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CHAPTER - IV

SETTING

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CHAPTER - IVTHE SETTINGIntroduction

In any given society, the level of educational development is determined by the socio-ecological setting, which consists of a number of factors like geographical condition, economic condition, politico-ideological climate, education and socio-cultural patterns, that operate directly or indirectly in the immediate and distant surroundings of that society. So it is pertinent to be familiar with the setting of the area under investigation. This is because, any picture of educational development that will emerge from the study will necessarily have a direct bearing on the above mentioned factors operating in that society.

The area of investigation of this study is Th. Rampur block in the Kalahandi district of Orissa state. Incidentally this block is one of the ITDA blocks and forms a part of the Scheduled Areas of Orissa. This chapter briefly describes the setting against the backdrop of the district and the state.

The State : Orissa:

Orissa was variously known in the past as Utkal, Odra, Kangoda, Kosala, etc., probably signifying different parts of what is known as political Orissa today. Prior to 1936, it remained fragmented belonging to various Presidencies under British rule. On 1st April, 1936, Orissa was given a name and geo-political entity, only partially, comprising six British ruled districts. Gradually after independence, by 1949 all the 24 princely states were merged with Orissa to it, its present socio-political identity having thirteen districts. At present it has thirteen Revenue Districts, fiftysix Sub-

divisions 314 Community Development Blocks and 108 Urban Centres with 46,553 thousand inhabited and 4,334 thousand uninhabited villages.

It can be seen from the map<sup>31</sup> that the State of Orissa extends from 17°:49° North to 22°:34° North latitude and 81°:28 East to 87:29° Longitude on the eastern coast of India. On its east lies the Bay of Bengal, Madhya Pradesh lies in the <sup>a</sup>est, West Bengal and Bihar lies in the north-east, and Andhra Pradesh lies in the south. It has an area of 155,707 Sq. Kms. with a population of 26,370,271, which gives a population density of 169 per Sq. Kms. as per the 1981 Census.

Situated between 17.49° North to 22.34° north parallels, Orissa is well within the tropical belt and hence it is characterised by a tropical climate. The monsoons, both south-west and north-east, effectively control the climatic conditions with a specific period of summer rains (from June to September with about 72 rainy days in a year) and a prolonged dry season from the autumn through winter to the spring. It's location in the eastern coast of India restricts it from receiving sufficient rainfall from the south-west monsoon unlike the Bengal region. Further, unlike the Western Ghats of Kerala and Maharashtra the Eastern Ghats of Orissa fail to act as barrier to the moisture-laden monsoon winds due to their NE-SW alignment and also lower elevations. The inadequate rainfall because of its location, coupled with the lack of irrigation facilities for farming in the state, has seriously affected the agriculture sector which is the prime means of livelihood of the people of Orissa (74.70 per cent of the working population depend on agriculture).

Due to inadequate developments in agriculture and industry as well as lack of expansion in transport and communication in comparison to other parts of India, Orissa

remains as one of the poorly developed States. Taking 1060-61 as the base year at constant prices the per capita income of state was Rs. 273/-. But it came down to Rs. 245/- in 1971-72 against the Indian average of Rs. 344/- registering the lowest average among all the states and having 64.7 per cent of the population below poverty line (Fourth Educational Survey of Orissa, 1982). It may not be out of place to mention here that the percentage of the states population below the poverty line is ever on the increase and at present it is nearly 80 per cent. Orissa has a population of 26,370,271 as per 1981 Census, distributed in a rather uneven manner over an area of about 1.56 lakh Sq. Kms. The population occupies 46,553 inhabited villages and 108 towns. The state has 4.75 per cent of the total land area of the country and accounts for about 4 per cent of India's population with an average density of 159 persons per Sq. Km. The coastal districts of Orissa are the most densely populated having an area of 25.9 per cent of the state's total area but a population as high as 52.70 per cent of the total population of the state. In contrast, the inland division comprising of 9 districts has 74.1 per cent of the state area with only 47.3 per cent of the population. The following table number 4.1 presents the population and density of population in different districts of Orissa.

