



आदिवासी संशोधन पत्रिका

TRIBAL RESEARCH BULLETIN



भिल्ल जमातीच्या गृहणी दळण दळत असताना

Tribal Research & Training Institute,
Maharashtra State, Pune



म. ठाकूर जमातीचे महिला जंगलातून मोळी घेऊन येताना, मु. पो. वैतरणा, जि. ठाणे.



महादेव कोळी जमातीची गृहीणी आपल्या मुलासोबत आठवडे बाजाराला जाताना.



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EDITORIAL

The Tribal Research Bulletin is a biannual publication, published by Tribal Research and Training Institute, Government of Maharashtra, Pune. The bulletin comprises of two sections. In the English section there are six articles; whereas in the Marathi section there are four articles.

In the English section, the first paper by Dr. K.B.Nayak is a brief ethnographic account of Paharia tribe of Orissa. The second paper by Shri M.K.Rathod and Ingle has unveiled the adoption behaviour of Korku farmers from Dharni block of Amravati District, about soil and conservation practices. The third article by Dr. Sunil Goyal and Ms. Sangeeta Goyal, is a brief account of the social and cultural features of the Sahariya tribe. The fourth article by Shri M.K.Rathod and others highlight socio-economic characteristics and information seeking behaviour of tribal farmers. The fifth and the last article in English section by T.S.Dhanorkar and Ingle points out the agricultural growth made by the Madias. The sixth article by Dr. B.A.Deshmukh unveils the theoretical dimension of the concept of Tribal Development Approaches.

In the Marathi section first article by Shri Sahare is an account of a movement started by the tribals on group marriage. The second article by Shri Sudhakar Kulkarni is on the health problems and the remedies for the same. The third article by Dr. Dhairyasheel Shirole is a descriptive account of Bastar district's culture and nature. The fourth article by D.S.Modgi presents an account of Bhil festivals, fairs and deities. The last article in the Marathi section by Shri Indarshah Madavi is a success story of a tribal youth from Panjarepar village of Nagbhid block from Chandrapur district.


I hope that the findings presented in these papers will be of immense help to the researchers and policy makers.

Editor



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THE 'PAHARIA' : A HILLY TRIBE OF ORISSA

Dr. Kunj-Bihari Nayak*

INTRODUCTION

In India, one set of criteria has been used in one context and quite another in another context in order to define and distinguish the tribes in India. It has caused mainly two problems. Firstly, the list of the Scheduled Tribes (STs) includes groups and communities strikingly different from each other. Secondly, distortion of Census data on the Scheduled Tribes. The distortion of Census data takes place through enumerators who generally record without verification. As a result, there are some tribal communities in India whose origin and ways of life are tribal by nature and reality, but they have not been enumerated as the Scheduled Tribes in the Scheduled Tribes list of India. This paper questions - why the 'Paharia' community of Nawapara district of Orissa, (who have been living in the hilly forest region since long past and having more or less similar features of 'tribes' as defined by social anthropologists and sociologists) has not been enumerated as 'Scheduled

Tribes' in the Scheduled Tribes list of Orissa?. Before going into investigating about the status of the Paharia community as a hilly-tribe, it is worthwhile to review literature on the definition of 'tribe' in the following section.

THE CONCEPTUALISATION OF 'TRIBE' IN INDIA

There has been a lot of confusion among anthropologists and sociologists with regard to exact definition of 'tribes' not only in the global context but also in the Indian context. Tribal societies may be considered as small in scale and restricted in the spatial and temporal range of their social, legal and political system and they possess morality, religion and a 'world view' of corresponding dimensions (Lewis, 1968:147). In the Concise

Tribes, in India, have their unique features that differ from each other in terms of their respective structural and historical specificities. Indian society is well known as a multicultural society characterised by unity in

*Lecturer, Department of Sociology, Shivaji University, Kohlapur-416004.

diversity' of various religious, ethnic, linguistic groups and communities living together irrespective of having different class, caste, creed, regional, linguistic, socio-economic and environmental background. The tribal communities though treated as a minorities, but represent the original fabric of Indian society and its cultural heritage. However, like the concept of 'peasant', the term 'tribe' has been subject to prolonged controversy in India mainly because of prevalence of various terms such as 'adivasis', 'aboriginals', or 'autochthon'. In fact, the tribes have been seen as the original inhabitants of the land (Jay, 1974:39-70). Various scholars have described them in different names. Sir Herbert Risley, L.V. Elwin and A.V. Thakkar called them as 'aboriginals'. Sir Baines included them in the category of 'hill tribes'. Girgson also regarded them as 'hill tribes or wilder aboriginals'. While Shoobert called them 'aborignales'. They have also been considered as 'animists' by Tallents and Sedwick. Martin and Hutton treated them as 'primitive tribes'. Similarly, Baines refereed them as 'jungle people', 'forest tribes' or 'folk'. Elwin thought that the Baigas as the 'original owner of the country', While G.S. Ghurey called them as 'Backward Hindus'. Since various tribal

communities have been presumed as the oldest ethnological race of the national population of India, the term 'adivasis'(original inhabitants of the land) has recently been used to designate them (Naik, 1998:69).

Even if their attributes often resemble with the non-tribal people in a given region. Some large tribes like the Gonds, Bhils, Santals, Oraons, Mundas etc. are not only settled agriculturists, like the members of the caste Hindus some of them are also found in modern occupations. The tribal economy is largely village centered and its division of labour is based on gender, work specialisation, tenurial differentiation and class distinctions. Despite these similarities, tribes remain different from the Hindu caste societies because of their geographical isolation, language or dialect and religion (Beteille 1974\1976:65;1981:8-10). Beteille agrees that a substantial number of tribal people are peasants today and hence, tribes are in transition (Beteille 1974\1976:70-73). Of course, a number of studies also supported this fact (Majumdar, D.N 1937, Oraons Martin 1969:232-41; Desai 1977; Roy Burman 1983; Goswamy 1978; Bhandari 1978; Mahapatra 1978; Pathy 1984; and Doshi 1990).

Like the caste-peasant society, there are different classes and consequently social stratification among some tribes in India. The existence of social stratification in different tribal communities of West Bengal, Bizarre, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Gujarat has been reported by a number of studies (Shah, G1979:459-69; Bose, P.K1981:191-196; Badgaiyan, S.D1986:293-308; Sachchidananda, 1990:278-320; Thapar, R. and, Siddiqi, M.H,1991:419-430).

In no way, tribes can be considered as "primitive". Along with differentiation of tribal peasantry, there is also rise of a middle class among the tribal people. A number of factors like education, migration, social mobility, socio-political awareness, changing occupations etc. have contributed to the emergence of a small middle class. Besides, the state has also sponsored development measures including the constitutional provisions and tribal welfare schemes have facilitated a new process of differentiation and stratification in tribal society today (Sharma,K.L 2001:170).

The tribal question, in India, is closely linked to administrative and political considerations. In fact, the term 'tribe' has never been legally defined in India (Kulkarni 1991:205). There has been more

concern with the identification of the tribes than with their definition. The former is an end while the later as a means. In fact, there are some problems not only in the identification but also in the definition of tribes in India. Thus, distortion of 'means' logically leads to the distortion of 'ends'.

Though, in academics, some criterias have been adopted to define tribes in terms of i) geographical isolation; ii) simple technology; iii) simple way of living; iv) general backwardness to the practice of animism; v) distinct tribal dialects; vi) physical features etc., these were neither clearly formulated nor systematically applied in Indian context. Further, one set of criteria was used in one context and quite another in another context. It has caused mainly two problems.

Firstly, the list of the Scheduled Tribes (STs.) includes groups and communities strikingly different from each other in respect of not only size of the population but also the level of technology and other characteristics (Xaxa,V 1999:3589).

Secondly, distortion of Census data on the Scheduled Tribes on which social scientists rely to study socio-economic changes in tribal communities of India. Such data are also used to formulate and evaluate various policies of the government meant

for the development of tribes in the country. All such data are uncritically accepted not only by the government officials but also by the academicians. The distortion of Census data takes place when a large number of respondents, for the sake of their interests, deliberately provide wrong information to the enumerators who generally record without verification (Kulkarni 1991:205).

As a result, there are some tribal communities in India whose origin and ways of life are tribal by nature and reality, but they have not been enumerated as the Scheduled Tribes in the Scheduled Tribes list of India. Therefore, they have been deprived of getting benefited from various tribal development programmes and schemes adopted by the government of India.

Our focus of our study in this paper is related to the second problem. It is concerned with the question - why some '*Adivasi*' communities (who have been living in the hilly forest regions of India since long past and having more or less similar features of 'tribes' as defined above) have not been enumerated as 'Scheduled Tribes'?. Answer to this question lies in the historicity of India's political-economy. In this paper, we have limited our focus only on the 'Paharias' of Nawapara district of Orissa, whose history of living conditions directly

corresponds with some primitive tribes of India, but they have not been enumerated as a 'Scheduled Tribe' in the Scheduled Tribes list of Orissa

THE 'PAHARIA' COMMUNITY AS A HILLY-TRIBE IN NAWAPARA DISTRICT OF ORISSA

Ethnographically, the '*Paharias*', a tribal community living in the hilly Nuapara region of Western Orissa still persist with their traditional lifestyle, but not yet included in the official list of Scheduled Tribes (Henceforth STs) in Orissa. Neither Census enumerates them nor they are mentioned as tribals in the District Gazetteer. In the British records, for the first time we came across a reference to the '*Kamars*' who are locally known as the Paharias in Nuapara (Nawapara) region of Orissa. While reporting on the life of the Kamars, V. Ball (1876 : 588) wrote that "he came upon two colonies of a wild race of people, called as *Kamars* who are regular troglodytes in habits, dwelling in caves and existing chiefly on roots and fish".

In fact, the *Paharias* were known as "*Kamars*" in Central Province during the pre-independence period. Prior to 1936, the Nuapara district (Nuapara subdivision of old Kalahandi) was in Raipur district (Deo, F.1984:17-49) which is now in Chhatisgarh state. While reporting on the *Kamars* (the

Paharias), Russell R. V. (1916, Vol. III : 323) identified the areas of the Kamars as Bindra Nawagarh and Khariar Zamindari (the present Nuapara district). According to S. C. Dube (1947 : 27), majority of the Kamars (*Paharias*) were living only by food gathering and hunting during pre-independence period. Considering themselves as the true autochthons of the country, they maintained their distinct tribal solidarity and culture. While R. V. Russel (1916, Vol. III p. 329) says that their mode of production was based on slash and burn cultivation i.e. shifting cultivation. Generally, they used to burn the nearby forest during March and April and sow a mixture of crop seeds on the ground during May and June. After producing crops once or twice they abandon that slashed and burnt land for few years to regenerate fertility. During off-seasons, they depended on food gathering and hunting only. Thus, they had a semi-nomadic life in the past. (Deo F. 1984 : 62). Subsequently they used to shift to other place and cultivate new patches of land, either reclaimed or encroached forest land.

The Kamars were also known as "*Pharias*" in Sambalpuri dialect. But in Oriya language '*Kamar*' means blacksmiths and the blacksmiths who are generally classified as OBC (a

servicing caste in old ***Jajmani*** system of Orissa), not as tribals. Perhaps, because of this confusion among the Indian demographers and the government officials, the Kamars (*Paharias*) were not enlisted in the tribal category of Orissa even after independence. Furthermore, the Nuapara (Nawapara) subdivision was included in Orissa 1st April 1936 and much later the Scheduled Tribe list of Orissa was made. To day, it is a newly formed district bifurcated from the old Kalahandi district of Orissa since 1st April 1993.

The Kamars (*Paharias*) do not live in any other parts of Orissa except Nuapara district. Numerically, they are very few (not more than a few thousands) compared to other tribal communities in the district, hence politically less significant. They were also not conscious enough to put forward their claim to be tribals. Besides, living in the inaccessible hilly and thickly forest areas, they have not yet attracted the attention of the government (Deo F. 1984 : 61). Today, their total population is to be around 4000 and out of which about 100 people live in our study village-Bhaisadani (See Table No.1.1). Due to ignorance, the Paharias in Kalahandi have not been demanding their enlistment as the 'Scheduled Tribes. However, today they consider themselves

as a hilly tribe and "Sons of the soil".

Recently, due to depletion of forest cover, they have settled in small groups by forming hamlets in Nuapara district. Usually, they like to live in small groups by forming hamlets. Perhaps, their semi-permanent way of life in the past was not suitable for them to form large population clusters. Today, some of them are found to be settled down permanently after abandoning their original practice of shifting cultivation and have taken up basket making as their occupation (Deo, 1984 : 62). In our study village, all the 20 house-holds belonging to the Paharia community have continued to practice their traditional occupation as basket-making out of bamboo available in the nearby jungle (See Table No.1.6).

About five or six families live in one cluster or hamlet in which their relationships are very close and strong. They also live near the villages inhabited by other tribal and caste communities. But, they do not mix with them so easily and thus they prefer to construct their huts outside the villager boundary (Dube, 1947 : 138-141).

Our study village Bhasadani has scattered over four hamlets locally known as "Paraa". Those four hamlets are: Juna Paraa, Paharia Paraa,

Karla Paraa and Pakhan Paraa. By the end of 1992, the village had 302 persons distributed in 58 households out of which 53 households belonged to two Scheduled Tribes namely : The Gonds called as Majhi and the Paharias. Out of rest five families, two families were from the Scheduled Caste and three were from the OBC. In terms of distribution of households between hamlets in 1992-93, it was found that Junapara and Pakhanpara were inhabited by only eight and nine families respectively, while Pahariapara and Karlapara were inhabited by 16 and 25 families respectively (See Table No.1.2).

During our fieldwork in 1999, it was observed that there has been increase in the village population. The Gond's population was highest 206 out of which 98 persons were males and 108 female. The Gond population was spread in three hamlets except the Paharia para, which was exclusively inhabited by the Paharias. The total population of the Paharias was 72 out of which 31 were male and 41 were female. The two SC families consisting of only 7 persons - 3 male and 4 female were found in Karlapara. While three OBC families consisting of only 17 persons were spread in Karlapara and Pakhanpara. The total working population of the village consisted of 72 men and 87 women. Two tables

(Nos.1.1&1.2) show distribution of households and population in 1992-93 and 1998-99.

This increase in population is mainly due to division in the joint families. Earlier there were 20 joint families in the village. But now, only four joint families are left undivided. The breakdown has taken only in the tribal communities. However, the disappearance of joint families might be attributed to the increase in population and married couples as well as due to acute poverty. Exceptionally, only one Gauda (OBC) family which had ran away into the forest during the 1980s drought period, has returned to the village.

In each cluster, they were jointly owning a tract of land and cultivating it in the past. They were also jointly hunting and collecting earlier. Their society was based on equalitarian rights, though one of them was serving as their chief-the eldest male member. There was no concept of private property among the Paharias in the past. (Deo,1984 : 63). Recently, after settling down permanently, the Paharias have adopted the system of private property which might be due to disappearance of forest cover, legal restriction over shifting cultivation, reservation of forest areas and distribution of some Patta land to them by the government.

As a traditional source of income, shifting cultivation is practised till now by some tribes in other regions of old Kalahandi district. But after clearing of the forest cover during 1970s, such practice has been stopped altogether by the tribals (both Gonds and Paharias) in Bhaisadani. The clearing of forest is not necessarily caused by the poor tribals but only by the outsiders particularly traders. In fact, their practice of shifting cultivation was sustainable in terms of their future needs and demands. It was a co-operative system of production. A number of families were collectively involved in this pursuit. The tribals selectively felled trees and cleared bush-wood for cultivation. The general practice is to leave the clearing land from the third year to recuperate. A clearing is left fallow 3 to 4 years after which it is again taken up for growing crops. Mixed varieties of seeds were sown in the clearings. One after another they start ripening in their proper seasons. Thus earlier, the tribals were growing a number of crops through shifting cultivation. But, such practice is discontinued today. Recently, cultivation of paddy has become a major activity in the area. Both the Gonds and Paharias have adopted paddy cultivation even in their encroached land. However, shifting cultivation is no more visible in the village Bhaisadani. But some families

who had encroached earlier the reserved forest land, now they have started cultivating it during rainy season like settled cultivation in the plain areas.

Whatever little output from the land and collection of forest produce provide them just a bare minimum. The land holding is small in size for a majority of families as far as owned **patta land** is concerned. The production out of this land is very limited for want of irrigation facilities and it is scanty due to primitive method of cultivation. The situation of this tribal peasantry further worsens in times of drought. Growth of population has again added to their pressure on land forging them to encroach forest land (for survival) which are reserved by the government. Our field data on Table No.1.5 on (Encroachment of Land by Different Farm-size Groups in Bhaisadani in 1998-99), substantiates the fact that majority of tribal families in the study village-Bhaisadani who belong to the marginal and small farm size groups and landless categories, have encroached the forest land which was cleared for shifting cultivation in the recent past. Thus, it verifies the fact that the Paharia community as a hilly tribe used to practice shifting cultivation (Podu Chas).

In fact, struggling to survive on their own way, the tribal peasants firmly believe

that the forest land reserved by the government belongs to their ancestors. But the government has not given them the right to own. Therefore, most of households in the village have opted for encroachment of the reserved forest land for agriculture.

Economic life of the village, however, is very simple and predominantly subsistence oriented. In order to maintain their subsistence both the tribal communities practise settled cultivation in small chunks. During pre-colonial and colonial periods, when the region was covered by drenched forests, these tribals used to practise shifting cultivation. Today, due to disappearance of forest cover, they have now no alternative but to depend desperately on settled cultivation on the foot-hills of Guru-Donger which is again affected by recurrent draughts and erratic rainfall. Moreover, there is a skewed land distribution among the tribal households showing inequalities and sources of underdevelopment in the village(See Table No.1.3 & 1.4).The land holding pattern in the village Bhaisadani shows that the peasantry has been highly differentiated over the years. In spite of development intervention, majority of households 56 (75.67%) have been reduced either to the marginal peasantry or to the

landless labourers. This highly differentiated land-holding pattern in the village is a syndrome of rural poverty and underdevelopment.

The Paharias cultivate a variety of crops and vegetables such as paddy, Mung, black-Mung, Gurji (Mandia) Macca and other millets. Among the vegetables they grow beans, brinjal, etc. The cultivation of paddy is more feasible than other crops in the plain areas but they prefer to cultivate vegetables in it. In fact, their cultivation has not been successful. Therefore as a primary source of their livelihood, they depend upon collection of various forest produces i.e. Kendu leaves, Mahul flower and fruits etc. Besides, they also hunt deer, pig etc. in the jungle. Cutting bamboo from the forest, they make a variety of baskets, round box, bet, cot, mat, winnow fan and instruments of kitchen and sell them in the market. Today, it has become their main occupation in this village. Sometimes they use the roots of bamboo seedlings for food. Their "quality of life" is too miserable. Majority of their families still continue to live below the poverty line (See Table No.1.7 on BPL Families).

PATTERNS OF SOCIO-CULTURAL LIFE

The chief of the village-Bhaisadani is called as "Gauntia" who belongs to the Gond tribe.

He is having largest acres of land. The Gonds who primarily depend on agriculture are stable and they do not migrate. While the Paharias, who are having basket-making as their primary occupation, seasonally emigrate in search of bamboo. But recently due to disappearance of bamboos in the nearby forests, the Paharias have also become stable to cultivate land for survival. One Gond family (Milkman caste) who belong to the OBC category entered into the village a few years back and was established by the Gond Chief (Village Leader - Gauntia).

The Paharias like to live together in a group in the jungle or on the foot-steps of the hill ranges. They disinclined to settle with any other communities. Today at least 5-10 families settle in a group or hamlet. From the viewpoint of their lifestyle they are quite conservative. The village head, (Mukhia or Gauntia) and the priest (Jhankar) are elected on the basis of patriarchy. Their houses are made of bamboo, straw or Khapar. They have special rooms or space for their family deities and kitchen.

In fact, the socio-cultural life of the Paharias is distinct from that of the Gond community. During the menstruation period, women can not enter kitchen for ten days or so and they live in a secluded room. Similarly, during the

period of pregnancy, they live in a separate room, at least for two months. The name ceremony of their new borns is observed before the family deity. They believe that the souls (Duma) of their ancestors take birth in new babies. The nomenclature of the infants is determined on the basis of time and space, Nature and situation. For instance, if the infant is born on Monday, he or she is named as Sombaru or Sambari. Similarly, if it is in the month of Ashadha (July), the infant is named as "Ashadhu".

There are two exogamous groups in the Paharia community i.e. Sauri and Netam. The marriage between boy and girl belonging to the same group is not allowed. They don't have a custom of child-marriage. Arranged marriage as per tradition is the most accepted form of marriage. Besides, love marriage (Udulia), widow marriage, forced or kidnap marriage (Ghicha or Rakshasa), Paisa-Mudi or Pisacha (when a girl run away from her parents to marry a boy) etc. are found in the Paharia community.

In case of arranged marriage, the groom's family provides all kinds of help to the bride's family including the bride-price. Cross-cousin marriage is a custom in this community. A marriage ceremony lasts for three days. Special arrangements are made for feasts, drinks, folk songs and

dances. The Paharias don't have a written literature. Therefore, no song is pre-established. Songs are immediately made from memory. A competition for songs and dances goes on whole night. The singers and composers of songs called "Geet-kodia" are well respected by the Paharias.

If any one passes away from this community, a different form of ritual is performed. On the 5th day, a lamp ritual (Dibior Tel Kriya) and on the 10th day, a final ritual called "Dasha-Kriya" are performed. On the 5th day, a lamp is lighted at night. While on the 10th day, soul (Jee or Duma) of the dead is worshipped. In order to respect the soul, the family members and relatives offer hen, goat, drinks etc. the village deity, and arrange a feast for the whole community. They believe that the soul of a person after death takes rebirth in a new baby.

The Paharias worship a number of deities with mythical origins. They are Nature worshippers too. They believed that every hill of the Mother Earth is either a God or a Goddess. This tribe does not have a village deity or village temple it's own in the village. Rather their deity is found on a hill close to the village. The Vima is the deity of rain while Pahar Pahare and Char-Chourashi are the protectors of Nature. The Paharias believe that if these

deities are propitiated through rituals, the Nature's fury is contained and people can derive their livelihood from Nature. The hymns (Mantra) chanted by them before their deities but are preserved with secrecy. In order to protect themselves from diseases they also worship different deities and practice witchcraft or magical activities. In terms of health, they lead a very miserable life. Malaria is a common feature in the village. At least one or two members in each family found suffering from Malaria, cold, cough, etc. daily. The tribals are accustomed to traditional method of treatment such taking herbal medicines from their village Vaidya or observing rituals to satisfy their deities.

