A. BASIC FEATURES OF SHIFTING CULTIVATION.

Shifting cultivation, as the term signifies is a cultivation of a patch of forest land used in rotation. It is practised in some form or other in many parts of the world. Bearing various nomenclature it is seen throughout the tropical and sub-tropical regions. The West African shifting cultivators call it farming and it is known as Sartage in the French and Belgian Ardennes. The natives of South-East Solomon Island call it Koholo. It is known as Chena among the Vedda of Cylone and 'Taunguya' among the Burmese Hill Tribes. Shifting cultivation is also referred to as 'slash and burn cultivation', 'swidden cultivation' and those who practise it are called swiddeners.

The term shifting cultivation connotes nomadic character of swiddeners. But some of these people live in permanent villages and carry on shifting cultivation in a cyclical order over the area around the settlement, whereas others live in temporary villages which are abandoned after a few cycles of cultivation while some others combine wet land and shifting cultivations. The most characteristic features which are common to this system are "firing" and "fallowing". Conklin (1961) precisely defines shifting cultivation as "any agricultural system in which fields are cleared by firing and
cropped discontinuously. However, a single definition of the term 'Shifting cultivation' does not appear to be wide enough to touch upon all its essential aspects. Sachchidananda (1989:4-5) while searching for a suitable definition of the term has enlisted nineteen factors as the most salient features of the practice. They are:

1. Practised chiefly by simpler cultures or small total populations but occasionally used by almost anyone to whom the cropping system appears expedient;
2. Human labour chiefly operative, using a few handtools primarily, but powertools are used occasionally;
3. Labour pattern frequently co-operative, but involving many variations in working group structure;
4. Clearing of fields primarily by felling, cutting, slashing and burning, and using fire to dispose of vegetative debris after drying (in special situations fire may not be used);
5. Frequent shifting of cropped fields, normally in some kind of sequence in land control, resting in special social groupings under customary law, but sometimes occurring under other legal institutions of land control;
6. Many different systems in crop planting in given fields but both multiple cropping and specialized cropping present;
7. Use of annual and short-term food crops predominant, but important use of long-term shrub and tree crops is common;
8. Use of crops primarily for subsistence but exchange patterns may reach total sale of whole product;
9. Use of permanent dooryard, village near homestead garden.
frequent among groups using permanent or near permanent settlement sites;
10. Fields per acre and per man-hour normally compare with those of permanent field agriculture within regions in which comparision is properly made but yields are often below those of mechanically-powered permanent-field agriculture;
11. Small annual cropped area per capita but comparable to that of the other non-powered sedentary cropping systems;
12. Use of vegetative cover as soil conditioner and source of plant nutrient for cropping cycle;
13. When system is efficiently operated, soil erosion not greater than soil erosion under other systems that are being efficiently operated;
14. Soil depletion not more serious than that under other systems of agriculture when operated efficiently;
15. Details of practice vary greatly depending upon the physical environmental and the cultural milieu;
16. Transiency of residence common but not universal, with many patterns of residence according to the evolutionary level or detailed system employed and preference of culture group;
17. Operative chiefly in the regions where more technologically advanced systems of agriculture have not become economically or culturally possible or in regions where the land has not yet been appropriated by people with greater political or cultural power;
18. Destructive or natural resources only when operated inefficiently and not more inherently destructive than other systems of agriculture when these are operated inefficiently;
A residual system of agriculture largely replaced by other systems except where retention or practice is expedient."

In India shifting cultivation is being carried out over large areas by a number of ethnic groups in various regions. Sachchidananda (p.33-35) records names of various communities as different states practising it as in 1960 (Table-I:1). In North-Eastern India the term Jhum is frequently used for shifting cultivation. It is known as Bogma among the Garos, Lyngkhalum or Shyrtiamong the Khasis in Meghalaya, Rit among the Mikirs of Assam, Tekonqlu among the AO Nagas of Manipur, Adiabik among the Adis of Lushai Hills. Hookuismong among the Reangs of Tripura, Lānkāpādsenad by the Koyas, Podu by the Khonds, Livang by the Bondo, Bagad by the Saora of Southern Orissa, Koman and Dāhi among the Bhuinyas, Biringā among the Juangs of Northern Orissa. Terms like Dāhi in Sambalpur and Toilla in Dhenkanal are used for comparatively plain land under shifting cultivation.

Exact data on the size of the population involved and area affected by shifting cultivation in India at present is not available. Yet from the data given in Table-I:2 (reproduced from Sachchidananda 1989:21-22) it is seen that as many as 109 communities with a population of 26.40 million carried on shifting cultivation affecting 1.36 million acres of land as per an estimate of 1956.

A review of the basic features of the practice shows a lot of variation, starting from ownership of land to swidden economy and operation. Most significant variations are in
(a) type of land and its ownership pattern, (b) distribution of swiddens, (c) shifting of residence, (d) Jhum cycle, (e) intensity of labour, (f) supplementary sources of subsistence derived, (g) selection of the plot and (h) methods of shifting cultivation such as, clearing and burning, sowing and hoeing or ploughing use of tools, crops grown, weeding, watching, harvesting and storage.

Hill tops and slopes and in some cases foot-hills covered with vegetation are brought under shifting cultivation. Swiddens are owned both individually, communally or by households or by the Chief. Such ownership rights are generally hereditary. Among many communities of the hills of North-east India and Orissa State, land is owned collectively by the village community and have traditionally fixed permanent boundaries. Individual ownership of land is usually confined to housestead and settled farm land. Each village has well demarcated traditional boundaries. Among some communities, the headman of the village council selects the swiddens and distributes it among each individual family/household according to capacity and necessity. Till the consecutive cultivation period continues, the swidden belongs to the cultivator, which may be called operational ownership, but reverts back to the corporate village ownership till they return back to the same area after the fallow period. An individual household may or may not return to the same patch. Among some other communities, the village elders under the leadership of the village headman hold discussions and inspect the areas before final selection of the
forested area. Sometimes the village priest studies omens to indicate the direction in which the area to be brought under swidden cultivation in the current year is located. Among some communities, like the Lanjia Saora of Orissa, swiddens are owned by the lineage groups.

"In Sema and Kanyak regions of Nagaland, the land ownership right is vested in the village Chief and it passes by inheritance on the basis of blood relationship" (Sachchidananda: 14). Among the Angami of Manipur, the Padam and Gallong and Abor of Arunachal Pradesh individual ownership of swiddens is prevalent with or without overall control of the village. Some of them have right to dispose it at will.

Disputes over land under shifting cultivation occur among some communities like the Tangkhul Naga of Manipur. Thus land in many regions is communally owned and distribution among the households is mainly democratic. When privately owned, land alienation through sale or mortgage occurs. Where there is sufficient land and forest growth is still luxuriant, communal ownership is common and dispute over land does not occur.

Shifting of residence consequent to the change of the place of cultivation is no more a common practice among many communities practicing shifting cultivation. There are a few communities which frequently shift their residence because of various factors including the change of the area under shifting cultivation. In this respect the Mikirs and the Kuki group of tribes in Assam and Manipur respectively, the Marias of Abujhmar hills of Madhya Pradesh may be cited. In the past,
among several other shifting cultivation communities shifting of residence was common, namely the Jhumia of Tripura, the Pauri Bhuiyan and the Juang of Orissa. Although shifting of residence is no more common, some of the communities such as the Tangas of Arunachal Pradesh establish field-homes where almost all the family members stay during agricultural activities.

The Jhum cycle consists of consecutive cultivation period and the subsequent fallowing period. The Jhum cycle differ from tribe to tribe. The fallowing period is determined by the density of population of a particular area, availability of suitable patches and the time taken for recoupation of its fertility through natural process. A review of the Jhum cycle in India has shown that consecutive period of cultivation is two years among a number of communities and only one year among some others. Only among a few communities, such as the Adi, the Pauri Bhuyan, the Koya, and the Juang of Orissa, patches are generally cultivated for three consecutive years. The cultivation period determines the fallowing period. Less the consecutive period of cultivation, the shorter is the fallowing period. "The review of swidden cultivation prevailing among the tribes of India brings to light the fact that over the past few decades the Jhuming cycle has been abridged from a longer margin to a shorter one" (Sachchidananda:44).

Human labour and land are very important factors of production through shifting cultivation. In addition to adequacy of land, availability of more working hands at the disposal of the cultivators can produce more crop. Among the shifting
cultivators, it is observed that labour is not purchased as is the normal practice among the advanced cultivators. The family with its able-bodied members is the work unit. In some tribal communities, who carry on shifting cultivation the practice of polygyny and the system of marriage by service, are prevalent as these bring additional working hands into the family. In some communities, like the Bondo and the Lanjia Saora in Orissa the practice of marrying a girl in the age-group of 15 to 20 years of age for a boy of 10 to 15 years has been adopted to get an extra working hand. In addition to these, among several communities shifting cultivation is carried on through co-operative labour of various forms and some times through collective labour on payment of nominal wages in the shape of food and drink or foodgrains at the time of harvest. Widows and widowers are helped in their field against treatment to a simple meal.

