

CONCLUSION

It has been observed that most of the tribal societies of Arunachal Pradesh were stratified even during the pre-Independence period. The notion of egalitarianism, not to speak of equalitarianism, which is sometimes used to characterize the pre-Independence state of tribal societies of the country in general and their counterparts in the north-east India in particular is largely vague and, hence, calls for a fresh look into this issue. We neither proposed nor undertook the issue at length. But an attempt was made to examine the available ethnographic data on the tribes of Arunachal and the widespread practise of slavery was noticed as one of the indicators of stratified social structure. The slavery, though polytypic, is essentially 'the fact that one man is the property or possession of another', as was put forward by Nieboer in his *Slavery as an Industrial System*. Apart from this, a distinct trend was also observed towards the conversion of cultivable land from communal to private ownership. The emergence of private property in land among some of the tribal societies further confirms their stratified status rather than anything else.

In the sphere of production and organisation of labour, the principle of reciprocity that has been epitomised by Karl Polanyi no doubt prevailed in many of these stratified tribal societies. The exact nature of such reciprocities prevailing among the Arunachal tribes is, however, yet to be studied at length. Unless a separate study is undertaken, it is difficult to conclude as to which of Sahlins' refinement of Polanyi's concept into three-fold categorisation, viz., (a) 'generalised reciprocity', (b) 'balanced reciprocity', and (c) 'negative reciprocity' is suited most or whether there exists a need of further modification for explaining the Arunachal scenario. The division of labour did not develop much in such societies beyond sex and family level. Of course, the observations by Sukla as well as Mishra about the Nishi artisans and the Nishi system of labour mobilization, viz., Doram Rey (both of which have been referred to in Chapter-II), may be interpreted as the embryonic forms of social division of labour as well as wage labour respectively. Because of the absence of money, the market as defined in terms of 'demand-supply-price mechanism' did not, in the true sense of the term, evolve. Different types of equivalencies had been used for exchange in both within as well as outside the territory. Thus, the catalactic triad of trade money and market did not emerge in them.

The internal dynamics of these tribal societies were so weak that even after more than a century of British annexation of Assam in 1826, no appreciable change of their social structures had been observed in the studies undertaken around the time of Independence. Due to this inconsequential nature of internal dynamics, external forces have played the dominant role in reshaping their future socio-economic structures since Independence.

Both the capitalist mode of production and system of governance which are often labelled as the 'forces of modernity' have subsequently been superimposed upon the traditional order. The pace of integration of the territory renamed as Arunachal Pradesh as sought through the introduction of these forces of modernity was rather slow during the 'frontier phase' of her history. With the abandonment of the revivalist-protectionist policy adopted during this phase following the Sino-Indian border conflict in 1962, the pace of integration has been greatly intensified. The introduction of parliamentary political structure and party line politics cutting across the ethnic boundaries, adoption of Hindi and English both as mediums of instruction, permission for the activities by the Hindu Missions, encouragement towards the growth of private property, adoption of the policy of commercialisation of agriculture and resource-based industrialisation etc., -- all these have brought about an unprecedented change within a very short span of time.

The fears that the interest of the local tribals might be jeopardized with the opening up of the territory which in turn may be a cause of resentment in this strategic border area have, perhaps, led to the continuation of the Inner Line on the one hand, and, adoption of legal ban on the transfer of tribal land to the non-tribals on the other. These have significantly lessened the unequal competition between the relatively less exposed tribals and the advanced non-tribals, and also contributed to the emergence of a group of tribal entrepreneurs.

The quick accumulation of capital in the hands of a section of the local tribals has taken place mainly through corruption rather than through exploitation of their people over time. Access to the seats of power has enabled them in the way of realisation of commissions against government orders, contract works, issuing of permits, etc, thereby consolidating their economic position. This lumpen bourgeoisie has accumulated a significant amount of money capital within a short period of time, and without much of pains. A part of this local capital is then invested in the industrial sector or businesses in collaboration with their regional as well as national counterparts. As this class has emerged through an unusual as well as unethical process of accumulation and not along with the process of reconstruction of the tribal society

and economy, more ruthless plundering by them of the tribal land and people may only be apprehended.

However, unlike the tribal entrepreneurial class, the local tribals are more marked by their absence in the industrial workforce in general and in the private sector in particular. This has resulted largely into a kind of ethnic division of the emerging classes where tribals are specialising in politics, white colour occupations as well as entrepreneurial activities in collaboration with outside elements while the non-tribals are increasingly participating in the labour force.

The ethnic overtone of the emerging industrial classes has made the bargaining on the part of the workers very difficult. Unless dealt with utmost care, any attempt towards mobilisation along class lines may result in ethnic conflicts in the future.

Moreover, the degree of internalization of the externally thrust forces of change differs from tribe to tribe. Factors like the population size of a tribe, the extent of area under its control, the stage of development it achieved historically, location of its habitation, social structure -- all are important determinants in internalizing the forces of 'modernity'. For example, the Adis, being the largest group, have been placed in a

better position in the number-based parliamentary political system followed by the Nishis. Because of their dominance in the power structure of the State, they enjoy greater facilities than those having marginal representation. Again, the Apa Tanis and the Khamptis, both of whom are numerically weak and do not figure in the political power structure have strengthened their economic status because they were relatively more developed historically than others.