From their distinct way of life, it is evident that like some primitive tribes in India the Paharias are very simple, humble, sincere and self-less by nature. Their mind is one-dimensional, If they like to understand something on their own, it is good otherwise, it is very difficult to mould them or change their mind. Although they were generous and guest-loving earlier, today, they show a kind hatred towards the outsiders (**Diku**) or they feel scared at the educated elite's who come from the towns.

The Paharia women are, in general very simple minded and affectionate. During fair and

festivals or marriage ceremonies in the village, they decorate themselves with a variety of ornaments .The Pahrias never excuse if a person belonging to other tribe or caste groups misbehaves with their women folk. Rather they go for taking his life. men are very workaholic and sincere. Men often loose temper at a very simple mistake or violence of customs by women.

However, our study reveals that majority of them are still illiterate. It is observed that their language has been influenced other dialects besides Oriya. Even then, the Paharias find difficulty to acquire minimum literacy through Oriya Language and it's texts. The teacher in the village is trained in Oriya but not in the Paharia dialect. Today due to dominance of Oriya language in the locality and school, the original Pahariya dialect is being slowly vanishing. The Paharias have not been able to develop their own language. They have started adopting the culture of mainstream society due to their exposure to the outside world through market or other agencies of modernisation and Hinduisation and so their cultural patterns and way of life have changed to a large extent. Even then basic tribal faiths, customs and superstitions continue.

However, the folk songs, stories and literature of the

Paharias are enriched with ornamental language, feelings and excitements. An equanimity of work and love, livelihood and beloved, duties and enjoyment are quite visible in the poetry of this community. Both sorrows and sufferings as well as happiness and enjoyment of the community are reflected in their poems or folk songs. Some of them depict drought situation and their plights. In fact, the Paharia folk songs are filled with sweets of feelings. There is a living description of the poet's sensitivity, sharp mind and soft heart in them. The poet's attempt to compare the properties of nature with the eyes, appearance, and other properties of beloved is quite enchanting. Such poetic comparison found in a Paharia folk-song is given below for illustration. "Chanhar Yæ. Chip Bha Chappun Bale Khate; Mamach Beti Lagun patan Bale Ante; Lele Sundar phuni Patan Bale Ante". A fruit called as chanhar has sweetness in its core but its shell or cover is too hard and strong to break. In this composition, the poet compares the nature of Chanhar fruit with that of a beloved. Thus, the lover sings to break that hard shell of his beloved (daughter of his uncle) mind and enjoy the sweetness of her heart (Mishra, M.K 1995:102-118). All these evidences suggest that the Paharias in Nawapara district of Orissa belong to a tribal heritage.

Therefore, they must be treated as a Scheduled Tribe.

CONCLUSION

Although the Paharias are still illiterate and lead a primitive lifestyle and economically, they are quite underdeveloped like other tribal communities in Orissa, their cultural patterns and social organisation are not inferior to that of mainstream Hindu Society. Value is given to the individual in the Paharia community who has sufficient freedom to express his/her feelings, attitudes, thought and enjoy life thorough various entertainment programmes like folk songs, music and dances, fair and festivals, arts and games. But this enjoyment is above all community centered. The tribal folk collectively exchange their ideas and feelings. They join together for maintaining integrity in their community. Today it is a pathetic fact that such "we feeling" or "community life" is gradually disappearing. And whatever may residues of their distinctive identity and culture, they do not appear to have helped them to overcome their privations, poverty and underdevelopment. Though this community has continued to maintain it's tribal life for generations, it has not yet been enlisted as a Scheduled Tribe in Ores. Had this community been enlisted in the Scheduled Tribe list of Ores, it would have certainly benefited

the fruits of various development schemes as specially meant for the Scheduled Tribes and it would have relatively improved its poor living conditions

TABLE NO. 1.1
Community-wise Distribution of House-holds in Bhaisadani
Between the Period of 1992-93 and 1998-99

Year	Tribe		Hindu		Total
	Gond Tribe	Paharia Tribe	Schedule Caste	OBC	
1992-93	37 (63.7%)	16 (27.5%)	2 (3.4%)	3 (5.1%)	58
Total	53 (91.3%)		5 (8.7%)		(100%)
1998-99	49 (66.2%)	20 (27.2%)	2 (2.7%)	3	74
Total	69		5		(100%)

Note :The figures on 1992-93 are extracted from the Lokdrusti Survey 1993,while that on 1998-99 are based on our field work in the village.

TABLE NO. 1.2
Sex and Community-wise Population Distribution in Bhaisadani
Between the Period of 1992-93 and 1998-99

Year	Gond Tribe		Paharia Tribe		Schedule Caste		OBC		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1992-93										
	98 32.4%	108 35.7%	31 10.2%	41 13.5%	3 0.9%	4 1.3%	7 2.3%	10 3.3%	139 46.1%	163 53.9%
Total	206 (68.2%)		72 (23.8%)		7 (2.3%)		17 (5.6%)		302	
1998-99										
	109 66.5%	130 68.8%	41 25.0%	46 24.3%	2 1.2%	4 2.1%	12 7.3%	9 4.8%	164 46.4%	189 53.6%
Total	239 (67.7%)		87 (24.6%)		6 (1.7%)		21 (5.9%)		353	

Note : The figures on 1992-93 are extracted from the Lokdrusti Survey 1993,while that on 1998-99 are based on our field work in the village.

Table No. 1.3
Community-wise Land Holding pattern in 1992-93

Farm Size Groups	ST	SC	OBC	Total
Landless Labourers (L.L) - No Land	17 (32.07) (89.47)		2 (66.66) (10.52)	19 (32.75)
Marginal Peasants (M.P) - 1 to 3 acres	11 (20.75) (100.0)			11 (18.96)
Small Peasants (S.P) - 3.1 to 5 acres	4 (7.54) (66.66)	1 (50.0) (16.66)	1 (33.33) (16.66)	6 (10.34)
Lower Middle Peasants (L.M.P) - 5.1 to 8 acres	6 (11.32) (85.71)	1 (50.0) (14.28)		7 (12.06)
Upper Middle Peasant (U.M.P)-8.1to12acres	12 (22.64) (100.0)			12 (20.6)
Lower Big Peasants (L.B.P)-12.1to22acres	2 (3.77) (100.0)			2 (20.6)
Upper Big Peasants (U.B.P)-22acresabove	1 (1.88) (100.0)			1 (1.7)
Total	53	2	3	58

Source : A Survey report of Lokdrusti (1993: 35) "A Socio-Economic Study of Twenty Hamlets in Boden Block".

TABLE NO. 1.4
Community-wise Land Holding pattern of Different Farm Size Groups in Bhisadani 1998-99

Farm Size Groups	ST		SC	OBC	Total
	Gond	Paharia			
L.L. - No Land	14 (28.57) (43.75)	14 (70.0) (43.73)	1 (50.0) (3.1)	3 (100) (9.3)	32 (43.24)
M.P. - 1 to 3 acres	19 (38.8) (79.2)	5 (25.0) (20.8)	0	0	24 (32.43)

Farm Size Groups	ST		SC	OBC	Total
	Gond\ Paharia				
S.P. - 3.1 to 5 acres	4 (8.2) (100.0)	0	0		4 (5.4)
L.M.P. - 5.1 to 8 acres	5 (10.2) (83.3)	1 (5.0) (16.6)	0	0	6 (8.1)
U.M.P. - 8.1 to 12 acres	7 (14.2) (100.0)	0	0	0	7 (9.4)
L.B.P. - 12.1 to 22 acres	0	0	1 (50.0) (100.0)	0	1 (1.3)
Total	49	20	2	3	74

Note:-The figures in the above table are based on our fieldwork in the village in November 1999.

Table No .1.5
Encroachment of Land by Different Farm-size
Groups in Bhisadani in 1998-99

Farm Size Groups	No. Of House-holds	Total Land Cultivated	Land Under Encroachment	Total Land Cultivated	% of Encroached Land to Total Land Cultivated
Landless (0)	32	-	69 acres (34.15)	69 acres	-
MP (0.1-3)	24	43 acres (24.71)	60 acres (29.70)	103 acres	58.25
SP (3.1-5)	4	27 acres (15.51)	21 acres (10.39)	48 acres	43.75
LMF (5.1-8)	6	42 acres (24.13)	24 acres (11.88)	66 acres	36.36
UMF (8.1-12)	7	48 acres (27.58)	24 acres (11.88)	72 acres	33.33
UBF (12.1-22)	1	14 acres (8.04)	4 acres (1.98)	18 acres	22.22
Total		174 acres	202 acres	376	53.72

Note & Source : The figures in the above table are based on our field work in the village in November 1999.

Table No.1.6
Primary and Secondary Occupation of Households
Farm Size Groups in 1998-99

Occupations	Primary	Secondary	Both
Agriculture	35 (47.3%)	24 (32.4%)	59 (39.86%)
Wage Labour	16 (21.6%)	26 (35.1%)	42 (28.37%)
Forest Produce	3 (4.1%)	19 (25.7%)	22 (14.86%)
Artisans or Basket Making	19 (25.7%)	0	19 (12.83%)
Small Business	0	4 (5.4%)	-
Public Service	1 (1.4%)	1 (1.4%)	-
Total	74	74	148

Note & Source : The figures in the above table are based on our field work in the village in 1999.

TABLE NO.1.7
BPL Families in Different Farm Size Groups 1998-99

Farm Size Groups	Below Rs.11,000	Rs. 11,000 to Rs. 20,000	Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 30,000	above Rs. 30,000	Total
LL	SC =1 OBC=1 P=4 G=11	OBC=2 P=8 G=3	P=2	--	32 (43.24)
MP	G=1	P=4 G=6	P=1 G=1	G=1	24 (32.4)
SP	G=1	G=1	G=2	--	4 (5.40)
LMF	--	P=1 G=4	G=1	--	6 (8.10)
UMF	--	G=3	G=2	G=2	7 (9.45)
LBF	--	SC-1	--	--	1 (1.35)
Total	29 (39.18)	33 (44.59)	9 (12.16)	3 (4.05)	74 (100)

Source : Our Survey in 1998-99.

Notes :G=Gonds; P=Paharia; SC=Scheduled Castes; OBC=Other Backward Castes.

(The numbers of families below the poverty line as shown in the table (BPL) are based on field work in the village in 1999. (In 1993, the Government of Orissa fixed the below poverty

line at Rs.11,000-00 annual income of a family of five members and in 1997 the BPL was increased upto Rs.20,000-00).

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ADOPTION BEHAVIOUR OF TRIBAL FARMERS ABOUT SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION PRACTICES

M.K.Rathod* , P.O.Ingle**

INTRODUCTION

Melghat is a scheduled area of Maharashtra State and main residents of this area are Korkus- a Scheduled Tribe community. In Melghat area nearly 75 per cent population is tribals. Korus are mainly engaged in rainfed agriculture. In Melghat average annual rainfall is 1100 to 1350 mm, which is erratic in nature and unevenly distributed. Despite of sufficient average rainfall, Korku farmers are not able to achieve the required crop productivity, because they are they are unable to use desired quantity of rain water as they have very low level of knowledge about recommended soil and water conservation practices. Continuous erosion since last several years have left the soils poor. It needs to rehabilitate by conserving soil and water for sustainable tribal agriculture. The government made sincere efforts by implementing the watershed development programmes in Melghat area. Expecting the benefits of watershed peogrammes, present study was emphasised on

adoption behaviour of tribal farmers about soil and water conservation practices (SWCPs).

METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in Dharni Panchayat Samiti of Melghat, District Amravati (M.S.). From the locale of study, 20 watershed villages were selected purposively on the basis of maximum physical work done and maximum expenditure targets achieved and the overall coverage of different activities. From all the selected villages, 15 tribal farmers from each village were randomly selected. In total 300 tribal farmers were selected and personally interviewed.

A list of soil and water conservation practices was prepared and sent to 20 judges for ranking, according to the importance of practices, on three point continuum i.e. highly important, important and less important. The importance of any agricultural and allied practice is situation specific and hence, they were also requested to consider the

*Ph.D.Scholar, Department of Extension Education, Dr.Panjabrao
Deshmukh Krishi Vidyapeeth, Akola, M.S.

**Preofessor & Head,

geographical features of area and tribal situation while ranking the practices. The selected judges were the experts in dry land farming and soil and water conservation. Out of 20 judges, only 12 responded. On the basis of judges' response, rank

score was calculated for each practice and the practices were rearranged according to the ranks.

For determining the weightages of individual practice following formula developed by Dhanorkar (1998) was used.

$$\text{Weightage of ith practice} = \frac{(R1 \times S1) + (R2 \times S2) + (R3 \times S3)}{100}$$

Where,

R1 = No. of response of 1st level

R2 = No. of response of 2nd level

R3 = No. of response of 3rd level

S = Rank score of ith practice (S1, S2 and S3)

In this way total weighted knowledge and adoption score of different practices were calculated. It

was then converted into index by using the following formula.

$$\text{Knowledge} = \frac{\text{Obtained weighted knowledge score of Respondent}}{\text{Total obtainable weighted knowledge score}} \times 100$$

Similar index for adoption was developed.

Distribution of respondents according to knowledge, attitude and adoption about soil and water conservation practices.

Extent of knowledge of watershed development practices

Knowledge about improved agricultural technology encourages and motivates the farmers to adopt the technology. Tribals are basically bashful in nature so have very low exposure to the improved technologies. It is thus necessary to identify situation

specific and need based technologies for them. Identification of technologies and areas of watershed development programme (WDP) on which improvement can be made accelerate adoption of watershed development activities. Thus, observations with regard to knowledge levels are as follows.

Table 1

Distribution of respondents according to extent knowledge about soil and water conservation and allied activities

Sr. No.	Attitude	Respondents							
		Small farmers		Medium farmers		Large farmers		Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	NO.	%
1	Extremely low	10	6.17	03	4.76	08	10.67	21	7.00
2	Low	109	67.28	55	87.30	55	73.33	219	73.00
3	Medium	43	26.55	05	7.94	12	16.00	60	20.00
	Total	162	100	63	100	75	100	300	100
	Mean	32.93		28.04		27.79		30.62	
	SE	0.85		0.53		0.49		0.51	
$X^2 = 10.81^*$ **Significant at 0.01 level of probability									

It is observed that 67.28 per cent small farmer respondents had low knowledge level about soil and water conservation practices (Table 1). In medium farmers group majority of the respondents (87.30%) had low level of knowledge. Similarly, majority of the large farmer respondents i.e. 73.33 per cent had low knowledge level of knowledge about soil and water conservation practices recommended through WDP. Land holding of respondents was significantly associated with the extent of knowledge about SWCPs ($x^2 = 10.81$ significant at 0.05 level of probability)

A comparison between different landholding farmer groups revealed that majority of the respondents had low knowledge level. Bhoite and Burve (1984), Ingle et al. (1988), Intodia et al. (1996) and Patil et al. (2000) are complimentary to the present findings.

The only 20 per cent of the total respondents had moderate knowledge level about SWC. The

probable reason was that the tribals of Melghat are not much interested on their own in seeking knowledge about technology of SWCPs. Rathod (1997) studied the information seeking behaviour of tribals in Ramtek, District Nagpur and found the mediocre information seeking behaviour of tribal respondents. Tribals didn't involve themselves in extension activities in this regard. They are interested in only those activities, which has been traditionally shaded. Pulamte and Babu (1992) also reported that the tribals from shifting cultivation have traditional knowledge and practices and do not believe in modern technology.

ATTITUDE

Attitude is one of the most important determinants of human behaviour. It fundamentally influences the process of learning. Attitude of tribals is the prerequisite to their change in knowledge and adoption of modern practices. Thus, considering its importance, attitude of tribals has been studied and presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Distribution of respondents according to attitude towards soil an water conservation

Sr. No.	Attitude	Respondents							
		Small farmers		Medium farmers		Large farmers		Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	NO.	%
1	Unfavourable	06	3.7	00	00	02	2.67	08	2.67
2	Less favourable	17	10.50	04	6.35	00	00	21	7.00
3	Moderately favourable	77	47.53	26	41.27	23	30.67	126	42.00
4	Moderately high favourable	52	32.10	25	39.68	31	41.33	108	36.00
5	Highly favourable	10	6.17	08	12.7	19	25.33	37	12.33
	Total	162	100	63	100	75	100	300	100
	Mean	41.43		42.53		43.95		42.29	
	SE	0.22		0.32		0.52		0.20	
$X^2 = 25.036^{**}$						$F = 15.20^{**}$			

****Significant at 0.01 level of probab ility**

It is seen from Table 2 that most of the small farmers (47.3 and 32.10%) were observed in moderately favourable and moderately high favourable attitude towards soil and water conservation, respectively. In medium farmers group, 41.27 per cent respondents were found in moderately favourable category, followed by 39.68 per cent respondents in moderately high favourable category of attitude. In large farmers group, increase favourability in attitude towards SWCPs has been observed. Relatively higher proportion of large farmers (41.33%) had relatively more favourable attitude.

Hence, it is concluded that Korku respondents have moderate to highly favourable attitude towards

SWCPs. But, the need is to persue the tribal farmers for adoption of these practices.

To find out the variation in the attitude of small, medium and large land holding farmers, the analysis of variance (F test) was made. F value (15.20) was found to be significant at 1 per cent level of probability. It indicates that there was significant difference in attitude of farmers with different land holdings.

The mean value further indicated that favourability of attitude was associated with the size of land holding that means the farmers with large holding had more favourable attitude towards SWCPs as compared to the medium and small farmers. The plausible reason was

that large farmers had relatively more education, high socio-economic status and more infrastructural facilities, this indirectly exposed and made them aware about modern watershed technology which helped them to develop the favourable attitude towards soil and water conservation practices.

Corroborating to the present findings Kapgate and Ingle (1990) and Kulkarni and Bhusare (1990) observed favourable attitude of Gond tribals of Bhandara district towards agricultural practices. Dhanorkar (1908) has reported that majority of tribal farmers from Gadchiroli District had moderately favourable

attitude towards improved agricultural practices.

EXTENT OF ADOPTION OF WATERSHED DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES

Adoption of recommended SWC technologies has a vital importance in sustainable agriculture. It has a potential to increase the productivity of tribals and thus it positively influence the socio-economic status of tribal farmers. Considering this important consequence of the adoption of watershed technology, the study in this regard has been made. It has revealed as follows.

Table 3
Distribution of respondents according to extent adoption about soil and water conservation practices and allied activities.

Sr. No.	Attitude	Respondents							
		Small farmers		Medium farmers		Large farmers		Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	NO.	%
1	Extremely low	139	8.80	61	96.83	69	92.00	269	89.67
2	Low	23	14.20	02	3.17	06	8.00	31	10.33
3	Medium	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
	Total	162	100	63	100	75	100	300	100
	Mean	10.27		7.98		8.54		9.36	
	SE	0.56		0.57		0.53		0.35	

$X^2 = 14.08^{**}$ ****Significant at 0.01 level of probability $F = 15.20^{**}$**

Data in Table 3 points out that majority of the respondents i.e. 85.80, 96.83 and 92.00 per cent, among small, medium and large Korku respondents respectively were found to be in extremely low category of adoption of SWCPs. The

reason behind it plausible was that the Korku farmers still believe and practice the indigenous technology of soil and water conservation. Thus, although the method may not be most scientific but then they have been found to using effective

traditional practices of soil and water conservation since long time which were considered to be immaculate.

Pawar and Patil (1987), Rao and Rao (1994), Ingle and Kude (1997), Dhanorkar (1998) and Patil et al. (2000) have reported extremely low level of adoption of recommended practices among tribal farmers. Their observations are complimentary to the present revelation.

Extremely low adoption of SWCPs of Korku farmers was because, there was some fear in their mind about watershed technology being executed by the Agriculture Department. They were not so eager to get information about watershed development technology, because they didn't have proper knowledge about the advantages of new recommended watershed technologies or their traditional and conservative mind was not ready to accept the merits of modern technology of SWC. One important example noted was that, since several years Change Agents are persuading the tribal farmers for across the slope sowing, but many of tribal farmers still sow the crop along the slope.

Unsuccessful execution of watershed technologies by the government agencies was also the reason of their fear, which has demotivated the tribals in some cases. For example, it was observed that Agricultural Assistant (State Dept.) implemented the earthen nala bund, which was washed away in a

few days after its rehabilitation, soil from farmers' field was dug out and used for the bund. During the rains this repaired bund was again damaged. Apprehending the adverse remark of superiors he again dug out the same field. And about one acre dug out patch became totally useless because of severe water logging in that field. This indicates the unskilled work for want of expertise field workers, they failed in selection of location and proper implementation of the activity. This has naturally demotivated the tribal farmers in some cases. The long lasting psychological effects unfortunately become serious constraints in the adoption process.

Nikhade et al. (1995) has revealed that adoption of improved crop cultivation technology of sorghum by Korku farmers was relatively low and further it was stressed that there is a need of inculcating progressive outlook, and bringing attitudinal change among the Korku farmers towards the adoption of recent farm technologies.

Dhanorkar (1998) and Tidke (1998) also observed the non adoption of new agricultural technologies by Gond tribals of Bhamragarh and Korku tribals of Dharni, respectively.

IMPACT OF WATERSHED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

The main objective of watershed development programme is to bring sustainability in crop production and to increase the

production of crop by conserving soil and water and also to improve the socio-economic profile of farmers. Considering the object of watershed development programmes. Impact of these programmes in terms

percentage change in knowledge and adoption of tribal farmers about SWCPs in the study area was evaluated. The observations are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Impact of Watershed development programme on knowledge and adoption of SWCPs

		Knowledge index			Adoption index		
		Mean			Mean		
		Before	After		Before	After	
1	Small Farmers	25.84	54.84	112.24	20.76	30.30	45.97
2	Medium farmers	25.78	50.84	97.19	22.10	29.78	34.76
3	Large farmers	25.98	53.60	106.29	21.10	29.94	41.88
4	Total farmers	25.87	53.70	107.60	21.32	30.40	42.60

KNOWLEDGE AND ADOPTION

From Table 4, it is seen that, before the programme mean knowledge index of small, medium and large tribal respondents was around 25, which has increased after the programme upto 112.24 per cent in case of small farmers, 97.19 per cent in marginal per cent and 106.29 per cent in large farmers, respectively. Mean adoption index about soil and water conservation practices of the respondents at the base year was just above 20, and after programme it increased by 45.97, 34.76 and 41.88 per cent in case of small, medium and large land holding groups, respectively. Naik and Jayaramaiah (1997) also

found such increase in adoption level of marginal, small and big farmers after the implementation of WDP made them aware about watershed activities. The increase in adoption was less than fifty per cent (42.60%).

