

Block

3

TRIBALS OF CENTRAL INDIA

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BLOCK INTRODUCTION

The block titled **‘Tribals of Central India’** consists of four units. Major tribal groups that are found in the nine states of Central India have been discussed in this block namely: Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand and Orissa, Goa and Maharashtra and Bihar and West Bengal.

Unit 1 is about the **‘Tribes of Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh’**. The unit not only describes the tribal areas and major tribes in M.P and Chhattisgarh but also talks about the origin of the tribes in the two states. It also provides information regarding the economic, social and cultural aspects of the tribes of the region and highlighting the distinctive features of different tribes of the region and at the same time talking about the present status of the tribes of the region.

Unit 2 on **‘Tribes of Gujarat, Jharkhand and Orissa’** provides information about the distribution of scheduled tribes in India and later moves on to provide information about the major tribes found in the three states. It also discusses the tribal pattern, the mobilization of the tribes as well as the development of the tribal population in the three mentioned states.

Unit 3 is about the **‘Tribes of Goa and Maharashtra’**. The unit begins by defining the Tribe and providing information about the geographical distribution of the tribes in the two states. It deals with the socio-economic life of the tribes in Maharashtra and Goa and also discusses the effect of New Economic Policy on Tribals.

Unit 4 is on **‘Tribes of Bihar and West Bengal’**. The unit describes the different tribal groups inhabiting Bihar and Bengal. It talks about the origin of the tribes in the two states. It also provides information about the condition of the tribes in the region.

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UNIT 1 TRIBES OF MADHYA PRADESH AND CHHATTISGARH

Structure

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Descriptions of the Tribal Areas and Major Tribes in M.P. and Chhattisgarh
- 1.3 Origin of the Tribes of M.P. and Chhattisgarh
- 1.4 Socio-Economic and Cultural Aspects of the Tribes of M.P. and Chhattisgarh
- 1.5 Distinctive Features of Different Tribes of the Region
- 1.6 Present Status of the Tribes of the Region
- 1.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 1.8 Further Readings and References

1.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit gives a description of the tribes of M.P. and Chhattisgarh States which are a part of Central India. It provides information about their origin, social, cultural and economic characteristics and their present status with the object of developing an understanding in the learner about the distinct features of the tribes located in the heart of the nation. After reading this unit you, you should be able to:

- describe the tribal areas of M.P. and Chhattisgarh;
- trace the origin of the tribes;
- understand the different tribes of the region and their social, economic and cultural characteristics; and
- Outline their present status in terms of literacy, occupation, etc.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

‘Adivasis’, ‘vanvasis’, ‘aboriginals’, ‘primitives’, ‘animists’ and ‘girijans’ are the different names given to the tribal people. After the Constitution of India listed them in a schedule, now they are commonly referred to as the ‘Scheduled Tribes’. The word tribe conjures up an image in the minds of the common people of simple folk living in hills and forests, famous for their dances and songs, animists in their beliefs, following a traditional and backward way of life and in general resistant to change or fearful of adopting the modern way of life. This description is based on the fact that, although 414 main tribes are listed in the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes lists, each with its own cultural identity, common threads of their lives make them a homogenous group and starkly different from the non-tribal world. Regional dissimilarities may occur among the same tribes who are inhabitants of different areas, for example the Bhils of M.P. have practices which are different from those of Bhils of Rajasthan, regional similarities also do occur between different tribes of the same area. This unit attempts to give a description of the

dominant tribes of M.P. and Chhattisgarh, their common features as well as distinctive practices of some predominant tribes.

1.2 DESCRIPTIONS OF THE TRIBAL AREAS AND MAJOR TRIBES IN M.P. AND CHHATTISGARH

The Central Zone that includes the areas of M.P. and Chhattisgarh has been the abode of the tribes or the 'aborigines' since many decades. "The tribal groups of the central zone are scattered all over the mountain belt between the rivers Narmada and Godavari" (Shankar Rao, 2006, p. 616) Madhya Pradesh (M.P.) holds the distinction of being the most populous tribal state since independence. "The undivided M.P. consisted of states of Madhya Bharat, Vindhya Pradesh and Bhopal. On 1 November 2000, the 26th state of Chhattisgarh was carved out from M.P. Now M.P is made up of 50 districts grouped onto 10 divisions, whereas Chhattisgarh has 16 districts with Raipur as its capital." (www.wikipedia.org) Chhattisgarh is considered as a predominantly tribal state with 31.8 per cent of its population comprising Scheduled Tribes according to the statistics of 2001 census report.

Madhya Pradesh (undivided) had about 43 Scheduled Tribes. (ST) Out of these, 7 tribes are most backward and are identified as primitive tribes, (Tiwari, 1984) based on their pre-agricultural level of technology, low level of literacy and stagnant or diminishing population. These primitive tribes are Saharias of Chambal division, Barinas of Patalkot, Baigas of Baigachak area, Hill Korbas and Birhors of Sarguja, Kamars of Raipur and Abujhmarias of Bastar. (Rao and Singh)

Tribal Areas and Major Tribes of M.P. (as per 2011 census)

The S.T. population of the state of M.P. is 15,316,784 which constitute 21.08 per cent of the total population of the State (72,626,809). The State has a total of 43 Scheduled Tribes which are overwhelmingly rural with 93.6 per cent residing in rural areas. At district levels, Jhabua has the highest proportion of STs followed by Barwani, Dindori and Mandla districts. Bhind district preceded by Morena and Datia has the lowest proportion of STs.

A Brief Description of the Tribal Areas of M.P.

"About half of the tribal areas of M.P. are covered with forests of which nearly half are on an altitude between 1000 -2000 feet, one fifth lies between 2000 – 3000 feet and only one fourth area is below 1000 feet. The terrain which the tribals usually cultivate is hilly and undulating. With the increasing pressure on land, undulating area and steep slopes have been brought under cultivation with consequent loss of fertility and soil erosion. In addition to this no irrigation facilities are available. Agriculture is carried out under these conditions and circumstances. Sparseness of population, scanty and difficult communication makes it even more difficult to extend the benefits of the development programmes to a majority of the tribals living in interior area."(www.1upIndia.com)

The major tribes found in M.P., their size and distribution as per 2011 census are given below in descending order according to their predominance.

Table No. 1

S. No	Name of the tribe	Population range	Percentage to total S.T. Population	Districts inhabited
1	Bhil	5,993,921	39.13%	Jhabua, Dhar, Barwani, West Nimar
2.	Gonds	5,093,124	33.25%	Chhindwara, Mandla, Betul, Seoni and Shahdol
3.	Kol, Korku, Sahariya and Baiga	1167,694	7.62%	Rewa, East Nimar, Shivpuri, Shahdol
4.	Korku	730,847	4.77%	
5.	Sahaqiya	614,958	4.01%	
6.	Baija	414,526	2.70%	

Table no. 1 reveals that out of forty three (43) STs, Bhil is the most populous tribe having a number of 5,993,921, constituting 39.13 per cent of the total ST population. Gond is the second largest tribe, with a population of 5093124 constituting 33.25 per cent. Four other STs in the descending order are Kol, Korku, Sahariya and Baiga, which make for 19.1 per cent. Along with Bhil and Gond, the six tribes constitute 91.48 per cent of the total ST population of the State. Pardhan, Saur and Bharia Bhumia have a population ranging from 123742 to 193230; together, they form 3.16 per cent. Four tribes, namely Majhi, Khairwar, Mawasi and Panika having population in the range of 50655 to 109180 account for another 2.17 per cent of the ST population; remaining thirty along with the generic tribes constitute the residual 3.19 per cent of total ST population. Tribes having below 1000 population are thirteen in number. Of them, nine tribes, namely Andh, Birhul, Parja, Saonta, Majhwal, Kalam, Kondh, Kurku and Nagesia each have less than 500 populations.

Tribal Areas and Major Tribes of Chhattisgarh

The tribal population of Chhattisgarh State is 7,822,902 which accounts for 30.62 per cent of the total population of the State. The State holds 8th position among all States and Union Territories in terms of the proportion of scheduled tribes population to the total population. It has 43 scheduled tribes with 94.7 per cent of them residing in rural areas. At the district level Dantewada has the highest percentage of scheduled tribes to the total population followed by Bastar, Jashpur and Janjgir – Champa.

A Brief Description of the Tribal Population of the State of Chhattisgarh

‘Chhattisgarh’ the name owes its origin to an explanation that it denotes the number of forts i.e. 36 in the region. The demand for a separate state was first raised in the early twenties. Since then such demands kept cropping up at regular intervals through various forums, rallies and movements. Finally in 2000, with the acceptance of Uttarakhand and Jharkhand, the demand for Chhattisgarh too was accepted leading to the birth of a new state. There were many factors which led to the demand of a new state, chief among them being a clear acceptance, within and outside the regions, of a distinctive socio- cultural identity evolved over centuries. A sense of relative deprivation also led the people to believe that a separate state was imperative for development to take place in the region. (www.chhattisgarh.gov.in)

The state is richly endowed with natural resources. There are 16 rivers with Mahanadi and Tundla irrigating maximum areas of Raipur, Dhamtai, Durg, a rich fertile red, yellow, black and laterite soil conducive to the growth of rice which covers 82 per cent of the area of Chhattisgarh making it the 'rice bowl' of India, 29 mineral resources, besides tropical deciduous forests which cover 43.85 per cent of the total land. (Status of human rights in Chhattisgarh – A PAIRVI Report)

Table No. 2 presents the major tribes of State of Chhattisgarh their size and distribution (as per 2011 census) in descending order with the predominant tribe at the top:

Table No. 2

Major Tribes of Chhattisgarh State

S. No.	Name of the tribe	Population range	Percentage to total S.T. Population	Districts inhabited
1	Gond	4,298,404	54.94%	Bastar, Dantewada, Kanker Suguja, Raipur
2.	Kawar, Oraon, Halba, Bhattra	213,900-887,477	28.44%	Jashpur, Durg, Surguja, Raigarh, Bastar and Korba
3.	Binjhwar, Korwa, Sawar	119,708-130,709	4.85%	
4.	Bharia Bhumia, Nagesia, Baiga, Kharia	44,032-114,532	4.69%	
5.	Sonr, Damor, Karku. Andh, Bhil, Mina and others		7.08%	

Out of forty three (43) tribes, Gond is the most populous tribe with a population of 4,298,404 constituting 54.94 percent of the total ST population. Four other STs in descending order are Kawar, Oraon, Halba and Bhattra. Along with Gond, the five STs constitute 83.38 per cent of total ST population of the State. Binjhwar, Korwa and Sawar have a population ranging from 119,818 to 130,709. Together, they form 4.85 per cent. Ten STs, namely, Bharia Bhumia, Nagesia, Baiga to Kharia having population in the range of 49032 to 114532, constitute another 4.69 per cent of total ST population; remaining twenty five (25) STs along with generic tribes constitute the balance 7.08 per cent of total ST population. Eleven (11) tribes have below 1000 population. Of them, five tribes, namely Sonr, Damor, Karku, Andh and Bhil Mina are very small having population less than 100.

At the district level, Gonds have registered their high population in Bastar, Dantewada, Kanker Surguja and Raipur districts. Kawar are mainly concentrated in Surguja, Raigarh and Korba districts. Other three major tribes, Oraon, Halba and Bhattra have the highest concentration in Jashpur, Durg and Bastar districts respectively.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.

- 1) Give a brief description of the tribal areas and the tribes of M.P.

2) Give a brief description of the tribal population of the State of Chhattisgarh.

1.3 ORIGIN OF THE TRIBES OF M.P. AND CHHATTISGARH

Many anthropologists and experts are of the view that the tribal population of Central and South Western India are the original inhabitants of the country. This view has its origin in the theory that “the whole of ancient India was inhabited by the tribal people but that Indo Aryans and other hordes of immigrants into the Indo Gangetic basin were stronger in physique, numbers, organs and arms and hence succeeded in imposing their will on the weaker groups, compelling the latter either to surrender to complete absorption or to escape to the inaccessible areas in the vastness of the forests and mountains. This is the possible explanation for the biggest concentration of tribals in Central and South Western India. These people are truly Indian in the sense that racially they do not seem to be akin to people from other parts of the world.”(Taylor, 1965, p.6)

A similar view exists about the Gonds of Malwa in M.P. The Malwa region is postulated to have been occupied by the predecessors of the Bhils, Gonds and other tribes, who had to confront the Aryans. The Aryans who were stronger pushed the tribal inhabitants to the South of the Vindhyas. The tribals of Vindhyas gained control of Malwa after the decline of the Mughals in 1690 (www.webindia123.com)

Puranic legends indicate that the inhabitants of the Vindhya Mountains were born from the thigh of the King Vena. Their appearance was described as dark as charcoal or as black as a crow with flattened faces. They were also described as being innately and hopelessly vicious, because “Nishada was so born that he bore away from the body of Vena all the sins for which that monarch had previously been notorious and bequeathed them to his offspring, leaving his Majesty free from all taints and ready for Heaven.”(Thomas, Taylor, 1965, Pg 57) This and similar legends indicate that there was in Central India, an intensely dark race who must be the aborigines of this belt!

From the above description, the aborigines of this area seem to belong to the Negritos stock. The Negritos were also considered by Dr.Hutton – the Census Commissioner for 1931 as the earliest inhabitants of India. The Commissioner for SCs and STs in his report for the year 1952 says that the tribals belong to one of the three stocks – Negritos, Australoids or Mongoloids. According to Dr. Hutton the Proto Australoids, Austro Asiatic, the Dravidians and the Rig Vedic Aryans or Indo Aryans are all immigrant people who settled in India, with the Indo Aryans being the last ones.

1.4 SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ASPECTS OF THE TRIBES OF M.P. AND CHHATTISGARH

As already mentioned, though the different tribes belong to various races, speak different languages, have their own distinctive customs, the tribes of a particular region or state are not totally insulated from their external surroundings. They live within the culture of the non tribal world hence the social, economic and cultural features of their lives often show adaption of the regional peculiarities though not in totality, but only in glimpses. Some tribes are more adaptive and receptive to change and so might show more reflection of their neighbors' way of life while those living in remote or interior areas retain their originality. Certain common features found in the socio-economic aspects of various tribes of the region followed by a description of the predominant tribes are given below.

Economic aspects

In 1951, about 90.5 per cent of the tribals throughout the country were engaged in agriculture. Agriculture still remains the predominant feature of tribal economy. The tribals are also known to depend on the products of forests, hunting on land and fishing for their food. The methods and tools used by them are also age-old and primitive, e.g. shifting cultivation by the slash-and-burn method, known as bewar or dahiya in M.P., is widely practiced by the tribals. In this method, the trees and jungles in the forest slopes are cut and burnt and the lumps of charcoal and stones removed. After some rains, the seeds are sown in the ash covered soil. Good crops like paddy are produced only in the first year, with millets and maize grown in the next year. "From the third year onwards, the place is left fallow for some years and the cultivator shifts to other clearings and this cycle continues in rotation." (Taylor, 1964, p.79)

This method was widely criticized because of the belief that it caused soil erosion and excessive deterioration of cultivable land. However the modern view holds this practice as an organic response to certain geophysical conditions – such as undulating terrain, steep slopes which make it difficult to prepare bunds in steep slopes. Ploughing is done either by bulls and ploughs or by digging with hoes and cow dung is used as manure. However some tribes have invented certain indigenous methods of irrigation like constructing bunds on mountain streams to irrigate their fields and terraces. Rice remains the predominant crop grown by tribals of M.P. along with some kinds of millet and maize.

The 2011 census shows that 'cultivators' and 'agricultural labourers' together constitute 74.67 per cent of the total tribal workers in M.P. and Chhattisgarh. This shows that there has hardly been any change in the means of livelihood of the tribals since 1951 and 'agriculture' still remains their predominant occupation.

Socio-cultural aspects

The fundamental structure of the social organization in M.P. and Chhattisgarh is particularly caste-based. Despite the cultural diversity, the state presents an interesting account of Adivasi and non-Adivasi customs and traditions.

1. Religion

The original religion of the tribal people is Animism – the attribution of a soul to natural objects and phenomena. According to it, all objects both animate and inanimate are permanently or temporarily inhabited by spirits or souls. Many experts are of the view that 'animism' is nothing but 'Hinduism' in its primitive form. Sir Herbert Risley, described

Hinduism as ‘Animism more or less transformed by philosophy’. Similarly Dr. J.H. Hutton, the Commissioner of the Census of 1931 considered modern Hinduism to be the result of an amalgam between pre Aryan Indian beliefs and Mediterranean inspiration and religion of Rigveda. Hence most of the tribes are considered ‘Hinduised’ but at different levels of conversion. As regards the tribes of the Central belt, it appears that by the time of the writings of the Puranas, most of them had already been Hinduised” (Taylor, 1965, pg.57) As in the case of other tribes, the tribes of this region also have an idea of a Supreme Being who is responsible for bringing creation into existence. This Supreme Being controls all other spirits but he is apart and different from them and does not belong to the class of natural or human spirits. Totemism, magic, witchcraft and sorcery form an integral part of the religious beliefs and practices of these tribes. The tribal people were influenced by the Christian missionaries and Islamic invaders as a result of which few accepted Christianity and Islam.

Presently, the tribal religion is not considered as a separate religion and is included in Hinduism. According to the 2011 census, 95.25 per cent of STs in M.P and 88.62 per cent in Chhattisgarh are Hindus. Tribes following ‘other religions and persuasions’ are 3.81 per cent in M.P. and 6.23 per cent in Chhattisgarh; Christian tribes constitute 0.57 per cent in M.P. and 4.92 per cent in Chhattisgarh whereas Muslims account for 0.21 per cent in M.P. and 0.10 Chhattisgarh both.

2. Kinship

Kinship terms used by different castes and groups are almost the same all over the state except with little difference in their pronunciation. Kutumb (family) is the smallest unit that shares the common rituals and mores of the clan. All the members of the family unit are bound by a kinship tie. Patriarchal system prevails in the state; hence, the elder son inherits the father’s right and property making the tribals no exception to this common practice. The position of a wife in a kutumb depends upon her husband and that of the mother is recognized in relation to her children. Sex, age and supporting capacity of an individual are the deciding factors which govern his role in the family.

Without a male child a family is considered incomplete. Widows and divorced daughters of a family are accepted as liabilities. Separation from a Kutumb in the same village or town is not encouraged. It is contrarily taken improper if somebody ventures to break the ties with a joint family. Among the Bhils, however, no sooner a boy and a girl get married, the couple is separated as a part of convention. Other than the birth links, people are also linked through ritual acts. One of such kinships is the kinship of ritual brothers and sisters known as gurbhai and gurbahen, which is acquired through a common teacher. This type of kinship is regarded more serious than the dharma sambandha- the relation sanctioned by religion. The duties attached to this form of kinship are mostly the same as performed in real kin ties. (www.webindia123.com)

3. Community Law

On the birth of a child or the death of a person there is always the community law that works to keep the perpetuality of rites and rituals. It is the social system wherein the caste has to submit without questioning. The importance of the Panchayat is obvious in relation to customs and traditions. It is the Gunia or Waddai or Gaita or Badwa, whose strange ways of ritual performance sometimes create an atmosphere of awe, who holds a final word among the Adivasis. The unlettered rural audience has to bow heads before all such things which are thrust upon through this institution. Only in certain cases the Panchayat happens to do away with evils of some age-old practices. (www.webindia123.com)

4. **Birth**

The male child gets preference over the female child as the birth of a male child is regarded as fulfillment of an obligation due to the ancestors. The announcement is made by beating a thali. If it is a male child, conventional designs symbolizing the foot mark of the child and toys, etc. called Paglia, are drawn on a piece of paper and sent through a village barber to the nearest kins living in other villages as a mark of good news and in return the barber brings back clothes and ornaments for the mother and the newly born child. On the ninth or the eleventh day after the child's birth, the Sun God is worshipped by the mother and the child is brought out to see its rays. The ritual is called Suraj Puja. (www.webindia123.com)

5. **Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage**

Marriage is considered as an obligation on part of all individuals as through it the important task of perpetuation of patriarchal line becomes possible. Marriage among tribals is usually within an endogamous group and violation of this rule often leads to excommunication. Exogamy is permitted only in the same village. Among the same gotra, marriage is possible in the agricultural communities of Central M.P. although not within a close link, e.g. two brothers could marry two sisters or a brother and sister could marry a pair of sibling. Marriage and cohabitation together are rare except among some animistic tribes. Premarital relations are possible within certain tribal groups like the Muria and that too in their Ghotul premises. But when the relations reach to assume marital position, the wedding ceremony becomes absolutely necessary through the elders.

Marriage takes place among different tribes in different ways eg. Bhagoda in Bhils, Kgitivari in Murias, Dudh Lotana in Gonds or Paithu or Paisa Mundi in which a girl goes on her own to her lover's house to live with him and various other types which are discussed later. Among the enlightened sections, marriage is arranged either by willing couples or by their elders. The actual marriage ceremony ranges from the most lengthy and elaborate practices to very simple ones, but the essential rites are the same like use of turmeric and oil and perambulation of the sacred fire or the pole. The feast depends on the availability of funds and on customs and traditions of the respective groups. (www.webinida123.com)

Divorce is convenient among the tribals and remarriage of a widow or a divorced woman is not a problem. Remarriage is done through natra – a conventional device for the remarriage of divorced women and widows. Biyah or lagan (first marriage) is the approved ceremonial form of marriage. There is a good deal of difference in the social and ceremonial aspect of biyah or lagan (first marriage) and natra. A widow may marry the younger brother of her dead husband, which is not a taboo in many tribes and agricultural communities.

The dissolution of marriage is done by mutual settlement and in consultation with caste elders by both the parties. A paper required to be signed by the surrenderer of claims is a customary practice. The paper is called faragati, meaning disengagement. (www.webinidia123.com)

6. **Death**

Among the Gonds, the deceased is buried, but the Raj Gonds prefer to burn the corpse. Sanyasis and infants are given the earth. The cremation takes place by the stream and the ashes are submerged in sacred waters. The death of an elderly person is mourned

by all the relatives. The close ones are expected to show extra respect to the dead by shaving off their heads.

