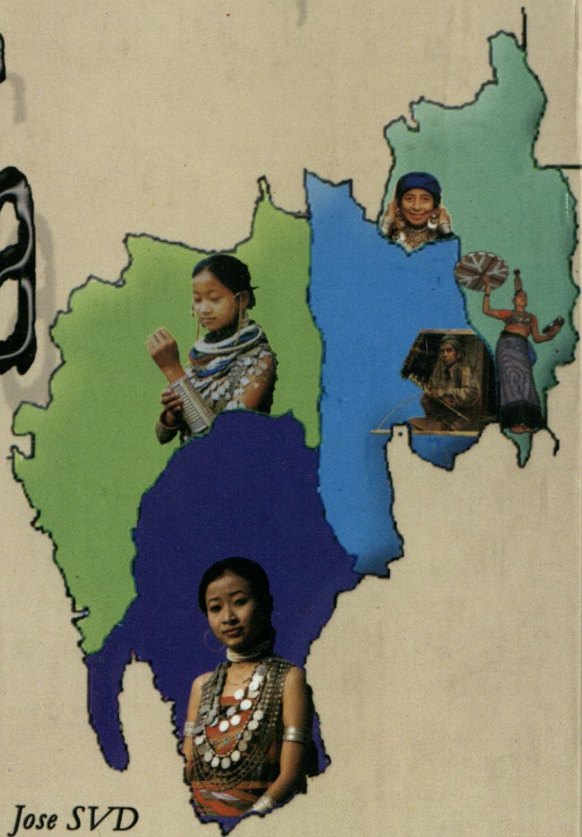


Tribal Development

T in Tripura



Chief Editor
Gautam Kumar Bera

Editors

B. K. Medhi, R.P. Athparia, K. Jose SVD

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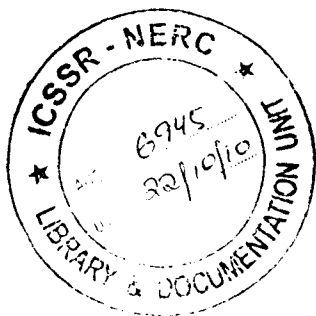
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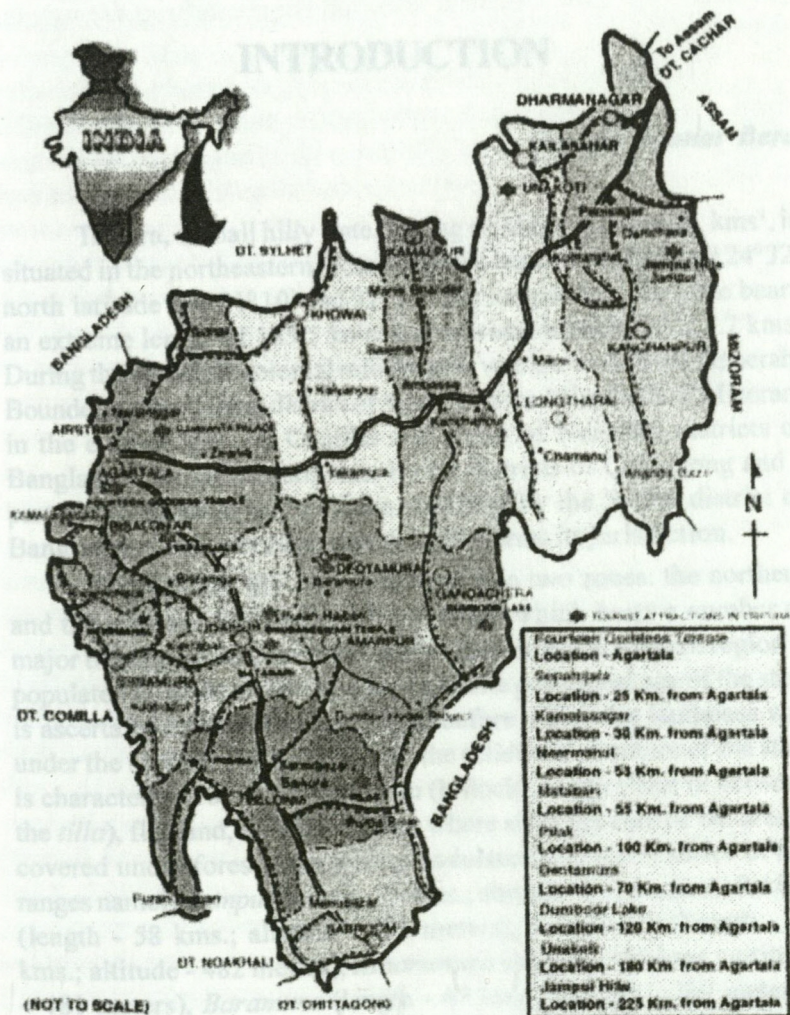
CONTENTS

