

Jharkhand Movement Splits : The Role of National Political Parties And The Jharkhand Organizations

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Master of Philosophy*

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CERTIFICATE

The dissertation entitled **Jharkhand Movement Splits: The Role of National Political Parties And The Jharkhand Organizations**, submitted by **Mr. Ajay Lakra**, Center for Political Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, for the award of degree of **Master of Philosophy**, is an original work and has not been submitted so far, in part or full, for any other degree / diploma of any University. This may be placed before the examiners for the evaluation for the award of Master of Philosophy

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DEDICATED TO MY FATHER


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AJAY LAKRA

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GLOSSARY

Abkari farmer	Collector of excise duty.
Ading:	Acres of land.
Baraik	A jagir awarded by the Raja of Chotanagpur.
Banias	Community of traders, money lenders.
Bumihar	Original settlers of the village, a local pioneer variant of the word khuntkatti
Chuars	A Bengali opprobrium for the Bhumejs and the tribals of the Manbhum and Tamar area who rose against the British Govt. and the non-tribal zamindars as money lenders during 18th century.
Daroga	Police officer.
Dhangars	A <i>kurukh</i> word signifying youth, engaged in Munda household.
Dharti Aba	Father of the earth, a name by which Birsa Bhagwan was hailed by his people.
Diku	Land lords, of late taken as persons of non tribal origin.
Hul	Vidroh' rebel.
Khuntkattihatu	Village of the original settlers of the area.
Khuntkattidars	Offsprings of the original clearers of the forest and settlers in Chotanagpur.
Killi	Exogamous unit of tribe
Mahajani	A type of demand by the zamindars on the raiyots.
Manki	Head of the group of Munda villages.
Mati	The ghost finder.
Neg	Means dasturi, customary payment which was made on certain occasions, marriage.
Padris	Christian Missionaries.
Pahan	Eccelesiastical head of the Munda and Oraon village.
Pahnai	Those land held by pahan for the performance of certain specified sacrificed.
Panchayat	Tribunal of the village.
Parha	A cluster of ten to twelve Munda villages.

Sing Bonga
Topped Buru

Thikadars

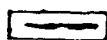
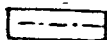
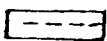
Supreme God of the Munda Pantheon.
Where guns were fired in quelling the
agitators.

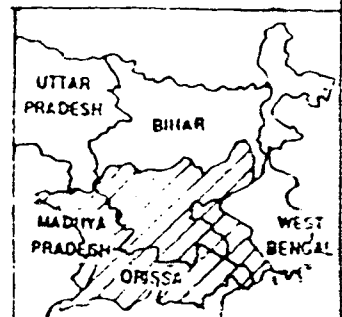
A jagidar used to allot some villages to the
contractor for collection of dues.

PROPOSED AREA OF JHARKHAND



Index:

-  *Proposed Area.*
-  *State Boundary.*
-  *District Boundary.*



INTRODUCTION

Jharkhand, is a cultural name given to the forested upland geographically known as the Chotanagpur plateau, forming the eastern end of the *Vindhyan* range.¹ The literal meaning of the word 'Jharkhand' is a tract of forest. The tribals inhabiting the area prefer to be called 'adivasi's', which literally means 'Original Settlers'. The claim of the tribals is that it is their ancestors who were first migrants to the Chotanagpur region, which was covered with dense forests. They cleared patches of virgin forest areas to establish their village settlements and to convert them into cultivable land. They established their own socio-cultural, economy and political system best suited to the then prevailing situation. Its political references go as far back as the 13th century when one Jaysingh Deo, a king of Northern Orissa, declared himself to be the king of Jharkhand. Saint Chaitanya on his historic religious journey from *Jagannath Puri* to *Vrindavana* in the 15th century refers to this part of the land as Jharkhand. Later on the Muslim rulers have referred to the area alternatively as *Khokhara* and Jharkhand. The forest content is reflected in names of many places in the area as Jhargram, Jharsuguda, Jharudih and others. Culturally, this is the only area in the entire country where the three major cultural streams - Aryan, Dravidian and Austro-Asian represented through various languages - have converged to create a cultural synthesis of its own kind. The tribals inhabiting the area prefer to be called Adivasis which literally means 'original settlers'.

¹Matheau A. 'An outline History of Chotanagpur', 1991, Delhi. pp. 9-11.

The Jharkhand Movement for a separate State which was formally started in early fifties had its genesis in the geographical and ethno-cultural uniqueness of the region. Historical accounts corroborate the claim of administrative independence, cultural and ethnic exclusiveness, and autonomy of the region.

In 1780, Jharkhand was described as “*Ramgarh Hill Tract*” by British. In 1883, it was renamed as ‘The South-West Frontier Agency’. The years 1811, 1818, 1820 and 1832 in the area saw tribal rebellions against British atrocities. One consequence of these upheavals was that the area was administratively separated and designated as the Chotanagpur Division. Since then it has continued to be known so. Ethnically and culturally, the *Santhals* of the *Santhal Paragnas* are close to the Adivasis of Chotanagpur. However, the *Santhal Paragnas* district has been a separate administrative unit since 1855.

Historical and administrative records show that most areas of Jharkhand were never fully integrated with Bihar. This is true of *Ranchi*, *Palamu*, *Hazaribagh*, *Singhbhum*, and *Santhal Paragnas*. Also the ex-States of *Orissa*, *Keonjhar*, *Sambalpur*, *Sundargarh* and *Mayurbhanj* were closely connected with Chotanagpur. The areas of *Surguja*, *Jashpur*, *Udaipur*, *Changbarkar* of Madhya Pradesh also are more closely linked to Chotanagpur in terms of geographic contiguity, ethnicity and administrative convenience than to its other districts.

In fact, the Chotanagpur plateau was never with Bihar as an administrative unit till 1912. In 1912 Bihar was separated from Bengal and at that time Bihar, Chotanagpur and Orissa were linked together to form a separate state of Bihar. In 1930 Orissa was separated from the area and Chotanagpur alone remained with Bihar. Though in the process of bifurcation it always remained with Bihar, geographically it is as close to Bihar, as it is to Orissa or Bengal.

The Simon Commission had declared Chotanagpur and Santhal Paragnas as “Partially Excluded Areas” in 1930. Even certain areas of Madhya Pradesh and Orissa were included under the ‘Chotanagpur raj’. In 1950, the President of India declared some areas as ‘Scheduled Areas’ and ordered the setting up of a ‘Tribal Advisory Council’. These ‘Scheduled Areas’ were from Chotanagpur and Santhal Paragnas.

Different authors, including S. C. Roy, have acknowledged the uniqueness of the Jharkhand region and its people. B. C. Majumdar described the bound areas of this region as “...the Santhal Paragnas, Chutia Nagpur, Sambalpur districts and the native states of adjoining Chutia Nagpur, fall within Jharkhand”.

The recorded history of the area is full of incidents which reflect their aspirations to be masters of their own life. In 1793, with the imposition of the Bengal Permanent Settlement Regulation (Regulation I of 1793), land became subjected to systematic taxation for the first time in the history of this area. Respective tribal chiefs, after their surrender to the British, became agents for revenue collection for their

new masters. This led to internal division and factionalism which was ethnic in nature in the beginning, but eventually becoming pan-tribal and regional in character².

A series of serious agrarian unrest surfaced in the later half of the 19th century. For over 100 years since 1765, the administrative response of the British in these areas was largely influenced by successive tribal uprisings and movements, the important ones being Maler revolt (1772), the Munda uprising of Bundu (1797) under the leadership of Bisnu Manki, Tilka Manjhi revolt (1788), the Bhumij revolt of Man Bhum (1798-99), the Munda uprising of Tamar under the leadership of Rudu and Konta (1819-20), Kol insurrection (1820), Ho revolt (1820), Great Kol Insurrection (1832), the Bhumij revolt under the leadership of Sidhu and Kanhu, Sardar struggle (1859-65) and Birsa *Andolan* (1895-1900).

These uprisings & movements against the British rule were efforts to protect the regional, ethnic and cultural traits of the adivasis. The response was threefold -- to suppress the uprisings through military action to strength the administration on the ground and to pacify the tribals through redress of their grievances, which were than mainly directed against the *Thekedars*, *Jagirdars*, *Mahajans*, merchants etc. Most of their grievances centered on their right over land and forests and also sometimes against exploitation of their women.

²: Pardesi G. 'Jharkhand-Origin of the Movement', *Mainstream*, vol XIII, no 47, 1980, pp. 6-9.

The political and cultural renaissance arrived in this area with the beginning of 'Tana Bhagat' movement under the leadership of Jatra Bhagat around 1914. The moment, though primarily a reformist movement of the oraos, it also registered a protest against the oppression at the hands of the police, *jamindars* and *mahajans*. It started with a non rent campaign and non payment of *chowkidari* tax. The first pan-tribal organization was started in the form of the 'Chotanagpur *Unnati Samaj*', in 1915. The first pan-tribal movement whose objective was to work for the uplift of Chotanagpur and the improvement of the social, political and economic conditions of the tribals. It collected large number of educated youth and its leadership came from teachers and catechists. It was essentially an urban and elitists movement. CUS was launched by some students educated in Christian missionary schools, which took up the causes of Ho's, Munda's, Santhal's and Oraon's who dominated the region. The Samaj was reorganized as the "Adivasi Mahasabha" in 1938 under the leadership of Jaipal Singh (an Oxford educated Munda Adivasi who had converted to Christianity) who had led the record making Indian Hockey team in 1928 Olympics. The Adivasi Mahasabha was again reconstituted in 1950, and was named as "Jharkhand Party" and thus making it even broader based to accommodate the entire Chotanagpur hill area.

The formation of the Jharkhand party gave a new direction to political and other welfare activities in the Jharkhand region in Bihar. It can be considered as a formal beginning of the Jharkhand movement under the leadership of Jaipal Singh. One of the objective was to drive

out the *Dikus* and demand for a separate Jharkhand state for the people of the Jharkhand region.

The Jharkhand party fought the 1952 general election and emerged as the main opposition party with 32 members in the State Legislative Assembly. These members signed a memorandum which the party submitted to the States Reorganization Commission (SRC) which visited the area in January, 1955. The memorandum demanded a separate State of Jharkhand comprising six districts of Bihar and nine districts of Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh (according to 1950 boundaries).

In the memorandum submitted to the State Reorganization Committee (SRC) which visited the area in 1955, the economic, political, and cultural imperatives for the formation of the Jharkhand state were emphasized. However, the issue of exploitation of tribals and the local resources by outsiders (mainly people from north Bihar who had migrated to this area) and the resentment among the tribals against them was not at all highlighted in the memorandum. Mr. Jaipal Singh, the tallest leader of tribals at the time and architect of the Jharkhand Movement, had also not signed the memorandum for reasons of his own. This was first major division within the party.

The SRC (of 1955) declined to accept the demand for the formation of the Jharkhand state mainly on the ground that people of the region did not have common language. The SRC had recommended the formation and redemarcation of the state on the basis of “common language” shared by the people living in a particular

region. Thus, the number of states largely corresponded with the number of languages recognized as “national” languages in the Constitution of India. However the SRC recommended measures to assuage the feeling of a separate homeland among the tribals of the region. Among other things, they suggested that ‘the tribal people should be associated with all branches of the administration including the cabinet and not only economic and educational but also psychological aspects of remedies should be considered as recommended by the sub-committee of the ‘constituted assembly’³.

In 1963 a major section of the party under the leadership of Jaipal Singh merged with the Congress Party and decided to withdraw the movement for a separate Jharkhand State. It seemed that the movement would die a natural death. It took almost fifteen years for any other tribal group to effectively bring back the issue of separate Jharkhand State to the forefront.

The issue was again brought to the forefront in late seventies and early eighties by a new political group named, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM). The move reflected the drawback of considering only ‘language’ as the criteria for granting Statehood and ignoring aspects of administrative viability and aspirations of the local people. The movement acquired militant form in early eighties under the leadership of Mr. Shibu Soren. It reflected a deep sense of injustice being done to the region.

³ Report of the States Reorganization Commission, New Delhi, Government of India, 1955.

It was felt that the polity had not responded to the aspirations of the people. While it ignored more valid reasons of administrative viability, ethnic compatibility, or even aspiration of the people applicable in the case of Jharkhand, it was seen that a number of new States were formed and language was not always the overriding criteria. Political expediency seemed to be the compelling force behind such moves from time to time.

Also the marginalisation of the local tribals due to exploitation of outsiders continued increasing the feelings of resentment against them. It was being realised that the problem of adivasis regarding land, forest, livelihood all emanate from their contact with the outsiders. Because of the entry of the outsiders into the Jharkhand region, the Adivasis had lost their proprietary rights on land and control over their natural resources. K. S. Singh (1983) states that the Adivasis lost their land to outsiders in the colonial phase. Even though legislation was enacted, after independence, to check land alienation of tribals, the process had been continuing by finding loopholes in the law and with collusion of the government staff. It was felt that the Government is dominated by people from north Bihar, who are not very concerned about either saving the interests of the tribals or their development.

After 40 long years when the SRC rejected the demand for a separate state in 1955, the plight of Adivasis had increased. Devoid of their land, deprived of their forest, with few alternative opportunities of livelihood and with dominance of outsiders in jobs and business were, the resentment against the system had only increased. Increased

awareness and education helped in articulating these resentments. In this phase, the students played a major role in shaping the movement

Those opposed to Jharkhand State argue that the Adivasis do not constitute a majority of the population in this region. The tribals consider it as a mere ploy by people who have been the main beneficiaries of the system. The non tribals viz. North Bihari people, Bengali merchants from Bengal and Muslim traders have invaded the tribal region, dispossessed the adivasis of their land and forest thus consciously transformed the adivasis into a minority group in many districts of Jharkhand area during the last 50 years. The supporters of Jharkhand argue for *Sadans, Mahtos, Kurmis* to be treated on par with tribals. This, they say, would place the tribals in majority in most of the districts of the Jharkhand area. These communities are not better off than the scheduled casts and scheduled tribes because they do not enjoy any privilege in job reversion etc. and are required to compete with outsider seeking jobs in modern industries. While the interests opposed to the movement have been trying to generate a feeling that nothing would change by merely creating a State and it would serve the interests of only a few, the supporters of the movement have been trying to highlight that nothing would change unless they get a separate State and are able to manage their affairs themselves.

The economic justification is reinforced with the need to save the rich culture and heritage of Adivasis. With outsiders becoming dominant, the local culture and traditions has got marginalised. There is a feeling that the Government as well as different political parties can not ignore the people's voice for long. It has been found that some

political parties even though with low voice have started to accept the demand for Jharkhand as legitimate. The Parliament too accepted the suggestion of "Committee of Jharkhand Affairs, 1989" to recognize Jharkhand, the special status of it and the need to give it autonomy of some kind in 1989. In furtherance of this, autonomy was granted under the nomenclature of Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council (JAAC)⁴ for a restricted area. But it can be said that in the light of justification for the demand of Jharkhand, the mass support that the demand enjoys and as the history of the struggle for it, JAAC does not reflect even a partial fulfillment. The state of Jharkhand could have been created as far back as in 1956 when states were reorganized. But the vested interests viz. The anti Jharkhand people did not allow it to happen. Prof. Prashan Hari Shanker prasad and Prof. D. D. Guru which are renowned economist of Bihar brought out a pamphlet in justifying the creation of Jharkhand in Bihar on economic ground purely. They argued that Bihar and Jharkhand is symbolically linked.⁵ Amrita Singh, a social worker from Patna argued 'already Bihar has a name in crime and lack of employment is one reason for it. Once Jharkhand is separated, more unemployment will follow besides putting additional pressure on land. This in all likelihood will shoot up not only the crime rate but also disputes'.⁶

Today, the proposed Jharkhand State is believe their land as comprising of 26 districts all together from Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and West Bengal. Its total area is 189, 646 sq. km. having a population of 35,098,991 (according to 1981 census).

⁴ 'Puzzling issues of Jharkhand' Times of India. New Delhi, Sept. 21, 1996.

The Jharkhand movement can be regarded as the oldest movement in independent India which has not succeeded in achieving its goal. Though the goal has been defined and articulated in different ways at different times and under different leadership it has by and large revolved around the demand for a separate state to be carved out of four states i.e. Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and West Bengal. The main portion (43%) of the proposed territory lies in Bihar which generally is referred to as Chotanagpur and Santhal Paragnas and constituted about 46% area of Bihar. This area consisting of 16 districts of Bihar, along with two districts of Madhya Pradesh, four districts of Orissa and three districts of West Bengal, makes the proposed 26 districts (present status) Jharkhand state of area about 187,646 sq. km.

Jharkhand movement remained in the same place for a long time, where late Jaipal Singh had left it four decades ago. Sometimes the movement was quite forceful, while many times its momentum subsided. The various *bandh* calls by different Jharkhand factions many a times succeeded in drawing the attention of both the Central Government as well as State Government. The split which occurred in the Jharkhand movement is also related with the lack of visionary leadership particularly after 1970 and 1980. They (leaders) have been discredited in the eyes of tribals just because of the fact that they compromised with the very demand of a separate state and involved in general financials bungling.⁷ Recently, the Bihar State Legislature has approved the demand for a separate Jharkhand State and more recently

⁵ Bharti Indu, 'Behind the BJP's Vananchal Demand', EPW, vol XXIV, no 13, Apr. 1989.

⁶ Times of India, Patna, Apr. 13, 1992.

the Central Government announced its intention to create 'Vananchal' by taking out some districts from Bihar. It is again taken as an example of political expediency, without recognizing the relevance of core issues of the movement.

Mr. Laloo Prasad Yadav the then Chief Minister of Bihar had declared that he would concede Jharkhand only 'on my dead body' finally gave in. But ironically he has sought to perpetuate the many divisions in the Jharkahnd movement which has been impeding the movement. One must not overlook the serious flaws in the JAAC (Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council) setup, conceived and inaugurated mainly out of electoral considerations of the major political players as JAAC was the result of the agreement signed by the two Government, Central and State of Bihar in September 26 1994 excluding Jharkhand organizations. It would serve little purpose as the state government with us history of betraying the people of the region could not be expected to act honestly to fulfill the aspirations of the people of Jharkhand.

It is therefore pertinent to analyze why this movement has not succeeded since the British left India even though the people of Jharkhand have a history of series of resistance for more than 200 years? The public was always ready for the struggle but leadership was not adequately there. When leaders emerged from the public, the opponents, mainly those who were in power and those opposed to Jharkhand movement bribed them with money and post and removed them from the public and the movement. This resulted in sidelining of

⁷ Hindustan Times, Patna, Jan. 17, 1993.

the leaders who had the potential to lead the movement to its logical end. The interests of the leaders and the followers became separate and the Jharkhand parties kept changing its profile, focus and approach for the personal benefit of the leaders for whom leadership became a profession. The primary reason behind the opposition of Jharkhand state is grounded in the fact which 'Dar Committee', 'SRC' espoused during 1955. In its report (1955), the SRC case for the formation of a separate State on the ground that the Jharkhand Party did not obtain a clear majority of votes or seats within the Chotanagpur division and Santhal Paragnas in the first General Election. even within this region, parties other than Jharkhand Party were in general oppose to separation from Bihar. The tribal population was only a little more than 1/3 of the total population. The tribals were again divided into several language groups. Thus the support for Jharkhand reflected only the views of a minority.⁸

The main concern of my dissertation is to analyze the nature of different political parties and their role in Jharkhand region including the Jharkhand organizations and why the movement for a Jharkhand state could not succeed till now? How the major National Political parties have viewed this issue? What are the factors behind Jharkhand parties failure despite many parliamentary seats? How they have been dealt with by the major national political parties?

⁸ National Herald, Patna, 30, June 1974.

The Area

Sl.	DIFFERENT TRIBES OF BIHAR			
	TRIBES	TOTAL POPULATION	DISTRICTS	% OF TOTAL POPULATION*
1.	SANTHAL	2060730	SANTHAL PARAGANA	35.46
2.	ORAON	1054064	RANCHI	18.14
3.	MUNDA	845887	RANCHI	14.56
4.	HO	536523	SINGHBHUM	9.23
5.	KHERWAR	222758	PALAMU	3.83
6.	BHUMIJ	186109	SINGHBHUM	2.91
7.	LOHARA	169090	RANCHI	2.86
8.	KHADIA	142271	RANCHI	2.49
9.	GOND	96574	SINGHBHUM	1.66
10.	MAHALI	91868	RANCHI	1.58
11.	BEDIA	79322	SINGHBHUM	1.36
12.	CHERI	60446	HAZARIBAGH	1.04
13.	CHERO	52210	PALAMU	0.90
14.	CHIKBARAIK	40339	RANCHI	0.69
15.	SAURIA PAHADIA	39269	SANTHAL PARAGANA	0.68
16.	KORA	33952	SANTHAL PARAGANA	0.58
17.	PARHAIYA	24012	PALAMU	0.41
18.	KISAN	23420	PALAMU	0.41
19.	KORWA	21940	PALAMU	0.39
20.	BIJIA	10009	PALAMU	0.17
21.	ASUR	7783	GUMLA	0.13
22.	SAWAR	7071	SINGHBHUM	0.12
23.	GOREAT	5206	RANCHI	0.09
24.	KARMALI	3865	HAZARIBAGH	0.07
25.	BIRHOR	4377	HAZARIBAGH	0.07
26.	BIRJIA	4057	GUMLA	0.07
27.	BAIGA	3551	SANTAL PARAGANA	0.06
28.	KHOD	1595	HAZARIBAGH	0.03
29.	BATHUDI	1569	SINGHBUM	0.02
30.	BANJARA	411	SANTHAL PARAGANA	0.02

* Percentage of total tribal population in Bihar.

