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DR. B. N. BORDOLOI
EDITOR

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AND
DIRECTOR

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Published by Dr. B. N. Bordoloi, Director, Tribal Research Institute, Assam
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Editorial Note :

This is the Sixth Annual Issue of the Bulletin of the Tribal Research Institute, Assam. In fact, this should have been brought out during the year 1988 itself. But due to circumstances beyond our control it could not be done so.

This issue contains papers contributed by Dr. Bhupinder Singh, Dr. B. K. Roy Burman, Dr. K. Brahma and Dr. Atul Goswami and also a paper contributed by the Editor himself. A note containing information and the types of activities undertaken by the Tribal Research Institute, Assam, has also been incorporated for the general information of the esteemed readers.

Our earlier issues viz. 1st to 5th, of the Bulletin were very much well received and feedbacks sent to us by our esteemed readers not only from our own State of Assam, but also from various parts of our country were found to be very much encouraging. For the present issue also we would like to receive feedbacks from our esteemed readers and well wishers in the forms of comments and suggestions. These will surely enable us to improve the quality as well as the standard of the Bulletin of our Institute further.

I offer my sincere thanks and gratitude to all those from whom I have received help and co-operation in editing and bringing out the Sixth Annual Issue of the Bulletin of the Institute. I also extend my gratefulness to the scholars whose papers have been incorporated in this issue of the Bulletin.

DR. B. N. BORDOLOI

Editor, Bulletin of the Tribal Research Institute

AND

Director, Tribal Research Institute, Assam,
Guwahati-781028

Dated Guwahati
the, 31st December,
1989

Application of Appropriate Technologies to Arrest Environmental Degradation in the Tribal Areas of Assam

B. N. Bordoloi*

INTRODUCTION TO ASSAM AND ASSAM TRIBES

1.1 Assam, a state in India situated in the North eastern part of the country with an approximate projected population of 2.45 crores in March 1988 is a very very beautiful state. It is blended with hills and plains and its scenic beauty is very much eye catching. The Kaziranga National Park which is the house of one horned rhinoceros is internationally famous. The Brahmaputra is the biggest as well as the longest river of Assam which creates flood havoc during the monsoon season twice or thrice every year.

1.2 The tribal communities of Assam constitutes 10.99 or say 11 percent of the total population of the state as per 1971 Census. 1981 Census in Assam could not be conducted due to foreign nationals' agitation. In 1971 the total tribal population in Assam was 16.07 lakhs and the projected population during 1981 calculated on the basis of Assam's growth rate during 1961-71, would be 22.02 lakhs approximately. Their percentage of literacy in 1971 was 26.02 as against the state percentage of 28.72. While literacy among the males was 34.62%, it

was 17.16% only so far as the females were concerned.

1.3 In Assam among the tribal communities, we have the hill dwellers as well as the plains dwellers. In the plains areas 9 (nine) communities and in the hill areas 14 communities are enlisted as scheduled tribes. Thus there are altogether 23 tribes in Assam. But if the subgroups or sub-tribes are taken together the total would come to 66. The hill tribals who live in the two hill districts, namely, the Karbi Anglong and the North Cachar Hills, enjoy autonomy granted under the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India. While in the plains the Bodo-Kacharis are the largest group, in the hill areas the Karbis otherwise known as the Mikirs are the largest group. The major concentration of the plains tribals lies in the foot hills of Bhutan, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya. The Mishings or the Miris and the Deoris are found to inhabit the Upper Assam region and basically they are riverine people who like to live on the river banks even by facing the fury of floods during the monsoon season.

1.4 Each tribal community in Assam has its own distinct, ethnic identity expressed

* Director, Tribal Research Institute, Assam, Guwahati-781028 (India)

through its customs, religion, language/dialect, dresses and ornaments, dance and music, value judgements, cultural heritage and a distinctive way of life. But the pace of development is not at all uniform and it differs from tribe to tribe and from region to region.

1.5 Although agriculture is the mainstay of the tribal communities of Assam, nevertheless, the agricultural practices differ fundamentally in the hills and plains depending on the topography and climatic conditions. While the valley dwellers practise settled cultivation, the hill dwellers practise shifting cultivation commonly known as Jhum in the North-East India. In the hills the tribal cultivators raise mixed crops including the main crop rice. In the plains areas the tribals cultivate jute, mustard, pulses and various types of vegetables besides paddy which is generally cultivated as a mono crop once and sometimes twice in a year.

1.6 Sericulture is a very important cottage industry among all the tribal communities of Assam. Endi, Muga and Pat are the three types of silk worms reared by the tribal families of Assam. Rearing of Endi is, however, most familiar with them. The tribal women are expert spinners and weavers and they weave cloths in their indigenous looms with highly artistic designs and textures. Weaving is the most important cottage industry among all the tribal communities of Assam and a tribal woman having no expert knowledge in spinning and weaving cannot be thought of. Cattle and poultry are also reared by the tribal families. They are traditionally not habituated in drinking milk. Manufacturing of bamboo and cane articles is also another important cottage industry.

1.7. While rice is their staple food, the rice-beer is their most favourite beverage. The use of rice beer in all socio-religious festivals is a must.

1.8. The tribes of Assam have a corporate life where people think in terms of the whole community rather than individual family. To offer a helping hand to the poor and the needy is a guiding principle for them. Their traditional institutions like the village councils, bachelors' dormitories, their indigenous system of medicine, cultural ethos, traditional leadership pattern, etc, still withstand the onslaught of the so-called modernism. At the same time they cannot be termed as conservative also since they are adaptive to the changes brought about by the tribal development programmes of the government, autonomous bodies and other agencies in the successive five year plans launched in the country since 1951-52.

ENVIRONMENT IN TRIBAL AREAS OF ASSAM AND THE CAUSES OF ITS DEGRADATION.

1.9. The problems connected with the environmental degradation in our country have drawn the attention of the scholars belonging to various disciplines in India after the holding of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm on 15th June 1972. In the recent years the problems have assumed greater and greater significance because of the fact that to meet the constantly growing needs of the constantly increasing population in a Third World country like India the resources available at the disposal of the people have been exploited in a very unplanned and ruthless manner leading to the environmental degradation at a very fast

rate. It is the excessive growth of population coupled with abject poverty that is primarily responsible for major ecological imbalance leading to environmental degradation in the Third World countries. To provide the fast growing population with the three basic needs of life, namely, food, clothing and shelter, the natural resources are not adequate. Whatever natural resources we have at our disposal, these have been exploited haphazardly without proper planning to meet the basic needs of the people resulting in fast deteriorating of the environment. To alleviate poverty by increasing production in the primary sector and to bring about an improvement in the standard of living through generating employment in the secondary sector by increasing the various types of industrial activities, the development activities in the developing countries of the Third World have been stepped up many folds resulting in the depletion of natural resources and non-renewable energies on the one hand and degradation in the environment on the other hand.

2.00 The situation obtaining in the developing countries of the Third World have become much more explosive due to the explosion of population. The world population was estimated to be 5 (five) billions in 1987 and it is likely to cross 7 billions at the beginning of the 21st Century, if the explosion of the population in the third world continues at the present rate. According to one estimate of the World Bank about 45% of the world population would be living in India and China by the end of the present century.

2.1 The population in India which was 54.81 crores as per 1971 Census had gone up to 68.51 Crores in 1981 (Census Report 1981), thereby showing an increase of 13.70 crores

during 10 years period. At the same growth rate the population in India is likely to be 85.63 Crores in 1991 and by 2001 it would be 107.02 Crores. It would rather be difficult to feed such a huge population, the probable quantitative increase being almost double the total population of India in 1971. To meet such a situation, the agricultural productivity will be required to be doubled by intensive cultivation resulting in diminishing return since the productivity of the soil would go down due to constant cultivation leaving no gap for the soil to replenish its fertility through natural process. To meet the fuel requirement of the increased population forest depletion will take place. Livestock population will sure to increase along with the growth of human population resulting in more and more demand for cattle and poultry feed. Flood and drought conditions which have become rather regular visitors in India will be more frequent. Lesser forest means lesser rainfall and more soil erosion when the rainfall is heavy. Ground water reserve will sure to decrease due to drought conditions and lesser rainfall. More and more people will migrate to urban areas in search of food and employment resulting in the creation of more and more slum areas in the cities and towns polluting the environment. Thus there will be chain of reactions followed by actions and then further reactions and there will be no end to it.

2.2 The environmental degradation in the tribal areas of Assam is, therefore, to be examined keeping the above factors in mind.

2.3 Although there are so many causes for the environmental degradation in the tribal areas of Assam, nevertheless, we are discussing here only major causes like deforestation, geographical location, use of chemicals in

agriculture, water and air pollution, unhygienic sanitation, etc, which can very well be identified even by giving a cursory glance.

DEFORESTATION

2.4 The Report on the state of Environment in India prepared by the Centre for Science and Environment, New Delhi, has warned that if the environment is not managed properly, India will find it difficult even to feed the existing population and the African experience of famine will recur here also (News Item, Times of India, New Delhi Edition, 25th August 1980). The report further says that India is losing 1.3 million hectares of forests every year resulting in fuel and fodder famine.

2.5 In Assam deforestation has been taking place at a very fast rate in the hills and plains causing an imbalance in the entire eco-system.

2.6 The tribal people of Assam have a direct relationship with the forests since the forests provide them with minor forest products, eatable roots, tubers and leaves and also fodder for their cattle. There are 499 forest villages in Assam where 47.11% of the inhabitants are tribals. Assam is supposed to have 39% of the geographical area under forests. This includes 22% reserved forests and 17% unclassed state forest. Since the unclassed state forest also includes government land, grazing lands and forest lands where virtually the state government has very little control, we do not exactly know how much area is there as forests. There are 44 Nos. of plywood factories, 360 Nos. of saw mills, one match factory and two Nos. of match-splint factories and three Nos. of paper mills all over Assam and to feed them with raw materials has already become a serious problem.

Moreover, the constantly growing demands for supplying fire-wood has also a direct impact on the unclassed state forest.

2.7 Secondly in the hill areas of Assam where shifting cultivation is practised, due to growing pressure of increased population the cycle of cultivation has become shorter. As a result many hills have become denuded.

2.8 Even in the reserved forests, there are encroachments and there are illegal felling of trees by forest contractors. Of course due to constant efforts on the part of the present government no further encroachment is taking place and illegal felling of trees by forest contractors has also been minimised.

2.9 Privately owned trees are sold to the forest contractors at a throw away price by the tribal people to get cash money for meeting the growing needs.

3.00 The indiscriminate cutting of bamboo groves by the unskilled labourers to feed paper mills has brought destruction to the bamboo groves.

3.1 All these factors have led to destruction of forest areas specially in the tribal areas of Assam at a very rapid rate causing environmental degradation in the following manner :

- a) Lesser and irregular rain fall.
- b) Reduction in ground water reserve because of lesser quantity of rain.
- c) Less water for irrigation.
- d) Depletion of fodder resources effecting cattle population.
- e) Soil erosion, silting of river beds in the plains resulting in floods due to shifting cultivation in heavy doses.
- f) Floods in the plains cause havoc to the standing crops and cultivation, land and property, human lives and livestock

followed by epidemics and pollution of air and drinking water.

g) When the jungles are cleared for shifting cultivation many medicinal plants used by tribal people are also destroyed because the younger generation has a very little knowledge regarding the uses of these medicinal plants. The animal habitats are also disturbed.

h) Those tribals in the habit of shifting of the villages to new shifting cultivation site are deprived of the fruits of development schemes of permanent nature.

3.2 The magnitude of the problem of shifting cultivation could be understood from the fact that in the Karbi Anglong District the area under Jhum cultivation is 4.15 lakhs hectares and the total number of tribal families involved is 45,000 as against an area of wet paddy cultivation measuring 0.60 lakhs hectares only. In the North Cachar Hills, area under shifting cultivation is 0.83 lakhs hectares and the total number of tribal families involved is 13,000. The area under wet paddy cultivation is 0.15 hectares only.

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF ASSAM

3.3 Assam is one of the Seventh States of North-East India. The other states being Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Meghalaya and Tripura. The above six states being hilly are located in higher elevation. On the Northern boundary of western Assam there stands Bhutan, a foreign country which is rather a part of the Great Himalayan range. In the adjoining state and also in Bhutan shifting cultivation has been in practice from time immemorial. Thus any deforestation activities due to shifting cultivation and through the exploitation of forest

resources in the North-Eastern states and in Bhutan has always an adverse effect on the plains of Assam causing frequent flood during the monsoon. Soil erosion and silting of the river beds specially of the northern tributaries of the Brahmaputra have made them so shallow that sometimes it is very difficult to distinguish the river bed and the low lying paddy fields.

USE OF THE CHEMICALS

3.4 When we speak of improvement in the agricultural practices the use of fertilizers and pesticides become inevitable. Unfortunately being illiterate and ignorant about the use of such chemicals the tribal people in Assam have a tendency to use them haphazardly. This might result in water pollution contaminating fodder grown in the paddy fields. Polluted water also might harm the fish population.

WATER & AIR POLLUTION

3.5 Recurring floods cause water pollution and to get fresh drinking water becomes a problem during as well as immediately after floods. Industrial establishments like Salakati Thermal Project, Bongaigaon Refinery and Petro-Chemicals, the Chandrapur Thermal Project, the Hindustan Paper Mills of Jagiroad, the Namrup Fertilizer Plant etc, have been causing water pollution at an alarming rate. All these big industries are unfortunately located in the tribal inhabited areas.

3.6 Similarly Bokajan Cement Factory has caused air pollution and the whole atmosphere upto a radius of 2 kms. from the plant, remains foggy with cement dust.

