of parental care and guidance at their homes and villages for reading do not help tribal children to devote time at home in their studies.

(6) Celebration of religious festivals and socio-religious ceremonies, like marriage and death rites divert the attention of the tribal children.

(7) Evil design and intention of the neighbouring non-tribal people and traders and money-lenders do not encourage the tribals to send their children to school, so that the tribals will remain where they are.

Interplay of these factors has resulted in alarming rate of wastage and stagnation in the educational development among the tribal people. In this context, wastage may be defined as dropping out and withdrawal of students before completion of a given course and stagnation means both low rate of enrolment in comparison to total strength in the school-going age-groups and also students already enrolled, when taking several more years to complete a given course. As per the Universal Bench Mark Survey in the Tribal Sub-Plan area of Orissa in 1979 only 10.35 per cent in the age-group of 0-6 years were going to school. Similarly in the age-groups of 6-11 years and 11-16 years, only 31.31 per cent and 15.63 per cent were attending schools, respectively. Enrolment of tribal students at Primary School and High School levels during 1988-89 as mentioned in the booklet titled, "Education in Orissa" of the Directorate of Elementary Education (Statistics Cell) gives a similar picture. The strength at M. E. School level is roughly one-fifth of the Primary level and at High School level it is about one-tenth.

Growth of tribal enrolment at Primary, M. E. School and High School levels during the period from 1978-79 to 1988-89 in the whole State of Orissa as shown in the same booklet will give an idea about the extent of progress of education among the Scheduled Tribes. The growth of enrolment at Primary level is estimated at 25 per cent in 1988-89 over 1978-79 among the Scheduled Tribes as against 34.07 per cent for the general population. Enrolment at M. E. School level has increased from 45,000 students in 1978-79 to 1,20,000 students in 1988-89 among the Scheduled Tribes.

The New Education Policy 1986, which brought hopes and aspirations for educational development in India envisages educational opportunities for promotion of equality. The Section 4.6 is exclusively devoted for education among the Scheduled Tribes. Besides giving priority attention in opening primary schools in Tribal areas it further emphasizes on the preparation and production of text books based on tribal languages and cultures. The educated and meritorious tribal youths are to be encouraged and given training to act as teachers in tribal areas. The Ashram Schools and Residential Schools will be established in large number. Besides the above, there will be incentive schemes to get rid of the socio-psychological barriers in the minds of tribals through proper education. There shall be Anganwadis, non-formal and adult education centres in tribal pockets, on priority basis. The curricula will develop in such a manner that there will be increasing consciousness in their cultural lives and their tremendous creative faculties.

The Working Group on Development and Welfare of Scheduled Tribes during Eighth Five-year Plan, 1990-95 has recommended as follows for educational development among Scheduled Tribe and they are mentioned as follows.

1. As envisaged in the National Policy on Education, 1986, emphasis of elementary education should be on :—

- (a) universal enrolment and universal retention up to 14 years of age; and
- (b) a substantial improvement in the quality of education.

2. A substantial improvement should be effected in the coverage of Scheduled Tribe habitations by primary and middle level schools.

3. School-less villages/hamlets with a certain minimum number of children (say 30) in the age-group 6-11 years should be identified and primary schools opened in such village/hamlets.

4. Buildings and other facilities in the schools in T. S. P. area should be brought up to the standards envisaged under "Operation Blackboard". Apart from State Plan funds, the funds made available under the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana and "Capital Outlay for Tribal Villages" under the award of the IX Finance Commission could be used.

5. Residential quarters be provided to all teachers serving in T S P area. The funds provided under the "Housing Outlay" of the award of the IX Finance Commission should be used in addition to other funds.

6. Monetary and non-monetary incentives may be given to teachers serving in T S P areas.

7. A new Centrally Sponsored Scheme for establishing Ashram Schools be started by the Ministry of Welfare. (The detailed requirements of funds for the proposed scheme prescribed).

The scheme would be funded equally by the Centre and the State concerned, except in the case of P T Gs., for whom 100 per cent of the cost would be borne by the Centre as a part of the integrated developmental scheme for the tribe or for the area. This scheme could also cover upgradation of facilities in existing Ashram Schools.

The location of the new Ashram Schools and admission policy should be so decided as to give priority to S T girls and children of P T Gs., shifting cultivators, forest villagers, migrant S T labour and nomadic tribes.

8. All schools in T S P areas may be placed under the control of the State's Education Department.

9. The tribal language/dialect may be adopted as the medium of instruction at primary level in T S P areas. To achieve this end, primers and other teaching materials in the tribal language/dialect will have to be devised. The N C E R T S C E R T S and Central, Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore can help in this respect.

10. All Schools, residential or non-residential, should provide facilities for sports and games.

11. School timings, vacations, etc., may be adapted to suit local needs.

12. Starting with the Ashram/Residential schools, vocational education, particularly in agriculture, should be introduced.

13. Teachers at primary level should be recruited from among local S Ts. For this purpose, qualifications required may be relaxed at point of entry and suitable post-recruitment training imparted.

14. The establishment in T S P areas of I T Is, Polytechnics, Colleges of Nursing, A N M Training Centres, Teachers' Training Institutes, etc., currently being done by some States, should be emulated by the others. This would cease the shortage of skilled/trained manpower in T S P areas and open up fresh employment opportunities for S T youth.

15. Elementary and adult education are fields in which Non-Governmental Organizations (N G Os) have been notably active. There is unlimited scope for involving and assisting N G Os to work in this field.

16. The scheme for upgradation of merit of S C/S T students being operated by the Department of Education (Government of India) should be continued and given wide publicity. The I T D Ps. should be requested directly to identify bright S T boys and girls for placement in good residential schools under this scheme.

17. The Working Group recommended that the existing educational schemes of the Ministry of Welfare be continued and those being formulated and started at the earliest possible. The rates of Post-matric Scholarships should be revised to compensate for inflation. The existing scheme for S T girl's hostels should be made better use of by the States to improve the educational status of S T girls.

18. The contents of curricula and text books may be revised to suit tribal children.

However, it all depends on how sincerely we execute the Policy and implement various programmes for goal-attainment.

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DONGRIA KONDHS OF ORISSA—THEN AND NOW

P. S. DAS PATNAIK
and
B. B. MOHANTY

A vast area of about 250 square miles, studded with lofty hills and surrounded by dense forest covering is a portion of the Niyamgiri hills in Bissam-cuttack and K. Singpur police-station areas in the district of Koraput. These hill ranges are the abode of the Dongria Kondhs, one of the most backward sections of the Kondh tribe of Orissa who occupy the seventh place for their numerical strength among the Scheduled Tribes in India. The Kondhs form the largest group among the 62 Scheduled Tribes of Orissa and are estimated at 9,89,342 as per 1981 Census and constitute 16.73 per cent of the total tribal population, in Orissa.

About a century and half ago, the British officials (Macpherson : 1952, Campbell : 1864) featured this tribe very prominently for their heinous practice of female infanticide and human sacrifice. These accounts serve as a valuable source on the culture of the Kondh. Elwin (1944) was the first Anthropologist in this century to give his impression on this tribe.

The Kondhs in Orissa are divided into various endogamous sections, such as Kutia Kondh, Dongria Kondh, Desia Kondh, Penga Kondh, Malua Kondh, etc. These sections may be broadly divided into three groups according to their level of development. The Kutia Kondhs of Belghar area (in the district of Phulbani and Boudh-Kondhmals), the Dongria Kondh of Bissamcuttack-area (in the district of Koraput) represent the primitive sections and the Desia Kondh, living in the plains in other districts represent the Hinduized section of the tribe.

Nothing definite can be said about the total population and number of villages inhabited by the Dongria Kondhs. But they are pocketed in one compact area, that is, the Niyamgiri ranges which comprise four police-stations such as ; Kalyansinghpur, Bissam-cuttack, Muniguda and Biswanathpur. Through reconnoitre study an attempt was made to know the total number of villages inhabited and the total population of the tribe. Thus, the Niyamgiri hills constitute 110 villages inhabited by the Dongria Kondh with an approximate total population of 5618 (Males—2,491, females—3,127) as found out during the survey made in the year 1975. The present paper is the out come of a field study conducted in villages Khambesi, Kurli and Khajuri during 1987-88.

The Dongria Kondh villages consist of cluster of mud-huts huddled together without a definite plan. Both the sides of a village are covered by rows of huts. The number of huts in a predominant Dongria Kondh village usually does not exceed 35 to 40. The Dombs, a Scheduled Caste live in separate wards in villages of the Dongria Kondhs. The hut of a Dongria Kondh looks very simple. It is made of mud with straw thatched roof. The furniture owned by an average Dongria Kondh house are neither numerous nor costly. The ordinary clothing that the Dongria Kondh male as well as a female uses in the village may be just an adequate covering or protection than that of the purpose of decoration. In spite of that, they are not devoid of aesthetic sense. They irrespective of sex make up for their deficient clothing by loading their

persons with varieties of ornaments. They do not take extraordinary interest for bodily cleanliness. They are negligent of personal hygiene.

Their staple food is *Peja*, a sort of gruel prepared out of *ragi* and *Suan*-rice. It is supplemented by fruits, roots, leaves and tubers collected from forests. Rice is considered to be the ceremonial food. They take the flesh of cows, buffaloes, pigs, goats, lambs, pigeons, etc. They also eat flesh of dead animals. The very savour of Mahua-liquor (*Iрпи Kalu*) and Sago-palm juice (*Mada Kalu*) make the Dongrias almost wild. Besides, its ritual and social significance, liquor has a special charm for the Dongrias.

The Dongria Kondhs are primarily horticulturists, but they also practise shifting cultivation. The entire Dongria area is divided into various Muthas (*Farti*). Mutha is an important feature of their social organization. Natural hills are divided and apportioned for each Mutha and these hills are treated as agricultural plots by individual families in villages of each Mutha. These swiddens are enjoyed hereditarily and get sub-plotted when partition occurs.

The land in hill slopes are called *Dongar* land. The slope on the plains is called *Gudia* and the kitchen garden (*Badi*) is situated at the side or back of the homestead land. Millets like, *Mandia* (*ragi*), *Suan* (*Kosla*), *Arka*, *Ganthia*, *Kating*, *Koltha* and *Khudijana*, pulses like; *Biri*, *Alsi*, *Jhata*, *Kandula*, and turmeric are produced on the *Dongar*. Plantain, orange, pineapple and jackfruit grow luxuriantly in the hill tops. No irrigation is possible in the area except though a stream called, *Gadgada Nallah* which flows at the foot of hills. No natural or artificial fertilisers are used. As a matter of fact, the production gradually decreases from first year to second year and more or less in subsequent years.

Due to growth of population and practice of shifting cultivation the forest has declined. Hunting has ceased to be an important source of livelihood.

As per tradition the Dongria Kondhs never go for wage-earning. Surplus commodities like; fruits, turmeric, castor seeds, etc., are sold as cash crops. As fruit growers, they should, in the fitness of things, be rich but most of their products are knocked off by the Domb at the cost of their simplicity and ignorance.