Source: Tribals in Bihar / NSDB - 1995

**DISTRICT WISE SC/ST POPULATION IN
THE PROPOSED JHARKHAND STATE**

TABLE II a - BIHAR

DISTRICTS	TOTAL POPULATION	SC		ST	
		POPULATION	%	POPULATION	%
GODDA	861182	77893	8.46	216047	25.09
SAHEB GANJ (includ. PAKUR)	1301088	70788	5.44	507321	38.99
DUMKA	1495709	104094	6.96	621484	41.55
DEOGHAR	933113	115697	12.40	119085	12.76
DHANBAD (includ. BOKARO)	2674651	415614	15.40	225282	8.42
GIRIDIH	2225480	296302	13.31	271924	12.22
HAZARIBA-GH (includ. CHATRA, KODARMA)	2843544	537157	18.89	218121	8.81
PALAMU (includ. GARHWA)	1649841	423730	25.07	317834	18.08
LOHARDA-GA	288886	10919	3.78	168964	56.41
GUMLA	1153976	61299	5.31	816988	70.80
RANCHI	2214048	123239	5.57	964422	43.22
EAST SINGHBHUM	1613088	77194	4.79	466572	28.92
WEST SINGHBUM	1787955	89496	5.01	978069	54.70

Source: Tribals in Bihar / NSBD -- 1995

**DISTRICT WISE SC/ST POPULATION IN
THE PROPOSED JHARKHAND STATE**

TABLE II b - MADHYA PRADESH, ORISSA, WEST BENGAL

STATE	DISTRICT	TOTAL POPULATION	SC	ST
MADHYA PRADESH	SURGUJA	2082630	114832	1117577
	RAIGARH	1722291	195913	821677
ORISSA	SAMBALPUR	2697153	471460	740323
	SUNDARGARH	1573617	138157	798481
	KEONJHAR	1377026	153639	595184
	MAYURBHANJ	1884580	131765	1090626
WEST BENGAL	MEDINAPUR	8331912	1561828	689636
	BANKURA	2805065	879931	289906
	PURULIA	2224577	430513	427766

Source: Census 1991.

According to the 1981 census, the total population of the proposed state was 31.9 million, one third of which constitutes the so called scheduled tribes (STs). During 1985 to 1992 the Jharkhand movement has grown in strength militancy and popularity and has gained the attention as one the main issue in India. Both the central government and State of Bihar have agreed to address the issue in one way or other. On the other hand, the states of Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Bengal do not recognize the movement and are strictly against conceding any part of their territory.

The area and population to be contributed by four states viz. Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh to Jharkhand state in terms of percentage of the total are as follows:

Bihar 45.6% area and 25.19% population, Orissa 29.5% area and 10.0% population, West Bengal 36.67% area and 9.0% population, Madhya Pradesh 7.9% area and 5.9% population⁹.

The Chotanagpur plateau, the richest mineral belt of India, which produces about 100% of India's copper, uranium 95% of Kyanite, over 50% of coal, mica bauxite and China clay and about 40% of iron ore. The region contains 80% of India's known coal deposits and almost all cooking coal.¹⁰

As a matter of fact Chotanagpur has the most advantageous situation in the country for the development of a sound diversified industrial economy. Bauxite and copper in association with the hydro-electricity of the *Damodar* valley provides base for non-metallic industries.

In Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal the names and numbers of districts belonging to the Jharkhand area have remained the same. In Bihar & Orissa the districts were sub-divided to create new (smaller) districts. The total number of districts included in Jharkhand area of Bihar has now increased to 17., the administrative division in the Bihar part has been changing since 1981, they have been divided into 9, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17.

Among the 30 tribes of Jharkhand region of Bihar, the four major leading tribes i.e. Santhal, Oraon, Munda and Ho (in descending

⁹ A memorandum submitted to the PM by AJSU, 1989.

¹⁰ Singh R. P. 'Changing Occupational Structure of Scheduled Tribes', Inter India publications, New Delhi, 1986, pp 49-51.

order of their numerical strength) together make up about 80% of the total tribal population.¹¹ The Jharkhand tribes identify with their culture and value system: a large population of the tribals who converted into Christianity too feel bonded to their cultural and historical background.

Almost all the movements in the region have been led by the tribals (Adivasis). They “were amongst the earlier communities in India who fought against the British expansion and made the greatest sacrifices”¹²

After a long history of Jharkhand movement since 1938 when ‘Adivasi Mahasabha’ first raised the cause, today, in terms of political status, it has been gradually getting stronger, it is strongest in the state of Bihar than in the other three states. The Bihar area of proposed Jharkhand state consists of 15 Lok Sabha constituencies out of which only 5 constituencies (Dumka, Raj Mahal in Santhal Paragana district, Khunti and Lohardaga in Ranchi and Chaibasa in Singhbhum district) are reserved for the tribals. Correspondingly, there are 82 Assembly seats for this area in a house consisting of 324 seats of Bihar Assembly of these 82 seats, only 32 are reserved for tribals.

The Jharkhand parties once managed to win six (6) Parliamentary seats (5 reserved seats plus 1 general seat). The parties also managed to win maximum of 26 Assembly seats. The rest of the seats are generally won by the major national parties (Congress Bhartiya Janta Party, Janta Dal , CPI.).

¹¹ Stephen Fuchs, 'Central India Tribes', Seminar publication, New Delhi, 1977, p 52.

¹² *Ibid*, pp 49-51.

The BJP has a substantial following in the Jharkhand region of Bihar because of its support for the formation of a separate state with the name of '*Vananchal*' comprising of 16 districts of Bihar only. Similarly, Janta Dal/Rastriya Janta Dal too support the statehood demand but in practice its leaders do not go beyond an autonomous council in these 16 districts of south Bihar. On the other hand, Congress always rejected the proposal of statehood but agreed to a *Jharkhand Development Council* according to its own version. But now Congress (I) supports a separate Jharkhand state due to its own political reasons. The CPI (Communist Party of India) and IPF (Indian Peoples Front) support the demand, however CPI (Marxist) has been hostile to the Jharkhand movement.

Nevertheless, all the major parties do not pursue the Jharkhand cause as the Jharkhandis themselves do. The national political parties have always used the people as the 'Vote Bank' for their own political gain. After the General Election of 1995 when the Congress Party was completely wiped out in this region, the whole Jharkhand politics has undergone a sea change. It is not the adivasi parties alone which are raising pro Jharkhand slogans; even Congress members hailing from this area have joined their hands. Congress leaders have come to realise that unless the party identifies itself with the tribals, it has no future in this area. Mr. Gyan Ranjan, MLC, Mr. Sarfraz Ahmad, former joint secretary of the AICC, say it is no longer a question of tribals. Seventy percent of the non-tribals population of the area also support the demand for a separate Jharkhand State. The BJP is dead serious about the formation of *Vananchal*, in fact it has championed

the cause for some years now. The BJP's demand for *Vananchal* even figured on the national agenda and also in the customary address of the President. However, the mainstream Jharkhandis, as also the "secular" groups led by the Mr. Laloo Prasad Yadav have voiced to fight the move tooth and nail.

Prior to India's independence, three factors, namely, the administrative unity of the region, exploitation of the adivasi people and the minerals, and forest resources by the *Dikus*¹³ (outsiders), and ethnic distinctiveness of the advasis, were forcefully articulated for the formation of the state of Jharkhand within Indian Union.¹⁴ These three factors continue to be the main grounds for the demand for the state of Jharkhand. But the character and the complexion of the Jharkhand movement have undergone a considerable change in terms of leadership, electoral politics, class and power, inter tribal ethnic and political linkages.

The Jharkhand movement is for a separate multi-lingual and multi-ethnic state in the Indian Union comprising the Chotanagpur plateau of Bihar and the adjoining area of West Bengal, Orissa, and Madhya Pradesh. The idea of having a separate state of Jharkhand is not new, though the issue assumed a greater sense of insistence and urgency during the Nineties.¹⁵

The intricacies and complexities of the movement can not be understood without looking at it from a historical perspective. The

¹³ Outsiders who came the Jharkhand region for exploiting the resources. It includes mainly Bengali people and people from North Bihar.

¹⁴ Das A. N. 'The Republic of Bihar', Penguin Books, New Delhi, 1992, Appendix.

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liberal and moderate nature of the movement can be attributed to the leadership of the movement. Though the movement have many stalwarts but none of them could provide any effective control to the entire region. Lack of effective leadership was one of the reasons for the decline of the movement and consecutively its hijacking by national parties.

As title of the study "Jharkhand movement splits: The Role of National Political Parties" itself suggests splits within the local level parties and the effect of national level parties which also fueled animosities among the regional Jharkhand parties is a study which analyse the Jharkhand movement keeping the political parties involved in the movement under a microscope. The study aims to present an alternate analysis of the issue.

Although lot of books and articles have already been published on Jharkhand, these studies are based on the tribal history, perhaps to see the movement as confrontation between the 'adivasis' and 'non-adivasi'. And thus so far these works have been done have seen Jharkhand movement in different ways.



S.C. Roy in 'Mundas and their Country', 1967 makes study regarding the original living place of Mundas and their journey to present home in Chotanagpur plateau. The village was known as *Patti* and the head man as *Manki*. Each village was occupied by the descendants of the family by whom the land was first cleared. The Mundas were acknowledged the supermacy of Raja. Holders of each

¹⁵ Kar Samit, 'Jharkhand Issue'. The Statesman, Delhi 18 Sep. 1993.

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village paid his a small rent and was collected on his behalf by the *manki*. The troubles of the Mundas began when their raja converted into Hinduism and brought in many non-tribal people in his court for his assistance of job. So the mundas resisted this. The struggle between the aboriginal cultivators on the one side and the non-tribals, those alien land lords and their creaturs one side. Mundas would appear to have migrated from Northern India southwards to modern Bundelkhand and Central India, from these across Eastern North - Western India and from these modern Rohilkhand and Oudh to Bihar and finally to Chotanagpur. The author talks about the tribal journey but lacks to express the different problems of tribal they had faced during their final settlement. R. O. Dhan in 'These are my Tribsmen', 1967 tells that according to the tradition the Konkan is said to be the original home of the Oraons. Owing to over population and external pressure they migrated from the West coast of India to Northern India, traveling through river valleys and settled down as agriculturist and land owners in the Shahabad district of Bihar. When further driven by successive hordes of new races, they took shelter on the Rohtas plateau, which they fortified, probably driven of by the Cheroes. When they left Rohtas, the Oraouns divided into two groups, known as Male proceeded under a chief, northwards along the Ganges valley and eventually occupied the Rajmahal hills. The other branch under the chief's youngest brother proceeded South eastwards up the North Koel river and settled down in Palamu and in the North west section of Ranchi district, then occupied by the mundas. Further he says in 1765, on the grant of the *Diwani* of Bengal, Bihar, Orissa to the East India Company Chotanagpur passed to the British. Non of the different alien

government interfered with the internal administration of Chotanagpur which was left entirely to the Raja. Until the year 1833 the British government actively interfered with the internal administration of Chotanagpur. It was first included in the year 1780 within the Ramgarh collectorate. The government in 1869 sought to remedy their problems by getting the register prepared of ancestral 'bhumihar' land still in possession of the tribal community. In 1889 and 1890 there were agrarian risings in the western parts of Ranchi.

L.P. Vidyarthi in 'The Dynamics of tribal leadership in Bihar' tried to study widely the leadership phenomena in Chotanagpur. He tried to explore the various facets of tribal leadership and characteristics of tribal leadership, its role and its interaction with the environment. While dealing this book in the first three chapters he sets forth the important elements of historical political and contextual factors inspiring tribal leadership in Chotanagpur. Next he focuses on some salient attributes of the tribal leadership itself. Vidyarthi's study provides with an insight into causes of Jharkhand movement and also enable us to understand and appreciate the dynamics of political situation of Chotanagpur. In all, it is an effort which enhances our understanding of politics and political leadership in Chotanagpur. But the study lacks to tell about the various factors that led to change of the pattern of modern tribal leadership behaviour.

Stuart Corbridge in 'Perversity and ethnoregionalism in tribal India: the politics of the Jharkhand', 1997 tells that since Independent, the politics of Chotanagpur and Santal Parganas in eastern India has been much influenced by the Jharkhand party and by other

organizations committed to the formation of a tribal Jharkhand state in South Bihar. Several theories have been advanced to account for the rise (and fall) of Jharkhandi ethnoregionalism. This article examines an 'official' or 'perversity' account of Jharkhandi politics. The perversity model makes three main claims: that British tribal politics were informed by a philosophy of tardy isolationism; that since independence this philosophy had been supplanted by a spirit of integrationism based upon positive discrimination for tribal development; and that the rise of Jharkhandi ethnoregionalism since 1950 (therefore) represents a perverse response to the enlightened tribal policies of the post-colonial state. Two conclusions are worth recording and two qualifications also, first there is the matter of the politics of Jharkhandi ethnoregionalism. It seems clear from this review that there is no reason to invoke the perversity model of tribal political irrationality or ingratitude. This account is unnecessarily complex and it is undercut by the more straightforward model of ethnoregionalism proposed by Hechter and Levi. In tribal Bihar it is clear that ethnoregionalism has flourished in the space that exists between the rhetoric and the performance of the state's ethnic and industrial policies.

A. L. Raj in the article 'Ideology and Hegemony in Jharkhand Movement' in EPW 1992 examines the tribal aspiration for autonomy in Jharkhand was first dragged on to a regional platform which enabled the execution of an inverse ideological somersault - the construction of nationality on the basis of region. Today the Jharkhandi nationality question is discussed as if it were part of geography and not of socio-

political anthropology. It needs reiteration that this struggle between ideologies takes place within the concrete and existential life situation of the people as well as within the overall framework of dominance and exploitative relationship. The author emphasize that in the ideological war of positions as well as in its struggle against dominance the movement has always been a loser. This is more so certain significant gains have been made also recognition at the contribution of tribal struggles to the freedom movement, acceptance of the problem of Jharkhand, limited share of political power etc, however considered against the original socio-political trajectory off the movement it has to be admitted that the dominant ideology has by and large succeeded in maintaining its hegemony within the movement. The observation made here in is not conclusive and comments leading to corrections are welcome.

Susana B. C. Devalle in 'Discourse of ethnicity: culture and protest in Jharkhand,' 1992 describes ethnicity is one of the significant modes of social distinction that have been used in numerous historical instances in the exercise of domination as well as in the organization of resistance. With this premise as the core of her analysis, D C. Devalle goes on to deconstruct the articulation of power relations in Jharkhand, a region in South Bihar inhabited predominantly by tribal groups. In its factual content, the study does not add to the existing literature in the area, with the possible exception of the elements of oral tradition that were recorded by the author during her field work, but it certainly contributes to the conceptual understanding of the subordinate tribal society. Peasant protest in Jharkhand presented a

double faced, coordinated resistance to the established order: first as an agrarian struggle, a struggle common at all times of history to peasants who strive for economic redress as epitomize in the struggle for land: secondly as a defense of the historical identity of the community. This dual nature of agrarian protest exist only in appearance and not in essence, since the use of cultural identity that enables the insurgent to distinguish themselves from the oppressor, and hence allow them to have a common consciousness against the enemy, is an inevitable condition of resistance. In Jharkhand, the historical identity of the community has been invoked since it is the only way the local tribals can differentiate themselves from the *dikus*. In analyzing the modes of this resistance, the book places equal importance on wide scale collective violence inflicted upon police on numerous occasions, and on the individual use of force against some particular oppressor, which has led the ruling elite to perceive the local tribals as dangerous. Also notable is the attempt to locate resistance in the violation of the norms of social conduct by tribals in their day to day intraction with *dikus*.

The theoretical framework of the book is in confirmity with the Subaltern School. Discourses in ethnicity focusses upon the contemporary tribal society. The past registered in the memory of the tribal people , and transmitted orally from generation to another in the form of mythological stories and songs, has been assigned a significance by the author which is generally reserve for archival documents. In the sense the study not only provided an excillent understanding of the Jharkhand society but also contributes to the

methodology of the social research by integrating anthropological method with historiography.

Amitabh Ghosh in 'Ideology and Politics Jharkhand Movement', EPW, 1993 describes how the Jharkhand movement has overcome some of its initial weaknesses and broadened its base to become more regional than ethnic, is still lacks an ideological bond. How this has given rise to factionalism and personalities taking precedence over collective interest. He further expressed his concern that the movement in the central tribal belt does not pose any threat to India's integrity. Like many other sectionist movement in the border areas. It must be admitted that barring the case of sending a Jharkhandi delegation to the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations at Geneva in August 1987, the movement leaders more or less confined their demand of the a separate state within Indian union.

Srabani Rai Chaudhury in the article 'Ideology and Cultural Renewal: Jharkhand Movement' Mainstream 1993 explain the question of ideopogy, in the context of the culture of the Jharkhandies, is inseparable from the concept of their identity. It is, therefore, necessary to highlight the anchoring points of ideology and identity in the backdrop of the Jharkhand movement. The author says a new identity emerged as the tribes of the Chotanagpur plecto in South Bihar began to regard themselves as Jharkhandis and extended this appellation to the residence in the contiguous areas of tribal concentration three other states. The author further says it needless to point out that this new style of naming has a political motivation in addition to socio-cultural connotation. The identity of any group does

not become a cause for concern, unless this identity is perceived to be threatened either by outsiders or even by indigenous groups-tribal and non tribal. So he analyzed the elements and bases of identity among the Jharkhandis. Such an analysis shows that there are several bases of the Jharkhandi identity and each base represents one central value. This concept of value- base identity itself embodies some of the fundamentals of humanistic philosophy. That man and nature is inseparable, both for a believer and for an environmentalist, is long accepted. The eternal longing of human being for equality, collective commonwealth, liberation, etc from the basis of many a meaningful and accepted ideology in our country. Ideological elements have, therefore, inevitably manifested in the present assertion of the Jharkhandi ideology. Thus the author stressed that the Jharkhandi ideology can not remain unaffected in the ongoing process of regional socio-economic development. It can not be designed just to satisfy the ethnic vanity of a given community. However, whichever approach is chosen, one must not forget that although the Jharkhand movement has become predominantly non ethnic in character, the ethnic elements has not been and can not be eliminated on totality. More over, the factor of ' tribal physis still appears to play a very important part in the movement

Sajal Basu in ' Ethnicity and Culture of Silence: Jharkhand Movement', 1994. Studied the gradual transformation of the Jharkhand movement into a broad-based movement involving economic cultural issues. According to hi the movement and the participant groups have always remained split, both in composition and content the selected

convenors are functionally active only on the eve of some demonstration and elections. Such occasional nature of functioning could hardly be meaningful in closing up of ranks of coalitioning of factions committed to the movement. To outweigh to fictional balance to once favor, groups often would forge alliance with or form new aliments as one like Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, which goes against the Jharkhand ideology. This also provided opportunity to precipitate division, defection since could easily get berth in the leadership of other faction, However, most of the groups have identical views on outsiders domination, exploitation and draining out of area's resources. The constant division has led to erosion confinement of Jharkhand's base. People feel that both the militant and pro system / strategy have only added to popular confusion. According to the author, since economic issues, demand for land reforms have not been made and an agenda of the movement, so this lacking, the participant communities often change political alignment to be more disillusioned. He views that half-century old Jharkhand movement never received any democratic responses from the government concerned. The split composition of the movement and absence of its polity enabled the authorities to take an apathetic attitude towards the demand. Participation of different Jharkhandi groups in election. the involvement of the non tribals and their political groups both right and left but the fissures and split in the movement could not be reconditioned. The basic issues ie namely land forest alienation, job and training deprivation due to the hold of the land by outsiders cultural submergence and unbalance development remained unresolved. But these have taken diversified forms in the demand

charters of the various factions. Along with the demand of recognition of Jharkhandi language, demands ranging from more provision for students, return of transferred lands to the Jharkhandis, for introduction their own political system etc. This has complicated the situation the movement in place of specific issues. As such movement itself lacks consistency due to geographical and cultural division spread over the four states and so lack of conformity in it have been counter productive

Significance of the study

This study seeks to find the possible causes that helping in splitting Jharkhand unity. The causes might be cultural; diversities, weakness of leadership, intro-tribal rivalry, impact of modernization, lack of coherence and vision, political compulsion and political corruption etc. Emphasis will be given on the role of major national parties in weakening of the Jharkhand movement.

How congress party fix it with the tribal cause it never supported the ethnic based demand of separate state accept in case of north eastern state formation. But very recently the party started advocating for the separate Jharkhand state.

BJP on the other hand uses the term *Vananchal* with its own version and condition. *Vananchal* essentially has a Aryan connotation descending directly from Sanskrit. { In Sanskrit van is forest and *anchal* stands for province} for the BJP the decision to confine *Vananchal* to Bihar has much to do with rewarding the area where the

BJP and its alliance has won 12 seats out of total 19 seats in 1998 election.

