

REGIONAL MOVEMENTS

Politics of Language, Ethnicity-Identity

SAJAL BASU

This book on a subject of great contemporary interest covers a wide range of issues: the legacy of the nationalist movement, trade unions, language and ethnicity, caste, Bengal renaissance, reform movements, bhadrak culture, and Marxism among others. The author takes into account the positive aspects of regional movements, their written literature, new scripts and regeneration of cultural symbols. The appendices include fascinating information from unpublished documents, political literature, views expressed in newspapers, memoranda submitted by agitators as well as official and government records.

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RASHTRAPATI NIVAS, SHIMLA-171005

Jharkhand Movement

Ethnicity and Culture
of Silence

Sajal Basu

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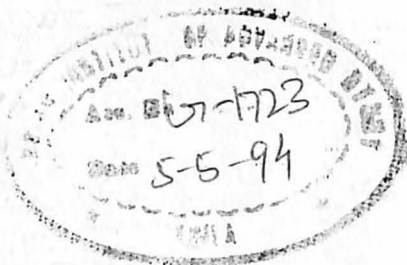
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TO
PASHUPATI (MAHATO)
A DEAR FRIEND COMMITTED TO
JHARKHAND CULTURE

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PREFACE

The recent worldwide upsurge in assertion of ethnicity and symbols of culture have captured the stage of social science disciplines. Long before this upsurge, since 1928 Jharkhand movement has remained a human laboratory for all the parties concerned, viz. participant ethnic groups, the agitating leaders, the authorities, the elites, theoreticians. Started with a vengeance against the *diku* exploiters, the movement gradually became the mobilisation ground for the grievances of indigenous communities in four states of India, viz. Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, and W. Bengal. Formerly known as Chotanagpur Plateau, the region with its background of cultural assimilation of three streams of civilization, and rich mineral, forest resources, has been covered by development process and modernisation. Instead of becoming the source of employment and opening of economic provisions for the sons of the soil, the process intensified the age-long phenomenon of pauperisation, displacement and migration of indigenous ethnic groups. The setting up of mineral industries, river valley projects, modern heavy industries meant for them alienation from land and forest resources on which they exist, economically and culturally. At some initial stages, they would have some work as casual daily wage labour uprooted from agriculture, then turning to migrant labours moving round the country without any home, occupation and living.

In this monograph, I have tried to study the movement with this background and to show how the movement gradually could change into a broad-based ethnic movement covering the economic, cultural issues of indigenous groups, many of which were outside the periphery of the movement. In course of development and extension of the movement, the concept of *diku* has been changed with the involvement of *Sadans* in the movement, and the participant ethnies also got transformed into articulate pressure groups in democratic politics. First, the study covers the people and the movement with a detail account of the area, the communities, economy, socio-political system and myths, the legacy of revolts against the British and *diku* - Mahajan - Zamindars. This legacy, and the revolts have

been interpreted by many as autonomy in subaltern consciousness, and the development process to be responsible for the creation of internal colonialism. The development of the movement from Unnati Samaj, Adivasi Mahasabha to Jharkhand Party and different factions, has been discussed.

In post-Independence India, language has remained the most efficacious symbol in mobilising popular sentiment for regional movements. The state reorganisation (1955) and creation of new states did not passify this sentiment. The sentiment of Language, mixed up with religion, ethnicity, culture became a source of social division as well as ethno-regional unity. When used as a caterer of religion (as in Punjab, Assam), it created division on communal line. It has also been used in a secular frame when movement based on ethno-lingual integration could forge ethnic unity and cultural integration as evidenced recently in the Gorkhaland and Jharkhand movement. In the second chapter, viz. Language and Culture of Silence, I have tried to study the creative aspects of the movement. Though the area and the movement were beset with contradictions in language, script having three main groups of language and a common market place language evolved, the movement has been instrumental in minimising differences and development of language in written form. The division of communities on the issue of script (e.g. Roman, Ol Chik or regional script in Santali), language (Northern-Southern Santali) was minimised and emergence of language in written form (Kurmali) could become possible as an impact of the movement. Moreover, the movement leaders have taken initiative to evolve a Jharkhandi language with Devanagiri as script. We have also noted, how the movement could make breakthrough into the culture of silence in course of protests, agitations. Many communities having lost their language and culture, could come up to identify with the culture and symbols of indigenous ethnies. Ethnicity as feeling of continuity and part of self-definition may be effective in mobilising groups, but the process of ethnies forming a nation, or community to state is very uncertain. With the background of civilisational base of Indian society, the concept of nationality formation, ethnicity as a movement has been discussed.

The phenomenon of ethnocide entailing economic and cultural genocide has been discussed in 'Ethnocide and Ethnicity' Chapter.

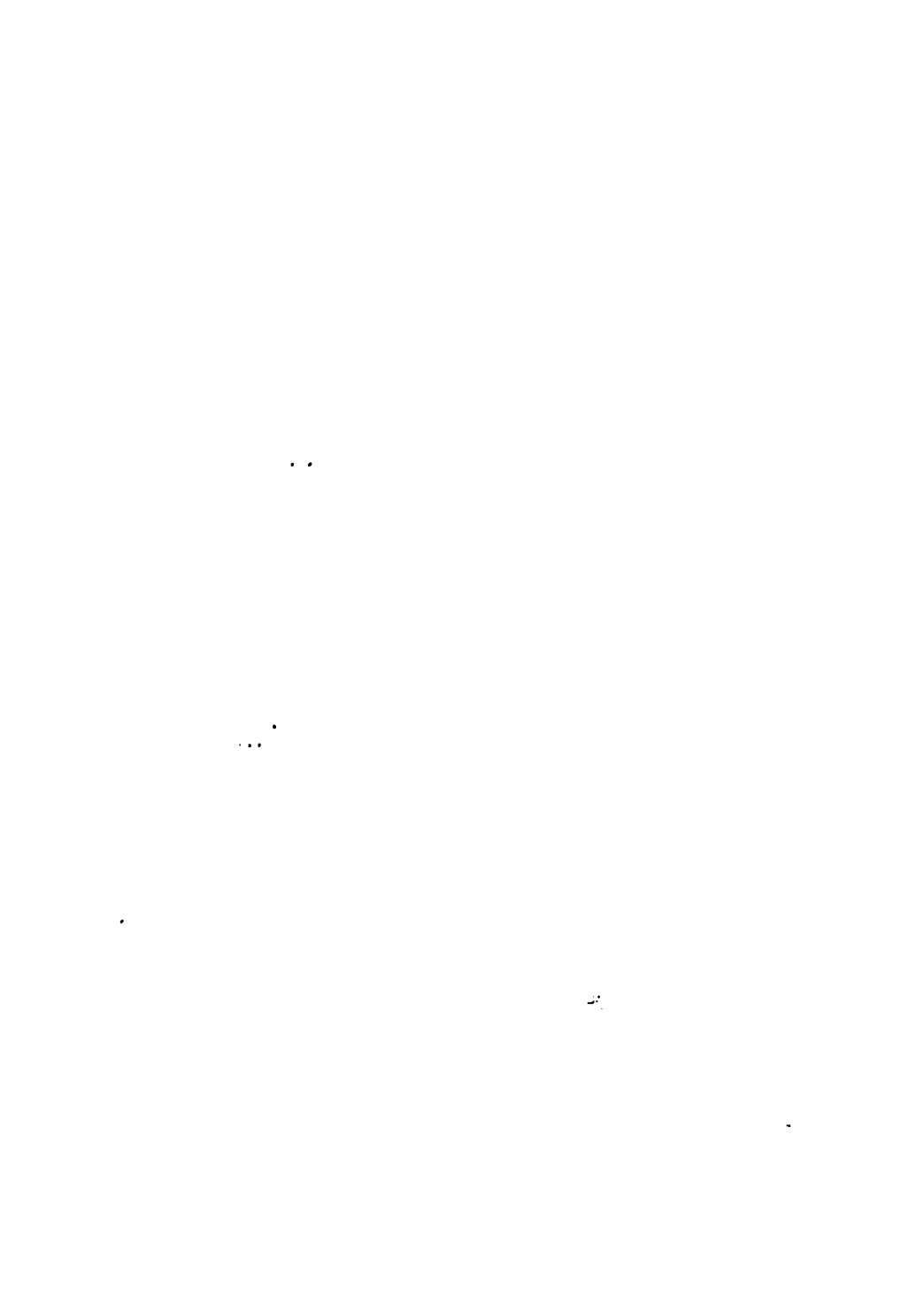
A brief account of losses of human and forest resources due to industrialisation, deforestation, exposes the nature of ethnocide. The bases of identity and the crisis caused by the development process have been discussed and the sentiment and plight of the culturally submerged groups expressed in folk songs, poems which are popular in the area. In discussing the Politics of Jharkhand, viz. 'Politics without Polity', the split composition of the movement, the broad overlapping streams, its constituency or absence of constituency, and reservation issue have been discussed. The constitutional provision of reservation, non-implementation of Commissions' recommendations, backlash of the Varna Hindus against the reservation system as a whole, have been represented with available data and inequality co-efficients.

Assertion of ethnicity and rise of ethnic movements may be considered as the only defence and way out for the ethnies. In the chapter Epilogue meant for the leaders, their over concern for unity and over-reaction to ethno-regional expressions have been held to be ill-conceived. Rather, sensitivity to autonomy demand and urge for cultural existence may be appreciably agreed to, or considered with a humane approach.

In working out this monograph, I have been privileged to receive the help of friends in IIAS, Shimla. For folk materials and participants' views, Pashupati Mahato remains the basic source. In course of interviewing some Jharkhand leaders and activists, I have earned some insight to the movement. Pranab Khatua, a young friend in Jhargram was kind enough to assist me in moving to the spots of Jharkhand activities.

Shimla
September 24, 1990

SAJAL BASU



CHAPTER I

THE PEOPLE AND THE MOVEMENT

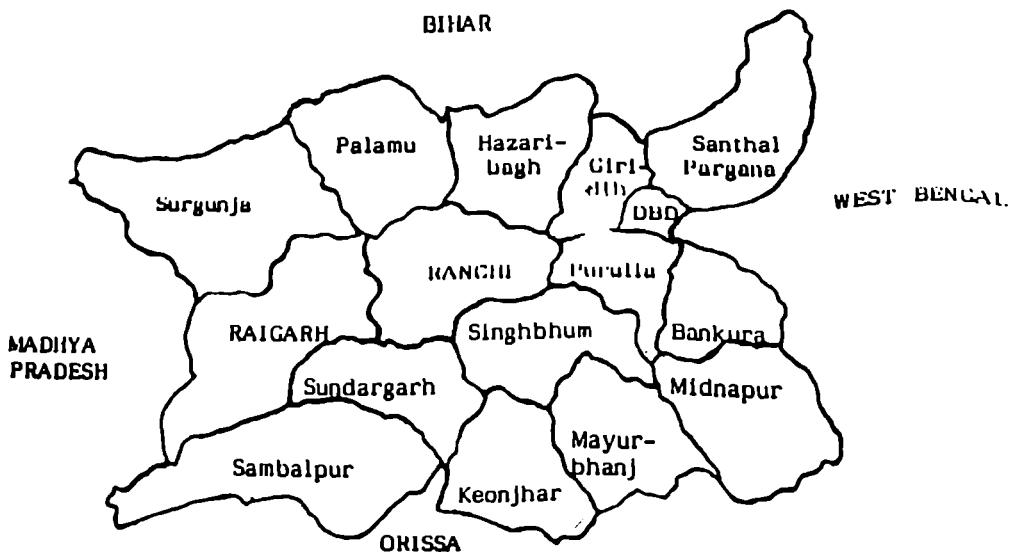
*Chuhait jabek manus kalo manus chule
aei uhader birdhan
buddhi bhaonr sab uhader lagye*

.....
*Etodinke sei niyamei aische cholye
Ekalabya, aei kahani Jharkhander Mahakabya
Aijkalkar Ekalabya -
Sabai torah soon -
dis na katye buro angul aar
tuilte habek dhanuke tankar.¹*

(A mere touch by black man would outcast, this is their ruling. Intelligence, education, everything is their attribute. This has been the rule for ages, oh Ekalabya (a mythical tribal hero), this is Jharkhand's epic story. Hear you all, the present Ekalabyas - don't spare your thumb, you have to twang the bowstring).

This folk poem of a local Jharkhandi poet represents the woe and sentiment of the area and its people. The movement, continued since last fifty years, has exposed the sad plight of the population spread over a vast region in four Indian states. This area, known as Chotanagpur plateau, includes a cultural region comprising 21 contiguous districts in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and W. Bengal. Geographically, it spread over Raimahal hills (Bihar) to Shimlapal hills (Mayurbhanj, Orissa), and Palamau to Dhanbad and Santal Pargana. In the natural peripheries of hills and forests, the *Janapadas* include Manbhum, Singbhum, Kendujhari, Khaspole, Nagbhum, Barabhum, Satbhum, Bogri, Palamau, Gumla, Lohardanga, Hazaribagh etc. The region has the richest deposits of mineral wealth and forest resources. The most vital sectors of industry are situated in this region, viz. Ranchi, Jamshedpur, Santaldih, Bokaro, Chandrapura, Sindhri, Hazaribagh, Jharia, Giridih, etc.

J H A R K H A N D



The Area and the People

The area of the proposed Jharkhand is 1,87,646 square kilometer with a population of 40 million. The composition of Jharkhand, as proposed by the movement, would be:

Bihar :	79,638 sq. km.
Districts :	
Singhbhum -	13, 447 sq. km.
Ranchi, Gumla	
Lohardanga	18,331 sq. km.
Hazari-bagh, Giridih	18, 060 ..
Palamau	12,677 ..
Dhanbad	2,994 ..
Santal Pargana	14,129 ..
(Dumka, Godda, Deoghar, Sahebganj)	

<i>West Bengal :</i>		26,864 sq. km.
Districts:	Purulia	6,259 ,,
	Midnapur	13,724 ,,
	Bankura	6,881 ,,
<i>Orissa :</i>		45,897 sq. km.
	Keonjhar	3,240 ,,
	Sundargarh	9,675 ,,
	Mayurbhanj	10,412 ,,
	Sambalpur	17,570 ,,
<i>Madhya Pradesh :</i>		35,247 sq. km.
Districts:	Raigarh	12,910 ,,
	Surguja	22,337 ,,

Of the total population, the percentage of Schedule Caste, Schedule Tribe would be about 47%, 13 million belong to tribal communities, 6.05 million Harijans, 7.5 million belong to other backward communities (OBC).² The prominent tribes with different socio-economic level living in the area are the Santal, Munda, Oraon, Ho, Birhor, Kharia, Bhumij, Mahali, Tamaria, Dudha, Turi, Pan, Bhuinya, Dhobi, Dusad, Muchi, Routia, Kuri, Kudmi (Mahato), Kumar, Kamar, Kohar, Konkali, Kalbar, Keshra, Manibar, Sonar, Teli, Napit, Gogi, Gangu, Kalindi, Lohar, Asur, Mandal, Pharia, Chunia, Gour, Rajwar, Monins Ghasi, Patikar, Khandwal, Bauri, Bedia, Chero, Gond, Khond, Kora, Malpaharia, Souripaharia, etc.

The Santal, Munda, Kharia, Bhumij, Kharwar, Mahali, Ho belong to Austro-Asian or Austric group, whereas the Oraon, Kudmi, Gond are of Dravidian origin, who migrated from Indus valley civilization and Maharashtra to Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and M.P. Culturally, this is perhaps the only area where the three major streams, viz. Aryan, Dravidian and Austroasian have converged into a synthesised formation of culture. Before the arrival of British administration in the form of Military collectorship in the Ramgarh Hill Tract (1780), the area was an abode of peace for the migrants belonging to various language groups. With the introduction of Permanent Settlement Regulation (1793), imposition of tax on land led the Tribal chiefs to become agents for revenue collection. This actually precipitated internal division and factionalism leading to series of uprising ethnic

in nature in the beginning but eventually becoming pan-tribal and regional in character.³ The historical events in this area provide a background of legacy of Jharkhand movement. It has been chronologically accounted in this way by the Jharkhand protagonists.

- 1765 - East India Company becomes the Revenue Collecting Agent of the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam XI.
- 1771 - Jharkhand comes under the East India Company.
- 1780 - Formation of the Military Collectorship of the Ramgarh Hill Tract.
- 1785 - The movement of Baba Tilka Manjhi.
- 1797 - The Munda uprising of Bundu (Leader—Bisnu Manki).
- 1798-99 - The Bhumij Revolt of Manbhum.
- 1800 - The Chero uprising of Palamau (Leader—Bhukhan Singh).
- 1807 - The Munda uprising of Tamar (Leader—Dukhan Manki).
- 1819-20 - The Munda uprising of Tamar (Leader—Radu Konta).
- 1831-32 - The Kol Rebellion (Leader—Singhray and Binray Manki).
- 1833 - Introduction of the Willkinson Rule, formation of the non-regulation province of the South West Frontier Agency vide Regulation XIII of 1833, after abolishing the Military Collectorship of the Ramgarh Hill Tract.
- 1834 - The Bhumij revolt or Chuar Hangama (Leader—Ganga Narayan Singh).
- 1845 - Introduction of Christianity in the area.
- 1854 - Agency administration abolished vide Act XX of 1854, and power of the agency vested in an officer appointed by the local government known as Commissioner placed directly under the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal continues to be non-regulation province with a new name Chutia Nagpur Division consisting of the districts of Manbhum, Singhbhum and the tributary states of Chotanagpur area, Surguja, Jashpur, Udaipur, Bangpur and Bonai.
- 1855 - The Santhal insurrection (Leader—Sidhu and Kanhu). Vide Act XXXVII of 1855, Santhal Pargana formed in to a separate non-regulation district under a separate Commissioner of the Bhagalpur division.
- 1856-57 - The Sepoy Mutiny (Leader—Bisnath Shahi, Ganapat Rai, Sheikh Bhikhari, Budhu Bir).
- 1859 - Introduction of the sale and rent Law and Chutia Nagpur division.

- 1869 - Chotanagpur Tenures Act.
- 1872 - Santhal Pargana Settlement Regulation.
- 1874 - Non-regulation districts changed to scheduled districts vide the Scheduled District Act.
- 1858-95 - The Sardar Movement in Chota Nagpur.
- 1878 - Indian Forest Act.
- 1879 - The Chota Nagpur Landlord and Tenant Procedure Act.
- 1895-1900 - The Birsa Movement.
- 1903 - The Chota Nagpur Tenancy (Amendment) Act, introduced restrictions of transfer of land.
- 1908 - The Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, the Santhal Pargana Settlement (Amendment) Regulation introduced restriction on transfer of land.
- 1912 - Separation of Bihar and Orissa from Bengal.
- 1914 - Tana Bhagat Movement (Leader—Jatra Bhagat).
- 1917 - Meli Movement in Mayurbhanj district, Orissa in that movement 17 persons were hanged by the British (Leader—Konka Manjhi, Kalia Mahato) against British Rule Govt. at that time.
- 1930 - Salt Satyagrah (Movement).
(Leader—Sahadev Mahato, Mohan Mahato, Gokul Mahato, Ganesh Mahato, Shital Mahato, of Purulia—West Bengal).
- 1936 - Separation of Orissa from Bihar.
- 1938 - Adivasi Mahasabha (Leader—Jaipal Singh).
- 1942 - Quit India Revolution.
(Leaders—Chuna Ram Mahato, Gavinda Mahato (of Man Bazar) and Brindaban Mahato (of Midnapur, West Bengal).
- 1948 - Kharawan Movement (Jharkhand Movement).

The Jharkhand movement got its lifeblood from the predecessor organisations, viz. Chotangapur Unnati Samaj (1915) and Adivasi Mahasabha (1938). The Samaj submitted a demand for separate Jharkhand state to the Simmon Commission in 1928. First, organised by the Christian adivasi students, the Samaj was reconstituted in 1939 with non-Christian adivasis included in it. It was thus renamed as Adivasi Mahasabha which again became Jharkhand Party in a conference at Ranchi, Bihar in 1949. Based on grievances against ethnic backwardness and regional economic deprivation, the movement's original demand was for the formation of a separate

state with 16 districts, which later became 21 districts as some were divided into new districts. The State Reorganisation Commission (1955) rejected the Jharkhand demand on the plea that the Jharkhand Party did not obtain a majority in the Chotanagpur and Santal Parganas area, and tribal population was only one third of the total population and divided into several language groups.

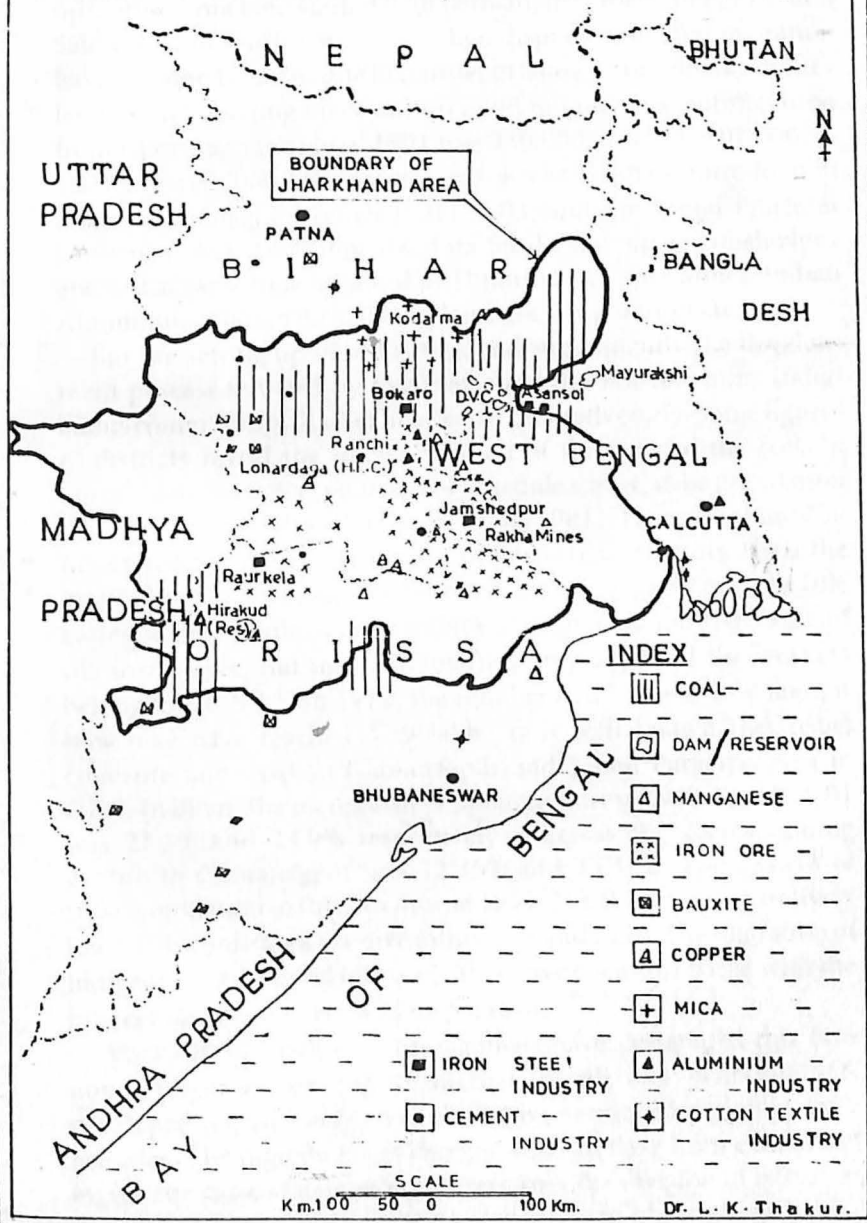
The movement based on ethnic and regional economic demands has always been loaded with split and division on ethnic and religious lines. The basic components-issues on which the Jharkhand identity developed have been exploitation by the *dikus* (outsiders), inclusion/exclusion of some communities in the reservation list guaranteed by constitutional provisions, right to forest resources, marginalisation and displacement due to setting up of industries, river valley projects, power plants etc.

The Economy

The region has the richest deposits of mineral wealth. Although the region accounts for 2.5% of the total geographical area of the country, more than 25% of mineral activities are carried on in this region. A major part of India's needs of manganese, copper, kyanite, asbestos, iron, chromite comes from Singhbhum district (Bihar) alone. The Bihar portion of the proposed Jharkhand area provides 100% of copper, 58.5% of mica, 85% of kyanite, 44.5% of coal, 22.4% of iron to the country.⁴ The forest resources in the area also provide revenues to the state government, viz. Bihar. The Kolhan subdivision in Singhbhum district is the richest single tract of land with mineral, forest resources—some of Asia's best teak forests are situated here. In Chotanagpur plateau alone, all important basic industrial minerals as coal, iron ore, manganese, limestone, copper, bauxite, mica, gold, silver, asbestos, kyanite, chromite, china clay are located in the Damodar-Subarnarekha basins. Nearly 25-30% of the area is covered with rich dense forest having commercial firewood, *sabai* grass, bamboo, *biri* leaves, lac etc. Industrial urban centres as Jamshedpur, Jadugoda, Bokaro, Sindhri, Gomla, Muri, Patratu, Chandrapura, Dhurwa, Adityapur, Rourkela have been developed in this resource rich region of Jharkhand. The main issues behind the movement are alienation of the indigenous communities

BIHAR, ORISSA & WEST BENGAL

LOCATION OF IMPORTANT DAMS, MINERALS AND INDUSTRIES



NOTE: "JHARKHAND IS THE MUSEUM OF MINERALS AND TOPOGRAPHIC FEATURES."

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from their land and forest, influx of outsider people resulting in deprivation of job and training, and submergence of culture. The uprooting from land started with permanent settlement (1793) and Sale and Rent law (1859). Since then dispossession and migration have remained chronic due to transfer of lands to the outsider money lenders and opening up of industry and mining. The outmigration from Chotanagpur only in 1891 was 330,000, in 1911, 707,000, in 1921 it was 947000.⁵ The process was checked with the introduction of the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act 1903, and the Santal Praganas Settlement Act, 1908. But the Tata Steel came up at Jamshedpur about that same time followed by Hindustan Copper Mines, Indian Aluminium, National Coal Development Corporation etc.

But the setting up of industries, and subsequently the development process initiated by five year plans did not touch the indigenous communities. Rather, it affected them adversely. Some figures of districts reveal the tragic situation of the sons of the soil. In Singabhum district, proportion of schedule castes, tribe population declined from 58.54% (1931) to 48.87% (1981). There are about 250 mines in the Kolhan area operated by outsider contractors where the original owner of the lands work as coolies. In Singhbhum, schedule castes, sechedule tribes comprise 50% of the population and 54.2% of the work force. But in the industries, only 24.4% of the workers belong to S.C.S.T.⁶ In 1971, the number of *dikus* was 1.69 lakh, it now may have reached 3.69 lakh.⁷ It is well known that tribal concentration exist in Chotanagpur and Santal Parganas area in Bihar. In Bihar, the increase in population during 1961-71, 1971-81 was 21.3% and 23.9% respectively, whereas the corresponding growth in Chotanagpur was 22.46% and 23.47%. The growth of tribal population in the area during 1951-71 has been comparatively low.⁸ This confirms a massive influx of population. The migration of indigenous people and influx of *dikus* have been correlated with the process of development and dispossession.

A section of Jharkhand protagonists have designated this economic plight as one due to internal colonialism—where underdeveloped region has been exploited by developed region as their colonies. The ingredients of this colonialism have been earmarked as: (i) The caste system which determines the division of labour in the country and shapes the mental attitude to physical work. The

administration, police also work on this basis. (ii) The uneven development of the society is said to be the second ingredient. Related with it is the discrimination in development between the two regions, viz plains and hill areas of Jharkhand, in the corresponding states of Bihar, M.P., Orissa, W. Bengal. The political centres, and its elites are held responsible for this. The discrepancy may be shown with the example of Chotanagpur.

<i>Items</i>	<i>Chotanagpur</i>	<i>Rest of the State of Bihar</i>
Revenue Contribution	70%	30%
Expenditure of Revenue	20%	80%
Irrigated land	5%	50%
Rural Electrification	5%	40%
Paved Road (per 1000 km.)	5 km.	20 km.

The most striking feature of the development process is that only 30% of the meagre allotted funds reach the people, and 50% remain unutilised.

(iii) Land and forest alienation has gone deep due to implementation of river valley projects, setting up of industries. The restriction on transfer of tribals' land remains in paper. All the big industries as TISCO, TELCO, H.E.C, Bokaro, Rourkella, and cities as Jamshedpur, Chaibasa, Ghatsila, Chakradharpur, Dhanbad, Bokaro, Giridih etc. are situated in the Jharkhand area affecting 12 lakh acres of land and 15 lakh people.⁹ The other ingredients described as part of internal colonialism are education and employment, culture and language, right to observe traditional rituals. A Jharkhand activist, alongwith an anthropologist of Anthropological Survey of India, made a survey on schools in Rajmahal hill area in 1985-86. The total number of teachers in these schools are 369, of them 271 teachers belong to south and north Bihar having little knowledge of Jharkhandi language and culture. 52% of these 271 outsider teachers would attend the school only for 6 months, 39% for 4-5 months. The local teachers also hail from distant places, posted on transfer.¹⁰

Another Jharkhand intellectual, Motilal Mahato has classified the pattern of occupation and unemployment. The people of Jharkhand have been said to belong to seven categories of work, viz. forest

hunting/gathering type, hill cultivation, settled agricultural type, settled harbour type, artisan, industrial mining type, white collar jobs. The first five occupations are traditionally held by particular tribes, e.g. Hill Kharia, Birhor, Birija, Asur are forest hunting groups; Maler type (shifting cultivator) or Sowriya Paharia of North Santal Parganas are hill cultivators; Kurmis, Santal, Oraon, Munda, Ho are settled agriculturists; Lohar, Asur, Karmali are traditional ironsmiths etc. The unemployment pattern has been categorised as voluntary, involuntary, frictional, seasonal, structural, cyclical, disguised, causal.¹¹

The System and Myths

The Jharkhand theoreticians and organisations have become assertive of the legacy of democratic/political thinking and related systems once practised in tribal society. The Parha-Panchayat system, said to be prevalent, worked successfully with village heads elected by village elders. The British introduced Manki-Munda system in Kolhan area allowing some internal autonomy and self rule. A cluster of villages known as *ilaqa* (area) was headed by a Manki, whereas the village was headed by a Munda. Both were responsible for revenue collection, law and order. Mankis were dealt with by the agent of the British Governor General in Calcutta. The system continued long after the British withdrawal. Some tribals as Ho still demand continuation of the system.¹² In the Parha-Panchayat system, the head of the village council was to be a Munda, Majhi or Mahato depending on the ethnic composition of village, the village heads would elect the Raja, Manki, or Parganait for a Parha or Pargana, the federation of Panchayats of a given territory. They in turn had allegiance to the Maharaja of Jharkhand. A democratic judiciary would assist the head at every level.¹³ The Munda-Munki-Ghatwal-Raja relationship in the land system and state formation has been studied by Anthropologists who held this responsible for the dissociation of the chiefs from the commoners. The impact of Vaishnavism and as a result, the rise of Vaishnava *gurus* as Brahmin Vaishnavas and myth of creation of Rajas have been analysed by them.¹⁴

The movements which we have listed with historical incidents

were more influenced and shaped by myths and faith in supernatural or cult hero. The so-called democratic thinking and related system, as claimed by the Jharkhand leaders, had nothing to do with these movements. Bengal Judicial Proceedings and statement of British officials in Santal Parganas, Bhagalpur division show that the movements were mostly shaped by gossips and myths created around some leaders who claimed to be God-gifted and/or deputed by an oracle. The Movement of Tilka Majhi (1784), Santal rebellion (1855), Kherwar Movement (1895-1900), Tana Bhagat Movement (1914) bear examples of this trend. Baske has compiled incidents leading to the guerrilla fight between British soldiers and Tilka Murmu, and the God-sent messages embodied in Sidhu-Kanhu, the leaders of Santal rebellion.¹⁵ Chowdhury has shown how the Santal revolt and the subsequent Kherwar and Safa Hore movements of the Santals, had been influenced by religious sentiments often having Hindu tenets.¹⁶ Later, the martyres and the leaders of the movement turned to be providential and source of new myths.

In most of the movements, destitution and famine due to excessive increase in land revenue led to outbursts, and open revolt in the form of non-payment of taxes, armed fights, and demand for Hul (independence). The exploitation and oppression were symbolised in *diku* Mahajans (outsider money leader) on whose instance the police and administration would harass the Santals. The Santali songs spread through the lips during Santal rebellion would speak for itself:

*Bako luturak khan bako hetaoak khan
 hai haire ! Bhagat Kenaram
 noarban nusaubon bankago tengon
 Nira niya nuru niya
 dinda niya bhita niya
 hai re hai re ! mapak gapch do
 nurich narar gai-kada, nachel lagit pachel langit
 seday leka betabetet —
 tabe do bon hul geaho.*

(None lend hearing to us, none bothered about our grievances, oh Bhagat Konaram (a *diku* money lender). We will live on ourselves,

none would help us. For the sake of our wife, land, homestead to get it back we shall fight, and struggle for the *hul*).

In course of the rise of popular sentiments against the *diku* money-lenders, police-sepoys and government agents, gossips and myths would spread through lips and mobilised into movement against the *diku*-white menace. The deep economic crisis and oppression by the *diku-mahajan* combine would often lead to outbursts in decoity and looting of the *mahajans'* houses. Since they did not know the way to deal with the expropriation of their land by the *mahajans*, and snatching away of hens, goat, physical opperssion of their women by British government employees. Some contingent events in 1854 actually led to the Santal rebellion.¹⁷ Economic hardship and destitution arising out of excessive revenue and appropriation of land by the *diku* money lenders led the Santals to get organised through secret group meetings in villages. Gossips and imaginary talks got spread in the areas having significant implications. A gossip came up regarding the *doms* that a boat full of gold was drowned in the Ganges with the touch of a *dom*, so all the *doms* will be killed. Then another gossip was spread that someone would appear to kill the *dikus*. The villagers were asked to hang cow-skin and a pair of flute in the junctions so that he culd recognise it as Santal village. Otherwise, he would kill all the villagers.¹⁸ Thus the tempo grew, Santals installed flags, hanged broken *Kulo*, (winnowing platter made of bamboo stick), broom in the street junctions to indicate the mood.

The concept of subaltern consciousness and autonomy of tribal movements, which have been said to be free from the influence of the mainstream Hindu nationalist movement, does not comply with the facts. These concepts tend to theorise the local tribal revolts as having far-reaching consequences in the consciousness and movements at the national level. Some Marxist-Jharkhand protagonists and subaltern theorists have tried to designate the movements as a parallel stream. Without questioning the historic significance of the revolts, it may be held that in many of the movements, the leaders, cult heroes and their pronouncements that gained providential character, had been influenced by Hindu norms and ideas. The appearance of God before Sidhu-Kanhu, the architects of Santal

rebellion, the call for reform of Santal society by Bhagirath Majhi, leader of the Kherwar movement, the religious metamorphosis of Birsa Munda, etc., bespeaks of strong Hindu influences. The myth of appearance of some God (not any *Bonga*, the Santali deity) before Sidhu and Kanhu and circulating the story of providential message that Santal Raj would be established and all *dikus* would be expropriated from the area, and they would get back their land, carried the emotion of the people. The poor people who were asked to fight under the leadership of Sidhu-Kanhu believed the pronounced story that only water would come out of the British guns and the British would be driven away.¹⁹ And after the failure of his movement, Sidhu held it to be due to *charitrik ashudhi* (impurity in character) of his disciples. Birsa Munda, the leader of another historical revolt, a convert Christian, after denouncing Christianity and traditional tribal religion, adopted purity in eating habits and life. His contact with Ananda Pandey, a Vaishnava *pundit* might have influenced him, but purity of life and eschewing the tribal eating habits (e.g. taking pork etc.) did bear strong Hindu influence.

