CHAPTER FIVE

(SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING WORKING CONDITION)

1. Collection
2. Documentation
3. Preservation
4. Display & Arrangement
5. Edification
SUGGESTIONS

It is through the case studies made here, the main drawbacks of the ethnographical sections of the Indian Museums have been traced. Now with this chapter (V), conclusion of the dissertation is being drawn by putting forward certain suggestions so that the existing museums may have the chance to improve their working potentiality inspite of limitations they are experiencing from different quarters. The suggestions have been put forward to improve the working condition of the museums within their possible scope in the following aspects:

1. Collection
2. Documentation
3. Preservation
4. Display and arrangement
5. Edification

COLLECTION

(a) Introduction

From the case studies made here, it has been ascertained that inadequate number of collection in all the
categories of museums is one of the salient features of the ethnographical museums in India. It is possible to trace out the reasons for such state of affairs. The main reasons for the unbalanced development are as follows:

1. Unplanned and unsystematic collection mostly depending on gift, exchange and purchase giving no real importance to the field collection.

2. Shortage of personnel.

3. Paucity of fund and space.

Apart from incomplete collection, absence of adequate field data of collected specimens for their utilization for research purposes is also another most serious handicap with the ethnographical collection of the Indian Museums.

So to give new incentive to the collection, a collection policy as to how the Indian museums within their possible resources can build up their collection substantially to achieve their objective, has been suggested. For the purpose here the concrete suggestions for a particular museum (Museum of the Cultural Research Institute) under case study, has been made. Where as for the other museums, general suggestions have been put forward. It has also been suggested as to the nature of information which may be collected from the field so as to utilise the informative data for research purposes. To make these museums functionally potential, one of the most important requisites is to build up representative collection of specimens together with their adequate field data. Because in the museum
service, data and specimens are complementary to each other. In support of this remark, McPeat may be quoted and it is as follows:

"Object + data = Specimen where by data one means notes, measurements, drawings, charts, graphs, photographs and models."

Suggestions for the improved collection policy of the museum of the Cultural Research Institute.

To chalk out a well integrated method for collection of this institutional ethnographic museum overcoming the limitations confronted by it, following propositions are suggested. An approach may be made to fulfil these propositions in the suggested successive stages as enumerated below:

1. Determination of the collection policy strictly in relation to the aim and objective of the museum.
2. Preparation of a list of tribes and of the nature of specimens to be collected from each tribe.
3. Determination of the geographical region from where collections are to be made.
4. Ascertaining the possible sources of securing the specimens.
5. Collection of information on the specimens to serve the best interest of the museum.

Theoretical preparation for systematic collection

(1) Determination of collection policy:

Ethnographic museum offers the chance of depicting and studying only the tangible aspect of culture, known as

material culture. In short, by the term material culture is meant all that we can know about man in the objects used or made by him for his survival or for supporting and improving his life. Therefore, socio-economic condition and technological knowledge of man are in most cases expressed through the objects of his material culture. As mentioned earlier, the aim and objective of establishing the Tribal Research Institutes as well as the museums attached to them, are to carry out research work on the socio-economic condition, technological knowledge of tribals and to keep their cultural relics on record, the collection policy to be broadly followed in these museums may be as follows:

(i) Category and nature of specimens: The objects belonging to all categories of the tribal and folk material cultures may primarily be collected for this museum.

(ii) The number of specimens to be collected may be in conformity with the available resources and space for storage and display at the disposal of the museum concerned.

Determination of a collection policy in regard to the nature of specimens to be collected and their number, before the actual collection starts, may help to control the growth of the museum and orient its collection in a definite direction. Otherwise, haphazard collection may lead to the accumulation of a good number of specimens forming an untidy jumble of curios which may involve much unnecessary expenditure and may also create a problem in regard to their accommodation either in the gallery or in the store without serving the purpose of the museum.
2. Preparation of list of tribes and nature of specimens to be collected from each tribe:

Following successive stages may be pursued for preparing the lists of tribes as well as of the nature of specimens to be collected in relation to the requirements of the museum:

(i) Each museum may initially prepare a list of tribes inhabiting the state where it is situated.

(ii) Out of the list, a selection may be made of tribes from whom the specimens are to be collected.

(iii) Subsequently, on the basis of practical experience as well as on information gathered from printed literature, a comprehensive list of articles as far as practicable, intimately connected with the material culture of the individual tribe mentioned in the list, may be prepared.

(iv) The articles contained in the list are then to be examined with reference to the requirements of the museum.

(v) In order to avoid duplication, the accession register of the museum is to be checked up for ascertaining whether any specimen named in the list has already been acquired or not.

(vi) Theoretically, it is thus possible from the list to find out tentatively the requirement of the museum. But practical experience reveals that it is very difficult to list successfully all categories of objects of material culture concerning a tribe without undertaking extensive field work among them. Therefore, to avoid this defect of theoretical planning, besides the list of articles, provision for collection of new specimens should always be there.