Messages :		
1. <i>Shri Aghore Debbarma</i> , Hon'ble Minister, Agriculture & Tribal Welfare, Government of Tripura	i
2. <i>Most Rev. Lumen Monteiro CSC</i> , Bishop of Agartala .....	...	v
3. <i>Rev. Fr. Cyprian Pinto SVD</i> , Regional Superior, North East Region .....	...	ix
Preface .....	...	xi
<i>K. Jose SVD</i>		
Map of Tripura .....	...	xv
Introduction .....	...	1
<i>Gautam Kumar Bera</i>		
Perspectives of Tribal Development: Issues and Challenges .....	...	17
<i>K. B. Jamatia</i>		
Development of Tribal Policy in Independent India ...	...	29
<i>Gautam Kumar Bera</i>		
Education among the Reang of Tripura: Issues and Perspectives .....	...	49
<i>Lincoln Reang</i>		
Socio-Economic Status of Reang in Tripura: An Empirical Study .....	...	63
<i>Manoshi Das & Sriparna Chakraborty</i>		

Changed Socio-Political Life of the Chakma of Tripura.	79
<i>R. P. Athparia</i>	
Rubber for Tribal Welfare in Tripura.	89
<i>K. K. Raghavan</i>	
An Appraisal of Tribal Development in Tripura.	99
<i>H. L. Debbarma</i>	
Efforts of Tribal Development in Tripura: An Assessment.	121
<i>Jayanta Choudhury</i>	
Major Hurdles to Tribal Development.	137
<i>Luke Daimary</i>	
Tribal Women in Decision Making: Perspectives from Tripura.	149
<i>Tapati Chakravarti</i>	
Tribal Artisans: Bamboo and Cane Crafts in Tripura ...	157
<i>Rajesh Bhowmick</i>	
Bamboo and Cane Arts of Tripura: An Appraisal ..	165
<i>Kaberi Choudhury</i>	
Role of NGOs in Tribal Development with particular reference to Tripura: Some Observations.	171
<i>Rajib Chatterjee</i>	
Tribal Development: Policies and Perspectives	181
<i>Sourajit Roy</i>	
The Indigenous Garia Festival of Tripura: Perspectives in Anthropology and Folklore.	187
<i>Nirmal Das</i>	
Tribal Development: Role of Voluntary Health Association of Tripura.	197
<i>Sreelekha Ray</i>	

Tripura Adibasi Mahila Samiti (TAMS).....	205
<i>Rita Rai</i>	
Jana Unnayan Samiti Tripura (JUST).	219
<i>R. Mathias CSC</i>	
Economic Survey of Tribal Welfare Department, Government of Tripura.	225
<i>Bishwarath Deb Barma</i>	
Development Through Involvement: St. Xavier's Bishramganj of Tripura.	243
<i>K. J. Joseph SDB</i>	
Kok Borok: Reflections and Perspectives.	251
<i>J. Pulinthanath SDB</i>	
Valedictory Address.	257
<i>Gautam Kumar Bera</i>	
Contributors.	261
Index.	265

MAP OF TRIPURA



INTRODUCTION

Gautam Kumar Bera

Tripura, a small hilly state, having an area of 10,486 sq. kms¹, is situated in the northeastern sector of India, between 22° 56' and 24° 32' north latitude and 91° 10' and 92° 21' east longitude². The state bears an extreme length of 183.5 kms. and extreme breadth of 112.7 kms. During the erstwhile colonial rule the area was known as Hill Tipperah. Bounded by the Cachar district of Assam and the Mizo Hills of Mizoram in the eastern side, by Comilla and a part of Noakhali districts of Bangladesh in the western side, by the districts of Chittagong and a part of Noakhali in the southern side, and by the Sylhet district of Bangladesh in the northern side the state forms its jurisdiction.

Ecologically, the state is divided into two zones: the northern and the southern parts have a hilly terrain which hosts a number of major tribal groups of the state, and the plains in the western region is populated by multiethnic communities. The geological age of the state is ascertained as the Tertiary period before which the landmass was under the seabed. Topographically, the relief and structure of the state is characterized by hill slopes, *tilla* (hillock), *lunga* (land in between the *tilla*), flat land, rivers and lakes where sixty per cent of the area is covered under forests comprising undulated surface. A series of hill ranges namely *Jampui* (length - 74 kms.; altitude - 939 meters), *Sakhan* (length - 58 kms.; altitude - 782 meters), *Longtharai* (length - 48 kms.; altitude - 482 meters), *Atharamura* (length - 106 kms.; altitude - 481 meters), *Baramura* (length - 47 kms.; altitude - 269 meters), *Devtamura* (length - 85 kms.; altitude - 229 meters), and *Sardeng* running north to south parallel to one another divide the state into broad

valleys, where *Jampui*, being the highest, stands at an altitude of 939 meters above the sea level. The main rivers namely *Longai* (98 kms.), *Juri* (79 kms.), *Deo* (132 kms.), *Manu* (167 kms.), *Dhalai* (117 kms.), *Khowai* (166 kms.), *Haora* (53 kms.), *Gomati* (133 kms.), *Muhuri* (64 kms.), and *Feni* originate from hill ranges and run through the valleys.