Ingle and Kude (1997) has reported that the farmers had high level of knowledge about SWCPs, but level of adoption was very low as compared to their knowledge. The gap in knowledge and adoption was due to the fact that Korku tribals do not easily believe the new methods when it comes to adoption, hence not so eager to adopt the recommended watershed technology. At the same time they use their local

soil and water conservation practices. They prefer to adopt only those practices, which are compatible to their indigenous practices. In this regard Nikhade et al. (1995) has observed that Korku farmers of Melghat were more conservative so, they adopt relatively less improved technology. Pawar and Patil (1987) also concluded that the adoption of improved technology in case of tribal farmers was very poor.

COMPARATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS OF NWDPA AND IWDP

Impact of both watershed development programmes National Watershed Development Programme (NWDP) and Integrated Watershed Development Programme (IWDP) implemented in the study area was studied about per cent change in knowledge and adoption of Korku respondents about SWCPs and change in their agricultural production, productivity, cropping intensity, employment and annual income. The observations are presented in Table 5.

Table 5
Impact of NWDP and IWDP on knowledge and adoption of Melghat tribals about SWCPs

Sr. No.	Parameters	Mean percent; change		Average	Z test
		NWDP	IJWDP		
1.	Knowledge	118.42	96.76	107.591	3.40**
2.	Adoption	54.30	30.91	42.61 i	4.29**
	<i>Average</i>	86.36	63.83	75.101	1.13

Extension system under NWDP was found to be more active. Thus, basic activities (training, survey, chetna kendra, kisan nursery etc.) and demonstrations of this programme helped to transfer the knowledge of watershed activities. Hence, average increase in knowledge and adoption of tribal respondents of NWDP area about SWCPs was found to comparatively more than IWDP (118.42 and 54.30, respectively) and differ significantly from IWDP (Z=3.40 and Z=4.29).

Average increase in developmental parameters of respondent farmers in totality was about 58.97 per cent under NWDP and 53.91 per cent under IWDP. Z

value was found to be non significant (Z=1.13) Thus, it is concluded that NWDP and IWDP did not differ significantly with regard to various developmental parameters. The consolidated picture shows that the overall impact of watershed development programmes on the respondent tribals of Melghat was favourable and 56.44 per cent increase was recorded in this regard.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the outcome, it is concluded that Korku farmers had moderately high favourable attitude toward watershed development activities. Despite of that they had low level of knowledge and have adopted few soil and water

conservation practices during watershed development programmes. The project was able to bring favourable impact among the tribals of Melghat. Due to the implementation of WDP information gaining of Korku farmers about

SWCPs was highly benefited, but adoption was not increased at that extent. NWDPPRA was more helpful to increase the knowledge and adoption of Melghat tribals about SWCPs as compare to IWDP.

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SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FEATURES OF SAHARIYAS – A CASE STUDY

Dr. Sunil Goyal* Ms. Sangeeta Goyal**

INTRODUCTION

Sahariyas constitute a distinct section of the Village Community. Their social structure is basically same, as of the other castes. But the Sahariyas are considered inferior than these so called upper castes.

LANGUAGE

The Sahariyas have no language of their own. Around sixty one percent of them speak 'Khari Boli', twenty three percent speak Brij Bhasha and fifteen percent speak Hadoti, while others have taken the local dialects'. They speak dialect which is influenced by Hadoti and Brij Bhasha spoken in Kota and adjoining of Shivpuri, Gawalior, Agra and Mathura.²

RELIGION AND BELIEFS

In Hadoti area Sahariyas are Hindus by caste. The Sahariyas worship Shri Ram, they consort and hold Ramayan in high esteem and also offer prayer to Hanuman³. Sahariyas have got great faith on Tejaji, which is a serpent God. They believe that due to worship of Tejaji, snakes will not bite. In

case of snakebite, they tie a knot on the affected part of the body on the name of Tejaji and he pumps out the poison after sucking by his mouth.⁴ Sahariyas also worship Kali, Durga and other gods and Goddesses. Sahariyas are very superstitious by nature. They are afraid of the spirits such as ghosts, Dakini and other evil spirits. They also worship Jin devta, which also is a spirit.

They are true worshippers of Goddess Kali and during the days of Navaratri, they worship her for nine days like other Hindus. Sahariyas do not perform regular prayers. It is done only when they are in trouble or sick. Some Sahariyas have their own place of worship, constructed in their own houses. For this purpose, they built soil alter in a corner of the house and plaster it with a mixture of cowdung and soil and then apply white colour, with a figure of 'Trishul' with red vermillion on it. Around 'Trishul' seven or eleven dots of vermilion are put. They worship it by offering again and burning incense⁵. They also worship Bhairon. Like other

*Senior Faculty Member and Head, Department of P.G. Studies and Research Centre in Sociology, Government College, P.O. Sarni-400447, District Betul (M.P.) (Tel. 07146-250264 (O), 278481 ®)

**Research Scholar

primitive tribes of India, Sahariyas also follow a primitive form of religion, called 'Animism' which is a crude form of religion in which magic is the predominant through a life surrounded by company of powers and elements, mostly impersonal in their character. It is believed that the soul deceased converts into potential force which effects on earth in various ways by causing trouble or by favouring relatives of the deceased. These spirits dwell every where and person should be at peace with them to keep away diseases and other troubles. Hence, Sahariyas are often found worshipping various ghosts and spirits offering sacrifices and engaging in various magical activities. These ghosts or spirits, they believe, are the unsatisfied and un-emanipated souls of their ancestors⁶.

They believe in 'Jada - Phunka', Tona - Totka' and black magic. They also regard some of the trees as sacred and hence, they worship them⁷.

FESTIVALS

Festivals form a part of the religious life among the Sahariyas. They celebrate all those festivals which are celebrated by the Hindus⁸. They do not have their own festivals, but their ways of celebrating are peculiar.

The important festivals which are celebrated by them are as under :

1. Makar-Sakranti,
2. Sanvalia Manwas,
3. Deevali,
4. Holi,
5. Dashahera,
6. Aakha - Teej,
7. Bhai - Dooj,
8. Janma-Ashtami,
9. Raksha - Bandhan,
10. Mai - Saptimi (Navratra Poojan),
11. Sava Dashmi or Teja Dashmi.

Description of some important festivals is given below -

MAKAR - SANKRANTI

The festival of Makar - Sankranti is celebrated in the month of January. It is generally celebrated by all the Hindu Communities. According to Hindu ideology¹⁰, it is the day from which the end of winter season starts. On this auspicious day the Sahariyas are calling back their sisters and daughters from their 'Sasural', give them 'Loogri and Kanchi' and brother-in-laws are presented an 'Angocha'.

HOLI

The festival of Holi is celebrated with great zeal by the Sahariyas¹¹. On the day of Amavas the Holi flag or 'Danda' is fixed on the ground which is fixed fifteen days before celebrating the main Holi festival. From this Amavas day the Holi celebration is started by singing and dancing with joy. On the day when Holi is burnt, the fuel is collected from each

house, who refuse to give, are fined by the Panchayat¹². After that they burn the holi in great enthusiasm, accompanied by dancing and singing of Holi, the remaining fire is considered as pious. A piece of burning wood from this fire is taken to light the hearth and food is cooked. Then Chhapati and Jaggery is distributed as prasad¹³. On the next day of the Holi they assemble on some religious place such as Mahavir Ji - ka - Chhabootra, Thakur Ji Ka - Chhabootra, Lanwar - ka - Chhabootra etc. and throw red powder or gulal on each other. On the day of Dhulendi, a person throws liquid colours, Gulal etc. on his female relatives such as wife, bhabhi and aunt. On this occasion vulgar jokes are played, but at this time, these are considered as a part of rejoicing. In these fifteen days of Holi the use of meat and liquor is in great use and 'Russia' song are sung¹⁴.

RAKSHA- BANDHAN

This festival is celebrated in the evening hour by the women of the Sahariya community by meeting each other and they offer green 'Siblings' of wheat to each other¹⁵.

SEVA DASHMI OR TAJA DASHMI

Seva Dashmi or Teja Dashmi is another important festival of the Sahariyas which is also celebrated with great zeal and enthusiasm. Teja Ji is a God related to snakes. As

Sahariyas live in the forests, there are more chance of snake bites. So they worship Teja Ji to protect them from snakes in the forest. On this day a procession is also arranged, drums are also beaten and delicious food like Poova, Pakodi and poories is prepared. The use of meat and wine is strictly prohibited and that is considered as a sin¹⁶.

NAVRATRA

During the days of Navratra, Sahariyas worship the goddess Kali like other Hindu communities for nine days and offer sacrifices.

DUSHAHERA

During Dussehra they worship Kali Mai or Mother Kali on the day of Ashtami, that is eighth day. A small niche in the wall is cleaned and dressed with cow dung. A few lines of vermilion are drawn on the surface. The diety is installed in it and the members of the house hold burn incense, offer flowers and invoke blessings. The Sahariyas sprinkle a few drops of liquor before the Goddess by way of offering and then drink it themselves.

DEEVWALI

Sahariyas also celebrate Deevali festival but there is a difference in the celebration of this festival with other Hindu communities. On this day they worship cow and decorate the bodies of cows artistically with colours or Mehendi (Hena). They are also garlanded. The other items of the decoration of cow

are Ghunghar Mal, Moriya, Kodliya, Kaost and Moranga, Ghunghar Mal is a belt of leather on which 'Ghungharus' or little balls are fixed and is put down on the neck of the cow. Moriya is a type of belt studded with Kodies and it is fastened on her mouth. Kodliya is a necklace of Kodies. Kaost is a rope, in which feathers of a peacock or mor pankha are fastened and it is placed on the head of the cow. Moranga is also made of Peacock feathers and it is also a decorative item of the head.

On the day of Deevali, Sahariyas worship Goddess Laxmi. They light 'Deeyas' filled with oil in night. Sometimes 'Ghee' is also used for these 'Deeyas' ¹⁹.

FAIRS

In addition to the above mentioned festivals. Sahariyas also take part with great enthusiasm in fairs also. They make purchases of items of their daily necessities at these fairs. Mate selection is also made in these fairs. Marriage by elopement have been also observed in these fairs. If a woman throws a handkerchief, Bidi or any other article before any man, which is sign of her choice for that particular man and it is considered as a challenge for that man to accept her²⁰. In such cases some times a Sahariya man runs away with that girl or woman keeping his wife and children in

abandoned and miserable condition.

The famous fairs are as under -

1. Kapil Dhara Fair - In the month of Kartik on Poornima.
2. Sita Bari Fair - Haldon Vaishakhi Amavasya,
3. Ghunghare Fair - During the month of Paush
4. Teja Ji Fair - On aasauj Sudi Dashami,

Sitabari is the most important big and famous fair of the Sahariyas. Sitabari is situated in a very beautiful natural environment, where there are a large number of mango trees. There are seven 'Kunds' at this place in which water is available for the whole year. In these 'Kunds' the famous kunds are Sita Kund, Laxman Kund and Sooraj Kund, though small in size is the most beautiful Kund of this area, which has got the most clear water. In the nearby area there is Valmiki Ashram with Valmiki temple. As Maharshi Valmiki was the inhabitant of Jungle, so the Sahariyas consider him from the member of their own community. They consider him as a tribal community man. As he rose to such a prominence that he wrote that most sacred granth of the Hindus Ramayana, so the Sahariyas take pride on the achievement of their ancestor Valmiki considering him as God and worship him. So in Sitabari fair Sahariyas come in a great

number from all the surrounding areas. Recently, a new idol of Valmiki was constructed by the Sahariya Community and installed in the temple of Valmiki. The management of this temple is also done by the Sahariya Community²¹.

HATTS

Weekly hats are also arranged in the big villages. From these Hatts the Sahariyas purchase the items of their daily necessity. These Hatts are arranged as under²² -

On Sunday - Hats are arranged at Kishangarh and Nahargarh

On Monday - At Bhanwargarh

On Tuesday - At Jaswada (Jalwada)

On Wednesday - At Bajarang Garh

DANCE AND MUSIC

In Sahariya Community men and women never dance together. On the Holi festival they are singing 'Phaag' and also dance on the occasion. They are using musical instruments such as Dholki, Langadiya, Nagadi, Jhanjhar and Majeera on this occasion. On the same day also after playing with these above mentioned instruments they dance before every house which is named as "Rai Dance". In

ordinary days they sing 'Kirtan Bhajan' etc. and are using Dholki, Nagadi, Jhanjar and Majeera. Some times some men are singing 'Ragnis' on the instruments of Tabla and Velha. In marriage ceremony they play with Dholki and Tumdi and the men and women either are standing or sitting are singing 'Rassia', 'Bajta' and 'Kahaiya' in marriage and fairs ladies are also singing 'Gare' or 'Gali' or abuses. At the time of singing they used to form groups of men and women. During the rainy season in the month of 'Savan' they are playing with a special game called 'Lengi' or 'Gair' on the instruments of Nagada or Peepa.

On Makar Sankranti festival they play 'Lengi' after keeping sticks or 'Danda' in their hands. It is played after making a circle and instruments of Nagada and Jhanjar are played. At the time of Deevali they sing 'Heed'.²³

FOLK SONGS

On the occasion of festivals, fairs and other auspicious days, the Sahariyas use to sing songs.

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SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS AND INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOUR OF TRIBAL FARMERS

*M.K.Rathod, **S.R.Khonde, *** A.S.Rathod

INTRODUCTION

Today there has been substantial growth in the scientific knowledge of agriculture. The scientific knowledge accumulated in the research need to be communicated to its ultimate user. Efforts in this direction to provide farm information inputs to increase present level of agricultural production are being made to convey farm information quickly and timely through different communication channels so as to narrow down the gap between knowledge, production and utilization.

Tribals are found in nature as compared to the non-tribals. They have very low exposure to the farm communication sources and highly credible towards religious leaders, (Sudamate, 1978). Their social, cultural and economic factors plays an important in getting farm information. Various efforts are being made by developmental agencies to install the community and area specific communication network. Hence, it is emphasized to study the socio-economic characteristics of tribals in respect to their information seeking behaviour in this process, pass on

the information so received to other fellows. Therefore, this research was designed to study the socio-economic characteristics and its relation with information seeking behaviour among tribal farmers.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in the ten villages of Ramtek Panchayat Samiti of Nagpur district. For the purpose of study a list of the villages having tribal population was obtained from the Additional Commissioner, Tribal Development Officer, Nagpur. On the basis of the large number of tribal population, Ramtek Panchayat Samiti was selected purposively. There are 98 tribal villages in this Panchayat Samiti. All the tribal villages were arranged according to its tribal population and first ten villages having more tribal population were selected for this research. In Ramtek Panchayat Samiti mainly Gond and Gowari tribals were observed. A list of these tribal farmers from each village was obtained from the Village Extension Worker of the village and from each villages 15 tribal farmers were selected randomly by arranging their names alphabetically.

* Senior Research Assistant, Agriculture Research Station, Sakoli.

** Associate Professor, Department of Extension Education, College of Agriculture, Nagpur.

***Ph.D.Scholar, Department of Extension Education, Dr.P.D.K.V. Akola.

Thus, 150 tribal farmers were finally selected for this study and information was collected from these farmers with help of pre-tested interview scheduled.

After collection of data all the respondents were divided into three categories namely low, medium and high in respect of information

FINDINGS

seeking behaviour. The categorisation was based on mean \pm standard deviation. The relationship of socio-economic variables with information seeking behaviour was tested with the help of co-efficient of correlation ("r" value).

Table-1

Distribution of tribal farmers according to their information seeking behaviour

Category	No.of respondents (N = 150)	Percentage
Low	26	17.33
Medium	91	60.67
High	33	22.00

It was observed from Table-1 that highest number of respondents i.e.60.67% was found in medium category in respect of their level of information seeking behaviour. This was followed by high-level category, which are comprised 22.00% respondents. About 17.33% respondents were found low in seeking agriculture information. It indicated that maximum tribals of Ramtek Tahsil were being moderately aware about the

importance of scientific information for the substantial growth of their agriculture. Here, effort of extension personnel played an important role in persuasion of tribals. Easy connection with modern city Nagpur (Second capital of Maharashtra) also helped to motivate tribal of Ramtek P.S. Hence, maximum respondents observed in medium level of information seeking behaviour.

Table-2

The relationship between the socio-economic characteristics and information seeking behaviour of tribal farmers

Sr.No.	Socio-economic variables	Coefficient of correlation ('r')
1	Age	0.042 (NS)
2	Education	0.61**
3	Annual income (in thousand)	0.64**
4	Land Holding (in ha.)	0.83**
5	Irrigated Land (in ha.)	-0.98**
6	Farm Experience	-0.26**
7	Family size	0.27**
8	Social Participation	0.31*
9	Socio-economic Status	0.67**
10	Involvement in agricultural programmes	0.50**

NS = Non Significant

** = Significant at 0.01 level of probability

From Table 2, it is revealed that all socio-economic variables except age have shown highly significant relationship with the information seeking behaviour of tribal farmers. But irrigated land and farm experience of respondents had negatively correlated. It indicates that availability of irrigation facility and the experience of tribal respondent in farming have restricted them to get the information about agricultural technology. Land holding with irrigation facility consequently increases the agricultural production of tribal farmers. They are short satisfied and need not get more information for more improvement of quantity and quality of agricultural production. Bhagwan (1997) stated that tribal need are minimum and they are so lazy and un-ambitious i.e. when they have enough for their immediate requirement, they stop working till their earnings are exhausted and necessity compels them. Elder tribal farmers are very conservative and with the more experience in farming, their attitude towards agricultural information was found to be pessimistic, because they have fear in their mind about new technology of agriculture.

Other socio-economic characteristics of tribal respondent

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viz. Education, annual income, land holding, family size, social participation, socio-economic status and involvement in agricultural programmes have shown positive and significant correlation with information seeking behaviour of tribal farmers at 1 per cent level of probability. It means that these factors help to increase the level of information seeking behaviour of tribal farmers of Ramtek Panchayat Samiti.

CONCLUSION

The socio-economic variables influence the information seeking behaviour of tribal farmers. It is therefore suggested to take care of these variables and greater attention should be given to communication of agricultural information through formal agencies working in the tribal area. The tribal farmers who had high average information seeking score belonging to different socio-economic variables, have expressed their willingness towards seeking agricultural information. If efforts are being made by the concerned extension agencies to motivate such tribal farmers it may be possible that they may seek more agricultural information for its adoption on their farms.

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AGRICULTURAL GROWTH OF MADIAS

T.S.Dhanorkar* and P.O.Ingle **

INTRODUCTION

Madia primitive tribes are most backward communities dwelling in the thick forest of Bhamragad tahsil of Gadchiroli District. Agricultural growth of the farmers determine the agricultural growth of a country. Poor agricultural development of tribes in general and primitive madia in particular has been a matter of concern to policy makers. Cultivation of land differs on the attitude and on the plain area. Shifting and settled cultivation pattern of agriculture is practiced in hill Madia tribe on plains near Laheri. Most of the cases settled during 1988 have been found to be reverted. (Dhanorkar 1998) Several Government schemes have been implemented for tribal development, however the results are not much encouraging (Sukthankar, 1992).

The tribal population in

Maharashtra State is 73.18 lakhs (1991 census) which accounts to 9.27 percent to the total population of the State. The major tribal population inhabits Gondwana region consisting the eastern parts of Vidarbha, Gadchiroli district has 38.75 percent tribal population as compared to the total population of the district.

Agricultural growth has been considered as an important indicator of agricultural development in the study area. In spite of efforts from Government agencies and NGOs, the agricultural growth of Madia tribe prima facie is very poor. Therefore, Agricultural Growth has been operationally defined as the extent of growth occurred in the farming of tribal respondents during the period of study i.e. from 1985 to 1995. An empirical study with an object to find out extent of agricultural growth and its rate was undertaken.

*Head, Extension Education Section Anand Niketan College of Agriculture, Warora District, Chandrapur.

**Head of the Department of Extension, Dr.Panjabrao Deshmukh Krishi Vidyapeeth, Akola.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Bhamragad tahsil of Gadchiroli District. The study was mainly based on exploratory and ex-post facto research design. In spite of peculiar topography and difficulty in data collection due to rivers, hills and forests the size of sample taken was still adequate. Out of 120 villages 35 were sampled by random sampling technique. In all 218 respondent tribal farmers were studied.

Agricultural growth was measured on the basis of Agricultural Growth Index (AGI). The composite index of 10 indicators of growth viz. Knowledge, attitude, adoption yield per ha. farm skills, cropping intensity, crop yield index, agricultural assets, land development and resource use, were worked out. (Dhanorkar, 1998) AGI was computed with the help of following formula.

$$AGI = \frac{(I_1, W_1 + W_2 + \dots + I_{10}W_{10})}{\sum (W_1 + W_2 + \dots + W_{10})} \times 100 = \frac{\sum_{r=1}^{10} I_r W_r}{\sum_{r=1}^{10} w_r} \times 100$$

Where I_r = % change in the n^{th} Item
 w_r = weightage of n^{th} item

$\sum 10$

$w_r I_r w_r$ = weightage of all indicating Agri. Growth for example.

$$AGI = (2.5 \times 1.41) + (8.6 \times 1.11) + (2.8 \times 0.95) + (27 \times 0.92) + (50 \times 0.83) + (35 \times 0.62) + (20 \times 0.61) + (0 \times 0.55) + (0.054) + (0 \times 0.42)$$

$$1.41 + 1.11 + 0.95 + 0.92 + 0.83 + 0.62 + 0.61 + 0.55 + 0.54 + 0.42$$

$$AGI = 3.52 + 9.55 + 2.66 + 2.48 + 4.15 + 2.17 + 1.22 + 0 + 0 + 0$$

$$1.41 + 1.11 + 0.95 + 0.92 + 0.83 + 0.62 + 0.61 + 0.55 + 0.54 + 0.42$$

$$AGI = 25.75$$

$$\frac{25.75}{3} \times 100$$

$$7.96$$

$$= 323$$

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A critical analysis of the data collected through interviews, observations, discussions with the concerned

developmental personnel and the respondents has revealed the scenario of tribal agriculture. The observations have been presented in table 1.