However, inspite of its defect, theoretical planning holds good for the museum of the Cultural Research Institute. This is because, initially formulation of such a list of tribes as well as of specimens may help the collection of desired specimens in limited number, in conformity with the space available for display and storage without incurring expenditure for unwanted specimens. It also helps in procuring different kinds of
specimens concerning the tribes inhabiting the state without omitting any significant variety for the purpose of carrying out the study according to the demands of the institute as well as for preserving the cultural relics of the tribes concerned in the museum.

3. Determination of the geographical region from where the collection is to be made in each museum:

Tribes having considerable population are found to inhabit in different adjacent states. For example, the Santals live predominantly in Bihar, West Bengal and also in some parts of Orissa and Assam. The question may crop up in the collection of specimens of the Santals whether the ethnographic museum of the Cultural Research Institute of West Bengal should collect specimens simultaneously from the Santals inhabiting in West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa or from West Bengal alone. As the jurisdiction of the Tribal Research Institutes confines within the individual state, the museum of the Cultural Research Institute of West Bengal should also confine its activities within the political boundary of this state of West Bengal.

4. Ascertaining possible sources of acquiring specimens:

To acquire the specimens mentioned in the lists, extensive field work would have to be carried out if there is no first hand knowledge of the sources from where they may be acquired. Extensive field work all over the state incurs much expenditure and requires a good number of personnel. However, the museum of the Cultural
Research Institute suffers from paucity of both. Therefore, to avoid the extensive field work all over the state, possible sources of acquiring the required specimens may be ascertained before the actual collection starts. For the purpose, contact may be established with the following organisations and persons who have more intimate knowledge about the whereabouts of cultural relics of the tribals:

1. District Tribal Welfare Officers.
2. Tribal organisations like clubs and associations of tribal youths.
3. Educated tribals, specially teachers serving in the villages of the tribal concentrated zones.
4. Tribal leaders.

Lists of specimens required for the museum may be sent to them to ascertain the possible sources from where they may be acquired. On intimation from them, extensive field work for collection may be undertaken in the specified areas. Alternatively, by supplying necessary schedules to the above mentioned persons, collection may be made through them.

Mode of acquiring of specimens

The museum of the Cultural Research Institute may adopt the following major ways besides the field work, for acquiring specimens, depending upon their convenience:

1. Purchase
2. Exchange
3. Gift
4. Loan
Purchase of museum specimens may be made from local markets or from the field. But preference may be given to field collection because detailed information concerning a specimen necessary for the purpose of study in the light of the requirement of the institute may be had from its cultural environment only.

In West Bengal, where lack of fund and museum personnel stand in the way of making specimen collection to the desired extent, the help of field investigators may be sought for. If the field investigators are apprised of the specimens required for the museum, and they are also provided with schedules for the collection of field data of the specimens, they may also collect the specimens in the field without hampering their own investigations. It would, therefore, be logical to prepare schedules for the collection of information of museum specimens before the actual collection starts.

5. Collection of information of museum specimens

In view of the nature of information that is essential for the specimens of the ethnographic museum of the Cultural Research Institute to carry out research work through them, information may be collected through different media within the scope of the institute. For the purpose, the information may be collected in following ways:
(i) by the use of prescribed schedules (memorizing collecting information mainly through interview) by workers undertaking field trips.

(ii) by making photographic documentation of the specimens in their cultural environment through still and cine cameras.

(iii) by recording folk-songs and folk-tales connected with the specimens through tape recorders.

Collection of Information through Schedules:

In view of the detailed information that may be necessary regarding the specimens, collection of information through schedule has the following advantages:

(i) A schedule helps in collecting information systematically to the desired extent.

(ii) The chance of omission of any information solicited in the schedule is less if it is followed properly.

(iii) Through a schedule even a layman can also successfully collect information.

(iv) A schedule serves as a permanent field record and helps in maintaining field information for research purposes in future.

Schedule No.1

(Schedule for the collection of information of museum specimens)

Structure of the schedule may vary according to the nature of specimens; but for the purpose of the museums of the Cultural Research Institute, a schedule as furnished below, may be tentatively followed for the collection of general information on the museum specimens in the field.