Table 4.1 reveals that there was a sharp increase in the growth rate of population and density of population in various districts of Orissa, resulting thereby a 20.17 per cent increase in the density of population for the entire state. Furthermore, the four coastal districts of Orissa have contained more than 50 per cent of the total population of the state and have shown a 5.8 per cent decennial increase in population; thus keeping the uneven population distribution intact.



TABLE - 4. 1

Spatial Distribution of Population Density (District level),  
as per 1971 and 1981 Census.

Sr. No.	Name of the District	Area in Sq. Km.	Popula- tion 1971	Popula- tion 1981	Density per Sq. Km. 1971	Density per Sq. Km. 1981
<u>Coastal District</u>						
1.	Cuttack	11,211	3,827,678	4,628,800	241	414
2.	Balasore	6,394	1,830,504	2,252,808	286	357
3.	Puri	10,159	2,340,859	2,921,045	230	286
4.	Ganjam	12,527	2,293,808	2,669,899	183	211
<u>Inland Division</u>						
5.	Balangir	8,003	1,263,657	1,459,113	142	163
6.	Mayurbhanj	10,412	1,434,200	1,581,873	138	151
7.	Dhenkanal	10,826	1,293,914	1,582,787	120	146
8.	Keonjhar	8,240	155,514	1,114,622	116	134
9.	Sundergarh	9,675	1,030,758	1,337,871	107	138
10.	Sambalpur	17,576	1,844,898	2,280,976	105	130
11.	Kalahandi	11,838	1,163,869	1,339,192	98	113
12.	Koraput	27,020	2,043,281	2,484,005	76	92
13.	Phulbani	11,070	621,675	717,280	56	64
	Orissa	115,707	21,944,615	26,370,271	141	169

Source : { Census of India, 1971, Series-16, Orissa, 1971 }  
{ Census of India, 1981, Series-16, Orissa, 1981 }

Tribal People in Orissa:

Orissa occupies the second position among the Indian States for her tribal concentration, next only to that of Madhya Pradesh according to 1981 Census. The Scheduled Tribe

population<sup>20</sup> the State was 59,15,067 which was 22.43 per cent of the total population of 26,370,271. It is also noteworthy that about 11.46 of the total tribal population (51,628,638) of India is concentrated in Orissa. The State had registered a 1.32 percent growth rate of tribal population during the decade 1971 to 1981. Districtwise growth rate of tribal population has been presented in Table 4.2.

TABLE - 4.2

Districtwise Distribution of Population of Scheduled Tribes, their Percentage to Total District Population and Growth Rate from 1971 to 1981.

Sr. No.	Name of District	S.T. Population in (000')		% of S.T. Population to the total Population of the Dist.		Growth rate in %
		1971	1981	1971	1981	
1.	Balasore	129	154	7.06	6.84	- 0.22
2.	Balangir	249	280	19.72	19.22	+ 0.50
3.	Cuttack	111	145	2.89	3.13	+ 1.64
4.	<b>Dhenkanal</b>	167	194	12.91	12.26	- 0.65
5.	Ganjam	229	253	<b>9.98</b>	9.48	- 0.50
6.	Kalahandi	341	419	29.28	31.28	+ 2.02
7.	Keonjhar	449	500	46.96	44.82	- 2.14
8.	Koraput	1,151	1,572	56.34	55.22	- 1.12
9.	Mayurbhanj	840	912	58.56	57.67	+ 1.11
10.	Phulbani	251	279	40.31	38.94	- 1.37
11.	Puri	87	101	3.70	3.47	- 0.25
12.	Sambalpur	519	621	28.13	27.21	- 0.92
13.	Sundergarh	550	686	53.40	51.26	- 1.14
	Orissa	5,072	5,915	23.11	22.43	+ 1.32

(Source: Census of India, 1981).

The above table reveals that though numerically Koraput district has the highest population, when seen in terms of proportion to district total population, Mayurbhaj is in the first position. Further it can be observed that the coastal districts have a very low concentration of tribals compared to the plains. The seven districts, viz., Mayurbhaj, Koraput, Sundergarh, Koenjhar, Phulbani, Kalabandi and Sambalpur, where the proportion of the tribal people ranges from 27.21 per cent to 57.67 per cent, are generally known as major tribal districts.