7. Ornaments

Brass/zinc or tin ornaments are common amongst the tribals. Traditional peasant jewellery not only fascinates the women but also indicates her marital status. Even the poorest woman wears some sort of ornaments. Head-bands or earrings with pendants of red, blue and white beads or cowries and bead-belts with bells suspended are desired by the Adivasi women. Men wear bracelets in their wrists and Mundri in the fingers. (www.webindia123.com)

8. Dress

Dhoti is the regular outfit for the peasants of this region. A white or a black jacket called bandi or mirzai is in vogue in Bundelkhand and Malwa. Safa is worn on the head in the eastern parts of the state and pagri or paga (turban) is preferred in the western regions. Women wear coloured lehnga and choli. A piece of cloth known as orni or lugra is used to cover the head and the shoulders. In the central region they prefer red and black colours, while yellow, blue and green are admired by the Chhattisgarhi women. Kanchali is stitched out of coloured pieces of cloth. It is a sort of bodice used for covering the breasts only by tying it at the back with strings, called Kasana in the Malwi dialect. (www.webindia123.com)

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) Trace two practices pertaining to divorce and remarriage among the tribes of M.P.

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1.5 DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF THE DIFFERENT TRIBES OF THE REGION

1. Gonds

The Gonds are the biggest group of the STs in number and the most populous tribe in Chhattisgarh. They are also unique due to the fact that for some centuries they had a kingdom which they ran successfully, after which a part of the country for a long time was known as Gondwana. They made a valiant attempt to preserve their political power and the Hindu faith against the onslaught of the Muslims. The districts of their chief concentration during the 19th century were Betul, Chhindwara, Senoi, Mandla, Chhattisgarh, Chanda and Bastar.

Occupation - They are distinguished by their great liking for woodcraft and for sacrifices and eating bullocks. It is reported by experts that the Gonds adopted newer and improved methods of paddy sowing which was a complete departure from their old bevar cultivation. They had also adopted cotton cultivation and taken to rearing cattle. Small shop keeping was another line which the 'Gonds had adopted for gainful activity.

Language and culture - The Gondi language is a Dravidian language. The Chhattisgarhi Gonds had even adopted the language, mode of dress and even culinary practices of their neighbors. In certain parts where the Gonds lived in common villages with Hindu castes, they not only associated themselves more with these castes but strived to differentiate themselves from such scheduled and allied castes as the Kamars and the Bhumjias. (Ghurye, 1963)

The Raj Gonds have adopted the Hindu ceremony of marriage. The most distinctive feature of a Gond wedding is that the procession usually starts from the bride's house and the ceremony is performed at that of the bridegroom's. When a Gond wishes to marry his children he first looks to his sister's children, whom he considers entitled to demand for his own; such a marriage is called 'bringing back the milk'. It is also known as dudh lotana. The Gonds wear 'bali' in the upper or middle part of the ears and 'lurki' in the lobes, toe-ring called 'chutka' is common. (www.webindia123.com)

2. **Bhils**

The Bhils are the most populous tribe in M.P. They are distinguished from most other STs due to their long connection with the Rajputs. They were described as courageous huntsman, skilful in snaring games and clever fishermen.

Occupation – Their original occupation was agriculture. The Bhils of this region had a fixed abode with majority of them being agricultural labourers. Some had also taken up the work of village watchman. (Ghurye, 1963)

Language and culture – The Bhils are believed to have had a Mundari language. They speak the dialect known as Bhil which is Malwi or Nimadi – a dialectical specimen of the language of the locality in which they are found. They observe untouchability, and the principal Hindu festivals. Marriage by elopement is still prevalent in the Bhils of the Vindhyas, but it is confirmed only after the bride-price is ceremonially paid off. Among the enlightened section, marriage is arranged either by willing couples or by their elders. (www.webindia123.com)

3. **Kols**

The Kols of Jabalpur Rewa region after whom the Munda speaking tribes – the Hos and the Santals- were formerly called the Kolarians, provide a specimen of a group, which in days gone by had a culture similar to the culture of Hos and Santals- who inhabit very restricted and confined areas. The Kols made excellent workers and formed the bulk of cheap labour in many industrial centres. They are more adaptable to changes and more accommodating and better inclined towards improving their living conditions. (Ghurye, 1963)

4. **Oraons**

They reached Central India from the South. They are found in Raigarh and Suguja districts. They are less tenacious and more submissive unlike the Mundas who are rebellious.

Occupation – Their main occupation is agriculture. Plough culture was introduced by them in the Central Province. They grow cotton and their women hand-spin it. They are also good in carpentry

Language and culture – Oraons speak a Dravidian Language and are basically animists in their belief like all the other tribes. The Supreme Being who is responsible for bringing creation into existence is called Dharmes in Oraon. Dharmes is the one who is worshipped and to whom sacrifice is offered even by the laymen. Prayers and sacrifice of eggs or

white fowl are offered to Dharmes so that he might save the individual and family from evil.

The Oraons have an ancestral pit – Kundi – in which the bones and remains of the dead are gathered and drowned at the annual Harbari or the ‘great marriage’ – as they believe that the spirits of the ancestors will help the living members of the family in difficult moments. (www.webindia123.com)

5. The Murias, Marias and Abujmarias -

The Murias of North Bastar are associated with institution of Ghotul. The bison – horn Marias or the sing – Marias are settled to the south of the Indrâvati. They have very little communication with the Murias of the North. The Raja Murias or the Jagdalpur Murias consider themselves superior to other tribes. The Abhujmarias have a strong wild appeal in their look as compared to the Murias of the plains. They occupy the wild and more primitive interior of Bastar in the west of Narayanpur Tehsil.

Occupation-Agriculture remains the predominant occupation of the above tribes, where ploughing is done either by bulls and ploughs or by digging with hoes and cow dung is used as manure. The Marias of M.P. as an exceptional case has invented certain indigenous methods of irrigation by constructing bunds on mountain streams to irrigate their fields and terraces.

Culture-The Ghotul is a unique institution for the unmarried boys and girls of the Muria tribe. A brief description of the Ghotul is given below, since it is a unique feature of this particular tribe.

The Ghotul – a village dormitory is a large hut or a group of huts with a compound around where the Muria youngsters assemble after sunset. This institution which is traditionally sanctioned by the tribal customs, serves as a centre of social and emotional activities, instills group feeling and discipline among the Muria boys and girls of Bastar, helps them to rise above jealousy and possessiveness, serves as a preventive measure of crime, provides the right place for acknowledging feelings of love and fostering feelings of friendliness, unity and sympathy.

The boy member of the Ghotul is known as Chelik and the girl member as Motiari. The relation between Chelik and Motiari are governed by the type of Ghotul to which they belong. In the older classical type of Ghotul, boys and girls paired off in a more or less permanent relationship which lasts till marriage. In the modern form of Ghotul, such exclusive associations are forbidden and partners must constantly be changed.

The male members begin to arrive anytime after sunset at the Ghotul with their belongings such as sleeping mats, tobacco pouches and such other things. The boys gather round a fire, or scatter about the compound or puff their chongis -the country cigarettes under the thatched roofs of the open huts. As the girls start coming, an atmosphere of music and dance livens up followed by a dance song called Rela. After an hour or two, storytelling around the fire starts during which the girls and boys join together freely. At fairly late night Belosa, the leader of the girls and Sirdar, the leader of the boys decide how the couples shall be paired based on a romance mixed with duty and charm.

Ornaments, clothing and eating habits

The women of the bison horn Maria tribe wear brass fillets on their heads as crowns when they go for dancing. Men wear head–gears decorated with plumes of feathers, horns and chains of cowries as a dancing outfit. Men also wear bracelets in their wrists and Mundri in the fingers.

The bead work done by the Murias is treated as a work of art. A Muria girl who cares for her brass rings with bells attached and wears all kinds of ornaments with her colored skirt and wimple is known as a Sigarimugari Muria girl. The women of the bison-horn Maria tribe wear brass fillets on their heads as crowns when they go for dancing. As a dancing outfit, men wear their headgears decorated with plumes of feathers, horns and chains of cowries. The dancing-stick of the Maria girl is also considered valuable.

The Abhujmarias eat red-ants and rats with great pleasure. Women are generally bare-bosomed and men wear just a loin cloth. Only during festivals they add some more items to their dress. Boys put on all kinds of finery. They wear red or white 'pagas' (turbans) with feathers tucked in their folds.

Marriage - As regards marriage in the Abhujmarias the boy's parents visit the parents of the girl and present a pot of mahua liquor. If the pot is accepted, the boy and girl are declared betrothed.

Among the Murias, the Kgitivari form of marriage which is an extension of cross-cousin marriage is common where the sister's children are given first preference. Remarriage is done through a ceremony called Pani-bihao.

The bison-horn Marias has many strange customs of observing death. If a child below the age of five dies, he is buried in an erect position. A corpse is laid down with his head to the east. Women put a pinch of tobacco in his mouth and weep bitterly, very often falling upon his bamboo bier. The master of the funeral ceremony is conventionally the Giata, but it is the son of the deceased's sister who has to do many more things. He takes a stick and measures straight upwards from the corpse's chest to the roof, poking the stick through the thatch. Then he climbs up to the roof and makes a hole which is intended symbolically to allow the message of death to spread throughout the world. He puts his dhol drum above the hole, waves a stick thrice round his head and then beats his drum. (www.webindia123.com)

6. **Dhurwas (Parjas)**

Dhurwas are the third largest Adivasi group in Bastar following the Marias and the Murias. The tribe is mainly concentrated in Dantewara and Konta. They border on most Tehsil of M.P. in the South. In addition to the usual customs commonly followed by the tribes of this region as mentioned above, the Dhurwas perform a ceremony after ten days of a man's death known as Khilawan in which a 'leaf earring' is given by any earning member of the family or an outsider of the widow. If it is given by the younger brother of the deceased the woman has to go with him as his wife. (www.webindia123.com)

7. **Baigas**

The Baigas are a class of priests among the Gonds. They are the people who know all about evil spirits and can avoid them by performing magical rites. In Mandla district there is a small tract called Baiga Chak known for its Baiga settlement. The Baigas are considered by many experts as the original inhabitants of the Central Province. (www.webindia123.com)

Baigas' economy mainly depends on agricultural pursuits and collection of minor forest produce. The other employment opportunities are unskilled labour and work in forest. They also love to work in the baris (land attached to the house) and grow maize, mustard, vegetables, roots and bulbs. Maize, Kodo, Kutki and Ramtila are the main crops grown by the Baigas. Maize and millets form the major foodstuffs consumed by

the Baigas. These are consumed in the form of 'Pej', often supplemented by vegetables. (Rao and Singh)

8. The Pradhans and the Korkens

The Pradhans are the musicians of the Gonds and the Baigas. If a Baiga is unavailable to a Gond, a Pradhan is called for performing the rites.

The Korkens are confined to a small portion in the Narmada valley; some of them have taken to work in the coal-mines around Chhindwara. Among the Korkens, marriage takes place in the following typical manner—the father of the girl brings home a capable boy called Lamsena. If the Lamsena likes the girl, he has to (1) serve as a household servant for 6-12 months (2) He has to prove his manhood. If the girl does not become pregnant within a year, the Lamsena is made to flee and a new one is caught.

There is another tradition among the Korkens, when the girl gets into the house of her fiancé. If the boy agrees to marry, the marriage is settled. Otherwise the boy has to leave his house and the village/tribe and whole of his property becomes that of the girl. A similar tradition is that the father of the girl sends the daughter away to search for a life companion. Among some Korkens, the father of the girl selects a boy himself. After getting a suitable boy, the terms of payment are settled and the father of the boy takes away the bride. (www.webindia123.com)

9. Others

The Savaras occupy Sheopur (Morena district), Isagarh, Narval (Gwalior district) and Bhilsa. This group also combines Saharia and Sour. Among others are the Bharias of Patakot and the adjoining areas in Chhindwara and the Binjhvars of Bilaspur.

From etymological point of view Saharia mean companion of tiger (Sa -companion, haria- tiger). Their total population is over 2 lacs, and is one of the poorest primitive tribe of Madhya Pradesh. Most of the Sahara families are landless, and the area is geographically often prone for draught hence drinking water is one of the major problem in the area. Their economy lies mainly on minor forest produce. Because of unemployment the young people migrate to nearby district or town in search of employment especially during summer.

The economy of Bharias depends on 'Baris' attached to their hutments. Maize, Jowar, Kodo and Kutki are the commonest crops grown in their 'Bari'. Minor forest products like Mahua, Amla, Harra etc. are also a source of income. Preparation of deo-baharis (brooms) and selling them in the local market is an important source of cash income. Though the valley is said to be very rich in medicinal plants, they are yet to be exploited as a source of income by the tribe. Maize is the staple diet along with coarse millets like Jowar, Kodo and Kutki, which are consumed in the form of 'Pej'. Green vegetables are scanty. Vegetables like gourds and vejra are grown in their baris. ((Rao and Singh)

Check Your Progress III

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.

1) What are the distinctive features of the Bhil tribe of M.P.?

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2) Describe the unique tribal institution of Ghotul?

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1.6 PRESENT STATUS OF THE TRIBES OF THE REGION

In this section we throw light on the present status of the tribes of the region in terms of literacy rate, sex ratio, work participation ratio and nature of work as per 2001 census report.

Literacy rate

State	Literacy rate of STs – 1991	Literacy rate of STs- 2001	Literacy rate of STs- 2011	National Literacy rate of STs – 2011
Chhattisgarh	26.7%	52.1%	59.1	58.96%
M.P.	18.4%	41.2%	50.6	

The above table shows that the literacy rate of STs in Chhattisgarh is not only higher than that in the last census, but is slightly also higher than that at the national level. The male as well as female literacy rates (69.7% and 48%) are similar to those at the national level (68.53% and 49.35%). Whereas in M.P. there is an increase in literacy rate from 2001 census it is lower than that of all STs at the national level. Male and female literacy rates are also lower in comparison to those at the national level.

In M.P. among the major tribes, only Gonds have registered a higher overall literacy as well as female literacy in comparison to the national average. In Chhattisgarh, Halba, Oraon and Kavar have registered overall higher literacy level than that of all STs at the state level.

Sex Ratio

The overall sex ratio of the ST population in Chhattisgarh is 1020 females per 1000 males which is higher than the national average of 990 for total ST population, whereas in M.P. it is 984 females per 1000 males which is lower than the national average.

Work Participation Rate

The WPR in M.P. for ST population is 49.9 per cent which is slightly lower than that of STs at the national level (53%). In Chhattisgarh the WPR of the ST population is 52.8 per cent with a marginal decennial decline of 0.6 per cent in the WPR.

Category of Workers

Economic category	STs of M.P.	S.Ts of Chhattisgarh	National average of all STs
Cultivators	3.51%	1.29%	5.3%
Agricultural laborers	68.71%	73.38%	59.70%
Household industries	15.64%	28.91%	23.07%
Other workers	9.55%	6.09%	14.76%

According to Census, 2011 in both the states around 70 per cent of the tribals are engaged in agriculture which still remains the predominant occupation of the tribals. In 1951 nearly 90 per cent of the tribals were engaged in agricultural activities, which indicates that there is hardly any change in the economic aspects of the tribals even though at the national level the percentage has come down to 81 per cent.

After independence, the Government of India adopted the ‘integration’ approach to bring the tribals into the national mainstream. ‘Integrating them into the national mainstream’ meant to make available to them the advantages of education, technological advancements, economic and social development, of which they had been deprived since ages due to their secluded existence, without threatening their rights to preserve their culture. At the same time the Constitution of India prescribed protection and safeguards to them with the object of removing their social disabilities and promoting their varied interests. On March 1992 the National Commission for SCs and STs was given a constitutional status. Further the Government has also increased the size of the investment in every successive five year plan. The tribal sub-plans which were started during the fifth five year plan (1974-79) are implemented through Integrated Tribal Development Programs covering 75 primitive tribes. The amount allocated for the tribal sub-plans increased from the fifth 5 year plan to the 8th five year plan by nearly 15 times.

According to Hindustan Times report, 4th August 2009 by Rahul Naronha, “M.P. is the second highest beneficiary of Central funds for financing schemes for uplifting tribal’s economic and social status. In 2008-09 it was the second highest receiver of GOI funds under the ‘Special Central Assistance to tribal sub plan’ for employment-cum-income generation activities and the infrastructure incidental thereto.

In spite of this, as per information placed in Parliament by Union Tribal Affairs Minister – Kantilal Bhuria, 58.58 per cent of the rural tribal population lives below the poverty line and there is only a marginal increase in their economic condition on moving to an urban center where 44.65 per cent of tribal population is found to be living under BPL. This makes M.P. the second highest state, in percentage terms, for tribals living below poverty line. In comparison Chhattisgarh is relatively better off, with tribal population between 54.74 and 41.04 per cent living below poverty line in rural and urban areas respectively. These figures are based on a study conducted by NSSO during 2004-05 for the Planning Commission.

The report indicates that there are leakages at various levels which lead to the siphoning of the funds meant for tribal welfare. Corruption, lack of interest on part of the officers at the administrative level, apathy, lack of accountability and scores of other reasons are responsible for the deplorable condition of the tribals of the state.

Chhattisgarh, the home to some of India’s most culturally distinctive tribes and coveted natural resources, is in the grip of a brutal civil war between the Indian state, the Naxals

and the counter-Naxal Salwa Judum. According to Hindustan times report by Chitragada Choudhary, 19 August 2009, the war claims at least one life every day and steadily widens a traditional gulf between government and people, as it shrivels options for negotiations.

The challenges before the government, both at the State and the Central level are enormous. It is indeed a matter of deep concern that even after 69 years of independence, we have not been able to achieve the aim of integrating the tribals into the national mainstream; their problems seem to have only increased. With the struggle to keep up with globalization and achieve the status of a developed country, we cannot afford to ignore 8 per cent of our population and keep them deprived or exploited by their own fellow countrymen. In conclusion it can be said the tribals need our concern, our respect and need to be treated as equals. The following lines by Rigoberta Menchu, Guatemala Nobel Peace Prize Winner, 1992 should serve as a reminder regarding our duties towards our tribal people – ‘We are not myths of the past, ruins in the jungle or zoos. We are people and we want to be respected, not to be victims of intolerance and racism’.

Check Your Progress IV

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) Review the present status of the tribes of M.P. and Chhattisgarh in terms of literacy rate and sex-ratio.

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1.7 LET US SUM UP

The word tribe conjures up an image in the minds of the common people of simple folk living in hills and forests, famous for their dances and songs, animists in their beliefs, following a traditional and backward way of life and fearful of adopting the modern way of life. This unit attempts to give a description of the dominant tribes of M.P. and Chhattisgarh, which are a part of Central India, their common features as well as distinctive practices. The tribal groups of the central zone are scattered all over the mountain belt between the rivers Narmada and Godavari Madhya Pradesh holds the distinction of being the most populous tribal state since independence.

Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh together have about 46 Scheduled Tribes. (ST) Out of these, 7 tribes are most backward and are identified as primitive tribes based on their pre-agricultural level of technology, low level of literacy and stagnant or diminishing population. These primitive tribes are Saharias of Chambal division, Barinas of Pataalkot, Baigas of Baigachak area, Hill Korbas and Birhors of Sarguja, Kamars of Raipur and Abujhmarias of Bastar. Agriculture still remains the predominant pattern of tribal economy. The tribals are also known to depend on the products of forests, hunting on land and fishing for their food. While the Bhils are the most populous tribe in M.P., the Gonds are the biggest group of the STs in number and the most populous tribe in Chhattisgarh. The overall sex ratio of the ST population in Chhattisgarh is 1020 females per 1000 males which is higher than the national average of 990 for total ST population

whereas in M.P. it is 984 females per 1000 males which is lower than the national average. The literacy rate of STs in Chhattisgarh is not only higher than that in the last census, but also higher than the national level. Marriage takes place among different tribes in different ways eg. Bhagoda in Bhils, Kgitivari in Murias, Dudh Lotana in Gonds or Paithu or Paisa Mundi in which a girl goes of her own to her lover's house to live with him. Divorce is convenient among the tribals and remarriage of a widow or a divorced woman is not a problem.

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UNIT 2 TRIBES OF JHARKHAND, GUJARAT AND ORISSA

Structure

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Tribal Habitation: Gujarat
- 2.3 Mobilization of Tribes in Gujarat
- 2.4 Jharkhand: Tribal Pattern
- 2.5 Important Tribes of Jharkhand
- 2.6 Tribal Development in Jharkhand
- 2.7 Tribes of Orissa
- 2.8 Major Tribes of Orissa
- 2.9 Let Us Sum Up
- 2.10 Further Readings and References

2.0 OBJECTIVES

The unit delineates itself to the following objectives:

- To understand the concept of tribe and to study the tribal population settled in Jharkhand, Gujarat and Orissa;
- To study the socio-economic and cultural life of these tribes;
- To analyze the challenges and opportunities for development of these tribal communities; and
- To study the efforts of the Governmental agencies and other stakeholders toward mainstreaming the tribes.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The tribal population is identified as the aboriginal inhabitants of our country. They are the most vulnerable section of our society, living in natural and unpopulated surrounding, far away from civilization with their traditional values, customs and beliefs. There has been a long and enduring debate among the social scientists to define a tribe. According to the Constitution “Any tribe or tribal community or part of or group within any tribe or tribal community as deemed under article 342 are Scheduled Tribes for the purpose of the Constitution”. Thus, the groups, which are in the Scheduled list of the President of India, are defined as Scheduled Tribes. There is a procedure for including tribal groups in the Scheduled list. The President may, after consulting with the governor of a State, by public notification, specify the tribes, which would deem to be Scheduled Tribes, in relation to that State. Communities are notified as Scheduled Tribes under Article 342 of the Constitution based on the characteristics such as – primitive traits, geographically isolation, distinct culture, and shyness of contact with community at large, and economic backwardness.