3.7 Most of the tribal communities of Assam have hearths inside their houses which remain burning twenty four hours causing air

pollution, effecting eye-sights and making the whole atmosphere inside the house smoky and nasty.

UNHYGIENIC SANITATION

3.8 Over and above these, the question of unhygienic sanitation in the tribal areas has also to be taken into account. The people generally go to the nearby jungles or fields to ease themselves. They practically do not have either sanitary or pit latrines. These tribal communities which have bamboo platform type of houses, use to keep the pigs below the platforms. As a result foul smells vitiate the whole atmosphere. Cow dungs and other refuges are thrown away and scarcely they are dumped in the compost pits.

DEVELOPMENT AND APPLICATION OF APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGIES TO ARREST ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

3.9 Having pointed out the principal factors responsible for degradation of environment in tribal areas we shall now have to think of development of appropriate technologies and also the manner in which these technologies have to be applied with the twin objects of (I) stopping further degradation in the environment and (II) brining about an improvement in the existing environment. From our preceding discussions it is seen that ruthless exploitation of natural resources to meet the growing needs of the explosive growth of population coupled with abject poverty is the primary cause of environmental degradation in the tribal areas of Assam. The appropriate technologies of which we are advocating must take into account the basic needs of human beings and planned and scientific exploitation and use of

available resources without degrading the environment.

4.0 Now the important question in this regard is whether we should accept the western model to meet our twin objectives. The situations in the third world countries, specially in the tribal areas, in a country like ours are quite different. A western model would have advocated the establishment of big and sophisticated non-forest based industries in the tribal areas to generate more income opportunities and also to lessen the impact on the exploitation of forest resources. Our experiences, however, show that establishment of major and sophisticated industries in the tribal areas does not help the tribal people not to speak of the desired extent but also to the minimum extent. The local tribal people being illiterate, untrained and unskilled, almost all the employees of such an establishment will be brought from outside. Thus there will no prospect of generating employment for the local tribals. Many tribal families will have to face displacement as a consequence of establishment of such industries leading to social disturbances, resentment, dissatisfaction and deprivation of their hearth and home and the cultural setting. Even those families whose land might not be acquired will also leave the vicinity of such an industrial establishment since the tribal people of Assam cannot tolerate a socially disturbed life. In addition to this the air and water pollution will vitiate the whole atmosphere and the tribal environment will be further degraded. Hence the western model will not serve the purpose and the remedy suggested rather be worse than the disease itself.

4.1. We are, therefore, required to find out alternative technologies which are not

totally alien to the tribals and which do not abruptly disturb their social structure and equilibrium. We, of course, do not say that there should be no development and no change in the society. Application of any new technology would surely bring some changes. But if the technology is not altogether new to the tribals, they would accept and apply it without hesitation. Hence at first we are to identify their own technologies. Because every society, primitive or modern, uses some indigenous technologies. These technologies shall have to be improved and modified so that they could serve the tribal people better. Secondly, some new technologies suitable for them should also be invented and these technologies should be rather simple so that the tribal people can adopt them without much difficulty.

AFFORESTATION

4.2 However, our first priority should go for afforestation which includes production forestry, farm forestry and social forestry. Plantation of trees by individual families will also help afforestation to a considerable extent. So far as the plantations under Social Forestry and Farm Forestry are concerned, trees and plants for which the tribal people have a liking, fruit bearing trees and trees which can be harvested for fuels and also for fodder are to be planted in consultation with the local tribal people. The management of forests by some tribal communities of N.E. India like the Apatanis at individual and village level can be a model for other communities also specially for the hill dwellers. The traditional tribal technologies with the help of which they make the trees thrive in the flood prone areas require to be studied by the forest department officials. Such studies will enable the officers

to improve the techniques and lessen the plant mortality in the flood prone areas of the state.

DEFORESTATION CONTROL

4.3 Control of deforestation to arrest further deterioration of environment, however, is the need of the hour. While it should be duties of the forest officials to see that there might not be any illegal felling of trees and encroachment in the reserved forests, at the same time education and motivation of the people through various publicity media to protect and preserve forests for their own interests should be given top-priority. In the performance of their dances and folk-festivals incorporation of ideas regarding the effects of deforestation, control of deforestation and purpose of afforestation has to be made. Harvesting of bamboos for the paper mills should be allowed to be done by local tribal workers who know how the bamboos are to be harvested without destroying the groves.

TECHNOLOGIES FOR ALTERNATIVE ENERGY

4.4 On 21st August 1986, in a message to the Global Energy Centre set up in India Shri Rajib Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India, says thus—"Developing countries face immense problems of malnutrition and poverty....The destruction of forests holds an ecological sword over their heads. Energy is becoming the most important need of poor people all over the world. It is said that even if they have grains, they may not be able to cook their food. One of the major challenges before world science is to solve the problem of energy shortage of developing countries and curb the waste of energy by the affluent."

(a) BIO-GAS

4.5 The tribal people in Assam rear cows except the Dimasa Kacharis of the North Cachar Hills. The Gobar (cowdung) Gas Plant can very easily be introduced in the tribal area which will provide fuel for cooking and generate power for lighting their houses. Since such a plant involves no high technology the tribal people will accept it provided the govt. offers a helping hand.

(b) SOLAR ENERGY

4.6 Solar energy can also be used for cooking, boiling of water, preparation of cattle food and irrigation purposes. If the solar energy is used for cooking purposes, a substantial percentage of fuel would be saved. Keeping in view of the climatic and weather conditions in Assam, a suitable cooker has to be designed.

(c) NATURAL GAS

4.7 The use of natural gas, which is found in Assam abundantly, for cooking purposes is yet to make a headway in the rural and tribal areas. It is due to the fact that sufficient number of gas cylinders are not available and even if they are available also, the price is so high for a poor tribal family that it can hardly afford it. Secondly the price of a gas stove is also beyond the reach of the common tribal people. If the price of gas cylinders and the gas stoves are subsidised and sufficient number of cylinders could be produced, the tribal people are sure to accept them. Use of natural gas will surely minimise the consumption of firewood.

(d) ALTERNATIVE TO PLYWOOD TEA CHESTS.

4.8 Assam produces one half of tea produced in the world and plywood tea chests

are indispensable for tea-packing. If alternative containers could be produced from plastics or from fiber glass or from materials other than wood, unclassed forests in Assam would be saved to a considerable extent.

(e) ALTERNATIVE CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS

4.9 The Regional Research Laboratory, Jorhat, has invented very low cost housing materials which make house-building easy as well as durable. But whether the tribal people would accept them by giving up their traditionally used building materials is yet to be assessed. If the govt. itself undertakes the construction of such houses by bringing an improvement in the traditional housing pattern the tribal people are likely to accept such houses.

(f) WIND POWER

5.0 The wind power can also be used to draw ground water for drinking purposes specially during the floods when drinking water sources are polluted.

(g) AIR AND WATER POLLUTION

5.1 The hearth which is kept burning for 24 hours of the day within the house of a tribal family is used for cooking food, preparation of tea, brewing of rice-beer and so on. During the winter season, the family members sit around it to ward off the cold. Even the guests are also entertained near the hearth. Just about a metre above, a Machang is kept hanging where vegetables and other seeds, dried meat and fish, newly manufactured cane and bamboo articles, etc. are kept to save them from insects. Introduction of smokeless Sullah might save the situations. However,

the acceptance of smokeless Sullahs or otherwise by the tribal people is, of course, another question which requires further investigation since they have the necessity of smoke inside their house.

5.2 The State Board for Prevention of Water and Air Pollution, Assam, has been taking effective steps to control air and water pollution caused by the industrial establishments. But the problems are still continuing. As per present industrial policy of the Govt. of Assam, without a specific scheme incorporating the prevention of air and water pollution no new major and medium industrial projects will be given green signal for their establishment.

5.3 Now our next important question is the use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, etc. Should we allow them to pollute water in the name of increasing production or introduction of modern methods in agriculture? Prior to the introduction of these chemicals, the tribal people used cow-dung and manures from compost pits in their cultivation. To control pests they used indigenous herbs in the fields and the pests were well-controlled. These indigenous technologies are quite effective even today. To condemn everything calling them unproductive and primitive will hold no water. The agricultural scientists should study them and improve these technologies and if required new technologies should be combined

with the indigenous ones. Such steps will not only encourage the indigenous technologists of the tribal societies and will also create a healthy atmosphere to improve the already degraded environment in the tribal areas.

CONCLUSION

5.4 The people of the third world countries specially those belonging to the most backward communities have been able to survive the onslaught of modernism and rapid changes because of their inherent capabilities coupled with the indigenous technologies which they have inherited from their forefathers out of their struggles for survival. An exhibition of the indigenous technologies in different regions will help us to understand these technologies and the scientists, technicians and engineers could improve and modify them according to needs of the hours. Such an exhibition will also help the tribal innovators and experts to exchange their views with each other. The modern scientists, engineers, technicians, etc. will surely be in a position to develop simple and appropriate technologies once they have a full view of them keeping in mind the cultural heritage of the tribal communities so that by the acceptance and application of the technologies the environment in the tribal areas of Assam could not only be saved but can also be improved. This is not a will-o'-the-wisp but our earnest expectation from an internal forum like this. ●●

This paper was presented by the author in the XII th International Anthropological and ethnological Science Congress held in Zagreb, Yugoslavia, from 24th to 31st July, 1988.

Man Power Creation as Strategy for Economic Development of the Tribal Communities of Assam

The question of strategy for development of the tribal communities needs to be examined in the context of their Socio-Economic structure. For the processes of development must be initiated within the existing framework of the system.

The tribal communities of Assam are traditionally agriculturists. As such their economy which is at subsistence level is dependent on land. But due to some historical and socio-cultural reasons these communities have remained still very poor in possession of agricultural land. In a recent (1978) Bench Mark (universal) Survey in Tribal Sub-plan areas of Assam it is revealed that more than 40 percent of the scheduled tribe households possess land less than one hectare and the average land holding of the total households of 17,9395 is estimated at 1.5 hectare approximately. It appears that most of the tribal households have less than one acre of land. But the more distressing fact is that the demographic growth rate of these communities is higher than that of the State, which is itself has one of the highest demographic growth rates in the country. The growth rates of the tribal population during 1951-61 and 1961-71 had

been 36.87 percent and 40.99 percent respectively against the corresponding percentages of 34.99 and 34.95 percent for the State as a whole (vide "Approach to the Development of the Scheduled Tribes of Assam"—T.A. & W.B.C. Deptt. Govt. of Assam, 1973). This clearly indicates that pressure of tribal population on land is mounting day by day. In this situation that is, extreme dependence on land, uneconomic size of land holding, and increasing population pressure on land coupled with low level of production technology the basic strategy for initiating the process of economic development among the tribes must be to divert a substantial portion of tribal population from agriculture to non-agricultural occupations. This is already suggested by many expert committees and authors. But the way this approach has been tried so far is unscientific. The economic schemes of non-agriculture nature are implemented first, in piece-meal way, secondly, without equipping the recipients with requisite knowledge, skill, interest and attitude, thirdly, without developing infrastructure for the schemes and lastly, without any sustained efforts to make the schemes viable. In this context infrastructure refers

to all kinds of facilities ranging from supply of capital and raw-materials to marketing and other form of utilising the end products of the units. So far various developmental schemes are distributed more as doles than as prospective economic enterprises. The existing methods of promoting non-agricultural occupations in tribal population, therefore, must be changed.

In view of the fact that the educational standard of the tribes of Assam is still very low various vocational training programmes, which do not require high education may be started as initial strategic approach towards diverting to non-agricultural occupations. Once skill in some trades, or crafts are acquired a low educated person can also easily get absorbed in non-traditional non-agricultural occupation which may be economically viable. The beginning, therefore, must be made by introducing vocational training programmes designed to impart skills for large number.

The process of skill creation should be started within the tribal social milieu by establishing the training centres in tribal villages. If trainings are imparted in the villages the whole process becomes familiar to the tribal folks and in that case, they develop interests and aptitude in non-traditional vocations.

It is, of course, to be noted that developing man power itself will not be so helpful in diverting to non-agricultural occupations if the programme are not commensurated with opportunities for utilising the skills. This is possible by establishing small scale industries appropriate in rural population. Such industries should be linked with agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry,

handicrafts, weaving etc., which form parts of the traditional economic system of the tribes. At present many schemes relating to these industries have been introduced; but they are of no avail because of the shortcomings indicated above. In the present system the distributing agents do not take care of the infrastructural facilities for viable economic enterprises. They do not bother even to take any follow up steps for helping the tribal entrepreneurs in making the enterprises successful. On the other hand if the instruments required for various industrial units are produced in the tribal areas themselves, opportunities for employing the skills developed through training programmes will be created. In other words, creation as well as utilisation processes of skills should operate within the same social milieu for which the developmental programmes are planned.

While the programme of developing skilled man power is taken into consideration it should also be kept in view that the scheme should be community as well as area specific as per as possible. For different tribal communities have different traditions, social practices norms and values. At the initial stage the schemes should be related to the socio-cultural system of each tribe.

Problem and prospects of economic development vary from region to region within the same state; even from area to area within the same region. It is, therefore, necessary to introduce different schemes keeping in view the problem and prospects of development in the habitats of each tribal community. So far the developmental schemes have been implemented in universal pattern as a result of which some of the

*Dr. D. Doley, Reader in Sociology, Dibrugarh University.

schemes tend to fail. This has to be replaced by area specific planning. This has been, of course, already introduced within the frameworks of Tribal Sub-plan but it is at conceptual level and not in real practice, atleast in case of Assam. For the same system of implementing various schemes in universal pattern has been still maintained. That is, the schemes introduced in one sub-plan area are also introduced in another area irrespective of variation in local problems and needs. Thus, the basic purpose of area specific planning has not been realised through 'Tribal Sub-Plan' approach.