Though economic exploitation in terms of land alienation, alienation from forest rights, social exploitation in terms of tribal women being kept and raped, and conversion to Christianity formed the main issues, religious overtones were prominent in all the movements. The Hinduised concept of purity was manifest in various forms. Some scholars as David Hardiman, Martin Orans held that the tribal reform movements were loaded with Hindu tenets for different reasons. Hardiman said it to be adoption of ruling groups' values so as to curb the influence of it through which rulers dominate over them. Orans held it to be a rank concession syndrome, emulation of values as a means of rank improvement. Chowdhury has rightly collated it with the dissenting groups' political temperament rooted in agelong phenomenon of oppressive land revenue, and non-responsive attitude of the government towards their grievances. Starting from the movement of Tilka Majhi to Santal rebellion, Bhumij revolt, Sardar *larai*, Tana Bhagat movement, this issue of agitation got articulated through major demands for reform subsequently taking the form of installation of Santal Raj.

The network of organising the movement, or means of communication used for mobilising the tribal sentiments was based on

circulation of myth and eulogising the leader as an oracle of divine power. Not to speak of Sidhu-Kanhu, or Bhagirath, even the radical Birsa Munda subsequently was apotheosised as Bhagwan or God. This myth-making feature of tribal movements have remained a constant phenomenon in Jharkhand movement also. Though its leaders do not tend to organise myth around the personalities, since it may not carry or may be counter-productive, but the culture symbols popularised through the movement, are mostly based on tribal myths, e.g. Karam, Dharam, Sibgazon etc. To disown the legacy of some movements, common symbols have been asserted as having traditional linkage with all the communities. In this aspect, the movement's role has been creative which would be discussed in language culture aspects and ethnicity portion.

In-built Factors

In the Jharkhand movement from its very inception, or if we accept its legacy in the above referred revolts and reform movements, we could find out some common tenets which have shaped the movement. The economic exploitation resulting in alienation from forest and land has always been considered to be rooted in the *diku* factor. The socio-cultural oppression of the communities concerned is also marked by this *diku* bias. Secondly, assertion of tribal identity and/or ethnicity involved rejection/disowning of any Hindu influence. During the long history of *diku*-tribal contact, such influence could hardly be marginalised. But the intellectuals and the leadership of Jharkhand find it to be efficacious in rousing the ethnic spirit of the indigenous communities. Thirdly, the divisions and contradictions in the movements have been precipitated by ethnic parochialism and personalised factors rather than language-culture differences. Lastly, the politics of Jharkhand, like any other movement, has been influenced and factionalised by the corrupt absorbing techniques of ruling party, i.e. Congress and its culture.

In course of its evolution from Unnati Samaj-Adivasi Mahasabha, to various forms of Jharkhand Party, the movement could extend its base among the indigenous communities. But internal squabbles and divisions remain chronic with the movement. Betrayal of some leaders, and gap in coalitioning of different ethnic factions have

reduced this movement into a leader-oriented one. Due to this lacking, though exploitation and deprivation factors continue to pinch the lives of diverse ethnic groups, the Jharkhand movement could not reach a take off stage.

Let us give an account of activities, agitation of the Jharkhandis which itself expose the contradiction and division among the groups. This account of J.M.M. has not mentioned the merger of Jaipal Singh's party with Congress and formation of Jharkhand Party (Hul) and J.C.C., J.M.M.'s victory in 14 assembly seats in Bihar was possible due to its electoral adjustment with Congress (I).

- 1950 - Formation of Jharkhand Party by Jaipal Singh.
- 1955 - Demonstration before the State Re-organisation Commission for separate Jharkhand State (Leader-Jaipal Singh).
- 1972 - Jharkhand Mukti Morcha under the leadership of Shibu Soren, present President of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha Central Committee.
- 1978 - The Communist Party of India supported the Jharkhand Movement and developing Pro-Jharkhandi Sentiment.
- 1979 - Murder of Shakti Nath Mahato (Dhanbad).
- 1981 - Formation of Chotanagpur and Santhalpargana Development Authority.
- 1982 - Murder of Ganga Ram Kalundia, Raj Nagar.
- 1982 - Murder of Dhananjoy Mahato, Ajit Mahato, Tiruldih. (Ichagarh and Chandil).
- 1985 - Jharkhand Mukti Morcha won 14 M.L.A. seats in Bihar.
- 1985 - Central Administration for the Chotanagpur area. Memorandum submitted under the leadership of Devendra Nath Champia with the signature of 52 M.L.As. of Bihar Assembly.
- 1987 - 8th August, Bir Martyrs for the cause of separate Jharkhand State Saheed Nirmal Mahato (Ex-President, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, Central Committee) resident of Uliyan, Kadma, Jamshedpur. Brihspati Mahato, Kalipada Baske, Fr. Anthony Murmu, Ex-M.P. etc. have sacrificed their lives for the cause of a separate Jharkhand State. Though may not be highlighted by the officials, historians to the extent they deprive but the living memories still ring in the heart of the millions of the hills and jungle areas kept alive by their songs and dances and the various tales that float over Jharkhand.

If Unnati Samaj is considered as a platform of the Christian tribals only, Adivasi Mahasabha may be taken as the progenitor of Jharkhand movement. Soon after its formation, Jaipal Singh took up its leadership and he continued to be the unquestioned leader of Jharkhand movement till 1963 when Jharkhand Party was merged with Congress. Mahasabha was a movement for self-respect, progress and freedom from exploitation. The Jharkhand Party developed on the basis of its demand for separate state. Since then, the movement faced splits, divisions due to nature of tribal consciousness, viz. general consciousness of being a tribal, and specific consciousness of being a Santal, Ho, Kharia, Oraon etc. Moreover, there were major communities like Bhumij, Kurmi who remained passive to the movement; the Kurmis' alignment with Congress continued even during 1970's. The Jharkhand Party led by Jaipal Singh could gain some electoral leverage in Bihar. It could win 32 seats in the Assembly, and became the biggest opposition party. But in 1957, its assembly strength declined to 18, partly due to the frustration with the refusal of State Reorganisation Commission to consider the Jharkhand demand. In 1962, the party could manage to win 20 seats in Bihar. This decline and frustration might have induced the leaders to decide about fighting their cause from within the Congress system. But the decision to merge with Congress (1963) left many young leaders disgruntled, leading to formation of splinter groups.

The re-emergence of Jharkhand Party in 1970 could hardly envelop broad support of various ethnic groups. N.E. Horo led a Party with Munda followers, Begum Sumrui with He followers, Set Membram with Santal followers. A radical group, Birsa Seva Dal came up in 1967-68 concentrated mainly in urban areas of Ranchi and Jamshedpur. Even the formation of front type organisations as Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, All Jharkhand Students Union, Jharkhand Co-ordination Committee could not forge unity of action. Marxist inclination of J.M.M. A.J.S.U. and participation of Marxist-Leninist groups in the movement further complicated the situation. Ideologically, the movement was set for division. As the Jharkhand movement did not have a Congress type composite character, intrusion of Marxist groups precipitated fissures and confusion in the movement. It may be evident from the differences in approach and demands put forth by various groups. The "character of the movement will be

class based. . . that will not activate a separate land for the tribal peoples but a land in general for all toiling peoples" "Political power of the Jharkhand movement will be established only intensifying class contradictions. . ." ²⁰ "Jharkhand question is not a development question, nor is it a demand of the Santals or *adivasi* alone, it is rather a nationality question in essence. ²¹ "Jharkhandi identity is not limited to tribes, scheduled or non-scheduled . . . it spans over other backward classes like Kamars, Kumhars, Teli etc. and all other people in the region who are living in harmony as part of the process of historical nationality building." ²²

The assertion of ethnic identity itself has been put in different frame of analysis which we like to discuss in the chapter on ethnicity. However, the demand charters put forth by different Jharkhand groups expose the diverging trends. The 15 points charter of J.C.C. includes demand for recognition of separate state, inclusion of all Jharkhandi languages in Eighth Schedule of Indian Constitution, job reservation, minimum wage, implementation of Mandal Commission Report etc. ²³ Another J.C.C. memorandum demands for teaching of tribal languages in colleges, schools where concerned linguistic groups exceed 10% of population, perform government business in those areas in local languages etc. ²⁴ The J.M.M. asserts that "Jharkhand is being systematically exploited by the governments of Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh in the name of industrialisation, modernisation, and development of Jharkhand. ²⁵ Thus the *diku* factor has been receded to the background since the movement now aspires to win the support of Sadan population in Chotanagpur areas. This, however, does not suggest that the basic issues of land-forest alienation, cultural submergence, unbalanced development have been resolved. The changing character and expanding base of the movement have induced the leadership to change their erstwhile stance. This may be discussed while dealing with the politics of the movement.

Not until the recent past, the movement could envelop more indigenous groups in the area. We have already mentioned about the Kurmis and Bhumij. Even the Santals were divided on the issue of language, viz. the move of the Christians to introduce Roman script for Santali language. So, initially the movement led by Jaipal Singh was more or less limited among the Christian *adivasis*. The

invention of *ol* script and linguistic assertion led by the Kurmis have been instrument in extending the base of the movement. This creative aspect and inter-group division on the issues will be discussed in language and ethnicity portion.

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CHAPTER II

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE OF SILENCE

'Walking itself is dancing, talking itself is singing'

A JHARKHANDI PROVERB

The movement offers a unique case of cultural resurgence and development of script-language in the related areas. Perhaps this has remained a rare example in the arena of post-Independence regional movements of being the caterer of socio-cultural transformation of the erstwhile marginal groups, communities, though without any political leverage. The tribal groups and other indigenous communities in the area are tillers of the land and form the core of Jharkhand culture. Originally started on nativist anti-*diku* sentiment in the form of Unnati Samaj and Adivasi Sabha, the movement gradually turned into a cultural resurgence movement enveloping various indigenous groups including the *Sadans* settled in the area. The language contradictions and inter-ethnic differences have been minimised in course of such involvement of these groups. New script and language have been made to develop, literature could find a written form in the areas concerned. Folk poems and songs have projected the issues of deprivation and exploitation of this area and its people on which the movement stands.

The Contradiction

The language issue remains the main source of contradiction in Jharkhand movement. This is not to suggest, however, that the movement's failure to gain political leverage has been due to this contradiction. In India, particularly in the regional movements, language has provided the way for enveloping groups from narrower to wider frameworks. "Forms are often deceptive in the realm of politics. What looks like primordial groups may actually be

mobilisational agencies seeking a transitional resource in apparently irrational symbols".¹ Ethnicity, language, caste have been used as a vehicle for political institutionalisation. The issue of language and culture has been proved to be efficacious in bringing the marginal groups into the fold of a movement or political process as such. At the same time, rise of such movements, group consciousness, often could authenticate the urge for linguistic and cultural identity. Language or cultural symbols, otherwise decayed or fallen dormant, have been resurged and developed through the process of the Jharkhand movement.

In the proposed Jharkhand state-area, three language groups are dominant : (i) Austro-Asiatic Mundari group, e.g. Santali, Mundari, Asur, Ho, Birhor, Kheria, Mahali; (ii) Dravidian group, viz. Oraon, Malpahari, Kurup, Malto etc.; and (iii) Kurmali group, viz. Kurmali, Kurukh, Khotta, Panch Pargania. Besides, a common market place language in the form of Sadri/Sadani, Nagpuria has been evolved. Of these, Santali has passed through many splits and controversy, mainly on script—Roman vs. *Ol Chiki* or regional. Ho and Birhor languages have common features with Santali, both groups also use Bengali and Hindi. The Mundas apart from Mundari also speak Sadri and the respective regional languages. The Mahali language has changed its form due to Hinduised influences. They use Manbhumi Bengali, a local variant of Purulia district's dialect. With the invention of *Ol* script by Pandit Raghunath Murmu (1927), there has been a proposal to introduce the script in all Austric languages. Naturally, such proposal precipitated a division in the movement on the line of Christian vs non-Christians.

The most dominant languages in the Jharkhand region, viz. Kurmali and Sadri are spoken by 10 million and 5 million people respectively—Kurmali has remained the spoken language of the Kurmis. Due to migration pattern and interaction with respective region's language, Kurmali has lost its original form. Having no script or written literature, the language is in use in respective region's script, i.e. Bengali, Oriya, Hindi.

The main three language groups emigrated to this atopic region at different periods of history. With the spread of interaction based on economic relations, and formation of market, need for a common language was felt. Rather, we may say, with the extension of

commercial entrepreneurs and ancient trade routes, a mixed language came up with the traits of interacting languages, viz. Indo-Mongoloid, Austric and Dravidian. This market place language has been known as Sadri/Sadani, Nagpuria. People having Bengali, Hindi or Manbhumi as mother tongue, got used to this language in daily affairs. To some extent, it has become a some sort of lingua-franca among the Jharkhandi people in the area.

The above scenario bespeaks of a complicated language situation in the area where official dictum could hardly offer any way out. Some of the Jharkhandi spokesmen held that unless geographical divisions are done away with in the formation of a state, development of languages and culture would remain far-fetched. The people, or say the children in this area have been loaded to learn the dominant language, or the medium of instruction (Hindi, Oriya, or Bengali), English etc. So indigenous languages have little scope to develop.² Indeed, many languages like Mahali, or say Kora, a Mundari language group who now use the language of their residence, have been eclipsed. But the contradictions and objective hurdles could hardly be underestimated. To the Jharkhand demand for opening departments in the universities for teaching and research in tribal and regional languages as Santali, Mundari, Kurmali, Kurukh, Ho, the Chief Minister of W. Bengal, Jyoti Basu retorted "I'm afraid how medicine and surgery could be imparted through *Al Chiki* languages.³ He also said that schedule caste, schedule tribe population compose only 4%, 8% and 17% in Midnapore, Bankura, Purulia, the districts claimed by the Jharkhandis to be included in their state. A Jharkhand leader rightfully criticised Basu by saying that *ol chiki* is a script, not language. And there are 7 million Kurmali-Khotta speaking people in the area.⁴ Though it is of no use to deliberate over the number game, but it should be noted that in W. Bengal, many indigenous communities have been excluded from the list of scheduled castes. They are not even specified as other backward classes. Basu's ignorance of Santali language and quoting incomplete figures expose the inherent negligence and disregard for the rights of the indigenous people. Another Minister, B. Bhattacharya while refuting the demand for a Jharkhand state, said, the state government has recognised *ol chik* language, and in India, no dominant ethnic group exists. So there is no logic in the demand for

a separate Jharkhand State.⁵ Even if the right of these languages could be recognised and established, the development of local languages may not be secured. Since, the indigenous communities have to learn the dominant language of the state concerned. Moreover, the different languages existing in the region have yet to minimise the gaps which have split the movement.

Creation of Language

However, the Jharkhand movement has its positive aspects in creation of a script, development of language and regeneration of cultural symbols. The case of Santali language may be mentioned. Though controversy hangs over the issue of script, viz. adopting *ol* or maintaining the Roman. The demand for the inclusion of Santali language (in *ol* script) in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution has been there. To accommodate various groups of Santali speakers using Roman, regional scripts, the All India Adivasi (Santal) Council held that Roman script, though it is foreign to the Santali language, may be kept for a few years to avoid controversy.⁶ The agelong controversy started since the inception of *ol* script by Pundit Raghunath Murmu in 1927 when he started propagating the script in the villages of Orissa, Bihar, and Bengal. He got its printed form in 1935-36, in 1947 the first printed book in *ol* came out from Tatanagar, Bihar. During 1958-59, it became known to outside world, and since 1960 the script has been popularised among the Santals in Bihar, Bengal and Orissa. The organisations as Socio-Educational and Cultural Association, journals as *Santal Barto*, *Jug Jarpa*, *Taras* etc. have contributed much to its propagation. The new script has been said to perform the long desired aim of expressing the suppressed phonetics in pronouncing Santali words.⁷ This problem became chronic with the use of diacritical marks in Roman script, which actually complicated the problem.

The bias against the introduction of *ol* script even divided the educated section of adivasi community. Besides the question of language load in education, the fear of isolation from Ho, Munda and non-Santal communities was there. Later, the division has been said to be minimised with the efforts of Jharkhand leaders. The *ol* script has been proposed to be introduced in Austric group of languages.

Since, the tribal people could identify with the script which would reflect the nature of tribal languages, viz. Austric group of languages.⁸

So far, the differences between the Northern Santali and Southern Santali posed serious hurdles for a consensus on Santali. Northern Santali, used largely in Bhagalpur, Monghyr, Hazaribagh, Manbhum, Santal Pargana in Bihar and Birbhum, Bankura in W. Bengal, has been accepted as standard Santali. This may be due to the impact of resurged ethnic sentiment for a common language and script which the movement subscribed. The campaign for *ol chik* also has influenced it. The development of Santali language and culture occupied the agenda of government programmes (in W. Bengal, Bihar), Santali literary activities have been more prominent in these states. The books published by Santali Literary Society, Calcutta, book on Santali grammar, state government's recognition of the language, and its publication of 'West Bengal' in Santali (Pachim Bongla), may be mentioned. The political literatures of the Jharkhand movement have been published in *ol* as well as in regional scripts. So script did not pose any problem since the publications are in regional scripts also.

The case of the Kurmis has been fascinating for its ambiguous role in the Jharkhand movement. The Kurmis are perhaps the major group in the region with their background of Kshatriya movement which they now tend to disown. Formerly, they were considered as akin to the Indo-Aryan group of Kudmis in Bihar. Contrary to this view of Dalton, Risley and Grierson confirmed that they are of Dravidian origin. Dr. Grierson held that they might have had a language of their own. By tradition and culture, the Kurmis are very close to the Santals who consider them to be half brothers. The Kurmis in Bengal have remained excluded from the Scheduled Tribes list. In 1931 Census, while amending the list of aborigines, they were excluded though other tribes as Gond, Kamar, Nama-Shudra, Rajbansi were not excluded. During the late 1920's, a section of Kurmi leaders, in their bid to be upgraded or get a berth in the Hindu hierarchy, organised Kurmi Kshatriya Mahasabha in Manbhum district, Bihar. A conspiracy was said to be hatched by the *bhadraloks*, collaborated by some landed Kurmi leaders. Since 1925, the pleaders in local courts of Manbhum started writing the word

'Hindu' instead of 'aboriginal' in the column of religion in *wakalatnamas* of the Kurmi clients. With the proposed formation of E. Bengal, the *bhadralok* leaders in Congress were intent on playing their Hindu card to outmanoeuvre the politics of Muslim League, viz. Pakistan Resolution. However, the records and correspondences reveal their effort to designate the Kurmis as *Jalchal* (touchable) but Kshatriya-hood was not recognised.⁹

As a language, Kurmali has its own traditional precedence, and has nothing to do with Magahi as a source. Though due to migration pattern and geographical divisions, Kurmali has been mixed up with Hindi, Oriya, and Bengali sometimes creating new dialect as Manbhumi, but the language's originality and tradition could hardly be negated. As a spoken language, Kurmali has been in use in extended areas covering Manbhumi, Ranchi, Hazaribag, Palamau, Singhbhum, Saraikella, Keonjar, Mayurbhanj, Bamra, Surguja etc. The language still has its pre-Vedic remnants. Moreover, the discovery of *Charyacharya-binischaya* by Pundit Haraprosad Shastri in 1907 opened up scope for claiming its legitimacy of being original. This copy book of lyric was found from Nepal Kingdom's library by Pandit Shastri who earmarked it to be written during the first half of 11th century by Lui, an accomplished Acharya. The book contains *charyapadas* or songs on Buddhist code of conduct with notes in Sanskrit, written by Munidutta. The notes were written long after the original text. The original text and its language are yet to be decided. Shastri designated it as *Sandha* or mixed language, a language which is partly understandable, partly conspicuous. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee considered it to be Bengali having Souraseni and Maithili sources of corrupt words. This actually led to the controversial claims of Hindi, Oriya, Maithili as being the language of *charyapadas*. But the context, idiom, verb, proverb indicate its Bengali orientation. Sashibhusan Dasgupta, a noted scholar on *charyapada* held that the language of *charyapada* may be of 10th-12th century. The contextual canvas, ecology, characters represented in it are supposed to belong to the region now known as Jharkhand. Sukumar Sen, the noted orientalist, refuting the Maithili influence in *charyapada*'s language, held it to be 'Abahattha', a refined language of the Aryan Indians used next to Sanskrit at the time.¹⁰ However, *charyapada* language bears much influence of Austric and Dravidian languages. Many words in

charyapada are used and understood by the common Kurmis. The Jharkhand intellectuals now claim that Kurmali may be nearest form of language used in *charyapada*. This was the regional form of Kurmali which gradually extinguished due to the migration pattern and domination of the regional languages which they had to adopt.¹¹ The Jharkhand intellectuals rightly held that the claim of Kurmali, as being the nearest form in *charyapada*, should be given priority. Such quest for the root and identification with tribal symbols as *Karam, Sohrai, Badna, Tusu, Cho, Sarhul* etc. have led to creation of a new culture. The Kurmali group of languages, mainly Kurukh and Kurmali have come closer, various cultural groups have come up to project the issues concerning identity and culture. Since late 1940's writings in Kurmali started by Basant Mehta with his slogan *Save Kurmali Mother Tongue*. The first book in Kurmali, *Kapila Mangal* by Rajendra Prasad came out in 1953 followed by publication of journals like *Silalipi, Sarhul, Akhra, Salpatra, Gairik Pataka, Furung, Jharkhand, Manbhumek Katha* etc. With the growth of intensity in the movement, books on theory of Kurmali language, Kurmali grammar, poems came out to justify the separate identity of the community.¹² Of late, there has been a proposal initiated by the Jharkhand leaders, to integrate Kurmali, Sadani/Sadri, Khotta, Nagpuria, Pargania into a common Jharkhandi language with Devangri script. Naturally, this effort would bring the other language groups closer to form a consolidated Jharkhand identity. The activities in the department of Tribal and Regional Languages, Ranchi University have promoted this urge for identity through development of language and culture. Subsequently, due to pressure of the movement and the demand for setting up of universities meant for the purpose, the Bihar government has agreed to open two Institutes/Universities. The proposed centres would help to authenticate the identity urges of the concerned communities. The urban intellectuals participating in the Seminars on Development, Panning organised by Jharkhand intellectuals, held the view that such efforts, or new centres would serve the interests of the privileged section of the Jharkhandis, viz. Kurmi Mahatos. However, this may be symbolically efficacious in legitimising the identity aspirations of the people. Moreso, even if they are privileged, Jharkhand intellectuals provide language to the oppressed communities who remain victims of culture of silence.

In the Jharkhand movement, the Kurmis' participation has been said to be ambivalent until the recent past. They had been more intent on being included in the schedule tribes list in the Constitution. Disowning the cultural load of the Kshatriya movement, they became vocal about their totemic similarity with other common indigenous communities' culture, dissimilarity with Bihar and U.P. Kurmis who have got *gotras*. Intense search for tribal identity and legacy was started by the upcoming elites and intellectuals. The then language and culture became the source of identity formation and participation in the movement. New literature, songs have been composed to assert the identity.

Let me cite some of the folk songs and poems expressing the sentiment and woe of the Jharkhand people.

*Khete bunli dhan
dhan dekhi tanman,
khara dekhi ural paran
eise ke jan.*

(you've harvested paddy but it seems to be dried up, life brushes out seeing the drought, this is our fate!)

The drought-prone area and its people feel one with the poems of *Sonar Jharkhand* (golden Jharkhand) in which poet Sunil Mahato says : Eh Jharkhandi, your land produces iron, silver is also there, your soil is gold, yet you go on starving! Another Tusu song composed by Sunil goes on like:

*Bangal Bale tui choto,
Bihar bale dur hato
Santaldih bidyut Karkhana,
Jato refugeer anagona
.....
Tata kolkatai pankha chale
Purulia ki jhap dibek jale !*

(Bengal says you are lowly, Bihar says get away. Outsiders come here in Santaldih thermal power station, the electric fan would run in Calcutta, Tatanagar (Jamsedpur). Should Purulia jump into the sea !)

The sad plight of deprivation and political hoax may be seen in a poem of Kritrivas Karmaker, an illiterate natural poet in Purulia.

*Aamader Purulia Zilla
sabai kare abohela
voter tare katoje bhulaili re,
Sabe balle 'vote chai'
sahal kichu habek bhai
voter pare kothao kichu nai.*

(our district Purulia, everybody neglects it, for the sake of getting votes, many false promises are given to us. All said, we want your vote, everything will be done. After vote, nothing could be found).

A collection of Tusu songs reveal the mood of the people in Jharkhand:

*Bangal aise kangal korilo
hamader sabkichu kaire nilo.
partite aer jabo na kolekata
hamra habo na bhojer shalpata.*

(After coming here Bengalees made us pauper, taken away everything from us. We won't go to Calcutta for the meetings, we would not be used as a dinnerplate).

So far, Jharkhand has been denied the privilege of being considered as a linguistic-cultural region like those of Maithill, Bhojpuri, Magahi, Chattisgari. The Jharkhand movement could rouse the concerned groups to find out a consensual method to minimise the gap between the communities. At the same time, the future of the movement also would depend on how far the groups could forge unity on the issue, the failure of which may lead to their isolation from the movement. Since, the new generation of Kurmi intelligentsia emerging from Ranchi University orientation, disillusioned with their old generation's expectation of being accommodated in the Hindu hierarchy-structure, got aroused to a new awareness of 'indigenism' during 1960's. In fact, they have played a key role in revitalising the cultural symbols through organisations like Aboriginal Kudmi Panch, Subarnarekha, Chotanagpur Kurmi Yuba

Mahasava, Mulki Kurmali Bhaki Baisi, Adivasi Kudmi Samaj, Gaonta etc.¹³ They have been able to forge a new alliance of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and Kurmi Mahato-led other backward communities. Due to their major participation in the movement, the age long division between Christians and non-Christians could be minimised, as the issues of division, viz. language-script, leadership, have become irrelevant in the new context of the movement.

The Cultural Resurgence

The intellectual leaders of the movement have been able to provide a new cultural consciousness in the area. Otherwise, the movement remained limited around the charisma of Jaipal Singh who first took up the issue of exploitation by the *dikus*. Subsequently, as the new educated groups got exposed to outside world, their experience and impression developed a community consciousness with a different perspective than that of their predecessors who did never had a chance to go out of Jharkhand region. These new leaders have projected the distinctive geography of balance between nature and culture.

The Chotanagpur plateau region forms the eastern end of the Vindhya ranges, having richest mineral resources. It's red to brown texture of surface soil with vegetation of *Sal* trees, the pleasant weather have attracted the visitors through ages. The pre-history of the area indicates that it was inhabited by earliest men. The present tribes of Austroloid origin (Santal, Munda, Ho, Kharia) are supposed to be the descendants of first human being in this part of the country. The Dravidian linguistic remnants in Kurukh and Malto languages expose the area's southern cultural connections. Buddhism and Jainism have been said to be spread to south through this area.

This geography of balance, accomodative history, and egalitarian social structure provided shelter to many ethnic groups through ages. The tribal-based egalitarian social structure "has to a great extent neutralised the caste and class hierarchical notions found elsewhere in the country."¹⁴ Like all other indigenous religions governed by naturalistic modes, Jharkhand society believes in ethical moral living. People are simple, hard working, honest. People-oriented art and literature, viz. folk form is predominant, hence

participatory. Poetry, story, drama, dance all have direct bearing on day to day life of the people. 'Literature is the reflection of everything man does and aspires to do.'

The tribal consciousness has been shaped by cultural contacts. In central tribal belt, one tribe in course of its contact with other community gets conscious of itself. The early history of this region was one of migration of tribes—the Asuras, the earliest inhabitants were followed by Mundas, Kharias, Hos and Santals, and lastly Oraons. Their individual history, geographical surrounding gave each of them a distinct consciousness. Subsequently, the tribal-*diku* contact was imminent with the rise of Chotanagpur *raj*, Ramgarh *raj* etc. with their supportive zamindars. The subtle mechanism of exploitation, domination led to alienation from land and rise of *Beth-Begar* system. "The *dikus* managed to take free labour from the tribals for cultivation of land grabbed from them and also for any social engagements going to Benaras, Puri, etc."¹³ The folklores, folksongs contain this atrocious, inhuman treatment of the tribals by the *dikus*. A consciousness of resentment and rebellion developed in the tribal region.

With the extension of British *raj* in the area in the early nineteenth century, Christian Missionaries made an inroad. The Christian form of worship as contrary to tribal gods, rituals touched the core of tribal belief system. However, Christianity also provided an impetus to the tribal consciousness, and the Church as a frame of social reference provided a new vista of life. At another level, the newly developed group consciousness and respect for the tribal self as reaction to exploitation and appropriation by the white-*diku* combine, led to the rise of tribal movements lasting for years. The example of Birsa Munda's emergence, Sardar Larai and Unnati Samaj would bear this development. A converted Christian Adivasi, Birsa Munda got aroused by the sermon, 'blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth.' It led him to ponder over the wretched condition of his people, he left the school, denounced Christianity, gave a call to fight the *dikus*, British and Christian Missionaries. Birsa movement was organised (1885) on the issue of land and forest alienation, oppression of the tribal women and religious conversion. Birsa's tribal consciousness was a mould of deprived tribal self and Vaishnava purism. Later, the Tana Bhagat movement (1913-14) also upheld

religion and purity of life as the means to liberate the tribals. The Unnati Samaj, a handiwork of Christian tribal leaders, transcended the limited Christian consciousness to do welfare of the whole tribal society. So Adivasi Mahasabha was its logical culmination.

The contribution of some leaders and institutes should be mentioned in this respect, viz. Dhumkuria School at Kanke, Ranchi, and Julius Tigga, a visionary of Tribal education and culture. A general secretary of Mahasabha, Tigga ran a school at Kanke, used Kurukh as the medium, and used song dance as the method of education. One could sing Mathematics and dance Geography and History, he would demonstrate.¹⁶ So the Jharkhand proverb quoted in this chapter has significant relevance.

With this cultural base and tribal identity, the Jharkhand movement has been able to resurge the values and demand for recognition of language and script. Various cultural organisation like All India Santhal Sabha, All India Munda Mahasabha, Kurmi Mahasabha, Kharia Mahasabha etc. and movements as Ho Andolan, Oraon Parha Andolan grew up. Subsequently, excepting the period of thaw of the movement with Jaipal Singh's decision to merge the Jharkhand Party with Congress, ever new organisations have come up to project the cultural demands.

The Jharkhand leaders and intellectuals think that their culture has been attacked and social atmosphere disrupted. The Jharkhandis living in Bihar, M.P. have to get their education in Hindi, in Bengali in W. Bengal, and in Oriya, in Orissa. The people of a single linguistic community have to adopt different languages. They consider this as an ingredient of internal colonialism and exploitation. Besides language, fairs, festivals and rituals of this region have been asserted to uphold the special culture, viz. folk culture. The literature in verbal form is the treasure of this region, expressed through songs like Tusu, Jawa, Bhadu, Dhua, Ahira etc. What we like to stress on is, due to the movement and inclusion of cultural demands in it, the cultural festivals have become more assertive and integrative. The leaders and their charter assail the modern media for introducing professionalism in performing arts thus damaging the participatory nature of folk culture, and held responsible for precipitating a crisis of identity. However, it is also to be noted that various folk forms as *Cho* (mask) dance, songs as Tusu, Jhumur, and craft products have

been popularised through use of the media. The constant assertion of demands on culture and language in the Memorandum and deputations, public meetings, demonstrations led to more observance and practice of the rituals and festivals. The outside world or the so called mainstream elite culture have to come to know about the festivals of the region due to the cultural overtones in the movement. Karam, Sohrai or Bandna, Cho, Jouban Utsav, Tusu, Jhumur are quite known names now. Let us have a brief account of some of them.

Karam: A festival of both male and female observed on the half moon day in the month of *Bhadra*. A combined puja of three Gods — Karam, Jawa and Indra. Both tribals and non-tribals participate, but not the high caste Hindus. Men, women spend the whole night in enjoyment, merry making through Karam song and Karam dance.¹⁷

Sohrai/Bandna: A festival of the Kurmis, Santalis, Munda, Oraon and other Jharkhandis. Held on the new full moon day of Kartik, it is a rejoicing for good crop. Special feeding, decoration of the bullocks, cows is done. A pair of lamps made of rice-husk with ghee and two bundles of special grass are placed on the husedoors.¹⁸

Cho: A popular mask dance in the lower Jharkhand region. Though the style varies in form as Saraikela, Dhalbhum (Bihar), Mayurbhanj (Orissa), the tune of accompanying Jhumur has maintained its uniform characteristics. It is performed as a ritual dance of *Shivagajan* i.e. festival of worship of Shiva in the month of *Chaitra*. The Bhumij, Santal, Bauri, Dom, Hari, Rajwar, Ghashi, Munda, Suri communities participate in the dance.

Shikar Utsav (Hunting festival): On the day of Buddha Purnima, Santal and other indigenous people assemble in Ayodha hill, Purulia. After the hunt, group dance and feast are held with the hunted beast or bird. During dance, songs a nude joker appears leaping stiffly like a frog. And as he bounces round, tosses his penis striking it sometimes at the buttocks of the leaders' faces which is said to be the initiation rite to sex.¹⁹

Sarhul: A festival on the eve of spring held in the month of *Falgun*. *Sal* flowers are collected from the nearby forest to decorate the God. Boys and girls perform dance, and sing around it. Munda, Birhor, Kurmi, Bhumij, Mahali communities observe this festival, Santal's

main festival *Baha* also resembles it.²⁰

The communities like Kharia, Bhumij, Lodha, Kora have lost much of their tradition since they were cut off from their main group due to migration and impact of the dominant Hindu culture. They use to observe the festivals and rituals of other indigenous communities of the area and identify with it. A survey of festivals observed would reveal that these festivals have gained legitimacy with most indigenous communities though some may not have the tradition in performing it. The continuous assertion made in course of the movement about the rights of culture and language may be considered as contributory to popularisation of these festivals, viz. Karam, Sarhul, Sohrai among them.

