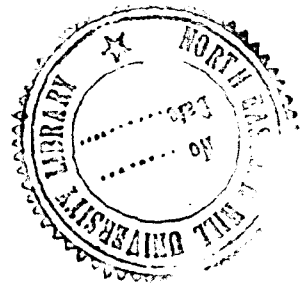


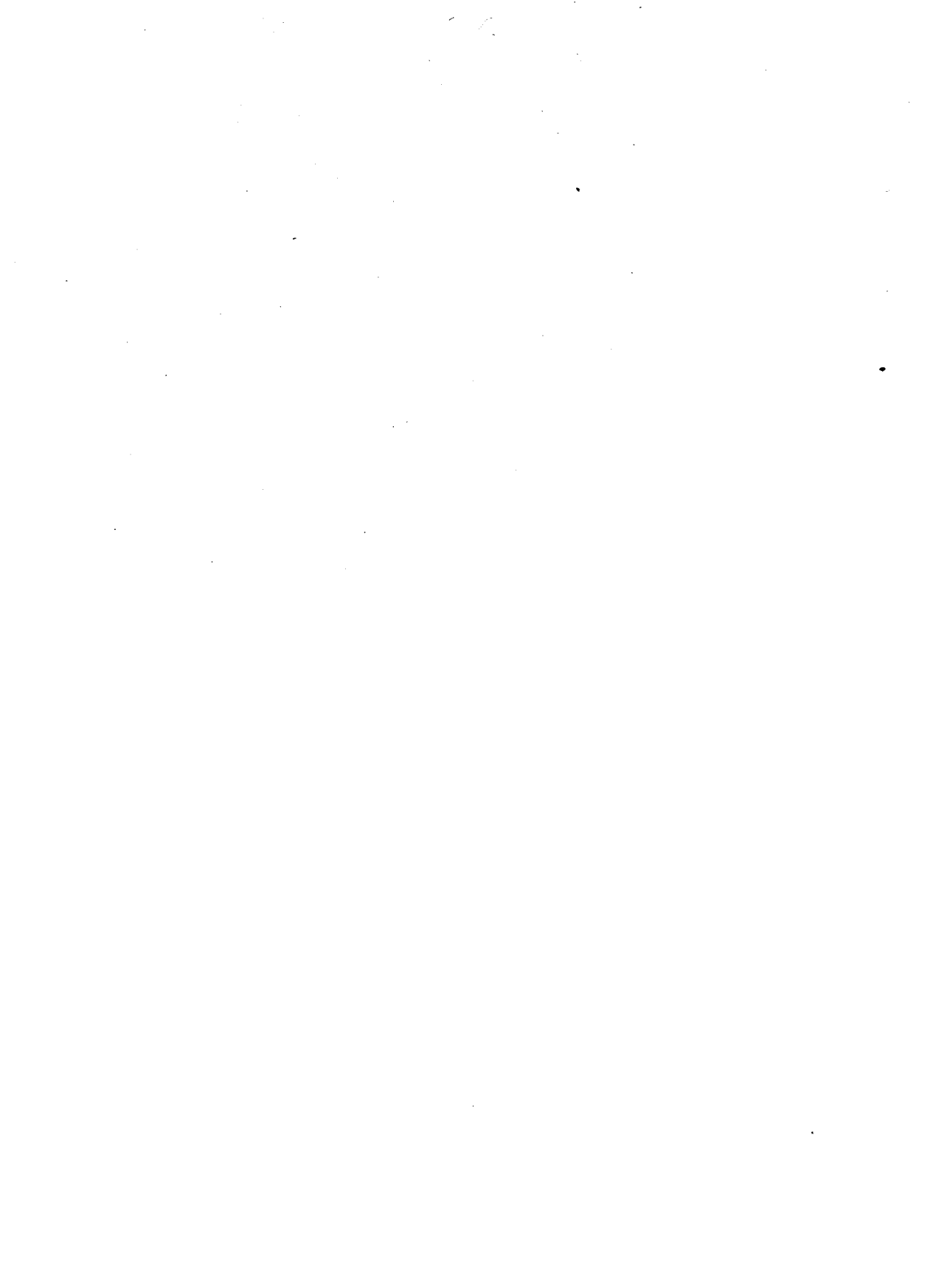
# Primitive Tribes

The First Step



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# Primitive Tribes

**The First Step**

*Edited by*  
Surajit Sinha  
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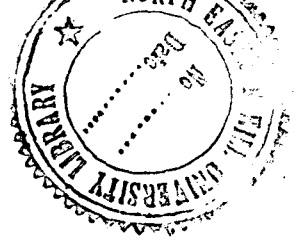
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## INTRODUCTION

When we think of tribal development, it is development of a number of groups which are at different stages of socio-economic development. At one extreme are groups which are indistinguishable from the general agricultural communities in the more backward areas while at the other extreme are the groups which still lead a secluded and archaic mode of life. This situation of large difference in the levels of socio-economic development of various communities has always posed important issues before the planners and administrators. Therefore, there has been an effort to identify the more backward communities and make special programmes for those groups. The Scheduled Areas and Tribes Commission, the Shilu Ao Committee and a number of other reports have listed the more backward groups. In some states, special programmes and special facilities have also been provided for these groups.

### *Backwardness and Poverty*

On the eve of the Fifth Five Year Plan formulation, the entire range of programmes under tribal development was reviewed. The problem of the more backward tribal communities was also discussed in considerable detail. While considering these problems, it was noted that backwardness itself needed a closer scrutiny. Amongst the backward, are those groups

who are at distinctly earlier stages of economic evolution like hunters, food gatherers, and shifting cultivators. These groups have to be distinguished from those more backward communities which are economically worse off, compared to the general tribal population. In earlier discussions, no clear distinction had been attempted between poverty and conditions ascribable to a prior stage of economic development. The groups which are at the pre-agricultural level of technology are not necessarily poor. The food gatherer, who may entirely subsist on the forest, is not poor because his state of economic development is different, where poverty in the conventional sense has no meaning. There may be deprivation and consequent 'want' if his natural resources are being encroached upon. This 'want' has to be differentiated from 'poverty' of the modern context.

### *Defining the Primitive*

In the new strategy of tribal development, therefore, the two concepts, viz, a prior stage of economic development and a lower level in the economic structure have been clearly distinguished. Those groups, which fall in the former category, have been categorised under primitive tribal communities while those in the latter category are termed as the more backward tribal communities.

Agricultural economy has been taken to be the water-shed for identification of primitive tribal communities. The pre-agricultural economic groups generally have been included in the primitive communities. The highest form of technology in the case of these groups can be said to be practised by shifting cultivators. Shifting cultivation is a stage of graduation from food gathering and hunting to settled agriculture. Even here, there are no clear boundaries. It is well known that process of change may not inform all facets of community life simultaneously. In the North East, all shifting cultivators are not entirely dependent on it. They depend on shifting cultivation in varying degrees. There are groups who are entirely dependent on shifting cultivation, while there are groups who are only nominally or partially dependent on this form of cultivation. Many of these groups, however, have advanced educationally and socially as a result of continued effort in social services. In their case, shifting cultivation does not represent a pre-agricultural stage of socio-economic life; it is, more appropriately, one of the means of livelihood in their peculiar situation. It is as good a source of livelihood as agriculture or mechanised agriculture or any other form on which a community may subsist. Therefore, in defining primitive tribal groups, some more distinguishing features have to be identified. It appears that literacy is an important criterion which may reasonably indicate the general level of social development of a community. Therefore, besides the stage of economy criterion, level of literacy has also

been taken as a characteristic to identify the groups which need special attention and could be properly categorised as primitive tribal communities. Five per cent literacy level appears to be a good enough server for this purpose.

### *Problem of Identification*

Before taking up a programme for development of the primitive groups, the first problem is their precise identification. While a number of sociologists and anthropologists have worked on different communities, there is no uniform coverage. The detailed information in relation to most of the groups may be quite old. It has to be appreciated that in a fast changing society, even a decade may be a long enough period to disturb the traditional life pattern and the new situation may be quite distinct from earlier accounts. Therefore, identification of these groups has been taken up in the first instance.