1. Name of the specimen -
   (a) Local name :
   (b) English name :

2. Date of collection :

3. Name of collector :

4. Place of collection -
   (a) Name of the village :
   (b) Name of the Police Station :
   (c) Name of the Post Office :
   (d) Name of the District :
   (e) Name of the state :

5. Field collection number :

6. Mode of collection - Purchase/gift/loan/exchange -
   (a) Price, if the specimen is purchased :
   (b) Terms in case of loan :
   (c) Objects exchanged in case of exchange :
   (d) Terms and conditions of gift :

7. Source of collection (Particulars about the persons from whom collection has been made) -
   (a) Name :
   (Age & sex)
   (b) Address :
   (c) Caste/tribe :
   (d) Occupation :

8. Whether the specimen is prepared by him/any body of his family member or purchased :

9. In case, the specimen is prepared at home, particulars about the preparator, time of preparation and source of getting constituent materials -
   (a) Name :
   (b) Age :
   (c) Sex :
   (d) Relation with the head of the family :
   (e) Time of preparation -
       (i) season or month :
       (ii) time of the day :
   (f) Total time required for construction :
   (g) Whether it is his/her professional or spare time activity ?
(h) Source of procuring constituent materials:
(i) If purchased, their market value:
(j) Approximate market value of the specimen after construction:
(k) Means of transaction:

10. If the specimen is purchased -

(a) Source of purchase:
(b) Community of person from whom purchased:
(c) Date of purchase:
(d) Approximate date of purchase:

11. A brief description of specimen -

(a) Constituent materials:
(b) Shape:
(c) Size:
(d) Process of construction:
(e) Different component parts -
   (i) Their specific names:
   (ii) Their individual function:

12. Use of specimen -

(a) Primary use:
(b) Secondary use:
(c) User -
   (i) Age:
   (ii) Sex:
   (iii) Other social category:
(d) Method of use:
(e) Whether any taboo is there in use:
(f) Extent of use -
   (i) In the field of economy:
   (ii) In the social and domestic life:
   (iii) In religious life:
   (iv) In recreational field:

13. Nature of ownership:

14. Mode of inheritance:

15. Is there any folk-song and folk-tale associated with the specimen? If yes, field collection No. of the song/tale as in item No. 4 of schedule No. 3.
   (cross reference with schedule No. 3)

(The above schedule has been prepared keeping in view to collect information specially on social, economic and technological aspects of the specimens)
In order to collect information through schedule, there are methods like interview, observation and participation and so on. Whatever method is considered appropriate for a specimen, may be followed. In case of necessity, all these methods may also be adopted alternatively either for the collection of information or for the verification of the collected information.

Schedule No. 2

(Collection of information by taking photographs through both still and cine cameras)

Information collected through the schedule is not often adequate enough to present the particulars of the objects of material culture. To substantiate and authenticate the theoretical data, photographic documentation of the ethnographic specimens in their cultural environment may be recorded for their use in museums. When Manipur the Cultural Research Institute is technically equipped with photographers and photographic accessories, information through such technological devices may also be collected from the field along with theoretical information at the time of making field collection. For collection of photographic information in systematic way, a schedule is suggested below:

1. Name of specimen:

2. Field collection No. (Cross reference with schedule No. 1, item No. 5).

3. Place of taking photograph of the specimen –
   (i) Name of village:
   (ii) Names of post-office and police station:
   (iii) Name of District and State:
4. Name of the photographer with designation:

5. Date of taking photograph:

6. Photographs taken during construction of specimen in different sequences -
   (a) Photographs of constituent materials or parts.
   (b) Photograph of specimen at the early stage of its construction.
   (c) Photograph of specimen at the middle stage of its construction.
   (d) Photograph of specimen after the completion of construction.
   (e) Photograph taken at any other special phase of construction.
   (f) Photograph of the maker at the time of construction which may give an idea about the process of construction through his/her posture.

7. Photographs after the completion of construction:
   (a) A full view of the specimen.
   (b) A close up view of the specimen showing the pattern or design, if any.
   (c) An enlarged view of any specially constructed part.

8. Photographs taken at the time of use of the specimen -
   (a) Griping or holding of specimen by the operator.
   (b) The posture of the operator just at the time of operation.
   (c) Specimen in different phases of its use.

Both still and 16mm cine cameras may be used to arrest the views of specimens in different phases of its construction and use. These photographic information along with the theoretical field data can furnish a good account of the specimen and help.
immensely in its study both from the points of socio-economic and techno-cultural aspects.

Schedule No. 3

(Collection of folk-tales and folk-songs)

Sometimes it is found that there are folk-tales and folk-songs connected with certain objects of material culture. They may also be collected either by writing or by recording in tape. Portable transistorised tape-recorder is very much helpful in recording during field collection. Information of folk-tales and folk-songs may be collected under the following headings:

1. Name of the specimen with whom folk-song or folk-tale is connected:

2. Field collection No. of the specimen (as in schedule No. 1):

3. Nature of recorded material -
   (i) Folk-song
   (ii) Folk-tale

4. Field collection No. of recorded song / tale:

5. Name of tribe/caste among whom it is prevalent:

6. Geographical areas where it is prevalent:

7. Particulars of the narrator(s) or singer(s) -
   (i) Name
   (ii) Age
   (iii) Sex
   (iv) Postal address

8. Name of the musical instrument used if any:

9. Name of the festival, ceremony, ritual or any kind
of operation with whom the tales and songs are connected.

10. At what stage of the ceremony or operation the song is sung?

11. Motive behind the singing of the particular songs as revealed by the people themselves.

12. Translated version(s) of the song(s) or tale(s):

The analysis of the folk tales and folk songs connected with an object of material culture throws considerable light on the role of the object concerned in the socio-economic life of the people.

