

DISTINCTION BETWEEN JALPAIGURI AND UTTAR DINAJPUR DISTRICTS (BLOCK WISE)

Income Index per Thousand (Agriculture and other Primary Field)

	Block	Jalpaiguri District : Block No. 13
0.200 – 0.299	3	Madarihat, Birpara, Meteli, Kalchini
0.300 – 0.399	-	-
0.400 – 0.499	1	Dhupguri
0.500 – 0.599	3	Kumargram, Falakata, Mal
0.600 – 0.699	2	Nagrakata, Alipurduar – 2
0.700 – 0.799	1	Jalpaiguri
0.800 – And More	3	Alipurduar – 1, Moynaguri, Rajganj
Block Uttar Dinajpur District : Block No. 9		
0.200 – And Less	2	Goalpukur – 1, Kaliaganj
0.200 – 0.299	1	Hemtabad
0.300 – 0.399	2	Itahar, Raiganj
0.400 – 0.499	4	Islampur, Goalpukur – 2, Karandighi, Chopra

What could be the remedies of those problems?

After Independence, planned development started and three different approaches were advanced. These are:

- (i) The first approach was a legacy of the British regime, and is usually described as

“Leave them untouched.” This was based on a policy of isolation and was justified on the grounds that their traditional culture ought to be preserved.

- (ii) Another approach was the policy of assimilation of tribal culture and population in the mainstream of national life as early as possible.
- (iii) The last and third approach was a policy of slow and steady assimilation of tribal culture and life in the national mainstream without disturbing the healthy features of tribal life and this change should be on their own initiative and their willing consent.

Besides these, so many policies, plans and programmes have been implemented by the

Govt. of India. Comprehensive and effective programmes have been included in the various 'Five Year Plans'. Viz., C.D. Projects, ITDP (Integrated Tribal Development Project), IRDP (Integrated Rural Development Project), LAMPS, TDAs (Tribal Development Agencies), MADA (Modified Area Development Approach), Mini (MADA). Every thing has gone in vain. According to my experience – the development work would be good if the beneficiaries become increasingly aware of themselves and the world they live in and of course their capacity to transform it. And another is the recipients are helped to remove obstacles to personal growth. Government should grow technically self respect, self confidence, self sufficiency in them, if that they would able to develop one's faith in one self and fatalistic attitude would change creating development-oriented attitudes. And then they will realise the new values, ideals, plans and programmes. This type of change is too much important and government should emphasise specifically on that matter. But it is difficult so far as tribal peoples are concerned. Because they are more ethnocentric in their

attitudes and timid as well as suspicious due to years of exploitative experience.

General people of the mainstream of the society as well as leaders of the developed community should take care of them (Tribal people). Indeed, they are dubious about our behaviour. According to me and my field survey experience reveal that 'they are adivasi, so, we should not go with them.' This kind of attitudes of developed community is also responsible for their backwardness. Upper community leaders are callous about their life, livelihood and development. Sometime they are deprived of their legitimate dues by the community leaders. We should change our mentality toward Adivasi and consider them as aboriginal inhabitant of Indian Territory and also we should accept those (tribal people) as foster brother of our own family.

What is their Cultural Background?

Poems of this nature are not recited but always sung and the feelings and sentiments which they express, as well as the dances which accompany them, help to add a touch of beauty to the plain joys and sorrows of existence. The artistic taste of the tribal folk also finds expression in decoration of their houses, in the clothes they weave and wear, as well as in the simple ornaments with which they decorate their bodies. Tattooing is popular among them. They wear few clothes; therefore, the body is decorated permanently with designs of many kinds. The colours with which textiles are dyed are of indigenous origin. There is nothing subdued in them, designs offer strong contrasts, and the range of colours is also limited. Red and yellow, blue and green, and a deep black are often their

favourites and the designs which are produced on the loom or by embroidery are often of geometrical shape. Even when simple garlands are strung from seeds and beads, or when a bunch of flowers is stuck in the coiffure the colours are strong and matched admirably with the warm colour of the skin or that of the textiles which are worn during ceremonial dances.

The examples which have been given above do not, however, exhaust the artistic resources of India's tribal folk. There is another field in which art becomes interwoven with religion or, as one may say, the distinction which is usually drawn between the sacred and the secular by more sophisticated people ceases to exist. As has been said already, the religious experience of the tribal people depends, not so much upon everyday experiences and logical constructs based upon them as on dreams, visions and revelations which arise from the deeper springs of their being. The source of artistic experience also perhaps lies in the same region; and, therefore, when there is complete abandon to the experiences which spring from such a source, both Art and Religion tend to fuse with each other into a unified whole.

Almost all forms of tribal religion demand that offerings should be made to spirits and these may take the shape of animals like elephants and bulls, horses and pigs. Figures are in terracotta and produced by priestly craftsmen, who are members of the same tribe. Occasionally they are carved out of wood, or of brass, worked by the archaic lost-wax process. Human figures, or figures of gods and goddesses, are comparatively rare. Where masked dances are in vogue, the masks may represent the fact of some god or even that of a demon.

What is significant about all these figures, whether carved in wood or made of burnt earth, is that there is no attempt to imitate what exists in nature. A horse or a bull, the vision of a god or of a demon, impresses tribal folk with perhaps one central quality. And all that the artist tries to do, whether he is a layman or a priest, is to reproduce that central quality without any embellishment which would make it more 'realistic'. It is this elemental quality in primitive and which impresses us most. The artist is not ashamed of what might be regarded by others as crude. He remains true to the impression which an object has produced upon him, and tries to reproduce it faithfully. It is this utter concentration upon the true nature of an object which raises tribal art far above the level of the more sophisticated art of the civilised. It has been rightly said that the tribal artist may be 'untutored, but he is not uninitiated.

Human figures are rarely carved. But when they are in memory of someone who was loved, but is no more. There is no attempt even in such examples to reproduce with fidelity any of the features of the departed. The figure of a woman, carved more or less in the rough, is enough to remind the brother, who was responsible for its execution, of the dear sister whom he loved and who has left him. Such objects are not for everybody, each one of them has an appeal for the one who alone is concerned.

It is significant that offerings like the above, or of terracotta animals and the like, of lamp stands made of the same material, are all placed not inside a walled temple, but in the open, under some tree or a group of trees. Year after year, the figures go on pilling; and they may strike an

outsider by the monotony of their form, or by lack of any arrangement among the offerings. But these are no more than tokens of memory, the symbol or seal of an experience through which one has passed.