2.2 TRIBAL HABITATION: GUJARAT

The largest concentration of tribal people anywhere in this world except, perhaps Africa is in India. It is interesting to note that there are six hundred and thirteen tribes inhabited all over India. Referring to the demographic statistics- 2001 census the total tribal population of the country was 104,281,034 which indicate 23.66 per cent decadal growth over the 84,326,240 tribal population of 1992 census.

Out of this total tribal population, in Gujarat alone there are 8,917,174 tribals, which indicates 14.75 per cent of the tribal population of the state (Ministry of the tribal Affairs, Annual Report, 2009-10 – Annexure: 6A) In the list of Scheduled Tribes of the country, 28 communities have been recorded in this state as belonging to what is popularly known as ‘*Adivasis*’, which has served as a generic term for all the different communities. But Census 2011 shows that there are only 29 types of tribals alive in Gujarat in which only 5 tribals groups are in their original form. In terms of population of these *Adivasis*, Gujarat ranks fifth in the country.

Besides eleven districts and 43 Taluka of East and South of the State, there are 21 pocket areas and 4 cluster areas in which the glimpses of different tribals are found. In Gujarat, Ambaji, Danta Talukas Mountains and hills area, Bhiloda, Meghraj, Panchmahals, Jalod, Dahol, Nanchal areas are occupied by tribals. In Surat-district, Mandvi-Songhadh, Vasanda, Dharampur, Dang and Umargam are also dominant with such population.

Most tribes are concentrated in heavily forested areas. Historically, the economy of most tribes depends on agriculture or hunting and gathering forest produce. They trade with outsiders, for the few necessities. They lack items such as salt, cooking utensils, iron and the like. Their identity was intact before intrusion of modern civilization and urban economic development. Nearly 68 million tribals lived in India according to the 1991 census but number has now reduced substantially as forest resources minimized. Economic constraints and modern life styles have forced them to interact with the modern generation.

As regards the sources of their livelihood, they depend on three sources: Forest, Agriculture and Migration. Forest contributes a source of substance and employment to the tribals. They sustain themselves by collection and consumption of forest produce. The serene source is that of agriculture. Most tribals cultivate, on their own lands or the disputed lands to which they claim titles, rain fed crops or crop combination i.e., paddy and minor cereals and pulses. After the monsoon, immigration in employment becomes the source of income for the tribal. Continuous deforestation and increasing population of forest under government and productivity in the absence of non-farm jobs have created crisis of livelihood in the tribal areas.

Occupation and Culture

The occupational structure of the tribal population suggests that ‘agricultural development’ is the essential key factor. The transformation of agriculture involves revolutionary changes on productivity, fertility and efficiency in cropping pattern along with remuneration. Forestry plantation and extended horticultural development including ‘*wadi*’ type project are having enormous potential of tribal development.

As regards the culture of the tribals, dance with all its intricacies is a salient feature of the social expansion of the tribal communities and constitute an important part of ceremonies connected with marriage, harvesting and funeral rites. The aesthetic

awareness is also revealed in their personal adornments and belongings. The cult of the token is an important feature in the tribal culture, which has conditioned the life and thought of the people and their arts and crafts. Totems are propitiated through ritual and magic. Among the arts and crafts of the tribal communities of Gujarat, the most interesting are textiles, wood and ivory carving, horn, bamboo and cane work and making of a variety of archetypal bronze used for ritual and domestic purposes. In terms of literacy, there has been a considerable improvement in tribal literacy rate in the last 3 decades due to efforts of the government and voluntary organizations.

Tribal areas have not remained the same; they are changing in their external context due to policy and programmatic interventions of the state and other socio economic forces. The tribal areas are recipients of developmental projects whose benefits have reached even the interior forest villages of Dangs and Dharampur. Tilakwada and Chhota Udepur roads, Schools, health centres, state transport and many other social infrastructural services are now accessible to forest dwellers also. Because of the presence of these vertical linkages, some of the tribal villages have now become dependent on metropolitan centres like Ahmedabad, Baroda, and Surat for trade and commerce, industry, education and employment. There are a number of tribes in Gujarat. The four major types: Bhil, Halpatis, Vasavas and Rathwa are discussed in the following section.

BHIL

Tribals with Bhil features account for around 50 per cent of the states' Adivasi population. Bhils since ancient time have been keeping bows and arrows with them. They include tribes like Garasiya, Bhilala, Dholi Bhil, Bhil Rawal, Bhil Vasava, Pawara, Tadvi, etc. Bhils are dark in complexion, strong in built, short and stout. Bhil usually stay in scattered hutments made of clay, grass and other indigenous material. Bhil habitat both in rural and urban areas.

Bhil traditionally put on short dhoti, a chaddar and a safa covering their heads. The women wear coats, mini sarees and backless blouses (*kanchali*). A silver *Bhoriyu*, solid round *kadu* (anklet), *Markiyo*, *Naja kadiyo*, Big rings, decorate a Bhil man while the woman adorn anklets on legs, silver waist ring, silver rings on fingers, etc. Bhil usually eat maize and 'urad' dal. Besides they consume *kodri* (a rice substitute), *kuti Barto Banti*, *Gram*, *Wheat*, *rice*, *pea*, *tuvar*, etc. They consume meat of buffalo, chicken, deer, rabbit, etc. Liquor is also freely consumed during religious ceremonies. As per 2011 census, the level of literacy among Bhil tribe was 59.8 per cent. They are typically agriculturalist tribe but besides agriculture they are also engaged in other occupations including labour work, roads and construction work, earth work and the like. Bhils worship the ancestors (*Khatraj*) and they offer them the meat of goat or chicken. Some liquor is also poured on the holy stone. Bhils are known for their special dance and songs. They have their own peculiar dialect, which is still in oral form. They communicate in their own speech but when they move out of their places they speak and understand Gujarati.

HALPATI

Among the scheduled tribes, Halpati is one such group that mainly habitat in South Gujarat region and their number is more than five lakhs. The tribe mainly has settled in the plain areas of the district of Surat, Navsari, Valsad, Bharuch and Vadodara, along with other non-tribal and high-caste hindu people of rural areas and towns. There are hardly any written literatures/ reference material available about this tribe. There are

several sub-tribes of Halpatis which include *lala, valsadia, Barania, Choria, Damani, Haravia, Isaria, Khodia, Talavia and Vahatia*.

The houses of Halpati comprises of kutcha houses with walls made from clay and grass and pucca houses with brick walls and roofs made of cement sheet. *Halpati Talavia* has no dialect of their own. The language has a mixed impact of several castes, communities which surround the Halpati-Talvia families such as Desais, Patels, Kolis, Muslims, Parsis and other tribal communities. As regards ornaments, both male-female are fond of chain (*kanthi*) in neck, a circle (*kado*) in hand and rings on the fingers. They do not have the tradition of tattooing. Those who are educated or economically well-off prefer ornament made from gold and silver. Halpatis usually take semi-liquid substance made from thick flour. (*Jowar rotla or bhaidku*).

The addiction to wine/liquor is very important. They also consume tea or *kavo*. Bidi and tobacco are very much popular among them. The marriages among the Halpati families are performed by the Brahmin pandit. He is known as '*Choreewala*'. Divorce is permitted in their society and whoever needs a divorce, the matter is referred to the tribal community '*Panch*'. The divorcee men and women are also allowed to remarry. Such marriage can be even with a younger brother of the husband.

The Halpati '*Panch*' is an important social institution comprising of elderly persons of the village. Halpati *Panch* could be for a village or it could have limited jurisdiction over only a small locality (Falie) of the Halpati families. Sometimes a Panch has a larger jurisdiction over the whole district and they control the Halpati social life for the entire district. The principal person of Halpati is known as *Patel*. While selecting a Patel the age, experience, influence and status of a person are taken into consideration.

The most known and most important God for Halpati is *Bharam Dev*. Halpatis have faith in Ghost, Vaintari, etc. The greatest festival for Halpatis is *Diwaso*-last day of the Hindu calendar in the month of *Ashada*. All Halpatis of the village celebrate this festival in a group when marriages of dolls-girls are arranged. The literacy level among Halpati lies at a very low level. The reasons for their non inclination towards education are their poor economic conditions, idleness, the addiction for liquor, etc. Some of the suggestions for bringing up level of literacy among Halpatis are: compulsory and free education, creating awareness among parents, providing midday meals, etc. The economic condition and health facilities need to be improved in order to promote Halpatis' quality of habitation and hygiene. It is necessary to take concrete measures to improve their economic condition, to bring a drastic change in their occupation pattern to arouse interest among them for education and to sensitize the concerned government authorities to their needs and problems.

VASAVA

Vasavas mostly habitate in Bharuch, Surat and Narmada districts of Gujarat. They live in single storey houses made of teak or kher wood. The walls are made from bamboo strips or cotton plant sticks. The houses are either scattered or are in groups. Vasavas have no script of their own '*Vasavi*', dialect is used for conversational purpose. The Vasavas who stay near *Khandesh* of Maharashtra have effects of Marathi in their dialects.

Vasavas use both leafy and root vegetables. Along with vegetarian food they also consume meat and fish. With regard to education, Vasavas used to follow traditional education, but now with the benefits of various government schemes like *Ashramshalas* and other schools, the level of literacy is coming up.

Vasavas are religious by nature. Under the influence of Hindu Culture, they worship Hindu Gods and Goddesses. In their tribes, they have different religious sects like Hinduism, Christianity, Satkeval sect, Kabir panth, Swaminarayan, etc. Their main occupation is agriculture, but besides that they also engage themselves in casual labour, collecting forest products, industrial factories, etc. Vasavas are patriarchy tribes where father is the head figure. His decision is important in matters of family income and expenditure. Vasavas have their own Panchayat for systematic administration of social customs. The *Panch* attends to cases of conflicts, divorce, marriage problem, mutual quarrels, etc. The traditional caste *panch* is effective even today, but there is also a trend of approaching legal court for solving the cases.

Vasavas usually arrange marriages in their own tribe decided either by parents or by self-choice. The prevalence of re-marriage is allowed in Vasavas and Divorce takes place only in the case of doubt. When the 'Panch' grants divorce, the husband orders for a new saree and he gives a piece of that saree to the wife. This is a symbolic expression. But now a days, decree to divorce is obtained sometimes through court. Vasavas practise the traditional rites related to death. They have a custom of *Barma* - giving lunch to all relatives, friends and it is called '*Dahada Pani*' and the amount of money spent in *Barma* ceremony depends upon economic conditions of the family. Talking about their beliefs, Vasavas are superstitious and they believe in ghosts, witches, black magic and worship their ancestors.

RATHWA

In India, Rathwa tribes seem to have concentrated mainly in the states of Maharashtra and Gujarat. The Bombay Gazetteer-2 (1925) mentions that Rathwas have originated from the "Rath" area of Madhya Pradesh – Malwa, near Ali Rajpur. The Rathwas in Gujarat have settled in the districts of Panchmahal, Dahod and Vadodara and as per 2011 census, they constitute 7.20% of the total tribal population.

Traditionally they can easily be identified by their stout body, fair skin and well-built structure. They wear colorful dresses. Men folk put on *langoti* (brief) which is loose in front while woman put on colorful petticoat and a saree. Rathwas wear heavy ornaments made from gold or silver, like *kadla* and anklet, *hansadi*, silver mangalsutra, etc. The poor people prefer nickel or artificial metal for ornaments. Rathwas are also fond of tattooing on hand, wrist, etc.

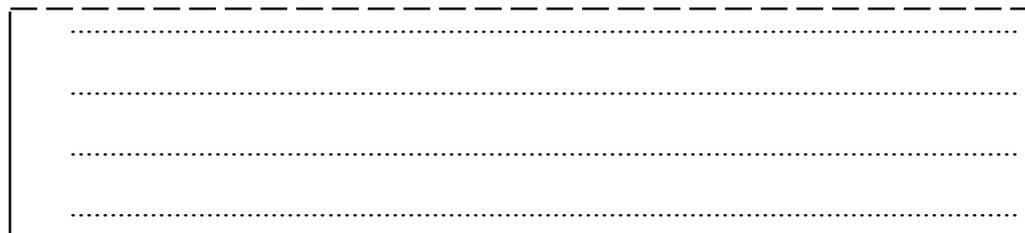
In Rathwas tribe, it is customary to keep *pithora* (wall pictures containing religious legends on walls). They worship Hindu Gods and Goddesses and celebrate festivals like Diwali, Navratri, Diwasa, Holi, etc. Their marriages take place only when both the parties are major. There are number of rituals between engagement and marriage. Marriages usually take place in summer (May-June). Rathwas are agriculturists. They take good care of their land and produce crops like maize, urad, wheat, vegetables, paddy and cash crops. Rathwas have their caste '*Panch*', which works for prevention of crimes in their caste. They handle cases like conflicts in marriage, divorce, property, occupational issues, etc.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1) Name the major tribes of Gujarat?

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2.3 MOBILISATION OF TRIBES IN GUJARAT

State Government of Gujarat has been implementing tribal sub-plan by earmarking certain percentage of its development expenditure to be spent in this scheduled areas. Since 1976, the scheduled areas have been enfolded into Integrated Tribal Development Projects (at present 12 in number) for emphasizing single line administration (planning & monitoring) and tackling issues of tribal development in project mode. Many voluntary agencies have taken up the job of grant-in aid from the state and Central Government. Forest Laborers' cooperative societies, rural credit-cooperatives have come into function for mobilizing people for their economic development. Gujarat has been fortunate enough to have Panchayat Raj Institution (PRI) working well since long. All these have contributed to the socio-economic development of the tribal people.

In order to involve local tribals in the process of formulation, planning and execution of development programmes suited to local conditions, Gujarat Pattern was launched by the Government in 1997, earmarking of Rs.200 crores out of Tribal Area Sub-plan as discretionary fund placed at the disposal of Tribal Development to formulate programmes/schemes suited to local tribal needs through District "*Adijati Vikas Mandals*" headed by concerned guardian minister of the district.

To encourage participation of tribals, Government has initiated innovative measure in creating '*Taluka Adijati Vikas Samiti*' at *taluka* level in the year 2002, so that local inspirations get involved in implementing different schemes. Apart from Government machineries, NGOs have involved in the skill development, water works and individual benefit distribution works.

Strategies that are envisaged for development include:

- Improved peoples' participation by way of effective decentralization through local self-governments;
- Involvement of civil society;
- Role of NGOs to accelerate socio-economic development;
- Ensuring Right to Information for transparency;
- Reforming Civil Service to improve accountability and efficiency;
- Administrative procedural reforms for public- government interface;
- Coordination of different public agencies for better synergy;
- Project formulation, implementation and monitoring;
- Empowering the marginal to act as pressure groups to resist bad governance and exploitation;
- Large scale Capacity Building programmes;
- Technology-supported benefit distributed mechanism;

The greatest policy challenge lies in developing human resources capability to use other resources effectively. Even at the cost of initial inherent inefficiencies peoples' empowerment through direct participation in planning and implementation should be attempted.

Strategies for Enhancing their Livelihood

Joint Forest Management occupies a special significance in this context. A study by the World Bank (2006) indicated that if properly operationalise, JFM could bring as high as rupees one million worth of forest produce for supporting the livelihood of the communities. Gujarat has been one of the leading states for promoting JFM. Proper management of forest and arrangement for benefit sharing may yield significant benefits to the tribal and other households living in these areas.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1) What is the main objective of Joint Forest Management in Tribal Development?

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2.4 JHARKHAND: TRIBAL PATTERN

Jharkhand that is also geographically named the Chotanagpur Plateau is predominantly a tribal belt. The principal tribes found in Chotanagpur are the Oraons, the Mundas, the Kharias, the Hos, the Birhors and the Santhals. Besides them, there are also small tribes such as the Asurs, Kisans, and the Cheros, the Kharwars, the Birijas, the Rautias, the Gonds, the Rajwars, the Mahlis, the Savars, the Karmalis and a few other minor tribes. The highest concentration of tribal population is found in Simdega while the lowest is in Koderma district.

The Scheduled Tribe population of Jharkhand state as per 2011 census constitutes 26.21% of the total population (32,988,134) of the state. Out of thirty two scheduled tribes notified for the state, Santhal is the most populous tribe; constituting 31.86% of the tribal population of the state. Four other major tribes, Kharia, Bhumij, Lohra and Kharwar along with Santhal, Oraon, Munda and Ho constitute 86.75% of the total tribal population. The tribe names: Chero, Bedia, Malpahariya and Mahli account for another 5.60%; the remaining 20 tribes, along with the generic tribes constitute the balance 7.64%; of the total Scheduled Tribe population. The overall sex ratio of the tribal population in Jharkhand is 1003 female per 1000 male. Among the major tribes, Kharia and Ho have female, outnumbering the male in their total population. As regards literacy, the overall rate among the tribals has increased from 40.07% at 2001 census to 51.1% at 2011 census. Despite this improvement, the literacy rate among the tribes is much lower in comparison to that of all Scheduled Tribes at the national level (58.96%). Among the numerically larger tribes, Oraon and Kharia- have more than half of the population in the age of seven years who are literate while Munda has the literacy rate almost equal to that of all Scheduled Tribes at the national level.

Although Hinduism is the predominant religion of the state (67.83%) the Hindu tribes constitute 37.54% only. Christian tribes are 15.47% and less than half percent (0.2%) are Muslims. Among the major tribes, Santhal have more than half of the total population, professing Hinduism while Oraon and Munda have more than 50% of population following other religions followed by Christianity. Among the major tribes, Oraon, Munda and Kharia have 62-71% workers engaged as 'cultivators' followed by Kharwar and Santhal. Bhumij and Lohra have recorded the highest proportion of 'agricultural labourers' in their total working population.

Family and Socio-political Organisation

Among all the tribes of Jharkhand, the family is the basis of social life. It is of nuclear type in which parents and the unmarried children live. Married sons and daughter usually set up new homes. Most of the tribes are divided into a number of clans, which are totemic and exogamous in nature. The Mundas, the Kharias, the Oraons, the Hos, the Santhals, the Cheros and the Kharwars have well-organized villages with their secular and religious headman and staff. The administrative committee of village elders called the '*Panch*' is formed for arbitration of cases. The organization of such a confederation mainly aims at maintaining peace and tranquility and settling group feuds and disputes. Tribes such as the Birhors, the Korwars, the Parahiyas and the Hill Kharias are on a differing level of cultural development and their life mostly depends on hunting and food gathering. The Jharkhand tribes constitute '*tandas*'-which are associations of different family groups. The head of each '*tanda*' is called *Naiga* or *Naya* who is both a secular as well as a religious head. The outer-village disputes are settled by bigger '*Panchayat*' or the inter-village councils where the '*Bar-Mukhiya*' presides and settles feuds. In Jharkhand, youth dormitories are very much prevalent which are meant to train the youth. Such youth dormitories are found among the Oraons, the Mundas, the Birhors, the Kharias and the Asurs. S.C. Roy comments "In the *jonkh-Erpa*- better known to us under the hindi name of *Dhumkuria* or "*DhangarMuria*, the hut of the 'Dhangars' or youngmen - we catch a glimpse of a very archaic form of economic, social and religious organization" (also see S.C. Roy-The Oraons of Chotonagpur, pp, 211-212).

The in-charge or the supervisor of the boys "*Dhumkuria*" is called '*Dhangar-Mahto*' who instructs the boys about their socio-religious duties. The *Dhumkuria* boys help the villagers in performing their social and economic duties. Among the Mundas, the youth-dormitory is known as *Gitiora* and among the Kharias it is called *Gitio*. Separate youth dormitories for boys and girls are found among the Birhors. The tribal boys, by the time they leave the dormitories, know all about sex, morals and social customs of the tribes.

Village and Housing

The villages of the tribes of Jharkhand are usually situated near the forests from where they can easily procure materials for the construction of their houses, collect-fruits, flowers, roots and leaves. Typical villages of the Hos and Kharias are usually built on the banks of rivers or streams. In most of the tribal villages are seen *Akhara*, *Sasan* and *Sarna* – the first for playing and dancing and the last two for worshipping. The houses in the Jharkhand villages are mostly built from the natural materials such as the wood of Sal, bamboo, grass, paddy-straw, etc. The walls of the houses are plastered with mud. The layout of the villages does not conform to any pattern except in the case of Santhals who build their houses on both side of the street known as '*Sadar-Kuli*'. The shape of the houses also varies from tribe to tribe, the absence of windows being a marked feature in almost all the tribes. The roofs of the houses are either thatched

with grass, paddy straw or tiles. Each house has a kitchen-garden called 'bari' attached to it.

Oraon *bastis* are made of mud-hut, huddled together without any definite arrangement. The Mundas have big houses – consisting of at least two huts; the 'gitora' or the sleeping house and 'mandiora' -the eating house. Among Hos the houses are simply constructed from wood, twigs, and mud and plastered with cow-dung or colored with earth. The Hill-Kharias construct small rectangular huts of mud walls thatched with grass. The huts of the Birhor tribes are devoid of the beauty of design. Compared to the other tribes the Santhal villages are beautiful. Their houses are constructed in a planned manner and they have *akhara*, *sarna* or *jaher* and in the centre, the 'manjhi-than' for worship. They paint their walls in alternate broad strips of red, white and black with clay and charcoal. The houses are very neat and clean.

The common furniture acquired by the tribals is 'Machia' (a stool with a wooden frame) string cots called *Parkom* or *Charpais* and those who cannot afford 'Parkam' use palm-leaf mats as beds. The household utensils are made of bell-metal, stone, wood and clay. Various kinds of bamboo baskets are also used for storing household goods. Baskets of different sizes, known as *Khanchis*, *tunkis*, *tupa,s* etc., are used for carrying or keeping the grain, vegetables and the like. Other important utensils are winnowing fans, pounding stones and brooms which are required for day-to-day use.