There are 62 types of major and minor tribal groups residing in the State of Orissa as per 1981 census. These groups are distributed across the 13 districts of Orissa in a rather uneven manner. Out of these, twentyfive tribal groups speak their own languages. None of these languages has its own script. Some of them have a well established grammar. Of the above mentioned racial and linguistic stocks, there are twelve major tribes which are considered dominant according to their size and spread in the state. A list of these major tribal groups and their distribution in various districts has been given in Table 4.3.

TABLE - 4.3

Major Tribes and Their Distribution in various Districts of Orissa.

Sr.No. No.	Name of the Tribe	Distribution in different Districts.
1.	Kondh	Koraput, Kalahandi, Phulbani and Gangam.
2.	Gonol	Sambalpur, Kalahandi, Koraput and Balangir
3.	Santal	Mayurbhanj, Balasore and Keonjhar
4.	Saora	Ganjam and Koraput
5.	Munda	Mayurbhanj, Sundergarh and Sambalpur
6.	Paroja	Koraput
8.	Bhuiyan	Sundergarh, Keonjhar and Dhenkarnal
9.	Kisan	Sundergarh and Sambalpur
10.	Oraon	Sundergarh
11.	Koya	Koraput
12.	Godaba	Koraput

Source: Tribal Development in Orissa, A Report, 1979-80, Tribal and Rural Welfare Department, Government of Orissa, (Bhubaneswar).

Scheduled Areas of Orissa.

In accordance with the orders of the President of India (1977), under paragraph 6 of the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution of India, the Scheduled Areas of Orissa are:-

1. Mayurbhonj district.
2. Sundergarh district
3. Koraput district
4. Kuchinda tahasil in Sambalpur district.
5. Koenjhar and Telkoi tehasil of Keonjhar Sub-division of Champua and Barbil of Champua Sub-division in Keonjhar district.
6. Khondamals tehasil of Kondamals Sub-division and Baliguda and G. Udayagiri tehasils of Baliguda Sub-division in Boudh Kohndamals district.
7. R. Udayagiri tehasil and Gumma and Rayagada Blocks of Parlakhemudi tehasil of Paralakhemundi Sub-division and Suruda tehasil excluding Gazalbadi and Gochha Gram Panchayats of Ghumsur Sub-division in Ganjam dist.
8. Thuanul-Rampur Block of Kalahandi tehasil and Lanjigarh Block falling in Lanjigarh and Kalahandi tehasil in Bhabanipatna Sub-division in Kalahandi district.
9. Nilagiri Block of Nilagiri tehasil in Nilagiri Sub-division in Balasore district

(Source- Report on the Annual Administration of Scheduled Areas in Orissa for 1984-85, Harijan and Tribal Welfare Department Government of Orissa.)

The Scheduled Areas of Orissa are co-terminous with sub-Plan areas of the State with the only exception of the Suruda tehasil **excluding** Garalbadi and Gochha Gram Panchayat

of Ganjam district which has not been included in the tribal Sub-Plan areas. The Tribal Sub-Plan is a mini development plan with weighted emphasis on economic upliftment of the tribals within the State Plan. The details of Sub-Plan have been discussed in Chapter-I.

From the above description it is quite clear that almost one-third of the area of the State is declared as the Scheduled Area for the Scheduled Tribes in Orissa. The Scheduled Areas of the State comprising of an area of 66,803,39 Sq.Km. and a population of 73,92,094 constitute 42.9 per cent and 28.01 per cent of the total area and population of the State respectively as per 1981 Census. The population of Scheduled Tribes was 54.2 per cent of the total population of the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes in the Scheduled Areas constitute 67.7 per cent of the total Tribal population of the State.

On account of increase in the population and areas and implementation of massive development programmes of the tribal Sub-Plan the Administration of Scheduled Areas has assumed considerable importance. With a view to ensuring speedier execution of different programmes the administrative machinery in the Scheduled Areas has been strengthened. In order to provide protection to the assets possessed by the Tribals and other indigent people, the Protective Regulations have been promulgated and whenever necessary, amendments have been made to make such regulations more stringent and effective.