Division of labour based on gender is also prevalent among the shifting cultivators. Men play the leading role in more strenuous jobs like cutting, gathering and firing operation, in ploughing, sowing and watching the field and women assist them in some of these operations in addition to shouldering the main responsibility of labourious debushing, weeding and harvesting, etc.

Estimates given by various authorities have shown that the labour requirements for shifting cultivation is comparatively more. According to Saikia quoted in (Singh et al:231)
labour requirements for one acre of land comes to 63 man-days among the Mikir:

a) Felling trees, cutting over growth and clearing jungle .. 27 man days
b) Tillage and sowing .. 12 man days
c) Weeding .. 9 man days
d) Harvesting .. 15 man days

63 man days

The shifting cultivators in general are found adopting several supplementary sources of subsistence allied to it. They carry on collection of edible roots, shoots, leaves, flowers, fruits and mushrooms and several varieties of minor forest produce such as gum, resin, honey, etc. In addition to this they carry on hunting and fishing. Building materials like timber, bamboo, fibres and thatching grass are also obtained from the forest.

In the selection of swiddens various combinations of factors are taken into consideration by different communities. The AO Naga select these patches which were left fallow for twenty years or more. Such patches should be facing east and receiving more sun. The land should be comparatively more level with less scope for soil erosion. The Lushai and the Jhumias of Tripura prefer a bamboo forest. The extent of vegetation is considered as an indication of the fertility of land by the Maler of Rajmahal Hills. The Khallu select patches close to their settlements but not adjacent to the burial ground or sacred groves. The Chero and the Lushai select plots by lottery. The village headman among the Maria of Abujhmar hills selects the plots for the cultivators. In the Garo Hills
a number of legal factors are taken into consideration in the selection of the patches. In Orissa the village headman among the Pauri Bhuiyan and the Juang in consultation with the village priest and elders, selects the area.

After selecting the forest area, the hazardous operation of tree felling and clearing undergrowth with the help of axe and dao is undertaken. This phase of work begins during December and January in some areas and from February or March in some other areas as among the Pauri Bhuiyan and the Juang of Orissa. Generally all the trees in the patch are not cut. Fruit trees like mango, jackfruit, kendu, Mohua and the like are left uncut. In some places, such as Garo Hills the trees are cut 2 to 3 feet above the ground while in some other places these are cut from the root. In certain other places the branches of big trees are topped off. Several trees are also left standing as the boundary pillars between family plots. The trees which are left uncut or trimmed up are used as stalks for climber crops such as beans, etc. In this operation of making forest clearings almost all able-bodied persons of the household participate. The forest clearing operation continues for a month or so. Although no ritual is generally observed before felling the trees, some communities initiate the operation consequent to specific rites. The patches to be used for second consecutive year, the felling is neither arduous nor so prolonged. Only sproutings of stumps and the regrowth of grass and brushwood are cut and gathered around the stumps.

After felling they wait for about a month to allow
the felled material to dry. Among some communities, they go to the patches to gather the felled material around the big standing trees and cover the hills. During the period between May and June the dried material are set to fire. Within a week or so, burning is completed. Many communities have practical knowledge of the local climate and can speculate when heavy showers occur. Basing on this knowledge they do the firing. Heavy showers normally spread over the whole patch. After the firing if any thing is left unburnt they again gather and go for a second firing.

The general method adopted for sowing rice, minor millets, oil seeds, pulses, etc. is by broadcasting while for vegetables and laguminus crops are put in dibbled holes. In many regions different varieties of seeds are mixed together and sown while in some other only one variety is sown in specified parts while some other seeds are put in dibbled holes. The varieties of seeds mixed together and sown vary from three to ten. In Garo hills, paddy, minor millets and oil seeds are sown together. Among the Juangs and the Pauri Bhuiyan paddy and arhar(minor millet) are sown together in the swiddens under first year cultivation with bajra and Jowar on the boarder. In the second and third consecutive years blackgram and niger are sown respectively. After sowing, the seeds are covered with soil by driving bullock, driven ploughs or by hoeing. Sowing and ploughing or hoeing are completed before the onset of monsoon.
Crops grown in swiddens consist cereals including paddy and varieties of minor millets, oil seeds, pulses, turmeric, ginger, vegetables (vide Table-I:2). Cropping pattern in the swidden cultivation varies with the year in which the patch is brought under cultivation. Rice is the main crop among the Angami, while it is grown by the Juang and the Pauri Bhujyan in newly cleared plots. Grams and oil seeds are mainly grown in the subsequent years by many communities. Root crops like ginger and turmeric are grown by the Lanjia Saora and Kutia Kondh in Orissa. In addition to this, cotton is grown by the Maga, Garo, Kuki, Reangs and Tripuri. Vegetables, like the brinjal, beans, tomato and creeper vegetables like the pumpkin and gourd are common crops among many communities. Onion, chilly and tobacco are also grown by some communities.

Although tree felling and bush clearing are arduous and hard work, weeding and debushing is more strenous and labour consuming. After the first showers, when fresh shoots sprout from the stumps and several varieties of grass also grow. Weeding and debushing then become very essential. The cultivators cannot expect to harvest anything from the swiddens without weeding at the right time. The job is mainly attended to by the female. In the fresh swiddens, more than one weeding is essential, and it varies between two and four from place to place.

Crops grown in swiddens are subject to damage by pests and diseases on the one hand and destruction by birds, rats and wild animals during the day as well as the night. In many areas boars, percupines, rabbits, monkeys and occasionally
wild elephants destroy crops. In order to protect the crops from such hazards, the swiddeners have to watch the fields day and night. For this purpose, watch-houses are raised in the swidden. In some areas these watch-houses are built on big trees or high platforms so as to protect the watcher from wild animals. In many places they tend a fire near the watch-house, beat drums, make loud noise and use different varieties of weapons to scare away and if required to kill wild animals and birds. Watching crops is a risky job and in some places, the swiddeners do this in groups. To protect the crops from insects, pests and locusts they resort to appease the spirits through prayers and rituals.

Harvesting of early crops go on side by side with weeding. In swiddens, mixed farming is generally done and these ripen one after another and are harvested one after another. Women play a dominant role in harvesting. After harvesting threshing and cleaning are done in the field specially cleaned for the purpose. During harvesting and watching, adult members of the households stay on in the watch-houses for several days (where they cook their food and sleep).
B. COMMUNITIES IN ORISSA CARRYING ON SHIFTING CULTIVATION.

Orissa is one of the major States of India where shifting cultivation is an age-old practice extensively carried on in several tribal areas. According to the Universal Benchmark Survey conducted by the Tribal and Harijan Research-cum-Training Institute in the Tribal Sub-Plan areas in the year 1978 covering 118 development Blocks, 19,000 villages containing 12,45,632 households spread over nine districts the percentage of tribal households carrying on shifting cultivation was 21.96. Among the Scheduled Castes 8.42 percent were reported doing shifting cultivation. Even other castes and communities are also found carrying on this type of cultivation, their percentage being 5.51. Thus, altogether 15.50 per cent of the total households were found to be carrying on shifting cultivation. Outside the Tribal Sub-Plan area, there are some other types of cultivation which are more or less akin to the shifting cultivation. These are known as Tāungyā, Dāhia, Thailā and Gudā are come across in Rairakhol and Bamra areas in old Sambalpur district, Nawapada area in old Kalahandi district and Dhenkanal and Kamakhyanagar area in Dhenkanal district.

AREA:

The area under shifting cultivation in Orissa has been estimated from time to time.

Dr. H.F. Mooney, a Conservator of Forests in 1951 had estimated that the total area under swidden cultivation in Orissa was 12,770 Sq. miles or 1/5th of the total land
surface of the State with 935,700 tribal people dependent on this mode of cultivation (Mooney: 1951). Orissa Forest Enquiry Committee, 1959, puts the swidden-affected area as nearly 12,000 sq.miles and the tribal people practising swidden cultivation, were not below 10 lakhs in 1948. This exercise seems to have confirmed Dr. Mooney's estimates.

Based on the vegetation map of India, the area under swidden cultivation in Orissa is 10,538.031 Sq.miles or 2,729,339.528 hectares (Institute de Francis, Pondicherry) (Table - I: 3). However, vegetation maps do not normally confirm the ground reality. For the same vegetation often grows on permanent upland fields, and not necessarily on swiddens (cf. Legris and Meher-Hamji, 1974 as reported by N. Patnaik et al).

According to the report on Erosion Assessment of Orissa (From Erts-I, Satellite Imagery, 1975) prepared by State Soil Conservation Directorate, Orissa, the area which is subjected to very severe erosion as a result of shifting cultivation it is estimated at 3,269,120 hectares or 12,770 Sq.miles. The total area under shifting cultivation in Orissa, estimated by different agencies, though does not help in arriving at the correct information, it gives an indication that there has been shrinkage of the area under shifting cultivation in Orissa.