Table 1

Distribution of respondents according to Agricultural growth index.

Sr. No.	Agricultural Growth index	Respondents					
		No.	Hill Madia %	No.	Madia on plain %	Total No.	%
1.	Negative	3	8.33	8	4.44	11	5.09
2.	Zero	6	16.66	1	0.55	7	3.24
3.	Upto10	12	33.34	93	51.67	105	48.61
4.	Upto 10-20	12	33.34	64	35.65	76	35.18
5.	Upto 20-30	3	8.33	9	5	12	5.56
6.	Above 30	0	0	5	2.78	5	2.32
Total		36	100	180	100	216	100

Mean		8.59		10.48		9.53
SD		8.13		8.38		8.23
CV		87.31				

Z value 1.26 non-significant

	Hill Madia		Madia on plain
Beneficiaries	Mean	0.66	11.08
	SD	8.17	9.04
Non-beneficiaries	MEAN	5.47	11.28
	SD	7.11	8.53
	Zvalue	1.63	1.25
		NS	NS

The distribution of respondents according to AGI (Table 1) has revealed that in case of 5.09 per cent respondents in general and 8.33% hill Madia, 4.44 per cent Madia on plain in particular, the agricultural growth was observed to be negative. It was further observed that in case of 16.66 per cent Hill Madia respondents there was no agricultural growth. In general the proportion of respondents with zero agricultural growth index were observed to be 3.24 per cent. It was observed that in case of 48.61 per cent respondents in general and 51.67 per cent plain Madia respondents, similarly 33.34 per cent Hill Madia respondents, the growth index was observed to be very low. It was followed by low agricultural growth index in case of 33.34 percent Hill Madia respondents and 35.66 percent plain Madia respondents. In general the proportion of respondents with low agricultural growth index was 35.15 per cent. None of the Hill Madia respondents exhibited agricultural growth index more than moderate i.e. 30. Proportion of plain Madia respondents was also very less (2.78%). The mean agricultural growth index in case of hill Madia respondents was 8.59 and in case of Madia respondents on plain 10.48 and for overall tribal respondents the mean agricultural growth index was 9.53. It was clear from the

observations that the agricultural growth was in general very poor and there was no significant variation between hill and plain Madia respondents in this regard.

A comparison between the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of hill and plain Madia tribal respondents revealed that there was no significant variation between these groups. As observed earlier the levels of percentage change in case of various indicators of the agricultural growth were low. Therefore, the ultimate agriculture growth index was also very low and in some cases nil and negative.

The green revolution as observed by Bisen et al. (1993) resulted in positive growth rate but the present observation do not support these observations. Considering the average growth index in the study area recorded for the period of 10 years (1985-1995), the average growth rate was computed and it was observed to be 1.04 for the Madia respondents on plain, whereas, 0.85 per cent in case of Hill Madia respondents. The overall agricultural growth rate of the tribal respondents was 0.95 per cent. It was extremely low as compared to the national agricultural growth rate, which was 4 per cent during the year 1992-93 and 2.2 per cent during 1994-95. As far as the Maharashtra State is concerned

the annual growth rate of agricultural sector in VII plan period (draft 8th Plan, Govt. of Maharashtra, 1992-97) was 6.4 per cent. Agricultural growth rate of the country (India) for the year 1992-93 was 4.1 per cent per annum, against it, the agricultural growth rate of tribal farmers in the study area was extremely low.

CONCLUSION

There is no past empirical evidence about the agricultural growth of tribals. However, it may be concluded that the agricultural growth index of the tribals and ultimately the growth

rates of the tribals under study was extremely low. Thus, the null hypothesis set for testing stands proved.

The comparison between hill and plain Madia respondents has revealed that the variation between these two groups was non significant, (z value 1.63 and 1.25 for hill and plain Madia respondents respectively). Moreover, significant variation between agricultural growth index of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries was not observed in hill and plain Madia groups respectively.

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TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES – A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Dr. B.A. Deshmukh *

The Tribals are the first settlers of this country and has always been the subject of study since long time. There are around 474 tribal communities in all over India. According to the 1991 census percentage of tribal population with total population was 8.08% and scattered in four major geographical divisions. i.e. (i) North-eastern zone (ii) central zone (iii) south-western zone & (iv) others (Andaman, Nicobar)

In the Indian context the term tribe has never been defined precisely and satisfactorily. It was used, at one time, to denote a bewildering variety of social categories that were neither analogous nor comparable. Most popular definitions of the term tended to see in the tribes some, if not all, of the following characteristics.

i) Their roots in the soil date back to a very early period: - if they are not the original inhabitants, they are at least some of the oldest inhabitants of the land.

ii) ii) They live in the relative

iii) isolation of the hills and the forests, iii) Their sense of history is shallow for, among them, the remembered history of five to six generations tends to get merged in mythology, iv) They have a low level of techno-economic development, v) In terms of their cultural ethos—language, institutions, beliefs and customs—they stand out from the other sections of the society. vi) If they are not egalitarian, they are at least non-hierarchic and undifferentiated.

On the whole, it has been observed that broadly speaking most of the 'tribes' exhibit some of the common features which are as follows- I) common name, territory and language, ii) strong kinship bonds and endogamy with distinct taboos, iii) one social rank & political organization, iv) distinct customs, moral codes, religious beliefs & rituals; v) high literacy and absence of schooling, vi) common ownership or simple economic profession of subsistence level and low level of technology of development.

*Lecturer in Social Work, Bharati Vidyapeeth, Deemed University, Social Science Centre, MSW, Pune-411038.

Strictly speaking there are few communities in India or for that matter anywhere in the world, which satisfy all the above mentioned criteria. Therefore, tribe in our context implies those communities or groups, which have been included in the list of scheduled Tribes in the Indian constitution. The communities which have been included in the list of scheduled Tribes have the following two important characteristics—

- (i) They were considered to be isolated primitive in economy & social organization till the recent past.
- (ii) They were considered to be from the rest of the population.

Considering the general features of their eco-system, traditional economy, supernatural beliefs and practices, and recent influences, the tribes of India may be classified into six cultural types— i) Forest hunting tribe, ii) primitive hill-cultivation type, iii) Plain-agriculture type iv) Simple artisan type, v) Cattle-herder type, & vi) Industrial-urban workers type.

TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

Conceptually, 'development' is the faithful imitation of developed. Change factor i.e. social, economic, political, technological is a basic component of development. It is a slow process of civilization. The

purpose of development is to provide increasing opportunities to all the people for a better life. It is essential to bring about more equitable distribution of income & wealth for promoting social justice & efficiency of production, to provide or greater variety of facilities like education, health services, nutrition, housing etc.

GOALS OF TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

One can find the goals of tribal development in Nehrus' Panch-shil narrated in the preface which he written for the Elvin Verriers book. Dr. B.S. Guha explained the tribal welfare must fulfill two essential conditions namely, conformity to the social values & patterns and the people for whom they are intended and the psychological receptivity and ability of the tribal population to absorb them.

The goals of tribal development can be précised as long term and short term objectives i) the long-term objectives are- a) to narrow the gap of development between tribals and non-tribals; b) to bring the quality of life ii) the short-term objectives are—a) elimination of exploitation by all means, by rapid socio-economic development; b) improving organizational capabilities, and, c) building up inner strength of the tribal people.

Jawaharlal Nehrus' panchshila for tribal development containing five principles:-

(1) The development of the tribals along the lines of their own genius without imposing any thing on them, (2) tribal rights in regard to land & forest should be respected, (3) attempts should be made to train and build up a team of tribals themselves to do the work of administration and development (4) tribals should not be over-administered and overwhelmed with a multiplicity of schemes; and (5) we should judge results by the quality of human character.

THE CHALLENGES

Despite a plethora of legislative measures, special safeguards and other developmental efforts, tribal rights in land & forests, their exploitation, reversesion from peasantry class to labour, large-scale displacement, increasing inequalities and poverty, degraded social status causing tribal tensions, loss of identity & lack of confidence have emerged as baffling problems for the tribals as well as policy makers. As far as administration is concerned the environment of an area has its impact on the administration of the area. The tribal culture, its economy, social custom & political system also influence the administrative setup and practices in that area. The administrative set-up has to

be suitably changed keeping in view the ecology of the tribal areas. The complexities arising out of the tribal ecology is quite different from those of other areas and hence requires a different approach. What important in the field of tribal development is to see who gets the benefits of development. Past experience of few decades shows that the development is for the elites of the society. the emergence of elite and also the middle class among tribals is said to be the result of our implementation of development programme.

The challenges before the tribal development in India can be broadly classified into following categorized problems, the gravity of which will measure according to the stage of their development, i) Socio-cultural problems, ii) politico-constitutional problems iii) economic problems and iv) protection of tribals from exploitation. Agrarian, indebtedness & unemployment based issues & socio-cultural problems mainly relate to issues regarding social contacts and acculturation, many times followed by culture shock and depletion of traditional values of tribals. Ultimately these may lead them to an identify crisis causing unrest.

APPROACHES

There have been three main streams of thinking

regarding the approaches to the tribal development. First which has been discredited, is the approach of *isolating* the tribal groups and allowing them to continue to 'develop' within the context of isolation. A second approach has been of *assimilation*. The idea here is that the tribal people would become a part of the total society and join the mainstream. Given the structure of the Indian society-religions differences, caste variance etc. it is not an easy process. This has been realized but the basic fact remains that the tribal groups should in some way or the other become a part of the mainstream of the national society. This policy of *integration* is an effort at developing a creative adjustment between the tribals and the non-tribals of India, thereby leading towards a responsible Partnership.

Now a days planners and administrators are coming to realise that their previous models and approaches have slighted some critical elements, namely the cultures and societies of the people for whom and on whom development plans were enacted. It is now recognised that development is not only the adaptation of advanced technology and economic programming, nor is it just another term for change. Development consists of purposive efforts by people, self-

motivation and self-determined course of action. Which enable them to achieve the style and quality of life to which they aspire. When their aspirations shift, the direction of development efforts must shift accordingly. These can be the innovative efforts in the field of tribal development.

1. **ACADEMIC APPROACH**

During the British-period, the tribals were brought closer to the non-tribal society owing largely to transport and communication this created number of administrative & socio-economic problems. With regard to the problems such as mode of cultivation, transfer of land, rights to forest exploitation and preservation of tribal solidarity, the Britishers were obliged in the wake of effective administration to frame some laws. In fact, the colonial rule had to carve out a policy resulting from the social consequences of the tribal interaction with the non-tribals. The isolation approach emerged out of these British views of tribals. It was sponsored by anthropologists and the British members of the Indian civil service & other Government officers. It aimed at keeping the aboriginals in their areas untouched by the civilizations of the plains. Those who advocated isolationism argued that the tribal contact with the Hindus would break their societal

solidarity and would pave the road for the introduction of the Hindu social evils such as untouchability, early marriage and purdah. J. H. Hutton who contributed mildly to isolationism brought out vividly the evils thrust upon the tribals by the British rule. "Far from being of immediate benefit to the primitive tribes, the establishment of British rule in India did most of them much more harm than good".

According to Elvin Verrier, the Hinduized aborigines were suffering from a sense of frustration and dismay, a certain loss of nerve, because of various reasons resulted from contact with non-tribal Hindus; he emphatically made the point that the opening of tribal areas had destroyed in the long run tribal religion, art and organization. Elvin was firm in his opinion when he said (1941) that nothing short of absolute isolation would solve the problems of the tribals. He suggested (1931) the idea of creating protected tribal areas like the 'National parks', which could give some sigh of relief to the urban people when they happened to visit these areas. Elvin later endorsed the Nehru's policy of Panch-shil.

The declaration of a new particular areas of tribal concentration as scheduled areas and tribal areas' is also an example of partial isolation in post-independence period. After

independence some anthropologists came out with several papers and addresses, dealing with the importance of applied anthropology in tribal welfare programmes. They made a re-valuation of anthropological position and came out with the theory of planned acculturation.

2 OFFICIAL (PLANNED)

APPROACH LEAD

INTEGRATION

The official approach of tribal development need to be viewed in historical perspective. For thousands of years tribes have been living in forests and hills without having more than casual contacts with the populations of open plains and the centres of civilization. Occasionally, there were military campaigns which brought the tribals in contact with the outsiders in a situation of antagonism. In some areas, they lived under feudal over lords, while in some cases they had hostile relations with the latter. The tribals liked to live in autonomous political units having their own village life. As a result, they were either constantly at war with the feudal lords or had cordial relations with them through treaties. If the feudal lords were powerful they extracted some levy from the tribals. At this stage of history of tribals lived an uninterrupted life. That was really a happy go lucky life. Neither the Mughals nor the Britishers in their early

period of regime interfered in the affairs of the tribals. It is common knowledge that his age-old Physical isolation of most of the tribals drew to an end when in the 19th and early 20th century, railways and roads were constructed around hill and forest areas. With the increase in population, Hindu peasants and traders made their entry in the tribal interiors. It also necessitated the introduction of law and order which was virtually non-existent in the tribal areas. This helped the Hindu peasants, traders and money-lenders to establish themselves in tribal villages and exploit the tribesman's ignorance of the working of a money economy to their own benefit. This resulted in the loss of economic independence of the tribals. In some cases the tension created by the loss of land resulted in spontaneous outbreaks of violence and even organized rebellions.

The contact of the tribals with the non-tribals during the British period were through government bureaucracy, revenue, forest guards, occasionally teachers and traders and money-lenders. These inroads into tribal life during the British period created two sets of problems. The first set of problems included new habits, language and shifting cultivation. In the second set of problems were included such problems as

arose from the application of the British system of law and revenue, from the forest laws, along with those that resulted from the loss of their land as the combined result of the British system and the rapacity of the money-lending classes. Most of these problems were shared by other classes of Indian population. These problems were far more important to their very existence than the problems of the first set, which in comparison may be regarded as minor ills. The existence of these problems was realized by an official anthropologist like Hutton who admitted that official and missionary zeal was responsible for the premature introduction of civilization. Actually, the British design of approaching the tribals was developed by British anthropologists, turned administrations. For them, the tribals were assumed to be unconcerned with the forces of history. The British policy towards tribals is very aptly characterised by K. S. Singh. "The conceptual framework developed by the British administrators-turned-ethnographers and by anthropologists was inspired by the then prevailing model in anthropology. Tribal communities were treated as isolates condition was described as a state of Arcadian simplicity. The deterioration of tribal communities was attributed to

the Sanskritization of the semi-tribal chiefs and to the vulnerability of tribal character."

The second inference that we can draw from the British Tribal model is the postulate that the tribes were a sub-system of the Hindu-system and that they were absorbed in the Hindu society. This view has been contested by K. S. Singh who says: "The tribes were, in fact, getting integrated into a secular system of production, a market system, as it was extended to the tribal region".

After attaining independence our national leaders were confronted with the tribal problem. It was emphasized in the debates of constituents Assembly that the tribals have long suffered from exploitation and subjugation of the high caste Hindus. They needed to be given special protection. The government policy of tribal transformation revolves round two important objectives: (i) identification, and a ascertaining of the actual size of tribal population. This involves framing of certain dependable indicators for defining a group as tribal. This would also help to ascertain the actual or approximate size of tribal numbers. (ii) When the identification is over, the second objective is to bring the tribal people within the fold of national mainstream. It means that in their private community or group life they could remain outside the

mainstream of national life. As the Muslims, Christians, Parsis and Sikhs are free to follow their traditional way of life, the tribals could also carry on with their distinct way of life, with this objectives in view it is hoped that, tribal assimilation and for that matter the assimilation of diverse groups such as Muslims, Parsis, Christians will occur automatically. Wherever small tribal groups are enclosed within numerical stronger Hindu population the former would seek their absorption in the latter. But in other areas, particularly all along India's northern and North-Eastern frontier, where the tribals have larger population, they may resist assimilation. Besides all these processes of retaining or losing tribal identify, these groups are required to fall in the national mainstream. This naturally brings us to the official model of integrating the tribals in the national mainstream.

3 NON- GOVERNMENT ORGANISATION (NGO) MODEL

The assimilation of the tribal people with the rest of the population is another approach to tribal development. The tribal people in India have come in contact with various communities and situations leading to assimilation in different parts. Some tribals have gradually accepted the Hindu way of life and others have

accepted Christianity. Mazumdar (1947), Dube (1960) and Ghurye (1963) Opine that this culture contact has created a set of different types of tribes on acculturation level.

The Christian missionaries, the Hindu social workers and reformers and others engaged in the task of tribal development and uplift thought of another solution, altogether different from that of isolation. They started their campaign for 'assimilation' of the broad social matrix. The trend emerged in the pre-independent period itself. The term 'assimilation' or 'missionary solution' could be applied to 'any attempt to deal with aboriginals not by solving their own problems from inside and on the basis of their own life and culture but by changing them or assimilating them into a new community.

The missionaries approach was always said to be tinged with the motive of evangelization. The real expansion of Christianity began in South India with the arrival of St. Francis Xavier around 1548. Father Gossnar geared up missionary activities in Chhotanagpur began about 1885-86. Likewise Bhagat movement as a baby of some social reformers has created socially divisive tendencies. At the same time some non-official

workers because of their direct or indirect association or link with the wide political parties, have already started doing harm to the tribal people. Under the reform movement, many of them, in fact, sever as the political link at the tribe or village level.

There are various kinds of NGOs get themselves associated and involved in the upliftment of tribals, in the present days. Some of them have definite ideological base and some have not, they simply working as a liaison between government and tribal people. These are called welfare or developmental agencies. Different roles and functions have been played and performed by these agencies such as giving Guidance, providing services as a mediator, & enabler etc. which further shift to the role of facilitator and advocacy and gradually withdraw themselves from the process and then innovative (self-motivation & self-determination) approach said to be began.

The greatest psychological handicap in assimilation is the element of inferiority complex which gets created among the tribal people towards their religion and culture. Detribalisation is a chief content in assimilation. One thinking in this regard has been that it would simply help poor tribals to become poor converts.

4. SELF-MOTIVATION /SELF-DETERMINATION APPROACH

Without self determination, there is not real development. It is one of the new approach which people evolved by themselves; but it remains somewhat unidentified and unrecognized by the planners, policy makers and government. Some experts call it an 'another development'. The self-determination or another development consists ideas which originate from the people. Actually, whatever is done in the name of development by the NGO's and government agencies is not received by the people for whom the development is made. The real consumers of development work are the people themselves. It is they who define and perceive development.

Our constitutional framers were quite hopeful that the political and economic development of tribals would, in course of time, also bring development in social and cultural life. Their belief though has proved to be false; it has given birth to a sort of awareness among the tribals. As a matter of fact, the tribal communities of today are not in the state of complete isolation. Because of the introduction of the various processes of planned social change, tribal people are frequently coming in contact with other communities. the

spatial and the occupational mobility, as well as the aspirations for the vertical social mobility have motivated the tribals to come under the influence of the non-tribal groups and made wider the scope of their social inter-relations.

In fact, self-determination approach consist of conflict or dialectics. There are internal contradictions within a society, that is between forces of productions and relations of productions resulting in contradictions between classes and between the old and the new structure. The conflict theorists believed that these contradictions push the society towards new and better social order.

With regard to tribal communities it emphasizes that people strive to be more self-reliant and co-operative. They get together into a plan and share responsibilities for the affairs of their community. One should note in this context that the perception of development among the tribals varies from elites to masses. The elites who have cornered larger benefits from tribal sub-plan. Area have a different perception of development from the masses of tribal people who have remained buried in poverty, illiteracy, oppression and discrimination. It would be erroneous to think that the perception and

understanding of development is the same for a tribe as a whole. It varies from one stratum to another.

Self-governance, an ancient unit of administration at grass-root level is reconceptualise and organized in a village in vidharbha region of Maharashtra with the help of local NGO and preserving forests, forest produce and other activities in association with state government. A wadi project initiated by Bharatiya Agro-Industries foundation (BAIF) a Pune based NGO in a wadi village of Jawhar taluka of Thane district. In wadi project New agricultural technology is introduced systematically for the poor tribal farmers holding a sloppy land of a acre or two; which is said to be one of the successful experiment in Maharashtra. Likewise in the village of Sakode tal. Satana (Baglan) in Nashik district, villagers voluntarily ban and forbidden the prohibitions and

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production of distillery liquor in 1985; since then there is no practice of consumption of liquor and its production. It was the first collective experiment made by villagers and latter various development plans have been formulated and articulated collectively by villagers without any outside agency intervention, which gives the inspiration to other villagers in the tribal belt of a region.

On the above-discussed background the present situation demands a revival of existing development strategies and a new orientation to the perspective of tribal development. Owing to their numerical inferiority the tribals are not competent to resist the atrocities and are not capable of creating a mechanism of self-defence except that of retreat to further remote areas, which are not easily accessible. But this has to be stepped up to bring them in the mainstream of the nation.

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आदिवासींनी सुरु केलेली सामुदायिक विवाहाची चळवळ

श्री.पद्माकर नागजी सहारे*

समाज जीवनाचा विचार करताना विवाह ही आवश्यक आणि मूलभूत संस्था असलेली दिसते. इतर सर्व समाजातील मूलभूत संस्था म्हणून विवाहाचा निर्देश करावा लागेल. कामवासनापूर्ती व त्या अनुषंगाने येणाऱ्या जबाबदाऱ्या पार पाडण्यासाठी विवाह करण्यावर भर देण्यात येतो. समाजात आशिकरित्या कामवासनापूर्ती इतर मार्गाने होत असली तरी लैंगिक स्वैराचारास कोणत्याच समाजात मान्यता नसते. कोणत्याही समाजातील लोकांनी विशिष्ट तऱ्हेच्या वर्तनांनीच कामवासनापूर्ती करून घेण्याचा प्रयत्न केला पाहिजे, असा समाजाचा नेहमी आग्रह असतो. मजुमदार व मदन म्हणतात "कायद्याद्वारा किंवा धार्मिक विधीद्वारा दोन भिन्न लिंगियांच्या लैंगिक संबंधास आणि त्याचबरोबर सामाजिक व आर्थिक कार्यास मान्यता देणे विवाहात समाविष्ट असते." हिंदू जीवन पध्दतीत विवाहात धर्म, अर्थ, काम व मोक्ष या पुरुषार्थ चतुष्टयाला आधारभूत मानले. वैदिक साहित्यात, रामायण, महाभारत, स्मृती व अन्य साहित्यात विवाह, विवाह जोडीदार निवडीचे नियम, विवाह संस्कार, त्यातील

विधीचे वर्णन केलेले आढळते. अमेरिकेतील प्रसिध्द मानवशास्त्रज्ञ डॉ.जी.पी.मरडॉक यांनी जगातील २५० वन्य जमातीचा अभ्यास करून विवाहाचे तीन सामान्य उद्देश सांगितले आहेत. त्यात कामवासनापूर्ती, मुलांचे संगोपन, आर्थिक सहकार्य यांचा प्रामुख्याने समावेश केला आहे. मरडॉकच्या मताप्रमाणे लैंगिक भूक भागविणे हा विवाहाचा एकमात्र उद्देश नसतो. मुलांचे पालन पोषण आणि आर्थिक सहकार्यासारख्या उद्देशांना त्यात प्राधान्यता असते. वर निर्देशित केल्याप्रमाणे हिंदूमध्ये पुत्रप्राप्ती आणि मोक्षासाठी विवाहाची आवश्यकता प्रतिपादन केली आहे.