Even in the music and dances of the tribal folk of Uttar Dinajpur the notes which are employed are of a limited range, while there is no end of repetition of the same rhythm or the same movement from hour to hour. There are no specialists, and every man, woman and child participates with abandon both in singing and in dancing. It is everybody's dance, for these are the things which one enjoyed not by watching others perform, but by joining in it oneself, and by temporising from moment to moment.

As such, tribal art is everyone's art. It enriches the daily life of those who share in it. And if the simplicity and monotony of daily life, which is often at the level of want, spills over into artistic expressions also, whether in the field of music, dance or sculpture, there seems to be nothing wrong about it.

Are their cultural mixed up with the other class?

In Uttar Dinajpur the tribals are surrounded by different Hindu and Muslim caste. Such as Das, Sarkar, Polia, somewhere Hindu and somewhere Muslim also. Tribal people come in direct contact for their every day life with these communities and also with the Bengalee higher caste who live nearby. Due to this contact with the Hindu for generations and the cessation of connection with their cradle land, they started borrowing the Hindu ideologies and adopted these. Gradually these Hindu ideas overlapped their original religious believes and practices and their originality stepped

aside. They started worshipping the *Kali, Sitala, Manasa, Laksmi, Mahadev* and others, who are Hindu deities, worshipped by almost all the Hindu caste of this area instead of their original deities such as *Sarhaburia, Pilchu Haram, Pilchu Buri, Marang Buru, Chandi* etc. Most of their original deities are day by day absent at present.

The religious rites during social ceremonies have also been mingled with Hindu religious ideas. Such as – the use of *Gangajal* (Water of Ganga), *Tulsijal* (water sanctified with leaves of sacred basil) in different socio-religious observances is undoubtedly Hindu in origin. The utterance of *Horibol* (the name of Lord Hari) and practice of *Sadhuali Gurumukh* (giving mantras to the son of the deceased by the *Sadhu*) in funeral ceremony are by no means their original traits, but must have been borrowed from the neighbouring Hindu communities. The Mantras are no longer in *Kurukh* dialect but in Bengali. Instead of their native priest e.g., *Mati* or *Pahom* during some festivities sometimes Hindu Brahmans are employed for worship.

Most of the tribal villages of Uttar Dinajpur and Jalpaiguri districts have become more advanced. They are advanced due to contact of advanced culture resulting from urbanisation, industrialisation, and modern communication, advanced medical methods, education etc. A number of changes can be noticed. The indigenous means of curing disease i.e., by magical method is not favoured much at present. They are taking the help of modern medicine. The interest in the religious ideas has also been deteriorated much. The festivals have lost mostly their former zeal. The young generations who have already taken their education and doing

their service in various fields, cannot participate in dance and music on festival occasions. Again due to deforestation and reservation of forests the hunting festivals have no charm. As a result of these, the festivals are gradually losing ground and the enthusiasm on the occasion is also becoming paler and paler. The people of present day are not much interested in the local spirits and deities and are not at all keen to please them with traditional functions. This subdued interest mingled with economic depression has brought change in the items of offerings and sacrifices.

In both the districts Jalpaiguri and Uttar Dinajpur there have taken place a lot of cultural changes and assimilations with others. They, no longer, boast of their primitive tradition, and instead of their primitive traditional traits, they have borrowed a number of traits from the modern world. Contact and migration are the two main factors which have brought forth the changes in them and amalgamated with various cultures.

Besides these, Christianity and upper born Hindu are important sources which have enhanced their cultural assimilation. Jalpaiguri and Uttar Dinajpur in both the districts there have many Christian Missionaries. They spread their activities even in the most remote places and give necessary assistance to these poor tribal people by establishing schools, hospitals, co-operative credit societies etc. Keeping their objective of propagation of Christianity in view and from these physical and economical aids these people, somewhat got their education, medicine, source of income etc. As a result of these incentives a number of tribal people are attracted by this, Sometime they get converted into Christianity and

sometime giving up their own traditional things, customs and conventions and we are also looking in them the heavy impact of Christian culture.

Role of Tribals of Uttar Dinajpur and Jalpaiguri in Economic development.

The Scheduled Tribes of Uttar Dinajpur have diverse occupational pattern. The females of the Scheduled Tribes population in different economic activities along with the males. The female participation is much higher than the females of the general population. The largest number of the tribals is engaging cultivation comes agricultural labourers. But in the case of the Scheduled Tribes of North Bengal and South Bengal agricultural labourers hold the first rank position followed by the cultivation 45.50% and 35.36% of workers of general population of India and West Bengal respectively are engaged as cultivators, the Scheduled Tribes workers as cultivators are 35.4% only. On the other hand, the percentage of the Scheduled Tribes agricultural labourers is as high as 43.37, the same for the general population of India and the West Bengal are as low as 26% and 25.28% respectively. From the above comparison, it is very clear that almost all the tribals of West Bengal and Uttar Dinajpur district depend on agricultural sector. Their economic condition is not at all satisfactory. Most of the communities like Karmali, Kora, Bhumij, Bedia, Birjia and the Santal are engaged as agricultural labourers. These communities stand below the measuring line in respect of cultivators. Very few of the tribals of Uttar Dinajpur are engaged in government and private sector services. In non-agricultural sector most of the communities remain engaged mainly on occupations of non-gainful types. More than hold of the workers engaged in non-agricultural sector. They earn their livelihood by labour, participation

in 'trade and commerce' by the Scheduled Tribes people is quite low. They are not in big business. Most of them shop-keepers, owner of tea-stalls, vegetable sellers, rice-sellers, etc. Some of the tribal communities are also engaged in household industries and manufacturing industries. Their number is also very small. Very few communities of tribals are found in livestock, forestry, fishing, plantation, hunting etc. Santal, Bedia, Karmali, Pahan are in these occupations. According to field survey of tribals of two Gram Panchayats of Itahar Block, three from Raiganj Block, four from Kaliaganj Block, four from Hemtabad Block, three from Karandighi Block and all most all the Gram Panchayats of Goalpokhar I and II Block and two each from Islampur and Chopra Block are engaged in the above occupation. In recent time Chopra and Islampur Block have started tea-plantation. In this tea garden the tribals of this area have engaged as labourer. The percentage of tribal labourers is very few, because Muslim labourers are doing there.

In Jalpaiguri district most of the tribals are engaged in cultivation. Rabha, Mech, Garo, Savar, Bhumij, Bedia, Karmali, Pahan, Limbu, Toto, Oraon, Mahali, Malpahari, Munda, and the Santal etc. are completely dependent on agriculture sector. In recent time, they started their shifting cultivation on the unploughed land. But at present time, they produce all types of high-breed crops and various vegetables like other communities. Tribals of Jalpaiguri have more cultivators than the state average for the Scheduled Tribes as a whole. Rabha, Mech, Karmali, Bedia and the Santal have 'cultivators' and 'agricultural labourers' more than the state average. Some tribals of Jalpaiguri are also engaged in tea garden and forest

department. There are two types of labourers in Jalpaiguri district viz., tea garden labourers and forest labourers. On behalf of forest department forest labourers get four to six bighas of land for cultivation and one hut type's quarter for their inhabitation.