Of course, it is not because of the inherent defects of the approach itself. The main shortcoming lies in the administration which is responsible for planning and implementing the schemes. Once this deficiency is removed the Sub-Plan approach will be a scientific strategy for the development of the tribal communities in Assam.

Apart from introducing vocational training programme as an effort to divert to non-agricultural occupations special measures for improving the standard of general education of the tribal children must be taken. The main maladies of the present system of education among the tribal communities are that there have been lack of proper infra-structural facilities, and teachers in both quantity and quality at the educational institutions in tribal areas. No doubt, financial grants are sanctioned and advanced to tribal schools regularly every year; but these are of no avail for want of scientific planning and proper utilisation of the funds. What is necessary now is that the whole problem of tribal education needs to be re-examined and appropriate measures based

on scientific planning should be taken. This would lead to improvement of general education of the tribal children which will eventually help them in getting into non-agricultural occupations.

While discussing the question of strategy for tribal development we cannot avoid the role of administration, which is no less important in bringing about development of these communities. The tribals are illiterate, and ignorant masses. As such they lack appreciation for changes in different spheres of life through introduction of new systems. It is, therefore, the administration which has to act as torch bearer towards new horizons of development. So far, the schemes are distributed just like doles to the beneficiaries. While developmental schemes are implemented in this manner one can easily understand the outcome. It is, therefore, necessary to change the whole method of administration in implementing the tribal developmental schemes, without which any strategic effort in developing the tribal communities will be a futile exercise. For the purpose, however, special team of workers i.e. officials committed to the cause of tribal development has to be created. All employees ranging from peon to high officials engaged in implementing tribal schemes must have sympathy for and interest in development and welfare of the tribals. To induce and encourage to work for the tribals incentives may be provided to the workers. At present, tribal orientation programmes for the Govt. officials have been carried on by the TRI, Assam. This should be more intensified so as to develop better understanding and appreciation on the part of the officials about the socio-cultural systems and

problems of the tribal people of the State.

In conclusion it may be suggested that planning and implementation of tribal development schemes should be based on empirical research and scientific analysis of the problems and prospects of development. In this case, role of T.R.I. is vitally important for which we may plead for expansion of the existing departmental organisation of the Institutes at district level.

Gist of the paper

1. Tribals in Assam are traditionally agriculturists for which they are largely dependent on land. But since land holding is diminishing gradually due to mounting pressure of population on land it becomes necessary to divert a substantial portion of tribal population from agriculture to non-agricultural occupations.
2. Approach to population diversion to non-agriculture economy should be based on creation of man-power or skill development in the tribal population for various vocations. Such programme should be introduced in rural areas among the tribals

themselves. At the same time opportunities for utilising the skills should also be created in rural areas where there have been concentrations of tribal population.

3. Steps should be taken for improving the standard of general education of the tribal people immediately. System of education should be based on scientific planning.
4. The developmental schemes should be introduced on the Principle of Community and area needs and problems.
5. The present system of doling out grants in the name of developmental schemes should be stopped.
6. Outlook of the administration towards planning and implementing tribal schemes should be changed and reoriented towards more realistic and sympathetic understanding of the tribal problems. Steps should be taken for creating special cadres for tribal administration with appropriate incentive provisions.
7. T.R.I. has vital role to play in scientific planning and implementing tribal developmental schemes in Assam.

Forest Villages of Assam Inhabited by Tribals

Origin, Problems and Prospect

G. C. Sharma Thakur*

Origin

Assam is traditionally famous for its forests particularly ever green forests and out of a total 75,155 hectares of forest land in the entire country, Assam possesses 2855 hectares of forest land. In 1951-52 the area of reserved forest in Assam was 33,550 sq. km. which has been subsequently reduced to 17,317 Sq. Km. in 1981-82. Accordingly to the National Forest Policy 1952, Assam should maintain 33 percent of the total geographical area of the state under forest for environmental safety. Considering the importance of forests in the ecological balance, due emphasis was laid on reservation of forests in the post independence period.

In Assam reservation of vast areas of forest land was undertaken during the British rule. After the formulation of reservation of forests considerable importance was given to the scientific and systematic management of forests. Initially the authority had to face certain problems in respect of manpower as in those days density of population in or near the forest areas was remarkably low. In fact most of the forest areas were devoid of population except for a few dispersed pockets of indigenous tribal population. Assam in those days, particularly before indepen-

dence, was famous for dreaded diseases like Malaria, Kalazar etc., wild animals, flood and contagious magic. Habitation was difficult as most of the forest areas besides being inaccessible, was known to be highly Malaria and Kalazar infested zones. Communication facilities were conspicuous by their absence as the forest areas were located in far flung areas at a considerable distance from the main commercial and administrative centres. It was a difficult task to mobilize labour force for harvesting and sylvicultural operations.

Another constraint was the absence of regular flow of labour force in the forest areas. As mentioned above habitation in those days was a very difficult task as the people had to move from place to place. It was the tendency of the villagers to move away from their regular habitat and establish new villages in distant places. The main reason for the above tendency was the hazard from the inhospitable ecology coupled with absence of roads and transport facilities. Even the fringe areas of the forest were not covered by the transport facilities. This single factor contributed largely for non availability of labour force for forestry work. The forest authorities had a trying time to procure labour force. Oftentimes plantation work had to be

suspended. Against this back drop the necessity for the creation of a regular labour force was urgently felt and the concept of forest village gained currency. Forest villages were set up within the limits of reserved forests in the nineties of the last century, 1901-05 to be precise. At the outset 35 Nos. of forest villages covering three erstwhile districts of Assam were established. There were 8 Nos. of forest villages in Cachar district 15 Nos. in Goalpara district and 12 Nos. in Kamrup District. Today the number of forest villages increased to 524 Nos. with a total population of 1,50,233 comprising 20,694 families.

The forest authorities had created another segment of forest dwellers in Assam who were known as Tangias and this section formed an additional labour force. The Tangias were not regular forest villagers in respect of allotment of land also in respect of terms and conditions laid down by the Forest Department. They were given 2 bighas of homestead land and for cultivation they were allowed to cultivate the intermediate spaces within annual plantation areas. They were engaged in raising and maintaining plantation.

Every forest villager was allotted upto 5 bighas of land including homestead land. Besides each working member living in that household was entitled to receive 10 bighas of land. The ceiling, however, was fixed at 35 bighas per household on payment of nominal land revenue. It may be noted that the forest villagers did not possess the right of transfer of land and they were given only right of use and occupancy over the land. In lieu of the facilities offered by the Forest Department, the forest villagers were required to render 5 days' free labour which entitled

them to the privileges of free grazing, 10 Nos. of cart loads of firewood annually, house building materials free of royalty.

As entry of outsiders to the reserved forests was restricted the forest villagers had to face certain difficulties in respect of the services of barbers, teachers, shopkeepers etc. Due to difficult communication system, the villagers could not visit the nearby weekly hats. Besides these hats were situated at distant places. Thus to cater to the needs of the forest villagers the Forest Department allowed entry of the non-forest villagers to the reserved forest areas and they were allotted homestead land only. It may be noted that the Forest Department allowed entry of these sections of outsiders on demand from more than 50% of the forest villagers.

Forest and Tribals :

Out of 524 Nos. of forest villages, 234 Nos. are tribal forest villages. The tribal people of these villages constitute more than 50% of the total population. The Kamrup West Forest Division with 58 Nos. of villages has the highest number of tribal forest villages. These villages cover an area of 1593.29 hectares. Some details of the forest villages and tribal forest villages are shown below in table I and table II.

TABLE—I

Sl. No.	Name of the forest circle	Name of the forest Divn.	No. of villages	No. of families.
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Western Assam Circle	Kachugaon	104	4706
2.	-do-	Haltugaon	27	1644
3.	-do-	Dhubri	14	304
4.	-do-	Aye Valley	12	698

* Joint Director, Tribal Research Institute, Assam, Guwahati.

1	2	3	4	5
5. Eastern Assam Circle	Digboi	16	1545	
6. -do-	Doomdooma	3	26	
7. -do-	Dibrugarh	23	787	
8. -do-	Sibsagar	22	946	
9. -do-	Golaghat	15	1028	
10. Northern Assam Circle	Lakhimpur	9	421	
11. -do-	Darrang East	9	247	
12. -do-	Darrang West	18	736	
13. -do-	Nagaon	15	824	
14. Central Assam Circle	North Kamrup	2	42	
15. -do-	Kamrup east	1	41	
16. -do-	Kamrup west	61	1291	
17. Hills Circle	Silchar	62	2476	
18. -do-	Karimganj	43	1437	
19. -do-	N.C. Hills	1	20	
20. -do-	Karbi Anglong East	7	365	
21. Tangia villages		60	1120	
		524	20694	

TABLE-II

Sl. No.	Forest Division	No. of tribal forest villages	Area of F.V. (Hectares)	Total population	Tribal population
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Kamrup West	58	1593.29	6342	6337
2.	Kachugaon	51	8366.10	22638	18369
3.	Silchar	20	1713.76	4011	3179
4.	Haltugaon	19	2606.16	10040	9772
5.	Dibrugarh	12	1462.20	4836	4836
6.	Darrang West	11	1034.47	2544	2460
7.	Lakhimpur	9	738.93	2060	2054
8.	Digboi	8	923.09	3677	2270
9.	Karimganj	9	544.95	2255	1689
10.	Sibsagar	7	911.00	4762	4111
11.	Aye Valley	7	1748.92	3075	2524

1	2	3	4	5	6
12. Dhubri	6	297.00	1544	1544	
13. Nagaon	6	348.90	2170	1964	
14. Karbi Anglong East	3	236.40	840	840	
15. Golaghat	2	44.64	388	288	
16. Northern Kamrup	1	N.A.	425	300	
17. Kamrup East	1	61.52	273	273	
18. Darrang East	3	—	—	—	

It has been observed that of late the population of the forest villages is increasing rapidly. The families are multiplying with separate establishments and number of households are increasing. Thus in most cases the figures of households in the official records do not tally with the actual households in the field. The limit of utilisation of forest land for non forestry purposes in such village settlements has exceeded leaving no scope for further extension. The actual area of cultivable land per family is greatly reduced. It appears if the pattern continues further land holdings of individual families will be too small to be economically viable.

Forest villages were established within Reserve Forest areas and these were governed under the Rules for establishment of Forest Villages and overall provision of the Assam Forest Regulation 1891 (Vol-I). Thus they were kept outside the purview of the Panchayat Act. The responsibility for enforcing development activities among the tribal forest village remained with the Forest Department. Thus villagers did not get the benefits of the Five year Plans. They are not having the basic amenities. The condition of the roads, school building is deplorable in most cases. There are 223 Nos. of ring wells, 35 Nos. of tube wells, 10 Nos. of tanks, 378 Nos. of L.P. Schools, 18 Nos. of Medical Sub-

Centres, 47 Nos. of M.E. and 15 Nos. of H.E. schools and 27 Nos. of Sub Post Offices in the forest villages and most of these facilities are of pre independence period. The villagers are extremely backward economically and educationally. It was reported that the villagers are not in a position to get the benefits from D.R.D.A. and Banks as their lands cannot be mortgaged. The people therefore generally want that they should be declared as revenue villages. Alternatively they may be allowed to mortgage the land for getting loans.

The Forest Department of the Govt. of Assam had launched a centrally sponsored scheme 'Improvement of Forest Villages' during 1984-85 with an outlay of Rs. 266.00 lakhs. It was an ambitious scheme with definite objectives like undertaking of individual beneficiary schemes thereby improving the economic condition of the poor forest villagers. It was also intended to raise the literary level of the children. The communication system needed immediate attention and the scheme had earmarked amount for the improvement of roads. Improvement and construction of school building, establishment of Veterinary Centres and Dispensaries, minor irrigation, grain Banks, Gobar Gas Plant, weekly Forest Village Market and extension of Rural Electrification were also undertaken.

In our sample survey of the forest villages inhabited by tribals we noticed that the

plight of the tribals living in the forest as forest villagers is not satisfactory in comparison with the socio-economic condition of the co-tribals who are living outside the forest. The 1984-85 Development Schemes could not bring any tangible change in the life pattern of the tribals as the Scheme was discontinued after one year's term. The problems of the tribals in the forest villages are such that one year's developmental programme on selective basis could hardly touch the fringe of the problem. It is therefore suggested that the scheme drawn for the welfare of the forest villages should be revitalised and it shall be an annual affair.

The tribal people in the forest villages are suffering from certain complexes, arising out of their poor economic condition. They are not having sufficient agricultural land and their anger is reflected in the form of peripheral encroachment and devastation of the marginal forest areas around the villages.

Arrangements should be made to allow the forest villagers to mortgage their land for obtaining loans from D.R.D.A., Co-operatives and Banks etc.

Forest villagers and forests are inseparable units. The destiny of the forest villagers are closely linked up with the existence of the forests. Only the formation of a symbiotic relationship between the two would usher in progress and plenty for both.

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Personnel Policy and the Tribal Development Administration in Karbi Anglong

B. C. Bhuyan*

The term Development Administration generally has a dual meaning. First, development administration refers to the methods used by large-scale organisations, notably governments, to implement policies and plans designed to meet their developmental objectives. A second meaning associated with the term developmental administration by implication rather than directly, involves the strengthening of administrative capacities. Administrative development in low income countries has generally been defined as "a pattern of increasing effectiveness in the utilization of available means to achieve prescribed goals." It, therefore, involves both qualitative and quantitative changes in bureaucratic policies, programmes, procedures and methods of works, organisational structures and staffing patterns, number and quantity of development personnel of different types and patterns of relations with clients of administration.