Culture of Silence

The new forces unleashed by exploitative economic development and rapid changes therein, have been said to disrupt the tribal life, its traditional social control. Confronted with development and modernisation, the people often experience loss of self-esteem, and devaluation of social identity. The negative attitude of the dominant society towards their culture aggravate this feeling. Besides being reduced to what is called *nijabhume parabasi* (outsider in own land) due to exploitation and extreme poverty, the indigenous people become incapable of any action against the disruption of culture and suppression of language. Through a process of domestication and categorisation, the poor have been treated like sub-humans and made to believe that they are worthless and incapable of doing anything intelligible. "The reduction of the oppressed to this state is a *sina qua non* for exploitation to continue. They are immersed in a culture of silence, a culture that debilitates and destroys not only their personality, but through it their humanness."²¹ The culture of silence is said to be the culmination of the process of exploitation, dispossession and dehumanisation. As a Jharkhand intellectual puts it, the educated employees in Calcutta feel awkward to expose their identity. 'They are so much submerged in the languages, literatures and cultures of the advanced and ruling classes that they feel ashamed of speaking their mother tongues, and this is especially seen among the so called educated persons of Jharkhand.'²²

Mahato has coined a new term 'Nirbakaization' of the indigenous people denoting a process of total submergence of identity caused by Brahminic hegemony, colonisation and sway of Sanskritisation. Due to total grip over power instruments, entitlements, and cultural idioms, the indigenous ethnic groups and tribes find no other way but to surrender their creative essence and excellence to the altars of dominant nationality. The regenerative elements in them may get lost, silenced due to this domination and oppression. The resurgence elements or resistance capacity in their culture depends on how far the leadership or movements could bear the symbols to the larger groups. Mahato held it to be a counter process to Sanskritisation.²³

This cultural destitution, precipitated by the dominant regional cultures in the area, has been instrumental in loss of original languages and culture of the indigenous people. The case of Kurmali has already been noted. The Jharkhand movement, originally started against the *dikus* gradually could make a breakthrough into this silence in course of various forms of protest and agitation. It is due to this movement that race pride and ethnic aspirations among the various indigenous groups led to disowning of false migration history and legacy of the Kshatriya movement. The resurgence of cultural symbols through wider observance of festivals and rituals has been a recent phenomenon. With the rise of demands for protection of tribal tradition and culture, and agitation for recognition of language as embodied in the movement, the phenomenon gets legitimised even among the communities who of late have recognised those festivals as their own. This rising sense of cultural affinity may be considered as the positive contribution of the movement. The concerned groups now do not hesitate to assert their symbols of identity through observance of festivals and rituals. The media and self-government groups also have become vigilant in projecting these symbols.

The Jharkhand movement evidently lacks consistency due to geographical and cultural divisions spread over the four states. The movement could never reach a take-off stage since the leaders seem to be unconscious of the various responses—political as well as cultural, the movement has to deal with. For instance, the caste-torn political culture in Bihar and bhadrak-oriented culture in W. Bengal would not react to the ethnicity issue in the same way.

Language chauvinism, caste violence and nativist sentiment in W. Bengal have been less explicit than in Orissa or Bihar. So any rabble rousing against the exploitation of *dikus*, caste violence, or say North-South divide within the state (as in Bihar) may not find any ground in W. Bengal. In such a situation, ethno-lingual militancy could hardly pay. In W. Bengal, the issue of ethno-cultural backwardness has been put in the frame of structural factor related to the existing social system which has to be destroyed. This Marxist approach prevailing in W. Bengal could easily combat the ethnicity oriented demands of Jharkhand, whereas in Bihar, such demands remain vital source of mobilisation. Hence, the movement could not gather momentum in extensive areas covering the proposed Jharkhand districts in W.Bengal, viz. Bankura, Purulia, and Midnapore.

So, the different states have different politics towards indigenous languages; social responses to cultural demands also vary. Besides, the problems of grammar, folk bias in different communities, intra-elite conflicts stand in the way of recouring to a consistent approach. The cultural and language aspirations of various communities, though genuine, have been impaired by socio-cultural motivations of different regions. There have been regional impacts on indigenous languages, e.g. Manbhumi dialect, which is called Manbhumi Bengali, Sadani influence on Kurmali etc. Any effort to forge a common form should consider this aspect of local influences. Due to interactions with Marxist groups and exposures to bhadrak culture, the newly emerged Kurmi elites of the Jharkhand area have acquired some modern attributes which stand contrary to ethnocentric aspirations. For the sake of identity, particular language and cultural autonomy should be given due recognition. But their newly acquired attributes and exposures to modern literature, art (e.g. Bengali literature, music) have to be integrated with the ethnic identity.

The movement has been influenced by the cross currents of forces having diverse ideology and cultural viewpoint. The age long ambivalence of Jharkhand groups did not end with the merger of Jharkhand Party in Congress in 1963. Recently, there has been a split

in Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, a militant group that came up in 1972. The newly formed Jharkhand Co-ordination Committee is composed of Marxist-Leninist groups as well as ethnic and cultural micro-groups having opposite world view and approach. The interactions between the participant groups also have bearings on the ideological approach of the movement. The moderate consensual line of Dr. Ramdayal Munda, theoretician of the J.C.C, finds little in common with the line of AJSU, the student organisation build up on the pattern of AASU (Assam). Whereas, the Marxists tend to explain identity crisis in terms of developmental process in capitalism. At the same time, a Marxist version said, "the problem of ethnic identity is obviously complicated, being the function of language, religion, region, caste and above all politics".²⁴

The ethnic identity aspirations and *indigenism*, to be more militant and appealing, sometimes take the form of parochialism, chauvinism. Be it on the issue of language or symbols of art and culture. At the same time, the identity aspirations itself get shape out of a sense of deprivation, dispossession and backwardness. For an indigenous group to cover up these weaknesses which are mostly economic, adoption and fluency in dominant language and culture are required. How this contradiction could be resolved? The Jharkhand leadership, due to its over concern for compromise with and accommodate different cultural groups, has not been able to find clue to this problem of culture and language. However, of late a section of the leadership and the intellectuals have become conscious of this problematique. Due to their effort, the proposal of integrated Jharkhand language and consolidation of Austic group of languages have gained legitimacy. The assertion of ethnic symbols also led to formation of a common cultural front of indigenous communities. Language and culture have become symbols of Jharkhand identity. Unlike other movements, e.g. in Punjab, Assam, this could be possible due to the secular content of the movement. At some stage, indeed the Roman versus ol script issue precipitated a split. But subsequently, with the rise of indigenous symbols, division could be minimised. This positive, creative aspect of the movement has rarely been appreciated by the so called mainstream culture and its elites.

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CHAPTER III

ETHNICITY AND NATIONALITY

I call him a traitor who, having been educated, nursed in luxury by the heart's blood of the downtrodden millions of toiling poor, never even takes a thought for them.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Gone are those days when ethnicity and movements based on ethno-regional demands could be stigmatised as secessionist, anti-national, divisive and so on. Such biased approach was prevalent due to our leadership's obsession with western theories and interpretations on third world societies and its political systems. India could delegitimise the western social scientists' prognosis of 'dangerous decades' and the probable collapse of democracy with the rise of primordial loyalties. The so called primordial loyalties as caste, language, ethnicity have given rise to local, sub-regional movements without any disruptive fall out on democratic system. Rather, a group of social scientists, both western and Indian, held that these movements through politicisation of primordial loyalties, have extended the social base of democratic system in India.

The elites in Asia and Africa, inspite of monopolising the instruments of coercion, have failed to implement the western model of nations and nationality. As Smith observes, the gap between civic model of nations found in West and the reality of states without having a nation in Asia and Africa makes it inevitable that political elites in the new states look for alternative models of nation and different modes of national integration. 'This is true even where the alternative civic model poses serious problems of integration and where the attractions of western civic model of territorial nationalism are greatest as in India.'¹ Smith offers an ethnic model which emphasises upon descent, populism, vernacular culture and felt nativism.

Ethnicity and Nationality

An ethnic group is a self-perceived group holding a common set of traditions not shared by others with whom they are in contact. Such traditions include folk, religious beliefs and practices, language, ancestry, common history and place of origin. Ethnicity is a feeling of continuity with the past, a feeling that is maintained as an essential part of one's self definition. Ethnicity is also intimately related to the individual need for collective continuity a sense of personal survival in the historical continuity of the group.² W. Isajiw has defined ethnicity as a process by which individual either identify themselves as being different from others, or belonging to a different group or identified as different by others, or both identify themselves as different by others.³

In the Indian context, ethnicity has been defined as a response to excesses of the modern project of shaping the whole of humanity around three pivots of world capitalism—the State system and a world culture based on modern technology, a pervasive communications and information order and a universalising educational system.⁴

Both the instrumentalist view of ethnicity and socio-economic format of the Marxists fail to acknowledge the legacy and spirits in nationalist and sub-regional movements. The first school earmarks the symbol manipulative role of elites in its power accessing bid, whereas the later upholds the historic necessity to first overthrow the capitalist system as prelude to liberation of the oppressed nationalities and regional balance in development. This is quite in tune with the debate on salience of class or ethnic principles of organisations which again is related to debate on autonomy of state, relative importance of boundary maintenance and content of ethnies etc.

In the canvas of ethnic movement like Jharkhand, or the Indian nationalism as a whole, these theorisations find little relevance. The instrumentalist view would earmark some groups as Kurmi Mahato whose participation in Jharkhand movement and ascension to leadership have been said to be caused by its exclusion from the schedule tribe list. Originally, the movement for separate Jharkhand was initiated by educated Munda and Oraon Christians in 1928,

when a memorandum was submitted to Simon Commission. Since then, the composition and base of the movement have been changed and reformed, e.g. emergence of Jharkhand Party, its merger with Congress, continuation of several factions, rise of new groups, new coalitioning and splits. The basic issues/components on which the movement and Jharkhand identity developed are—exploitation and alienation from the land by the *dikus*, demand for inclusion of some communities in the reservation list, inherent right to forest resources, and displacement caused by setting up of industries, river valley projects and power plants. The alarming dimension of human misery may be assessed from the figures given in Chapter IV.

The western approach to the question of nationality, nationalism in third world countries has been handicapped by its un-concern for the legacy of tradition and cultural constructs. The growth of Indian nationalism or nationalist movements did not oblige the western theorists' frame. The concepts of monolith and container nationalism having national or regional elites, making a division between cultural nationalism and secular nationalism have been invalidated. The existence of pre-Congress nationalism and secular nationalism have shown how the intellectual exercise in categorising Indian national movements within the western format led to mere abstraction.⁵ Of late, the subaltern historians have come up to project the local indigenous movements as being a parallel stream of consciousness for autonomy which should be considered equally significant as the so called mainstream nationalist movements. However, in many cases, e.g. the revolt of Titumir, Unnati Samaj, Farzi, Wahabi movement, the issues were not related to any aspiration for freedom. On the contrary, many such movements, viz. Tana Bhagat, Rabha movement, Haribaba movement, were being influenced by Gandhi's charisma. The regional scenario was set and influenced more by legacy of social reform, anti-colonial sentiment (as against the pro-British line pursued by regional forces in Assam, Punjab, Madras), development of vernacular press as symbol of protest, existence of trade union movement etc.

The progressive historians', and Marxists' problem lies in their attachment to economic format upheld by Lenin and Stalin. Lenin is said to have distinguished between reactionary nationalism and progressive nationalism; and his theory of liberation of oppressed

nationalities, their right to self determination to the extent of secession could hardly help to solve the problems even in Marxist states. Stalin's pet concept of nation as historically evolved stable community of people and race as biological category, tribe as ethnographic category, was mechanically followed till 1960s. Hopefully, the conventional Marxist view of nation, ethnos has been challenged by Iu Semenov, Iu V. Bromlei, A.D. Litman, S. Schevtsov. 'Ethnicity provides the source of strength of a given nation'. Semenov defines nation only as a political structure. Their confusion and ambivalence still seem to be deep.⁶

The confusion of the Marxists may be evident from their ever changing stance on nationality problem and local movements in India. In case of Pakistan, Sikhsthan, Gorkhastan, their native copybook adherence to Lenin reduced the party to a laughing stock. Regarding Jharkhand issue, since 1946, the Communist Party of India considered it as part of tribal problem involving backwardness and a question of nationality. The Bihar unit of C.P.I. upheld the idea of regional autonomy for tribal majority districts in Bihar; from 1978 it began to support the demand for a separate State carved out from the districts of Bihar having tribal majority.⁷ The West Bengal unit of C.P.I. however did not support it since to them Bengal offered a progressive situation. The Communist Party of India (Marxist)'s role on the issue has been on the line of Congress (I). The misinformed, often ignorant statements of its leaders, as quoted in preceding portion, would expose C.P.I (M)'s weak position.

The Jharkhand movement bear testimony of a unique ethnic movement having traits of sub-national consciousness. Though the Jharkhand protagonists claim it to be in the way of nationality formation, in poly-ethnic composition and variety of social situations one could not play ethnic roles all the time. However, at the outset, the anti-*diku* consciousness and protest against displacement from land were inspired and activated by the Christian missionaries. The Santal Munda leadership of Adivasi Mahasabha, or the series of nineteenth century revolts of tribals were their handiwork. The subsequent uprooting of tribals and other indigenous groups from the area paved the way for greater mobilisation.

The initial Santal-Munda-Oraon base of the movement could be extended largely due to ethno-cultural orientation of the movement.

Induction of Marxist group led by A.K. Roy, later of the C.P.I. (ML) factions has been said to infuse a secular bent in the movement. But these Marxists, and militant groups as J.M.M., AJSU, or leaders as Sibu Soren, Nirmal Mahato have made the movement split-prone and opportunistic. The longevity and resilience of the movement have been possible due to its civilizational base. The creativity and excellence of Hor-Mitan civilisation contribute to this resilience. Hor means human, Mitan means friendship. The common memory of this civilisation as expressed in oral folklore, participatory cultural forms, caste-free social structure, naturalistic religious pursuit, etc. remain salient features of this area's population. As one participant observes, ethnicity and cultural excellence could retain the regenerative elements in Jharkhand enabling its people to bear the brunt of *Nirbakaiization* and resist the onslaught of dominant nationality.

In his lecture on *Swadeshi Samaj* (civil society) in 1904, Tagore laid stress on the civilizational base of our society. Later, as the cult of nationalism overshadowed civil norms in Europe, Tagore warned against it as a great menace, 'the aspect of a whole people as an organised power, an organisation incessantly keeping up insistence of the population on becoming strong and efficient.'⁸

To him, India's problem was social, not political. He always drew a sharp distinction between *Samaj dharma* and *Rashtra dharma*. 'In our society king waged wars, defended territory and dispensed justice, but society attended to all else, from the supply of water to the supply of knowledge.'⁹ Indian leaders and elites have tried to emulate western model of nation state during the post-independence period. Though the social reformers and intellectual activists always stood for upholding the unique pluralistic base of Indian culture, and accommodative character of various nationalities and groups. The post-independence politics of nation making leading to coercion and over reaction to regional expressions disrupted this accommodative base. The repression and subjugation of diverse identities by the over centralised oppressive nation state gave rise to ethnicity or ethnic nationalism as one may term it.

Paul Brass defines nationalism as a political movement requiring political organisation, skilled leadership, resources to gain support, and ability to be dominant in representing the demands of the ethnic

groups against its rivals.¹⁰ The problem with Brass is that he delineates everything including nationality formation and transformation of ethnies into nationalities in the frame of elite competition for power and resources. N.K.Bose's characterisation of tribal movements as sub-nationalism, Roy Burman's distinction of two kinds of elite-based tribal movements as infra-nationalism and sub-nationalism, M. Oran's rank-path theory do not explain how the conglomerates of tribal and non-tribal groups could uphold the Jharkhand cause for such a long period. Though these movements are guided by a minority of emerging elites, it would be oversimplification to look into the phenomenon exclusively from the perspective of sub-nationalism engineered by a few self-seeking elites.¹¹

There is no hard and fast rule for ethnic groups becoming a nation, ethnic identities may not always be inclusive. It may vary according to specific social situation. 'Individuals need not play ethnic roles all the time . . . behavioural significance of ethnicity, for individuals as well as for the groups they form, cannot be ascertained apart from a rather comprehensive analysis of the overall system.'¹²

The Transformation

The composition and character of Jharkhand movement have been subjected to change and transformation. Started by well meaning *adivasi* Christians for reform, gradually the basic issues of economy and development have been taken up. The movement took a new dimension with the rise of educated group of individuals, who unlike their predecessors, were exposed to foreign ideas and consciousness of the oppressed. Since the decision of merger with the Congress in 1963, and revival of the old party in the form of factions—N.E. Horo with his Munda followers, Begun Samrai with Hos, Set Hembrom with Santals, the movement had a tendency to project its demand from inside the system. Not only Kartic Oraon, a powerful spokesman of Jharkhand in Congress, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha was not free from it. However, the radical bent in the movement was given by J.M.M., A.K.Roy's group, C.P.I.(M.L). The rise of J.M.M.(1972) 'catered to the needs of the mining and industrial labour, and secondly, it made a headway in a non-tribal (mainly Kurmi Mahatos) population which so far had been luke-

warm to the cause of the Jharkhand movement.¹³ The process continued, with the formation of J.C.C. the involvement of Sadan population of the Chotanagpur hill areas further broadened the base of the movement.

With such broadening of its support base, economic issues and cultural demands have been enveloped, leading to qualitative change in *diku*-non-*diku* controversy, the concept of *diku* itself got transformed with the involvement of Sadans in the movement. A careful reading of resolutions and memorandum on Jharkhand would reveal that the concerned groups have been subjected to the process of coalitioning and manipulation prevalent in a democratic system. The splits, formation of new party like Jharkhand People's Party (J.P.P.), coining a new demand for 'Adisthan' in recent times justify this trend. The movement, as such, in course of becoming a more broad based tribal-non-tribal indigenous groups involvement, has turned the participant groups into democratic political groups. The demands, issues in the movement also get a bigger format as expressed in demand for cancellation of freight equalisation which affect the area's development by denying locational advantage of raw materials, setting up of universities and Cultural Academy, more primary schools for different linguistic groups, social forestry, equal wage for women, use of mother tongue, Jharkhand Planning Commission, etc.¹⁴

How far such struggle against economic exploitation and consciousness of being oppressed could approximate the level of nationality formation and sense of nationalism? Indeed, uni-lingual, mono-ethnic composition should not be considered as precondition for it. But a sense of commonness, ethnic sentiment against alien ethnic domination do contribute to it. As such, Jharkhandis never aspired for freedom; demand for regional autonomy and access to economic resources, retention of culture are main factors. The plural, accommodative culture in the area never upheld autarchy or secession. Hence, question of nationality or debate on sub or infra-nationalism may not help to understand the mood. The process of ethnies becoming a nation, community formation to State/nation formation would not explain the movement. Rather, it may be said that a common Jharkhand identity has been developed in course of the movement. Economically, Kurmis and Sabars are poles apart,

Bhumijis and Santals are culturally at opposite ends. How they could be forged into a nationality? Solidarity between tribal and non-tribal groups at the political level does not mean that they would confirm to rule of a dominant Jharkhandi group. So, let us prefer not to accept the claim of any nationality formation which is far from an economic or political entity. As we have already noted in the sphere of language-script, symbols of culture, identity, the movement could develop some sense of commonness. At the political level, different ethnic groups try to gain space in the game of power and domination.

As reaction to homogenising exploitation of nation-state system, or so called dominant nationality, the emergence of Jharkhand ethnicity and identity may be traced in the use of common symbols and sentiments of the area. But ethnicity as a movement, as a creative force, could open new spaces, in thought and practice, for diversity and community as a basis for organisation.¹⁵ The Jharkhand movement has yet to come up to that level. The performance and functioning of the Jharkhand activists rarely demonstrate any sign of creating space. The leadership could tap the emotional chord of ethnic sentiments and throw out the symbols of identity. But they are afflicted with parliamentary bourgeois diseases so prevalent among the other parties. Let me cite from an interesting leaflet circulated recently by a group of J.M.M. activists who defected to C.P.I.(M). After describing their old association with J.M.M. they express their mind in unequivocal terms :

'We got associated with this party in our urges for doing something for the adivasi, scheduled caste and backward people. But we observed that recognised leaders lead the ignorant people to confusion. They function in a way to put the poor against each other, make things easy for jotedars. They collect money in the name of party and use it for personal luxury, and loot the properties of poor people. Such a party could not deliver any goods this is our firm conviction.'¹⁶

The Jharkhand canvas is discoloured with many such cases. The positive achievements of the movement in the sphere of language, identity have been hijacked by the activities of its leaders who carry on their squabbles and personal fortune making. The erosion in the movement caused by the performance of its leaders may be due to lack of ideological consistency and weak organisational network.

Due to this, the movement could never reach a take off stage, not to speak of nationality formation.

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CHAPTER IV

ETHNOCIDE AND ETHNIC IDENTITY

*Chal Mini Assam jabo
Deshe baro' dukh re
Assam deshe re Mini chabagan hariyal.*

.....
*Sardar bale kam kam
Baboo bale dhorī aan
Saheb bale libo pither cham
re Jaduram, fanki dije
pathaili Assam.*

(Eh Mini, let's go to Assam where the tea gardens are green, there's so much suffering in our place. (But there) the Sardar says catch hold of him (the labour), Saheb threatens to skin the back. Oh Jaduram, you've sent us to Assam by deceiving).

This is a popular *Jhumur* folk song in Jharkhand area, describing the pathos of the migrant tea garden worker. The man once migrated to Assam tea garden to make a living. But there, the labour Sardar, his boss and the proprietor *Saheb* oppress them to hard work, bondage and torture. Such process of depeasantisation and pauperisation continuing for the last 200 years, has attributed a unique psychosocial content to Jharkhand movement. New language and symbols of culture based on myth, could infuse a sense of identity and assertion of ethnicity. The breakthrough into the 'culture of silence' may be said to be due to reaction against the unbalanced development process. The process of dispossession and forced migration of the tribals from this region has been an age long phenomenon since the introduction of permanent settlement. The post-independence development planning has proved to be an extension of the British colonial exploitation which the Jharkhand protagonists call inter-

nal colonialism. Even if we do not argue with this designation of the Indian development programmes, it is evident that the so called development has rarely benefitted the Jharkhandis. Due to the claims of outsiders and nature of the projects, the indigenous communities did not get minimum benefit in the form of employment, trade and commerce.

Ethnocide

The tribals and ethnic minorities became the first victim of conquest and colonisation. They usually occupy a position of subordination and domination within the country. This situation has been called internal colonialism, which has been a constant phenomenon in the Jharkhand region. In recent times, after ages of marginalisation and dispossession, many of the indigenous groups have become the victims of development. In the newly independent former colonies of Asia, Latin America and Africa, this has been more evident. They have been physically destroyed or disappeared as groups. This has been called ethnocide or cultural genocide. Ethnocide entails two principal aspects—economic and cultural. The economic aspect is embedded in the so called modern theory and practice of development implying “that all pre-modern forms of economic organisation must necessarily disappear to make way for either private or multinational capitalism, or state-planned socialism or mixes thereof. Cultural ethnocide means that all sub-national ethnic units must disappear to make way for the overarching nation-state”.¹ It is distinct from socio-economic, cultural change involving intercultural influences and diffusion. No government would admit that its policies and development programme lead to marginalisation and disappearance of communities. Rather, they professedly intend to improve the condition of marginal ethnic groups, provide rights and opportunities. But modern development projects have led to deforestation and pollution, displacement and pauperisation, social polarisation and dependency. Such development and nation building have become the *nouveau ideologue* of leaders, academicians and planners. But due to its ethnocidal effect, alternative concepts of ethno-development, green movement, indigenism, etc., have come up and captured the minds of the people.

Internal colonial exploitation finds its relevant case in the Jharkhand region which used to enjoy an autonomy. The British rule shifted the political centre to the port cities like Calcutta, Bombay, Madras. The leadership of the anti-imperialist struggle as well as free India came from these areas. The development and exploitation follows the same pattern of colonialism of the developed area. The region has become the epicentre of industrial activities since the setting up of Tata Steel. Subsequently, major plants as Ranchi-Hatia, Bokaro, Rourkella, etc., and river valley projects, power plants as D.V.C. Kansabati, Hirakud, Santaldih, etc., have been launched in this region. A brief account² of losses of human resources due to installation of some river valley projects is revealing :

<i>Project</i>	<i>Land submerged/ (in lakh acres). villages occupied</i>	<i>People displaced</i>
D.V.C	1.25	1.5.lakh
Kangsavati	.40	60,000
Subarnarekha and Kharkai	.85	90,000
Hirakud	.65	75,000
Dimna	.25	20,000
Sitarampur	.15	20,000
Tilaia-Panchet, Maithon-Durgapur	N.A.	1 lakh
Hatia-Ranchi	26	13,000
Patratu	19	12,000
Bokaro	45	37,000

There are many other such projects which have had a devastating effect on the people of the area. The Panchet reservoir is situated in Purulia, but the district would not get irrigation water form it. The Subarnarekha reservoir project initially involved a cost of Rs. 355 crore, it has been raised to Rs. 1000 crore. There has been strong movement since it would displace 15,000 families. The displaced *adivasis* are usually paid a compensation at the rate of Rs. 200 to Rs. 300 per acre of land according to the Land Acquisition Act, 1894.

A conservative estimate of displacement due to development projects undertaken during the last four decades exposes a staggering figure of 1,45,00,000. The traumatic experience of displacement

may be contrasted with the mental agony of partition.³

Displacement by Various Categories of Projects

Type of Project	No. of displaced persons	No. of Rehabilitated	Backlog
Coal & other mines	17,00,000	4,50,000	12,50,000
Dams & canals	1,10,00,000	27,50,000	82,50,000
Industries sanctuaries & parks	6,00,000	1,50,000	4,50,00
Others	12,00,000	3,00,000	9,00,000
Total	1,45,00,000	39,50,000	1,15,50,000

Source : Fernandes W., J.C. Das & S. Rao (1989) "Displacement and Rehabilitation : Extent and Prospects" in W. Fernandes & E.G. Thukral, (Eds), *Development, Displacement and Rehabilitation*, Indian Social Institute, New Delhi, p.80.

Displacement and Rehabilitation by Coal Mines. 1981-85

Company	No. of displaced persons	No. of jobs provided to one member of the family	% of displaced families
Eastern Coal Field	81,100	4915	33.32
Central Coal Field	43,600	3984	50.32
Western Coal Field	34,300	2250	36.10
Bharat Coaking Coal	21,100	752	19.53
Total	1,80,000	11,901	36.34

Source : Government of India, 1985; 24, Quoted in Ibid.

Adivasi life is not only forest-based, like land it is a part of their culture. When Santhal Revolt was in the offing, British government, in 1871, declared 36 sq. mile area of Damin-Eko as protected forest land. In 1872, officially the Forest department was set up to administer the Jungle. Different trees in jungle were included in this protection policy. Cutting down of trees as *Sal*, *Mahua*, *Kendu*, *Kusum* was prohibited. 292 sq. miles of Santhal Parganas were declared as government forest land. Though after a long period, in 1894 the British government declared its National Forest Policy and

protected forests. After the formation of forest department, the city Babus were given permission to have job, business and other works. They did never recognise these forest-based people as 'Man'. So, including forest administrators, the *Thikadars* regarded forest as a commodity. Those who had no attachment, sentiment for the jungles became rulers of the forest. Including Conservator or Chief Forest Officer, Divisional Forest Officers, Ranger, Deputy Ranger, Forest guards, all became proprietors of the Forest from 1872. On the other hand, due to their age long dependence on forest, with the evolution of economy and culture, the *adivasis* became backward. The food collecting and hunting tribes, e.g. Lodha, Birhore, Rangatota, Jheria, Korwa, due to their dependence on forest, led a communitarian life of ease and leisure. The implementation of forest law had adverse affects on *adivasi* life. With the decline of forest areas, many *adivasi* groups in India came in confrontation with the forest officials and administrators. The imperial government declared many tribes as crimeprone groups. Korwa, Lodha, Gheria are still regarded as born criminals. Ancient tribal people feel that they have a legitimate right in jungle for generations. The civilised world failed to appreciate this value, hence the clashes have increased.

The educated Indians like to rule the *adivasi*, their motive being to utilise them as a source of cheap labour. There has been a lot of difference between British government's Forest Reservation Act, 1894 and India's National Forest Act, 1952. In the old law, provisions for reclaiming the forest and make it cultivable or for habitation was there, in the new law it has been scrapped. In the former law, people could collect woods from the jungle for their household use as fuel, for making agricultural implements, etc. In the new law this right has been taken away and the forest people asked to create village jungle of their own. According to the National Policy Draft (1981), it was seen that the Forest Officer, guard and police were given supreme power. With their power they could confiscate anything, could arrest without warrant any person alleged to be involved in any type of jungle crime. The State government may take over any land as a forest land and turn it into reserved place. Reserved place means prohibition of entrance of people. So the *adivasi* and local tribes would be charged with crime if they get in to the prohibited jungles. So poaching in the forest land, collecting bark

of a tree for medicine, to collect coir for cottage construction, household fuel, wood for making tools, collecting leaves for offering meal on it, all have been designated as criminal offence. Apart from conviction and fine, government may ask for compensation too. According to this law, the State government would determine the pasturing land, hunting area, etc.

Considering the probable serious consequences of the Bill, the labour union and organisations of landless peasants started a movement, viz. save jungle movement. Chipko movement in Uttarkhand areas in U.P., was launched against the dishonest business *menthikadar* clique. Jharkhand Mukti Morcha in Bihar, Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana and Jharkhand Sangharsha Sangjukta Morcha in Bankura, Jhargram launched struggle against this clique. Simultaneously they organised resistance against the law. Parliament member Manomohun Tudu brought serious allegations against the Forest Corporation. In *Samaj*, an Oriya newspaper published from Cuttack (25.12.80), a report said, 59,000 *adivasis* have been ejected from their homes due to Simlipal Jungle Development Project. *Adivasis* were deprived of their rights to forest. When Sibusoren, M.P. got arrested in Baripada with the allegation that the *adivasis* would cut and destroy the jungle in the hunting festival, the *adivasis* complained of interference into their religion. An inspection into the godown of *thikadars* and forest corporation at Badampahar, Karanjia, Jangipur, Baripada, Ayodhya, Ghatshila would reveal how the jungles were destroyed. Under the pressure of *adivasi* and peasants' movement, West Bengal government declared the new forest policy in *adivasi* areas giving some hazy concessions for the *adivasis* only. They have taken it for granted that in the *adivasi* area, upper caste Hindu peasant caste, or Muslim and Christians do not live. This discriminatory government policy is still operative.

The factor behind the enthusiasm of the officers and employees of Forest department in social forestation is that the method and system would help them to set up a generational vested clique in social forestation scheme. This work first started in Madhya Pradesh according to Indo-U.S.A. planning. The U.S. Agency for International Development agreed to provide aid of 25 million dollar to Indian government in 6 years. Only in M.P., 63000 acres of land would be put under social forestation, 5000 villagers will be

provided with fuels. The Maharashtra government also collaborated with U.S.I.D. to take up similar project. The World Bank will also give several lakh dollars for Tiger project and social forestation in Simlipal mountain, Orissa. The money allotted to West Bengal by Centre for Social Forestation in D.P.A.P. areas also come from U.S.A. I.D.s fund.⁴

The foreign experts have recommended implantation of trees necessary for fuel or for medicine. But without implementing this suggestion, the forest department has been insistent upon implanting Eucalyptus, Akashmani, etc., which grow very fast. Throughout the Himalayas, ecology balancing trees as Sal-Segun are cut-down and replaced by Pyne. In Himachal, with the collaboration of influential party leaders, *thikadars* smuggle out the valuable woods, it has been alleged. In Singhbhum, Hazaribag, Keonjnar, Mayurbhanj jungles, Sal trees have been cut down and replaced by Eucalyptus, Akashmani. In the Sunderbans, Bankura, Midnapore, Purulia, as part of social forestation Eucalyptus trees are implanted. So to serve the interests of paper mill owners, the high ups in the forest department join hands with big businessmen without any concern for *adivasis'* interests. As per the government rules regarding cutting of jungle trees, the forest department could cut down Sal jungle after every 30 years keeping small Sal branches in tact. But they think that small Sal trees do not allow Kusum, Mahua to grow fast. So Sals are to be destroyed. To get the aid of World Bank they have uprooted all the Sal trees. So the social forestation policy of the government in the form of replacing Sal, Kendu, Mahua, Kul, Haritaki, Bamboo, Amlaki trees by Eucalyptus and Akashmani have disrupted the economy and culture of the indigenous people in the area. Eucalyptus, Akashmani may be apparently economic for its use in paper mill. But wherever such trees were implanted, e.g. in Hura, Arsa, Jhalda, Kashipur (distt. Purulia), there all grasses and plants withered away, perhaps an indication of future soil erosion. Moreover, Sal, Mahua, Kendu, etc., have been part of the *adivasi* culture and economy. Thus the *adivasis* and the indigenous people in the Jharkhand region have been doubly displaced, from their cultural locale and economy.

The region, mainly the Bihar-W. Bengal districts and part of Madhya Pradesh in Jharkhand area, has been supposed to be drought-prone. If we go back to Indian history, we will see that our people could produce crops in drought areas through water plan-

ning and dams. Indeed, drought is chronic in Jharkhand portion of Bihar, W. Bengal, but that is due to weak network of irrigation. The irrigation percentage in Bihar districts, e.g. Santal Parganas, Singhbhum, Hazaribagh, Ranchi, Palamau, Dhanbad, has been much below the level of Bihar,⁵ not to speak of all India average.

Ethnic Identity

As a respondent in Jharkhand, viz. Murarai, a village in Binpur, Jhargram, said, "in marriage, before starting for bride's house we are given marriage with the household mangoe tree, Why should I give up this practice if asked for? This is a question of my identity". Any sophisticated definition of identity could hardly approximate such candid expression on one's identity. And it is evident that assertion of ethnic identity in recent times has been rooted in such reaction against prescribed norms set by the dominant community, state or the ruling party. So in such a situation, question of one's identity arises from a sense of insecurity, fear of being lost in the sea of majority or being submerged in dominant stream. A sense of 'we' and 'they' develop.

As mentioned earlier, the region remained an abode of Aryan, Dravidian, Agneya cultural groups to settle in. With the opening up of development process, mainly through mining and industry, outside people invaded the area having little sense of obligation and commitment to the people. As distinguished from old settlers, these outsiders branded as *dikus*, in collaboration with the corrupt government officials, disrupted the eco-cultural balance and communitarian values and culture prevailing in the area. Indicating the participatory nature of culture and economy, Ramdayal Munda, the theoretician of Jharkhand movement, held that economic pursuits and religious pursuits are directly linked in Jharkhand life. All prevailing power is supposed to govern different gods, goddesses, and their territory is different. Territory is demarkable as house, village, fields and forests including hills. "The house gods (ancestral spirits) and the village gods are for peace keeping in the family and village, whereas field and forest gods are for providing prosperity".⁶ These gods are nothing but nature personified in hills, rivers, trees. So the hill spirit is involved to ensure good rain, harvest, and so on.

The inter-relationship between the economic and religious pursuits has been designed in a circular frame where economic pursuits determine religious performance which in turn determines literary work. Literature is said to be the reflection of everything man does and aspires to do. The secret behind the oral, participatory, folk nature of art, literature and performing art is that it could communicate in a most intense way. Oneness of the performer with the respondent is made possible due to this. With the invasion of modern media, professionalism has been introduced with the result that participatory character is lost. The bases of identity and crisis in it have been summarised in this way.⁷

<i>Bases of Identity</i>	<i>Cultural values</i>	<i>Causes of crisis</i>
1. Geography	Balance between nature and culture	Imbalance
2. History	Accomodativeness	Exploitation by outsider
3. Society	Equality	Inequality
4. Economy	Collective management	Individualism
5. Polity	Democracy	Paternalism
6. Religion	Naturism	Fundamentalism
7. Art & Literature	Participation	Non-participation

Ethnicity, ethnic identity have been resurged in all spheres of life. As suggested by the respondent, whom we have quoted, the implication of development, threat to individual group norms, become more imminent. No government or development planners would agree to the possibility of such imminent threat as a result of their policy or projects. But the policy of national government, and pattern of modern development projects rarely allow any autonomy, participation of the people concerned. Moreover, compliance with their prescriptions is implied for the sake of integration and existence of primordial loyalties considered to be contrary to integration and nation building. The industrialisation and development projects in the area, as already noted with corresponding data, have marginalised the people of indigenous communities. The worst thing is that they tend to think themselves culturally submerged. Apart from economic aspects, the cultural implication of such a threat could be

ascertained from the folk songs and poems popularised in course of the movement. Some mention of few lines of Tusu songs^b may help us in understanding the mood.