The State Governments were requested to take up reconnoitral survey of the more backward tribal communities from amongst whom it may be possible to pick up the primitive groups. The Anthropological Survey of India has had long experience and close contact with these groups and, therefore, their help would also be required in this task of identification.

### *The Workshop*

When this exercise was started in the field, it was soon realised that the concept of primitive tribal groups put forward could be usefully crystallised if those engaged in the task of identification of these groups could come together and discuss their field experience in relation to these groups. The reconnoitral survey itself requires a focus different from general ethnographic studies. It has to address itself to the specific problems which may be faced by these communities and it should help in evolving a suitable strategy for each of these groups. A workshop on primitive groups was, therefore, convened and all those involved in the survey and formulation of programmes for the primitive groups were invited. A number of papers on selected primitive tribal groups were presented by several scholars. A basic frame for the reconnoitral survey was also presented on behalf of the Ministry of Home Affairs. This literature formed the basis of our discussion in the Workshop. The idea was to clarify concepts in relation to identification the lines on which the reconnoitral and detailed studies are to be undertaken, and the possible direction for the economic development programmes for the concerned groups.

Shri T.C.A. Srinivasavaradan Addl. Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, initiated the discussion. He suggested that problems of these small communities should be viewed in a broader perspective than has been done so far. Closer contact with these groups should enable us to gain a proper understanding of the problems which they are facing and devise programmes for their fast economic development so that they can be brought closer to the larger societies as soon as possible.

In the paper entitled "Problems of Diagnostic Research and the Strategy of Development of Pre-Agricultural Primitive Tribal Communities", Dr. Surjit Sinha Director, Anthropological Survey of India, emphasised that the proper understanding of the situation in relation to these communities will require a historical perspective of their problems. The basic question is how to bring the process of science and technology within the social control of the participating groups. Education has an important role in bringing about the process of modernization within their social and cultural outlook. The new world in which they have to participate and live has to be explained to them in commonsense terms. The research studies have to present the essential information both in qualitative and quantitative terms so that they can form the basis for programming development and influencing the process of change.

Dr. B. K. Roy Burman invited attention of the scholars to the fact that although certain communities may be considered to be pre-agricultural in the sense that they are dependent on hunting, food gathering and collecting economy, the entire communities are not at the same stage. For example, the Pardies in Maharashtra are at hunting stage, yet a number of them are now at home in market economy; some of them are cultivators and agricultural labourers and only a small section now depends on hunting. It will, therefore, be necessary that this small group is identified so that its problems of transition are attended. Each tribe should be studied in the context of the micro situation so that specific solutions for its specific problems can be found.

After the above preliminary remarks, the attention of the participants was invited to the first question which we have before us, viz, that of identifying the specific groups and preparing a design for collecting the necessary information so as to enable programme formulation. In a number of cases, the published information is rather old and outdated. In the earlier reports, reliance had often been placed on ethnographic reports on standardised customs and reports of administrators and field workers spread over a long period. It will not be possible either to accept all the backward groups as primitive groups for special attention or to rely on that information for detailed programme formulation. For example, the Chenchus in Andhra Pradesh are a large group spread over a vast area.

Some sections amongst them may have changed under the impact of new developmental processes. It is possible that some of them may have become worse off economically, being drawn into the world of developing societies without adequate preparedness. Thus, although they may be poor, they would have lost their primitive characteristics. They will be, more or less, in the same position as the landless labourers in the rural economy. Therefore, the solution for their problems will be different from the one for those remanent sections who may still be in the pre-agricultural stage, comparatively isolated, dependent on food gathering, hunting, etc. In a sense, various sections in this community will be at different stages in the temporal sequence of development, some of them may be 50 years behind the general rural communities, some may be 100 years behind and some may be 500 years behind them. Each of these sections, therefore, will require to be specifically identified with reference to their stage of economic development.

### *The 'Unwanted' Katkaries*

Shri Palnitkar, Secretary, Social Welfare, Government of Maharashtra emphasised the need for clarity in defining objectives for this exercise. It was now universally accepted that forcing down new technology on a unwilling community, trying to teach them new methods is not desirable. It does not lead us anywhere. A method has to be found which may ensure that the groups do not lose their self-respect and self-confidence during the transition and the process of development is to be brought within their understanding and their control. For this purpose, the native skills of each of these groups have to be identified which have enabled them to survive in a larger hostile world. He invited attention to the problem of Katkaries of Maharashtra. When the primitive people are drawn from their native places into a situation where mechanised processes are being increasingly used in the wake of new scientific and technological advancement, their skills are reduced to the level of redundancy. Their level of education is low and, therefore, in the last four decades they have been denied the benefits of economic development and advantages of the gradual progress in the areas around them. The question is whether it will be possible to treat the skill of their hands as the available raw material and basic resource for the development of these communities and build upon it so that they are brought closer to the other groups as quickly as possible. This calls for a new educational policy which should expose them to the right type of technology. This will help them in adjusting themselves to the new economic situation. Those amongst them, who join new professions, may also be helped to provide the necessary leadership. The most demoralising part of the present situation is the feeling of being unwanted; this is engulfing these communities and will destroy them. It

will be necessary to take urgent measure to instil amongst them a sense of self-confidence. Once their confidence is restored, a massive response from the people can be expected. Then, a new generation of leaders could emerge who can guide the future of these communities.

### *Onges on the Precipice*

The general discussion started with the presentation of paper "The Onges of Little Andaman" by Shri T. N. Pandit. The Onge life has, since ages, been intimately connected with the virgin tropical forest of Little Andaman. The position has now been disturbed. The area under their command is progressively declining under pressure of other developmental schemes. The Onges population itself is declining and if this trend continues, it will die out in not too distant a future. The new contact is also disturbing the economic base of this small community. They are losing the traditional sources of their food because of new competition for the pig and honey, progressive destruction of forests and temptation of Onges themselves to exchange these very items for tea and tobacco. The Onge has lost the proud bearing, healthy stature and a sense of self-respect which is still observable amongst the Jaravas and Sentenelese who continue to be hostile. There is need for psychological adjustment of the Onges to the changing social scene in the area.

Dr. Roy Burman pointed out that even the small Onge community is not homogenous. It is quite possible that they may be constituting a number of sub-groups, each of which may be having a clear political command area and economic command area. According to him, there is evidence to support that there were at least 3 distinct groups on this Island. He felt that the estimate of population of seven hundred reported for Onges in 1901 may be somewhat exaggerated. The carrying capacity of the Island may not have been more than three to four hundred persons. Even if this figure is taken, the decline is fast and, therefore, the possibility of their biological extinction cannot be ruled out. It appears that sterility has taken over in this area. There is also a question about hygienic habit of living. It is not possible to introduce 'desirable' habits all at once, but it has to be seen whether this adjustment can be made. There is also a reported case of murder out of jealousy. It will be necessary that effective steps for social education are taken up in this area.

The question of hostility also came up for discussion in the context of the Jaravas and the Sentenelese. It appears that in the case of these groups, their hostile attitude has enabled them to preserve themselves while the contact in the case of Great Andamanese, and now in the case of Little Andamanese, has proved to be detrimental. The relevant questions are whether if some tribals want to be left alone and where they think that

it is best for them to be left alone, should they be left alone? Or what kind of strategy should be adopted for making gradual adjustments? These questions were dealt at considerable length in the paper, "A Strategy of Development for Primitive Tribal Communities" by Dr. B. D. Sharma. No group can be said to be a free agent. Even determining the free choice of a community is an extremely difficult task. A policy of 'non-interference' by the Government may only mean leaving them to the mercy of other adverse forces particularly in those areas where there are no difficult geographical barriers or where there is no natural isolation. Therefore, an approach of cautious and gradual change, ensuring that at every stage, change is within the comprehension of the group and that slowly, it is enabled to understand its new context better, will have to be adopted.