Very few tribals of Jalpaiguri are also engaged in fishing, hunting and some collecting wood from thick forest and selling it in the market. Their livelihood depends on this uncertain occupation.

The Oraon, Baraik, Nagesia, Mahali and the Mech are also engaged in 'household industries' as profession. Mahalis has been given first rank position who is mostly basket makers. They make it in their house and supply them to the various gardens and markets.

The tribal communities of Uttar Dinajpur had lost their economic, social and political individuality since long before. After 1854, the British Govt. for their personal interest took many a tribal labourers to the tea gardens of North Bengal and other places from Santhal Parganas and Bihar. They started their career in Uttar Dinajpur only as 'Labour Group'. Before 1850 those who lived up as proto-Astroloid, their numbers were negligible. Before 1960, those who came to North Bengal as well as Uttar Dinajpur from East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) started their livelihood as day labourers too. The tribals, pouring in 1860 became owner of some lands by dint of their clearing up the jungles and working for years in forest department. By farming the lands the corns they harvested could not meet their yearly demand. In this condition, the helpless tribals had to go to the local landlords or *Mahajan* for the deficient food grains which could meet them upto the next harvesting season. But, due to the high

rate of interest imposed by the land lords, they could not have been able to pay their previous debts after harvesting. And if they paid the due with interest, they would have to face starvation next year. The selfish landlords, taking this detestable opportunity, snatched their last hope, a piece of land away from them. They were compelled to work at the land lord's house with lower pay. The tribals could not send their children to school for education; rather they engaged their children to look after their landlords cattle's and other domestic pets. Again when the children grew upto labour age, they worked for the land lord's house hold affairs with their parents.

The deplorable condition of the landless day labour tribals is beyond description. The historical term 'Medieval Land Slavery' is not opt to depict their plight. They have almost turned into slave. Because, the cultivation oriented labours do not get job all the seasons of the year in agricultural works of Uttar Dinajpur. The few months that offer them work for earning are not sufficient for their family. But when the agriculture needs not to have any day-labour, they are forced to work without pay in the land lords or *Zamindar's* house. It is found in Field Survey that many a non-paid day labours are still active in Goalpokhor, Karandighi, Hemtabad, Chopra and Itahar of Uttar Dinajpur. The bright lights of the civilised world are as if futile to them. Modern education, health-care, human development could not touch their wretched livelihood. Being failed to meet the domestic demands and to have a momentary respite from family pain and wince, they drink home made liquor daily.

This intoxication helps them forget their mundane perils and pangs. That is why daily drinking has become a part and parcel of their lives.

The Santals predominate in almost all the districts for their handicrafts and also in Jalpaiguri district. The skilled worker, per family, is 1.1 on an average. Labourers engaged in these crafts are mostly from the same community. The Meches are very famous for their crafts in all over Jalpaiguri district as well as North Bengal. Spinning and weaving occupied a prominent place in the Mech society. The Mech women are enthusiastic weavers. In the past, it was a must for every Mech woman to know spinning and weaving and the Endi culture. Social prestige depended on how well a woman could weave. At the time, the selection of the bride, in older days, her craftsmanship in weaving cloth, particularly the Endi cloth, had been regarded as one of the important criteria for selection. Though, with the change of time, the importance of this industry has been lessened much, it still plays some role in the present day Mech economy. The rearing of the Endi moth and the making of cloth out of that has been closely associated with the life of the Meches, through generations. Earlier, it was present in the Rabha society also, though most of the Rabhas used to wear cotton cloth. But, today it has disappeared from Rabha society.

In recent time, the increase in the economic hardship of those people, in the face of tough competition offered by the mill-manufactured cloth, the Endi industry is slowly becoming a dead industry., A good number of the Mech households being very poor, have to work hard from Sun rise to Sun set as day labourer round the year, for their mere existence.

What measures have been taken by Government to usher their economic stability?

Tribals, by and large, depend on agriculture and forests for their livelihood. Hence, development of agriculture, forests and some other field is needed. Government of India has given special attention to those matters. In Ninth-Five Year Plan (1977-2002) government has taken some measures to bring economic stability of tribals.

Approaches taken by the Government:

- (a) Efforts will be made to ensure that the tribal economy is protected and supported against threats from external markets. The ownership or patent rights of the tribal people in respect of minor forest produce vis-à-vis the use of medicinal plants will be protected as per the provisions of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR).
- (b) The Primitive Tribal Groups are leading an extremely precarious existence and some of them are on the verge of extinction. Existing development programmes have not been able to alleviate their condition. An Action Plan incorporating total food and nutrition security, health coverage, education facilities etc. in keeping with their socio-economic and cultural conditions will be prepared by the Central and State Governments.
- (c) A National Policy for Tribal Development will be formulated at the earliest.

Strategy taken by the Government:

- (i) Due to introduction of New Economic Policy, the rights and privileges of the tribal are encroached upon. Therefore, there is an urgent need to formulate a Tribal Policy with a special focus on the rehabilitation aspects during the Ninth Plan.

- (ii) The Tribal community should be involved in the planning process under TSP approach. The four tier system recommended by the Bhuria Committee should be the best suited vehicle for self management of tribal development.
- (iii) The Indian Forest Act, 1927 should be revised in consonance with the provisions of the Forest Policy Resolution of 1988. The Intellectual Property Rights involving the tribal areas should be carefully looked into.
- (iv) The tribal resources are getting eroded by the entry of international markets and multi-national companies. The tribal economy, as it stands today, can neither enter into the market created by the new economic policy nor can it withstand the competition created.
- (v) The traditional tribal Panchayat System should be utilised for planning process at the ground level.
- (vii) Extensive Employment-cum-Vocational Training Programmes to rehabilitate the displaced tribal with alternative sources of income on sustainable basis should be provided on priority basis.

