CHAPTER III

THE SETTING

THE PORT: EMERGING TOWN:

The river Mahanadi, after flowing through the Western part of Orissa, bisects the Cuttack District (referred through the Map) to join the Bay of Bengal. The name 'Mahanadi' signifying a huge or big river, is enriched by various other rivers, which empty much water into it. This rejuvenated Mahanadi, herself being distributed into various tributaries. These tributaries in the estuarine region, have provided inlets to commercial sea vessels in the historical past. But these natural harbours remained neglected both by the local users and the Government, during decline of India's navigation practices.

In such estuarine region of Mahanadi, it was decided to develop a modern harbour for sea-faring big vessels. Eastern India had only one running port at Diamond Harbour at the month of the Ganges. This port is bit inwardly placed and it was difficult to expand the facilities of berth to large sea vessels, heavily ladden with mineral ores.

Obviously, Paradeep became a natural choice, with large scope to harbour big-vessels on the open sea. The anchorage of the vessel is protected by two natural sand reeves: (a) long island and (b) Dowdeswell island. The port has its natural deep draft, which facilitates the ship to come closer to the land.
It was due to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, who visualized India's possible command over sea in trade and commerce, that a modern harbour was established at Paradeep in 1962 and commissioned in 1963. Pandit Nehru dedicated it to the Nation, 'Paradeep Port ....... willed by the people, I command you to this yet another national venture'.

THE LOCATION:

The new Paradeep Port is 210 nautical miles South of Calcutta Port and 260 nautical miles north of Visakhapatnam (Vizag) and 598 miles north of Madras, on the east-coast of India, on 20°.15' - North Latitude and 86°-40' east longitude. It stands at a distance of 12 Kms. from the confluence of Mahanadi.

This township occupies 8686.70 acres of land which includes two revenue village - 'Sandikud' and 'Bhitargarh' (fully) where as 'Bijoychandrapur' and 'Udaybat' partially. The entire urban area is surrounded by the Bay of Bengal on the east, Mahanadi on the North and the natural creek, 'Atharbanki' (Meaniang eighteen curves) on the West and South.

The area comes under Cuttack district of Orissa. The district head-quarters (Cuttack City) is 90 Kms. away and the State Capital (Bhubaneswar-town) is 119 Kms. away. The surface communication is good with metalled road, capable of carrying heavy traffic, and a railways link with the Cuttack city.
CLIMATE:

The area experiences mean annual rainfall of 1500 mm. and the temperature varies from maximum of 41°Celsius to minimum of 9°Celsius (during winter). Neither the highest nor the lowest recording of temperatures stand for a considerable period. The sea wind maintains a soothing climatic condition. Rainfall is high during July-October. The sea-wave heights on average remains 2.76 meters with a range of 3.07 to 6.14 meters. Some meteorological data are given in table - 1.

**TABLE SHOWING METEOROLOGICAL INFORMATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Record</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Temperature</td>
<td>41°C</td>
<td>9°C</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Rainfall</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1500 mm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Height of Waves</td>
<td>6.14 m.</td>
<td>3.07 m.</td>
<td>2.76 m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Tidal height</td>
<td>3.46 m.</td>
<td>0.40 m.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Wind speed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Summer</td>
<td>35 to 42 Km.ph.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Winter</td>
<td>18 to 24 Km.ph</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Km. ph - Kilometer per hour)

The climatic situation under meteorological determinants, prove to be important not only for the commercial cargo traffic, but for the activities of the fishermen also. The wind speed occasionally becomes very high, when there is some cyclonic storms in the Bay. Every year the region experiences some cyclonic days, when all normal
activities of Port life as well as those of fishermen remain suspended. Tidal waves rise nearly up to 4 meters making journey to sea very risky. (As the entire coastal areas of Bay of Bengal is cyclone prone area).

FACILITIES OF PORT:

The Port, as mentioned before, naturally guarded by two sandy reeves, has developed an artificial lagoon type harbour. This is divided into two break waters - (a) North Break waters (538 meters long) on the North-Eastern side and (b) the Southern Break Waters (1217 meter long) on its South-Western side. The approach Channel to the break-waters are (a) 2020 meters (b) 190 meters broad at different places with an depth of 2.25 meters. The entrance channel is 500 meters long and 160 meters side with same depth (2.25 meters). The turning basin has a diameter of 520 meters. There is facility of 3 ships getting anchorage at a time.

A special berth for handling the heavy iron-ore cargo was constructed in 1966 with a jetty of 135 meters long and 13.75 meters broad, with a distance of 320 meters between one 'Dolphin' to the other.

The Port has its own railways, adequate water supply and an well-equipped ship repairing workshop (M/S. Kalinga Engineer’s Ltd.). Such facilities help cargo-ships and also the fishing trawlers to enjoy repair services.
OTHER FACILITIES:

Paradeep Port establishment encouraged a large scale fishing activities by entreprenuers who opened canning factories for shrimps or lobster export. The village fishermen could not cater to the demand for large scale export oriented business. In 1979-80, there was 250 mechanized fishing trawlers and the number has considerably increased by a decade since then. An earlier estimate (1981) shows that more than 3000 metric tonnes of prawns were produced in one year. (Details statistical data of prawn export is attached Annx.IV.

To utilize the huge catch of shrimps, prawn, lobster, sardines, sharks and various other sea creatures, the Government of Orissa, established fish meal plant in the Industrial Estate area for the Port. The shipping corporation of India, central Govt. undertaking, introduced Reefer container for export of frozen shrimps. Another Government of Orissa Corporation (Orissa Maritime and Chilika Area Development Corporation) OMCAD has set up a fishery complex with facilities of freezing plant, diesel store, cold storage and processing unit.

THE PORT TOWN ADMINISTRATION:

The Port is controlled by the Port authority of India, under the control of Union Ministry of shipping and Transport, is an autonomous body, under the Major Port Trust Act, 1963. It has got a Board of Trustees, formed by the Government of India, is headed by Chairman. The Board members,
nominated by the Government, are the representatives of various types of Port users e.g. commercial houses, Government departments in connection with the Port and the labourers. The Chairman is assisted by a Deputy Chairman.

The Port Trust is the actual controlling authority of the whole activities of the Port, which includes the berth of a ship, loading and unloading of cargo, security, checking smuggling and all other related affairs.

PORT TOWN:

J.K.Das who conducted a demographic study on Paradeep Port Town in 1978 described that this town attracted and drew larger percentage of the rural population into the deltaic region with only motivation of gainful employment. As a result, the density of population increased to 288 per square kilometer in the town area. It is pure urban characteristics, as males greatly outnumber the females. The male section of the population are highly biased to the working age-group, of which 11.46% belong to 25-29 year group and 17.72% belong to 30-39 year group. The male and female taken together, shows 0-14 years as the largest group as 30.41%, next is 20.95% belonging to 30 to 39 years age-groups. For this, the probable reason is that the youths within the age group of 15-24 must have reached the Paradeep Port are in bulk, a decade prior to 1971 whose age variation has resulted in the highest age-group of males under 30-39 years. More appropriate cause behind the highest percentage of the total
male and female between 0-14 age group may be due to annual birth rate.

Against out of total population of Paradeep town, 49.7% are workers and total number of workers (3335) as many as 3288 are males where the percentage is 98.5 of the total working force. The percentage of female worker is so low, due to lack of job opportunities for females (taken from demographic study by J.K.Das on Paradeep town). Moreover, the urban influence brings the consensus of views regarding the execution of Master Plan for ever will growth and Development of entire Urban Area. Due to high rate of urban growth (where the people mainly migrated from different parts of Orissa as well as out of the State like Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Tamilnadu etc. for job facilities is no doubt a drag on the process of rapid socio-economic transformation. In the main stream of progress, the developed sectors (who are not fishermen by Caste) have marginalized the traditional fishermen.

The Port has provided educational facilities like one State run High School, Central Govt. School, Christian Missionary School and also D.A.V. School and a college for higher education. Besides these, there is one Government Hospital where Port employees get free treatment. Good Guest House (Nehru Bunglow) is also there at Paradeep and good private hotels have come up.
There is a community centre (auditorium hall) in the town to organise film shows (as there is no specific cinema hall) for recreation of the Port staff. These are all provided to town-people. Such centre attracts people and is a very powerful source of spreading modernity. It creates appetite for modern items and introduces liberalised values to the local people etc. through audio-visual exposition.

Sport activities are also facilitated and a small stadium is there. All most all the port-employees are provided with staff quarters.

Communication through bus, rail route are also there at Paradeep town. A Police-Station is there to maintain law and order.

