Anthropological Survey of India

NEWSLETTER

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His Excellence, Hon'ble Vice President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu in the photographic exhibition on "Tribes of India with Special Reference to the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups" in the National Media Centre, New Delhi.

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Dear Readers,

One of the national projects of the Anthropological Survey of India (An.S.I.) is an ethnographic documentation of the de-notified, nomadic, and semi-nomadic communities. To begin with, the list of these communities taken up for investigation was borrowed from the Report that the Commission set up for them, under the chairmanship of Shri Dada Bikuram Idate, a social activist from Konkan, submitted to the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in May 2018. In addition, the An.S.I. also decided to enlist some other communities it came across during its field work, which have the characteristics of nomadic life or its shades, and which currently are not there in the Commission's list; and also bring to the notice of the state the communities the names of which appear in the Commission's list, but in fact are untraceable despite the best efforts of the field investigators to reach their abodes. Besides the Idate Report, for this work we have also consulted the Report of the earlier Commission, which functioned under the chairmanship of Shri Balkrishna Sidram Renke, submitted to the Government of India in 2008.

We decided to first cover the de-notified communities, and then, move to the documentation of nomadic and semi-nomadic people. Field studies began in the financial year of 2018-9. The regional centres of the An.S.I., which had completed the field work and are in the process of writing up their reports, held detailed presentations by their respective staff members engaged in their study. I participated in the presentation-seminars that the NERC (Shillong), WRC (Udaipur), CRC (Nagpur), and ERC (Kolkata) had organized, and was satisfied with the progress they had made. In the mean time, the detailed reports of their field investigations started coming to my office, which I am reading with profit.

To take a larger stock of the studies of the de-notified communities that have been carried out, the sub-regional centre

of the An.S.I. at Jagdalpur (Chhattisgarh) convened a two days' seminar on 18 and 19 March 2019. Inaugurated by the Vice Chancellor of Bastar University, the seminar had presentations which the anthropologists from different regional centres of the An.S.I. and the universities made. In addition to a focus on de-notified communities, the title of the seminar also included Scheduled Tribes, to make the discussion more inclusive. Dr. Piyuse Ranjan Sahoo, the Head of Office of Jagdalpur, spelt out the aims and objectives of the seminar.

The highlight of the seminar, however, was the lectures that Shri Idate and Shri Renka delivered on its second day. It was indeed a great moment for the An.S.I. because the two stalwarts, the national figures, who have spent their lifetime serving the most marginalized communities of the country, shared the same dais. In fact, both of them have a rich, personal experience of being a member of one or the other such community. In their lectures, they were able to weave their personal experiences of being brought up in their respective communities with their insights from having worked as activists with the poorer and deprived sections of society.

Beginning with a description of the scientific methodology for studying human societies, with particular reference to Auguste Comte's positivism, Shri Idate in an erudite address laid emphasis on an objective and scientific assessment of the lives of people, with a clear and sustaining strategy of ameliorating their conditions. He drew the attention of the audience to the role of the nomadic people in freedom struggle, especially that of Umaji Naik, whom he regarded as the greatest man in Maharashtra after Chattrapati Shivaji. Since these communities have remained on the margins of our society, we have never thought of looking into their contribution to the building of Indian civilization. However, as social science has now shed off its elitism, 'studying from above', that is from the viewpoint of the establishment, the politically and economically powerful people, it has given way to a study from the 'below', the perspective of the people occupying the lower rungs of hierarchy. Shri Idate also urged upon the academic fraternity to look into the distinction and the relationship between the concepts of 'tribe' and 'community'. It is because some forty years ago, the term 'De-notified Tribes' was changed to 'De-notified Communities', which meant the tribal identity of some of these communities, which were also in the list of the Scheduled Tribes, was eclipsed. Later, the Government of Tamil Nadu withdrew its Order of 30 July 1979, whereby the nomenclature Denotified Tribes was changed to Denotified Communities, and restored the De-notified Tribes status of its sixty-eight communities.

Shri Renke based his lecture on a well-prepared and detailed power-point. Speaking with exemplary eloquence, he spoke of the Sholapur Settlement, which had a population of 3500-4000 people of de-notified communities, and had a wired barricade around it. It is generally believed that Pandit Nehru cut the wires of the Settlement to liberate the people; but Shri Renke pointed out that it was done on 31 August 1952, not by the late Prime Minister, but by the Governor of the State of Bombay, Sir Girija Shankar Bajpai, and Shri Ganpatrao Devji Tapase, a Congress leader and activist. In fact, after India's independence, Pandit Nehru visited Sholapur in 1960. For the de-notified people, their day of liberation is 31 August, which is celebrated with joviality.

ये समाज 'क्रिमिनल ट्राइब्स' या 'आपराधिक समाज' की श्रेणी में रखे जाते थे

भारत का ये समाज 1947 में नहीं 1952 को मानता है आजादी वर्ष

भारतीय मानवविज्ञान सर्वेक्षण की ओर से हो रहा है 350 से 400 समाजों पर राष्ट्रीय सर्वे

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उदयपुर. भारत को आजादी सन 1947 में मिली थी और हर साल 15 अगस्त को स्वतंत्रता दिवस के रूप में इसे मनाया जाता है। लेकिन, जानकर ये आश्चर्य होगा कि देश में कुछ ऐसे समाज हैं जो अपनी आजादी 1952 से मानते हैं। ये ऐसे समाज हैं जिन्हें 'क्रिमिनल ट्राइब्स' यानी 'आपराधिक समाज' की श्रेणी में रखा जाता था। भारत में ऐसे 350 से 400 समाज हैं जिन पर भारतीय मानवविज्ञान सर्वेक्षण विभाग की ओर से शोध किया जा रहा है। उदयपुर आए भारतीय मानवविज्ञान सर्वेक्षण विभाग, कोलकाता के निदेशक प्रो. वीके श्रीवास्तव ने ये बात पत्रिका से कही।

1952 को इसलिए मानते हैं आजादी वर्ष

उन्होंने बताया कि एएसआई ने वर्ष 2017 से 'क्रिमिनल ट्राइब्स' जिन्हें 'विमुक्त जातियां' भी कहा जाता है, पर सर्वे शुरू किया है। ये सर्वे मुख्यत: क्रिमिनल ट्राइब्स या अपराधी समाज पर है। ये उस समय की बात है जब ब्रिटिश सेना ने भारत को गुलाम बना रखा था। वर्ष 1871 में क्रिमिनल ट्राइब एक्ट पास किया गया था। इसमें उन लोगों को इस समाज में रखा गया जो स्वतंत्रता संग्राम में भाग लेते थे। इन्हें आपराधिक समाज बना दिया गया। इन लोगों के साथ ब्रिटिश लोग बर्बरता किया करते थे। इस पर एक फिल्म भी बनाई गई है। ये एक्ट जब से लागू किया गया, उसके बाद से ऐसे समाजों की संख्या बढ़ती गई। भारत को आजादी मिलने के 5 साल बाद यानी कि 1952 में इस एक्ट को हटा दिया गया। इसके बाद हैबिचुअल ऑफेंडर्स एक्ट लागू कर दिया गया। एक्ट हटने के कारण ही ये समाज 1952 को अपना आजादी वर्ष मानते हैं।

मार्च तक 60 समाजों का अध्ययन

उन्होंने बताया कि 'आपराधिक समाज' पर अभी सर्वे चल रहा है। इसमें मार्च के अंत तक 60 समाजों का अध्ययन हो जाएगा। वहीं, इस सर्वे को पूरा होने में 3 साल का समय लगेगा। इसके बाद इस सर्वे के वॉल्यूम जारी कर दिए जाएंगे। इसके अलावा जैविक मानवविज्ञान के तहत डीएनए प्रोफाइलिंग पर भी 74 समुदायों पर सर्वे किया जा रहा है।

Counting the population of de-notified, nomadic, and semi-nomadic people to be not less than 110 million - the Idate Commission counted it to be close to 150 million - divided into more than 800 communities, their overall condition is despicable. Both the distinguished guests detailed out heart-rending examples from their personal experiences of the tribulations these communities are forced to face. Shri Idate, narrating the problems that women face, cited an incident from the community of Gadulia Lohar, a nomadic community, whose camp was stationed on Delhi-Jaipur highway. He saw a frail woman from this community beating a piece of wrought iron with a heavy hammer. Shri Idate counted she struck the metal sixteen times. From inside the tent was coming out the cries of a baby. When enquired, it was found that just four days before, she had delivered; it was her baby who was wailing. There was no rest, no respite for her. If she did not work, the economy of her household would be affected.

Shri Renke gave the instance of a village in the district of Banaskantha (Gujarat), named Wadia, which had a settlement of two hundred households, with a population of six hundred, of the nomadic community of Saraniya. At one time, they worked in local militia; alongside, they continued with their traditional occupation of knife blade-sharpening, a work that required a lot of travel from one hamlet to the other in search of prospective clients. Gradually, as has happened with a number of communities that specialized in traditional occupations, their source of livelihood from the task of knife-sharpening declined, in the face of changes coming in technology and material culture.