#### Education of Scheduled Tribes in Orissa:

Orissa is one of the states recognised as educationally backward, ever since Independence. Although instances such as Christian missionaries involvement in promoting education

among tribal people and the significant recommendation of the Indian Education Commission, 1982, that "the tribal children be exempted from payment of fees and additional grants may be given to private schools on account of the tribal children attending them", are found in the pre-independence period but, no serious effort was made by the government to promote education among tribal people. However, after independence concerted efforts are under way for the development of the Scheduled tribes on the basis of the provision made in the Constitution under Article 46. Since then the programmes of tribal welfare and development have been taken up and priority has been given to educational programmes as a pre-requisite to an overall development of the tribal people.

After Independence when the first census was conducted in 1951, Orissa had an overall literacy of 15.8 per cent. It rose to 26.18 per cent by 1971 and to 34.23 per cent by 1981. Similarly the tribal literacy rate during 1961 was 7.36 per cent. It increased to 9.40 per cent in 1971 and to 13.95 per cent by 1981. Although the tribal literacy figures show an increasing trend, but it may not be out of place to mention here that in all the Census years tribal literacy of Orissa was below the national average.

One of the important National objectives at hand is to fulfil the Constitutional commitment of universalization of Elementary Education by achieving 100 per cent enrolment by 1990. For this Government has been persistently trying with various alternative strategies, but still a large chunk of tribal school going children are out of school. This is evident from the the Table No. 4.4.

TABLE - 4.4Enrolment Ratios of Scheduled Tribe Children  
at Elementary Level : 1971 - 1984

Class	1971*			1984**		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
I - V	85.6	38.4	62.2	98.6	47.7	74.1
VI - VIII	14.2	3.4	8.8	28.5	11.4	20.2

Source:- \* = Education in Orissa 1978, D.P.I., Orissa.

\*\* = Selected Educational Statistics, 1984-85  
Ministry of H.R.D., India.

It can be seen from the table that the enrolment of boys is increasing and almost reaching hundred percent at the elementary level (Class I-V), but the girls enrolment is still below 50 per cent. This means much effort is needed to persuade the girls to come to school. Further, it can be observed that around 26 per cent children of school going age are out of school, demanding an urgent attention to motivate these children to come to school.

The District : Kalahandi:

The district Kalahandi occupies the south-western portion of Orissa and is situated between 19°.3' North to 21°.5' North latitude and between 82°.20' East to 83°.47' longitude. It is bound on the north by the districts of Balangir, Sambalpur, and Raipur (Madhya Pradesh), on the south by the district of Koraput, on the west by the districts of Koraput and Raipur (Madhya Pradesh) and on the east by the districts of Koraput and Boudh-Khondamals. It extends over an area of 11,772 Sq.Km. with a ~~density~~ population of 113 per Sq. Km. and ranks 4th among the district of Orissa with regard to its area (1981, Census).

The present district of Kalahandi was an ancient times a part of South Kosala. It was a princely State. After Independence of the country, merger of princely States took place in 1st January, 1948. The princely State of Kalahandi was merged in Orissa along with the other princely states. On 1st November 1949, the ex-zamindari area of Khariar, which was a sub-division of the Sambalpur district was separated out and the present district of Kalahandi was formed with the ex-state of Kalahandi and the ex-zamindari area of Khariar. Subsequently in 1962, Kashipur police-station was taken out from this district and merged with Koraput district. At present the district has three sub-division, seven tahasils, sixteen police-stations, and eighteen community development blocks. Incidentally two community development blocks viz., Thuamul Rampur and Lanjigarh have been included in the Scheduled Areas of Orissa.

The district extends over an area of 11,772 Sq. Km. and constitutes 7.56 per cent of the total area of the state (1981 Census). The 1981 Census gives a figure of 1,339,192 as the total population which constitutes 5.08 per cent of the state's population occupying 10th place among the districts of Orissa. Out of the total population of 1,339,192 the rural population constituted 1,258,651 (6,241,570 males, 634,081 females) and urban population constitute 80,541 (41,593 males, 38,948 females). Thus nearly 95 per cent of its population lives in villages which shows that this district is economically backward and rural in character. Another fascinating fact to observe here is that the sex ratio calculated in 1971 was around 1,010 females per 1000 males in 1981 also it was exactly 1,010 females per 1000 males.