TRIBES:

Various tribal communities in Orissa still carry on shifting cultivation in some form or the other. The search for suitable strategies for tribal development identification
of primitive tribes had been done on more than one occasion. In this sort of exercise the practice of shifting cultivation has been taken as one of the criteria for determining their primitive status. As early as 1963, the Government of Orissa identified about 4.5 lakhs tribal people belonging to as many as 12 tribal communities in the State as primitive tribes (Rout 1964:17). On the eve of Fifth Plan, when new strategy for tribal development was adopted in the whole country, again primitive tribes were also identified taking shifting cultivation as one of the criteria. A review of literatures and Government reports have revealed that shifting cultivation is still carried on by a number of tribal communities in Orissa(Table-I:4). The common term used for such practice is 'Podu' which is a Telgu version by accent of the term 'Podu' meaning burning. But tribal groups who practise it have their native terms for it. Excluding the Koya and the Didayi, only some of the sections of other main tribes are found carrying on this cultivation. Moreover, all households of these tribes/sections do not carry on. In the absence of authentic data on tribe-wise population practising shifting cultivation at present, it is worthwhile to reproduce the break-up as shown in Table-I:5. It reveals that 63.31 per cent of the population of eight main tribes are still practising it (as per the census 1971). The special features of these tribes/tribal sections, in a nutshell are presented here.

THE BONDO:

The Bondo also known as Bonda Poroja live on the hills to the north-west of the river Machkund in Malkangiri
area of old Koraput district. The tribe, with a population a little over five thousand (5,895) consists of two groups - the Hill dwellers their traditional distinctive socio-cultural features and the plain dwellers (along the foot-hills) who are in close contact with other communities. There are some other Bondo settlements close to Machkund, largely influenced by the Gadaba tribe. The Bondo stand in sharp contrast to the other neighbouring tribal communities of the State marked by their geographical isolation, stubborn character and independent spirit, homicidal tendency and scanty dress of their women.

The Bondo are at the pre-agricultural level of technology. Their primary source of living is shifting cultivation called Livang or Kundāchās in their own language. About a century ago, game was plentiful in the Bonda hills. Wild animals such as, bison, pig, sambar, spotted deer, bear and tiger roamed about in abundance. But to-day the forest as well as its denizens have almost disappeared. Gathering of roots and tubers has considerably diminished, and fishing is greatly restricted. Trapping, snaring and other modes of catching birds and small animals are occasional. Thus, they carry on shifting cultivation on hills inherited as parental property generation after generation. The owner has customary rights over his hill patch without legal sanction to sell or mortgage.

THE DIDAYI:

The Didayi in Orissa constitute numerically a small tribe with a population of 1,978 in 1981 Census. They live in

1. Note-I
the areas close to the habitation of the Bondo in Khaiput and Kudumulguma Blocks of Malkangiri area in old Koraput district. The early writers described them as a 'wild tribe' (Elwin 1950) and 'the stratum of primitive semi-nomadic shifting cultivators' (Haimendorf:1945). The progenitors of the Didayi and the Bondo have been described as brothers in their legendry stories.

Most characteristic feature of the Didayi: social organization is the existence of the moiety system dividing the community into two exogamous segments, each containing different totemistic clans called Gtá. Each clan is further subdivided into several lineage groups called Biriá.

The Didayi carry on shifting as well as settled cultivation supplemented with forest collection. They obtain permission from the Forest Department to carry on shifting cultivation on hill slopes adjacent to their village. Millets, niger and brinjal are cultivated in the third year, and arhar and blackgram in the first year and the second year. Bullock driven ploughs and hand hoes are used in tillage of the swiddens. The patch is used for three consecutive years and left fallow for 10 to 12 years.

THE GADABA:

The Gadaba are one of the most colourful tribes of Orissa. The total population of Gadaba in the State was 56,913 according to the 1981 Census with a growth rate of 6.4 per cent. The Gadaba speak Gutab which linguistically belongs to the Mundari group.
The tribe is mainly concentrated in Lamataput, Jeypore, Nandapur, Semiliguda, Sunabeda and Pottangi areas of old Koraput district. It is said that their original home was somewhere along the banks of river Godabari from which they have migrated to their present habitat.

The Gadaba are divided into a number of sections such as Bodo Gadaba, Sano Gadaba, Ollar Gadaba, Parenga Gadaba, Kapu Gadaba, etc. The Ollar Gadaba of Semiliguda area practise shifting cultivation along with wet cultivation. Those who live in comparatively plains area practise both types of cultivation whereas those who live in the hills depend solely on shifting cultivation. Their chief agricultural produce include paddy, ragi, suän, maize and gram. Ragi is their staple food. Forest gathering is their supplementary source of income. Mango and its kernel, edible roots, green leaves and fruits collected from the forest provide them some food. They also work as agricultural labourers.

Swiddens are not owned privately. It belongs to the village. But when cultivation is done in a patch it belongs to that household as long it cultivates.

THE BHUNJIA:

The Bhunjia with a population of 9,075 in 1981 Census are found only in and around the Sunabeda plateau of Komna Block in old Kalahandi district. Linguistically they belong to Dravidian group. The tribe has two sub-divisions, viz: Chinda Bhunjia and Chuktia Bhunjia. The latter living in forest clad hills of the
Sunabeda plateau are more primitive. The Chuktia Bhunjia still carry on shifting cultivation which is called Bewar in their language. They also undertake settled cultivation and forest collection as supplementary sources of livelihood. The area has been declared as a Wild life Sanctuary by the State Government. The Bhujias consequently have to carry on the shifting cultivation within the area demarcated by the Government.

THE JUANG:

The main distribution of the Juang with a population of 30,876 is the Juangpirh of Keonjhar district and Dhenkanal district. The Juang of Juangpirh and Pallahara are more primitive than those of Sadar Sub-division of Dhenkanal district. The Juang believe that they had originated at a place called Gonasika in Keonjhar district. The most conspicuous place in Juang villages of Keonjhar district is the imposing bachelors' dormitory called Majang. It is located in the centre of the village and close to it is the abode of the village Goddess. In front of the Majang, an open space called 'Darbar' is used for dancing. The unmarried youth of the village sleep in the Majang at night and the elders assemble at this place to discuss matters concerning the village. A fire kept burning continuously in the Majang is considered sacred and used by the village priest for firing the clearings. The Juangs in the past were in the habit of shifting their village site from time to time. Now-a-days this is rare.

The primary source of livelihood of the Keonjhar Juang is shifting cultivation locally known as Toilā Chās. A patch of clearing is normally cultivated for three years and
reclaimed again after about 6-10 years. The main agricultural implement is a hand-hoe with which the soil is worked for raising crops in the swiddens. The swiddens are owned by the village community and individual household has no right to dispose it off even during the period under cultivation.

The main crops which are grown by the Juang are rice, millets, black gram, arhar, mustard and niger.

Traditionally the Juang do not have private ownership right over land under shifting cultivation. The area available in a village belongs to the village community and is divided by mutual consent in the village at the village Majāng. If in one year a man gets a poor site, he is given a better one next time. If one year his crops fail or are damaged by wild animals he is given the best place the following year. The clearings are distributed among households. If there is no adult male member in a family to keep watch over the crops, it is given a place in the middle where the field is better protected. If there are several male members in a family available for guarding the crops that family takes a more exposed clearing. Each takes as much as he can manage; the main capital invested in shifting cultivation is the strength of a man's hands. In addition to this they carry on low land cultivation and forest collection to supplement their income.

THE KONDH:

The Kondh, also called Kond, Kandha and Khond are one of the very well known tribes of Orissa, famous for their erstwhile meria or practice of human sacrifice. They are most numerous having a population of 9,89,342 according to the 1981 Census. Though they are scattered throughout the State their main
concentration is in the districts of Koraput, Ganjam and Phulbani.

The Kondh are divided into several sub-sections such as, the Kutia Kondh, the Dongria Kondh, the Penga Kondh, the Jharia Kondh and the Desiya Kondh. These divisions largely correspond to their socio-economic conditions. The most primitive sections of the Kondh tribe are the Kutia of Rayagada Sub-division of old Koraput district and Baliguda sub-division of Phulbani district and the Dongria Kondh of Rayagada sub-division of old Koraput district.

The primitive sections of the Kondh community practise shifting cultivation as the primary source of their livelihood. The Dongria Kondh stand separate from all other sections for their skill in horticulture. These Kondhs occupy the Niyamgiri hills of Rayagada sub-division and have vast stretches of pineapple plantation in the hill-slopes. The pineapples are planted under the jackfruit trees so that the required shade is ensured. The Dongrias are also very much skilled in banana and turmeric cultivation. The hill slopes are owned by the founder clan of the village and have been divided among all clan members.

The Kutia Kondh living in different regions carry on shifting cultivation, known as Dongar Chas along with settled cultivation on up-land and low-land and collections of forest produce. The Dongar lands are communally owned by the village. Every year, the village elders sit in a meeting and decide upon the swiddens to be brought under cultivation. Thereafter they distribute patches among themselves. The patch when allotted
to a man becomes the private possession of the allotee enjoying rights to mortgage at the time of need. They grow arhar, niger, grams millets and creeper crops with the help of digging stick and hoe as the main implements.