Faced with recurrent episodes of starvation, the women of this community had no option but to enter into flesh trade, Shri Renke said. Their kinsmen became their customer-wooers, most of the time moving close to the highways for prospective deals. In 2007, Shri Renke held a meeting in Wadia to discuss with the local people their problems. Whilst this meeting was going on, a group of women came to see him, of which two spoke. The essence of what they said was that the city-dwellers, like Shri Renka, come to their areas to exhort them of 'virtuous values', telling them repeatedly that flesh trade is abominable, extremely harmful for family and the health of the individual. The women said it was easier to catalogue advices, but those who come to 'preach' should take note of the harsh reality of their life. They said they could always work - they have 'two arms' - but 'where is the work'? They also want to live a life of dignity, but where is the wherewithal for leading such a life? Caustically, the women said that these outsiders come after every couple of years to sermonize, to tell us what we do is immoral and we should give up, but what they do not realize is that if we, the landless people, give up the flesh trade, we would die of hunger, and none would come to our aid. Prostitution, they said, was not their 'traditional occupation', as has been said again and again, but has come to be thrust upon them because of the situations in which they found themselves after the avenues of their survival collapsed. The media describes them as 'openly known for prostitution in Gujarat'.

Shri Renke elaborated his argument that socio-historical conditions were solely responsible for the downfall of nomadic communities and they came to be labeled as 'criminal'. The Saraniya were stigmatized as 'child-lifters', with the media describing them in these words.

Vinay Kumar Srivastava

Director

Inaugural Session of the Seminar, "Scheduled Tribes, De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-nomadic Communities of India: Challenges and Future" at Jagdalpur.

RESEARCH UPDATE

Anthropological Study of Nomadic, Semi-Nomadic and De-notified Communities

Under this Research Project, we have carried out extensive study among some communities in various parts of the country. Here we present some pen pictures of these:

Sansi

The Sansi, a de-notified community, once was an inseparable part of the agrarian society of the yesteryear Haryana. However, they lost the rights to livelihood practices through the agrarian system, because of the enforcement of law in land legislation by the British. Consequently, the Sansi was declared as a Criminal Tribe vide the Criminal Tribes Act, 1871. On 31 August 1952, they were categorized as a 'de-notified' tribe by the independent government. Later the old act was replaced by the Habitual Offender's Act, 1959 and the injustice continued with the implementation of this Act. The plight of this 'so-called tribe'- now statutorily renamed 'De-Notified Tribe', has worsened over the years.

In Haryana, the Sansi are scattered throughout the state. The data for this study was collected from various villages and urban areas of the districts of Kurukshetra, Karnal, Panipat, Jind, Hissar and Rohtak. As per 2011 Census, their population in the state is 50,684. They have been clubbed with Bhedkut and Manesh. 81.4 per cent of their population dwells in rural areas and 18.6 per cent live in urban areas of the state. A majority of them (99.3 per cent) follow Hinduism. The community members claim to have been descended from the Rajputs and consider Raja Sans Mal as their guru, who was the progenitor of this community.

The present study reveals that the Sansis of Jind, Rohtak, Hissar and nearby areas do speak in Sansi dialect among themselves. However, Haryanavi (with its regional variations) is the lingua franca. The Sansi of Kurukshetra, Karnal and Panipat converse in Haryanavi dialect only. The educational qualification of the community is limited to matriculation or higher secondary, while some of them have acquired graduation and post-graduation degrees. The Sansi are mostly engaged in daily wage labour (construction, agriculture etc). Some of the community members are working in various government and private sectors, while a few of them do run pretty businesses as livelihood. Many Sansi families residing in various villages of Kurukshetra and Karnal possess agricultural land and do engage in agriculture as a primary occupation. Intra-community differences are prominent among them. The Sansi inhabiting Ambala, Kurukshetra, Karnal and Yamunanagar prefer marriages within their area only and consider the Sansis living in other districts as socially backward (due to poor educational backgrounds; involvement in some petty crimes and atrocities faced by people of these areas) and avoid any marriage negotiations with them. Earlier the system of Jati Panchayat (caste council) was prevalent but now statutory panchayati raj system is effectively monitoring their villages as well as community development programmes, though some of the community members do prefer the Jati Panchayat to resolving disputes. Their stigma of being criminal is still rampant in the larger part of the neighbouring society. There are many cases of atrocities on Sansis by local police authorities and on many occasions, innocent persons get arrested to match the missing statistics of the crime registers. The community members of Rohtak and Jind have complaints against police on this matter.

Women's World of the Sansi: An Watchful Shepherd

In general, the women are given a low status in their society. Women have a role in agricultural operations, animal husbandry, collection of fuel and fodder. They take part in other economic activities, such as in wage-labour, animal rearing, harvesting. The Sansi mostly live in pucca or semi-pucca houses. Most of the members of the community have a bank account but for a few of them, due to their poor economy, these are mostly namesake practices. Over a passage of time, various developmental initiatives by the state government came in force to integrate them into the mainstream. Vimukt Ghumantu Jati Vikas Board was formed by the state government for socio-economic welfare of the community.

Rajput Bhamti

The Rajput Bhamti of Maharashtra is a settled community. They claim themselves as the descendants of the Rajput clans of the Great Maha Rana Pratap of Rajasthan. The popular narrative about the Rajput Bhamti community is that during the invasion of Mughals into Mewar (the kingdom of Maha Rana Pratap), they were forced to flee from Mewar region and found hideouts into neighboring states. During transition, some of them adopted wage labour as a way of livelihood and engaged themselves in

mending of jute bags that later eventually turned into the traditional occupation of the Rajput Bhamti of Maharashtra. At the same time, some of them engaged themselves in immoral activities like theft, robbery for their survival. These mischievous occupations made their community identity Bhamtiya or Bhamta, which denotes thief in some vernacular of Maharashtra. The community is officially known as Bhamti, even though they claim to be of the Rajput origin. Hence, they prefer to be called the Rajput Bhamti. They are also known by the name Hindi Bhamti because of their language, which is a mixed form of Gujarati and Marwari language. The experience of this community exodus from one place to another and social stigma therein classified them under semi-nomadic and de-notified community.

The Raj Bhamti: Woman Emancipation Speaks Volume

The present study covered Nagpur and Wardha districts of Maharashtra, therefore the source of information and data were drawn from Rajput Bhamti households of these two districts. Many of them have changed their original caste identity Bhamti and adopted new identity of Rajput, as they were often looked down by the other neighbouring castes through proper filing of an affidavit to the notary public. However, there is a certain section of this community which interestingly claims itself as Bhamti and wants to be enrolled under the vimukt jati category. Due to lack of proper supporting documents in favour of their claim they could not succeed. The former group gave up the government benefits and schemes, which were meant for the vimukt jatis, as the Rajput belong to the general category. The latter group is being deprived of the privileges, those earmarked for vimukta jati.

The community members do practice petty business of jute bags that include manufacturing, stitching and selling of jute bags. Besides, some of them are engaged in the service sectors, both in government and private and run petty businesses. Attainment in formal education among the community members has a progressive trend due to the influence of urban life style. The community made a demand saying that the Bhamti is the only community under de-notified/vimukt jati category of the state. Though they are enrolled in national list for the OBC category and accordingly they are now advocating for their inclusion in the national list of the vimukta jati for more privileges.

Natta / Nat

Natta or Nat (in Sanskrit Natta means 'dancer') is a caste group which earns its livelihood through performing dancing and singing in folk society during ceremonial performances, festivals and for recreational purposes in troop, tying up with a number of musical instruments, like vagrant acrobats, showmen and so on. Earlier the Nat community had symbiotic relationship with Brahmin families and provided services for arrangement of firewood of funeral pyres (Rose, 1919). On the other hand, "Nat is an occupational term which includes a number of different clans who have been grouped together merely on account of their common occupation of dancing, prostitution, and performance of various primitive industries", as reported in ethnological account of William Crooke in 1896.

Karwal Nat community is distributed over Gujarat, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Bihar and West Bengal. However, in West Bengal they are primarily concentrated in the erstwhile Dinajpur District of undivided Bengal Province (now in the North and South Dinajpur district of West Bengal). In West Bengal, the Nat community is listed as a one of the Scheduled Caste communities of the state.

Rhythm of Life

This study carried out among the people, who are bearing surname of Natta at different places of both the districts of the Uttar and Dakshin Dinajpur, like Ukilpara, New Ukilpara High Road, Gangarampur, Harirampur, Basudevpur and Dighirpar etc. Nat are also engaged with different castes like Turi, Bhuituri, Handi, Muslim, those who play musical instruments and accompany with the Nat in troop during performance.

Etymologically, their progenitors had migrated from the Pabna district of Bangladesh. They are now identified by their troop names, such as Santosh Band Party, Vijoy Band Party, Pradip Band Party, etc. Each musical band comprises of six to ten or more musical performers. The main occupation of the Nat community is beating drums, like traditional *khol* and *dugi*. However, induction of musical instruments of greater tradition is a recent trend.