कोणत्याही समाजातील व्यक्तीच्या विवाहाला कायद्याने किंवा प्रचलित रितीरिवाजानुसार समाज विवाहांना मान्यता देत असतो. आदिवासी समुदायही यास अपवाद नाही. विशिष्ट वयात पदार्पण केल्यावर मुला-मुलींचे साहचर्य ही एक जीवनातील आवश्यक बाब आहे, असे आदिवासी मानतात. आदिवासीमध्ये प्रचलित रितीरिवाजानुसार विवाहाचा धार्मिक विधी होणे आवश्यक बाब मानली जाते.

*रघतविहर, ता. सुरगणा, जिल्हा नाशिक.

महाराष्ट्र व गुजरातमधील विशेषतः नाशिक, ठाणे, धुळे, नंदूरबार व बलसाड, डांग व सुरत या जिल्हयामधील भिल्ल, महादेव कोळी, कोकणा, वारली, धोडिया या मुख्यत्वे लोकसंख्येने अधिक्य असलेल्या जमाती आढळतात. या जमातीमध्ये विवाहाच्या तीन-चार मुख्य पध्दती आढळून येतात. वर आणि वधू पक्ष यांच्यात प्रथम विचारविनिमय व पसंती होऊन देणी-घेणी ठरतात. परंतू दुसरा घरजावयांचा एक वेगळा प्रकार यांच्यात रुढ आहे. आदिवासीतेर समुदायात क्वचित घरजावई आणण्याचा प्रकार असेल. पण महादेव कोळी, कोकणा, वारली, भिल्ल यांच्यामध्ये ही पध्दत पुष्कळच प्रमाणात आढळून येते. ज्याला मुलगा नसेल किंवा मोठ्या मुलीच असतील अशा व्यक्तीला आपल्या शेतीच्या कामासाठी सहाय्यकाची जरूरी भासते. मोठ्या मुलींसाठी वर म्हणून तो एखाद्या तरुण मुलाला प्रचलित रितीरिवाजानुसार घरी आणत असतो. बहुधा ज्यांची आर्थिक स्थिती फारच गरीबीची असेल असा मुलगा दुसऱ्यांच्या घरी घरजावई म्हणून जाऊन रहावयास तयार होतो. लग्नासाठी करावा लागणारा खर्च करण्याची ज्यांची ऐपत नसेल अशा पुरुष-स्त्रियांसाठी आणखी एक पध्दत नाशिक, बलसाड, डांग जिल्हयातील आदिवासीमध्ये मान्यता पावलेली आहे. आदिवासी जमातीमध्ये पेण पध्दतीने (म्हणजे अगोदर साखरपुडा करून) वधूला सासरी पाठविले जाते व जवळ काही पैसा आला तर सवडीने लग्न केले जाते. अन्यथा आयुष्यभर पेण

वरच आधारीत वैवाहिक, कौटुंबिक, आर्थिक व्यवहार चालत असल्याने त्यांच्या लग्नाला धार्मिक अधिष्ठान, कायदेशीर मान्यता मिळावी यासाठी आज सामुदायिक विवाह विधीचे आयोजन केले जाते.

वर्तमानात सामुदायिक विवाहाचे आयोजन हे सीमांत आर्थिक उत्पादनातून व्यक्तीगत पातळीवर विवाह खर्च भागविणे शक्य होत नसल्यामुळे सामुदायिक विवाहाचे आयोजन होत असले तरी सामुदायिक विवाहाचे प्रचलन आर्थिक, सामाजिक शोषणातून निर्माण झाले आहे. म्हणून सामुदायिक विवाहाचा उदय आणि त्याचा इतिहास हा आदिवासींवर होणाऱ्या अन्याय, अत्याचार, छळवणूक आणि शोषणापासून मुक्तता मिळविण्यातून झाला आहे, असे म्हणता येईल. आदिवासी समुदायामध्ये विवाह समारंभाच्या निमित्ताने कराव्या लागणाऱ्या खर्चासाठी सावकाराकडून कर्ज घ्यावे लागत होते. लग्नासाठी किंवा अन्य कारणासाठी प्रामुख्याने पैसे, धान्याच्या रुपात मामुली कर्ज घ्यावयाचे आणि त्या बदल्यात कर्जदारास सावकार स्वतःच्या घरी आणि शेतावर कामासाठी ठेवून घ्यावयाचे किंवा कर्जदाराची जमीन कर्ज संपेपर्यंत स्वतःकडे कसण्यासाठी घ्यावयाची अशी जाचक बंधने ठाणे जिल्हयातील शहापूर, तलासर, मोखाडा, डहाणू, पालघर या तालुक्यात सावकार जमीनदाराकडून लादली जात होती. कर्ज आणि त्यावरील व्याज फेडण्यास कर्जदाराचे संपूर्ण आयुष्य मालकाच्या

स्वाधीन असे. सावकाराकडे दिवसरात्र कष्ट उपसावे लागत असल्यामुळे इतरत्र काम करून पैसे मिळविण्यास वेळ मिळत नव्हता. मालकाच्या घरी पडेल ते काम त्यांना करावे लागे आणि किती वर्षे काम करावे लागेल हे ही मालकच ठरवित असे. पूर्वी हा काळ अनिश्चित असे. म्हणून नवरा-बायको दोघांनाही मालकाकडे बांधील मजूर (वेठबिगार) म्हणून काम करावे लागे. लग्नासाठी घेतलेल्या कर्जापोटी बांधिलकी स्विकारली जाते म्हणून त्यांना “लग्नगडी” म्हणत. लग्नगडी म्हणजे तहहयात गुलाम मानला जात असे. या जोडप्यांना इतरत्र काम करण्याची सक्त मनाई होती. एखाद्या वेळी लग्न गडयावर मृत्यु ओढावला, पळून गेला किंवा निकामी झाला तर त्याच्या बदली घरातील कोणातरी इसमास जावे लागे. मोठ्या जमिनदारांनी बाहेरून आलेल्या पांढरपेशीय वर्गीयांनी व सावकारांनी आदिवासींच्या जमिनीही बळकावल्या. त्यामुळे बरेचशे आदिवासी भूमीहिन शेतमजूर झाले तर काही लग्नासाठी घेतलेल्या कर्जामुळे बांधील गडी (लग्न गडी) झाले. कायदे असूनही प्रत्यक्षात अत्यंत कमी मजूर तर रोजगाराच्या अभावामुळे कामाच्या शोधात स्थलांतरही मोठ्या प्रमाणात वाढीस लागले. कमालीचे दारिद्र्य व अनारोग्य यातच व्यापाऱ्यांनी दारुच व्यसन वाढविले. या संपूर्ण जीवन चक्रात आदिवासी भरडला जात होता. ब्रिटीशकालीन मुंबई इलाख्याच्या मागासवर्ग विभागात अधिकारी असलेल्या

के.सी.सावे यांच्या १९४५ मध्ये प्रकाशित झालेल्या ग्रंथात त्यांनी ठाणे मधील वारली जमातीचा सामाजिक, सांस्कृतिक जीवनाचा अभ्यास केला असून त्यांच्या मते बहुतेक सर्व कुटुंबे कर्जे काढून विवाह करतात. शिवाय विवाहासाठी जे कर्ज काढले जाते ते तुलनात्मकदृष्ट्या इतर कोणत्याही कारणापेक्षा अधिक असते. त्यांच्या अभ्यासात ५४ टक्के किंवा अर्ध्याहून अधिक कर्ज विवाहासाठी घेतले होते. तर ४६ टक्के किंवा त्यापेक्षा थोडे कमी कर्ज इतर कारणासाठी घेण्यात आले. हयावरून त्यांच्या मते वारली लोक कर्जबाजारी होण्यास व त्याची मानहानी, छळवणूक करण्यात केवळ लग्न हे कारणीभूत आहे, हे स्पष्ट होते.

बहुतेक आदिवासीमध्ये लग्न हे कर्ज काढूनच केले जाते. असे डॉ.गोविंद गारे यांनी सहयाद्रीतील आदिवासी-महादेव कोळी या अभ्यासपूर्ण ग्रंथात म्हटले आहे. आदिवासींच्या कर्जबाजारात लग्नाच्या खर्चासाठी काढलेल्या कर्जाने जेवढी भर पडते तितकी भर दुसऱ्या कोणत्याही कारणाने पडत नाही. साधारणपणे कुटुंबाच्या एकूण खर्चाच्या ५० ते ६० टक्के कर्ज लग्नासाठीच काढलेले असते. कर्जामुळे त्याला सावकार किंवा जमीनदाराची गुलामगिरी पत्कारावी लागते हे माहित असून देखील लग्नासाठी आदिवासी सावकाराकडून कर्ज घेतो. त्याचे कारण विवाह ही शारिरीक तसेच सामाजिक गरज असून त्याशिवाय

समाजात स्थान, प्रतिष्ठा प्राप्त होत नाही, अशी त्यांची समजूत असते.

ठाणे जिल्ह्यात १९७५ च्या आणीबाणीच्या काळात भूमी सेनेने पालघर तालुक्यात काही गांवाची पाहणी केली. त्यात त्यांना दोन गोष्टी प्रामुख्याने आढळल्या. एक म्हणजे शेतमजुरांना मिळणारे अपुरे वेतन. दुसरी गोष्ट लग्नासाठी घेतलेल्या कर्जापोटी लग्नगडी म्हणून राहिलेले बांधील गडी. या सामाजिक व आर्थिक शोषणातून श्री.काळूराम दोधाडे आणि त्यांच्या सहकाऱ्यांनी गावंकऱ्यांशी चर्चा केली. त्यातून भूमी सेनेने गांवोगांव तरुण मंडळे संघटीत केली. शेतमजूर व लग्न गडयांना या वेठबिगारीतून सोडविण्यासाठी भूमीसेनेने गांवोगांव या विरोधी जी जागृती केली त्यातून बहुसंख्य गांवातील लग्नगडी स्वतःच्या संघटीत ताकदीवर वेठबिगारीतून मुक्त झाले. आदिवासी समाजामध्ये विवाह समारंभाच्या निमित्ताने सावकार, जमीनमालक, व्यापारी, धनिकांकडून होणाऱ्या शोषणापासून, छळवणुकीपासून आणि अनाठायी खर्चापासून आदिवासींना वाचविण्यासाठी ठाणे जिल्ह्यातील भूमीसेनेचे कार्यकर्ते श्री.दोधाडे याच्या पुढाकाराने १९७७ मध्ये पहिला सामुदायिक विवाह सोहळा पालघर तालुक्यातील नागझरी लालोंडे येथे पार पडला. या विवाह सोहळ्यात १४ जोडप्यांनी सहभाग घेतला. या दृष्टीने श्रीमती गोदावरी परुळेकरांचे ठाणे जिल्ह्यातील आदिवासीमधील कार्य उल्लेखनीय ठरले. त्यांनी आदिवासींचा स्वाभिमान जागृत केला. विवाहासाठीच्या कर्जापोटी सावकाराकडे

आदिवासी स्त्री-पुरुषाला जन्मभर गुलामासारखे राबवून घेण्याच्या ह्या पध्दतीला आणि वेठबिगारीतून आदिवासींची सुटका करून घेण्यासाठी हा विवाह सोहळा म्हणजे शोषणमुक्त, अन्याय मुक्तीच्या हेतूने भूमीसेनेने घडवून आणलेली सामुदायिक चळवळ होती. आदिवासींना त्यांच्या अत्यल्प आर्थिक मिळकतीतून आयुष्यात मुलांच्या लग्नासाठी मोठा खर्च करावा लागतो. हा खर्च भागविता येत नसल्याने त्यांना सावकारांकडून कर्ज घेणे अपरिहार्य होई. नंतर कामाच्या रुपाने त्याची परतफेड करण्याची आदिवासींच्यात पध्दत रुढ झाली होती. आदिवासींना पैसे देऊन गुलामाप्रमाणे त्यांच्याकडून काम करून घेण्याचे तिकडील सावकरांनी एक व्यवस्थित तंत्र बसवून ठेवले होते. सावकाराने किंवा मालकाने जे काम सांगितले ते निमूटपणे करावे लागे. एखाद्या दिवशी लग्न गडयाची तब्येत बरी नसेल व त्याने नित्याने काम केले नाहीतर त्याला मारझोड करण्याचे जणू सावकारांना स्वातंत्र्यच होते. स्वतःच्या गांवी किंवा आई वडिलांकडे त्यांना नेहमी जाता येत नसे. अशा कर्जबाजारी कुळांना संघटीत करून त्यांना त्यांच्या जमिनी परत मिळवून देऊन सावकार व व्यापाऱ्यांच्या मगरमिठीतून त्यांची सुटका करणे किमान वेतन कायदयाप्रमाणे किमान वेतनासाठी संपाचे आयोजन, रोजगार हमी योजनेखाली कामे करण्याबाबत सरकारी अधिकाऱ्यामार्फत रोजगाराच्या संधी उपलब्ध करून देणे आणि कमी खर्चात आदिवासींच्या सामुदायिक लग्नाचे आयोजन करून लग्नाप्रित्यर्थ

होणाऱ्या अनावश्यक खर्चाला आळा घालणे व याद्वारे सावकारांच्या पकडीतून आदिवासींची सुटका करणे, बांधिलगडी (लग्न गडी) सोडविण्याचे धोरण भूमीसेनेने अवलंबिले.

१९७७ पासून भूमीसेनेतर्फे दरवर्षी सामुदायिक विवाह सोहळा या परिसरात होऊ लागला व आता तो ठाणे जिल्हयापुरताच मर्यादित राहिला. नसून महाराष्ट्र व गुजराथमधील अनेक आदिवासी जमातींनी सामुदायिक विवाह प्रथेचे व सोहळ्याचे स्वागत करून अनुकरण केलेले आहे. नाशिक, बलसाड व डांग जिल्हयातील पेठ, सुरगाणा, वासंदा, धरमपूर, आहवा या तालुक्यातील आदिवासींची पूर्वीपासून आर्थिक परिस्थिती कमकुवत आहे. त्यामुळे पेण (म्हणजेच साखरपुडा) झाल्यावर मुलगी सासरी नांदावयास जाते. बहुतांश वेळा वधू-वरांना पेण वरच आयुष्य काढावे लागते. परंतू पेण नंतर विवाह करावा अशी असंख्य आदिवासींची इच्छा असते. आर्थिक कुवती अभावी ते नेहमीच शक्य होत नाही. आज मात्र सामुदायिक विवाहाने त्यांचे स्वप्न व इच्छा पूर्णत्वास येत आहे. यासाठी गांवातील सुशिक्षित ग्रामस्थ, स्वयंसेवी संस्था, जंगल कामगार सोसायटया, समाज कल्याण विभाग व आदिवासी विकास प्रकल्पामार्फत आदिवासीमध्ये सामुदायिक विवाहांना प्रोत्साहन मिळावे यासाठी सामुदायिक विवाहाचे उपक्रम आयोजित केले जात आहेत.

आदिवासी विकास प्रकल्पांतर्गत न्युक्लिअज बजेट योजनेमार्फत सामुदायिक विवाहात सहभागी होणाऱ्या या जोडप्यास संसारोपयांगी भांडी पुरविण्याची योजना राबविली जाते. पेठ, सुरगाणा तालुकयात जंगल कामगार सहकारी सोसायटया या संस्थेने पहिल्यांदा सामुदायिक विवाहाचे आयोजन केले. आता मात्र दरवर्षी शेकडो जोडप्यांचे सामुदायिक विवाह आयोजित होत आहेत. सन १९८३ साली कविवर्य वि.वा.शिरवाडकर यांच्या प्रमुख उपस्थितीत ३८० जोडप्यांचा विवाह सोहळा आयोजित केला गेला. आतापर्यंत, सुरगाणा, उंबरठाण, रघतविहीर, कुकूडणे, मांधा, पांगारणे, हडकाई चोंड, गुही,राशा, काठीपाडा, आंबाठा, खुंटविहिर, बाऱ्हे, पळसन, राक्षसभुवन, पातळी आणि अलंगुण अशा अनेक गांवात सामुदायिक विवाहाचे आयोजन केले गेलेले आहे. आजपर्यंतच्या सामुदायिक विवाहामध्ये प्रथमच मोठया व भव्य स्वरूपात विक्रमी विवाहांचे आयोजन करून ते यशस्वी करण्यात आलेला सामुदायिक विवाह माझ्या आठवणीतच आहे. सुरगाणा तालुक्यातील अलंगुण येथील आदर्श समता शिक्षा प्रसारक मंडळाच्या वतीने ७ जून, १९९८ रोजी झालेल्या सामुदायिक विवाहासाठी १२७६ वधू-वरांवर एकदाच मंगलाष्टक म्हणून त्यांच्यावर हजारो हातांनी अक्षतांचा व शुभेच्छांचा वर्षाव करण्यात आला. मुळातच सीमांत जमीन धारणा व तुटपूज मोलमजुरीवर गुजराण करणा-या परिसरातील आदिवासींना लग्न समारंभ

सोहळा करुन घेता आला. कोकणा, महादेव कोळी, वारली या जमातीत "पेण" (साखरपुडा) पध्दतीत लग्नापूर्वीपासून नवरी मुलगी सासरी राहत असल्याने जेव्हा कधी वर वधू पक्षांकडे पैसा उपलब्ध होईल तेव्हा त्यांचा विवाह सोळा केला जातो. परंतू सद्यस्थिती पाहता अलंगुण येथे झालेल्या विवाह सोहळ्यात ५० टक्के हून अधिक जोडपे हे गेल्या १० ते १५ वर्षांपासून एकत्र राहत होते व त्यांना २ ते ५ मुलेही झालेली आहेत. १८ ते ५५ वयोगटातील नववधू वरांच्या या विवाह सोहळ्यास त्यांच्या मुलांनीही हजेरी लावली होती हे या ठिकाणी सांगणे विशेष संयुक्तिक वाटते. ५ ते ६ एकर उघडया जमिनीवर कुठलाही मंडप नसताना हा विवाह सोहळा करण्यात आला. लग्नपूर्वीच वधू वर आपल्या मुलांचा हात धरुन पुढे तर त्यांच्यामागे वऱ्हाडी मंडळी आदिवासी गाणी व नृत्य सादर करुन उत्साहाने परिसरातील गांवातून येत होती. तुरळक वधू-वरांच्या अंगावर नवीन कपडे दिसून आले. दाढी-मिशी न फुटलेल्या नववरापासून ते काठी टेकत चालणाऱ्या ५५ ते ६० वयोगटातील वृध्द वरही आपल्या तेवढ्याच वयोगटातील वधूचा हात धरुन मार्गक्रमण करतांना दिसत होते. तोरणमाळ येथील जयराम लहानू वळवी हे आपल्या ४ मुलांसह वधूला घेऊन मंगल फेऱ्या फिरत होते. तर प्रकृतीने जर्जर झालेले ५५ वर्षीय जाणू भावडू वाघमारे यांना वऱ्हाडी मंडळींनी हात धरुन लग्न मंडपात उभे केले होते. धुरापाडा येथील लक्ष्मण शिवा वाघमारे या विशीतील वराचे पेण चार वर्षापूर्वीच झाल

होते. सोहळ्यात त्यांचा औपचारिक विवाह करण्यात आला. या विवाह सोहळ्यास त्यांच्या जाण्या-येण्यासाठी सुमारे वीस मालट्रक तैनात ठेवण्यात आले होते. लग्नानंतर वधू-वरांसह वऱ्हाडी मंडळीच्या पाहुणचारासाठी ६० किंवटल तांदळाचा भात तयार करण्यात आला होता. शिवाय ४ किंवटलच्या अक्षता व विवाहात हळदीचे महत्व लक्षात घेता ४ किंवटल हळद वधू-वर मंडळींना चार दिवस अगोदर पुरविण्यात आल्याची माहिती विद्यमान, पेठ, सुरगाणा, विधानसभा सदस्य व संयोजक कॉ.जीवा पांडू गावीत यांनी दिली. या परिसरातील सुमारे ८० गांवातील ग्रामस्थांनी व वधू वरांनी याचा लाभ घेतला असे सांगून सहभागी झालेल्यांच्या लग्नाची नोंद ग्रामपंचायतीत करण्यात येईल. तथापि, शासनाच्या वतीने प्रमाणपत्र मिळवून दिले जाईल असेही ते म्हणाले. या सोहळ्यात प्रामुख्याने हिंदू कोकणा, हिंदू महादेव कोळी, हिंदू वारली या आदिवासी जमातींच्या वधू-वरांचा समावेश होता. लग्नसमारंभाच्या निमित्ताने शुभेच्छा, आशिर्वाद देण्यासाठी येणारे कार्यकर्ते, शासकीय अधिकारी यांच्या बरोबर या निमित्ताने आदिवासींचा संपर्क येतो असेही त्यांनी सांगितले.

समाजातील परंपरागत रिती रिवाजानुसार . लग्नातून करावा लागणारा खर्च, नातलगासाठी मानापानाचा खर्च व वर वधू मूल्यासारख्या खर्चापासून आपले वेगळे आस्तित्व दाखविण्याचा भूमीसेनेचा हा प्रयत्न स्तुत्यच आहे. सर्व आदिवासी समुदाय या उपक्रमातून जोडला जावा. सामुदायिकरित्या

आदिवासी बांधव यामुळे एकत्र येऊन एकतेची भावना निर्माण व्हावी हा त्यांचा व्यापक उद्देश होता. शेकडो वर्षे आदिवासींचे झालेले शोषण थांबविणे एवढेच पुरेसे नसून जमीन सुधारण्यास मदत, पाणीपुरवठ्याच्या सोयी, शेती, शेती तंत्राचे आधुनिकीकरण, कृषी उत्पादनाची योग्य भावात खरेदी-विक्री व्यवस्था होणे आवश्यक आहे आणि या सर्वांसाठी शिक्षण हे ही भूमी सेनेला अभिप्रेत होते.