### *Jenu Kurubas between Advancing Civilization and Spaceless Forests*

Shri P. K. Misra presented the paper on 'Jenu Kurubas' in Karnataka. Jenu Kurubas are basically forest dwellers and move from place to place. Their economy is being disturbed because of the shrinking forests and advancing agriculture. They are not able to cultivate more land in the forest and are engaged by contractors as casual labourers. On the margin of the forest, the stronger communities have taken to land and even take away the land which this group cleared once. The Forest Department cultivate 'Kumry' land with the help of the tribals who have no rights on it. The group is essential for the working of forests, since its members know the forest areas, they can work during the night and they can face the wild animals. Therefore, in some cases, they may not be allowed to go out even if they would want to do so. An adverse relationship has developed between the contractors, forest department and the local tribal communities. The level of education amongst this community is minimal, indebtedness is high and the interest charged usurious. / ca. n

The physical survival of Jenu Kurubas is becoming difficult due to their exposure to the dominant peasant groups and entrepreneurs who are coming in search of new opportunities to the detriment of the tribal communities. The smallness of their size also brings to the fore the political dimension of their development. It was pointed out that in their case, programme of development cannot be in terms of individual schemes. It will have to be based on the concept of social development of the entire community and will need political support. This group, by virtue of its very small numbers, cannot claim such a support in normal course. It is not necessary that the political processes should be viewed in a narrow ✓

context. The political frame-work extends from the local micro situation on the one hand, to the broad national scene on the other. The very fact that the problem of primitive tribal communities is being separately discussed and effective measures for their protection and development are being drawn up is a process in the broader political frame. The task of the research worker and the administrator, therefore, is to put the problem in a proper frame and present it in an appropriate forum. In this way, it will be possible to realign the political processes also in such a fashion that the process of transition for these groups may become smooth.

Another general question, which arises with reference to the situation of Jenu Kurubas, is the valuation of the native skills of the weaker groups. The Jenu Kurubas are highly skilled in forestry operations and in handling wild animals. But a very poor valuation has been fixed in money terms for use of their skills. These are artificial equations. If a proper value is accorded to their native skills, it will help both in restoring the confidence of the people in themselves and helping them economically in a period of transition, till such time as they acquire other skills which are more relevant in the new socio-economic context.

The problem of the primitive groups should not be viewed in static terms where all relationships are taken to be fixed. It will be necessary that a broad perspective for their future development is prepared; a process of gradual directed change is initiated with the final goal in view. In the new context, the Jenu Kurubas perhaps finally may have to be part agriculturist and part forest worker. Some sections of this community may largely depend on the forest operations while some other may become largely dependent on agricultural resources. They should be provided opportunity to acquire necessary skills as also other necessary equipment for the new life. In the period of transition, the main emphasis should be on fullest utilisation of their traditional skills.

This brings us to the question of education. The Jenu Kurubas are hardly literate. There is the problem of medium of instruction. There is heavy drop out. Therefore, special programmes for education should be drawn up for this community.

In relation to utilisation of forests and its policy, it will be necessary to understand the entire process in terms of the Jenu Kurubas' world view. The experience is that whenever there are any programmes of afforestation, the benefits to the local communities are negligible. The interests of the forest dwellers do not find any place in the programmes as are drawn up by the Forest Department. In these areas, it is necessary that forestry programmes should be so formulated that the tribal economy is also simultaneously strengthened.

### *Kathodias—A Splinter Group*

The case of Kathodias of Rajasthan provided an added dimension to the problem under discussion. Here is a community which was brought from Maharashtra for working in the forests of Rajasthan. It got separated from its original group and is now surrounded by more advanced communities. The task for which they were brought in is over and they are now 'trapped' in an unfamiliar world. They do not know any other trade. This Community does not fall in any of the classical "types" and can be considered to be a splinter group of a community trapped in a different situation. The basic tenets of the developmental model of primitive groups would be applicable in their case also.

### *Baigas of Mandla*

Shri Srivastava presented the case of Baigas of Mandla who are essentially a forest people. He invited attention to some of the points in the administration of forests which is posing some problems to this community. He suggested that there should be separate administrative arrangement for these people. The Baigas are living in the sal wood forest and would not like to go out elsewhere for their livelihood. Even when they are provided labour they would like to reach their homes in the evening. The Forest Department itself could take up certain developmental programmes and report regularly on the steps taken. The developmental benefits could be channelised to this group through the forest administration machinery.

The land management of the Baigas also needs a review. They are given 10 acres of land and a patta is given for 5 years. There are no money lenders in this area. In fact, the area is so inaccessible that the contractors are not willing to go and work the forest. It appears that on an average, a Baiga gets employment for 30 days in a year in various forestry operations. Some loan is provided by the government which is extremely meagre. There are some restrictions on their grazing of cattle although the villagers from outside the forest village area are also allowed to graze their cattle. This has affected their economy. This will need a careful review and a detailed planning for this group.

### *Cholanaickan of Kerala*

Dr. Mathur presented his paper on Cholanaickans of Kerala. In their case, it appears that even the enumeration is not reliable. The group lives in the deep recesses of the forest and are almost 'cave dwellers'. Their only contact with the outside world is through the local forest contractors. Lot of excitement was caused by local reporting of their primitive conditions,

which on detailed inquiry was found not to be accurate. Regular contact with this group is now growing. The group will, however, require very delicate handling to enable them to catch up with the rest of the communities in the area. The forest areas in Kerala are experiencing pressure from the over populated plains and there is a growing competition even for the traditional vocations of the forest dwellers. The more advanced groups are adopting more advanced technology for collecting minor forest produce and even for collecting honey. They are also competing for the traditional non-skilled jobs which, so far, have been the closed preserves of the tribal communities. Thus, the tribals are experiencing tremendous competition in their very habitats from outsiders and their very survival is threatened.

The workshop could not consider in detail some of the papers presented on other tribal communities like Paharias in Bihar, Chenchus in Andhra Pradesh, Kathodias in Rajasthan and Bharas in Madhya Pradesh. It was agreed that the Institutes will review their work and conduct a reconnoitral survey in the course of the next three months.

### *Primitive Groups—A Conceptual Framework*

#### *(i) Classification*

The brief discussion of a few representative cases of primitive economies prepared suitable background for considering the basic issues at conceptual level. A theoretical frame for the development of tribal committees was presented in a paper by Dr. B. D. Sharma. In the first section of this paper, the problem of small tribal communities has been conceptualised. The case of two primitive communities, viz., the Onges and Abujhmarias has been discussed within this frame. In the first instance, the social dynamics of smaller groups has been discussed bringing out the difference in the process of change of a small group compared to bigger groups. A small group has been defined as one having population of less than 15,000. Within these groups, a special class of diminutive group, viz., a group having less than one thousand population, has also been identified. While the 'small' groups are in a state of unstable equilibrium, the 'diminutive' groups are generally found to be declining fast and heading towards extinction.

#### *(ii) A Four Stage Model*

The paper then moves in the next section to define the concept of ecological equilibrium and tries to identify the causes of its disturbance. A model is presented in which the causes of disequilibrium have been categorised as (i) socio-economic and physical, (ii) external and internal, and (iii) individual, group or institutional in their character. The groups are also

categorised according to the extent of their isolation. The model, thereafter, presents a possible strategy for their development. Stage one is identified as the stage of confrontation. In stage two, the model envisages for effectively countering external forces. Institutional forces are easier to tackle. Individual and group forces have to be tackled through institutional measures. In the meantime, it is necessary to recognise their native skills, build economic activity around them and restore the self-confidence of the community. The group should be enabled to understand the nature of the new contact. The new techniques programmes should be so formulated that they 'grow' naturally from their traditional economy. This represents the third stage in the new developmental effort. In this stage, the pace of developmental programmes have to be extremely slow. Communication barriers have to be broken and gradual upgradation of new skills taken up. Education should help these communities in this process. If these programmes are effectively implemented, the state of confrontation will cease to exist. At this stage, the group can be said to have successfully graduated through the critical transition phase in its existence and it will be in a position to take benefit from the normal developmental process of the larger community around it.

