CHAPTER - III

ECONOMIC LIFE
OF
THE BHUYANS
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The economic life of the Bhuyan tribals makes an interesting study. Living in the inaccessible forest areas, surrounded by the hills, their economic life was quite different from that of the people of the plains. This was best illustrated in their agriculture, industry, trade and commerce, transport and communication, mineral, wealth, living condition, economic exploitation and the like.

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture was the main occupation of the Bhuyans. They claimed themselves to be the children of the soil or the original owners of the soil. Sometimes they claimed to be the masters of the land or landlords or Zamindars. Basically the Feudatory State of Keonjhar which had always been the stronghold of the Bhuyans was an agriculturally dominated State. Agriculture was the primary and main occupation of the Bhuyans which played a key role in the economic system of the State. As in other parts of the country, it provided greater employment opportunity to the maximum number

1. Feudatory States Gazetteers, P.43.
of the people. Richardson, the Settlement Commissioner in 1814, made the report that the total cultivable land was only one-eighth of the total land. Out of the total area of 3,096 square miles, only 346 square miles were cultivable in Keonjhar State.

The Feudatory State of Keonjhar was mainly divided into two parts, namely, Upper Keonjhar and Lower Keonjhar. Upper Keonjhar was covered with dense forests, inaccessible hill ranges and rocky lands, on the other hand Lower Keonjhar consisted of mostly plain lands. The plains of Anandpur had a good amount of cultivable lands. Upper Keonjhar was mostly inhabited by the tribal communities particularly by the Bhuyan community who paid a very little attention for the development of the land and agriculture. Their practice of agriculture was perfunctory. As their needs were very small and limited, they remained satisfied with what they could get from the land with least care and effort.

3. Feudatory States Gazetteers, P.212.
5. Feudatory States Gazetteers, P.212.
6. SRKS, P.42
The soil of Upper Keonjhar was generally dry, but most part of it was rich as it received every year for its nutrient, the ashes of leaves and other small bushes burnt down in the self-igniting jungle fire, mostly during the hot months of the year. The depressions and the hollow lands which were locally called Bera had special ability as they retained more of this washing of the ashes. The Upper elevations and crests of the hills were rocky and as they could not retain water, were not suitable for any other cultivation than Taila cultivation which in the plains was called dahi. Taila was a fresh clearing on which the bushes cut from the land are burnt and thereafter it was ploughed up with the ashes which provided fertility to the soil. These types of lands did not bear permanent cultivation and had to be abandoned for three or four consecutive years of cultivation for an equal or sometimes a longer period by falling back on the jungle, unless as sometimes happened in the plains, they were converted for 'baze fasal' by manure or for sarada by the construction of bundhs or embankments for storage of water and irrigation in the places where the site was bad. The soil of Lower Keonjhar in its general appearance was
remarkable. There was some sand a little Lower Anandpur on both sides of the Baitarani river and near the river Kusai, on which those rivers and their tributary nalas (streams and rivulets) had deposited during flood.  

The system of agriculture in the Bhuyan tract remained unchanged over generations. It was traditional and was depended entirely on rainfall. The land was divided into six categories, namely Jala, Kala, Gora, Dahi, Pala and Dalua.  

The Jala or the wet lands were the wet rice lands which were again divided into four categories. The first type of land called bera lands was situated at the bottom of the depression. The Kala lands were the high homestead lands corresponding to gharbaris and bustees. The Gora lands were situated on high ground. These categories of lands situated close to the villages were better taken care of and manured and so they sometimes produced two crops. The Dahi lands, similar to Taila lands, consisted of land freshly cleared of jungle. First the jungle was burnt and then the land was ploughed up along with

12. SRKS, P.21
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
the ashes which made the soil fertile, but these lands were not
conjennial for permanent cultivation and had to be abandoned after
three or four consecutive years of cultivation. Such lands were
meant for the production of either rice or rabi (winter) crops. The
Dahi cultivation was practised by the tribal people of Upper
Keonjhar. The Pala lands were very much alluvial land situated in
the river valleys and produced two crops in a year. The first crop,
rice, was generally followed by rabi crops, namely, pulses and
vegetables like marsh-melons, onions, brinjals and the like. In
Lower Keonjhar such lands were called garipal. The Dalua land
was found only in Anandpur Division of Keonjhar State. This type of
land was a part of the low land watered by the river Baitarani.