वर्तमान व भविष्यातील पिढीला विचार करण्यास उद्युक्त करणे ही समाज परिवर्तनाच्या दृष्टीने महत्वाची बाब आहे. परिवर्तनाच्या प्रक्रियेमध्ये आदिवासी व गरीबांचे संघटन, सावकार, व्यापारी यांच्यापासून त्यांची मुक्तात करण्यासाठी जागृती करणे आवश्यक आहे. तसेच आदिवासींनी आपली उपजिविकेची साधने स्वतःच निर्माण करणे जरूरीचे आहे. ही

संदर्भ :-

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आदिवासींच्या आरोग्य समस्या व त्यावरच्या उपाययोजना

सुधाकर कुलकर्णी *

जागतिक आरोग्य संघटनेने (WHO) मानवी आरोग्याची व्याख्या "शारिरीक, मानसिक, सामाजिकदृष्ट्या परिपूर्ण समाज" अशी केली आहे. केवळ व्यक्तीचे, कुटुंबाचे किंवा एखाद्या समाजाचे आरोग्य चांगले असून भागणार नाही. आरोग्याचा प्रश्न हा संपूर्ण राष्ट्राच्या दृष्टीने महत्वाचा आहे आणि म्हणूनच "सर्वांसाठी आरोग्य (Health for all)" हे सर्व राष्ट्रांचे एकमेव ध्येय असणे आवश्यक आहे. सुदृढ व्यक्ती ही त्या राष्ट्राची आरोग्य संपत्ती समजली जाते आणि अशी संपत्ती जपण्याची व ती वृद्धीगत करण्याची जबाबदारी शासनाची आहे व सर्व राज्य व केंद्र सरकारची आणि निश्चितपणे स्वयंस्फूर्त संघटनांची आहे.

आदिवासी लोकसंख्येच्या बाबतीत जगामध्ये आफ्रिकेनंतर भारताचा क्रमांक लागतो, असे अभिमानाने सांगितले जाते. तथापि, या आदिवासींच्या आरोग्याच्या प्रश्नाबाबत गंभीरपणे विचार करून त्याप्रमाणे ठोस पावले उचलणे जरूरीचे आहे.

महाराष्ट्रापुरते बोलायचे झाल्यास महाराष्ट्रातील आदिवासींच्या शिक्षणानंतर

आरोग्य संवर्धन ही अति महत्वाची मूलभूत गरज आहे. आदिवासींच्या सामाजिक, आर्थिक, शैक्षणिक समस्या या आरोग्याशी निगडित आहेत. ज्याप्रमाणे "घोडा का अडला" "भाकरी का करपली" या प्रश्नाचे उत्तर एकच म्हणजे फिरवली नाही म्हणून येते. त्याप्रमाणे आदिवासी शिक्षणात मागे का राहिला, त्याची आर्थिक, सामाजिक उन्नती का होऊ शकली नाही याचे एकमेव कारण म्हणजे आदिवासींची आरोग्यविषयक अनास्था व अज्ञान हेच आहे.

ठोकळमानाने महाराष्ट्रातील ४७ जमातीचे वास्तव्य हे सहयाद्री पर्वत, सातपुडा पर्वत आणि विदर्भातील घनदाट दुर्गम भागात वर्षानुवर्षे आहे. त्यामुळे त्यांच्या आरोग्याचे प्रश्नही जवळजवळ सारखेच आहेत.

भारताने वैद्यकिय आणि आरोग्य क्षेत्रात उल्लेखनीय यश मिळविले असले तरी आरोग्य शिक्षणाच्या क्षेत्रात बराच लांबचा पल्ला गाठावयाचा आहे. कारण रामकुमार (१९९०) यांच्या अहवालाप्रमाणे भारतात Maternal mortality चे प्रमाण फार मोठे आहे.

माजी उप संचालक, आदिवासी संशोधन व प्रशिक्षण संस्था, महाराष्ट्र राज्य, पुणे

ख्यातनाम सामाजिक कार्यकर्ते डॉक्टर धैयशील शिरोळे यांच्या मताप्रमाणे पंचान्नव टक्के आदिवासी स्त्रिया स्त्रीरोगाला बळी पडतात. त्यांच्या मते मंजुर झालेल्या निधीपैकी केवळ १०% निधी आदिवासी पर्यंत पोहोचतो. मधल्या मध्ये आदिवासींचा निधी हडप करणा-या झारीतली शुक्राचार्यांचा शोध घेऊन त्यांच्या विरुद्ध कडक कारवाई होणे जरूरीचे आहे.

आदिवासी भागातील स्त्रीपुरुषाचे आरोग्य खालावयाचे प्रमुख कारण म्हणजे पिण्याच्या पाण्याची समस्या. उन्हाळ्याच्या दिवसात नद्या, ओढे कोरडे पडल्यामुळे विशेषतः पुणे, नाशिक, धुळे व ठाणे भागातील लोकांना पाण्यासाठी टेकड्या उतरून पाणी उपलब्ध असलेल्या ठिकाणी खड्डे करून वाटी वाटीने पाणी भरावे लागते. असे पाणी निश्चितच अशुद्ध असते. तर पावसाळ्यात डोंगर दऱ्या मधून वहात येणाऱ्या नद्या, नाले, ओढ्याचे गढूळ, अशुद्ध पाण्याच्या सेवनामुळे रक्ती हगवण, कृमी, नारु, कावीळ, कॉलरा यासारख्या महाभयंकर रोगाला तोंड द्यावे लागते.

अशुद्ध घाण, गढूळ पाण्यामुळे वरीलप्रमाणे रोग होतात. त्याचप्रमाणे महारोग (Leprosy) क्षय (TB), देवी (Small Pox), त्वचेचे रोग यासारखे सर्वसाधारणपणे रोग आदिवासींमध्ये आढळून येतात. रोजगाराअभावी आर्थिक समस्या उदभवतात. त्यामुळे उपासमार, अर्धपोटी राहणे, निसत्व अन्नाचे सेवन, भूक भागविण्यासाठी बऱ्याच वेळेला जंगलातील

कंदमुळे, रानभाज्या, कच्ची फळे इ. खाण्यामुळे स्थानिक आदिवासींच्या तब्येतीवर विपरित परिणाम होतो.

वर्षानुवर्षे दारिद्र्याने गांजलेल्या आदिवासींना समतोल व पुरेसा आहार तर सोडाच पण पोटभर अन्नही मिळत नाही. अनेक आदिवासी कुटुंबाकडे कसण्यासाठी स्वतःची जमीन नसते. ज्यांच्याकडे जमीन आहे ती निकृष्ट दर्जाची असते. वर्षभर पुरेल इतके धान्यही तिच्यातून पिकत नाही. सरकारी कर, सावकाराचे देणे, खंडणी, वाटा इत्यादींचा हिशोब करून त्यांच्या वाटयाला किती धान्य येणार. जमीन नसलेले बहुसंख्य आदिवासी मोलमजुरी करतात. जी मजुरी मिळते ती अपुरी असते. सारांश, आदिवासीं शेतकरी असो वा मोलमजुरी करणारा, त्याला वर्षातील आठ महिने उपाशी, अर्धपोटी रहावे लागते. जे धान्य पिकते ते बरई, नाचणी कोद्रा, सावा अशाप्रकारचे निकृष्ट प्रतीचे असते आणि त्यामुळेच त्याला निसत्व आहारावर आपली व कुटुंबाची गुजराण करावी लागते व त्यातूनच निर्माण होणाऱ्या रोगांच्या प्रार्दुभावाना बळी पडावे लागते. थोडक्यात जीवनसत्वाच्या अभावामुळे रोग, डोळ्याचे विकार, मुडदूस, क्षय, अॅनेमिया इत्यादी रोगांनी आदिवासींचे जीवन पिडलेले असते.

आदिवासी दुर्गम भागात आदिवासींसाठी आरोग्याच्या योजना राबविणे म्हणजे असी धारावत स्विकारण्यासारखे कठीण काम आहे. आदिवासी भागातील रोगराई व कुपोषण कमी करण्यासाठी

नवसंजीवनी योजना, खावटी कर्ज वाटप यासारख्या विविध योजना सातत्याने राबविले जात आहेत. त्यासाठी कोटयावधी रुपये खर्ची होत आहेत. तथापि, कुपोषण का कमी होत नाही याचा मागोवा घेऊन त्याप्रमाणे पध्दतशीर नियोजन व कार्यक्रम व प्रामाणिक अधिकारी यांची नियुक्तीची आवश्यकता आहे.

माझ्या मते, आदिवासी भागात रोगराई विशेषतः कुपोषण होण्याची तीन महत्वाची कारणे आहेत. त्यापैकी महत्वाचे कारण म्हणजे दुर्गम भागातील आदिवासी ज्या घरात राहतो, त्या घराची सदोष रचना हे होय. अशा आदिवासींचे घर म्हणजे गवताचे छप्पर, कुडाच्या भिंती. अति पावसाने घरावरील गवत, वासे, तुळ्या, खांब कुजतात. त्यांना उघड वाळवी लागते. ऐन कडाक्याच्या थंडीत किंवा मुसळधार पावसात लहानश्या झोपडीतील/घरातील ६-७ व्यक्ती हातपाय आखडून झोपतात. उबेसाठी एक लाकडी ओंडका रात्रभर जळत असते. त्याचा धूर जाण्यासाठी किंवा हवा खेळती राहण्यासाठी पुरेशा खिडक्या किंवा झरोखे नसतात. घरातच किंवा घराला लागून असलेल्या पडवीत गुरे बांधली जात असल्यामुळे त्यांच्या मलमूत्राचा वास रोग फैलावण्यास मदत करतो. घरात एक प्रकारचा कुबट वास येत असतो. घर दुरुस्तीची बाब विशेष खर्चिक नसते. पण एवढाही खर्च करण्याची ऐपत आदिवासींमध्ये नसते. अशा आरोग्यदृष्ट्या चांगल्या नसलेल्या घरात आदिवासी वर्षानुवर्षे राहिल्याने त्याची प्रकृती खालावणार नसेल

तरच नवल म्हणावयास पाहिजे. अशा आरोग्यदृष्ट्या अपायकारक घरात राहणाऱ्या आदिवासींना प्राथमिक आरोग्य केंद्रातील औषधांचा कितपत व कसा गुण येणार हा प्रश्न न सुटणारा आहे. आदिवासींच्या घराच्या स्थितीवरून त्यांच्या दारिद्र्याची कल्पना येते. पण त्याहून त्यांच्या घरातील साहित्य, कपडे, पोचा आलेली कळकट अल्युमिनियमची भांडी व त्यात शिजणारे अन्न पाहिले की, त्यांच्या दारिद्र्याची अधिक कल्पना येते. मी शहापूर येथे प्रकल्प अधिकारी असताना बऱ्याच वेळा आदिवासी पाडे, त्यांच्या झोपड्या व त्यातील दारिद्र्य प्रत्यक्ष पाहिले आहे.

आदिवासींचे आरोग्य सुधारावयाचे असेल तर प्रथम त्यांच्या घराची, झोपड्यांची रचना, आरोग्यदायक पध्दतीने असणे अत्यावश्यक आहे. त्यासाठी शासनाने केंद्र शासनाच्या आर्थिक मदतीने दुर्गम भागातील आदिवासींच्या निवासासाठी इंदिरा आवास योजनेखाली हवेशीर, टिकाऊ, घरे बांधून देणे अत्यावश्यक आहे. सामाजिक बांधीलकी मानणाऱ्या इमारत बांधकाम व्यावसायिकांना या योजनेत सहभागी करून घेतल्यास त्यांच्या ज्ञानाचा निश्चित फायदा होईल, असे वाटते.

कुपोषणाचे दुसरे कारण म्हणजे आदिवासी भागातील कच्चे रस्ते, दुर्गम आदिवासी भागात पावसाळ्यात सुरवातीलाच पाऊस पडलो की, त्या भागातील रस्ते खराब होतात, असा सर्वसाधारण अनुभव आहे. नदी, नाल्यांना पूर आले की, कच्चपूल, साकव, कच्ची पायवट वाहून जातात. त्यामुळे जनसंपर्क

तुटतो. अशा भागातील आजारी माणसाला किंवा स्त्रीला त्याच्या पाडयापासून प्राथमिक आरोग्य केंद्रापर्यंत आणण्यासाठी बरेच प्रयत्न करावे लागतात. रोगाची अवस्था गंभीर असेल किंवा त्याला सर्पदंश झाला असेल त्याला पोत्याची खोळ करून आणताना वाटेतच त्याचा मृत्यु झाल्याची उदाहरणे आहेत.. साधारणपणे दरवर्षी जिल्हा नियोजन मंडळाकडून नवीन रस्ते बांधणे, जुने रस्ते दुरुस्त करणे, साकव बांधणे यासाठी लक्षावधी रुपयांची तरतूद केली जाते. असे असताना पावसाळयात आदिवासी भागातील रस्त्यांची दुर्दशा का होते हा एक चिंतेचा आणि संशोधनाचा विषय आहे. निदान पावसाळयात तरी आदिवासी दुर्गम भागातील रस्ते वहातुकीसाठी ठेवण्याची जबाबदारी रस्ते बांधकाम विभाग का घेत नाही हा प्रश्न आहे.

कुपोषण होण्याचे तिसरे कारण म्हणजे आदिवासीमधील अंधश्रद्धा. माणसाला रोग होतो तो देव कोपल्यामुळे किंवा चेटुक लागल्यामुळे अशी त्याची भ्रामक कल्पना असते. त्यासाठी भगताकडे जावे लागते अशी त्याची ठाम समजूत असते. दुर्गम आदिवासी पाडयात रोगाचा प्रादुर्भाव झाला की, तेथील लोकांची स्थिती दयनीय होते. दवाखाना आणि डॉक्टर यांच्यावर त्यांचा प्रथम विश्वास बसत नाही. अशावेळी रोगग्रस्त आदिवासी व त्यांचे कुटुंब भगताचे अंगारे, धुपारे करतात. त्यामध्ये बराच कालावधी जातो. असे किरकोळ प्रकार करूनही रोग न बरा झाल्यास तो मांत्रिक किंवा भगत काही

अघोरी उपाययोजना करण्यास सागाते. हे उपाय खर्चिक असतात. असे उपाय करूनही रोगी बरा न झाल्यास शेवटी त्याला दवाखान्यात नेण्याचा निर्णय घेतला जातो. तोपर्यंत बराच वेळ गेलेला असतो व रोग पराकोटीला पोचलेला असतो. प्राथमिक आरोग्य केंद्रात जाईपर्यंत किंवा स्थानिक डॉक्टर येईपर्यंत वाहतूकीची व्यवस्था न झाल्यास रोगी दगावलेला असतो. आदिवासी भागातील अंधश्रद्धेचे निर्मूलन होण्यासाठी व भगत या प्रथेला आळा बसण्यासाठी सामाजिक कार्य करणाऱ्या संस्थांनी आदिवासींमध्ये जागृती निर्माण करणे आवश्यक आहे. या कारणांव्यतिरिक्त आदिवासी मधील बालविवाह प्रथा, दारुचे आत्यंतिक व्यसन अशासारख्या समाजविघातक प्रथेस प्रतिबंध करणे अत्यावश्यक आहे. आदिवासी विभागाच्या न्युक्लिअस बजेट अंतर्गत आदिवासींची शारिरीक क्षमता, त्या भागातील भौगोलिक साधनसामुग्री लक्षात घेऊन उत्पादनाशी निगडीत अशा काही योजना राबविल्यास स्थानिक आदिवासींना रोजगार उपलब्ध होईल.

मध्यंतरी अल्फा किंवा ई टी.व्ही.वर अशी बातमी आली होती की, आदिवासी ज्या उंच डोंगरावर राहतो त्या भागात विद्युत पुरवठ्याची सोय नाही. मात्र डोंगराच्या पायथ्याशी असलेल्या गांवाना विद्युत पुरवठा सोय झालेली आहे. आदिवासीबाबत असा दुजाभाव विद्युत मंडळ का करते हे समजत नाही. १९९८-९९ च्या अहवालामध्ये जवळ जवळ ७३ टक्के आदिवासी भागात विद्युत

पुरवठ्याची सोय करण्यात आलेली नव्हती. याचाही विद्युत मंडळाने विचार करावा.

आदिवासींच्या आरोग्य समस्यांचा विचार करतांना शासकीय आश्रमशाळेतील आरोग्य समस्येबाबत विचार व्यक्त करणे आवश्यक आहे.

शासकीय आश्रमशाळा या आदिवासींच्या आर्थिक, शैक्षणिक दृष्ट्या विकास गंगा आहे. एका आश्रमशाळेत २००-२५० विद्यार्थी असतात. आश्रमशाळा पोस्टबेसिक असेल तर तेथे अंदाजे ४०० ते ४५० विद्यार्थी राहतात. या निवासी शाळेत विशेषतः पावसाळ्यात विद्यार्थ्यांचे आरोग्याची अधिक काळजी घेणे आवश्यक आहे. शाळा सातवी पर्यंत असो वा १० वी पर्यंत असो या निवासी शाळेत आजारी विद्यार्थ्यांला विश्रांतीसाठी वेगळी खोली नसते. आजारी विद्यार्थी एखादे पोते किंवा सतरंजीवर झोपलेला असतो हे मी बऱ्याच वेळा पाहिलेले आहे. आश्रमशाळेत प्रथमोपचार पेटी असते. परंतू त्या पेटीत औषधे/ गोळ्या आजारी विद्यार्थ्यांस देण्यास कर्मचारी घाबरतात. एखाद्या विद्यार्थी गंभीर आजारी पडल्यास किंवा त्याला सर्पदंश झाल्यास कर्मचाऱ्यांची पाचावर धारण बसते. आश्रमशाळेतील विद्यार्थी पाण्यात वाहून गेला किंवा सर्पदंशाने मरण पावला की संबंधितास प्रशासकीय कारवाईला तोंड द्यावे

लागते. हे सर्व टाळण्यासाठी प्रत्येक आश्रमशाळेत एक वैद्यकिय अधिकारी, एक पुरुष नर्स, एक स्त्री नर्स, एक मेडिकल अटेंडंट अशी चार पदे निर्माण केली तर आश्रमशाळेतील विद्यार्थी, कर्मचारी आणि आश्रमशाळेच्या आजूबाजूच्या आदिवासी पाड्यातील स्त्री पुरुषांना त्याचा लाभ घेता येईल. समाज कल्याण खात्यामार्फत भिकाऱ्यांसाठी बेगर्स होम रिसिपशन सेंटर चालविली जातात. त्या ठिकाणी वरीलप्रमाणे वैद्यकिय कर्मचारी कार्यरत असतात. असे असताना आश्रमशाळेसाठी स्वतंत्र वैद्यकिय पथक नसावे, हे योग्य वाटत नाही.

थोडक्यात दारिद्र्यात खितपत पडलेल्या दुर्गम भागातील आदिवासीसाठी आरोग्यदायक घरकुल योजना, शुध्द पाणी पुरवठा, पक्के रस्ते, सक्षम वैद्यकिय पथक, अंधश्रध्दा निर्मूलन, स्थानिक भौगोलिक परिस्थितीनुसार न्युक्लिअस बजेटमधून रोजगार निर्मिती अशा सारख्या योजना आदिवासींची बांधलकी मानणाऱ्या प्रामाणिक अधिकाऱ्यामार्फत राबविल्यास त्या भागातील रोगराई, कुपोषणासारख्या रोगांना निश्चित आळा बसेल यात शंका नाही. आदिवासी विकासाचा हा जगन्नाथाचा रथ ओढण्यासाठी सामाजिक कार्य करणाऱ्या संस्थांनी शासनाला सक्रिय सहकार्य करणे आवश्यक आहे.

संदर्भ :-

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२. An Evaluation Study of Health & Nutrition among the Tribal- T.R.T.I.Pune M.S.

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बस्तरचा निसर्ग आणि संस्कृती

डॉ. धैयशील शिरोळे*

महाराष्ट्रातील अनेकांना छत्तीसगड या प्रांताविषयी फारच थोडी माहिती आहे. मध्यप्रदेशाच्या पूर्वेकडील भूभागाला वेगळे करून हा नवीन प्रांत स्थापन करण्यात आला. याच्या पूर्वेला झारखंड आणि ओरिसा, पश्चिमेकडे महाराष्ट्र, दक्षिणेकडे आंध्रप्रदेश आणि उत्तरेला उत्तर प्रदेश आहे. रायपूर ही या प्रांताची राजधानी आहे. या प्रदेशातील इंद्रावती ही महत्त्वाची नदी आहे आणि रायपूर, जगदलपूर, अंबिकापूर, जशपूरनगर, कोरबा, कवर्धा, दुर्ग, धमतरी, राजनंदगांव, कांकेर, नारायणपूर, दांतेवाडा ही काही महत्त्वाची गांवे आहेत. ह्या प्रांतात साठ टक्के भूप्रदेशावर उत्तम प्रकारचे अरण्य आहे आणि त्यात साल, साग, मटुवा, बांबू, आंबा, तेंडू ह्या प्रकारचे असंख्य वृक्ष आहेत. ह्या घनदाट अरण्यांमध्ये बिबटे, पटेरी वाघ, अस्वल, उदमांजरे, कोल्हे, लांडगे, तरस, सुसरी आणि अजगर यांचे वास्तव्य आहे. शेकडो प्रकारच्या वनस्पती या भागात आढळत असल्याने वनस्पतीशास्त्रज्ञांना संशोधन करण्यास खूप वाव आहे. भूगर्भशास्त्रज्ञांना गुंगवून टाकतील अशा STALAGMITE आणि STALACITE च्या अनेक गुहा येथे आहेत. समाजशास्त्रज्ञांचा आणि आदिवासी समाजाचा चौफेर अभ्यास करण्याची मोठी संधी येथे उपलब्ध आहे. मानववंशशास्त्रज्ञांना येथे जगातील प्राचीन जमाती आजही आढळतील.