*Kurmali Santali Bhasa, Manbhum Sarbaday
Eto loker bhasar mulya ek paisayao pali nai.*

(Kurmali Santali language are used everywhere in Manbhum, but it has no value though spoken by many).

*Engrajke Khedbar laigye, Kato bhaier paran jai
tobu hamder kuno katha itihase lekhak nai*

(So many brothers sacrificed their lives to drive out the British, yet history does not mention about us).

Not only language, the Jharkhand communities of late have become assertive of script, culture, mythical history, everything. We have already discussed how these assertions, and the articulation/manipulation of it in course of the movement have led to creation and development of script, language. Besides script and language, ethnicity could mobilise the sentiment of scheduled caste, scheduled tribe communities as well as other backward groups left unrecognised in the constitutional provisions. For the groups who remain so, or derecognised as scheduled caste or other backward communities, the Jharkhand movement has become the platform of asserting their ethnic, tribal identity. Since 1940s the movement remained ethnic in content. Even after the participation of Marxist groups and Marxist-Leninist factions, the nativist ethnic spirit has been intensified. Though the Marxists have tried to infuse a class content in asserting that the capitalist development could necessarily lead to the struggle of exploited nationalities who are mostly tribals and scheduled caste communities. The J.M.M. leader Sibū Soren held that the 'objective of the Morcha is to attain liberation from class as well as national oppression, and 'most important of all our culture must be protected.' A.K. Roy, claimed to be an independent Marxist, felt that workers of industrial towns like Dhanbad, Jamshedpur, Bokaro would lead the liberation movement in Jharkhand.⁹ The contradiction and confusion of such Marxian prognosis may be discussed in the following portion dealing with the

politics of Jharkhand.

The ethnicity factor in the movement could hardly be explained in the Marxian frame or developmental model of analysis. The premises upheld by the western social scientists that identities, loyalty based on language, ethnicity and other likely traditional attachments are obstacles to development which may be made to disappear in course of development. The Marxists have tried to deal with it on the basis of their concept of exploited national communities. In the Indian context, such hypothesis, and the Marxist parties' experimentation of it in regions and sub-regions have been proved to be naive, often self-defeating.

Ethnicity, and the symbols of identity assertions may be active at various stages of development. The recent ethnic movements in India, of which Jharkhand happens to be the most significant in this aspect, have illustrated how such assertions could transcend economic factors and become effective in mobilising mass sentiment. Rather, sometimes economic factors or deprivation issues have been catered through ethnic, cultural symbols. Instead of being divisive, it may prove to have unifying effect. Gorkhaland agitation and its success in integrating the various Napalese groups in India, viz. Chetry, Magar, Gurung, Tamang, etc., through symbols of language and ethnic identity may be mentioned. The creative aspects of Jharkhand movement in the sphere of language and culture have already been discussed.

The impact of the movement on the indigenous communities' ethnic-self may also be emphasised. Though many ethnic groups belong to same eco-cultural stock in the Chotanagpur plateau region, their deity and festivals though identical, are not the same. The cases of Bhumij, Birhor, Kharia, Lodha, are illustrative. The Lodhas, like other tribals, are not so fond of song and dancing. They do not have specific festivals, but have adopted from the neighbouring tribes the festivals as Bandna, Tusu. The Bhumijis, a distracted community of Mundari origin, are now influenced by Hindu rituals. But they also perform Karam, Bandna, Tusu. The Birhors have adopted the festivals of Mundas, Santals, e.g. Sohrai, Karam. The Kharias, having no festivals of their own, in Ful patan, their main festival, they would form friendship with singing Jhumur songs.¹⁰

So, the Hinduised influence and Jharkhand impact continue to

move the spirit in the concerned area. The presence of Jharkhand spirit, or in other words, upholding the symbols of tribal identity in course of the movement could resist the absorption of many communities into the Hindu fold. Already some indigenous communities as Bhumij, Kharia, Sabar, Mahali, Kora have forgiven their language. They have adopted Sadri, a conglomerate marketplace language or use the language of the region in which they have settled. The cultural symbols have been effective in the sustenance of the tribal spirit as against the onslaught of Hindu influence. Moreover, the movement has built up myths and supermen with divine power to establish a historical legacy of ethnicity. The divine oracle bestowed on Sindhu-Kanhu, myth of Birsa God, the myth of autonomy of the revolts, etc., have authenticated the rebel personality of Jharkhand figures. There is little scope here to describe in detail the myths and divinity imposed on the rebel figures of the movements, a list of which has been given in the first portion.

Indeed, in all the movements — starting from the Santal rebellion to recent Jharkhand, economic exploitation and marginalisation of the people formed the core background. Always, it has been found that recurrent rise of land revenues, torture of the *diku* Zamindars and Mahajans, response-inertia of the district administration led to the situation of extreme oppression of indigenous population. But revolt, call for a *hul* got mobilised only when some God-figure, saviour having divine power appeared on the scene. Myths were created, circulated, lip-gossips about the divine message spread so as to mobilise discontent in the form of open revolt. Even when divinity was not bestowed, as in the revolt in Hendoa Estate in Dumka, prophecy of Kanhu was propagated. “Within six years, there would be another revolt, he would re-appear as the leader.” Such prophecy was unknown during the Santal rebellion, perhaps this was a new propaganda to attract the Santals.¹¹ Subsequently, such myths and God-figures have been authenticated in various forms. Even Jaipal Singh, the founder of the Jharkhand Party was made a charismatic figure, a Marang Gomko.

Radicalisation or Authenticism?

The intrusion of Marxists and their effort to radicalise ethnicity

through linking it with exploited class paradigm have precipitated confusion and split in the Jharkhand consciousness. The Jharkhand indigenism, as they held it, based on language, ethnicity and culture which in turn should motivate development process, has little commonality with class-based Marxist viewpoint on the backwardness of ethnic communities.

Whether ethnic backwardness is rooted in Varna-based exploitative system of Hindu social order, or an aspect of specific phase of capitalist development? Are specific ethnies, nationalities are destined to be exploited and marginalised in an upper caste oriented ruling class dominated society? All these theoretical postulates seem to have little relevance when we find that an ethnie, e.g. Sabars remain 96% illiterate, living on frogs and rats. A pathetic song in a Sabar village in Purulia; W. Bengal (1983) said:¹²

*Bas kori dudhe jhare bang indur mere khai
Etake ki bancha bala jay?*

(We live in bushes, live on by eating frogs and rats, should it be called human living?).

If a movement, to project or dramatise people's tragic existence, asserts ethnic affiliation as a means of mobilisation, that could not be assailed as sheer nativism. Different developmental levels could give rise to such nativism (e.g. in Punjab and Jharkhand) in various forms. So economic deprivation factor, or development does not explain the rise of nativism. As in the broad-based national liberation movement, ethnic upsurges may also win the support of people on ethnic line cutting across classes. Even there may have been differential class position, land-relations among the ethnies. In Jharkhand, for instance, the Mahatos and Sabars are unevenly placed so far as land-relations are concerned. Still, both of them, and many such ethnies dissimilar in class position, have been mobilised in the Jharkhand demand. And it is based on ethnic factor, rather than on economic class position. How this is to be radicalised, or whether it could be radicalised at all?

Of late, the Jharkhand movement has been exposed to influences of forces which Hobsbawm termed as vulgar Marxist. The vulgar or quack Marxists in India mechanically apply economic interpreta-

tion of history, and model of structure—superstructure as a simple relation of dominance and dependence.¹³ So A.K. Roy, the leader of Marxist co-ordination committee, in a public meeting at Purulia Court compound in 1981, said, “We will establish an ideal society in Jharkhand free from exploitation, so we have formed Jharkhand Mukti Morcha inspite of Jharkhand Party’s existence, . . . well, we are secessionist in the sense that we like to secede from those who practice Babuism in the name of Marxism.”¹⁴ The same leader, however, perhaps realising the problem of harmonising the sense of identity with integration in course of his involvement in Jharkhand movement, later said, “the problem of ethnic identity is obviously complicated, being the function of language, religion, caste and above all politics.” And the heavens will not fall if some new states like Jharkhand, Uttarkhand, etc., are formed, but it will not end conflict as its root lies somewhere else.¹⁵ Then he talks about the need of embracing swadeshi and value-based politics as the way out.

The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, after characterising the nature of Indian State and Indian government, held that the character of the movement should be class based and revolutionary, with the leadership of the working class and peasantry. They consider the self-styled sociologists, folklorists, teachers of non-formal education as the enemies of the movement.¹⁶ The same group, later, could realise that “Jharkhand movement is a joint movement of the tribals and non-tribals . . . separate state demand is not the outcome of any political manipulation. It is full of innumerable ethnic, socio-economic complexities and contradictions which are showing up.”¹⁷ Such theoretical summersault and confusions have been evident in all the groups. This has caused serious cleavages in the movement which we would discuss in the next portion.

The difficulties with Marxist and other progressive groups involved in the movement seem to be rooted in their bias against ethnic, caste and other sentiments considered to be superstructural. In reality, however, in course of participation in a movement for its commitment to toiling people, the radical groups, as they find that exploited/oppresed nationalities have existed in the form of caste, tribe and ethnic rather than economic category and get mobilised on ethno-linguistic line; they become inconsistent. Some of the C.P.I. (M.L.) groups have come out to assert their stand by categorising

downtrodden caste as a form of class. The class-caste controversy has been an age long issue of debate between the Indian Marxists and Socialists. The Marxists always held that "class and caste should not be equated and ruling classes often exploit caste to perpetuate their class domination. It is only by adopting a class approach that the toiling masses can be drawn into the common mass struggle for democracy and socialism."¹⁸ The Socialists, since the time of Congress Socialist Party, have laid stress on the caste factor which is an ossified class, and the mixed character of Indian classes, viz., its dual character as a labour in town and landed farmer in native village.

However, exposure of the movement to Marxist influence has its positive aspects too. In course of interactions with the C.P.I. (M.L.), as one respondent held, the Jharkhandi young activists have developed some progressive consciousness. Some leaders who are enlightened to new thoughts, acquire some mixed characteristics which may eventually erode the nativist content of ethnicity. Especially, in W. Bengal portions of the proposed Jharkhand, interaction with *bhadraloks* otherwise considered to be *diku*, led to assimilation of certain values and cultural norms. Whereas in Bihar, unjust policies of government loaded with bias and casteism led the non-tribal people to support the demand for Jharkhand. Hence, the C.P.I. in Bihar extended support to the movement.¹⁹

Thus the radicalisation process and awareness of indigenism have been operative at different levels. The intrusion of radical ideas had to be accommodated in the format of ethnicity. Such unique task could hardly be performed by the Marxist groups having limited appeal. The indigenous ethno-Marxists have already been derailed, as the referred statements expose. At the other level, aspiration for ethnic authenticity in the form of Jharkhand indigenism faces the hurdle of age long religio-cultural divides as Christian non-Christian, tribal-non-tribal, schedule-non-schedule-O.B.C.'s.

The movement's stress on ethno-lingual, animistic identity based on indigenous culture, language, religion could gradually sidetrack the divisions. The efforts in integrating the languages and adoption of neighbouring groups' symbols have already been noted. The new generation emerging from Ranchi University orientation, being disillusioned with old generation's expectation of getting a berth in the Hindu hierarchy, has been aroused to the new awareness. This

sense developed out of common concern to be rescued from age long deprivation, dispossession and culture of silence. In past revolts during the British rule, divinely inspired leader, myth, God-given messages determined the shape of the movement. Of late, in keeping with the time, or tempera of movements, ethnicity has taken the stride. This is not to suggest that leadership factor does not matter. The acquiring of charisma, liberator image, and legitimacy depend on ethnic commitment and qualities. Thus a leader has to be a participant and visionary at the same time.²⁰ He has to be ethnically authentic having commitment to indigenous symbols and norms. Such authenticity seems to be more efficacious in mobilising popular sentiment, than any progressive ideology. Thus ethnicity, both in resistance of ethnocide and assertion of identity, has been the most legitimate form of protest in the Jharkhand movement. This has taken a historical dimension notwithstanding the Marxist assertion of class-based struggle as the way to liberation of the oppressed. By strange coincidence, this phenomenon has enveloped the support of the Marxists as well as split them. This will be discussed in Chapter V.

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CHAPTER V

POLITICS WITHOUT POLITY

*Hindu Muslim Sikhi Esahi
Sab Jharkhandi bhai bhai*

A JHARKHAND SLOGAN

Though the slogan itself stands for united raj of Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikhs and Jharkhandis, the movement has always been alleged to be sectional and communal. This has been given coverage in any political literature of the Jharkhand groups in which they try to refute the charges. The political parties and the media in general are standard bearer of the charges made against the movement, viz. of being secessionist, divisive, nativist, Church affiliated conspiracy, etc. At this stage of the movement when its base has been extended to more indigenous communities, and Christians compose only 5-10% of the population in Jharkhand, it may be anachronistic to deliberate on Church affiliation and movement's growing strength due to Church support.

Indeed, at the initial stages, the *adivasi* Christians provided leadership and the leaders were closely related to Church. The Munda-Oraon alignment and *adivasi* bias in the movement had been eroded in course of increasing involvement of other indigenous groups and intrusion of economic issues into the movement. Gradually, the alignment pattern and nerve centre of the movement were changed with Congress' support to the Tana Bhagat and Kherwar movement. Munda-Oraon orientation was changed, and Santal Pargana became the centre of activities in place of Ranchi. Since then, politics of Jharkhand has changed its form and content.

The Split Composition

The movement and the participant groups have always remained

split, both in composition and content. The State Reorganisation Commission (1955) refused to accede to the demand for separate Jharkhand state on the plea of stiff opposition from political parties, and minority of tribals in Chotanagpur and Santal Parganas and linguistics divisions among them. With this, division and confusion in the movement were further deepened. It did not end with the merger of Jharkhand Party with Congress in 1963.

From the outset, division and confusion have been prevalent on ethnic, linguistic lines. Though with the broadening of social bases, the religious divide, viz. Christian-non-Christian had become of secondary significance. But ethnic, linguistic and political differences continued to stall the movement. We have already noted about the rise of splinter groups of Jharkhand Party during 1960s after the merger of the main party with Congress. The process, however, had its sway over the movement during 1970s and 1980s too. The so-called radicalisation of the movement with the formation of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (1972), its cooperation with A.K. Roy's Co-ordination Committee, rise of A.J.S.U., J.C.C. could hardly check the fissures and divisions in the movement. It may have catered to the needs of mining and industrial labour in the area, and made a headway into non-tribal groups, but intrusion of diverging ideological trends only added further confusion to the movement. The import of class- caste-ethnicity issue, debate on nationality as a category, language and religion, etc., have all being mixed up. The movement and the groups were soon destined to be in disarray. The J.M.M. which could have some electoral advantage through understanding with Congress (I), fell apart with its other faction (Benode Mahato) joining the Jharkhand Co-ordination Committee, a front of nearly 50 groups. Besides the Jharkhand Party, J.M.M. (B), C.P.I. (M.L.), A.J.S.U., Jharkhand Kranti Dal (Tudu), organisations like All India Santal Council, pocket organisation of C.P.I. (M.L.) compose the J.C.C.

None of the above fronts, factions have regular committee or organised membership. The selected convenors are functionally active only on the eve of some demonstration, public meeting, deputation, etc. Such occasional nature of functioning could hardly be meaningful in closing up of ranks and coalitioning of factions committed to the movement. As one respondent, an intellectual

activist of Jharkhand, said, factionalism in Jharkhand movement has led to arbitrary functioning and constant tussle between the groups and its leaders. He readily referred to submission of separate memorandums before the government committee on Jharkhand.¹ To outweigh the fictional balance to one's favour, groups often would forge alliance with or form new alignments as one like Jharkhand Muslims Morcha, which goes against the Jharkhand ideology. The J.M.M., J.C.C. and Jharkhand Party have remained split-prone due to such trend. This also provides opportunity to precipitate division, defection since one could easily get berth in the leadership of other faction.

In context also, the different approach of the concerned parties, factions, has been evident in their memoranda and leaflets. Not to speak of the theoretical deliberations (e.g. on cast-class-ethnicity, tribalism) focussed by radical intellectuals,² the political viewpoints of the groups stand poles apart. We have already mentioned about the concept of internal colonialism said to be relevant in the area, and ingredients of such colonialism as upheld by the J.M.M. The J.C.C. held that, "a large number of people belonging to other nationalities, ethnies (e.g. Biharis, Bengalis, Oriyas) live in this region. The Jharkhandis would forge unity with them on the basis of equality. However, the toiling people have to be separated from those (outsiders) who exploit."³ The AJSU speaks of a Varna-Hindu dominated India under 'Indian whites' where the Jharkhandis could not have the taste of freedom. So they (Indian whites) bracket the Jharkhand movement as communal, secessionist.⁴ However, most of the groups have identical views on outsiders' domination, exploitation and draining out of area's resources.

In India, no single nationality, particular ethnies could be designated as a dominant nation, or ruling ethnies. The political parties are also conglomeration of various nationalities and ethnic groups. May be, some ethnic groups are more well placed in some occupation, business and commerce, but ruling coteries are not based on this line. Though in some of the nativist movements, the agitators have earmarked certain parties as ethnic (e.g. C.P.I [M.] branded as a Bengali Party in Assam), the professed ideology and political line of the parties could hardly be said to be determined by ethnic considerations. In practice, for example the Jharkhand protagonists also

have to come up against such ethnic divides. On the eve of its agitation during December, 1987, the Jharkhand leaders had to contradict the reported deterioration in *adivasi*-Bengali relationship in Jhargram sub-division. As a Jharkhand leader remarked, "some newspapers are trying to bracket us as anti-Bengali, but we stand for the slogan, Hindu Muslim Sikh Esahi, etc. And our movement is not a matter of *adivasis* alone, all indigenous ethnies are with our movement."⁵ Most significantly, all the Jharkhand groups now avoid using the word *diku*, instead held, 'all the sons of the soil, tribes, Sadans and others having common history and cultural tradition, used to identical values, they constitute Jharkhand people, they are Jharkhandis.'⁶

Thus the movement and the groups have to dissociate from its basic tenets for the sake of extending the base as well as to form a composite character of the movement. The radicalisation and opening up of the movement with the participation of Marxist-groups and non-tribal population led to this change. However, it has its fallout in division and confusion among the groups. The most broad-based platform, the Jharkhand Co-ordination Committee formed in 1987, composed of Jharkhand Party, two factions of J.M.M, J.K.D, A.J.S.U., I.S.A, I.P.F, factions of C.P.I.(M.L.), has been torn with split and recomposition. A faction of J.M.M (Soren) left the J.C.C., new formations as Jharkhand Muslim Morcha, defection from Jharkhand Party to J.M.M. remain a constant phenomenon. The J.C.C. has been alleged to be manipulated by Rana faction of C.P.I. (M.L.) through their pocket organisations. These non-political groups attend the meetings of J.C.C. and dictate the decisions.⁷ The J.C.C. could hardly maintain the balance in the new alignment of scheduled caste, scheduled tribe and other backward communities. Subsequently, with the change in country's political complexion, the J.C.C. withered away. Some of its leaders' pro-Congress (I) role in negotiating with the government has been held responsible for this. The charisma of Dr. Ramdayal Munda has been tarnished for his alleged closeness with Congress (I) government. Participant workers in the movement even go to the extent of assailing him as a planted agent.

The Constituency

Who and which sections form the constituency of the Jharkhand

movement? At this stage, it is of no use in vegetating about the loot of the area and imbalance in development, economy. The ethnocidal aspects have comprehensively projected this than in any other conventional theories. The colonial background and hangover of its clutch have been discussed extensively. The movement ceases to be a tribal movement is also evident. What we need is a clear approach on the changing nature and constituency of the movement.

The Jharkhandi allegation against the government's (both central and state) tactics of triangle—viz. corrupt and isolate, oppress and isolate, terrorise and win through relief, may be true to some extent. But constant division and fissures have led to erosion, confinement of Jharkhand's base. So far, both the militant and pro-system strategy/streams have only added to popular confusion. The setting up of Development/Tribal Councils, winning few seats through adjustment with Congress could not make any headway into the problematique. On the other hand, call for consolidation of militant forces has been counter productive in the sense that it underscore the ethnic dimension of the movement. The latest proposal of Tribal Council in Bihar with nine districts of Chotanagpur has split the J.C.C. and J.M.M. alike. No group is in a position to express views on this or likely proposal of formation of Union Territory.

The erosion in Jharkhand constituency may be revealed in electoral figures in Bihar. From its initial Assembly strength of 33 (1952, 8%), the Jharkhand Party or the Jharkhand Factions came down to 3(1972), 1(1977), 11(1980), 9(1985). The position in W. Bengal and Orissa is far more depressive with only 2(1971) and 4(1971), 1(1974). Subsequently, no faction could win in a single constituency in W. Bengal and Orissa.⁸ In W. Bengal, the movement has gained some momentum in some pockets of Midnapore Bankura and Purulia district. In the Purulia Panchayat elections, the performance of Jharkhand was disappointing, it could win in 23 village Panchayat seats in 1988(38 in 1983), in Bankura the Jharkhand gained majority in 2 village Panchatayts, in Midnapore its performance has been significant having won in 227 seats in village Panchayats, 36 in Panchayat Samities, 3 in Zilla Parishad. However, the stronghold of C.P.I. (M.) among the scheduled caste, scheduled tribe communities could not be challenged. In Bankura, for example, 575 S.C., 234 S.T. candidates belonging to C.P.I. (M.) have been elected, i.e. about 33%

of victorious C.P.I (M.) candidates belong to these communities.⁹

So split and factionalism had its impact on the electoral base of the Jharkhand. It is of no use to cover up electoral failures on the plea that since some major groups often decide not to contest the election, the voting figures do not reflect the actual strength. It has been found that even when groups combine to contest, or at least do not put up candidates to avoid division of votes, the result has been dismal.

Socially too, the base of the movement has been diversive due to its regional bias. In Bihar, the movement remained restricted to Munda community and oriented against the exploitation of North Biharis. During that time (1940s) the movement was not explicitly political, later the leaders realised that until the North Biharis, outsiders were not unseated from power, the indigenous people could not be liberated.¹⁰ So in other states, the base of the movement was bound to be different. In some areas of Orissa, e.g. Baripada, Keonjnar identical regional sentiments prevail against the Cuttki Oriya (i.e. men from Cuttuck) and Bengalis. But in Bengal, such sentiment could hardly pay since the state politics has not been divided on caste line, neither nativist sentiment is politically fruitful.

As such, the movement in Bihar has been motivated and shaped by such sentiment. And since Bihar happens to be the nerve centre of the movement, this bias gets prominence only to minimise the possibility of the movement in other states. Moreover, economic issues, demand for land reform, have not been made an agenda of the movement. For this lacking, the participant communities often change political alignment only to be more disillusioned (e.g. the Mahatos, Santals). The question of identity and nationality could not be duly tagged in with economic issues so as to mobilise the ethnies. The unimpressive electoral performance and occasional nature of the movement are rooted in this weakness.

So the movement and electoral base of the groups remain constricted and ever changing. The shifting of its base has been evident in voting pattern in Bihar, (e.g. B.J.P. has 11 M.L.A.s in the tribal region of Bihar), erosion of Jharkhand strength in Purulia and rise of strength in Jhargram sub-division of Midnapore district in W. Bengal. A community-wise assessment of its strength is not possible, but increasing electoral strength of B.J.P. in Bihar portion of Jharkhand

region, and near total grip of C.P.I.(M.) in Bengal portion of Jharkhand certainly bespeaks of a shifting trend in communities' support to Jharkhand. Of late, with the decline of J.C.C., J.M.M (Soren) has emerged as the driving force in Bihar. It has been consistent in aligning with Janata-left combine and virtually outwitted the other factions. The Jharkhand People's Party has been made to come up to check the broadening base of J.M.M. but without any positive fall out. The anti-J.M.M. groups like Jharkhand Party in West Bengal unilaterally made electoral understanding with Congress (I), the J.P.P. has functioned as a platform to oppose the J.M.M. This has been taken as a Congress move to split the movement. The split situation was exposed on the recent move of central government to put the ball on concerned state government's court. The Union Home Minister's statement in Parliament that the Centre was not averse to the formation of a separate Jharkhand state if the Chief Ministers of states had no objection to it, has created the desired split.¹¹

The Broad Streams

In its present phase of the movement, five streams are said to be active viz., the Congress Jharkhandis, Church influenced Jharkhandis, independent, militant, and Naxalite Jharkhandis. The ex-Jharkhandis who joined the Congress with Jaipal Singh and afterwards are now advocates of setting up of an autonomous unit with 12 districts of Chotanagpur and Santal Parganas in Bihar. The Bharatiya Janata Party's recent demand for Vananchal is identical to this. The second stream, supposed to be influenced by Church is said to be interested only in the development of Church and spread of missionary activities.¹² This group does not carry much in the present context of Jharkhand movement, its participation has been restricted to development projects undertaken by Church-aided voluntary groups. The movement and some Jharkhand leaders have been alleged to receive finance from them. This stream, as this author noted during his visits in the area during election and otherwise, represents the old legacy of Church-affiliated moves to introduce primary education, health service among the backward communities and made conscious of basic rights against abysmal oppression. Moreover, its

miniscule size and influence have been projected out of proportion by the media and political parties. As such, the presence of this group is a mere load rather than a source of strength to the movement. The third stream is supposed to be represented by those who have turned to Parliamentary path and blunted the edge of movement. This is a simplistic categorisation, since many of the militant, Marxist groups also take up Parliamentary way, viz. J.M.M. C.P.I (M.L.), individuals belonging to J.C.C. Only AJSU has openly abhorred parliamentary path. The fourth stream, supposed to be represented by AJSU patterned on All Assam Students Union and its movement, demonstrate militancy and extreme leftist jargons, but its demand includes ethno-communal issues as to stop attack on the Sikhs, Muslims, Gorkhas alongwith the call for implementing Mandal Commission's Report and combating the move for doing away with the present reservation system.¹³ There seems to be a confusion about the fifth category, viz. the C.P.I. (M.L.) factions participating in the movement. The inherent factionalism and split among the C.P.I. (M.L.) groups have actually led to isolation of some groups (as C.P.I. (M.L.) S.N. Sinha). The Indian People's Front, though support the movement in spirit, organisationally, they do not associate with any Jharkhand platform.

So there has been overlapping and withdrawal of participant groups making such broad categorisation most unwise and confusing. A combined move of A.K. Roy's Co-ordination Committee and Jharkhand Mukti Morcha infused radical content in the movement and enveloped participation of working class. Soon they fell apart, not on ideological point of view, but on personality factor of three leaders, viz. Siby Soren, A.K. Roy, Benode Mahato.¹⁴ We have already quoted Roy to show how he drifted from his erstwhile stand, subsequently confused on nationality, development, ethnicity questions. We would rather prefer to categorise the groups into: (i) J.C.C. - J.M.M. (Mardi) - Janata group, (ii) Jharkhand Party, Jharkhand Kranti Dal etc. (iii) J.M.M. (Soren) - Congress Jharkhandis, (iv) the Cultural Groups. The J.M.M.-Congress Jharkhandis, are clubbed on the basis of its common approach to work within or in collaboration with the system to extract the demands. This stream owes its origin to Jharkhand Party's merger with Congress in 1963 and initiative of leader as Kartik Oraon, a Congress M.P. to develop the region and

facilitate economic opportunities for the sons of the soil. Sibusoren, though not professedly, has taken identical stance to manipulate electoral advantage through understanding with Congress and Congress (I) during 1980s. The first category factions have been active in forging some common issues on which united action could be launched. After the Janata's ascension to power, these groups could not work in co-ordination. The decision on Mandal Commission may integrate and consolidate the groups. The J.P. and J.K.D. factions are rarely identifiable from the J.C.C., only during elections they put up separate candidates. The forth groups have been most effective in asserting ethno-cultural issues and commonness in ethnicity. The newspapers and journals (names already referred), organisations as Aboriginal Kurmi Manch, *Adivasi* (Santal) Council, etc., uphold the cultural issues.

Politics of Reservation

As we have noted, inclusion and exclusion of communities in the list of scheduled caste-tribe category form an important issue in Jharkhand movement. In the Census of 1931, several communities had been descheduled from the list. And after that Census, the caste column has been deleted from the Census form thus complicating the situation further. May be, out of good intention to avoid precipitating conflicts based on caste, subcaste, tribe, the Government of India has continued this policy. However, several commissions had been appointed to categorise backward castes, communities to provide facilities to them. Rather than immobilising, it has sharpened the base of caste conflict. Commentators have now come up to question the concept of extending base of polity in course of politicisation of caste as propounded by Rajni Kothari. The backlash of Varna-Hindu intelligentsia, students-youth against the reservation system as a whole, would remain a growing concern for the policy makers and theoreticians who tend to treat caste as a historical category of backwardness in India.

The President of India, according to Art 340, appointed the First Backward Class Commission in 1953. The Commission prepared a list of 2399 backward castes. This commission, viz. Kalekar Commission recommended scholarship grant to students and protection

of services for the backward castes and groups. The S.C.s enjoy reservation since 1940.

In ten Indian states, the state governments appointed Backward Class Commissions and by specifying backwardness tried to implement recommendations of the Kalekar Commission. The states are Andhra, Bihar, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Punjab, U.P. and Tamil Nadu. In eight other states, and centrally governed union territories, lists of backward castes have been made and various facilities provided.

The Second Backward Class Commission's Chairman was B.P. Mandal. The Janata Government, in 1979, appointed the commission with the following terms of reference : (a) defining social and educational backwardness, (b) specifying ways for development of backward classes whose backwardness has been defined, (c) find out ways to reserve employment facilities in State and Central government services for the backward classes, (d) to provide for timely submission of report to the President by the Commission. The Commission also formed a planning team to make research on backward castes and groups. The foremost social scientists like M.N. Srinivas, B.K. Roy Burman, N.S. Reddy, etc., were its members. The Commission considered comparative position in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th grade employees in government offices. They gave out the proportion of backward classes in each of the service.

The commission took interviews of Ministers, political leaders, Parliament and Assembly members and citizens on the issue. Many M.P.s demanded reservation of jobs in Central and State government departments. The M.Ps from West Bengal asserted in their views before the Commission, supporting Left Front Government's policy in the State. Mrs. Gita Mukherjee, M.P. of C.P.I. said that in West Bengal caste based discrimination was a thing of the past. She spoke in favour of giving special assistance to economically weaker sections. Jyotirmoy Basu, M.P. of C.P.I.(M.) pointed out that caste was a legacy of feudal system and viewing this social scene from the casteist angle was no longer relevant in West Bengal. The Backward Classes Confederation, West Bengal has computed the following figures which expose the extent of caste domination in politics and employment.

<i>Cluster of ethnic groups</i>	<i>% of population</i>	<i>% in politics.</i>	<i>% in jobs</i>	<i>% in Business</i>
1. Upper Caste cluster	15.0	68.0	86.0	98.0
2. O.B.C.	52.0	6.0	6.0	23.0
3. S.C.S.T.	22.5	22.5	7.0	0.2
4. Minorities	10.5	3.5	1.0	3.5

<i>Categories of job</i>	<i>Total employment</i>	<i>S.C./S.T.</i>	<i>O.B.C.</i>
Class-I	1,74,026	5.68%	4.69%
Class-II	9,12,925	18.18%	10.63%
Class-III & IV	4,46,687	24.8%	19.98%

Source : Backward Classes Confederation, 1989, Calcutta.

In West Bengal, the upper caste cluster has been said to be formed after the formation of Muslim League. The Brahmins, Vaishyas, Kayasthas forgot their ethnic differences and settled mutually after Fazlul Haque came to power in 1936.¹⁵ This interpretation of enlarging upper caste umbrella may prove to be naive. The so called cluster or the bhadrals have been able to legitimise their power since early 19th century. Their political legitimacy was only an extension of social leadership provided by them.

In W. Bengal, the media, administration and parties are dominated by upper caste people. After having the Backward Class Commission's report, Home Minister Zail Singh declared that Commission specified 3743 backward castes who form 52% of India's population. In West Bengal their number is 177, among them Goala, Ansari, Bag, Buno, Chasi, Kaibarta, Mahishya, Chitrakar, Dhania, Fakir, Kamar, Napit, Kora, Kuir, Kaly, Kumbhakar, Kurmi, etc., and those who have been Christianised are also listed.¹⁶

After considering the data of backward castes, decisions of different courts, the Commission recommended that since the backward castes form 52%, so the demand for reservation of 52% services has been referred. As scheduled caste and scheduled tribes compose 22.5% and service reservation for them is 22.5%, and Supreme Court's verdict as per Article 15(4), 16(4) of Indian Constitution

hold that reservation could not exceed 50% accepting Supreme Court's decision, the Commission recommended 27% reservations for the O.B.C.s in services in Central and State Government. For service and promotion, as in the case of scheduled tribe and scheduled castes, the O.B.C.s are also to be given age concession. Reservation is also recommended in bank, public corporations, factories and government aided institutions. The State Governments are also to take administrative measures for this. So also about the universities and educational institutions. The Commission also recommended for setting up of a separate portfolio in Cabinet for promotion of socio-economic conditions of backward people and to investigate implementations regarding reservation. The West Bengal government appointed a Commission which held that economic position rather than caste should be the basis of reservation. However, in the state, the quotas for S.C., S.T. in education and jobs remain unfulfilled. In 1979, 2503 posts reserved were declared to be vacant, but only 1006 could be filled up, though in State Employment Exchange, 1,61,943 S.C., S.T. were registered as unemployed. The position of S.C., S.T. people employed in Central government services as on 1.1.1980 also, exposes the same trend.¹⁷

Table I

Service Grade	No of Jobs	S.C.(%)	S.T.(%)
Class I	47,937	2375 (4.95)	506(1.06)
Class II	59,161	5055(8.54)	763(1.24)
Class III	17, 52,230	2,35555 (13.44)	5534(3.16)
Class IV	12,72,397	2,47,603(19.46)	68401(5.38)

After this, during the last decade though the proportion of S.C., S.T. in Central government services, has been increased, as evident in Table II below, but it did not reach 50% of the reserved quotas provided for them. The position in the public sector undertaking was worse.

Table II: S.C./S.T in Central Government Services as on 1.1.1989

	S.C. (%)	S.T.(%)
Class I	8.51	2.24
Class II	11.65	2
Class III	14.85	4.52
Class IV	20.41	6.46
Total:	16.41	5.03

Source: CMIE Basic Statistics Relating with Indian Economy, Vol II. 1990.

S.C., S.T. in Public Sector Undertaking as on 1.1.87.

	S.C.(%)	S.T.(%)
Grade A	4.86	1.17
Grade B	6.17	1.55
Grade C	18.54	8.82
Grade D	30.82	17.07

Source: 28th Report of S.C./S.T. Commission, 1986-87.