THE KOYA:

The Koya is a Dravidian speaking tribe numbering 87,260 according to the 1981 census. They are found in the Malkangiri sub-division of old Koraput district. The concentration of the Koya is in the southern portion together with some pockets in the north upto Mathili, at a distance of 32 Kms. north of Malkangiri. The Koyas living north of Malkangiri upto Mathili and in south up to Manyamkonda are more primitive than those living in villages of Mallavaram and Mottu, the southern-most point of the sub-division.

Most of the Koya settlements lie in the midst of forests. When threatened by an epidemic or by wild animals, the Koya shift to new sites. Generally a site for settlement is selected near a virgin forest where shifting cultivation called Lankapadseenad could be practised. But when the forests become thin by repeated cutting and burning, the village is shifted to another place in the forest where the vegetational cover is thick enough for shifting cultivation. The village with its surrounding land and forest belong to the founder's clan.

The Koya maintain a large contingent of cattle. They also rear pigs and goats. Sometimes the number of cows and bullocks of a family exceeds a hundred. It is important to know
why the Koyas keep large herds of cattle. Formerly when they are practising shifting cultivation the cattle were used to trod over the swiddens to loosen the soil after which seeds were sown. Both cow and bullocks are used as drought animals. The bullocks are sold for cash and also bartered for fishing nets and bison-horns, the latter used as head dress. Possession of a large herd of cattle also gives one a higher social status. Bride price is paid in cattle and no man can marry without paying bride price in the form of cattle. If a Koya does not possess any cattle he approaches one of his relatives having cattle. On such occasion the needy has to carry some rice-beer as a token of humility. Such cattle are expected to be returned when the beneficiary sees better times.

**THE PAROJA;**

The Paroja are distributed in Kalahandi, Sundargarh and old Koraput districts, the main concentration being in the latter. The population was 2,67,184 according to the 1981 Census. It has several sections, viz: Jhodia, Chelia and Parenga. Among them, the Jhodia found in Lakshmipur and Dasmantapur areas of old Koraput district practise shifting cultivation as primary source of their livelihood. They supplement their income by food gathering in the nearby forests. As the forest area is considerably denuded and the yield from the shifting cultivation has reduced they find it difficult to depend entirely on this primitive agriculture. Some of them have taken to wage-earning as agricultural labour in nearby villages and under local contractors.
The swiddens are owned by the village community and not by households. But when a patch is allotted to any person it belongs to him as long as he cultivates it, and when he stops cultivating it he loses his operational ownership right.

**THE SAORA:**

The Saora are not only numerically important but also historically a significant tribe. According to the 1981 Census the Saora population was 3,10,060.

There are several sub-divisions of the Saora community based on social status and economic pursuits. Some of the important sub-divisions are: 1) Jati or Kampu Saora (Cultivation), 2) Kindal Saora (Basket makers), 3) Kumbi Saora (Pot makers), 4) Luara Saora, (iron-workers), 5) Arai Saora (Weavers) and 6) Lanjia Saora (Primitive Saoras). The Saoras have no exogamous totemic clans, no phatries, and no moities. The main exogamous unit is the extended family descended from a common male ancestor. This unit is called **Birinda**, based on patrilineage.

The main concentration of the Lanjia Saora is in the hilly regions of old Koraput and Ganjam districts. In fact, the region which they inhabit is clad with forests and lofty hills with darting hill streams and gaping valleys. The scenery is very picturesque, but by the constant use of the hill slopes for shifting cultivation, the region wears a look of deforestation and denudation.

The Lanjia Saora practise three kinds of cultivation: a) in the kitchen garden near their house, b) on their terrace fields and c) in the swiddens on the hill slopes and tops. This
is supplemented by forest collection. The swiddens are owned individually and paternally inherited. The owner has the right to sell, mortgage or exchange, through within the community and preferably among the uterine brothers. Every Saora village has a well defined boundary and the swiddens within it have been distributed among all Birindas since long. Again the swiddens demarcated to a Birinda group are further distributed among all members. Thus individual ownership of the plots of land on the hill-slope is recognized on a hereditary basis.

The crops grown in shifting cultivation are millets, arhar, turmeric and citrus fruits. With the most rudimentary implements such as a hoe and a small axe, they are able to raise crops. Their success in agriculture depends upon their extensive knowledge of the crops suitable for cultivation on the hill-slopes, upon the geographic conditions of the locality and last but not the least, upon hard work organized with a team spirit.

C. AN ETHNOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF PAURI BHUYAN.

The Pauri Bhuyan, living in the adjoining areas of the Keonjhar, Sundargarh, Sambalpur and Dhenkanal districts in Orissa can be regarded as the true representative of the Bhuyan tribe. The Bhuyan have been described by several writers as one of the most widespread tribes of the country, found in Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Assam and Uttar Pradesh. The history of the Bhuyan has been narrated by many scholars, notably Buchanan(1810-1811), Mc Pherson(1898-1907), Dalton(1882), Risley(1891), Majumdar(1932) and Roy(1935). The name of the tribe meaning "first settlers" or "reclaimers" or "owners of the land" or "autochthones" was widely used by several communities as a
prestigious designation. The early writers have included the Bhuyan either in the Mundari or Dravidian group. Stirling (1813), Russel (1916), Hutton (1931) and Risley (1891) are of the opinion that the Bhuyan belong to the Mundari group but not to Dravidian group as Dalton (1882) thought. Being confused by such resemblance of names, some of the early ethnographers, rather surmised affinities and connection of the Bhuyan proper with a number of other communities, like the Bare Bhuiyas of West Bengal and Assam, Bhuiyan Brahmans of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and the Bathudi, the Sounti and the Bhumia and Rajwar of Orissa. But the community bearing the name "Bhuyan" is no more found in the list of Scheduled Tribes in any other States/Union Territories except Orissa. The Bhuyan found in Orissa, bearing serial number six of the list of the Scheduled Tribes, notified by the President of India for the State of Orissa is a distinctive community having no linkage with most of these communities.

**POPULATION:**

The total population of the Bhuyan which included some other communities like the Bhumia and Bhuihars was estimated to be 703,088 in the whole country during 1931 Census (Roy: 1935). The Bhuyan population in Orissa and Bihar taken together (both then constituting a single State) was 625,824 which constitute 89.00 per cent of the total Bhuyan population in the country. Population in Orissa, as a whole, has been increasing constantly from 1,56,072 in 1961 to 188,212 in 1971 and then to 2,07,783 in 1981 registering a growth of 32.45 per cent in 20 years. The district wise distribution of the Bhuyan population
in Orissa (Table-I:6) shows that they are found in all districts with larger concentration in Sundargarh.

**LITERACY AND EDUCATION:**

1981 Census records literacy among the total Bhuyan population at 22.50 per cent. Among the males and the females it was 36.72 per cent and 8.52 per cent respectively. The percentage of literacy increased from 7.73 in 1961 to 14.88 in 1971 and then to 22.50 in 1981. There were 433 Matriculates and 15 Graduates in the community according to the census of 1981. As Pauri Bhuyan are not separately enumerated in census, their population and percentage of literacy for them are not available. However, various studies on the Pauri Bhuyan has revealed that their percentage of literacy may not go beyond 10 per cent at present.

**NOMENCLATURE AND ORIGIN:**

The name Bhuyan and its some other variants such as Bhumia, Bhuihar Bhuiyar, etc. are mostly derived from the Sanskrit word Bhumi meaning 'land' and therefore the Bhuyan hold the view that they were born out of the mother earth and become 'Bhumiputra' (sons of the soil). Regarding the origin of the tribe several mythical stories current among them have been reported by Roy (1935:262-267), Elwin (1948 Reprint:153-154) and Patnaik and others (1980:3-5) reproduced in Appendix I,II and III. These legends highlight the connection of the Pauri Bhuyan with the land as the 'sons of the soil' or 'owner of the land' and their association with the 'Juang' who believe Gonasika (a place close to the Bhuyan country in Keonjhar and the source of the river
Baitarani) as the place of origin of the Bhuyan and their influence over the native ruling chiefs of the ex-feudatory States like Keonjhar, Bonai and Bamra (Dalton: 1882).

MOTHER-TONGUE:

The Pauri Bhuyan speak Oriya with local assent as their mother-tongue showing racial and cultural affinities with Kolarian stock. Other sections such as the Khandiat Bhuiya, the Rajkuli Bhuiya and the Rautali Bhuiya who live in plains and assimilated with the neighbouring Hindu castes disdain their affinities with the Pauri Bhuyan.

PHYSICAL FEATURES:

The Pauri Bhuiyans are found to be muscular in built and their height varies from short to medium. Their hair is black, plentiful on head but scanty on the body. Their heads are mostly dolicocephal and their noses are broad with low nasal bridge and lips are thick. Their skin colour is mostly light brown. They are mostly prognathous, the projecting cheeks and jaw bones giving a certain squareness to the face.