An important distinguishing feature of the process of change for small groups is the big impact of instrument of development itself. In a group like Onges, introduction of normal programmes will have much too big an impact which cannot be absorbed by the small community. In the case of small groups also, the instrument of development itself is an important factor in the process of change. Therefore, in their case any decision for introducing change should be taken after a very careful consideration of all possible implications, direct or indirect, to the group. The local community should be enabled to take independent decisions and, for this purpose, it is necessary that the change is slow and the extension agency is extremely small. In the case of small tribal communities, the approach of incrementalism appears to be the best choice.

### *The Rich Abujhmaria*

The paper presents the case of Abujhmarias as an illustration. It is a classical case of a small community in command of a resource-rich region with little contact with the outside world. The technological skills of the people are archaic and their economy is pre-agricultural and pre-monetised. In this context, any big programme based on exploitation of resources of this area is likely to affect the demographic structure of its population. Even a programme for fast opening up of this area through road development, is likely to result in immigration of large number of labourers, many of whom will never go back. Therefore, a reasonable demographic constraint has to be accepted as one of the important conditions in this model. The basic question

is whether the process of change should be such that may be under the conscious control of the local community. It has to be noted that the local community, at the present, has full control on its resources even though they are not exploited except in the traditional ways for subsistence economy. Inaccessibility stands in the way of utilisation of its resources by the local community itself. Therefore, the model suggests neutralization of inaccessibility through a suitable policy measure for purchase and sale of the commodities in this area. In the context of Abujhmar situation, the approach for extensive agriculture, in clear contrast to intensive agriculture in other parts of Bastar, would be most appropriate with some areas specialising in animal husbandry. Education and health services could be an important factor in the new development. Institutionalization will be necessary to enable them to have an effective say in the cause of socio-economic development of the area.

The applicability of the model presented in the paper to some other tribal situations in the country was discussed. It was agreed that the model, in its basic essence, is applicable to a large spectrum of the primitive tribal groups. In each case, the solution will have to be defined in terms of the specific situation. The problem will be more difficult in those areas where the groups are located on the fringe of larger communities like Birhors in Bihar or the Jenu Kurubas in Karnataka. In many a situation, conflicting interests of major tribal groups and smaller tribal groups also becomes important. Even in the case of Abujhmar, the conflicting interests will arise, in due course, between the primitive Abujhmaria and the more advanced tribal communities of the surrounding area. In this case, it is not a question of tribal versus non-tribal or one tribe versus another. The basic issue is to evolve a suitable strategy for development of a group which is far behind its neighbours. A suggestion was made that the problems of these groups for effective solution have to be brought into focus at the political level. As explained earlier, political process has to be viewed at different levels in specific contexts. It is, therefore, necessary that conscious political decisions are taken in each case regarding their development and protection of their interests *vis-a-vis* the stronger groups. The developmental process has to be so moulded that the socio-economic life of their community itself should provide the base for further superstructure; the natural resources and the environment should guide the future course of action and help in designing the developmental programmes.

#### *A Frame for Identification of the Primitive*

The various papers presented on specific communities and the theoretical frame brought into focus some of the issues which may be

faced in identifying the problems and evolving suitable solutions for the primitive groups. The workshop, thereafter, addressed itself to the problem of identification of these groups in the light of experience of each State. The note on 'Preparation of Monographs on Tribal Communities' listed a number of suggestions about this identification. Although some scattered information was available about different communities from varied sources, it was agreed that it may not be adequate for clear identification of communities with reference to specific areas. The Census publications gave a list of statistical material. The village directories provide information about tribal composition for each habitation. It will not be possible to know the precise number of each community or their economic status from these documents. While effort should be made to draw upon whatever information is already available in different sources, it is necessary that each of these groups is urgently studied so that the latest position can be known.

The consensus was that the level of literacy of any group is an important criterion for identifying its level of development, since it represents, in a way, the total effect of various processes on a community. While literacy can be an important indicator for the primitiveness of a community, it cannot be the only indicator. There are a number of poorer sections, for example amongst the Scheduled Castes, who may have no literacy at all because of their social conditions and economic deprivation; but they cannot be considered as a private group. Similarly, some of the tribal communities have lost command of their land and have been caught in the whirl of neighbouring advanced communities. They are mostly landless labourers and sometimes are even bonded labourers as in the case of Jenu Kunubas. Their condition is extremely pitiable. But with their very contact with the processes, they have become a part of a bigger system where they, no doubt, occupy a very low position. While they have lost their earlier bearing, they have also shed their primitive characteristics. Their problems will need urgent attention but their solution will be different from the one which may be necessary for the primitive groups.

The loss of ecological equilibrium invariably tells upon the growth rate of a community. While it cannot be said that all primitive communities should show a declining or near stationary population trend, yet the loss of ecological equilibrium must tell upon the 'health' of a group. Therefore, it is necessary that growth rate of the primitive groups, for whom programmes are to be prepared, should be specifically assessed. The communities with declining trend or near stationary numbers must be assigned the highest priority in undertaking the programmes.

#### *Group-Oriented Programmes*

The programmes formulation is a crucial step in the strategy. The  
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various programmes can be conceptually idealised as area development programmes or group-oriented programmes. Certain Programmes entirely address to the development of the area with no regard whatsoever for the people. The big industrial development programmes fall in this category where the people are expected to adjust to the requirements of the industry. On the other extreme, there are group-oriented programmes where the welfare of a specific group is the primary concern with no element of area development. These are the two extremes. Generally a programme has elements of both these ideal types. In the case of primitive tribal communities, the approach will necessarily have to be group-oriented. Whatever programmes are in the nature of area development will have to be tested with reference to their impact and relevance to the development of the community. In fact this is the central theme of the new approach of tribal development in general. In the case of primitive groups, there should be an added accent to group-oriented aspect.

Since all primitive tribal communities will not fall in the same category in terms of their stage of development, the mix of area elements and group-oriented elements will have to vary from one case to another. In the case of those communities which are located in well-identified exclusive geographical regions, certain minimal area development aspects will also have to be taken care of, since even the provision of basic services may require some infra-structure. However, in no case infra-structural development should be treated as a pre-condition for the solution of their problem. In the case of those communities which are located on the margin of larger groups like Birhors, area development aspects have no significance; the programmes will have to be primarily group-oriented. In their case, the infra-structural development can be presumed to have already taken place in the region. There may be some cases of supplementing the existing infra-structure but such programmes will be essentially marginal.

### *Study Design and Methodology*

The nature of studies will also depend in each case on the size of the primitive group. In case the primitive group is extremely small, universal coverage will be useful. In case the primitive group is comparatively larger, the study may be conducted on a sample basis. It will, however, be necessary that the community life of some villages is understood in its totality so that initial conditions are comprehensively defined. It will help in finding the real problems of ecological disequilibrium and other disrupting elements. Once there is a clear appreciation of the problem of some villages, it may be possible, with some additional field work and giving allowance for local variation, to broadly assess the problem of other villages and plan out a comprehensive programme. In programme

formulation, it will be necessary to work out both short-term and long-term measures with a view to restore the ecological equilibrium and ending the state of confrontation, wherever it may exist between different elements in an area.

In the case of primitive tribal groups, general statistical methods should be applied with great caution. The 'averages' may be an illusory guide to their present condition. The individual frequencies have to be carefully observed to bring out the real condition of the people. In the pre-monetised economy, the per-capita income approach is also not a very safe guide. In fact, the conventional computation of assets may give a completely distorted picture of the reality. For example, in a community where cattle wealth has more prestige value than economic value, computation of income on the basis of net addition to the cattle herd may work out to be a fabulous figure. In the real situation, the cattle may have no other use than for common festivals, thus, the net addition may be shared by the entire community. Such social practices are not amenable to normal economic analysis. Similarly, computation of level of food availability on the basis of agricultural produce may be erroneous. There may be seasonal dependence on local forest produce. A statement that 'an average tribal does not have food for more than four days in a week' will need to be more closely examined. The relevant question needing clear answers on whether the deprivation is the same in the entire community or there are people who have their food for all the seven days and the condition of some others extremely critical.