The backward population consisting of Scheduled Castes (15.76 per cent) and Scheduled Tribes (31.28 per cent) forms 47 per cent of the total population. There was a decrease of 1.35 per cent in Scheduled Caste population from 1971 to 1981, but Scheduled Tribe population has shown an increase of 2.02 per cent. The largest concentration of tribals is found in Thuamul Rampur and Lanjigarh blocks numbering 42,831 (48 per cent to total population in the two blocks) occupying an area of 1323.50 Sq. Kms. The district houses two major tribes viz., Gond and Kondh and a few minor tribes. The Gonds are numerically the most significant tribe in the district. They are mostly concentrated in the tahasils of Bhawanipatna, Dharamgarh, Lanjigarh, Nuapara and Jaipatna in the district of Kalahandi. Next to Gond is the Kandha population. They are mostly found in Thuamul Rampur block and are still existing in the primitive agriculture stage. Besides, it is believed that they are the original inhabitants of Thuamul Rampur block.

The ex-state of Kalahandi was very backward during the princely rule so far as its literacy was concerned. According to 1951 Census the literacy percentage (all communities) was 6.3 per cent (5.8 per cent for males and 0.5 per cent for females). The percentage of literacy had gone upto 13.9 per cent as against the state average of 38.3 per cent and 13.9 per cent respectively. By 1981 the literacy was 19.42 per cent as against 34.23 per cent for the state. Among males it was 31.28 and among females it was 7.68 per cent as against the state average of 47.10 and 21.12 per cent respectively. It can be inferred from these figures that the percentage of literacy in the district was less than the State average.

There is no definite information regarding the old centres of learning in the district of Kalahandi in the remote past. However, the history of education in the district dates back to the year 1860, when 4 Primary schools were opened in the ex-state of Kalahandi during the rule of Fatenarayan Deo. After Independence and just before the merger in 1947-48, there were 118 Primary schools in state of Kalahandi. By 1960-61 the number of Primary schools rose to 916 of which (903 were recognised) with a total enrolment (in recognized schools) was 46,110 (30,016 boys 9,094 girls) and 1,367 teachers (1,356 males and 11 females). By 1980-81 there were 1,900 primary schools with a total enrolment of 1,08,943 (74,613 boys, 34,330 girls) and 3,844 teachers (3,587 males, 257 females). Thus the above figures clearly indicate that governmental efforts are showing a promising results.

With regard to the spread of education among Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes, the available records of ex-State of Kalahandi depicts a sorry picture. It was found that during 1935-36, 2,475 low caste and aboriginal students were attending schools in the ex-state. However, the post-independence period ushered in new promises to these down-trodden people. Special schools such as Sevashram and Ashram schools were opened. Besides, several other educational facilities were also provided to them. In spite of these facilities, the Fourth Educational Survey of Orissa (1982), shows that during 1978, Kalahandi district had a total enrolment of 1,12,739 at the Primary level and 14,201 at the Middle school level. From among these, the scheduled tribe enrolment was 30,311 at the Primary level and 2,002 at the Middle school level. The percentage of ST enrolment at the Primary level was 29.26 per cent to the total ST population of the district and 26.88 per cent

to the total enrolment of all communities. Similarly the percentage of ST enrolment at the Middle school level was 48.19 to the total ST population of the district and 14.10 per cent to the total enrolment of all communities. This situation was further aggravated by another revelation of the survey which shows that out of the total 1,506 ST dominated habitations 674 habitations (44.75 per cent) were not served with Primary school facilities within 1 Km. distance and 111.5 habitations (75.7 per cent) were not served with Middle school facilities with 3 Km. distance. In the sphere of literacy, the 1961 census shows that, the percentage of literacy among Scheduled Tribes in the district was 5.7 per cent; the break up being 5.4 per cent for males and 0.3 per cent females. By 1981, the literacy percentage was 10.09, the break up being 21.25 for males and 1.96 females. Thus within two decades the literacy rate had almost doubled. However, the 1981 literacy percentage was much below the district average of 19.42.