In brief, the present and future priorities of development administration are :

(1) The role of government will continue to expand and direct the over all process of development.

(2) Government activities will become increasingly complex and specialised.

(3) The need for planning, co-ordination and control will be greater.

(4) Administrative attempt at dominating the political process is expected to continue.

(5) Managerial orientation and techniques will play a crucial role in speeding up the process of development.

(6) Human well being will continue to be the central concern of public administration.

(7) Public administration will increasingly become more change oriented and development oriented.

(8) The role of administrative reform and management improvement will be greatly stressed.

(9) Personnel training and management is crucial to the whole process of development administration.

A study on the tribal development administration of the autonomous district of Karbi Anglong in Assam is very much relevant in this context. Therefore, an attempt will be made, in this paper, on the personnel policies adopted by the autonomous district administration from time to time and also its impact on the development administration of the district. This study will also take into account whether the policies adopted have really become the constraints of tribal development of this district.

*Head, Department of Political Science, Diphu Govt. College, Diphu.

The present study shall mainly deal with the recruitment policy, qualifications salaries and allowances, prospect of promotion training, classification of cadre etc. All these aspects of the personnel policy should have come within the fold of the Service Rules of the affairs and staff of the autonomous district administration. But service Rules have not yet been brought into existence. The Constitution of District Council Rules, 1951 (hereinafter to be referred to as Rules 1951) has clearly provided that subject to the previous approval of the Governor, the District Council of an autonomous district may make rules regulating the conditions of service of its affairs and staff. Till such rules are not framed the rules governing the service condition of the State Government employees will be followed. Since the Services of the Council are different from that of the State Government separate service rules should have immediately been brought into existence.

Recruitment Policy : The recruitment authority of the council is the Chief Executive Member. In other words, the council itself has been given the authority of recruiting its staff without any prior approval of the State Government. The State Government may depute some officers to the council for the speedy implementation of some of the developmental programmes. The State Government has also been given the power to appoint an administrator when the council is superseded under the provisions of para 16 of the Sixth Schedule.

Regarding the mode of recruitment of the staff, merit did not have place in most of the cases. This, of course, has been noticed in cases of those jobs where local tribal candi-

dates were found eligible for appointment. In 1952, two posts of Upper Division Assistants and one post of Lower Division Assistant were advertised. The Secretary to the Executive Committee prepared a selection list strictly on the basis of merit. But the CEM recommended the appointment of the last candidate. In 1953 also, two posts of U.D.'s were advertised. A selection list on the basis of merit was prepared. The CEM recommended the first and the last candidate. In 1973, one post of L.D.A. cum Typist was advertised and selection was made. The CEM appointed the third candidate who was having a typing speed of 18 words per minute. The first two candidates were obviously better but they were non tribals. In the Forest Department of the Council also, the appointment of Forest Guards and Forestors were not made according to merit. A large number of appointments were made on the recommendation of the CEM and the EM (Executive Member), Forest without observing the procedures which are to be normally followed. The posts of Assistant Inspectors of Schools were advertised. Fifteen candidates appeared in the written and oral tests. The candidates securing the lowest marks were selected for appointment. In 1987, the council conducted one written test for the posts of Assistants in its offices. But the appointments that followed were not according to the list prepared by the council authorities themselves. Regarding the appointment of primary school teachers the less said the better. The selection tests which are held from time to time are held only in name. Of late, the council authorities have empowered the Member, District Council (MDC) to recommend the names of persons for

appointment in the primary schools of his own constituency as and when the vacancy arises.

Thus, the appointment which forms an important part of the personnel policies of a development administration was not given its due place. The result, therefore, is bound to be disastrous. As noted earlier, that public administration need to be charge oriented and development oriented it is doubtful whether such type of personnel would be able to deliver goods or not.

Qualification : Qualification also forms an important part of our studies on the personnel policies of a development administration. As there are no service Rules the council administration had to follow the Government instructions and orders regarding the qualifications of its employees. In the early years some under matriculates were appointed as L.D.As. with due permission from the State Government. This was done mainly due to derth of local qualified people for the posts in councils offices. It is important to role that till early sixtees the council's offices were manned by the qualified persons from the two adjoining districts of Nowgong and Sibsagar. The local qualified recruits started entering into the Council's offices only in the late Sixtees. In 1978, out of a total of 1841 employees 1125 were tribals and the rest were non tribals. This is really a significant change as the tribals have out numbered the non tribals within such a short period. These figures, of course did not include the primary school teachers. At present, there are 2047 primary school teachers for a total of 1163 primary schools.¹⁰ Till late Sixtees a large number of retired government servants were also engaged by

the council administration. A large number of Government deputed staff were also engaged from time to time. At present, of course, there are a very few such staff working in the council. The practice of engaging retired government servants is, in fact, not conducive to the effective functionary of a development administration.

The Salaries and allowances : The salaries and allowances of the staff are exactly the same with those of the State Government. The pay revision of the State Government employees is applicable to council staff also. Hence there is no question of burgaining either by the council authorities or by the State Government. In the present salary structure there are maximum, minimum and inter-mediate rules of pay. There are, at present, 28 different pay scales in the council.¹¹ All deputed staff draw their own grade scales and deputation allowances fixed by the Government from time to time.

Thus the number of pay scales are too many which actually should have been reduced to atleast 15 incentive originated scales of pay. Too many scales of pay may bring too much of disparity among the council employees which ultimately may adversely affect the efficiency of the development administration of the autonomous district.

Promotion : Promotion is an important part of our studies on the personnel policies of a development administration. There is, of course, a good prospect of promotion of the council employees. This is, however, mainly due to the expanding nature of the council's functions. A.L.D.A. can expect his promotion

upto the rank of the Office Superintendent, and Electrical Wireman appointed in 1971 to the post of Electrical Overseer in 1976, a Road Mohorer appointed in 1965 to Overseer Grade I in 1981. A brief survey on the qualifications and experiences of the personnel in the Works Department indicates that promotions done were not according to qualifications. The promotion prospect of the Forest and Revenue Staff, however, is not very bright.

The council administration could have opened more avenues of promotion in the existing arrangement itself. Certain posts were created to satisfy the political aspirations of the leaders of some rival groups. The posts like Development officer, Public Relations Officer, Attendance Officer, Special Officer (Border), Liason Officer and Asstt. Secretaries are of this type. Four posts of Development Officers were created for the reorganisation of villages. But only one person was appointed. The person so appointed was a political figure and one of the founders of the district. That post does not exist now although reorganisation has not taken place up till now. Similarly, two posts of Public Relations affairs were created. Two persons having political aspirations were appointed. But the posts were abolished when they left their jobs subsequently. The posts of special officer (Border) and Estate Officer were created to satisfy the political opponents of the ruling group. The posts of Attendance Officers were created to ensure attendance of children in the primary schools. But those posts do not exist now although a large number of children donot attend schools due to the ignorance of the parents. The post of Assistant Secretary was created in 1957. In 1964, it was realised that the post was not necessary. The

post, however, was created again in 1979. The Employees Association of the Council wanted to fill up those posts specially those of Assistant Secretaries from among them to make their promotion avenue a better. The Association stated that since some of the posts of Deputy Secretaries and under Secretaries are filled up from among the ex-employees the council could do the same without any difficulties. But the authorities have been turning a deaf ear to all those demands of the employees. The authorities, on the other hand, moved the Government on several occasions for the special recruitment of some office Assistants to the Assam Civil Secretariat and for age relaxations to the council employees for the purpose of recruitment for services under the State Government. But all those moves were a failure. The Association also moved the council authorities for the creation of two posts of Assistant Conservator of Forests as the same have not been held by the council Forest Staff.¹² The council did not like to credit those posts for the reason best known to them. Thus the council administration could have made the promotion prospect better if the State Government lifted the age bar of its employees as it is normally done in case of the employees of the temporary departments, such as, Relief and rehabilitation and Supply and Textiles etc.

Another important aspect of promotion is the crossing of efficiency bar. It is to be observed that there is not provision of writing Annual Confidential Report of the Staff by the immediate Superior Officer Concerned. It is due to this nothing better can be expected of them. The employees themselves complained that efficiency and devotion to duty were not at all considered for crossing the E.B.

and increments. It is gathered that some of the employees settle contracts with the council in the names of their wives and relations.¹⁴ This resulted in the regular absence of these employees from their duties. That, of course, discourages the conscientious employees which in turn adversely affects the personnel administration, of the council.

Training : In the contemporary perspective of development of administration, the personnel are required to discharge multifarious functions in order to meet the changing needs of the people. The personnel are not adequately trained for them to deliver goods effectively. But the autonomous district administration has not provided any kind of regular training for its employees. There is no provision of in-service training also. It is mainly due to this the office procedure is not followed and efficiency suffers to a great extent. In the long history of thirty six years of the council a few of its staff had undergone training under the Directorate of Accounts, Government of Assam. The Forest Staff, of course, have been undergoing training regularly in the Assam Forest School, Guwahati. The teachers of the primary schools were also sent to the Basic Training Centre located outside the district. But recently, a basic Training Centre has been established at Diphu to cater the needs of the Primary School teachers of this district. But the course in which the Primary School teachers are to get through the training is not according to the qualifications prescribed by the council for teachership. It is doubtful whether all of them, specially the tribal teachers, will be able to come out successful from the Centre without any difficulty. Thus

it is, observed that the development Administration of Karbi Anglong did not realise the importance of training seriously which adversely affected the administrative system.

Transfer : Transfer is one of the most important means of ensuring efficiency in a development administration. The transfer, infact relieves monotony, encourages the employees to gather experiences in different branches and ensures high degree of efficiency. But some of the transfer orders from one department to another are not complied with by the employees. There are instances of warning the employees of losing seniority if they did not comply with the transfer orders. But non compliance of such orders did not follow any kind of exemplary punishment. There are instances of sticking to a particular table for more than a double decade. The interference of the E.M. and sometimes even the Ministers of the State Government is noticed. Council decided to introduce Karbi as a compulsory subject in all primary schools of Karbi Anglong irrespective of existing medium of instructions with effect from the academic session 1986-87. To implement this decision all circle officers were requested to transfer at least one Karbi knowing teacher to those schools which do not possess Karbi knowing teachers. But it is gathered that due to the interference of the District Council Members most of the transfer orders have not been carried out and the Karbi language has not been introduced as a compulsory subject in most of the schools. Thus, transfer which is one of the most important means of ensuring efficiency is not given due weightage by the authorities.

Classification of cadre : There is no classification of cadre of the council

employees. But it is observed that every post created by the council bears a scale provided by the State Government. The Assistant Secretaries, the Estate Officer, the Special Officer (Border) are given the scale of class II of Assam Civil Services. It would have been good if the classification could have been made at the earliest.

Personnel Policy and transfer of functions : The transfer of functions under the provisions of subject para 2 of para 6 of the Sixth Schedule has brought a series of problems to the personnel administration of the council.¹⁵ Under the above provisions, the Governor has entrusted with a large number of functions to the District Council of Karbi Anglong on 1st June, 1970 with some conditions. One of those conditions was the control of district level officers and their subordinates of those departments which were transferred to the council. The transfer of functions stipulated that the council would be associated in the preparation of their A C R in accordance with the procedure to be prescribed by the State Government. Then officers however, would nevertheless continue to be responsible to the State Govt. for implementing schemes which had not been transferred to the council. The council would be competent to exercise powers in respect of the intra-district transfers of then officers but so far as inter-district, transfer were concerned the State Government would have exclusive jurisdiction. The Heads of Departments would continue to exercise full power and responsibility in the matter of techniques, control and supervision over the officers placed at the disposal of the District Council even in respect of schemes transferred to

the Council. The council was not given the authority to entertain new staff out of the funds placed at its disposal without specific prior approval of the Government.

But the autonomous district administration of Karbi Anglong had experienced a number of difficulties as they had to manage themselves with their own personnel. The council, therefore, suggested to the Government that the power of creation of posts (Grade IV), creation of new posts (Grade IV) should be within its own competence. The council further suggested to the Government the revision of the entire personnel policy to cope with the changed circumstances.¹⁶

The Government of Assam on the recommendation of the Planning Board for Hill Areas constitute a Committee under the chairmanship C. S. Teron, then Minister, T.A.D. to examine among other things, the feasibility of placing all district level officers and staff connected with the transferred schemes on deputation to the council and to prescribe the procedure of initiating confidential reports of all officers and staff placed at its disposal. The Teron Committee endorsed the existing arrangement and suggested to the Government to place them for a period of three years which could be modified by mutual consultation between the council and the Government. The Teron Committee further recommended that the Committee should initiate A.C.R. and suspend their pending drawal of department proceedings by the Government. Regarding the appointment of Grade III and IV staff in the transferred subjects the Teron Committee recommended that the council should have a deciding voice only and not the power of appointment. The Government

did not accept all the recommendations relating to the control of officers by the council. The existing practice of initiating the A.C.R. of the district level officers by the immediate superior and reviewing the same by the Principal Secretary and the Executive Member, In-charge continued to exist. It was only after the revision of the terms and conditions of the transfer of functions in 1979, the procedures slightly changed. According to the procedure the Secy. in charge of the council should initiate the A.C.R. and the E.M. in charge of the respective entrusted subject should review the same which would finally be accepted by the respective Heads of concerned departments. This picture still continues to exist since 1979.