The soil structure contains alluvium, and sandy loam to clay loam. The upland soil is deficient in potash, phosphorus and nitrates. The low land soil consists of alluvium with a fair amount of nitrogen and phosphorus. The state bears a tropical climate with three distinct seasons, viz. summer, rainy and winter where the temperature varies between 4°C and 36.8°C and the relative humidity varying between 70% and 85%. The area lies within the southwest monsoon belt and it experiences a heavy rainfall. About 60%, i.e., 6292.69 sq. kms. of the total land area is covered under forests in which 3588.183 sq. kms. is Reserved Forests, 587.633 sq. kms. is Proposed Reserved Forests, and 2116.874 sq. kms. is Unclassed Government Forests. The common vegetation is characterized by *Gamar* (*Gomelina arboria*), *Sal* (*Shorea robusta*), Bamboo (*Bambusa indica*), *Garjan* (*Dipterocarpus turbinatus*) and so on.

At the present day all the forest areas of the state have been brought under the Forest Laws and Rules that have been adopted and formulated with the approval at the floor of the Legislative Assembly of Tripura. The important ones among these are *Indian Forest Act, 1927*; *Tripura Forest Rules*; *Wildlife (Conservation) Act, 1972*; *Tripura Wildlife (Conservation) Rules*; *Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980*; *Tripura Forest (Conservation) Rules*; *Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006*; and *Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Rules, 2007*. The implementation of all these Rules and Acts provided an opportunity for the scheduled tribes and other forest dwellers for deriving all benefits by working in the forests. The *Forest (Conservation) Act* and its *Rules* allowed forest land to be diverted for use for non-forestry purposes with the receipt of same area of *khas* land by Forest

Department as compensation. These have accelerated the process of getting the Government forestland for serving the inhabitants in public interest.

The early history of Tripura, particularly prior to the fifteenth century, is shrouded in mists of legend and tradition. It is believed that the erstwhile State of Tripura derived its name from king Tripur, the fortieth descendant in the dynasty. According to *Rajmala* (chronicles of Tripura kings) scribed by Kailash Chandra Singha (1896:2) the name of the State has come from the words *Tui* (water) and *Pra* (near) meaning land adjoining water. However, other scholars believe that the name Tripura is the Sanskritized form of *Tipra*, a tribe to which the ruling family belonged. W. W. Hunter (1876:357) opines that the nomenclature was done in honour of the *Tripureswari* temple located at Udaipur built around 1501 A. D. by Dhanya Manikya who ruled the State between 1490 and 1515 A. D.

According to *Rajmala* the rulers of Tripura are the descendants of Dhruhya, the third son of Yayati of the lunar dynasty. Scholars who believe in the historicity of *Rajmala* opine that Tripura was a very ancient State and its connection can be traced to the *Sabha Parba* and *Bhisma Parba* of the epic *Mahabharata*. Singha (1896:8), however, mentions that a branch of the Shan dynasty of Upper Burma formed an independent kingdom at Kamrup. The descendants of this dynasty were driven away by the tribals of Kamrup. The eldest son of this defeated king established an independent kingdom in the Naga Hills which later on came to be known as Heremba or Cachar kingdom with its capital at Dimapur and the younger son migrated to the northern side of Cachar where he established the ancient kingdom of Tripura.

Several rulers including Shamser Gazi, who was once a Revenue Clerk under the ruler, ruled Tripura. Krishnamoni, who assumed the title Krishna Manikya after the death of Shamser Gazi ruled Tripura from A. D. 1760 to 1783. *Maharaja* Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya was the last ruling king of Tripura. He succeeded his father Birendra Kishore in 1923 and ruled till 17th May 1947. The formal integration of Tripura took place on 15th October 1949 but it gained statehood on the 21st day of February 1972.

Today Agartala (Altitude: 12.80 meters) is the capital of Tripura that happened to be one of the most famous among those principalities mentioned above. It was made the capital during the reign of *Maharaja* Krishna Kishore Manikya (1830 – 1850 A. D.), which derives its name from *agar* (incense tree) and *tala* (beneath) attributing to be the land under the *agar* tree. It is believed to be the land that nurtured *agar* tree in huge numbers. The royal palace of the kings called Ujjayanta Palace was built in 1901 A. D. where the family of the kings lived even after integration to the Indian Union. Geographically spread between the hilly undulating forest clad hilly tracts and the rice bowl of Bangladesh plains, the territory of Tripura feudal chieftainship comprised a huge concentration of the indigenous population encompassing tribals and some Hindu castes who represented similarity, at least, in respect of social manners, customs and practices. These people were juxtaposed with the intermediary castes as well as the higher castes who depicted a wide variety of social organization and equally wide range of cultural variation extending between the classical and the local, canonical and the autochthonous, the sacred and the profane.