Kaikadi

The Kaikadi are one of the fourteen de-notified communities of Maharashtra. Apart from Maharashtra, they are also distributed in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Kerala. In Tamil Nadu, they are known as Kuran and Korba, in Andhra Pradesh as Yerakula and Korvi/Korba/Bajantri in Karnataka. They are called Kaikadi in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. The present study is undertaken among the Kawda Naka (Korvigali) of Kolhapur city and Jawaharnagar, Sutharmadha, Hupri, Kangal, Nondani and Kurundwad of Hathkangle Talluka of the Kolhapur District. Besides these areas, Kaikadi of Moulali Chowk, Korvi Gali and Nayee Duniya of Sholapur District of Maharashtra have also been studied. Kunchikorvi/ Makadwale, Dhontle, Pamlore and Korvi Kaikadi are the four sub-groups of the Kaikadi community. The Konchikorvi/Makadwale are found in Sangli, Kolhapur and Sholapur district of western Maharashtra. Dhontles are inhabited mainly in Beed and Parbhani district of Marathwada. The Pamlor are found in Marathwada and the Korvi/Korva are distributed in western and southern Marathwada of Maharashtra state.

Kaikadi are mainly divided into two exogamous groups: Satpade and Kawde. About fifty-four surnames were reported among Satpade and sixty-nine surnames were identified among Kawde. However, none of these surnames exist today. It is reported that after the promulgation of 1871 Criminal Tribes Act, Kaikadis were easily identified and arrested by the police. To escape from police interrogation, they started discarding traditional surnames and adopted the surnames of Maratha community. At present, Mane, Gaikwad, Jadhav and Powar surnames have become very much popular among them.

Elderly members informed that due to deforestation policy undertaken by the British Government, they were forced to migrate from Tamil Nadu to the aforesaid places since they had no forest land to pursue forest based livelihood practices. In the new locale they had to indulge in looting, snatching and robbery. Particularly, the Dhontle sub-group was mastermind in looting, snatching and organizing robbery, whereas the Kunchi Korvi/Makadwale were used to charming monkeys as well as preparing wooden brush for weaving. The Pamlore sub-group is popularly known as snake charmer while the Korvi Kaikadi professionally had opted for basketry and taken up playing musical instruments on ceremonial occasions of the village.

Basketry in Sustenance of Life

Now-a-days, their main occupation revolves round basketry, making brooms, wage labour in cotton mills, playing musical instruments and domestic help particularly among the female members. The main work of the community in Kolhapur is to make baskets from bamboo while the main work of the Kakadi of Sholapur is to make broom from leaves of a particular type of wild plant. The current study shows that due to their inability in carrying out technical formalities as regard the caste status and the other requirements for obtaining government support in the form of loans for self-employment and skill development, they are unable to upgrade their social and economic status. They do not possess cultivable land or homestead. The Kaikadi are not able to get benefits of constitutional safeguards due to their inability in obtaining caste certificates.

The Berad

Berad is a vimukta jati and nomadic tribe in Maharashtra. During the colonial rule, Berad was regarded as a habitual criminal community by the British authority. Enforcement of Criminal Tribe Act, 1871 and the subsequent police actions against the Berad, consequently constructed a suspicious social environment grossly around the Berad and that detached the community from any means of social engineering. With rational amendment in the Criminal Tribes Act in 1952, the Berad was declared a 'de-notified' akin to many other communities of the country.

The dialect of this community belongs to the Dravidian linguistic group, they seem to have migrated from Karnataka State and settled in the southern bordering region of Maharashtra. In Maharashtra, the Berad are mainly concentrated in Chandgad, Gadinglaj, Ajra, Kagol, Shirol areas of Kolhapur district.

The present study was conducted in Chandgad Taluka where the concentration of Berad population is highest, as in Chandgad Taluka they are distributed in forty-two villages out of one hundred fifty-six villages. The total population of the Berad community in Chandgad is 9017 (Census, 2011), of which males

are 4386 males and females are 4631. The Berad believe that the communities named Berad, Ramoshi, Bedar and Valmiki are the same community, but are referred to by different names in different regions. Their dialect is affiliated to Dravidian linguistic group that has less resemblance to Kanada and more Marathi in Chandgad. They are divided into several clans (*kuli*) such as Gujarlwar, Baskalwar, Taklawar, Mallanwar, Mandlwar, etc. Generally, the Berad practiced clan exogamy, but presently some changes have been noticed in related to their marriage practice.

In past Berad were mainly forest dwellers and brewed country liquor (*kajuka* and *gulika*); today a few of them are continuing with this occupation. Most of them are landless and pursue share cropping, collection of forest produces and selling, daily wage labour, agricultural labour, animal rearing and selling of milk, and engage in masonry work, etc. Enforcement of law relating to forest and making of country liquor results in a decreasing of their traditional occupations which compels them, particularly the youth, to migrate to various places, such as Goa, Pune, Belgaum, Kolhapur, Mumbai, etc, in search of livelihood.

In the social hierarchy, the Berad were considered as an untouchable community subjugated to lower rank in the caste hierarchy. The untouchability is disappearing gradually since formal school education has made road to every nook and corner of the rural society of the Chandgad. Saravashikshya Abhiyan has a great role indeed in villages and has achieved more in the villages like Wagotre, Yaratenatti, Kanur, etc. Khandoba, Yellama or Renuka, Joitba are their major deities which they worship since time immemorial.

A separate ministry has been created by the Government of Maharashtra especially for the development of Vimukt Jati and Nomadic Tribes. However, benefit is only restricted to educational scholarship and provision of loans in some welfare measures. Though the general development programmes are being implemented, in comparison to Sadar villages Berad of border areas and forest dwelling villages of Chandgad require more emphasis related to different schemes, such as MGNREGA, IAY/ PAY, toilets facilities, old-age and disability pension, communication, skill development programmes, different basic infrastructure, unemployment eradication programmes, agricultural development programmers, etc.

Bafan

Etymologically the word Bafan has been derived from Kutchhi and Gujarati word Bhapan. Colloquially Bhap means steamed foodstuffs. It is believed that Bafan had expertise for preparing the steamed foodstuffs, especially mutton and other flesh foodstuffs.

The Bafan had migrated from Sindh region of Pakistan about eight hundred years ago to Nagiary village of Kutchh. In folk narratives, Weera (a saint, pir), along with three other companions and some members of Bafan made their voyage to Kutchh and settled in that village. They were basically cattle-herders and most of their families are following pastoralism as the primary source of livelihood. Pastoralism demands roaming with cattle herds to far off places in search of pastures, thus those days their semi-nomadic behaviour made them suspicious to the neighbouring village folk, especially when some asset went missing from the village, although during the colonial rule, they did not have a criminal background.

Pastorals can't part animals in distress

However, after independence, the situation has changed to some extent, and as of now, Bafan are incorporated in the state list of the OBC by the Government of Gujarat under Resolution No. 12011/68/93-BCC(C), dated 10.09.1993. They are entitled with benefit of various welfare schemes.

Boya

The Boya or 'Boyar' (in a plural and respectable sense in Tamil), represents a very large community of Telugu speaking people, spread all over the State of Tamil Nadu and in the neighbouring States, in various names, such as, Bhovi, Bovi, Bhoi, Odde, Oddar, Vadde, Waddar, Bandi, Godda, and so on. Traditionally the Boya are involved in stone cutting, quarry works, earth digging, limestone extraction and other related occupations.

It is reported that the Boyar or Oddar are closely connected to the Godda and Bandi. In Tamil Nadu, the Bandi and Godda are classified as Scheduled Castes, while Oddar and Boyar are classified as the Most Backward Communities. In the past, the group was locally referred to as Godda rather than Oddar. From their traditional practice of transporting goods, such as loads of earth, stone and salt on oxen back and in carts, they were called Bandi. The literal meaning of Bandi is 'cart'. In the State of Karnataka, the same group is enlisted as Bandi Oddar under the Scheduled Caste category. Hence, the classification of these different identity groups as belonging to different categories such as SC or MBC needs certainly a reconsideration.

These groups claim a common history and a common origin. In fact, the mythology associated with their story of origin is the same. They claim origin from the areas of what today are Andhra

Pradesh and Orissa, more precisely the Ganjam and Srikakulam districts. They seemed to have acquired different identities as they moved geographically and chronologically. The earliest migration of these people took place when the Nayaka kings of Madurai brought the Oddar community from the present Andhra Pradesh/Karnataka for digging lakes and ponds and for construction works, mainly to assist in raising the *gopuram* (tower) and *theppa kulam* (tank) of the famous Meenakshi Amman temple in Madurai).