MARKET FACILITIES:

There is a market maintained by Port-authority and N.A.C. (Notified Area Council). Here fashionable shops which are alluring to people of particular category (urbanised people). But these shops are the media through which all fancy and imported items are available. Besides these, other grocery shops, vegetable shops are there and all the day to day accessories are within the reach of general people. A new market complex has been set up in 1983 which is catering to the need of growing population of Paradeep town.
DEMOGRAPHIC PICTURE OF PARADEEP PORT

**TABLE - II**

**POPULATION OF PARADEEP PORT (1971)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>SEX RATIO (M/F x 1000)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4579</td>
<td>2126</td>
<td>6705</td>
<td>2153.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total population of Paradeep Port Town according to 1971 Census are 6705 - where males are 4579, females are 2126 having sex ratio 2153.8

**TABLE - III**

**POPULATION OF PARADEEP TOWN (1981)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>SEX RATIO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21,259</td>
<td>11,783</td>
<td>33,042</td>
<td>1804.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total population of Paradeep town which includes three villages, Bijoychandrapur (Partly), Bhitargarh (full) and Sandhakud (full) where total males 21,259, females 11,783 and total population is 33,042. Sex ratio is 1804.2.

**TABLE - IV**

**POPULATION OF PARADEEP TOWN (Provisional) 1991**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>SEX RATIO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27,992</td>
<td>20,164</td>
<td>48,156</td>
<td>720</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here provisional report of 1991 census data shows total number of males 27,992 and females 20,164 and total population comes to 48,156 and sex ratio is 720. Growth rate in 1971-81 is 392.8 and 1981-91 is 45.74.
The above data available from Paradeep Port N.A.C. (Notified area Council) which was established in the year 1976 with 10 wards. It covers total area of 22.65 square Kms.

**TABLE - V**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>2640</td>
<td>83.2</td>
<td>533</td>
<td>16.79</td>
<td>3173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>13,538</td>
<td>77.94</td>
<td>3,830</td>
<td>22.05</td>
<td>17,368</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the year 1971 out of 3173 total literates male 2640 and female 533. According to 1981 Census, the literacy population males are 13,538 and females are 3,830, where in the year 1971, the literacy percentage was 83.2 and 16.79 in case of male and female respectively. In the year 1981 it was 77.94% and 22.05% male and female respectively.

**THE VILLAGE SETTLEMENT:**

Here the present study is conducted mainly in the base village 'SANDHAKUD', adjacent to Paradeep Port.

Throughout the coast line of Orissa, which is continuous with Bengal in the North and Andhra in the South, the Sea faring fishermen are found to settle. The whole coast of Orissa can conveniently be divided into (a) the ethnic type and (b) composition of the fishermen. In the northern part, sea-fishing is carried out by the people who are entirely not of traditional fishing community, because a few amongst them
are Oriya and Bengali speaking people of different castes.

The habitation pattern of the northern fishermen differ from that of the southern, as the former lives away from the beach and the later settle right on the beach. The North Orissa fishermen usually set up temporary fishing camps on the sea-shore for carrying out fishing work, where women and children are not allowed to stay. As community is composed of various castes, though majority of them are fishermen, their houses are of scattered type, well separated from each other. In contrast to that the South Orissa fishermen community, live in closely set up huts arranged in linear fashion and on the sandy beach. The houses are separated by common fences. The barren sandy beach lying in between the huts and the sea, serves the purpose of keeping catamarons, drying nets and unloading of catch etc.

The settlement pattern of the village shows the type of fishermen and also social composition of the community. The base village of present study, 'SANDHAKUD' conforms to the south-Orissa type and composed of one type of fishermen community the Telgu speaking group. The surf-beaten sea-beach, varieties of fish, dare-devil nature of fishermen, technology etc. draw them towards southern zone like Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Kerala etc. but the geographical location indicate its position more appropriately in the middle coastal zones of Orissa.
DESCRIPTION OF THE VILLAGE: SANDHAKUD

The base village of the present study as stated above is 'SANDHAKUD'. It is one of the revenue villages within the jurisdiction of Paradeep Notified Area Council under ward No.III. Udayabat is in its North, Bay of Bengal in its south where as on the eastern side, there is Musadia-forest and Ranigarh, Chauliapada and Udayachandrapur on its western side. The inhabitants of these villages are mostly marine fishermen mainly migrated from Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu along with local Oriya people.

The village 'Sandhakud' is now a hamlet of Paradeep-Port-town. As myths say due to such sandy natural elevation resembling the 'Kakud' (bulls hump in Sanskrit) of a 'Sandha' (bull), the village name is so given. Its Southern side is surrounded by back waters. Sea erosion is mostly prevented to some extent, due to Casaurina-plantation. There is a flat sea-beach visible from a kilometer distance. This area is used for keeping the fishing crafts, drying and repairing of nets and such activities.

SETTLEMENT PATTERN:

The village (under study) shows very compact settlement pattern. The houses are mostly rectangular in shape and are present in scattered manner. Most of the houses are low-roofed, thatched with palm leaves with walls made up of mud. Each family possess 1-3 rooms. The innermost room is used as kitchen when there are more than one room. The basic
pattern of every house is to provide an outside varanda which is for multipurpose use. In case of single-room house, it serves both the purpose of bed-room cum kitchen room. However, the housing pattern of the village is mostly influenced by ecology. The entire village has 3378 number of house-holds, there are only 4 brick-built houses. The village headman's house is developed 'pucca' house, in front of which there are two cemented benches for village meeting or even sitting place for the guests.

Roads are uneven and very narrow type. This is only one connecting road between Paradeep town and the village and a culvert in between.

At the entrance of the village, there is 'Grama Devi' or village goddess and at the centre of the village, there is a 'Ram Mandir' established recently (1982).

The village has a primary school which was destroyed in the devastating cyclone of December 1981. Recently, they have started a small Telgu-medium school managed by a single teacher, and ten pupils on the roll. There is no Post Office in the village and for postal communication, they have to go to the Port area.

Minimum facilities like electricity, water-supply etc. are not supplied to the village, though they are under N.A.C. and pay tax for the same. Only some of the shops have taken unauthorized temporary power connection from
the Port. Four shallow tubewells are in the village but water is salty and not suitable for consumption, they have to depend on waterholes for drinking and cooking purpose. These are generally of 2 to 2½ meters deep where the women scoop water with the earthen pot or aluminium alloy. During rainy season, the swelling sea submerges these holes and water supply is stopped.

Besides all these, there are six tea stalls, five liquor shops, four grocery shops and two tailoring shops in the village.

DEMOGRAPHIC PICTURE OF VILLAGE SANDHAKUD:

No census data on the population structure, literacy etc. of this Sandhakud village is available from Government sources, at it is mixed with the census data of the Port Town. The data collected by the present author in 1986-87 for the village Sandhakud reveals the following picture.

In the village Sandhakud, total Males 6972, Females 3403 and total population comes to 10,375 where percentage of males are 66.20 and females are 32.80% sex ratio comes to 2048.

(Table-VI is represented in the next page)
TABLE - VI
AGE GROUP OF VILLAGE: SANDHAKUD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE GROUP</th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
<th>SEX RATIO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0- 5</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>5.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>2.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>691</td>
<td>5.96</td>
<td>7.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>589</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>858</td>
<td>8.45</td>
<td>7.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>479</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>705</td>
<td>6.87</td>
<td>6.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>779</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>1146</td>
<td>11.17</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>1078</td>
<td>667</td>
<td>1745</td>
<td>15.46</td>
<td>18.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>1229</td>
<td>607</td>
<td>1836</td>
<td>17.63</td>
<td>16.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>1369</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>1775</td>
<td>19.64</td>
<td>11.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-50 and above</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>718</td>
<td>6.26</td>
<td>2.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>6972</td>
<td>3403</td>
<td>10,375</td>
<td>67.20</td>
<td>32.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The age-sex composition data have been presented Table-VI, where a five year age-categories have been made. In 0-5 group males 307 and females 198, 6-10 years group males 289 and females 107, 11-15 age group males are 416 and females 275, again 16-20 age group, there are 584 males and 261 females, 21-25 age group males 479 and females 226. In the age group 26-30, 31-36, 36-40, 41-45, 46-50 and above there are 779, 1078, 1229, 1369, 437 males, and 367, 667, 607, 406, 281 females respectively. In the age group 0-50 years and above the male, female percentages are 4.4 and 5.39, 4.14 and 2.96, 596 and 7.63, 8.45 and 7.46, 6.87 and 6.27, 11.17 and 3.6, 15.46 and 18.51, 17.63 and 16.84, 19.64 and 11.26, 6.26 and 2.79 respectively. Sex-ratio age group are 1550, 2700, 1512, 2189, 2119, 2122, 1616, 2024, 3372 and 1555.
respectively. Maximum number of people are observed in the age-group 36-40 years, 62.67% of people are in between 26 years to 45 years, with more people in between 36 to 45 years. This age-group people are the working group and a high proportion indicates favourably towards economic manpower. A high sex-ratio in the 0-5 years age followed by a still higher sex ratio in the next age-group, indicates a sex-bias. This picture sex ratio is continuously in favour of male for a considerable period of time, as the elderly people also show that.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE VII</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LITERACY PERCENTAGE OF VILLAGE SANDHAKUD (1986-87)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3404</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table shows the literacy percentage of village Sandhakud during 1986-87 where total male literates are 3404 and females of only 973 occupying the percentage of 51.07 and 30.35 respectively. This shows the low literacy percentage of females.
TABLE - VIII

CASTE COMPOSITION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LINGUISTIC GROUP</th>
<th>CASTE GROUP</th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Telgu</td>
<td>Fishermen</td>
<td>6947</td>
<td>3393</td>
<td>10,340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oriya</td>
<td>Teli</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bengali</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>6972</td>
<td>3403</td>
<td>10,375</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table-VIII regarding Caste-group. There are fishermen of telgu linguistic group 10,340 where males are 6947 females 3393. Oriyas are only Teli in caste having 21 males and 7 females. Bengali are of mixed type having only 4 males and 3 females.