THE FORMER RULERS AND THE BHUIYAN:

In Keonjhar, a former feudatory State (present Keonjhar district) the Pauri Bhuyans were well-known for their association with the royal families and also rebellion against them. According to tradition the Bhuyan of Keonjhar stole away the boy, Jyoti Bhanja from the ruling family of the neighbouring Mayurbhanj State and installed him as their king. According to local tradition the crowning of a new king was to be performed after the king-designate had sat on the lap of the important
Bhuyan Sardar. This was the practice from the time they had stolen Jyoti Bhanj and immediately performed the crowning ceremony of their king by making him sit on the lap of the important Bhuyan Sardar as there was no throne or even an ordinary chair.

In 1868 there occurred the first Bhuyan rebellion (Melii) known as Ratna revolution, a Sardar who openly opposed the installation of Shri Dhanurjay Narayan Bhanj as the king. After the death of Gaddadhara Bhanja in 1861, the chief Rani, Bishnupriya who was barren, wanted to set aside the claim of Dhanurjaya Narayan Bhanj, the son of the younger Rani and supported the claim of Brundaban Bhanj the grandson of the ruler of Mayurbhanj State. When the claim of Dhanurjay Narayan Bhanj Deo was recognised by T.E.Ravenshaw, the then Superintendent of tributary Mahals and subsequently court of law also gave the same verdict, being instigated by Rani Bishnupriya the Bhuyans revolted under the leadership of Ratna. But the revolution was suppressed and the rebel leaders were severely punished. Again, there was Bhuyan rebellion in 1891 under the leadership of Dharanidhar Naik, a Bhuyan leader. This is locally known as Dharanj Golmal. The main cause of this revolution was the oppression of the people for bethi in the construction of an earthen dam for water supply to the town. However, the famous Oriya writer Fakir Mohan Senapati who was then Assistant Diwan of Keonjhar, played an important role in suppressing the rebellion. The Bhuyan rebels were liberally treated and the British Government found fault with the king and as a punishment to the
defaulting king withdrew all powers. But subsequently he was reinstated on the Ḡāḏi after the verdict of the court in his favour.

**SUB-DIVISIONS OF THE TRIBES**

The aboriginal Bhuyan tribe is also referred to as Bhuiyan, Bhuinya and Bhuyan by different writers. While dealing with the Hill Bhuyan of Orissa S.C. Roy (1935) observed "Here we may study them in various stages of cultural development, from almost primitive Pauri or Hill Bhuiyas of Keonjhar, Bonai, Pal Lahara States to the thoroughly Hinduised Bhuiya zamindar families such as the Garhatia family of Himgir and the Mahapatra family of Nagra in Gangapur State and some others, and the Paik Bhuiyas or Khandait Bhuiyas and Rajkuli and Paraja Bhuiyas who hold intermediate positions" (1935:1-2). Further he classified the Bhuyans into two broad disivision, i.e. the southern division, having Orissa as its centre and the northern division with Chota Nagapur as its centre.

The widespread Bhuyan tribe in the State appears to have been a dominant group exhaulting influence over the early rulers have several sections. Roy (1935:36) roughly classified the Bhuyans into five sections, viz: Des Bhuiya represented by the Pauri or Hill Bhuiya, (b) the quasi-military Khandait Bhuiya or Paik Bhuiya, (c) the mixed Rajkoli or Rajkuli Bhuiyas, (d) the Paraja Bhuiya or Rautali Bhuiya and (e) the landholding Ghatwar Bhuiya or Tikait Bhuiya or Rae Bhuiya. Among them the Pauri Bhuyans, also known as Desi, Paburi Bhuiyas (henceforth to be referred to as Pauri Bhuyans) found only in the adjoining
The hilly regions of Keonjhar, Sundargarh, Sambalpur and Dhenkanal districts constitute the most primitive section.

**HABITAT:**

Banspal, Joda and Telkoi Block in Keonjhar district, Koida, Bonai and Lahunipada Blocks in Sundargarh district, Barkote Block in Sambalpur district and Pal Lharà Block in Dhenkanal district constitute the habitat of the Pauri Bhuyan. It is contiguous area and roughly lies between $20^\circ$ and $22^\circ$ North latitude and $85^\circ$ and $86^\circ$ East Longitude, and forms the part of the southern extension of the central Hill belt of India. The wild ranges of lofty hills and dense forests form the watershed of the rivers Baitarani on the north and the Bramani on the south. The highest known peaks include Gandhamardan (1,002 meters), Mankadnacha (1,110 meters), and Malyagiri (1,188 meters). Though the mountain summits appear from the low land as sharp peaks with narrow ridges, but in reality there are extensive table lands on the summits containing loose stones fit for pasture and tillage. The gradient of hills is gentle and most land brought under shifting cultivation lie on slopes varying from $12^\circ$ to $20^\circ$. The hill slopes are concave in shape and the valley bottom flat. The jungles at the top of the hills are virgin while those of the slopes regenerated. In between the hill ranges there are valleys having rich alluvial soil suitable for cultivation. There are numerous hill streams which discharge water during rainy season in high speed.

Geologically the Pauri country is composed of Archean rocks containing granites and gneisses in an extensive scale. The area contains manganese and iron are deposits of upper
Dharwar series and is characterised by red soil. The vegetation of the region is of tropical, mostly deciduous type and the dominant species are Shorea Syzygium-Operenlatem Toon series, which represent trees like Sisu (Dalbergia sesco) Sal (Shorea robusta), Asan (Terminalia Tementosa) Bija (pterocropas marsupium), Kusum (Scheeichera tringa and Mohua (Basia Latifolia). Wild animals which are now commonly come across are tiger, bear, wild pig, 'sambar' (Rusa artiotelis), spotted deer (Curvus Axis), the mouse deer (Meminna India) and wild dog. Pea fowls and jungle fowls abound in these forests. The panther, the wild elephants and the bison are no more found in the area at present.

The Pauri Bhuyan country lies on a much higher elevation than the plains and is consequently cool and pleasant. The hills rise to an elevation of 2000 to 3,500 feet above sea level. The area receives heavy rainfall during season while the winter season goes almost dry. The annual rainfall is 157.5 cm. and the number of the rainy days in a year is 40.5. The mean annual temperature is 21.4°C to 26.6°C in 1991. In rainy season the climate is unhealthy and malarious.

Houses

Previously a Bhuyan village consisted of about a dozen to 40 households. But now there are several big villages with 100 to 150 households. The houses are not sited according to any systematic plan but are mostly jumbled up in a settlement. In some villages, houses are constructed on either side of irregular and uneven village paths while in some other villages houses are dispersed over a considerable area. Each household owns a courtyard to which face one or more living rooms and the
cowshed. Close to the houses lie the Bakādi lands (kitchen, garden) for growing maize, mustard and vegetables. In and around the village site and also in the forests and hills a huge number of jack-fruit and mango and other fruit-bearing and useful trees are found. These trees overhanging the huts give an idea about the existence of a village or hamlet from a distant place. The Mandaghar (bachelor's dormitory) which is a spacious and prominent house generally located at the central place of the village still exists in some villages. The open space in front of it, known as Darbar, is used as the meeting place of the village council and for the performance of dance and village rituals. Separate huts in which goddess Thakkurani and the seat of the village deities are located close to the Mandaghar. The house of the secular headman and the village priest are generally found in close proximity of the Mandaghar. Cremation grounds are generally located on the banks of the rivers and rivulets. Previously when the bachelor's dormitory was in full functional all unmarried boys slept in the Mandaghar and the unmarried girls in some vacant house or in the house of a widow. In a village where there are persons belonging to several agnatic groups, separate Mandaghars for each group are built. While founding a new settlement or constructing a house, magico-religious rites with the help of the village priest, are performed on the site.

The Bhuyan live in tiny houses which may be termed as hut. Except the Mandaghar and houses of some of the joint families, a traditional hut has normally two-sloped low roof; thatched with straw of grass available in the forest. The
ground plan is rectangular measuring 8' to 12' in breadth and 16' to 24' in length. The walls which are mostly made up of mud or wood planted upright and plastered with mud and cowdung from inside, are about 6' to 10' in height. A house is divided into three parts according to the purposes these serve. The inner part is provided with a wooden platform on which straw bundles containing grains and other containers of useful articles and possessions are stored. In the middle of the room, close to the platform is located the hearth by the side of which the inmates sleep. Water pots are kept in one corner and a portion close to the platform and the hearth is earmarked for cooking pot. The chicken are allowed to take shelter in one corner of the house. Some goats may be tied under the platform, or a separate shed is constructed for them. The ancestral spirits are believed to take their shelter in one corner of the platform. The cowshed is constructed close to the living house. The walls of the cowshed are generally made of wood.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION:

The Pauri Bhuiyans are patrilineal and their social organization is characterised by extended lineages, minor lineages, nuclear family and territorial units.