Labourers at construction site: urbanization and semi-nomadic life of the Boya

The name 'Boyas' is enlisted at Serial No.6 in the Idate Commission Report of 2017, in List 1A - Confirmed List of Denotified Communities of the State of Tamil Nadu. The Boyas are popularly known as Oddars all over the State. According to the community members and its State Level Association called Boyar Seva Samajam based at Pollachi in Coimbatore District and affiliated with the Od Community Council of India, the names Boya and Oddar represent one and the same community and these two names are interchangeably used by its members. Under the People of India project of Anthropological Survey of India, the Boyas have been studied under the name Oddar and its occupational sub-groups in Tamil Nadu. Three occupational subgroups are reported to exist among the Boyar or Oddar community in the study villages in Coimbatore, Madurai and Theni districts of Tamil Nadu, namely, Kal or Kallu Oddar (stone-cutters; Kal or Kallu means 'stone' in Tamil), Mann or Mannu Oddar (earth-diggers or well diggers; Mann means 'soil' or 'earth') and Sunnambu Oddar (lime-workers; Sunnambu denotes 'lime'). It is reported that wherever the Oddars are found in community based spaces, i.e. in their own living areas in the villages of Tamil Nadu, the headman is called Boyan, Boyadu or Peddha Boyadu, the term Peddha denoting 'chief'.

In the study villages, it has been reported that the said occupational subgroups were endogamous in the past with some hierarchy but, of late, such subgroup affiliations are diluted over a period of time due to urbanization and socio-economic mobility of a sizeable section of the community members. In almost all the major cities and towns of Tamil Nadu, it is reported that the Boyar community people are primarily employed in the construction and connected infrastructure industries as labour contractors, masons and mobile (or semi-nomadic) wage labourers, camping in the outskirts of villages and towns with their women and small children to undertake the earth digging works. Therefore, the Boyar or Oddar community comprises both, a small section of developed and a large majority of lower middle class or poorer sections, all over the state of Tamil Nadu. In major cities and towns of Tamil Nadu, the Boyar contractors have been employing the migrant labour from the eastern parts of India, especially from West Bengal and Jharkhand during the last one decade or so, to keep up the pace with, and to cater to, the rapid growth of the construction industry and the increasing urbanization of the smaller towns.

Members of the community also assert that they should not be considered a Denotified community as, hardly any records or evidences exist historically or at the present in proof of their involvement in crimes of any sort.

Community Health, Disease and Genetic Structure of Indian Population

The Physical Anthropology division of the Anthropological Survey of India has also initiated comprehensive study in ascertaining the health status of the De-notified, Notified and Semi-Nomadic Communities. This study includes inquiring on health and hygienic practices, health seeking behaviour, nutritional and general health condition of the community members. Under this project, four different teams have carried out fieldwork among Bedia (West Bengal); Bhar (West Bengal); Maghaiya Dom (West Bengal) and Bansphor (Meghalaya).

Community Genetics and Health (Human Genetics Extension Programme)

A health screening programme for detection of Sickle-cell anaemia and Thalassemia was conducted on 19th and 20th January, 2019, during the 8th Science Expo - 2019 that was organized by the Raman Science Center and Planetarium, Nagpur, in understanding Sickle Cell Anaemia and Thalassemia in Central India, Nagpur city, Maharashtra.

Team from Anthropological Survey of India, Kolkata conducted a Health-awareness-cum-Screening Camp under the project "Community Health, Disease and Genetic Structure of Indian Population" among Pahari Korwa of Mainpat Tehsil, District - Sarguja, Chhattisgarh from 15th to 17th February, 2019. 149 venous blood samples were collected for screening of Beta-thalassemia and abnormal hemoglobinopathies. Further, a similar camp was conducted among Bhutia and Lepcha Community of Yuksom, West Sikkim, by the team from Headquarters, from 24nd to 27th February 2019. A total of 263 individuals were examined and 142 venous blood was collected for screening of Beta-thalassemia and abnormal hemoglobinopathies.

EVENTS

Health Awareness Programme

With the objective of creating health awareness among the tribal communities of the country, the Anthropological Survey of India has taken up a major initiative to organize various health awareness camps across the country. In this endeavour, Anthropological Survey of India, Andaman and Nicobar Regional Centre, Port Blair in collaboration with the Directorate of Tribal Welfare Andaman and Nicobar Administration; Andaman Adim Janjati Vikas Samiti, Andaman and Nicobar Administration; and Directorate of Health Services, Andaman and Nicobar Administration organized a field study entitled "Anthropometric and General Health Assessment among Great Andamanese of Andaman & Nicobar Islands" at Strait Island, Middle Andaman from 6th March 2019 to 9th March 2019. A pilot survey was conducted at Strait Island from 19th January to 20th January 2019 for making preliminary arrangements for the field study. Surmayi, a Great Andamanese lady of the Strait Island inaugurated the camp and got herself registered first for the health check-up. A total of 68 Great Andamanese individual enthusiastically participated in that health-camp.

Let me check: Anthropologist in assessing nutritional health of the Great Andamanese

Research personnel of Head Quarter of the Survey, Kolkata organized a three day long "Health awareness-cum-Screening Camp of Beta-Thalassaemia, Abnormal Haemoglobinopathies" among the Bhutia/Lepcha Community of Yuksom, West Sikkim from 25th to 27th February, 2019.

The North-Western Regional Centre, Dehradun had organized a two day long "Health awareness camp for Genetic disorders" among the Jaunsari Scheduled Tribes of Jaunsar Bawer of Uttarakhand from 27th to 28th February, 2019.

Documentation and Dissemination

Exhibition

- We participated in the 12th Sundarban Utsav and arranged a photographic exhibition at Sonakhali Bazar, Basanti, South 24 Parganas, West Bengal, from 26th January to 4th February, 2019.
- The Central Regional Center (CRC) mounted an exhibition titled 'Human Evolution and Cultural Diversity of Central India' on the occasion of the 8th Science Expo - 2019, organized by the Raman Science Centre and Planetarium, Nagpur from 16th to 20nd January, 2019. Five days' event was conceptualized to bridge the gap between science and society by bringing the Institutes of repute in and around Nagpur to showcase their research activities and contribution to society. The exhibition was well received and attended by more than 55,000 visitors including the students from schools and colleges and had been covered extensively in the local media house. Dr. Abhisikhta Ghosh Roy, Anthropologist of the Central Regional Centre of this Survey, delivered a popular lecture on "Application of Molecular Anthropology in Disease Prognosis" as a part of the Science Expo.

"Up from the Ape": Student in human evolution pavilion

- The Central Regional Center (CRC) had organized an exhibition "Tribes of India with special reference to PVTG" in the National Media Centre, New Delhi on 19th February, 2019. Hon'ble Vice President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, Dr. Nand Kumar Sai, Chairperson, NCST, Ms. Anusuiya Uikey, Vice-Chairperson, NCST, the Secretary and members of the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST), New Delhi, and Prof. Vinay Kumar Srivastava, Director of Anthropological Survey of India, visited the above exhibition.

Seminars

- The North East Regional Centre, Shillong of the Anthropological Survey of India, organized one day symposium on "Mahatma Gandhi and North East India" on 14th February, 2019.

Prof. Amena Passah spoke about the influence of Gandhi on the lives of women in Northeast India in general and Assam in particular. According to her, it was Gandhi who brought the women of the region out of their homes and encouraged them to participate in the freedom movement, to fight against the British rule. Gandhi also influenced the people of Assam to be self-reliant by subscribing to the use of Khadi and other indigenous products. He taught the people how to spin the wheel and weave by doing with which the Assamese women not only boosted the economy but also showed their deep sense of patriotism.

Prof. Passah also talked about the four visits Gandhi made to Assam, which ultimately led to the awakening of freedom movement among the people of Assam. She further emphasized on the fourth visit of Gandhi to Assam when the Kasturba Gandhi Ashram was inaugurated, which still has a great influence in the lives of people.

Later during the discussion hour, it was further shared that the women of Assam responded very well to the call of Gandhi due to various problems they were facing such as alcoholism and opium consumption.

Dr. Sanjeeb Kakoty spoke on the tremendous influence Gandhi had on the people of Northeast India. He cited the example of Gandhi Jayanti, which is observed with respect by the Nagas, which is not the case for the other national freedom fighters. On the influence of Gandhi he cited the example of Assamese women standing up against alcoholism and opium. He also talked about the brief history of Assam prior to independence and mentioned about Gopinath Bordoloi and JJM Nicholas Roy, who met Mahatma Gandhi to save the fate of Northeast India. It was Gandhi who supported the idea that Northeast tribals should not be a part of East Pakistan. Consequently, Northeastern India became a part of India after independence. He admitted that there were not many books and records on Gandhi and his relationship with the Northeast. Dr. Kakoty also shared the teachings of Gandhi and the value of ashram which was embraced by his own parents, too. His own aunt was trained in the ashram founded by Gandhi. At the end he likened every individual with a single lamp which cannot light up the whole world but it can certainly light up thousand other lamps.