In October 1993, the then Chief Minister [Janata Dal] Laloo Prasad Yadav had conceded the idea of a Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council' following an economic blockade by tribals thereby implicitly accepting the name Jharkhand over other. However, Laloo's attitude later change to one of " thus far and no further when categorically declined "*Jharkhand raj mere lash per hanega'* (Jharkhand will be founded on my dead body)

It is however another matter that the shrewd Chief Minister was able to break the Jharkhand activists rank and bring it to a virtual end. It took another General Election (1996) and the subsequent break of Janata Dal (and the formation of RJD by Laloo Yadav) to force the former Chief Minister to strike a compromise for the survival of the RJD government headed by his Rabri Devi.

The CPI (M), the largest party with a Marxist label, speaks with the vehemence and threat of the ruling classes. It denounces the movement as communal and secessionist. Their justification for this identity has some connection with classical Marxist texts.

The study attempts to analyze and trace the transformation of the Jharkhand Movement from its initial stage when its leadership and organizational structure was controlled by a single party. On the other hand a number of parties emerge for the Jharkhand mainly due to split within the political parties.

As it is pointed out non-of the Jharkhand leadership could provide any effective control to the entire region. They remained limited to their respective local area, ethnic group and religion which is the reasons why a single leader could not claimed to be a leader engulfing the whole region. Initially the movement was very popular but with due course of time it looses its hold among the people. The study tries to present an alternative answer to the factors responsible for the decline of Jharkhand movement.

The entire work has been divided into five chapters. The first chapter deals with Jharkhand history, a historical resume. Every country has different problems, situation, and tradition, therefore we can give definition of indigenous according to its own culture and organization.

The chapter begins with definition and characteristics of the indigenous people. Different and often contradictory criteria tend to be used by administrators, lowers and sociologist a basis of their definition, such as color of the skin, language, customs. Tribal condition and living standards. These differences continued to mark the relationship between the indigenous peoples and the wider society after the political independence of the colonies. The danger to indigenous culture comes from many quarters; namely national government policies of integration or assimilation through the linguistics policies. The penetration of the mass media in the indigenous area contributed to the dissemination of other, alternative cultural models which undermine the established traditional customs frequently the issues faced by indigenous population are dealt within

the framework of minority problems. The process of the systematic destruction of indigenous has been termed 'ethnocide'. The history of tribal movement is history of resistance to the attempt at conquest and assimilation of the tribal people and their culture by the invading plain people and their superiority. The chapter ends with the understanding of the history of the migration of tribals into Chotanagpur region. The tribes of Chotanagpur can be classified linguistically in two groups. Those speaking the Munda language and those speaking the Dravidian language. According to anthropologists the Munda and Dravidian belong to the same ethnic stock.

In second chapter issues of Jharkhand movement has been taken up. It deals with tribal problems and their development in the Jharkhand region of Bihar. Main emphasis has been given on the problems of land- alienation, forest, indebtedness, non-payment of minimum wages, bonded labour, migration of the tribals, atrocities on them and toll-tax. Apart from them some problems of social service infrastructure have also been discussed. The state government, from time to time, passed many Acts to solve these problems but due to loopholes in these Acts, the problems are persisting as usual which are grounds of discontent behind the Jharkhand movement and tribal politics in Bihar.

In the third chapter the role of national parties and Jharkhand organization have been discussed. Main focus is on the evolution of the Jharkhand party through various phases, its participation in the general elections and its achievements, relation with the political process, Congress Jharkhand merger, consequence of the merger, split

and fragmentation of the Jharkhand party and emergence of splinter groups, installation of coalition governments, rise of urban pressure groups, 1972 General Election and waning of the popularity of splinter groups, radicalization of tribal politics and rise of independent marxist political organizations, Jharkhand alliance between workers and peasants, cracks in the alliance.

In the fourth chapter leadership pattern among the tribals of the region, has been discussed. National political parties and their attitude towards the demand of a separate Jharkhand state, their allegations on the Jharkhand movement that it is a secessionist movement and a foreign inspired conspiracy. And attempt has also been made to refute these allegations by some arguments that the Jharkhand movement is neither a secessionist movement nor it is a foreign inspired conspiracy, but it is a political movement for the attainment of a separate statehood on ethnic and regional basis within Indian federal set up.

Finally in the fifth chapter the conclusion has been drawn with the findings of the entire study of Jharkhand movement and tribal politics, and analysis of the causes for the failure and decline of the movement.

CHAPTER I

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF JHARKHANDIS

Before any practical study can be made of the problems of life and work of indigenous people in independent countries, and of how those problems could be solved, the groups which make up these populations must obviously be identified. Different and often contradictory criteria tend to be used by administrators, lawyers and sociologists as a basis for their identification, such as the colour of the skin, language, customs, and living standards. But every country has tackled the problem of identification in its own way, according to its own traditions, history, social organisation and policies.

Indigenous people may be defined as the original inhabitants of a territory, who, because of historical circumstances (generally conquest and / or colonization by another people), have lost their sovereignty and have become subordinated to the wider society and the State over which they do not exercise any control. Frequently, the issues faced by indigenous people are dealt with within the framework of minority problems. But whereas many indigenous peoples in the world constitute indeed ethnic minorities within the wider society, in some cases they are numerical majorities, who do not, however, enjoy a corresponding share of political and economic power. That is why indigenous people distinguish their problems from those of other ethnic, linguistic, religious, national or racial minorities, and consider that they should be dealt with separately. The concept of indigenous people sometimes overlaps or is used indiscriminately with other terms

such as natives, aboriginal, or tribal populations. But, while most tribal problems may be considered as indigenous not all indigenous people should be considered as tribals¹.

Public awareness about the problems of indigenous people has arisen due to various inter-related factors. For example, the principle of self-determination of people is a major international human right, recognised by the United Nations. UN has been very clear that this principle should not be interpreted as applying to minorities within the framework of established independent states. However, indigenous people consider that the principle of self-determination should also apply to them.

Indigenous people have for many generations lived out their lives on the margins of economic mainstream. As the economic frontier advances, they have come into contact with 'modern civilization' their problems have come to public attention and have often become major political issues.

In many parts of the world, economic development programmes such as river basin development schemes, land settlement projects, highway construction, mining activities, the transformation of tropical forests into cultivable acreage have negatively affected the life chances of indigenous people, and they have become the victims rather than the beneficiaries of these transformations².

¹ Kisku A.K., "Report of the UN Working Group on Indigenous Population", Working papers for All India Consultation on Indigenous and Tribal People Affairs, Ranchi University, Oct 16-19, 1987, pp. 1-10

² Rodolfo Stavenhagen, 'The Indigenous Problematique', Seminar, vol. 323, July 1986, New Delhi, pp 14-17.

As so many developmental strategies which were furiously pursued during the last few decades are now considered to be failures, many people have taken a second look at indigenous values and lifestyles in their search for development alternatives.

In recent years, concern with the situation of indigenous people has been relegated to some specialised branches of the social sciences. The major paradigms of social sciences thinking did not consider the indigenous people as worthy of their attention. Social theory was more concerned with major issues such as economic growth, urbanization and industrialization, the power of the state and political process, social classes and social movements, rather than with such 'marginal' social groups as the indigenous people.

Actually, for the indigenous people, 'national integration' the often stated goal of modern states, has meant loss of sovereignty and political impotence. Many of their current problems caused from the fact that up to very recently the indigenous people have been effectively excluded from the political decision making process. A recurrent demand of indigenous organizations at the present time is political participation and power over all matters which directly concern them and the rejection of traditional paternalistic attitudes by overbearing governments and non-indigenous groups and agencies who intervene in their affairs.

The danger to indigenous cultures comes from many quarters; mainly of course, national government policies of integration or assimilation through the school system and linguistic policies, then the

impact of Christian missionary activities which perhaps more than any other single factor has contributed to the distribution of indigenous cultures around the world. Labour migrations and changes in economic activity have produced transformations in cultural values and lifestyles. The penetration of the mass-media in indigenous areas (radio, cinema and television) has contributed to the dissemination of other, alternative cultural models which undermine the established, traditional culture³.

TRIBALS IN CHOTANAGPUR

Tribal history is a history of resistance to the attempt at conquest and assimilation of the hill people and their culture by the invading plains people⁴.

The tribes of Chotanagpur can be divided into two linguistic groups. One, who speaks the Munda language and the other group who speaks the Dravidian language. Anthropologists opine these two language groups to the same ethnic stock. But their language belong to two different families. According to Herbert Risely the distinction between Munda speaking and Dravidian is purely linguistic⁵.

It appears from the historical context that the early inhabitants of Jharkhand belonged to either of the three communities – Austric, Dravidian and Asur. The Mundas, Kharias, Korwas, Korkas, Bihors, Kherwars, Santals, Hos, Mal Paharias etc. belonged to the Austric

³ Ibid., pp. 18-19.

⁴ Singh K.S. 'Tribal Movements in India', vol.2, 1982, pp.68-70. Manohar Publications, New Delhi.

⁵ Fr. Holfman 'Encyclopedia Mundarica', p.32, Calcutta, 1914.

group of people. The Oraon, Nagesia and Sadan communities belong basically to the Dravidian groups of people.

According to the Austric theory the Mundas came to India on an eastern route from South-China via Burma and Assam⁶. According to W. C. Schmidt the Mundas speak a language belonging to the Austro-Asiatic group. This group of languages has its centre in South-east Asia. Therefore, the conclusion suggests itself that the Mundas came from the east where they received this form of speech. The mon language of Burma and the Khasi language of Assam both of which belong to the Austro-Asiatic group, would provide likely links to indicate the routes which the Mundas had taken on their migration to eastern Central India.

According to Fr. Stephen Fuchs, Schmid's constructions are too bold and lack a proper foundation according to our present standard of scientific research. Basing his arguments on the close connection between the Tibet-Burma dialects and the Munda languages, Fuchs proposes a Himalayan route for the migration of the Mundas. The Himalayan route theory was earlier postulated by H.B. Hodgson, E. Dalton, W. Hunter and J.A. Hutton.

According to J. A. Hutton, "as there are two distinct families of Austric languages in use in India, it is possible that there have been two routes of migration from Central Asia, one round the west end of the Himalayas, the other somewhere to the eastward of them. The languages used may be spoken of as Kolarian (i.e. Munda) in the

⁶ J.H. Hutton, *Caste in India: Its Nature, Functions and Origins*, Oxford, 1961, No.4.

former case, Mon-Khmer in the latter, which is confined in India to one area in Assam”⁷.

As such the history of the Munda tribes could be said as a story of people in search of new homelands. These wanderings were due to the invasion by outsiders who tried and still trying to subjugate them either through conquest or through assimilation. In the process many of the Mundas lost their Munda language and adopted the language, culture and religion of the conquerors. The largely Hinduised Bhils, Kolis, Cheros, Kherwars etc. were once Munda speaking people. They have now completely abandoned their original Munda idiom and adopted the language and religion of the conquering Aryans. Those who were able to withstand this process of conquest and assimilation fled to the hilly regions to preserve their independence and identity. Thus the Tibeto - Chinese speaking Burmese forced the Mon people, who at one time were spread over the greater part of Burma. Similarly the Khmers, who were once spread over Siam were overwhelmed by the Tibeto-Chinese speaking Siamese who forced the Khmers to Cambodia, where they are now confined. In India, the Aryans forced the Mundas to the hilly regions of Chotanagpur which has become the homeland of the Mundas.

Besides the Munda speaking tribes, Chotanagpur is inhabited by Oraon, Mal Pahariya, Sauriya - Pahariya and Gond tribes speaking Dravidian languages such as *Kurukh*, *Malto* and *Gondi*. According to their own tradition, the Oraons originally lived in the Konkan area. Because of over population and external pressure they migrated from

⁷ Matthew A. 'An Outline History of Tribal Movement in Chotanagpur', pp. 1-8.

the west coast of India to north India through the river valleys and settled down in Bihar on the banks of Sone river. When further driven by successive groups of new races, they took shelter in the Rohtas plateau, which they fortified. Even this fortress they had to leave because of the attack by outside forces. When they left Rohtas the tribes split into two divisions. One group, known as the Male of Sauria, followed the course of Ganga and finally settled in Rajmahal hills. The other branch known as Oraons proceeded South-eastwards up the north-Koel river and occupied the north-eastern portion of the Chotanagpur plateau, then occupied by the Mundas. According to S.C. Roy, the Oraons came to Chotanagpur a few centuries after the Mundas, who themselves came to Chotanagpur around the 6th century B.C.⁸

According to Munda tradition, when the Munda came, the Asurs had been the inhabitants of this area. Since they found that the country was occupied by the Naga people, the Munda too have named this land as “Nagdesh”⁹. The Nagbanshis, Kurmis, Ahirs, Saraks are the communities who have originated from Naga people.

All these communities are found today in the proposed Jharkhand regions which itself is an indication of their local origins. There exist a few other communities e.g. Bhuinya, Bhogta, Ghashi, Pan etc. who are found only in the Jharkhand area. A number of these communities are known as Scheduled Tribes at present. Others e.g. the Sadanis, Nagbanshis, Kurmis or Bauris are included as castes within the

⁸ Anant Prasad Banerjee Shastri. ‘Asur India’, 1926 cited in District Gazetteer, Ranchi, 1970, pp. 38-41

⁹ Roy S. C. ‘The Mundas and their Country’. Bombay, 1970. pp. 330-334.

Hindu communities. Under the influence of Brahminism, the feudal families of Jharkhand have tried for long to depict themselves as distinct from the local people. Habitually, the 'Jharkhandis' are worshippers of nature. Their religious beliefs do not extend much beyond that. The moon, the snake and the water symbolizes the process of reproduction¹⁰. In all the fields, the 'Jharkhandis' have been able to resist the outside influence.

Traditional Organisation and Land System of Tribals

When the Munda entered into Chotanagpur, the whole country was virgin forest. Each family of settlers made in this virgin forest its own clearance which became a "Hattu" or village. When the founder of the village died, his sons often separated and built houses in the same village. The village from then on came to be known as the "*Khuntkatti Hatu*" or the village of the descendants of the original founder. The eldest son of the founder became the head of the village in both temporal and spiritual matters. The ownership of the land was held commonly by the *Khuntatkatidars*.

Over and above the village organisation, there was another organization called the '*Patti*' organisation. For mutual help, especially in times of war, several villages, linked together by their common "*kill*", united together under the one man called '*Manki*', who was elected by the head men of the villages¹¹.

¹⁰ Sharma Rambilas '*Bhasa Aur Samaj*'. N. Delhi, 1961, p. 514

¹¹ Kesri B. P. '*Chotanagpur Ka Itihaas: Kuch Sandary Kuch Sutra*'. 1963, pp. 30-35

In Munda system, the ultimate owner of the land is not the village headman or Manki or any other individual, but the village as a whole. This fact is important to understand the various unrest that took place in Chotanagpur.

Evolution of Kinship

For some centuries after their entrance into Chotanagpur the Mundas and Oraons continued to live side by side without any change of their political organisation. In course of time foreigners began to make regular attack on them. As a result, about the 5th century A.D. a momentous change was introduced which had far-reaching consequences for the entire country. This momentous change was the election by all the mankis of one of their member to be a chief manaki or Raja. The manki so elected was Phani Mukut Rai of Sutiambe from whom descended the Nagbanshi Rajas of Chotanagpur. He was, however, a chief among chiefs. He did not have any special proprietary rights, but received free gifts and subscription from the Mundas and Oraons and military service in time of war¹².

A section of the tribe, the Ho's, did not subscribe to the idea of a king and left the parent tribe and moved over to Singhbhum where they lived an independent life. In course of time, the Rajas began to show sign of lording it over the people. Unable to bear this, some of the

¹² Opcit, Matthew A, p. 8

Mundas, leaving the Oraons marched towards the South and East, where they founded new Khuntkutti villages.

The movement into the Jharkhand region started when the Aryans drove the native Adivasis out of the region, the Valleys of the Ganga. The first independent Maharaja of this state was Chatia Madhra Munda and the last Maharaja was Durjan Sah. In all, forty five independent kings ruled over the Jharkhand region. They were regarded as the ancestors of the “*Naga Bansa*” kings - kings of the Kobra clan. At present, the lineage members of this clan are found in Ranchi District of Bihar.

According to the Muhammadan historians, Chotanagpur or Jharkhanda - the forest country, which was also known as ‘*Khukra*’, was known in the Mughal court for its diamonds. In 1616, Ibrahim Khan, Governor of Bihar under Jahangir invaded this country and imprisoned the then Raja, Durjan Sah at the Gwalior fort in Madhya Pradesh. While in prison the Raja absorbed new ideas of royalty from the Hindu kings he met there and when he was released on his return to Chotanagpur he built palace and invited men from other parts of India to be his courtiers and priests. In payment for their services, Raja offered these new-comers a share in the gifts he had received from the villagers. The raja became gradually Hinduised by getting married into Rajput family¹³.

Hence, during seventeenth century, the tribal history could be marked by introduction of large number of strangers into the Jharkhand

¹³ Fidelis de Sa, ‘Crisis in Chotanagpur’, A Redemptorist pub. Bangalore, 1985, p. 47

country and also promotion of the concept of middlemen by Raja. The Rajas had gradually begun to have about them a court attended by Brahmins, courtiers and numerous other attendants and servants, all men from northern India. The Hindu warriors and Brahmin priests who came to the Raja's court had to be supported. The Raja assigned to many his own customary rights. The Jagirdari system or the system of service grants was thus introduced. But these alien assignees, who were granted the supplies and services given to the Raj were not content with this. They made every effort to acquire proprietary rights to land in the villages, and in the process they succeeded in reducing the tribal proprietors to the position of tenants. The foreign idea of rent was also slowly introduced. Thus began the gradual growth of the power of the Raja and his zamindars, a growth which was chiefly responsible for the agrarian trouble of the 19th century¹⁴. Due to the defeat of last Raja. Durjan Sah and subsequent invasion by foreign conquerors, the state was shortened to the size of present Chotanagpur. At present, Chotanagpur includes 10 districts – which are treated as the core of both the ancient Jharkhand state and the one that is now demanded.

Reaction of the Adivasis

Adivasis of this area made every possible attempt to resist the new system (developing as a consequence of immigration of outsiders). For over 100 years, since 1765, the administrative response of the British in these areas was largely influenced by successive tribal uprisings and movements: the important being Maler revolt (1772)

¹⁴ Singh K. S. 'Tribal Movement in India Vol. II', Manohar Publication, N. Delhi, 1982. pp. 71-72.

Tilka Manjhi revolt (1784). Tamar revolt (1798), Kol insurrection (1820), Ho revolt (1820), Great Kol insurrection (1832), Ganga Narain (Bhumij revolt), Sardar larai (1859-65) and Birsa Andolan (1895-1900)¹⁵.

In 1771, a British Military Collector was stationed at Chatra, which was formed of the present district of Hazaribagh. The Military collector combined in himself the function of a judge, a Magistrate and a Collector of revenues. Thus Police System was introduced with a mix of Zamindari as also regular police thanas. The Permanent Settlement (1793) had aggravated the problem of land and forest alienation and it was further accentuated by the Sale and Rent Law (1869). A series of serious agrarian unrest surfaced in the later half of the 19th century.

The “Sardari ladai” of 1859-65, was triggered off by the system of compulsory labour, illegal enhancement of rent and other grievances of the tenants. The “Birsa Andolan” (1895-1900) impressed upon the Government the necessity of taking more effective steps to remove the grievances of the tenants. It was recognised that the preparation of a complete record of rights was absolutely necessary and that the abolition of compulsory labour was a must. In the light of the experience gained in the course of the settlement operation of 1902 the “Chotanagpur Tenancy Act” of 1908 consolidated the previous enactments and embodied certain provisions of the “Bengal Tenancy Act”. Some additional provisions confirmed local customary rights and

¹⁵ Ibid. pp. 280-283

usage. The tenants had now final rights on their land, rent and on forest and wasteland¹⁶.

The 'Tana Bhagat Movement' of 1914 though primarily a reformist movement of the Oraon, also registered a protest against the oppression at the hands of the police, zamindars and money lenders. It started with a non-rent campaign and non-payment of *Chowkidari* tax. To strengthen the administration more sub-divisions and police stations were created.

In early nineteenth century, the district of Santhal Paragnas was swamped by the influx of Santhals, Bhuiyans, Paharias from the neighbouring areas. In the plains, Bhojpuri speaking people from North Bihar and Bengalis from Bengal settled in large numbers on account of improvement in road communication. Gradually, both the Paharias and Santhal found the inner structure of the administrative system to be corrupt, unjust and oppressive. *Dikus*, i.e. non-Santhal immigrants, had monopolised trade and money lending and introduced the system of bonded labour. The Santhals resented the extortion of the Mahajans (money lenders), the corruption of the revenue officials and the oppression of the police. Also, the non-Santhals had gradually ousted them from their own lands. The simmering discontent found expression in the Santhal Rebellion of 1855. The rebellion was widespread and lasted for two years. Proclamation of martial law and deployment of troops suppressed the revolt. This insurrection made the British realise the need of bringing the entire Santhal tract under effective administrative control.