Family is the primary unit in the Dongria Kondh social organization. The nuclear family is the predominant type. Through marriage the conjugal bond is established. Clan exogamy is the general rule for marriage. Though monogamy is the approved form of marriage, the society also permits for polygynous unions. The second form of social grouping is the division of the tribes into twenty-five clans called, *Bansha*. Mutha as a bigger social unit has got socio-economic relationship with other Muthas of the entire area.

Administration of justice, settlement of disputes, maintenance of peace and promotion of social welfare are some of the functions of the village council. These functions are performed by a group of people elected as officials to the council. There are four important traditional office bearers of the village council. The *Jani* is the headman of the village and also the priest. The *Bishmajhi* is the revenue collector. The *Pujari* is the village cook and leader-cum-organiser of *Meria* festival. The *Barika*, the village messenger belongs to the Domb community. Excepting these social leaders, there are several religious leaders such as:—*Jani*, *Ichan-Jani*, *Pujari*, *Bejuni* (Shaman), *Guruma* and *Dishari* (medicine-man). *Mandal* is the leader of inter-village traditional council or Mutha organization.

The Dongria Kondhs are believers of large number of deities and conceive of a large pantheon of Supernatural Beings who control the whole phenomena. They recognize a supreme deity symbolized by *Dharani Penu* (Earth-Goddess). *Kotebali*, *Jatrakudi*, *Bima*, *Dongar Penu*, *Thakrani Penu*, *Niyamraja Penu* are worshipped and treated as important deities at the village level. *Dumbas* are the ancestor-spirits. Totemism has almost lost its religious significance among them and shamanism is involved in their religion rather than in magic. The rites employed to establish harmonious relations with the deities and spirits are mainly supplication and prayers, offerings and sacrifices and the ceremonial sharing of sacrificial food, besides, certain special observances and taboos. Throughout the year the Dongrias remain busy in performing various feasts and festivals.

However, indebtedness was the most acute and complicated problem among the Dongria Kondh. Their economy was primitive but their natural surroundings had bountiful resources. Ordinarily they could glean and reap adequate

amount of food materials to live in primitive affluence. The balance with nature was seriously dislocated by the economic pressure, the dominant feature of which was indebtedness.

Since time immemorial, the Dongria Kondhs were perpetually exploited by the Doms resulting in a severe deficit in the budget of individual families.

Secondly, agriculture and fruit growing are the main sources of income of the Dongria Kondhs. But their swidens are uneconomic due to stony soil, lack of forest growth and lack of irrigation facility, etc. Government launched Purchase-Sale and Fair-price Shop Scheme in the year 1964 to bring about economic development by way of curbing exploitation, by granting interest free loan, by arranging market to purchase their surplus commodities and by giving them adequate amount of cash in exchange to purchase articles of daily necessities through Fair-price Shops. It was intended to improve their horticulture in a scientific line.

A new strategy, called, Tribal Sub-Plan was grounded during the Fifth-Plan Period (1975—80) which aimed at comprehensive development of the tribals with special focus on the individual family. The families living below the poverty line were identified and their felt-needs and problems were assessed and suitable programmes for their development were executed. The idea of integration in terms of sectoral programmes and pulling of resources were fundamental aspects in the concept of Tribal Sub-Plan.

Again on the eve of the Fifth-Plan it was recognized that special programmes for the extremely backward tribal groups should be taken up on the basis of proper identification on the lines suggested by Shilu Ao Team and Dhebar Commission. It was also considered that the programmes meant for the development of this primitive group would be financed on cent per cent basis by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India. On the basis of these norms an Action Plan was formulated for the development of the Dongria Kondh known as, Micro Project or Dongria Kondh Development Agency (D.K.D.A.).

All these measures brought radical changes in the socio economic life of the Dongria-Kondh and ensured them the right to live with a solid economic base.

Changing Science

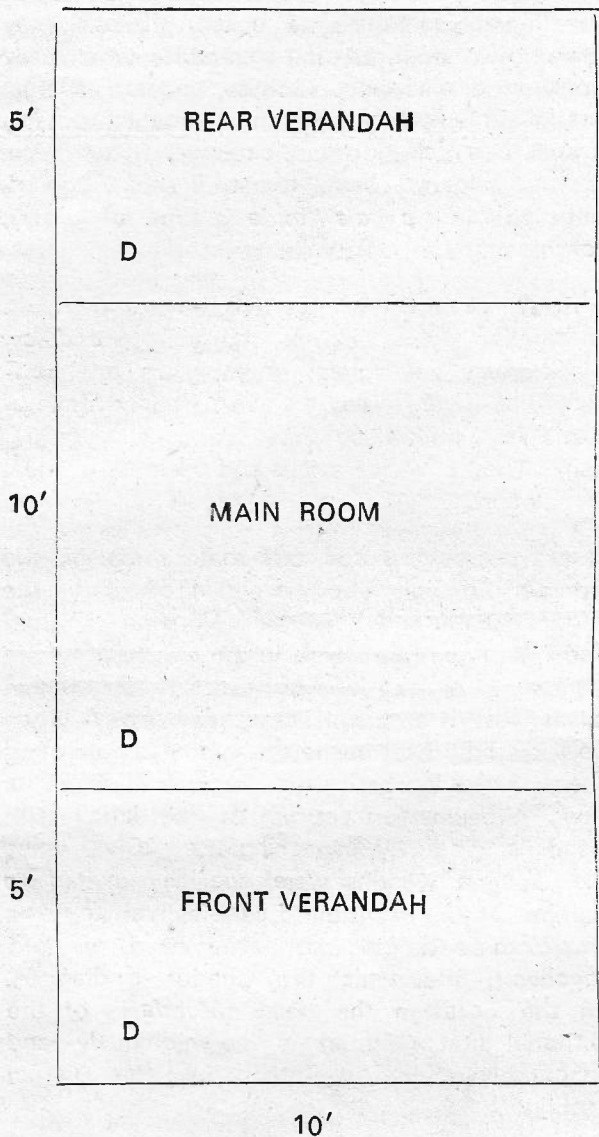
The cultural changes among the Dongria Kondh are both vast and complex, particularly in the recent past and from 1975 onwards under the impact of modern forces. The past years are marked by the advent of modern processes like installation of development agencies and implementation of various welfare schemes, industrialization, development of communication facilities, etc. From the past history and cultural synthesis, it is clear that the present cultural change among the Dongria Kondhs is the most important and noteworthy phenomenon which reflects their increasing consciousness, on the one hand, and the force of modern factors on the other.

Changes in the living conditions

The material aspect of their life has undergone a great change. Straw-thatched houses and bamboo split walls have given place to substantial pucca houses, even bungalow type of houses are found in four villages such as Khajuri, Kurli, Khambesi and Kadragumma. Each house is planned to be of one roomed with front and back with high closed verandahs and G. C. sheet roof with an estimated cost of Rs. 9,500 occupying only 200 sft. plinth area. Each house is provided with a pigsty and a goat-shed and a separate cowshed is built at the back of each house. The walls are made of burnt bricks plastered with cement and sand. Houses have been provided with wooden ceilings which serves as the granaries and storing space for prized-possession of the house.

For free air and light window has been fitted to the wall of the sleeping room. Besides, doors of 6 feet in height have been fitted both at the front and the back of the house. There is no trace of traditional look in the new set-up of the house construction. *Hadada Munda*, the small wooden post which once represented the *Dumbas* or the ancestral-spirits in each Dongria Kondh house is now found in a basket (Changudi) hanged in a rope-shelf from the middle post of the new house instead of posting it on the ground. Cemented platforms have been raised at the right corner of the sleeping room to keep cooking utensils and water pots. Wooden platforms raised about 3 feet in height from the ground level are fixed to the walls for storing paddy and other grains in the sleeping room.

GROUND PLAN OF A NEW HOUSE



Plinth Area = 200 Sq. ft.

In fact, the kitchen to which outsiders were not allowed previously to enter is now opened to the public without any restriction. For interior decoration wooden selves have been fitted on the walls of the living room where suit-cases, bags, etc. are kept. Mirror is fixed on the wall to comb hair. Framed photographs of Lord *Siva*, *Durga* and *Krishna* have been found hanging on the walls at a height in the back room. Due to free air and light the house becomes less cosy of smoke. Now women folk devote more time for up-keeping the house and its contents. The inside and the surroundings of the house seem to be more neat and tidy than before.

Household Contents

The new house has necessitated the requirement of varied modern articles. Their furniture which used to consist of a bedstead or date-palm-leaf mat, their crockery which included a few earthen vessels, wooden and gourd ladles and leaf plates, their dress which was nothing more than rags and loin clothes, have all been replaced by more substantial, artistic and durable patterns. Wooden cots, quilts, bed-sheet, pillow and mosquito-curtain have pushed their rope-knitting cots and a wrapper out of many homes. Hurricane lanterns have replaced the indigenous lamps (*Badi*). At present electricity has been provided to four villages namely, Khajuri, Kurli, Khambesi and Kadraguma and most of the households in each village have taken domestic connections. Umbrellas made of steel frame, tin suitcases, leather bags, torch light, radio, cycle, steel almirah, tape-recorder, tin chairs, wooden chairs and tables have found place in their houses.

Bamboo combs are fast disappearing as also the traditional bangles and other ornaments worn by women. Now, women prefer light and sparkling glass bangles. New designs of elegant earrings and nose pins made of gold are gradually being adopted by the well-to-do families. Dhotis and shirts are the commonest dress for the males when they go out. *Kodi* of 16 feet in length which was their usual cloth is now replaced by Lungi. Banian is put on while in the village. Some young men use stripped-shirts as used by the well-to-do families when they go out. Young women wear blouses when out of door. They put on red or yellow-bordered or print-saris, petti-coats and blouses when visit dormitories. Half-pants and shirts are put on by the children. Shoes have now become popular among them. Use of sponge-chappals, leather and canvas shoes are found among the members of well-to-do households.

Modern cosmetics like soap, scents, hair oils, liquid *alta*, *kumkum* and nail polish, have found their way into the houses of both the poor and rich families. The women are now more keen to wash their garments regularly with soap or soda and keep their children in more tidiness.

The well-to-do young males go to salon located at Chatikona and Bissamcuttack to crop up their hair and do not prefer the traditional method. They have started giving their dirty clothes to the laundry for washing and ironing.

Some of them possess razor-set for shaving regularly. For cleaning teeth, tooth brush and paste are used.

Earthen pots in the kitchen are being substituted with long durable aluminium utensils. Water is stored in the bellmetal pots for drinking purposes. Stainless-steel utensils are used for taking food. Steel tiffin carrier is used for carrying food to the hill tops.

In most of the villages people are listening news items of the radio. Even though no community set has been provided, the interested persons are found to be assembled at teacher's residence or at the residence of the person who is having radio set to listen to the local and Delhi news. They have picked up interest for Hindi musics. The daily news paper 'Samaj' is also read by some persons in the village Khambarsi. The villagers are also interested to see Hindi and Oriya movies. They attend in large scale when cinema shows are organised by the Agency authority.