S.C. Roy (1935:28) has given names of different sections of the Bhuyan tribe. But presently they may be divided into two broad classes, viz, the Hill Bhuyan, those who live in the adjoining hilly areas of Keonjhar, Sundargarh, Sambalpur and Dhenkanal districts commonly known as Pauri Bhuyan and the
low-country Bhuyan, generally referred to as Plain Bhuiyan or simply Bhuyan. The Pauri Bhuyan is the term used for the more primitive section of the Bhuyan, now still considered as the genuine representatives of the tribe. Presently these two broad groups exhibit differences in their social status, occupations, food habits, nativity, customs and manners and have become endogamous groups. The plain Bhuyan who now live in the midst of various castes and tribal communities in comparatively plain areas are an acculturated group, already assimilated in the hierarchical caste system of the Hindu society. Among them, there are Rajkuli Bhuyan who had risen to status of Zamindars and Jagirdars in the erstwhile princely Stats and could establish matrimonial alliances with the ruling houses. The Rajkuli Bhuyan claim superior over other sections.

The Pauri Bhuyan has no clan organization. In this connection Roy (1935:80-81) writes, "The Pauri Bhuyans are one of the few Munda tribes among whom though exogamy exists, totemistic organization is absent. In place of clan-exogamy, they practise what may be called village-exogamy. The unit of their social organization is the village consisting of families supposed to be descended from a common ancestor and all regarded as Kutumba or agnates........Cognatic relations are known as Bandhus and villages with which Pauri Bhuyan of a village may enter into marital connections are called his Bandhu villages". He also came across among the Bhuyan of the plains, a few Gotra names, such as, Nag (cobra), Kachhap (tortoise), Gaja (elephant) Kabutar (pigeon), etc. in imitation of their Hindu neighbours.
But these Gotras are not exogamous. In place of the clan organization, the Pauri Bhuyan have Khilli system which, not only regulates marriage but also serves as a core of the kinship organization. In the absence of exogamous totemistic clan, phratries and moieties, Khilli is the main exogamous unit at present. It is the extended lineage based on patrilineage and believed to have descended from a common male ancestor. The term Khilli is used for the 'clan' by their Munda neighbours. In the past when the rules of village-exogamy was strictly followed, each village had persons from one agnatic group and villages having members from several agnatic groups were not known. Each agnatic group was then named after the village where the members of that particular group originally had settled down. Now these village names have been used as the Khilli names. During our study, as many as 13 Khillies were encountered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the 'Khilli'</th>
<th>Name of the founder</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Sarkondí</td>
<td>Sarkond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Kadakadi</td>
<td>Kadakalá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Batagaon</td>
<td>Batogaon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Kasiālī</td>
<td>Kasira</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Patilia</td>
<td>Patilo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Raisuan</td>
<td>Raisuan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Sareikala</td>
<td>Sareikala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Chaadā</td>
<td>Chaadā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9) Nendri</td>
<td>Nendrā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10) Khandapata</td>
<td>Khandār</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11) Rāikuli</td>
<td>Raikalā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12) Kunārdi</td>
<td>Kunār</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13) Daanlī</td>
<td>Daanlā</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All members of a Khilli considered themselves as brothers and sisters and thereby marriage among them is considered incestuous. Matrimonial alliance is also not allowed among members of some Khillies which are termed as Kutumba-Khillies and the villages in which the members of such Kutumba Khillies live are known as Kutumba (agnatic) villages. Similarly members of these Khillies among whom marriage is socially approved, are known as Bandhu (cognatic) Khillies and the villages where these Khilli members live are called Bandhu village. Now all Bhuyan villages are not uni-Khilli. There are some having people belonging to several Khillies as a result of population growth and mobility.

This maximal descent group (Khilli) is divided into a number of smaller social units called Kutumb which may be termed as minimal lineages. Members of a particular Khilli inhabiting the same village, continue to constitute a minimal lineage and those members who desert the original village and live in another village for three generations are no more treated as members of such minimal lineages. Most important functions of the minimal lineages are:

a) Whenever death in any family of the unit occurs all households suspend their work. While male members take the corpse to the cremation ground for disposal, female members throw away the used earthen cooking vessels and go to take a purificatory bath. All families are considered ritually polluted until the purificatory rites are observed.

b) In hunting expeditions, whenever a member gets a special share, it is distributed among all
c) Exchange of special items of food are exchanged on festive occasions among the households,

d) All families constitute a well-knit social groups helping each other in their socio-economic life.

Family is the smallest social unit. It consists of members who are related by birth and marriage. Incidence of nuclear type of family consisting of the husband and the wife and their unmarried children, is very common. A son, soon after his marriage, has to live with his wife separately in a house generally constructed by himself. Joint families, having several nuclear families of the same generation and extended families consisting of parents and their married son or sons are now seen sporadically in some villages. Incidence of the nuclear type of family is so common in interior villages where even widows or widowers are found living separately from their married sons. An unmarried boy or a girl whose parents are dead is allowed to stay with his/her brother's family till he/she is married.

The eldest male member of the family is the head exercising his authority over all other members in all family matters. Father is the owner of the property which is not normally divided among the sons as long as he and his wife survive. These customary privileges in practice are not always strictly observed. The head of the family normally consults other adult members of both sexes while taking vital decisions on matters concerning the family. After the death of the father and also
frequently when the mother dies, the ancestral properties of the family are equally distributed among all sons with the eldest son getting a little more. When a person dies leaving behind no male issue, the property is inherited by the close agnagnatic kinsmen and in no case the married daughters can claim it.

In the selection of mates, both boys and girls enjoy freedom subject to approval of the parents.

VILLAGE:

Previously the Pauri Bhuyan villages were unilineal in composition as members of a single aganatic group now termed as Khilli along were living in a village. Every village had traditional boundary, recognized by the neighbouring villages in particular and the Pauri Bhuyan in general. Now villages have become multi Khilli as a result of increase in population and inter-village migration. Generally members from the Kutumba Khillies and in few cases, from the Bandhu Khilies from other villages are allowed to settle down in some villages. Although the rule of post-marital residence, which is patrilocal still prevails, married daughters and sisters are allowed to live in the villages of their birth.

Inter-village migration has occurred more in the villages located nearer to the roads and semi-urban areas. In multi-Khilli villages, members of each Khilli live in separate hamlets. As a result of this many villages have become large and multi-hamlet in composition. Incoming of members
belonging to these incompatible social units for settling down in a residential unit has not created much difficulties in maintaining cohesion and continuity of the closely knit social entity of the villages more particularly in the interior areas. All individuals in a village are inter-related and bear with the sorrows and happiness and co-operate with each other in various spheres of village life. The village is the landowning unit, so far as the sites, where shifting cultivation is carried on. The land situated in the plains and valleys utilized for cultivation and the homestead land and its adjacent kitchen garden were also not privately owned in the past. After the operation of the land survey and settlement, the record of right has been issued for these types of land to the persons who have been utilizing these for several years. Although individual ownership of land is a new phenomenon traditional collective outlook of the villagers on the maintenance of the traditional village boundary is still in vogue. Without the approval of the village council outsider whether belonging to their own community or any other cannot settle down.

In many spheres, cohesiveness of the village community is exhibited in the collective participation. Rites and rituals connected with birth, marriage and death of an individual are considered more as village affairs than the concern of the family. The unmarried youths, both girls and boys are treated as the working force, as assets of the village community rather than as exclusive possession of their parents. Whenever anybody desires, the labour of the unmarried youths of village can be hired on nominal payment of wage. The Mandaghar (bachelor's
and its front open space called Darbar in the past symbolised the unity of the village. Though Mandaghar no more exists, the Darbar is still there in the village for holding the meeting of the village elders. It is the place, where villagers meet frequently and gossip in their leisure time and gather on festive occasions and dance and sing song. The ritual organization at the village level reinforce community feelings and ensure solidarity.

The village is also a quasi-political unit. The traditional secular headman of the village called Pradhan or Naek has still considerable influence. Where these officials are also elected as the ward member to represent the village in the statutory Gram Panchayat solidarity of village is more strong. Thus, a traditional Pauri Bhuyan village is an economically, socially and ritually independent unit to a large extent. Whenever any problem and crisis crop up and any external danger befalls, the whole village get united to combat these. On the other hand, the village is also partially dependent on the neighbouring villages for several purposes. As a result of this they have to interact with the inhabitants of other village. For matrimony they depend on Bandhu villages following the practice of village exogamy. This helps them to spread the kinship network spatially.

Beyond the village there is the larger organization of the neighbouring villages known as Bar or Pirha. The most important functions of this organisation is to organize the
annual festival known as Pirha janta in the month of Pusa (December-January) to propitiate the tutelary deity of the Pirha. On this occasion participants from all villages have to attend on payment of the contribution for the ritual and the community feast. On this occasion decision relating to the re-admission of the ex-communicated Bhuyan and admission of the clean caste people consequent upon their marriage with members of their group into their community are taken after deliberation. Cases arising out of breaches of traditional customs, whenever referred to it are also adjudicated. The headman of the most important village generally presides over such meetings. The Pirh organization, however is weakening as a result of modern influences.

BACHELOR’S DORMITORY:

The village dormitory for boys was in existence in the past among the Pauri Bhuyan. But disappeared about 15 to 20 years ago. Now in many villages the conspicuous dormitory building called Mandaghar, with its open space called Darbar still exists. When the bachelor's dormitory was in full action it was functioning as the centre for imparting training in dance and music and many aspects of socio-economic life. Here unmarried boys and male guests used to sleep in the night. The unmarried girls of the village too used to sleep in some vacant house of the village; and were vested with the responsibility of cleaning the bachelor's dormitory.