In the end it may not be out of place to quote here a document released by the Kalahandi district Statistical office, which laments that, "Considering the indicators which have a high co-relation with economic growth such as density of population, percentage of literacy, percentage of irrigated areas to the total cultivable area, percentage of workers engaged in non-agricultural occupation, percentage of villages electrified, percentage of village-s connected by roads, medical facilities per lakh population and number of educational institution per thousand population, all the 18 blocks are relatively backward in comparison to their counterparts existing in other district of the state. As such all the eighteen blocks of Kalahandi district are considered to be **economically and** educationally backward.

But out of these eighteen only ten are considered to be highly backward and the rest eight blocks are moderately backward. In view of this, special attention of government for uplifting the educational and economic conditions of these people is needed on priority basis. (District Statistical Handbook, Kalahandi, 1981, pp.2-3).

The Block : Thuamul Rampur:

The block under investigation was a part of Kashipur block of Koraput district of Orissa till 31st July, 1962. On 1st August, 1962, it was merged with Kalahandi district of Orissa. After that it remained as a part of Kalahandi tehasil for about two decades but subsequently, the tehasil was bifurcated and at present it is situated within Th.-Rampur tehasil, formed as a separate and new tehasil with effect from 1st April, 1982. So, the present Th. Rampur block, now comprises of one tehasil, one Police station and twelve Gram Panchayats, consisting of 295 villages. Also the block comes under the Scheduled Areas of Orissa and an Integrated Tribal Development Agency, is operating for the development of tribal people in this area.

The block is situated in the south of Kalahandi district occupying an area of 323.76 Sq. Kms. Its boundaries extend in the north to Madanpur Rampur block of Kalahandi district and in the south to Koraput district of Orissa, in the west to Kalampur and Jaipurna blocks of Kalahandi district and in the east to Koraput district. The whole area is surrounded with dense forests and lofty hills intersected by a number of rivers. The hills belong to the main line of eastern ghats and contain extensive plateaus of about 4,000 ft. elevation with long tropical grass grown over them, providing the most natural habitat for ferocious animals and poisonous snakes. Human habitations are

mostly situated inside the forests and thereby communication becomes very much problematic. The means of communication is through the forest path alone, because the main road that is linked between the district head-quarters and block head-quarters, passes through only a few villages. Therefore, if one has to go to interior villages, the journey not only becomes difficult but also involves risk of life.

The climate of the area is cool because of its height above the sea level, but is unhealthy, particularly in the forest locality, where malaria is still found in epidemic form. Because of heavy rains and dense forest most of the areas, remain quite damp throughout the year. Summer is scarcely felt but winter is very severe. During summer the temperature fluctuates between 37° to 41° centigrade during day and between 20° to 29° during night. In winter the temperature ranges from 20° to 28° centigrade during day, while at night it comes down to as low as 10°.

The population of the block, according to 1981 Census was 42,120 (21,116 males and 21,004 females). The sex ratio being 999 females per 1000 males. Out of the total population, the scheduled tribe population was 24,199 (12,086 males, and 12,113 females) constituting 57.45 per cent to total population of the block. The Scheduled Caste population was 10,248 (5,125, males and 5,123 females) constituting 24.33 per cent to total population of the block. The population of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes taken together was 34,447 constituting 81.78 per cent to the total population. The proportion of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was much higher than the corresponding figures for Kalahandi district (15.76 per cent Scheduled Castes and 31.28 Scheduled Tribes), and Orissa State (14.65 per cent Scheduled Castes and 22.43 per cent Scheduled Tribes). When the proportion of Scheduled Castes

and Scheduled Tribe was calculated against their representation in the Kalahandi district, it worked out to <sup>be</sup> 4.99 per cent. Thus it can be inferred here that the block has higher concentration of scheduled population. Furthermore, examining the 1971 and 1981 Census record, it was found that the block had registered a 5.65 per cent and 1.33 per cent population growth among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes respectively.