Food habits

To the Dongria Kondh food was only meant something to satisfy hunger. They were conscious neither of the nutritive value of the diet nor of its tonic value like vitamins, etc. Their kitchen affair was thus quite primitive owing to their ecology, traditional food-habits and geographic isolation. The raw food materials are taken after being boiled in water, or roasted, or fried depending upon their method of preparation. The food prepared once sometimes used for days together. They cared more for quantity than quality.

At present the Dongria Kondhs have little advanced in cooking. They have learnt the defferent cooking methods from their neighbouring hindus. They now use spices, etc. in preparation of their dishes.

There is no time fixed among the Dongrias for taking food. Ragi-gruel (*peja*) is the staple food. In the morning, after brushing the teeth and washing the face, they take ragi-gruel, either prepared fresh or left over from the previous night. After mid-day, they take the same food which they carry with them to the field. Their night meals consist of ragi-gruel added with suan-rice and baked greens or dry fish, if available.

But now their night meals consist of boiled rice, vegetable curry and baked greens. They have now started growing vegetables which they consume or else they purchase vegetables from the local market. Among the vegetables potato, brinjal, bean, chilli, onion, cabbage, french bean, radish, salgam, beat, tomato, snake gourd, bitter gourd *Dangala Konda* (a type of tuber), (*arum*) etc. are consumed.

They live on cereals like-rice, suan and wheat. In addition, pulses such as red gram (*Kandula*), black gram, beansgram, green gram are consumed by them. They are very much fond of fowl, meat, pork, flesh of buffalo, beef, egg and fish. They now use spices and oil in their meat preparation.

It is to be pointed out that, some of the Dongria Kondhs who have visited Puri, the pilgrim centre and have their Darshan of Lord Jagannath and taken bath in the sea, have given up eating of any kind of meat. A belief that all the sins of a person are washed away when he takes holy bath in the sea is spreading among them. After the bath it has become a taboo for them to resume to meat diet of any kind. This trend is gradually increasing after 1984, when the Dongria Kondhs were specially invited to Koraput on the occasion of car festival to tie a new cloth as the preceptor a the head of Lord Jagannath after which the Chariot is dragged. On the occasion the head (*Mandal*) of the territorial unit (*Mutha*) is ceremoniously and honourably offered a turban by the District Authority.

They are now very much keen in taking raw tea in the morning. On special or festive occasions, like *Dasahara*, *Gamha Purnima*, etc. they prepare cakes like that of the Hindus from unboiled rice and black gram. Fried-cakes are also prepared as and when funds permit. In fact, the Dongria Kondhs have already felt the importance of tastes and delicacy in taking and preparing food.

The Dongrias are now aware of the diet of the patients and do not let them eat according to their own choice. For instance, patients suffering from fever are not allowed to take rice, dal, tamarind, brinjal, etc. They are strictly prohibited to take non-vegetarian and other items with sour taste. Pregnant ladies are not allowed to eat chilli, garlic, brinjal, fish or meat. They are also restricted from taking hot food, twin fruits and things with sour taste.

Intoxicants and Narcotics:

Mahua Liquor (*Ipi Kalu*) and Sago-Plan juice are the favourite drinks of the Dongria Kondh. Liquor vending of the Dombs in the Niyamgiri hills has always claimed a substantial share of the income of the Dongria Kondh.

In view of this the Agency with the help of some young elites has stopped this business of vending of the Dombs. A committee was formed in the year 1984 to stop this exploitation of the Dombs. The *Mandal* and other young leaders of the villages organized an oath ceremony to stop drinking liquor. The Agency intensified Police vigilance in the area to detect cases of liquor brewing and liquor vending. The young Dongrias also actively supported it. The Agency monopolized liquor vending and supplied the required quantity on various social functions to each family at the rate of Rs. 2'00 per bottle.

Some of the young Dongria Kondhs are now found making funfare with foreign liquor. They are smoking cigarettes and *bidis* and keeping match boxes with them. Some of them are also using gas lighters.

Religious Charges:

The Dongria Kondhs now worship Hindu Gods and celebrate Hindu rituals. Accordingly, they follow the Hindu pattern of feasts or religious occasions by using sacred food and sacred materials like, coconut, milk, ghee, turmeric powder and other Hindu religious traits. They are celebrating the major Hindu festivals like—*Ganesh Puja*, *Sri Panchami*, *Ganha-Purnima*, *Ratha Jatra*, *Dasahara*, *Janmastami*, etc. Participation of the Dongria Kondh in all the Hindu festivals is common now-a-days. In fact, not only do they believe in Hindu thoughts and ideas but themselves participate in the rituals, to the extent that they even perform the function of priest in many occasions like—*Ganesh Puja*, and *Saraswati Puja*. The Hindu idea of holy rivers and the custom of sacred bath have also been adopted by them. Now they undertake pilgrimage to Puri, a holy centre.

Being influenced by Hinduism they are now contributing funds to construct a Jagannath temple at Kurli village, a central place of the area. Book receipts have been printed and each person now pays Rs. 10'00 in the minimum for the proposed construction of the temple.

Goddess *Durga* otherwise known as *Gota Penu* has been accepted as such in the Dongria Kondh pantheon. She is ceremoniously worshipped during *Balijatra*, otherwise known as *Jhamu Jatra*, organised at the interval of two years during *Pana Sankranti* in the month of March-April. It is exclusively held at Khambesi where the people and the vow-takers from different *Muthas* assemble. The *Pat-Beju*, Daitari Kadraka acts as priest. *Gota Penu*, representing a pitcher-full of water is installed over a mud raised altar under a shade (*Chhamunda*). A pit of 13 feet long and one foot wide is dug and filled up with burning charcoal over which the *Beju* meanders to and fro in barefoot. Then he sits over a heap of thornes (*Mane*) where he gets possessed with spirit. In castacy he prophesises the future of each vow-taker. Then he propitiates goddess *Durga* with sacred food materials and sacrifices animals brought by the vow-takers. After the rituals, the consecrated food are distributed among the audience. Since eight years, this ritual is observed. Another interesting aspect of this ritual is persons suffering from fatal diseases are said to be cured by performing this *Puja*.

It is remarkable that, the Dongria Kondhs are gradually giving up sacrifice of buffalo on various ritual occasions. The Agency which is responsible to bring this change has 'thus' saved the community from exploitation of the Domb. The Agency is now supplying buffalo to the Dongria Kondhs for celebration of various festive occasions.

Thus, it is clear that the Dongria Kondhs have been greatly influenced by Hinduism and have adopted Hindu religious and social behaviour to a very great extent.

Political Changes

In the Dongria Kondh society the heads of different traditional units (clan, village and territory) were obeyed, respected and accepted. The office of these heads was on hereditary basis and the authority remained in the hands of a single person. The introduction of Grampanchayat system and Community Development brought the Dongria Kondhs nearer to the democratic character of the National Administration. Besides, with the establishment of the Micro-Project the political organization of the Dongria Kondhs got a new direction. Though customary laws are still prevalent, their importance is diminished under the impact of modern forces.

At the intervention of the Agency, leadership pattern has been organised more formidably at the Mutha or territorial level and the developmental measures are introduced through them. The village headman, *Jani*, the ward member and the young leaders help the *Mandal*, the Mutha head, and Sarpanch in taking decisions on various matters. The Panchayat has good authority in its area. The Government officials are not able to implement any plan and programme without the help of the *Mandal* and Sarpanch.

Another Committee has been formed in each village comprising of *Jani*, *Bishmaihi*, *Pujari*, *Ichan Jani* and two more young leaders. These leaders are responsible for taking decisions on the following matters.

- (a) Selection of beneficiaries for receiving different benefits.
- (b) Distribution of different implements required for horticultural plantations.
- (c) Settlement of consideration for sale of crop fields, orchards, fruit trees and horticultural produce to Dombs.
- (d) Selection of beneficiaries for distribution of petty loan and consumption loan.
- (e) The Committee shall shoulder the responsibility of receiving advance from the Agency for liquidating the debt burden of the Dongrias and to make Dongrias free from the clutches of local money lenders.
- (f) The Committee shall negotiate land dispute cases and disruption arising out of marriage by capture.
- (g) Through Committee consumer goods are supplied.
- (h) All the welfare measures like—construction to approach road to the village supply of electricity, construction of water harvesting structure, sinking of wells and tube-wells, opening of schools, etc. are done as per the suggestion of the Committee.
- (i) The Committee selects the Domb traders for purchase of the surplus agricultural and horticultural produces from the tribals and also decides, the rate of purchase of different items.

- (j) The Committee unanimously decided not to brew liquor. They motivated the villagers not to purchase liquor from the Dombs or borrow money for purchase of the same.

The modern leaders are also well represented in the Niyamgiri Fruit-Growers Co-operative Society. Under the sponsorship of the Agency, Wadaka Madan of village Khambesi (*Mandal*) became the President and Kadraka Mandala of village Dhamniponga became the Vice-President of the Co-operative Society. Jakasika Majhlani (Mundbali village), Pusika Gaji (Sutanguni village), Wadaka Kana (Khajuri village) and Kadraka Peju (Radang village) became the Directors of the Co-operative Society. Thus the political system and leadership played important role in enforcing reformative measures among the society members and bringing down the extent of exploitation of the Dombs and local money-lenders.

Social Changes

Changes in marriage—Excessive bride-price (Jhola), customary among the Dongria Kondhs, has made it impossible for indigent families to provide bride to otherwise eligible young men and therefore bride capture and bride services have become frequent in the society. Among the Dongria Kondhs, a girl is considered prized possession and at her age of 4 or 5 years, proposals for her marriage comes from different boy's parents under the system of negotiable marriage. If the girl's parents accept liquor from the boy's parents, the negotiation is finalized and the nuptial is kept pending till both the boy and the girl are grown up. If after finalization, the girl is captured from the dormitory by any one, the situation results in feuds or tug-of-war between two Muthas belonging to both the boy and the girl—resulting to arson and bloodshed. The boy's parents are heavily penalized to the tune of Rs. 2,500 to Rs. 3,000.

Secondly, in an indigent family, the boy renders services in the girl's house for years together to minimize the quantum of bride-price required to be paid by his side. When his patience is taxed, he with his fellow boys, threatens the girl's parents to behead them in case the marriage is not solemnized earlier.

All these cases made the Dongria society more strife-ridden and tussels and strife become regular phenomenon. The Agency mitigated

these cases by arranging funds in the shape of loan for meeting the expenses of marriage and social ceremonies of those who could not provide the means required for these functions. As a result of this, a large number of marriages could ever be possible among the poorer section of the people. There are now less cases of bride capture and late marriage.

With the intervention of the Agency, the bride-price which consisted of Rs. 500 to Rs. 700 along with some heads of animals in the shape of cows and buffaloes is now reduced to money only in the tune of Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 3,000 with one or two cows.

The Dongrias now feel it more convenient to pay the amount in cash only as they are now economically better off with assistance from the Agency.

At present, there are absolutely no celebrates in the Dongria Kondh Society. Poor economic condition forced some of the Shamans to lead the life of celibacy for which they were involved in spiritual marriages ultimately. But the situation is changed now as the Shamans are no more found as bachelors or spinsters.