TABLE - IX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOAT OWNER %</th>
<th>FISHING GEAR OWNERS %</th>
<th>NET OWNERS %</th>
<th>NON-OWNER CREWS</th>
<th>Total Boat and Net Owner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>289 .05%</td>
<td>1169 30.77%</td>
<td>3512</td>
<td>1458</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table shows the Boat and Net Owners amongst total fishermen community. Boat owners are only 289 and Net Owners 1169 and non-owner crews are 3512 and .05%, 30.77% respectively.

TABLE - X

| ACTIVE FISHERMEN OWNER AND ACTIVE FISHERMEN NON-OWNER CREWS |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3798                                                        | 286                                                           | 3512                                                           |

The table shows the total number of active fishermen is Sandhakud village are 3798. Amongst which owner of boat and net and active fishermen are only 286. The non-owner crews are 3512.
WAY OF LIFE OF THE VILLAGERS:

The main inhabitants of village Sandhakud are Telugu fishermen except Nine Oriya families five Bengali families whose main occupation is business other than fishing. They are traditional group where the age-old hereditary occupation is fishing. This occupation needs human co-operation and not solo effort, individual excellency of course, play an important role. From the very childhood, a close association with the sea nurtures individual courage to move into the vast, blue mighty sea which will yield their livelihood. In the version of the fishermen of this village (under study), 'actually we always feel enthusiastic and energetic to venture into sea for fishing'. It is not possible for a single family to fulfil all the necessary requirements for fishing. So in combined manner they launch their daily venture.

As their life revolves around fishing activities, they dedicate their total efforts to it. A glance at their daily routine will reveal this. Before the day-break, about 4 A.M., they start for fishing in groups, after finishing all their early morning personal works. Before launching their boats (fishing crafts), they individually pray for a safe return from sea and a good catch. Then in each boat, minimum 3-4 fishermen (generally kin members) venture into the sea.

The traditional fishermen choose the fishing ground, usually depending on the expertise of the senior boat
members. After the fishing (nearly upto 4 P.M.) they come back to shore. Then the catch of each boat is unloaded on the sandy sea-beach. The catch is usually sold to the either to the fish merchants, who assemble on the beach, or in the local markets. It is usually performed by the women and children of respective families, of the fishermen. This reveals the system of efficient work distribution amongst each of the family members which enhances their sense of responsibility even in the occupational field.

These are typically found amongst the fisherfolk of South Indian origin, whereas the participation by the females and children are strictly prohibited amongst the Northern groups. After the selling of fish either at shore and local market is over, they (male members) sit in the village parlour in a relaxed mood for any kind of recreation and gossip over their experiences or even discuss any problem regarding fishing. The whole day's engagement makes them extremely tired for which they mostly go for country liquor to have a sound sleep. Slowly the night gets older. The sons and daughters of the sea get into deep slumber by the lulling sound of the ever rolling sea waves only to repeat their practice from the next morning.

The fishermen carry water-rice and curry with them when they set-out for fishing which they relish as working-lunch. At times, they take all cooking accessories with them and cook the same on their fishing craft or 'Dangi'
(It generally occurs when fishing is continued for a longer period i.e. more than one day). One amongst them, generally engage himself in cooking when others remain busy in fishing. They also take drinking water in earthen pots, because it is not possible to drink saline water of sea. In occupational field, all the members of the village behave as a cohesive social unit.

While the male members of the village remain engaged in fishing, the females do the domestic chores. This aspect should not be undermined as they have to perform all necessary works like child rearing, cooking, cleaning the clothes, utensils, house, purchasing food stuff etc. They have to cook food and keep ready for the tired male members and also to give food to them early next morning before fishing expedition.

The children also help their parents in their profession. During arrival of catch in the afternoon or evening, they help in carrying out the baskets containing fish. Thus there is involvement of whole family in the occupation.

Thursday, in Hindu belief system belongs to 'Laxmi', the goddess of fortune, peace and prosperity. Women observe the day more seriously than the men, among all rural Hindu population. Customarily they (the fishermen) donot go for fishing on thursday because on that day, they donot want
to dissatisfy the goddess of fortune, 'Laxmi'. So on that weekly rest day (Thursday), all the mending work of nets, repairing of fishing crafts are usually attended.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION:

Most of the families in the village Sandhakud had migrated from Andhra Pradesh, (a part of South India) speaking in Telgu language among them. Only Nine Oriya non-fishermen families have settled in the village whose main occupation is business like tea-shops, grocery shop, liquor shop etc. along with five Bengali house-holds. They (Bengali) are also settled their for business.

The fishermen community of the village Sandhakud show a well organized social system where pattern of culture is woven around their risky occupation. All of their social institutions display persistent primitive customs and norms. As Mathur (1978) has described, 'Not a single boat or canoe in Tanur (a fishing village) has been built without performing the prescribed fishing rituals and magical practices'.

Due to well organized social system, there develops a strong feeling of unity which help them in their uncertain and hazardous occupation 'Marine fishing'.

FAMILY TYPE:

Here strong kinship ties bind the individual and his family with specific codes of conduct. Joint and
extended families are of rare occurrence, mostly simple nuclear families are found. Yet these nuclear families are tied together with kin bondage with tinge economic relation. In their community, notion of equivalence amongst siblings is of common social norms. In family level, they learn the systematized reciprocity in social, religious, ritual, economic sphere which signify their well organized social system. Intimate social relationship and mutual trust is maintained amongst the family members and kin groups. Though after marriage, the couple establishes a separate household, intimacy and affection between grand parents and children is not affected.

The village 'Sandhakud', fishermen show more emphasis on the generative process of the family and its segregated household members act according to their common culture trait. Their cultural traditions are manifested through social action like common observation of religious practices, fishing expedition.

All these social norms maintain a corporate solidarity in the community life of fisherfolk. In their well organised social system, the members share same set of value-concepts, beliefs, ideas, norms which helps in keeping co-operation in fishing. Because marine fishing need more man-power than capital, a strong kinship-ties and mutual co-operation is of utmost need in this occupation. It is observed during fieldwork that in each fishing boats generally
father is the master (head of fishing unit) and sons work as the crews. Incase of required number of fishermen, they take their paternal kins because the society is patriarchal type. Next preference goes to outsiders (other than kins).

CASTE COMPOSITION:

The 'Sandhakud' fishermen like those of Puri and Ganjam district of Orissa, are referred as 'Noliyas' by local people for being Telugu speaker. Their distribution pattern shows that they have spread out towards Cuttack and Puri Districts. According to Sangam literature (Venkataswamy Nattar, 1927), 'Noliyas' is an ancient Tamil word which dates back to nearly 1500 years. The 'Noliya' is a common name of two district telugu-speaking fishing castes:- (a) 'Jalari' and (b) 'Vodabalija'. The 'Jalari's' ('Jala' means net) are found in the Ganjam, Puri and Cuttack district in Orissa and mainly in the coastal parts of Srikakulam and Vishakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh. (The Jalari fishermen studied by M.Kodanda Rao , 1990), The Jalari is divided into two sub-castes like 'Eduralta' and 'Pardrevdu' group who has got the social tradition to interdine but marriage is strictly prohibited. Regarding other tradition and customs, they show much similarly. (Kalavathy and Tietze, 1985).

Jalaries mainly live in the hamlets which stand just on the sea-shore. Men are exclusively engaged in fish catching. They have a caste-council having 8 members where membership is hereditary. The head of Caste-council is called 'Padhanau'. This council controls the socio-economic affairs
of fisherfolk village. It has also the power to decide the fishing holiday due to any ritual or social reasons, inter-village disputes in different social matters like marriage, property inheritance. It also controls matters relating to fishing operations ceremonies and rituals linked with birth puberty, marriage and death and other religious activities. They collect money as funds (communal bank) provide aids to needy persons during off-seasons, lean fishing seasons, natural calamities etc. They can also punish the people who violate their social norms.

The other fishing caste, 'Vodabalija' are numerically greater than the 'Jalaris'. They are concentrated in the coast line of Ganjam distrit but also found in Puri and south part of Cuttack district. The Vodabalijas have well organised caste council called in local terms as 'Kulasamadhi' The head of this council 'Kula Pilla'. The number of members of caste council differs from village to village but the average number is 5 and membership is hereditary, that means from father, the son gets the right to become a member of caste-council. In case the person concerned does not have son then by the help of elderly members of the village a new member is elected. The basic function of caste-council which is described earlier, is same both in the case of Jalaris and Vodabalija. These are the basic feature of Telgu fishermen, so far as their caste composition is concerned.

Apart from all these, Oriya fishermen Caste like 'Kaikbarta' and 'Gokhas' who have adopted 'Marine fishing'
mainly as it is more lucrative though strenous and risky than sweet water fishing. They are not much acquainted to operate fishing gear and crafts on open surf-beaten beaches.