Conclusion : The above study on the personnel policy accepted by the autonomous district administration of Karbi Anglong clearly indicates that the policy adopted so far has always been the constraints of tribal development of this part of the North East. The development administration needs efficient hands but the recruitment policy adopted by the council shall not be able to recruit the best and the efficient. Since the present and future priorities of development administration will be to put emphasis on specialised and complex governmental activities, the autonomous district administration could have adopted an impartial recruitment policy by which the best and efficient could have

been selected. There should, in fact, be an objective list for each category of jobs and appointment should be made strictly on the basis of merit. Secondly, development administration should provide sufficient scope for promotion to its employees so that the services of the best could be utilised. There were a number of scopes for the same. But the administration did not provide any scope for the same and on the other hand it had unnecessarily created some posts at the cost of the tax payers' money. No attention has been paid to the training of its employees and hence efficiency suffers to a considerable extent. Attempt has not been on the administrative reform and management improvement. Managerial orientation and techniques should have played a crucial role in the tribal development process. In respect of transfer of functions also, the personnel policy adopted by the State Government is far from satisfactory. The district level officers and their staff were placed at the disposal of the council for the implementation of certain schemes only. But the same officers were responsible to the State Government also for the implementation of those schemes which were not transferred to the council. Moreover, the council was not given the power to create or retain the posts even of Grade IV. In fine it may be concluded that the personnel policy adopted by the council and the State Government are really the constraints of tribal development of this autonomous district of Karbi Anglong.

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7. -do- (D.F.O.) East, 1976.
8. -do- (A.S.I.), 1976.
9. General Administration (Estt) file, 1987, (Appointment of Assistants)
10. Figures collected on 19.3.88.
11. Figures collected on 19.3.88.
12. Proceedings of the Executive Committee meeting of the Employees Association dated 16.9.78.
13. Proceedings of the Executive Committee meeting of the Employees Association dated 7.10.80.
14. Informal interview with cross sections of employees of the council.
15. Sub. Para 2 of para 6 ran as follows :
"The Governor may with the consent of the District Council entrust, either conditionally or unconditionally to that council or to its officers, functions in relation to agricultures, animal husbandry, community projects, co-operative societies, social welfare, village planning and any other matter to which the executive power of the State extends.
16. MHC/XI/34/71/118-7658 dated 13.7.71.

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The Boro-Kachari Hutments at the 'Open-Air Tribal Habitat' Exhibition at Bhopal : A short report

M. G. Saikia*

The National Museum of Man (Rastriya Manab Sangrahalay) is an organisation located at Bhopal under the Ministry of Education, Department of Culture, Government of India. This Institution has been assigned the duty of interpreting the cultural history of the ethnic groups of India and also to conduct systematic study on the evolution of human beings.

During the early part of 1980, the National Museum of Man, had evolved a scheme to organise an open-air Tribal Habitat Exhibition at the permanent site of the National Museum of Man at Shamlu Hills—about 12 k.m. away from the present site of the National Museum of Man office at Bitten Market, Bhopal. The object of this proposed exhibition was to expose the cultural attainments of some of the major ethnic groups through their traditional habitat and technological skills using local materials and creating environment of their own. In pursuing this objective greater stress was laid on authenticity both in representation of dwellings as well as in displaying cultural objects pertaining to the tribe.

Having decided to launch such a project, the Tribal Research Institute of Assam was asked by the National Museum of Man to

join in the venture and the Tribal Research Institute took up the matter with the Department of Welfare for Plains Tribes & Backward Classes. The Department then approved participation in the venture and made budget allocation for the purpose, suggesting that on the basis of the numerical strength of the Boro-Kacharis in the population structure of the scheduled tribes, their dwellings should be depicted in the National Complex of Tribal Habitat. Then the Director of the Tribal Research Institute and an artist left for Bhopal for the on-the-spot study of the project site and did all other ancillary work. On the basis of recommendation of the Director, truck load of bamboo, thatch and other materials including household objects and other exhibits concerning the Boro-Kachari tribe were sent to Bhopal in April 1982, but due to uncertainty of the date of opening of the exhibition on some technical grounds, the construction programme was deferred till March 1984 when a team of six tribal artisans hailing from Kokrajhar area with myself as team leader left for Bhopal to construct the dwellings with the materials already deposited with the National Museum of Man. The construction programme took about a month and by mid April 1984, all works were

completed but the scheduled exhibition did not take place owing to some technical considerations. The completed dwellings were then left at the custody of the authorities concerned who took upon the responsibility of looking after them.

Then a tentative date for inaugurating the exhibition in November '87 was informed and we were requested to send a team of tribal artisans to undertake repair and reconstruction of the dwellings already raised. The time-gap between March 1984 to November 1987 was sufficient to damage the dwellings and our arrival there at Bhopal we had to undertake massive repair and also some reconstruction work. The same team from Kokrajhar excepting a few went this time also under my supervision and attended the entire work in a record time. Although the Assam dwellings were ready by the scheduled date, constructions by other tribes were not ready and due to this, the exhibition had to be deferred this time also. Although the scheduled exhibition did not take place, the Boro-Kachari hutments drew a large number of visitors from the city and those coming from other States. Photo-journalists including Vedio party visited the site and took snaps as per their requirement. The Naga Morung gate and the Assam dwellings became a talk of the interested section of people.

The twice deferred exhibition however was inaugurated on 27th January '88 when a team of 10 Boro-Kachari tribal artisan from Kokrajhar comprising mostly from the members of the previous team was deputed to participate in the cultural programme of the inaugural function and also to display the household objects to give a real life-style of the community. The cultural programmes

presented by the Boro-Kachari team was highly appreciated by press and public alike. In this context it would be befitting to give a short account of the hutments raised and household objects displayed in the hutments by transporting them to Bhopal, from this eastern most part of the country. The hutments comprised of the following :

- (a) 'Noma Nwa' The main house where the head of the family with his wife resides.
- (b) 'Choura Nwa' Primarily a guest house but often occupied by other family members alongwith guests.
- (c) 'Bokhri' The granary for storing paddy.
- (d) 'Aungkham-songra' The cookshed.
- (e) 'Mousougali' The cowshed
- (f) 'Shansali' The shed meant for weaving and keeping all accessories required for weaving purpose.
- (g) 'Omagondra' Structure for keeping pigs.
- (h) 'Dao-gogra' A small shade for keeping cocks and hens.
- (i) 'Bourma-gondra' or Shade meant for ducks
'Hangchou-gogra' or goats.
- (j) 'Bathow' The altar of worship.
- (k) 'Maihung' Heap of paddy straw kept like a dom and meant for the draught bulls and milch cows.
- (l) 'Deona' Indigenous device of checking unauthorised entry of persons or animals to the interior of the household.

* Deputy Director, Tribal Research Institute, Assam, Guwahati.

(m) 'Doihubaishang' An improvised bamboo platform raised by bamboo poles to the height of a metre to keep water pots and jars.

(n) 'Jharo' Bamboo fencing around the kitchen garden attached to the household.

(o) 'Chekhor Dumnai' Raised fencing around all the hutments to maintain family decorum and privacy (The 'Omaganra' and the 'Jharo' not included in its coverage).

Besides the above structures, bamboo cots known as 'Manshi-Undugraishang' have been erected in the 'Choura-Nwa' and also in the last western end room of 'Noma-Nwa' which is usually known as 'Khopra' and is used by the head of the family for sleeping purpose. In the eastern most room of 'Noma-Nwa' known as 'Eaching', three main deities have been established one for 'Mainao' (the goddess of wealth) in the north eastern corner, the second for 'Songraja' ('Siva' or Burha Bathow) just on the west of Mainao, and the third for 'Ailong' on the South of Mainao. In the immediate proximity of 'Ailong' a big rice pot known as 'Maihendi' has been kept wherefrom the day-to-day requirement of rice is met. Another big ricepot known as 'Bagcha-Maibong' has been put near the Maihendi where unhusked rice of sufficient quantity is kept ready for rainy season over a bamboo platform called 'Bgishang'. Outside in the courtyard where the altar of Bathaw has been raised with a siju tree (*Euphorbia splendens*) is encircled by a bamboo fencing as per prescribed norm and an earthen lamp

has been kept lighting with mustard oil any an ironstand ('Gasa') and routine prayer conducted at the close of the household work. A Tulsi plant and a Jatras plant have been put outside the altar—the former on the south of the altar and the latter on the north. All these have been done to give an authentic representation of the religious belief of the tribe under reference.

For decorating the household, some items of day-to-day use have been carried over to Bhopal and kept partially at the middle room of the 'Nona-Nwa' known as 'Okhong' and partially in other houses. Some of these items displayed in their respective places are as under—

- 1) 'Napham' (dried fish kept in a bamboo container).
- 2) 'Amao' (main ingredients in the shape of a cake for preparing rice-beer).
- 3) 'Jumaidala' (bamboo mat used for keeping cooked rice for preparing rice-beer).
- 4) 'Dumsu' (a wooden pot used for filtration of rice-beer)
- 5) 'Jantha' (a strainer for rice-beer)
- 6) 'Laothai' (a ladle used for drawing rice-beer from the 'Dumsu')
- 7) 'Laofithai' (an emptied shall of a gourd used for keeping salt)
- 8) 'Jekhai' (a conical shaped fish trap made of split bamboo and used primarily by womenfolk)
- 9) 'Khubai' (a fish container made of bamboo and carried along with the 'Jekhai' to keep the catch.
- 10) 'Keoali' (a small net for fish catching that can be operated

- 11) 'Folo' (a fish catching equipment made of bamboo and used primarily by men).
- 12) 'Kherkha' (a brass bowl with pours around for washing rice meant for cooking).
- 13) 'Don' (an indigenous weighmen for paddy).
- 14) 'Hongkha' (an indigenous pipe for smoking tobacco).
- 15) 'Songrai' (winnowing fan)
- 16) 'Uwal' (mortar)
- 17) 'Gahen' (Pestal)
- 18) 'Khada' (a large bamboo bowl)
- 19) 'Wigong-Khada' (a small bamboo bowl)
- 20) 'Kho' (an ordinary bamboo bowl for laying eggs by the hen).
- 21) 'Khamplai' (a big wooden seat usually meant for elderly persons of some social status).
- 22) 'Dahra' (a bamboo mat).
- 23) 'Gasa' (an earthen lamp stand made of iron)
- 24) 'Hasib' (a broom made of split bamboo)
- 25) 'Gissib' (a hand fan)
- 26) 'Janthi' (three legged iron stand for holding rice cooker while cooking).
- 27) 'Festa' (paddy-straw bound together to form a circle and placed below the earthen water jars to prevent them from falling all on a sudden)
- 28) 'Nangal' (wooden plough)
- 29) 'Jungal' (a yoke)
- 30) 'Hokhen' (a hooked bamboo pole used in thrashing paddy)
- 31) 'Hasini' (wooden comb used to collect

waste materials before sowing of seeds).

- 32) 'Ruwa' (a usual sized spade)
- 33) 'Ruwabashwa' (a small spade)
- 34) 'Beda' (a wooden comb for weeding after sowing seeds)
- 35) 'Kham' (a drum and other musical instruments).
- and others
- 36) 'Salgandi' (a set of weaving loom).

The household items as displayed were not exhaustive, but they had been shown only as specimen to indicate the life style of the community.

Like the Boro-Kachari tribe of Assam, the other tribes represented in the open air 'Tribal Habitat' complex in Shamla Hills either by their traditional hamlets or by their indigenous technological crafts like pottery, iron-smelting and blacksmithy, wood carving, stone carving or pitloom weaving were as follows:

- 1) The Warli tribe of Maharashtra
- 2) The Rathwa and Chodhri tribes of Gujrat
- 3) The Agaria and Maria tribes of Madhya Pradesh
- 4) The Toda and Kota tribes of Nilgiri Hills' Tamilnadu
- 5) The Tharu tribe of the Tarai region of Uttar Pradesh
- 6) The Gadaba and Saora tribes of Orissa
- 7) The nomadic Birhor tribe of Bihar and
- 8) The Ao-Naga tribe of Nagaland.

Besides the above representation from ethnic groups, non-tribal potters from Paducotta district of Tamilnadu were seen erecting a replica of the Ayyanar temple through their teracotta works.

It was our experience, during our stay at Bhopal that people in general more specially the tribal communities of other States had practically no knowledge on Assam tribes. The Boro-Kachari hutments raised amidst a National complex in the very heart of India will definitely give a clear idea of the art and culture of Assam tribes and will also be a living document to the outsiders for a comparative study of the artistic achievement of different ethnic groups of India. In relation to our works, the authorities of the National Museum of Man had remarked : "The Boro-Kachari dwelling units constructed by the team deputed by your organisation (i.e. Tribal Research Institute) to represent your State in the site of National

Museum of Man is a piece of workmanship. The tribal artisans despite the spatial, ecological and other constraints left no stone unturned in documenting their rich cultural heritage most appropriately". On our part we offer our heartiest thanks to the authorities of the National Museum of Man for giving us a chance to depict our cultural heritage permanently in a site where the tribal population makes a record concentration.

There is another proposal for raising a piled structure of the Mishing Community in the Tribal Habitat Complex just near the Boro-Kachari hutments. If this proposal is materialised, two major tribes will be represented in the National Complex from Assam.



Constraints of Tribal Development

A. K. Sachan*

There are many indices of development like Social, Economical, Political, Cultural etc. There could be view and views about the true index of development. This paper however deals with the constraints of economic development mainly. After independence of Country there were long debates about the strategy of development to be adopted in the Tribal areas. While one school advocated the policy of protection and seclusion, the other school attacked the idea of seclusion on the ground that it threatened integration of the Tribals into the rest of the population. Extending the policy adopted by the British (excluded and partially excluded Areas) the Constitution of India provides extensive safeguards for the protection of Tribal aspiration. With the incorporation of Sixth Schedule to India Constitution the administration of a very wide fields of subjects in Hill Areas is the responsibility of democratically elected District Councils. The District Councils have wide ranging legislative powers and these powers cannot be encroached by the Legislations passed by Parliament or State Legislatures relating to those subjects. This was done to ensure that the Tribals run their own affairs without any interference from outside world.