The methods of cultivation were different at different altitudes
of the hill tracts of Orissa. These methods of cultivation were
primitive, crude and unscientific and quite wasteful. ‘Slush and burn’
cultivation was the chief method practised by the tribals. Such was

16. SRKS, P.41
17. Ibid.
19. SRKS, P.42.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid.
the case of the Bhuyans. The hill Bhuyans called it Kaman or Kamani. It was also called shifting cultivation.\(^22\)

The Bhuyans of Keonjhar practised a different type of cultivatised called as *Dahi*.\(^23\) In this system of cultivation, large trees were ringed and the smaller ones cleared by cutting and setting it on fire in the dry season.\(^24\) The soil was then scratched with a primitive plough and the tribal people produced the crops like rice, maize, millets, oil seeds and turmeric, etc. for two or three consecutive seasons.\(^25\) Then the land was left uncultivated till the trees and plants grew again sufficiently to admit of a second felling. Such a cycle continued till the land was completely exhausted and there was no further hope for its regeneration and the growth of plants.\(^26\) This was called the shifting cultivation, practised by the Bhuyans and the Juangs in the hill tracts.\(^27\) They also called it "Podu Chasa".\(^28\) Living


\(^{23}\) Feudatory States Gazetteers, P.72.


\(^{25}\) A.R. (Orissa and Chhotnagpur), 1916-1917, P.12.


\(^{27}\) Ibid.

\(^{28}\) S.C. Ray, op. cit., P.60
on the hill tracts they practised shifting cultivation. By felling and burning the forest they cleared land for cultivation. When the land was exhausted after about three years, a new area was cleared. When all the cultivable area accessible was exhausted the village was shifted to a new site. However, the practice of Podu cultivation by the tribal people was the result of a primitive habit. But this practice of cultivation caused a great harm to the land and much destruction to the forest. The removal of green cover resulted in a lot of soil erosion and large areas were rendered permanently barren. It was reported that both Dahi and Podu cultivation were found to have caused a great damage to the forest as well as the land, since many hill tracts used to be denuded of valuable forest growth as a result of this rainfall was adversely affected.

Agricultural operations in the Keonjhar State depended entirely on rainfall. As no attempt was made to effect irrigation, each men

31. Ibid.
33. Feudatory States Gazetteers, P.226.
used to make his own petty dam to water his fields. The Rajas of the State paid very little attention to the problems in connection with the agricultural operations. Raja Dhanurjay Narayan Bhanja, however, paid some attention for the improvement of irrigation for agriculture. The annual expenditure on agriculture per head was Rs.5-4-0 (Rupees Five and Four anna). For tilling the soil the people of Lower Keonjhar made the use of ploughs drawn by the bullocks while the Bhuyans of the Upper Keonjhar used a type of stick called 'Ankusbadi'. Rice was the important agricultural produce of the people. In the hilly areas pumpkins, beans and brinjals and other vegetables were produced along with Indian corn. The rice of Upper Keonjhar was better than that of Lower Keonjhar, being of a finer quality. Rice was the principal product of agriculture. An area of 135.6 square miles or 86778.4 acres of land produced rice in Upper Keonjhar. On the other hand an area of 105.2 square miles of land produced rice in Lower Keonjhar. Rice was also grown on Pala, Gora and Dahi areas. On the gora and dahi lands

36. Ibid., P.466.
37. Feudatory State Gazetteers, P.72.
38. SRKS, PP.42-43.
39. Ibid.
the agriculturists did not stick to growing the same crops every year. It was found the tenants sowing China or Guldi or Kangu or Muga or Kolatha on the land where they had grown rice in the preceding year. Rice was of four kinds, namely, Beali sown on the highlands in May and June and harvested in August and September; Laghu or early winter crop harvested in October and November; Garu or late winter crop harvested in December and January and Dalua which was transplanted in January and harvested in April. The second and third description of rice were either sown in June or were transplanted in July and August. In Doyam and Sayam or the second and third class lands the agriculturists took little interest in sowing seeds. In the ayal or first class lands which were situated in beras, transplantation was the only mode of cultivation. For transplantation the cultivators had to sow seeds in a highly manured plot locally called as talimunda in the neighboured of the cultivator’s house. When the seedlings were about a foot high and of sufficient strength they were transplanted. The straw was not much cared for in Upper Keonjhar and in hilly dandpats of