Prof. David R. Syiemlieh focused on the national movement and Gandhi's influence on Northeast India. He pointed out that Gandhiji had good leadership quality and was able to influence the women of Assam to rise against the British rule. Gandhi paid four visits to Assam province and led social reformation in the state. In 1921, his visit to Assam was to encourage the women to stand up against the rule of British by fighting against alcohol and opium. He introduced Non-Cooperation Movement and encouraged them to use Khadi clothes. His next visit to Assam in 1926 was to attend the 41st Indian National Congress, which was held at Pandu. Prof. Syiemlieh mentioned about the agitation carried out by the students which was later joined by the INC. He also stated that the people of Northeast India were active in the freedom movement. However, he also mentioned about the British Policy that kept the tribals in the region isolated from the freedom movement. In 1934, Gandhi visited Assam to introduce the Harijan Seva Ashram and in 1946, he inaugurated the Kasturba Gandhi Ashram, the only ashram inaugurated by Gandhi himself, which is still a full-fledged inter-denominational ashram. Finally, Prof. Syiemlieh expressed his support to the ashram and wished that people would adopt Gandhian movement because of its valuable principles.

- A National Seminar on "Mahatma Gandhi: Tribal and Rural Development" was held on 29 and 30 January 2019, in the Conference Hall of Anthropological Survey of India (An.S.I.), Western Regional Centre, Udaipur. The inaugural programme started with welcome songs favourite of Mahatma Gandhi, like his famous Ramdhun song and Bhajan; they were presented by students of Central School No.1, Udaipur, under the direction of Shri Sadashiva Gautam, Music Teacher. During the inaugural session, Dr. M. Sasikumar, Deputy Director and former Head of Office, An.S.I., Kolkata, while welcoming the guests, remembered the influence of Mahatma Gandhi on the thought and anthropology of noted thinkers, like Thakkar Bapa, Verrier Elwin, and Nirmal Kumar Bose. Prof. V. K. Srivastava, Director, An.S.I., in his opening remarks reiterated that Gandhi's philosophy spoke of human body, village and nation for an overall human development. Down the memory lane, he recollected what his grandfather and father remembered of Mahatma Gandhi's prayer meetings. He remarked that when Gandhi addressed a large gathering, everybody in it thought that it was an address for him or her only.

Dr. Tilak Bagchi, Head of Office, An.S.I., Western Regional Centre, Udaipur, introduced the theme and the concept note of the seminar. In his speech, he reiterated Gandhiji's notion of 18-points constructive programme for rural development which incorporates tribal development as well.

Dr. Bagchi also spoke of Gandhian philosophy regarding the revival of village industry and khadi for decentralization of production and distribution of necessities of life vis-a-vis the role of Gandhiji in the life and philosophy of noted anthropologists. Shri D.C. Jain, RAS, Director, MLV Tribal Research and Training Institute, Udaipur, was the Chief Guest. He, in his speech, spoke about the Gandhian Model of economic development. Professor Naresh Kumar Bhargava, Mohanlal Sukhidia University, Udaipur, in his speech as the Guest of Honour, discussed the Gandhian philosophy from a sociological point of view. He also told about Gandhi and protest in tribal perspective. He also compared Gandhian thought with the writing of noted social scientists, like Karl Marx, Ralf Dahrendorf, P. Sorokin, and J. Habermas.

Prof. S.L. Sharma, Professor of Sociology and Director, Post-Graduate School of Social Sciences, Rajasthan University, Jaipur, delivered the keynote address. In his speech, he described the Gandhian model of development and its relevance to the modernity and post-modernity in India. Prof. Sharma said that the philosophy of Gandhi lays stress on the unity of mankind, application of moral principles, social and economic equality and political decentralization. Gandhi provides solution to the contemporary dilemmas and conflicts arising due to the failure of the development paradigm and the failure of leadership.

Dr. Umesh Kumar, Senior Ecologist and presently, Head of Office of Anthropological Survey of India, Head Office, Kolkata, offered the vote of thanks. Shri Vilas Janve, former Programme Officer, West Zone Cultural Centre, Udaipur, and a noted anchor, was the anchor.

After the inaugural session, a book exhibition on Mahatma Gandhi was inaugurated jointly by Prof. N.K. Bhargava and Shri D.C. Jain. More than forty papers in five different sessions, namely Mahatma Gandhi and Indian Tribes, Mahatma Gandhi and Rural Development, Gandhian Social Thinkers and Organizations, Gandhian Philosophy and Thought, and Mahatma Gandhi and Rural Reconstruction, Relevance and Development in Contemporary India, were presented in the two days' seminar. Eminent scholars from different disciplines and walks of life, like Anthropology, Sociology, Social Work, History, Geography, Political Science, Philosophy, Hindi Literature, English Literature, Drawing and Painting, Gandhian Philosophy, Economics, experts in the field of Management and Administration, including experts in the field of Forest Management and Himalayan and Environmental Development, representative of NGOs following the Gandhian path, presented their thought provoking papers in the Seminar.

Eminent scholars including Prof. B.P Bhatnagar, former Vice-Chancellor, J.R.N. Rajasthan Vidyapith (deemed-to-be-university) and Regional Convener, INTACH, Udaipur, Prof. H.S Chandaliya, Professor, Department of English, JRN Rajasthan Vidyapith, Prof. Pushpa Motiani, Former Professor, Head and Dean, Department of Gandhian Studies, Gujarat Vidyapith, founded by Mahatma Gandhi, Prof. Sudha Chaudhry, Head, Department of Philosophy, Mohanlal Sukhadia University, Udaipur, Prof. Arun Chaturvedi, Former Professor of Political Science, Mohanlal Sukhadia University, Udaipur, Prof. Sanjay Lodha, Professor of Political Science, Mohanlal Sukhadia University, Udaipur, Prof. Lalit Pandey, Former Professor and Head, Department of Archaelogy and ex-Director, Sahitya Sansthan, JRN Rajasthan Vidyapith, Prof. Brij Kishore Sharma, an eminent historian and former Professor and Head Department of History, Kota Open University, Rajasthan, and Dr. Purna Shankar Meena, an eminent Bhil intellectual and former Vice-Principal, Salumbar Govt. College, chaired the different academic and special sessions. Various eminent scholars including Dr. Umesh Kumar, Senior Ecologist and presently, Head of Office of Anthropological Survey of India, Head Office, Kolkata, Dr. R.P. Mitra, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Anthropology, University of Delhi, Dr. K.M. Sinha Roy, Head of Office, Anthropological Survey of India, Eastern Regional Centre, Kolkata, and Shri A.J. Biswas, Anthropological Survey of India, Kolkata, Dr. Kahani Bhanawat, Associate Profeesor of Drawing & Painting, Meera Government Girls College, Udaipur, Dr. A.K Sahani, Scientist-D, G.B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Institute of Environment and Sustainable Development, Srinagar, Garhwal, Dr. Jyoti Mehta, Joint Director, MLV Tribal Research and Training Institute, Dr. Debashish Debnath, Associate Professor, Indian Institute of Forest Management, Bhopal, and Dr. Tuhin Kanti Das, Associate Professor of Political Science, Belda College, West Das, Associate Professor of Political Science, Belda College, West Bengal, Dr. Preeti Bhatt of Dept. of Hindi, S.N.B. Post Graduate Govt. College, Nathdwara, Dr. Sita Gurjar, Faculty of Udaipur School of Social Work, Dr. Kanubhai Heerpada of Dept. of Gandhian Philosophy, Gujarat Vidyapith, Dr.Anju Beniwal,

Inaugural session of the National Seminar, "Mahatma Gandhi: Tribal and Rural Development"

Faculty of the Dept. of Sociology, Govt. Meera Girls, Udaipur, Dr. Bhartiben Daave of Dept. of Gandhian Philosophy, Gujarat Vidyapith, and others including members of the staff of this regional centre were present as distinguished participants, speakers and co-chair persons during different academic and special sessions. Scholars from Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Uttrakhand, New Delhi, and West Bengal participated in the seminar.

दो दिवसीय राष्ट्रीय संगोष्ठी का समापन

जनजातीय विकास में आज भी प्रासंगिक है गांधी दर्शन

नाटक 'मोहन से मसीहा' ने छोड़ा असर

उदयपुर. भारतीय मानवविज्ञान सर्वेक्षण, पश्चिमी क्षेत्रीय केंद्र जो ओर से महात्मा गांधी : जनजातीय एवं ग्रामीण विकास पर आयोजित राष्ट्रीय संगोष्ठी के दूसरे दिन बुधवार को एसआई, कोलकाता के निदेशक प्रो.पीके. भौमसरथ ने गांधीजी की विचारधारा का राष्ट्र निर्माण व अर्थकेन्द्रित विकास में उपयोगिता पर प्रकाश डाला। मोहनीर के मुख्य वक्ता राजस्थान सिंधि, जयपुर के समन्वयक्षम के पृथ्वीराज प्रो. एसएन शर्मा ने गांधीजी का स्वराज सर्वोदय के दृष्टिकोण के बारे में विचार रखे। प्रो. एनके. भागव ने गांधीजी की विचारधारा का मानविक एवं सामाजिक दृष्टिकोण से विश्लेषण किया। मुख्य अतिथि मानवविज्ञान वर्मा जनजातीय एवं शोध सं प्रशिक्षण संस्थान के निदेशक दिनेशचंद्र जैन ने गांधीजी की विचारधारा का ग्रामीण एवं जनजातीय विकास के लिए प्रासंगिकता पर प्रकाश डाला। दो दिवसीय इस संगोष्ठी में महात्मा गांधी एवं भारतीय जनजाति, महात्मा गांधी व ग्रामीण उत्थान, गांधीवादी समाज चिंतक एवं संगठन, गांधी दर्शन व चिंतन व समकालीन भारत में गांधी दर्शन पर लगभग 40 पत्रवाचन हुए। सुखाड़िया विवि के कुलपति प्रो. जेपी शर्मा ने उदयपुर के जनजातीय एवं ग्रामीण विकास को गांधीवादी चिंतन के द्वारा समझाया।