However, during their entire tenure of kingship, the *Rajas* enjoyed complete autonomy in respect of the management of the internal affairs of their principality. The *Rajas* of Tripura tried to build up a viable polity by accommodating the various forces of the Tripura society in a system of coordination and control that had several dimensions: social, economic, political, cultural and moral. These endeavours on the part of the *Rajas* expanded and organized the opportunities of interaction among the different strata of the society under their auspices. Intensive interaction among the different ethnic groups accentuated the process of cultural synthesis, which culminated in a series of achievements in the various facets of their society and culture. The Tripura polity started succumbing in the last century when the country headed for democracy. Despite being the fact that there was decline in the social and cultural traditions that was systematically breaking the indigenous social and political institutions, the vestiges of some of the old forms persisted in its own manner. Possibly the old forms continued due to the probable absence of a viable alternative or it may have persisted with a new

social meaning that has taken shape in the changed socio-political environment under a new canopy of a democratic government.

Tripura achieved the status of full-fledged statehood on February 21, 1972. Etymologically it derives its identity from the ethnic group Tipera, or Tripuri in its Sanskritized form, which belongs to the *Kirata* or the Indo-Mongoloid stream. People speak here Kok Borok language belonging to the Tibeto-Burman family of languages. Immigration to this soil took place from the erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and also from other parts of eastern India during the pre-colonial period. The erstwhile kings invited Brahmans from Mithila, described as *Bangadvar*, and from further west, Kanyakubja, who served in the court of the kings and other professions as desired by the feudal lords. The Dhanuks came from Bihar and worked as scavengers here. However, large-scale immigration of refugees took place from erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) after the achievement of national independence in general and the annexation of the State of Tripura with the Indian Union on October 15, 1949 in particular. This trebled the population dynamics and reduced the proportion of the tribals, the original settlers of the soil. It was the glaring example of demographic metamorphosis in this part of the country.

As per the Census of India 2001 the state of Tripura ranks 22nd in terms of population in the whole of the nation with a literacy rate of 73%. The total population of the state is 3,199,203. Of the total population, 993,426 persons are Scheduled Tribes (ST) constituting 31.1 per cent. The state has registered 16.4 per cent decadal growth of ST population during the period 1991-2001. There are nineteen (19) notified Scheduled Tribes in the state.

Tripuri, the main ST in the state, alone accounts for more than half of the total ST population of the state (54.7 per cent), followed by the Riang (16.6 per cent), Jamatia (7.5 per cent), Chakma (6.5 per cent), Halam (4.8 per cent), Magh (3.1 per cent), Munda (1.2 per cent), Any Kuki Tribe (1.2 per cent), and Garo (1.1 per cent). These are the major tribes in the state. Along with Tripuri they constitute about 97 per cent ST population of the state (Table below). The rest of the tribes are small in population size.

Population and proportion of major STs, 2001 Census

SL. No.	Name of the Scheduled Tribe	Total population	Proportion to the total ST population
1	All Scheduled Tribes	993,426	100%
2	Tripuri	543,848	54.7%
3	Riang	165,103	16.6%
4	Jamatia	74,949	7.5%
5	Chakma	64,293	6.5%
6	Halam	47,245	4.8%
7	Mogh	30,385	3.1%
8	Munda	12,416	1.2%
9	Any Kuki Tribe	11,674	1.2%
10	Garos	11,180	1.1%

The tribals in the state are predominantly rural (97.4 per cent). One third of the total ST population of the state live in West Tripura district (39 per cent), followed by South Tripura (29.1 per cent), Dhalai (16.7 per cent), and North Tripura (15.1 per cent). Dhalai district, however, has recorded the highest proportion (54 per cent) of ST population. As per 2001 Census, sex ratio of the ST population is 970, which is below the national average for STs (978). The Jamatia has recorded the highest sex ratio of 996 among the major STs. On the other hand comparatively low sex ratio has been recorded among the Munda (950), Chakma (951), and the Riang (962). The child sex ratio (0-6 age group) for the STs in the state (981) is higher than the corresponding aggregated national average (973). It is important to note that while the Jamatia has recorded a high overall sex ratio, the child sex ratio (958) among them is comparatively low. This situation is just the opposite among the Chakma.