Dress and Ornaments

The traditional dress of a tribal young man is a narrow piece of loin-cloth. Besides wearing loin-cloth, on special occasions or on going out on journeys, most of the tribal also use cloth as a wrapper for the upper part of their body. This is of two kinds: the longer variety called 'barki' measuring about six yards in length and the shorter variety called 'Pichowri', from five to six cubits in length and less in width. The women ordinarily wear round the waist only a loin cloth called *Khanria* or *Lahanga*. It is a piece of cloth with or without borders that reach down to the knees. The upper part of the body is without any covering. Some women, however, cover their breasts either by using a 'Lahanga' a little longer, or by wearing another piece of cloth in addition to 'Lahanga', round the chest. The well-to-do ones wear sarees. The tribal women are very fond of personal decoration by using flowers and variety of ornaments made of brass, gold and silver. Besides the dress and ornaments, tattooing is also a common mode of personal decoration.

Marriage

The major tribes like the Oraon, the Mundas, the Santhals, the Hos, the Kharias and the Bihors follow the practice of adult marriage. Among the Gonds, the Goraitis, the Mahlis, the Kurmis, the Rajwars, the Rautias and a few others, the daughters are given in marriage while they are very young. However most of the tribes being poor, adult marriages are largely in practice specially among the Kharias. Among the tribals, the tradition of polygamy prevails. Though there is no limitation on the number of wives only people who are well-to-do and can afford maintenance of more than one wife practice this luxury.

2.5 IMPORTANT TRIBES OF JHARKHAND

SANTHAL

The Santhals are one of the major tribes of Jharkhand and they habitat in Santhal Paragana, Singhbhum, Hazaribagh, Giridih, Dhanbad and Ranchi Districts. The Santhals

belong to proto-australoid racially and linguistically to austro-asiatic. This tribe speaks the Santhali language; they also know Hindi and Bengali. The Santhals celebrate festivals like Sarhul, Karma, Sohrai, Jitia, Durga Puja, Diwali, Ramnavami, etc. The Christian Santhal celebrates Christian festivals. The Santhal tribe is mostly settled on the plains. They make their houses that are rectangular in shape with mud, khar, bamboo, wood and tiles. The house has two to three rooms to accommodate the family members. The floors and walls are kept neat and tidy with plaster of earth mixed with charcoal. The Santhal women keep their house clean. They are the custodians of family culture and tradition. As regards their literacy, the situation is still dismal. There is need to organize them under the self-help groups to protect them from exploitation, oppression and domestic violence.

The Santhals have nuclear family structure. The existence of joint family is rare. It consists of father, mother and unmarried children. On the basis of lineage, the family is patrilineal and on the basis of authority, the family is patriarchal. By and large, the Santhals practise monogamy but in exceptional cases bigamy is also permitted. Some important clan names of the Santhals are *Hansda, Murmu, Kisku, Hembrom, Manoli, Soren, Tudu, Besara, Paudia and Bedia*. The practice of marriage is done by usually paying a bride price. The other ways of acquiring marriage mates are service, exchange, love, trial, etc. The marriage by bride price is the negotiated form of marriage. The Santhals are mostly agriculturists, but besides this they also engage themselves in road construction, wage earning and service. Agriculture provides them engagement for six to eight months in a year and for the remaining six to four months, they depend on wage earning and collection of MFP. The Santhal religion presents a mixed picture of Tribal animism, Hinduism and Christianity. The *sing bonga* is the principal deity of the Santhal.

Santhals are politically conscious. From their tribe, national leaders like Sidhu and Kanho have played a great role. The Santhals have traditional village Panchayat and inter-village panchayat called '*Parganait*' which is the custodian of all social functions of the villages coming under the pargana and settles all disputes between villages.

During festivals, Santhal dance is a very popular folk-dance of Jharkhand. The main attraction of the Santhal dance in Jharkhand is the colorful costumes worn by the tribal people. Since the Santhals are believed to be close to nature, they use natural things such as leaves, branches and flowers to do their make-up and design their clothes.

ORAON

Oraons occupy the second position in the numeric strength of the tribe in Jharkhand. Also called '*Kurukh*' and '*Dhangars*' Oraons are believed to have originated from the Konkan, gradually migrated north crossing the river Son and finally settled down in Palamu and North-West of Ranchi district. They are found in the districts of Ranchi, Gumala, Lohardaga, Latehar, Palamu, Garhawa, Hazaribagh, Dhanbad, Santhal Pargana and Singhbhum. Racially they belong to proto-australoid and linguistically to Dravidian family.

The Oraon villages are situated in plain areas. Their houses are rectangular in shape, each house consisting of 2 to 4 rooms, a veranda, a courtyard and cattle shed. The houses are made of mud, wood, bamboo and tiles. The walls of the houses are painted with colors and have pictures drawn. Some houses are also double-storeyed. Oraons believe in nuclear family structure. Joint family system is rare. The tradition of patriarchy is observed. The family of Oraon is based on belief and cooperation of family members. The relationship of husband and wife, parents and children, and relation among the

siblings are sweet and cordial. Marriage rituals in the Oraon Community are similar to those of Santhals and Mundas. Marriages are arranged by the guardians in the family, but the opinions of the bridegroom and bride are also respected. Inter-tribe and inter-caste marriages are considered as social offence and offenders are driven out from the community. Bride-price is paid before acquiring the mate. Besides bride price, marriage partner is also acquired by service, love, exchange or elopement. When the demand of the bride price is accepted by the father of the boy, the marriage is declared as settled. The '*Pahan*' is called to fix a suitable date of marriage and the date is preferred between December to May.

An important characteristic of the social life of the Oraon's village is the practice of *Dhumkuria* or dormitory life. It is the educational institution for bachelors where they stay together and get trained about their customs, culture, religion and social life. Teachers of such centres are old men or priests (*Naigas*). As soon as a boy attains six or seven of age, he becomes eligible to become a member of the *Dhumkuria* or Common dormitory.

The Oraons are mainly an agricultural tribe. They are good cultivators and they claim to have first introduced the ploughing in Chotanagpur by replacing the '*Jhuming*' cultivation. Besides ploughing they also work as labour in tea-gardens of Assam and coal-mines of Chotanagpur. Now-a-days, well-to-do Oraon families have their own wells and diesel machines for the purpose of irrigation. Some Oraons are also employed in Government services and their economic condition is better. Oraon men, women and children visit the local market called '*Haats*' and do marketing of essential commodities. The Oraon believe in Hindu Gods and Goddesses and the Christian Oraon celebrates Christian festivals. They also believe in superstition and the concept of cycle of birth and death.

In order to settle disputes between people and villages, political organization called '*Parha Panchayats*' are constituted. The *Parha* panchayat decides feuds, disputes and other cases related to such taboos which affect the entire *parha*. Like the other tribes, Oraons too like to dance, sing and play instruments. They use flute, nagara, mandar, drum and dholak as their musical instruments. *Jhumur* songs of Oraon reflect their lifestyle and philosophy. The famous dance and songs of Oraon tribe are Karma, Sharhul, Jhumar, Jejuti, Itu and Jatra.

In recent times, Oraon tribes have been immensely benefited by the development schemes of Government and NGO are related to education, housing, health, economic upliftment, etc. For health checkup and treatment of diseases the Oraon families visit health-sub-centres. They also visit Block headquarters to avail the benefit of economic development programmes.

BIHORS

The Bihors have their origin from the proto australoid racial stock and they are one of the primitive tribal groups of the state of Bihar. They are also of two types: i) Uthlu Bihor ii) Jaghi Bihor. The Uthlu Bihors have a wandering lifestyle whereas the Jaghi Bihors are settled. Agriculture is their principal occupation.

Their houses are conical in structure and are called '*Tandas*' constructed from leaves and branches. As regards their clothings, the men are clad in half Dhoti and *gamaccha* while the women wear sarees. The women are very fond of ornaments made up of brass, bronze, steel, glass thread, seeds, etc. The family is the smallest unit of the Bihor society and it is nuclear in structure. It comprises of husband, wife and unmarried children. The Bihors have organizations of families called '*Band*'. The head of the band is called

'Naya' and all members of the family work under his leadership. The Birhor Tanda maintains good relation with other Tandas by exchanging food, loan, service and feast.

The Bihors practice monogamy. The common practice of marriage is by paying the bride price either in cash or in kind. The bride price includes clothes for the bride, bridegroom, bride's parents, brothers and sisters. After the payment of the bride price, the marriage date is fixed with the help of the 'Tanda' head.

The kinship system of the Birhor model is a relationship based on parentage and marriage. In matters of inheriting property, the Bihors follow the patrilineal tradition. The Bihors believe in animism, animatism, naturalism, belief in spirits and witchcraft. They offer worship to their deities on different occasions and celebrate festivals. Their common festivals are Karma, Naya Khaui, Diwali, Makarsankranti, holi, sarhul. The religious leader of the society is called 'Naya' and he is assisted by *Kotwar* or *Dignar*. In Birhor society the women are very hardworking; they are the custodians of family income, expenditure, customs and traditions. Though they play active role in the economic activities of the family, their participation in political matters is very restrictive. The women of Jaghi Birhor also work in the fields and earn wage.

The Bihors have a systematic political organization headed by 'Naya'. He is the social, political and religious head of the *Tanda*. Issues of dispute, inter Tanda Panchayats, adultery, divorce, cruelty etc are decided by the *Naya*. However after the establishment of modern gram Panchayat, Police Stations, local courts and Churches the importance of *Tanda* has lessened.

Regarding their educational status, the Bihors are still considered a backward tribe. They do not have representatives in the political sector. The Jharkhand state government has taken up special programmes for the rehabilitation of Bihors who still follow the practice of wandering economy. Under the rehabilitation scheme, schools for children, training centres for economic activities like rope-making, honey-collecting have started. However, still the tribe faces problems related to health, nutrition, drinking water and sanitation. It would still take time and efforts towards mainstreaming the tribe.

Check Your Progress III

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1) What are Tandas?

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KHARIA

The Kharia is a Dravidian tribe of Jharkhand and the inhabitants are mostly settled in the South-West corner of the Ranchi district in Palkot, Biru, Bishnupur, Sisai Parganas and in the hills of Singhbhum district. The Kharias are divided in three sections namely Hill Kharia, Dudhu kharia and Dhelki Kharia. The Dudhu Kharias rank first and they outnumber the other sub-tribes. The Dudhu Kharia and the Dhelki Kharias are better off than the Hill Kharias and are mostly agriculturalists. They show an inclination towards

Hinduism. With regards to the manner and customs of these three sectors- they are separate. Marriage does not take place among these three tribes and each is an endogamous tribe. Hill Kharias are also called 'Savars'.

The chief occupation of the settled Kharias is cultivation and in South West of Ranchi there are many of them claimed to be 'bhumi-hars' and in other parts of the district, they are mostly tenants-at-will and farm laborers. The Kharia villages are situated on the hills as well as the plains, surrounded by hill-ranges clad in thick forests. The houses are made of bamboo, wood, mud, khar grass, straw and rope made from tree-barks.

The Kharias have a nuclear family-structure where the father, mother and unmarried children reside together. The Kharia family is patriarchal where father's decision is regarded as final. The inheritance and the succession are also patrilineal. Marriage is an essential component of the Kharia tribe and the people believe that for the continuation of the family name, progeny and the tribal race marriage is essential. For the purpose of marriage Kharias are divided into a number of clans which are exogamous. Some important clans of the Dhelki Kharia are Murhu, Soren, Charha, Hansada and Topno. Intra-clan marriage is not allowed in the Kharia tribe.

As regards the society of the Kharias, they believe in traditional system of marriage and sex. Inter-tribe, extra-marital, inter-clan marriages are considered as social crimes. For settlement of village disputes, there is the system of village panchayat and its decision is obeyed by all. The head of the village Panchayat is called *Pradhan* and the head of the inter-village Panchayat is called *Parahan Pradhan*.

The Kharia women are hard-working and they are the custodian of household possessions, family customs and community tradition. In matter of religion, the kharias believe in Hinduism and Christianity. They also believe in ancestral spirits. Popular festivals like Sarhul, Karma, Sohrai, Jitia, Dipavali and Ramnavami are observed by them.

Check Your Progress IV

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1) Describe the family structure of the Kharias.

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2.6 TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT IN JHARKHAND

The concept of tribal development in Jharkhand should be multidimensional, inclusive, job oriented, community-based so that the socio-economic condition of tribals improves substantially. If the development of tribal group is taken into consideration, then a process of social reconstruction and political mobilization should be initiated. The central issue in encouraging such participation of tribals in the development process is by empowering Individuals. Intensive awareness and capacity building of the villagers, women, volunteers through trainings, workshops, meetings, street-plays, brochures and pamphlets can be

organized by local assistance involving local resources as well as NGOs. Alliance building and networking with NGOs and media would accelerate the process and build a wider support for collective action.

Considering the low literacy among tribals and high dropout rates at elementary and higher levels, there is need of special focus on education of the tribal including context-specific traditional and innovative interventions. A normative network of primary, secondary and high schools equipped with proper school building, hostel and other requisite infrastructure facilities should be worked out for all schools in tribal areas. All interventions should have community participation as a core strategy. For ensuring universal education and sustainable improvement in the quality of education, it is necessary to bring the community closer to the school system.

Steps taken by various agencies in all stages of planning, implementation and evaluation should be undertaken systematically. Some of the measures to be adopted are briefly mentioned as follows:

- a) to support traditional tribal livelihood patterns and provide technical assistance to improve their yields;
- b) commercialize and market tribal produce/goods through tribal organizations;
- c) public-private partnerships for the creation and sustenance of micro-credit structure;
- d) Formation of Panchayat level pressure groups and tribal grassroots associations and empowering them through workshops, training and cultural associations;
- e) Disseminating information and initiating programmes through ICT and radio-based information;
- f) Empowerment of tribal women is. A perceptible discrimination against women both at social and economic levels has been prevalent since long. In the name of superstition and witch craft, victimization of poor widows, issueless women and old women have become common. It is time that the local educated youth should be encouraged to launch a drive and State should play the role of a facilitator.
- g) Self- help groups should take initiatives to promote rural savings and gainful employment.
- h) With the help of Joint Forest Management Committees, forest resources like Gram, Bamboo, Tassar and Lac making can be encouraged thereby providing the tribal group a nation-wide market exposure.

Finally, the administration should be made responsive. Relevant information should be disseminated to the tribals and the civil society at grassroots level should take steps for proper planning and execution. Unless steps are taken to address the above issues, there is little hope of the Jharkhand tribal population to benefit from the equitable participation in the development process.

2.7 TRIBES OF ORISSA

The tribes of Orissa, nearly about seven million, form a major portion of the total population of the state. All the districts of the state possess a tribal population, however the districts of Rayagada, Koraput, Malkangiri, Naurangpur and Kalahandi have more than fifty percent as the tribal population, while some of the other districts like Rayagada, Kalahandi, Koraput, Malkangiri and Naurangpur hold a small number of tribals There

are few tribes who are in a better economic condition, whereas several other tribes of Orissa spend a totally secluded life. In Orissa state, different tribes possess different tradition, culture, language and rituals.

Linguistically the tribes of India are broadly classified into four categories: (1) Indo-Aryan (2) Dravidian (3) Tibeto-Burmese and (4) Austric. In Orissa the speakers of the Tibeto-Burmese language family are nearly absent and the tribes belong to other three language families. The Indo-Aryan language family in Orissa includes Dhelki-Oriya, Matia, Haleba, Jharia, Saunti, Laria and Oriya. The Austric language family includes eighteen tribal languages namely, Birija, Parenga, Kisan, Bhumiji, Koda, Mahili Bhumiji, Mirdha-Kharia, Ollar Gadaba, Juang, Bondo, Didayee, Karmali, Kharia, Munda, Ho, Mundari and Savara. Within the Dravidian language family there are nine languages in Orissa, namely, Pengo, Gondi, Kisan, Konda, Koya, Parji, Kui, Kuvi and Kurukh or Oraon.

Though the tribes belong to three linguistic divisions, yet they have lots of socio-cultural similarities amongst them. The tribes are scattered all over the state, but they are mainly concentrated in Kondhmal, Koraput, Rayagada, Nabarangpur, Kalahandi and Gajapati districts. They are agricultural tribes. Kondhs are the largest tribal group in the State with population of over a million and carry out both settled and swidden cultivation. Saoras are shifting cultivators mainly found in Gajapati district. Parojas and Gadabas stay mostly in Koraput and are swidden cultivators. Parenga, Didayi, Bondo, Dharuas are other south Orissa tribes which practice shifting cultivation. In North Orissa, Juangs and Bhuiyans practice shifting cultivation. The main settled peasant tribes are Gonds, Santals, Mundas, Oraons, Bhattadas, Bhumij etc. The population of Gonds is approximately seven hundred thousands, concentrated in Kalahandi, Sambalpur and Koraput. Santhals are concentrated in Mayurbhanj and are settled peasants. Mundas, Oroans, Bathudis and Bhumij stay in north Orissa districts of Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar. Bhattadas and Bhumias live mostly in Nabarangpur district and are settled cultivators. Most tribes tend to follow a clan based land tenure system which provides customary rights in land, trees, forests etc. Tribes like Kondhs, Saoras, Parojas, Gadabas, Bondos, Juangs and Bhuiyans traditionally carry out shifting cultivation along with paddy cultivation in valley lands.

Check Your Progress V

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1) Name the districts which have the largest concentration of tribal population in Orissa.

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Occupation: The land use and tenure systems varies from tribe to tribe, but most swiddening tribes broadly cultivated four types of land—valley bottom paddy lands or wetlands, homesteads/backyards, uplands and swidden or shifting cultivation fields. Tribal communities residing in the hilly areas of Orissa are adept in shifting cultivation. Some of the tribal people are also engaged in handicraft industries or mills. Among these tribal people, some tribes namely the Gadaba tribe and Bondo tribe possess their

own looms and they are engaged in making clothes for regular use. Some tribal people like Loharas and Mohali have mastered the art of creating tool making and basket weaving while some tribal communities namely Oraon, Munda, Santhals and Ho have switched to the factories, industrial occupations and works in mines. The traditional land tenure system of the different tribes has been dramatically modified by increasing pressure on land, reservation of forests, imposition of formal land tenure system, and interaction with markets. A majority of the Orissa tribes has taken up other occupations to sustain livelihood like gathering, hunting and fishing. Though the tribal people of Orissa reside together, their cultural and traditional background is the major factors which distinguishes one tribe from another.

Religion and festival: Tribal communities of Orissa are very much religious minded and practice religion like animism, animalism, nature-worship, fetishism, and anthropomorphism. The tribes of Orissa also worship their ancestors. These Orissa tribes carry on their religious practices to ensure their happiness and personal security.

The tribal people follow a large number of festivals including birth ceremony, harvesting, marriage, sowing, etc with their tribal dances and songs. In such festivals one of the most important ways of rejoicing is the consumption of *Mahua* liquor. Their local and tribal deities are worshipped by sacrificing animals. The tribal people are superstitious and they take the '*Ojha*' of their community seriously to get rid of evil spirits. The well-known festivals of the tribes of Orissa are *Push parab* and *Chaita parab*. In this festive day all able tribal men of the village set out for a hunting expedition.

Dress: One of the most important things in the costumes of the tribal people of Orissa is metal jewellery. Most of the jewellery is made of aluminum and brass. Tattooing is practiced among the people of the tribal groups. Women wear long clothes, scarves and jewellery to adorn themselves.

Society and Tradition: The overall **kinship system** of the tribes may be labeled as classificatory. Descent and inheritance are patrilineal.

Among the tribes there is very little specialization of social roles. There is very little rigid stratification in society. The tendency towards stratification is gaining momentum among several settled agricultural tribes under the impact of modernization. The tribes of Orissa are now at different levels of socio-economic development. Shifting cultivation is not only an economic pursuit of some tribal communities, but it accounts for their total way of life. Their social structure, economy, political organization and religion are all accountable to the practice of shifting cultivation.

In the past, land in the tribal areas had not been surveyed and settled. Therefore, the tribal freely practised shifting cultivation in their respective habitats assuming that land, forest, water and other natural resources belonged to them. The pernicious, yet unavoidable practice of shifting cultivation still continues unchecked and all attempts made to wean away the tribal from shifting cultivation have so far failed.

However in the recent times a sizable agglomeration of tribal population in Orissa has moved to mining, industrial and urban areas for earning a secured living through wage-labour. During the past three decades the process of industrial urbanization in the tribal belt of Orissa has been accelerated through the operation of mines and establishment of industries. Mostly persons from advanced tribal communities, such as Santhal, Munda, Ho, Oraon, Kisan, Gond etc. have taken to this economic pursuit in order to relieve pressure from their limited land and other resources.

In some instances industrialization and mining operations have led to uprooting of tribal villages, and the displaced have become industrial nomads. They have lost their traditional occupation, agricultural land, houses and other immovable assets. They have become unemployed and are forced to face unfair competition with others in the labour market, and are sometimes frustrated. customs and norms and social integration continue to be achieved through their traditional political organizations. The tributary institutions of social control, such as family, kinship and public opinion continue to fulfill central social control functions. The relevance of tribal political organization in the context of economic development and social change continues to be undiminished. And as the traditional leaders continue to wield influence over their fellow tribesmen, it is worth-while to take them into confidence in the context of economic development and social change.

Cyclic rites: As most of the tribes of Orissa practice agriculture in some form or the other, sowing, planting, first-fruit eating and harvest rites being common amongst them. Their common cyclic rites revolve round the pragmatic problems of ensuring a stable economic condition. It involves restoration of the declining fertility of soil, protection of crops from damage, human and live-stock welfare, safety against predatory animals and venomous reptiles and insuring a good yield of annual and perennial crops. The annual cycle of **rituals** begins with the clearing of hill slopes during the Hindu month of *Chaitra* (March-April) and *Baisakh* (April-May). All the rituals centering agricultural operation are observed by the members of a village on a common date which is fixed by the village head-man in consultation with the village priest.