¹⁶ Sinha Surjeet 'Introduction, Tribal Politics & State System', p. xvii

Once again, the discontent among the Santhal culminated in the disturbances of 1871. It was realised that indiscriminate extension of Acts had worked mischief and the district needed a simpler form of administration. Act XXXIII of 1870 which provided regulations for the peace and good government was applied to Santhal Paragnas.

According to Kumar Suresh Singh, the development of tribal movement in Chotanagpur shows two different stages. In the pre-1920 stage there were series of revolts which were centered around right in land and forest and aimed at expulsion of the British Raj and the Hindu landlords, money lenders and sought for autonomy and social order which were breaking down under the impact of colonial economy. There were effective mobilization of people because of religious rationale. These movements were violent and they were ruthlessly crushed. The main reason of this failure was that they were scattered and not constant. From 1920 onwards a distinct change is noticed in the behaviour pattern of tribal movements. During this stage the Jharkhand movement in its electoral politics became a legitimate sphere which the tribals began to manipulate for the achievement of their aspirations¹⁷.

Among the Mundas and the Oraons in 1820 there was first 'Kol Insurrection' against the *thekedars* and *jagirdars*. The Hos of Singhbhum revolted many times during 1920-21 to protect their freedom and check the exploitation by the Zamindars. The Kol revolt of 1831-32 was an important uprising as it involved all the three tribes of Chotanagpur (the Mundas, Hos, and Oraons). Immediately after the

Kol rebellion of 1832-33 the Bhumij Kols of Manbhum and Singhbhum revolted against the British administration and for getting relief from the landlordism.

After 1857 tribals registered their protests because they found the breakdown of the tribal land system reflected in money rent, money lending, and alienation of tribal lands.

Thus, it has been noticed during this period that the Santhals, the largest tribe in the Jharkhand area was first to start 'a peasant war' - the Santhal rebellions of 1855-57. The main causes were the grasping and rapacious nature of the money lenders and also police helping and abetting the Mahajans (money lenders). The two brothers Sidhu and Kannu who claimed to have an apparition of Thakur Bonga, led the rebellion with the cry Hul! Hul! (insurrection). The rebellion broke out throughout the Santhal region¹⁸.

The Birsa movement is another most important uprising in the history of Chotanagpur. It was characterised by a religious cultural revival and political action. Actually, it sought socio-political emancipation and religious reform. In 1895 Birsa Munda declared himself a diurnally inspired prophet for liberating his fellow tribals from the domination of the foreigners.

The socio-religious movement among the Oraons initiated by Jatra Bhagat in 1914, when Jatra Bhagat claimed that in his dream

¹⁷ Opcit. Matthew A. pp. 31-35

¹⁸ Singh K. 'The Chotanagpur Raj Mythology' in Surjeet Sinha (ed.), K. P. Bagchi & Co., Calcutta, 1987. pp. 61-64.

Dharmes (the Supreme God) had told him to denounce all the dealings with Ghosts and to give up animal sacrifice and liquor. He advised his followers to stop paying rent for land. He and his disciples were jailed for defying the zamindars and the British Government.

Following the defeat of Durjan Sal and subsequent invasion by foreign conquerors, the state was truncated to the size of present Chotanagpur. It was called Chotanagpur because it was once the estate of the 'Naga Bansa' kings. Chotanagpur division includes five districts- namely Ranchi, Palamou, Hazaribagh, Singhbhum and Dhanbad - which are treated, as the core of both the ancient Jharkhand state and the one that is now demanded. Thus the Jharkhand Party aims at the unification of the areas of the ancient Jharkhand state treating Chotanagpur as the central portion. The party also wants to incorporate in the new state the adivasi populated areas from the state of Orissa, Bihar, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh, so that the political, economic, social and other human problems of the adivasi's could be fruitfully tackled. Otherwise, they claim the progress and prosperity of the inhabitants of this area cannot be achieved.

CHAPTER II

ISSUES IN JHARKHAND MOVEMENT

Adivasi society, being an agricultural society, depends completely on land. In the beginning ownership of land was commonly held by the village community. The first ascertainable grant of a village made by the Jharkhandi Raja to one of the Hindu outsiders is dated 1676¹. From that time onwards the outsiders gradually began to snatch away the lands of the adivasis. By 1902 in the whole of the estate under the Raja of Chotanagpur, with an area of 7,710.19 sq. miles, only 156 villages within an area of 144 sq. miles in the poorest part of the province remained, which still preserved the greater part of the ancient rights. The alienation of adivasi land is still going on both legally and illegally.

The basic reasons for the tribal unrest which Fr. Hoffman gave in his *Encyclopedia Mundaricha* are valid even in the present situation. The general inability of two entirely different civilizations to understand each other. Adivasi society is a communitarian society. The village land is held commonly by the community. The outsiders who came into Chotanagpur had a different concept of land ownership. For them legitimate title to proprietary rights over land was the result of conquest. The British with their background of private property and the incapacity to converse with the adivasis could not understand the land

¹ Prior, H. C., *Bihar & Orissa in 1922*, Government Printing Press, Patna, 1923, pp. 17-18

system of Chotanagpur and the grievances of the adivasis. From this inability to understand the civilization of the adivasis followed most of the other mistakes made by the British, like the introduction of the British law system and the ideas of land lordism in to Chotanagpur. Further more, the British were more interested in the revenue from the area. The same situation holds true even now. The entire administration is controlled by outsiders who have little understanding of the tribal situation and have very little sympathy for the Adivasis cause.

As Fr. Hoffman says, Chotanagpur offered no attraction to the respectable classes of Hindus. Those who came in were mainly adventurers of some military castes, merchants and moneylenders whose sole aim was to enrich themselves as fast as possible. With its mineral and forest wealth and the large number of industries that have come up, Chotanagpur has become one of the most fertile grounds for loot in the whole country and has attracted a large variety of people from outside. Because of their roots outside Chotanagpur, they have little concern for the adivasis here, and keen-eyed traders and merchants, land grabbers and money-lenders, who have flocked into this area have played havoc with adivasis agrarian institutions and brought about their complete destruction. The whole network of the administration which is a part of the organised loot of this area is run mostly by people from North Bihar whose sole aim is to amass wealth for their families across the Ganges. The correspondence between the exploiters and the outsiders is so vivid that the tribal word '*Diku*' came to mean both 'exploiter' and 'outsider'. Thus converting Chotanagpur

into a ground of communalism, these forces are aiming to break tribal solidarity in order to keep the adivasis in eternal bondage so that they can carry on their loot unopposed.

Adivasis are known for their simplicity and truthfulness. But the incessant lawsuits with the outsiders have taught them lying and deceit in public life. "In this way the aliens, after robbing them of their rights and their property robbed them of something much more valuable still, their acknowledged truthfulness, and thus of their right to respect and sympathy²". Thus there are four basic issues behind the Jharkhand movement: land and forest alienation, training and job deprivation due to influx of the external populations, cultural submergence, and unbalanced development with a gradual change of focus from the pre-independence to post-independence period.

Ever since the introduction of the laws of permanent settlement in 1793 and the subsequent Rent Law of 1859, large scale transference of Adivasi land into the hands of outsiders, the absentee landlords, has taken place in the entire Chotanagpur hill area. Collection of revenue was the main concern of the East India Company and the British Government in their agreement with the local Adivasi Chiefs. When the latter failed to pay the agreed amount, their lands were auctioned to someone who could pay the said amount. Most of the fertile land belonging to the adivasis had been transferred to non-adivasi people especially in the hands of moneylenders³.

² Areepampil Matthew, "An Outline History of tribal movement in Chotanagpur" P-33.

³ Matthew A. Opcit. p. 33

According to Nirmal Sengupta, more than one-fourth of the country's mining activities, and 20 percent of the total public sector investment in industrial activities is based in this region⁴. With the introduction of the Chotanagpur Tenancy (Amendment) Act of 1903 and the Santhal Parganas Settlement (Amendment) Regulation of 1908, began the process of opening up of the area through mining and industry with the setting up of the Tata Iron and Steel Company (TISCO) at Jamshedpur right about the time⁵.

The prosperous trade and commerce with the improvement in the transport and communication systems for easy movement of people and goods and industrialization along with various sorts of government initiated development programmes in the area, have opened the door for the free entry of outsiders into the region. Shopkeepers and traders, who have also come from outside, entered even the remotest corners of the region and have settled down there permanently.

The process of land alienation continued by industrial and urban development. Public sector companies, such as Rourkela and Bokaro Steel Plant, Heavy Engineering Corporation, Ranchi and a number of cottage and small scale industries have come up in the region during the last 50 years of independence. Big Power project under the Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC), Koel Karo, Konar, Masorijre, Maithon and Bokaro power and irrigation projects engulfed thousands of acres of land. The aboriginal are thus deprived of their lands through alienation, acquisition for public use and displacement,

⁴ Nirmal Sengupta, *Opcit.* p. 10

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 11

especially in the mining areas and industrial concerns without systematic and appropriate compensation to the owners.

With the Forest Policy of 1854, the adivasis began to lose control over the forest resources. With each policy and Act, there was an emphasis on the “progressive assertion” of the monopoly right of the State disregarding the customary rights of the forest communities. “National interest” has been the main weapon used by the State to usurp the rights of the tribals in the forests. Profit maximization led to over exploitation and large scale destruction of forests. The *de jure* ownership of the state overwhelmed the traditional *de facto* ownership of the tribal communities⁶. After the nationalization of forests by the government, the unprecedented deforestation deprived the adivasis of their old world. Women in particular, found it difficult to collect necessary firewood and other forest produce for home consumption. The unscrupulous rulers of the center and the states, in their propaganda, talk so much about giving jobs to the adivasis and preservation of forests but in practice they do the opposite.

The Chotanagpur region should have deserved special treatment by the State Government. Instead of that the government’s “narrow parochial approach” is evident from the niggardly allocation of funds for people’s development and the unjust employment policy that it pursued. The 72 percent of the entire revenue of the State of Bihar comes from the Chotanagpur plateau, only 20 percent of it is allocated for the development of the area⁷. The Jharkhandis, Sadanis and

⁶ Matthew A, *Opcit*, 1988. pp. 28-29

⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 18-19

Scheduled Castes together find themselves employed in only about half of the employment opportunities opened up in the area by large scale development activities. Out of the total urban population in Jharkhand areas, only 17 percent were Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, according to 1981 census.

The new industries and power projects mentioned above required personnel. Appointment of outsiders for skilled labour is quite understandable but even in the areas where no such specialisation was needed, people from outside Jharkhand were appointed on a large scale. Even in Civil jobs like primary and secondary school teaching, outsiders dominated due to red tapism and favoritism on caste lines. The most frequently used ploy to discourage implementation of the reservation policy is to declare the said category of candidates are not available. Therefore, the development benefits in Jharkhand are not enjoyed by the Jharkhandis.

A sociologist of the Punjab Agricultural University has estimated that there are over one million migrant agricultural labour in Punjab mostly hailing from Bihar tribal communities⁸. This is in spite of the industrialisation in Bihar. The large tribal migration for jobs is due to two factors: absence of adequate technical education facilities for imparting necessary technical skills to the tribals and secondly and secondly, the medium of instruction in primary schools being Hindi which is not their mother tongue. Because of the heavy industrialization and the problems incidental to it, all of which affect the tribals the most, it would be no exaggeration to say that the tribals

have come to regard the natural resources found in their area more as a curse than as a gift of nature.

The Tribal Welfare Commission had submitted a report to the State Government in 1982, stating that the tribals felt aggrieved on account of the inadequate monetary compensation paid to them for the land acquired from them in connection with various projects⁹. The National Labour Institute also had undertaken a study in February 1984, which pointed out large scale illegal mining in areas where the tribals are the legitimate owners of the land¹⁰. Minimum wages are never paid to workers. The study has pointed out several serious infringement of the different provisions of the labour laws and ruthless exploitation of the ignorant and illiterate Adivasis by the contractors. More than 3,700 cases were pending with the Police for filing of charge sheets under the Forest Act, Indian Penal Code and others. In all these cases the accused tribals were either in jail or on bail.

The Supreme Court, disposing of the court petition filed in 1983 by Matthew Areparampil and others, against the illegal and indiscriminate detention of adivasis by the State of Bihar observed in its order dated September 20, 1984, "the facts are, as gleaned from the reports and documents reveal, a most shocking state of affairs in the region in question. It seems that a very large number of people have been languishing in Jails without trial for petty offenses."¹¹ These

⁸ Hindustan Times, New Delhi, Nov. 18, 1987.

⁹ Ranchi Express, Ranchi, 17 June, 1989

¹⁰ Sengupta Nirmal Opcit. pp. 42-43

¹¹ Rajgopal P. R. 'Legal New & Views', Bombay Nov. 1988. p. 5

experiences in no small measure contributed to their alienation from the mainstream of national life.

The Chotanagpur tribes is facing the additional problem of cultural discrimination. As immigrant population to some parts of the country, they are not treated as Scheduled Tribes eligible for availing developmental benefits due to them. There are over one million Chotanagpur tribal people settled in the north eastern part of the country in course of their working in the tea plantation but are deprived of the privileges due to them as Scheduled Tribes. The usual explanation given is that the native tribals share in the funds and opportunities would be much less if they were to share them with the Chotanagpur tribes. The culture of Chotanagpur area 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, and a democratic political thinking. Mrs. Gandhi on her last visit to Ranchi, while speaking about the culture of Chotanagpur had expressed that “This culture is facing a crisis of identity at this time. We see a large scale devastation of nature in the form of deforestation and unscientific mining: the hierarchical notions of caste and class creeping in place of egalitarianism, exploitation by the in coming population in return of the accommodativeness of the local people, and the literacy and artistic pursuits losing their participating nature and becoming more passive and observation oriented¹²”.

¹² Ranchi Express, Dec. 6, 1983, Ranchi.

It can be said that the condition of the tribals worsens every day. K. S. Singh noted, "The 1971 census disclosed an alarming state of affairs. The percentage of Scheduled Tribes in the population of districts of Tribal Bihar has fallen sharply¹³". This trend persists as Prof. Ashok Mitra analysed the 1981 census and showed that the share of the tribal in the population was decreasing at a still faster rate¹⁴. It means that the tribals are facing the danger of extinction.

Sometimes it is alleged, that some non-tribals preach preservation of tribal culture ignoring the fact that the tribal society has developed through adoption of modern influence, and that the slogan for preservation for tribal culture by tribal leaders is motivated by political interests. However, the tribal mass, particularly the uneducated, is still attached to its cultural moorings and leads by and large, a traditional conformist life. Some of the present day intellectuals wielding considerable influence over political leaders are ardent protagonist of tribal culture and languages. In fact, they identify cultural sub emergence as one of the four basic issues behind Jharkhand movement. According to them this culture is presently facing crisis of identity. One only needs to recall that the earlier stages of the Jharkhand movement have been sustained on the emotive cultural base. The Debar commission acknowledged this and was influenced by the undercurrent of culture.

¹³ Munda, R. D., 'Search of a Tribal Homeland', in *Ethnopolitics and Identity Crisis*. (ed.) Budhdev Choudhary, Inter India Publication, N. Delhi, 1992, p. 384

¹⁴ Mahapatra, L. K., 'Social Movements amongst Tribes of India', in *Tribal situation in India*. (ed.) K. S. Singh, 1972

As already indicated, Santhal Paragnas and the districts of Chotanagpur constitutes the main jungle tracts of this province. There are contiguous parts of Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh of similar terrain which makes Jharkhand at the same time more extensive and more inaccessible. Santhal Paragnas district, and also Chotanagpur, is surrounded by the so-called civilized non-tribal people on all sides. This infiltration of outside population inevitably results in a heavy influence on the adivasi people. This continuous movement of educated and non-advasi population deeper into the interiors of the Jharkhand districts had led to the exploitation of adivasi people in every conceivable way. They have literally been robbed and deprived of their lands and incomes and driven into complete ruin. Had the adivasis not come into contact with these so called civilized groups, they would not be in the miserable plight in which they now find themselves, or at worst the process would have been slower and its intensity less severe. Their ruin would not have been so swift or on such a mass scale. Earlier it was held that only in the Santhal Paragna had there been this kind of penetration of civilized persons for exploiting its Adivasi population. This is also the view of government, which is why a special set of administrative regulations were adopted favouring this district. It is possible that this process occurred here on such a vast scale because Santhal Paragnas is a principal centre of Hindu Pilgrimage. The point of reference is the Shiva temple at Deoghar, a Baidyanath Dham, which is in fact a major pilgrimage site, especially for Hindu devotees of Bihar. It is also, because of its elevation, serves as a holiday retreat for many visitors from Bengal.

Now, to a greater or lesser degree, the same state of affairs is forced uniformly in all the districts of Jharkhand. Every where the ownership of land is being taken over by non-*adivasi* outsiders. The report of the “Santhal Pararagnas Inquiry Committee” in 1938, submitted during the time of the first Congress Ministry, holds true for all the districts of Jharkhand. It says, “The system was designed and created to meet the needs of an area which contains a large proportion of somewhat primitive aboriginal and semi-aboriginal intermingled in varying proportion with a more advanced population. The problems arising out of this mixture of population are intermixed by the fact that, unlike the other large aboriginal tracts in the province, the district is almost surrounded by areas inhabited by more advanced people(s) and suffering an excessive pressure of population on the soil. This has throughout the last century produced a steady tendency for the surrounding population to encroach upon the land of the aboriginal and to exploit that population¹⁵.”

This process continues to the present day. Much of the land of the *adivasis* has been expropriated in this way. This practice extends widely in Chotanagpur. The loot which followed the setting up of TISCO by the Tatas in Singhbhum district is a glaring example. The Jharkhand tract is characterised by dense forests and mountains, and the agricultural fields are generally much less productive. Consequently the peasants of this region are very poor and live on the verge of hunger much of the time. But the dryness, barrenness and sterility of the soil of Jharkhand is more than compensated for by its

¹⁵ Report of the ‘Santhal Paragna Enquiry Committee’, Superintendent Government Printing, 1938, Patna. Also see K. S. Singh, ‘The Scheduled Tibes, People of India National Series - Vol. III’,

priceless underground wealth. Beneath its soils lie vast deposits of coal without which factories, railways, and the entire administrative establishment would come to a stand still. This coal is also known as "black gold" and this description is entirely accurate. The scarcity of this invaluable material can render ineffective the entire commercial work of the world. The foundation of present day capitalism rests on materials like coal, petroleum, iron and rubber. Mica is also one of these critical materials. It will be no exaggeration to describe this region as the life blood of the entire province. The area abounds in large deposits of iron ore as well. The famous iron works of the Tatas, who control dozens of such industries, in this region are after all situated in Jharkhand. The entire surface of Hazaribagh and Kodarma is literally full of mica. Americans and other foreign companies hold many of these mines on lease. The dense forest of Sal trees growing in the region and many other kinds of trees are no less valuable for their timber. The bamboo which grows widely here is a rich resource for paper manufacture. Another valuable product from the forest is lac produced chiefly on three kinds of trees, that is the Palas, Kusum and Ber, which are found especially in the districts of Singhbhum, Palamu, Ranchi and Santhal Paragnas. Lac is a major product of the area, but it is also a source of great harassment to the peasants historically. The zamindars have forcibly taken possession of lac producing trees. The fields belong to the peasant but the Palas trees, on which lac worms feed, are regarded as belonging to the zamindars. Consequently even officials of the administration accept this arrangement as fact. They attach no importance to ordinary common sense in the face of the

documentary evidence to the contrary and deliver their judgments accordingly.

Thus one finds that the land of Jharkhand is producing wealth without limit. Its vast deposits of minerals and many varieties of stones have enabled large numbers of Indians and foreigners literally to become multi-millionaires. The Tatas earned or in a sense looted vast wealth from Jharkhand. But the original inhabitant of this place have remained as poor as before¹⁶. They remain poor but have helped others to become rich beyond measure.

There is no doubt, however, that the real centre of Bihar's wealth is Chotanagpur. If it were to be separated from Bihar it would be a death blow to the State. It is already the case that the wealth of Jharkhand is largely exploited by outsiders. Although the population of the region is roughly one-third that of Bihar, yet its inhabitants are in a sense voiceless. They lack the power to speak about their sufferings and grievances nor are they familiar with present day means of agitating for their just rights. Their cries of agony and anguish are not audible in the present political environment. It is only the agitation of the middle class which we now see, and their concern for jobs, for electing their representatives to local boards, to the Bihar Assembly, and making public representation of their loyalty to government. (There has of course been a proliferation of political groups, movements and parties mobilized to achieve one object or another for

¹⁶ For further detail see Victor Das, 'Jharkhand: Castle Over the Graves', Inter India Publication, New Delhi, 1991, pp. 190-194. Also see Arun Sinha, 'Struggle Against Bureaucratic Capitalism', and Nirmal Sengupta, 'Background of Jharkhand', in Nirmal Sengupta (ed.) 'Fourth World Dynamics: Jharkhand', Authors Guild Publication, Delhi, 1982.

Jharkhand and its people). Had there been some political awakening among the original inhabitants of Jharkhand, a feeling of class conscious as well as a sense of their just rights, had they possessed the ability of representing their rights and demands with conviction and without fear, the present state of affairs would not have existed.