The museum may confront a problem in the collection of information through technical means. If the field collection of specimen is made through field-investigators or research workers they may not always be in a position to collect photographic information as well as recorded folk tales and folk songs. It may be suggested that these aspects of information connected with a specimen may easily be collected at a later date according to convenience by sending a technician to the place from where it has been collected.

Considering the scope of making extensive field work with the help of competent anthropologists and collecting data specially by technological devices, the museum of the Cultural Research Institute enjoys special advantage over the other museums provided its working policy is oriented in that direction.

Next to this, the museum which has the scope of making collection by undertaking fieldwork is the University
Departmental Museum (Anthropology). In every year under the
guidance of the departmental teachers the students undertake
extensive field-work in different parts of the country. Be-
sides this, departmental research scholars also make extensive
field work in the cultural environment of the people. Over and
above, the departmental teachers in connection with carrying
out their research projects undertake fieldwork as well. During
these occasions, they can make substantial collection provided
they are asked to do so.

The remaining three museums - National Museum, Indian
Museum and Assam State Museum which do not have much scope for
field collection, may have the chance to get their required
specimens collected through these two institutional museums.
For the purpose, the National Museum and the Indian Museum
which are meant for building up national ethnographical collection
may at the initial phase prepare their working policy as sugges-
ted in case of the museum of the Cultural Research Institute.
To collect the desired specimens from the selected tribes, they
may establish contact with the different Tribal Research Insti-
tutes situated in different parts of the country like NEFA,
Nagaland, West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat,
and Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh. As the Tribal Research Institutes
are in a position to make substantial collection from among the
tribes of their respective states, the National Museum and the
Indian Museum may have the chance to make representative col-
lection from as many as nine states where there are Tribal
Research Institutes. By entering into negotiation with the
University Departments of Anthropology, these two museums may also have the chance to collect specimens through them from the states like Assam, West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra, Mysore, Madras as well. In this connection, example of the Australian museums may be cited. In the initial building phase, all the leading museums of that country collected ethnographical specimens in collaboration with the university departments.

In making the collection through the Tribal Research Institutes and the University Departments of Anthropology, finance required for the purpose, may be borne by the museums for whom they make collection. Occasionally a staff of the museum may also be spared to work with the staff of the institutes.

Besides field collection through other museums, these two museums for building up national ethnographical collection may also acquire their desired specimens by entering into negotiation with different museums so that they may give specimens as gift. By entering into exchange programmes between themselves, the National Museum and the Indian Museum may also acquire specimens in filling up the deficiency of their collection. For the collection of specimens, these museums may also establish contact with the Anthropological Survey of India which is making extensive ethnographic survey all over the country. Different missionary and Philanthropic organizations who are working in the tribal zones may also be contacted to have specimens through them.
Like the National Museum and the Indian Museum, the Assam State Museum may also enhance the collection of its anthropological section by entering into negotiation with the Gauhati University Department of Anthropology and the Tribal Research Institute of the state. It may also collect specimens through different missionary organizations working in the tribal belts of Assam specially in Garo Hill, Khasia & Jayantia Hills and also in Mizo Hill District.

The best scope of enhancing the collection of the ethnographical specimens of the university departmental museums from different parts of the country is by entering into exchange programme with the different university departments of anthropology located in different places.

The success of building up of collection of the different museums in these ways as suggested to overcome the difficulties of the paucity of staff and fund depends greatly on careful planning. The planning consists of preparation of lists of specimens, lists of tribes from whom and the lists of regions from where these articles will be collected. Selection of sources through whom the collection to be made and its policy followed to get the work done through them are also equally important and vital.
DOCUMENTATION

Documentation which is so important in modern museum service is almost totally neglected in the Indian museums. Except for the National Museum, no other museum has yet introduced the modern documentation system. The case study reveals that there are obvious reasons for such state of affairs. The main reasons for apathy towards the documentation work are as follows:

1. Lack of working knowledge on modern documentation system.
2. Paucity of staff to deal with the matter.

For example, the Keeper (Anthropology Section) of the National Museum who is a specialist in documentation work and has studied the modern documentation systems by personally visiting the leading museums of the world, has introduced modern documentation system in the National Museum. But for want of adequate number of sectional staff, the progress of work is not at all satisfactory. Although in the Indian Museum, requisite number of staff is there but for want of adequate working knowledge on the modern documentation system, it has not yet been fully introduced. But in other museums, it is found to have lacuna both in working knowledge and number of staff. Inspite of these limitations, to improve the documentation system of the Indian museums, a few suggestions have been put forward and they are as follows:
Suggestions:

1. To wipe out the deficiency of working knowledge on the documentation system, it may be suggested that the Indian National Committee of ICOM may prepare a working plan of the documentation system and with a note urging the museums to take up the modern documentation system for enhancing their working potentiality may be circulated to the different museums. With such working knowledge made available, the developing museums may have the chance to take up the improved documentation system.