Initiatives Undertaken by T.D. Division during the Year 1998:

All the Central and centrally sponsored schemes which are under implementation will continue during Ninth Plan. Revisions of the Schemes have been made after consultation with the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance. The Schemes are being implemented according to revised norms:

- (I) A new Central Sector Scheme for the development of Primitive Tribal Groups has been introduced during current financial year. Under this scheme cent percent assistance would be available to Integrated Tribal Development Projects (TIPs), Tribal Research Institute (TRI) and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) for undertaking activities such as awareness generation and confidence building, training for skill development of Tribal Youth Organisations of self help groups and provision of services.
- (ii) It has been decided to set up 11 member Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission under Article 339(1) of the Constitution. The main objective of the Commission is to examine the existing TSP strategy and to suggest alternative arrangements, if necessary.
- (iii) It has been decided to set up a National Institute for Training and Research in Tribal Affairs at Delhi. The main purpose of setting up a National Institute is to coordinate research activities of 14 TRIs in various states and to assist the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- (iv) Revision of the Schemes has been initiated after consultation with the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance.
- (v) Revision of Norms of the Scheme of Grant-in-Aid to voluntary organisation working for the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes have been made raising the cost heads to a realistic and workable level.

Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) Strategy:

In order to accelerate socio-economic development of the Scheduled Tribes and their protection against the exploitation, Government of India has adopted a separate strategy known as TSP, since the Fifth Five Year Plan with the objectives of:

- (i) Bringing them on par with other sections of the society;
- (ii) And to protect them from exploitation by various vested interest groups. TSP strategy is in operation in 18 States viz., Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Orissa, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal and two Union Territories viz., Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Daman and Diu.

In order to fulfil the above objectives, 194 Integrated Tribal Development Projects (ITDP) have been set up in blocks or groups of blocks where the Scheduled Tribe population is more than 50% of the total population. Modified Area Development Approach (MADA) Pockets have been formed in group of villages having population of 10,000 or more than 50% or more tribal population. 252 MADA Pockets have been created. In addition, 79 clusters have also been formed for groups of villages having population of 5,000 or more where Scheduled Tribes constitute more than 50% of the population. 75 Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) have been identified in 15 States/UTs on the basis of pre-agricultural level of technology and extremely low levels of literacy. The development of PTGs is undertaken through micro projects for these tribals.

Special Central Assistance (SCA) for Tribal Sub-Plan:

The Special Central Assistance is given by the Ministry of Welfare to the Tribal Sub-Plan for State Government/Union Territories Administrations to fill in the gap in their financial outlays. The SCA is to be utilised in conjunction with the TSP flow with a view to meet the gaps which are not, otherwise, taken care of by the State Plan. It is basically meant for family oriented income generating schemes in sectors of agriculture, horticulture, minor irrigation, soil conservation, animal husbandry, forest, education, cooperatives fisheries, villages and small industries and Minimum Needs Programme.

Sector-Wise Supplement Outlays for Tribal Development

Rs. in Crores

Plan Period	Education	Economic Upliftment	Health/Housing	Total
First Plan	5.10	8.46	3.81	17.37
Second Plan	8.05	22.70	9.76	40.51
Third Plan	13.23	30.72	7.10	51.05
1966-1969	9.32	24.07	1.93	35.32
Fourth Plan	31.50	42.25	10.45	84.20

Fifth Plan Efforts
For the Year 1974-75 – 1979-80

Rs. in Crores

Total State Plan	Total State Sub-Plan	Percentage of Sub-Plan to Total Plan	Special Central Assistance	
1974-75	1844	43	-	5.00
1975-76	2660	109	4.10	20.00
1976-77	3215	192	5.96	40.00
1977-78	3874	257	6.64	55.00
1978-79	4975	344	6.92	70.00
1979-80	4987	394	7.90	70.00

Expenditure in different Plan periods for development of Scheduled Tribes:

Funds From

Rs. in Crores

	State Plan	Special Central Assistance	Total
Fifth Plan	759.44	186.76	946.20
1979-80 (Actual)	382.45	59.45	441.90
Sixth Plan	3387.89	486.11	3874.00
Seventh Plan (1985-90 Provisional)	7100.57	851.25	7951.82

The criteria for allocation of Special Central Assistance have been fixed on the basis of certain norms for ITDP, MADA, Pockets, Clusters,

Primitive Tribal Groups and Dispersed Tribal Groups. The allocation and expenditure for the years 1992-93 to 1997-98 are as follows:

Year	Allocation	Amount Released (in Lakhs)
8 th Plan (1992-97)	1,25,000	1,47,985
1992-93	25,000	25,000
1993-94	29,500	29,500
1994-95	27,500	27,500
1995-96	33,000	33,000
9 th Five Year Plan (1997-2002)		
1996-97	33,000	33,000
1997-98	33,000	33,961
1998-99	38,000	29,308
1999-2000	40,000	27,029
2000-2001	39,000	39,450
2001-2002	42,000	42,860

From the above Plans, Programmes and money allotment, it is very clear that the Government of India has taken adequate measures for the Development of the Tribal people of India. All the above data and datum have been collected from Planning Commission, New Delhi.

Do they participate in political activities at the District or State Level?

Before the advent of Panchayati Raj and Constitutional Reservation there was a traditional Institution in the tribal society. Their functions

have been primarily to decide social and religious matters in the light of their customary laws and in some areas to determine judicial matters also on the basis of the content of the people as a whole. This does not mean THAT THE TRIBAL COUNCILS DID NOT DECIDE ECONOMIC QUESTIONS. This has been a part of their social responsibility. These tribal councils were not elected bodies. Heredity was often the basis, but many times character and the personal life of an individual elevated him to his coveted position. Despite such constraints every adult had an equal right to argue and put forth any question and thus issues used to be settled through consensus. The decisions of the council are law to the tribals because they are based on their social customs and religious rites.

But the introduction of Statutory Panchayat System and Constitutional provisions under Article 330, 332, 334 and 335 for Lok Sabha, Bidhan Sabha and others throughout India has weakened the traditional tribal councils. Generally speaking, these Statutory Panchayats have adopted almost all functions of the traditional tribal council with added responsibility of implementing development works too. The functions of the Statutory Panchayats are, broadly speaking, administrative, economic and social. Due to the Provision of the Constitution tribal's sent their representatives to the democratic governmental body. In this decision-making place tribal representatives are taking part actively.

Amongst the administrative functions, they are performing watch and ward, control and regulations of fairs, market grazing grounds and village farm lands and functions pertaining to sanitation and health. Among the economic functions are included functions relating to development of

agriculture, irrigation, conservation, promotion of cottage industries and development of animal husbandry. Amongst social functions are included education and recreation, maternity and child welfare etc.

As per direction of the Government and Constitutional Reservation, tribal peoples are participating at the grass root level to topmost level namely – Gram Panchayat, Panchayat Samity and Zilla Parishad and also in the Lok Sabha and Bidhan Sabha like other communities.

What is the Standard of their Education?