There are now more of widow remarriages. Improved economic condition has enabled some of the widowers to marry the widows. In fact the changes are more conspicuous in the economic aspects of marriage but neither the structural nor the organizational parts are changed.

Changes in death rites—Among the Dongria Kondhs, the mortuary rite (*Dasha* or *Karja-ki-manamu*) takes place on the second day after the death. Only the nearest and closed relatives are called upon to observe the rite. To meet the expenses involved in this unfortunate incident, the Dongrias circumstantially borrow money and animals from the Dombs by mortgaging fruit-bearing trees and cropped-fields. Further, in a Dongria Kondh family, it is a must to call back the soul of the dead (*Ghar Dumba*) ceremoniously, a year after death along with other souls (*Konda Dumbas*.) If it is not done there may occur repeated deaths in a family. But to celebrate the function, a family is to incur lot of expenditure. This forces some of the families to defer the spirit calling for years together and until this ceremony is observed the affected families live in an atmosphere of fear and anxiety expecting always some kinds of misdeeds from the underworld.

The Agency took up 25 such cases and extended funds to bereaved families to accomplish the rituals. Further, the Agency became very much liberal in extending consumption loan to those families who immediately needed to perform such rituals in time without delay.

Changes in health condition

The Dongria Kondhs live in the most unhealthy regions and face a lot of difficulties with regard to their health and sanitation. A number of diseases like chicken pox, joint pain, diarrhoea, cholera, scabies, eye infections and other diseases like gastric pain, stomach pain, headache, malaria and so on are found among the Dongria Kondhs. Specially they suffer from many kinds of fevers and chronic diseases which are mostly water borne. They attribute disease as the evil acts of malicious spirits and magicians or effects of breach of taboos.

With the intervention of Agency, a lot of changes have taken place in the general health condition of the Dongria Kondhs. The Dongria Kondhs at present cry for medical aid, more of it, for quinine and for pure drinking water, and show least courtesy to shamans and diviners, though the village medicine-man (*Dishari*) still has an important role to play in their struggle and vicissitudes of life. In many villages today, the vaccinator finds little resistance and greater welcome as hundreds of them submit to inoculation against cholera or typhoid. In central villages schools have been opened and the teachers are the custodians of medicine. The teachers, who are in direct contact with the people, distribute medicines worth Rs. 150 in a month and inform the Agency authority when there are special cases of suffering. Moreover, health guides have been appointed suitably selecting both from the Dongria Kondh and the Domb communities with a remuneration of Rs. 50 per month each, to distribute medicines and to keep the Agency informed about the health condition of the people from time to time. In every month two Medical camps are being organised in consultation with the doctor of local P. H. C. to attend to the patients suffering from various diseases. The Health Guides inform the public the time and venue of such camps. In case of serious illness and fatal injury, etc. patients are admitted to the Mission hospital at Bissam-cuttack and the entire cost for the treatment is borne by the Agency. However, the co-ordinated efforts of the Health Guides,

Teachers and the Agency staff have achieved the necessary goal in this regard and their hazardous efforts are really praiseworthy.

Every Dongria Kondh faces the difficulty of getting safe drinking water. Even though water is sufficiently available in some villages, it is very dirty and contaminated. But due to unavoidable situation they are forced to use that water. Realising the situation, the Agency sunk wells and *Chuas* in 67 villages in the Project area.

Educational Changes

Now-a-days, a considerable Dongria Kondh particularly the younger generation are very much conscious regarding education. Under the educational Sector 33 Formal Education Centre and 33 Adult Literacy Centres have been opened up in the area by the Dongria Kondh Development Agency. Students are provided with reading and writing materials, garments, mid-day meals, care feeding and medicines free of cost. Free kerosine oil is supplied to the Adult literacy centres. School buildings are constructed and maintained by the Agency.

Teachers recruited locally are appointed with an emolument of Rs. 450 per month each to teach students. To teach in the Adult Literacy Centres, the same teachers are paid an additional amount of Rs. 30 per month each. The appointment of the teachers is subject to cancellation after one year if they do not learn the tribal language within the stipulated period. Other than teaching, the teachers look after the health of the students, motivate the parents to send their children to the schools, visit plantation yards of different families and look after the plantation, distribute medicines and prevent the Doms from purchasing cropped-fields and fruit-bearing trees from the Dongria Kondhs.

Other than the Non-formal Educational Centres, there are 7 Upper-primary Schools functioning in the area. A low cost hostel is functioning at Kurla with 40 boarders, of which 26 are Dongria Kondhs and only 4 students belong to the Domb community.

Economic Changes

Some of the striking changes noticed in the economic sphere after the establishment of Micro-Project are described below :

1. The Dongria Kondhs in Muniguda and Sakata areas who possess *Penga* type of land mostly have adopted modern agricultural

practices and have achieved reasonable success as agriculturists. The settlement operation in the year 1976 has settled *Penga* type of land under individual possession as a result of which about 54 families have been benefitted by adopting paddy cultivation at the foot of the hills. These families have been provided with plough and bullock. The use of hybrid seeds, chemical fertilizers and pesticides in agriculture is now quite known to them. At present, they are getting more yield from the land by adopting these practices. Irrigation is not a problem for them, which is assured by the perennial stream flowing from the hill top.

2. Almost all the beneficiaries were supplied with new sets of agricultural implements to take up scientific shifting cultivation.

3. The Dongria Kondhs have now started sowing two types of crops—the Kharif crops and Rabi crops of high yielding varieties. The Kharif crop is sown in the beginning of the rainy season and is called the 'Rainy Season Crop' while the Rabi crop is sown when the winter starts and is known as the 'Winter crop'. The Kharif crops include, maize, ragi, castor, mustard, vegetable seeds like—Pumpkin, cucumber, bittergourd, snake—gourd, ladies finger, green leaves (*Palanga* and *kosola*), etc.

Low—lying fertilized fields are taken up at village Radanga and Patlamba in Kadraka Mutha, Gunjapadi, Surudipai and Salap-jhola in Pusika Mutha and Gailanga and Sakata in Sikoko Mutha for improved variety of paddy cultivation.

The Rabi crops include—Potato, Onion, cauli-flower, cabbage, tomato, beat, gazer and bean.

4. In the horticultural sector, the Dongrias were also supplied with high yielding varieties of fruit-plants which include queen variety of pineapple, improved variety of banana such as—*Vusaba* and *Champd*, mango, lichhu, guava, grape, cocoanut, jackfruit, drum stick and cashewnut, ginger and turmeric of better varieties were also supplied to them for cultivation in their swiddens.

5. Cultivation of different crops and plantation programmes were organized in phased manner under the direct supervision of the Agricultural Extension Officer, Field Assistant, Mate and School teacher. These officials constantly keep watch over these agricultural and

horticultural programmes by chalking out programmes village-wise, besides pursuing follow-up measures.

6. In an attempt to involve the beneficiaries in the plantation programme, they were paid wages in the shape of rice, ragi, salt and clothes.

7. For Rabi crops, Channels were prepared at the rate of Rs. 2,000 each to irrigate cropped field by utilizing the stream water. The Dongrias rendered free and co-operative labour to make the scheme a success. As a result of this there was bumper production of potato and beat in Wadaka and Takasika Muthas.

8. To encourage cottage industry two families were sanctioned funds to take up blacksmithy, four families for carpentry, seven families each for bee-keeping and embroidery and twenty-five families for charka-playing.

9. The problem of indebtedness was quite serious among the Dongria Kondhs. Usually, the Dombs were the main exploiters. The Dongrias appeared to have accepted indebtedness as a normal and almost inescapable aspect of their existence.

To curb indebtedness, committees were formed constituting important leaders in different villages to settle up the contract of loan between the Dombs and the Dongria Kondhs and suggest measures for repayment of the loan to the former.

They were paid an advance of Rs. 69,000 by the Agency during the year 1983-84 to liquidate the debt burden of the Dongrias. Until now 400 Dongria families have been freed from the clutches of the Dombs and their outstanding loans have been repaid and mortgaged articles have been given back to the loanee families. The teachers guide these committees. These committees have also taken steps to desist the Dongrias from taking further loan from the Dombs and selling the surplus commodities to the Dombs. The Dombs are hoodwinked and taken to task if at all a loan contract is known between a Domb and a Dongria Kondh.

Other than the repayment of loan the Agency extends consumption loan to the tune of Rs. 500 maximum to an individual to meet emergent necessities. Previously it was interest free. But from the 1st July, 1986, an interest of 4 per

cent per annum is charged to control extravagancies in this respect. The loan is realized in the shape of kind when the surplus commodities are purchased by the Agency.

Due to repayment of loan and payment of consumption loan, the indebtedness position of the Dongrias is now minimized to a greater extent. This practically gave a death blow to the economic transaction of the Domb and as a result of this the Dombs of the entire area appealed to the Agency to save them from economic hardship and degradation. The Agency allowed the following concessions to the Dombs.

(a) In case the Agency has no funds to extend loan, a Domb can extend loan to a Dongria only with the approval of the Agency and a record has to be maintained to that effect.

(b) The Dombs are given small trading loan for carrying fruit business in the Agency area. All the Domb families have been booked under ITDA Programme. As per recommendation of the P. A., I. T. D. A., about 47 families have received trading loan to the tune of Rs. 9,000 in three phases with 33 per cent subsidy.

After receiving the amount the Dombs will purchase the commodities directly from the Dongrias in the presence of the Agency authority. These commodities are to be sold to the Agency first. In case the Agency denies, the Domb may sell to the public and the profit is taken by them.

To throw light further on the present economic condition of the Dongrias under the changing scene, a case study on Dongria Kondh budget is described below.

Dongria Kondh budget—A case study

This case study relates to Wadaka M of village Khambesi, M aged about 40 years is having 7 members in his family which includes wife, Ma (35 years), unmarried younger sister, L (17 years), two sons, P (7 years) and B (6 years) and widow sister, S (45 years) and the daughter of the widow, Pu (7 years).

M said that primarily he derives income from two sources such as horticulture and shifting cultivation.

He has his swiddens located in three hills, The distance of these hills from the village and the area of swiddens under his possession in each of the hills is given in table 1.

TABLE 1
Location of swidden

Name of the hill	Distance from the village Khambesi in Kms.	Approximate area in acres
Wadanga ..	2	5
Malanda ..	1	2
Gadagada ..	2	1

Although he possesses about 8 acres of swidden land, but in the year 1986 he took up cultivation in 2 acres of land located in Malanda hill.

The crops grown and the quantity of seeds sown and the yield of each crop is given in table 2.

TABLE 2
Crops grown with the quantity of seeds sown and yield of each crop

Name of the crop	Quantity of seeds sown in Kg.	Yield of each crop in Kg./Nos.
1. Kosala ..	6	300
2. Mandia ..	6	150
3. Jana ..	3	50
4. Kangu ..	3	50
5. Ghantia ..	1.5	60
6. Jada ..	3	75
7. Kandula ..	3	150
8. Jhudunga ..	3	75
9. Kating ..	3	100
10. Nangala Kanda	30	200 Nos.
11. Maka ..	0.25	300 Nos.
12. Boitalu ..	..	100 Nos.
13. Kakudi ..	..	300 Nos.
14. Baila ..	1	45
15. Dhan maricha	0.5	10

Expenditure on shifting Cultivation

M said that the works connected with shifting cultivation is very arduous and labour intensive. Therefore, most of the works are done through co-operative labour (*Punda Buti*). Besides, engaging himself and his family members, he employed 12 persons for one day for cutting trees and clearing bushes, 12 persons for one day for hoeing, 12 persons for three days for the first and 2nd weeding, 12 persons for one day for harvesting and 12 persons one day for threshing. It is a practice among them that the workers who are employed are provided food for their labour besides Rs. 5 per day.