सर्वसाधारण पर्यटकाला आकर्षित करणारे येथे अरण्य, नद्या, जाड प्रपात, पुरातन देवळे, येथील बाजारहाट, येथे तयार होणाऱ्या कलापूर्ण वस्तू मन जिंकून घेतात. छत्तीसगड प्रांतातील बस्तर हा जिल्हा विशेष करून पर्यटकांना आकर्षित करतो. प्राचीन संस्कृतीचे अनेक पुरावे या भागात आढळतात. बस्तर म्हणजे बांबू. ह्या भागात सर्वेक्षण केल्यावर असे आढळले की, येथे फार उत्तम प्रकारची खनिजसंपत्ती उपलब्ध आहे. बैलाडिला सारख्या मोठमोठ्या खाणी येथे कार्यरत आहेत. भविष्यकाळात हा भाग खनिजांवर प्रक्रिया करणाऱ्या उद्योगांनी गजबजून जाण्याची शक्यता नाकारता येणार नाही.

या भागात गोंड, माडिया, बिसनशिंगी, भुरिया, अबुजमाडिया, माडिया, राजमाडिया, भात्रा, हलबा या प्रमुख जमाती आहेत. याशिवाय काही उपजमाती पण आहेत. पूर्वीचे काही मराठा सैनिक या भागात स्थायिक झाले. त्यांचा आणि हलबा जमातीचा निकटचा संबंध आहे. येथील सर्वमान्य बोलीभाषा हलबी आहे. इतर अनेक बोलीभाषा प्रचलित आहेत. अनेक प्रांतांनी वेढलेल्या छत्तीसगड प्रांतावर त्या त्या प्रांताच्या संस्कृतीचा थोडाफार परिणाम झालेला दिसतो. १९८१ साली केलेल्या जनगणनेनुसार येथे प्रति चौ.मी.अंतरामध्ये ४७ लोकांची वस्ती आढळली.

*रत्नदिप, शिरोळे रोड, पुणे-४११००४

पुरातत्वाचा जुना पुरावा भोंगाडपाडा येथील पाचव्या शतकातील बौद्ध अवशेषांच्या रूपात आढळतो. आठव्या ते बाराव्या शतकापर्यंत हया भागावर चालुक्य, चोला, होयसळ राजवंशांनी राज्य केले. तेराव्या शतकात काकती यांनी हिंदू राज्य स्थापन केले. त्या काळात महाराष्ट्र आणि मध्यप्रदेशातील अनेकजणांनी हया भागात स्थलांतर केले. इंद्रावती नदीच्या उत्तरेकडे नागर संस्कृतीचा प्रभाव आहे. तर दक्षिणेकडे तेलगु.

बस्तरमधील सुंदर निसर्गाचा आनंद घेताना आदिवासी जीवनाची ओळख करुन घेणे जरूरीचे आहे. आदिवासींच्या जीवन पध्दतीवर खूपच सांगण्यासारखे आहे. त्यांची काम करण्याची क्षमता, एकमेकांमधील सहकार्य, एकसंध समाजजीवन, त्यांचे उत्सव, नाच, विवाहप्रथा, स्त्री स्वातंत्र्य हया गोष्टी शहरवासियांचे लक्ष वेधून घेतात. त्यांची रंगीत वस्त्रे, सुंदर दागिने, लयबध्द पदन्यास, त्यांच्या जत्रा आणि उत्सव पाहण्यासारख्या असतात.

आदिवासींच्या जीवनातील महत्वाचा भाग म्हणजे आठवडे बाजार. त्याला ते हाट म्हणतात. जंगलातून गोळा करुन आणलेल्या वस्तु ते हया बाजारात आणतात आणि त्या बदली त्यांना उपयुक्त असणारे पदार्थ घेतात (देवाण-घेवाण BARTER) आदिवासी तरुण तरुणी येथे भेटतात. आदिवासी तरुण त्याला आवडलेल्या तरुणीला स्वतः केलेला कंगवा बक्षिस देतो. असे कंगवे जिला जास्तीत जास्त मिळतील ती सर्वात सुंदर स्त्री मानली जाते. विवाह झाल्यानंतर ती

सुंदर तरुणी ते कंगवे त्या त्या तरुणाला परत करते. आदिवासींचे नृत्य अतिशय प्रेक्षणीय असते. मोहाची मदिरा पिऊन, धुंद होऊन ते रात्र रात्र नाचू शकतात.

आदिवासीमध्ये उत्तम कलाकार आहेत. ओतीव मूर्ती करण्यात ते वाकबगार आहेत. त्यांनी केलेल्या मूर्ती मोठमोठ्या पंचतारांकित हॉटेल्समध्ये शोभेसाठी ठेवल्या गेल्या आहेत. बाजारात लहान मोठ्या सुंदर वस्तु मिळतात. पर्यटक हया वस्तु आवर्जून खरेदी करतात आणि आदिवासी अर्थव्यवस्थेला हातभार लावतात.

आदिवासी वर्षातून सात आठ मोठे उत्सव साजरे करतात. त्यांचा संबंध निसर्गाशी असतो. सर्वात महत्वाचा उत्सव म्हणजे दसरा. हा आदिवासींची सर्वोच्च देवता दांतेवाडा येथील दंतेश्वरीच्या सन्मानार्थ असतो. हा समारंभ चौदा दिवस पूर्वपार चालत आलेल्या परंपरेनुसार चालतो आणि आदिवासी समाजातील प्रत्येक घटकाचा त्यामध्ये सहभाग असतो. आदिवासींची पूर्वी अनेक संस्थाने होती. तेथील राजांना अत्यंत आदरपूर्वक रथात बसवून त्यांची मिरवणूक काढीत.

पर्यटनाच्या दृष्टीने हा भाग पाहण्यास आठ दिवस लागतात. रायपूरला रेल्वे स्टेशन आणि हवाईतळ आहे. पहिल्या दिवशी रायपूरहून ६ तास मोटारीने प्रवास करुन जगदाडपूरला पोहोचता येते. वाटेत सुंदर अरण्यदर्शन होते. दुसऱ्या दिवशी जगलदपूरहून कांगेर नॅशनल पार्क मध्ये जाऊन तेथील आदिवासींना त्यांच्या झोपड्यात जाऊन भेटता येते. त्या भागात असलेल्या दुर्मिळ प्रकारच्या गुहा पाहता येतात. जवळचा तीरथगडचा सुंदर धबधबा

पहात पहात जेवण घेता येते. तिस-या दिवशी जगदाडपूर-चित्रकोट-नागरतार हा प्रवास करता येतो. हा धबधबा शंभर फुटावरून कोसळतो. या भागातील हेराकोटाच्या मूर्ती फार प्रसिध्द आहेत. चौथ्या दिवशी जगदाडपूर येथील बाजारात सहभागी होऊन खरेदी करता येते. संग्रहालय बघता येते. पाचव्या दिवशी नारायणपूरला जाऊन तेथील हस्तकला व्यवसाय प्रत्यक्ष पहाता येतो.

रायपूरहून कवर्धा ह्या जुन्या संस्थानला भेट देता येते. हे अंतर १२० कि.मी. आहे. तेथील राजप्रासाद पाहण्यासारखा आहे. रायपूरहून कांकेर संस्थानला भेट देता येते. तेथे पारंपारिक प्रेक्षणीय आदिवासी नृत्य पाहता येते. रायपूरचे आदिवासी संग्रहालय प्रेक्षणीय आहे.

बस्तर क्षेत्रात पर्यटन हा एक अनोखा अनुभव आहे. शुध्द हवेत, हिरव्यागार निसर्गात, भोळ्या भाबड्या आदिवासीमध्ये व्यतित केलेले दिवस चिरकाल स्मरणात राहतील. तेथे जाऊन आदिवासींची जीवनपध्दत पाहून आपल्या शहरी जीवन पध्दतीत काही बदल करता येतील. तेथील हस्तकलेच्या वस्तु घेऊन आदिवासींच्या उत्पन्नात भर टाकता येईल. ह्या अपरिचित पण सुरक्षित प्रदेशात आपण पर्यटन अवश्य करावे.

आपण आपल्या देशातील आदिवासी बांधवासाठी काय करू शकतो ? शहरातील सुशिक्षित जनता आदिवासीबद्दल

बौध्दिक चर्चा करून काही उपाय सुचविण्याचा प्रयत्न करतात. प्रत्यक्ष आदिवासी प्रदेशात फिरून तेथील वास्तविक अडचणी समजावून घेऊन ह्या सूचना केलेल्या नसतात आणि म्हणूनच त्या व्यवहारात आणता येत नाहीत. हजारो रुपये खर्च करून भारताबाहेर प्रवास करण्यापेक्षा आपल्या देशात ज्या अनेक जागा पाहण्यासारख आहेत त्या आपण आवर्जून पाहिल्या पाहिजेत. त्या त्या आदिवासी भागात निर्भेळ सृष्टीसौंदर्य असते. तेथील स्थानिक आदिवासी अनेक प्रकारच्या सुंदर कलाकुसरीच्या वस्तु निर्माण करतात. आपण जेव्हा प्रवासाला ह्या वनवासी भागात जातो तेव्हा तेथील उपहारगृहामध्ये चहा, नास्ता, जेवण घेऊन तेथील आदिवासींच्या उत्पन्नामध्ये भर घालण्यास हातभार लावावा. असे उत्पन्न मिळाल्याने ह्या आदिवासींना अन्नधान्य खरेदी करण्यास धन उपलब्ध होईल आणि त्यायोगे कुपोषणाचा प्रश्न सोडविण्यास आपल्या परीने हातभार लागेल. हा उपयुक्त दृष्टीकोन प्रत्येकाने ध्यानात घेणे आवश्यक आहे.

भारतातील प्रेक्षणीय आदिवासी स्थळांना भेट देऊन आल्यावर त्यासंबंधीची माहिती, लेख, भाषण, चित्रफितीद्वारे इतरांना द्यावी म्हणजे आदिवासी कल्याणास हातभार लागेल. बस्तरचा आणि महाराष्ट्राचा ऐतिहासिक संबंध आहे आणि तो आपण पुढे चालविला पाहिजे याबद्दल दुमत नाही.

* * *

भिल्लांचे सण, उत्सव व देवदेवता

डी.एस.मोडगी*

महाराष्ट्रात एकूण ४५ अनुसूचित जमाती आहेत. या ४५ अनुसूचित जमातीपैकी भिल्ल एक प्रमुख जमात आहे. महाराष्ट्रातील बहुसंख्य आदिवासी लोकसंख्या ही ठाणे, धुळे, नाशिक, पुणे, अहमदनगर, अमरावती, जळगांव, यवतमाळ, चंद्रपूर, भंडारा, गडचिरोली, रायगड या जिल्हयात प्रामुख्याने असल्याचे दिसून येते. सातपुडा पर्वत रांगामधील तापी व नर्मदा या दोन नद्यांमधील पहाडी व सखल प्रदेश हा भिलवाड (भिल्लांचा प्रदेश) म्हणून ओळखला जात असे.

भिल्ल अनुसूचित जमातीची प्रामुख्याने लोकसंख्या ही नंदूरबार, धुळे, जळगांव, अमरावती व औरंगाबाद या जिल्हयात असल्याचे दिसते. 'सातपुडा पर्वता' चा प्रदेश व 'भिल्ल प्रदेश' म्हणूनच ओळखला जातो. १९९१ च्या जनगणनेनुसार भिल्लांची एकूण लोकसंख्या धुळे जिल्हयातच फक्त (७) सात लाख एवढी असल्याचे आढळते. तळोदा, अक्कलकुवा व अक्राणी हे तीन तालुके धुळे जिल्हयातील आदिवासींचे मोठे क्षेत्र असून येथील भिल्लांत, पावरा, मावची, गावीत, धानका, तडवी, नाईक उपजाती असल्याचे दिसून येतात.

दऱ्याखोऱ्यात राहणाऱ्या व अज्ञानात रुतलेल्या भिल्ल आदिवासींच्या देवधर्माबद्दलच्या कल्पना ह्या त्यांच्या स्वतंत्र आस्तित्वाला पोषक अशाच आहेत. वाघादेव, धानदेव, (पिकांचा देव) सर्पदेव, म्हसोबा, वेताळ, डोंगरदेव हे या आदिवासींचे प्रामुख्याने देव असल्याचे दिसतात. त्यांची ते पूजा करतात. भिल्ल जमातीच्या उपासना पध्दती व धार्मिक विधीवरून ते स्वभावतःच निसर्गपूजक असल्याचे दिसून येते. असे असले तरी दूर पहाड, पर्वतात राहणाऱ्या या आदिवासींना काही लोक हिंदू धर्मापासून अलग ठेवण्याचा प्रयत्न करतात. पण ते स्वतः मात्र हिंदू सण समारंभ साजरे करतात. त्यामुळे त्यांचे सण व उत्सव हे बहुतेकदा हिंदूच्या सणांसारखेच आहेत. उदा.होळी, दिवाळी, राखी, दसरा इ. डॉ.टी.बी.नाईक यांनी त्यांच्या 'दि भिल्ल्स या पुस्तकात भिल्लांचे सण हे शेती हंगामाशी निगडित असल्याचे दाखविले असून ते खालीलप्रमाणे आहेत.

१. जेष्ठ आषाढ महिन्यात खेडा म्हणजे नांगरणी व जळण गोळा करण्याच्या कामाच्या वेळी त्यांचा नंदरावे हा सण असतो.

*सांस्कृतिक अधिकारी, आदिवासी संशोधन व प्रशिक्षण संस्था, महाराष्ट्र राज्य, पुणे.

२. याच चोमादू म्हणजे पावसाळ्यात आषाढ-श्रावण (मोजर) महिन्यात **मतन्यावो** हा सण पेरणी व खुरपणीच्या काळात येतो.
३. मोजर (श्रावण) भादव्यात पिकांच्या राखणीची व जनावरांना हिरवे गवत कापून घालण्याची चान्याला नेण्याची कामे असतात. तेव्हा **गोवलदेव** उत्सव साजरा करतात.
४. पावसाळ्यात भादरावी, आश्विन महिन्यात पिकांच्या राखणीचे काम काटेकोरपणे करावे लागते तेव्हा या महिन्यात सण उत्सवांत त्यांना रस नाही.
५. अथम (आश्विन) डहारु (कार्तिक) या हिवाळ महणजे हिवाळ्यातील महिन्यात भात व इतर पिकांची आखणी व रखवालीही असते. पीक काढण्याचेही हे दिवस असतात. या महिन्यात त्यांचा सण नाही.
६. कार्तिक (डहारु), कचकी (मार्गशीर्ष) भात हंगामी हिवाळी मशागत, झोडणी इ. कामात **दिवाळीचा** सण येतो.
७. मार्गशीर्ष (कचकी) उतरन (पौष) काढलेल्या धान्यांची पुढील कामे, चुडया लावणे (उनवान) देणी, घेणी, हिवाळी पीक पेरणीच्या दिवसात **नवई** हा सण येतो.
८. पौषण (उतरन) गौम्ब (माघ) भात झोडणी, मळणी रस्ते दुरुस्ती गवत कापणी, गाडीची दुरुस्ती इ.कामे जंगलतोडीचे काम
९. होळी (फाल्गून) वुडाबु (जंगल तोडीचे काम) द्विदल धान्यांची हरभरा, उडिद, घेवडा, भुईमूग इ.निगराणी क्वचित डायरी (गाव मासेमारी) या काळात माघयात्रा गीबंजगा भरते
१०. फाल्गून- जात (चैत्र) जंगलतोडीचे मजुरीचे काम डाळी पीक काढणी होळीचा सण या काळात येतो (फाग)
११. चैत्र (जात)- वैशाख (आखाती) जंगलतोडीची मजुरीची कामे डाळवर्गीय पीक काढणी. दादर ज्वारीची राखण
१२. आखानी (वैशाख) जेष्ठ (जेठ) जंगलतोडीची कामे, ज्वारी काढणी, मळणी, डाळ पीकांची जोडणी इ.
- अशाप्रकारे वर्षभराची कालगणना डॉ.नाईक यांनी दिली आहे. त्यांनी त्यासाठीची माहिती जुन्या पश्चिम खानदेश भागातून घेतलेली असल्याने गृहित धरण्यास हरकत नसावी.
- यामध्ये थोडी भर घालून हिंदू सण व भिल्ल सणांची माहिती खालीलप्रमाणे-

हिंदू सण		भिल्ल सण	
१.	राखी पौर्णिमा	१.	नोबरता मार्गबाचा

हिंदू सण		भिल्ल सण	
२.	नवरात्र	२.	राखी
३.	दिवाळी	३.	भाद्रबाडी का जागरण
४.	संक्रात	४.	गवरी
५.	शिवरात्र	५.	नोबरता भेरु आणि माताकी
६.	देव झुलनी एकादस	६.	रिवासे (दीप अमावस्या)
७.	जन्माअष्टमी	७.	मोमिया आणि मतलोक
८.	भादयनाम	८.	हंक्रात
९.	आक्रदा तीज	९.	माघचाटटचे जागरण
१०.	लोदी दिवाळी	१०.	होळी
११.	दसरा	११.	शीतलामाता
१२.	शिल सतम	१२.	निळीबारी
१३.	तीज	१३.	उजाडया देव उर्फ मोरीमाता
१४.	होळी	१४.	वागदेव (पौर्णिमा)
		१५.	निंबादेव
		१६.	गांव दिवाळी

यापैकी खालील सण दोघेही साजरे करतात.

(१) राखी (२) नोबरता किंवा नवरात्र
(३) दिवाळी (४) संक्रांत किंवा हंक्रात (५)
शी सतम किंवा शितलमाता आणि होळी

फक्त भिल्लांचे सण

(१) मार्गबाबाची नोबरत (२) भाद्रबाडी
का जागरण (३) गवरी (४) भामिया (५)
माघचाटटचे जागरण

असे असले तरी हिंदू सण भिल्ल
साजरे करीत असले तरी आशय, उद्देश व
साजरे करण्याच्या पध्दतीत खूप फरक
आहे. म्हणजे पूर्णतः वेगळेपण आहे. काही
सणांची माहिती पुढीलप्रमाणे आहे.

(१) **राखी पौर्णिमा** :- घरगुती
स्वरुपाचा हा सण भिल्लासाठी नाही. बहिण
भावाला राखी बांधण्याची सर्वसाधारण
कल्पना भिल्लामध्ये नाही. त्यांच्यामध्ये हा
सण सगळ्या गांवाचा असतो. राखीचा

धागा स्त्री/पुरुष सर्वजण एकमेकांकना
बांधतात. कोणी कोणाला बांधावा याबाबत
कसलेच निर्बंध नाहीत. काही गांवातून
राखीचा सण दोन दिवसांचा असतो.
पहिल्या दिवशी स्नान करून मेरु माता,
राजा पाष्टा, मोगरा इत्यादि देवांना तसेच
नांगर, ऊस सर्व यंत्र, तलवार, नटबोल्ड,
कडी कोयंडे तर उभ्या पिकातील
मवऱ्यांच्या ताटांनाही धागे बांधतात.
दुसऱ्या दिवशी मात्र छोट्या मोठ्या संमलाने
गांवात फिरून घरोघर जाऊन सर्वांना धागे
बांधतात. गठे लागतात. रब्बाली खुशाली
विचारतात. घरी येणाऱ्या सर्वांना मध व
सादडयाच्या पानाच्या बिडया व ताक किंवा
दही देतात आणि मद्यपानाने झिंगलेले
अनेक जण या दिवशी दिसतील. तरीही
रात्री नाचगाण्यात भाग घेतील. या दिवसांचे

आणखी आगळेपण म्हणजे पंचाच्या घरी १०-१५ च्या घोळक्यांने भेटी देतात. गांवातील प्रतिष्ठीत लोक त्यानंतर ज्या ज्या घरी दुःखद घटना घडल्या त्या घरांना भेटी देतात. त्या घरातील स्त्री त्यावेळी मोठमोठ्याने रडू लागते. मग वृध्द मंडळतील स्त्रिया त्यांना घरातून बाहेर आणून त्यांच्यासह नृत्य करतात. घरातील मंडळी मग त्यांच्या दारु व विडया देऊन मान ठेवतात. त्यानंतर त्यांचा दुःखाचा (सुतकाचा) काळ संपतो.

(२) नोबरता किंवा नवरात्र :-

नवरात्रात इतरत्र सारखेस घट सर्व देव ठाण्यात (देवळात) बसविण्यात येतात. नऊ दिवसांच्या या उत्सवात पहिली, नववी व दहावी रात्र फार धामधुमीची असते. घटाशेजारी पेरलेल्या थानावरून मडक्यातील उर्वरित पाण्यावरून पीक परिस्थितीचा व पावसाचा अंदाज येतो, असा त्यांचा समज आहे. भेरु म्हणजे भैरव व माता व देवतांची पूजा या उत्सवात प्रामुख्याने करण्यात येते.

(३) दिवाळी :- गुजरातमध्ये छोटा उदयपूर भागात व राजस्थानातही काही भागात भोपळ्यात ठेवलेला दिवा घेऊन दररोज एक मुलगी गांवात मिरवत जाते. भोपळ्याला बाहेरून सगळीकडे ओळीत भोके पाडलेली असतात. बाहेरून हिरवा रंग देतात. दिव्यासह भोपळ्यालाच त्यांच्या भागातील 'गडालिओ' देव समजतात. त्या त्या गांवातील मुले साधारणतः पंधरावडाभर अगोदर दिवाळीत काय करायचे ते ठरवितात. त्यानुसार

त्यांच्यापैकीच कोणीतरी 'गडालिओ' देवाचे आईबाप होतात. दिवाळीच्या दिवशी, गांवातील मुला-मुलींचा जथा सशस्त्र संरक्षणात शेजारच्या गांवाच्या सीमेपर्यंत जातात, नाचतात आणि हा पेटता भोपळा, ('गडालिओ') शेजारच्या गांवाच्या हददीत फेकून देतात. समज असा आहे की, त्या गांवचे सगळे 'दुर्भाग्य' अशाप्रकारे ते शेजारच्या गांवाकडे हस्तांतरीत करतात. शेजारच्या गांवची मुलेही नेमके तसेच करतात.

दिवाळीच्या दिवशी संध्याकाळी विहिरीवर बायका जाताना पणती घेऊन जातात. पेटलेली पणती विहिरीवर ठेवून पाण्याची घागर घेऊन येतात. त्या दिवशी घर, परिसर, झाडून स्वच्छ करतात. घराच्या शेवटी, घरात व देवळात किंवा आळीच्या शेवटी दिवे लागतात. गुराखी मुले गांवाभोवतालच्या टेकड्या टेकड्यातून दिवे घेऊन पळत असतात. गुरे-जनावरांना ओवाळतात. दिवाळीच्या दिवशी शेणाच्या गाडलिओ व त्याचा मुलगा यांच्या मूर्ती काही घरी करतात. बकऱ्याच्या काळजाचा नैवेद्य त्यांना देतात. देवही अंगात येतो.