The tribal literacy rate is indescribable in comparison with the general people of India. It is in reality that in spite of several measures for rapid improvement of education; the development of literacy among the tribal folk is appreciably lower than what was expected. Formal education has made very little impact on tribal groups.

During the colonial rule in India no serious constructive step was taken for the overall spread of literacy among the tribal people. The growth of formal education among the tribal populations of the country may be gauged from the facts yielded by the Census data. The rate of literacy amongst these people was as low as 0.7 in 1931 as compared to the general literacy rate of 8.3 percent. Actually only after Independence, the National Government concentrated its attention on the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes. While the percentage of literacy among the Scheduled Tribes was 0.7 in 1931, it rose to 15.35 percent in 1981 as against 36.21 percent of the general population. This percentage rose to 32.60 in 1991 against 52.2 percent for the entire country. After ten years in 2001 the

tribal literacy rate has come in 35.6 percent. The literacy rate among the tribal women is obviously too much lower. In West Bengal only 5.01 percent of females are literate whereas it is 8.01 percent for the Scheduled Tribes females of India. So, the total picture of spread of education among the tribal men and women are not satisfactory, barring a few tribes of north-eastern region like Khasi, Garo, and Bodo etc. who tremendously benefited from the vast network of Christian Missionary Institutions.

The literacy rate of tribals of Uttar Dinajpur and Jalpaiguri districts are in alarming condition. Especially, the literacy condition of Uttar Dinajpur is too precarious. It is the lowest position all over North Bengal. The literacy rate of tribals of Uttar Dinajpur is ... whereas the rate of the general population is ... Formal education, non-formal education, *Sarba Siksha Avijan*, Adult Education etc., it has no any impact on the tribals of Uttar Dinajpur. In comparison with this the literacy rate of Jalpaiguri district is high and the literacy rate of tribals is better than this, but not satisfactory.

Do both the man and woman take their Education equally?

After the long run of civilized human society still the literacy rate of tribal people is not satisfactory. They are too much lagging behind than the other developed community. Government of India as well as State have implemented number of plans and programmes for their development yet they are backward in every field. Especially literacy rate is in the bottom of the list. According to 1991 census report the percentage of the tribal literacy was 32.60 as a whole. In West Bengal the literacy rate of general population is more than 69 percent whereas the literacy of tribal

is less than half of this. The literacy rate among the tribal women is undoubtedly a matter of worry. In West Bengal only 5.01 percent of females are literate whereas it is 8.01 percent for the Scheduled tribe's females of India. In Uttar Dinajpur district the education of tribal woman is in too much poor condition. The tribal male literacy rate is 32.60 but the female rate is below 10 percent. From the above analysis it is very clear that females are not in position to take their education equally with the male tribals. It is also proved that tribal women are not taking education like the females of general category. Tribal male groups are not conscious about the education of their female child. They are not sending their girls equally with the boys in the school.

The Government of India has drawn the attention on the Himalayan parity of the tribal male and female education. The Government of India has launched a scheme in 1993-94 only to establish the tribal male and female in a same platform. The scheme was implemented through non-Governmental Organisation or Institution set up by Government as autonomous bodies or educational and other institutions like Local Bodies and Cooperative Societies. As per 1991 Census the Districts where literacy among Scheduled Tribes women is less than 10% are covered under the scheme. Total 136 districts of the 11 states viz., Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal are covered under this scheme.

The female literacy among certain primitive tribal groups was indicated to be very low. With a view to improving the situation, the scheme of educational complex has been introduced. The Educational

Complex is meant for girls studying in one to five (I to V) with a strength of 30 girls in every class with a provision for training in crafts or vocational education. Food and lodging is free for the students. Every students will be supplied two set of uniforms per year, free medical check-up and Government also provide Rs. 50/- to their parents as an incentive for sending their child.

Why are they educationally backward in comparison with others?

Tribal literacy is very poor in West Bengal as well as Uttar Dinajpur. Educationally they are too much backward in comparison with others. Formal education has very little impact on tribal people. In the light of the past efforts, it is not shocking because prior to 1950, the Government of India had no direct programme for the education of the tribals. With the adoption of the Constitution, the promotion of education of Scheduled Tribes has become a special responsibility of the central as well as of the State Government. Both the Governments have already been taken special measures to increase the literacy rate of the tribal people.

In spite of that tribals are educationally backward. There are various reasons behind the backwardness of the tribal people.

Social Factors:

More allocation of funds and opening of schools do not go for in providing education to the tribal people. Social factors play very important role in this respect. Formal education has not been necessary for the members of tribal societies to discharge their social obligations. Hence, they should be prepared to accept education and it should be presented to them in such a way as to cut the barriers of superstition and prejudice.

Barring the tribal communities of Uttar Dinajpur district, it is still a widespread feeling among the tribals that education makes their boys defiant and insolent and alienates them from the rest of the society, while the girls turn modern or go astray. Since some of their educated boys felt alienated and cut off their links with their families and villages and society also after getting education and good employment, some of the tribal group vehemently oppose the spread of education in their midst. Besides, some of their superstition and myths also play their part. Some tribal groups believe that their gods shall be angry if they send their children to schools run by 'outsiders'.

Economic Factors:

Some economic factors, too, are responsible for lack of interest shown by the tribal people in education. Since most of the tribal people are living in an object properly under subsistence economy, it is not easy for most of them to send their children to schools thus losing two healthy hands in their struggle for survival.

According to field survey experience poor economic condition of the tribal societies is a great hindrance to successful education. All most all the tribes – whether food gatherers, hunters, fishermen, shifting cultivators, cultivators, agricultural labourers, small wine sellers, day labourers of other field etc. lack enough food to maintain the family for the whole year. Education, therefore, is a luxury to them which they can hardly afford. Each school going child in a tribal family is an economy unit and contributes to the family income more or less. If the child is taken away from his normal economic work to attend school, the family is deprived

of the little income which he brings. Instead, the parents have to feed the child out of their earnings which further reduce the economic stability of the family. According to present system of education any economic benefit a tribal child can bring to his family will be only after ten or fifteen years of schooling. The parents have neither the patience nor the foresight to wait for such a long period. They can, however, be convinced easily if the education for them can be made productive right from the very beginning.

Lack of Interest in Formal Education:

Tribal children are taught through the same books which form the curriculum of non-tribal children of the urban and rural areas of the rest of the State. Obviously, the content of such books rarely appeals the tribal children who come from different cultural backgrounds. Stories of scientific and technological progress, foundation of modern India, history and geography of the country etc., of course, form necessary part of any curriculum but the situation demands that their education should start with the teaching of demography, history and ecology of their own region, their neighbourhood and the State. National consciousness should not be imposed from above or outside, but they should be made aware of it in a systematic manner.

