

Page No.3 of Table I contains details of economic condition.

Col.6 of page 3 shows that 37.50% of the community live in Kutcha houses. The leaders of the Community say that about 30% of their houses are semi-pucca and that about 10% have pucca roofing. That leaves out about 60% which may be kutcha. The Commission feels that even 37.30 % is quite a high percentage and that the percentage indeed may be higher considering that almost all the members of the community are agriculturists.

As for services, only one person of the community holds a Group A post. Similarly only one person holds a Group B post. Number of Group-A posts in the Islands is 344 and that of Group B posts 458. It is pretty clear that the representation of the community in the Group A and B services is very much below the population - equivalent proportion of the community. From the statement of Shri Prasad it appears that the Community has 24 Group C and 10 Group D Holders. This preponderance of representation in Group C and D also shows the backwardness of the Community.

**CONCLUSION:** The very fact that the Bhatu are a denotified tribe and further that they have been listed as a scheduled caste in the State of their origin clearly establish their backwardness as a community. Their backwardness is also revealed by the overwhelming involvement of both the men and women of the Community in agriculture and other labour intensive jobs and occupations. Their habit of taking country liquor is another indication. Unsatisfactory performance in the field of education also reveals their backwardness. The fact that quite a large proportion of the community lives in Kutcha or semi-pucca houses indicates their socio-economic backwardness. Lastly their inadequate representations in the higher echelons of the State Service very convincingly reflect their backwardness. In view of all these factors the Commission is of the view that the Bhatu may be considered as one of the OBCs of these Islands.

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