Although the bachelor's dormitory, as a village institution, has disappeared, traditional dance and music which
are still inseparable part of the social life and religious festivities have been retained. The girls and the boys separately exchange dancing trips with their counterparts of the Bandhu villages. Marriage ceremony and festive occasions are celebrated with music and dance. In the dance the boys sing and beat their typical musical instrument called Changu (tambourine—a circular membrane drum) while girls in a yok dance. During such visits they avail the opportunity of selecting their mates.

ECONOMIC LIFE:

Economic activities of Pauri Bhuyan has been considerably influenced by the ecological character of the area. The habitation is full of rugged hills covered with forests. In course of time they have developed indigenous skill and adaptive strategies to take up shifting cultivation as the principal economic activity, which helped them survive. The present economic activities, however, exhibit considerable change and in some localities shifting cultivation is replaced by settled cultivation or by some new economic activity. Thus now there is a wide range of variation in Pauri Bhuyan economic life depending upon the accessibility to natural resources and developmental intervention. Now one can find that the Pauri Bhuyan in particular, are found adopting a number of economic pursuits, some of which are traditional and some are modern.

In Orissa, the Bhuyan tribe as a whole had returned 72,983 main workers constituting 35.13 per cent of the total population of 207,793 during 1981 census. The marginal workers
claimed 9.89 per cent of their total population. Thus, 45.02 per cent among them are found engaged in some kind of economic activities. Similarly, the percentage of males and females engaged in economic activities stood at 58.76 and 31.49 respectively.

Table-I:7 indicates the percentage of main workers by industrial classification among the Bhuyan of Orissa in general and those of Keonjhar district in particular. It is seen that there is overwhelming dependency on cultivation both as cultivator and agricultural labourer in Orissa including Keonjhar district. Among them, only 2.48 per cent in the whole State and 4.49 per cent in Keonjhar district found working in mining quarrying as the next highest quote among the main workers.

In addition to collection of minor forest produce and shifting cultivation locally termed as kamāni as the main source of livelihood for the majority, some have taken to settled cultivation, livestock rearing and occasional fishing, hunting, wage-earning, and few items of indigenous crafts like mat-making, broomstick-making, rope making, carpentry, basketry and leaf-cup making, mostly as leisure time works.

The work cycle starts after Māgha podoi parab in the month of Māgh (January-February) and continues till completion of harvesting of all crops in the month of December. The daily work schedule shows that women work longer than men. Women, including girls above 11 years, generally get up earlier and start their usual domestic chores such as cleaning house and utensils, fetching water and cooking food. Then they
proceed to work in the field or go for collection of minor forest produce or some other engagement. They return home in the afternoon with head-loads of things collected. Then they start cooking their evening meal. After taking food, they retire or chit-chat in groups for some times before sleep. On the days when there is no work in the field, women spend the morning hours in collecting minor forest produce and devote the day time in weaving mats, baskets or making leaf-cups and plates and attending to other household chores. Men and boys above 10 to 12 years get up early and spend sometime near the fire at home warming up and smoking cigar. Then they go for ablution and thereafter gather at the Darbār of the village to gossip on any matter relating to the village and neighbouring area till about 9 to 10 A.M. Then they go to their houses, take food and then proceed to their respective places of work either in the forest or in the field. While returning from the place of work they come with loads of firewood or logs. When they have no work, they spend the time either fishing in the local streams or undertaking fashioning wooden household implements.

Men can do all kinds of work indoor and out door, shouldering the arduous and heavier items while giving lighter one to women. Cooking and other household chores fall on women while ploughing, cutting trees and sowing are masculine activities. Thatching houses, climbing trees and hunting are taboo to women.

SETTLED CULTIVATION:

Among the Pauri Bhuiyan, who are traditionally shifting cultivators, some have acquired land and some allotted with
land located in the valley bottom and at the foot of the hills and on the banks of the stream where they carry on settled cultivation. Apart from the swiddens, different types of land which they own now individually as private property are classified into three categories viz, Bila (low land), Guda (up-land) and Bakadi (kitchen garden) used for growing different crops.

Both broadcasting and transplanting methods are practised in the cultivation of wet land while only broadcasting method is adopted in the cultivation of upland and kitchen garden. The use of bullock driven ploughs for tilling all types of land is common. Manuring the fields, excepting the area to be used for growing mustard, is rare although use of chemical fertilizers and improved seeds by a few Bhuyan cultivator is also encountered.

Cultivation is a family affair in which all capable members fully participate. Hiring of labour is occasionally done. Whenever extra labour is required, it is procured through reciprocity. The hired labour, if even engaged, is paid in kind consisting of food grains and a simple meal in the process of work. Outside labour is used only for weeding and harvesting. Anybody having no drought animals may take the help of another having such animals. In such cases he has to plough the land of the owner of the animals for the same number of days he used the animals in his land. Cultivation involves a number of steps and a number of crops are grown (Table-I:8).

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY:

The Pauri Bhuyan are not pastoral people. However,
they keep different types of domesticated animals to meet their economic and socio-religious requirements. The purpose of keeping cows is not of milk but of breeding and using as drought animals for cultivation. A few families keep buffaloes and sale milk and milk products. Both cows and bullocks are generally used as drought animals. Cattle dung is utilised to manure the maize and mustard fields. A household having no cattle cannot think of mustard cultivation. Most households keep goats and sheep while almost all households keep fowls (Table 1:9). They are fond of eating mutton and chicken. Bucks and chicken are sacrificed in honour of the deities on ritual occasions. These animals are also sold for cash. Cows, bullocks and goats are used as a medium of payment of bride-price and castrated he-goats are exchanged as gift in marriage ceremonies. Ownership of livestock has come to be regarded as a symbol of status. Larger the number of cattle one owns, greater is his status in the village. A cowherd boy is employed collectively by a number of families to tend their cattle. He is given food daily and 10 Kgs of paddy per bullock or cow annually as his remuneration. Both male and female children in the age-group of 9 to 12 years serve as cattle tenders.

SHIFTING CULTIVATION:

Shifting cultivation called Toila Chāsa or Kamāni is the most significant traditional economic activity among the Pauri Bhuyan. It consists of cleaning and cultivating a patch of forest land for three consecutive years. Different terms are used for different years of cultivation. The patch under first year of cultivation is called Biringā, the second
year as Kaman and the third year as Nala. The swiddens belong to the village in common. As soon as a patch of forest land is allotted to a man, it belongs to him as long as the cycle of cultivation is not over (Details in Chapter-III).

HUNTING:

The hilly habitat of the Pauri Bhuyan was once densely wooded teeming with wild games. Hunting and working in the swidden supplemented each other. It is viewed as a sport and a pursuit for adding a palatable dish to their diet. An elaborate annual ceremonial hunting called Akhin Pardhi is organised in the month of April to mark the beginning of hunting. It is community oriented in which all adult male members of the village are expected to participate.

FISHING:

Fishing in the local streams is still another activity to add variety to the diet. They mostly catch fish by hand and occasionally use traps and nets. Both hunting and fishing are undertaken as a casual and lean time activities and have never been commercialised.

COLLECTION OF FOREST PRODUCE:

The Pauri Bhuyan are in the habit of collecting different varieties of minor forest produce primarily for use as well as for sale as a secondary source of income. This is closely associated with their traditional practice of shifting cultivation. While working in the field to raise crops, different items of minor forest produce are collected from and around the swiddens. In different seasons they collect several edible items such as,
fruits, green leaves, flowers, roots, shoots, tubers and mushrooms, materials for house construction and for making household appliances. Mohua trees (found in abundance), sago-palm and wild-date palm trees help them to meet their requirement of alcoholic drinks. Hilly rivers, streams or springs provide them perennial sources of water patches for fishing.

Most materials required for the construction of houses and domestic cattle sheds are acquired from the forest. They collect timber, bamboo, thatching grass, faggots, logs, wattal, fibres for rope and fine clay for plastering the walls and floor. Raw materials for preparing a few items of household articles and wooden agricultural implements are also collected.

The huge requirement of firewood is met from the forest which is thick in vegetation. During winter, houses are kept warm by burning firewood. They are not able to afford winter clothing. Most of the households do not use light and all work inside the house are managed under the flickering flame of the fuel. Even in dark night when a person goes out, he takes a piece of burning faggot. They also require lot of fuel to boil wild roots, tubers and fruits at a constantly high temperature. To ward off the attack of wild beasts in the night from the agricultural fields a big fire is burn constantly. Wood mostly gathered and kept while felling trees in the swiddens is used for these purposes.

Most of them know which leaf, root, flower or fruit has got medicinal effect. While spending most of their time in the forest, they make use of these herbal plants as a
measure of first-aid for different types of ailment and injuries. A number of forest produce collected and other articles prepared out of these are either sold or bartered in the local markets, in the neighbouring villages or to the visiting traders. Jhuna, Mohua Pālab, leaf cups and plates, Patalagaruda, lac, several varieties of fruits and green leaves and logs are the important items sold by them. They make rope, and mats (from the date-palm leaves) for use and sale.