This is a well known fact that education in India has spread in a haphazard way without taking care of future needs. Tribal education also could not escape this anomaly and become instant failure due to apathy, indifference and lack of interest of the tribal people in formal education.

Under this circumstances a scheme is to be worked out through which the school children shall be able to link up the school and the

teacher with their parents and the tribal activities. The school has to act as a centre of dispersal of simple technical know-how beyond the skills of reading and writing becomes an effective agent of social change. This student-teacher-parents continuum should be able to generate a congenial atmosphere, so that the broad purpose of education, which is to enable an average citizen to comprehend the social, political, economic and other processes and forces around them, is fully served.

Suitable Teachers:

Lack of suitable teachers is one of the major reasons for the slow growth of education in tribal areas. Most of the teachers employed for importing education to the tribal children show little appreciation of the tribal way of life and value system. They approach the tribal people with a sense of superiority and treat them as 'sow age' and 'uncivilized' and hence fail to establish proper rapport with their students. A teacher in the tribal areas must have a through knowledge of tribal life and culture.

Medium Problem:

One of the major problems in tribal education is that of language. Most of the tribal languages and dialects are in the most rudimentary stage and there is hardly any written literature. Hence, the problem of medium of instruction has been a great irritant. Most of the States import education to tribal and non-tribal children alike through the medium of the regional language, thus making education un-interesting to many of the tribal people. It also hurts tribal sentiments for his own language. Hence, some way out has to be found to make education meaningful and productive for the tribal people.

Nature of Habitation:

Nature of habitat of the tribal people is also responsible for slow growth of education. Most of the tribal villages are scattered. This entails long travels to attend schools. Unless the school is situated very close to their villages and its site approved by the local people the result shall not be encouraging.

Timing Problem:

The enthusiasm of tribal people in the education of their children also depends considerably on the timing of school hours in different seasons. The school timing should not clash with their important socio-economic activities and events. People running schools for the tribals have often killed their interest in education by their unimaginative planning. Local conditions and requirements of the people should get top priority in any scheme for running these schools and a balance has to be maintained between the needs of the family and the needs of education.

Do they enjoy full Governmental Facilities?

Education can play an important role in bringing up the gap between the tribals and non-tribals and in helping the processes of change and modernisation, a considerable amount of money is being spent on the provision of education facilities to the tribals. The important schemes included in the programme for the expansion of education facilities among the Scheduled Tribes are the opening of various types of schools, award of scholarships, providing hostel facilities, stipends, stationery grants, boarding grants, mid-day means, *Anganwari* Centre in tribal villages etc. The tribal peoples are getting these very facilities everywhere. All school

going boys, especially who are studying in higher classes must get these facilities. A big boy's hostel (more about 200 students_ has been established at Karnajora, Raiganj, Uttar Dinajpur. There are so many Ashrams in Uttar Dinajpur district for tribal students, from where they are getting their food and lodging with free of cost. The students who are not staying at hostel on boarding also getting their stipends, scholarships, study materials and other facilities as per government norms.

The Central and State Governments have also provided for the reservation of seats to Scheduled Tribes. Some relaxation in the criteria for admission is also practised. The educational programmes of the Central Government include award of post-matric scholarships, provisions of girls' hostels, pre-Examination Training Centre and coaching cum guidance facilities to tribal student appearing for Indian Administrative Services (IAS), West Bengal Civil Services (WBCS) and Overseas Scholarships. In addition to these, there are schemes in the State sector for provision of pre-matric scholarships, stipends, exemption from tuition fees and examination fees, educational equipment etc. Schemes are also being operated to train the tribals to work as teachers in their own areas.

The Union Government also recommends that 15% and 5% seats for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes candidates respectively for admission to undergraduate courses in all medical colleges should be reserved. A relaxation of 5% in marks was also recommended for candidates belonging to these communities, in cases where admission was restricted to candidates who obtained a certain minimum percentage of marks. Similar recommendations were also made for admission to

post-graduate medical courses. But it has not been accepted by many states so far matter regarding to 5% relaxation in minimum marks for admission, since students belonging to Scheduled Tribes are generally very poor, they cannot afford to purchase all costly books of medical and engineering courses. Accordingly, a centrally sponsored scheme for establishing book banks in various medical and engineering colleges in the country was undertaken in 1978-79.

The Union Minister of Education issued directions to the three Institutions of Management of Ahmedabad, Bangalore and Kolkata to reserve 20% of seats (15% for Scheduled Castes and 5% for Scheduled Tribes) for admission. Similar relaxation and reservations were made in admissions to the Institute of Technology located at Mumbai, Delhi, Kanpur, Kharagpur and Chennai and the Institute of Technology located at Varanashi. Since admission of Scheduled Tribes candidates through Joint Entrance Examination was very poor, direct admission was granted for the first time to all Scheduled Tribes candidates who had secured 50% marks in Higher Secondary Examination in the academic session 1975-76. However, this privilege was withdrawn from the academic year 1979. Ministry of Labour, Seats are reserved in these Institutes for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes candidates in proportion to the percentage of their population in the State or Union Territories concerned.

Keeping in view the employment needs of the Scheduled Tribes, increase in educational facilities to them, and their meagre representation in government services, reservation in different services and posts have been allowed for the numbers of the Scheduled Tribes. In the case of

recruitment made on the basis of all-India Competition, 71/2% of the vacancies are reserved for the Scheduled Tribes. Reservations to direct recruitments to Class III and Class IV posts which normally attract candidates from locality or region are fixed in proportion to the population of the Scheduled Tribes in the respective States and Union Territories.

In certain cases where promotion are to be made from departmental candidates in Class II, III and IV posts, reservation for Scheduled Tribes is made at 7.5% of the vacancies. In the case of promotion for selection from Class I posts (and within Class II posts), employees belonging to Scheduled Tribes are given one higher growing in categorization of merit. This concession is confined to 25% of the total vacancies in a grade in a year.

Various programmes have been initiated by the Central and State Government for the development of education and welfare of the Scheduled Tribes. It can be shown as follows:

Central sponsored Programmes:

1. Post-Matric Scholarships.
2. Girls' Hostel.
3. Pre Examination Training.
4. Tribal Development Blocks.
5. Cooperation.
6. Research, Training and special projects.
7. Improvement of working and living conditions of those engaged in unclean occupations.

8. Coaching-cum-Guidance Centres.
9. Grants to All India non-official organisation doing welfare work among Scheduled Tribes.