Table-3 gives the amount of labour invested with its money value for all types of work connected with shifting cultivation.

TABLE 3
Amount of Labour invested with money value

Nature of work	No. of mandays employed		Money value in Rs.
	Own	Co-operative labour	
Forest clearing & de-bushing	20	12	129
Cutting of stumps and fencing	20	..	100
Sowing and Hoeing	40	12	229
Weeding ..	24	36	207
Harvesting and Threshing	30	24	208
	Total		Rs. 873'00

The price of different types of seeds sown in shifting cultivation is given in table-4.

TABLE 4
Amount of seeds sown with money value

Name of the crop	Quantity of seeds sown (Kg.)	Money value in Rs.
Kosala ..	6	7'20
Mandia ..	6	9'00
Jana ..	3	2'70
Kangu ..	3	4'50
Ghantia ..	1.5	2'10
Jada ..	3	13'50

Name of the crop	Quantity of seeds sown (Kg.)	Money value in Rs.	Name of the crops	Yield in Kg.	Money value in Rs.
Kandula	3	12.00	Maka	300	30
Jhudanga	3	6.75	Boitalu	100 nos.	100
Kating	3	9.00	Kakudi	300 nos.	20
Nangal Kanda	30	20.00	Baila	45	90
Maka	0.25	2.00	Dhan maricha	10	60
Boitalu	..	2	Total	..	Rs. 2652.50
Kakudi	..	1			
Baila	1	1			
Dhana Maricha	0.5	3			
Total		Rs. 95.75			

The expenditure on shifting cultivation which M has to incurred is (Rs. 873 + Rs. 95.75) Rs. 968.75.

The money value of the yield of different crops as shown in Table 5 gives the income from shifting cultivation.

TABLE 5

Money value of the crops produced in shifting cultivation

Name of the Crops	Yield in Kg.	Money value in Rs.
Kosala	300	360
Mandia	150	225
Jana	50	45
Kangu	50	75
Ghantia	60	42
Jada	75	337.50
Kandula	150	600
Jhudunga	75	168
Kating	100	300
Nangala kanda	200 nos.	200

The money value of the crops grown in shifting cultivation shows that M got man income of Rs. 2,652.50 from two acres of land against an investment of Rs. 968.75. This means that he got a good crop that year which enabled him to earn a profit of Rs. 1,683.75 paise.

M has two orchards, one located at Udadarka hill and the other at Gadagada hill, Besides, he maintains a kitchen garden. The area of the orchards and the type of crops grown in these orchards has been given in Table 6.

TABLE 6

Location of the orchards

Name of the hills	Area under plantation in acres	Type of horticultural crops grown
Udadaka	4	Pineapple, Banana, Orange, Turmeric, Jackfruit.
Gadagada	2	Banana, Turmeric, Guava, Lemon, Mango.
Kitchen garden	0.5	Banana, Orange, Lichu, Pineapple.

The horticultural plants which he has grown in both kitchen garden and orchards are pineapple, banana, orange, turmeric, jack-fruit, lemon, mango, etc. M said that before the inception of D.K.D.A. he had only small orchards with few fruit bearing trees. But after getting assistance from the Agency he could able to expand the area under horticultural plantation by planting more and more improved quality plants. He feels that in comparison to shifting cultivation the labour requirement in horticultural crops is less. Nevertheless, it requires requiring expenditure for maintenance.

The amount of expenditure involved for maintenance and other works in connection with horticultural crops as told by him is given in table 7.

TABLE 7

Expenditure on horticulture

Name of the hill	Items of work	Amount spent Rs.
Udadak	Weeding operation of turmeric, new fencing and repair of old fence, Digging of pit and plantation of new plants, Harvesting.	650
Gadagada	Ditto	500
Kitchen garden	Ditto	50
Total	..	1,200

To expand the area under horticulture he got an amount of Rs. 1,500 in the year 1983-84 (Rs. 1,100 for pineapple and Rs. 400 for Banana plantation) and Rs. 400 for Banana plantation in the year 1984-85.

The amount of income derived through horticulture is given below in table 8.

TABLE 8

Income from Horticulture

Name of the hill	Name of the crop	Amount of annual income in Rs.
Udadaka ..	Pine apple	.. 700
	Banana	.. 1,000
	Turmeric	.. 4,000
	Orange (Old)	.. 400
	Jack-fruit	.. 1,000
Gadagada	Banana	.. 400
Kitchen graden	Banana	.. 100
Total	..	7,600'00

The total income of wadaka M is Rs. 10,252'50 of which horticulture has a major share of 74 per cent.

Expenditure :—

M told that since he is having a large family, the major portion of his income is spent on food. The annual requirement of cereals for his family as told by him is given below.

Kosala	..	300 Kg.
Ragi	..	400 Kg.
Jana, Ghantia, Kangu	..	190 Kg.
Rice	..	250 Kg.

Besides these, he has to spend some money for the purchase of salt, vegetables, cooking oil, chilli, onion, dry fish, tobacco, sugar, molasses and tea-dust, etc. His annual expenditure on different items has been given below :—

TABLE 9

Annual Expenditure

Items of expenditure	Amount spent in Rs.
Food and drink	.. 3,900'00
Religious expenses	.. 2,000'00
Shifting cultivation and horticulture.	2,168'75
Clothing	.. 400'00
Purchase of durable household articles.	350'00
Entertainment of guests and visit to relatives' house.	225'00
House thatching and repairing	.. 150'00
Medicine	.. 325'00
Others	.. 250'00
Total	.. 9,768'75

The annual expenditure of M is Rs. 9,768'75 which indicates that he has a surplus amount of Rs. 483'75. The expenditure on first three items taken together constitute 82 per cent of the total expenditure and the rest 18 per cent is distributed in other different items.

The facts which emerge out from this case study show that shifting cultivation which was once considered to be the primary source of income has now given way to horticulture. As evident in this case, about 74 per cent of the total income is derived from horticulture. At present, shifting cultivation has become unproductive and less profitable. Moreover, the situation has reached such a stage that the cost of input is threatening to surpass the cost of output. This fact has been realised by the Dongria Kondhs to some extent, as such, many podu ravaged areas are now brought under horticultural plantation with assistance from D. K. D. A.

The budget also reflects some noticeable changes which have come about in respect of their dietary habit and other aspects of material culture. Rice, which was once used as ceremonial food, has occupied a significant place in their daily diet. Since shifting cultivation has failed to provide them with their required quantity of cereals, the people have been, under the circumstances, forced to change their dietary habit by taking rice during the deficit months. With cash in hand earned from horticulture, they could now easily afford to purchase rice either from local weekly market or from the fair price shop located at Bissamcuttack. Besides rice, other new items such as wheat, dal, onion edible oil, tea, sugar and molasses etc., have found their place in Dongria Kondh diet.

Some other things which emerge out of this case study reveal that a substantial amount has been spent on clothings and for celebration of religious rites. While giving clarification to this effect M said that the expenditure on clothings is little high because he has purchased some woolen dresses and shawals for his family during the last winter. Regarding the religious expenses he said that certain important religious rights such as *Meriah Parab*, calling of 'Dumba' (dead ancestors) which were unusually deferred previously due to want of money are now celebrated at the right time without any delay. These clearly indicate that their standard of living is gradually increasing.

Above all, the income and expenditure pattern as revealed from this case study show that the budget is more or less a balanced one with a reasonable surplus. This budget which not only indicates about the economic self-sufficiency and advancement of M. Wadaka but also of many Dongria Kondhs, who, infact, have got themselves freed from the clutches of local Dombs from perpetual debt. They no longer sell their horticultural produce to the Dombs, rather they sell these in the local market or in the Co-operative Society.

Now, the time has come for the panic stricken Dombs to reconsider their occupational strategy.

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Madhuca Latifolia (Rexb) Macbr, (Mahua)—

A tree of Socio-Economic importance to tribals of South-Eastern India

R. D. GIRACH

and

AMINUDDIN

Introduction :

Four species of Genus *Madhuca*, belonging to family sapotaceae are reported to occur throughout India (Anonymous, 1981) and are known for their economic utility, particularly for native people.

One of the common tree species *Madhuca latifolia*, locally known as *Mahua* or *Mohwa* is associated with culture, socio-economic conditions and every day needs of various tribal societies in Orissa and Bihar. Due to its multipurpose usage among the tribal communities and its key role in improving economy of the native people, the tree has been protected and regarded as a sacred tree.

Some aspects on ethnobotany of *Mahua* tree recorded from tribal pockets of Orissa and Bihar are discussed in this communication with a view to conserve it for the benefit of local tribal societies.

Distribution :

It is largely distributed in the peninsular region of India. The range of distribution extends from Western Ghat, Vindhyanchal to Eastern Ghats. It is common in central India, Deccan trap, Orissa and Bihar (Anonymous, 1981). It was collected as one of the common associates of Sal in tropical dry deciduous forests of Orissa and Bihar between 200 m. MSL. to 1000 m. MSL.

Role of Mahua in Tribal Life :

Tribals of various ethnic groups dominate this hill region, where they largely practise shifting cultivation. Their income from cultivable land is hardly sufficient for 4—6 months. They have to depend on collection of minor forest produce including wild edible plants to augment their requirement of food and supplement their source of income.

Mahua is one of the important plant sources and bread winning tree for local tribals at least for three months in a year.

Maduca latifolia (Rexb) Macbr.—*Mahua* tree begins to bear flowers and fruits at the age of 8—10 years and continues to do so for about 60 years (Anonymous, 1981). Flowering begins at the end of February or first week of March. Women and children belonging to tribal communities start collecting flowers of *Mahua* tree found in their surroundings. Ground around *Mahua* tree is cleaned with a broom prepared from locally available dried plant, *Sida rhombifolia* (*Bajramuli*) before collection starts. Flowers are dropped by vigorous shaking of the branches. As soon as they fall on the ground they are collected and kept in the baskets of varying size and shape. Collection process goes on for 16—8 hours a day, till the end of April. After collection they are spread in the outer verandh, in the open, under shade for drying. They shrink in size and turn reddish-brown in colour after drying.

Local uses of Flowers—

1. The Kondh, Gond and Koya tribes of Orissa and the Santal and Ho communities of Bihar use freshly collected or dried flowers for edible purpose. Flowers are either eaten raw or cooked as vegetable.

2. Dried flowers are stored in a cool place and used as vegetable during the period of scarcity by the Kondh of Dhenkanal.