It would be a weak excuse to say that the British Government and its committees were responsible for this condition. After all the British administration did not last forever. Whichever government was formed, the administration of this province was always composed of and controlled by Biharis. The adivasi people were persuaded to believe that if do not remain with Bihar, no one will take care of them. Despite being the source of much of Bihar's wealth and having the same area as that of Bihar proper, not even one adivasi was included in the first Congress Ministry (1941). Even the Parliamentary Secretary, during the Congress ministry, who belonged to Chotanagpur, had opposed the holding of the Legislative Assembly session at Ranchi. (Here the reference is made to Krishna Ballav Sahay, Parliamentary secretary during the first Congress Ministry and subsequently Bihar's fourth Chief Minister from October 1963 to March 1967. Sahay was from Chotanagpur, Hazaribagh.)

Those who are backward and are not able to raise their voices themselves, as the educated and economically advanced Biharis or Bengalis immigrants do, constitute not less than eighty percent of the population of this region. Its most solid proof is the existence here of lacs of upper caste of the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Bania Mahajans, Kayastha and others. The upper section of the population have actually

migrated here from the outside to loot. The British came here only to exploit the people and the country. Hence they never mixed with the people. This is exactly the same behaviour of the civilized, educated and high caste people, who came to Jharkhand and settled down here purely as exploiters.

In a 1990 report, Ram Dayal Munda examines the tribal non-tribal issue that “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. The irony of the situation is that while the external population is coming in, people from the Chotanagpur area are forced to leave in search of menial jobs in far away places like Punjab, Assam, and elsewhere. There are provision for 80 percent reservation for tribal and local people in training and jobs but the fact is that nearly 90 percent of the training facilities and jobs (in general education, engineering and medical) are filled by an external population¹⁷.” Most of the posts of Grade III and Grade IV jobs go to the outside non-tribals. Fake certificates are issued to the outside non-tribals as tribals, as in most cases it is the a non-tribal who sits in the chair of authority that issues these fake certificates.

In the Jharkhand region, the category of zamindar are found , as in other parts of Bihar. But the distinguishing feature of this region is that the government itself functions in a zamindari way. The government owns and manages many of the dense forests of Chotanagpur. The Zamindars also own and control some forest areas, but the “reserved

¹⁷ Munda R. D. ‘The Jharkhand Movement: Retrospect & Prospect’, A report submitted to Home Minister Mr. Buta Singh (Ranchi: Jharkhand Coordination Committee, 1990), p. 10

forests” owned by the government are nevertheless vast. All these reserved forests are sources of great hardship to the local population¹⁸. In spite of the fact that dense forests are rich source of water with their rivers and streams, the people living nearby and their cattle literally die in the summer for want of water. To dig well in these mountainous tracts is beyond their means, yet if the people here go into the reserved forest with their cattle, they are subjected to legal action. Neither the government nor the zamindars are concerned with meeting this human need. For the people it is an everyday matter of life and death. The forests were grabbed up more brutally eschewing all legal formalities, the landlords adjudged to themselves the ownership of the woods and underwood; they enclosed the forests and forbade hunting, and abolished the right of taking wood for fuel and for the repairs of houses, fences, implements etc. The encroachments of the nobles on the forest land, which were the common property of the village, gave rise to terrible revolts of the peasants. The tribals followed the natural law that the nature does not entitle anyone to enjoy exclusive rights over the forests, therefore it can not also deprive anyone of these rights. In Jharkhand, by one stroke of the pen, the government of the capitalists deprived the peasants of their ancient rights and made the zamindars their masters. Also it is remarkable that there is, to date, no proper legislation governing tenancy relations in Jharkhand area. Some old rules and ‘regulations’ are the basis on which old land settlements have been arrived at there.

Another serious problem is the absence of proper legal assistance. The legal profession is spoiled mainly due to the

¹⁸ Singh K. S. ‘Dust Storm and the Hanging Mist’, p. 25

malpractice indulged in by the lawyers and is getting overcrowded here with the result that everyone must find something to do to justify his existence. Accordingly many lawyers engage in questionable methods to maintain themselves. They become facilitators in the game of exploitation played by outsiders. False evidence, trickery, physical intimidation, etc. are the tools which are often employed with the connivance of lawyers by the outside non-tribals to cheat the adivasis of their land and belongings. Even the most heinous crimes committed against the tribals have gone unpunished, as the lawyers employ every trick in the trade to protect their moneyed clients. Incidents of murder, rape of tribal women etc. in which the accused rarely gets punished, have encouraged them further. Inability of the State to provide effective legal protection to the tribals, have further increased their sense of helplessness and anger.

In sum, a strong sense of deprivation that prevails among the tribals of the Jharkhand area is deliberately brought under the control of the exploitative structure of the dominant society. They have been systematically dispossessed of the means of production, political autonomy, of their culture, their values and their identity through the policy of integration and assimilation. What is very agonizing to them is that they have been deprived of their economic power and this has made them politically powerless.

CHAPTER - III

NATURE OF JHARKHANDI (TRIBAL) LEADERSHIP PATTERN

In general, leadership is characterised with certain basic features common to all types of societies. In tribal society it is tradition oriented. The tribal's network of social relation remains confined to a relatively smaller area - a region. The non-tribals on the other hand have more or less a country wide network and they are largely conscious of the events occurring on the regional, state or national level. A tribe has its own political system and it confines to form a political unit in itself having its own institutional leaders, headmen and authorities. To say, a tribe is considered to be a territorial and linguistic unit with its own social system and cultural institutions.¹

According to W. H. Colley (1928), a leader is an individual who is moving in a particular direction and who succeeds in indulging others to change accordingly. An UNESCO paper defines a leader as a person who holds a position of prestige, power, authority or any sort of influence in initiating, directing, organizing or controlling the behaviour of members of a community and leads them towards some culturally defined or other goals.²

Park and Tinkar view leadership as a situation-process in which a person because of his actual or supported ability to solve problems in

¹ Vidyarthi L.P. some Preliminary observations on emerging pattern of leadership in tribal India. In emerging pattern of Rural Leadership in Southern Asia, Govt. of India, National Institute of Community Development, Hyderabad 1965 p-175.

² UNESCO-paper-1965 pp-42-46

the field of current group interest, is followed by others in the group and influences their behaviour³. R.T. Lapiévs and P.R. Fransworth defines leadership as the behaviour that affects the behaviour of other people. As such, leadership applies when this is voluntarily accepted that is it leads the group towards a commonly shared goal. Philip Selznick opines that leadership is not equivalent to office holding. He prefers to make a distinction between routine and 'critical decision making'⁴. Hans Nagpal in one of his paper on leadership presents a brief historical review of the concepts of leadership and observes that during past three decades social scientists had been shifting their attention from one aspect to the others for the territorial formulation of the leadership concept. Early leadership researchers focused on the leader himself known as the "great man theory of leadership" which is based on physical character or traits⁵.

On the basis of personality types and social roles, they have been classified as the political boss, the democrat, the bureaucrat, the diplomat, the reformer, the agitator. On the basis of modes of the exercise of their leaderships, they have been classified as authoritarian, democratic and charismatic. Using the criterion of the relation between the leaders and the led, Bartlett has divided them in three groups; institutional leaders, dominant leaders and persuasive leaders⁶. Following the origin of leadership, they have been classified as self-appointed leaders, group appointed leaders.⁷

³ Weiner Myron, 'Sons of the Soil', P. 120.

⁴ Dr. Rajnarain in article 'Two decades of studies of leadership traits' in Shiksha, July 1955.

⁵ Vidvarthi L. P., Opcit, 1975, p. 179

⁶ Sengupta Nirmal 'Background of the Jharkhand Question' Opcit, 1982.

⁷ Dube S.C. 'Inaugural Address: Tribal Situation in India (ed. K. S. Singh)', IAS, Shimla, 1972

Vidyarthi makes a two fold classification of tribal leaders: traditional and modern.⁸ Traditional leaders are those who were hereditary and institutionalized like the secular and religious heads of tribal village like *Mahto*, *Pahan*, *Baiga*. It also included the leaders associated with their inter-village councils like *Praha-Raja*, *Manki* etc. There was growth of new leaders in moment of crisis like Birsa Bhagwan among Mundas, Jatra Bhagat among Oraon, Bir Sing and Bhagirath among Santhals. The traditional leaders of the tribals were rural bred, charismatic and religious in their approach. They had little education but they derived power through dreams to lead the masses. The rural bred charismatic leadership functioned for revitalising the tribals, on the line of Hindu religion like, *Sudhikaran*, *Sankritisation* but received a set back at the hands of Christian missionaries. Christian missionaries could more effectively penetrate the tribal area and managed to get them converted to Christianity by offering education and medical facilities. Impact of urbanization and industrialization led to the emergence of other new type of tribal leadership which is characterised by the aspirations and needs of the local and regional people. The urban bred, educated have also come up in modern times. As such tribal leaders were firstly divided into two broad categories in terms of perspective viz, historical and contemporary. The former type were found in the past, which were generally associated with rebellions and revolts -- economic, socio-religious and political -- like Birsa Munda among the Munda tribes, Thakur Bholanath of Tammar, Jatra among the Oraon tribes, Bir Sing and others among Santhals. The contemporary type is the modern charismatic type, urban oriented,

⁸ Vidyarth L. P., *Ibid*, p. 176

literate and secular. It has new vision and takes a holistic view of the problem.

Nature of Tribal Leadership in Bihar

In Bihar, as mentioned earlier, there are around thirty scheduled tribes who are concentrated in Chotanagpur and Santhal Paragnas area. There are three areas in which tribes and non-tribes have interacted to make Chotanagpur and Santhal Paragnas a distinct cultural region. For example tribes, as the *autochthones*, laid down many of the norms that the communities coming in later adopted. Chotanagpur has been meeting ground of three major languages, Indo-Aryan, Davidian and Austro-Asiatic. The society that has emerged in Chotanagpur is relatively humane and equally, marked by the absence of distortions that characterise hierarchical societies elsewhere. This participative cultural system explains why and how, many tribal movements from 19th century onwards, led by the tribal people also witnessed participation by a sizeable section of the non-tribals who were socially and economically related to tribals as a part of the emerging larger cultural system. Even though, this character of Chotanagpur society and culture survives in various movements for autonomy of Chotanagpur, it was ethnic as it was led by tribes. There were four reasons why such a movement started in Chotanagpur. First, Chotanagpur was the most advanced tribal region in spheres of literacy, political consciousness, and industrial progress. Secondly, the major tribal communities were concentrated in this geographically distinct region; thirdly, Christianity came in a big way to Chotanagpur performing many roles. It accentuated the notion of private land: it

promoted education, medical care and emphasized tribal consciousness thereby giving them a sense of separate identity, finally Chotanagpur tribes have had a tradition of militant and century-long organized struggles going back over a hundred years⁹.

Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Century Insurrections and the Pattern of Tribal Leadership

The early eighteenth century movements in the Jharkhand region were restorative rebellions, aimed at driving out the British and the Hindu zaminders installed by the British administration, and restoring earlier autonomy and social relations. As such, tribal movements in the Jharkhand region were “class struggle” against those who exacted surpluses from them and tried to disrupt their autonomy and ways of life. In effect these movements were against their oppressors and moneylenders and aimed at the restoration of the pre-British social order or when this was not possible; at restructuring the prevailing mode of social relations between the ‘tribals’ and ‘outsiders’. All these tribal uprisings had religious underpinnings, yet they strived at the liberation of the tribals from the yoke of the British and the Hindu zaminders of North Bihar. A sore point of tribal grievance was the ‘forest rules’ and ‘agricultural taxes’, which adversely affected the forest economy of the tribals¹⁰.

The Birsa movement from 1895 to 1900 was basically transformative in terms of its ultimate goal. No tactics was employed to mobilise the masses and to get them involved in it. The Indian

⁹ Sengupta Nirmal *Op.cit.* 1982. p. 121

national movement, for instance, mobilised the Indian masses by using religious and cultural symbols. The basic instrumentalities of the Birsa movement were no doubt messianic or charismatic in nature; but the movement itself never aimed at a new religious order as such among the tribals. On acquiring vitality and momentum most of these movements became issue-oriented; aimed at re-redressal of some grievances even through tactics involving violence.

Writing about Indian peasant uprisings, Kathleen Gough says: "All of the revolts seem to have occurred under conditions of relative deprivation, that is, of deprivation considered outrageous by comparison with the past or with the condition of others in the present. All of them embodied ideas of freedom from undue economic exploitation or deprivation of some form of collective independence from a domination conceived of as foreign and unjustified; and of a just social order sanctioned by some religious faith or all embracing modern ideology, especially that of Marxism"¹¹. Gough's observation is partly applicable to the tribals in the Jharkhand for they considered intervention by the British rulers and the Hindu zaminders as an attack on the autonomy of their culture and tribals of Jharkhand believed that they were never under any kind of dominance before the British period. Thus, these movements aimed at the re-establishment of traditional rule.

The mobilisers of the movements echoed the slogan that all land belonged to the tribals. The Kols, Mundas and Oraons who were the

¹⁰ Singh K. S. 'Tribal Movement in India'. Opcit. pp. 120-121

¹¹ Chaudhry Binay Bhusan 'Peasant Movement in Eastern India during British Rule'. Samar Sen Memorial lecture, 1989.

indigenous people of the region, never had kings and chiefs, and were divided into families united by their '*Parhas*' or conferences. All the land belonged to them and the indigenous people of Chotanagpur chose a king and gave him a grant-in-land for his maintenance, viz; half of the land belonging to each village. Till the establishment of the British court in 1932, the kols never paid any rent on their lands. The tribals therefore revolted against the British interference and the zaminder's extortion and demanded restoration of the earlier system of land management. These agrarian issues, were basic in all the early tribal uprisings. For, even before the British rule the kols of Chotanagpur had been reduced to a state of serfdom. One of the results of the contact with the British Government and Christian missionaries was that the Kols, Mundas, and Oraons began to realise their actual position; and these revolts were an off-shoot of the contacts and awakening they developed as a result of their association with them. In recent times too, due to increased immigration as a result of industrialisation in South Bihar, the tribals have lost their lands. Therefore, the exploitation by *dikus* and alienation of land by non-tribals were the cause behind the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century tribal insurrections.

Early Twentieth Century Reformative and Emulative Movements

The reformative and religious movements were quite different from the early insurrections, though both employed supernaturalism, spiritualism and ritualistic paraphernalia. An important reformative

movement was the Tana-Bhagat movement started by Oraons in 1902 which emphasised kurukh Dharma of Oraons. The Oraon

Bhagats (prophets) promised their followers safety not only from the capricious and blood-thirsty tribal spirits of which the Oraons were much afraid, but also assured them relief from the oppressive and unjust revenue system and exploitation by landlords, usurpers and government officials. The Bhakti movement and Christianity had a great impact on the Bhagats. The movements of Jatra Bhagat, Sibhu Bhagat of Kandar, Tana Bhagat, Julaha and Arwa Bhagats and Rakshimi Bhagats were mobility movements emphasising mainly tectotalism, Hindu ways of life and restoration of their golden age. The contemporary Hindu revivalistic movement led by Gurus, Vaishnava Bairagis and Kabir Panthis influenced the Bhagats, who in their turn influenced the Santhals and Hos. Some of the tribes, particularly the Bhumijis, showed a strong desire to adopt Rajputs style and life; however, they failed in their aim of *Kshatrialisation* because most of them were not prepared to give up eating chicken, drinking liquor, widow-remarriage and traditional Bhumij religious rites.¹²

These revivalistic and emulative movements were never so widespread and strong as the earlier ones. They were all short-lived and they did not have an enduring impact on tribal life. However, some reformative institutions and associations formed by the educated tribals did have an impact on the formation of the Jharkhand party and the demand of a separate state of Jharkhand in 1950.

The initial phase, starting at the turn of the present century saw the rise of the institutions designed to introduce reform and stimulate

¹² Sharma K. L. Jharkhand movement in Bihar, *Economic and Political weekly*, Jan 10, 1976. Pp. 37-39.

development among the tribes, mainly along denomination and even along inter-denomination lines. As early as 1898, the Christian Association had been formed by the Lutheran graduates for the promotion of education. In 1912, J. Bartholomen of Anglican Mission, on his return from the students conference of Dacca in 1911-12, founded a branch of the Dacca students union with the objective of raising funds for the education of poor Christian students. The Munda-Oraon Education conference (*Siksha Sabha*) founded by a non-Christian leader did the job of promoting education among urban tribals.

When the era of constitutional reform dawned after 1918 and demands for promotion and protection of regional interests grew, the educated Christian tribals, mostly students, belonging to the German and Anglican missions, took a hand in organizing the Chotanagpur Improvement Society at the instance of the Anglican Bishop of Ranchi. A Munda led this inter-denominational body, which voiced its concern in 1916 over the absence of security for tribals and stressed the need for the preservation of tribal identity in the changing political context.

The phase from 1920-38 was dominated by the activities of the revived Chotanagpur Improvement Society (Chotanagpur Unnati Samaj) in 1920. A tribal urban middle class was gradually forming. It was led by tribal teachers and catechists and sought to secure employment for educated tribals, reservation in the services and legislative bodies, and formation of a sub-state joined to Bengal or Orissa. Though it sought to spread its activities to villages, it remained essentially an Urban movement.

The period 1938-47 saw the rise of militant movement under the banner of Adivasi Mahasabha. The immediate cause of the formation of the Mahasabha was the experience of the first election held in 1937 under the Government of India Act of 1935, in which the Congress party had swept the polls. This persuaded mainly Christian and also some non-Christian tribals to close their ranks and form a joint body. The Chotanagpur Improvement Society led by members of different denomination and non-tribals merged to form the Adivasi Mahasabha in 1938. In this respect this new body represented an advance on the earlier movement, commanded a wider political base and possessed pan-tribal composition and objectives¹³. The Report of the 'Excluded and Partially Excluded areas (other than Assam) Sub-committee of the Constituent Assembly' (August 1947) noted that the Adivasi Mahasabha had "captured the imagination" of the tribes as a whole, not only of the Christians but also non-Christians and that it was gaining sympathy among the non-aboriginals too. The committee considered "adequate association of the people of patrially excluded areas, particularly the tribes, in different branches of the administration including in the cabinet" necessary and that the problem of administration in this area must be dealt with not only by economic and educational improvement but also through remedies which recognized its political and psychological aspects.¹⁴

¹³ Hazel Lutz and Ram Dayal Munda. 'Tribal Change & Development in India'. 1980. The Passing Scene in Chotanagpur. p. 115.

¹⁴ Singh K. S. (ed). Tribal movements in India. 2 volumes, N. Delhi, Manohar publications. 1982. See particularly first seven articles in 2 volumes, also see Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay, 1966, S.P. Sinha life and times of Birsa Bhagwan, Ranchi, Bihar Tribal Welfare Research Institute 1964.

In December 1911 the government of India declared that Bihar, Orissa and Chotanagpur would constitute a separate unit called Bihar. Later in 1935, Orissa too became a separate province. But the problem of Chotanagpur remained. In 1915 a reformative organization called Unnati Samaj was formed and it was renamed Adivasi Mahasabha in 1938. The latter's leader Jaipal Singh achieved prominence as the chief exponent and spokesman of the tribals of South Bihar, Chotanagpur and Santhal Paragnas, and led the Jhankhand party, and the movement for the formation of a separate Jharkhand state.

Characteristics of Tribal Leadership in Bihar

Among around thirty recognised Scheduled Tribes community concentrated in Chotanagpur and Santhal Paragnas area, four tribes -- the Oraon, the Mundas, the Hos and the Santhals -- are numerically dominant. The Oraons, though found in all the five districts of Chotanagpur division, are mainly concentrated in Ranchi and Palamu districts. The Mundas are concentrated in the southern & eastern parts of Chotanagpur. The Hos are concentrated in Kolhan (Singhbhum) area and Santhals are mainly concentrated in Santhal Pargana districts of Bhagatpur division. As mentioned earlier, the two linguistic groups of tribals i.e., Mundari speaking and the Dravidian speaking came somewhere from the north west and western part of India and took to different ecological settings where they developed different cultural systems. Some of the tribes who were historically connected, developed cultural differences and cross-cultural regularities because

of ecological factors.¹⁵ Thus tribal Bihar is marked by a great cultural heterogeneity and to understand the various patterns of tribal leadership under various cultural settings of the tribes, it is necessary to study them in historical perspective to understand the socio-cultural factors which created conditions for leadership and to see as to how the process of evolution of leadership among the tribes of Chotanagpur and Santhal Paragnas point out from the beginning the process of diversification of leadership.

Traditionally, these tribals lead a secluded life in the hilly and forested areas. They have their traditional village priest known as *Pahan or Biga* (Oraon and Munda Custom) and *Deori* (Ho custom) etc. Due to such historical background and the fact that they live in forest environment, the tribals continue to be highly obsessed with the fear of spirits and deities. The blessings and due propitiation to spirits is required whether it is a journey, a marriage-negotiation, cattle wealth disease, progeny, yield of the crop etc. Naturally, the village priest wielded a strong influence on his people in religious as well as secular matters and he was the overall leader of a tribal village. Thus he was entrusted with the duty of maintaining harmonious relationship between the villagers and the super natural powers. This overall village leadership of the village priest was in direct descending line of the *Risa* Systems of leadership introduced by the original tribal colonists of Chotanagpur, centuries ago¹⁶. In due course of time, to minimise his workload, he delegated some of his secular power to *Mahto or Munda* who could look after the secular affairs of the village. S.C. Roy,

¹⁵ Vigyarthi L.P. Cultural Types in Tribal Bihar in *Journal of Social Research*, Vol-I, No. 1, 1958.