The marine fishing is not only technical job but requires a lot of courage and expertise, which is learnt from traditional training.

Raychaudhury, Mitra, Mukherjee (1967), during their study of Phuleswar fisherfolk has mentioned about the caste system of fisherfolk. They delineats that Rajbansi, Dhiba and Bagdi are the three marine fishing castes. Roche (1984) also mentioned about Paravas of Coromondal, fishermen caste of eastern coast of south India. M.Kodanda Rao (1990), during his study of Jalari fishermen has clearly mentioned about Vada, palli besides the former (Jalari) who are also fishing caste. They are the fishermen of coastal Andhra of South India. Subha Rao (1980) has described that there are 9, sub-castes under the fishermen caste 'Vodabalija'.

In the village 'Sandhakud' the fishermen (98%) are Telgu and classified under 'Noliya'. Rest 1.8% are non-fishermen caste, inhabited there for business purpose. Here in the village under study shows the inhabitants are mainly Telgu fisherfolk called 'Noliyas'; except 9 Oriya 'Teli' caste and 6 mixed Bengali families.

MATERIAL CULTURE:

The male members of this village use conical palm-leaf cap in which they take tobacco, match-box etc.
during the time of fishing. The conical cap also protects the fishermen from any head injury from the high tidal waves, hot sun-rays, heavy rains etc. during the time of fishing. The conical cap is also helpful to fishermen during cyclonic weather to cut along the high waves as well. The male members of their community use a very small piece of cloth on their waist portion which is their common dress. On rare occasions, they use 'dhoti' and shirts. The females usually use 'sari', petticoat, blouse, and use mostly silver ornaments. Most of them are poor, so only well to do family women use gold ornaments.

Most of the fishermen of this village use earthen pot for cooking purpose and aluminium pots for storage of drinking water, cooking and drinking eating very rarely people use steel utensils. They are too poor to possess any wooden or shell furniture piece like chair, table, cot etc. The sitting and sleeping purpose is usually served by mats' (reed mats).

RITUAL CYCLE:

Due to uncertain and risky occupation, the marine fishermen of the village community have developed a strong belief supernatural powers and also in ancestral worship to satisfy their deceased fore fathers. Ritual cycle which starts from birth of an individual, puberty, marriage and ends at death. All these rituals are observed with rigidity where money is never counted as barrier.
BIRTH RITUAL:

Birth ritual is not very important in their society, though pollution is counted up to 21st days of child birth. The family members have to observe it by giving a communal feast to all the kin members. But on the other hand shaving off the birth hair at the completion of one year is most important and it involves a community feast. It is performed by a barber who is also a Telugu speaking person.

INITIATION CEREMONY:

It is commonly observed in case of girls, which is followed by a feast to kin members. Initiation ceremony is as followed; when a girl attains puberty or first maturation, the pollution is observed for seven days. Generally she is hid in a secluded place. Then on the 7th day, she takes bath with turmeric powder. Then vermilion is applied to her forehead. From that day she is considered to be an adult member. According to economic standard, they have to arrange one communal feast.

MARRIAGE:

Here monogamy (one spouse at a time) is the rule. Generally they choose the bride groom from their own community and at intra-village level and even from outside the village. After marriage the residence is patrilocal as the society is patriarchal type where male member or father is the head of the family. Property inheritance takes place from father to son because daughters are to go to their in-law's house after marriage. Inter-caste and inter-community marriage
is strictly prohibited in their society. Dowry system is not commonly found in them only ability and skill of fishing in the sea is the main criterion for selection of groom. The bride should be able to manage household. After the marriage ceremony family members offer feast to their community members.

**DEATH RITUAL:**

It is strictly performed by the kin and family members of the deceased man. The belief behind the fact is that if the departed soul is not satisfied, then subsequent harm will befall them (as for example failure of catch, unexpected danger in the sea etc.). The dead body is generally cremated to free the soul which in their concept is immortal whose blessings will be their source of success.

After cremation, all the family as well as kin members take bath. Then the family members of the deceased man offer liquor to the villagers and kin members. The burial ground is now shifted to the eastern side of the sea-shore. On the 11th days of death, again the family members take bath for purification purpose and followed by a feast to all of their kin and community members. This feast depend on the economic status of the deceased man's family.

**POLITICAL ORGANISATION:**

As these people are very much tied to their occupation, their social and political organization also reflects. In the political organization, the most important
and crucial role is played by the village headman. here the post is not hereditary in nature i.e. it is not transmitted from father to son. Selection of headman solely depend on ability, traditional skill and efficiency of a person (generally elderly man) through votes. It proves their democratic approach towards life. Headman has got the power to solve intra-village disputes, arrangement of communal fishing. As the village under study is numerically dominated by fisherfolk, other caste people also obey the decision of headman elected by fishermen community. He also fights against injustice, outside interferance. But absolute power is not vested on the Headman. Before taking any decision the village headman must have to take the advice of other elderly members of the village. He is assisted by two vice-Presidents (Assistant village headman) and five members. The common people express their opinion in the solution of any type of disputes arising from intra and inter-village level. This proves their well-organized administration system as well as attitude towards maintaining an orderly society. Any disputes regarding occupation, disobedience of social norms, share or remuneration fixation, market value of the fishes etc. usually managed by the village-headman and other members of the village council. Because of their self-organized administration, they donot feel the help of modern political system village 'Sarpanch' or any other general administration, provided by Government.
KINSHIP STRUCTURE AND THEIR INTER-DEPENDENCE:

Kinsmen play an important role in an integrated social system. Anthropologists have always paid attention to this fact and tried to understand the interchangeable roles of kinsmen, either consanguinal or affinal. These fishermen are no exception to that. Kinsmen have some obligatory roles in social events, religious rituals and festivals. The nature of role varies from society to society.

The village Sandhakud also exhibit similar kin interdependency. Family members and kind groups take part in all the rituals as well as festivals. But the kindship bond is more strong when we will go to a fishermen village because main source of their livelihood needs more manpower and co-operative work. So it is the nature of occupation which makes the bond stronger and entire community behaves as an integrated system. In the village under study, there was a devastating cyclone in the year 1981 December. During this cyclone two families were completely destroyed except one son and daughter of 14 and 16 age group. Then those orphan youngsters were financially helped by their kin member (paternal uncle) to get fishing boats.

Klausen (1968), attempts to show how the factors such as community social structures kinship patterns and the work ethics have a crucial bearing on adoption of the technologies demonstrated by the INP (Indo Norwaygean Project) It is because the Hindu fishermen seemed 'leftout' of this process of moving up the asset hierarchy.
As the society of the fishermen village under study is patriarchal type, more importance is given to paternal kins rather than affinal kins. In each fishing boats all the close agnatic kins like father, brother etc. are mostly found whereas the distance kins work in other boats. There are two exceptional cases where the same family members work in other fishing boats after marriage.

Besides these kin groups, there is also existence of ritual kins who occupy important position and status in their social system. The ritual kins take active part in all rituals, annual worship, festivals etc. Here in the Sandhakud village there are evidence of 37 ceremonial kins.

**KINSHIP STRUCTURE:**

The network of kinship structure shows that in a fishing unit both the affinal and consanguinal kina work together. The affinal and consanguinal kin-ship structures are classified here described separately to represent their working system and inter-dependence in their occupational field. The extent of kin relationship has been described in tabular form.

(Table is continued in the next page)


TABLE XI
SHOWING INTRA-UNIT KIN-RELATIONSHIP

Bar between two individual = Kin relation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consanguinal Kins.</th>
<th>Affinal Kins.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Fa - So</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Br - Si</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Br - Br</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Fa Br - Br So.</td>
<td>Mo Br - Si Da</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Mo - So</td>
<td>Si Da Hu - Wi Mo Br.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Mo - Da</td>
<td>Mo Si So - Mo Si So</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Fa Fa - Fa Mo</td>
<td>Wi Si So - Mo Si Hu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Fa Fa Br So - Fa Br So So</td>
<td>Fa Fa Fa Br So So So So</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ritual Kin

1. Br - Br.
2. Si So - Mo Br.
3. Friend - Friend.

(Abbreviation of kin terms is after Murdock, 1966)

Above kinship ties shows the blood relatives; through marriage and also ritual kins of fishermen community of Sandhakud village. But in each fishing unit, there must be more than one genealogically related kin. So the extension of kin-ship ties has no limitation. Still first preference goes to paternal kins. Due to partiahrchal nature of society, the close agnatic kins like Father, Brother, Father’s father are more closely associated within the same unit where as the distant kins are diversified into other fishing units.