### *Conclusion*

The workshop, thus, for the first time gave an opportunity to inter-disciplinary groups to apply themselves to the variegated problems of primitive tribal communities scattered throughout the country. The concept of identifying the special groups at pre-agricultural level of technology and also at low levels of literacy found general acceptance as a workable starting point. The frame provided for a preliminary survey also makes a departure from the conventional studies in which emphasis is either an ethnographic aspects or are generally socio-economic in character. The new frame attempts to strike a balance between different approaches and can be said to work backward from the point of evolving a suitable strategy for development of these groups. It is accepted that these groups have to be helped in adjusting themselves to the new socio-economic forces which are informing all aspects of our national life.

With these basic premises, the attempt is to clearly identify their present stage and work out a rough and ready time-table for their guided

development. More backward a community, the longer will be the transitional period ; smaller the group, greater will be the personal attention which have to be bestowed on the group. The instrument of change itself acquires an important role in the process and has to be very delicately handled, particularly, in the case of more backward and smaller groups. The nature of the new contact of the group with other individuals, groups, institutions as also the changing relationship of these communities with the social-economic and physical environment has to be clearly appreciated. The conventional statistical methods will need to be reviewed and every individual, the way he is reacting to the new process, has to be the matter of concern for the developmental workers. While these studies will provide a reliable information base as also a reliable socio-economic dynamic relationship metrix for initiating the process of change or guiding it, it will also add to the fund of scientific knowledge about the primitive groups. Each group may provide basic material for valuable monographs on their present status and the inter-action of forces which has resulted in their present situation. These studies, with a common frame, about numerous communities far removed from each other, living in different socio-economic and ecological environments, may help us in understanding the inter-action of socio-economic forces better and enable us to understand their subtle behaviour.

The work in respect of the primitive groups will have to be more in the nature of an action programme. The existing balance in the case of some communities is so precarious that one wrong step may harm a group irretrievably. Therefore, there will be a need for continuous inter-action between the scholars, administrators and extension workers. The common base data and common frame for implementation of programmes adapted to suit different conditions will provide rich fund of information for further researches and action programmes. These micro-studies and developmental programmes for small groups where some of the constraints can be easily removed, particularly the financial constraint, may prove useful guide for adoption in the case of larger groups on a bigger scale.

We are presenting the papers, as they were considered by the workshop. They provide some valuable data. It may be possible for us to present more exhaustive information on each of these communities at an early date. The present volume will serve more as a guide to the field workers rather than as a reference work on the primitive tribal groups. It attempts to present the history of an idea and the processes which will go into the making of a new programme.

*SURAJIT SINHA*  
*B. D. SHARMA*

## Problems of Diagnostic Research and the Strategy of Development of Pre-agricultural “Primitive” Communities

SURAJIT SINHA

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Friends, you are aware that during the Fifth Five Year Plan a decision has been taken by the Government of India that “pre-agricultural primitive tribal communities” should be taken as a special category for which special development programmes will have to be initiated on an urgent basis.

I am very pleased to find that Dr. B. D. Sharma, Joint Secretary, Tribal Development, Ministry of Home Affairs, has taken the initiative to organize a work-shop seminar for developing the strategy for research-cum-action programme on the basis of detailed discussion of a few diagnostic case studies. A note on the preparation of monographs/reports on primitive tribal communities has already been circulated. We expect that the learned participants will critically review the tentative outline in the light of their specific research experience.

One of our exercises will be to identify ethnic groups or sections of these groups as “primitives” in terms of objective criteria. Obviously,

# Development of Small Tribal Communities A Theoretical Frame

B. D. SHARMA

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## *Introduction*

Although Sociologists and Anthropologists have been interested in small communities, no special theory of economic development appears to have been evolved for these groups. The general developmental programmes, therefore, have been considered to be adequate to meet their situation as well, particularly because their problems are of smaller dimension. The developmental processes, however, have either bypassed them or have had an indifferent impact. Other socio-economic forces, operating in the larger areas, have been influencing these groups with different results. In the long history of the Indian Nation, some of these groups got fully assimilated as a caste or a sub-caste or as an identifiable distinct group in its expansive social structure. Some groups, however, failed to adjust to the new contact with larger society and a state of maladjustment or confrontation arose. In some cases, individuals got dis-

## Abujhmar—Some Aspects of Planning

B. D. SHARMA

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I paid a short visit to Abujhmar on the 28th and 29th of March, 1975. The detailed survey which was planned last year has not been completed so far and it is expected that it will be taken up shortly and will be finished by the end of April or middle of May, *i.e.*, before the onset of monsoon. It may then be possible to analyse the data and put the programme formulation on a firm base.

A closer look at the map of the Abujhmar area showed that the location of the villages has considerably changed since they were mapped last. As such both communication as well as educational planning can be realistically done only after the positions have been clearly fixed. One method for fixing the position would be to take the help of aerial photographs available with the Pre-Investment Survey of Forest Resources. Another method would be to decide the approximate location with the help of local knowledge of the Gram Sevaks and teachers already working in this area. This may be done urgently, in any case before the meeting in Delhi when the advance action for the year 1975-76 will be decided.

## Baigas of Mandla

R. K. SRIVASTAVA

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Baigas are a little known small tribal community living in Bajag range of South Mandla forest division in Madhya Pradesh. These people have been traditionally shifting cultivators and used to move about in the extensive forest region in this area. They were expert axemen and depended on their axes for their livelihood. When the British began to consolidate their hold on the forest region, they turned to tame the Baigas of this region. It was in 1890 that a specific area was carved out for these people which was known as *Baigachak* with the ostensible objective of converting these axemen into ploughmen. Subsequently with the extension of Indian Forest Act, the *Baigachak* was converted into a group of forest villages. This area is also covered by the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution.

The Baigas continued to enjoy special privilege of shifting cultivation till 1935. It may be noted that the other Gonds were dis-allowed shifting cultivation in the adjoining region much before this date. After 1935 there have been some more restrictions on the Baiga's shifting cultivation as well.

## Bharias of Patakot

SUSHILA SHARMA

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There is a small depression in the hilly tract of district Chhindwara near Tamia which is known as 'Patakot'. There are almost vertical walls locally known as 'Kanat', the total depth being about 3000 ft. This vertical descent is in three stages and villages are located at different elevations on the small level land available in the surrounding areas. The area is traversed by Doodiya river which starts from one end of this region. In fact, it appears that geologically, this river has caused this depression by denudation of softer rock material over the millenia. The river is very narrow and its depth continues to increase till it emerges from this valley and reaches the plains of the surrounding region.

This area was once rich in forest resources. Even now most of the area is under reserved forests. Patakot as also its surrounding region, was full of wild life but now the tigers, bears as also 'sambur' have been, more or less, finished. There are some tigers in the downward reaches of Doodiya river in the Patakot. It is reported that now the number of wild boar, monkeys and other smaller animals has considerably increased.



## The Kathodis : A Tribe in Transition

N. N. VYAS

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The Kathodis are an isolated primitive community in Rajasthan. They are a part of larger Kathodi or Katkari community which is spread over in Gujarat and Maharashtra. Since the Kathodis are not recognised as Scheduled Tribes in Rajasthan their total number is not available. According to 1921 census the total population of Kathodis and Katkaris in India was about 80,000. The number would have been doubled in the last half a century.

Both the names of this group are indicative of their profession, 'Kathodi' means those people who make *Katha* or catechu and katkari means a wood-cutter or a person who by profession is engaged in occupations like bamboo cutting, felling of trees, catechu-making and charcoal-making. According to even early descriptions of Welling and Robert-Heine Geldern, the Katkaris are 'people of the jungles who have no land of their own, no fixed and sedentary profession. They are hunters, coal-makers, gatherers and sellers of forest produce, freshwater fishermen, field labourers and agriculturists' (Welling). According to another noted writer John Ferreira, there is little literature on Katkaris with the result that one has to go into wild speculations

## Dongria Kondhs of Koraput

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### *Niyamgiri Hills*

Dongria Kondhs are a shifting cultivator tribal community living in Niyamgiri Hills of Koraput. According to 1971 Census, their total population was 25,236. The Niyamgiri Hills rise steeply from the plains near Bissamcuttack and form the rugged habitat of the Kondhs. The average height of this area is between 1000 to 1500 feet, some of the peaks are much higher, Dwargudi being the highest measuring 4968 feet above the sea level.