केंद्र के कार्यालय प्रमुख डॉ. तिलक बागची ने भी विचार रखे। वहीं, कार्यक्रम में सामील विद्यार्थ में लोककलाओं की स्वतंत्रता को महत्वपूर्ण कला के रूप में पश्चिम क्षेत्र सांस्कृतिक केंद्र के पूर्व कार्यक्रम अधिकारी विनायम जगवंत ने राष्ट्रीय बहुरूपिया शिक्षादेर अल्बास ने प्रस्तुति दी।

उदयपुर. लोक कला मण्डल एवं दि परफोरमर्स के संयुक्त तत्वावधान में नाट्य कार्यशाला के तहत प्रतिभागियों को नाट्य कला के विभिन्न पहलू से अवगत कराया जा रहा है। इसी कार्यशाला के दौरान राष्ट्रपिता महात्मा गांधी के जीवन तथा भारत की स्वतंत्रता के लिए किए प्रयासों को नाट्य रूप में तैयार कर नाटक 'मोहन से मसीहा' के रूप में बुधवार को प्रस्तुत किया गया। इसका लेखन एवं निर्देशन डॉ. लवीर हुसैन ने किया। कार्यशाला में राष्ट्रीय नाट्य विद्यालय के अंतिम अली हैदर खान, कल्याण बनिक, अनुराधा लवीना एवं प्रबुद्ध पालवे ने सहर्ष सहित अभिनय क्षेत्र के गुरुओं को प्रशिक्षण दिया। मास्टर सचिव दौलत सिंह दीपावत ने बताया कि नाटक में प्रसिद्ध प्रतिभागी कल्याण वैष्णव, भरोसा सिकरी, कुलदा लोहारनी, सुमन अमेटा, गुणपाल मेहता, दीपांशु धुरिया, अर्जुन सिंह सुखावत, हर्ष कवर सिंह, सावल्या लोहरी और नवीन भीलोरा ने अभिनय अभिनय से खरा उतरी।

In the first academic session, papers were presented on Gandhi and protest in tribal perspective, Gandhi and model of development vis-à-vis rights of the tribals in India, exploring Gandhi Ashram in tribal area, role of Mahatma Gandhi on rural and economic development, and such other issues. In the second academic session, papers were presented on the Gandhian concept of rural development, Gandhian role in rural development and the present day scenario in rural and tribal areas, Gandhian role and relevance for successful implementation of Panchayati Raj institutions in tribal areas, Gandhi and Gram Swaraj for tribal as well as Gandhi as people's leader in rural area during India's freedom fight and such other issues.

In the third academic session, papers were presented on the role of Mahatma Gandhi on shaping the life of Balwant Singh Mehta, member of the constitutional assembly, an illustrious son of soil of Udaipur and Prof. Nirmal Kumar Bose, renowned Gandhian philosopher, interpreter of Gandhian thought and anthropologist, role and activities of non-governmental organizations following Gandhian path, like Dakshin Adivasi Seva Mandal, Valsad, Gujarat, inaugurated by Shri Morarji Desai, Former Prime Minister of India, Vidya Bhawan Society and Seva Mandir, Udaipur, founded by Mohan Singh Mehta noted Gandhian philosopher and activist, Jagran Jan Vikas Samiti, an organization associated with Dr. B.D Sharma, former Commissioner of Scheduled Tribes and a noble personality, who fought throughout his life for the cause of the tribal and role of Gandhian organizations in rural reconstruction in Paschim Midinapur, West Bengal. In these papers, the authors attempted to highlight Gandhian principles in the arena of economic, educational and social aspects, as well as the development in the arena of ethno-medicine and Ayurveda.

In the fourth academic session, papers were presented on Mahatma Gandhi and his educational philosophy, Satyagraha Darshan, role of Gandhian philosophy in Indian economic and rural milieu, and such other issues. In the last academic session, papers were presented on the role of Gandhian philosophy in conservation of natural resources, economic sustainability of a village and the philosophy of Gandhiji on rural development, Gandhian philosophy and women's rights, *charkha*, etc., Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, as reflected from Gandhian vision, for a healthy nation, contribution of Gandhi in indigenous knowledge system, Gandhian dream for new India, Gandhian concept of equality across caste, creed and gender barrier, the thought of Mahatma Gandhi on anti-alcoholic campaigning and its present day scenario in South Rajasthan and so on. Besides academic sessions in the three special sessions, presentation of invited speakers, namely Smt. Kalpana Palkiwala, former Deputy Director, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India, spoke about songs on the Mahatma along with audio-presentation, which was based on her painstaking research and compilation of more than 100 songs on Mahatma Gandhi in 14 different Indian languages. Shri Vilash Janve, Head, Martanda Foundation, Udaipur, and Shri Sikandar Abbas, National Bahurupia, made a presentation on Gandhiji and the rural folk performance with special reference to Bahurupia Kala and Shri Aswani Kabir Sharma presented his paper on "In Search of Gandhiji among the Nomadic Communities" were also the prime attraction of the seminar.

The valedictory session was chaired by Prof. V.K. Srivastava. He, in his address, spoke of the relevance of Mahatma Gandhi in contemporary India as reflected from the presentation of the two days seminar. Prof. J.P. Sharma, Vice Chancellor, Mohanlal Sukhadia University, in his speech as Chief Guest told that Gandhian model of development is more relevant in contemporary Indian nation building from economic and social point of view. Prof. Puspa Motiyani in her valedictory address described the role of Mahatma Gandhi in changing the tribal lifestyle. In her address, she described Mahatma Gandhi both as an academic philosopher and a system builder who contributed significantly to the existence of human race. She also described that Gandhi firmly believed that tribals are intrinsically related with nature and nurture, including land and forest. Prof. Motiyani focused on the Gandhian philosophy, tribal lifestyle and preservation of environment. Dr. Chandrakant Upadhaya, Director, Gujarat Tribal Research & Training Institute, Gujarat Vidyapeeth, Ahmedabad, delivered the second valedictory address in absentia, where he narrated Mahatma Gandhi's role in tribal and rural development.

The news of the seminar was well covered in local press and electronic media. In this respect a press conference was held on 28 January 2019, chaired by Prof. Srivastava.

- The Sub-Regional Centre of the Anthropological Survey of India, Jagdalpur organized a two day National seminar on "Scheduled Tribes, De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-nomadic Communities of India: Challenges and Future" which was held on 18 and 19 March, 2019 in the office Campus. Around 120 participants participated in this two day seminar where a total of 46 papers were presented by the researchers, students, professors from various universities, institutions, NGOs and others from all over India including the personnel from various Centres of Anthropological Survey of India.

Audio-visual documentation

A Journey to Kumbh Mela

Kumbh Melas have always attracted millions of pilgrims of all ages and generations to the banks of sacred rivers of our country since time immemorial. Traditionally, Kumbh relates to the grand narrative of falling of nectar from the holy pitcher (Kumbh) and the way this grand narrative becomes the focal point of convergence of different sects of religious beliefs in the country. This spiritual gathering over the period has become the symbol of peace and harmony to the pilgrims, religious figures, saints who travel in large groups to participate in the ritual of holy baths to the confluence of rivers. As a consequence, knowledge, understanding and tolerance about the different strands of spirituality are shared among the people that attract millions of tourists, pilgrims and foreign nationals to be a part of this celebration.

People from all walks of life have imagined the Kumbh Mela in their own way. To some people, it is the greatest show on the earth, a media spectacle; the largest congregation of people in the world. Kumbh Mela has always been an occasion of interest in the academic circles and among the documentarians. Some have said that it is the ephemeral, the temporal city which comes up every interval of twelve or six years and gets dismantled after the Kumbh. To some, this is the classic case of understanding the urban planning and crowd management. One finds innumerable books, articles and documentaries sponsored by big funding agencies and freelancers from the national and international arena. The literature often illustrates the festival background, the archaeological evidence, astrological connections, development of the Kumbh Mela festival and its influence on people, historical perspective of religious mass gathering and even the controversies on the administration of religious festivals, or the risks posed by the sadhus of different Akhadas and Naga sannyasis while fighting over the control on Kumbh, etc.