2. The National Museum may also take leadership in this sphere. Because, this museum has been set up in the country with a view to develop this institution as a model to the developing museums. The documentation system now being followed in this museum is by far the best and advanced in the country. As there is provision for the working museum personnel to have training in the conservation laboratory, similar facility may also be given for having study facilities and working experience on documentation system as well in the National Museum.

3. But the documentation system of the National Museum is elaborate. Most of the museums having very limited number of staff, it is not possible for them to introduce this elaborate system. For them at present, a simple documentation system may be suggested giving emphasis on two aspects only. First of all, they may improve the condition of their accession register so far as its get up, binding, quality of papers, shape, size, volume, information columns and their upkeep as per standard prescribed by the National Museum. It is essential for long duration of the registers by withstanding stress and strain of handling. Maintenance of essential data in systematic order in this register, may help in the introduction of advanced documentation system in future. Secondly, introduction of card-cataloguing of specimens is also urgently required. It is through this card cataloguing, brief information may be readily available about a specimen. This information together with brief description, measurement, sketch or photograph in the card helps also in identification of specimen and in tracing it out very promptly as well. Ready availability of data and spotting out the specimen at the right moment are the two most helpful devices in carrying out the museological activities very effectively.

4. Efforts may also be undertaken to make the museums conscious about the importance of documentation in the museum service. For the purpose, seminar on the documentation may be organized. Through different museological journals, articles on the role of documentation may be ventilated.
as well. The Indian National Committee of ICOM and the different museums' associations also may launch a movement for this. Once the museum authorities are convinced on its importance, they will definitely try all measures to improve their documentation system.

5. There is another scope of introducing better documentation system. In the museum service, fresh entrants may be taken from the Museology Diploma holders. In the museology curriculum much importance has been given on documentation system. Thus with basic knowledge on documentation, it will be easy for the diploma holders to implement better documentation systems in the museums where they will be employed.
P R E S E R V A T I O N

It is through the museum movement launched so far in India, it has been possible to impress upon the museum administrators about the importance of conservation of ethnographical specimens. Although all the museums do not have adequate laboratory facilities, some of the leading museums of the country have already taken adequate positive steps for the chemical conservation of their specimens. In this respect the National Museum and the Indian Museum are pioneer in India by establishing well-organized laboratory under expert chemists. These experts have also gained considerable knowledge on modern chemical conservation processes by visiting the foreign laboratories. But in the other museums, there are miniature form of laboratories just to give preliminary treatment to their specimens. From the case studies made here, reasons have also been ascertained for the under-developed condition of the laboratories of many of the museums of the country and they are as follows:

1. Paucity of staff to look after the museum affair.
2. Inadequate working knowledge on conservation of the existing staff.
3. Paucity of fund and space.
4. Lack of planning and foresight in developing the museum laboratories.

Inspite of the handicaps as mentioned above, how effectively the museum with underdeveloped laboratories can carry out the conservation work has been suggested below:
Suggestions:

1. The National Museum in its conservation laboratory is now running a short course on conservation for the museum personnel. The deficiency of lacking knowledge of the staff of the small museums may be overcome by arranging to have them this training.

2. The Calcutta University and the Baroda University are running diploma courses in museology. In the curriculum, chemical conservation is one of the most important papers having scope of both theoretical and practical lessons. Special privileges are given so far as attendance is concerned to the museum personnel. To have their staff trained in museology, small museums may also give necessary facilities to some of their staff to read in this diploma course. In this way also, deficiency of working knowledge may be overcome.

3. In case of fresh appointment, strict measures may be taken so that only the diploma holders in museology are appointed. With basic knowledge in conservation work, the diploma holders will be in a position to work in scientific way right from the very beginning and thereby problem of inexperienced staff may also be overcome.

4. When most of the museums have miniature form of laboratory which is in a position to render preliminary chemical treatment to the specimens, in complicated cases the specimens may be sent to any one of the central laboratories like National
Museum (National Laboratory), Indian Museum (Eastern zone), Madras Government Museum (Southern zone), and Baroda Museum (Western zone) according to the convenience of the museums concerned. Because there is provision for treatment of the specimens of the other museums in these laboratories. In this connection it may be mentioned that to make this scheme a success, arrangement may be made to circulate the news on the availability of such laboratory facilities in the central laboratories to the different museums of the country. At the same time, in the central laboratories also top priority may be given to the work of the small museums so that clear understanding may develop among themselves.

5. Sometimes instead of sending the specimens outside, expert's opinion may be obtained through correspondence. Wherever possible, the dealing assistant may establish personal contact with the chemist of the central laboratory and may have requisite information on the conservation procedure. He may then carry out the work in the museum laboratory itself.