¹⁶ Fr Hoffman, 'Encycopaedia Mundarica', Opcit, 1976. p. 2406

writing about Oraon says that the "*Pahan Gaon Banata hai, Mahto Gaon Chalata hai*" -- a Pahan maintains the village, while a Mahto runs the village.¹⁷

Thus one finds that the ecological setting, nature of economy and type of social structure of a tribal community are important factors which go to determine the leadership pattern of a tribal community. Another feature of the leadership pattern is their sole dependence on the leaders of their own tribal community. As such the earlier type of leadership was not at all integrated within the regional or state leadership system.

On the other hand, the settled agricultural tribes who have entirely different ecological, economic and social structure setting, the nature of leadership pattern is different. Settled agricultural tribes, like the Oraons, the Mundas, the Hos and the Santhals, live in the village generally inhabited by the Hindus and Muslims too, and have developed close reciprocal relation with them. However, there is a marked difference between the network of social relationship maintained by the tribals and the non-tribals. The social relations of non-tribals generally extends to a much wider geographical region which may even cover the whole State or many States. It is also true in regard to their leadership and political system. Whereas, the leadership pattern of tribals has to a great extent remained within a much smaller geographical context. It generally tends to merge within the regional or state politics and leadership system in particular, and the country-wide politics in general. On the sub-regional council level, the various

¹⁷ Roy S. C. *The Oraon of Chotanagpur*. Calcutta. The Brhmo Mission Press. 1915 pp-111-113.

officials working under *Parha Raja* or *Manki* had specialised duties. Also the religious leaders like *Pahan* and *Baiga* had got importance only in the village affairs and the leadership may be said to be mainly religious oriented.

Since the advent of Christian missionaries in tribal Bihar in the nineteenth century, the traditional tribal institutions and their hereditary leadership suffered a great set back. The tribals were converted to the new Christian faith on a massive scale. And such tribals got well organised at the hands of Christian priests and religious authorities of various denominations. With independence of India, a new constitution was drawn up which aimed to uplift the backward sections of the Indian population. As a result, Panchayati Raj and various welfare schemes were introduced which promised to provide effective leadership to the people through its various personnel, office bearers and officials. "*Adimjati Seva Mandal*" in Chatonagpur and "*Santhal Paharia Seva Mandal*" in Santhal Paragnas may be cited in this connection which are private welfare agencies and which have given new lead to the tribal people. The democratic form of government also provided a sense of equality and the system of elections and pre-election propaganda made the people politically conscious and gave them a new turn in the direction of tribal leadership. It was through the leaders winning in election, that the local tribal leadership was to be integrated within the wider regional, state or national network of leadership.

The leadership pattern in urban areas, due to the impact of urbanization and industrialisation, is distinctly marked. Whileth

leadership patterns found in the first categories mentioned above, were rural bred, traditional and religious oriented, the urban leadership is urban bred, educated and secular oriented. Moreover, there are a number of such tribals who have been directly affected by industrialization; they have been uprooted from their original villages, and facing a number of problems related to their socio-cultural and economic life. With the emergence of new needs of the people, there has also emerged a new set of leaders to look after the new interests of the tribals viz, the leaders associated with various trade unions, middlemen, businessmen, contractors, politicians etc. Presently, the tribal leadership in urban areas is integrated with the state and national leadership system because of modern means of communication which helps them for their direct and frequent contacts with the state and national leaders. The tribal leadership in urban centres is more heterogeneous in terms of ethnic affiliation and profession of the leaders and involves many new types of emergent leaders.

Economic status considerably influenced the leadership traits of the tribal leaders. Emphasis on 'social' and 'educational' problems especially by tribal leaders, reveal the influence of culture-contact, as otherwise in an aboriginal culture problems are generally viewed in the traditional context. The impact of modernity on the literate and educated leaders, at the same time also point out as to how education brings about a change in the thinking of the leaders in regards to goals and aspirations of their life. There were various sources from which tribal leaders took their inspiration for social work viz, their relatives, Christian missionaries, political leaders, and the freedom struggle of

India itself. Also family circumstances and financial resources of a tribal leader and above all, his social contacts and amount of zeal, are also the decisive factors responsible for the extent of popularity and fame achieved by leaders.

The foregoing discussion leads to the following significant facts. The ecological setting, nature of economy and type of social structure of a tribal community are important factors which go to determine the leadership pattern of a tribal community. Secular and religious affairs for these two tribal people are so mixed up with each other that they require single man to look after both the types of responsibilities. Another point of importance which emerges from the study is that, family circumstance and financial resources of a tribal leader and above all his social contacts and amount of zeal, were also the decisive factors responsible for the extent of popularity and fame achieved by a leader.

CHAPTER IV

THE ROLE OF NATIONAL PARTIES AND THE JHARKHAND ORGANISATIONS IN JHARKHAND MOVEMENT

Under the influence of new constitutional arrangements emerged consciousness and an articulate and effective political elite (those who are educated and are in better socio-economic condition with wide exposure and experience) emerged in several tribal areas. The new tribal political elite has not only acquired a taste for politics, but it is also vigorously contributing to the emergence of a new political idiom. It is not constrained by the conventional rules of political game; it makes its own rules as the play progresses. This elite rejects the solitude of those in power and has no use for their condescending benevolence. It is conscious of the tribal rights and is capable of making shrewd and calculated moves to gain their acceptance. Where such an elite does not exist, political parties - national, regional or local, are moving in to fill the vacuum¹. The various political parties are extending their zones of activities in the tribal areas. They have created a number of organizations in the tribal areas and even launched various movements to redress the grievances of the tribal population. The vocal, educated and well to do section of the tribes have also started independent political organs with a view to securing concessions which they feel to be beneficial to the tribes². The problems of the tribals and their grievances are being politicised

¹ Dube S. C. 'Inaugral Address' in K. S. Singh (ed.) 'Tribal Situation in India', Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, Shimla, 1972, p. 30

² Desai A. R. 'Tribes in Transition', in A. R. Desai (ed.) 'Rural Sociology in India', Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1969, p. 222

increasingly and are being manipulated by the tribal elite and by their political organizations to mobilize the tribal support behind them to enhance their own status, to occupy powerful political positions and to serve own self-interests like political power, making money and influencing the decision making policy of the area.

Today the entire gamut of tribal problems have to be seen in a political perspective. The vocal, educated and richer section of the adivasi's all over the country have also started independent political organizations of the tribal population with a view to securing concession which they feel to be beneficial to the adivasi.³ Politics has emerged as the principal avenue through which they look forward to finding solutions to their various problems. The tribals, through political actions, i.e. membership of political parties, participation in rallies, demonstration, voting, petitioning, spontaneous revolts, seek to change their physical environment. They have evolved local political institutions as a shield to protect their social, political, economic and cultural interests. They also use the method of ballot box for electing representatives to the state assemblies and to the house of the people to achieve their aims and demands. They use both parliamentary and non-parliamentary method of struggle.⁴ They are aware that in the contemporary politics, competitive pressures determine one's place and share in the decision making process. By being a part of this process they feel they can ensure not only the preservation of their interest but also gain proportionally larger share of scarce resources of economic development. There has been a noticeable change in their

³ Jharkhand Jyoti, Apr. 1992.

political attitudes and strategies. From the politics of compliance and affirmation, they have moved over to the politics of pressure and protest. The tribal political elite in their efforts to capture the minds and votes of the tribals are adopting radical postures and fomenting militant agitation. The tribes are emerging from their subjective political culture in which they did not question the validity or usefulness of the higher political decisions, and visualized their own role as one of compliance. But the emerging political culture is disturbing in several respects. It appears to be a cross between what Almond and Verbe would call a 'parochial political culture' and 'participant political culture' respectively.⁵

The Jharkhand Movement and Political Parties

All India national parties like the Congress (I), Communist Party of India (CPI), CPI (M), Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) etc. were opposed to the movement for a separate Jharkhand state. The CPI (ML) was a participant in the *Sanjukta Sangharsh Samiti* in 1979, but its position was not very clear. It seemed that it had been persuaded by the CPI (M) to withdraw its support. At one time the CPI was supporting the Jharkhand movement for a separate state demand of the Jharkhand movement. Not too long ago, the CPI supported the movement for a separate Maharashtra. Similarly, when there was proposal for the merger of Bengal and Bihar and vociferously supported by the then Congress Chief Ministers of Bengal and Bihar, the CPI in Bengal launched a movement against this on the ground that

⁴ Joel S. Migdal, *Peasant, Politics and Revolution, Pressure towards Pol.&Soc. Change in the Third World*, London, 1979, pp 1-30

⁵ Singh K. S. *Op cit*, pp 30-33.

the Bengalis would lose their identity and the proposal was dropped. Presumably for CPI, the identity of Bengalis and Maharastrians was more important than that of the wretched tribals of Jharkhand.

The main attack of the so called national political parties against the Jharkhand movement was that the movement is communal and secessionist . Some people called it a communal movement because in its early phases the movement was led mainly by tribals. But even in early phases the movement was never targeted against the Bengalis or Biharis residing in the region of the Jharkhand and they had never witnessed any communal riot. If Jharkhand has ever witnessed any communal riot, it is the riot against the Muslims in Jamshedpur and the Sikh riots in Bokaro. All these riots were acts of ruling class parties and the main participants in rioting were the *goondas* from central and north Bihar.⁶ The Congress (I) and the CPI (M) had a common approach to the problem. Both the parties opposed the movement for a state and as an alternative, talk about tribal development programmes.

The full urge to take a concrete stand has not yet developed either from Congress or from communist. The political parties like the CPI and CPM or the Congress, who dominate in the major trade unions, have made only nominal statements. Although, as all India parties and their stands were mostly opposed to the Jharkhand cause, they had not stepped in to undertake the task of supporting the movement. On the other hand, the Jharkhandis have not yet been actively involved in political activities against the outsiders. Once an effort was made to occupy were discussed (for eg. the proposal 'to

occupy' the township of Maithon) but lack of earnestness is evident as no such programme has up till now been carried out.⁷

The all India parties, the working class organisations and the Jharkhandis working groups are all pondering over the question of as to which way the movement should go. Neither the autonomy demand nor the cultural upheaval, nor even a rising agrarian tensions has been agreed as a uniform course. Therefor the imminent danger of clash between various Jharkhandi organs is one reason which led divisive and demoralising. Such a scenario has gone into a crisis for the state many times, with the people mounting a campaign and loosing it and again mounting another after a time. Generations have changed, the colonial regime has changed, the economic patterns in the region have changed, the very tribal inhabitants have changed, the parties and the messiah of the campaigns have changed. What has never changed is the people's idea of having a territory of their own.

There have been attempts by some of the Jharkhand organisations to lay down what the desired state would be like. But obviously the structure could not be different from that of the other federal states, barring some special protective laws. The earlier (pre-colonial) confederations are not going to be restored; nor the community rights to land. Nor in the future is Jharkhand going to change, the pattern of the industrial exploitation. The AJSU (All Jharkhand Students Union) says one of its main tasks is to educate the masses on the separate state demand.

⁶ Lawyers and Legal Activists Meeting, Bomboy, 1988.

⁷ Sengupta Nirmal, 'Fourth World Dyanamics', Guild Publications, Delhi, 1982, p. 34

The Splits

When Rajendra Prasad established Bihari Students' Conference in Patna, the first student organisation in the country at the same time Christian Student's Conference was convened in Hazaribagh in 1910. The Christian Adivasi students, to start with some philanthropic ideas. But very soon they turned to the question of socio-economic upliftment and were reorganised as Chotanagpur Unnati Samaj in 1915. In 1939 Unnati Samaj was again reorganised into a political organisation called 'Adivasi Mahasabha' and for the first time raised the question of creation of a Jharkhand state. The modern approach of these organisations was also reflected in their recruitment policies. The student's conference was composed of students belonging to various tribes. With the Unnati Samaj, opening to non-Christian Adivasis. 'Adivasi Mahasabha' also opened its membership to non-Adivasis. The Jharkhand party formed in 1950 followed the same type of recruitment policy of enlisting non-scheduled tribe members. While such were the conscious policies for establishing broad fronts of people, the limitations of these organisations were the Christian converts, english educated students belonging to Munda and Oraon tribes. These organisations have shown four prominent traits, Urban orientation in thinking and activity, Christian domination and close links with the churches, Predominance of Munda-Oraon Organisations. Efforts to establish tribal solidarity tending to sectarian behavior against non-tribal authorities. As such, both expression of sectarian behaviour by Jharkhandi leaders as well as sectarian characterization of Jharkhand

movement by vested interest, are quite common. In fact the questions of Christian and non-converts have been important rallying points.⁸

Thus one finds that the formation of the Kisan Sabha and the Catholic Sabha split the Unnati Samaj in 1939. Owing to this split, the inter-tribal unity that the Unnati Samaj which had brought about, suffered greatly. However, this split indirectly helped the Jharkhand movement. In 1938, Jaipal Singh led the 'Adivasi Mahasabha' for statehood against the exploitative tactics of the *Dikus*.

After India became a Republic, the Adivasi Mahasabha was renamed Jharkhand Party (1950), which won 32 seats in 1952 general elections in the Bihar Legislative Assembly. As such it enjoyed mass support and the demand for a separate Jharkhand state was turning into a mass movement. But the Congress party which was ruling both at the Centre and the State did not appreciate the mass support the Jharkhand party enjoyed in Jharkhand. Because the electoral victory of the Congress in January 1937 led to a change in the strategy of the tribal leaders. So it devised plans to upset the existing trend and succeeded in its coopting plans when in 1963, the Jharkhand party merged with the Congress and Jaipal Singh was given a portfolio in the Bihar Cabinet. This caused a great shock for the Jharkhand movement.

The merger created a political vacuum. This led to the rise of different groups which could unfortunately influence only in some areas of Jharkhand. When in 1969 the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act was amended which revived anti-money lender struggle, leading to the

⁸ Vidyarathi L. P & Sahay K. N. 'Dynamics of Tribal Leadership in Bihar', Allahabad, 1976, pp.

birth and development of some important social and political organisations. The Birsa Sewa Dal and Jharkhand Mukti Morcha were born out of this struggle. At the same time, the influence of national level political parties like BJP, CPI, CPI (M) as well as Congress strengthened. The need to bring all the Jharkhand parties together was being felt more and more. To this effect a Jharkhand Co-ordination Committee (JCC) could be formed only in 1989. The students also united together under the name of All Jharkhand Student's Union (AJSU) in 1986. One more militant organisation called Jharkhand Kranti Dal surfaced in Jharkhand land. Knowing well that a united front will not help the Congress party, the then ruling party managed to bring disunity in the JCC by dealing separately with different groups that formed the JCC. They would agree to keep the door open for a dialogue with the state government on the modalities of speeding up development in the advasi belt of Chotanagpur and the Santhal Pargana including structural change in the tribal advisory council. The success of the Congress Party to bring disunity among the leaders could be seen by the '120 hours' Jharkhand Bandh call given by AJSU in 1990, which was opposed by JCC and JMM. Moreover to keep the Jharkhand groups off balance the Government formed a Committee, in the month of September, 1989, to analyse the demand of the people of Chotanagpur. By the formation of this committee (Committee on Jharkhand Matters, in 1990) the "Government was merely buying time till the completion of the Lok Sabha elections. While the Jharkhand leaders were busy meeting the committee members, the dates of the general elections were announced. Since the JCC could not succeed in bringing the various Jharkhand fractions together, the Jharkhand party

(JHP) fielded 19 candidates, while AJSU called for the boycott of the Jharkhand elections. The Jharkhand Kranti Dal sent threatening letters to all religious institutions warning them not to use their franchise. People were at a loss. However, as campaigning progressed, the boycott call was forgotten. The winners were the National Front (Janata Dal and the BJP). The ruling Congress party at the centre was defeated and a Janta Dal government came into power with Mr. V. P. Singh as the prime minister.

In a significant move the AJSU held its third '*Maha Adhiveshan*' from 15th Jan to 8th Feb, 1990 at Ranchi. Important persons who attended the Adhiveshan were; Dr. Ram Dayal Munda and Mr. Syed Shahabuddin, President of the Insaf Party. This 'Adhiveshan' of AJSU was very crucial because of the change of leadership and their decision to take part in state legislative elections. Another significant move among the Jharkhand parties was the merger of the factions led by Mr. Sibhu Soren and Mr. Vinod Bihari Mahto into one Jharkhand Mukti Morcha in January 1990. However, the Jharkhand Party led by Mr. N.E. Horo, Jharkhand Kranti Dal and AJSU did not merge with other groups, but only had electoral adjustments.

The hostile AJSU-Jharkhand Peoples Party (JPP) and JMM(Soren) charged Dr. Ram Dayal Munda (Chief patron of the JPP), Mr. Sanjay Basu Mallik and Mr. Dev Sharan Bhagat (AJSU- JPP) along with Mr. Suraj Mandal and Mr. Subodh Kant Sahay (JMM Soren) of going on a 'sell out bid' (regarding the various Jharkhand Bandh and economic blockade). Because the stance of JCC for Jharkhand state was that they would not discuss separate statehood and rejection of anything

less than a state despite this hard stands negotiations have taken place by these leaders.

The then Union Home Minister, Mr. S. B. Chavan, had made several direct and indirect promises of a separate tribal state and back tracked with equal ease. In August 1992 the then home minister S. B. Chavan, stated in Pune that the Jharkhand problem might required the granting of statehood or a union territory status⁹ for the region has drawn a lot of flak. What Mr. Chavan said is indicative of what has ultimately to be done in dealing with the Jharkhand question. This statement, that the Jharkhand problem can be solved only with the concurrence of Mr. Laloo Prasad Yadav (then CM of Bihar), has predictably led to further friction. While Laloo government alleged that the centre is interested only in passing on the buck, however finding a solution was practical only at the state government level. Since the Bihar legislature had already passed a Bill in 1991 enacting the Jharkhand Vikas Parishad (Development Council) provision. On the other hand the Union Government was taking rigid stand on the modifications suggested by the Bihar Government on the recommendations to the Council Bill. Earlier the centre had passed the buck by recommending elected posts proposed by the Bihar Government in the development council. In September 1992 the Union Home Ministry was informed in writing that the Bihar Government accepted most of the recommendations including 2/3 of the Vikas Parishad to be elected posts. But the game had changed again, with the then minority Government of Mr. Laloo Yadav leaning against others for support.

The Congress was left with no other choice but to bargain with the then National Front & Left Front to stay in power. The rank and file of the Jharkhand supporters were frustrated and became increasingly hostile to the bandh call of leaders who talked of bandh and blockades but disappear when it is to be imposed. The Jharkhandis feel that the leadership always compromised with the very cause of Jharkhand thus weakened the movement.¹⁰

The business community of Ranchi, Gumla, Jamshedpur, Lohardagga, Daltonganj, Hazaribagh and Dhanbad, also veered round to accepting the creation of a separate Jharkhand state. The Chotanagpur Chamber of Commerce (CCC) with head quarters at Ranchi also endorsed the agitation since 1992, ending the decades long recrimination and hostility against Jharkhand.

The Janata Dal Government (1993) had raised the pertinent point of “why only Bihar” on the issue of bifurcating the state. The Jharkhand leaders and the Janata Dal government were in agreement on three points. “Article 40 of the Constitution empowers the centre to create new states or redraw boundaries of existing states, and Jharkhand relates to four contiguous states, not just Bihar” argued both Mr. Laloo Yadav and his erstwhile JMM and JPP allies General, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi, 1983, Mainstream,

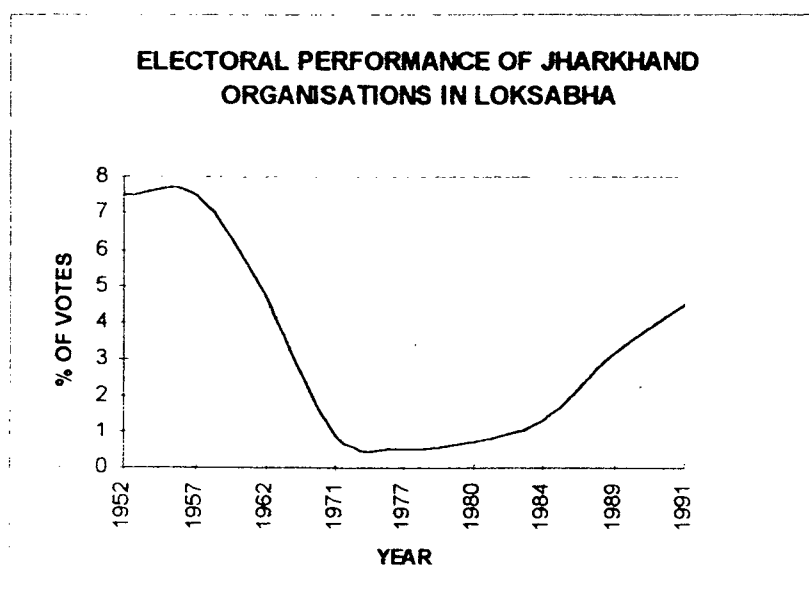
¹⁰ Aaj, Ranchi, 14 Dec. 1992.