The ideological system of all the tribes surrounds **supernaturalism**. The pantheon in most cases consists of the Sun God, the Mother Earth and a lower hierarchy of Gods. Besides there are village tutelaries, nature spirits, presiding deities and ancestor-spirits, which are also propitiated and offered sacrifices. Gods and spirits are classified into benevolent and malevolent categories. A peculiarity of the tribal mode of worship is the offering of blood of an animal or a bird, because such propitiations and observance of rites are explicitly directed towards happiness and security in this world, abundance of crops, live-stock, plants and progenies. Sickness is not natural to a tribal; it is considered as an out-come of the machination of some evil spirits or indignation of ancestor spirits or Gods. Therefore, riddance is sought through propitiation and observance of rituals

Political organization: Among all the tribes in Orissa, conformity to customs and norms and social integration continue to be achieved through their traditional political organizations. The tributary institutions of social control, such as family, kinship and public opinion continue to fulfill central social control functions.

Check Your Progress VI

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1) What is the importance of Shifting Cultivation in the Tribal life?

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2.8 MAJOR TRIBES OF ORISSA

The major tribes of Orissa are Bonda Poraja tribe, Bhunjia tribe, Bagata tribe, Chenchu tribe, Dal tribe, and Dharua tribe. Let us discuss a few major tribes in the following section:

BONDA PORAJA TRIBE

Bonda Poraja tribe of Orissa, reckoned as primitive tribes are the scheduled tribes present in the southwestern provinces of Orissa, especially in the rugged and mountainous regions of Malkangiri district. They are identified by the names of Remo, Bhonda, Bondo. Remo means 'people' in the Bonda language. In fact, Bonda Poraja speaks with each other in a language which falls in to Munda group of the broad language family of Austro-Asiatic group. According to the study made by anthropologists and scholars, the Bonda Porajas are considered descendants of Austro-Asiatic tribes.

Bonda Poraja tribes have unique style of dressing which emphasizes the rich heritage of their culture and ethnicity. They are in general found to be 'semi-clothed'. Ornaments play a great role in the attire of the Bonda tribes. They wear broad silver necklace bands, which also embellish their beauty to a great extent. The people of this tribal community prefer to apply castor oil in their head. Some of the people of this community are adept in creating artworks like many of the tribal women create beautiful warli paintings. The Bonda Poraja tribes are agrarian people and even the ladies help the men in cultivation.

What is really interesting about these Bonda Poraja tribes is that they have retained their originality, conserve their heritage due to their exclusion. Another reason drawing the attention of almost all the anthropologists of the country is that the Bonda tribes are among the few tribes of India who till date follow the '*binnimoyprotha*', signifying the give-and-take policies and they frequent the local markets for carrying out these activities. There is a custom prevalent in this tribal community that the bride has to be older than the groom. The Bondas celebrate different festivals with great merriment. Among these festivals, '*Patkhanda Yatra*' is worth mentioning.

BHUNJIA TRIBE

Bhunjia tribe, an ancient tribe of Orissa, is a small Dravidian tribal group basically found in the Nuapada District of the State.

They are known to be a sub-division of Halbas of Bastar who ran away from Bastar as a result of a clash with the Dhakars. The people of this tribal group converse in Halbi language which is an amalgamation of Marathi language, Chhattisgarhi language and Oriya language. Apart from this, the Bhunjia tribal communities are also found in several districts like the Kalahandi District. The Bhunjia Tribe has two branches namely Chinda and Chaukhtia. The Chinda Bhunjia people are the inhabitants of plain areas while the Chaukhtia Bhunjias reside in the hilly areas of Sunabeda plateau. Since the topography of the region is quite rugged, having hills, mountains and also dense forest areas, the Bhunjia tribes have settled down in a scattered manner in their villages.

Just like any other tribe of the mountainous region of India, the Bhunjia tribes too have adopted the profession of shifting cultivation. They have also learnt to sustain their living by gathering and selling non timber forest products in the local markets.

The costumes of the Bhunjia tribal people are colorful and attractive. The men of this tribal group generally wear a piece of cloth and shirt. Sarees and different jewelleryes

made of glass; coils, beads, brass, silver and aluminium adorn the women of this community. Ornaments like bangles, ear-rings, necklace, anklets etc are some of the jewelleries used by the women.. Bhunjia tribes are quite conservative and traditional. Moreover, it has also been said that the Bhunjia tribal community has a kinship with the Gond tribe. The Bhunjia people have marital relationship with the Gond people and marriages also take place among the cross cousins of the community. The Bhunjia society is patriarchal. Generally, the Bhunjia tribal people duly follow the structure of nuclear family with a monogamous form of marriage. The pious nature of these tribes has a plethora of Gods and Goddesses whom they worship them for the sake of the well-being and prosperity of their society. In the month of *Chaitra*, the tribal people offer goats and coconuts to their principal deity, *Sunadei* and their priest, better known as '*Pujari*', who carries on the religious rites. Festivals too are a part and parcel of these Bhunjia tribes. Except Holi, these tribes celebrate almost all the other Indian festivals with great fervor and enthusiasm.

These Bhunjia tribes follow the traditional system with the formation of village council as the key unit of village administration. An important aspect of Bhunjia tribal society is the status of their women. In fact, the Bhunjia tribes have a very stringent set of rules in order to govern a woman's life. It is said that women are not permitted to consume food from outside and there is no such restriction for the male folks

BAGATA TRIBE

The Bagata tribes are regarded to be one of the aboriginal tribes and also are one of the Scheduled tribes of India. The tribal communities reside in different sectors of Orissa and apart from that, they are also found in Andhra Pradesh. This tribal community is also known by the names of Bagatha, Bhakta, Bagat, Bagodi, or Bogad. The Bagata tribes have undertaken the profession of farming in order to sustain the requirements of their day-to-day living. Festivals, dance as well as musical bonanza make the culture of these Bagata tribes. Special mention may be made about the *Dhimsa* dance practiced in the Bagata tribal society. It is a dance form where Bagata tribes of all ages, starting from eight to eighty, participate quite energetically. During the months of *Chaitra* (March to April), the Bagata tribes dance on occasions of marriages and also at joyful social functions.

The unique feature of *Dhimsa* dance is that it spreads the spirit of friendship and alliance between the people residing in the nearby villages. Since this is a traditional form of dance of the Bagata tribe, the female folks dress up in distinctive tribal clothes and also wear beautiful ornaments. All the Bagata dancers dance in the rhythm of Mori, Kiridi, Tudumu, Dappu and Jodukommulu.

Most of the Bagata tribes are Hindus and they also worship Hindu Gods and Goddesses along with their tribal deities. The people of Bagata tribe interact with each other in the 'corrupted form' of Oriya language though their main language is Telugu. Adivasi Oriya is their local dialect. Just like any other tribal community of Orissa, there is the prevalence of the structure of social hierarchy amongst the Bagata tribe.

Economic indicators of development of the tribes in Orissa are poor and that have caused acute poverty conditions. There are also a number of social conditions of deprivation that tend to perpetuate poverty which, in turn, hold back social development. This is a kind of vicious circle which calls for stepping up investment in productive sectors to increase the pace of growth and improve the economic and social well being of the poor. Therefore the State has to make a longitudinal perspective plan for the transformation of the subsistence oriented backward agricultural economy in order to

solve the problem of poverty and to improve the 'quality of life' of tribal people. The strategic plans which are being implemented for overall development of the tribal communities are known as Integrated Tribal Development Agency, Special Micro Project, Modified Area Development Agency, Cluster approach and Dispersed Tribal Development Programme. Apart from giving financial assistance, the State has enacted various laws to safeguard the interest of the tribals in respect of the land alienation, indebtedness, exploitation, protection of their civil rights, reservation of vacancies in public sector posts and services, abolition of bonded labour system, protection of tribal rights over forest produces, etc. The State has commenced the process of democratic decentralization by extending the Panchayati Raj Act to Scheduled areas and in empowering the tribal through Gram Sabha. In spite of this it is observed that, by and large, the benefits of Constitutional privileges for the Scheduled Tribes of Orissa have not been realized to the desired level. Thus, Orissa has been showing its commitment to provide protective measures to the tribal people for their development.

2.9 LET US SUM UP

In the above discussion, the socio-economic and cultural life of tribes of Gujarat and Jharkhand as well as Orissa has been analyzed with a description about the major tribes of these states. The above analysis presents a mixed picture, with respect to the status of tribal rights in Gujarat, Jharkhand and Orissa.

As far as the question of autonomy and recognition of tribal rights are concerned, in principle it has been accepted and along with constitutional provisions there is little formal threat to tribal rights. However as far as their mobilization, socio-economic development and participation in economic activities are concerned, they seem to have a low priority. The issue of land, water, forests and local resources which are central to the tribes for preservation of their socio-cultural identity and livelihood are under constant threat from various quarters. To ensure the participation of tribal in matters of governance, some of the existing policies towards tribal population need to be restructured.

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs is the key governmental agency with respect to the welfare and development of the tribal people all over the country. Voluntary organizations should make all possible efforts to involve the community in their work. Community participation helps in building confidence among the people and in providing feedback for further improvement and reorientation of programmes.

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UNIT 3 TRIBES OF GOA AND MAHARASHTRA

Structure

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 The Socio-Economic Life of the Tribes in Maharashtra
- 3.3 Health and Nutritional Problems in Tribal Areas of Maharashtra
- 3.4 Goa Tribes
- 3.5 Effect of New Economic Policy on Tribals
- 3.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.7 Further Readings and References

3.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit will help you to understand the nature, types and status of tribal communities in Maharashtra and Goa. When we complete this unit you will be able to:

- Know the position of tribal communities in Maharashtra and Goa;
- Understand the meaning of tribe;
- Understand the socio-economic, cultural life of tribal communities in the states;
- Know the brief profile of Goa tribes;
- Know Health and Nutritional problems in Tribal areas of Maharashtra; and
- Understand the effects of New economic policy of Tribals.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

There are forty-seven tribes in Maharashtra. Out of them, there are seventeen numerically and ethnographically important tribes. In Maharashtra, although tribal population is mainly concentrated in 14 districts, it is spread over in almost all the districts. According to 2011 census, the tribal population of the state was 10,510,213 (9.35%) and there was comparatively more concentration of them in districts like Chandrapur, Thane, Nashik, Dhule, Nandurbar and Yavatmal. The principal tribes are Bhil, Mahadeo-Koli, Gond, Warli, Kokna (Kokni), Katkari, Korku, Kolam, Gamit, Thakar, Pardhi, Andh, Malhar-Koli, Pardhan, Dhanka, Dhor-Koli etc.

The inhabited area of tribals have been divided into mainly two regions : (1) Sahyadri region, comprising 31 tehsils in seven districts and (2) Gondwan region comprising 16 tehsils in seven districts. This type of regional demarcation was found some what necessary because of ethnic and cultural similarities among the tribals residing in the respective regions. Sahyadri and Satpuda mountain ranges, forming the western and north-western ghats having thick forests, have been the natural abode of Bhils, Katkaris, Mahadeo Kolis, Kokna-Koknis, Thakars etc. while in the Gondwana region of eastern Maharashtra, especially the districts of Chandrapur and Gadchiroli where the forest is

very thick and on the plains, the roads are uncommunicable and the tribals can be found in the most primitive state, is the habitat of Gonds, Kolams, Madias etc.

The Government of India has recognised some tribal groups as being 'primitive' and special plans as well as grants are sanctioned for their development. In Maharashtra State three tribal groups are recognised as 'primitive' namely, Media-Gonds from Gadchiroli district, kolams from Yavatmal district and Kinwat and Katkaris from Thane district.

The major tribe of the Goa are the Gowdas, but there are other tribes too, which are the Kunbis, the Velips and the Dangars. The tribal people live in segregated villages. The lifestyles, customs, ceremonies, religious beliefs and superstitions have remained an integral part of the tribal people.

3.2 THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC LIFE OF THE TRIBES IN MAHARASHTRA

In the initial stages of economic development of the Maharashtra State, tribal community has not joined the mainstream of society in real sense and were, therefore, left behind in the process of development. The main source of income for tribals in Maharashtra are the collection and sale of minor forest produce, farming, fishing, hunting and forest labour. From time immemorial, the tribals have remained mainly dependent upon the forest for their livelihood and sustenance. They get wood from the forest for their daily fuel requirement and also for the construction of their huts. They collect different varieties of minor forest produce and sell them to the non-tribals in the nearby 'Bazaars' and 'Mandis' where the unscrupulous traders exploit them by offering a very low price for their agriculture and forest produce.

Social and cultural life of tribals have survived since time immemorial because of higher degree of solidarity, respect for traditions and customs, meanings associated with social actions, less importance to money and a very high degree of sense of sharing which is still prevailing amongst them binds them together.

Despite introduction of several schemes for the tribals they have not shown much progress. One of the reason for this is their nature of shyness and lack of contact with urban world and lack of knowledge of regional, national and English (linguistic language). Things are however changing due to introduction of Ashram schools. Tribes such as Kokna-koknis, Mahadeo Kolis have shown signs of progress.

As far as educational status of the Tribals in Maharashtra is concerned Government of Maharashtra has introduced Ashram schools, which are doing good work. In Maharashtra there are 205 primary and 203 Secondary Ashram Schools. Voluntary organisations also manage government aided 177 primary and 76 secondary Ashram Schools. Besides this Tribal sub plan area has 56 and 32 hostels which are being run for tribal boys and girls respectively.

Educational Status

It is well known that Maharashtra is industrially and commercially a very advanced state in India. Large number of industries are being set up in the backward regions in private and public sectors due to package scheme of incentives offered by government. The industrialization and urbanization in Maharashtra is taking place very speedily with its effect on the rural population in all spheres of life. The percentage of urban population to total population, which was 38.69 in the year 1991, went upto 45 in the year 1995.

There has been a large-scale migration from rural to urban areas for employment and in this whirlpool the tribal population has been caught unaware and the influence of the industrialization and migration has also affected the tribal population to a great extent. Their efforts to stick to their deep-rooted traditional value system, customs and religious practices have pulled them further down leaving an ever increasing gap between the tribals and non-tribals. In the initial stages of economic development (say up to Fifth Plan) of the state, the tribal community has not joined the mainstream of society in real sense and was, therefore, left behind in the process of development. This is also true in respect of educational status. It can be seen from the Table 4 that while the overall literacy percentage in the State is about 64.87 per cent, it is only 36.77 per cent among STs. Thus, there is a very wide gap so far as the literacy percentage among the tribals and non-tribals is concerned.

Therefore, the Government of Maharashtra has taken special interest in tribal education and during the last two decades or so a large number of Ashram Schools have been started in the tribal areas. Many Ashram Schools have been located in the remotest part of the tribal area to facilitate the spread of education among the tribal children. At present, there are 406 Ashram Schools started by the Government of Maharashtra while more than 200 such schools are being run by the voluntary organizations with the grant-in-aid from government. There are about 1.72 lakh tribal students taking education in these Ashram Schools.

Besides Ashram Schools, the government has also started a large number of hostels in many urban centres like Bombay, Nagpur, Pune, Aurangabad, Amravati, etc., for the tribal children aspiring for higher education in good universities. Presently, more than 5,000 children can be accommodated at a time in such hostels located in different parts of Maharashtra.

Geographical Distribution of Tribals in Maharashtra

In Maharashtra, the Scheduled Tribes (STs) are spread over 47 tehsils of 14 districts. The specified areas declared by the notification of the Government of India in 1950 is now coterminous with the tribal sub-plan area. It can also be seen that the tribal population in the scheduled area is about 37.67 lakhs which is about 52 per cent of the total tribal population of the state. It means that about 48 per cent of the tribal population live outside the scheduled area. This is the result of the large-scale migration that may have taken place during the last 25-30 years to urban and industrial centres in search of livelihood and employment. It may also be the result of enrolment of non-tribal population as tribals in the census record and most of these non-tribals are living outside the scheduled area. The migration may have also taken place due to depletion of forest cover and the increase in tribal population who are unable to subsist on forest and agriculture produce and had no other alternative but to migrate to nearby urban and industrial centres.

For the purpose of convenience the scheduled areas inhabited by STs have been divided into two regions: (1) Sahyadri region, comprising 31 tehsils in seven districts, and Gondwana region comprising 16 tehsils in seven districts. This type of regional demarcation was found somewhat necessary because of ethnic and cultural similarities among the tribals residing in the respective regions. This has also facilitated the government and the voluntary organizations to prepare plans for the social and economic development of the communities residing in the respective regions.

3.3 HEALTH AND NUTRITIONAL PROBLEMS IN TRIBAL AREAS OF MAHARASHTRA

It is a well-known fact that the tribal communities have been living in isolation in forest and remotest areas in the state, where means of communication and transport are not only readily available but are also not in a good condition. It, therefore, becomes extremely difficult for the health authorities to provide medical facilities to the tribals in these areas. With the result diseases spread very rapidly. Large number of deaths occurs among infants during rainy season, each year. It has, therefore, become an acute problem for the health authorities in understanding how to cope up with this situation and provide reasonable medical care to the tribals. It has also been observed in certain tribal communities that many of the families do not live in the village but their houses are situated away from each other. Thus, for a health worker it becomes extremely difficult to contact many of the tribal families not only because of difficult terrain but also of the tendency of the individual families to live in isolation and away from each other.

3.4 GOA TRIBES

Goa too has been invaded by Aryans just like the other parts of India. Still some tribes that exist in the state were the original settlers of the konkan region much before the Dravidians invaded and occupied it. After sometime the Aryans came into the konkan region area and settled down.

The major tribe of Goa is the Gowdas, but there are other tribes too, which are the Kunbis, the Velips and the Dhangars. The tribal people live in segregated villages. The lifestyles, customs, practices, traditions, ceremonies, religious beliefs and superstitions have remained an integral part of the tribal people.

Even if certain changes have crop up in the recent past still if one takes a closer look at their habits, customs and traditions they can be called more civilized too. Their way of life does have logic and meaning behind it and is not at all affected by the economical, technological and scientific changes that have taken place in the rest of the civilized world.

Cultural Identity

There have been no records of where from the Gowdas have migrated to Goa. They have known as the Gowdas as they reside in the interior villages of the Goa.

Gowda Women:

The Gowdas differ when it comes to the role and rights given to women. Property is inherited by the wife after her husband's death. After her death it is distributed equally between sons and unmarried daughters. Women also play a very active role in economic matters and activities such as agriculture.

Rituals

Gowdas are Hindus and they do not marry outside their tribes. They oppose the practice of other Hindus of cremating the dead instead the dead are buried in a set burial ground.

In 1620, the Portuguese converted a part of Gowdas forcibly to Christianity. That's why the Gowdas have split into three groups, which maintain strict endogamy and where both the matrilineal and patrilineal types of cross-cousin marriages are practiced. The chief deity of the Gowdas is Malikkarjun, the local name of Lord Shiva.

3.5 EFFECT OF NEW ECONOMIC POLICY ON TRIBALS

The new economic policy envisages privatization and deregulation of industries and commerce which means that there will be a keen competition in respect of production and sale of commodities in the free market economy. It also means that no industrial undertakings are to be set up by government in public sector and whatever the public undertakings are functioning at present are to be privatized and to be given in the hands of the private entrepreneurs. This policy will have a serious and adverse effect on the tribals. At present, there is a minimum 7 percent job reservation in government and public undertakings for the STs. If more and more industries are to be privatized, then the number of jobs available in government and public sector companies will be reduced to a very great extent which in turn would reduce the quota for the STs. Because of the new education policy of the government, a large number of tribal children are taking higher education but they are still not in a position to compete with the students of other communities. Therefore, the tribals are not likely to get jobs in the private sector on merit basis. Besides, the tribals do not have any trade skill which other communities like Goldsmith and Blacksmith acquire due to inheritance and by undergoing formal training. Therefore, they will not be able to fall back on their family business as such. Therefore, there is an apprehension that there will be large-scale unemployment among the ST children in the near future which will result in a widespread frustration among them. The government may have therefore to think in terms of asking the private entrepreneurs to keep certain quota for the STs in jobs or to make some alternative arrangements. This new economic policy may also perhaps bring welfare for the community in general but so far as tribal communities are concerned, it will have an adverse impact on them.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) Explain the effects of New Economy Policy on Tribals.

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3.6 LET US SUM UP

The aim of this unit was to help you understand the meaning and socio-economic cultural status of tribal communities in Maharashtra and Goa. You are now familiar with the meaning of tribe, principal tribes in Maharashtra and Goa. You will now be able to understand the economic, social and cultural life of tribals in both the state. You have also been informed about the effect of New Economic Policy on Tribals.

3.7 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

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UNIT 4 TRIBES OF BIHAR AND WEST BENGAL

Structure

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Tribes of Bihar
- 4.3 Present Scenario of Tribes of Bihar
- 4.4 Tribes of West Bengal
- 4.5 Present Scenario of Tribes in West Bengal
- 4.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.7 Further Readings and References

4.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through the Unit, you should be able to:

- Know about the different tribes inhabiting Bihar;
- The present conditions of the tribals in Bihar;
- Know about the different tribes inhabiting Bengal; and
- The present conditions of the tribals in Bengal.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Across the belt of central India running from the border of Gujarat through Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa and Bengal, there lies a vast tract of undulating upland interspersed with hilly spurs and fertile valleys. The area is generally forested and the eastern part is richly endowed with valuable mineral deposits. It is peopled, by and large, by tribal communities. In the State of Bihar, this area is covered by the Chotanagpur division and the Santhal Parganas district of the Bhagalpur division.

4.2 TRIBES OF BIHAR

Bihar is home to a multitude of tribes that constitute the major chunk of social and culture map of Bihar. Before the year 2000, the number was even higher. But after the segregation of Jharkhand state, most of the tribes have moved to the Jharkhand. Most important and biggest of them all was the Santhal tribe.

- a) *Demographics of Tribals at Bihar*: The Scheduled Tribe (ST) population in the State of Bihar is 1,336,573 as per 2011 census, constituting 1.28 per cent of the total population (104,099,452) of the State. The decadal growth of ST population has been 76.25 per cent which is 58.83 per cent higher than the State's decadal growth rate. The State has a total of thirty two (32) Scheduled Tribes and all of them have been enumerated at 2011 census.