6. Books and journals on conservation may be purchased in the library so that in case of necessity, the published literature on conservation may be consulted.
DISPLAY & ARRANGEMENT

The case study reveals that display and arrangement of specimens so far made in the National Museum and the Indian Museum is far from adequate to present a picture of the current Indian ethnography. Considering the limited scopes of these two museums, a scheme has been suggested which may be able to depict a very sketchy picture of the Indian ethnography in the museum.

An outline of the scheme

I. Theme:

The theme of display is the presentation of a broad outline of Indian culture from the anthropological point of view in the gallery showing special emphasis on its diversity of forms through different regional cultures accounting the significant reasons of such diversity.

Heterogeneous nature is the special characteristic feature of Indian culture. Therefore, to present an ideal picture of Indian culture in the gallery, its heterogeneous nature must clearly be depicted. This aspect of Indian culture can best be presented through regional cultures which are significantly different from one another. For the purpose, in this scheme, much emphasis has been given on the presentation of regional cultures.
2. Method:

The diversity of regional cultures can best be presented in the gallery if they are arranged on the comparative basis.

The essence of presentation of regional culture on the comparative basis is to help in accounting the reason of their peculiar features in comparison to each other. Therefore, the comparative display on regional basis will help the visitors to spot out the significant difference of regional culture and also to understand the reasons behind the diversity of its form.

3. Subdivision of gallery:

From the anthropological point of view, the Indian culture may be presented in the gallery from the following aspects:

(a) Tribal culture

(b) Folk-culture

For the purpose, in two blocks of the same gallery, each culture may separately be dealt with to show the distinct patterns of their own. In conformity with the modern trend of anthropological study in India at present, provision for a third block is suggested. Because, it is in this block the changing pattern of tribal and folk cultures which is now in process under the impact of social and economic revolution as well as for acculturation both in the rural and urban areas may conveniently be shown. However, to start with, the tribal cultures may be considered and comparative method may followed to find out their complex pattern in India.
Scheme for display in tribal block

(a) Basis of comparison:

In presenting the tribal culture, the factors responsible for their development, should be taken into consideration. In this respect, economic condition and ecological factors demand special attention. Keeping these two aspects in mind together with ethnic character, different tribal cultures may be presented in the gallery with a view to compare them with each other. The comparison made in this angle, will throw light how far the economic life and ecological factor mould the culture of people and thereby ultimately reveals the reason behind the diversity of culture pattern of tribal India. Therefore, ethnic character, economic life and ecological factors are the three salient features which have been selected to use as the basis of comparison.

Selection of individual tribal culture to use as a unit of comparison:

In India there are three tribal zones besides the Andaman & Nicobar Islands. From the economic point of view, the Indian tribals are in different economic levels right from purely food gathering stage to settled agriculturists. Furthermore, they are distributed all over India and are thereby living in different ecological conditions. Among the Indian tribals, there are three basic ethnic characters viz. Negrito, Mongoloid and Proto-Australoid.

To present the regional culture, one tribe from each region having regional characteristic features in ethnic character and economic pattern, has been selected. In the selection of individual tribes, special consideration may be given in regard to their
ethnic character, economic life and ecological condition. Tribes from each of the broad three ethnic groups and each important economic levels living under different ecological conditions may be selected with the following end in view:

(a) To correlate the role of economy and ecology in moulding the culture pattern of people and thereby accounting the reason of diversity of forms of tribal cultures in India.

(b) To find out the reason behind the formation of heterogeneous culture in the tribal world of India and also to present the visitors conspicuously a broad outline of the diverse culture pattern of tribal India.

Method adopted to present the culture of an individual tribe in relation to ecology and economy:

For facilitating comparison between the culture pattern of the selected tribes, each one of the tribal culture may be presented in the gallery strictly in uniform line which is as follows:

The cultural objects and corelating factors may conveniently be presented through three means such as (a) diorama, (b) objects of material culture and (c) proper presentation of economic activities.

Diorama:

(1) House type: by constructing a model.
(2) Settlement pattern: by painting.
(3) Topography: by models.

(4) Ethnic character: by models.
(5) Traditional dress: by models.

Therefore, it is through the diorama, the ethnic character and traditional dress of the tribe together with certain aspects of ecological picture can best be presented.
Objects of material culture:

The material expression of culture of the people is made through the objects used by them in different spheres of their life. Therefore, for the sake of making comparative analysis of the cultures of different tribal folks through the objects of material culture, following categories of material objects which are found to exist in all the tribes may be selected:

1. Specimens connected with economic activities both primary and secondary (Hunting, fishing and agricultural implements).
2. Offensive and defensive weapons.
3. Domestic utensils.
4. Objects of art and craft.
5. Ritual objects.
6. Weaving and basketry.
7. Smoking devices.