3. Both men and women folk of tribal communities are habitual drinkers, after a day's hard work or due to hardship in mountain life, they drink liquor prepared from distillation of *Mahua* flowers and other indigenous plant materials. In Koraput and Dhenkanal, flowers are kept near running water to get fermented. For this purpose dried flowers are sold in the weekly markets of tribal dominated villages at the rate of 25 paise per *dona*, (leaf-cup).

4. Dried flowers are bartered for salt on equal weight basis in Malaygiri area of Dhenkanal. Native tribals of this area are said to consume salt with rice at the time of non-availability of vegetables.

5. Flowers are rich source of sugar, vitamins, calcium, phosphorus, iron, magnesium, copper (Anonymous, 1981) and fluoride (Anonymous, 1987). Flowers are cooling, demulcent, expectorant, tonic, nutritive and stimulant. Methanolic extracts of flowers possess antibacterial activity (Anonymous, 1987).

Fruit

It ripens in May-June. Fruits are collected as soon as they fall from the tree or are dropped on the ground by shaking of its branches.

Local uses

1. Unripe fruits are eaten raw or cooked as vegetable by local tribes at Urbengi in Dhenkanal district and Athgarh in Cuttack district.

2. Fruits are also relished by wild animals, like Monkey and Bear.

Seed

Seeds are separated from the fruit which is one of the important source of oil.

Seed oil

Oil is obtained from the seeds by indigenous method through husking lever (*Dhenki*) in the tribal areas surveyed. The yield of seed oil is very low. Fresh oil is yellow in colour.

Local uses

1. Seed oil is used as non-conventional edible oil for cooking purpose by the tribals of Dhenkanal, Kalahandi and Cuttack districts of Orissa and Hazaribagh of Bihar. Seed oil is known as '*Tulo*' by local tribe in Athgarh forest areas. Though seed oil is used for edible/cooking purpose since long, no side effects were reported by the tribes consuming.

2. Oil is reported to be used as adulterant for ghee, in manufacturing lubricating grease, as emollient in skin diseases and laxative for piles and constipation (Anonymous, 1981).

Mahua cake

It is used as manure and animal feed by the local tribes in Singbhum and Hazaribagh districts of Bihar. There is controversial report regarding its use as animal feed. According to Anonymous (1981), presence of saponin renders the cake unfit for use as animal feed, when Anonymous (1987) has reported that introduction of seed cake in the diet of lactating buffaloes did not produce any ill effect on the general health of the experimental animals.

Timber

Wood is used in manufacture of *Dhenki*, the husking lever by local tribes and for agricultural implements.

Twigs

Twigs of the tree are employed as tooth brush by tribals of Singbhum and Hazaribagh districts of Bihar and the Kondh of Dhenkanal and Kalahandi districts of Orissa in order to strengthen gums.

Stembark

1. Stembark decoction is employed to cure mouth ulcer by the Kondh of Phulbani district of Orissa.

2. Powdered stembark is applied on boils in Kankadahad area of Dhenkanal.

Stembark is reported to contain 17 per cent Tannin (Anonymous, 1981). Tannin exhibits astringent and cooling properties thus suggesting genuineness of its use as tooth brush and cure for ulcer/boils.

Leaf

Leaf paste is applied in scabies by the Kondh of Dhenkanal. Leaf extract is reported to have anti-bacterial activity (Anonymous, 1987).

Latex

1. Milky sap of the plant is employed in tooth ache by the Kondh of Gajapada area of Athgarh forest division.

2. Latex is applied on snake bite by the tribals of Khariar area of Kalahandi.

Tribals living in Orissa and Bihar have developed a deep sense of attachment with certain trees, like *Sal*, *Mahua* and *Kendu* grown in their surroundings. These trees are of great economic importance to them. They satisfy their daily needs, like food, medicine, shelter etc. from these trees.

Since *Mahua* tree is one of the most important sources of their livelihood, they invariably spare this tree from cutting, when they clear up a fresh patch of hill slope for shifting cultivation (Acharya, 1989). Similarly living trees are never felled by the Kol tribal community (Haines, 1978). *Mahua* is also regarded as a holy and sacred plant by a number of tribes of Orissa, namely, Kondh, Koya, Bondo and Gond.

According to Gupta (1981), the plant has found a place in the socio-religious ceremonies connected with marriage among the Munda tribe of Bihar. He has recorded a folk song giving importance of *Mahua* tree in the Munda culture. It reads like this, "Do not, O my parents! Give me in marriage in a country where there are no *Mahua* and *Sal* trees—Nevertheless it is in such a country that we have decided to marry thee".

CONCLUSION

Mahua is one important forest produce for the native tribes. *Mahua* tree with its multipurpose usage among various ethnic groups has acquired a sacred place in their mind.

In an attempt to grow trees, like Eucalyptus, Teak and Rubber during afforestation campaign large number of natural species and those having sense of attachment by the tribals are lost sight of. Introduction of Teak in place of *Mahua* and *Sal* by the Bihar forest department, in Singbhum district was strongly opposed by the tribal community (Acharya, 1989).

Care should be taken while planning afforestation programmes as regards introduction of new species. Tribal communities should be taken into confidence before removing plants, like *Mahua* which continues to play a very important role in the culture and socio-economic life of tribal communities since time immemorial.

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Customary Law and Justice :

A case study among Santals of Balasore district

M. ACHARYA

Introduction

No society whether simple or complex is lawless, in the former it is unwritten and lacks documentation, whereas in the latter it is written. In the simple, preliterate or pre-industrial societies law is manifested through social customs, norms, sanctions, taboos or negative sanctions and they are backed by physical force. In other words they have enforceability and the customary law is by nature and spirit obligatory.

According to Stephen Fuchs, "Primitive law is more or less identical with ethical norms and public opinion". The ethical precepts and norms are handed-down from generation to generation not only through initiation, but also by an informal and occasional education by the elderly members of the tribe. But the observance or primitive law and custom is enforced most effectively by the pressure of public opinion as it is mostly based on kinship bond. Further more, the remarkable faithful observance of the tribal law is the feeling of inter-dependence and mutual obligation among the members of a particular tribe.

Customary law refers to rules that are transmitted from generation to generation through social inheritance. In a close-knit simple or tribal society, the people themselves want to live according to customs backed by social sanctions to save them from objections and ridicule of the society and they do not have to resort to the original thinking on every aspect. Customary law acts as a means of informal social control as it includes those methods developed

by themselves according to the needs of the society and these are more, traditions and customs. The social control is effected by awarding the obedient and punishing the disobedient or miscreant.

The tribal societies are governed by their customary laws which are framed by taking into consideration their societal values, ethos, customs, norms and belief systems. All aspects of their life are governed by these laws. These set of rules which varies from tribe to tribe are maintained and transmitted from generation to generation mostly by oral tradition. Among the large tribal communities, such as the Kondh, the Saora, the Gond the sub-divisions are many, and these sub-divisions in course of time have become separate indigenous and culturally distinctive groups. As such there is marked difference in the customary laws among these sub-divisions.

The present paper is the outcome of field study undertaken among the Santals in Nilgiri block of Balasore district during 1988-89.

Techniques of data Collection

Besides case studies, the data were collected from the field by means of structured schedules and group discussions.

The study village

The village Pattam sahi which comes under Nilgiri block of Balasore district is situated at a distance of 44 Kms. from district headquarters. The village is named after the late Pattam Majhi

who was considered to be the oldest inhabitant was appointed as the Chowkidar by the then king of Nilgiri, and founder of the village. During his days he

The age-sex break up of the Santal Population in the village is given below:

TABLE 1
Age-sex break up of the population

Sl. No.	Age-group	Population			Percentage to Total population
		Male	Female	Total	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1	0—14	34	28	62	38.28
2	15—39	18	27	45	27.77
3	40—59	25	13	38	23.46
4	60+	10	7	17	10.49
	Total	87	75	162	100.00

The above table reveals that the total Santal population of the village is 162 and here the males out-number the females. The distribution of population in different age-groups shows that the age-group of (0—14) records the highest percentage (32.28 per cent), whereas the age-group of (60+) the lowest percentage (10.49 per cent).

Primitive law is more or less based on moral and ethical norms (Fuchs, 41). This definition holds good for all the tribal communities including the Santals of the study village. Among the Santals there is a corporate body of legal institution based on their customs and traditions. Through this institution the customary laws of the society are enforced among the members. The rigid social customs, norms, values, ethos and taboos are considered to be very essential cohesive factors for maintaining a healthy society, and violation of any of these by any person is considered offensive by the society. Apart from the social laws the positive and negative sanctions enforce certain check on an individual for committing any mistake or crime besides playing a vital role in strengthening the solidarity of the community life. In other words, sanction is a social force which brings or impels a person to behave in conformity with the rule recognized by the society.

Positive sanction is the observance of social standards which is approved by the society. The individual is held in respect and thereby his position is secured in the society.

Negative sanction is the non-observance of social standards. The person who violates the code is punished. The negative sanction has two aspects, such as, unorganized and organized. While the former means punishment by itself caused due to break of any taboo, the latter refers to oath, ordeal and trial.

Social Taboos

They have certain taboos, the breach of which leads to punishment. These are :

1. If a woman gets upon a thatch
2. If a woman engages in ploughing
3. If a woman sprinkles water on his elder sister-in-law after the end of flower festival or on her husband's elder brother.
4. Any unusual behaviour with other low caste people.

In case of violation of any of such taboos the offender has to undergo various types of ritual purifications. In the above mentioned cases, the woman has to go through religious expiation by

taking holy water (water is made holy by dipping *tulsi* leaf mixed with cow-dung). Then she is to lie prostrated before the Jahar Era and Merang Biru, their village deities, and promise before them not to repeat this mistake in future.

In other cases, if a man has taken food from any other lower caste people and wants to get himself purified, he has to go to the *Jalghat* (bathing ghat) where a Santal barber shaves him on receipt of cash. Then he takes a purificatory bath in the river. Thereafter the village elders who have accompanied him fix a twig of *Pipal* tree on the mud near the bank. After this while the man comes out of water with the barber, the villagers shout *haribol* thrice. Then the palms of the offender is tied in seven fold by means of a string with the planted twig. The barber sprinkles holy water on the body of the delinquent for the second time amidst another shout of *horibol*. Then the offender is set free by unfolding the knots and asked to eat a brass coin along with a pinch of cow-dung and some *tulsi* leaves. Following this, he is escorted to the village when the village deities are ceremonially worshipped. After this, the offender is re-admitted to the society and he arranges a feast for the headman and elders on this occasion.

Marriage

The marriage in their society is performed in accordance with the set of rules framed for that purpose. They perform village and clan exogamy. Marriage between father-in-law and daughter-in-law, husband's elder brother and younger brother's wife is forbidden. There is a belief among the Santals that marrying within one's own clan and own blood relatives brings supernatural anger on those persons who are engaged in such contract, ultimately leading to the extinction of the family. When there is any apprehension of occurrence of such type of illegitimate union they try to enforce check through persuasion. In spite of this, if such marriages occur the offenders are punished by the inter-village Council. In case the village Council fails to arrive at any decision in this regard the matter is referred to Pargana Panchayat, the inter-village Council. As per the decision of the inter-village Council the couple is separated from one another by giving a penal feast, each contributing 2 pots of rice beer, 2 hens and one goat. In case they disobey the decision of the council the offenders are excommunicated or

ostracised from the village and society. This is called *Bitlaha*.