The Scheduled Tribes are overpoweringly rural as 94.6 per cent of them dwell in villages. If one goes by the district wise distribution of ST population then the Katihar district has the highest proportion of STs (5.9 per cent) preceded by Jamui (4.8 per cent), Banka (4.7 percent) and Purnia (4.4 per cent). Sheohar district has the lowest proportion of the STs(0.01per cent), followed by Darbhanga and Khagaria (0.03 per cent each). Out of twenty nine (29) STs, Santal is the most populous tribe, having a headcount of 406,076, constituting 30.3 per cent of the total ST population of the State. Oraon, Kharwar, Gond and Tharu are the other largest tribes. Along with Santal, Oraon, Kharwar, Gond and Tharu constitute 8.67 per cent of the total tribal population. Eight tribes, Bedia, Ho, Mahali, Munda upto Lohara having population in the range of 10,000 to 30,000 account for another 10 per cent and the remaining sixteen tribes, along with the generic tribes constitute the residual per cent of the total tribal population of the State. Thirteen tribes have below 1,000 population. Of them, eight tribes are less than 500 in number.

- b) *Cultural elements of Tribals of Bihar:* Tribes of Bihar maintain their exclusivity by retaining their own identity and stature. Exuberance in the culture of these tribes of Bihar state are portrayed in its various elements, including its house decoration, art works, dance, festival, musical melodies etc. The tribes of Bihar have a number of languages of their own. Most of the tribal languages fall into two categories, the Austric and the Dravidian. Mundari, Ho, Santali, Kharia, Birhori etc. belong to the Austric family while Kurikh, the language of the Oraon and Malto, the language of the Maler of Santal Parganas belong to the Dravidian group. Mundari, Santali, Ho and Oraon are well developed languages and have their own literatures also. For a long time their folklore was communicated through the oral tradition but they have now been written down and fresh works are also appearing either in the Devnagri or in Roman script.

Most of the tribes of Bihar reside in mud houses with thatched roofs. The roofs are marked with baked tiles. Often these houses have provision for kitchen gardens that grows various items like vegetables, and a space for their cattle that they have domesticated. Some of the tribes have sloppy dwellings; some of them live in the leaf houses. Santal tribes are the best planned, along with the different apartments for the old folks.

Cultural embellishment of these tribes of Bihar is also exhibited by the celebration of Festivals. The most important festival for the tribes of Bihar is Sarhul, which celebrates the blossoming of Sal trees. Each and every tribal communities of Bihar celebrate this festival in the early days of spring time. Sal trees are worshipped in the sacred orchard. Different tribes have different ways of celebrating this festival. However, each one of these tribes of Bihar worships the 'spirit' of the Sal tree to try to find its blessings for a good harvesting.

Most of the tribe of Bihar practice cultivation, shifting cultivation in particular. The most significant crop of these tribes of Bihar is paddy. On a daily basis, the meal of these tribes comprises of boiled cereals and millets. Amongst the delicacies include a curry of boiled vegetables or meat or any of the edible roots, and tubers adequately seasoned with salt and chillies. One of the most noteworthy thing is that milk and all the milk products are entirely absent from the menu of these tribes of Bihar

Amongst all the tribes of Bihar state, marriage is also an important institution. Special rituals are celebrated. As soon as a child is born, the first thing that the

child is given a drop of milk of the goat before he is allowed to suck the mother's milk. Taboo is that goat's milk is never savored afterwards, as they thought that it is going to make the child quite argumentative.

Religious nature of these tribes of Bihar is best represented in the fact that there are diverse Gods and Goddesses, varying both in number and strength. For example, the Ho tribes have the tradition of appeasing only two village deities. These are namely, Desauli and Jahira Buru. According to the eminent anthropologists, some of these tribes of Bihar worship as many as 10 to 12 deities through out the year. Invocation of spirits too is a popular phenomenon. However, most of the tribes revere the Singh Bonga as the Supreme Being.

In fact all the houses of the tribes of Bihar have a sacred space completely devoted, for the spirits, since the fear of infuriating dead ancestors haunts the tribal people. Breaking of epidemics and diseases can also occur due to some encroachment of several of the taboo. Some even believe that 'hostile spirits', 'the ghosts of the dead', are also responsible. Appeasing ancestral spirits is very important to the tribal people who also execute sacrifices, mainly of animals also, for propitiating the ancestors. For the purpose of getting an indepth insight into the tribal life of Bihar, we shall elaborate on the social and cultural lives of the main tribes at Bihar:

i) Santal

The third largest tribal community of India are distributed in the states of Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa and Tripura. The Santal call themselves Hor, which means man. The community is divided into two groups, namely Deswali Santal, and Kharwar. As per the anthropologists' observations, these Santal tribes mostly reside in every possible corner of the districts of Bhagalpur, Purnea, Sharsha and Munger in Bihar.

As far as the languages of these Santal tribes are duly concerned, they converse with other in their own dialect, commonly known as Santali. This Santali language is believed to be one of the ancient languages of Indian subcontinent. It falls in to the Munda group of the Austro- Asiatic sub-family, which again embellishes the broad language family namely, Austric family of languages. However, as a recent phenomenon, it has been observed that several people of these Santal tribal community converse with each other in Oriya language. At present most of them speak and understand Hindi, Bengali and Oriya languages.

What is also significant about these Santal tribes of Bihar region is how these Tribal communities are being segregated. It is quite well known that the whole of the Santal society has division of 12 patrilineal exogamous clans. The respective members of the group are again utilizing the names of these clans, from time to time as surnames.

Santal tribal culture is also being nicely reflected in the way they build their houses, in their food habits etc. These Santal tribes reside in airy houses with verandah both at the front and back sides. The houses are almost dirt free and the walls are usually adorned with a variety of artistic paintings in diverse colors.

The food of the Santal tribes is too exotic. The Santal tribes have the habit of drinking alcohol; especially at the time of festivals and during celebrations of joyous socio-religious ceremonies. Beer, produced from rice, is their conventional drink. These Santal tribes make this drink at their individual houses. Quite often these Santal tribes also buy alcohol, from the local venders which are known as Mahua.

Fair and festivals are also a part and parcel of the culture of the Santal tribal community. They celebrate festivals like Karama festival and Makar Sankranti on an elaborate manner. Dancing, singing and drinking accompany several other socio-religious ceremonies like birth, marriage and even death.

Just like most of the Santal tribes of Indian Territory, these Santal tribes work as cultivators. Some of them even take up the occupation of agricultural labors in the fields. With the end of every harvesting season also, some of these Santal tribes immigrate to certain other places and take up the job of daily wagers though on a temporary basis. However, till date, these Santal tribes are less proficient in the field of education and learning.

For better controlling and administration, these Santal tribes have developed the concept of village Panchayat system. All the heads of the family constitutes the members of Santal tribes. The village leader is known as “Manjhi” who used to hold rent-free land for his service. Their general rate of literacy is low, but there are some well qualified Santal persons, who have excelled in their respective fields. Their active interest in the political affairs is evident from their representation in the state legislature and statutory village and regional councils, and political leadership has emerged from among them at the regional and state level through participation in the Jharkhand movement.

ii) **Oraon**

Oraon is one of the tribal communities found in India, which mainly depends on agriculture for earning their living. They also call themselves kurukh. According to Roy (1915), they probably owe their name kurukh to their hero king *karakh*. These tribes are mainly found in the states of Jharkhand, Bihar, West Bengal and Orissa.

Oraons are considered to have the second largest population of tribes in Bihar and Jharkhand. Efficient, particularly in tea garden works, Oraons are believed to have settled in the Chotanagpur Plateau centuries ago.

Oraons speak Kurukh language which belongs to the northern subgroup of the Dravidian family of languages. The Devanagari script is used by them.

Oraons are further divided into sub-castes like Kudas and Kisans, who follow patrilineal family customs. There are a total of 14 clans in Oraon tribal community like, Gari, Lakra, Kispotta, Runda, Tirky, Toppo, Linda, Ekka, Kuzur, Bek, Kerketta, Bandi, Minz and Khalkho. This tribal community in India is also known world wide as they still believe in following age old custom of human sacrifice. These sacrifices are carried out during the famous Sarhul festival celebrated before cultivation of crops, as a mark of respect to please the local deity.

Majority of the Oraon tribes are Hindus and are religious minded people. They worship Gods and Goddesses but a great number of these tribes have adopted Christianity. In the ancient days, this community used to follow Sarna religion. Festivals have been a part of life for tribals since ancient time. Sarhul and Karma are the two main important festivals of these tribals. They are also very fond of music and dance. Karma, Jadur, Dassai and Kagma Parva are their most favorite dances. Traditional instruments like Nagara, Kartal and Mandar are still used by these people.

Until a few years ago, they practiced child marriage. Spouses are generally acquired through negotiation or with mutual consent. Bride price consisting of token cash and some garments is paid by them. They are patrilocal people. Either the husband or wife

can seek divorce. They have nuclear or extended families. The marriage takes place at the bride's place and it is consummated at the Groom's house. The dead are generally buried and sometimes cremated. The Oraon women tattoo their bodies in intricate symmetrical emblems, which they make according to their affiliation with certain totems.

To most of the Oraon, the economic importance of forests has considerably been reduced due to its extensive destruction. Only who live near to forests have some degree of dependence on it. They are mainly settled cultivators and also work as wage labourers and industrial workers. A number of Oraons are engaged in salaried jobs in government and private organizations.

The Oraons especially Christians are a well-educated group. This is due to the presence of schools even in the remotest of areas. The modern system of medicine has not completely replaced their traditional medicinal system. Their attitude towards family planning is not favourable. Firewood and dry leaves are used as fuel. For the irrigation of cultivable land they depend on rain. The cultivators use organic manure as well as chemical fertilizers and insecticides. Essential commodities are available through fair price shops.

iii) **Kharwar**

They are different from the revivalistic religious group bearing the same name among the Santals. According to Prasad (1961), the Kharwar once resided in the Sone valley.

In Bihar, they are distributed among the hilly and forest areas. Sadri, an Indo-Aryan language is spoken at home and Hindi with others. They use the Devanagari script. The Kharwar have six endogamous groups and these groups are again divided into number of exogamous totemic clans (kili). They use Singh and Kerketta as surnames.

Monogamy is the general form of marriage and the earlier practice of polygyny is discouraged now. Adult marriage has replaced child marriage. They acquire spouse through negotiation, exchange, courtship and intrusion. Customarily, they have to pay bride price (dali paisa). Post marital residence is patrilocal. Divorce is allowed with social approval and compensation is paid to the aggrieved parties. Widow remarriage is allowed. The Kharwar live both in nuclear and extended families. The women carry out various domestic chores as well as other socio-economic pursuits and contribute towards family income. They cremate or bury the dead and observe pollution for ten days.

Settled cultivation is the primary occupation of the Kharwar, being supplemented by hunting, gathering, wage labour, business and service. Of them, 56.67 percent are cultivators, 25.46 percent agriculturer labourers, 1.05 percent are engaged in livestock, forestry, hunting etc and the remaining 16.82 percent in various other occupations.

The Kharwars have made moderate progress in the field of education. They use both indigenous and modern systems of medicine. A few among them have been granted loans by governmental agencies. Their children are served midday-meals at schools. They are served by the public distribution system, but not very regularly. In times of monetary crisis, they depend on local moneylenders.

iv) **Gond**

Numerically the most dominant tribe of India. Their homeland extends from the Satpura range down to the Godawari, from Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand to Andhra Pradesh, and from Maharashtra to Orissa.

The mother tongue of Gonds at Bihar is Sadri. They are conversant with Hindu and they use Devnagri script. There are three main divisions namely, the Raj Gond (ruling class), the Dhur Gond (peasants) and Kemia among them.

A system of cross cousin marriage exists among Gonds of Bihar. The marriage of first cousins is considered suitable. Bride price is also prevalent. Marriage is generally adult. The most distinctive feature of a Gond marriage is that the procession starts from the bride's house and the wedding is held at that of the bridegroom, in contradiction to the Hindu practice. The remarriage of widows is freely permitted. Divorce is freely allowed on grounds of adultery, inability to bear children, quarrelsome, disposition or is suspected to being a witch. Polygamy is freely allowed and the Gonds who can afford the expense are fond of taking a number of wives. Wives are very useful for cultivation as they work better than hired servants, and to have several wives is a sign of wealth and Dignity.

The Religious practices of the Gonds present much variety. The tribals are divided into groups worshipping seven, six, five and four gods presiding over the village destinies, the crops, and epidemic disease, the spirits of their forefathers and the weapons, and creatures of the chase. The worship of ancestors is an integral part of their religion. They observe festivals like Sarhul, Karma, Bhamba etc in Bihar.

Agriculture is the mainstay coupled with the hunting and food gathering. The Gonds are mainly engaged in agriculture, and the great bulk of them are farm servants and labourers.

Total literacy rate among Gonds is 609%. Male educated are 72.8% and female educated 48.7%. This indicates the good progress in social education. The attitude towards family planning is somewhat indifferent. The public distribution system for selling essential items is sufficiently used. They seek the help of moneylenders. Some of them avail the facilities under IRDP system.

v) **Munda**

The name Munda is of Sanskrit origin. It means headman of a village. They believe that they are the descendents of Sing Bonga, the supreme God.

The Munda, an ancient people, also, lent their name to the language, called Austro-Asiatic or Mundari or Kolarian, which is one of the four language families of India. They use the Devanagari script.

The Munda of Bihar are divided into totemic clans (kili/gotar). Group endogamy and kili exogamy constitute their marriage boundaries. They prefer adult marriage, but there are also cases of childmarriage. Among them the common mode of acquiring a mate is through negotiation. Other modes resorted to are mutual consent, elopement, service, intrusion and exchange. Monogamy is the common form. Junior levirate and junior sororate are allowed. The Munda are patrilocal. Divorce is permitted and either women or men can initiate it. The Munda women have a role to play in the economic, social and ritual activities. The marriage is solemnized at the bride's house. They bury the dead and observe the customary pollution upto nine days.

The Munda are mainly nature worshippers. They also worship their ancestors. They also worship clan and village deities.

Cultivation is their traditional as well as their primary occupation, while hunting and collection of forest produce are subsidiary occupations. Some of the Munda are service holders in government and private sectors, while many of them work as labourers in agricultural or non-agricultural sectors. They have scholars, artists, white collar job

holders, teachers, administrators, doctors, engineers and political leaders among them, who keep the community linked to the outer world.

The literacy rate in Mundas is 22.16 per cent. They rely on both indigenous and modern systems of medicine. For domestic fuel, they mostly use wood and kerosene oil. Some of their land is irrigated by water drawn from wells, which have multiplied in number through the efforts of various agencies. The Munda cultivators use both the organic and chemical fertilizers and insecticides. Their schools are served midday-meals in the government run nursery schools. They are supplied with some essential commodities through fair-price shops.

vi) **Bathudi**

Bathudi Tribe is among the most important tribes left in Bihar. They are the most colorful and artistic of all tribes in the state. Their homes which are ordinary mud thatched houses are made extraordinary with some exquisite multi colored flowery designs. The Bathudi live primarily in the districts of Mayurbhanj, Kendujhargarh, and Balasore in the state of Orissa, East India.

Most Bathudi are bilingual, speaking their native language, Bathudi, and Oriya. Bathudi is an unclassified language that is perhaps unlike all other tribal languages. Like most Indians, the Bathudi are primarily Hindu.

The ancestors of the Bathudi emigrated from Bakua in the Similipal hills, following the course of the Godavari River. After bitter conflict and tribal warfare with the Gond, the Bathudi were eventually defeated. Today, the Bathudi live among the Santal, the Gond, the Munda, and the Ho people groups. The social organization of the Bathudi maintains a hierarchy of “castes” (social classes) and sub-groups, some of which are the same as those of the neighboring Hindu groups. Presently, the Bathudi are considered to be a “clean” caste in the caste hierarchy of Hindu society. The Bathudi tribe is divided into more than 56 sections, or khili. Marriage within the same section is prohibited. Weddings are expensive for the poor Bathudi. Most marriages are arranged by the groom’s parents. Before the parents seek a wife for their son, they consult an astrologer to see if his marriage to a particular woman will be successful. Once the marriage is arranged, a ceremony takes place in the bride’s village. In the past, marriages were celebrated with dancing, but now the guests are entertained with a festive meal.

The Bathudi have given up drinking alcohol and eating beef or pork. Instead, they enjoy eating termites and red ants. Rice is their staple food, accompanied by green leaves or vegetables. They are mostly vegetarians, due to the non-availability of game and their low incomes. For religious ceremonies, however, the Bathudi will eat fowl. The Bathudi live in villages consisting of various tribes. However, within these villages, the Bathudi have separate settlements. Their houses are arranged in two rows alongside the main street. Their mud-walled huts generally have two rooms. The inner room is used for sleeping and cooking, while the goats and poultry roam freely in the outer room. The Bathudi usually paint the walls of their homes red or white. They sleep on palm leaf mats, and wooden furniture is rarely found.

The Bathudi are mostly Hindu, and their beliefs and practices are the same as those of the neighboring Hindu tribes. The village priest, who serves as a mediator between the villagers and the gods, worships the village gods. The Bathudi have not yet completely lost their belief in magic and witchcraft. The Bathudi were traditionally fishermen. Today, however, they depend primarily on farming or wage-earning jobs. They live in the plains

areas in the midst of different castes and tribes. The amount of land they own is insufficient for meeting their basic needs, and hunting and fishing are no longer practiced as an added income. Therefore, many are dependent on income from petty businesses, such as buying rice and selling it for a higher price.

vii) **Binjhia**

The Binjhwari, also known as the Binjhal, live in several Indian states: Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar, and West Bengal.

It is unsure as to whether their native language, called Binjhwari, is of Dravidian or Indo-Aryan origin. Many of the Binjhwari are bilingual, speaking both Binjhwari and Chhattisgarhi.

Risley has mentioned two subgroups, the Pahariya Binjhias and the Dand Binjhias, among them. The Binjhias have a number of exogamous totemic clans. They have titles like Naik, Pradhan, Raut and Majhi. Child marriage is now being replaced by adult marriage. The common mode of selecting a spouse is negotiation, mutual consent and exchange. They normally follow monogamy but polygyny is also at times followed. Junior levirate (Devar biya) and junior sororate (Sali biya) is permitted. Vermillion and glass bangles are the marriage symbols for women. Bride price is paid in cash and in kind. Post-marital residence is patrilocal. Divorce is allowed with social approval. Remarriage is allowed for both the sexes and in such a marriage alliance, bride price is not paid. Most of the families are nuclear though extended families are not uncommon. The parental property is divided equally among the sons. The women attend to all the household chores and participate in various socio-economic activities. Post-natal pollution is observed for twelve or twenty-one days, and ends after the barhi ritual is observed. On that day a Brahman names the child and tonsure (mundan) is also performed. The first feeding of rice (mujhutti) is held either in the fifth or the sixth month. The dead are either buried or cremated. They observe death pollution (chhut) for ten days and on the twelfth day (akhri) the lineage members are treated to a feast.

Food is accepted from and exchanged with the Ghasi, Turi, Domra, Ahir, Lohra, Brahman, etc. Lohra women serve as midwives during childbirth and the Brahman presides over marriage rituals. They share all the public places except the burial ground with their neighbours.

The binjhia are a community of both landowning and landless people. Their traditional vocation, agriculture, is supplemented by wage labour in mines and quarries. They observe the festivals of Holi, Diwali, Ramnavami, Karam, Jitia and Sarhul. Their rituals are conducted by a priest (pahan). The community has oral traditions and uses percussion instruments while singing folk songs. Both men and women participate in their traditional dances.

The literacy rate among the Binjhia is 46.2 percent (2011 census). The children often discontinue their studies due to various socio-economic reasons. They prefer to use traditional herbal medicines except in critical cases. Their attitude towards family planning is not favourable. They fetch drinking water from streams and wells. Some of them have procured loans for purchasing draught animals through employment generation schemes. Some of them have electricity in their homes. They use firewood and cowdung cakes as fuel. They use organic manure to raise the fertility of cultivable land. The facilities of the PDS are availed of, though not regularly, and they are dependent on private moneylenders.

viii) **Birjia**

Birjia is one of the largest tribes in Bihar today. Often spelt as Brijjia, the word Birjia means fish of the jungle. Earlier they were mainly resident of hilly areas but because of difficulties in agriculture, they moved down to plains. There are two groups among them, namely Telia or Telha and Sinduria.

Their mother tongue, Birjia, belongs to the Austro-Asiatic family of languages. But they also converse in Sadri and Hindi and use the Devnagari script.

The Birjia groups are divided into exogamous totemic clans (sirtha). Both child and adult marriages are prevalent. Marriage through negotiation, exchange (golat) or by intrusion (dhuku) are the ways of acquiring spouses. Monogamy is the usual form, but polygyny is also practised. Bride price (Dali) is paid in cash and kind. After marriage residence is patrilocal. Divorce (chutta chutti), remarriage (sagai), junior levirate and junior sororate are permissible. Both nuclear and extended types of families are reported. The Birjia women are involved in economic, social, and ritual affairs. After the birth of a child, a ritual (chhatti) is performed on the sixth or the ninth day, unless it is delayed for economic reasons. The naming and tonsure (mundan) ceremonies are observed on the same day.

Most of the Birjia people are farmers and only few of them indulged in occupations like gathering, hunting, fishing, basketry, and working as daily labors. The collection of forest produce and hunting are their subsidiary economic activities.

Most of the Birjia tribe people practice Hinduism and worship Hindu Gods and Goddesses. Birjia folks also worship ancestral spirits for peace and prosperity. The Birjia worship their ancestors who are believed to have divine attributes. They observe festivals like Sarhul, Karma, Fagua along with Ramnavami and Dussehra.