The figures speak of a trend of under representation in upper grade services and over representation in low grade jobs in which the S.C., S.T. presence has been more than the provided quota.

As a Jati or Varna, a major part of the downtrodden are enlisted as scheduled caste and scheduled tribe. But some communities have not been included as scheduled caste or tribe. Mahato, Bagal, Kumor in West Bengal belong to this excluded category. Though the Santhal, Munda, Oraon etc. are recognised as scheduled tribe, they are not recognised so in Assam. The report of various commissions recommended for their enlistment as scheduled but for political reasons Assam government rejected it. Similarly Rajbansi group is recognised as scheduled caste in Bengal, but not in Assam. In the state of Assam, 4.5 million Jharkhandis are residents but they are not enlisted in S.C., S.T. lists for political reasons. Similarly Koch, Rajbangsis are not regarded as S.T. If all these are included, the real number of S.C., S.T. in Assam will be higher.

We have no figure of scheduled caste, scheduled tribe, O.B.C.

people living below the poverty line, but certainly it may be said that of the people living in absolute poverty, a major portion belong to scheduled caste/schedule tribes (S.C., S.T.), among the S.T. population in Orissa, 88% are living below the poverty line. A major section of the landless and marginal farmers also belong to S.C. and S.T. population. The figures available are given in Tables. The violence and looting, burning of *adivasi* hutments could not be ascertained from percentage figures. Their women are molested and their killings could not be checked. However, attempts may be made to assess their situation through data and equity measures. The co-efficient of equality is determined say, S.C. and S.T. population compose 20% of the population, and total *adivasi* first class officer employees in central government offices compose 1.8%. Then in the central government job (1st class), co-efficient of equality will be $\frac{1.8}{20} \times 100 = 9$. This is good in assessing the degree of inequity, the comparative lowest position below 100 may be regarded as the situation of greatest inequity. This co-efficient may help to determine the degree of social inequality, also comparative social position of downtroddens (Dalits) in different states may be assessed.

Table below shows, in India among the graduate students, the co-efficient stands at 34; it indicates how S.C. and S.T. remain backward in education. Maharashtra figures show that (100) Dalits get opportunities in the sphere of education, Dalit movement has contributed a lot to achieve this. Whereas in Bihar, the equality coefficient stands at 6. The Table containing the percentage of S.C., S.T. population in central government offices, has already been given. Table IV gives the comparative state figures in III class government employees.

The S.C., S.T. Commission recommended 381 measures. Neither Central nor State Governments are serious in implementing these. The important recommendation are:

8. More money to be allotted for the development of S.C., S.T. population. The funds allotted in Plans has been meagre.
9. State governments must take steps to stop transfer of *Adivasis'* lands.
10. To gear up participation of S.C., S.T., economic aid and facilities should be given.
20. To eradicate caste-*varna* hurdles, inter-caste marriages should be promoted, such couples should be granted special facilities and social security.

Table III
(a) Percentage of S.C. S.T. population in Different States
(b) Percentage of S.C. S.T. students in Post-Graduate level (1977-78).
(c) Co-efficient of equality $a \div b \times 100$

State	(a)	(b)	(c)
Andhra Pradesh	18.47	7.49	41
Assam	20.03	10.08	50
Bihar	23.63	1.50	6
Gujarat	20.85	3.88	19
Haryana	18.88	6.21	33
Jammu & Kashmir	8.25	1.10	13
Karnataka	15.48	4.75	31
Kerala	10.40	6.92	67
Madhya Pradesh	37.36	7.65	20
Maharashtra	13.82	13.85	100
Meghalaya	83.47	36.26	43
Orissa	38.19	5.58	15
Punjab	24.38	5.80	24
Rajasthan	28.52	10.12	35
Tamilnadu	18.86	7.28	39
Uttar Pradesh	21.83	11.17	51
West Bengal	26.48	6.29	24
Delhi	15.63	4.41	28
All India	22.54	8.82	39

(Source: 27th Report of Commissioner for S.C.S.T.)

Table IV
Representation of S.C., S.T. in Ill services in some states

States	% of S.C. & S.T.	% of S.C. & S.T. in services	Equality co-efficient
Bihar	23.63	11.8	49.94
Himachal Pradesh	27.42	14.4	42
Madhya Pradesh	37.36	12.8	34.26
Maharashtra	13.82	16.1	116.5
Meghalaya	83.47	79.76	95.56
Tamil Nadu	18.86	10.9	57.8
U.P.	21.83	10.23	48.86
West Bengal	26.48	8.6	32.1
All India	22.54	16.6	73.65

Table V
Composition of landless labourers in 8 districts of Bihar.

No. of sample = 965 families in 31 villages.

<i>District</i>	<i>Upper caste</i>	<i>lower caste</i>	<i>Schedule caste</i>	<i>Schedule tribe</i>	<i>Muslim</i>	<i>Total</i>
Patna	-	26	47	-	-	73
Sahabad		22	66		88	
Saran	3	43	10	42	98	
Dharbhanga		94	113		21	236
Santhal Parganas		20	51	73	4	148
Purnea		41	72	19	60	192
Ranchi			28	7	28	
Palamau		84	18			102
Total	3	330	377	120	135	965

Source : Agro-economic Survey of India, 1980.

21. The system of carrying of night soil must be done away with.
28. Land reforms to be quickened. If required, ceiling may be lowered.
34. In spite of commission's recommendations, reservation in the first class services is not introduced.
54. S.C., S.T. students should be given Rs. 20 monthly stipend from the primary level.
81. The state governments should send reports to the Commission regarding implementation measures taken.
102. Reservation should be introduced in private firms too.
103. During 1979, vacant jobs notified for the S.C., S.T. were only filled up by 49% and 30% whereas in that year number of registered unemployed in employment exchanges was 6 lakh 49 thousand and 1 lakh 20 thousand respectively.
176. Housing Boards in different states should provide reservation for S.C., S.T. people.
191. In all Central educational institutions, 15% and 7.5% reservation for S.C. and S.T. should be introduced.

220. W. Bengal government should raise the amount of hostel grant for S.T. students, number of girl hostels for S.T. should be increased.
230. Scholarship, stipend or hostel grants should be linked up with price level, like D.A. Its amount should be increased accordingly. The income ceiling for eligibility to be increased from Rs. 750 to Rs. 1250.
232. For scholarship, etc., the restriction of 2 children should be done away with.
262. The development work for forests should be taken up in a way consistent with economic development for the *adivasis*. The rights of *adivasis* in jungles must be maintained.
278. *Adivasi* children should be educated through mother language.
337. The demand for separate Jharkhand state consisting of 1 lakh 90 thousand sq. km. area of West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh should be considered.
340. West Bengal government should take steps to restore the transferred lands of *adivasis*.
371. To protect the interests of migrant *adivasi* labour, State government should take measure.

A section of elites also hold that demand for reservation in education and service is itself a communal demand. They do not appreciate that the social system provides reservation for the upper castes. It is so powerful that even after 40 years of reservation, coefficient of equality for Dalits stands at 30 or 40. Withdrawal of reservation would mean permanent reservation for the upper castes. Some others talk about efficiency decline due to reservation. In fact, the posts reserved for S.C./S.T. remain vacant, so these posts must have been captured by the so called efficient men. But what is the position of efficiency in administration? The criteria of efficiency are never followed in any sphere. Actually, those who get opportunities through patrons are vocal about efficiency.

Some, however, support reservation in services but oppose it in cases of promotion. This is a round the way opposition to reservation. If reservation is not allowed in promotion, Dalits could never get post in decision-making levels. With the implementation of

Mandal Commission Report, violent backlash of the upper castes has again put the issue of reservation on defensive. The latest figures in Bihar, U.P. expose the downtrodden conditions of the S.C., S.T. population. The data reveal (December 1989) that in U.P., S.C.S.Ts despite reservation, lag far behind the backward classes in their reservation in government jobs. The proportion of S.C.S.T stands as 3.62%, 0.04% (Class I), 5.12%, .27% (Class II), 9.61% and .39 (Class III).16% and .53% (Class IV).¹⁸ In Bihar, a survey in 40 villages of North Bihar reveals that 90% of the beneficiary backward classes covered by Mandal Commission consisting of 100 castes, sub-castes are either illiterate or have nominal education to apply for the job in central government. Despite implementation of Mandal Commission, it seems that the fate of enlisted backward castes is destined to be that of S.C. and S.T.¹⁹ The sub-human poverty of the O.B.C.s and inherent backwardness to utilise the provision of reservation however, should not, by any means legitimise the upper caste opposition against the system of reservation.

The downtrodden castes could come up to assert their rights as a resultant of the constitutional protection. Even after 40 years, it is obvious that the constitutional provisions remain limited in paper. The gaps in the reservation policy of the states would confirm this, data quoted above are no mere figures. The rise of ethnicity and ethno-regional movements are related to it. The Jharkhand movement may be treated as a symbiotic part of the process. The recently roused strong emotion and backlash of the Varna-Hindus against the implementation of Mandal Commission tend to justify the plea that reservation could not be the answer to backwardness, hence it should be abrogated. There is no point in arguing with the logic of the elite Varna Hindus. The fact remains that the existing social and political hierarchy has not been helpful for upgrading and/or liberation of the downtrodden castes and communities living at sub-human level. The Marxist leaders' ostrich-like outlook towards the caste system may be exposed if we study the poor living conditions in Purulia district, West Bengal where the S.C., S.T. people form a significant portion. Ramakrishna Mission, Purulia, made a survey in 1979 in 30 villages of Purulia in the northern part of the district. 98% of the people in Purulia live below the poverty level. Sanitary conditions are worse, of the sampled 5517 families, 20 have no

house, only 2 houses have latrine, 43% of the people suffer from respiratory troubles, and 42% from skin diseases, 753 persons are victims of leprosy, 44% depend on pond or wells for drinking water. A tabulation of S.C.S.T. students in West Bengal universities reveal how S.C.S.T. population remain untouched, in Medical the S.T. enrolment is only 0.07% and S.C. 4.3%, in Science faculty, S.T. composes only 0.7%, S.C. 3.6%.²⁰ The situation in commerce faculty is no better. The upper caste lobby and the media, who dramatised the anti-Mandal agitation in 1989 would never take note of this situation.

Muralidharan has compiled a page-wise coverage in the national newspapers on anti-Mandal agitation. In its coverage during 15 Aug.- 30 Sept. 1990 the Indian Press did cast a destructive rampage in the role of crusade for nothing less than the principles on which Indian nationhood is founded. This has exposed the ugly grimace of caste Hindu chauvinism. The table²¹ would speak for itself. The computation, however, did not account the casteist commentaries such as Arun Shourie's diatribes, and statements of political parties and its leaders.

	<i>News Reports</i>		<i>Visual</i>		<i>Editorial</i>
	<i>Front Page</i>	<i>off front page</i>	<i>Front page</i>	<i>off front page</i>	
1. Indian Express (New Delhi)	1915	3311	1461	4050	168
2. Times of India (New Delhi)	1554	3229	1158	2681	171
3. Hindu (New Delhi)	848	1412	166	666	151

Rana has rightly observed, apparently on the basis of Varna-jati, there is no such discrimination in West Bengal as in other states of India. But "if we look very carefully about different occupations in West Bengal, the topmost and middle ranging government officials, physicians, engineers, artists, writers, lawyers, judges, journalists, professors, and club them together as elitist, then the percentage of the Dalits in these professions are almost insignificant". The Muslims share only 1% in government and private sector jobs.²⁰ So the

impression of leftist leaders and caste biased press that such caste discrimination is absent in West Bengal has not been substantiated. The recent example of shameless stance of the Delhi University teachers in Academic Council meeting on reservation issue would legitimise the allegation of S.C.S.T. intellectuals against the caste Hindu intelligentsia. After two postponements due to objection of the upper caste teachers to include the issue in the agenda, the meeting took place on 7 March, 1991. Some teachers even went to the extent of saying that with the appointment of teachers belonging to S.C./S.T. categories, Goddess Saraswati will be polluted. The arguments against reservation were based on intellectual arrogance, and resolved not to adopt resolution providing reservation in the University. Ultimately, the Vice-Chancellor was authorised to form a Specialist Committee to examine the proposal and submit a report within 4-6 weeks. The said Committee held four meetings, but could not finalise its report.²³

The assertion of ethnicity and demand for cultural autonomy expressed through the movement could gain legitimacy due to this. The nation-state system and the ruling hierarchy, the political parties rarely act to liberate the oppressed communities. The electoral pledges, commissions, political assurances have been reduced to mere-tactics to stabilise or build up a vote bank among these communities. Some castes, communities, as we have mentioned, consistently fought for inclusion in the list of reserved communities. The attempt has been made at different levels—both in working within the system and in mobilising ethnic movements. The Jharkhand movement is a rare example where the groups committed to all the streams, strategies, have been involved. This may have led the movement to its basic weakness, viz. absence of any constant polity-base. The process of involvement of new groups and alienation of participant communities continues. The organised parties also play upon this weakness. Moreover, the division of the region into four states and varied conditions and responses contributed further to this inbuilt weakness. The issue of reservation, enumeration of castes, criterion of such enumeration, composition of state polity, influence of caste tribe factor in states are important variables. The Jharkhand leadership and the movement as a whole have failed to design a strategy to square up this weakness. The positive gains in language-culture, identity have been negated by such weakness due

to which the movement after 50 years could not acquire political leverage.

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CHAPTER VI

EPILOGUE: FOR THE LEADERS

*India does not admit difference to be conflict,
nor does she espy on enemy in every stranger.
Since India has this genius for unification,
we do not have to fear imaginary enemies.*

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Since Independence, the Indian leaders of all hue, viz. the so-called modernised ones, would always over-react to any regional, ethnic demand. This westernised approach, instead of subduing the popular emotions, led to mobilisation of ethno-regional sentiments. The leadership's susceptibility to any demand with religious bent may be appreciated. The nation was passing through the hangover of partition and communal killings. But their over-concern on any regional agitation based on demand for language, ethnicity, reallocation of areas on cultural-linguistic line lest that any favourable response to it would lead to disintegration, has subsequently proved to be misconceived. As we have seen, concession to such demands actually helped to accommodate and absorb the erstwhile secessionist forces:

The half-century old Jharkhand movement has never received any democratic response from the governments concerned. The split composition of the movement and absence of its polity enabled the authorities to take an apathetic attitude towards the demands. Not to speak of considering the demand for a separate state, the relevant demands for recognition of languages, inclusion of some ethnies in the reservation list, to forest rights, etc., were not taken into consideration. The movement continued, sometimes taking violent turn, without any political pay-off. This is not to suggest, however, that the factors behind the movement have disappeared and reasons of social unrest got assimilated in the unification process.

Consensus and Autonomy

The movement has been unique so far as its contribution to creation of language-script, development of culture are concerned. In course of the movement, the participant ethnies have become articulate and got transformed into pressure groups in democratic politics. Participation of different Jharkhand groups in elections despite opposition of the militants, open avowal to parliamentary path by some groups would confirm this. The broad streams also expose how the movement has been influenced by democratic politics. The involvement of the Sadans, and political groups both right and left, has transformed the movement from its emotional base to an intellectual one, as held by its theoreticians. But the fissures and split in the movement could not be reconditioned. The basis issues, viz. land and forest alienation, job and training deprivation due to the hold of outsiders, cultural submergence, and unbalanced development remain unresolved. But these have taken diversified forms in the demand charters of various factions. Alongwith the demands for recognition of different Jharkhandi languages in the Eighth Schedule of Indian Constitution, demands, ranging from more provisions for students' hostels, return of transferred lands to the Jharkhandis, for reintroduction of Parha-Majhi-Pargana system, etc., have been included. This has complicated the situation in the movement in place of spearheading it on specific issues. As such the movement itself lacks consistency due to geographical and cultural divisions spread over the four states. The discordant demands and lack of conformity in it have been counter-productive.

To make the identity aspirations and sense of indigenism more meaningful, the movement and its leadership have to arrive at a consensus on some demands and go ahead with it. The demand for a separate state, or autonomy in the form of a Council would cut the ice of starchy held by westernised Varna-Hindu elites only when the movement could mobilise to the extent of posing a threat to existing state-hierarchy. Otherwise, the logic of maintaining the nation-state and plea of disintegration, nation in danger, etc., may be held to justify state terrorism and ethnocide.

The concept of nation-state and overarchic state machinery was

alien to India. As held by Tagore, our society and state had independent autonomous existence and functioning "...the king waged wars, defended his territory and dispensed justice, but society attended to all else, from the supply of water to the supply of knowledge".¹ And this was done with unique fitness, floods of new sovereignty could neither destroy India's spiritual life nor break up the society. The problem started since we began sacrificing the rights to the altar of state.

That strength lies in a close unity and that largeness is the way to greatness do not seem to be the modern belief". When separateness, distinctness are realities and sincere aspirations exist for it against the dominating trends, attempt to wipe it out so as to secure the advantage of a larger unit would not work. Since "suppressed separateness is a terrible explosive force; sometime or other it would create a mighty upset by blowing up suddenly under pressure. The best way to union is to honour the separateness of what is really separate".²

The problem with Indian leaders has been their mechanical way of dealing with ethno-regional identities. The majority ethnic identity has often been equated with national identity,³ which the indigenous communities could hardly agree. As a reaction to the overarching nation state, these communities find it more convenient to adopt ethnic affiliation as a source of mobilisation. The homogenising political arrangement of nation state, having failed to accommodate ethno-cultural pluralities, resorts to terrorism as a response to ethnic assertions.

Ethnicity, subnationality, or ethnic nationalism, as one may term it, are mere expression against the excesses of modern nation state system involving repression and subjugation of the socio-cultural identities. In such a situation of excesses, concerned local groups, ethnies may aspire to turn itself into an assertive, if possible to acquire the status of majority community in a state of desperation. The sense of desperation in an oppressed mind has been evident in such expression as, "the Rulers and the Ruled speak different languages, look differently, go to different schools, everything is different for the poor. So they cannot be one even as a nation. This is the real two nation theory operating in Jharkhand".⁴ So, one tends to rationalise their state demand for being a nation by reinterpreting or redefining

the concept as a whole. "Is there any nation in Jharkhand? In Jharkhand state, with the adivasi nationalities there are Sadans, Kurmi-Mahato, etc. The resolution of their national problem would be made in a common format. The problems of these nationalities are identical, its development also is similar".⁵ So they are said to be historically formed a nation. Indeed, this adoption of Stalinist interpretation has been made by a Marxist faction of Jharkhand movement. But such ideologisation could catch the popular imagination though it rarely follows the real situation in the area. Similar subjective approach was also found in the Gorkhaland demand for recognition of their language and indigenous identification.

However, we should keep in view the qualitative differences between the aspirations of an oppressed community, backward ethnies, and the regional parochialism based on religion and language. The perceptual deprivation of religious, linguistic communities, often take the form of intolerant 'sons of the soil' or 'drive out the outsiders' movement. This is not to suggest that ethnicity and movement of ethnic aspirations do not take such anti-outsider stance. Basically, Jharkhand movement was initially based on such slogans, but it gradually transformed into a multi-community supported movement. However, the movement has failed to win even support of indigenous communities in all the states. To some extent this may be due to response variation and political textures of the states.

In Bihar, for instance, narrow mindedness and bias of the policy makers led to alienation and hatred among the people of Chotanagpur region. The unjust policies loaded with casteism have induced the non-tribal people to support the slogan of Jharkhand state. Whereas in W. Bengal, the movement has not been able to mobilise non-tribal communities in a big way. Assailing the economic backwardness, deprivation of tribal people, the Marxist parties laid stress on their economic upliftment. Through such strategy and providing concessions (e.g. recognition of Santali language, adivasis), they could precipitate division between the tribes and indigenous ethnies. Without rising a hue and cry about unity and fear of disintegration, the local outbursts should be accommodated through consensus and autonomy. There is no reason why the authorities and leadership should not adopt this approach, since we have seen that most

nativist, secessionist expressions were being accommodated. Why Jharkhand should stand as an exception?

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4. *Memorandum to the President of India*, p. 6, J.M.M. 1989.
5. J. Soren, *Jharkhand Party O' Andolanke Jante Hole*, p.13, Bankura, 1988.

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APPENDICES

1. *Join the Padayatra at Midnapore on demand for Jharkhand State and Implementation of Mandal Commission'*

Friends,

The people in Jharkhand area have launched the struggle for Jharkhand state since a long time. The central and state governments do not agree to such demands. They have branded the movement as secessionist.

Why we demand Jharkhand state? In India, different linguistic, ethnic groups co-exist, without self-autonomy no group could develop. So achievement of autonomy through state formation has been an agelong demand of the ethnic groups. In 1954, during state reorganisation many nationalities could acquire statehood and their demands, later many new states were formed. We, the Jharkhandis are distinct from the Bengalis, Biharis, Oriyas in language, culture. Yet, the Jharkhand area has been divided and made to stay within Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and M.P. Jharkhandis are outsiders in their own land.

Let us see the position in Jhargram sub division where 98% are Jharkhandis (*adivasi*, scheduled caste, Raju, Kumbhkar, etc). But who own the houses in Jhargram town? Who control the Jubilee market? And the majority jobs? In a nutshell, who dominate over the sub division? They happen to be minority outsiders—Banerjee, Mukherjee, Sengupta, Dasgupta, Bose, Mitra, who are not Jharkhandis. During the last 10 years of C.P.I.(M.) rule, the outsiders' domination has increased throughout the Jharkhand area. Anyone could see it in Bahragora, Chakulia, Ghatsila where even the post of peons are filled up by persons from Patna. Though our Jharkhandi people also go out for jobs, but what type of job? As a coolie in brickkiln, soil digger in underground railway, washer of utensils or

* Published by Naren Hansda on behalf of J.S.S. M.

a cook in *babus'* households.

To continue the exploitation and destroy their literature, culture, and loot the resources of the area, Indian rulers have divided the jobs in this way. The government is not eager to recognise languages as Santali, Mundari, Kurmali, etc. These have been taught upto the M.A. level in Ranchi University, but no such effort is taken in Calcutta or Vidyasagar University. Due to conspiracy of rulers, the very existence of Jharkhand languages, culture, lives, are at stake. So the demand for Jharkhand state is the democratic demand of its people. The *babus* of Calcutta, Patna resist it. Like the whites in South Africa ruling over the majority blacks with Apartheid, they also exploit, suppress and loot the Jharkhand people. Those who call us secessionist they are racists like the whites in South Africa.

Their attitude towards Mandal Commission is also similar. In 1979, the Janata Government appointed it under article 351 of the Indian constitution. Its purpose was to categorise the socially and economically backward communities and recommend for their upliftment. The Commission submitted its report in 1980. In its recommendation, the communities as Tili, Kumbhkar, Mahato, Sadgopa, Raju, Khandayet, Cap have been earmarked as backward (O.B.C.), and protection for them in education, employment, being recommended. Though many states in India have taken some measures, the W. Bengal government is not ready to accept the recommendations of Mandal Commission. They want to continue the present system of Brahmin-Kayasta-Vaishya domination in employment. We oppose this upper caste biased policy of W. Bengal government and demand the implementation of Mandal Commission.

To project the aspirations of 95% of this area's people, we would hold a march in Midnapore and Jhargram on the demands of : (1) formation of separate state of Jharkhand, (2) implementation of Mandal Commission's recommendations. A memorandum will be submitted to the S.D.O., Jhargram on 10 September, the *Padayatra* (march) will then start from Jhargram on 23 September to reach Midnapore on 25 September, on that day a memorandum will be submitted to District Magistrate.

We urge upon all of you to join in the *Padayatra*.

Jharkhand Samjukta
Sangharsh Morcha

2. *Chotanagpur Plateau Kurmi Yuva Mahasabha*

Memorandum

Submitted

to

The Secretary

Lok Sabha

Parliament House Annexe

New Delhi

Subject: Inclusion of the Kurmi (Mahato/Mahto/Mohanta) in the Scheduled tribe list of the Constitution, in the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled tribes Orders (Amendment) Bill 1978.

Submitted by

Chotanagpur Plateau Kurmi Yuba Mahasabha

8J, Naktala Road

Calcutta-47.

The Secretary,
Lok Sabha,
Parliament House Annexe,
New Delhi-110001.

Re: Inclusion of the Kurmi(Mahato/Mahto/Mohanta) in the Scheduled Tribe list of the Constitution, in the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes orders (Amendment) Bill, 1978.

Sir,

In response to the advertisement in *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, dt. 30th October, 1978, I, on behalf of Chotanagpur Plateau Kurmi Yuva Mahasabha, 8J, Naktala Road, Calcutta-47 hereby submit the following memorandum for the consideration of the joint committee on the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Bill.

Introduction—The Kurmis' (Mahatos) homeland consists of parts of Chotanagpur in Bihar and the adjoining regions of West Bengal and Orissa; its heart lies in the erstwhile Manbhum district. A well defined geographically homogenous territory bounded by the four rivers, namely Damodar, Kangswabati, Subarnarekha and Baitarini has been a part of Chotanagpur plateau, where the Mahatos

have co-existed with other tribal communities, namely the Santhals, Bhumij, Ho, Munda etc. Ethno-graphical accounts of Kurmis (Mahatos) have differed in description of their origin and migration but they emphasised on the close relationship that existed between Mahatos and other tribes.

Title and Population of the Kurmis

In West Bengal, the Mahatos are in the districts of Purulia, Bankura, Midnapore, Burdwan, Malda, Murshidabad, West Dinajpur. In Bihar the Kurmi (Mahatos) are in Dhanbad Ranchi, Singbhum, Hazaribad, Giridih, Palamau and in Santhal Pargana district. In Orissa, they are in the districts of Mayurbhanja, Keonjhire, Sundargarh, Bonai. In Assam the Kurmis are in Lakhimpur, Dibrugarh, Darang districts. The total population of the Kurmi Mahatos is above 50 lakhs.

From Manbhum, the Mahatos started migration along with other tribes as "indenture labour" to Assam tea gardens, in the year 1882 and from Manbhum they migrated to Mayurbhanja and Keonjhire for their existence and survival due to terrible famines of 1770-72, 1866, 1872-74 etc. For the reclamation of land they migrated to Sundarban areas, from former East Pakistan, Malda, Murshidabad, Nadia and Howrah, 24 Parganas.

The Kurmis (Mahatos) have got a single title Mahato in West Bengal. Mahato in Bihar, and Mohanta in Orissa, according to regional linguistic variations. In Assam they are known as Mahato and Kurmi.

Difference with Kurmis of North Bihar and Uttar Pradesh

(a) Most remarkable thing is that the Kurmis (Mahato, Mahto/ Mohanta) of Chotanagpur Plateau have got no sub-caste, no sub-division or even no sub-groups in the light of stratification. This oneness of the community totally differentiates it from the Kurmis of North Bihar and U.P. who are divided into sub-castes like Awadinha, Ghamalia, Joswar, etc.

(b) The U.P. and Bihar Kurmis have got titular *gotra*, but the Chotanagpur plateau Kurmis are Totemistic and their *gotras* (clan) are namely Hindoar, Ghilbinda, Kesria, Tiruar, Katiar, Ghanch Mundra, Hanstowar, Bag-Bonowar, Bansiriari, etc.

The Kurmi (Mahatos) Social Structure:

The Kurmi (Mahatos) social structure is similar to any general Indian tribes. A person is known as his totemistic *gotra* or clan according to its Bakhol where the Bhayad or lineage members used to reside. A few Bakhol comprise one Kulhi or So (Hamlet) and a few Hamlets form one gram or village. The other interactional social ties are regulated by matrimonial relation and these are known as Kultum or Bandhu (relatives). They practise *sangha* or widow marriage. So considering all these network of social relation in day-to-day activities, they developed a collective life, a collective world view and collective value, thereby forming Kurmi Jati or ethnicity.

Religious Festivals, Music and Dance

1. The Mahatos have got religious rituals and festivals just like the tribals, namely Tusu, Akhan Jatra, Bhadu, Karma, Jama, Jita, Sarul Ind and Chata Dassai and Bandana.

They have got commercial folk songs and folk dance. Apart from these songs and dance they have got marriage songs, Cho dance, Jhumur dance, etc. They worship their deities at Jaher Than or Gram Than and used to dance in Akhara.

Considering all these things, sociologically and anthropologically the Kurmis (Mahatos/Mahto/Mohanta) are tribal in custom, manner, and in world view.

Economically, socially, and educationally they are backward. Not a single Kurmi Mahato of this geo-political belt pay agriculture tax. None has got ownership of factory, or any other business. Socially they are known as Buno, in other parts they are locally known as Chotlog, Rarh and Chuar. In Orissa, they are even untouchable by the Oriya speaking tribes. At present, due to the pressure of Sanskritization, some peasants employ Brahmins, but general Kurmi-Mahato even refuse to take the food cooked by the Brahmins. Educationally they are so backward that:

(a) None of the Kurmis in West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa is in the Civil Services, both judicial and executive.

(b) None in the other State services except two in Engineering service and four in Medical services.

(c) None is in Higher Police Service.

(d) Very few Class III and Class IV grade service of the state of West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.

(e) None is I.A.S., I.P.S. or I.F.S.

The Kurmi (Mahato) has been treated as aboriginal tribe upto 1931. The family (Kurmi) is not governed by any School Law (A.I.R. 1932 Part 734). Notification No. 550 of May 1913 under section 332 of the Indian Succession Act which withdrew the Act with retrospective effect from among the other tribes, the tribal known as Kurmis.

So considering the available literature, we do not know why the Kurmis are descheduled from the tribal list in 1931. Still the Kurmis (Mahato/Mahanta) are tribal.

The sacred constitution envisages the establishment, at an early date, of a classless and casteless society from all kinds of exploitation. According to the provisions of articles, laid down for the total protection of the weaker section, the Kurmis must be protected.

So, we pray to all the honourable members of the Joint Committee on the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Bill 1978, to kindly include our Kurmi (Mahato/Mahto/Mohanta) community in the Scheduled Tribes list and for this act of kindness we shall be ever grateful.

With regards,

Yours Faithfully,
Sunil Kumar Mahato
President

(Chotanagpur Plateau Kurmi Yuva Mahasabha)

Printed and Published by Sujata Mahato from 8J, Naktala Road, Calcutta-49 and Printed at Loksevak Press, Calcutta.

3. *Jangal (Forest) is Ours*

Letter to the Editor, Aazkal, November 16, 1981.

Social forestation is necessary for the upliftment of Purulia's economy, to stop soil erosion and assure production of animal's food and fuel. But which forestation, is it by Eucalyptus and Akashmani, in place of Sal, Kul, Kendu, Mahua, Bamboo, Haritaki, Amlaki? I wonder how Mr. Singh and Mahato (who supported forestation by Eucalyptus in this column) know that villagers use the leaves of Eucalyptus

and Akashmani as fuel. The big trees are cut in size and sent to paper mills, thus the national-international capitalist clique bag their profit. I request them to visit any social forestation project in Hura, Arsa, Jhalda, Kashipur, or in the protected forest areas projects undertaken by Forest department (Panchet, Kangsabati, Soil Conservation, Ayodhya Forestation, etc.) They could see that wherever Eucalyptus and Akashmani have been implanted, there all grasses have withered away. Why? Soil scientists and chemical experts say, these trees absorb all the humidity of the upper layer of soil. As a result, not only grass, trees like Buan, Bherra also die in the areas.

So, those who support this move of eliminating the leaves of Sal, Kul, Kusum which are animal food, they prescribe for the villagers to purchase animal fodder from the city. Such a day is not far off in Purulia. Sal, Mahua, Kendu, Kusum, Neem, etc., trees are useful to forest-based population. Sal leaves, Sal twig as a tooth-brush, sal flower and fruit, Sal Gum, similarly Mahua flower and fruits, Kusum seed and flower, Kendu leaves used as Bidi-paper, Amlaki, Bhela, Haritaki, all these trees' utility has been denied. The city-based people speak for social forestation in its place. I doubt, whether these men know the district or willingly go for disrupting the village life.

Their data of ten years are ridiculous. They forget that men who hardly live from hand to mouth would be able to attend the seminar on social forestation held in Rabindra Bhawan. The yesmen of Forest Minister, Mr. P. Mitra, were present, but not the real peasants of the concerned villages, as Saharjuri or Danga Torang. I have come to know from the President, Bagmundi Panchayat Samiti that their Committee has resolved that forest lands in Bagmundi and Ayodhya areas should be protected for ten years, viz. 1979-89. He alleged that forest officials used to cut down valuable trees. Now auction are held through Panchayat Samity and Village Panchayat. The Pradhans (panchayat head) have organised auction in Arsa, Balarampur, Jhalda jungles. So far from being protected, the forests are destroyed by Panchayats.

The implantation of Eucalyptus replacing Sal, Kendu, etc., has been interpreted by Mr. Haripada Mahato, peasant leader of Bagmundi, as "this is done very carefully with a conspiratorial move. Destroying the adivasi and peasant economy Purulia is going to be made a depot of cheap labour." He said excepting some watchers and

III Class employees, all the posts, viz. Forester, Ranger, Overseer, Clerks, officers are outsiders. Many of them could make pucca buildings in Calcutta, Dum Dum, Birati, Jadavpur, Behala. Designating their sons as local men, they admit them into Medical-Engineering Colleges, Ramkrishna Mission, etc. Wherefrom they get such huge money to maintain? They are the leaders of Co-ordination Committee (A C.P.I.[M.] controlled union of state government employees), by employing 5 men they make it 50 in the master-roll (workers list) and they cheat the excess money by false finger tips. So they are vocal for social forestation. When the local people resist this corruption and conspiracy, they are branded as secessionists and the main issue is diverted. In this context, I request Mr. Mahato and Mr. Singh to go through "the West Bengal Forest Manual, Part-I p 32, No. 574 dt. 15.9.62 and amendments in pp. 72-73. It is said there about the areas transferred from Bihar, and provisions to be taken for protecting the root of Sal trees. Cutting down of jungles is interrelated to issuing permit, transit pass and other corruptions.

I beg to inform this to Mr. Singh and Mr. Mahato that including Mahatos all adivasi marriages' cover dress is made of Sal leaves and branches, Mahato girls are first married to Mahua trees, then to groom's mangoe tree. In Sarul festival, Santhal Munda Mahato girls wear sal flowers in their head. The sacred "garam than" (place of a god) is placed under the shadow of Sal. Many gods, goddesses as Chandiasore, Mahadana, Pakhini, Jakshini, Marang Burang Bara Pahar are placed under this tree. Could Eucalyptus or Akashmani tree provide the wood required for musical instruments like big Dhamsa, Dhak, Dhol? Moreover, in adivasi life hunting is a ceremonial game. After hunting in Disum Mendarer in Ayodhya mountain they assemble for *Jouban Mela* (youth festival). The Jharkhand saying goes, "the man who has not gone for hunting in Ayodhya mountain, he is still in mother's womb." That means, to have excitation of youth, sing its songs adivasis have to go for hunting in the jungle. Even the flute played by adivasis are made of bamboo. I would ask Mr. Mahato and Mr. Singh, is social forestation for us? To eliminate our tradition and culture, jungles have been destroyed. Let them go and see how thousands of Sal wood, Piyasal are being sent to Cuttuck and Calcutta from Belpahari, Gidni, Baro, Ayodhya—marketplace (*hat*). So before using high sounding words as social

forestation, fuel, saving soil erosion, etc., let them know the land and its legendary heroes like Birsa Munda, Sidhu, Kanu, who said, "this is our land. Our jungle".