The importance of consanguinual greater than those of affinal kins. Moreover, the nature of their occupation, demand a very strong kinship-ties compared to
other rural society. As P.R.G. Mathur (1978) mentioned, 'The
notion of equivalence amongst siblings of Mappila fisherfolk
of Kerala. Here the big net group consists of only Kinsmen of
local descent group who are agents, gives continuity both to
economic and social relations. The kinship-ties binds
individual and his family with codes of conduct. Paternal
uncles, cusins, grand parents and children are on intimacy and
mutual trust, inspite of their separation from natal
households! This is also reflected in having strong
preferential marriage between maternal uncle and niece
(sister's daughter). This type of preferential marriage is
found in many societies in South-Orissa and Andhra Pradesh.
This makes a double bond kinship of both types. Also they to
establish their occupational base in the village under study
and makes the social ties into a over lapping of social
relations. So though the fishermen society here at village
'Sandhakud' is of Patriarchal type, still then mother's
brother has got more importance in their society. They also
show more affinity and inclination towards ritual kins due to
over come from any unexpected danger of marine fishing. So the
kinship structure shows that the members are closely linked
and inter-dependence is more amongst the fishermen, which
enforce them to develop a cohesive moral order. Thus the
bondage of kin-relationship get them relief from the
arduousness of fishing occupation.

The occupation 'Marine-fishing' needs more
man-power and entirely a co-operative job for which the
kin-ship ties are highly valued by these fishermen. The 'Occupation' is the common binding force to maintain unity amongst the kin-groups. Even though one individual is economically better off, still then he cannot perform 'fishing' alone. So despite of personal differences of opinion, they try to keep co-operation amongst kin members. Starting from collection of wood, fishing boat construction, lunching of fishing crafts, daily fishing venture, they need each other's help.

So the sphere of interdependence can be broadly categorised into the following types: (a) Ritual sphere, (b) Social sphere and (c) Economic sphere.

(a) **Ritual sphere:**

Participation of kin members is of utmost importance because most of the rituals are concerned with fishing. Starting from boat construction, launching of fishing boat, first fishing expedition, daily worship before venture to sea etc. are associated with different forms of rituals besides the rituals concerned with birth, puberty, marriage and death. So in order to perform the ritual in a perfect way, the kin-group functions in a cohesive manner and need each other help for co-operative action. In each ritual, individual activity is of little value unless it is performed unitedly. As for example, for boat construction, more men are required, launching activity also needs number of persons, daily fishing expedition also performed unitedly. Besides these fishing-
connecting rituals, there are the rituals like birth, puberty, marriage and death which are not connected with same; details of which have been described earlier. Rituals are oriented in such a way that participation of various kin members become essential which is exemplary of interdependence amongst kin-groups. Such type of observances are socially designed and monitored, so that personal differences from day to day activities, have to be buried and group co-operation ensured.

(b) Social Sphere inter-dependence of Kin-groups:

Any society thrives in its co-ordinated activities. Initially societies were built with at least one activity in common, later on it diversified into many. Such societies with their occupation in common, still adhere more strictly to their codes of conduct. These fishermen, still to-day, have a common occupation which demands greater human co-operation. For such reasons, functions of kin-groups have not died out. Differences of opinions, petty quarrels are ubiquitous and these Sandhakud fishermen are no exception. Still then in any kind of social gatherings or day to day activities, they work in united manner so as to over come the problems of their social life. There social life is well conditioned with deep, integrated inter-personal relationship, specially amongst kin group it is more strong. Early days before sun rise they go to the occupational field (to sea) in combined way to avoid any hazards or danger that may anytime can happen inside the sea where only help they can get from God and fellow humans. The attractive and eye-catching example which was happened during field work when all the kin-members
of an under-age boy helped financially to purchase a fishing craft catamaron. It was after the mishap caused death to his parents.

The social bond of kinship also inflicts responsibilities, as for example, when minor child looses its father due to any reason, either the father's brother or mother's brother has to take care of and bear the maintenance of the deceased's family. So kinship ties also emphasize the obligatory relationship of their relatives besides the usual need. The sphere of interdependence is manifested through the actions in ritual, social fields as they have continued to live at the mercy of nature.

(c) Inter-dependence in Economic Sphere:

Inter-dependence of Kin-groups is of equal need in the economic sphere. The fishermen of village Sandhakud are too poor to acquire all kinds of fishing equipments by money power. Obviously, they have to fall back upon others' co-operation in the form of pecuniary or manual help. Mathur (1978) is of the opinion that, 'the fishermen of Kerala share same set of values, concepts beliefs, ideas, rules for social organisation and economic prosperity. It is marked within the economic sphere along with social, ritual sphere'. In day to day activities they help each other.

Generally the fishermen having more than one boat and net help their kin members by lending their fishing craft and gear at a nominal price when one's own is not ready.
Usually the boat is rented at the price of Rs.20/- and net Rs.30/-. But for the kin groups it is reduced to Rs.10/- and Rs.15/- respectively. During the study, there are seventeen cases where the marginal rate of fishing boats and nets have been reduced to half for their kin members. Thus it proves the symbiotic social relationship amongst kin groups and also their mutual co-operation.

After fishing venture, when they return back to shore, unloading of catch, selling to the middle man or petty-traders or even in the nearby port markets etc. usually performed in combined way. During off season they also take loan from the middle man or petty-fish traders as a result they are bound to sell their catch in a nominal price. In addition, these loans are repaid with 4% interest. If any person dies before repaying the loan to outside money lender, then the family members or kin groups jointly repay the money. Kin members also extend their help maintaining daily household requirements if any fisherman is really in need of that. Such help, of course, not limited only among the kin members.

Petty quarrels and disputes are common everywhere, but that is never allowed to escalate to the extent that their unity is at stake. Any kind of intra-village or inter-family disputes are amicably solved by themselves. It is their usual attitude to avoid personal hitch as far as practicable. The fishermen are engaged for the whole day which minimizes the conflict.
Like other occupational groups, these fishermen are also caste-based, but differ in the nature of risk-ladden occupation, compared to, for example, potters, iron/gold smith, bellmetal workers etc. Hunter group, like this, always depend on group activity. The inter-dependence nature of occupation (marine fishing) makes the fishermen in maintaining unity and strong social relationship with their kin members and other villagers. They try to keep up unity amongst kin-groups, because they need each other’s help every now and then when the male members are busy for whole day in fishing, the women pray to God for their safe-return from the risky, uncertain occupation where every moment of their husband’s life is in danger.

Although there is a kind of sustained competition among the boat owners to have better catch. The fishermen never indulge into such activities which go against, their group safety. The aged fishermen can depend on their younger kinsmen in fishing ventures.

The kinship structure of fishermen of Sandhakud village exhibit the inner-strength of a well organised social system. This integrated social relationship cohesiveness of fishermen plays a vital role in their total way of life.

SOCIAL TABOO AND SUPERSTITIONS:

In the culture-complex of a well organised social system, there are certain restrictions in the fishermen
community of Sandhakud village. They are very orthodox regarding their social norms. Generally taboo means prohibition sanctioned by the society.

Women in the periods are considered profane in almost all Hindu cultures and many tribal culture. But in a few cultures, a woman is tabooed to deal with the professional materials, even if not in period. As for example, Toda woman donot enter buffalo thatch, beetle-growers donot allow women to enter the shed etc. So here in fishermen community totally the women are considered as ritually impure during periodic cycle. They donot allow their women to touch the boats during the same time. It is also prohibited during the time of pregnancy. Otherwise, the females are allowed to help their male counter part in sorting the catch, selling of fish in the market etc.

Females are not allowed to take part in any kinde of decision making which is usually discussed in the village council by the Village headman and other members and villagers (only male members). This proves the lower-status of women in their society.

Again inter-caste marriage is strictly prohibited in the fishermen community. There is no evidence of inter-linguistic group marriage in the village Sandhakud.

The females are separately allowed to perform religious practices in the temple of village Goddess and Ram
Mandir etc. But they cannot take part in any communal worship related to fishing. Any deviation from the rules and violation of social taboo by any individual of their community is seriously viewed by the caste-panchayats or village council. For such case, the culprit may have to pay in cash or kind or even social ostracism. By this he or she is not allowed to take water, debarred from fishing etc. Here 'Sea' is considered as Mother Goddess and fishing craft is the main source of income for which they worship both of them with heart and soul and strong belief in satisfying the supernatural power. According to the concept of fishermen of Sandhakud village, sea is just like their mother because it provides them plenty of food stuffs without hesitation like the mother'. During first launching of fishing boat, they must have to offer cocoanut, flowers etc. which is usually performed by male members but it is a social taboo for females. Everyday before fishing venture to sea, all the fishermen worship the mother Goddess (Sea) and fishing crafts for better catch and safe return. They also pray to overcome any kind of danger. All these activities are performed by the male members of the village but not the females. It is common concept of all the fisherfolk to obey 'Magha Saptami' which is the Seventh day of the darker half of the month 'Magha' (January to February). In their ideology, this is considered as the menstrual cycle day of the sea-goddess when fishing is strictly prohibited as a taboo, on that particular day.
STATUS OF WOMEN:

Social status of women are often, mistaken or judged by these social/ritual prohibitions. These customs may also be due to (1) have greater involvement of male members with the supernatural powers and (2) to protect their female members from exposure to danger. The (Kerala) fishermen also do not co-habit with their wives on the night before sea-ventures, so also the members of the hunting group among many tribals. The women are in general viewed as physically weaker section, potential for reproduction in order to maintain population size and not fit to be exposed to dangers in war-fare also, women are not to be killed or injured. So calling such status a lower status, needs deep introspection.