The birjia have a literacy rate of 39.6 per cent. Many of them have benefited from rural employment generation schemes and old age pension schemes. They use wood and kerosene as domestic fuel and use organic manure to raise the fertility of cultivable land. They depend on private moneylenders to procure loans.

ix) **Chik Baraik**

Chik Baraik tribe is mainly found in the rural parts of Bihar. Also known as Baraik, they believe that they originated from a scarecrow brought to life by Lord Siva. They are considered very friendly and share space with other tribes.

The chik Baraik are divided into seven groups like the Sut Bansi, Paihka, Das, Gara Baraik and so on. The languages spoken by Chik Baraik people include Mundari, Sadani and Hindi. Nowadays they prefer adult marriage to the customary practice of child marriage. Marriage by negotiation is common and is otherwise finalized by intrusion, exchange, service and courtship. The Divorce and remarriage (sagai) of a widow, widower or divorcee are permissible. Junior sororate and junior levirate are prevalent. Women observe birth pollution for six days. The chik baraik may either cremate or bury the dead, and the pollution period is observed for five to ten days.

Chik Baraik is famous as a tribe of artists. The Chik Baraik is traditionally a community of weavers but now most of them have given up this occupation to become cultivators. However, some families practice weaving as a subsidiary occupation. They also work as weavers, bird trappers, farmers and daily labors. The collection of forest products and hunting supplement their earning. The Chik Baraik profess their traditional religion,

and Devimai, Surjahi and Barpahari are their deities. They also worship the moon, earth, air, their ancestors (kili or sirtha), and other deities.

In recent years, a number of them have begun to get into teaching and government profession. The members of the community are interested in educating their children; this is evident from their literacy rate which is 44.1 percent. In case of illness, they prefer to consult a village medicine man and visit the hospital only if his treatment fails. They have responded positively towards family planning programmes and a couple prefers to have three children. Many of them have received government assistance to revive the craft of weaving. They avail of the facilities of mass media and communication. Wood and kerosene oil is used as fuel. Their lands are rain fed and they use organic manure. They have benefited from welfare schemes for children and depend on private moneylenders during an economic crisis.

x) **Khond**

Khond tribes of Bihar are basically of Proto-australoid race and are considered as one of the scheduled tribes. Jharkhand, Singbhum, Hazaribagh are the abode of this tribal community. As per the history, the Khond tribe migrated from Orissa and is one of the major tribes of India. This tribal community linguistically belongs to Astro-Asiatic family. Their language is known as 'Kuvi' and is a type of Dravidian language.

There is no strict endogamy within the Khond tribe. It has two main divisions: the Kutia khonds who are hill men and retain their primitive tribal customs, and the plain dwelling khonds who have acquired the customs of Hinduism. They know the use of medicinal plants and treat diseases with the plants. The Khonds are a group of people who are tall and have some features of Aryan. They are considered as mixed Dravidian race. Khonds are divided in clans like Hansa, Beck, Hembram, Bedia, etc.

The Khonds follow animistic religion and they worship almost eighty-three gods, of whom Dharni Deota, the earth God, is the chief. Some are also followers of Hinduism and Christianity. The name of their main deity is Sing Bonga. Their local deities are Thakur Dei, Thakur Deo, Burha Dei, Burha Deo, Borang Buru, Bhagbonga, and Tila bonga. These Khond tribes are also very pious as reflected in their practices and rituals that they used to revere with enthusiasm. In the ancient times, in commemoration of their 'Earth Goddess', 'Tara pennu', they carried old practice of giving human lives. The way the whole ceremony of sacrifice was done was also very significant. First, the sacrificial victim Khond Tribe used was bought or captured. He was then 'anointed' with oil and turmeric and then connected to the crosspiece of the pillar, which constituted an elephant. This crosspiece was then spanned and then taken round the erected post. Males and females danced and sang around the victim who was then drugged and thus 'intoxicated'. He was then beaten up to death and chopped into pieces.

Every Khond tribes used to take these pieces and buried it in his field in order to ensure beneficial crops and debar evil. Ultimately this gruesome practice was prohibited in the year 1845. Today, these Khond tribes go for giving goats and buffaloes as offerings. The Khond tribes also have plethora of traditional objects. These include broad range of brass images of animals and also human figures, which are revered and also taken during any of the marriage processions.

The tribe has three principal festivals, known as the Semi Jatra, the Mahua Jatra and the Chawal Dhuba Jatra. The Semi Jatra is held on the tenth day of the waning moon of Aghan (November) when the new *semi* or country beans are roasted, a goat or fowl is sacrificed, and some milk or water is offered to the earth god. The principal festival is

the Dasahra or Chawal Dhuba (boiled rice) on the tenth day of the waning moon of kunwar (September), which, in the case of the khonds, marks the rice harvest.

The khond traditionally despises all occupations except those of husbandry, hunting and war. In some villages individual ownership is unknown, and the land is cultivated on a system of temporary occupation subject to periodical redistribution under the orders of the headman or *malik*. The khonds will admit in the community a male orphan child of any superior caste, including those of the Binjhvars and Gonds.

In the present times, they have got awareness and exposure, which has led to reduction of superstitions like human sacrifice. Kondh children now attend schools and colleges. Though many dropout, because of economic hardships. Both modern and indigenous methods of medicine are used. They have also benefited from macro-projects initiated by tribal welfare department for self-employment in agriculture and employment in animal husbandry. ICDS schemes benefited the mother and children. The tribals utilize service of banks and post offices, though dependence on moneylenders and shopkeepers still continues.

xi) **Savar**

The practice of worshipping the deities namely Dharmesh and Mother Earth is central to the culture of Savar tribes of Bihar. Amongst the various tribal communities that throng several districts and provinces of Bihar, Savar has truly gained a place of prominence amongst the anthropologists till date. Although much is not known about the origin of these Savar tribes of Bihar, the popular understanding is that these Savar tribes have settled down here after migrating from some other place within the subcontinent of India. Apart from Bihar, the Savar tribes are concentrated in other parts of India namely Ranchi, Singbhum and Hazaribag.

As far as the language of the Savar tribes is concerned, most of these Savar tribes converse with other using a language that has a belonging to Mundari group. Hindi or Oriya vernacular is currently in use nowadays.

The Savar tribes are classified in four sub tribes among which three are Basoo, Jaytapati and Jhara. The Jhara tribes reside in some parts of Dhalbhum. The Savar people earn their livelihood by doing various occupations. Some are engaged as labourers, herbs and fruit collectors and wine makers. Some of the people are occupied in agriculture.

The Savar society is Panchayat based. In order to keep the whole of the tribal society in better control, the Village Panchayat choose the village head man as the 'Manjhi' who used to hold rent -free land for his various services.

For settlement, these Savar tribes have built their villages at the foot hills and that too near the water bodies of the state. Moreover, the houses of these Savar villages are set using various materials like bamboo, wood etc. These are built in a linear style, with the walls inside the house made from mud. Similar to any other tribal community, this Savar family too is patriarchal following the nuclear family structure. Marriage is also an important institution, which these Savar tribes celebrate in accompaniment of several rituals and customs. In the society of the Savar community monogamy is practiced and widow marriage is also permitted. Divorce is permitted on the husband's initiative for adultery or serious disagreement. If the wife wishes for a divorce she simply runs away from her husband. The Laria Savars must give a *marti-jiti-ka bhat* or death feast on the occasion of a divorce.

The Savars worship Bhawani under various names and also Dulha Deo, the young bridegroom who was killed by a tiger. He is located in the kitchen of every house in some localities, and this has given rise to the proverb, 'Jai chulha, tai Dulha'. The Savars are considered to be great sorcerers. Their charms, called Sabari mantras, are especially intended to appease the spirits of persons who have died a violent death. They observe all local Hindu festivals. They visit the sacred centres of Mai ha and Jatashanker during the Navdurga and Shivratri festivals.

Their occupation is centred on collection of jungle produce and cultivation. They are very clever in taking honeycombs. Their economy is mainly based on cultivation and wage labour these days. Most of them work in agricultural fields of their neighbours. Some even go outside the village for livelihood; they procure loans from their landlords and repay them by serving as agricultural labourers.

Savars visit government hospital in emergencies or otherwise depend on local traditional medication. They have shown favourable response towards family planning programmes. Savars feel that communication and irrigation facilities in the area are insufficient. Wood, cowdung cakes and sometimes kerosene oil are used as fuel. The public distribution system is fully utilised by them for procuring essential commodities.

xii) Gorait

Gorait tribes are a part of the proto-australoid group and are of Austric racial group. These Gorait prefer to settle down in hilly areas densely covered with forests and greenery. Gorait tribes reside in the hilly areas of Bihar region. This tribal community is settled in some parts of Palamu, Sathal Pargana, Singhbhum, Dhanbad, Ranchi, and Hazaribagh.

Gorait speak in Indo-Aryan language, Sadri within themselves. Hindi is used as a link language. They use Devnagri script.

Gorait tribes have a heritage of rich culture and tradition as reflected in various aspects like marriages, attires etc. This tribe interacts with the other tribes and communities that have enriched their culture. The style of making houses differs from district to district. However, all these Gorait tribes follow a common pattern. In general, these Gorait tribes raise one roomed house with kitchen, bed and storage. Rightly adjacent to the house is a verandah, which these Gorait tribes utilize mainly as a cattle shed. This cattle shed is sheltered by wooden and bamboo pillars.

According to the anthropological evidences, most of these Gorait tribes have taken up the occupation of farming and irrigation. Various tools like Khamti, khurapi, axes, sickles etc. are used to carry on these works. Some of them also work as drum players, village messengers and watchman. Apart from these, some of them even involve in works of weaving, beautiful items namely, baskets, mats, brooms, winnow tray etc are made by these Gorait tribes so that they can carry grains and goods to various places and also for restoring goods and commodities. It is only natural that the economy of this Gorait society too is agrarian.

The Gorait tribes are also involved in hunting and making various kinds of weaponry. These weapons include bow-arrow, Lathi, Ber, Barchha. Besides they are also known to make musical instruments, like, Dhol, Manar, nagara, flute and others. For both Gorait males and females, unique dresses are prevalent. Men wear a shirt and dhoti. Women wear saree and blouse. Also the women folks are very much fond of ornaments, chiefly made up of steel, thread, glass and silver etc.

The societal structure of these Gorait tribes comprises elements of any other patriarchal system. The smallest segment is family, that too the nuclear one, comprising of parents and unmarried siblings. There is also unique feature that can be found out in this Gorait society. Although the authoritative power lies in the hand of the father or any other male, as the head of the family, but he takes into consideration the opinions of both of his wife and children especially while making decision, those related to selling and purchase of commodities, marriage, invitation, dresses, worship, social relation, feast, cow, goat, chicks, ducks etc.

The society of this tribal community is administered by the Panchayat. The Panchayat Pradhan who is the Panchayat head, create and implement laws for the tribal society. The members of the Panchayat are closely associated with each other to maintain the administration properly. Moreover, the lineage and succession among the Gorait tribes is patrilineal. The families belonging to one lineage stay together and assist each other at times of trouble, miseries and the performance of ceremonies. The property of the father is inherited by all his sons equally. However, the daughters of these Gorait tribes receive only maintenance and bride price. The rule of 'primogeniture' and 'ultimogeniture' is absent in the Gorait tribal society. Husband's brother's sons inherit the property of barren couple and also have to look after the old couple through out their life. He also inherits the property of the widow.

There are numerous clans within the Gorait tribes based on 'totemism'. Few significant 'totemic' Gorait clans are Indnar, Tudu, Khalkho, Toppo etc. Marriage within the same clan is rigorously forbidden. Thus they follow the rules of tribal endogamy and clan exogamy. The Gorait maintains prohibitory rule in case of cousins and relatives up to three generations from the sides of both of the parents. Quite often widow remarriage is also widespread in the Gorait tribal society. Divorce is also permissible.

Religion too is quite enriched. In fact the religious practices are a blend of manaism, animism, animalism, naturalism, Bongaism, witchcraft and Sharananism. Also these Gorait tribes ardently believe in the concept of rebirth of man. They believe in different Gods, Goddesses and spirits. They also believe in ancestral spirits, who according to them, dwells in Saranagrove. Jalabonga, Dubal Bonga, Katal Bonga, maral Bonga etc deserve to be mentioned. They celebrate festivals like Karma, Sarhul, Jitia, Sohrai, Nawakhani, Maghi and Phagu.

The establishment of several schools and colleges in their vicinity has generated a new taste for education. Their literacy rate is continuously on increase. Locally, they depend upon money-lenders. Some of them have been provided government loans to boost their economy. Radio is popular especially among the youth.

xiii) **Paharia Korwa**

Korwa tribe occupies a major part of Bihar. The people of Pahari Korwa tribes practice cultivation, thereby, producing various crops. According to researches, these tribes belong to the Austro-Asiatic family group.

If one divides the whole of the Pahari Korwa tribal community, one can find that there are two sub tribes, popularly known as Pahari Korwa and Dihari Korwa. The society of the Paharia Korwa tribes is further segregated into 5 'totamistic clans', namely, Hansadwar, Samar, Edigwar, Ginnur and Renla. It has a rich heritage of culture and tradition, as depicted in their fairs, festivals, music and dancing forms. The villages that these Paharia Korwa tribes built are usually selected on the top of the hill. Sometimes

they are being constructed in the fringes of the forest areas. Most of the families of Paharia Korwa follow the nuclear family structure.

Another remarkable characteristic of these Paharia Korwa tribes is that magic and invocation of the spirits are being practiced in the whole of the society. In fact most of the Paharia Korwa tribes are really scared of executing any type of magical fetes or shows. However, these tribes have had tremendous faith on various deities. The significant gods of Paharia Korwa tribes are Sigri Dev, Gauria Dev, Mahadev or Lord Shiva and Parvati. Khudia Rani is the supreme god of this Paharia Korwa tribal community. The reasons behind revering these deities are many. They want to get recovered from sickness, have better crops, and also to get protection from several natural disasters.

Due to their huge accessibility to the forest provinces, it is only natural that these Paharia Korwa are going to take up the occupation of hunting and gathering. Maximum of these Paharia Korwa tribes collect several items from the forests including Sal, mahua, gum, tendu leaves, amla, harra, bahera etc. During the monsoon times, these Paharia tribes involve themselves in collecting some of the forest roots, leaves and vegetables. The Paharia Korwas are concentrated in many villages of Bihar and are living together in peace. However, in order to keep themselves at par with the modern trends and practices, in the contemporary times, they adapt to the farming and irrigation and too with the aid of the ancient tools and techniques only. Fishing too is exercised as occupation by some of the Paharia Korwa tribal communities. At times when they are free from the burden of undertaking agricultural works, these Paharia Korwa tribes work in the fields as laborers.

They have developed the habit of taking several food grains. Also at the time of the odd season, they fulfill their hunger on leaves, fruits, tubers namely Gainth, Pitharu, Nakwa, katharu, kulthi, konge, charhat, bilar etc. During the months of October and March, they get the supply of better food which includes makai maize, kutki, arhar (pigeon pea), and other pulses etc.

Moreover, in the culture and the tradition of the Paharia Korwa tribes they celebrate different religious and cultural festivals and other such occasions with their tribal music. They worship sun, Dharti Mai (Mother earth), Mahadev, the river, forests and birds etc.

Unlike many of the other Scheduled Tribes discussed of to far, Korwas donot have favourable attitude forwards formal education. Some of them have procured loan for self employment under Integrated Rural Development Programme but still, they depend a lot on local moneylenders.

xiv) Sauria Paharia

Sauria Paharia tribes reside in the mountainous and wooden pathways of several districts of Bihar. These include Rajmahal, Pakur, and Godda. Being one of the nine primitive tribal communities of Bihar, Sauria Paharia is a part of Paharia tribes. The Sauria Paharia tribes are scattered in different parts like Godda and Sahebganj of Santhal Pargana Plateau.

Most of these Sauria Paharia tribes converse with each other in the language of ‘Malatri’ or ‘Malto’ which has got a close resemblance with the language of the Oran tribes. Malto language is of Dravidian language group. There are quite a few Sauria Paharia tribes who also converse in quite a few of the indigenous local languages. In their local dialect the Sauria Paharia tribes are known as ‘Maler’.

Following the tradition of most of the tribal communities of the whole of Indian subcontinent, these Sauria Paharia too takes up the occupation of cultivation. Shifting cultivation is the most popular one. In order to facilitate the process of the shifting cultivation, all these Sauria Paharia tribes create their settlements on the hilltops and these too inside the jungle areas. They grow millets namely Bajra, maize, pulses, vegetables etc. Apart from cultivation, they are also engaged in fishing during the summer season. Some are also engaged as labourers and in government services.

It becomes obvious that since all these Sauria Paharia tribes are farmers, their festivals and several of their social rituals too revolve around the harvesting and its related activities. For the sake of good harvest, they worship the spirits in order to appease them so that they would not bring about any destruction, further. The work of starting the harvesting follows immediately afterwards.

The Sauria Paharia tribes are followers of animism and some follow Hinduism as the main religion. They arduously follow several Hindu traditions like reverence of one God, vegetarian food etc. They believe in witch craft and evil spirits. They sacrifice fowls and animals to appease spirits. Several sacred centres are situated in and around their residing states. They celebrate different festivals like Ghaghra Puja, Bandana etc. All the members of the community celebrate these festivals with great pleasure and clad in beautiful clothes, they enjoy the tribal songs and dances in the community.

There are several villages of these Sauria Paharia tribes that are scattered here and there and not cloistered in one place. In every village the chief leader is chosen who is popularly known as the 'Mukhia' who gathers the revenue of the land from the villagers. However, it is also to be noted that there is no permanent religious head amongst the Sauria Paharia tribes. The Sauria Paharia tribes have ardent faith in clan system, better known as 'Gotra'.

The Sauria Paharia tribes have plethora of songs, dances, religious rituals and social customs etc. As far as the functions of marriage etc they follow an elaborate and traditional format. As per the tradition of the Sauria Paharia tribes, the eldest son of the family naturally becomes the legal heir of the property of his father after his demise. In the marriage, divorce is permissible and also re-marriages are predominant amongst majority of this Sauria Paharia tribal community.

The Sauria Paharia sends their children to school. They depend on indigenous medicines, though an awareness of the modern system of medicine is developing among them. Wood is their principal fuel. They get drinking water from streams and dug-wells. They also take the benefit of the Public Distribution System..

4.3 PRESENT SCENARIO OF TRIBES OF BIHAR

As per the Census report of 2011, the Demographic profile of the tribes at Bihar shows a sex ratio of the ST population in Bihar is 958 females per 1000 males, which is considerably lower than the national average of 990 for the total ST population. At the individual level, all the five major tribes have registered the sex ratio lower than the national average. While Santal, Oraon and Gond have sex ratio above 900, Bathudi, Birjia, Bedia, Savar and Khond have the sex ratio below 900. The sex ratio among STs in the age group 0-6 years (969) is marginally higher than that of the STs at the national level (957). Among the major tribes, Kharwar, Oraon and Santal have the child sex ratio higher than the national average whereas Munda and Gond have child sex ratio lower than the national average.

The **literacy rate** among the STs has increased from 28.2 per cent registered at 2001 census to 51.1 per cent at 2011 census. Despite this increase, the literacy rate among the tribal population is lower, if compared with that of all STs at the national level (59.0 per cent). Male and female literacy rates among the tribal (61.0 per cent and 40.4 per cent) are also low in comparison to those at the national level (68.5 per cent & 49.4 per cent). Among the numerically larger tribes, Gond and Kharwar have returned over all literacy rate (60.9 and 59.4 per cent), which is close to the national average. Oraon, Munda and Santal have the over all literacy rates almost half of the national average for all STs.

Among ST literates, 37 per cent are either without any educational level or have attained education below primary level. The proportion of literates who have attained education up to primary and middle levels are 28.2 per cent & 14.4 per cent respectively. Persons educated up to matric/secondary/higher secondary constitute 16.3 per cent. This implies that every 6th tribal literate is a matriculate. Graduates and above are 3.8 per cent.

Work Participation Rate ‘Agricultural Labourers’ constitute the highest proportion (79.20 per cent) among the total tribal workers, which is considerably higher than that of the national average (59.70 per cent). ‘Cultivators’ account for 4.73 per cent, which is less than half of that recorded for all STs at the national level (44.7 per cent). ‘Agricultural Labourers’ and ‘Cultivators’ together constitute 83.9 per cent of the total workers. ‘Other Workers’ form 9.93 per cent which is comparable with the national average of 14.7 per cent in respect of all STs whereas workers engaged in Household Industry (HHI) constitutes 10.51 per cent, which is lower than of the national average (23.07 per cent). Among the major tribes, Santal and Oraon have more than 60 per cent workers as ‘Agricultural Labourers’ followed by Munda, Gond and Kharwar. Kharwar and Santal have every 4th worker; a ‘Cultivator’ and among Munda have every 3rd worker belong to this category of ‘Other Workers’.

Marital Status The data on marital status show that ‘never married’ persons (52.32 per cent) exceed the ‘married’ persons (43.8 per cent) in total ST population. ‘Widowed’ persons form 3.65 per cent while a negligible 0.15 per cent has been in the category of ‘divorced and separated’.

Religion Hinduism is the predominant religion of the tribes of the State as 95.60 per cent STs are Hindus. The tribes professing ‘Other Religions and Persuasions’ account for 0.81 per cent. Christian tribes are 2.43 per cent and less than half per cent (0.8 per cent) are Muslims.

Check Your Progress I

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

1) List the various tribes of Bihar.