With the formation of District Councils, the political development in Hills Areas has

been very fast, the corresponding social and economic changes however, have been very slow.

The society of Tribals is as variegated as the whole Indian Society is. Each Tribal group has its own way of life, customs, practices, and traditions. Each Tribal group is therefore very individual and any uniform policy of development could be questionable. Situation analysed in this paper and constraint mentioned hereinafter are based on my limited experience of working in Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills district of Assam and therefore may not fit in the situation prevailing in other Tribal areas.

Education :

Education is very important in the sense that it is the stepping stone to the other forms of development. In all types of education, elementary education is the foundation of intellectual well-being of any society. Unless the elementary education is suitably strengthened, no matter how much more sophisticated higher education is available, it will make no visible impact. N. C. Hills is inhabited by a variety of tribal groups, having their own languages, which are completely different from each other. Education experts are unanimous to the idea of imparting the education in mother tongue at least upto High School

* Principal Secretary, N.C. Hills District Council, Haflong.

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level to the Tribal children. To make primary education effective the medium of instruction has to be in the mother tongue of the pupils. Further, with the advent of political consciousness in the tribal Areas, there is a revival of interest in Tribal languages. It is therefore necessary to have teachers from the tribal group matching with that of the pupils in the primary schools. In present conditions it is too much to expect the availability of trained teachers from various tribal groups. Even the High School passed candidates are not available to take teaching as profession in Primary Schools. In prevailing situation High School passed youngsters like to serve as Lower Division Clerks, rather than becoming Primary School teachers owing to various reasons. The educated sections of the tribals like to take up jobs in the District Headquarters towns. Since there are no good teachers, there are no good students and therefore no good teachers and this completes the vicious cycle. In all tribal areas the condition of Primary education is deplorable if one evaluates it in modest way. In a situation like this the outside agencies are helpless and the educated youths (who are mostly from the towns) from the tribal groups will have to take this responsibility if the vicious cycle is to be stopped. Govt. may however make the jobs of Primary School teachers more attractive by giving more incentives to them.

Tribal Ethos :

Most of the tribal groups are very shy and introvert by their nature. Thinking beyond the affairs of family or at the most village is nobody's business. Anything which is not traditional is not accepted very easily. The

needs of Tribal families are limited to the bare essentials of the life, which are produced by themselves. Tribals by temperament are an easy going people, who do not react very sharply to new ideas, new methods and experiments. This has adversely affected the pace of development of almost all economic sectors. It is our experience that even in the places where flat irrigated land is available the tribals are going for traditional one crop of paddy. In the vast areas of North Cachar Hills and Kabi Anglong the sugarcane is grown successfully, and it is of common knowledge that all these fields have been rented out to migrants from Bihar for cultivation since the Tribal families cannot take up hard jobs which are not traditional.

Disruption of Traditional Value System :

The hill districts are inhabited by a multitude of tribals and each of them evolved its own distinct pattern each culture, its own language, its own code of laws and each of them have by and large succeeded in maintaining its identity till recent times. Villages in tribal areas have traditionally been independent units. All decisions affecting the village used to be taken by debating in meeting through a perfect democratic set up. Villages used to be managed jointly and the things like as to which area shall be used to be decided jointly and therefore the systematic way of jhuming never had such disastrous effect in ecology. In their original pattern of living trade was in kind and their needs were limited to a few essentials of life like clothing, utensils and ornaments, most of which were produced by themselves. Step by step with the breaching of isolation and invasion of foreign trade the temptation to

acquire things which were not all that essential, grew. To satisfy newly created needs the tribals require cash. One can witness this tendency, more particularly among the members of younger generations. People are therefore becoming self centred without caring for the need of fellow villagers. The elder people however still continue to be traditional. While serving in C. Hills we come across a typical example of such a situation. Once a Gaon Bura (Village headman) approached us for taking action against the young boys of village, including his own son, for felling trees from the village reserve forest for the gain of cash money. The headman was not at all hesitant even if his son was arrested and prosecuted. This kind of situation has brought the society of tribals at a point where there is complete lack of direction for taking future course. They are neither here nor there.

Land :

Land is not treated as a valuable assets in the tribal areas for the reason that it is available in plenty. No importance is attached for proper development of land. Land tenure system is such that the rights over the land are not permanent, hereditary and transferable. In the areas like North Cachar Hills district most of the area is hilly and the flat land is scarce. Cadastral survey has been done only in case of flat land. Most of the land therefore is not covered by cadastral survey and hence the maintenance of land records is either just not there or it is very poor. Right of transfer of land has not been conferred for the simple reason that it may open new vistas for outsiders to purchase land from the tribal people. In the absence of feeling of

ownership or belonging, Land is developed for very temporary benefits and it is never treated as a long term assets. In many areas the land for cultivation is allotted by village headman to the villagers for a period of few years, and thereafter a fresh area is allotted for the purpose of shifting cultivation. The fall out of such a situation is that very often the whole village shifts to other place nullifying the whole process of planning. It induces the nomadic tendencies in the people. It has been observed that the people have abandoned villages and shifted to other places even after the Govt. had installed water supply schemes, constructed the school buildings, etc.

Agriculture :

Agriculture is the mainstay of the economic activity of all tribal groups. Though the economy of the areas is basically agrarian, the agriculture has seen very little progress. Most of the families still survive on shifting cultivation which is commonly known as jhuming. Jhuming is not only labour intensive and less productive but the adverse effect of this practice on ecology and environment are known to all. But jhuming is not only an economic problem but in addition it is socio-cultural problem. It has been seen that the families who own flat irrigated land, giving them more than sufficient rice, have not abandoned jhuming. Planners for the control of 'Jhum' have to take this aspect into account. Since strengthening of agriculture is sine-qua-non for the development of other economic sectors including Industry. One of the most important constraints in the development of agriculture is non availability of suitable land, since most of the areas are rugged, hilly terrain. Stre-

ngthening thening of Agriculture means more production through adoption of new method of cultivation which in turn will enhance the purchasing power of the people. Some change in the attitude and old practices is, however, coming slowly and it is the time that the machinery of motivation and extension is suitably streamlined and strengthened. Demonstration of high yielding varieties and use of fertilizer should be more intensified to induce people to take up new methods of agriculture. Most of the areas inhabited by tribals are suitable for horticulture crops. Inadequate facilities of marketing and processing have contributed to the non expansion of the areas under horticulture to any perceptible extent. Many times the horticulture produces are sold by cultivators at throwaway prices.

Industrialisation :

Most of the tribal areas are rich in mineral deposits and have potential for setting up of big hydroelectric projects. In the past, especially in the central India with the exploitation of minerals and their processing led to large scale displacement of tribals from their own homeland. Many times displaced tribals could not be properly rehabilitated. This generated resentment among the tribals. It is to borne in mind that hasty decisions about setting up of large scale industrial units without assessing the availability of technical manpower, labour from the locality more often than not is counter productive. With the commissioning of these industrial units lot of people are imported from non tribal areas for operation of the industry. The disruption of life style and environment of tribals by

large scale industrialisation has occurred in Ranchi with the advent of Heavy Engineering Corporation, which has forced Munda and Oraon tribes to rickshawpulling from cultivation due to displacement and poor rehabilitation.

Same kind of situation results from setting up of big Hydroelectric units. One could easily cite the example of setting up of NEEPCO Hydroelectric Project at Garapani in North Cachar Hills. Though the Govt. provided huge amount as compensation to the displaced tribals the latter had no capacity to utilise the money fruitfully. In most of the cases the money was used for procuring the things of domestic consumption for a short period and there after people have settled in the nearby Kruming Reserve Forest indulging in large scale deforestation, for which the Forest department has taken up eviction programme making the life of those settlers uncertain.

The situation like this always develop apprehension in the mind of tribals that the big Industrial Units are set up to provide jobs for non-tribals whereas they are deprived of their resources.

It is worthwhile to develop infrastructure in respect of trained manpower from within the tribals before setting up of big industrial projects.

Apathy of Officers :

In the absence of trained manpower from among the tribals, most of the people serving in various Govt. departments in the tribal areas are non-tribals from outside the district. For a longtime the tribals were treated as uncivilised by non tribals and therefore sometimes attempts were made to civilise

the tribals in such a way that there is a complete change in the pattern of their behaviour and way of life. Many times it is done with good intention and without foreseeing as to how this will lead to cultural conflict any agony for the tribals. Nothing gives rise to so much anger, hostility and even hatred as the apprehension of cultural aggression. It is this apprehension which has been allowed to grow that has given so many problems. It has become fashion to argue that the tribal people are so ungrateful that even after so much of economic investment on them, they are not satisfied and do not feel obliged to the rest of the world. Economic investment is not a wholesome solution though it may foster understanding. More important however is gaining confidence and goodwill of the tribal folk. Tribal people will have to be convinced through right actions that their culture and way of life will be determined by themselves. It is this lack of sensitivity that the many schemes have failed at the level of implementation even if they were planned and conceived well. With more failures the apprehensions grow and add to the problems. Working conditions are no doubt harder and an it requires special efforts on the part

of officer to make himself acceptable to people at large. It is worthwhile selecting right set of people for serving in tribal areas. From the beginning of the career these officers should be imparted special training, where they are made to understand the culture and ethos of tribal people.

Lack of Voluntary Organisations :

In the areas where the people are not aware of policies / programmes undertaken by the Govt., due to reason of poor education and extention services, voluntary agencies play an important role. Voluntary agencies have advantage of not being the Government organisation and have no vested interest. There is a dire need of right minded voluntary agencies who could gain the confidence of all sections of tribals. Voluntary agencies could have helped the tribals in spreading the awareness about ecology, environment and health, besides various welfare programmes taken up by the Government. The agencies could have also helped the Government departments in actually assessing the impact of their policies, programmes and how to improve functioning for better implementation of programmes. ○ ○

A Report on the Survey of Socio-Economic conditions of the Namasudras of Karimganj and Cachar Districts of Assam—A summary Note

T. R. I. Report

(The Tribal Research Institute, Assam, had conducted a survey on the socio-economic conditions of the Namasudras of the Karimganj and Cachar Districts of Assam at the instance of the Ministry of Welfare, Government of India. The main objective of the survey was to make a correct assessment of the socio-economic conditions of the Namasudras, a scheduled caste of Assam. The survey was conducted by Shri G. N. Das, District Research Officer, Karbi Anglong, N. C. Hills, Cachar and Karimganj Districts with headquarters at Diphu under the establishment of the Directorate of the Tribal Research Institute, Assam and over-all guidance and supervision of the Director, Tribal Research Institute, Assam. Here a summary note of the report on the survey is furnished—Editor).

In Assam, there are 16 nos. of scheduled castes with 9 synonyms as per Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Lists Modification Order, 1976, Government of India. Among all the scheduled castes, the Namasudras occupy the predominant position i.e. 32.97% to total scheduled castes population of Assam. A decision was taken by the meeting of the Tribal Research Institutes held in New Delhi under the aegis of the Ministry of Welfare, Govt. of India, to conduct a socio-economic survey by the Directorate of the Tribal Research Institute, Assam, among the Namasudras inhabiting the Karimganj and Cachar districts.

In order to carry out the survey a list of 100 nos. of villages having 40% or above

Namasudra population was collected in the last part of the year 1985 from various Gaon Panchayat Offices located within the jurisdiction of the two districts. Out of the list, 10 nos. of villages were selected on the basis of random sampling. Interview schedules were prepared and canvassed to 156 respondents, selected on the basis of 20% of the total number of 780 Namasudra households belonging to these villages. In addition, necessary particulars of each village viz. location, transport and communication system, civic and educational facilities and other basic amenities were recorded in the village schedule. Data were collected in the year 1986 and report writing was completed by the end of July, 1987. The report is

prepared under several chapters with penetrating analysis to highlight origin, social customs and habits of the Namasudras, population characteristics, infrastructural facilities, economic profile and trends of change etc. In the last chapter of the report several suggestions for accelerated development of the people are incorporated. On the other hand major findings have been placed just at the beginning of the report. Findings have also been narrated herewith the intention of projecting socio-economic conditions of the people, under study.

Major Findings of the Report

1. The total population of the erstwhile Cachar district (at present Karimganj and Cachar districts) constitutes 11.7% of the total population of Assam, as per 1971 Census. Again, the percentage of scheduled castes population of this district is worked out to be 12.19 of the total population of the district. The Namasudras occupy the highest position i.e. 32.97% of the total scheduled castes population in Assam. On the other hand, the Patnis and the Namasudras constitute 37.5% and 27.4%, respectively of the total scheduled castes population inhabiting the erstwhile Cachar district.

2. Although the Namasudras are generally supposed to belong to the fishing community, in fact, they are an agricultural caste in the Karimganj and Cachar districts of Assam.

3. The total no. of households selected for our study, on the basis of random sampling, is 156 only and the total population of these households is estimated at 965, out of which the no. of male and female population is 503 and 462 respectively. Sex ratio is worked out to be 1000:918.

4. Except one village which is located at a distance of 4 k.m. all other nine villages are located within the range of 0.1 k.m. to 3 k.m. only from the nearest motorable road. Two villages are located by the side of the gravelled roads and another two villages are located by the side of 'Katcha' fair weather motorable roads. People from the remaining six villages have to use foot tracts in winter season and boat in summer season to reach the motorable road. Proper maintenance of the gravelled motorable road appears to be lacking and services rendered by public buses are quite unsatisfactory.

5. Civic amenities like post office, telegraph office, health dispensary, veterinary dispensary etc. are within reach of the people, under study.