There is no denying the fact that Th. Rampur is one of the least educationally developed blocks, in the district of Kalahandi. The available archive material indicates that prior to Independence there were only two primary schools and when the merger of the block took place in 1962, there were nineteen primary schools (including 4 Ashram schools). By 1987-88, there were 77 formal education institutions (Sixtysix Primary Schools, nine Middle schools and two high schools). Seventy seven non-formal education institutions (Sixty Adult Education Centres and Seventeen Prathamik Chalu Salis). This shows that there was a steady increase in educational facilities, particularly after the merger took place. However, considering the population of the block these facilities were inadequate. This was reflected in the district statistical handbook (1980-81), which shows that schooling facilities per thousand population were 1.50 for Primary, 0.20 for Middle English and 0.02 for High schools. This situation was further aggravated by another revolution from the District Inspector of Schools which shows that nearly 42 per cent children in the age group of (6-14) were out of school by 1980-81. This itself poses a very big problem for the National which has committed to ensure 100 per cent enrolment by 1990. Poor schooling facilities coupled with large scale dropout in this block, probably, had a consequential effect on the

literacy of this block. According to 1981 census the block had a literacy rate of 7.69 (13.46 per cent male and 1.9 per cent female) the corresponding figures for the district being 19.42 per cent (31.23 male and 7.68 female). It may be mentioned here that in terms of literacy this block takes the last bench among all the 18 blocks of Kalahandi district. The situation is much worse in case of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. This is indicated by a very poor literacy rate. The Scheduled Castes literacy was 10.81 per cent (16.86 males and 4.76 females) to their total population in the block and for the Scheduled Tribe it was 3.67 per cent (6.83 males and 0.52 females) to their total population in the block as per 1981 Census. Thus these figures indicate that, in general, the spread of education among the backward classes in general and Scheduled Tribe in particular, is very poor.

#### Tribal People in Thuamul Rampur Block:

As mentioned earlier tribals of this block constitute 57.45 per cent to the total population of the block. Almost all are Kandhas, except a very insignificant number of other tribes like Dharua are also found in this block.

The Kandhas (usually mispronounced as Khonds or Kondhs) form a major tribe of Orissa. The Kandhas call themselves Kui-loka and the language they speak is Kui (some of them also speak, Oriya language). The name Kandh is obscure. There are many theories put forward by anthropologists and scholars as regarding the origin of the term. However, the most plausible explanation appears to be the derivation from the Oriya word for a sword, which is Khanda; as it is the totem of the tribe.

The Kandhas are supposed to have migrated from different part of Orissa from south more than three hundred years ago. They live on agriculture - Podu or shifting cultivation, forest produce and hunting. In the past they have been ruthlessly exploited by plainmen and deprived them of their fertile land, by taking advantages of their proneness to get into debt. This process of alienation of land to the non-tribals has continued till present day and the Kandhas are becoming pauper day by day.

The traditional economic life of the Kandhas like any other aboriginal hill-folk, does not involve in complicated methods but a simple economy to meet the fundamental requirements of food, clothing and shelter. Their basic economic activities are cultivation, both shifting and settled which are mainly supplemented by the collection of minor forest produce. Among the minor forest produces of the region are Kendu leaf, Bamboo, Broom grass and Mahua flower and seed. The Mahua flower is used for various purposes like producing liquor, means of livelihood during rainy season and feed cattle. The tribals also collect the bamboo fibers from the forest and use it in cottage craft like rope making, basketry and roof thatching. Thus the forests play the important role in their economic life.

Agriculture is mainly a gamble of monsoon in the absence of suitable irrigation and non-availability of inputs with them. The tribal farmers adopt the methods of both broadcasting and transplanting of paddy crops. Use of cow-dung manure is a common practice in the paddy fields. They have not yet fully adopted the use of modern chemical fertilizers. They make use of bullock driven plough and follow the traditional method of transplanting, weeding, etc.

Shifting cultivation is highly prevalent in the area. For shifting cultivation patches of forests on the hill slopes or tops are selected and clearings are made by cutting trees and bushes for which all members of the family will have to work hard. When bushes dry up they set fire to them. After the first shower in the month of May, once again they clear newly sprouted plants. In the first year they grow pulses like Biri, Kandul, Jhunanga etc. In the second and successive year, they grow Kosala ( a variety of cereal). Then the plot is left for a period of ten to twelve years after which the same patch may be used for growing crops. The major problem encountered during this cultivation is to protect the crops from wild animals. It is, therefore, a common practice among the Kandhas to do this cultivation by a group of families.