These are the social taboo and superstitions strictly obeyed by the fishermen of village understudy which proves their rigid social system and status of women in their society.
THE WAY OF UNDERSTANDING THE CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT:

There is no doubt that in this culture bound lore or 'inside view' (Redfield 1955:81) of the fisherfolk there is certain arbitrary conscience which is not strictly empirical in import.

The Noliyas of Sandhakud village, due to their long association with sea have developed a thorough knowledge about climatology along with other natural phenomena. Their immediate environment is vast sea, so the clear perceptions regarding direction of currents, winds, cyclonic weather, ebb and tides, topography of sea bed, varieties of fishes, their movement, along with other technical knowledge.

The fisherfolk donot have any mechanical means and ways to learn about weather, or sea current or interprete other phenomena. They learn from their experiences to read Nature and know about sea current, bottom topography, tidal bores, approach of cyclonic storms etc. on which question of life and death depends. Any mistake will cost them heavily. Now, the scientific method of weather forecast or an impending danger of cyclone (which is very frequent during the month of August to October) is broadcast by the Government media, helps them greatly. Besides these, the type of fish, their behaviour and movement in the open sea etc. are also detected through traditional learning. In understanding the resource base and and its proper utilization of fishermen Kurien (1982) has written, 'In aquatic terrain, at a certain depth, during a
particular time of the year given certain oceanographic factors, and using a specific type of fishing gear results in catching of a particular specie of fish'.

These knowledge of environment are utilised for getting bumper catch by the fishermen and at the same time saves their life. So the above said traditional learning is a part and parcel of their upbringing.

KNOWLEDGE OF SEA-BED:

The fishermen are to judge very minutely the topography of sea bed. It is of utmost need to set the net which results in good catch. Generally they go up to 10 Kms. to 20 Kms. per day to reach the 'fishing ground' (where fishes can be available in shoals). They usually set their nets after studying the soil condition of sea-bed and direction of movement of the shoal of fish. From their personal experience they know that the soil condition of sea is not uniform allthrough. Sometimes sea soil may be sandy in nature which contains more than 50% of sand. It is not easy to set the nets as the soil becomes loose to make escape route for fishes. Moreover, good varieties of fishes are not found in the water above sandy soil. So these areas are not selected as fishing ground. Sticky soil is black in colour and depth of sea-water
is relatively more. Here they can easily set their nets. In this 'sticky soil' which is considered to be the ideal fishing ground (because plenty of different varieties of fishes are available there). It is gathered from their traditional knowledge the depth of sea gradually increases as it is away from the shore. Exception is marked when some places exceeds sea level. This elevation is not destroyed during highest tidal period. The probable reason is due to self deposition. Due to this uneven type of sea-bed, the flow of current is not uniform inside sea bed. It is important for them to know and judge the depth of sea, type of sea bed, colour of water and direction of current as well. They also know the fact that the current of the surface water is more in shallow areas of the sea which is resulted due to number of breaks on the surface. Again the nature of breaks is also different in shallow water. Generally the upper ridges of the breaks are of broken type.

The village Noliyas, especially the elders, have the ideas about the nature of waves and current. The shoal of fish cannot withstand extremely strong currents and are pushed to eitherside of it. So they set their nets accordingly for better catch.

They also know the nature and movement of waves at different places of sea. As for example, the force of waves in the mid-sea is different from the nature of waves near the shore. The big waves which are found in the mid-sea, generally make the plying of boats disastrous, if such waves
dash against the boat sidewise. During this time, the steerer of the boat, keep it perfectly straight in the line with the movement of waves. During cyclonic weather, sea becomes very rough, they try to save their life by using sail in a small, light country boat. Here the basic principle is by using sail the boat cannot be destroyed or even break except is fitted by decreasing its vertical length than horizontal length, so that if forms a pouch like structure to accommodate more wind to resist the upward thrust and thus that boat floats lightly over the waves without sinking or breaking.

In the mid-sea the water is rather calm due to greater depth. The upper ridges of wave are continuous. Such type of waves are also seen due to current of water and flow of wind. Most dangerous waves for the fishermen are those which suddenly come up from below like boiling water and cover an wide area. If the boat comes to that area, they face serious disaster. It cannot be predicted before hand. But from their personal experience and knowledge about the locality of the sea, they know such areas frequently occupied by those waves, which they usually try to avoid or cautiously ply their boats and also offer prayer to God when they pass. Such waves are caused most probably due to under currents. Near the shore or in shallow water, the upper ridges of the waves are of broken type. It is their belief that when sea-goddess 'becomes dissatisfied, she causes natural calamities and any sort of disaster.
ASSESSMENT OF CATCH FROM SEA WATER:

Proper assessment of catch is another important criterion for fishermen. 'Fish are not all there is one bio-mass to be hauled in with a fisherman's net. The ocean contains several hundreds of species - over 25,000 species of marine fishes have been identified - each with its own particular characteristic and locations' (Kurien 1982). He is of the opinion that over 90 per cent of the marine life is concentrated in 10 per cent of waters above the continental shelf. It is from the coastline to a depth range of about 200 meters (Kurien, 1982).

The colour of sea water is not uniform all over. Fish types also accordingly. It is the perception of the fishermen which has got empirical experience (based on observation) that colour of sea water varies according to depth and solvent contents. At some places it looks green cocoanout colour which does not contain much of fish. In some places, sea water looks reddish in colour in the month of November to January during 6th to 9th lunarday when current is comparatively low. In this type water typical varieties of fish like 'bhekti', 'Paniakhia', 'Borei', 'Silverbelly', 'Ribbon fish' etc. are found. However amongst all blue water is of great importance to fisherfolk. it is intermingled with sparking light during night due to phosphorous content in water. In this water all types of fishes are found in more quantity. Amongst them important are 'Hilsa', 'Rupapati', 'Pomfret', 'Kokali', 'Shrimps' (Small varieties of prawn) are
found. In the areas where small varieties of fishes are available, they say that this water gives a fishysmell and water looks like fresh fish washed water. Then following this indication, the fishermen mark the direction of shoal of fish movement. The presence of shark is detected by some oily substances floating on the surface when southern wind begins to blow. Most of the cartilagenous fishes (generally devoid of scales) are 'Tangra', 'Pangas', 'Simul', 'Silang' etc. These fishes produce more oily substances than scaled fishes, which is detected by expert fishermen or 'master'. (The expert steerer who is generally an experienced man is called as 'Master'). The shoal of hilsa cover a wide area where pinkish oil substances can be marked on the surface of water. Hilsa fish moves in large numbers forming different layers by disturbing water level and also produce sound which is detected by fishermen. They also know the presence of crocodiles which gives flesh smell. Again the presence of shell fish can be known by some greasy particles on the water surface.

TYPES OF FISH AND THEIR MOVEMENT:

The fishermen are the keen observers of the behavioural pattern, movement of various fish which escapes attention of a common man. It is developed through their personal interest learnt through long term close association with sea. It is known that the fishermen's 'World view' is restricted to sea and fish only. They also recognise varieties among same type of fish. Although prawn donot belong to pisces,
it is commonly classed as fish, which are of various types like shrimps, penaeid prawns, Indian prawn etc. In fact different varieties of prawn especially tiger prawn, earn more money. (Table showing scientific names of different varieties of marine fishes).

**TABLE-XII**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCAL NAME</th>
<th>ENGLISH NAME</th>
<th>SCIENTIFIC NAME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ilishi</td>
<td>Hilsa</td>
<td>Hilsa ilisha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Dhama</td>
<td>Hilsa</td>
<td>Hilsa toli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Dhala Chandi</td>
<td>White Pomfret</td>
<td>Pampus chinensis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Kala Chandi</td>
<td>Black Pomfret</td>
<td>Parastromateus niger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Bhekti</td>
<td>Cock-up</td>
<td>Lates calcarifer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Paniakhia</td>
<td>Clupeids</td>
<td>Megalops cyprinoides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Sahalo</td>
<td>Indian Salmon</td>
<td>Eleutheronama tetratactylum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Borei</td>
<td>Jew fish</td>
<td>Johnius dussumieri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Kokili</td>
<td>Anchovy</td>
<td>Anchoviella indica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Rupapatia</td>
<td>Ribbon fish</td>
<td>Trichicurus haumela</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Kantia</td>
<td>Cat fish</td>
<td>Arius arius</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Magura</td>
<td>Shark</td>
<td>Carcharhinus gangeticus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Khandha</td>
<td>Silverbar</td>
<td>Chirocentrus dorab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Bagda</td>
<td>Tiger prawn</td>
<td>Penaeus monodon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Chapda</td>
<td>White prawn</td>
<td>Penaeus indicus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Khopra</td>
<td>Brown prawn</td>
<td>Metapenaeus spp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Chingudi</td>
<td>Small shrimp</td>
<td>Acetes indicus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Neva or Bumalo</td>
<td>Bombay-Duck</td>
<td>Harpodon Neherius</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this above table alongwith important varieties of marine fishes, prawns of different varieties are also included.