These objects of material culture may be kept conveniently at close proximity of the diorama in a specially designed showcase meant for the purpose.

Economic life:

The activities connected with the economic life and the operation of different implements etc. may be presented through sketches and photographs in a panel display just opposite to the diorama and immediately behind the showcase containing the objects of material culture. For example, in case of shifting cultivation, the different stages of this type of agricultural operation in proper sequences together with the implements used and the
part played by the operators may best be presented in the gallery through sketches and photographs for making the visitors understand about the shifting cultivation.

From this point of view, for ideally presenting the individual tribal culture, the block meant for the tribal culture, may be subdivided into as many compartments as the number of tribes are there. In each portion, cultural life of a tribe may be presented through a diorama, objects of material culture, sketches and photographs of economic activities. The arrangement of these three aspects in each portion should be as follows:

**Diorama** | **Showcase containing objects of material culture.** | **Panel showing economic activities.**

The arrangement of this type of display will help significantly to present the picture of cultural life of a tribe in the museum within a limited space. Because, through diorama it is possible to show a partial picture of the ecological conditions. Models of male and female individuals kept inside the diorama may show the ethnic character of the people and their traditional dresses. The actual picture of the culture expressed through the material culture may conveniently be shown through the presentation of actual objects used by the tribe in different spheres of their activities. Different categories of economic activities will be presented through photographs and sketches in a panel specified for each tribe.

In support of this type of display, it may be mentioned that the current trend of anthropological study is to find out
the contribution of environmental factors in the development of a particular type of culture. It has been established that ecological factors and economic pattern play a significant role in determining the culture pattern of a group of people. Therefore, by making correlation between culture, ecological condition and economic life, a close relationship may be found to exist with the objects of material culture of the people and the environment in which they live and thereby ultimately this correlation throws light how culture of a tribe is developed to cope up with the surrounding environmental factors.

In this light, when the culture pattern of the selected tribes will be compared, it will definitely show the complex culture pattern of tribal India and at the same time also will help in explaining the reasons behind the formation of such complex culture pattern. This will undoubtedly help in explaining cultural elements from the functional point of view. On this pattern of display and arrangement some comments may be made and they are as follows:

(a) In the Anthropological Gallery much emphasis may be given on tribal culture due to the fact that in anthropology, the socio-cultural branch deals mostly with simpler primitive cultures to find out the basic elements of human society which is very difficult to locate in the complex pattern of modern human society.

(b) India is almost a virgin field in anthropological research. There is much scope to tackle with the tribal cultures from different angles. In the museum gallery also, there is
enough scope to present tribal cultures and to make them study to understand the cultures of simple folk.

(3) When India is trying for a national integration, the common people must appreciate and understand the cultures of their countrymen other than their own for its fulfillment. It is through the museum/gallery, the common people may have a nice picture about the tribal world of India and thereby may appreciate the idea of integration of tribal people with the modern Indians for strengthening the national solidarity.

(42) In the selection of tribes, special attention may be given as to the extent of availability of ethnographic data which will be required for furnishing information in the gallery. Because in India, there are many tribes on whom no significant ethnographic work has yet been done.

**FOLK CULTURE**

**Introduction**

By selecting a number of common elements of folk cultures and pointing out their significant regional variations, it is possible to depict the characteristic features of regional folk cultures in India. The following elements may be selected for the purpose:

1. Dress
2. Agricultural implements with special reference to plough
3. House type and settlement pattern.
4. Oil press
5. Transport with special emphasis on wheel.

Many more elements may be selected. But in view of limited space, the above-mentioned elements are sufficient to deal with the regional folk cultures at present.
Dress:

The dress in three distinct aspects such as (a) foot-wear, (b) head-gear and (c) apparel proper may be presented. For the purpose, provincial dresses with significant local variation may be shown with special emphasis on style of wearing particularly in case of 'Sari'. Thus on the basis of distinct pattern of dress and style of wearing, it is possible to divide and subdivide India into a number of zones and subzones. Dress displayed in this perspective can only show its distinct regional features.

Agricultural implements with special reference to plough:

Indian economy is predominantly an agricultural economy. Among the agricultural implements used, plough is by far the most important and significant implement. There are various types of ploughs found in different parts of India. By the presentation of different varieties of plough used by the Indian peasants it is possible to show not only the effect of ecology on the modification of the elements of material culture but at the same time, the characteristic features of the regional agricultural system, upon which the pattern of folk culture depends to an appreciable extent.

House type and settlement pattern:

The effect of environment on culture can best be shown through house types and settlement pattern. Because, the simple folks construct their houses and plan their settlement pattern to suit the local climatic condition. They also utilize the local conveniently available materials for such construction. In planning
settlement pattern, regional topographic condition is also taken into consideration. By analysing the house type and settlement patterns, India may be divided into a number of zones showing the regional characteristic feature of folk culture from house types and settlement patterns. At the same time, it is possible to correlate for such regional forms by comparing the different factors such as climatic condition, flora, fauna, topography, technology etc.