P.P. Mahato

4. *Steering Committee on Ol Chiki*

Ranchi, November 7, 1982.

The committee formed at the instruction of the Vice-Chancellor of Ranchi University, Ranchi, met under the chairmanship of Rev. P. Ponette for the first time in the Department of Tribal and Regional Languages, Ranchi University, to discuss the line of action regarding the proposal on part of the proponents of the Ol Chiki script, a script invented by Late Pt. Raghunath Murmu to be adopted for education and instruction in the tribal areas of the country, specially in the Austric languages area. Representatives of writers writing in the tribal languages and a few members representing the University were invited to give their views. Speaking on behalf of the proponents of Ol Chiki, Mr. Kushal Baskey, President, Adivasi Socio-Educational and Cultural Association, West Bengal, expressed a need for a script that the tribal people of the country can identify with, and a script that would reflect the true nature of the tribal languages, particularly the Austric group of languages in the country. He said Ol Chiki can be very conveniently used to fulfil the need.

Following him Mr. Murmu, Chairman, Educational Board, West Bengal, Mr. Nityanand Hemram, Civil Engineer, West Bengal, and Mr. Harihar Hansda, Ranchi University explained the nature of the Ol Chiki script itself. They told how the symbols originated and how they represented the different sounds employed in the Austric languages of the country. Drawing examples from the Santali languages they said that Ol Chiki was more suited to write these languages than any other script. The last member speaking on behalf of the proponents of the script, Mr. Sundar Mohan Soren, a former M.P. from Orissa, told the audience that the script has already been given recognition by the State Government of West Bengal. He also explained how the script is easier and more accurate than any other script.

The discussion that followed was largely based on the statement

by these speakers. For most of the participants the script was new although they had all heard about its existence. Therefore, they all wanted time to look into the script closely and then decide whether they want to go along with the idea of adoption of the script in their respective languages. As an observer, Dr. Ram Dayal Munda of the Department of Tribal and Regional Languages, Ranchi Univeristy, presented a structural analysis of the script, and pointed out the merits and demerits of the proposed writing system. He suggested that its demerits, which are mostly organisational, should be removed before proposing it for a wider usage. As the Chariman of the meeting, Rev. P. Ponette reminded the audience that a script is not the most essential criteria of identity. Countries of Europe, he said, use only one script yet they have maintained their distinct identities. Therefore we should look into other avenues of establishing and asserting tribal identity as well. In the meantime, he suggested, we should weigh the pros and cons of the proposed script before deciding anything. The meeting ended with this general consensus.

Ram Dayal Munda
Chairman

5. *March on to Ranchi*

Jai Jharkhand
Jai Hind

Inquilab Zindabad
Chatra Ekta Zindabad

(Massive Rally before Vice-Chancellor of Ranchi University on 6th October (Wednesday) 1982 in support of "Ol Chiki" (Script of Tribals) to get recognition by the Government for it as a state language)

Comrades,

Even after 35 years of Independence, the language of "bonded" tribals is not protected/secured by the Government. Besides the FR, all other castes of India have autonomy of language and education. Today you compare the tribals with Punjabi, Bengali, Oriya, and Tamil. Whether they possess all those facilities which are available to their counterparts? No.

The Constitution of India bestowed the right of self-determination to all its nationalities. The Government has made languages like

Bengali, Oriya, Tamil as the medium of primary education as well as higher education and medium of official works. But it is shameful on the part of government that it has given partial treatment to its first son of the soil (the Adivasis) and has deprived them of their fundamental rights. The government has completely ignored the Article 29 of the Constitution in this respect. Does it not require a historian's mind to provide it? It is clear that the government has not done anything for the development of the tribals rather using them as scapegoats. In the absence of plausible script, the ancient as well as modern history and literature of the tribals could not be protected in the records and are being eclipsed. Neither their language is the medium of primary education nor is official language of the region. Under the circumstances, the intellectual community cannot grow among the adivasis which exist among the other castes. The tribals are being exploited by other dominant languages. Instead of studying in their mother tongue they are being forced to study in Bengali, Oriya and Hindi, etc.

In the absence of the script in their languages, the tribals are being deprived of written literature, and journals, history of their ancestors, story of their sacrifices in the freedom struggle. Thus they have become underdeveloped and backward in the world.

Under the prevailing circumstances, the tribals will have to unite and to adopt the path of mass struggle and protests. So, Comrades, come, let us join hands to make the massive demonstration a roaring success. A meeting shall be held after this demonstration in the premises of Ranchi University which shall be presided over by the Chief Guest, Shri Ram Dayal Munda, Regional Languages Department, Ranchi University and Shri Surya Singh Besra, General Secretary, Ghatshila, Mahavidalaya will be the chief speaker.

Our Demands :

1. Recognition of "Ol Chiki" script in Bihar.
2. Jharkhand languages be treated as medium of education.
3. Jharkhandis be given primary education in "Ol Chiki".

Incharge Reception

Sh. Poloos Kunjjar (Gen. Secy.)
 Chottanagpur, Santhal Pargana
 Sangharsh Vahini.
Organizers

1. Dhalbhum Yuva Chatra Sangh
2. Singhbhum Chatra Sangha
3. Krantikari Yuva Chatra, Mukti Morcha
4. Chottanagpur-Santhal Pargana Yuva Chatra Mukti Sangh
5. Adivasi Student Fellowship

Programme :

1. Rally will start from Raja Bengal Maidan at 10.00 a.m.
2. Demonstration before Vice-Chancellor at 11.00 a.m.

Published from Ghatsila

6. *Jharkhand Movement*

Ananda Bazar Patrika, 4-6 April, 1981.

We never say for seceding from India. We demand a separate Jharkhand state as a province in India. We do not fight for freedom like Nagas or Mizos, we are fighting for autonomy. Just as Kerala became separate from Tamilnadu, Haryana from Punjab, similarly we like to be separate from Orissa, M.P., Bihar and West Bengal. This was declared by Jharkhand Party leader N.E. Horo in a meeting at Jhargram on 29 March, 1981. It was a public meeting after the annual conference of the party. Amidst the sound of Maadol, Dhamsa, Singa, processions of Santhals, Bhumij, Oraon, Mahato merged into the meeting holding up the green flag of the party and map of Jharkhand. What is Jharkhand? It is the proposed separate state composed of 16 adivasi populated districts of Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Bihar, West Bengal, Jharkhandis are those having the same legacy, tradition and culture, try to uplift the economy and life of the people. Her anthropological background is old, long before the Aryans settling in Western India, in Jharkhand land, communitarian civilisation of the Nishad, Kirat Sabar, Dravidas developed. Not only in Hindu era, during the Mughal period too, the inherent unity, geo-cultural identity of this society were in tact. But British rulers, in collaboration with the Zamindars and Mahajans destroyed this society. Zamindari-Rayat system was established, subsequently began the looting of natural resources of this land. Adivasis revolted again and again to get over from the torture of being outsider in their own land. In recent meetings and speeches of party leaders this cry has become prominent. Mr. Horo said, it was expected from the so-

called progressives that they would sympathise with the crores Jharkhandis. In North-East India, CPI(M.) has been active in promoting Bengali Provincialism. The Tripura tribals have become angry not without reasons, what did they do in Assam? Jharkhandees anger is aimed at C.P.I.(M), the main party of State Government. As many of the Bengalis belong to this party, to them Bengalis and C.P.I.(M.) become identical.

Manoranjan Mahato, a Jharkhand leader alleged, whenever there is meeting of Jharkhand, programme of "food for work" is held so that people get busy in day's work and fail to attend our meeting. With the end of meeting the programme is stopped. In case of *barga* operation also, *bargas* have been installed in small peasants' land belonging to our party. Whereas, the big *jotedars* remain free from *barga* by giving donations to party fund. They make the labourers work in old wage, though propagate about the new rate of Rs. 8.20. Adivasi peasants say, the provision for abolition of land revenue upto 18 Bighas would not benefit them. The Jharkhand lands are mono crop area and production is less.

Jharkhandis want their drama, recitation, folk poems to be given place in local competitions held by government. But in education administration, non-Jharkhandis held sway. So to Jharkhandees the non-Jharkhandis - C.P.I.(M) = Bengalis. A leaflet circulated during Jharkhand meeting proclaims. Jharkhandis have been enslaved by Bengalis through conspiracy. On one side, outsiders have settled in Jharkhand areas, whereas local people have to go out in search of work in Burdwan, Hooghly, etc., districts throughout the year.

Their grievance against M.L.A. Sudhansu Majhi and Minister Sambhu Mandi is that instead of projecting their issues in the Assembly they have condemned the movement. On their advice special police and administration have been employed to suppress the movement. Mr. Horo said, realising this the Jharkhandi youths tend to follow Tripura and Assam way. We have restrained them. We want the mineral resources of Jharkhand to be enjoyed by the whole country and Jharkhand remain a state in India. Only we demand recognition as a separate state and nation. Government did not listen to our demand. Police repression has set in. We believe in non-violence. But we cannot guarantee that future generation would remain peaceful against government violence.

On 31 March, in a meeting at Purulia Court compound, A.K. Roy, leader of J.M.M. said, not only separate state. We want our land to be free, we will establish an ideal society in Jharkhand free from exploitation. So we have formed Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (Liberation Front) inspite of Jharkhand Party's existence. He replied to propaganda against them saying, if we were communal, we would not have allied with Sibusoren, Benode Mahato, etc., who belong to other community. Well, we are secessionist in the sense that we like to secede from those who practice Babuism in the name of Marxism. We have united here to snatch away red flag from these pseudo-leftists.

Though strong in mass support, J.M.M. has got no office in Purulia town. On the eve of this meeting Police vigilance was extensive, the whole town appeared like a police barrack. The Bangali local men who have resided here for generations, held this measure as obnoxious. According to them, it was unwarranted, would only incite tension. Jharkhandis are not going to execute revolution now. The local Bengalis attended the meeting, they said, we have not heard of such slogan as 'blood of Bengalis' which has been propagated. We got it from Calcutta Newspapers only. There's no antagonism here in this city, they said.

Besides A.K. Roy, leaders as Sibusoren, Benode Mahato, Parbati Mahato attended the meeting. They spoke on social, cultural and geo-physical identity of Jharkhand. During British rule, only three provinces existed in India, now it is 22. The reasons on which 22 states have been formed why it should not be applied in case of Jharkhand? they enquired. The strongest grievance of Jharkhandis is against the negligence of four State governments and Central government towards the area. The limited pockets which have been industrialised to utilise the vast resources of the area did have a negative effect. As for example, the revenues collected by Bihar government from seven districts of Jharkhand compose 70% of total state revenues. But little is spent for the development of these districts. In industrialisation also, the agriculture's surplus and local unused labour have not been taken, outsiders have been employed. Local youths or Jharkhand workers are minority among industrial workers, they depend on local manual works. So when they complain about city-oriented developments, one could hardly deny. The

agriculture remains neglected for ever. Due to stoney soil and lack of fertiliser, cultivation is to be suspended every 2-3 years for increasing fertility. Whenever Settlement employees find such vacant land of the adivasis, they mark it as vested official land. Thus landlessness increase. The requisitioning of lands for setting up of reservoirs and industries, made many men landless. Few got compensation, fewer got job. The villagers are dependent on trees and animals for their living, as a result of government's policy of forest reservation and requisition of it have deprived them of their traditional occupations. Although, government employed Thikadars use to cut trees and sell woods, export skin and bone of Jungle animals to make huge profits.

Except in Palamau, in the Jharkhand areas due to existence of intermediary peasant economy among adivasis, rural class struggle on land did not grow. The scope of wage rise movement remained limited too. Rather the exploited adivasis' grievance and grudge took shape against Forest department, Block level administration and local state apparatus.

Social repression has ignited the fire of Jharkhand agitation. Generally, the settled outsiders look down upon them. Though they have introduced prostitution, here which was unknown in adivasi women, keep them as hirelings or sell them in other provinces. In open daylight adivasi women have been molested, in thana lock ups they are molested.

The Morcha leaders held, with Left front coming to power they expected a new history to be written, exploitation would be done away with. But they oppose our movement most. "We did not want to make them target. We are not fools to demand separate State from a State government, only Centre could grant this, not State. Unfortunately the front government has offered their head on the issue and employed all force to combat us." Do the foreign missioneries finance the movement? The Jharkhand leaders unitedly protested, they asked, could any foreign agency service in this state without support and sympathy of the State government? Missionaries infiltration is not sudden, for last 200 years British got into the jungles of Chotanagpur with Bible in one hand and bayonet in the other. When Bible failed, bayonet was charged. They opened schools, food kitchens. The hero of Munda revolt Birsa was also educated in such

a school. Should the Marxists say that Birsa revolted with the backing of Missionary money?

With the enthusiasm of Jharkhand uprising, a popular symbolic tale is passing through lips. There is one type of scorpion, *Dudhbora* in Jharkhand. In the darkness of night, as the infant baby's mother goes to sleep, the snake appears to suck in milk from mother's breast and put in its tail into baby's mouth. Mother and baby both think that baby was sucking milk from mother's breast. The baby gets sick day by day. No doctor could diagnose the disease. But the adivasi Ojha could easily detect the case on seeing the baby's tongue. According to the adivasis, the coal, manganese, lac, nickel, brass, iron ore and gold mines belong to their land. Her three crores children are getting sick day by day. Jharkhand is that adivasi Ojha who could detect the origin of the disease, the *Dudhbora* snake. To break the spine of that snake they now organise to collect sticks.

7. *Purulia—No Difference between Two Parties*

Ananda Bazar Patrika, June 7, 1982

The poems composed by illiterate natural poet Kritwivas Karmakar are now passing on lips in Bhaduria song. Fifteen days have passed after election, as the tension of election subsides, the chronic problem of Purulia, i.e. drought, has come to the fore. And with it acute poverty. From morning on, Santhals, bauries, doms assemble in Purulia town to seek for the day's work. They have no work for the last few months. A large section of adivasis has gone to nearby districts to work as hired labourers. The song popularised is:

*Amader Purulia Zilla
Sabai Kare abohela
Voter taro kato je bhulai re,
Sabe balle, "Vote Chai"
Sakal kichu babbe Bhai
Voter pare kuthao kichu nai.*

Our district Purulia, everybody neglects it, for vote's sake so many false promises are given to win over us. Everyone says, we want your vote, everything will be done, after vote, nothing is there.

Throughout the district, especially Santurian, Neturia, Para, Raghunathpur, Bandoan, and No. 2 Block of Manbazar, all types of land is dry. 40% of the district population has to subsist on grass seeds, boiled pulse seeds and other wastes. Cultivation would start from the beginning of rainy season, until then no work would be available. The whole district's cultivation depends on rain. The local rivers, viz. Darakeswar, Kansabati remain dry like a field. The landless labourers could get work in land only for four months in a year. For the rest their days of living co-exist with starvation and frustration. They ply to adjacent places of Hooghly, Burdwan district or to Bihar. They would come back in the middle of June.

Utilising this drought and poverty, a bad type of policy is active, vote was secured by distributing wheat, cloths and *haria* (local wine). In ten booths (voting centres) of Arsa, Baghmundi area, on the last night before vote, *atap* rice, wheat and *haria* were given in the name of relief. In *anchal* Narra, Hurra, the C.P.I.(M.) Panchayat Pradhan took lead in distributing rice and cash money on 16 May, it has been alleged by local people. During April-May of this year, so far Rs. 3.5 million have been spent on development works. Whereas in the last one year total amount spent was Rs. 2.9 million. This account is given by the Secretary of Zilla Parishad, Mr. Kamal Roy Chowdhury.

Why this abnormal increase in relief just on the eve of election? In reply, district authorities say—to fight out drought. But an elderly villager in Ayodhya mountain's adjacent village Baghmundi, says, "the C.P.I.(M.) babus have given us paddy-cloths, I told them that I could vote for them". A young adivasi of Hura said, not that relief reached to all, in it also they discriminated.' Same is the version of people in Jhalda, Raghunathpur, Manbazar. In this slack season, when a large number of people go outside for work, polling of 70% of vote is quite unnatural. How could it be? The opposition allege about rigging. This reporter asked the area president of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha that before the vote, it was felt that Morcha's chances were fare, why this reverse? He said, we have been defeated by the money-car strength of C.P.I.(M.). Though we have gained much in favour of demand for separate state, he held. He also alleged about purchasing of votes through reliefs.

Simon village of Jaipur is mainly populated by lapers. They also did cast their votes. Their village head Sankar Hembram said, for the

last two years G.R. was stopped (Gratuitory Relief). Suddenly, on the eve of vote relief was given. Their experience has been of the two parties, Congress and C.P.I.(M), there is no difference. In many villages, e.g., Ketaki, there is only a single pond, in summer even a pot is not sunk in water, such is the drought. In Purulia's area of 6259 sq. miles, average rainfall is low in comparison with nearby districts. No industry has been set up, though natural resources are there. Kendupata is exported to Orissa, Calcutta. Santaldih's electricity has not reached a single village in Purulia. After so many years of independence, the district remains a monocrop area due to lack of irrigation. No tubewell has been installed. A major section of district people feel deprived. They say, nothing was done during Congress regime, so also during C.P.I.(M.) rule. So Jharkhand's demand get popular, vocal in such songs as one by Sunil Mahato:

Bangal bale tui choto
Bihar bale dur hato
Bihari Bhai Bangali Bhai
Santhaldih Bidyut Karkhana
Jato refugeer anagona
Megher opar tar tana
Tata-Kolkattai Pankha challe,
Purulia ki jhap dibek jole.

[Bengal says you are lowly, Bihar says get away. Bihari and Bengali brothers,in Santaldih power plant, outsiders are seen everywhere. The wire stretches over the sky, the electric fan revolves in Tata and Calcutta. Should Purulia jump into water?]

8. Memorandum Submitted
to The Honourable Chief Minister of West Bengal
On behalf of
The Jharkhand Co-ordination Committee
On the occasion of
The Mass Rally at Calcutta on the 31st January, 1989
Demanding
 1. Co-operation in the formation of Jharkhand State under the provisions of the Indian Constitution.
 2. Starting teaching of the tribal and regional languages like

Santali, Mundari, Kurukh, Kurmali, Nagpuri, etc., in the concerned schools, colleges and university departments of West Bengal.

Respected Sir,

We believe that you know the historical identity and the present critical situation of the Jharkhand people better than any other Statesman in our country. It is a fact that due to heavy influx of Finance Capital in the minerally rich Jharkhand region gigantic industries of all sorts are coming up with rapid speed. Big dams and mining projects, too, are devastating our sylvan ecology and displacing our people in large scale making them destitutes. The rate of immigration and colonisation is going up day by day unabatedly. On the other hand our people are being forced to migrate to other areas to earn their daily bread. All the big industries in private sector, white collar jobs, bigger trades and business and other resources of livelihood are going in the hands of non-Jharkhandis while the tribal and indigenous people of the region are becoming slaves in their own home. Even the 3rd and 4th grade jobs are being grabbed by the non-Jharkhandis. Their language, literature, traditional arts and crafts and other tenets of cultural values are facing extinction in every walk of life. Jharkhandi people are being exploited politically, socially, economically and culturally. It is a pity that the Jharkhandi people, inspite of their glorious past, are the worst sufferers of all sorts of torture and oppression in the independent India. Jharkhand region is the "Ruhr Valley", the industrial backbone of India, yet its inhabitants are lacking the basic infrastructure of their development. In the name of their development the intermediaries, bureaucrats, contractors and mafia groups are flourishing. The whole sylvan cultural ethos of Jharkhand has become vitiated.

It is for this reason every man and woman, whether tribe or non-tribe (Sadan) residing in the Jharkhand region is very much restless to end this state of affairs. They are struggling for their enancipation from national oppression. And it is evident that without political power or autonomy in the form of State under Indian Constitution at present, step towards the direction of emancipation is rather impossible.

The Jharkhand Co-ordination Committee (JCC) holds that the Jharkhand question is not a Development Question, nor is it a demand of the Santals or adivasis alone, it is rather a Nationality Question in essence, a genuine demand of all the people residing in Jharkhand area, which in the present situation cannot be solved without achieving autonomy in the form of a State as provided in the Indian Constitution (Article 2 and 3).

The JCC is looking into the Jharkhand problem in a much bigger way. Its future lies in Federal India at large. Moreover, at present it aims at the "reconstruction" of the Jharkhand identity in all its aspects—political, social, economic and cultural. Hence the Jharkhand movement led by the JCC is not only a political movement, rather it is reconstruction movement which has its social, economic, linguistic, cultural and intellectual dimensions.

The Jharkhand culture is the product of historical synthesis of Austric, Dravidian and Aryan cultures—the three great cultures which have immensely contributed in coming to-days India. As it stands to-day the Jharkhandi identity and culture are facing disintegration and extinction. Protection of the Jharkhandi identity and culture will be a great step towards protecting India's diverse cultural heritage.

In such a critical situation we have to come to you to seek your help and co-operation regarding the following demands:

1. Form the Jharkhand State with 21 districts (Midnapur, Bankura and Purulia from West Bengal; Maurbhanj, Keonjhar, Sambalpur and Sundargarh from Orissa; Raigarh and Sarguja from Madhya Pradesh; and Chotanagpur and Santal Parganas divisions of Bihar).
2. (i) Open departments in the Universities of West Bengal for teaching and research in tribal and regional languages like Santhali, Mundari, Kurmali, Kurukh, Ho and Nagpuri etc.
- (ii) Make arrangements for teaching of tribal and regional languages in colleges and schools in those institutions where the particular linguistic groups exceed 10% of the student strength.
- (iii) Conduct government business in tribal and regional languages in those parts where these languages are spoken.

We hope that your government will extend its support to the first demand and take immediate steps to fulfil the second demand which is within the jurisdiction of the State government.

With regards,

Dated
Calcutta the 31st Jan' 89.

Sincerely yours,
1. (Ramdayal Munda)
2. (N.E. Horo)
3. (Binode Bihari Mahato)
4. (Naren Hansda)
5. (Santosh Rana)

9. *Case for a Jharkhand State*

Statesman, February 8, 1989

Sir, —The report, "Jharkhandis not to get State: Basu" (February 3-4), quotes the West Bengal Chief Minister as claiming that "Jharkhandis constitute four per cent of the population in Midnapore, eight per cent in Bankura and 17 per cent in Purulia". Perhaps he thinks only of the Scheduled Tribes as Jharkhandis, a misconception that is shared by the Union Government. But the Kurmi-Mahatos of the Jharkhand region number almost seven million and have their own culture and their own Kurmali-Khotta language.

This is also so with other Sadan communities which are not among the Scheduled Tribes, though many of them were treated as such till 1931. If the Scheduled Tribes and these communities are taken together as Jharkhandis, they constitute more than 90 per cent of the population in West Midnapore, an overwhelming majority in Bankura, and nearly 100 per cent in Purulia. A similar situation exists in some districts of Bihar, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh. A Jharkhand State is demanded on the basis of a Jharkhandi identity, not as a State for the Scheduled Tribes. Today, there is large-scale participation of Mahatos and other Sadan communities in the Jharkhand movement.

Mr. Basu's assertion that the "State Government has already introduced teaching of 'Alchiki' language exposes his ignorance. 'Alchiki' is not a language but a script developed by Pandit Raghunath Murmu, and used by a section of Santhals and Mundas for writing Santhali and Mundari, respectively. Not a single school in West

Bengal uses Santhali or Mundari as the medium of instruction. They are not taught even at the secondary level. Mr. Basu insults tribals by asking if the medical and engineering sciences can be taught through 'Alchiki'. Every Marxist knows that any language spoken by the people can be developed with State support. The C.P.I.(M.) once covered all the walls in West Bengal with the slogan. "Mother-tongue is mother's milk in education. (*Sikshaye Matribhasa-i Matridaughdha*)' Where has it gone now?"

Lenin stood firmly for equality of all languages. He was opposed to the idea of accepting even Russian as the national language of the Soviet Union, because that would mean suppression of other linguistic groups. It is a pity that Mr. Basu, ostensibly a Marxist, rejects the Jharkhandis' demand for equality. — Yours, etc. Santosh Rana (Communist Party of India-Marxist-Leninist).

Calcutta, February 3.

10. The Resolutions of Adibasi Kudmi Conference, 1987
at Junjhka, P.S. Arsha
Dist. Purulia, West Bengal on 27th December, 1987

The Conference of Adibasi Kudmi Samaj held on 27th December, 1987 at Junjhka, P.S. Arsha, dist. Purulia, West Bengal under the Presidentship of Shri Thakur Das Mahato (I.A.S. Retd.). Shri Ram Ratan Ram, M.P., Chairman Parliamentary Committee on Welfare of Scheduled castes & Scheduled tribes and General Secretary, Congress (I) was the guest-in-chief in the conference.

Dr. Nirmal Minz, Ex-Principal, Gossener College, Ranchi, Sri Shibu Soren President Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, Sri Sailendra Mahato General Secretary Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, Sri Monoranjan Mahato Secretary West Bengal Unit All India Jharkhand Party, Sri Ram Tahal Chowdhury Ex M.L.A. and Pramukh Ormanjhi Block, Ranchi, Sri Dhananjay Mahato Chairman Adityapur Industrial Development Authority Jamshedpur, Sri Keshav Mahato 'Kamalesh' M.L.A., Bihar, Sri Angad Mahato Advocate Ranchi, Pashupati Prasad Mahato, Anthropologist, Calcutta, Sri Padmalochan Mahanta Mayurbhanj Orissa, and many other distinguished guests addressed the Conference and supported the demand for re-inclusion of the aboriginal Kudmi Mahatos of the two Chhotanagpur Divisions and

Santhal Pargana Division in Bihar, Purulia, Bankura, and Midnapur Districts in West Bengal and Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar and Sundargarh Districts in Orissa in the list of scheduled tribes and recognition of Kudmali language as regional and tribal language.

There were near about one lakh aboriginal Kudmi people present in the conference.

Sri Keshav Chandra Mahato, General Secretary Adibasi Kudmi Samaj, placed the resolutions in the conference.

Sri Prafulla Kumar Mahato, General Secretary, Aboriginal Kudmi Panch, read out the resolutions before the conference and appealed to consider the resolutions.

The conference unanimously passed the following resolutions:

Resolution No. 1

“This conference of the Adibasi Kudmi Samaj unanimously resolved that the Aboriginal Kudmi (Mahatos) community of the two Chhotanagpur Divisions and Santhal Paragana Division in Bihar and Districts of Purulia, Bankura, Midnapur and other areas within the state of West Bengal and districts of Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Sundargarh and other areas within the state of Orissa which had been included in the tribal list before 1931 and which has now been included in Annexure 1 (One) of the Backward classes list in the state of Bihar is a Tribal community and accordingly the conference requests the Government of India to take immediate legal and consitutional steps for re-inclusion of the aforesaid Aboriginal Kudmi community of these areas in the list of scheduled tribes in accordance with the provisions of Article 342 of the Constitution of India.”

This conference also resolved that a delegation be sent to the appropriate authority in furtherance of the resolution.

Resolution No. 2

“Further this conference also unanimously resolved that the Kudmali language be recognised as a regional and tribal language in Bihar, West Bengal and Orissa.”

The conference request the concerned governments of West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa to take necessary steps for its teaching in all

Educational Institutions with immediate effect like Ranchi University where teaching in Kudmali language from intermediate to Master degree has been already introduced.

Sri Ram Ratan Ram, M.P., Chairman Parliamentary Committee on Welfare of Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes and General Secretary, Indian National Congress (I), in his concluding speech as chief guest in the conference realised the genuineness and the gravity of the demand which came out as resolutions in the conference and he assured to fulfil the demands in a legal and constitutional way at the earliest possible.

(Thakur Das Mahato)

President

Adibasi Kudmi Conference, 1987

11. Memorandum

for the

“Formation of Jharkhand State” within the Union of India comprising the two divisions of Chotanagpur, i.e. the districts of Ranchi, Gumla, Lohardaga, Palamau, Singhbhum, Giridih, Hazaribagh, Dhanbad and Santhal Pargana division with Deoghar, Godda, Sahebganj and Dumka districts in Bihar, Purulia, Bankura, Midnapur districts of West Bengal, Maurbhanj Keonjhar, Sundergarh and Sambalpur districts of Orissa, Raigarh and Surgunja district of Madhya Pradesh, under the Provision of article 3 Clauses (a) of the Constitution of India.

To

The Hon'ble President of India
Rashtrapati Bhawan
New Delhi

Through

The Hon'ble Home Minister
Government of India
New Delhi

Submitted by

Jharkhand Mukti Morcha
Central Committee Office
Bariyatu Road
Ranchi-834008

The 11th Day of August 1989

Hon'ble Sir,

The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha Central Committee most respectfully submits this Memorandum to the Hon'ble President of India through your kind Honour demanding for the formation of "Jharkhand State" within the Union of India comprising the divisions of Chotanagpur, i.e., the district of Ranchi, Gumla, Lohardaga Palamu, Singhbhum, Hazaribagh, Godda, Sahebganj and Dumka and Santhal Pargana division with Deoghar, Godda, Sahebganj and Dumka districts in Bihar, Purulia, Bankura, Midnapur districts in West Bengal, Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Sundargarh and Sambalpur districts in Orissa, Raigarh and Surguja districts of Madhya Pradesh, under the Provision of Article 3 and Clause (a) of the Constitution of India.

"Jharkhand"

Jharkhand is a picturesque area with hills and forest and this area is known geographically as Chhotanagpur plateau. Its geographical conditions, economy, cultural tradition, social structure is free from exploitation, its simplicity and its historical tradition to revolt against all types of atrocities is present even to-day in every field of its life.

Formation of Jharkhand state within the Indian Union is demanded by including 21 districts of Chhotanagpur-Santhalpargana, 12 districts of Bihar, Midnapur, Purulia and Bankura of West Bengal, Keonjhar, Maurbhanj, Sambalpur and Sundargarh districts of Orissa, Surguja and Raigarh of Madhya Pradesh in it. The area of Jharkhand is 1,87,646 square kilometer. Its present population is about 4 crores.

India is a multi-community nation made of many sub-nationalities. Jharkhandis are a sub-nationality like Bengali, Punjabi, Tamil, Bihari, Gujar, Oriya, etc., and they are a part of the Indian Nationality. Sub-nationality does not signify any caste, race, etc., rather a historical, cultural identity of certain communities. As sovereignty is a basic condition for the independence of the nationality of any country, similarly autonomy is necessary for the sub-nationalities. Autonomy is given in India in the form of statehood.

Autonomy means the right of the people of any region to develop themselves. Jharkhand area is divided and placed in the states of Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh and thus it has been

made the colonies of those states.

Like the other sub-nationalities of India, the Jharkhandi nationality also wants to develop its language, culture, civilization, etc., and social justice and dignity, so that it may not have to remain as the slave of other sub-nationalities. The ruling classes of the country have crushed its social system and plundered every thing. The capitalist and their government have made the immense mineral and other natural resources of Jharkhand, i.e., their means of prosperity for their own interest depriving the Jharkhandis. The Jharkhandi people are victims of double exploitation—on one side the sub-national exploitation and on the other side class exploitation. The struggle of Jharkhand is against both these exploitations. This is the question of liberation of the people of Jharkhand.

Thus, the foremost cause of the oppression of the Jharkhandi people is depriving it from the “right of autonomy”, whereas the right of autonomy is the essential condition for freedom of any sub-nationality from its feeling of inferiority and joining it with the national mainstream.

The People of Jharkhand

The number of population in Jharkhand is about 4 crores, out of them 1 crore 30 lakhs belongs to tribals, 65 lakhs Harijans, 70 lakhs Kudmis, 75 lakhs other Backward communities are living peacefully. The total percentages of S.C. & S.T. constitute about 47% which is definitely much bigger than the National Average of 22%. The Santhal, Munda, Oraon, Ho, Kharia, Bhumij, Mahali, Tamaria, Dudha, Birhor, Turi, Pan, Bhuya, Dhobi, Doin, Dusad, Muchi, Routia, Kuir, Kudmi (Mahato), Kumar, Kamar, Kohar, Konkali, Kalbar, Keshra, Munibar, Sonar, Teli, Napit, Gogi, Gangu, Kalindi, Lohara, Asur, Mandal, Pharia, Chunia, Gour, Rajwar, Momins, Ghashi, Patikar, Pattra, Khandwal, Mudi, Bastam, Baniya, Bauri, Tamil, Baiga, Banjara, Bedia, Karmali, Chero, Chikbarik, Gond, Gorait, Birjia, Bathudi, Chaupal, Bhogta, Pasi, Bantar, Hari, Musahar, Lalbegi, Nat, Knond, Kisan, Kora, Malpaharia, Souripaharia, Swar etc., constitute the Jharkhandi Identity. The Jainis (Sarakh Majee), Buddhist, Christian, Muslim, Momins, Sikhs and Brahmins are living side by side peacefully and maintaining communal harmony

and there is no any instances in the historical passed of any communal disturbances.

Santhal, Munda, Kharia, Bhumij, Kharwar, Mahali, Ho, are Austro-Asian or Austric family, while the Oraon, Kudmi, Gour belong to Dravidian family, who have migrated from Indus Valley Civilization and Maharashtra to Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh in the remote past.

The Kudmis were with the Scheduled Tribe list till 1931, vide Notification No.550, 2nd May, 1913 of Home Deptt., Government of India. The Kudmis submitted a Memorandum to the Home Minister, Government of India through Sri Ram Ratan Tam, M.P., Ex-General Secretary, Congress (I) in their conference at Jhunjka, P.S. Arsa, dist. Purulia, West Bengal. The conference of the Kudmis was hold on 27th December, 1987. More than one lakh Kudmis attended the conference which was presided over by Sri Thakur Das Mahato, Retd. I.A.S. and the conference unanimously resolved for re-inclusion of Kudmis (Mahato) of Jharkhand belt in the list of Scheduled Tribes, Government of India. The Central government must include the Kudmis of Jharkhand in the list of Scheduled Tribes, Government of India without delay. The Mandals are still S.C. in the West Bengal and the Gour of Singhbhum are recently notified as a tribal community they must include in the Scheduled Tribe list of Government of India. The Kumar, Kamar and other communities of Backward Classes Annexure (I) also be included in tribal list. Among outside workers who have migrated to this region for work in the mines land industries also the down-trodden people and they are living peacefully with the Jharkhandi people. Taking all this, the people coming from the oppressed society constitute more than 80% of the population of Jharkhand. It is an interesting feature of Indian body politic that those who are socially exploited are economically exploited also and they live in this exploited and backward area called Jharkhandis.

To understand Jharkhand Movement properly it is necessary to understand how unbalanced development of the region or of the different segments of the society is creating problem of internal colonialism in the model of South Africa. Where the exploiter and exploited are not connected with any link even staying within the same geographical region. This is a peculiar situation with no

parallel any where with which we generally tend to compare our conditions like Russia, China or Vietnam and try to draw our political line of action of India, under developed region is exploited by the developed region as their colonies and similarly the under developed people by the developed people. Society is physically divided and the gap is increased to the extent that the Indians are openly declared in India as foreigners. The relationship has become that between the natives and the foreign rulers as in the British days. And the Rulers and the Ruled speak different languages, look differently, go to different schools, join different clubs, everything is different for the poor. So they cannot be one even as a nation. This is the real two-nation theory operating in Jharkhand.