राजस्थानातील भिल्लात नवपरिणीत मुलीला माहेरी आणतात. पण तिच्या नवऱ्यानेच दिवाळीची साडी (पडकी, लुगडी) मद्याची बाटली आणावी लागते. सासरा त्यांचा सत्कार गाय किंवा काही रक्कम देऊन करतो.

दुसऱ्या दिवशी पुरुष मंडळी घोळक्या घोळक्याने गांवात भेटी घेत फिरतात. प्रत्येक घरासमोर थांबून गाणी

गातात. त्यांना बिडया व दारु दिली जाते. दारुचा खूप अतिरेक होतो व परिणामही दृष्य स्वरूपात दिसतात. इतका की जमात पंचायत अशा वीरांना नंतर दंडही करते.

(४) हंक्रात किंवा संक्रात :-

तिळगुळाच्या सर्वसाधारण प्रथेसह काही ठिकाणी डोचकी नांवाच्या पक्षास पकडून नंतर सोडण्याचा कार्यक्रम भिल्लात आहे. गांवातील तरुण मुले आपआपल्या भागात हा पक्षी पकडण्याचा प्रयत्न करतात. सगळे लोक ते पहात असतात. आरडाओरड गोंधळ असतोच. पक्षी पकडणाऱ्या पोराना मका-गुळाची चिक्की देतात. पक्षी पकडल्यावर मुले त्याला घेऊन मिरवतात. सगळ्यांना दाखवितात. पक्षाला मका गुळाची चिक्की देतात. नंतर पक्षी धुवून स्वच्छ करून खाऊ घालतात. मग एक मुलगा पक्ष्याला हातावर घेतो व तो उडून जाण्याची वाट पहातो. पक्षी सुरवातीला भांबावतो. पण नंतर उडून जातो. हिरव्या झाडावर बसला तर पीकपाणी चांगल, सुकलेल्या झाडावर बसल्यास पिके वाईट येतील असा समज असतो. संक्रातीलाही मर्त्यक घरी जाऊन त्यांचे सुतक कमी करण्याचा विधी होतो.

भिल्ल सामुहिक शिकार करतात. धनुष्यबाण, भाले, बरच्या, तलवारी आणि कुन्हाडी घेऊन शिकारीला जातात. शिकारीचा व्युह तयार करून वेगवेगळ्या ठिकाणी दबा धरून बसतात. यादिवशी फक्त सश्यांची शिकार करतात. आरडाओरड करीत जंगलात घुसून फक्त ससेच बाहेर काढतात. ससे पकडण्याची

चढाओढ असते. दुपार नंतर सश्यांचे मांस शिजवून भोजन होते.

संध्याकाळी चिंध्याचा चेंडू (मोठा) फूटबॉलसारखा खेळतात. हा फक्त पुरुषांचा खेळ असून फारच आडदांडपणे खेळला जातो. नंतर त्याच ठिकाणी मोठ्या ढोलाचा नाच होतो. संक्रांतीच्या नाचापासूनच होळीच्या मोठ्या नाचाची सुरवात होते.

(५) होळी - काही भागात होळीच्या अगोदर २० हात लांबीचा वासा गांवाच्या उत्तरेला उभा केला जातो. होळीच्या दिवशी गांवातील सर्व घरांतून गोवऱ्यांच्या माळा मुली घेऊन येतात व या वाश्याला बांधतात किंवा आजूबाजूस खोचतात. लाकडे आणून रचतात. ढोलाच्या साथीत ठरविलेल्या वेळी होळी तयार करतात. स्त्रिया गोलाकार फेरात होळीची गांणी गातात. या वेळात वृध्दमंडळी गांव नायकाच्या घरी जाऊन त्याच्या ४ बैलांची नांवे पुढील ४ महिन्यांची ठेवतात. गोठ्यात जाऊन ते बैल बसलेले असतील तर उभे करतात. व नायकासह होळीकडे येतात. गांवातील किंवा शेजारच्या गांवचा पंडित होळीला दौरा बांधतो. नायकाच्या हस्ते होळीची पूजा करून तो होळी पेटवितो. यावेळी गेल्या वर्षभरात लग्न झालेल्या सर्व जोडप्यांना एकेक नारळ होळीला द्यावा लागतो. परंतु तो नारळ जळत्या होळीतून फुटण्यापूर्वी किंवा पूर्ण जळून जाण्यापूर्वी बाहेर काढावा लागतो. मधला खांब जळून पडणार नाही याची खबरदारी घ्यावी लागते. प्रल्हाद आणि होलीका नावाच्या चेटकीच्या

कथेचा चौव्हाण यांनी त्यासाठी संदर्भ दिला आहे.

भिल्लांच्या बहुतेक भागात होळीची तयारी महिना दोन महिने अगोदरपासून सुरु होते. प्रल्हाद व चेटकीची कथा तुरळक ठिकाणीच आढळते. किंबहुना नाहीच, होळीचा खांब गांव प्रथेनुसार १५ दिवस ते १ महिना अगोदर रोवला जातो. त्या ठिकाणी किंवा खांबा भोवती नाच गाणे महिन्याभरापासून सुरु होते. होळीचे फाग दररोज रात्री मुली व स्त्रिया घराघरासमोर नाचून गाऊन जमा करतात. ही गाणी फार अश्लील असतात. रात्री घेर-टिपरी नाच होतो.

भिल्लात होळीला दुसऱ्या दृष्टीने महत्व आहे. गेल्या होळीपासून लग्न होऊन गेलेल्या ज्या मुलींना अपत्य झाले असेल तिच्या घरी मुलीच्या बापाने किंवा भावाने साडी चोळी, एखादा दागिना व बाळासाठी कपडे घेऊन जाण्याची रीतच आहे. पाहुण्यांचा बिडी, दारु, सामिष भोजनाने पाहुणचार करण्यात येतो. होळीच्या दिवशी बकरा मारण्याचा मानही पाहुण्यांचा असतो. घरोघरी एकमेकांच्या पाहुण्यांना निमंत्रित करतात. पाहुण्याने गाणी म्हणा-या मुलींना फाग घ्यायचा असतो. घरातील सर्वांना नवे कपडे करतात.

होळीचा खांब (पोल) आणण्याचा मान ज्याकडे असतो त्याला गांवकी तीन सव्वा रुपया मिळतो. गांवात सकाळीच "बालई" दवंडी देऊन होळीची वेळ आणि प्रत्येकाने त्यासाठी लाकडे आणण्याची सूचना देतो. सूर्यास्ताच्या वेळी सगळा गांव

होळीच्या जागी जमतो. पुरुषांनी लाकडाचे बिंड आणलेले असतात.

काही भिल्लांत "होळी" आणि "आमळी" असे दोन खांब पुरण्याची प्रथा आहे. मोठा व उंच खांब होळी, छोटा व बारीक खांब आमळी यांना क्षेत्रपरस्तवे पती पत्नी किंवा बहिण भाऊ समजण्यात येते. गांव नाईक होळी नंतर आमळी पेटवितो. गांवातील सगळे आल्याची खात्री करून रिवाजानुसार होळी पेटविल्यानंतर नाईक होळीकडे तोंड करून उभा राहतो आणि संचारल्यासारखा होळी भोवती उलटया फेऱ्या मारतो. त्यावेळी तो होळीत नारळाचे खोबरे व मिठाई फेकत राहतो. सातव्या फेऱ्यानंतर होळीला नारळ देतो. माहेरवाशीनही होळीचा नारळ देतात.

होळीचा नाच चालू असतो. त्यानंतर नायकाचे घरापुढे नाच होतो. तरुण तरुणींचा तो मनमौजेचा दिवस असतो. दुसऱ्या दिवशी घोळक्या घोळक्याने नाचून घरोघरी फिरतात. विशेषतः ज्या घरी मागच्या होळीनंतर अपत्या जन्म झाला आहे त्या घरी आवर्जून नृत्य करतात व भेटी उकळतात.

६. शितळामाता व हशमाता उत्सवात तसे वेगळेपण नाही.

७. मार्गाबाबची नवरात्र दर दोन वर्षांनी डोंगर देवाच्या नांवाने नवरात्री सारखी साजरी करतात.

८. भोमिया किंवा पितर पूजा :-

महाराष्ट्रातील भिल्लात पाटली पूजा म्हणतात. गांवाबाहेर लाकडाच्या पाटल्या उभ्या दिसतात. क्वचित दगडी

पाटल्याही आहेत. स्त्री पुरुषांच्या लाकडावरील या आकृत्यांनाच **भोमिया** किंवा **मातलोक** म्हणतात. गांव संरक्षणाच्या उद्देशाने त्यांची स्थापना केली जाते. घरात सारखा आजार पिकपाणी न येणे, नुकसान व्हायला लागले की, घरातील लोकांना या पितरांची आठवण येते. भगताकडून त्याबाबत खात्री केली जाते.

दिवाळीनंतर सोयीच्या दिवशी पाटल्यांची स्थापना करतात. पाटल्या सुताराकडून करून घेतात. सर्व समाज यात भाग घेतो. हा समारंभ रात्री सुरु होतो. पाटलीची जागा स्वच्छ करून सारवतात. किलो दीड किलो तांदळाचा ढीग त्या जागेवर ठेवतात. दोन्ही बाजूला विस्तव असतो. नैवेद्य व उतारे बाजूलाच ठेवलेले असतात. भिंतीवर कुंकु, तुपात कुंकुचा दहयासह गंध करून फूटभर लांबीची रेषा ओढतात. त्रिशुळाच्या आकारात कापडाने ते झाकून टाकतात. दोघे जाणकार त्या ठिकाणी घुमत असतात. ढोल वाजत असतो. त्यांच्यापैकी एकजण उठून नारळ फोडतो व अग्नीत टाकतो. तूप ओततो. जळणाऱ्या तूप-नारळांचा वासाने व ढोलांच्या गजराने एकाच्या अंगात येते. कुणीतरी नातेवाईकांचा आत्माच संचारतो, असा समज आहे. तरीही गांवदेव समजून चुकल्या-माकल्याला माफ करण्याची विनंती जवळचे नातेवाईक करतात. अंगात आल्याचे सर्वजण आडजूड घेऊन स्वागतच करतात. अंगात आलेली व्यक्ती मुलासारखे हावभाव करीत असतो. तो त्याच्या काही अपुऱ्या इच्छा त्वरीत पुऱ्या

करण्याची आज्ञा करतो. आत्म्याची ओळख न पटल्यास तात्पुरत्या रितीने थोडा वेळ थांबून पुन्हा तूप, नारळ, अग्नीला अर्पण करून पुन्हा सुरु करतात. खास प्रकाराने वाद्ये वाजू लागतात. रात्रभर हा कार्यक्रम चालतो. सकाळी सकाळी मुख्य भगताच्या (भोपा) अंगात येते. तो मृतांचा आत्मा असतो. अंगात आल्याबरोबर लोक त्याच्या नांवाने ओरडून टाळया वाजवून संमती दर्शवितात. तो आत्मा मग स्वतःची ओळख सांगतो. त्याने जाणीव देण्यासाठी काय काय केले ते सांगतो. तुमचे सगळ्या संकटातून रक्षण करीन असे सांगतो व त्याची पाटली आणायला सांगतो. एक कुवारी मुलगी ती घेऊन येते. ती घराच्या पूर्वेस थांबते, मग भोपा त्याच्या जागी जाण्यासाठी निघतो. लोक बरोबर असतात. वाद्यांच्या गजरात मिरवणूक नियोजित स्थानी येते. जवळची माणसे खड्डा खणतात. खड्ड्याची विधीवत पूजा करतात. भोपा पाटली खड्ड्यात सोडतो. दारुचा राऊंड होतो. लोक भोप्यासमोर आडजूड होतात. नारळ वाटला जातो. पाटली पक्की केली जाते. तोपर्यंत सूर्यादय होऊन बराच वेळ झालेला असतो.

दिवाळीनंतर १३/१४ व्या दिवशी हा विधी होतोच. अशा पाटल्या या भागात सर्वत्र पहावयास मिळतात.

(१०) **गवरी** :- ऑगस्ट ते ऑक्टोबर या महिन्यात ३० ते ४० दिवस चालणारा हा उत्सव आहे. तीन वर्षातून एकदा हा उत्सव साजरा होतो. खूप खर्चाचा, खूप मुदतीचा हा सण क्वचितच साजरा होतो.

खूप खर्चाचा हा उत्सव असल्याने अनेक गांवानी मिळून हा उत्सव साजरा होतो. मुख्यतः नाच गांगी याच काळात होतात.

चौहान आणि चेलावत यांच्या पुस्तकात 'गवरी' किंवा गौरीचा उत्सव, महादेव किंवा शंकरपत्नी गौरी जी भिल्ल होती व नंतर शंकराशी विवाह झाल्यावर देवत्व प्राप्त झाल्याने तिच्या सन्मानार्थ पूजा केली जाते. कालिका, आम्बा, पार्वती मातेच्या पूजेसाठीच गौरी सण साजरा होतो. परिसरात ज्या गांवी गवरी असतात तेथे इतर गांवचेही लोक येऊन राहतात. भिल्ल जमातीच्या एकजिनशीपणाचा द्योतक असा हा सण आहे. यामध्ये केल्या जाणाऱ्या नाटय प्रहसनामध्ये राई, बुडीओ, कटुकारिया, भोपा, पूंजारी, खेला इ. पात्रे असतात.

राखीच्या दुसऱ्या दिवशी रेड्याचा बळी देऊन गवळी साजरा करण्याचा निर्णय जाहीर केला जातो. देवीच्या पूजेनंतर मुखियाच्या आवारात पान पेरतात. भोपा सगळ्या कलाकारांना त्यांचे पेहरावत देवीसमोर ठेवण्याचा व दारु व स्त्री वर्ज्य करण्याची शपथ घेण्यास सांगतो. दुसऱ्या दिवशी ते गवरी साजरा करतात व त्यानंतर गांवोगांव त्याचे प्रयोग होतात.

गवरीच्या शेवटच्या दिवशी चिखलाचा हत्ती करून जेथे धान्य पेरले आहे तेथे ठेवतात. सर्व त्या दिवशी देवीच्या

संदर्भ

- १) द भिल्स - टी.बी.नाईक
- २) महाराष्ट्रातील आदिवासी जमाती - डॉ. सुधीर फडके

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नांवाने उपवास करतात. दुसऱ्या दिवशी हत्ती गांवात मध्यवर्ती ठिकाणी आणून धान्य कापून मिरवणुकीने महादेव मंदिराकडे जातात. इकडे गव्हाच्या पीठाचा मोठा रोडा करून धानाच्या ठिकाणी ठेवतात. महादेव मंदिराहून स्मशानात जाऊन तूप, नारळ, अग्नि देऊन लोक हातपाय धुवून धानाकडे नाटकातील पात्रे तलवारीने पीठाचा रेडा सोडतात. सगळे तो प्रसार घेऊन घरी जातात.

भिल्लांच्या सांस्कृतिक सण उत्सवामध्ये महत्वाचे असे हे सण व उत्सव आहेत. याखेरीज महाराष्ट्रात काही खास उत्सव आहेत. देवदिवाळी, गवरीसदृश्य दिंडपूजा, इंदल, भोगऱ्या उत्सव व क्षेत्रपरत्वे साजरे होणारे गणोरची शिवरात्री, तेजबाबाचा उत्सव व तत्सम क्षेत्रीय महत्वाचे सण आहेत. आशंतांबाची यात्रा हा बांडा भिल्लांच्या महाभरात प्रहसानाचा समावेशसुद्धा होऊ शकतो. या समाजातील पारंपारिक धार्मिक सणांपैकी सर्वात मुख्य धार्मिक सण "इंदोल" हा होय. हा सण मुख्यत्वे तीन देवतांची एकत्रितरित्या पूजाविधी करून साजरा करतात. (१) हुडोवदेव (वनदेव) (२) इंदीराजा (इंद्रदेव) (३) कव्हर (कणसरी). इंदल म्हणजे इंदी राजा. त्याला प्रसन्न करण्यासाठी केलेला नवस म्हणजेच "इंदल" होय.

यशकथा :

राजेंद्र गोडाम या आदिवासी युवकांने बेरोजगारीवर मात केली.

इंदरशहा मडावी*

आज घरोघरी शिक्षण घेऊन रोजगार नसल्यामुळे बेरोजगार युवक रिकामे असलेले पहावयास मिळतात. बेरोजगारांचा प्रश्न हा कुटुंब प्रमुखाला भेडसावणारा आहे. तसेच शासनकर्त्यासमोरही बेरोजगारचा प्रश्न आ वासून उभा आहे. अशाही परिस्थितीत युवकांना त्यांच्या शैक्षणिक पात्रतेनुसार रोजगार पुरविण्यासाठी शासन प्रयत्नशील आहे. अशाच एका आदिवासी बेरोजगाराची ही कहाणी.

आदिवासी म्हटले की, दऱ्याखोऱ्यात राहणारा, अंधश्रद्धेत गुरफटणारा, इतरांपासून अलिप्त असणारा असा समज समाजात आहे. परंतू अशा परिस्थितीमधून बाहेर पडणारे व दुसऱ्या शिक्षित व्यक्तीच्या सहवासाने स्वयंरोजगार थाटून स्वतःचे पायावर उभे राहणारे युवक आता पुढे येत आहेत.

आदिवासी युवकांना स्वयंरोजगार थाटून अन्य युवकांच्या बरोबरीने येण्यासाठी शबरी आदिवासी वित्त व विकास महामंडळासारख्या संस्था पुढे आल्या आहेत. त्याशिवाय मागेल त्याला व्यावसायिक प्रशिक्षण देण्याचे उपक्रमही शासनाच्या औद्योगिक प्रशिक्षण संस्थेत लोकसेवा केंद्रामार्फत दिले जात आहे. खास आदिवासी बेरोजगारांना व्यवसाय उपलब्ध करून

देण्यासाठी चंद्रपूर येथे सन २००० साली महाराष्ट्र शासनाने शबरी आदिवासी वित्त व विकास महामंडळ निर्माण केले. या महामंडळामार्फत विविध व्यवसायासाठी आदिवासी बेरोजगारांना कर्ज योजनेचा लाभ देण्यात येत आहे. अशाच एका योजनेचा लाभ जिल्ह्यातील नागभिड तालुक्यातील पांजरेपार या गांवातील आदिवासी युवक राजेंद्र सोमाजी गोडाम याने घेतला असून चारचाकी गाडीचा मालक आपल्या व्यवसायात रमून गेला असून त्याने अन्य युवकांसमारे वेगळा आदर्श आज निर्माण केला आहे.

पांजरेपार हे लहानसे आदिवासी खेडे. या गांवात व्यवसायाच्या संधी नाहीत. घरची गरीबीची परिस्थिती इ.बाबींचा सखोल विचार करून राजेंद्र गोडाम यांनी रोजीरोटी साठी चंद्रपूर गाठले. घरगड्याचे काम व ट्रकवर क्लिनरचे काम करून स्वतःचा महिन्याचा खर्च भागवू लागला. ट्रकवर क्लिनर म्हणून काम करतातना राजेंद्रला वाहन चालविण्याचा मोह आवरता आला नाही. त्याने वाहन चालविण्याचे काम शिकून घेतले व तीन वर्षेपर्यंत त्याने वाहन चालविण्याचे काम केले. ज्या ट्रकवर क्लिनर म्हणून काम केले त्याच ट्रकवर सातशे रुपये महिन्यावर चालक म्हणून

*माहिती अधिकारी, जिल्हा माहिती कार्यालय, चंद्रपूर.

तो काम करू लागला. राजेंद्रचा प्रामाणिकपणा बघून ट्रक मालकाने दीड हजार रुपये अशी पगारवाढ केली. यामधून खर्चात बचत करून राजेंद्रने स्वतःचे लग्न केले. आता कोठे खऱ्या अर्थाने राजेंद्रच्या जीवनाची सुरवात झाली.

राजेंद्र ट्रक चालविताना वृत्तपत्रातील प्रसिध्द होणाऱ्या बातम्या नियमित वाचत असे. असेच एके दिवशी आदिवासी बेरोजगारांना रोजगार उपलब्ध करून देण्यासाठी आदिवासी शबरी वित्त व विकास महामंडळाची निर्मिती करून चंद्रपूर जिल्हयासाठी विविध धंद्याकरिता आदिवासी उमेदवाराकडून अर्ज मागविण्यात येत असल्याची बातमी त्याने वाचली. आदिवासी विकास महामंडळाच्या योजना २००० सालापासून शबरी महामंडळाकडे वर्ग करण्यात आल्या. स्वतःचे वाहन खरेदीसाठी अल्प व्याज दराने कर्ज उपलब्ध करून देण्याची योजना असल्याने राजेंद्रने चारचाकी वाहनासाठी महामंडळाकडे अर्ज दाखला

केला. राजेंद्रने कर्ज प्रकरणासाठी असलेल्या सर्व अटी पूर्ण केल्या. शबरी महामंडळाच्या अधिकाऱ्यांनी त्याचा अर्ज मंजूर केला आणि राजेंद्रला धीर दिला. जुलै, २००१ मध्ये कर्ज प्रकरणास रितसर मंजूरी मिळाली . ६% इतक्या नाममात्र व्याजदराने ३ लाख ४० हजार रुपयांचे कर्ज मंजूर झाले. स्वतःचा १० टक्के सहभाग भरावा या अटीनुसार राजेंद्रने ८० हजार रुपये आपल्या मित्राकडून घेऊन महामंडळाच्या अधिकाऱ्याकडे जमा केले. सन २००१ मध्ये राजेंद्रने स्वतःचे चारचाकी टाटा सुमो वाहन खरेदी केले. ओळखीच्या मित्रामुळे त्याला ग्राहक मिळण्यास मदत झाली. प्रेमळ स्वभावामुळे त्याला ग्राहक मिळण्यास अडचण होत नसे. आता राज्यात आणि राज्याबाहेर त्याच्या गाडीचा प्रवास सुरु झाल्यामुळे महिन्याच्या उत्पन्नात भर पडत गेली. मिळालेल्या उत्पन्नातून कर्ज रक्कमेची परतफेड नियमित सुरु असून कुटुंबांचा खर्च भागवून कर्जाची परतफेड नियमित सुरु असल्याचे राजेंद्र अभिमानाने म्हणाला.

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ओळख

- वाय.डी. काळबांडे*

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*मुख्याध्यापक,
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