Mid-sea is considered as the home of sea fish. Generally fish moves with the current and against the wind. Generally fishes move with the current. But certain specific varieties of fishes like hilsa, karul, bacha, bata, pangas, etc. move against the current.
During fishing season the movement of fish follows this basic principle when current comes from mid-sea (in the south) and wind blows from the north direction only slightest difference is marked during particular lunar position. But when southern wind blows, the current as well as wind change the direction from North which bar the fish to move against the wind and also obstructed by strong back current. This is the variation of general concept regarding the movement of fish. Hence the free movement of fish is checked. The result is the reduction of catch. During last part of rainy season and beginning of winter, from September to October, sweet water flows through tributaries of rivers to sea which makes sea water less saline and light. But during summer season from March to August when southern wind begins to blow, the heavy water from mid-sea generally flows towards shore. This natural phenomenon affects the movement of sea fish. Thus the quantity and good quality of fish can be hauled within 3-4 miles off the shore during September to October. After this fish gradually move towards south direction towards mid-sea along with the flow of north wind. Again the fish moves towards shore from the mid-sea in the month of February to March. Thus according to the variation in the movement of fish, the fishermen set their nets for a better catch.

One type of fish becomes the food of another types. As for example, a very small variety of shrimps and small crabs are often food of all big fishes. These 'shrimps' can be seen on the water surface during low tidal period when
sea water is comparatively calm and clear. So the fishermen can know which type of fish can be expected to be hauled between tides and ebbs.

Generally large varieties of fish takes small fishes as their food. 'In the oceans there are much greater stocks - both in number and weight - of the smaller sizes of fish than of larger sizes. Also the smaller fishes are always closer to the shore and larger fishes further away. The smaller fishes feed on the microscopic plant and animal life in the coastal waters and the larger fish in turn feed on smaller fish. There are much more sardines and anchovies than there are perches and tuna' (Kurien, 1978 b.).

Fishes always overlap each other. But shark always chase all types of fishes which come in its way because all the fishes are their food, even saw fish is afraid of sharks. So for fishermen it is important to note that if small and particular variety of fish is hauled in the net, then in the second time in the same place, they can get large quantity of same fish as the fish generally move in shoal in the same track with rare contradiction.

WEATHER FORECAST:

The fishermen of Sandhakud regarding weather or any climatic variation; depend on their own experience to know the imminent danger like cyclone, storm etc. Without the help of mass media (Radio, Television) announcement.
They can also presume the weather from the colour of the eyes of fish. It is said that the red eyes of fish foretells severe cyclonic weather. They describe it as follows. When stormy weather persists in some parts of deep sea and continues for some days, cause disturbances in the water thereby causing redness of the eyes of fishes. When such fishes move towards the mid-sea and are caught in the net, the fishermen presume that the stormy weather is ahead and take precautionary measures. Generally during the new moon (amabashya) or full moon (Purnima) when sea is very much disturbed, the eyes of fish turn little reddish than normal eye colour. Their conception is that fish is created by Sea goddess, so they are sympathetic towards any hazards or disturbances are apprehended on her (Mother Goddess). Here the rationalistic view of the fishermen is their belief in supernatural power which can save them from imminent danger.

**EFFECT OF TIDE AND EBB:**

The sequence of tide and ebb is directly connected with the lunar positions and influence nature of catch. The fisherfolk take note of these sequences of natural phenomena. Each month is broadly divided into two halves like 'Sukla Puksha' or brighter half and 'Krishnapaksha' or darker half. Each 'Paksha' is equivalent to a fortnight. The tides are guided by lunar attraction and so intensity varies as per lunar appearance. On the new moon day (Ambashya) the current is stronger than the full moon day (Purnima). Hence, they consider 'Amabashya' as male and Purnima as 'female'. Again
the force of current increases from 10th and reaches its optimum level either on 'amabashya' or on 'purnima' whichever may be the case. But in 'Krishna Paksha' the force of current is greater than that of 'Sukla Paksha'. Tides reach the lowest level for three days (7th to 9th) in dark period. In 'Sukla Paksha', the low current continues for 7 days from 5 to 11 day. The reason is simple because the increase in volume of water in 'Krishna Paksha' is more than what subsides during ebb period. The Krishna Paksha ebb period is shorter than the tide period which has got empirical value. So every day the rise and fall of water is not equal in both dark and light period. Thereby, the volume of water increases day by day till 'ambashya'. But after 'amabashya', when the back pressure of water becomes lesser, the rise and fall of water gradually balanced up to Sukla Paksha. In this period, the tide and ebb are uniform from 5th to 11th day, as it is described earlier. One can notice the extremely low current of water from 7th to 9th day of Krishna Paksha. So it is said by the fishermen that the force of water current is more before new moon or amabashya and after full moon. On 10th lunarday which is of more importance in fishermen's life and some rituals are performed, as from this 10th day, the tide begins to rise. Basing on these traditional skill, the fisherfolk always set their nets according to 'lunar position' or 'tithi'.

**DISTANCE CALCULATION:**

The fishermen calculate the distance in terms of tide and ebb instead of miles or kilometers. To cover a
particular distance, they can calculate how many tides and ebbs they have to cross through. A cyclic order is followed by the tide and ebb which is a natural phenomenon. In a day (24 hours) there are two tides and two ebbs where each continues for about 5 hours. The time gap between maximum tide and beginning of ebb when water comes to a stand still condition, gradually becomes shorter towards amabashya or Purnima. In this period, the fishermen remove the catch from the net. During other periods, the net goes down under water due to strong action of current. They are also well aware of the fact that each day the tide begins for about 45 minutes later than previous day. On the 11th lunar day, the tide begins in the evening and again reappears in early morning. So the timing of the tides are influenced by lunar position, which is calculated by fisherfolk.

On certain specific days, tide reaches its maximum level. These days are the fullmoon days of Falguna (February-March) i.e. on Dola Purnima, the full moon day of 'Bhadraba' i.e. (August to September) i.e. on Rasa Purnima. Again the new moon day in the month of Kartik (October to November) i.e. on Deepabali Amabashya. According to fisherfolk cultural forum the fishing season starts from 'Rasa Purnima' and ends on 'Dola Purnima'. They consider the rainy season is the appropriate time period for the growth and development of fishes.
CONCEPT OF TIME AND DIRECTION IN SEA:

In the fishing occupation, the fishermen have to go far away from the shore in both day and night. In some special times they remain in the sea for days together. There is every possibility of losing the direction of shore. They are not conversant with modern amenities like forecast machine etc. For this they have to depend on stellar system where by position and direction of stars will guide them for getting shore at night. They select a big star, by which they know that direction and adequate knowledge about time. The 'Dhruba tara' (Polar star) is mostly depended star for knowing the direction. The polar star is seen every night at a fixed position of North. The position of a known star on the horizon time at night. During day the sun provides the direction and time. The following are the dependable stars:-

NISHI TARA (VENUS STAR):

It rises at mid-night in the east and sets in the west which also helps the fishermen to show the direction and time.

SAPTA TARA (SEVEN STARS):

These are seven in numbers which rise in the east and set in the west.

Besides all these, the fisherfolk generally donot sail in foggy nights because during these nights, they cannot see the stars. So there is every possibility of losing the direction in the sea.
The sea-gulls also help them when the net is missed, through their crying sound. They are called 'Friend of Mariners'. They move around the missing net which help the fishermen to search it out. They also save the life of many fishermen from sudden danger. So the fishermen have got some sort of affection and consider it as a taboo to kill or harm the sea-gulls.

This proves the intimate and thorough knowledge about the immediate environment and climatic variation which are indispensable for the risky sea life of the fishermen. The daring sea voyage of fishermen is very much dependent on correct assessment of the climate otherwise they will risk life or incur economic loss. They have developed a cultural and emotional attachment to their immediate environment.

Basing on relative climatic conditions, they set their working principle. According to Redfield (1955-82), 'the sentiments, ideas and judgements of their environment adds to the quality of their cultural dimensions'. The fishermen always try to overcome the technological problems with their traditional knowledge. It is based on deductive principle.
THE RITUALS ASSOCIATED WITH FISHING:

Man always seeks the blessings from unknown unseen supernatural power, where he is at his wits end, where no known technique will serve the purpose, where uncertainty prevails over his path. The same sentiment plays in the case of these helpless fishermen. Dependency on supernatural powers stem from the helplessness of man, in certain situation, whose repetition is totally unwanted. In apprehension of such event, man tries to appease supernatural power.

In every step of life of fishermen, starting from sailing their boat for fishing venture to returning home, a series of rituals are performed inorder to save their life from all hazards in occupation. Through ritual performance, they also adapt themselves to natural environment. They believe in supernaturalism, witchcraft, magical power of evil eye etc. In a fishing unit, the master is called 'Steerer' who is assisted by some crews. So inorder to avoid the evil eye, they put on amulets made of 'astadhatu' (8 specific varieties of metals) on the left little finger. The head of the fishing unit 'Master' also keep the spine of large fishes (Sankar fish) in an amulate in the waist region. They also keep the spine of baby Shankar (skate) fish which they believe to give them protection against the poisonous sea snakes. In their society, the magicians, performing magical practices called 'Ojha'.
The fishermen also have a strong faith on the presence of evil spirit, evil wish and evil loose. They believe that sometimes fishes cannot hauled due to evil eye and evil mouth. To overcome from all these, they bring chanted water (Mantura Pani' from the Ojha (Magician). It is then just sprinkled around the fishing craft, fishing ground to get good catch. To get this 'Chanted water' (sacred water), a particular process is followed which is 'Ritual for better catch'. It is to be collected in one breath alongwith a sickle in hand. Before fishing venture, they spray it on their nets, craft etc. Their belief regarding less catch is due to evil look, though the actual reason may be due to some technical defects or some other natural causes. When any such defect is not found out and others getting a good catch just by the side of fishing boat, they believe it to be the effect of evil look or evil wish. They also spray the chanted water which is sacred in nature to overcome the effect of evil look if at all there.