Transport with special reference to wheels of the bullock carts:

Even today, in the most interior parts of the country, communication and transporting are being maintained by the bullock carts as motorable roads have not yet been constructed all over India. The wheels of bullock carts have different characteristic features in different regions of the country depending upon the local conditions such as soil, rainfall, strength and capacity of bullocks, condition of roads etc. Therefore, on the basis of the structure of the wheels, regional folk culture can be presented showing its diversity of forms, and at the same time, accounting the reasons of such diversity.

In this connection it may be mentioned that in the bulletin of the Anthropological Survey of India, "Peasant Life in India - Unity in Diversity", oil press, wheels of the bullock carts etc. have been taken as elements of folk culture to show their diversity of forms in India.
PROPOSED THIRD BLOCK

The most current picture of Indian culture may successfully be presented in the proposed third block by showing the changing pattern of Indian culture due to culture contact between the Hindus and tribals in the village level as well as in the industrial belts. In the display of this block, instead of depending much on the concrete objects of material culture, it is proposed to depend mostly on graphical representation, photographs, sketches etc. showing the extent of change in different aspects. As the cultures in contact zones change very quickly, this block should be exhibited as temporary exhibitions. Because, to present the changing pattern of tribal and folk cultures in different contact situations such as tea gardens, mines, factories, towns and villages etc. and also to cope up with their rapid changes, the only method that can successfully be employed is the arrangement of temporary exhibition in the gallery.
EDIFICATION

The case studies reveal that apart from the National Museum and the Indian Museum which are directly under the financial control of the Government of India and have been built up mainly to serve as a centre of education together with different service units like photography unit, publication unit, presentation unit, and educational unit, no other museum in the country has been bestowed with the blessings of carrying out different categories of educational activities like maintenance of photo-library, bringing out museum publications, organization of popular lectures, temporary exhibitions and introduction of free guide service. There are obvious reasons for this state of affair and they are as follows:

1. Inadequate staff.
2. Paucity of fund and space.
3. Absence of well-organized service units.
4. Divergent working policies of the different categories of museums.

In the state museums, university departmental museums and tribal research institutes' museums, not only staff position is poor, fund and space are also insignificant for setting up different service units which are essential for carrying out all categories of educational activities which are possible to organize for the National Museum and the Indian Museum. In this respect working policy of different categories of museums may also be taken into consideration. The National Museum, the Indian
Museum and the State Museum are all public museums mainly for dissemination of knowledge to the visiting public. Where as the university departmental museums and museums of the Tribal Research Institutes instead of public, being mainly meant for research and study purposes of the respective departmental staff and students, aspects of educational activities which are vital for the public museum, are almost absent here.

Whatever may be approach and policy of the different museums, the very basis of all the museums is their collection. So it is the responsibility of all the museums to prepare a catalogue of their respective collection for extending study facilities and research references to the interested persons by providing necessary information through this publication. It is really pity that none of the museums in India has yet brought out printed catalogue of their collection although they are mostly meant for imparting education. It is, therefore, suggested that from the educational point of view, among the publications of all the categories of ethnographical museums, topmost priority may be given to the preparation and printing of their sectional catalogue.

Apart from the catalogue which is essential for all the categories of museums, guide-book is another most important publication specially for the public museums. This guide-book should be up-to-date and in conformity with the sectional galleries so that by consulting the guide-book, a person may have no difficulty in identifying and understanding the significance of specimens displayed in the galleries. In this respect, the
guide-books of the anthropological section of both the National Museum and the Indian Museum are not only back dated with very brief information but incomplete as well, as they do not cover all the galleries of the section. Hence preparation of fresh guide-books is essential not only for the museums which do not have guide book but also for the museums having guide-books but back dated.

As the preparation of catalogue and guide-book is purely scholastic work and curatorial job, both the Indian Museum and the National Museum with their qualified keeper and curator respectively, the research institute museum with the help of its departmental research officers and the university department in collaboration with the lecturers and research scholars can easily get the scripts of the catalogue and guide-book prepared. Though paucity of staff is there in all the museums, preparation of script in collaboration other competent staff of the parent departments is not a very difficult task provided honest and sincere intention is there to get the work done.

Again there is not much difficulty in the publication of these scripts. The National Museum and the Indian Museum with their respective well-organized publication division can easily bring out these publications. The literate visitors may profitably utilize the guide-books in understanding the exhibits on display.
But in India a major portion of the visitors being non-literate, it is not possible for them to take the help of guide-books. Sometimes pocket does not permit the literate visitors to make use of guide-books. Again among some of the visitors who are in a position to pay for the guide-books, being not so much museum minded, are often reluctant to spend money for it. These problems of the non-literate and a portion of the literate visitors can only be successfully met with by the introduction of free guide service in the galleries specially in the museums meant for public in general.