ELECTORAL PERFORMANCE BY JHARKHAND ORGANISATIONS

LOKSABHA (BIHAR)

YEAR	JHARKHAND ORGANISATIONS	SEATS CONTESTED	SEATS WON	% OF VOTES
1952	JHP	7	3	7.5
1957	JHP	12	6	7.5
1962	JHP	11	3	4.7
1971	JHP	16	1	0.9
1977	JHP	6	0	0.5
1980	JHP: JMM	13	1	0.7
1984	JHP: JMM	10	0	1.3
1989	JHP: JMM	9	3	3.2
1991	JHP: JMM	8	6	4.5

Source: INDIA DECIDES (ELECTION 1952 - 1995),
NEW DELHI, 1995

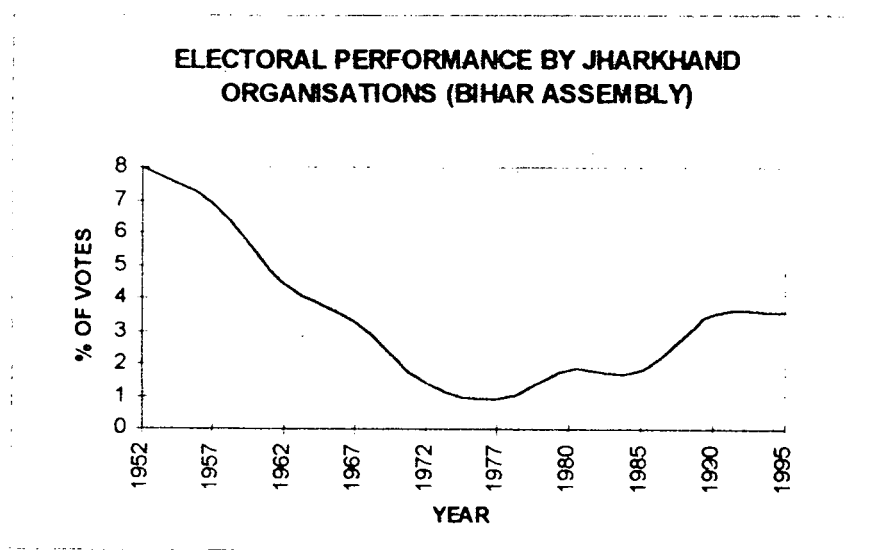


ELECTORAL PERFORMANCE BY JHARKHAND ORGANISATIONS

BIHAR ASSEMBLY

YEAR	JHARKHAND ORGANISATIONS	SEATS CONTESTED	SEATS WON	% OF VOTES
1952	JHP	53	33	8.0
1957	JHP	69	30	6.9
1962	JHP	75	20	4.4
1967	JHP; AIJHP	60	13	3.3
1972	JHP; AIJHP	45	4	1.4
1977	JHP; AIJHP	31	3	0.9
1980	JHP; JMM	31	1	1.8
1985	JHP; JMM	57	9	1.8
1990	JHP; JMM	82	20	3.5
1995	JHP; JMM	56	16	3.6

Source: INDIA DECIDES (ELECTION 1952 - 1995).
NEW DELHI, 1995



Unnati Samaj

After the cruel repression of Birsa's uprisings in the last nineteenth century, the Adivasi leaders remained quiet for about two decades. However, the young educated tribals were moved by the pathetic state of their brethren and they felt the urgent need for a united organisation of tribals. Leaders from prominent tribes were invited to join this organisation. The most popular of these leaders Bandi Ram Oraon, Alphonse Kujur, Elias Topno, Bir Singh Munda, Joel Lakra and Anand Mashih Topno played a leading role in the foundation of this cultural and social organisation. Though it was founded in 1915, it officially came into existence in 1920. It was for the first time that a formal organisation was established with support of all the major tribal groups.

The Unnati Samaj adopted a somewhat liberal and democratic style of operation. The leaders of the Samaj organised meetings from time to time, and submitted reports of their grievances to the government. The Samaj had two objectives --(i) to uplift Chotanagpur from its backward state, and (ii) to improve the social, political and economic conditions of the Adivasis. The main slogan of this organisation was "if we want to hold our own in India we must hang together or we shall be hanged separately"¹¹. The Samaj contributed towards inter-tribal unity in the region, though it basically remained a welfare organisation. They were made to work and unite on the basis of ethnicisation and tribal brotherhood. However, the Unnati Samaj members could not remain united because of the conflict between the Christian and non-Christian Adivasis. Kisan Sabha was being an organization of Hindu people on the other hand Catholic Sabha

constituted of christian advasi leaders, for long and soon some of them left it and formed two other organizations, namely, Kisan Sabha and Chotanagpur Catholic Sabha in 1931. The Catholic Sabha was dominated by the tribal converts to Christianity while the Kisan Sabha was dominated by non-convert Adivasis. The establishment of the Catholic Sabha marked the beginning of the Anglican and GEL Church in tribal policies. The Churches of all denominations were opposed to the Indian National Congress and were close to the tribal leadership.¹²

Because of disunity among the members of the Unnati Samaj and the formation of Kishan Sabha and Catholic Sabha, this organisation became weak. The churches became active through the Adivasi converts, and the non-converts opposed them through their organisation Kishan Sabha. All these factors led to the formation of the Adivasi Mahasabha under the leadership of Jaipal Singh, the '*marang gomeke*' (great leader) of the tribals of Chotanagpur.

Adivasi Mahasabha, 1938

Only adivasis were allowed to become members of the Unnati Samaj, whereas at the instance of Jaipal Singh non-adivasis were also allowed to join the Adivasi Mahasabha to avoid a clash between the Adivasis and the non-adivasis Jharkhandis (non-tribals of Jharkhand region). The Adivasi Mahasabha had two main objectives: (1) Statehood for Jharkhand, and (2) protection of the Adivasis against the exploitative tactics of the *dikus*. These objectives were clearly of a 'sub-

¹¹ Sharma K. L. *Opcit.* Economic & Political Weekly, Jan. 10, 1976, pp.37-39

¹² Susana BC Devalle, *Discourses of Ethnicity, Culture and Protest in Jharkhand*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 1992, pp 110-118.

national' character and ultimately led to the formation of the Jharkhand Party in 1950. The formation of the Adivasi Mahasabha marks a departure from the Unnati Samaj in terms of its means and goal ie Unnati Samaj had the objective and aims confined only to upliftment of Chotanagpur tribal people. Now with the formation of Adivasi Mahasabha it had broadened its base and started fighting against every injustice for all the people inhabiting in this area.

Jaipal Singh, who emerged as a leader of the Jharkhand movement in 1938, combined both 'local' and 'cosmopolitan' attributes in his personality. He made efforts to evoke the primordial sentiments of the tribals to unite them, he also sought the cooperation of the non-Adivasis of the region by extending, the membership of the Sabha to them and universalizing the cause of Jharkhand statehood. But there was not much in common by way of social background, economic interests, etc. between the Adivasi and non-Adivasi, permanent settlers like the north Biharis, Marwaris and Punjabis.

Very soon the Adivasi Mahasabha became a political organisation. It tried to have close relations with the Congress party during the forties because the members of Sabha were educated and so they had developed some close links with the Congress party. The Adivasi Mahasabha demanded representation in the Bihar Pradesh Congress Committees (BPCC) and its working committee; the congress did not accede to this demand. In March 1946, a memorandum was submitted to Rajendra Prasad, the President of BPCC for their representation of the tribal leadership in these organs of the Congress Party. When this demand was not accepted by the

Congress high command, a series of clashes took place between the Congress and the Adivasi Mahasabha workers at Khunti and Ranchi during March 1946.

In 1946, Jaipal Singh contested a seat on the provincial council, and was defeated by a Congress candidate. It was said that many Adivasis themselves had supported the Congress candidate against the reactionary policies when people felt that Adivasi Mahasabha changing its stand time to time. The Hindustan Standard of March 19, 1946 reported that the Adivasi Sabha was predominantly a Christian aboriginal organisation and that the few non-Christians who were in it were there, either under duress or for some "personal ends". Searchlight of March 23, 1946 reported that the Lutheran and St. Paul's Missions were taking a leading part in acts of Gangsterism and creating a 'Christian terror in Khunti'. It was also reported in the newspapers that Jaipal Singh and his associates, the Christian missionaries and the Muslim League, openly fought against the Congress with the connivance of some government officials.¹³

Just after the defeat of Jaipal Singh, he came out with the slogan "We shall take Jharkhand". He declared that Jharkhand was the land of Adivasis, and the non-Adivasis had exploited the Adivasis economically and politically, and there was little hope for their regeneration unless the intruders quite Jharkhand. During this period, Jaipal Singh through his Adivasi Mahasabha even preached violence to oust the intruders and achieve the goal of separate statehood. The educated Adivasi youth plunged into the movement against the non-

Adivasis. The demand of Adivasi Mahasabha was rejected by the Congress Party because the Congress Party was pre-dominantly led by people of North Bihar. The movement was seen as a threat to the Congress Party bosses and their dominance in the region. The non-convert tribals generally opposed the activities of the churches and the Sabha but were not clear about the idea of a separate state of Jharkhand, though they too demanded privileges on the basis of their numerical strength in the Chotanagpur division and other areas. Some of these demands included reservation of seats for higher education and employment, and one-fourth representation in administration and first class jobs. They also demanded that only *Chotanagpuris* should be given employment in the industries of the region. It was made clear by the Adivasi Mahasabha that fulfillment of these needs and demands would decide the question of Chotanagpur - whether it would remain with Bihar or separated from it. The continuity of the movement, despite the shocks it has been suffering intermittently, proves that these demand, of the Adivasi Mahasabha were not fulfilled.

Jharkhand Party (JHP)

In order to avoid the controversy of the tribal and non-tribal, Adivasi Mahasabha was renamed as Jharkhand party in 1950 under the chairmanship Jaipal Singh. Since then it became a full fledged political party. Jaipal Singh himself became its president and Igneous Beck its Secretary. With the formation of Jharkhand party, the tribal movement in Bihar evolved into a modern political organisation, participating in electoral politics. With its formulation, a new secular model emerged

¹³ *Ibid*, p 120.

which symbolized the aspirations and the needs of the local and regional people. Jaipal Singh having lot of exposure to the outer world was able to bring together Christian and non-Christian, urban and rural people under the common banner i.e. Jharkhand party. The first general election held in 1952 marked the zenith of the popularity of the Jharkhand movement led by it. The issues against which the leaders of the Jharkhand movement agitated were: acquisition of land for large irrigation, survey and settlement operations which were held up, camps closed down, collection of loans, rent and co-operative dues, nationalization of forest produce, election of Panchayat. The Jharkhand party's slogan was "Jharkhand party stands for a separate state for all irrespective of caste and creed for achieving democratic socialism, equality, justice and fair play; the government of Jharkhand state would look after the interests and well being of the tribesmen inhabiting the state."¹⁴ The Jharkhand party in its constitutional role as a Regional party, had played down the agrarian issue during the intervening period. The agrarian situation had become worse. The incidence of alienation of land belonging to the tribals had shown an upward trend. More and more educated youth were seeking employment, construction of industrial complexes had resulted in the displacement of tribals from their land on one hand and their absorption into industrial culture was slow on other to mete out the rising aspiration among the new generation of the tribal community¹⁵. The participation of a section of tribal leadership in the Government, no doubt had resulted in distinct improvement.

¹⁴ Manifesto of Jharkhand Party. 1976.

¹⁵ Raj A. L. 'Ideology and Hegemony in Jharkhand Movement', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Bombay, No 5, vol. XXVII, 1 February, 1992, p 200.

Now the demand of Jharkhand was slowed down and more new demands were included which were agrarian in character. Thus the political character of the Jharkhand movement went in the background, the agrarian aspect came into the prominence. The formal political slogan was not given up, but it weakened and there was greater stress against the nature and consequence of exploitation, isolation and neglect. Due to the intra-party rivals fighting over the question of leadership the Jharkhand Party faced a crisis in 1963, when its most prominent leader, Mr. Jaipal Singh along with his supporters merged with Congress. However, a section in the party opposed to merger continued with the Jharkhand Party.

During 1967, due to the same question of leadership, the Jharkhand party split into two factions. One group that was dominated and led by Munda tribes and other one was led by Ho tribes. As a result the solidarity of the original Jharkhand party was weakened and people lost confidence in the leaders of the movement when people found their leaders merely concerned with their self interest ie showing each other their own influences. Jaipal Singh, the founder of JHP, has often been branded as a leader with confused and contradictory ideologies because leaders for political benefit the party was forced to merged with Congress without even the proposal being passed in the executive committee meeting. It must be noted, however that the leadership of JHP was primarily by Christian converts and the english speaking persons of the Munda and Oraon Community. Here ethnicity was replaced by regionalism as a platform for Jharkhand party and militant movement gave way to an organised political party open to all

Chotanagpur people. This was partly a concession to the stand taken by the Congress party in the sense that, ethnicity could not determine the formation of a province. Many of the Congress socialist party and quite a few members of the money lending community who could be identified as *Dikus* joined the party. The concept of Jharkhand was enlarged to include all the regions which formed part of the Chotanagpur plateau and administrative division. From 1957 onwards, Jharkhand party underwent a sea-change with the admission of elements in it, which could be identified as the traditional enemies of Adivasis. As a result, in the assembly election of 1962 party representation in the assembly got slashed to almost half. The leaders now realized that they could serve their people better from within the ruling party. Jaipal Singh was also facing increasing criticism for his dictatorial role and he sought safety behind the Congress umbrella. As a result, the Jharkhand Party merged with the Congress Party in June 1963. B. N. Jha, the then C.M. of Bihar used this opportunity very cleverly and rehabilitated the Congress in Chotanagpur.¹⁶

Actually, the process of split and fragmentation within the Jharkhand party already started after its merger with Congress in 1963. All India Jharkhand Party was created as result of the split in 1963 and Bagun Sumbrai, a Ho tribal leader became its president and N.E. Horo as its Secretary. Again a fraction occurred under the two rival leaders N.E. Horo and Bagun Sumbrai. Finally N.E. Horo led the original Jharkhand party separately. Horo and Jaipal Singh had confused its activities and confined it only to the petition and memorandum. The

¹⁶ Shrama K. L. 'Jharkhand Movement Genesis and Resurgence', The Hindustan Times. New Delhi. 27 Apr. 1988.

JHP no longer remained the supreme party because the tribal in the region began to doubt its bonafides.

Birsa Sewa Dal (BSD)

This organisation was formed in 1967 by a group of young men, namely, Lalit Kujur, Prem Kujur and Moses Guria. It was basically a non-political organisation. But Birsa Sewa Dal always supported the creation of separate Jharkhand state. It also fought for the expulsion of the exploiters from the Jharkhand region and demanded agrarian reforms and measures against the money lenders. Because it was a social organisation, it never contested any election. It exercised as the urban pressure group led by the young educated tribals, mostly Christians and centered at industrial complexes, to demand jobs for tribal youths in administration and industrial undertakings. The process of the formation and the development of the pressure groups was epitomized in the Birsa Sewa Dal (BSD) which emerged as an important, if not only one, of the urban groups. It was essentially a socio-political organisation formed with the objective of securing a better deal for tribals in matters of employment. It functioned mainly at the two industrial centres of Jamshedpur and Ranchi and occasionally at other places.

Behind its formation there were two influences at work. First, the missionaries of different denominations had been shocked by the fragmentation of the political structure of the Jharkhand party led by Jaipal Singh and were dismayed at the erosion of Christian leadership

as revealed by the election results¹⁷. Therefore, a new organisation had to be established to safeguard the interests of the educated tribals in urban areas. Secondly, the extremist elements were fairly active seeking to establish a base of their influence and operation in the tribal region. They managed to influence the BSD ideology, programmes and methods considerably. The co-existence between the missionary and pro CPI (ML) was not always happy, and subsequently there was a split. But the two worked together for some time. The name of the tribal hero Birsa Munda who led the uprising of 1899-1900 against the missionaries and the British Government was borrowed by Birsa Sewa Dal (BSD)¹⁸.

The constitution of the BSD organisation spoke generally of the commonality of interests of tribals, backward classes and other "exploited sections" of the Indian population. However its objectives were primarily geared to securing the interests of tribal people. It demanded action to: bring about a wide awakening among tribal people to secure their deliverance, remove fear, inferiority complex, sense of isolation and correct the habit of silent submission to tyranny and exploitation, secure priority in the matter of providing employment in administrative and private institutions, prevent loot of the land and secure restoration of the alienated land, end and expose colonial exploitation which is the root cause of all sufferings, organize tribals to secure the fundamental rights and democratic rights, establish the rights of tribals to secure admission to educational institution on a priority basis, organize workers and students to secure their demands,

¹⁷ Gail Omvedt, 'Buhr-Jharkhand Movement', Third World Unity, New Delhi, 21-22 Sep. - Oct., 1979, p 39.

install love and devotion for tribal culture and develop a sense of universal peace, forge unity among the people and teach them how to exercise their collective will to secure their rights and creation of Jharkhand state.

The action programme however, was restricted to securing employment and admission to educational institutions, amidst the slogans for the tribalisation of the local administration. The BSD constitution stressed the role of collective leadership to guide the people through the struggle. However it was not achieved successfully because of factional rivalries which brake up the organisation and limited its activities in Jamshedpur region only. But, in this part of Jharkhand region its appearance is very effective. The BSD is perceived to be strongly committed to fighting for the tribals and poor people. At present the Birsa Seva Dal is led by Mr. K. Lakra who is more of a social worker rather than a modern politician.

There were two phases in the development of the BSD movement. The first, from 1967 to 1969, was a militant phase. Violent methods of struggle to secure tribal rights were advocated and meetings, processions of the youth armed with bows and arrows, *gheraos* on celebrations of the Birsa Day were the modes of mobilization. BSD demanded early creation of a separate Jharkhand state, expulsions of *Dikus*, agrarian reforms and measures against money lenders. There was a series of violent incidents involving grabbing of urban land, at Jamshedpur, clashes between tribals and non-tribal "outsiders". During 1969, the CPI (ML) launched a

¹⁸ New Republic, August 15, 1969. Patna.

Naxalbari type of movement in the area.. BSD supported its pro-Mao slogans which appeared on the walls in Ranchi town. But the movement failed to take root because some of the BSD members were divided over supporting and adopting CPI (ML) line of struggle and thus a rift occurred between the BSD members.

After 1969, the second phase of the BSD movement began. The influence of CPI (ML) and the missionaries waned. BSD pledged itself to play a constitutional role and adopt peaceful methods of struggle. The organisation was undermined by conflicts between two factions. Some of the BSD leaders sought refuge in the Jharkhand splinter groups.

Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM)

On February 4th 1973, at Dhanbad, the Sonat Santhal Samaj led by Shibu Soren and the Shivaji Samaj led by Binod Bihari Mahto merged together and formed the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM). The ideological force behind the Morcha was the trade union leader, A.K. Roy, of the Marxist Coordination Committee (MCC).

The Morcha combined in its operation the element of agrarian radicalism and cultural revivalism. It launched operations to recover alienated land from money-lenders and big peasants. After its formation it organised forcible harvesting of crops standing on lands illegally taken from Adivasis, Kurmis, Harijans and poor Muslims by money lenders. For the development of the tribals, it took up co-

operative farming and a literary programme¹⁹. Under the leadership of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, the tribal peasant, the landless labourers and the industrial workers started a popular movement against exploitation on four fronts, for recovery of land illegally taken from the tribals by the money-lenders and Mahajans, for seeking employment for local tribals in the public undertaking established in the area. The Morcha started also an *Andolan* to get proper compensations for the land taken from the tribals for the construction of big projects like Koel-karo and Subarnarekha Multipurpose project, the '*Jangal Kato*' *andolan* against the anti-people forest policy of the government, for the formation of a separate Jharkhand state.

JMM is basically the result of alliance between Mahtos and Santhals, which have been traditional enemies. The Mahtos thought that by placing the Santhals in the forefront they would be able to protect their interests. Though Mahtos alliance with the Santhals gave the movement an extra ethnic dimension, the movement also developed into a pan-Santhal awakening. The President of JMM, Shibu Soren, a Santhal leader acquired something of a charisma which was so typical of the nativistic movement. It is said that Shibu Soren is *Chando Bonga* (the greatest God) and Indira Gandhi had granted him a license to rule this part of Jharkhand territory²⁰. During this period, policies became a legitimate sphere which the tribals began to manipulate for the achievement of their aspirations. The Jharkhand movement always had a wider field base but before reaching the destination in the process of struggle the leaders became a prey to

¹⁹ Hemant, '*Jharkhand Seema Aur Sambhavna*'. Jamshedpur, 1987. pp. 27-28

enemies. In the first All India Conference of the Morcha held at Dhanbad in 1983, signs of split between its sections were clearly manifested.