Among all tribals, 56.5 per cent of the population has been recorded as literate, which is higher than the national average for STs (47.1 per cent). The male literacy rate of 68 per cent and female of

44.6 per cent show high gender disparity in literacy. Any Kuki Tribe with 73.1 per cent literacy rate is well ahead of other major STs. The Tripuri has recorded literacy rate of 62.1 per cent with male and female literacy rate of 81.9 per cent and 63.8 per cent respectively. On the other hand more than half of the population among Munda, Riang, and Chakma are illiterate (Table below).

Literacy rate among major tribal people

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheduled Tribe	Literacy Rate (7 years and above)		
		Total	Male	Female
1	All Scheduled Tribes	56.5	68.0	44.6
2	Tripuri	62.1	73.7	50.2
3	Riang	39.8	51.8	27.3
4	Jamatia	60.2	72.5	47.9
5	Chakma	47.6	59.5	35.0
6	Halam	56.1	67.5	44.5
7	Mogh	51.4	61.6	40.9
8	Munda	33.6	43.8	22.8
9	Any Kuki Tribe	73.1	81.9	63.8
10	Garos	66.8	75.3	58.3

Among all tribals, 62.7 per cent of the children in the age group 5-14 years have been attending schools or any other educational institutions. Any Kuki Tribe have recorded the highest (77.6 per cent) and the Munda show the lowest (36.7 per cent) percentage attending schools or any other educational institutions. As regards the level of education, merely 9.5 per cent of total literates among STs have educational level of Matriculation standard / Secondary standard and above. Among the major tribal groups, Tripura have 10.5 per cent of their total literates as matriculates, while among the Munda (4 per cent), Riang (5.7 per cent), and the Magh (6.5 per cent) this percentage is low.

Variation of population during hundred years

Census Years	Scheduled Caste	Scheduled Tribe	Others	Total	Density of Population
1901	(A)	91679	81646	173325	17
1911	(A)	111308	118305	229613	22
1921	(A)	171610	132827	304437	29
1931	(A)	192240	190210	382450	36
1941	(A)	256991	256019	513010	49
1951	40457	237953	367297	645707	62
1961	119725	360070	662210	1142005	109
1971	192860	450544	912938	1556342	148
1981	310384	583960	1158714	2053058	196
1991	451116	853345	1452744	2757205	263
2001	555724	993426	1650053	3199203	305

Note : (A) Separate data not available. Data of 1951 based on local tabulation

Many scholars believe that the royal family of Tripura belonged to the Tipera (also called Tripuri / Tripura) tribe, who are classified under the Indo-Mongoloid or the *Kirata* group and are Bodo in terms of their linguistic identity. The Tripuri speak in Kok Borok, which comes under the Tibeto-Burman family of languages of Sino-Tibetan group and have close resemblance with Kachari and Garo dialects. The Meitei and Bishnupuriya, referred to under the blanket jargon Manipuri, speak in Manipuri, the Halam speak in Halam, the Magh use the language of Burma and the Chakma language bears influence of Bengali though both of these languages differ in many respects.

However, for historical reasons Bengali is the dominant language of the state. The erstwhile rulers accepted Bengali as the language of the State administration for five centuries of their rule. Though Kok Borok happens to be the mother tongue of the Tripuri community, yet most the people belonging to the urban area do not speak in it and the

language is at the stage of transition. Kok Borok is predominantly a tonal language where most of the words carry at least two meanings with its falling and rising intonation. In Kok Borok literature, it is difficult to analyze the Kok Borok words in terms of the morphological process involving the complex matters of morpho-phonetics, though their morpho-syntactic categories can be defined formally. In standard grammatical usage there are both prescriptive and descriptive grammatical rules. The normative or prescriptive rules guide how one ought to speak or write. On the contrary the descriptive rules describe the language.

The communities living in Tripura are patriarchal by authority and patrilineal by descent except the Garo and the Khasi who are matriarchal and matrilineal. The families belonging to the same community living in a village is called *para* or *bari* and very often are named after the chief of the village and sometimes named after the *chhara* (rivulet). Most of the communities are united through common village organization, which also reflects remarkable solidarity in tribal communities. In the marriage system they prefer both bride price and dowry and *jamaikhata* (marriage by service) is still practised by some tribals. Though four major religions are being subscribed to, yet animism is the order among the tribals. However, there is a tendency of Hindu mode of tribal absorption except among the Magh and the Chakma who are Buddhists, and the Murasing and Majhipure who profess Vaisnavism.

Tripura places itself proudly in the map of fairs and festivals of India. The most important festival is the *Kharchi* associated with the worship of *Chouddo Devta* (Fourteen Gods) followed by *Ker* and *Garia*. The other festivals include *Ganga puja*, *Durga puja*, *Deepavali*, *Baisakhi mela*, *Poush Sankranti mela* at Tirthamukh, *Mahamanipara mela* at Belonia, *Unakoti Tirtha mela* at North Tripura and *Tripura Sundari puja* at Udaipur. Tripura has retained the customary laws till date. Their two-tier system of operation of authority structure is maintained well both at village level and at the inter-village level.