Almost all the Kandhas are non-vegetarian. They kill domestic birds and animals for food purpose and also hunt in jungles and catch fish in the streams. Their staple food is ragi. Although they are fond of rice but due to its scarcity it is consumed whenever available. Mahua liquor is their favourite drink. They are so habituated that sometimes even they forego their food but make it a point to drink. This forces them to remain under debt all the time. That is why the local money lenders take advantage of this situation and allure them to dispose of their produce and land through the process of indebtedness.

The Kandhas build tiny houses with materials available in the local forests. In general a Kandha house is built on a rectangular ground plan and is divided into three parts. The outer part is used for sleeping, storing and husking food grains. But the poorer section of the tribe built smaller houses having one room only. The walls of the houses are built with planks of sal wood and bamboo

plastered with mud. The two sloped roof is generally thatched with grass. The Kandhas are by and large ill-clad on account of poverty and backwardness. This habit is mainly connected with their forest and agricultural economy. The women wear short petticoat reaching down upto the knee. Their upper <sup>part</sup> of the body is bare, except for a string of beads.

The Kandhas generally live in small families which include husband and wife with unmarried children. Soon after their marriage they get separated. Thus nuclear type of family prevails and both husband and wife are mutual partners in the matter of economic and social significance.

The Kandha social structure is remarkable for its clan organization, which functions socially as well as territorially. Exogamy is strictly observed among them. Inter-marriage between persons of the same tribe, however large or scattered is considered incestuous and punishable with death. Even then the Kandhas have no exogamous sub-division, and their matrimonial alliances are regulated by avoiding prohibited degrees from a common ancestor.

The Kandha ritual is distinguishable by its fear of the unknown and the malevolent forces of nature. But the ritual mechanism of religion provides enough safeguards against them. The ritual mechanism occasionally emerges into cruel practices. The sacrifice of goat, buffallow etc., is an expression of it. These sacrifices are a substitute for human sacrifice (also called Meriah sacrifice in Kandha community) which was in existence during the nineteenth century.

The Kandha Ghost or 'Duma' is only a temporary resident in the under world awaiting turn to reform and even identified after birth. This is evident from the naming ceremony of their children. After the Child's birth

Jani (P<sup>r</sup>est who conducts and regulates the rituals) is invited to identify who~~s~~ 'Duma' has come and the name is given by him. That is why most of the time the name of the deceased is repeated in the same family. 'Disari' is a native doctor who administers traditional medicines from the local herbs and also prescribes ritual offerings. Disari's influence on the Kandhas is deep rooted to such an extent that they do not opt for allopathic treatment. This is because, they believe that they have a well developed system of diagnosis and cure. The usual theory of the disease is that it is caused by malevolent spirits, the ghosts of the decador, the breach of some taboo. What is spiritually caused, therefore, must be spiritually cured. In fact these socio-cultural practices come as major stumbling blocks in their education and economic development.

Notes and References :

Scheduled Areas :- The Fifth Schedule of the Constitution envisages special administration for the under-developed areas having a preponderance of Scheduled Tribes. The idea that distinct and special arrangements are necessary for the isolated tribal regions gained acceptance over a period of time. The extent, total population, Scheduled Tribe population etc., of the Scheduled Areas are indicated in the two Presidential Orders of 1950 and 1977. Article 244 of the Constitution provides for the administration of "Scheduled Areas" in accordance with the Fifth Schedule. The Scheduled Areas are administered as part of the State in which they are situated, but the Governor of the State has been given powers to (a) modify Control and State Laws in their application to them and (b) frame Regulation for the peace and good governance and, in particular, for the protection of rights of tribals in land, the allotment of waste land and their protection from money lenders.

Protective Regulations :- Apart from Laws/Regulations in force in the entire State of Orissa, special regulations are in operation in the Scheduled Areas for ensuring welfare of Scheduled Tribes and safe-guarding their interests. The two important regulations are (1) The Orissa Scheduled Areas, Transfer of Immovable Property (by Scheduled Tribes) Regulation, 1956 (Regulation 2 of 1956), (2) The Orissa (Scheduled Areas) Money Lenders Regulation, 1967 (Regulation 2 of 1968).

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