The payment of bride-price (*Gonang Taka*) is compulsory in their society which includes 2 calves, 1 pair of bullock, 1 pig and 3 sarees and cash varying from Rs. 3 to Rs. 50 depending upon the economic condition of the household. If the bride-price is not paid within the stipulated date and time the case is referred to the village Panchayat and generally double the amount of actual bride-price is paid after which marriage is solemnized.

In case of breaking of negotiation after fixation of marriage date, the party responsible for such act is liable to return back the articles received by the other party.

Illicit relationship with any consanguineal relations is strongly dealt with and persons involved in such act are not only purified but also are heavily fined, both in cash and kind. The amount of fine paid in cash varies from Rs. 60 to Rs. 80 besides some heads of pigs & hens and some quantity of rice beer.

Both rape and adultery are condemned in the society. Whoever commits adultery is fined at least Rs. 60 besides 2 bottles of rice beer, one pig, one hen and some cash. An outsider involved in such act, is killed instantly when caught. But if he is living in the village as an inmate, his case is dealt with in similar manner as would have been done for any member of the tribe.

The person who is involved in rape is fined with Rs. 60 in addition to one hen for sacrifice, 2 pots of rice beer and is asked to marry the girl after payment of required bride-price.

If a person is found having pre-marital relationship with a girl, he is asked to marry the girl. Besides, he has to pay a cash fine varying from Rs. 50 to Rs. 100 along with one pig and one hen. Further, the married couple if belongs to the same clan may be ostracised.

A few case-studies relating to different types of crime are cited below:

Court—Traditional Panchayat (Jarwa)

Date—February, 1980

Parties—(1) B. Hembrum

Vs.

(2) A. B. Majhi, wife of D. Majhi

B. Hembrum was in illicit relationship with A. B. Majhi, w/o D. Majhi in the absence of her husband. Both of them were caught red-handed. The Jarwa fined B. Hembrum with Rs. 60, 2 pots of rice beer, 2 pauti of rice and hen.

Charge—Rape

Court—Pargana

Place of occurrence—Botisahi

Date—January, 1982

Parties—(1) R. Kisku, (23) of Botisani

Vs.

(2) M. (20) of Botisahi

R. Kisku of Botisahi caught hold of M. in the nearby forest and raped her. On receipt of the complaint the Jarwa passed orders to R. Kisku to marry M., and it was not obeyed by R. Kisku. Then it was referred to Pargana (inter-village Council). Pargana (Head) fined R. Kisku with Rs. 50, 2 hens for sacrifice and 3 pots of rice beer.

Charge—Pre-marital sex relationship

Court—Jarwa (Village Council)

Place of occurrence—Jambuni

Date of occurrence—1983

Parties—(1) C. Soren (28) of Jambani

Vs.

(2) Father of D. Hansda (22) of Jambani.

C. Soren fell in love with D. Hansda and had illicit relationship with her in her house. Father of D. Hansda complained before Majhialam on receipt of complaint from her daughter. Jarwa passed orders to C. Soren to accept the girl by paying Rs. 70, one pig, one hen, 30 pots of rice beer (handia) as bride-price (gonory) to the father-in-law and Rs. 40 as fine, for violation of social custom. That girl was also accepted by C. Soren.

Legal Status of Women

If a married man has no child, he can marry a second one. Bride price has to be paid in both the cases.

If a man has more than one wife, they inherit the property equally.

The daughter has no share in her father's property, provided there is male child.

In case of death of the husband, the widow inherits everything, if her husband was living separately. But in case of joint living, the widow is given maintenance only.

Divorce

A husband may divorce his wife in the grounds of barrenness, adultery, desertion or failure to fulfil the promises of marriage. A woman may also break the wedlock due to certain behaviour of her husband, like desertion, cruelty, or flagrant ill usage or non-support. A divorced woman is accepted in her parental clan if she remarries another man, the prospective husband will have to give the bride-price to the previous husband as compensation.

A case study is given below :

Case Study No. 1

Charge—Divorce

Court—Jarwa (Village Council or Panchayat)

Place of occurrence—Botisahi

Date of occurrence—1982

Parties—(1) M. Kisku (22) of Botisahi

Vs.

(2) B. Kisku (20) of Botisahi

B. Kisku having illicit relationship with M. of Botisahi, went to his house and stayed with him for one year. When she became the mother of a child, a joint meeting of the villagers and the Panchayat (Jarwa) was called for. The bride-price was fixed and their marriage was regularised. After some days M. again fell in love with another girl of Khuntadia. On receipt of complaint from B. Kisku Majhialam (headman in consultation with the members of the Panchayat) fined M. Kisku with Rs. 60 and further warned them for ex-communication in case they are further involved.

Law of Inheritance

When a man dies leaving behind his sons and widow, the property is divided equally among the sons. In the partition of property the person or the son who keeps the widow, gets one more share for her maintenance and generally it is the duty of the eldest son. A reasonable portion of the property of deceased is given to the widow, if she wants to live separately. The property is only divided after the death of the father. A man having the second wife, who has

been socially accepted, then her children also get share at par with the children of the first wife. If a man dies without any issue then the property goes to the same clan members who were closer to that deceased man. In case of the remarriage of the widow, the property of the deceased remains with his brothers. If a widower gets married, then the children of both wives get equal share.

The eldest son supports his old and invalid parents. In case a person does not support, then he is outcasted and some willing party has to maintain the old parents.

In the domain of partition and inheritance, the researcher has found that sons share equally, the daughter succeeds when there is no son to the man who died.

Conclusion

Although the Santals of Nilagiri Block have no legal institution, there are social mechanisms which serve the same function as legal institution in civilised society.

The laws and enforcement of justice of the tribe is relatively less crystalised and modernised. The leaders dealing with this stick to old ideas, values and social norms and operate in traditional social structure.

The society is based on customs and traditions or on customary law. The brethren carry on according to customs and obey it to avoid ridicule and embracement.

Note:—The researcher has used pseudonyms in depicting the Case-studies.

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Role of Trade Unions in Mineral Sector of Tribal Sub-Plan region of Rajasthan.

PRERANA VAISH

Abstract

The Tribal Sub-plan (TSP) Region of Rajasthan is endowed with rich mineral wealth which is exploited in different districts of this region contributing substantial sale value and mineral revenue. The mineral exploitation activities and number of establishment of mineral based industries are increasing day by day in TSP region but the role of trade unions is negligible. This has resulted in exploitation of tribal workers.

Privately owned mineral units are not at all encouraging for the formation of trade unions and consequently they are not bothered about legitimate rights of tribals provided under various labour welfare acts. Tribals are also not aware of such benefits. On the other hand, Government owned mineral units encourage trade unions thereby protecting the legal rights of tribals. There is strong need to develop the mineral sector into an organised sector. Such a move has the potentiality to protect exploitation of tribals and to make them more responsible towards their duties.

Introduction

The largest concentration of tribal people any where in the world, except in Africa, is in India. Around one third of tribal population of India is concentrated in the western belt constituting parts of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Goa, Daman and Diu.

The Tribal Sub-plan (TSP) Region of Rajasthan is having a population of 28.54 lakhs living in 4483 villages. Out of this, the tribal

population is 18.42 lakhs. The TSP Region covers districts of Banswara, Dungarpur and parts of Udaipur, Sirohi and Chittorgarh.

The TSP region is bestowed with rich mineral wealth. Various types of minerals are produced from the region which hold monopoly in the country's production. The region has contributed substantially to the state exchequer in the form of mineral revenue. During the year 1986-87, State's mineral revenue was Rs. 51.23 crores, out of which TSP region has contributed Rs. 33.58 crores. There are sufficient reserves of minerals, like lead ore, zinc ore, silver ore, soapstone, rock-phosphate, asbestos, limestone, marble and building stone in this region. The sale value received from these minerals is also substantial and is increasing year by year.

Mineral development activities in TSP region is gradually increasing, but unfortunately the role of trade unions in the mineral sector is negligible. The social customs, habits, local environment and living patterns of tribals of this region are also not conducive to the formation of trade union organisations. This has resulted in the exploitation of tribal workers.

What is a Trade Union ?

The trade union is the most important element in any trade, industry or business, which is mainly responsible for smooth production, bringing about harmony in industrial relations and in improving the working conditions of the labour. It is generally agreed that healthy and effective trade unionism is an integral part of the industrial way of life.

A scientific study of trade unionism requires a clear understanding of the term 'Trade Union'. According to Indian Trade Union Act 1926; "trade union means any combination, whether temporary or permanent, formed primarily for the purpose of regulating the relations between workmen and employers or between workman and workmen, or between employers and employee or for imposing restrictive conditions on the conduct of any trade or business, and includes any federation of two or more Trade Unions".¹

The trade union is an outcome of modern factory system. It was felt strongly by labour class that unless they improved their bargaining position through the formation of trade unions, they would always be subjected to the danger of serious exploitation by their employers. Hence the trade union came into existence. In general, the trade unions are the organisation of the workers. The workers form themselves into a union, raise funds, get the union registered according to law and then it sets itself to carry out functions for which it came into being.

The primary function of the trade union is to promote and protect the interest of its members. The union draws its strength from the funds and the general support which its members subscribe to it. The functions of trade union may be described under following two activities:

Intramural—The aims of such activities is to ensure adequate wages, secure better conditions of work and better treatment from the employers. For realising such objectives, the trade union adopts the method of collective bargaining, negotiation, strikes and boycotts.

Extramural—Extramural activities means the performance of those activities which help the workers in times of need and improve their efficiency. Such activities help labourers during the time of sickness, provide accident benefits and support them during the period of their unemployment, strikes and lockouts. Besides this, these activities include various schemes and measures for the welfare of the workers.

The above functions confer a large number of benefits upon the workers and hence the growth of trade unionism has proved a boon to the working classes. A strong trade union is a guarantee of industrial peace and ensures the stability of the industry. Any decision agreed upon collectively by the workers is bound to command obedience and respect of the general

body of the workers and on the other the employers also cannot afford to take workers decisions lightly or ignore them. Such decisions not only bring about improvement in the conditions of work, employment and wages of the workers but also lead to greater efficiency among labourers and create a feeling of self-respect and confidence among them.

There are four central trade union organisations operating in India as well as in Rajasthan for the welfare of the labourers. These are:

1. All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC)
2. Hind Majdoor Sabha (HMS)
3. Central Indian Trade Union (CITU)
4. Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC)

All the four trade unions are popular in the country and in Rajasthan too. Each trade organisation is affiliated with some or the other political party.

Trade Unions in Mineral Activities of TSP Region.