Programmes in the State Sector:

1. Pre-Matric Scholarships and Stipends.
2. Exemption from tuition and Examination fees.
3. Provision of educational equipments.
4. Provision of Mid-Day Meals.
5. Provision of *Anganwari* Centre in tribal concentrated areas. The numbers of centres are 2 lakhs in all over India.
6. Grants for the construction and maintenance of hostel and school buildings. Improvement of Standard of Education.
7. Provision of Land and Irrigation.
8. Teaching in mother tongue.
9. Extra-curricular Activities.
10. Physical education.
11. Special Programmes for youth in the age group of 15-25.
12. Citizen Education.
13. Stipends to Children Teachers.
14. Special Pay to teachers working in Extremely Backward Areas.

15. Construction of residential facilities, especially for lady teachers.
16. Recruitment Programmes and Refresher Course for Teachers.
17. Development of Tribal markets as Centres for Cultural Activities.

All the above facilities are available in Uttar Dinajpur and Jalpaiguri districts. At present they are getting these as par norms of the Government.

In spite of Different Plans, Programmes and Reservation Why they still Socially, Economically and culturally and educationally backward?

None can ignore the genuine desire of the Government to uplift the tribal people and role played by its efforts in changing the mode of thinking and attitudes of many tribals. Thus, educational policies of the government, provision of reservation in jobs, policies in the field of agriculture, cooperation, communication, industrialization, social services etc. have brought the tribal closer to the main stream of national life or society. Tribal Market have been linked up with urban markets providing greater economic opportunities to the tribal and creating a commercial aptitude in them and there is also arising a matter of definite shift in the consumption pattern of the tribals from need based to impersonal needs. Yet, all said and done, the efforts so far have not helped in solving the problems of poverty, malnutrition and exploitation faced by the tribals.

If I discuss the various matters, which have so many drawbacks then it would be clear to us.

In the field of education and employment it shows a very miserable plight. According to the 1971 to 2001 Census report, the percentage of

literacy among the Scheduled Tribes is too much low than the general literacy rate. Till today the tribal literacy is less than the half of the general literacy. This poor condition does not exist only in the district of Uttar Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri or West Bengal but also in the every districts or State of the country. It has shown as a gigantic problem throughout the country.

Thus, the impact of the educational programmes of the Government has been uneven. It has been seen that a large number of post-matric scholarship have gone to students belonging to a few selected tribes only. Once a Commissioner for Scheduled Tribes very relevantly pointed out a matter that three-fourths of the total scholarship had been awarded to Scheduled Tribe students belonging to Assam and Bihar, though the tribal population of these State constituted only one-fifth of the total tribal population in the country. Even within States, the distribution of scholarship was highly skewed in favour of some tribes. Thus, it would seem that some advanced Scheduled Tribes have gained educational benefits out of all proportion while a number of tribes have failed to benefit.

In the case of reservation, there is also existing problem. When one comes to reservations for Scheduled Tribes in services, the position does not seem to be better. At the policy making level on ardent desire and anxiety to provide persons from amongst these communities with adequate employment under the State, in as short a period as possible, the various bottleneck created at the implementation level. It has also found that most of the reserved vacancies are lying unfilled from long day. Authority becoming less interested when they are looking this post or that post will be under category of Scheduled Tribes. They are not giving their demand

for official personal consequently, the reservation scope belonging to Scheduled Tribes are becoming narrow to narrower.

In some public sector, government undertaking, labour unions, private sector are opposing to the policy of reservations. There are also numerous cases of humiliation, harassment and ill treatment faced by workers of Scheduled Tribes in respect of promotions, transfer and other related matters.

The Project of Tribal Development Blocks has failed to implement its task. It means the development of the tribal community has come to a fruitless condition. The benefits fail to reach the lower strata of the society and got concentrated in the hands of the upper crust of the tribal community; The Shilu Ao Committee also observed some limitation of the project of Tribal Development Blocks. According to them the drawbacks are as follows:

- (i) smallness of the area in each T.D. Blocks;
- (ii) fragmented approach to development planning;
- (iii) application of a large number of standardized scheme in vogue among advanced community in tribal areas;
- (iv) neglect of the employment aspects of development;
- (v) Failure to take up settlement of land disputes in the pre-extension state.

Practically, TDB Programme succeeded in making only a limited impact due to certain inherent problems such as subsistence level of living of

tribals, underdeveloped infrastructure and over all illiteracy etc. among them. It is also noted that land alienation problem and shifting cultivation as practised by the tribals hampered development of these blocks.

Other problems are dearth of trained personnel to work among these people and frequent transfer of block level officials. The cooperative have often been started by Block Officials without much education on preparation of the tribal people. It is also known that 60 to 70% of the funds are spending on 'brick and mortar' schemes.

The most important limitations of the Tribal Development Blocks are that the whole programme has been carried without the participation of the tribal people. The tribal had practically no say in the programmes formulated for their own development nor was their cooperation obtained in the implementation of these programmes. The planners were fully aware of the need to involve the tribal people in the programmes formulated for their development, yet, as has happened in so many other spheres, the spirit and pious intentions of the planners could not be translated into practice. This is not unexpected in a framework where formulation aspects of planning have no connection whatsoever to the implementation of planning. The latter aspect is the whole sole responsibility of an unchanging bureaucracy that has failed to fulfil the role of a developmental agency.

According to me, the power structure in the tribal areas is such that it perpetuates exploitation of tribal people and independence from foreign rule in 1947 did not bring about any institutional changes in this framework.

In fact, the interests of the politicians, administrators and local power elite connive to perpetuate and strengthen the system. This ensures status, power and money to the politicians, power and continuity to the administrators and continuity of economic dominance to the local power elite.

According to my field experience at the various blocks of Uttar Dinajpur and Jalpaiguri districts, most of the tribal peoples have claimed this matter. In every matter, the local power elite gives something to the others in return for what it gets. Local politicians get commission or bribe for every scheme from the poor tribal people. And even from the daily labourers or from the homeless tribals they collect their commissioned money. In Uttar Dinajpur District all most all the tribals are living shatteringly. These very conditions widen the scope of exploitation of local political leader (specially – Gram Panchayat Members, Pradhan of Gram Panchayat and their associates).

There are certain structural deficiency the tribal development administration as well. Though there is a directorate of tribal welfare in all States, the Tribal Welfare Programmes are implemented by various departments such as agriculture, cooperation, etc. The usual practices are to transfer funds to these departments. The director of tribal welfare is not rested with enough powers to ensure adequate implementation of the programmes through a special and separate unit for tribal welfare in the Social Welfare Department.

Another problem of tribal administration is staff absenteeism. It is difficult to find willing workers in tribal areas and the staffs that are

posted in these areas tries to get him transferred from there as early as possible.