Tripura has witnessed both the nationalist movement and revolutionary movements waged in defence of peoples' rights against the princely administration. The bifurcation of Bengal in 1905 A. D. led to the *Swadeshi* upsurge in Tripura. In 1938-39 *Harijan* movement took place against Agartala Municipality. In 1940-42 the Riang led by Ratanmani raised voice against the feudal lords. However, the Jamatia in 1863 and the Kuki in 1871 have showed the tradition of militant struggle.

The tribal communities prefer to wear clothes made by themselves. Males wear turban and a narrow piece of cloth as lower garment. Females wear a long piece of cloth called *pachhra* and the breasts are covered by a small piece of cloth called *risha* embroidered with various designs. The Riang and the Molsom women adore themselves with various ornaments. The necklace of the Riang is called *rangbatang* and the Molsom put on *mala*, a bead necklace. The common ear ornaments are known as *wasum*, *dhedi* and *taiya*; bangles are known as *kasar* and *chudi*; and nose ornaments are called *kali* and *bali*. Some communities have the flair for traditional art and craft that include drawing, floor painting, modelling, engraving, wall painting and body painting, basketry, embroidery on cloth and leather, weaving and pottery.

Though the state is located in the northeastern sector of our country, yet it is not cut off from the mainland, as it apparently seems. Tripura is a frontier state with almost all its fringes touching the international boundary at a length of 846 kms. or so. Under this backdrop with 'its tribal autochthones and 'refugees', the notion of purity and pollution in terms of acceptance of food and water is either relatively weak or almost non-existent' (Singh, 1996: xviii)³.

After introducing the book in terms of its history, language, culture and so on, it proceeds on to the **Key Note Address** delivered by **K. B. Jamatia** who brought into relief perspectives of tribal development that were initiated half a century ago through *Panchsheel*. His deliberations revolved round the developmental attributes that are considered mandates in welfare activities. In a general parlance he spoke of the whole of the nation and put forth the theoretical dimension

of development as a concept. The **Theme Paper** presented by **Gautam Kumar Bera** suggested that to the Indologists, possibly Kautilya's *Artha Shastra* stands as the first monumental work which refers to tribals as a category of people and Emperor Asoka was the first one to initiate the process of tribal development, may be under a different nomenclature. But, the credit of conceptualizing the studies on tribes as a category and their welfare goes to the British, who had a different goal in their mind. Until 1920's the forerunners of the national freedom struggle kept these indigenous population away from manifesting their plight. It was the Constitution of the Union of India that provided a legal measure for safeguarding the interests of the tribal people at large. After independence the Nehru-Elwin duo provided the countrymen a five-point action plan as five fundamental principles of development, called Nehru's *Panchsheel*. With the passage of time there was further evolution of ideas concerning tribal development and to accentuate this process separate plans and programmes were initiated as a mode of National Tribal Policy, which in some way or the other reflected indigenization of governmental attributes. He also highlighted some of the measures of tribal development that should have been the mandate particularly for the states of northeastern India, which are flanked almost on all sides by the neighbouring countries. As a theoretical guideline these policies should be initiated for having a proper governance of the land and the people. The recent developments in this field should also be appreciated and honoured for the real development of the area at large.

Scholars today believe that education and human development have a symbiotic relationship as has been shown by **Lincoln Reang** who has tried to portray the educational perspective of the Riang from an emic point of view. As an insider his feeling was that ignorance, illiteracy and poverty are the main reasons behind educational underdevelopment. This has been accentuated by ill communication and their *jhum* based economic sustenance. Their habitats being located in forest clad hill regions does not allow them to avail of modern day amenities of life. He thus advocated for proper governance of this tribal community who are enlisted as Primitive Tribal Group by the Government.

While dealing with the socio-economic problems of the tribes of Tripura **Manoshi Das** and **Sriparna Chakraborty** brought in to relief the case of the Riang, the tribe discussed earlier. Their major concern was to look into the social and economic profiles of this tribe who live in interior areas. They also suggested a measure for their upliftment through developmental measures. With a similar thought **R. P. Athparia** has given an ethnographic picture of the Chakma in a holistic perspective. Tracing historical anecdotes, he has highlighted the major issues that revolve round the Chakma way of life. The economic mobility from shifting hill cultivation to settled cultivation has given them a way to strengthen their economy. Almost for four decades or so rubber plantation has been introduced in Tripura, which changed the way of life of many a people as has been suggested by **K. K. Raghavan**. With the introduction of this plantation scheme the Rubber Plantation Board was set up to ameliorate the livelihood of the tribal people. Of late, it has been seen that this plantation scheme has enhanced their income substantially and wherever necessary rehabilitation of shifting hill cultivators has been done in an effective manner.