6. Pre-primary school is not established in any one of the selected villages. Lower primary schools are, of course, located in every village. The percentage of Namasudra students is found to be 79 of the total students belonging to all castes and communities, as per enrolment in the year 1985.

7. In the High School stage of education, the enrolment of students is not so much satisfactory. The no. of students, irrespective of caste and community, coming from ten villages to seventeen educational institutions is found to be 562 only, according to 1985 enrolment. In other words, 56 students, in average, from the selected villages attend various educational institutions.

8. The trend of school drop-out is gradually decreasing. The total no. of drop-outs as collected from the different educational institutions, right from L.P. to High school, is 106 nos. in 1984-85, 113 nos. in 1983-84 and 125 nos. in 1982-83. Lack of

proper guidance, extreme poverty, failure in examination and marriage of girls etc. are the fundamental causes of drop-outs.

9. Fourteen colleges are available in the Karimganj and Cachar districts for general education. The total no. of students attending various colleges from the selected villages in 1985 is found to be 42 only. Out of 42, the no. of Namasudra students is worked out to be 21, the no. of boys and girls being 17 and 4 respectively. Although the no. of college going students appears to be very thin, even then a positive outlook towards higher education has been observed among the people during our field investigation.

10. The percentage of literates among the total population of 965 is estimated at 36.5, male literacy accounts for 43.73%. In case of female literacy, the percentage is found to be 28.78 only. According to 1971 Census the percentage of male and female literacy in the erstwhile Cachar district is estimated at 40.4 and 19.9 respectively. The Increase of 8.9% of female literacy in the selected households is a healthy sign towards female education.

11. Provision of safe drinking water is quite unsatisfactory. People use to fetch water from the ponds, wells and the nearby rivers. Except the traditional method of filtering water the people do not adopt any scientific measure to get rid of water-borne diseases. The people appear to be least conscious of health hazard.

12. In spite of limited numbers of shops within the selected villages, availability of daily, bi-weekly and weekly markets near the villages has considerably helped the people in procuring essential commodities and selling their agricultural products.

13. 10 nos. of G. P. level co-operative societies with a share capital of Rs. 10,74,158/- have extended services to 29,343 nos. of shareholders out of which the no. of Namasudra shareholders is 5963.

14. Bamboo and cane works may be mentioned as the only cottage industry as observed during field investigation. Some of the households particularly in the villages Kamargram and Talikhalepar have taken up bamboo and cane works as the primary source of livelihood.

15. In respect of primary occupation it has been observed that out of 156 households, 95 households (60.9%) are engaged in cultivation, 21 households (13.5%) in bamboo and cane works, 19 households (12.2%) in service, 8 households (5.1%) in business, 7 households (4.5%) in fishing and 6 households (3.8%) in daily wage. On the other hand, in case subsidiary occupation, it is observed that 72.4% of the total households have subsidiary occupation. The percentages of households engaged in cultivation, daily wage, fishing, bamboo and cane works and business are 27.4, 26.5, 21.2, 17.7 and 7.1 respectively. Perhaps, adoption of daily wages as primary source of livelihood by 3.8% of the total no. of 156 households indicates the appalling poverty of these families. However, agriculture still plays a significant role in the economic condition of the people, although, at present, occupational pattern has undergone some sort of changes due to influence of modern education, minimum land holdings and easy transport facilities etc.

16. Out of the total population of 965, the total no. of earners and earning dependents is 290 (30.1%) and 261 (27%) respectively. On the other hand, the non-earning

members constitute 42.9% of the total population.

17. It has been found that out of 156 households, 68 households (43.6%), 44 households (28.2%) and 23 households (14.7%) possess lands in the categories '0.5', '5-10' and '10-15' bighas respectively. 8 households (5.1%) are found to possess lands in the category (15-20) bighas and 13 households (8.3%) in the category 20 bighas and above. The total area of land possessed by 156 households is found to be 1356 bighas, out of which 1070 bighas, 268 bighas and 18 bighas are brought under cultivation, home-stated and fishery respectively. It is to be noted that 32 households have got no cultivable land. The average land holding per household is 8.6 bighas. Per capita land holding is worked out to be 1.41 bighas only.

18. Cultivation of sali paddy is extensively undertaken by the people. We find 91% of the cultivable land under sali cultivation but in case of Ahu and Boro, the percentages are 23.3 and 6.8 only. The yield per bigha is estimated at 2.4 Qtls. in Sali, 2 Qtls. in Ahu and 1.64 Qtls. in Boro. According to the informants, although they are not in the habit of utilising fertilisers, pesticides and improved variety of implements etc., the rate of production would have been better if flood waters had not swept over the agricultural fields repeatedly.

19. Out of 156 households, the no. of households having different types of livestock population is as follows;

69 households	(44.23%)—bullock,
21 "	(13.46%)—he-buffalo,
26 "	(16.67%)—he-goat
59 "	(37.82%)—pigeon,
19 "	(12.18%)—fowl.

73 households	(46.79%)—cow
24 "	(15.38%)—she-buffalo
96 households	(61.54%)—she-goat
136 "	(87.18%)—duck

Among the different types of livestock population, the percentage of ducks is found to be the highest i.e. 46.61. Again, the percentage of bullocks and cows is estimated at 17. In respect of buffalos, goats, pigeon and fowls, the percentages are 3.58, 15.3, 10.3 and 7.1 respectively. It may be mentioned that rearing of fowls has been recently taken up by some of the households. Pig is not reared by them.

20. Field investigation reveals that only 9 households (5.7%) have possessed cultured fishery per household. The total area of land under fishery is 18 bighas which is 1.3% of the total area of land possessed by 156 households. Of course, the people have the habit of collecting fish by means of nets and other traditional methods mainly for household consumption.

21. Out of various sources of income, cultivation stands first because of the fact that 41.33% of the total income is derived from cultivation. Other sources, in order of sequence, are service (18.21%) bamboo and cane works (13.15%), fishing (11.05%), daily wage (8.23%) and business (7.96%). It may be mentioned here that 80 households (51.2%) live below poverty line. The average gross annual income of a household is estimated at Rs. 7590.26. per capita income is worked out to be Rs. 1227.03 only.

22. Of all the items of expenditure, food is the only item which accounts for 77.55% of the total amount of expenditure. Other items are dress and ornaments (7.98%), pay-

ment of labourers for agricultural purpose (4.35%), health (4.05%), festivals and ceremonies (2.98%), education (2.4%) and miscellaneous (0.69%). The average annual expenditure per household is found to be Rs. 7255.51. As a result, we find that the average household has a very low budget with a little surplus amount of Rs. 334.75 only per annum.

23. Rural indebtedness has affected the village economy adversely. Out of 156 households, 58 nos. (37%) are in debt. The amount of debt is found to be Rs. 1,33,600/-. The average debt per household is Rs. 856.41 and the average debt per indebted household is worked out to be Rs. 2303.45. The per capita debt is estimated at Rs. 138.45. The amount of loan taken from banks, DRDA and G.P. level co-operative societies is to the tune of Rs. 41,800/- but the amount of loan taken from village people is Rs. 91,800/-. The rate of interest for the amount taken from bank and other Government agencies varies from 10 to 14% per annum but, on the other hand, the rate of interest for the amount taken from village people is as high as 10% per month. In spite of the high rate of interest, people like to approach the village people for loan perhaps to avoid the complicated procedure of banks and other agencies.

24. The Namasudras, under study, appear to be less conscious so far as constitutional safeguards and welfare measures for upliftment of the scheduled castes people are concerned. Moreover, they have not been able to derive much benefit from the provisions offered by the Government of Assam to bring all round development of the scheduled castes population of the state.

25. Change is inevitable to a society.

Among the Namasudras also certain changes have been observed. Traditional institutions like Family and Marriage have undergone significant changes. Disintegration of joint family has taken place. Marriageable age of boys and girls has gone up in recent times. Attitude towards adoption of modern treatment of disease is a good indicator of positive change. The importance of higher education has been felt by the people. In respect of material culture viz. dress and ornaments, hair style, household articles, food habits and house pattern, we observe notable changes. In short, the mind of modern civilisation has started blowing over the Namasudra villages.

In the context of family planning and birth control measures we find that out of 131 respondents, 20 persons (15%) have expressed their negative attitude towards those measures while 111 nos (85%) have expressed their support for the scientific methods but nobody in the selected villages has taken advantage of the family planning and birth control measures. In respect of inter caste marriage also we have not found any case of such type of marriage. Evils of untouchability and atrocities are totally absent not only in the selected villages but also in Assam as a whole. According to the informants, drinking of liquor is absent among the people, although someone may take it quite secretly. It is heartening to note that drinking of liquor has not victimised anybody in the selected villages.

In the long run, we may sum up saying that the Namasudras themselves must come forward with a missionary zeal to mould and reshape their destiny by taking advantage of various welfare measures showered upon them by the Government.

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE

INTRODUCTION :

The Tribal Research Institute, Assam, with Headquarters at Guwahati was set up in 1977 as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme under "Research and Training". A full time Director was, however, appointed in July 1981. The scope of activities of the Institute includes both Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The jurisdiction of the Institute extends to entire Assam covering plains and hills.

FUNCTIONS :

As per guidelines laid down by the Govt. of India, the main functions of the Tribal Research Institute are (1) Research, (2) Evaluation, (3) Planning and (4) Training. The other important functions include publication of Books, Research Papers and Research Bulletins, Organisation of Seminars, Symposia and Workshops, participation in Exhibitions at state, regional and national levels, award of Doctoral and Post-Doctoral Research Fellowships, documentation of Tribal Life and Culture through audiovisual media, establishment of a Documentation Centre and a Data Bank on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, establishment of a Museum for the authentic documentation and preservation of the Material Culture of tribals and their heritage, establishment of a Reference Library, and so on.

RESEARCH :

The Tribal Research Institute, Assam, has so far completed 30 Nos. of important Research studies and half a dozen of such studies are in hand.

EVALUATION :

Evaluation studies numbering 7 (seven) have so far been completed and 2 Nos. of such studies are in hand.

PLANNING :

The Tribal Research Institute had prepared Project Reports for all the 19 Nos. of Integrated Tribal Development Projects during the Fifth Five Year Plan and during the Sixth Five Year it had revised the Project Reports for 17 Nos. of I.T.D.Ps.

It had also prepared the Indicators of Development for the Tribal Sub-Plan Areas of Assam during the Seventh Five Year Plan in pursuance of the guidelines given by the Ministry of Welfare, Govt. of India.

In addition to this the Institute has also been helping the Government of Assam, in the Department for Welfare of Plains Tribes and Backward Classes, in preparation of the Tribal Sub-Plan and the Scheduled Castes Component Plan.

TRAINING :

The Tribal Research Institute organizes Tribal Orientation Training Courses regularly out of its own annual budgetary allotment and Orientation Training Courses sponsored by the Department of Personnel and Training (Training Division), Govt. of India.

So far its own training courses are concerned, the courses are organised for officials and non-officials connected with the welfare and development of the Scheduled tribes. For the officers who are connected with the formulation and implementation of Tribal Sub-Plan Schemes I.T.D.P. wise at the District and Sub-divisional level and the officers entrusted with the welfare and development of the Hill Areas Plan Schemes in the Sixth Schedule Areas, Tribal Orientation Training Courses are organised.

Orientation Training Courses for non-officials like the Chairmen of the Project Implementation Committees of the Integrated Tribal Development Projects, Sub-division Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Development Boards, Members of the Managing Committees of the Gaon Panchayat level Samabai Samittees, Educated Tribal youths are also organised.

26 Nos. of such trainings—20 Nos. for officials and 6 Nos. for non-officials have so far been organised.

Under the Specific Category of Training sponsored by the Department of Personnel and Training (Training Division), Govt. of India, training courses are organised for Police, Forest and Excise Officials, Project Directors of I.T.D.Ps., Development Officers and Branch Officers of the Assam Plains Tribes Development Corporation and Assam Scheduled Castes Development Corporation,

District and Sub-divisional level Officers connected with formulation and implementation of tribal development schemes, etc.

10 Nos. of sponsored training programmes have so far been organised and conducted by the Tribal Research Institute, Assam.

PUBLICATION :

Publication of monographs and other books and Research Bulletins has been a regular feature of Assam T.R.I. The Institute has so far published eight books as shown below :

1. Chomangkan—the Death Ceremony observed by the Karbis.
 2. The Dimasa Kacharis of Assam.
 3. The Lalungs.
 4. Alienation of Tribal Land and Indebtedness.
 5. Tribes of Assam—Popular Series—Part I.
 6. Tribes of Assam—Popular Series—Part II.
 7. Application of Science and Technology for Tribal Development.
 8. Constraints of Tribal Development in North-East India.
- Another book, namely Tribes of Assam—Popular Series-Part-III is in press.

The T.R.I. Bulletin in the form of Research Journal is published annually. Six annual issues including this have so far been released. The Seventh Annual Issue in press.

SEMINAR :

The Tribal Research Institute, Assam, organizes Seminars on the problems of development of the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes at State, Regional and National levels. Subjects of Seminars and the venues

where they were organised are shown hereunder :

1. The Contribution of Assam Tribes to the Cultural Heritage of Assam and India. (State level seminar held at Boko).
2. Alienation of Tribal Land and Indebtedness (National level seminar held at Guwahati).
3. Socio-Economic Problems of the Plains Tribes of Assam (State level Seminar held at Jalah College).
4. Dimensions of Poverty among the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of Assam (State level Seminar held at Dudhnoi College).
5. Application of Science and Technology for Tribal Development (State level seminar held at Guwahati).
6. Constraints of Tribal Development in North-East India, (Regional level seminar held at Guwahati).