RITUALS CONNECTING WITH THE PREPARATION OF FISHING GEAR:

For the fishermen, the boat and net are the two most important fishing gear. So they observe the ritual for the preparation of the same.

Usually the boat is constructed by the carpenters, on a day which seems to be auspicious, selected for beginning of boat construction. First of all they worship the keel of the boat by the caste priest offer flowers and
fruits. (The details of wood type, Parts of boat is described in the chapter fishing tools and techniques). When boat construction is completed, it is smeared with mustard oil and vermillion, which is followed by greeting rituals with varieties of crops like paddy, peas, barley along with an earthen lamp, water and durba grass (Cynodon), Mango fruit etc. Sweets are distributed to all the villagers. They consider boat as 'female deity' (Nava Maa). The fishermen believe that any deviation of ritual will cause severe harm to them. They also foresee imminent danger through peculiar sounds and bad dreams, and also get indications about proper location of successful haul in their dream.

RITUALS FOR NET MAKING:

There are also some rituals for the preparation of Net. Here the most important point is the number of meshes of a net is to be prepared according to the position of planet at the time of birth of the owner for whom it is prepared. If suppose the position of the planet is 9th house, then it is either '9' or even the multiples of '9'. For this they take the help of their own priest-cum-astrologer.

The fishermen are highly dependent on nature, often it is observed that they are more resigned to fate. As human beings, they have little hold over the untamed mights of Nature. That is why a compromise is made between them and supernatural power by obeying certain rules as well as superstitions. They do believe in the animation even of their
own fabricated tools, as for example a butcher considers his chopper has life, a boatman thinks his boat has life similarly the fisherman's net has got life.

It is essential to make the 'net' according to 'rashi' name (name as per stellar position) otherwise severe misfortune will befall them. They also avoid to begin the net making on Thursday, Saturday and Sunday due to inauspicious result. The same principle is also followed during the joining of different parts of net (as it is an animate object for them). They think the net can see and feel anything just like living beings. This concept is reflected in their working pattern and behaviour with the same. As for example the 'Old net' is considered as incapable due to 'Old age' just like their father. When Jelly fish enter into their net during catch, it chokes the 'Meshes' of the net which is termed by the fishermen, as 'Pain in breathing' etc. The most important ritual of the fishermen is the 'life giving ritual' to the net. Here first of all 4 chokhs or eyes are separately knitted and joined to the main net. In this ritual, 3 to 5 individuals greet the net with greeting disc containing earthen lamps, turmeric, vermilion, flowers, one iron nail, a piece of conch shell, a small date palm tree having only one leaf, Sandal Wood Paste, Manago leaves etc. The four corners of the earlier made parts of net are attached to the eyes of the net where vermilion mark is marked earlier. Then 4 men sit in 'stooping position' in front of four eyes of the net. They spit betel juice from their mouths to the net to make it impure. It is
the concept of fishermen that by making the net impure, evil spirit will not be attracted towards the net. They also use iron nail to move out the evil spirits. During the greeting ritual for a net, the owner also throw some fresh fish with the idea to encourage the net to bring more fresh fish subsequently.

RITUAL ASSOCIATED WITH FIRST FISHING VENTURE:

During the beginning of fishing season, one day (auspicious) in usually fixed by the village priest for the fishing venture into the sea. Preferably they start fishing on Tuesday or Wednesday. On Thursday fishing is completely banned in Sandhakud village.

Prior to departure for fishing, the following ritualistic procedures are followed. This ritual includes the worship of three deities, the main being worship of Sea Goddess, 'Danga Puja' or worship of fishing craft. According to fishermen Sea Goddess is the most important deity. Because their success mainly depend on the blessing of Mother Goddess (Sea). In fishermen community 'sea' is worshiped as 'Mother Goddess' due to its motherly attitude. They believe that just like mother 'sea' helps them without any interest. Sea is considered as the source of fish production. An earthen pot filled with water is placed in the name of Mother Goddess. The Pot is then covered with red cloth and a cocoanut is placed over it. Here the articles required for worship are Sundried rice, butter, honey, basil (Tulasi) leaves, flowers etc. Then the ceremony ends by offering to 'Incantation' (Homa)
performed by the priest. The water inside the earthen pot is called consecrated water (Shanti-Jala) or sacred water which is sprayed over the boat and net. It is followed by a ceremonial feast to their kin members and friends. Then they worship the boat and net by offering flowers, coconuts, Sundried rice, turmeric powder, vermillion etc. fruits and flowers to overcome the imminent danger and better seasonal catch.

On the day of first fishing venture, they smear two ends of the boat with mustard oil and sprinkle some water to perform the bathing ritual of the boat. Then two ends of the boat is smeared with vermillion, and garlanded. They also spray paddy grains (Dhana) with turmeric powder and grass. At the end sweets, fruits are distributed to the members present in that place.

So through performing all these worship, they try to avert the unexpected danger and ill luck. Along with all these important rituals, the fishermen also worship, village Deity, Lord Ram, Hanuman etc.

Everyday before the fishing process starts, they worship Sea, boat and net by offering coconuts, flowers etc. Again on every 10th day of 'Krishna Paksha' and 'Sukla Paksha', they worship 'Sea', by offering banana, coconuts, sugar, sundried rice etc. The 10th day (dashami) is selected because the tide and ebb come to their lowest level and thereby catch increases. It reflects their aspiration for
economic gain for which apprehensive folk mind seeks supernatural appeasement through ritual performance.

FESTIVALS OF FISHERMEN:

The fisherfolk of Sandhakud village celebrate different festivals which are mostly equal to South India, as they are mostly Telgu. 'Makar Sankranti' is their most important festival. In this day they usually worship Sun God, Mother Goddess 'Sea'. It is usually celebrated in the middle of January. Before this festival, they dispose of all old things and clean the house. On the day of festival, they perform ancestral worship by offering own prepared food and pray for family welfare. It is believed in their social system that if ancestor is not satisfied then it will lead to less catch (fishing) and family members will suffer on different diseases so they observe it very cautiously. Irrespective of rich and poor 'meat' is a must. For this festival beforehand they purchase goat and give proper food to make it more healthy and then sacrifice it on the very day to satisfy their ancestor. Sea-Goddess is also worshiped alongwith Sun God by offering cooked food specially the new rice. The blood of sacrificed goat or even chicken is sprayed over the fishing craft (Teppa, Nava, barboat) and nets. Then they offer flowers, camphor etc. to God and Goddess as a sign of respect.

Another important festival is the 'Kothamavasi' which is celebrated as the beginning of Telgu year. It is observed in the month of March. In this festival generally the
economically well off members of the village distribute money and food (sweets) amongst the poor families.

Kartik purnima is another festival of both Oriya and Telgu fishermen, which is usually celebrated in the month of November or December. It is observed as a mark of respect to revive the past glory of trade and commerce performed by merchants. They were sailing their boats to Bali, Java, Sumatra in the past to expedite their business. They consider the primitive sailors were nobody else, rather fishermen. In this festival they pray to God for the 'safe return' of their male folk. For the worship, they offer sweets to their kin groups. The fishermen (Net and boat owners) of Sandhakud village also appoint new crews (provided the family members are lesser than that of required number of persons needed for a fishing boat) on this auspicious festival day.

Besides these festivals, they are now also celebrating Ram Navami, Ganesh Puja, Durga Puja, Diwali which are important Oriya festivals.

Moreover the fishermen of village under study also observe festivals for worship of village deity, once in a year. It is usually performed on 'Ram Navami' (in the month of April).

All these rituals and festivals of fishermen are encircling around 'fishing'. So it is called by the Social Scientists as 'Fishing Culture-Complex'. Just like agriculturists, the marine fisherfolk, a specialised component
of rural folk have also elaborate, rigid traditional rituals connected with different phases of fishing. Because of the occupation itself, they are dependant on the freaks and vagaries of nature. Their life is always at stake. This insecure and uncertain job like 'Marine fishing' leads to perform rituals with much anxiety, seriousness, the aim being to satisfy the supernatural power. For this they consider 'Sea' as female deity to whom they worship with heartiest devotion. This is the rationalistic approach of fishermen towards their way of life. Through these communal worship the fishermen, exhibit common subjugation to supernatural power. Here one can mark three guiding factors in social system of fishermen. Those are (a) insecurity of life in the vast, unlimited open sea (b) uncertainty of production (c) satisfaction of super-natural power, for their economic development. It also intensify the degree of respect to their deities which seems to be more than any other societies. In fishermen community 'rituals and festivals' are important from structural, functional point of view and brings cohesiveness in their social system.