Their requirement of oil for different purposes are met with the collection of seeds from the forest. Besides mustard and niger oil, they extract cooking oil from Kusum seeds, toilet oil from Tula and Bendiri medical oil from Pinga and Karanja (for curing scabies). Thus, forest provides them with a number of items for use in different months (Table-I:11).

WAGE-EARNING:

Wage earning in the non-agricultural sectors is becoming increasingly popular; though agriculture still remain a major area of employment. Agricultural labour is sold within the community and outside. Both men and women are now found engaged on daily wage in mining quarries, plantation and construction works of the Government.

FOOD HABIT:

The food habit of the Bhuiyan is greatly influenced by habitat. There is seasonal variation in food supply and consequently in food habit (Table-I:11). Rice is their staple food and considered superior to all other types of food.
Whatever amount of rice is produced is never sold. They store rice for use in busy seasons. Though they grow different types of pulses (mainly for sale), they also consume it occasionally, particularly on festive occasions.

Roots, tubers, flowers and fruits which are either collected from the forests or obtained from the orchards supplement their food to a large extent. During the lean months, i.e., July, August, September, and October, the people subsist largely on jack-fruits and mangoes, roots and tubers, and fruits and flowers. They occasionally go for hunting in the area. When crops ripen, the wild animals get into the fields. It gives some chance to them to hunt some of these animals. Occasionally they do fishing in nearby streams and rivers, but the catch is not significant. They eat mutton and chicken with great relish but such food items are generally taken on festive occasions.

**POLITICAL ORGANIZATION:**

In the past, particularly during pre-independence period, the Pauri Bhuyan are well-known for their well-organized political organization. They had village and inter-village organization headed by functionaries recognized by the King. At present, these organizations still exist but with less power and control than in the past. Introduction of statutory Gram Panchayat and implementation of development programmes bringing changes in the age-old traditional socio-economic aspects have contributed in reducing the authority and power of the traditional leaders.
As mentioned earlier, the village is a close knit compact unit where members are mostly inter-related to each other. The village council (panch) is vested with responsibility of maintaining harmony and peace in the village.

About a decade back the Naek or Pradhān (in Keonjhar) was recognized by the rulers as village headman. The village priest known as Dehuri was the sacredotal headman of the village and the rest of the villagers were called Bārabhāi or Parjās (commoners). Both the Pradhān and Dehuri belong to the founder groups. In addition to his duties of performing community worship of the deities, the Dehuri, along with the Pradhān looked after the wellbeing of and exercised authority over the village. Their actions had force of the public opinion and presented the collective will of the village community as a whole. Both these position were hereditary. It is still a privilege of the village priest to initiate agricultural operations ceremonially and then by other households. He was the final authority in deciding in religious and socio-religious matters. Both the Pradhān and the Dehuri are still treated as important guests whenever they pay visit to any household.

Similarly, beyond the village there was the Pirha organization for a group of neighbouring villages under an official known as Sardār. The post of Pradhān was generally hereditary while that of the Sardār was elective, the most influential Pradhān of any village in the Pirha being selected as Sardār. In the past, whenever a new Pradhān or a new Sardār was appointed, a saree was being given to him by the king for using as turban in recognition of his position. But now
things have changed, and at the village level there is now multiplication in the leadership while the Jirahahas become a vestigial organisation with very little function. The village level elected representative called 'ward member' under Panchayat Raj System is overshadowing the traditional leaders, more particularly is secular and development matters. In this connection in the sample villages, viz, Bayakumutua and Sankarei, it is found that the village council is controlled by the elected Panchayat 'ward member' to a great extent although the traditional secular headmen are still there.

In addition to these leaders, some new leaders are also emerging. Persons who are educated and politically conscious are also exhausting influence over the village matters. Now all these leaders, statutory, traditional and other enlightened elders dominate the proceedings of the village council. The primary functions of the village council are to adjudicate cases of quarrels and conflicts among the villagers, to decide partition of property among brothers, to distribute land for shifting cultivation, to organise religious and socio-religious ceremonies, to adjudicate cases arising out of violation of taboos and restrictions, and to maintain peace and order in the village.

These village leaders still enjoy several privileges. Each of them get special share of the game from hunting and also from the brid-price received by the girl's parents. They are supplied with liquor free of cost at least once in a week by the households dealing with sale of liquors and are given a share whenever any household prepare it at home.
They get special treatment from all households on festive occasions.

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND PRACTICES:

The Pauri Bhuyan, like other primitive tribes live in the world of deities and spirits which are believed to control and direct the course of nature and human life. Their illness or physical well-being, bad luck or success in their food quest, their personal security, etc. largely are believed to be the works of these supernatural powers. As a result, they worship them with a sense of gratitude and devotion and appease them with customary offerings and sacrifices at regular interval to keep them in good temper and to avert danger from evil spirits.

Their religion is based on the belief of polytheism. They believe in the existence of innumerable deities having their abode in the village, spring, forest, hills and trees. Basing on their nature, function and character, these deities have gradation. Among them some are benevolent, some neutral and others malevolent.

Like other tribes in the neighbourhood, the Pauri Bhuyan have two supreme deities known as 'Dharam Deotā', (Sun God) and 'Basuki Mātā', (also called 'Dhartī Mātā', 'Basu Mātā', 'Thakurāni') or Earth Goddess. The duo is regarded as husband and wife. They are not represented in any material form but are constantly remembered and offered oblations by uttering their names at the beginning of any worship performed before invoking other deities. Both of them are benevolent.
There are also village deities called 'Bodam' (also known as 'Mangalā' and 'Gāi-Sri', 'Gramsri' or 'Bāsuki', or 'Thākurāni') who may be described respectively as the representatives of 'Dharam Deota' and 'Basumata' at the village level. 'Gāi-sri' is represented in a block of stone or a wooden post installed on one side of the Darbār whereas the 'Boram' is represented by a stone placed in a sacred grove at the outskirts of the village.

The Pauri area has a number of 'Pāt-Deota'. The term 'Pāt' usually refers to a prominent hill or river and its surrounding region and the 'Pāt-Deota' is the tutelary deity of that region. Once in a year people from all villages within that region assemble to worship 'Pāt-Deota' who is represented in a stone and installed in a tiny hut. Previously the feudal chief had to provide fund for the worship.

In addition to these principal deities, they believe in the existence of ancestral spirits called Pitrus having their abode in the Bhitar or the inner compartment close to the place where cooked food is stored. Moreover, they believe in the existence of a number of malevolent spirits who constantly move around and bring diseases and danger to the persons whoever they meet. The Paurī Bhuyan who have taken up wet cultivation have started worshipping Hindu Gods and Goddesses like Laxmi, Siva, Jagannath, Radha and Krishna along with their Hindu neighbours at specific occasions and visit the places of festivals celebrated in honour of these deities in the neighbourhood.
The deities are generally propitiated at regular intervals in a series of congregational religious rites and ceremonies through a functionary known as Dehuri who is from the same agnostic group to which the Pradhān or Nāek belongs. In all ceremonies which are not communal in nature but are performed at family level, the eldest male member of the household officiates. These are mostly connected with the worship of the ancestral spirits on the occasions of religious ceremonies and also on special occasions like birth, marriage and death rites in the family.

The annual festival cycle of the Pauri Bhuyan is mostly associated with their economic activities and are performed to mark the termination, and/or beginning of new phases of economic pursuits. The annual cycle of festival starts with Māgh Podei Parab in the month of Māgh (January-February) as a closure of the old year and the beginning of a new year to start the allotment of shifting land and making clearing and collection of thatching grass. This is followed by Āmb-Nuākhāi (first-eating of new mango) and Gilor Jātra (first-eating of gilor leaves and flowers and green leaves and flowers including mohua) in the month of Phāgun (February-March). Then comes the hunting ceremony known as Ākhin in the month of Chait (March-April). Borām Puja is performed in the same month for ceremonial bringing out of seeds from the grain-bins which is followed by Tīrtī Mutī (Ceremonial sowing of seeds by individual households in their plots) in the month of Bāisak (April-May). Then comes Asārhī in Sāvan (July-August) to start transplanting and cross-cultivation of wet-land and sowing blackgram and Kulthi in shifting and up-land. This ceremony is also aimed
at good rainfall for a bumper crop. This is followed by Nuā khāi (first eating of new rice) in the month of Kārtik (October-November) and Karam in Maṛgāsira (November-December) before harvesting low land paddy.

Besides the above ceremonies, they observe a number of other religious ceremonies such as Raj in Asār (June-July) Gamhā in Bhoda (August September), Makar in Pusa (January-February) and Thākurani usā in Maṛgāsira (November-December). These festive occasions are celebrated with dancing and singing. Sacrifice of chicken and/or bucks are generally offered. Cow milk, arua rice, turmeric and vermilion are commonly used in the worship. Consumption of alcoholic drinks such as mohua-liquor, rice-beer and sago-palm juice mostly by male members is very common on these occasions (Table-I:12).