Pilgrimage studies have always been a core topic to the discipline of Anthropology as a whole and Anthropological Survey of India as an organization has attended to the discourse from time to time. As a consequence there are some solitary studies on pilgrimage as well. A small venture was attempted in 2016 for making a photographic documentation of Royal Baths and other rituals during Simhastha Kumbh Mela at Ujjain by the Central Regional Centre, Nagpur of the Survey which later culminated in an exhibition in November 2018. As a preparation for the next Kumbh Mela of Prayagraj from January to March 2019, a seminar on 'Anthropology of Pilgrimage' was held in the centre along with the exhibition on Ujjain Kumbh. The seminar was a combination of understanding on the old and new schools of pilgrimage studies which used the analytical categories of the sacred geography, the sacred performances and the scared specialities; on socio-cultural changes in pilgrimage centre concerning the sacred specialists directly engaged in the activity of pilgrimage; as well as placing pilgrimage within the modern context of tourism and travel studies and the accompanying massive logistic challenges in organizing the religious congregation.

Maha Kumbha: The Sacred confluence of triumph, joy and offerings

This was a boost to the researchers in increasing the horizon and move forward for a larger endeavour in making an audio-visual documentary in Prayagraj Kumbh Mela in 2019. Some pertinent queries would arise here as why an organization of repute is interested to work in an area that has been overworked. What more the researchers of this great organization will add to this great mass of knowledge? This was the most challenging point which intrigued in initiating the audio-visual documentation. The country observes Kumbh Mela in four different places, Hardwar, Prayagraj, Ujjain and Nasik and all are situated near a holy river. Why people again and again come to the place and work in the area? What motivates people, not only the researchers or film makers but also the innumerable number of pilgrims from different parts of the country and outside throng at the confluence of rivers and stay for a certain period and experience the spiritual activity?

But still in academics, there is always a gap in the knowledge. Though many issues were taken up but most were pursued in isolation. For a group of anthropologists, Kumbh Kumbh is not only the confluence of Sadhus, Aghori Babas, or Naga Sannyasis from different Akhadas in a common platform and sharing the philosophy of Sanatan Dharma, it is also about knowing the country and its people and the underlying connections between the ideal and the real. The gap was evident in the context of Kumbh and its association with the devotees and in comprehending the complex character of Pilgrim/Kalpavasis-Ghatia-Prayagwals and the people of Prayag.

Firstly, Kumbh festival in Prayagraj occurs during the period of winter solstice which is also the shortest days of the year. The moving of sun towards the northward direction brings more sunshine which is vital for the crops. In the Indian tradition, the abundance of the crop signifies the renewal of life which in a way connects to the greater narrative of procurement of nectar of immortality and the confluence of the sacred rivers and directs us to the cult of fertility (Kumbh), the great celebration of life and a belief in the sanctity of the River Ganga. Thus the local tradition meets the greater tradition in Kumbh.

Secondly, the penance observed by the groups of Kalpawasis who stay for a month in every year during Magh Mela for a period of one month in Prayagraj over the period of time has become a part of the larger Mela of Kumbh. Besides having the regular bath in the sacred river and staying in tents on the banks of Ganga, these Kalpawasis observe special code of conduct related to daily bath, spiritual discourses along with restricted food which includes *snan* (bath), *dhyan* (meditation), *japa* (repetition of God's name), *upavasa* (fasting), *seva* (service), *puja* (worship), *bhajana* (singing of bhajans), *kirtana* (group singing), *pravachan-shravana* (listening to religious discourses), and *sadhu darshana* (meeting holy men). The penance, as Kalpawasis say, evokes a kind of effervescence which is full of positive vibes and emotions. Along with them, the devotees and pilgrims from different parts of the country join the *aratis* of Ganga Maiya (the sacred river becoming the sacred mother) by lighting and flowing small earthen lamps in the river water. On the other hand, the *aratis* in the Akhadas which are more disciplined in nature create a divine atmosphere and give a bubbling excitement, happiness and positive emotions. The whole ritual of penance and devotion is incomplete without the presence of Prayagwal, the *pandas* of Prayagraj, who keep the family trees of the pilgrims coming from different places and the Ghatiyas, the other group of Brahmins from Prayag who receive the *dan* from the devotees.

Thirdly, the occasion traditionally is essentially a gathering of religious teachers and saints who came together to discuss points of theology and philosophy with each other. It may be said that it was treated as a parliament or forum of religion where differences of belief and practice could be rationalized, the Dharam Sansad. In the present day parlance, this Dharam Sansad has become a place of debate on the present day politico-religious

situation. The discourse now has shifted to more on how the country should prioritize its next step on religion and politics.

Fourthly, Kumbh Mela in recent years has been completely institutionalized; it has emerged as an international fair, a complete display of event management. It becomes a challenging task for the government to create a temporal city on a site, the *kachad* which remains submerged during monsoon months and is available for the construction work only two months before the beginning of the Mela where a huge number of pilgrims could be housed without any outbreak of epidemics, the human wastes to be safely disposed, the medical needs, availability of food and other provisions, with any violence. There were common people, the shopkeepers of various kinds, religious books, precious stones, boatmen, beggars, mendicants, etc; for them Kumbh Mela is the place for making good business. A whole economy is found to be running on pilgrimage.

For the researchers of the Anthropological Survey of India, there were many pull and push factors which were present at the same site and contributing together for a certain period of time to reach a certain goal which many be individual or collective. The event also experienced the conflicts surrounding the whole event and the mitigation process therein; the imposition of ban on intrusion of photographers at Sangam rose during the bath, thus depicting the ever presence of tensions between religious display and media.

The audio-visual documentation by the researchers of Anthropological Survey of India has hopes to bring out a coffee table book, a photographic exhibition in future and a documentary film. The initial findings have shown that Kumbh Mela as a site has potential for further research in Anthropology and in other social science disciplines.

Collaborative Programme

- The Survey extended financial support to the Dept. of Anthropology, Vidyasagar University, Medinipur, West Bengal in organizing an International Seminar on "Tribe, State and Development: Exploring Anthropological Knowledge" from 7th February to 8th February, 2019.
- The Anthropological Survey provided collaborative academic financial assistance to the Dept. of Anthropology, Assam University, for organizing National Seminar on "Anthropology in the 21st Century: Emerging areas of Research and its Role in National Development" from 11th February to 12th February, 2019 at the Diphu Campus, Karbi Anglong, Assam.
- The Survey provided financial assistance for holding Indian Anthropology Congress on "Anthropology for Developing India: Pathways to Policy Planning and Implementation" at Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune from 21st February to 23rd February, 2019.
- In collaboration with the Dept. of Anthropology, Panjab University, Chandigarh, the Survey organized a National Workshop on "Situating Social Impact Assessment in Development Milieu: A Holistic Approach" from 8th March to 9th March, 2019.
- The Survey extended financial support to the Dept. of Geography, Aliah University for organizing a two-days National Seminar on "Geography as a spatial science: Contemporary Issues and Challenges" from 8th March to 9th March, 2019.
- In organizing a national conference entitled "Kolkatar Samskriti: An Anthropological Review" from 15th March to 17th March, 2019, we extended financial support to the Kolkata Society for Asian Studies, Kolkata.
- The Survey provided collaborative financial support for holding a ten day "Ethnography Workshop for Research Scholars" at Ambedkar University, Delhi from 11th to 22nd March, 2019.

Man-power training

- Dr. Tilak Bagchi, Assistant Keeper attended a ten day workshop on "Ethnography workshop for Research Scholars", organized by the School of Liberal Studies and School of Human Ecology of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University, Delhi from 11th 2019 to 22nd March 2019, and as a resource person of the said programme, Dr. Bagchi delivered a lecture on "Tribes of Rajasthan" and conducted a session in the said workshop.
- Shri. C.S. Roy, Research Associate (Physical), participated in a workshop on "Tribal Healers Workshop", organized by Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya, Bhopal from 19th to 23rd February, 2019.
- Dr. Mithun Sikdar underwent a training programme at MAHE-AIST workshop on Epigenomics at School of life Sciences, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal, from 20th to 22nd February 2019.
- Dr. Ratna Dhar, Superintending Anthropologist (Cultural) delivered a lecture on 'The Fieldwork Tradition in Anthropology and Qualitative Research' at a Workshop on 'Methodological Perspective on Ethnographic Research' at Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishva Vidyalaya, Wardha on 11th March, 2019.
- Shri Mainak Chakraborty, Junior Research Fellow participated a Workshop on "Qualitative Methods in Social Sciences: Ethnography, Narratives and Story Telling" from 11th March to 15th March at Council for Social Development, New Delhi.
- The Western Regional Centre, Udaipur organized a Workshop on "Conservation of Museum Objects" from 12th March to 16th March 2019.