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4.4 TRIBES OF WEST BENGAL

Numerous tribes who reside in the rural parts of the state occupy West Bengal state. These tribes comprises of less than one-tenth of the total population of the state. As per the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950, the following were listed as scheduled tribes in West Bengal: 1. Asur, 2. Baiga, 3. Badia, Bediya, 4. Bhumji, 5. Bhutia, Sherpa, Toto, Dukpa, Kagatay, Tibetan, Yolmo, 6. Birhor, 7. Birjia, 8. Chakma, 9. Chero, 10. Chik Baraik, 11. Garo, 12. Gond, 13. Gorait, 14. Hajang, 15. Ho, 16. Karmali, 17. Kharwar, 18. Khond, 19. Kisan, 20. Kora, 21. Korwa, 22. Lepcha, 23. Lodha, Kheria, Kharia, 24. Lohara, Lohra, 25. Magh, 26. Mahali, 27. Mahli, 28. Mal Pahariya, 29. Mech, 30. Mru, 31. Munda, 32. Nagesia, 33. Oraon, 34. Parhaiya, 35. Rabha, 36. Santal, 37. Sauria Paharia, 38. Savar, 39. Limbu (Subba) and 40. Tamang.

- a) *Demographics of Tribes at Bengal:* As per 2011 census scheduled tribes numbering 52,96,953 persons constituted 5.80 per cent of the total population of the state. Santals constitute around half (47.42 per cent) of the total ST population of the state. Oraons (12.14 per cent), Mundas (6.91 per cent), Bhumij (7.10 per cent) and Kora (3.0 per cent) are the other major STs having sizeable population. Along with Santal, they constitute nearly 76.8 per cent of the state's total ST population. The Lodhas, Mahalis, Bhutias, Bedias, and Savars are the remaining STs, and having population of one per cent or more. The rest of the STs are very small in population size.
- b) *Cultural elements of Tribals of Bengal:* Many of these tribes of West Bengal have adapted to diverse religious practices. Among them, Hinduism, with its subdivision of various castes and native tribes, has filled three fourths of the total tribal populace of the West Bengal state. Apart from Hinduism, there are also followers of Islam. Most of the people of the tribal groups of West Bengal speak in Bengali. In fact these tribes are quite proud of their enriched culture and language. Variant dialects are also equally popular amongst these tribes of West Bengal. They are, in general, confined to the rural belt of the state. However, a small portion of this population has now moved to the urban belt, in search for employment and a better lifestyle.

Most of the people of the tribal groups have adopted the religious culture of Bengal. The tribal groups of this region worship some of the gods and goddesses. Durga Puja is one of the most major festivals of Hindus of West Bengal. The tribal groups also celebrate this festival with much cheerfulness. Some other festivals like Makar Sankranti, Kali Puja, etc are feted in the whole of tribal society. They have their own tribal occasions and festivals too.

The tribes of West Bengal are mostly farmers but many of them are engaged in some other occupations like carpentry, weaving, hunting, fishing etc. Rice is the staple food of the tribal people of Bengal and sometimes they include fish, meat, chicken and fowls in their diet. Some of the tribes are adept in art and craft and their created items give evidence to the exclusive tribal arts. Tribes of West Bengal are famous all over the world for its proficiency in art and crafts. They are truly skilled in creating splendors to its outstanding works on carpentry, terracotta, drawings, and textile. Earthenware, brass and copper ware, needle works, wall-hanging, hand looms, fine muslin and silk clothes, wood statues, cane works etc. are a couple of examples of handcrafts which have developed from the villages households of these tribes of West Bengal. Maximum of these craft products embellish the cottage industry of the state and have been spine of the economy of the rural provinces of the West Bengal state.

Population and proportion of ten major STs in West Bengal, as per 2001 census, are given below:

Sl No	Scheduled Tribe	Population	Percentage of the total ST population
1	Santal	2,512,331	47.42
2	Oraon	643,510	12.14
3	Bhumij	376,296	7.10
4	Munda	366,386	6.19
5	Kora	159,404	3.0
6	Tamay	146,203	2.76
7	Lodha	108,707	2.0
8	Bedia	88,772	1.67
9	Mahali	81,594	1.54
10	Bhutia	66,627	1.25
11	Sabar	40,374	.76

The Scheduled Castes (West Bengal): *Census of India 2011*, Government of India.

More than half of the total ST population of the state is concentrated in Medinipur, Jalpaiguri, Purulia, and Bardhaman districts. Of the remaining districts, Bankura, Malda, Uttar Dinajpur, and Dakshin Dinajpur have sizable ST population. We shall discuss few of the major tribes in details:

i) **Santals**

The third largest tribal community of India are distributed in the states of Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa and Tripura. The Santal call themselves Hor, which means man. The community is divided into two groups, namely Deswali Santal, and Kharwar.

As far as the languages of these Santal tribes are duly concerned, they converse with other in their own dialect, commonly known as Santali. This Santali language is believed to be one of the ancient languages of Indian subcontinent. It falls in to the Munda group of the Austro- Asiatic sub-family, which has no script. Recently there has been an attempt to create a script called Ol-chiki, which has been recognized by the West Bengal government. Many santhals are bi-lingual, and speak either Bengali or Hindi.

The members of this community have distinct ways of wearing clothes. Their women wear either a sari, or two pieces of cloth, one as a long skirt and other for the upper part of the body. The men wear a loin cloth while at work, and a longer dhoti when visiting others. Both men and women are fond of wearing a piece of cloth as a shawl. The santal women decorate their hair flowers and silver hairpins and adorn themselves with tattoo marks on the arms, neck and chest. The santhals are non-vegetarians and eat fish and meat including pork. Their traditional liquor is rice beer (handi), which they brew at home.

Fair and festivals also are part and parcel of the culture of this Santal tribal community. The celebration of festivals like Karama and Makar Sankranti is done in an elaborate manner. Dancing, singing and drinking commemorate several other socio-religious ceremonies like birth, marriage and also death.

The traditional occupation of the santal community was hunting and gathering. Now, their primary occupations are settled cultivation and wage labour.

ii) **Oraon**

Oraon is one of the tribal communities found in India, which mainly depends on agriculture for earning their living. They also call themselves kurukh. According to Roy (1915), they probably owe their name kurukh to their hero king karakh. These tribes are mainly found in the states of Jharkhand, Bihar, West Bengal and Orissa.

Oraons are considered to have the second largest population of tribes in Bihar and Jharkhand. Efficient, particularly in tea garden works, Oraons are believed to have settled in the Chotanagpur Plateau centuries ago. Oraons speak Kurukh language which belongs to the northern subgroup of the Dravidian family of languages. They use the Devanagari script.

Majority of the Oraon tribes are Hindus and are religious minded people. They worship Gods and Goddesses but a great number of these tribes have adopted Christianity. In the ancient days, this community used to follow Sarna religion. Festivals have been a part of life for tribals since ancient time. Sarhul and Karma are the two main important festivals of these tribals. They are also very fond of music and dance. Karma, Jadur, Dassai and Kagha Parva are their most favorite dances. Traditional instruments like Nagara, Kartal and Mandar are still used by these people.

Oraons are further divided into sub-castes like Kudas and Kisans, who follow patrilineal family customs. There are a total of 14 clans in Oraon tribal community like, Gari, Lakra, Kispotta, Runda, Tirky, Toppo, Linda, Ekka, Kuzur, Bek, Kerketta, Bandi, Minz and Khalkho. This tribal community in India is also known world wide as they still believe in following age old custom of human sacrifice. These sacrifices are carried out during the famous Sarhul festival celebrated before cultivation of crops, as a mark of respect to please the local deity. Until a few years ago, they practiced child marriage. Spouses are generally acquired through negotiation or with mutual consent. They pay bride price consisting of token cash and some garments.

They are patrilocal people. Either the husband or wife can seek divorce. They have nuclear or extended families. The marriage takes place at the brides place and it is consummated at the Groom's house. The dead are generally buried and sometimes cremated. The Oraon women tattoo their bodies in intricate symmetrical emblems, which they make according to their affiliation with certain totems.

Festivals have been a part of life for tribals since ancient time. Sarhul and Karma are the two main important festivals of these tribals. They are also very fond of music and dance. Karma, Jadur, Dassai and Kagha Parva are their most favorite dances. Traditional instruments like Nagara, Kartal and Mandar are still used by these people.

To most of the Oraon, the economic importance of forests has considerably been reduced due to its extensive destruction. Only who live near to forests have some degree of dependence on it. They are mainly settled cultivators and also work as wage labourers and industrial workers. A number of Oraons are engaged in salaried jobs in government and private organizations.

The Oraons especially Christians are a well-educated group. This is due to the presence of schools even in the remotest of areas. The modern system of medicine has not completely replaced their traditional medicinal system. Their attitude towards family planning is not favourable. Firewood and dry leaves are used as fuel. For the irrigation

of cultivable land they depend on rain. The cultivators use organic manure as well as chemical fertilizers and insecticides. Essential commodities are available through fair price shops.

iii) **Munda**

The name Munda is of Sanskrit origin. It means headman of a village. They believe that they are the descendents of Sing Bonga, the supreme God. The Munda, an ancient people, also lent their name to the language, called Austro-Asiatic or Mundari or Kolarian, which is one of the four language families of India. The Devanagari and Bengali scripts are used by them.

The Munda of West Bengal are also known as Manki, have several groups. They are distributed in the districts of Midnapur, Purulia, West Dinajpur, Malda, Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and some adjacent districts. They prefer adult marriage, but there are also cases of child marriage. Among them the common mode of acquiring a mate is through negotiation. Other modes resorted to are mutual consent, elopement, service, intrusion and exchange. Monogamy is the common form. Junior levirate and junior sororate are allowed. The Munda are patrilocal. Divorce is permitted and either women or men can initiate it. The Munda women have a role to play in the economic, social and ritual activities. The marriage is solemnized at the bride's house. They bury the dead and observe the customary pollution upto nine days.

Cultivation is their traditional as well as their primary occupation, while hunting and collection of forest produce are subsidiary occupations. At present, a few of them are settled agriculturists and agricultural labourers and also work in government and in private firms of the organized sector. Basket -making and weaving are their crafts.

The literacy rate in Mundas is 11.84 per cent. Nowadays, they are aware of the relevance of formal education and send their children to schools.

iv) **Bhumij**

In the western districts of West Bengal, there are prominent groups of Bhumijes, although numerically they are considerably behind the Santals and Bauris. They live in the territory between the Kasai and Subarnarekha rivers. In olden days they probably had settlements north of the Kasai, possibly right up to Panchakot, but were pushed back by the Aryans, represented by the Kurmis. Their present area of settlement is spread across Dhalbhum, Barabhum, Patkum and Baghmundi. While those living nearer to Chota Nagpur Plateau still retain linguistic links with Mundari, those living deeper east have adopted Bengali as their language. In the Dhalbhum region they are completely hinduized. During British rule, or sometimes even earlier, many of the Bhumijes became zamindars and some even secured the title of Raja. Others were called Sardars. However, all of them, having climbed the social ladder, proclaimed themselves to be Kshatriyas, in keeping with the trends in the region, ignorant of their rich contribution to the traditions and culture of the region.

v) **Kora**

West Bengal state houses Kora tribes who are found in every hook and nook of the region. As per the recent survey conducted in the region, these Kora tribes constitutes of three percent of the total population of tribes of India. Although these Kora tribes are quite small in numbers, these Kora tribes have got cultural and traditional heritage.

Most of the kora tribes converse in the Kora language, which falls under the category of the Mundari language family group. In this State the Kora tribes have rightly adopted

all the religious customs and practices of Hinduism. Due to their adaptation of Hindu culture, some of their original practices have been lost.

The word Kora has got a significant meaning. It signifies earth digging. So it becomes quite obvious that the profession that these Kora are related to cultivation. To cope up with the increasing demands of the modern society, these Kora tribes took up jobs like 'share cropping', woodcarving and also various construction works.

vi) **Lohara**

Apart from West Bengal, the Lohara tribes are scattered in some districts of Jharkhand namely Singhbhum, Santhal Pargana, Ranchi, Hazaribag, and Palamu. Being the artisan tribal community, the Lohara people are adept in iron-craft-making.

The Lohara tribal communities earn their livelihood by getting employed in different occupations. Some of them are shepherds; many of them rear cattle and have developed the expertise of weaving exquisite baskets. Iron smelters also are found in Lohara society. With the touch of their skillful hands, beautiful iron products can be carved out from the raw and hot iron bars. These Lohara artisans specialise in tools for carving. The houses where these Lohara tribes live in too bear the reflection of their artistic acumen. Some of them, however, practice the typical occupation of any other Indian tribe, namely, cultivation.

The Lohara tribes of West Bengal have a plethora of festivals. Some of the festivals are either held at individual homes or they are held as community fetes. All the religious festivals are commemoration of worship of various folk deities. The reason for worshipping these deities is to appease them and seek their blessings. Rituals and social ceremonies are also no less in numbers. Rituals of Lohara tribes mainly center on conservation of nature and also activities, which actually support their livelihood. Festive mood gets heightened with incorporation of beautiful dance forms and joyful songs.

Both males and females of Lohara tribes perform dance forms wearing their conventional attires. Singing songs in accompaniment of wonderful musical instruments add stupor to the whole of merrymaking. Art works done using conventional 'handloom weaving' tools and also beautiful wall painting are also exhibited at the time of festivals. Their tongue is similar to that of all the other tribes of region. The costumes of this tribal community are similar to the other tribal communities of this region as the male folks of this community wear ganji, kurta, dhoti and the females of this community wear saree, blouse and Salwar-Kameez-Dupatta.

Lohara tribes of West Bengal are one of the notable tribes that have occupied a major position in this state. The culture and social tradition of Lohara is such that they have got huge similarities with that of all the other tribes with whom they live in close proximity. Festivals, dance, languages, rituals, music, handicrafts thus becomes a style mark of the tribes' unique heritage and cultural tradition.

vii) **Bhutia**

Bhutia tribes, one of the prominent tribes residing in West Bengal, are mostly found in hilly districts of West Bengal, including Darjeeling and Kalimpong. These Bhutia tribes have crossed various passes of Himalaya region. These tribal groups are also known as Lachenpas or Lachungpas, which connotes the meaning dwellers of Lachen or Lachung respectively. Moreover, the Bhutias residing in Sikkim are known as Denzongpa, meaning the inhabitants of Denzong, which is the Tibetan name for Sikkim. The aristocrats of the Bhutia tribes were called Kazis and they were an essential part of Chogyal monarchy.

The Bhutia tribes generally speak in Sikkimese language. This language has got similarity with some of the foreign languages. Moreover, Nepali language is widely spoken by quite a number of Bhutia tribes. Apart from these, these tribes also speak in Hindi, Bhutia, Lepcha, and English.

The Bhutia tribes are mostly farmers, producing several vegetables and fruits. Some of them also have developed expertise in weaving. Woolens, shawls are popular in various markets of West Bengal as well as its nearby provinces. Another occupation of the Bhutias is breeding yaks and sheep.

They are followers of tantric Buddhism. In fact they follow all the rituals and rites related to this sect with great reverence and enthusiasm. Festivals and fairs are an integral part enriching the culture and tradition of the whole of the Bhutia tribal society. The majority of these Bhutia festivals or any of their joyful functions hold religious Buddhist signification. Amongst the main festivals of Bhutia tribes, the Losar and Losoong festivals are worth mentioning.

The Bhutia cuisine comprises of rice, which is their staple food. In fact they are amongst the conventional rice eaters. Other dishes include fried vegetables, animal meat including pork, and beef. On special occasions, however, these Bhutia tribes consume mutton or chicken. Amongst the specialties of Bhutia tribes are momo, steamed meat ‘dumplings’ and also Thukpa noodles ‘in broth’. The Bhutias prefer to consume a special drink called Chhaang or Chyang which has ingredients like fermented millets or barley and is consumed in a bamboo container known as Tongba. In social or religious occasions, they prefer to have milk tea with sugar or butter tea.

Amongst Bhutia tribes of West Bengal, marriage is held in high esteem. Usually intermarriage within their clans is prevalent. The Bhutia tribes also follow a very hierarchal structure of selecting both bride and groom. What is significant to note is that discrimination amongst clan is widespread and marriage outside the community of Bhutia tribes is not at all entertained.

The costumes of the Bhutia tribes are a traditional cloak type dress called ‘Bakhu’. A cotton or silk belt is tied on the waist. Moreover, the male group of this tribe wears Bakhu teamed with a loose trouser and the women wear Bakhu with Honju that is a full sleeve blouse. They also wear a multicolored woolen cloth called Pangden in the front part. This garment is designed with colourful geometric designs. This is generally worn by the wedded women. The women folk put on different jewellerys of gold, mainly gold trinkets. The Bhutias built their house in a particular manner. Their houses are known by the name of Khim, which are of rectangular shape.

viii) **Mahli**

Mahli is the name of a tribe of India. It is a scheduled tribe of the state of West Bengal and Jharkhand (earlier these areas were part of Bihar). They mostly reside in Santhal Parganas and certain other regions of Jharkhand, and in the adjoining areas of West Bengal. Their population is dwindling. Mahli people traditionally earned their livelihood by selling articles made of Bamboo. Some typical articles made by them are: *Machi* (a small bench), umbrellas, *soop* (used in kitchen, to remove dust from cereals), *sop* and *chatai* (for lying down and sleeping), raincap (special cap covering head, and upper back for protection from rains during work).

Mahli people typically have a tattoo of their name on their hand.

4.5 PRESENT SCENARIO OF TRIBES IN WEST BENGAL

As per 2011 Census, the **demographic profile** of the tribes in Bengal shows that the sex ratio of total ST population in the state is 999, which is higher than the national average for STs (990). The state also has recorded a higher child sex ratio (0-6 age group) of 990 as compared to the aggregated national figure (957) for the STs. The sex ratio among Bhutia (1014) is the highest among the major STs. But the child sex ratio (964) is low among them. Bedia has recorded the lowest sex ratio of 973. The situation is just the reverse among Bedia.

Among all STs of Bengal, the literacy rate of 57.9 per cent of the population has been recorded as literate, which is lower than the national average (59.1 per cent). The male literacy rate of 68.2 per cent and female of 47.7 per cent, show a gender disparity in literacy. Of the ten major STs, Bhutia with 81.1 per cent overall literacy, 86.7 per cent male and 75.5 per cent female literacy respectively, is well ahead of others. Savar are at the other extreme having 40.6 per cent overall literacy and 31.5 per cent female literacy rate. Total of 51.7 per cent of the STs in the age group 5-14 years have been attending some kind of educational institutions. Of the ten major STs, Bhutia has recorded the highest 77 per cent and Savar the lowest 35.5 per cent of their respective population attending educational institutions. In West Bengal, merely 8.4 per cent of total literates among STs are having educational level above matriculation. The Bhutia with 26.1 per cent are well ahead among the major STs in this regard.

Work Participation Rate: In 2011 Census, 47.4 per cent of the ST population has been recorded as workers, which is close to the aggregated national average for STs (53.9 per cent). Of the total workers 57.9 per cent has been returned as main workers and 42.1 per cent as marginal workers. WPR at 43.7 per cent among females is slightly lower than males (53.8 per cent). Gender disparity, however, is paramount in the category of main workers; 78.3 per cent males and 49.9 per cent females have been returned as main workers. The percentage of female marginal workers is more than twice than that of male. Industrial category wise, of the total ST main workers, 23.7 per cent have been recorded as cultivators and 45.1 per cent as agricultural laborers. The Mahali are ordinarily involved in non-agricultural activities with only 5.3 per cent of their main workers in cultivation and 19.6 per cent as agricultural labourers.

Marital status: The distribution of ST population by marital status shows that 46.89 per cent is never married, 46.29 per cent currently married, 6.04 per cent widowed, and 0.54 per cent divorced /separated. The Santal has recorded the highest .56 per cent of their total population as divorced/ separated, while it is the lowest among Oraon (0.5 per cent), For all STs, 2.6 per cent of the female population below 18 years – the minimum legal age for marriage – is ever married.

Religion: Of the total of 5,296,953 ST population Hindus are 73.9 per cent, followed by 6.49 per cent Christians, 4.17 per cent Buddhists, and merely 0.5 per cent muslims.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) Give a list of the tribes of West Bengal.

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4.6 LET US SUM UP

We then discussed the tribes of Bihar and Bengal in an elaborate manner. It is now important to sum up what we have discussed so far. This will help us to get a better understanding of the subject matter of this unit, and also help us to review our own understanding of the subject matter.

We started the unit with an introductory note on the Tribes of Bihar and Bengal. Next, we discussed the demographic profile and cultural elements in the tribal life of Bihar and Bengal. Alongside, we tried to have an insight into the major tribes of Bihar and Bengal. Eventually the discussion ended with a brief on the present scenario of the tribes in the context of Census of India.

4.7 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

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Home Pakistan Defence Forum > Country Watch > Indian Defence Forum >. Tribals lynch 3 Maoists in Vizag. Discussion in 'Indian Defence Forum' started by Bang Galore, Oct 21, 2014. Page 1 of 2. CHINTAPALLI (Visakhapatnam): In what is perhaps the first incidence of tribals killing Maoists in the history of the naxalite movement in Andhra Pradesh, a group of irate tribals lynched three extremists, including a district committee member (DCM), after the Reds killed one of their fellow villagers, Gemmeli Sanjeeva Rao, at Veeravaram village in Chintapalli mandal on Sunday night. While there have been incidents of tribals attacking Naxalites due to the latter's 'atrocities', this is the first time that they killed naxalites. BSW-044 Tribals in North and North East Regions of India. Block-3 Tribals of Northern India Collection home page. Browse. Subscribe to this collection to receive daily e-mail notification of new additions. Collection's Items (Sorted by Submit Date in Descending order): 1 to 1 of 1. Preview. © 2019 The Indian Express Ltd. All Rights Reserved. 8 Jharkhand tribals in jail for 3 months for killing ox<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/8-jharkhand-tribals-in-jail-for-3-months-for-killing-ox/>. India. Advertising. 8 Jharkhand tribals in jail for 3 months for killing ox. According to villagers, besieged by diarrhea, fever and a poor harvest this year, the adivasi residents of Jatni Toli decided to perform a ritual they had conducted over 10 years back as part of their Sarna belief system. Written by Deepu Sebastian Edmond | Khunti | Published: May 9, 2015 3:11:55 am.