This country is a land of multiplicities and diversities. Jharkhand Movement is the result of such policies of the government since last 41 years that are born out of an unscientific outlook regarding development and progress. Almost all the areas have their economic, traditional and cultural peculiarities and every one of these areas insists on preserving that peculiarity. In fact, this instance is the birth right of every citizen. It was necessary for natural unity and national development that the government would follow such policies that would provide all the opportunities for these peculiarities and diversities, support them and instil self-confidence in them. But in today's conditions the people of the Jharkhand region consider themselves as victims of economic and social injustice. Jharkhand movement is a joint movement of the tribals and non-tribals. Neither this movement has come up in one day, nor is it devoid of logic. Due to continuous discriminations this area is denied even the simple necessities of life till date. The inhabitants of this region consider themselves different from the main streams of Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh, e.g. The Jharkhandis living in Bihar and M.P. have to get their education in Hindi, in Bengali in Bengal and in Oriya in Orissa. Consequently the people of a single linguistic community have to adopt different languages in different states. Culture is being attacked and social atmosphere is changing. So we want separate Jharkhand State so that we may progress in accordance with our aspirations.

This demand is not the outcome of any political manipulation. It is full of innumerable ethnic, socio-economic complexities and

contradictions which are showing up. Jharkhand movement has taken birth in this very complex situation. After 1947, all the governments at Patna, Calcutta, Bhubaneswar and Bhopal have adopted such policies that a state of tension and antagonism has existed, development has been irrelevant to the interests of the people. These policies were based on narrow-mindedness and oriented towards creating conflicts among the Jharkhandis communities.

The sufficient amount being allocated for the development of this area? Has the government made a justified employment policy for the unemployment of this region. If the answers for these questions would have been in affirmative there would not have been any questions of this movement taking such exploding proportions. In fact the whole thinking of the administration has been ridden with narrowness. One need not say that history has done great injustice to this region. It could not be liberated from the centuries old backwardness.

The Ingredients for Internal Colonialism and Exploitation

1. The first ingredient of the internal colonialism is the caste system which despite all denials broadly determines the division of labour within the country and still definitely indicates mental attitude to physical work. The upper caste police men can do anything in a Harijan and Tribal village which they cannot dream of doing in an upper caste village just as a Englishman could do any thing in India, a fraction of which he could not think of doing in England. What happened in Gua, Tiruldih in Singhbhum and Adilabad could not have happened any where with non-tribal agitators, however great and grave might be the provocation. The existing Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh governments could not show their sympathetic attitude towards the problems of tribal and Jharkhandi people. A rude attitude of the government towards the Jharkhandi people is the root cause of frustration. The Mafia group are working every where and exploiting Jharkhandis people with the help of power and money. This is social unevenness and internal colonial exploitation to the Jharkhandi. To get rid of this exploitation "Separate Jharkhand State" is the only solution.

2. The second ingredient of internal colonial exploitation is the uneven development of the society. Political upheavals which might lead to development did not embrace all the area of this vast country for a long time. In the medieval age, all the civilisation were to rise and fall on the banks of the big rivers like Sindhu, Ganga, Brahamputra, Godabari, Narmada, Kavery and there was a mad rush to capture fertile land around these big rivers. In that colonial era, the political centre shifted to the shore like Calcutta, Bombay and Madras, later on shore-based colonial civilization combined with the river-based feudal civilisation to regulate politics of the country. The leadership of the anti-imperialistic struggle also came from this area ensuring to lead in political development. This trend is still ruling in the politics of Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh and the Jharkhand people are exploited due to the same sentiment is working in their mind. In past, these areas which formed the mainstream of political struggle used to enjoy an undisturbed autonomy of age old inertia. Today they disarmingly face not only with this exploitation but with submergence, suffocation and gradual extinction. They have now become the colonies of the people of the developed area. Their fate is like that of the original people of America now on the way out of history or those of African—the birth place of homosapiens who were used to be shipped as slaves to work in the tobacco gardens and mines of white masters. The internal colonial politics of Bihar, West Bengal and Orissa and Madhya Pradesh have forced the Jharkhand people gradually extincted which cannot be checked without separate Jharkhand State.

3. The 3rd Ingredient - Unbalanced Economic Development

The foregoing factors have all resulted in a discrimination in development between the two regions of the State—the hill area of Jharkhand having been provided less opportunities than the plains of Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh. This discrepancy is reflected in all areas of development.

The most alarming feature of the development process is that even from the meagre funds allotted for this region less than 30% reaches the real beneficiaries. Seventy per cent is pocketed away in the process of finalising the paper work by a 15-20% of the superimposed personnel which has no sense of obligation and belonging for

this area. More than 50% of the allotted funds have been surrendered to the government from this belt every year due to non-utilisation of funds.

This has an obvious reflection on the quality of life in the two regions. The people of the Jharkhand area are increasingly sliding down below the poverty line despite their being sincere and hard working. This is most apparent in the newly developed industrial and urban areas including the district headquarters like Ranchi, Dhanbad and Jamshedpur where the local people are systematically marginalised or sandwiched into slum areas. There are some who have tried to move out to far away places like Punjab, Assam and others in search of better living conditions but their prospect remains the same—to be disintegrated into the slums there.

4. 4th Ingredient - Land and Forest Alienation

The land of the Chhotanagpur and Santhal Pargana is protected under C.N.T. Act. and Santhal Pargana Tenancy Act, 1908. The transfer of raiyati land is restricted under these Acts.

The C.N.T. Act and S.P.T. Act have been made ineffective due to Land Acquisition Act, 1894, and now the lands of tribals and non-tribals have been acquired for the purpose of multipurpose river valley projects, mining, queries, industries, township, railways, roadways, irrigation schemes, colonies in urban centres and other public and private uses under the Provision of Land Acquisition Act, 1894 through the notification of governments of Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh without giving them adequate compensation, re-settlement, service facilities, education and cultural safeguards.

Almost all the big industries like TISCO, TELCO, H.E.C., Bokaro Steel, Rourkella Steel Plant, and urban centres are based on cities like Jamshedpur, Adityapur, Chaibasa, Ghatsila, Chakradharpur, Ranchi, Muri, Simdega, Khunti, Loharda, Daltunganj, Godda, Hazaribagh, Chatra, Ramgarh, Dhanbad, Bokaro, Chass, Rourkella, Giridih, Chandrapura, Gomia, Deoghar, Santhaldih, Dumka, Pakur, Purulia, Jhargram, Baripada, Rairangpur, Keonjher, Sambalpur, Sundargarh, Raigarh, Surguja, etc., are situated on the heartland of Jharkhand and have affected 12 lakh acres

of land and displaced about 15 lakhs Jharkhandi people from their home land without proving re-settlement, services and adequate compensation and other facilities to them.

The major mining centres are also in the homeland of Jharkhand. The iron ore, copper, mica, lime-stone, kyanite, bauxite, uranium, gold, manganese, asbestos, dolomite, quartz, china clay etc. "The Ruler of India" based on Jharkhand, their mining operations have affected about 20 lakh acres of land and have displaced 25 lakhs of Jharkhandi people without proper compensation, rather oasted them like anything.

Thus all these modernisation of welfare state have affected about 35.55 lakh acres of land and 44.25 lakhs of Jharkhandi people have been displaced in improper way. They have migrated to tea-gardens of Assam and Darjeeling and most of them have become beggars. The number of displaced persons in Jharkhand is much more than the displaced persons at the time of the division of our country. They were given much more facilities than the Jharkhandis. This indicate the clear intention of the government to extinct the Jharkhandi people from their Home Land.

Forest

The governments of Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh have good intention for administering this region but its intentions are always being frustrated by inflexible officers, who refuse to see the dynamics of a policy of the government. We can take, for example, the Social Forestry programme started in the beginning of the eighties. The Central and the Provincial governments got together to finance this good effort from 1985 onwards. Social forestry has not yet become a people's movement in this region as the people have quite recovered from the shock of the Indian Forest Act, 1927, and the Bihar Forest Produce (Regulation of Trade) Act, 1948. Unless the people are able to market forest produce freely, they are not going to protect the tree for decades, just to be taken over by the State.

Although the State has agreed to make the marketing of forest produce lucrative, it has not done anything in this regard. It will not be long before the Central government will decide to spend this

money in a state which may benefit by it. This has been the fate of most projects in this area. Projects which have been completed have acquired more land than actually required for and have later established private residential colonies for their employees and retired employees, which goes against the Provision of Land Acquisition Act, 1894. Private residential colonies are not public purpose (e.g. co-operative colony of Bokaro, Jamshedpur, Ranchi and many others) the land belongs to the government.

These development projects and schemes did good to the nation on one hand but on the other hand it also left a worst impact on the economy of the Jharkhandis. The land was the main source of income and the economy of the Jharkhandis. They were dependent on agriculture but their lands were acquired and they were compelled to become displaced and no government attention was paid towards their economic growth except the payment of compensation which was very nominal. Therefore their condition started deteriorating. An economic, educational, employment and other survey will speak for their present pathetic condition.

5. *5th Ingredient - Education and Employment*

India is a rich country inhabited by poor people. There is light everywhere, industries and power plants flourishing in all directions but just beyond an under limited boundary live the people of the region in the villages where one even could not get lamp. Jharkhandis are living under darkness in the midst of light.

There is no dearth of development but only at the cost of people there. Industries displaced them, dams around them, and frustration starves them. The industrial development of the region does not mean the development of the people there, but displacement of the people from there and their replacement by descending the colonies of developed people, the clever people, the politically connected people, descending from the developed region. As the industrialisation of the British India was done to draw drain the resources of the country and even railways were installed for draining out the raw materials. So was the industrialisation of Chhotanagpur, where railways came as early as 1894 to draw out its Coal and Iron. Total demography of the region changed while lakhs and millions of

people coming from outside and taking most of the jobs, today without getting jobs, the Tribal men and women are to sell themselves to the contractors to be exported any where—from Punjab to Tripura—for working in brick kilns or digging earth. Even in the Forest Development and Department they have no place no jobs. The colonial character of development would be evident from the following facts: 80% of the income of Bihar comes from Jharkhand but only 15 to 20% is spent for the people there. Not even in the proportion of the population. More than 45 lakh people have been displaced from this region for making dams, mining, quarries, urbanisation and in the name of modernisation. They have no berth in the government services, even in the III & IV grade, what of others? In the cosmopolitan cities like Jamshedpur, Ranchi, Dhanbad, Hazaribagh and others, millions and millions of outsiders (people) are working but the people of this region have no place. They have been totally deprived from the service. Even in civil jobs like primary and secondary schools, teachers are outsiders who dominate due to red-tapism and favouritism on caste lines. The influx of an outside population has led the 60/40 tribal/non-tribal population ratio in 1951 to become 40/60 in 1981, just the reverse in 30 years.

There are provisions for 80% reservation for tribal and local people in training and jobs but the fact is that nearly 90% of the training (in general education, engineering and medical) facilities and jobs are filled by an external population.

In Jharkhand the biggest sufferers of the reservation policy for the locals (particularly in Grade III and Grade IV position) have been the local non-tribal (i.e. the backward communities). Most of the posts go to the outsider non-tribals who are used to take certificates being issued to the outsider non-tribals. As in most cases it is the outsider non-tribal who sits in the chair of authority that issues the residential and caste certificates. There have been cases where higher caste candidates have changed their names to fit the job restriction for the weaker sections. At times local customary laws are trusted to be taken advantage by the otherwise unfit candidates.

6. 6th Ingredient

The Bihar and West Bengal governments issued the ordinance banning the possession of bows and arrows by the tribals and non-

tribals of Jharkhand which are part of their life and at the same time lifted prohibition and started liquor shops in tribal region. There are clashes and resistance from the tribal people and the government swearing in the name of Gandhiji, provided armed forces to protect the wine shops. Any colony can be kept under subjugation for long only after the character of the people in the colony is spoiled. So as once opium was forced in China, now wine is being pumped in to Jharkhand. Thus between development and non-development, the choice for the people of Jharkhand is like that between firing pan and the fire, under- development means languishing death, development means extinction.

7. 7th Ingredient

The 42 years of the post Independent exercises could not narrow the gaps of development between the different regions of the country and between the different social groups. If all restrictions in movement, settling, pursuing profession, etc., are removed considering India as one country than underdeveloped people and their society would be completely submerged and erased out of the map due to thrust of the people of the developed region. Integration of India can only remain secured in a revolutionary change of their present system. Unless the motivation is changed the migration only creates hostility and India's integration always remain in peril. Despite all deformation, it has created a scope to project working class philosophy and the crisis has injected a bond between the industrial workers even if they have come from outside and rural poor who constitute the vast local masses popularly known as Jharkhandis. This is a phenomenon having image, possibility of struggle of *dalit* (oppressed) people of internal colonies. The tribals and the socially down-trodden against the imperialism and rulling class can develop any time into a real national liberation movement in the country, but now it threatens to commence in the very heart of the country. There can be so many new states in India—such as Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujrat, Punjab, Haryana, Assam, Mizoram and Arunachal on the basis of nationalities, specially on language and administrative facilities and cultural uniformity.

8. 8th Ingredient

We now deal with the social life, social customs and culture of the people of Jharkhand and its neighbouring areas which have speciality and peculiarity of their own. Briefly speaking, culture is a way of life which includes the activities of human beings, such as rituals, custom, habits, songs, and dances, languages and literature, education, art, religion, occupation, livelihood, and so on and so forth. Thus culture of a society or nation, so to say, does not depend on the efforts and contribution of a few intellectuals, or intelligent and enlightened people. On the contrary, social and geographical conditions of the society play the most important role in making its culture and sustaining it through ages. It is regarded as folk culture as distinguished from elite culture. Folk culture is the culture of the general masses. It includes all cultural cross-currents of the nation as an integrated whole. The entire region of Jharkhand has a common cultured basis. It has taken a shape of its own through centuries.

The social set up of the people of this area is a clear depiction of this special culture, the social ceremonies, birth, marriage and death are wholly different from those of the elites, the cultured people. Even in the twentieth century they observe their traditional customs, rites and rituals and social conduct according to their own relation and in original manner. These social ceremonies are observed on different occasions. Kudmali, Mundari, Nagpuri, Kurukh, Khotha, Santhali, Ho, Kharia, Pahari, etc., are the dialects of the region. Now-a-days, Hindi, Bengali and Oriya are also adopted by them due to the demand of the time. Adoption of either of these three languages upon the language of the States they reside in. Written literature is rare but the literature in its verbal form is the hidden treasure of this region. This continues primarily through songs like Tusu, Jawa, Bhadu, Bhogta, Dhua, Ahira and marriage songs, etc., and secondly through stories like Jankahanis, proverbs, *dant katha*, *chhara*, *mantra*, *rumujha sakhi*, *jant*, *kavigam* and so on. *Maharaya*, the great epic of this region is again there in its verbal form and is preserved through oral tradition from generation to generation. This is sung at the time of Dharam Puja. There is a custom to celebrate Dharam Puja by the male (boy) before his marriage. A male member

cannot marry, if he does not celebrate the Dharam Puja.

Fairs and festivals of this region—Jharkhand—have their base on agriculture and on behalf of birth, death and re-birth. 'Jawa' festival, for example, represents birth, 'Tusu' represents death, the 'Bhoga' represents re-birth. Apart from these three festivals Rajaswala festival is observed on the first day, and 'Ambawati' on the 7th day of the month of Asar. Mansa Puja is observed in Sharwan Sankranti, 'IND' on the next day of Karam Ekadashi, Chatta is observed on 'Bhadra-Sankranti', 'Bandhna' in Kali Puja, and 'Aikhan Jatra' is observed on the first day of the month of Magh. In addition to these, Khelai Chandi, Duru, Bhansigh, Magh, Baha Sarhul, Horo and so on are also observed during the year on different dates and time. During all these festive occasions. Puja is performed by their respective 'Layas' (Pujaris) in the traditional way. All these festivals are associated with their distinctive songs and dances. Cock-fighting is a common feature of amusement almost in all the fairs besides 'Bhera Larai' (Sheep fighting) and 'Kara Larai' (Buffalo fighting) are also among various forms of local amusements.

Songs and dances are life blood of the people of this region. These are traditional in nature and are learnt with the mother's milk. No training is needed for the same. By the time a child is grown up, he or she becomes well acquainted with songs and dances like Chhau, Dard, Karma, Jawa, Kanthi, Bhadu, Jhumur, Panta, Sohrai, Tusu, Nachni, Natua, Judur, Gonu, Jupi, Raca, Arandi, Jagaran, Hejor, Jatra, Bhajan, Citid, Labun, Large, Dhantha, Bapla (*dang serang*) Rijha, Burigari, Matoya, Machhani, Bhogta, Bhuang, Marriage songs and dances, etc. These dances and songs can be categorised as occasional, seasonal and social. People here believe in their traditional art and craft. These are Wood-craft, Bamboo-craft, Metal-craft, Earthen-craft, Weaving, Sewing, Rope making, Leather work and the like.

Wood Craft

Hal, Jawal, etc., are related to agriculture. Takta, Khat, Daraja, Janala, Lora Pira, Parti, Mundha, Ukhal, Dhenki, Jant, Ghani, Weighing rod, etc., are the necessary household articles. The craftsmanship of these equipments and articles is traditional in nature.

Bamboo Craft

Dom, Nahli, Kharia, and Paharia people are the traditional craftsmen of this Bamboo craft. They prepare items like Deli, Khanchila, Kula, Dala, Supti, Jharu, Ghuni, Ghugi, Dabha, Sara, etc., which are the most essential and useful items in daily life.

Metal Craft

Aluminium, Iron, Kansa, Brass, Silver and Gold are the metals used in traditional metal craft in this locality. Groups like Maluhar, Kamila, Kansar, Thentri and Kamar are the traditional craftsmen of this region. Articles like Paila, Sera (Weighing Measurement Unit), Pradeep, Toys, etc., are prepared by Kansaris. Aluminium articles such as Chatu, Khusni, Bathins, Ghati, etc., are prepared by the Thentries. The Kamaras are the traditional blacksmiths who prepare items like Bansla Batali, Tangi, Talwar, Tir, Gupti, Dauli, Fal, Kudal, Gainta, Kajal Lata, Loha Kharu, and other daily appliances out of Iron. The Kamila people are the traditional Goldsmiths who prepare ornaments like Mol, Mahar, Pajani, Jhumka, Kharu, Hansli, Bala, Ring, Kanpasa, Nakful, Luluk, Got Mukut, Sithi, Bichha, Tuila, Belkari, Chulchipa, etc., out of Silver and Gold in various traditional designs.

Earthen Craft

Kumar, Chhutar or Mistri are the traditional earthen-craftsmen who prepare various traditional items of daily use.

Weaving and Sewing

Tanti, Jolha, Ghumla are the traditional weavers of this region. People belonging to these castes are the fathers of the local weaving craft.

Rope Making

There is no specific caste for this trade, on the contrary, all are partially engaged in that besides their own traditional occupations.

Leather Craft

Muchi and Dom are the castes engaged solely in leather trade. Leather work for preparing local musical instruments like Dhak, Dhol, Mridanga, Tabla, Dhumsa, Mahdal, Kendrai, Dugdugi, Damu, Dhaki, etc., are done by them in their traditional manner even to this day.

Fine Arts

Alpana Chok and colouring of the walls are the fine arts of the area. A solution is prepared from rice flour and juice of Cherry Dudhi and Panlalata creeps and with this Alpana and Chok are done by finger tips of mainly three finger, i.e. fore-fingers and also by the palm.

Food Habits

People of this region produce their food stuff through their traditional processes. Dheki, Jant, Ukhail, Shil Lara, etc., are the means to prepare rice, dal, *ata*, *guri* (rice-flour) out of which Muri, Chira, Kurha, Pitha (cake), etc., the special favourite dishes of the locality are prepared.

Smoking and Drinking

Smoking and drinking habits of the area are also indigenous in nature. Chuti, Biri and Hukka are the main smoking items. Sal and Kendu leaves and tobacco are used for making Chuti, Biri, etc. Haria, Tari, Wine are main drinks of the area which are prepared at home, and Sal, Palash, Kamal (Lotus) leaves, etc., are used as improvised utensils for serving these drinking itmes.

Games & Plays

Hadu-Dadu, Sita-Churi, Dandia, Tirdabhu, Kana-Manhhi, Bagh-Chal, Asta-Chuka, Ghuti-Chala, Luka-Churi, Kan-Jhun-Jhun, Khapti Chaika, etc., are the traditional local games originally found in this region.

Religion, Faith & Belief

A detailed examination of religion, fear, faith and belief of the people of Jharkhand will reveal the traditional hatred towards Brahminial and Vedic supermacy. The following are important worship as God and Goddess, Dharam Puja or the Surjahi Puja. According to the tradition and belief, the first day of the month of Agrahayan or the first day of the month of Magh is auspicious and favourable to have this Puja. For performing the Puja, the head of the family remains in fast from the previous day along with another, also on fast to kill the goat specially preserved for sacrificing it before Dharam God. Mahari song in story form is sung by a special and expert songster in praise of Dharam God throughout the night.

Jantal Puja or Garam Deota Puja

In the month of Ashar or before transplantation first fruit is offered to the village deity. Goat sacrifice and meat distribution is done in the village.

Karam Festival

Karam festival is observed on the half-moon day of the month of Bhadra (Sept-Oct.). It is a joyful festival both for the males and the females, who spend the whole night in enjoyment and merrymaking through music and dance based on Karam song which has a melody style and standard of its own. This is called Karam Nach. The festival is deeply and fully related to the Jawa function celebrated by the young girls, and this in fact, forms the basis or rather it is a part and parcel or life-blood of the Karam festival, without which every charm and beauty, every sanctity and sublimity of the Karam festival is completely lost. Besides the Baha Sarhul and Bhru worship is made by the people of Jharkhand.

Sohrai or Bandna

This is an important festival of the Kudmis as well as Santhalis, Mundas and Oraons and all other Jharkhandis.

It is purely a rejoicing for good crops, special feeding and decoration with the blades of corns and oil and vermilion are made

to the bullocks and cows who assisted for good crops. On the day of the new moon in the month of Kartik this festival takes place.

One pair of lamps (made of powdered rice mixed with *ghee*) burning and two bundles of special grass are placed in the house doors, gardens, tanks, manure pits, wells, powdered rice mixed with water is thrown on all the things of house-hold. One bullock and one cow is selected for worship and these are named as 'Shree Balad' and 'Shri Gai'. On the first day of the moon, the *puja* is done by a 'Layar or Pahan' at the resting place of village cattle.

The special features and the identity of the Jharkhand are follows:

The study reveals the vivid picture of the Jharkhand culture, religion, language, literature, fairs and festivals, art and music specially and peculiarity of their own which forms a common culture known as Jharkhandi culture. The Jharkhandi culture is the richest culture in India.

The eminents of the Jharkhandi culture have been elaborately discussed. Now the maintenance of cultural pluralism has been one of our flourished national goals. Jharkhand has been the only cultural region in the entire country where the three major cultural streams have met and have created an integrated and uniform synthesis. This is a mini India in the true sense of the term. The culture of Jharkhand region over the years has attained a distinctiveness by fostering a balance between nature and culture. Egalitarianism in social structure, accommodative history, equal sharing of economy, secularism in religious pursuits, a democratic political thinking and a people-oriented art and literature. These are marks of truly viable modern culture. But this culture is facing a crisis of identity. We see a large-scale devastation of nature in the form of deforestation and unscientific mining and industrial growth, the hierarchical notions of caste and class creeping in place of egalitarianism, exploitation by the incoming population in return of the accommodativeness of the Jharkhandi people. Business and industry taking over and making agriculture subservient; fundamentalism setting in and dividing the population on communal lines; and the activities, literary and artistic, are losing their participatory nature and becoming more passive and observation-oriented. In fact, the Jharkhandi people, out of sheer frustration and unable to cope with the external pressures, are developing at an alarmingly increased

rate marks of a negative identify for himself. He is being branded as a lazy bum, good for nothing, drunk and criminal, particularly in the fast developing urban areas like Dhanbad, Ranchi, and Jamshedpur. The notions of a noble savage and a healthy tribe are fast becoming a myth. These are all signs of cultural degradation. This submergence of a potential modern culture must stop if we as a nation are to look forward to a better future for our Jharkhandi people. Jharkhand is being systematically exploited by the Government of Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh in the name of industrialisation, modernisation and development of Jharkhand. Money and population is injected in this area to create - (1) Cultural identity problem, (2) Linguistic identity problem, (3) Political identity problem, (4) Ecology and environment problem, (5) Qualitative improvement of human resources problem, (6) Pressure on land problem, (7) Health problem, (8) Economic problem, (9) Unemployment problem and last but not the least (10) Survival problem for the aboriginals of the Jharkhand identity.

Jharkhand is the best place for exploitation as cheap labour, cheap resources, cheap raw-materials, cheap coverages, no political problem. Hence, Jharkhand is the paradise for the governments of Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh. We have given enough time for industrialisation, modernisation and development of economic condition of the country and sacrificed a lot. So far, we have been made scape-goat for the national cause. But till now, no amount of industrialisation, modernisation and development programmes could change the lot of the people for the better but gone against it.

So for the survival of the aboriginals of Jharkhand and Jharkhandi identity, Jharkhand State is must at the earliest.

Sir—Much has been said above. We now come to the conclusion of this memorandum through which we have placed before you a vivid picture of the pitiable, social, cultural, economical, political, educational, employment and geophysical, historical position and the lamenting plights of the Jharkhandi Identity for your just and august consideration. Jharkhand Mukti Morcha Central Committee demanded the formation of separate Jharkhand State for Jharkhandi people under the provision of Article 3 and Clause (a) of the Constitution of India.

The fact and circumstances stated above, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha

Central Committee on behalf of four crores Jharkhandi people submit this memorandum through you to the Hon'ble President of India for the formation of separate Jharkhand State with most humble and sincere wish that your kind honour will be highly pleased to consider our demand for the formation of separate Jharkhand State for the Jharkhandi and oblige the Jharkhandi people for ever. The Central Committee of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha and more than four crores Jharkhandi people shall ever remain grateful to you and the Hon'ble President of India.

Thanking you,

Yours most sincerely,

(Shibu Soren)
President

(Suraj Mandal)
Vice-President

(Shailendra Mahato)
Gen. Secretary

(Manoranjan Mahato)
Secretary

(Abutalib Ansari)
Secretary

(Sudhir Mahato)
Secretary

(Salkhan Soren)
Treasurer

12. Jharkhand Co-ordination Committee

Main Office: Aryapuri, 17, Ratu Road, Ranchi

Press Release

The representatives of the Jharkhand Co-ordination Committee (JCC) and the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (S) held the second round of talks with the Union Home Minister at 11.00 A.M. on 11th August, 1989. The Union Home Minister was assisted by the Chief Minister of Bihar, Union Minister for State, Home and high officials of Home Ministry.

The leaders of the Jharkhand movement reiterated the demand for separate Jharkhand state with 21 districts. They stressed that the level of autonomy that is needed to solve the problem of Jharkhandis is a full-fledged state.

Through talks, both sides agreed to the formation of a committee comprising of the movement leaders, government officials and some experts of ethnicity problems. The committee would be announced within a day and it would furnish its report and recommendation

within a month. The JCC proposed that the name of the committee should be "Jharkhand State Re-organisation Committee".

The movement leaders assured the Home Minister that the agitational programmes would be withheld till the committee places its findings. On the other hand, the Union Home Minister assured the movement leaders that he would see to it that peaceful meeting and other programmes are not suppressed by the various state governments.

The Jharkhand Co-ordination Committee will hold its programme of rally in Orissa on 22nd August, 89 as announced earlier.

Sd/-

(B.P.Keshari)

Convenor

Dated: 11th August, 1989. Jharkhand Coordination Committee

13. *Memorandum Submitted to the Committee on Jharkhand Matters visiting Jhargram by the Jharkhand Sahayak Samity on September 24, 1989.*

Sir,

We, on behalf of the Jharkhand Sahayak Samity and the people of this part of our land, welcome you to Jhargram and thank you wholeheartedly for taking this strenuous initiative to delve into a longstanding problem of the people of the Jharkhand region in general and of the Jharkhandi people of the districts of Bankura, Midnapur, Purulia and also Birbhum in particular, a problem which is concerned not only with the development of their economic conditions, agriculture and industry in their region, educational facilities and culture but with the existence of their identity as a distinct nationality group. We take this opportunity to place before you, on behalf of Jharkhand Sahayak Samity, a socio-cultural organisation of tribal and non-tribal intellectuals, students, workers and servicemen, both Jharkhandi and non-Jharkhandi in ethnic origin and hailing from different corners of West Bengal who are committed to the cause of upliftment, and justice for the Jharkhandi people, the following submission:

The people of the districts of Purulia, Bankura and Midnapore

comprising more or less the major portions of them as also of Birbhum in part are through the common historical process of development economically and culturally and, through the common shared values as regards their individual behaviour and also social administration have the same agony of discriminatory oppression and ethos of harmony and democracy, the same yearning for asserting and preserving their identity, the same aspiration for developing their mother tongues and being taught in their own languages which are linguistically unique in affinity. That in sort, the people of this region are brethren by ethnic origin of their counterparts in Bihar, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh which you have already visited.

(ii) The people of the above mentioned part of West Bengal are geographically contiguous to and part of their counterpart in Jharkhand region in Bihar and Orissa, comprising the Jharkhandi tribes—Santhals, Mundas, Hos, Oraons, Kharias, Bhumijis, Mahatos, Lodhas, etc. and the different scheduled caste communities, e.g. Dom, Dusad and many O.B.C. groups such as Kamars, Kumhars, etc., who together constitute a overwhelming majority of the population in the above said region.

(iii) That the population pattern of this region is not reflected by the census of the recent times with adequate fidelity, first, because large section of the population, the Kurmi-Mahatos have been left out of the list of scheduled tribes since 1931 by some machinations of the colonial rulers, and secondly, because, ever since the imposition of the colonial British rule, partly as a reprisal to the numerous bloody revolts of the Jharkhandi people against the British and their feudal collaborators and partly as a ruinous impact of the imperialist—capitalist rule, the large masses of population from this region, as well as in other parts of Jharkhand were evicted from their land, their traditional economic and cultural life-link namely rights to forest usurped, their means of livelihood destroyed, their villages forcibly razed and the population seized and transferred under bayonettes to distant plantation areas as workers, to North Bengal, Assam, U.P. and even abroad. The number of such transported Jharkhandis in plantation region alone was almost two crores. Their descendents are still in Santhal agency tracts in Assam, in North Bengal, in U.P. Terai and even in West Indies and other such

countries abroad. This large-scale depopulation of the area was followed by depopulation of another type—the so-called voluntary homeleaving under compulsions of hunger and deprivation. In search of livelihood a large section of the population left their land annually as also permanently to work as agricultural labourers in other parts of Bengal e.g. to Sunderbands, to Bangladesh, to all rice-producing districts of Bengal, as miners, as contract labourers of railways. This process of depopulation has not been reversed even after the national independence in 1947. Whatever hopes the Jharkhandi people had placed on an independent India has been belied. Big dams, industrial development, different development projects, forest acts all have added to their misery. Their villages have been submerged, taken over or simply razed to the ground; they have been evicted from their land and forest, their traditional livelihood being denied they were forced to migrate. Thirdly, the development of commerce and industry has brought in, especially in the cities and commercial and industrial centres, a large number of non-Jharkhandis from other parts thereby diluting the percentage of Jharkhandi people of the soil. Specially, in this part of West Bengal, after the partition, a large number of refugees from erstwhile East Bengal have settled in the lands of tribal people. All the towns and cities in this region have grown at the cost of the tribal lands as in Jamshedpur in Bihar. Census do not take into account this dynamic nature of the population pattern. Fourthly, the concept of Jharkhandi identity cherished, nurtured and developed through long periods of history of co-habitation, co-operation and comradeship in hardship and struggle, especially through common fight and martyrdom in anti-imperialist and anti-feudal struggles, is not properly understood by political leaders, officers and allied scientists of non-Jharkhand region. Jharkhandi identity is not limited to tribes, scheduled or non-scheduled, e.g. Mahatos. It spans other scheduled castes, backward classes like Kamars, Kumhars, Teli, Tanti, etc., and all other people in the region who are living in harmony as part of the process of historical nationality building.

In the face of these misconceptions, the census data only directly shows the statistical pattern of the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes. So the number of scheduled tribes in the population data speaks only the mistruth about the numerical strength of the

Jharkhandi people in this region. Still, we have quoted some figures of scheduled tribes in certain regions of West Bengal in the Appendix 1. Appendix 1 shows convincingly that if population of the other Jharkhandi out-nationalities are added to it, the percentage of the Jharkhandi people in the mentioned parts of Bankura, Purulia, Midnapore (and we may add Birbhum also) overwhelmingly surpassed the number of Jharkhandis.

The Jharkhandi people of these areas are victims of discriminatory oppression and exploitation. The age-old oppression of feudal forces, Moneylenders have been augmented by the oppression under the capitalist system of internal colonial type. Taking advantage of dire poverty of the people, their produce, in the form of distress selling in the lean seasons, passes smoothly out of their hands very cheap, whereas the consumer goods and utility items for agriculture, house building, cottage industry are sold to these people at exorbitant prices. Essential commodities in this region are seldom covered by the rationing system. No relief operations reach the Jharkhandi people in general. Whatever meagre amounts are spent are sorted out to party functionaries connected with the state government. No safeguard has been placed against the transfer of land from the hands of Kurmi-Mahatos, since they are not included in the scheduled list. Even for the scheduled tribes, the protective law has been so constantly hoodwinked that the people feel that the law is only a show piece. The forest act deprives the inhabitants of these regions previously called Jungle Mahal from their traditional livelihood on forest produces.

No significant efforts have been initiated and patronise co-operatives of the deprived tribals so that they can make their two ends meet. The educational facilities in this region, especially in the villages and areas where Jharkhandi population abounds have not progressed an iota since the time of independences. The education among the masses paves the way for their progress and development of the society. Such a gross negligence in the field of education is a pointer to the degree of discrimination against the Jharkhandi people. Adding to the misery is the state government's policy of not imparting primary education through the mother tongues of the tribals. The children in schools, because of the imposed language bar, become estranged from the study and failures and dropouts

thrive. Table 1 of Appendix 2 gives the literacy rates of the Purulia district as a whole. The same is the picture in the Jharkhandi parts of the other two districts. The condition of the tribal employment can be vividly demonstrated from the adjoining Table II of Appendix 2. This is a general picture. Of these posts also, only the scheduled tribe men and women of urban elite background avail themselves of a large chunk. So the picture of the Jharkhandi people in the mentioned area is still more dismal.

The West Bengal government is not taking any step to recognise, develop and apply the different languages of the people in this region, e.g. Santhali, Mundari, Kurmali, Kurukh, Ho, Kharia, etc. In no university in West Bengal are there arrangements for their studies. In this respect our Bihar brethren have achieved something. The Ranchi University has shown the other universities and state governments that the Jharkhandi people have their own languages and university studies could be done in those languages.

To sum up, region that is called Jharkhand and is spread up within the existing boundary of the four states, e.g. West Bengal, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa, has a composite Jharkhandi culture being strengthened by hundreds of years of co-habitation of a hoard of ethnic groups throughout a contiguous area. Hence the concept of an exclusive separate tribal culture or extra-tribal culture does not exist. Only tribals do not constitute the Jharkhandi people or the jharkhand region.