If one starts from Bissamcuttack, the first Dongria village, Kurli, is reached at a height of about 3000 feet after 3 kms. of plain and 10 kms. of zig-zag hilly track. The entire Dongria country is divided into 5 *Muthas*, viz., (1) Kakiska Mutha, (2) Wadaka Mutha, (3) Pushika Mutha, (4) Kadraka Mutha and (5) Niska Mutha. The demarcation of *Muthas* by one Peter *Saheb*, the then *Dewan* of Jepur State, is an important event in Dongria's chronology. The next notable event in the folk memory is the construction of a road by Shri Gopi Nath Mohanty. The pace of development programme otherwise, however, has been rather slow.

## The Chenchus

A. JOSEPH

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Concentrated in a small pocket situated right in the heart of Andhra Pradesh, about 9,000 of the 17,609 Chenchus live on either side of the major perennial river Krishna with the famous Nallamalai forests on the southern side and the rugged and densely wooded plateau country on the northern side. It is interesting that Chenchus, though surrounded on all sides by the most civilised and technologically advanced groups, still persist as food gatherers, digging roots and tubers and collecting minor forest produce. The Chenchu pocket, which is distributed in three districts of Mahaboobnagar, Kurnool, and Prakasham has the following details :

1. Tribal Area	552.98 Sq. Miles.
2. Population	9,129
3. No. of villages	74

The remaining Chenchus numbering about 8,500 live in peripheral villages and amidst plains population of these districts. They constitute a distinct socio-economic entity as they are mostly settled cultivators who

## The Jenu Kurubas

P. K. MISRA

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I took a quick survey of some of the settlements of the Jenu Kuruba in Heggadadevana Kote taluk of Mysore district. This taluk is located on the south western side of Mysore. It is the second largest taluk in terms of area in the district. Heggadadevana Kote taluk is considered to be one of the most backward taluks of Karnataka State. Transportation and communication within the taluk and outside are poorly developed. The density of population of this taluk is 88.45 per square kilometre which is almost the lowest in the district. The highest density of population in Mysore district is of Mysore taluk, being 610.00 per square kilometre. The tribal population in this taluk is the highest being 6686. Though this taluk is largest in size, the land put under plough is the lowest in the district. Of the total area cultivated, only 13 per cent of the land is under wet cultivation which again is the lowest in the district. 38.41 per cent of the land lies fallow. No major industry is located within the taluk.

The taluk is rich in forests. About 14.3 per cent of the total geographical area is under forest, yielding timber, sandalwood, etc. In addition, there are

## Onges of Little Andaman

T. N. PANDIT & D. K. BOSE

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### *Negrito Tribes :*

The Negritos (to be distinguished from the Negroids) are among the relatively rarer human populations and are found today in Africa, Malaysia and the Andaman Islands. The Negritos of the Andaman Islands are the best representatives of the Asian Negritos. They are highly interesting not only as a racial group but also as a linguistic and a cultural group. They live by hunting and food gathering and this pattern of living is sometimes compared to that of the old-stone-age people. But more than all this they are the sort of "Primitive People" who have proved to be very vulnerable to uncontrolled contact with civilisation so much so that their very existence as biological and cultural entities is gravely threatened today. And they are not in a position even to murmur a protest. Much damage has been done already, but the point is whether further damage can be stopped or at least slowed down so that they find some relief in their deep

## Cholanaickans of Kerala

DR. R. P. G. MATHUR

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There are few tribal communities today which may be subsisting entirely on hunting and food-gathering. Such an economy can exist only in a generous natural habitat which may have been protected by accident or design, from inroads of outside influence. Cholanaickans of Nilambur valley in Ernad taluk of Malappuram district provide a striking example of this earlier form of human existence.

### *The Nilambur Valley*

The Nilambur valley in Malappuram lies south of South Wynad of Kozhikode district and to the West of Nilgiris District of Tamil Nadu. It has an average height of 4080 ft. above the sea level; the rainfall ranges from 100" in the east to 300" in the west; the daily temperature ranges between 80° to 90°F.

The entire valley is covered by good forests which is evergreen in the ghats and semi-deciduous in the foot-hills. The trees grow to immense

## The Kurumbas of Attappady

DR. P. R. G. MATHUR

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A small tribal community of Kurumbas lives in the Attappady valley of Mannarghat Taluk of Palghat district. This area has undergone a fast demographic change since 1961 when the tribals constituted 63 per cent of the total population of this area. In 1971, they had been reduced to about 40 per cent of the total population. The opening up of the valley has resulted in a big influx during this decade increasing the non-tribal population by more than 150 per cent. The Kurumbas are a small community numbering about 1000. Irrulas and Mudkas are the two major tribal communities of this area, who are comparatively more advanced.

### *Attappady Valley*

The Attappady Valley extends over an area of about 765 sq. kms.; the elevation of the valley ranges from 1200 ft. to 3000 ft. above the sea level. The valley lies just south of Nilgiris and is flanked by thick forests of Perintalmanna Taluk of Malappuram District in the west and Coimbatore of Tamil Nadu in the East. The annual rainfall varies from about 200" in

# A Note on Preparation of Monographs on Primitive Tribal Communities

B. D. SHARMA

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## *Introduction*

Those tribal communities which are still at pre-agricultural level of technology and primitive have been identified as a special group needing attention of the State. Such groups are scattered all over the country and their conditions are widely different. However, in most cases the ecological equilibrium appears to have been lost. Therefore, the first problem is of restoring the equilibrium of these groups with their eco-system. Consequently, a programme of development for these groups will have the following distinctive features :

1. There will be a unique development plan for each group ;
2. The developmental plan will have specially to take the eco-system into consideration ;

## Epilogue

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The Developmental programmes for primitive tribal communities have picked up, though slowly, after the Workshop in early 1975. The subject has evinced considerable interest in different States and has also continued to engage attention in the Government of India at the highest level. However, one of the most important difficulties has been the continued lack of clear understanding of the problems of each of the groups. The programme proposals, in many cases, proved nothing better than compilation of well-known sectoral schemes which are known to have by-passed these groups. The problem of getting persons sensitive to the problem of these groups and prepared to work amongst them continues to evade a satisfactory solution.

The details about a number of isolated small communities are, however, becoming available in greater measure. So far, references have been received in relation to thirty groups from different States. Advance action has been authorised in all these cases so that the most urgent problems do not await the results of either a detailed study or the formalities of project preparation and finalisation.

A Regional Workshop was organised under the aegis of Anthropology Department, Ranchi University, at Ranchi, in July, 1976. It helped in bringing into focus the problems of the primitive groups in Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal. Considerable data has been generated in the process which will be a help in preparation of realistic programmes.

It is becoming clear with experience that the development of these groups will require an extremely flexible administrative frame. General consensus now is in favour of constituting registered societies for the development of each group so that programmes can be taken up swiftly and suitable personnel can be appointed without getting involved in procedural complexities. Such societies have already been constituted in A & N Islands, Orissa and Bihar. Other States are also actively considering the suggestions.

An important land mark in the solution of the problem of primitive groups has been the decision to actively associate the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences for tackling the medical aspects of the declining primitive communities. The Government of India have taken a formal decision in this regard so that continued attention can be given to this problem. The Institute is already seized with the problem of the primitive tribal communities in Andaman and Kotas and Paniyans in Tamil Nadu. Some of the State Governments have also undertaken special health surveys as a preparatory step for effective health for them.