40. SRKS, P.42-43.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid.
Lower Keonjhar where the people thatched their houses with a kind of spear-grass called 'maru'. They cut the crop from a little bera the middle and leave the stumps in the field. After reaping the crops were bound up in sheaves and stocked in the baris or in the vicinity of some rocky floor nearby called 'Chatyari', where the grains were threshed out. The well-to-do cultivators used bullocks to thresh the grain from the straw by treading over the produce. But in case of seed-pappy, the grains were always beaten out. The straw trodden over by bullocks was known as 'Pual' and was used as fodder.

Besides rice, the Bhuyan tribals produced other food grains like makai (maize), bajra, arhar, biri, kulthi, chana, muga, chola (gram), khossa (oil seed) and the like. Makai (maize) was the principal grain used as food stuff. With khossa sesame sometime they made a kind of cake for their meals. They also produced tobacco for their consumption.

44. SRKS, P.42-43.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid.
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid.
INDIGENOUS INDUSTRIES

The economic activities of the Bhuyans was reflected in its indigenous industry. It not only helped in meeting with their own needs, but also helped immensely in meeting with the local demands.

The Bhuyans including other aboriginal tribes prepared leaf plates and cups, bows, arrows and spears. They also prepared ploughs for the purpose of cultivation.\(^{50}\) Besides agricultural implements like plough, etc. bamboo baskets, brass ornaments such as anklets, etc. were manufactured to meet with the demand.\(^{51}\) Sabai grass was cultivated extensively and ropes were made out of it for local use.\(^{52}\) During respite from field labours men make pumpkin gourd drinking vessels, bamboo sticks, wooden pestles and mortars and the threshing apparatus called Dhenki.\(^{53}\) During the winter and spring season the Bhuyan girls wove mats of wild datepalms.\(^{54}\) The Bhuyan women were skilled manufacturers of cups and plates of sal leaves.\(^{55}\)

50. Feudatory States Gazetteers, P.72.
51. SRKS, P.29.
52. Feudatory States Gazetteers, P.98.
53. S.C. Ray, op.cit., PP.75-76.
54. Ibid.
TRADE AND COMMERCE

Trade and commerce in the Feudatory State of Keonjhar was primitive and traditional. It played a negligible role in the economic life of the people. It had been estimated that in all the Feudatory States of Orissa taken as a whole there was only 1 to 1.5 per cent of the people were engaged in trade and commerce. The people in general imported articles from the border areas such Chaibasa and Kharasua. It was reported that a good number of people from the state went to the market at Gadatota in Talcher to buy cattle. The people also exported the articles like rice, oil seeds, mahul, horns, panasi grass (used in rope making), honey, molasses, etc.

The Bhuyans were often unable to meet their day-to-day needs by their own labour. So they had to go to the market to buy things that they needed. There were a number of markets at different places in the tribal tracts and also in the low country. These markets called Hats which sat once or twice a week. Besides, weekly Hats were

56. Feudatory States Gazetteers, P.120.
57. SRKS, P.13.
held at many other important places. In Udaipur weekly market was held at Silipada, Patna, Handiasil and Musakori on Mondays, Fridays, Mondays and Tuesdays respectively. In Kalikaprasad Dandapat markets were held at Rimuli and Jhumpura on Mondays and Wednesdays respectively. Trade and commerce in Keonjhar was carried on chiefly along the various roads and tracks that linked the various parts of the state. The river Baitarani also helped in the transportation of commodities. Bullock carts were used for the transportation of goods over land routes. To begin with, no dues were levied on the transportation of goods to markets and fairs. But subsequently the British Government imposed levies at certain places. Thus all sorts of provisions were there but the Bhuyans were neither good traders nor interesting in trading. The articles like rope and thatching grass collected occasionally in very small quantity are sold to the non-tribal merchants in weekly markets. Barter was widely prevalent in the Pauri area. Ordinarily

60. SRKS, P.29.
61. LSS O’ Malley, BBG (Angul), PP.90-94; Also, Feudatory States Gazetteers, P.5.; Also SRKS, P.29.
a Bhuyan desirous of selling his goods had to go to the markets and sold them there and with sale proceeded to buy whatever he wanted for him or for his family.65

In barter system, on the other hand, he need not take the trouble of going to the market for any transaction. Soon after the crops were harvested the non-tribal merchants visited the Pauri village with load of rice and paddy and the Pauris got those readily by exchanging their crops at their door step at the usual rate.66

Thus, trade and commerce of the Bhuyan tracts was going on barter system. When most of the people were engaged in agriculture, very few people were engaged in trade and commerce and the Bhuyan tribes depended upon forest and forest product.

COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

The Tributary State of Keonjhar, being a land full of inaccessible forests and hill ranges which was mostly inhabited by the Bhuyan tribes, was singularly deficient in the matter of roads and

66. Ibid.
communication facilities. Its rugged terrain made the construction of roads very difficult. Till 1857, it was reported that the State was without any road at all. In addition to the terrain, the apathy of the state administration was also responsible for such a precarious situation. A.J.M. Mills reported, "The Rajas were afraid of opening roads as they wanted impenetrable jungles around their residence".67 As early as 1842 the road was opened and it passed through Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Pal Lahera and Bamra.68 During the year 1861 and 1868 the Bonto-Bhadrap road connecting Anandpur with Bhadrak was constructed.69 Similarly a road from Jaintigarh to Keonjharga was constructed under the direction of Capt. J. Johnstone whereupon the Government ordered its Agent to extend the road up to the border with Bhadrak covering a distance of 106 miles. It was pointed out in the Settlement Report of 1892, "It is essential to open out the communication for this territory, which hitherto has been inaccessible from the Orissa side. No elaborate road is needed, but there must be a tract on which load bullock carts will be able to travel during the fair weather". The road

68. Ibid, AJM Mills to the Tributary Mahals, Jan., 23, 1847; Also, SRKS, P.24.
69. Ibid.
connecting Keonjhargarh with Jaintigarh covering a distance of 36 miles was opened in 1893.70

In the older days elephants, bullocks, buffaloes were used as the means of transport and communication.71 During the Dharanidhar Rising of 1891, Fakir Mohan Senapati, the Manager of the State, travelled by an elephant.72 The Maharaja also travelled by an elephant during his marriage.73

STANDARD OF LIVING

The standard of living of the Bhuyan tribals were best reflected in their sanitary habits, food and drink, dress and ornament and the like.

Sanitary Habits

The Bhuyan villages were situated on the high hills and inaccessible forests. Although they enjoyed fresh and cool breeze, during the rainy season the home land of the Bhuyans became

70. SRKS, P.24.
72. Fakir Mohan Atmacharita (Oriya Ed.) (Cuttack, 1963), P.187.
malarious. But the native people who were accustomed to their habits had developed strong resistance for malaria.\textsuperscript{74} The Bhuyan women took care of their houses which were plastered with cowdung and earth. The women cleaned the earthen cooking vessels. Leaf cups and leaf plates were used for eating food. The people did not get pure drinking water and due to use of polluted water they mostly suffered from stomach disorder.\textsuperscript{75}

Food and Drink

Rice constituted the ideal food of the Bhuyans. Even meat and millet without rice did not constitute a hearty meal.\textsuperscript{76} A few people used wheat. Besides rice and wheat, they took jalli, maize, kango, ragi. The flesh of deer, sambar, wildboar and hare were eaten by them. Fish was eaten when available. Dried fish was purchased from the market and taken boiled or fried. They also relished fried red ants and termites.\textsuperscript{77} Cooked rice soaked in water called ‘Pakhal’ was very popular among the people.\textsuperscript{78} Besides the