Whatever industries have come up in the State are based on the forest resources in particular. The preponderance of forest-based industrial units may be taken as an indication of comparative advantage of the State in this line. It may be noted that the industrial growth of Arunachal for about last twenty five years or so has followed the NCAER projections. There is hardly any scope for further establishment of wood-based units in the State as the total capacity of the existing units has already exceeded the annual turn-over of timber permissible from a scientifically managed forest. In addition to this, the increasing awareness for maintaining bio-diversity both at home and abroad may lessen the scope to further extent. Already the newly emerged local entrepreneurs are entering into tea-plantation as an alternative to wood-based industry. But unlike manufacturing or processing units, the plantation sector requires a large and stable labour force

within the territory. In view of her sparse population and their reluctance to join in the private sector, the State then has to accommodate a huge labour force from outside required for the development of tea plantation. The present ethnic movement in Arunachal against the Chakmas and Deoris living in the eastern part of the State has a lesson for everyone. The rehabilitation of the Chakmas and Deoris was made by the Government of India to man the north-easternmost border of the country immediately after the Sino-Indian border conflict in 1962. The opening up of the territory for large scale tea plantation and consequent migration of labourers from outside may create a similar problem.

However, in view of the limited local demand, and segregated internal market, the industrial development of Arunachal will necessarily be based on her resources for some years to come. But the development of resource-based industries under the dominating outside capital and enterprise may cause a drain of resources without much tangible welfare of the local masses. The attempts made under the public sector have also failed to gain any substantial achievement. The industrial philosophy of the public sector seems to be largely responsible for its failure not only in Arunachal but elsewhere as well. In fact, the limitation lies at the subjective level, i.e., the way of looking into the relationship between industrialisation and economic development. The former may

be viewed either as a means or as a social movement/a process towards achieving the latter. While the first approach leads to the mere transplantation of some large projects into the heart of the backward areas in order to stimulate the process of development in an isolated fashion, the second recognises the necessity to develop the area symbiotically. It raises the quality of the people of the area, cultivates industrial culture among them and, after setting the stage ready, it decides the type of industries to be developed where maximum local participation is assured along with the structural need of the local economy. The failure of the public sector in synchronising the local manpower with resources indicates that the industrial development, of Arunachal belongs to the first category which may in the long run be a curse rather than a boon for the local people.

The post-independence pattern of development in general and the development of the secondary sector in particular in Arunachal may remind some of the model of "internal colonialism" proposed by Hechter in connection with his work on the Celtic fringe of Britain. Not only the 'mainstream' political structure has been superimposed in Arunachal, even her cultural milieu is being redefined exogenously due to the very weak internal social dynamics of the tribal societies. The different sectors of the Arunachal economy are developed largely in response to the need of the

national economy rather than the need of the State itself. The programmes of resource-based industrialisation in Arunachal has largely been synonymous to the supply of raw materials and semi-finished products to the national economy. But, while the colonial relation involves unilateral flow of resources from the colony, the phenomenon of large scale central investment in the State does not lend the Arunachal experience to be immediately cited in favour of Hechter's model. Rather, the Arunachal experience may possibly be approximated in a better way following the core-periphery model. While the developmental economists have largely used this model in order to explain the underdevelopment of the peripheries in relation to their respective core areas, the same may also serve the purpose of explaining the nature of peripheral development in relation to the cores. As the peripheries revolve round the cores, their economies are less likely to be independent as it has been found in case of Arunachal.

It may also be pointed out that Frank's thesis on the interlinkage between the process of development in certain regions and the underdevelopment in some others does not adequately explain the state of underdevelopment of Arunachal. As the territory was not integrated economically with the capitalist market network till Independence, her underdevelopment cannot be the resultant of either Myrdalian 'backwash effect' or Hirschmann's 'Polarisation effect'.

In fact, the historically belated integration had caused the backwardness to perpetuate even after Independence. In a certain sense, her placement into a peripheral position, *a la* Wallerstein, like any other late-comers, was inevitable. If viewed in this perspective, the spectre of internal colonialism vis-a-vis the relative backwardness of the hill states of north-east India requires further explanation. But, be what it may, no complete understanding of the Arunachal scenario is possible unless the geo-political factors are taken into consideration. In fact, the geo-politics of Central Asia has largely moulded the policy of both the colonial British India as well as Independent India towards Arunachal. The isolationist policy of the Raj and the resultant underdevelopment of the territory, and the policy shifts of the government of Independent India from revivalist-protectionist approach to that of progressive integration and development--both seem to be largely explained if her strategic location is duly taken into consideration. How far such a policy will serve the purposes of the larger Indian polity in the long run will depend on the compatibility of the newly emerging entrepreneurs and the working classes in Arunachal with their counterparts in rest of India, and the efforts made to ensure that the schism among them is not diverted along ethnic lines.