Five scholars have focussed their attention towards the main theme of the workshop. While portraying the facets of tribal development, **H. L. Deb Barma** has shown the overall attributes of tribal development as initiated by the State Government. He has given a detailed picture of facets and attributes of development that has been so far availed of by the tribal people at large in this state. **Jayanta Choudhury** focussed his attention towards the initiatives of developmental attributes and its impact on the tribal society. He has also suggested some measures to improve the current status of living addressing issues of development. Taking the whole of north eastern India as its canvas **Luke Daimary** brought into relief the factors like land alienation, corruption, insurgency and the role of civil societies. Today we belong to welfare state and such issues are in practice since ages. Large scale immigration has brought in the problem of land alienation affecting indigenous way of life to a large extent. His proposition to incorporate the civil society as a machine of development

is a suggestion from his end to resolve the problems of backwardness of society. With a different strain of thought **Tapati Chakraborty** highlighted the issues related to the empowerment of women in tribal society. Based on a personal survey conducted by her, the authoress found that women share equal power and prestige at the domestic level whereas they were least involved in the decision making process at the community level. The traditional system of tribal governance did not have any decision making role for tribal women. But with the 73rd amendment of the constitution in 1992, there marked a new era in the federal democratic set up in the country which provides not only constitutional safeguards and status to the *Panchayati Raj* Institutions, but also it removes the gender imbalances by way of creating at least 1/3rd space in political participation and decision making. Her presentation with empirical findings captured both the qualitative as well as quantitative profiles of women empowerment.

Two scholars namely **Rajesh Bhowmick** and **Kaberi Choudhury** have highlighted the aspect of traditional art present among the tribals of Tripura. This tiny state is famous for bamboo and cane work and the tribal communities form the stock of artisans. Along with their daily household chore and economic pursuit like *jhum* cultivation both men and women involve themselves in this work. In reality bamboo is inextricably related to their life both material and philosophical. It forms both transient culture as well as intransient way of life. From birth till death their life revolves round bamboo. Hence, they find a pleasure in creating new ideas and thought through bamboo and cane designs. It is not a mere craft to them, but it is a way of life for them.

The role of NGOs plays an important role in tribal development apart from the functioning of government machineries. **Rajib Chatterjee** has presented that NGOs play a key role at the grassroot level to ameliorate the standard of living of the people by way of removing distress present among them. The NGOs share responsibilities in providing basic social services such as infrastructure building, provision of basic education, agricultural extension, health services and so on. They also raise public awareness on different

developmental issues such as gender equality, environmental protection, health, etc. Though both the papers were generic in nature, yet the authors tried to highlight some basic issues pertaining to Tripura through their deliberations. In his paper, **Sourajit Roy** has evaluated the tribal development policies of independent India and has tried to gauge the nature and extent of development in terms of quantitative profile. He has also highlighted some of the visions that are applicable to understand the tribal scenario of the country.

With a little departure from the field **Nirmal Das** highlighted one of the major festivals of the state that is under the process of universalization and secularization. There have been carrying forward and upward of some cultural forms correlating it with the greater Sanskritic canopy. It also justifies the Hindu mode of tribal absorption. In her paper, **Sreelekha Ray** has delineated perspectives of tribal development through major developmental progress of the state. These landmarks in one hand acted as a source of inspiration to people and on the other it brought new challenges to cope up with the immediate situation.

Four institutional papers have been appended here to understand the scenario of Tribal Development in Tripura in a particular frame of space. It is no denying a fact that still there are some institutions, which act relentlessly for the service to the mankind. These three are no exception to the rule. They have been helping for the cause of human welfare in some form or the other, both from individual capacity as well as governmental capacity. The **Valedictory Address** was delivered by **Gautam Kumar Bera**.

NOTE

- 1) The area of Tripura has been shown as 10,486 sq. kms., as per the records of the Registrar General of India attested by the Surveyor General of India, though K. S. Singh (*c.f. People of India*) and Samarjit Kar (*c.f. Tripuray Bedate Ele*) mention it 10,477 sq. kms. Some private publications mention it to be 10,491 sq. kms., and the Department of Information, Culture and Tourism, Government of Tripura mentions it 10,491.69 sq. kms.
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- 2) The geographical position as per the records of the Registrar General of India attested by the Surveyor General of India, is between $22^{\circ} 56'$ and $24^{\circ} 32'$ north latitude and $91^{\circ} 21'$ and $92^{\circ} 21'$ east longitude, though the Department of Information, Culture and Tourism, Government of Tripura mentions it to be between $22^{\circ} 56'$ and $24^{\circ} 32'$ north latitude and $90^{\circ} 09'$ and $92^{\circ} 20'$ east longitude.
- 3) One cannot collate this concept keeping in view the pan Indian cognition, as has been seen by Singh (*ibid.*) through his study on the *People of India: Tripura*. It is observed that the concept of *jal chal* and *jal achal* is very much existent among the immigrant population. This seems to be a hangover in their cognitive dimension brought forward from their ancestral land. With the gradual delinking from the natal core, they apparently might not be projecting this view of purity and pollution, but if put under scrutiny of matrix transaction, the existence of very notion of purity and pollution is in the minds of men that can be justifiably attested in the vertical ladder.