Since tribal development is linked with social services, a cut in the latter when imposed on account of shortage of funds effects tribal development programmes adversely. Thus, a reduction in expenditure on health, education and housing programmes also entails a cut in the tribal development programmes.

As pointed out by various Committees, the funds allotment for tribal development is too insufficient keeping in view the magnitude of the task. The reference of "The Shilu Ao Study Team" (1969) may be cited in this regard.

The tribal development efforts have not so far succeeded in making the tribals fully conscious of their rights on the one hand, and have failed in bringing dedicated, articulate and enlightened tribals in the forefront on the other.

Bureaucracy's apathy in understanding the problem of Tribal people and red-tapism resulting wastage of already meagre resources provided for tribal development.

With the enforcement of forest laws without much consideration to the human life in the forest areas, land restriction and alienation of their lands; their exploitation by the money lenders, landlords and other unscrupulous elements like liquor contractors have greatly disturbed their way of life.

Actually, if the sole objective is to improve a tribal's life, then must be done according to their taste and need. The planners always forget this truth. In fact, their need for earning is greater than their need for learning. All avenues of income should be opened up first in order to bring sunshine to their life.

To sum up, it must be admitted that the adjustment of the tribal mentality with other social groups do not materialise. Till now the tribal life and culture is unknown to the other Indians. A dearth of temperamental unity is the reason that they are standing apart in fear and mistrust. We have to apprehend that the tribal society is a part of the greater Indian society and that we are the descendants of an undivided Indian Legacy and history and that is our biggest identity.

Are the Tribals not able to utilise the Government Facilities?

Union and State Govts. Have initiated different welfare plans and programmes for the upliftment of the tribal's socio-economic condition. At each and every Five Years Plan special attention is given for their development. But, it is a sorrow that they neither utilize nor even try to utilize the scopes and facilities offered by Govt. This is solely due to their lack of self consciousness, apathy towards modernity and their staunch inclination to the aged long faiths, customs, prejudices and bigotries. Some relevant instances may be given:

In a village or Orissa, some deep tube wells were sunk to supply fresh and pure drinking water to the village tribal peoples. But, it was found that the tribals did not even tread the way towards the tube wells;

they rather went to the nearby river and took home stream water for drinking and other useful purposes. As a result, the tube well remained unused and were going to face a huge financial wastage. It is their ancient superstitious habits that prevent them from using a certain Govt. facility. Though not wide spread; this custom is found even today in some isolated cases Uttar Dinajpur and Jalpaiguri districts.

The tribals believe in the existence of a Room with no window. According to their belief and faith unseen evil forces like charms, devils, and spirits may enter into a house through its window. So, in this ultra-modern age of twenty first century a section of tribal people stills avoid scientific air-tightly room in the field survey some such rare cases have been traced at Suliapara of Itahar Block in Uttar Dinajpur and in Jalpaiguri. Govts. Earnest efforts for their upliftment are, in this way, going futile making a governmental monetary loss as well as a social one. The room are, at present being unused and misused as well.

If a black cat, by chance, enter a tribal village, all the people of the village remain shot down inside home for a certain period. They believe thus to be a witch in the form of a black cat coming to the village to kiss some one in the village. So, during the period, forgetting their work daily earning, recreation chat and everything they confine themselves in a closed door house. The matter then comes to them as of greater in par dance than any alternative idea of science, development or pleasure and pain. Everything, however great or important, passes by their house step unheeded.

A recent incident of Saraidighi of Itahar Block in Uttar Dinajpur drew my attention towards the tribals' apathy to undermine their culture and tradition. This appeared in the weekly newspaper "The Saraidighi Samachar", published from Itahar. An aged Adivasi, willing to fulfil his art of charms and incantations, take a little boy, Mongol Kisku (8) beside a pond. Another man was in his aid. The two were trying to tear apart the child's breast with forms of date tree to gobble up the boy's liver afresh. Luckily, the child's brother heard the formers painful cry and saved the boy from the so called *Tantrik*. Later, the two were handed over to the Police of Itahar Police Station. Here the main concern is that the tribals believe to upgrade their physical and mental status by such horrible superstitious means and not by utilising Govt's. scopes and facilities offered for them.

To conclude this point it can be said that apart from their superstitious mental set up the tribals cant utilise the Govt. facilities due to the concerned authorities corruption, lapping up of their funds; politicks of the local political elites with them as well. This is an outward hindrance for the tribals to utilize Govt. opportunities. But the most powerful and obstructive bums are engrained in their mind and heart which prevent their using Govt. opportunities for themselves.

Do the facilities offered by the Government reach to the Grass-root Level?

Both the Central and the State Govts. have adopted different welfare plans and programmes for the tribal people, living in utter penury, deprivation, illiteracy and above all, a lack of consciousness. These

initiatives, if however implemented properly among the grass-root levels, might bring about a radical change in their manner, living, custom and habit. But due to various known and unknown reasons, the facilities offered by the Govt. cannot reach and even can't touch in some cases to the grass-root levels of the tribal community. The well-noted elements behind the fact are as follows:

- (1) Lack of special attention is found to tribal and scheduled areas in spite of Constitutional provisions.
- (2) Inadequate allotments of funds in both general and special sectors to cover all aspects of development of the tribal areas.
- (3) The major programmes for tribal development are not significant enough for carrying to the tribal areas – all the services essential for their full development.
- (4) Inadequate administrative machinery to integrate all the sectoral programmes.
- (5) Lack of co-ordination and integration of inter and intradepartmental levels within the State.
- (6) Lack of effective personal policy of Government and adequate incentives to work in and for tribal areas, lack of specialised training in tribal culture as well as non-inculcation of the spirit of social service in them.
- (7) Governmental failure to adopt scientific planning and to ensure implementation based on research materials and findings.
- (8) Excessive politicization of the tribal issues and failure on the part of the tribal societies to produce dedicated and enlightened local leaders.

- (9) Benefits and facilities of the Government are not touching the severe needs of the tribal people of Uttar Dinajpur. Due to meagre percentage and scattered living, the local political elites and administration get advantage to exploit them. They usurp the poor and needy tribal from their own legitimate dues. Sometime they embezzle the whole schemes which have been supplied by the Government for the Scheduled Tribe.
- (10) We can't, however, impose the whole responsibility on Government about the enjoyment of right of people. A good Government obviously offers facilities but it is also the duty of the citizen to accept it, considering his/her own interest. But it is an exception to the Adivasi community. They always suffer from an unknown inferiority complex, breeding a lack of self consciousness. Due to this, they are less uninterested to communicate with the local Panchayat Office or the Govern Officials to establish their own rights.