The role of trade unions in the mineral sector of TSP region is negligible, at least in the organisations and activities carried out by the small scale private entrepreneurs. However, such is not the case in the public owned mineral activities of TSP region. The various labour Acts; such as Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923, Minimum Wages Act, 1948; Employee's State Insurance Act, 1948; Industrial Dispute Act, 1947; Mines Act, 1952; Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 are operative in State owned units and every labourer has a right to avail the benefits provided by these acts. In the private owned small scale organisations, the tribal workers have not been able to organise themselves. Since these workers are employed on *ad hoc* and daily basis, they do not develop any sense of affinity to the job and unite themselves. Even if they show a slightest intention of unity or form a union they are threatened in many ways. The employer threatens to dismiss them from work, or stop helping them by advancing money which they need for social, religious or personal purposes. Most tribal workers are illiterate, untrained and not aware of their own legal rights. Again, since the mineral activities are generally in the interior areas, the workers do not have any outside leadership to guide them in their

¹. Malik, P. L., *The Industrial Law*, Eastern Book Company, Lucknow, 1974.

difficult times. Moreover, it is not possible for the outside trade union leaders to contact these tribal habitants. The social customs, their habits, local environment and their living patterns are also not conducive to the formation of trade union organisations. This has resulted in exploitation of tribal workers by their owners in the private owned organisations.

Certain enquiries relating to trade unions from the tribal workers and the owners were made during the survey of 65 mineral activity units and from 265 tribal workers. The findings are presented under the following heads:

Analysis of Present status of Trade Unions in the Mineral Sector of TSP Region.

As stated above no trade union was operative in any of the privately owned mineral units. However, only one unit was found to have a trade union recognized by its employer. This unit is located in Bari village of Banswara district. All the tribal workers were members of this trade union. All Government owned mineral units had trade unions recognized by their authorities.

Following questions were incorporated in the schedules of employers and the tribal workers to obtain the information on working of trade unions in the mineral activities of the study region. The questions asked to the owners are :—

- (i) Does any trade union exist in your mineral unit ?
- (ii) If yes, then is it recognized by you ?
- (iii) Do you feel that existence of any trade union in your unit will ever be useful in helping the workers of your unit ? How ?

Certain questions were also asked from the tribal workers to gather information on the trade unions and cross tally the responses of the employers. These are :—

- (i) Are you a member of any trade union ?
- (ii) Is your trade union recognised by the management ?
- (iii) What is the total membership of your trade union ?
- (iv) How many tribal workers are the members of this union ?

(v) What was the role of trade union in your mineral unit during last 12 months ?

(vi) Has the union been helpful to you (tribal workers) ?

The findings on the basis of the responses recorded are presented below :

Responses from privately owned Mineral Units

Of the 58 surveyed (privately owned) mineral units, 29 units were of mining leases. At the time of survey it was found that no trade union was operative in any of these mineral units. The owners of these units also did not encourage or allow any trade union in their units. In case of 29 mineral-based industrial units, except for one unit that is Bari village of Banswara district, no unit was having the trade union.

On the basis of the responses, it was found that in the mineral unit of Bari village of Banswara district, Hind Majdoor Sabha trade union was recognized by the owners. The total members of this trade union is 300, out of which, 250 members are tribals and they were in favour of the existence of the trade union. During the last 12 months there was no dispute between the workers and management. The role of this trade union was not so impressive. It had virtually played no role in helping the tribal workers to get the employment in the unit or settle their problems with the employer.

Because of the non-existence of any trade union different Labour Acts were not followed by any of the privately owned units. For example, under the Workmen's Compensation Act 1923, a labour employed in a mine if met with an accident or casualty during the time of carrying out the job, he has a rightful claim to receive reasonable compensation from his employer. But during course of present survey, it was found that no such benefits were provided to any tribal worker in the private owned mines. In case of casualties, the employers try to settle or hush-up the matter by paying a very negligible amount showing their apparent sympathy.

Similarly the Minimum Wages Act is also not observed in all the mining units. This is because of the easy availability of tribal labourers throughout the year to the privately owned units. The women workers and children

working in the mines do not receive the wages as per this Act. They are generally paid much less than their counter-part male workers.

Mines Act directs for proper safety of labourers providing adequate securities to the workers. But in fact the tribal workers engaged in mines do not get any weekly rest and extra wages for over-time work. Thus in the absence of recognized trade unions the various provisions such as, Maternity Benefit Act, Employee's State Insurance Act and Mines Act are not availed and enjoyed by the male and female tribal workers.

Responses from Government Owned Mineral Units.

The number of mineral units under Government ownership surveyed was five and out of these four were mining units and one was beneficiary piloting plan. All the four mining units have trade unions functioning smoothly in the units. The trade unions are not only recognised but are encouraged by the authorities of these units. All the problems of labour are solved through negotiations between union leaders and the management. It is a healthy sign to note that all the tribal workers employed in these units are enjoying various social security benefits.

In the public sector organisations management is taking adequate steps for welfare of tribal workers. Authorities hold periodical discussions and undertake mutual agreements with representatives of trade union leaders for smooth running of the unit. The organisation-wise trade union details are—

(i) INTUC exists in the mining unit of Rajasthan State Mineral Development Corporation (RSMDC) of Banswara district near village Bari. The total members of the union is 20, out of which 16 are tribal workers. During the last 12 months, INTUC was not so effective. However, the workers were in favour of the existence of this trade union in this unit.

(ii) In Udaipur district, three Government owned mining leases are in existence. Out of these one is of Hindustan Zinc Limited (HZL) at Zawar Mines near Prasad village of Sarada Tahsil. INTUC is recognised by the management in this unit. The total members of this trade

union is 850; 525 members are tribal workers. This trade union is playing its role effectively in the welfare and other activities of the labourers. The dispute are settled through mutual discussions and negotiations which prevent unions conflicts.

(iii) At Jhamarkotra Mines of Rajasthan State Mines and Minerals (RSM), INTUC is recognised by the management. The total members of INTUC is 900, out of which 550 are tribal members. In this mining unit about 40 tribals got the jobs through efforts of the INTUC trade union.

(iv) The RSMDC is mining the rock phosphate at village Kanpur and INTUC is in operation and is recognised by the management. The total number of members of this trade union is 40, out of which 25 are tribals. The disputes are settled through negotiations and mediatorship of labour leaders of the trade union.

Different Acts, like Workmen's Compensation Act, Maternity Benefit Act, Minimum Wages Act, Employee's State Insurance Act are strictly observed by all the mineral units. Every labourer of the unit gets the benefits provided by the above Acts.

Thus it was observed during the course of survey that the role of trade unions in all State owned agencies is quite effective and has resulted in providing healthy industrial environment in the smooth working of the units. It is conformed from the following two recently made negotiations in the units.

(i) The Hindustan Zinc Limited, Udaipur, where INTUC is active has signed conciliation wage settlement during August 1989 with the Union. The wages are effective from the 1st January 1989 for a period of three and a half years; that is up to the 30th June, 1992. This settlement has since been implemented.¹ The workers are happy with the settlement and receive wages which are much higher than the wages of a worker in the privately owned units. Besides Hindustan Zinc Limited has also constituted an Apex Council which is headed by a Senior Executive.² The purpose of this council is to identify areas where company can contribute for the welfare of tribals. A sum of

2. 23rd Annual Report, Hindustan Zinc Limited, Udaipur 1988-89.
3. Facts At A Glance, Hindustan Zinc Limited, Udaipur, 1988.

Rs. 1.50 lakhs have been earmarked by the company during the year 1988-89 for extending social welfare activities in TSP Region.

(ii) Similarly in the Rajasthan State Mines and Minerals unit Udaipur and in the unit of Rajasthan State Mineral Development Corporation mainly INTUC is recognised and looking after tribal welfare activities.⁴ This union takes every care for regularising the temporary tribal workers on permanent posts after entering into negotiations with the management.

Conclusion

1. Labours of the mineral activities fall under two broad categories, they are organised and unorganised. Organised labourers are affiliated to some trade unions or federation known by its particular ideology. The unorganised labourers have no affiliation with any trade union. With respect to trade union activities in government owned mineral activities, the privately owned activities, stand poles apart. In all the Government activities, tribal workers were organised, nevertheless multiplicity of unions exists in these units.

2. Social security to the workers in the mineral activities is provided under the various acts. Tribal workers in the privately owned units do not get advantages of security provisions of these acts. The reasons being short-term base, small unit operation, unorganized labour, contract-basis work, fault recording of muster rolls and inadequate legislative control over the mineral activities of the TSP region. The statutory enactments do not apply to the privately owned mines because the owners cleverly manipulate records to evade the statutory provisions and thereby escape from their liabilities to provide the social security benefits to their employees.

3. Labourers employed Government owned mineral activities are protected by the best possible social security measures possible in a

developing country, like India. Besides the medical benefits, the tribal workers are also entitled to get benefits in the form of provident funds, gratuity and insurance.

Suggestive Measures

It was observed during the survey that trade unions are not encouraged in the privately owned units. There are various reasons for such a situation. The owners discourage such unions in their units in order to save themselves from spending amount on various welfare activities of the tribal workers. It is, therefore suggested that—

(i) Awareness among the tribals be developed by the Central Labour Department as well as by the State Labour Department. The labour officers during their visits to mines should make the tribal workers aware about their legal rights and claims as per provisions of various social security acts constituted by Government of India. Since the tribal workers have no knowledge or idea of safety and security of working in hazardous occupation of mineral activities, it is advisable to educate them through the periodical film shows by means of mobile vans and to show them how measures of safety can be adopted or how a sense of unity can be developed to claim the provisions under various acts. This will be the first and foremost step to make them aware of the various benefits in getting organised into unions.

(ii) The statutory provisions made under various acts should be more strictly adhered to and defaulters should be adequately penalised. For this purpose, surprise inspections should be conducted and defaulters should be warned. Intelligence departments should also make the enquiries through its usual procedure. Inspections should be entrusted with sufficient powers to penalise the defaulters on the spot of inquiry.

4. Annual Report, RSMM, Udaipur, 1988

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

1. Professor L. K. Mahapatra,
Director,
Nabakrushna Choudhury
Centre for Development Studies,
-A-Chandrasekharpur,
Bhubaneswar-751005.
2. Professor N. K. Behura,
Department of Anthropology,
Utkal University,
Vani Vihar, Bhubaneswar.
3. Professor K. K. Mohanti,
Director,
Tribal & Harijan Research-cum-Training
Institute, Bhubaneswar.
4. Shri B. Chowdhury,
Deputy Director,
Tribal & Harijan Research-cum-Training
Institute, Bhubaneswar.
5. Shri P. S. Das Patnaik,
Research Officer,
Tribal & Harijan Research-cum-Training
Institute, Bhubaneswar.
6. Shri B. B. Mohanty,
Research Officer,
Tribal & Harijan Research-cum-Training
Institute, Bhubaneswar.
7. R. D. Girach,
Research Officer,
Survey of Medicinal Plant Units,
Regional Research Institute of
Unani Medicine, Bhadrak-765100.
8. Aminuddin,
Survey of Medicinal Plant Units,
Regional Research Institute of
Unani Medicine, Bhadrak-765100.
9. Shri M. Acharya,
Nabakrushna Choudhury Centre for
Development Studies,-A-Chandrasekharpur,
Bhubaneswar.
- 10 Shri Prerana Vaish,
Research Scholar,
Department of Economics,
College of Social Sciences & Humanities,
Mohanal Sukhadia University,
Udaipur, Rajasthan.