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About the Book:

Development is a wide and complex subject that is being continually debated both in government and non-government circles, in the bureaucratic as well as academic world. To many, it means the provision of basic economic services, while to others it is nothing but social progress. For some others, it means liberation from poverty and exploitation; and for others, the integration

stream. Now, this development paradigm has not taken on an even path among all the people most specifically among the Scheduled Tribes population who accounts 8.2% of the total population in the country. When it comes to Tripura it is observed that almost 84% of the people of this state live in villages. They include 19 tribal communities, who constitute 31% of the total population of the state. Though the state is endowed with huge natural resources yet the poverty of the people remains a matter of major concern, 66.88% of the population of Tripura is living below poverty line, which is overshadowing the quality of life of general people. The state governments have a crucial role to play in the process of translating the vision into a reality. The people of the states have a dream, a dream for a better and brighter future. Will the people participate proactively to translate this dream into reality? Will NGOs participate in the development process and become true mediators between the people and the government? These and other pertinent questions need to be raised by us on the one hand and extend our helping hand in constructively responding to the needs of the people.

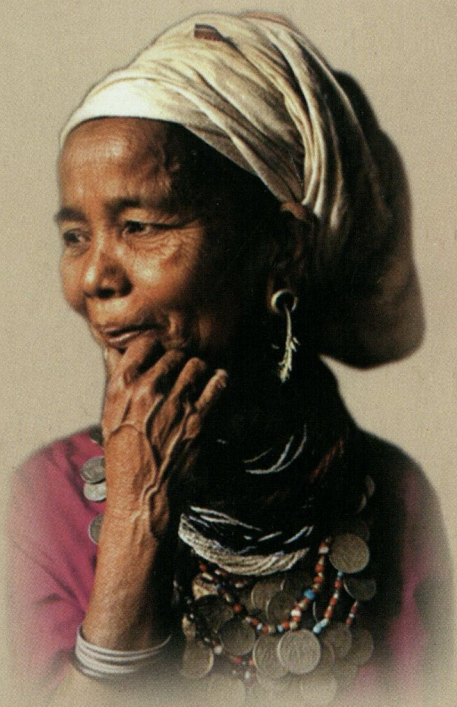
This book will be of interest to those who do further research on tribal development with special reference to state specific perspectives. No doubt it will prove greatly useful for policy makers, social scientists, NGOs and other development departments of the Governments, thus in turn it contributes to the welfare of the civil society as well about the Book.

About the Editors

Dr. Gautam Kumar Bera a specialist in Social and Cultural Anthropology received several distinguished awards and honours at both national and international levels. He is the Life Member of the Indian Anthropological Society, Kolkata, Foundation Fellow of Sanskriti – North Eastern Institute of Culture and Religion and the Oriental Institute of Cultural and Social Research, Allahabad. He has to his credit a number of publications which are widely appreciated.

Prof. Birinchi K. Medhi, being a social anthropologist Medhi sees man not as an anthropological subject only; as a novelist and short story writer does. He tries to understand the agonizing and devastating impacts of modernity on life and cultures of North-East India which he depicts through novels, poems, columns and lyrics. Medhi has a number of publications in Anthropology, both in Assamese and English, to his credit. At present he is a Professor of Social Anthropology in the Department of Anthropology, Gauhati University, Assam. Dr. R. P. Athparia is a well known name in the world of Anthropology in North East India. At present he is the Head of Office in the Anthropological Survey of India, North East Regional Centre, Shillong. He is the Executive Member of North-East India Council for Social Science Research, Shillong. He edited five volumes of publications including Renewable Energy Resource and Its Management. Many of his research papers on anthropological and social issues on North-East are published in the well known research journals in the country.

K. Jose SVD is the Founder Director of Sanskriti. Jose is a Life member of this Society which has a number of Anthropological and Folklore Research Institutions World-wide including Institute of Indian Culture, Mumbai. He is currently doing his Doctoral Studies Folklore from Gauhati University. He has presented several research papers in various International, National and Regional Seminars. His areas of interest are studies on indigenous knowledge systems for sustainable development, Peace initiatives in North East India.



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