NEWS

Participation in National/ International Seminar

- Dr. Abhishikta Ghosh Roy, Anthropologist (Physical) participated in the 106th Indian Science Congress at Lovely Professional University, Jalandar, Punjab from 3rd to 7thJanurary, 2019.
- A contingent of scholars from the Southern Regional Center, Mysuru participated in the National Seminar on "Unique markers of biology, culture, language and history of Indian population" organised by the Anthropological Association, Mysuru during 10th and 11th of January 2019.
- Dr. Abhishikta Ghosh Roy, Anthropologist (Physical) participated in the 2nd Inernational Academic Conference on Humanities and Social Sciences held at University of Washington, Rome Centre at Rome, Italy from 15th to 17th February, 2019 and presented a paper on 'BRCA and Breast Cancer Risk: A Bio-environmental Susceptibility Study on Bengali Females of India'.
- Ms. Banita Behera, Assitant Keeper, with the generous support of International Travel Grant of the Indian Council of Social Science and Research, New Delhi participated in the Second International Academic Conference on Humanities and Social Science, held at University of Washington, Rome Center, Italy, from 15th to 17th February 2019.
- Dr. Abhishikta Ghosh Roy, Anthropologist (Physical) delivered a popular lecture on "Application of Molecular Anthropology in disease Prognosis" in the 8th Science Expo - 2019, organized by the Raman Science Center and Planetarium, Nagpur from 16th to 20nd January, 2019.
- Dr. Arsi Prasad Jha, Research Associate (Psychology) attended a National Seminar in Pandit Sundarlal Sharma Open University, Bilashpur, Chattisgarh, from 19th to 20th January, 2019 and presented paper on disability.
- Dr. Tilak Bagchi, Assistant Keeper, presented a paper titled "Influence of Mahatama Gandhi on the life and anthropology of Nirmal Kumar Bose" in the National Seminar on "Mahatma Gandhi: Tribal and Rural Development" organized by Anthropological Survey of India, Western Regional Centre, Udaipur during 29th and 30th January, 2019.
- Dr. Arsi Prasad Jha, Research Associate (Psychology) presented a paper titled "ग्रामिनों एवं जनजातियाँ मे वढ़ रही नशा प्रवृत्ति के दुस्परिनाम के वारे मे गान्धी के विचारः राजस्थान के ग्रामिन विकाश में वाधक कारोकों के परिप्रेक्ष मे अध्ययन" in the National Seminar on "Mahatma Gandhi: Tribal and Rural Development" organized by the Anthropological Survey of India, Western Regional Centre, Udaipur during 29th and 30th January, 2019.
- Dr. M. Nanibabu, Research Associate (Physical) and Dr. B.V. Raviprasad, Assistant Anthropologist (Physical) presented papers in the National Seminar on "Schedule Tribes, De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-nomadic communities of India: Challenges and Future", organized by the Sub-Regional Centre, Jagadalpur from 18th March to 19th March, 2019.
- Dr. Ratna Dhar, Superintending Anthropologist (Cultural) participated in the National seminar on "Scheduled Tribes, De-notified, Nomadic and Semi Nomadic communities of India: Challenges and future" organized by Anthropological Survey of India, Sub-Regional Centre, Jagdalpur from 18th to 19th March, 2019 and presented a paper on "Patriarchy and Gender Dynamics: Family, Marriage and Prostitution among Banchhada of Central India".
- Smt. Shruti Singh Saxena, Research Associate (Cultural) presented a paper "Unexplored facets of Gandhi: His contribution to indigenous knowledge system" in the National Seminar on "Mahatma Gandhi: Tribal and Rural Development" organized by Anthropological Survey of India, Western Regional Centre, Udaipur during 29th and 30th January, 2019.
- Shri Anil Kumar Singh, SRF presented a paper "महात्मा गान्धी के सपनों का भारत" in the National Seminar on Mahatma Gandhi: Tribal and Rural Development organized by Anthropological Survey of India, Western Regional Centre, Udaipur during 29th and 30th January, 2019.
- Dr. Piyusha Ranjan Sahu, Anthropologist (Cultural) participated in the International Seminar on "Understanding Tribes in Neo-Liberal Era" from 9th March to 10th March, 2019 at the P.G. Department of Anthropology, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar.

Representation of Survey/Government of India / Abroad

- Dr. R.R. Gowloog, Superintending Anthropologist (Cultural) attended a meeting on "Anthropological and Ecological Research in Arunachal Pradesh" on 30th January, 2019 at New Delhi.

Scientists on the March : An Indo-US Collaborative Programme

- As a part of the Memorandum of Agreement between the Defense, POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA), Federal Government of United States of America and the Anthropological Survey of India, Ministry of Culture, Government of Republic of India, a team of four research personnel i.e., Dr. B. P. Urade, Superintending Anthropologist (Physical), Dr. Mithun Sikdar, Superintending Anthropologist (Physical), Dr. Venugopal. P.N., Assistant. Anthropologist (Physical) and Dr. Shiv Kumar Patel, Assistant Anthropologist (Physical) made a visit to the DPAA Laboratory, Hawaii, USA to attend the training programme on "Forensic Archaeology and DNA extraction" from 4th to 8th February, 2019.

- Shri Santosh Kumar Pathak participated in a National Level Workshop for the Nodal Media Officer of all organizations under the Ministry of Culture on 15th March, 2019 at Indira Gandhi National Centre for Art, New Delhi.

- Dr. Tilak Bagchi, Assistant Anthropologist (Cultural) attended the Stake Holder Meeting from 26th March to 27th March, 2019 at G.B. Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development, Garhwal Unit, Srinagar, Uttarakhand.

Swatch Bharat Abhiyaan

The Western Regional Centre, Udaipur organized Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan- Health and Cleanliness Awareness Programme in the community hall of Raghunathpura a Bhil dominated village of Udaipur, Rajasthan on 26th February. In the said programme popular lectures were delivered by faculties like Dr. R.P. Mitra, Dr. K.N. Saraswati, Dr. Benrithung Murry and research scholars and students of the Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi on various issues pertaining to health, nutrition, sanitation, personal and environmental hygiene and cleanliness. Shri Khemraj Kharade, President, Bhil Samaj Vikas Samiti, graced the occasion as Chief Guest.

Guest Lecture

Prof. Henry Lamin, Pro-Vice Chancellor, North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong delivered a thought provoking lecture on "Matrilineal Society of Khasi, Meghalaya: Past and Future Trends" at the Andaman and Nicobar Regional Centre, Port Blair on 5th January 2019.

Rajbhasha

- Hindi Timahy Karyashala (Quarterly Hindi Workshop) was conducted among the staff members at all Regional Centres of the Survey.
- The Central Regional Centre, Nagpur had confer with "Official Language Innovation Award" (Rajbhasha Navachar Samman) by the Town Official Language Implementation Committee (TOLIC), Nagpur in the Annual Award Ceremony on March 8, 2019 for organizing two-day National Seminar on "Vartaman Sandarv mein Bharatiya Janjatiyon mein Paramparik Gyanki Prasangikta ("Relevance of Traditional Knowledge among the Indian Tribes in the Current Context") on 25-26 September, 2018.

Ceremonious "Official Language Innovation Award" evening

Others:

- A press conference was held in Udaipur on 28th January, 2019 about the Seminar on Mahatma Gandhi, which was addressed by Director, Anthropological Survey of India. Senior journalists and media person of the local print and electronic media attended the press conference.
- The 30th Executive Committee Meeting of this Survey was held on 15th January at Eastern Regional Centre, Salt Lake, Kolkata.
- The Survey organized 70th Republic Day at its Head Quarter and all Regional Centres in a befitting manner.

New recruitment

Miss. Rakhi Kumari and Ms. Monica Huidrom Devi joined the posts of Research Associate (Linguistics).

Superannuation

Shri Asaru Pradhan (M.T.S.); Shri Sudip De (Office Superintendent) Shri P. S. Khisti (Photographer); Sri Manohar Prasad Rai (Assistant); Smt. Mary Alphonsa (Assistant) had retired from Service on reaching the age of superannuation.

Scholastic imprints

Bagchi T, R. Chakravorty, A.P. Jha, P. Purkait and A.K. Singh, 2018; Psycho-Social Impact of Border in Two Indo-Pak Frontier Villages of Jaisalmer, Rajasthan, *Journal of the Anthropological Survey of India*, Vol. 67(2) ; 161-184.

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Behera, B. 2019, Majang: The Youth Dormitory of Juang Tribe, its persistence and Change. 2019. *The International Journal of Academic Research*, 6(5): 11-16.

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Chakraborty, P. 2019, Death-defying game Cock Fight among the Santals: A Case Study in Pachim Medinipur, West Bengal, *Indian Journal of Research in Anthropology*, Vol. 5 (1): 15-24.

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Changmi S. 2019, Culture, Religious Change and Identity: A Case Study of the Muklom (Tangsa) of Arunachal Pradesh, (pp.301-310). In G. Lazar SVD, Sarit K. Choudhuri and K.Jose SVD (Ed.), *Syncretism in India: Religious and Cultural Dimensions.* Delhi: Gyan publishing House.

His Excellency the Governor of Himachal Pradesh in the Zonal Anthropological Museum, Port Blair

Front Cover : Maha Kumbha- where divinity ignites

Back Cover : Celebration of 70th Republic Day, Kolkata
On 30th Executive Committee Meeting, Kolkata
Musical Chair: Solidarity with Fun
Cleanliness is next to Godliness

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