There have been proposals for constitution of Tribal Advisory Councils on the line of the Sixth Schedule. These isolated pockets of proposed councils will in no case be able to encompass the whole Jharkhand region and the whole of the Jharkhandi people. These tribal councils will create a further division of the Jharkhandi people, will help to create a permanent rift between the tribals and the non-tribals whose bond for the last hundreds of years has been the Jharkhandi society and its culture and pose a serious problem both to the state government and the government at the centre.

So in the interest of the Jharkhandi people, their development and to fulfil the just aspirations of these people it is high time that the Jharkhandi people be given their political autonomy. And that autonomy for a region which the Committee on Jharkhandi matters has eventually recognised by their recent visits to all the states of

West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh can only be in the form of a State and only a State could fulfil the just aspirations of the Jharkhandi people.

Jt. Convenors
Sd/-
(T.K. Rapaz)
(Debasish Aich.)

Appendix 1

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Police station</i>	<i>No. of houses (according to sample size)</i>	<i>% of tribal population</i>
Midnapore	Gopiballvpur	168	73.49
	Nayagram	134	74.01
	Jamboni	119	77.33
	Jhargram	134	74.40
	Binpur	391	85.85
	Khargpur	106	56.77
	Debra	47	64.16
	Narayangarh	71	62.77
	Sankrail	65	79.98
	Garhbeta	144	63.12
	Salbani	80	68.32
	Keshpur	34	57.53
	Midnapore	52	57.52
	Purulia	Jaipur	12
Jhalda		29	82.50
Arsha		28	60.26
Baghmundi		60	73.52
Balarampur		27	75.91
Barabazar		32	62.54
Banduan		135	51.86
Manbazar		98	79.89
Puncha		40	79.88
Neturia		33	79.65
Raghunathpur		27	82.15
Santuri		40	76.09
Hura		26	76.09
Para		10	76.09
Bankura	Ranibandh	84	78.54
	Raipur	124	74.13
	Khatra	85	70.25
	Taldangra	29	75.83
	Simlapal	43	71.48
	Saltora	44	75.99
	Chhatna	72	74.33

Appendix 2

Table 1: Literacy rates for the whole of Purulia District

District	District general literacy percentage	State general literacy percentage	Tribal literacy percentage
Purulia	18	33.20	8

N.B. The calculation have been done according to the 1971 census.

Table II

The condition of the scheduled tribes' employment in West Bengal Government Jobs.

Post	Percentage of employed S.T. People
Gazetted	0.40
Non-gazetted	1.47
Inferior	1.49

N.B. The calculations have been done according to the 1971 census.

Source: *Planning for the ST and SC—A West Bengal Perspective*, published by the Cultural Research Institute, Calcutta.

14. Tribal Bihar is in Turmoil

Statesman : Dec. 4, 1990

Ranchi, Dec. 3. All prominent parties—national and regional—are threatened with a vertical split over the "Jharkhand issue". If the Janata Dal leaders have formed a Chhotanagpur and Santhal Pargana Sangharsh Samity under the leadership of Mr Salkhand Murmu, the regional Congress (I) committee for Tribal Bihar has recently resolved to support the demand for a separate State. Local Bharatiya Janata Party leaders have already raised the banner of revolt against the State satraps by refusing to obey their dictates over the question of extending support to the Lallu Prasad Yadav Ministry in the State.

What seems to have actually stirred the politics of the region is the endeavour of some of the BJP legislators in Bihar to cause a split in the party. Significantly enough, the man who is leading the group is

the former president of the State unit of the party. Mr Inder Singh Namdhari, is an MLA from Daltonganj in Palamau. He is being backed by the former Vice-President of the State BJP, Mr Samresh Singh, elected from Bokaro. They together enjoy considerable support of the party workers in tribal Bihar.

However, the popularity of both Mr Namdhari and Mr Samresh Singh have cost them dearly. It caused so much jealousy among the senior leaders of the party in the State that they had to lose their presidentship and vice-presidentship immediately after the last Assembly elections. It was probably the first time in the history of any political party that the President and the Vice-President of the State unit were suspended without being informed of the reasons of such a harsh step.

Both Mr Namdhari and Mr Samresh Singh have been under suspension for the past nine months. During this period no step has been taken by the party leadership either to revoke their suspension or remove them from the primary membership of the party.

It was therefore not without significance that these two leaders, who had championed the cause of the creation of a separate State in tribal Bihar—Vananchal—have utilized the motion of no-confidence in the Bihar Assembly on Thursday to raise the banner of revolt against the party leadership. They, together with seven of their supporters, some of them belonging to the tribal regions of the State, did not cast their vote in the Assembly and abstained in protest against the whip.

Such a stiff attitude on the part of these leaders is sure to have an adverse effect on the fate of the BJP in the State. For, out of the total 39 members of the party in the Assembly, 21 including Mr Namdhari and Mr Samresh Singh, have been elected from tribal Bihar.

Though the BJP is led in the Bihar Assembly by a tribal leader, Mr Lalit Oraon, this strategy of the party leaders to counter the growing influence of both Mr Namdhari and Mr Samresh Singh in the region seems to have proved counter productive.

The faction-ridden Congress(1) in the region is, however, united in one respect; the office bearers of its regional committee have asked for more autonomy for the committee.

15. Jharkhand Groups to form New Party Statesman: January 20 1991

Ranchi, Jan. 19—Three prominent Jharkhand groups—the Jharkhand Party, the All Jharkhand Students' Union and the Jharkhand Coordination Committee—have decided to merge and float a new political party to fight the cause for the establishment of a separate Jharkhand State. In all probability, the new party is to be named as the Jharkhand People's Party.

According to sources close to these organizations, a secret meeting of the top leaders of the Jharkhand Party, AJSU and the JCC was held early this month at Jamshedpur to explore the possibility of launching a united party to further the Jharkhand cause. The sources said that the leaders agreed on the need to float a united party to urge the Central government to form a separate Jharkhand State out of the tribal-dominated districts of Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh. They reiterated their claim for agreeing to nothing short of such a big Jharkhand State. They also rejected the proposal to accept either a regional council or any other administrative arrangement for Chhotanagpur and Santhal Pargana only, the sources said.

The sources also confided that the new organization would strive to enter electoral politics in the region should mid-term Lok Sabha and Assembly elections take place in the country. This would mean reversal of the earlier stand of the AJSU and the JCC who had been talking against participating in elections and had been boycotting elections since their formation. The Jharkhand Party had abandoned the election boycott programme much earlier after its boycott plan of the 1979 Assembly poll did not bear fruit.

Proximity of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha to the powers that be both at the Centre and the State levels too appears to have prompted these three Jharkhand groups to float a united party. The sources said that for the past few years the Jharkhand groups have splintered into many, causing immense damage to the Jharkhand movement.

16. Split in Jharkhand Vote Bank Imminent: Statesman March 29, 1991

As the situation now stands, the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha and the two erstwhile Jharkhand Coordination Committee constituents—Mr. N.F. Horo-led Jharkhand Party and the All Jharkhand Students' Union—are likely to confront each other in the Lok Sabha poll in the

Jharkhand areas of Bihar. A split in the Jharkhand votebank is imminent, exposing the bitter power struggle among Jharkhandis which has never before been so open.

Perhaps keeping in mind the "sensible Jharkhandi elements", especially from the JMM, are now trying to forge an understanding among themselves, which is, however, a difficult proposition. During 1989, while the JCC boycotted the elections, the JMM contested and won three Lok Sabha seats. This eventually saw the eclipse of the JCC and emergence of the JMM as the most powerful Jharkhandi group. In the subsequent Bihar Assembly elections, the JMM secured, 18 seats, while the AJSU-JKP and other splinter Jharkhand groups together bagged only five seats.

History shows that many a time Jharkhand leaders have willy-nilly played into the hands of national political parties. Their personal ego and desire to steer the Jharkhand movement has jeopardized their cause of struggle itself. This time is no exception, say well-placed Jharkhand sources.

Of the 15 Lok Sabha seats in the Jharkhand region covering 12 districts in Bihar, the JMM is planning to field candidates for 12 seats. In the last Lok Sabha election, it fought in eight constituencies. The initial talks between the JMM and its co-partners in the National Front indicate that Hazaribagh and Daltongunj seats may be given to the CPI and Janata Dal, respectively. In Dhanbad, the JMM is willing to support the Sampurna Kranti Dal to put up a fight against one time friend of the Jharkhandis, Mr. A. K. Ray of the Marxist Co-ordination Centre.

But what is worrying the Jharkhandis most is the willingness of the JKP and AJSU and some splinter Jharkhand groups to contest almost all the 15 seats. The student leader, Mr. Surya Singh Besra (AJSU), now reportedly wants to contest the important Jamshedpur seat against the JMM general secretary, Mr Sainen Mahato. Alarmed over this the JMM has offered the AJSU the Gumla seat provided the AJSU does not put up any candidate in Jamshedpur. The JMM leadership is trying to impress the need for this upon two senior office-bearers of the AJSU who are not altogether happy with Mr. Besra's move. The Jharkhand sources alleged that both Mr Subodh Kant Sahay, the Union Minister of State for Home who was elected from the Ranchi seat, and some of his Congress (I) friends are trying

to widen the split among the Jharkhandis to reap electoral advantage.

Mr. Sahay has earned the wrath of the JMM, particularly after the split of the Janata Dal. The JMM has charged him with deliberately delaying the formation of the Jharkhand autonomous council in Bihar and is going all out to defeat him. Mr. Sudhir Mahato is likely to be the JMM candidate against Mr Sahay. This despite the keenness shown by another JMM stalwart, Mr Suraj Mondal, to contest from the Ranchi seat.

Squabbles within the JMM are also posing problems for the party. These surfaced when the party higher-ups removed Mr Suraj Mondal from the post of chief whip of the JMM Legislature Party of the Bihar Assembly a few days ago. When contacted, a party spokesman in Dhanbad alleged on Thursday that of late party leaders had not been happy with certain activities of Mr Mondal which were going against the interests of the party. Knowledgeable sources, however, said the party leaders had become annoyed with him as Mr Mondal was hobnobbing with Mr. Subodh Kant Sahay for his "own political benefits".

The rival Jharkhand groups are now openly criticising the JMM for "sabotaging" their original movement for Statehood. But the JMM leadership feels that it will be wise for them to get the autonomous council in Bihar first. Once achieved, it can be regarded as a step towards Statehood. In an apparent bid to appease fellow Jharkhandis in West Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh, the JMM has also sought three similar councils in these States knowing fully well the hostile attitude of their State governments unlike that of Bihar. In reality, the JMM knows that they will have to remain content with an autonomous council in Bihar and Statehood is now a near-impossibility.

The critics of the JMM point out that the National Front will in no way highlight the demand for Statehood in its election campaign which all the Jharkhand groups—including the JMM—are doing in their own. This has certainly put the JMM in an embarrassing situation. The un-written understanding between Mr. V.P.Singh and Mr Shibu Soren, the JMM supremo, is that if the National Front bounces back to power, the Jharkhandis will be rewarded with a Bihar autonomous council and a berth for the JMM at the Centre, it

is reliably learnt.

The latest development indicate that the JMM has already sent feelers to the prominent Jharkhand leaders of rival groups. But again ego and personality factors are the stumbling blocks. Mr. Ram Dayal Munda, former charismatic JCC stalwart and ex-Vice-Chancellor of Ranchi University, is unlikely to align himself with Mr Shibu Soren, his arch rival. Though living in virtual political wilderness, Mr Munda is still a force to reckon with among the Jharkhandis, especially the Mundas.

The elitist academic background of a section of the JCC leadership surrounding Mr Munda has been challenged by a group of both tribal and non-tribal intellectuals, including several members of the teaching staff of Ranchi University who now form the think-tank of the Jharkhand agitation steered by the JMM. They include Mr A.K. Singh, Mr S.R. Akinchan, Mr P.P. Mahato, Mr C.C. Mahato, Mr B.N. Tudu, Mr P.K. Mahato and Mr. Kedar Mahato. Their sympathy towards the tribal cause has reportedly prompted the university "higher-ups" to order suspension and transfer of many Principals on charges of corruption and their apathy towards tribal interests.

The Congress(I), it is alleged, is trying to create a split among some prominent Jharkhand leaders. For this, it is using one non-tribal Bihar legislator apart from trying to cash in on the influence of its own tribal leaders such as Mrs Sumati Oraon, Mr Sanatan Majhi, Mr. Mochirai Munda and Mr. S. Sardar.

With the rise of the JCC-sponsored movement and subsequent electoral success of the JMM, the Congress (I)'s influence over the tribals began to wane. Some important leaders, such as Mr. Shibu Soren, distanced themselves from their Congress (I) friends. Soon, many others followed them. The latest such blow was struck only recently when Mr Bagun Sombrai, the undisputed leaders of Ho tribals of the Kolhan region of Singhbhum deserted the Congress(I) to align himself with Mr Shibu Soren.

But behind-the-scene manoeuvres are still on to win over the important tribal figures. A huge amount of money is now reportedly being offered to bring them within the fold of some national parties. A well-known Jharkhand stalwart has even been promised a possible berth in the Rajya Sabha if he can serve the electoral interests of a leading national political party.

17. *Jharkhandis Divided Over Centre's Move. Statesman* December 12 1991

Jamshedpur, Dec. 7.—The different Jharkhandi organisations in the Chhotanagpur and Santhal Parganas in south Bihar are divided over the Narasimha Rao Government's stand on the issue of creating a separate state for this tribal-dominated region.

The recent announcement by the Union Home Minister, Mr S.B. Chavan, in the Lok Sabha that the Centre was not averse to the formation of a separate Jharkhand State if the Chief Ministers of Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh had no objection to it, "has split the protagonists of the Jharkhand movement into two rival camps and widened the rift in the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha further", according to sources.

While section of the JMM led by Mr Shibu Soren and Mr Suraj Mandal, president and vice-president of the party, respectively, the All Jharkhand Students Union and the newly constituted Jharkhand People's Party have hailed Mr Chavan's statement as a "positive step," others, including the JMM faction owing allegiance to the party general secretary, Mr Shailendra Mahato, the Jharkhand Party and Jharkhand Liberation Front, described the Centre's move as a "deliberate attempt to mislead the people of Jharkhand and further delay the creation of a separate State".

According to Mr Mahato, since only the Centre was empowered to take a final decision, the recent statements by Mr Chavan proved that the Centre was trying to let the ball be in the State Government's court with a view to further delaying the matter. The JMM leader said the Bihar Chief Minister, Mr Lallu Prasad Yadav, had already made it clear that his Government was ready to accept any decision taken by the Centre on this issue.

"Now the onus of creating a Jharkhand State is on the Narasimha Rao Government and it cannot shrug off its responsibility", Mr Mahato said.

Describing the recent statements by Mr Soren and Mr Mandal that the JMM would cease to be a constituent of the National Front and withdraw its support to the Lallu Yadav government in Bihar if the Chief Minister failed to recommend the creation of a separate State as "motivated" and "irresponsible," Mr Mahato alleged that these

leaders were keen to mortgage the interests of the Jharkhandis to fulfil their personal needs.

According to him, the Congress (I) had succeeded in sabotaging their movement several times in the past and now it was eager to repeat the act. Mr Soren and Mr Mandal are knowingly falling into the trap by trying to forge an alliance with the Congress(I)", he said adding "the people of Jharkhand will never forgive".

Welcoming the Centre's move, Mr Simon Marandi, JMM M.P. and an ardent follower of Mr Soren, accused the Bihar Government of betraying the innocent tribals of the region by not recommending the creation of a separate Jharkhand State. He expressed surprise over the fact that though the matter was approved by the State Assembly long ago, the Government had failed to send the recommendation to the Centre.

Demanding that Mr Yadav immediately do the needful, Mr. Marandi threatened to snap all ties with the National Front if the State Government failed to oblige them.

Mr Marandi alleged: "Despite the fact that the Janata Dal Government have done nothing in our favour, a section of the Jharkhandi leaders are keen on continuing the party's support to it as they benefitted from the association". He threatened that his party would soon expose these elements.

Reiterating Mr Marandi's views, Mr Surya Singh Besra, convenor of the JPP and a former AJSU general-secretary, urged the leaders of the various tribal organisations to launch a united struggle against the Lallu Yadav Government.

According to him, Mr Yadav was "exploiting" innocent tribals only to stay in power. "Mr Yadav will never recommend the creation of a separate tribal State as it would harm his interests in north and central Bihar", Mr Besra claimed.

What surprises observers is that despite the differences between them, leaders of the rival camps agree that only a separate State comprising 14 tribal districts in the Chhotanagpur and Santal Parganas could be formed as the State governments of West Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh would never agree to part with any land. They felt that by raising the issue of a State comprising 24 districts from four States, the Centre was unnecessarily complicating the matter.

Political observers here are of the view that Mr. Chavan's announcement was a "cleve move" by the Centre to further weaken the Jharkhand movement by widening the rift between the different tribal organizations and alienating the JMM from the National Front.

Besides, it would also help the Centre to keep the four State governments, headed by its political rivals, under constant pressure from the Jharkhand protagonists, they argued. "If the Centre was sincere in its efforts it would have made the Committee on Jharkhand Matters report public and initiated an all-Party meeting on the issue," they said.

18. Nascent demand for Adisthan. Statesman December 19, 1991

Calcutta, Dec. 18—A Demand for Adisthan on the lines of "Khalistan" is likely to surface in the Jharkhand region if the Centre fails to create a separate Jharkhand State soon, the All Jharkhand Students Union and the newly formed Jharkhand People's Party warned here today. The two organisations had threatened to declare the Jharkhand region, comprising 24 districts in Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh, as a separate State and form a parallel government if the Centre failed to solve the issue at the Secretary-level meeting to be held in Delhi on December 20.

The militant posture adopted by these two organisations spear-headed by the youth of the tribal region comes in the wake of the Union Home Minister, Mr. S.B. Chavan's statement in the Lok Sabha that the Centre was prepared to grant statehood for the tribal-dominated region provided the four state governments recommended it. While a section of Jharkhandis and a political party has hailed Mr. Chavan's statement, the AJSU and the JPP feel that it is a calculated move by the Centre to delay and deceive the innocent tribals of Jharkhand.

The Centre's announcement of its willingness to create a Jharkhand State, should the four States agree, is seen as a ploy to create further disturbances in Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh where the Congress(I) is no longer in power. The AJSU and the JPP point out that the Centre has to amend the Constitution if a separate tribal State is created and the States had little to do with it.

They also felt that New Delhi was trying to complicate the matter.

The Centre, according to them, must announce that it agreed in principle to create a new State instead of saying it was not averse to the idea, Mr Surya Besra, Convenor of the JPP, affirmed.

Representatives of the two organisations pointed out that unlike the Sikhs, Kashmiris and the ULFA, the Jharkhandis have never wanted to dissociate themselves from India and wanted a settlement within the framework of the Constitution. They warned that should the State governments and the Centre continue to deprive the Jharkhandis of their right to self-identification, "we will be forced to revolt".

Mr. Besra was critical of Mr Jyoti Basu for having ruled out carving of Purulia, Midnapore and Bankura from West Bengal for the formation of a separate Jharkhand State. He pointed out that parts of these districts were a part of Bihar before 1956 when the States were reorganized, "Can Mr Basu make Bengalis out of us tribals?" he asked. He said that Jharkhandis were being kicked around like a football between the Centre and the States.

The AJSU and the JPP have decided to launch a prolonged agitation from March 1, 1992. Among other forms of disruption in the "Jharkhand region", the two organisations, would resort to economic blockade. "Once we launch our agitation, we will not go to the negotiating table in Delhi", Mr. Besra warned.

The AJSU and the JPP also announced plans by the different Jharkhand political organisations to team up and form a common platform by the end of December.

19. Jharkhand Buddhijibi Manch

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Resolution Adopted at the Seminar on Planning for Development and Social Justice in Jharkhand held in Jamshedpur on 29th December, 1991.

The Seminar on Planning for development and social justice in Jharkhand was held under the auspicious of Jharkhand Buddhijibi

Manch at Tata Auditorium in Jamshedpur from 26 to 29th December, 1991 in the background of adoption of the Bill for autonomous Council in Jharkhand area of Bihar by the Bihar Legislative Assembly and subsequent declaration of the Union Home Ministry in the Parliament as a step towards formation of Jharkhand State. The participants of the Seminar included the political leaders and workers of Bihar, U.P., West Bengal, academicians of Ranchi University and scholars from other parts of the country. Dr. Amar Kumar Singh, Vice-Chancellor, Ranchi University and President, Jharkhand Buddhijibi Manch was present throughout the Seminar and participated in the celebrations.

The Inaugural Session of the Seminar was presided over by the Patron-in-Chief Jharkhand Buddhijibi Manch Sri Shibu Soren, M.P., other important personalities included Sri Suraj Mandal, M.P., Sri Rampujan Patel, M.P., Sri Bhola Singh, M.L.A., Sri Mahendra Pratap Singh, M.L.A., Dr Sawa Ahmad, M.L.A., Sri Sudhir Mahato, M.L.A., Sri Mangal Ram, M.L.A., Sri Champai Soren, M.L.A., Sri Hassan Rizvi, M.L.A., Dr M.K. Hussan and others. The concluding session was presided over by the Dr S. Akinchan, H.O.D. Sociology, Ranchi University and Working President, J.B.M.

The Research papers submitted for the different sessions of the Seminar and speeches by the eminent persons highlighted the important issues concerning the life, health, nutrition, drinking water, language, cultures, education, agriculture, the pollution of water, air and soil and the wastes of Uranium mines in Jadugoda area, law and administration, the status of women and their right to property, witch system, human right for removing poverty, droughts, hunger, safeguarding the environment and for insuring social justice. The politics of big dams, the police bureaucracy, politician-antisocial nexus in the area and the adverse affect of freight equalisation policy of the Government of India on Industrial Development of Jharkhand.

The Seminar was divided into eight separate sessions which was devoted to the specific dimensions of the subject.

Resolution

1. *Freight Equalisation Policy*

The Seminar felt that the continuation of freight equalisation

policy of the Government of India concerning coal and steel has adversely affected the industrial development of Jharkhand by denying locational advantages of raw materials. This type of colonial exploitation should not be allowed to continue for the benefit of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Tamilnadu & Karnataka. This Seminar urges the Chief Ministers of Bihar and M.P. of Jharkhand to put pressure on the Government of India for the abolition of freight equalisation policy immediately.

2. *Jharkhand Cultural Academy*

The Seminar notes with pleasure that in response to the demand made at the Bokaro Seminar organised by JBM held in December, 1990 the Government of Bihar has agreed to establish the Jharkhand Academy in Jamshedpur to co-ordinate and develop the cultural and literary activities of the various ethnic groups of Jharkhand and had sent the proposal to the Government of India.

The seminar urges the Human Resource Ministry of the Government of India to approve the proposal and sanction the necessary monetary assistance to start the Jharkhand Academy within this financial year.

3. *Women:*

The Seminar notes with concern that the women of Jharkhand are neglected both in family and society. In the male - dominated society, they are unable to organise themselves for their rights guaranteed in the Constitution of India. Though they work harder than men-labourers they are denied equal wages. Moreover, they do not get minimum wages also. Women are killed as witch due to religious beliefs, superstition and occasionally for political reasons. The Seminar urges the Government of Bihar to spread education, both formal and legal, among the women to make them conscious of health and child-care to ensure employment to the educated women of the poor families. The Seminar also urges the Government of Bihar to pass a

law immediately banning the witch system and to prosecute the Jan-gurus, the so-called detectors of witches, under I.P.C.

The Seminar suggests the political parties and the people in general to help the women to start Independent women organisations irrespective of political affiliations to fight for equal rights in all walks of life including equal right to property.

4. *Education*

For the spread of literacy, the Seminar requests the Government of Bihar to establish more Primary schools for different linguistic groups in Jharkhand with proper arrangement of teachers and text books in their respective languages.

The Seminar requests the Government of Bihar to put pressure on the Bihar State Text Book Society to publish the regional languages from the primary to the High Schools immediately.

For higher education, the Seminar urges the Ranchi University to change the present regulations for the affiliation of colleges. The present rules hinder the starting of new colleges in the backward region like Jharkhand.

The Seminar urges the Government of India to initiate the starting of a Central University in Jamshedpur in the name of Sahid Nirmal Mahato.

5. *Health*

As Jharkhand is backward in health services. The Seminar urges the Government of Bihar to open more health centres in the area with regular attendance of Doctors and necessary supplies of medicines. The State government should introduce a system of monitoring the work in hospitals and health centres to ensure the regular presence of doctors and the regular supply of medicines. The government should co-ordinate the different health care systems such as Allopathic, Homeopathic, Unani, Ayurvedic and indigenous tribal herbal medicines. The government should start

imparting medical education through T.V., Radio and through books meant for Adult and non-formal education. The women folk should be the main target of medical education. The State government should take stern measures against the Industries polluting water, air and soil.

The Seminar urges the local M.Ps and M.L.As to take initiative to stop the Uranium mining in Jadugora area and stop the bringing of radio active wastes of Heavy water plant of Hyderabad.

The Seminar also demands that immediate arrangement should be made for free treatment of radio active affected villagers in the hospital of Uranium Mining Corporation in Judugora and elsewhere. Further in the light of the news item appearing in National papers that gold reserves have been found with significant commercial feasibility in certain parts of Jharkhand.

The Seminar urges the Central government to first ensure compensation and rehabilitation of the people who are likely to be affected by the Industrial gold mining in the area before formation of any Gold Mining in the area. This principle should be observed in the case of mining/or project. Further the displaced should be allowed share in the benefits of this project

6. *Displacement and Rehabilitation*

In the name of industrialisation big industries are established and thermal plants and big dams are constructed, mining of coal and iron ores has taken roots in the area. The displaced Adivasi and other cultivating communities, submerged fertile agricultural land, destroys forests, pollutes water in the rivers, reservoirs and tanks, displaces people who depend on forests for their living. As the area is very backward educationally local people do not get any job in the industries of the organised sector. This never ending process drives the local people out of Jharkhand and in search of employment. To stop this process, the Seminar suggests, that the principle of land for land as compensation

should be followed strictly so that valuable agricultural lands are preserved. In no case, forests should be allowed to be destroyed in the name of development and this policy would help the Adivasis to maintain their homes and forest-based culture.

Further the Seminar urges the management of C.C.L. and other public sector undertakings to immediately stop the policy of retrenchment and termination of the workers of Jharkhand under the concocted pretext of absenteeism and production losses.

7. *Social Justice and Human Rights*

The present political and economic system deprived the ordinary people of their human rights. In the absence of human rights there can be no social justice. On the economic front, greater emphasis should be laid on starting medium, small and cottage industries which would employ local labour and local material reducing the scope of more pollution and the displacement of local people. As a corollary to this policy, more technical institutions should be started to impart skills that would be required in the new industries. The principle for equal work for equal pay and minimum wages Act should be strictly enforced.

On political front, the people should be brought into decision making process in all stages and to allow them to exercise their political and economic rights. People of Jharkhand should be allowed to be educated in their mother tongues.

The police administration in Jharkhand behaves like an occupation army and they do not respect the democratic movement against the government policy.

8. *On Big Dams*

The Seminar condemns the Government of India and the governments of Bihar, M.P., Gujarat and Maharashtra, Bengal for their insistence on the construction of big dams which displace millions of people pushing them below the poverty line, submerge villages with homestead and fertile

land, destroy forests and environment for the benefit of contractors, corrupt politicians, engineers bureaucrats and industrialists. It is unfortunate that the Government of India and those of various states are refusing to talk to the leaders of movements opposed to the big dams regarding the alternative pattern of development for irrigation, power and environment to avoid the insistence of the World Bank for the rehabilitation of the oustees of Sardar Savovar Dam, Subarnarekha Dam, Koel-Karo Dam. The Water Resources Ministry of Government of India decided to finance those projects from the budgets of the Central Government. When the Government of India has already embarked on privatising the losing public sector concerns, it continues to support the construction of big dams which would result in economical and ecological disaster.

The Seminar requests the Planning Commission to start a dialogue with the leaders of the movements against the big dams to devise a cost effective irrigation and power-generating system and to pressurise the state government to stop the construction of big dams immediately.

The Seminar expresses solidarity with the Narmada Bachao Andolan led by Baba Amte and Medha Patkar. Anti-dam movement in Tehri led by Sundar Lal Bahuguna, the people in Koel Karo and Subarnarekha area for mobilising people against big dams to safeguard the interest of the people in their respective areas.

Demands:

The meeting noted that Government of India in the letter No. 2355 Dated 29th November 1990, written by the Chief Secretary, Bihar to the Chief Secretary, Government of India has accepted the following recommendations of the Committee on Jharkhand matters:-

- I) Sidhu Kanhu Santhal Pargana University.
- II) Office of Awar Sewa Parisad at Ranchi.
- III) Office of the School Examination Board at Ranchi.
- IV) Jharkhand Rural Development Training Institute with branches in each block (180 centres)

- V) Vidyasagar Women Studies Institute at Karmatar at Santhal Pargana.
- VI) Jharkhand Cultural Academy at Jamshedpur.

Resolved that the same be immediately implemented.

Further resolved that

1. Infrastructural facilities, subsidy, raw materials, power supply, diesel supply, storage warehouses, preserving techniques be provided to Jharkhand people.
2. Pisciculture, Sericulture, Floriculture, etc., be developed.
3. Mixed farming, dryland techniques be implemented in the area.

Federation:

4. Jharkhand Teachers Association of Ranchi University, B. T. T., I.S.M., B.A.U., S.K.S.P. University be formed to improve the condition of teachers and teaching standards.
5. Taskforce on Jharkhand Environment be formed.
6. An informal Jharkhand Planning Commission be formed.
7. Baba Saheb Ambedkar Institute of Social Justice be formed to study and have watch on human rights condition.
8. The industrial planning should have employment of Jharkhand people as main objectives.
9. It should be mandatory for industries causing displacement to rehabilitate the displaced.
10. A proper watch to be kept by Jharkhand Buddhijibi Manch on displacement.
11. For promotion and development of natural talent of Jharkhand youth the Sport Authority of Jharkhand should be established.
12. The ethnic groups which were descheduled in 1931 should be reincluded for all facilities under article 341, 342 of Indian Consitution.
13. An awareness programme like Chipko movement be organised to check the industrial pollution, water pollution air pollution and soil pollution.
14. Construction of big dams like Koel Karo, Subarnarekha projects be stopped in the area, instead traditional irrigation

- system be revived through small check dams, Ahars, lift irrigation.
15. The plantation of eucalyptus in the area be immediately stopped, instead mango, *chiranjee*, *jamun*, *kathal*, *ber*, *sal*, bamboo, grass and other fruit-bearing trees be planted.
 16. Capability map of each village be prepared.
 17. Health awareness, elementary hygiene, environment conservation and legal education be included at the school level and adult education programme curriculums.
 18. 25% of jobs in the area be reserved for women.
 19. 25% of Vidhan Sabha, Panchyat, M.P. seats be reserved for women.
 20. Ownership right to property be given to tribal women.
 21. Ashram school for the children in Panchyats be opened.
 22. Improvement of Science teaching at school level. Jharkhand Science and Technology Centre be opened at Bokaro.
 23. The confidence of minorities be restored and they be brought into the people's movement and struggle for self-determination.
 24. Special recommendation of the Seminar are Saheed Nirmal Mahato University be formed in Jamshedpur and Railway Station named after Tata should be renamed in the name of late Nirmal Mahato.
Binode Bihari Mahato Institute of Labour and Management should be established for the Jharkhand youths in Dhanbad.
 25. The rate of snake bite mortality is fairly higher in the whole Chhotanagpur plateau of Jharkhand and as a result fairly large number of people are regularly victimised due to snake bites by both poisonous and nonpoisonous snakes and losing their lives. In view of the grave situation availability of antivenom serum should invariably be made in remote villages and rural areas to save the precious lives of the Adivasis of the whole of Jharkhand.
 26. Social forestry (controlled and Managed by the villagers on collective basis) be shared by villagers and the government.
 27. Save hills of Rajmahal, Dalma, Ayodhya, Parashnath, Simlypal, etc., as sacred centres of the tribals.
 28. Vidyasagar University in West Bengal be renamed as

- Vidyasagar Kherwal University. The archaeological and historical monuments also be taken into consideration for the preservation of those objects.
29. The practice of charging capitation fees in Medical/Engineering colleges as prevalent in South India be opposed and those passing out of those colleges/institution should not get employment in this area.
 30. B.I.T. Mesra be pressed to admit local Jharkhandi youths in the institute.
 31. Jharkhandi languages in 'Alchiki' script for the Santhali medium of instruction at school level in North Bengal, Assam, and Jharkhand area of Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and M.P., be implemented.
 32. For the upliftement of the Jharkhand people the conference demands immediate formation of Jharkhand State under Article 3 (ii) of the Indian Constitution.
 33. Jharkhandi Press at Bokaro be established.
 34. Binode Bihari Vikash & Social Justice Manch be formed.

Sd/ Shibu Soren Member of Parliment President, J.M.M. Patron, JBM.	Sd/ Dr. A.K. Singh Vice Chancellor, Ranchi University President, JBM	Sd/ Dr. S. Akinchan Chairman, Concluding Session Working President, JBM
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(Prof. C.C. Mahato)

Gen. Secretary

Jharkhand Buddhijibi Manch.

20. *Fall in Bihar's tribal population fanning flames of Jharkhand Statesman, May 10, 1993*

New Delhi, May 9—A continuous fall in the tribal population in Bihar has been cited as one of the reasons for the increasing influence of the pro-Jharkhand movement in the State, reports UNI.

The State's tribal population fell from 10.07 per cent in 1951 to 8.31 per cent in the last census. The decline was more pronounced in the case of the Jharkhand region—from 36.81 per cent in 1951 to 30.26 per cent in 1981. This was due to the migration of the tribal population from Bihar and of non-tribal people into the State,

according to a report of the Committee on Jharkhand Matters, constituted by the Union Home Ministry.

The influx on the basis of place of birth from other districts of the State increased steadily from 1.17 million in 1961 to 1.46 million in 1971 and to 2.14 million in 1981. The percentage of incoming migrants increased from 10.06 to 12.16 during this period, the report said. It noted that such a large influx of population exerted considerable pressure on land and other resources, employment, educational, medical and other facilities.

The report noted that over the years, the tribal majority districts (the Santhal Parganas and Singhbhum) turned into tribal minority ones. Only Ranchi retained a clear majority despite the rise in urban population and Singhbhum, minus the steel town of Jamshedpur, still has a tribal majority in the rural areas.

There was a population explosion in urban areas and urbanisation of tribal population, the report said. While the tribal population in the rural areas declined, it showed an increase in the urban areas, the report noted.

The low rate of literacy and lack of other facilities were also recorded as other factors that gave rise to the Jharkhand movement.

The report said the Santhal Parganas continued to record the lowest educational facilities in rural areas. Medical facilities available in the Jharkhand districts were lower than the state average. So were the availability of electricity and communication facilities.

The extension of the term "local" to include people from all the districts of the state deprived the people of Chhotanagpur and the Santhal Parganas of the opportunities of employment in the industrial complexes established in their region, the report stated.

"We believe the reasons for this support (to the movement) arises from a widespread feeling of alienation among a large section of people of Chhotanagpur, both tribal and non-tribal from the rest of Bihar....", the report concluded.

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