The following two seminars are proposed to be held shortly ;

1. Socio-Economic Problems of the Scheduled Castes of Assam, (State level seminar to be held at Guwahati),
2. National seminar on Tribal Women and Development (National level seminar to be held at Guwahati).

EXHIBITION :

The Tribal Research Institute, Assam, has been participating in the State and National level exhibitions held from time to time within and outside the State of Assam by displaying the cultural heritage of the tribes of Assam—both plains and hills—and also their fast disappearing artifacts. So far it had participated

in 10 Nos. of State level exhibitions and two Nos. of National level exhibitions. The National Handloom Expo'85 and the Tribal Habitat Exhibition organised by the National Museum of Man in Bhopal are the two national level exhibitions in which the Institute had participated.

In the Tribal Habitat Exhibition at Bhopal the T. R. I. had got a Bodo-Kachari hutment constructed and a team of Bodo-Kachari artisans and artists drawn from Kokrajhar district had not only displayed the material culture of the tribe but also presented a number of cultural items during the exhibition which were highly appreciated by the visitors drawn from different parts of India.

MUSEUM

A good beginning has already been made in establishing a Museum for the purpose of displaying and preserving the rare artifacts belonging to different ethnic tribal groups of Assam covering hills and plains. The Museum set-up will not only help in displaying and preserving the rich cultural heritage of the tribes of Assam, but will also help the research scholars and persons of various walks of life in enhancing their knowledge and further research aptitudes. Many artifacts belonging to the Bodo-Kacharis, Mishings, Rabhas, Deoris, Sonowal Kacharis, Lalungs, Karbis, Dimasa Kacharis, Rengma Nagas, Zeme Nagas, Hmars, Kukis, Garos and Hajongs have already been collected.

LIBRARY

The Institute maintains a Reference Library of its own. Important books numbering more than 5000 have already been collected. It also subscribes about twenty Research

Journals. The Library provides reading room facilities for scholars and others.

RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS

The Tribal Research Institute, Assam offers Doctoral and Post-Doctoral Research Fellowships to deserving scholars on "Various Aspects of Tribal Development" sponsored by the Ministry of Welfare, Govt. of India.

While two scholars had already obtained their Doctoral (Ph.D.) degrees through the Research Fellowship awarded by the Institute, another two Research Fellows are conducting their research studies for Doctoral Degrees.

Two Research Fellows have already completed their Post-Doctoral research studies while another Post-Doctoral Fellow is continuing his research studies.

DOCUMENTATION OF TRIBAL CULTURE

The Tribal Research Institute, Assam, has recently introduced the scheme-Documentation of Tribal Culture. The North East Council, Govt. of India, Shillong, has also helped the Institute financially for implementation of this scheme. Different aspects of culture of tribal communities inhabiting the hills and plains of Assam are proposed to be documented authentically through Audio-Visual media.

Production of 16 mm short duration coloured Documentary Films on the 'Kherai' festival of the Boro-Kachari of Assam, 'Baikhow' festival of the Rabhas and 'Ali-Ai-Lrigang' of the Mishings have already been completed. Video Film Cassette on the 'Baikhow' festival of the Rabhas has also been produced by the Institute. Documentation of different aspects of Tribal Life and Culture has also been undertaken

through the medium of Coloured Blow-Ups (Still Photography).

DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

The Tribal Research Institute, Assam, has also set-up a Documentation Centre recently. The Library of the Institute serves as the resource materials centre.

DATA BANK

A data bank on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of Assam has been started since 1988-89 with a view to providing required data on Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes to the Central and State Governments and other agencies including research scholars as and when required.

BUILDING COMPLEX

At present the Directorate of the Institute is functioning in the rented buildings. The construction of the multi-storied building complex at an estimated cost of Rs. 1.06 Crores at Jawharnagar, Guwahati, is almost in the completion stage. The building complex apart from accommodating the administrative and research personnel, will also accommodate the library, museum and the training wing along with hostel facilities for trainee officers.

The building is likely to be occupied within the first half of the year 1990-91.

MISCELLANEOUS

The Commission for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes, set-up by the Govt. of Madhya Pradesh, Bhopal, had visited our Institute in the last part of the year 1988. The Chairman and the Commission

Members expressed their high satisfaction at the functioning and the activities of the T.R.I., Assam. Dr. B.K. Roy Burman, Senior Professor, Council for Studies of Developing Societies, Delhi, also visited our Institute thrice during the year 1988-89.

Dr. B.N. Bordoloi, Director of the Institute has been conducting all the Tribal Orientation Training Courses organised by the Directorate as the Course Director. He has also been serving as Guests Speaker in various training courses organised by state level and national level Institutions. He has also been attending state, regional and national level seminars by contributing and presenting research paper within the state and outside. He also attended the XIIth International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences in Zagreb, Yugoslavia,

in July '88 and presented a research paper which was highly acclaimed.

Dr. Bordoloi was a member of the Working Group constituted by the Planning Commission, Govt. of India on the Welfare and Development of the Scheduled Castes during the Eighth Five Year Plan, 1990-1995. He is also a member of the Central Research Advisory Council constituted by the Ministry of Welfare (Tribal Development Division) Govt. of India. He is member of the Task Force for Application of Science and Technology for Tribal Development, constituted by the Department of Science and Technology; Govt. of India, Dr. Bordoloi is also a member of the Working Group on Tribals, Command over Resources constituted by the Indian Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi.



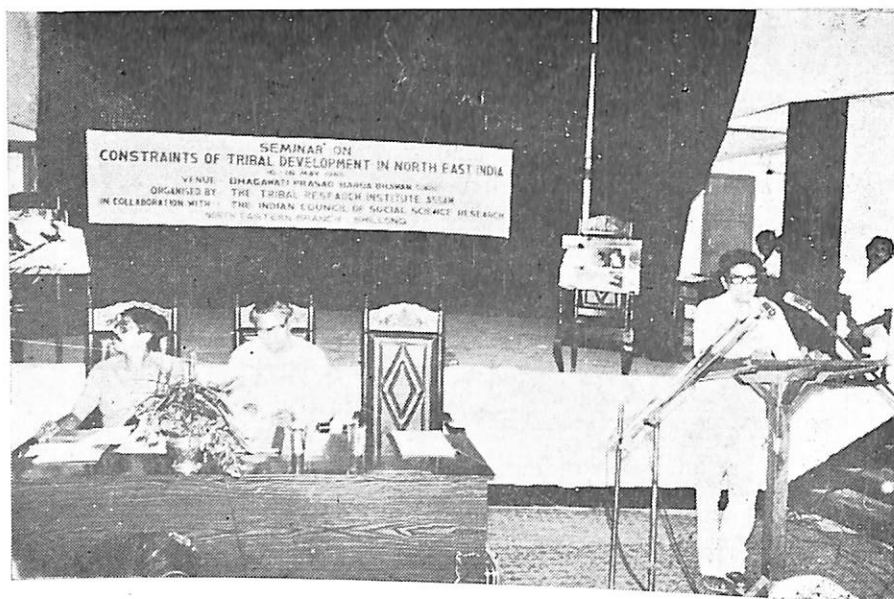
Shri P. K. Mahanta, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam, at the Foundation stone Laying ceremony of the T.R.I. Building Complex at Jawaharnagar Khanapara, Guwahati.



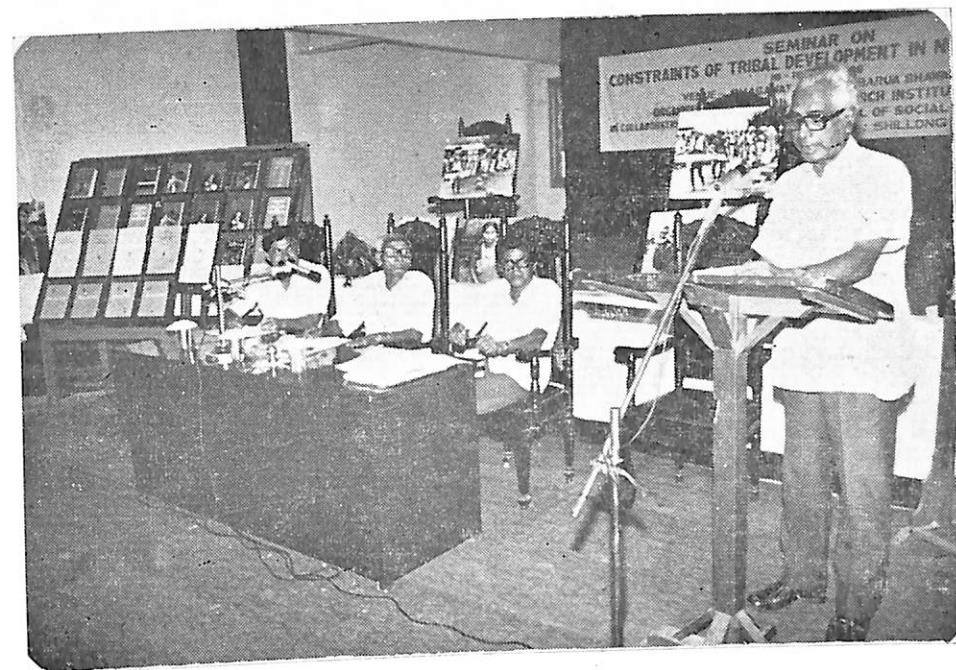
Shri P. K. Mahanta, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam, laying the foundation stone of the T.R.I. Building Complex at Jawaharnagar, Khanapara, Guwahati



Shri P. K. Mahanta, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam, delivering his lecture as the Chief Guest in the meeting held in connection with the Foundation Stone Laying function of the T.R.I. Building Complex at Jawaharnagar, Khanapara, Guwahati.



Dignitaries at the Inaugural Session of the Three Day Seminar on Constraints of Tribal Development in North-East India held in Guwahati.



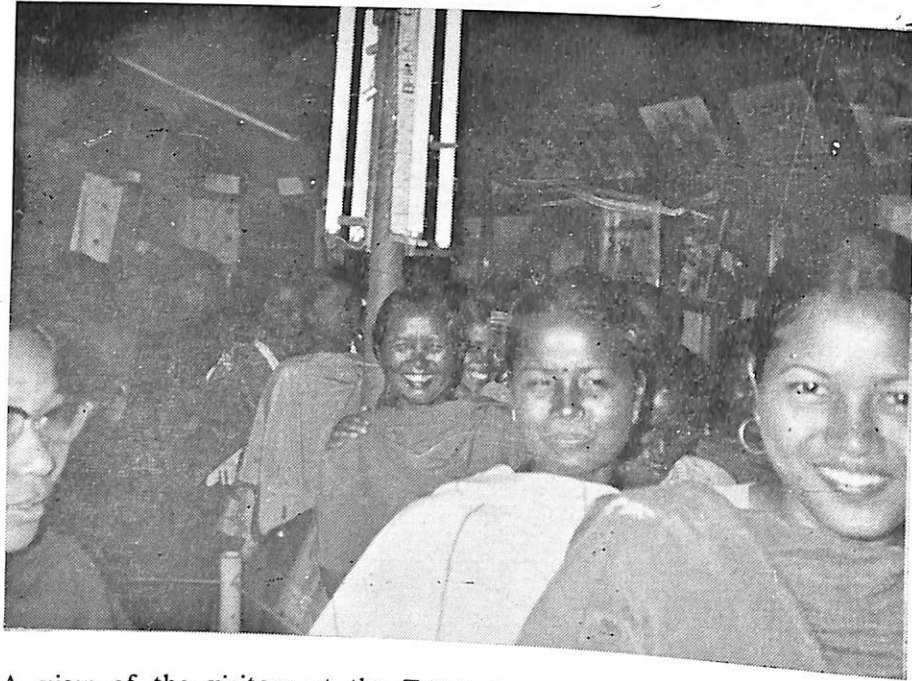
Dr. Amalendu Guha presenting his paper in the Seminar on Constraints of Tribal Development in North-East India held in Guwahati.



Dignitaries present at the One Week Tribal Orientation Training Course held at Silchar for District and Subdivisional Level Officers.



Dignitaries present at the Valedictory Function of the One Week Tribal Orientation Training Course for District and Subdivisional Level Officers of Karbi-Anglong District held at Diphu.



A view of the visitors at the T.R.I. Exhibition stall at Salbari Session of the Bodo Sahitya Sabha.



Shri Bharat Chandra Narah, Hon'ble Minister, Welfare of Plains Tribes and Backwards Classes, Assam, was led to the Dudhnoi College Premises in the local traditional way to the Inaugural Session of the Seminar on Dimensions of Poverty among the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes of Assam.



A view of the dignitaries present at the Valedictory Session of the Seminar on Dimensions of poverty among the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes of Assam held in Dudhnoi College, Goalpara.

COMMENTS OF THE SCHOLARS AND ADMINISTRATORS ON
THE FIRST ISSUE OF THE BULLETIN

"On the whole your publication will be of much interest to those of us who are concerned with tribal studies."

M. C. Goswami,
Retd. Prof. of Anthropology,
Guwahati University.

"It is rather a landmark in the history of the Tribal Research Institute, of Assam."

K. Brahma,
Head Dept. of History,
Gossaigaon College.

"I am glad to inform you that the Bulletin Vol-No. I published by the T.R.I. gives me much pleasure and valuable information about my people of Assam."

Bidhan Ch. Borah,
Ex-President, All Assam Tribal
Sangha.

"This is really a laudable venture and I must congratulate you for bringing out this nice magazine. Your Bulletin will definitely remove a long felt need."

Dr. P. C. Dutta,
Director of Research,
Arunachal Pradesh.

"I have gone through most of the contents and have found them quite interesting and profitable reading. The printing and get-up are excellent. You deserve congratulation for such a venture."

Dr. B. N. Dutta,
Head, Dept. of Folklore Research
Guwahati University.