### *Abujhmarias*

Abujhmarias are a part of the larger Gond tribe inhabiting the territory of Abhujmar in the tehsils of Narainpur, Birajpur and Dantewada in Bastar, M.P. and Sironcha tehsil of Chandrapur, Maharashtra. Their total number was about 14,000 in 1971. The Abujhmar area in Bastar has not been opened up as a matter of policy. The normal administration was withdrawn from this area in the early 30s. There has, however, been some influx of outsiders in this area in the recent years. A team of doctors has recently visited this area and a programme for this community is being formulated. The natural resources in this area are plentiful and population sparse. The approach of development for this area is to develop plantation crops so that a large area can be under command with a comparatively small work force. It is proposed to allow controlled in-migration ensuring that demographic balance is not unduely disturbed.

### *Ariya Goundans*

Ariya Goundans are a small tribal group numbering about 24,000 who live in Kalrayan Hills in South Arcot district of Tamil Nadu. These hills were covered under three Jagirs with 153 villages. The Jagirs have been abolished only recently in August, 1976. The community subsists entirely on food gathering and hunting in the forest area. They also collect minor forest produce which they exchange for other necessities. They were highly indebted and were in the condition of semiserfdom. Urgent measures have already been taken to give them immediate relief and special programmes are being prepared by the Government of Tamil Nadu.

### *Asurs*

Asurs are a small tribal community numbering about 6,600. They live in Ranchi and Palamau districts of Bihar. They consider themselves to be the original inhabitants of this area who have been pushed back by the more advanced communities. Many of them have taken to settled cultivation but their economic condition is precarious because of the pressure from other groups and dwindling forest resources. There is considerable incidence of mal-nutrition amongst them. A special programme for this group is being prepared by the State Government.

### *Baigas*

Baigas are a part of larger Gond Tribe. A small area of *Baigachak* in the district of Mandla with 27 forest villages, has been identified as a primitive pocket with about 3,000 Baigas. They depend largely on forests. They have now taken to agriculture although socially and economically they are still extremely backward. The literacy rate amongst them is near zero. A programme for their development is being planned around agriculture and animal husbandry.

### *Bharias*

Bharias are one of the smaller tribal groups of M.P. and are found in Chhindwara, Seoni, Mandla and Sarguja. A small section of this community, about 300 strong, live in an area known as Patalkot in Chhindwara district, Madhya Pradesh. This area is a deep depression in the hilly region, the

approach being extremely difficult as the 'kanats' are almost vertical. This group has been by-passed by modern development because of the physical situation of their habitat. They practise shifting cultivation and also rear cattle. Indebtedness is unknown in this area. The level of literacy is less than 2 per cent. Medical facilities are non-existent. A programme of providing social services and an economic base with forestry oriented programmes is being prepared.

### *Birhor*

Birhors are a small tribal community mainly located in Ranchi and Hazaribagh in Bihar and Purulia in West Bengal. The total population of Birhors is 2,534 out of whom only 100 live in West Bengal. They are interspersed with other communities and generally live in groups of 3 to 4 families. Some of their 'tandas' may also be larger. These people live on the fringe of forests and outskirts of larger villages. They move from one place to another depending on the availability of raw materials in the forests for their traditional occupation. Their main occupation is chehor fibre. They also do some cultivation, work as agricultural labourer or collect honey, bee-wax, etc. Literacy amongst them is comparatively high being 20% for males and 6.9% for females. An action-research programme for this group has been taken up by the Anthropology Department of Ranchi University.

### *Birjias*

Birjias are a small community in Palamau district of Bihar. They generally subsist on forests and also work as forest labourers. They are, however, in a prevarious condition and level of nutrition is very low. They are at a pre-literate stage. A special programme is being taken up for this group.

### *Bondos*

Bondos are one of the most backward tribal communities, who number about 5,300, and live in Koraput district of Orissa. They are divided into two groups. About 4,350 Bondos live in Bondo hills of Mudlipara. The remaining Bondos are now living in the plains of Andrachal Grampanchayat. The Bondos practice shifting cultivation and also cultivate paddy along the streams in the narrow strips. The Bondos have been a ferocious group who have not liked outside contact. Educational effort has not yielded much result so far. The Hill Bondos have been recognised as a primitive community and special programmes are being prepared for them.

### *Chenchus*

Chenchus numbering 10,448 are the most backward tribal community in Andhra Pradesh. They live in forest areas on the borders of Mehboobnagar district of Andhra Pradesh. They generally depend on food gathering and hunting. They also collect minor forest produce and work as labourers in forests.

Special programmes have been taken up for Chenchus even before independence but there has not been much impact on them. The opening up of the areas has adversely affected this community since its command over resources has declined. The level of literacy amongst them is about 2%. A special programme is now being prepared for them.

### *Cholanaikayan*

Cholanaikayans are a small community, numbering about 160, who live in Nilambur Valley in Ernad Taluk of Malappuram district, Kerala. They live deep in the forests in cave-dwellings. They depend largely on food gathering and hunting. They also collect minor forest produce which they exchange for meeting small necessities of life. Their only contact with the outside world is through contractors working in the forest area. They are a pre-literate community. Special programmes have been taken up for them by the Government of Kerala.

### *Great Andamanese*

The Great Andamanese are a remnant group of 10 tribal communities of Andaman Islands which together once numbered about 10,000. These communities include Charier or Chari, Kora, Tabo or Bo, Yere, Kede, Bea, Balawa, Bojigiyab, Juwai and Kol. Their total number now is 23. They have lost their command of the forests, but have not been able to join modern economy. They were living as destitutes in the periphery of Port Blair when they were shifted to Strait Island. The most important problem of this group is health and sterility. The group is pre-literate. Personalised attention is now being given to each individual member of the community so that they may regain confidence and could have some faith in their future. Their health problem is being tackled under the aegis of All India Institute of Medical Sciences.

*Hill Korbas*

The Hill Korbas, about 4,000 in numbers, are scattered in the hilly region on the border of Sarguja and Raigarh, Madhya Pradesh. They are extremely backward and are caught amongst more advanced tribal groups. They have no land and depend entirely on the dwindling forest resources. The literacy rate amongst this community is near zero. A forest based programme is being prepared for the Korbas.

*Jarvas*

Jarva is the last of the hostile groups amongst the original twelve tribal communities of Andaman Islands. They had a brief contact with the British more than a century back after which they have continued to be hostile. Some contact has been established with the Jarvas in the past few years. Now it is proposed to establish greater contact with them from the sea side under the leadership of a senior civil officer with an anthropologist and a doctor as a part of team. The land boundary with the Jarvas is being made invariable so that a confidence relationship can be established. Gradual contact may help in ending hostility and in developing the Jarva.

*Juangs*

Juangs are one of the most backward tribal communities, numbering about 24,400, who live in Juangpirh of Keonjhar district, Orissa. The Juangpirh was delineated exclusively for this group in the pre-independence days because of their primitive conditions. There has been some influx from outside in the Juag area and the economic condition of the Juagans has deteriorated. They still continue to subsist on shifting cultivation, food gathering, hunting and minor forest produce. In some of the areas with heavy pressure of population some of the Juangs are taking to settled cultivation as well. The Juangs shift their habitations when the resources in the local area get depleted. The developmental programmes have not touched this community in any significant manner. Special programmes are being prepared by the Government of Orissa for the Juangs.

*Katkarias*

Katkarias, who number about 1,40,672, are found in the districts of Thana, Poona, Ratnagiri, Satara and Nasik in the State of Maharashtra. The Kat-

karia are also over flown in Gujarat & Rajasthan where they are known as Kathodia Kathodias are not included in the Schedule. The hereditary occupation of Katkaria is catechue making. Some of them are now engaged in preparation of charcoal. The literacy rate among Katkaria is about 2 per cent. Katkarias are the poorest among all the scheduled tribes in Maharashtra. The precise groups, which continue to be in pre-agricultural stage, are being identified for whom separate projects will be prepared.

### *Kharias*

The Kharias are a small tribal group, numbering about 11,000 who live in Singhbhum district of Bihar and Mayurbhanj district of Orissa. They are confined generally to thick forests and have been isolated from other communities. They practice shifting cultivation and depend on collection of honey, cocoons and other minor forest produce. The level of literacy is very low. Special programmes are being prepared for them by the two State Governments.