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{75} Ibid, P.10.
  \item \textsuperscript{76} Ibid, P.11.
  \item \textsuperscript{77} ODG (Keonjhar), 1986, PP.99-100.
  \item \textsuperscript{78} Nihar Ranjan Patnaik (Ed.), \textit{Economic History of Orissa}, New Delhi, 1997, P.189, Jagannath Patnaik’s ‘Economic Life in the Feudatory States of Orissa’.
\end{itemize}
Bhuyans depended on the forest products. Although rice constituted the principal food of the Bhuyans, but it was supplemented with a variety of leaves, fruits and roots collected from the forest. These forest products included the fruits, such as mango, jack fruit, *kendu*, *podhai* and roots, such as *pitaikanda*, *bainga*, *saiga* and edible green leaves called *Koliarisag* and *bengulisag*. Edible leaves and roots were used in place of vegetables and taken with the staple or principal food. These roots and leaves were dried and preserved for use whenever required. The Bhuyans collected *Mahua* followers and preserved throughout the year to be cooked and eaten with other food stuff. They also derived a part of their livelihood from hunting in the forests and catching fish from the hill stream. It was a fact that hunting and fishing were two of the main economic activities of the tribals of Orissa. In festive occasions, special foods, such as, rice cakes, *khiri*, sweets, etc. were prepared and eaten. The use of tea and coffee was not popular among the tribals. They prefer liquor to tea and coffee. Irrespective of sex and age the tribal people including the Bhuyan tribes used to drink *handia* (rice beer) and

79. ODG (Keonjhar), 1986, P.100.
80. Ibid.
81. Ibid.
83. ODG (Keonjhar), 1986, P.100.
Smoking a *bidi* (rolls of *sal* or *kendu* leaves with tobacco) was common among them. Some of them were addicted to opium, *ganja* and *bhang*.84

**Dress and Ornament**

Since the economic standard of the Bhuyan tribals was not uniform, so also their dress and ornaments varied from one community to the other.

Clothing of both men and women were simple, but scanty. They had a fascination for ornaments and the ornamentation of the body.85 The dress and ornaments of the Plains Bhuyans were just like those of other neighbouring non-tribal peasants. The men wore *dhoti* banian and shirt and the women wore *sari*. However, blouse were worn on special festive gatherings.86 The ornaments worn by the Plains Bhuyans were simple and of lighter variety. Like other rural women, they were fond of silver bangles, armlets, anklets and

84. ODG (Keonjhar), 1986, P.100.
necklaces and nose-rings and ear-rings. The men wore only a very short loin cloth round the waist and the poorer of them wore only a strip of perineal cloth kept in its place by a string round the waist. The women wore a cloth about twelve cubits long which was worn as a combined shirt and shawl. Unlike the women of the plains the hill Bhuyan women adorned themselves with a number of ornaments. The principal ornaments worn by them were Mathamani, pins, clips for head; padaka or tankamala (necklaces of cotton thread strung with coins), Pohalamali (beaded necklaces), chain, Kanthi for neck; Fasia, ear-ring, Noli for ear; Guna, Nakafula, Dandi, Notha for nose; armlet, Bahasuta for arm; Chudi, Bala, Bataphal, Kataria, Bandria for wrist; Mudi for finger; Antasuta or Gotha for waist; Pahuda for anklet and Gudamudi for toe. The men folk did not generally wear ornaments of any kind except ring. The Bhuyan women also used feathers, Kaincha, coloured beads, Kathamali, etc. in order to decorate their body.

91. ODG (Keonjhar), 1986, P.98.
Thus varieties of ornaments worn by different Bhuyan communities had an important place in the economic life of the Bhuyans of Orissa during the British rule.

**TAXATION SYSTEM**

As pointed out earlier, the Bhuyans claimed to be the original proprietors of the land. When questioned as to who they were, they invariably answered, ‘I am Zamindar’ or owner of the soil.\(^{92}\) They used to pay a house-tax. Practically there were no intermediate rights in the soil except in the case of service tenures and other beneficiary grants.\(^{93}\) Before the settlement made by James Johnstone, the Government Agent, after the Keonjhar rising of 1867-68, there appeared to have been no fixed revenue levied on the Bhuyans: a house-tax of four \textit{annas} per house and a plough tax of eight \textit{annas} per plough was imposed. A school fee of one \textit{anna} per house was also imposed. The old duty of thatching certain State buildings and supplying transport for the Chief, when on tour, was also regulated and duly enforced.\(^{94}\)

93. Ibid., P.376.
94. Ibid.; Feudatory States Gazetteers, P.52.
FEUDAL EXPLOITATION

The feudal exploitation was a common phenomenon in the economic life of the Bhuyan tribals during the reign of the Feudatory Chiefs of Orissa.

