Preface

Tripura is my homeland. I feel myself proud to give my identity as the son of Tripura which is a relic of a once powerful Kingdom of the North-Eastern part of ancient India. The conquests of the Kings of Tripura gained for the kingdom till the sixteenth century possession of a vast territory stretched from the Sundarban (now in West Bengal, India) in the West and Myanmar in the east. In different centuries it gave shelter in its bosom people of many races belonging to different regions and culture. Vast hordes of tribal people migrated to Tripura along the rivers and hill-slopes either in search of 'jhum' cultivating forest-lands which had been their only means of livelihood, or in search of proper shelter to protect themselves from the attack of other stronger tribal groups, or in search of a new dwelling place as they have lost their own due to natural calamities. Whatever might be the cause, there is no denying the fact that Tripura now has become the heavenly abode for the tribal people of nineteen various distinct races and they comprise not less than one-third population of the present Tripura State. This was really interesting to me why so many tribal groups took their shelter in Tripura and why do they feel secure to settle in Tripura. These queries prompted me for further investigation and that is the reason why I have selected my research topic titled "Tribal People of Tripura with special reference to Buddhist tribes."
My respected supervisor Dr. Jayanti Chatterjee, Reader and Head of the Department of Pali, University of Calcutta, has encouraged me to continue my researches on the tribal people of Tripura. Not only that, she has guided me throughout by supplying data from various sources. But for whose constant vigilance and encouragement, I could not have finished my work. I am, therefore, really grateful to her. I am also grateful to other members of the teaching staff of the Department of Pali. To mention: Professor Bela Bhattacharya, Professor Manikuntala De (Haldar), Dr. Saswati Mutsuddi and Dr. Aishwarya Biswas.

I express my deep sense of gratitude to those authors and publishers whose books on the tribes of Tripura have been utilised by me. Thanks to those friends, especially my students, who gave me company while doing my field work among some of the tribal people, especially Chakmas, Maghs, Tripuris and Reangs. Many of the tribal people are not approachable. I have no other alternative but to avoid them.

I have done my work according to my capacity, but the vast field is open for the future researchers.

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CHANDAN DAS

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