### *Kolam*

Kolams who number 52,615, live in the districts of Yeotmal, Nanded and Chanderpore in Maharashtra and in Andhra Pradesh. They were traditionally shifting cultivators but now many of them have taken up settled agriculture. The literacy rate amongst Kolams was 2.62% in 1961. The groups, which may still continue at pre-agricultural technology, are being identified.

### *Konda Reddies*

Konda Reddies are a small community, numbering about 1,800, in a small pocket of West Godavari district, Andhra Pradesh. They largely depend on forests and practice shifting cultivation. They also occasionally work as forest labour. The level of literacy is very low. A special programme is being prepared for them as a part of the Integrated Tribal Development Project.

### *Kondh*

Kondh is a small tribal community, who live in Niyamgiri Hills of Bisamcuttack in Koraput district of Orissa. They largely depend on shifting cultivation, food gathering and hunting. Their contact with the outside world

is almost nil. Panos, a Scheduled Caste community, are the exclusive intermediary. The pressure of population is now being felt in some areas where the forest resources are getting depleted. Some of the Kondhs, therefore, are taking to settled cultivation as well. The level of literacy is extremely low. Many of the Kondhs are indebted to the Panoes. A special programme is being prepared for them by the Government of Orissa.

### *Kotas*

Kotas are a small tribal community, numbering about 1,200, who are dispersed in 7 villages in the Nilgiri district, Tamil Nadu. Their social status is the lowest amongst the tribals in this area. Their number is declining because of sickle-cell disease. The Nilgiri Adivasi Welfare Association has been doing good work in this area. The health problem of this group is now engaging the attention of the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences. Special programmes are being prepared for them.

### *Kotwalias*

Kotwalias are a small tribal community numbering about 13000, in Surat and Bharuch districts of Gujarat. They have been traditionally bamboo workers. They also depend on food gathering in the forest areas. Their economic condition has deteriorated with the depletion of forest resources. They are almost pre-literate. A special programme is being prepared for them by the Government of Gujarat.

### *Kurumbas*

Kurumbas are a small tribal community who live in Palghat district of Kerala and in the adjoining area in Tamil Nadu. They are confined to reserved forests. They practice shifting cultivation and depend on collection of minor forest produce. They also change their habitat when the local resources get exhausted. The level of literacy is very low. Special programmes have been initiated in Kerala and Tamil Nadu for this group.

### *Mankarias*

Mankarias are a small community, numbering about 2000, who live in Mayurbhanj district of Orissa. As their name signifies they have been

traditionally dependent on monkeys for their subsistence. They are nomadic in character and move from one forest to another in search of monkeys. They also work as casual labourers. They are almost in the pre-literate stage. Special programmes are being prepared for them by the Government of Orissa.

### *Onges*

This is a small tribal community inhabiting the Little Andaman Islands. Its total strength was about 500 in the beginning of the century but they have now been reduced to barely 112 in 1971. They are at the food-gathering and hunting stage of economy. The establishment of resettlement colonies in the Island and working of forests has posed fresh problems for the survival of this group. The groups pre-literate. It has now been decided not to extend the re-settlement area. Forestry programmes will also be taken keeping in view the full requirements of this community. A team comprising three or four persons is being organised for working in these Islands. Two centres of operation will be organised one at Dugongcreek and another in the south-western part of the Island. Health and sterility are the biggest problems. The All India Institute of Medical Sciences have been associated in the programme for this group.

### *Paharias*

Paharias are comparatively a larger tribal group, numbering about one lakh, who live in Santhal Parganaes district of Bihar. They are confined to the hills of Sunderpahari, Litipara, Amrapara and Barhait. Some of them are also scattered in the Damini region in the district.

The Paharias generally subsist on shifting cultivation. They also collect minor forest produce and exchange it for meeting their basic needs. The economic condition of this community has considerably deteriorated with the depletion of natural resources. Their number is also declining. Some of them, who live in the areas adjoining the plains, have also taken to agriculture. Those who have got dispersed have turned into agricultural labourers. The bulk of the community, however, continues to live on the top of the hills where there is little economic or social service infra-structure. The level of literacy amongst the Paharias is barely 2%.

Those sections of the Paharia community who are still in primitive conditions are being delineated for taking up special programmes. Six pilot projects for a group of villages in each of the hills where they are found

in concentration are being taken up by the Government of Bihar in the current year.

### *Paniyans*

Paniyans are one of the most backward tribals in Tamil Nadu. They are scattered on the western slopes of Nilgiris. Their main concentration is in Gudalur Taluk, Nilgiri. Their total population is about 5800. The incident of bonded labour was sizeable amongst them. Special programmes have been taken up for their development after termination of debt bondage. This community is also facing some special health problems and All-India Institute of Medical Sciences has been associated in evolving a suitable health programme for them.

### *Parahaiyas*

Parahaiyas are a small tribal community in the Palamau district of Bihar. They live deep in the forest. They were treated as criminal tribes during the British days and that legacy continues to haunt them. Their economy, therefore, has deteriorated and they have turned into casual labourers. Many of them were in debt bondage. The level of literacy is almost nil. Special programme is being prepared for this community.

### *Rajis*

Rajis are a small community numbering about 300. They live in forests of Pithoragarh, U.P. They were extremely shy of any contact with the outsiders till very recently. They were entirely dependent on food gathering and hunting. They exchanged minor forest produce for meeting other needs. They are now gradually taking to cultivation but have not been able to establish as cultivators. The new contact has converted them into casual labourers and they are highly indebted. The level of literacy amongst the Rajis is almost nil. Special programmes are being prepared by the Government of Uttar Pradesh for them.

### *Reangs*

Reangs are the most backward tribal community in Tripura. Their total population is about 90,000. Most of them are shifting cultivators. They also collect minor forest produce. The level of literacy amongst Reangs

is very low. Some of the Reangs, however, have also taken to settled cultivation. Those sections of the community which still are in primitive conditions are being identified and special programmes are being prepared for them by the Government of Tripura.

### *Saharias*

The Saharias are located on the border of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan in the districts of Morena in M.P. and Kota in Rajasthan. Their total number is more than a lakh. They have been generally confined to forest region in this area. They are known to shift their villages in no time whenever they experience any pressure from any other group. This is one of the communities which are said to have lost their nerve. With the opening up of this area there has been large scale alienation of land by the stronger communities. The level of literacy is less than 5%. A programme has been recently started in Kota, Rajasthan with effective measures for restoration of land as the central point. They have to be rehabilitated as viable agriculturists. Comprehensive programmes identifying the group to be covered under the primitive community is being prepared by these two states.

### *Soura*

Soura are a small community numbering about 2500 who live in Ganjam district of Orissa. Soura practice shifting cultivation and depend largely on forests for their livelihood. The level of literacy is extremely low. A Soura Development Agency has been constituted which is working for their development for the last two years.

### *Sentenelese*

Sentenelese are members of one of the negro tribal community inhabiting the North Sentineal Island in Andamans. There is no contact with this group. Their total number is about 100. A policy of establishing gradual contact is being planned for this group.

### *Shompens*

Shompens are a small tribal community of Great Nicobar Island numbering about inhabiting the unlogged forest areas. They subsist at pre-agricultural economy. Their biggest problem appears to be health. A team comprising

a doctor and an administrator is being constituted to go into this area and study their problem so that effective developmental programmes can be taken up for them.

### Todas

Todas are a small pastoral tribal community numbering about 800 who live in Nilgiris district, Tamil Nadu. This is one of the much studied community amongst the Scheduled Tribes in the South. They have been declining in numbers due to various reasons including prevalence of certain diseases. The decline in their number has been checked by work of various organizations including the Nilgiris Adivasi Welfare Association. Efforts have also been made to wean them away from pastoral economy and settle them as agriculturists. But this effort has had a limited success and only a few families have been able to take to agriculture. Even here they depend on labour from outside. Special programmes are being prepared for the Todas.

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