During the reign of the ruling chief of Bonai State forced labour called Bethi was a common practice the Bhuyans were forced to work on construction of road and buildings free of payment. At the same time, it was obligatory for each village to give 12 Khandi of Biri, 3 Khandi of mustard, 10 seers of turmeric, and 8 Manas of ghee, 2 Khandi of niger, honey, fire wood, rope and vegetables to the chief every year.95 The system of bethi (forced labour) and begari (unpaid labour) was also the chief means of feudal exploitation in the Feudatory State of Keonjhar. This system had originated long years ago in Orissa in general and Keonjhar in particular. The Raja of the State forced the subjects to work for him without payment. The Raja also made extra demands on the subjects in addition to their tribute owed to him. The tribal people were mostly exploited in this way than the people of other sections. Right from the beginning of the

State, the Bhuyans had a special relationship with the Raja and they were inclined to render some sort of free service for him on certain special occasions. But with the passage of time this voluntary labour of the subjects was converted to forced and free labour. The Raja was not the only one to uphold the system of *bethi*, the other officials of the royal palace like the *Dewan*, the *Bebarta* and the *Amlas* also made use of the system in his name. Even the *Pradhans* (the village headmen), *Garhnaiks* and *Kanungoes* (Head of the *Dandapats*) made use of this *bethi* system. This caused a great economic hardship on the part of the subjects and they vehemently protested against it.

The history of the *'Bethi'* system can be pushed back to a very early age in the history of Orissa. Richard Temple in his report had mentioned that the Great *Baldev Jew Temple* in Keonjhargarh had been constructed by Laxmi Narayan Bhanja (1716-1730AD) by the use of *bethi* only.96 During the hunting expeditions of the royal personages it was also prevalent in a large scale and such expeditions often occurred more than forty times a year in Keonjhar State.97


97. Ibid.
During the imperial rule of the British the 'Bethi' system consisted of forced and free labour. Mr. H.P. Wylly, the Agent of Keonjhar State, called the system of *bethi* an organised institution. 98

The tribal subjects, especially the Bhuyans and the Juangs, made some voluntary service for the Raja by supplying ropes and wood and all labour for the Rath Car festival and on other religious occasions. They also rendered free labour for all Government officers travelling in the Bhuyan Pirhs and supplied *rasad* (articles of consumption) at current prices. 99 They had to supply labour for carrying the Maharaja's luggage whenever he travelled, not only in the Bhuyan Pirhs, but also in any part of the State, and even outside the State. They had to supply *rasad* to the Maharaja when he travelled in the Bhuyan Pirhs at current prices. 100 They were also liable to thatch the Maharaja's houses, and to provide all materials therefore without charge. They had to pay a proportionate payment of rent-in-kind on terms favourable to the Maharaja. 101

99. Ibid.
also to supply a certain number of goats from each *pirh* at the *Parban Puja* (*Durga Puja*) free of cost.\textsuperscript{102} After the harvest season was over the Bhuyans were required to tender every year certain offerings of fruits, vegetables, etc. to the *Maharaja*, the senior *Maharani*, the heir apparent, and the *Bebarta*.\textsuperscript{103} All these feudal claims were commonly known as the *bethi* system.\textsuperscript{104}

In addition to the *Maharaja*, State officials of higher rank also made use of the *‘bethi’* system. Bichitrnananda Das, Assistant Manager of Keonjhar State, who was the supervisor of the project of excavating a canal known as *‘Machhakandana Jora’* from north of *Keonjhargarh* to the east through a hillock, engaged the Bhuyans under the *bethi* system.\textsuperscript{105}

Thus the economic life of the Bhuyans was of much interesting. Mainly their economic life centered round shifting cultivation which was the primary source of their livelihood. Their

\textsuperscript{102} Bd. Procd (Rev.) (OSA Accn No.617S) Resolution No.1064P, 19th March, 1894.
\textsuperscript{103} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{104} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{105} Fakir Mohan Senapati, *Atmajibana Charita* (Ed.), (Cuttack, 1969), PP.133-134.
livelihood was also supplemented by the collection of forest products and to some extent by dry and wet cultivation, by hunting, fishing, petty, trade and commerce. In spite of their poor financial condition, they were not free from economic or feudal exploitation of the Raja and his officers. From the study of the economic life of the Bhuyans of Orissa it may be concluded that they struggled hard to earn their livelihood and continued to cling to their age old primitive practices.