During 1977-78, the JMM and the Congress had a good relation. In the mid-term election of 1980, the Jan Morcha fought the elections in collaboration with the Congress (I). During the Janta regime of 1976-78, the demand for a separate state of Jharkhand was strong. All the MLAs and MPs of the area raised their united voice and presented the matter to the then Chief Minister of Bihar, Mr. Karpuri Thakur who had given assurance of sympathetic consideration to the cause, but he too betrayed them very badly. He took measures to suppress the Jharkhand movement. In 1980 the Janta Government broke down.

The split in the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) was formalized on Aug. 1992 following a war of attrition between the two factions - one led by Shibu Soren and Mr. Suraj Mandal and the other by Mr. Krishna Mardi and Mr. R.K. Mahto. The split was vertical. While 4 JMM MPs and 10 MLAs were on the Soren-Mandal side, two MPs and 9 MLAs went with the break away Mardi-Mahto faction. Leaders of both factions along with their supporters met then Governor Shafi Qureshi one after the other the same day, the former informing him of withdrawal of the JMM support to the Laloo Prasad Government and pleading for its dismissal. The other faction, however, reiterated its support to the then ruling party.

²⁰ Singh K. S. 'Tribal Society in India: From Ethnicity to Regionalism', Manohar Publication, 1982. pp. 212-214

In 1989, the JMM had switched over to the Janata Dal and in various ways, fully exploited its position as an ally of the Laloo Government. The second rung leaders and the rank and file including JMM Vice President Suraj Mandal and some others cared more for self-aggrandizement than the Jharkhand cause. Things came to a head when during the Rajya Sabha elections in July 1992, former Union Home Minister of State Subodh Kant Sahay was thrust as a party nominee. A large number of legislators revolted, causing a vertical split in the JMM. While the breakaway group led by Krishna Mardi remained with the NF (National Front) and the Janata Dal, the residuary Soren-Mandal group tried to build bridges with the Congress. They felt old and tired, having already tasted something because of their proximity to power and now seemed in a hurry to get at least a Gorkha land type autonomous council as suggested by the COJM (Committee on Jharkhand Matters, 1989). They had broken away from the National Front and during some voting in the Lok Sabha, at time of the Presidential poll and certain other occasion fulfilled their part as obligation for a possible bargain.

As such, on the eve of the Rajya Sabha elections from Bihar in 1992, the former Minister of Home Affairs in the Cabinet Mr. Subodh Kant Sahay, was all of a sudden admitted to the JMM fold and given a Rajya Sabha ticket within 24 hours of his joining the party. Mr. Sahay, reputed to be one of the most moneyed politicians from the Bihar state, was incidentally never known earlier to have any sympathies for the Jharkhand cause. This led to Senior Jharkhand leaders getting openly accused by the local media of selling themselves to the largest money

bag whenever the Rajya Sabha election are held. In 1992, it was widely believed that Mr. Sahay had paid a fortune to the JMM leaders to get the nomination. It might be a little unfair to single out the JMM leadership for its delinquency given the present trend of market friendly politics, evident throughout the country particularly during Rajya Sabha polls.

The situation had come to such pass that the different factions of the JMM, were labeled either pro Congress or pro Janata Dal, instead of being regarded as pro Jharkhandi. At the time while JMM (S) manifestly maintained a cordial relationship with Congress high command in New Delhi, JMM (M) served as an ally of Laloo Prasad Yadav's government in Bihar. The JMM (Soren) is demoralized because four of its members including the President & Vice President are caught in the net of a CBI inquiry for receiving pay off from the former Prime Minister, Mr. P.V. Narashima Rao (Congress I). The JMM (S) has lost trust among other parties in the region so much to that no party is ready to identify with it. Moreover, for the common people in the region too, it has earned an image of party of "self-seekers and corrupt leaders"²¹.

On the other hand, the JMM (Mardi) led by Krishna Mardi, has virtually been reduced to the status of a mere 'appendage' of the ruling Janata Dal in Bihar. JMM (M) has been supporting the Laloo Prasad Yadav Government ever since its inception after the split in the JMM, about five years ago. It is an uphill task for the JMM (M) to project itself as an outfit committed to the cause of the separate Jharkhand

State due to its association with the party led by Mr. Laloo Prasad Yadav who has all along been opposing the creation of a separate state.

All Jharkhand Students Union (AJSU)

In North Chotanagpur a new development took place which had an important influence on the Jharkhand movement, partly because Ranchi, Chaibasa and Gumla had the largest number of Christians in the population and partly because the Ranchi University provided a guiding pillar, with the Department of Tribal and Regional Languages serving as a staff college for activists. 1984 was the period, when the then Prime Minister Rajeev Gandhi followed a policy of appeasement in Punjab, Assam, Mizoram, Nagaland and Darjeeling. The tribal students, taking a cue from their counterparts in Assam, formed an All Jharkhand Students Union (AJSU) on 22nd June 1986, exactly when Dr. R.D. Munda was elevated to the post of Acting Vice Chancellor of the Ranchi University. Prabhakar Tirkey, a student of Birsa Agriculture College, Ranchi became the President and Surya Singh Besra, student of Tribal & Regional languages Department, Ranchi University became the Secretary. AJSU started its activities as fiery speeches and launched a violent movement for a separate Jharkhand state. AJSU adopted the idea to organize an Assam type agitation, calling on the legislators to resign and then organize a provisional government. A twenty three point programme was chalked out for the success of the demand for a Jharkhand state consisting of 21 districts of four states, i.e. Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh.

²¹ Prabhat Khabar, Sept. 30, 1996, Ranchi

On behalf of the organisation (AJSU), a memorandum dated 26th September, 1986 was submitted to the Prime Minister, Rajeev Gandhi by the General Secretary, Mr. Surya Singh Besra. The Memorandum stated, "Our demand is for a separate state of Jharkhand within the Indian Union which should be created as per the provision of Article 3(a) of the Indian constitution". With the spread of literacy and education in the Jharkhand area there emerged many new leaders to give the Jharkhand movement a national character. The leaders opposed opportunistic alliance with the ruling Congress (I) and sought the unity of all Jharkhandis in the movement. This new trend took the Jharkhand movement as a part of a General democratic movement and sought unity with other democratic movement all over India.

Mr. Rajesh Pilot, the then Union Minister of State attended the JMM sponsored Lok Sansad at Ranchi and publicly announced on behalf of the Prime Minister P.V. Narsimha Rao in 1992, that the centre would unilaterally create JAC (Jharkhand Autonomous Council) if Laloo Prasad Government failed to approve it by a limited time frame. This statement brought a triangular split in the militant outfit of AJSU which was primarily the result of the one upmanship and individual aspirations of its second line leaders. This was discernible in their conflicting political stand. All felt that something should be done about the unfulfilled promise of Union Minister of state for Home. Surya Singh Besra faction parted way and another faction with James Horo along with the Christian youths formed a separate AJSU (Horo).

Left Front and Jharkhand

The CPI had also rejected the demand for a separate state and instead had set in explicit terms the objective of regional autonomy for the predominantly tribal areas of Chotanagpur and Santhal Paragnas, and of economic and cultural upliftment of the tribals. In its resolution adopted in May, 1975 it was stated that, the existing political organization of the tribals like Jharkhand party, the Hul Jharkhand party, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, Birsa Sewa Dal lack clear perspective for the tribals, if a separate state of Jharkhand of their conception comprising Chotanagpur, Santhal Paragnas and other area of West Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh is set up it would reduce the tribals to a state of perceptual minority of 1/3 of the total population, as a result they would not be in a position to solve any of their political and economic problems, which the tribals are facing. Instead it would enable reactionary forces to secure firmer stranglehold for plundering both the tribals and non-tribals people, tribal regional council according to the constitutional provisions should be formed for two compact tribal minority areas in Bihar consisting of (a) major parts of Lathehar sub-division of Palamu, Ranchi, Singhbhum and Hazaribagh districts and (b) Santhal Paragnas areas and Dhanbad districts²².

CPM is also opposed the demand of separate Jharkhand state. Its stand is that there is no Jharkhand nationality and that the bourgeoisie's interests may capture the agitation. The CPM also alleged the demand for a separate Jharkhand state to be a secessionist demand and a foreign inspired conspiracy.

²² The Patriot, New Delhi, May 11, 1975

Neither of these allegations as leveled by the CPM is true. The question of secession arises when a particular nationality has a state of its own as a constituent unit in a political grouping like federation. The tribals of the region aspire to have a separate state on the same pattern but the problem is that there is multiplicity of tribal languages in the region whereas there should be only one language common to all the tribal communities in the region. Therefore, the tribals of the region demand ethnicity to be the basis of creating separate Jharkhand state, which runs contrary to the constitution²³.

The CPM's position towards the Jharkhand movement seems to be influenced by the fact that it has a long standing Government in West Bengal, which would also be adversely affected if the demand for Jharkhand is accepted.

On the other hand the JCC has been gaining strength rapidly over the years in West Bengal like Midnapur. As the more militant mobiliser for the demand of separate state it has made inroads into erstwhile CPI (M) bases. The CPI and CPI (M) supporters have in an open letter shifted their allegiance to the JCC. Similar losses in other area of Midnapur has made the CPI (M) wary of the JCC. CITU organizer of transport workers in Bardwan and also happens to be the younger brother of CPI (M) leader and former speaker of the state assembly. Certain lapses of the state government has further fuelled Jharkhand mobilization in West bengal. While the chief minister Jyoti basu has repeatedly asserted that tribals have not been discriminated against but have gained substantially from the redistribute measures of

²³ Gail Omvedt, 'Bihar - jharkhand Movement', Third World Unity, New Delhi, Sept-Oct, 1979

the state government, the actual performance of the government has remained contrary to such assertions.

The Congress Party

Political power is a great leveler. Its pragmatic enjoin a logic of domination which has scant regard for ideological divergence. This is evident from the way ruling parties handle dissent. Between the Congress (I) ruled centre and the opposition parties governed states there are differences of degree and not of intent with respect to Jharkhand movement.

The Congress party supported the creation of separate states on linguistic basis, as in the past. It never supported ethnicity except in the case of creation of North Eastern Hill States. The then prime Minister of India Mrs. Indira Gandhi rejected the demand of separate Jharkhand state on the basis that is not practicable and it would have had bad effect in the country. The President of the Bihar Pradesh Congress Committee (BPCC) described the movement for separate Jharkhand state as politically motivated.

Jharkhand politics since the days of late Jaipal Singh has been known for opportunism because Congress party always showed its keen interest to buy its leaders and used or manipulated the Jharkhand leaders through bribing or offering some post to them. In 1963, when dissident Congress leader K.B. Sahay posed a serious threat to Chief Minister B.N. Jha (Congress), the latter cleverly persuaded Jaipal

Singh to merge his Jharkhand party into the Congress and provided him a ministerial berth in his cabinet. But within a month Mr. Jha was *Kamrajed* leaving Jaipal Singh in the lurch. The Jharkhand party met an untimely death.

In July 1992, the statement on Jharkhand made by the then Union Home Minister in Pune created a controversy in the political circle all over the country and particularly in Bihar. It was another game plan by Congress. The half a century old problem suddenly witnessed fast development. Whatever would have been the outcome of that controversy, the statement of Mr. Chavan (Congress I) had already done its job and which compelled many a leader to shed equivocation and speak on the subject. The BPCC President, Dr. Jagannath Mishra and the Congress leaders of the Chotanagpur and Santhal Paragna regions were sharply divided over the issue. Still a large number of Congress leaders are in a fix and yet to make their opinion public.

After the 1995 general election when the Congress was almost completely wiped out in the tribal region, the congress members hailing from the area have now joined with the Jharkhand slogans. Late Mr. T. Mochirai Munda, an important Congress leader of the area, and other members of his party had come to realise that unless the party identified itself with the tribals, it has no future in this area.

Now-a-days, because of political gain Mr. Gyan Ranjan, MLC, Mr. Sarfraj Ahmed, former Joint Secretary of the AICC, Mr. J.P. Chaudhry, a prominent worker of the area and several other leaders of

the Congress party in the area strongly advocate a separate Jharkhand state. They realised that “it is no longer a question of tribals. Seventy per cent of the non-tribal population of the area also supports the demand for a separate state. Unless we reflect the hopes and aspirations of the people, we can not win their votes²⁴”. On the other hand, BPCC chief Dr. Jagannath Mishra, who hails from North Bihar and has a upper caste vote bank, as always has opposed the demand because creation of Jharkhand state would deprive them of perpetual sources of making ill-gotten gains when they come to power. Very recently Congress has supported the demand for a Jharkhand state because it found itself fast loosing its hold among the tribal people. Therefore for the sake of political mileage, they have started supporting Jharkhand cause. Not long ago, for its survival, the Narsimha Rao regime at the centre had allegedly used some JMM (S) leaders to defeat a no-confidence motion against his government.

The position of the congress leadership among the tribals of of Singhbhum has been somewhat different as it was a tribal area with least Christian influence and did not meet wish the type of resistance as found in Ranchi district, though the Mankis and Mundas who were the stooges of the British government always opposed the moves of the Congress and whenever they succeeded in it they were rewarded with honourable titles.

The Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP)

²⁴ Prabhat Khabar, Nov. 18, 1992, Ranchi

At its core, BJP has an organicist conception of society, the proper functioning of which is predicated on individuals performing their economic, social and religious duties. There is an emphasis on the essential unity of 'Hindu' society, and on this unity as the basic expression of the Indian nation. But just what exactly constitutes 'Hindu' society is not clearly and consistently articulated.²⁵

In the Jharkhand belt of Chotanagpur and Santhal Paragnas, BJP is aided by the activities of kindred organisations. The RSS / VHP combine has, since the late 1960s, allocated substantial resources to tribal development. First through the VHP and then subsidiary organization, the Bharatiya Vanavasi Kalyan Ashram (BVKA) the combine has constructed large numbers of health and education facilities in this tribal region. These facilities and their concomitant programmes represent an attempt to counter the activities of Christian organisations in the area and promote the integration of tribals into the wider Hindu Community.²⁶

Indeed, it would appear that the BJP's political strategy is already beginning to pay dividends. In the 1990 Assembly elections for state the BJP won twenty one seats in tribal Bihar, marginally outperforming the JMM and Congress. The BJP with its Vananchal slogan, has developed a significant level of support in the tribal region. Its competitors, the Congress and JMM, appear to be declining in credibility. This is largely because of their failure to realize the core demand of a separate state, despite receiving significant support over

²⁵ Yadav M. 'The Content of Hindu Rastra' in *Mainstream* Vol. XXIX, No. 30, 1991. pp. 12-13

²⁶ Anderson & Damle. 'The Brotherhood in Saffron', pp. 133-144

many years. Partly as a result of these unfulfilled expectations, there is a growing cynicism among Jharkhandis towards the tribal elite which has emerged during the past decades and the motive underlying their activities.

In August 1988, at its national conference, the BJP decided to support the call for the creation of a new state in the region. It proposed the creation of the state of 'Vananchal' comprising the 12 districts (at present 18 districts) of southern Bihar.²⁷ A separate state, it was claimed, would provide the means of advancing the welfare of the 'Vanavasi', the BJP's term for tribal.²⁸

By announcing its support for the Jharkhand movement, although with a different name, the BJP hoped to make inroads into the Congress support base in the region. The resurgence of the Jharkhand movement in 1980s would have been an important factor in the calculations underlying BJP's support for 'Vananchal'. The BJP's strategy of building support in the region, however is not dependent on a rudimentary reading of Hindutva. Also as a general rule 'tribals' are not excluded from the BJP's conception of the 'Hindu nation'. In the Jharkhand, the BJP's Hindutva message of unity and exclusion is specifically targeted against Christian tribals. The prosperity of the Christian tribals vis-à-vis non-Christian tribals makes this a potentially fruitful strategy, combined as it is with the call for the appropriation of

²⁷ Hindu Bharati, 'Behind the BJP's Vananchal Demand', *Economic & Political Weekly*, Vol. XXIV, No. 13, 1989, pp. 656

²⁸ The choice and use of the term Vanvasi is significant for two reasons. Firstly, it allows the BJP to avoid using the common term Adivasi with its connotations of first or original inhabitants, pre-dating the Aryan migrants; secondly in the use of the term 'Vananchal' with 'Vanvasi' links the people and the region through the Ramayana to Hindu Mythology.

church property in the region²⁹. Moreover, the Hindu nationalists are trying to enhance their support by co-opting potent tribal symbols, like the memory of Birsa Munda, for their purposes.

So the central component of the BJP's political rhetoric in the region combines support for the long running demand for a separate state with an anti-Christian, anti-westernized elite, and as anti-congress platform emphasizing cultural renewal and integration. Broadly the message is a call to reject the leadership of the westernized and affluent elite who have exploited the Jharkhand movement to enrich themselves while failing to deliver the promised autonomous state.

The basic limitation of the BJP is that it has cultivated its image as a party of non-tribal Hindu population in the Santhal Paragnas and Chotanagpur region. Moreover, the BJP is forced to carry out its agitation programme in an isolated manner. Besides adopting some of the traditional tribal symbols, the party is cleverly trying to use symbols which link the tribals to their concept to Hindu Rastra. The use of the term Vanavasi and Vanachal is a part of the strategy. The need for adopting a new name seems to be influenced by the need to create some space for itself in the struggle for a separate state and if the opportunity arises, to usurp the credit for creation of a separate state under the name suggested by it.

Instead of adivasi BJP use the term *banvasi* because they say according to Russell Hocking, for two reasons firstly it allows BJP to avoid the using common term adivasi with its connotation of first and

²⁹ Gupta Anish 'Making Sense of Jharkhand', Sunday, 18-24 Oct. 1992, pp. 32-37

original inhabitants, predating the Aryan migration. Secondly the use of the term *Vananchal* with *banvasi* likes the people and the region. This is significant to BJP to use these terms to project its image of 'party with a difference'. It is significant to note here the BJP doesn't want to antagonise its supporters which is precisely the migrants North Bihari Hindu upper cast population. At the same time BJP cannot afford solely on their traditional support. Thus to widen its support base it becomes necessary for the BJP to take along with itself both the adivasi and non-advasi.

Janata Dal (JD) / Rastriya Janata Dal (RJD)

The former Chief Minister of Bihar Mr. Laloo Prasad Yadav has many a times reiterated that Jharkhand state is not feasible and it could only be created over my dead body. It has always been seen that the RJD/JD leader Mr. Yadav has used Jharkhand as a pawn to serve his political interest in a blatant manner. He knows well that passing a resolution in the Assembly will not suffice for the formation of a Jharkhand state.

Barring a few honourable exceptions Mr. Yadav used state power ruthlessly against grassroots forces of political change even as it promoted economic and social anarchy.

In fact it is a common knowledge that Laloo Prasad has all along been adverse to giving any sort of autonomy to the Jharkhand region. If at all the Chief Minister agreed to endorse the concept of the council, it was because of political compulsions. But soon the Chief Minister

sowed the seeds of division and factionalism with the Jharkhand movement. The JAAC (Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council) created by Laloo Government has become such a big farce that so far not even its account has been opened. It has no funds, no infrastructure, no administrative power and for all practical purpose it exists on paper.

The JMM (S) leadership which stands thoroughly discredited in the eyes of the people of this region for playing into the hands of Mr. Yadav, was compelled to dissociate itself from the ruling Janta Dal in the state in 1992 and to go on 'war-path' in a desperate bid to show that they are still the champion of the Jharkhand cause. On the other side, Laloo kept the support of JMM (M) association by offering them handsome money and position of power, as JMM (M) had all the way supported the Laloo Government in the State Assembly.

It is very much a political game of JD/RJD that many a times it changes its stand on Jharkhand issue. Sometime in July 1997 (as reported in Telegraph) Laloo announced that a separate Jharkhand state was essential for all round development of Bihar. This announcement was related to the JMM's support to his government, which was in danger of losing the confidence of the house, as the JD had got divided and the left front withdrew its support to it. In July itself, at the time of confidence vote, Mr. Yadav, who had earlier claimed that statehood was only possible over his dead body, transferred powers of the 21 administrative departments to the interim JAAC and even promoted the executive committee members to the rank of Deputy Ministers. The responsibility of the departments has been given by Laloo government but there is no control over officers, who remain still tuned to Patna.

The state assembly also passed the resolution for the creation of a separate state for Jharkhand.

After the split in Janta Dal, and formation of RJD, Laloo Prasad Yadav was mainly concerned for the survival of his government. His position had become weak, as JD had split, his traditional and long term allies in the form of Left parties had ditched him due to his involvement in fodder scam and BJP/Samta alliance was gaining in strength. He desperately needed new allies. Sensing his desperation and knowing the value of their support, the JMM drew a hard bargain and made Laloo eat his words on the issue of Jharkhand.

CONCLUSION

Today, the Jharkhand movement is not only a tribal affair, a large number of non-tribals also are participating in it. The quantitative expansion has led to the qualitative dilution of the movement. The non-tribal entrants are more often contractors, money lenders and other dubious elements. They are not content with being mere followers, but have become local leaders and on several occasion prove to be more powerful than the prominent tribal leaders. Issues and problems of the tribals namely, exploitation-discrimination of tribals in every sphere of socio-political life, land alienation, *mahajani* exploitation, sexual exploitation of tribal women, the general looking down up on the tribal way of life, dominance of regional and national languages and culture over those of the tribals, the crisis of cultural identity, etc. have been almost lost sight of by the movement, because of the predominance of the non-tribals.

Moreover, in the course of its long existence, the Jharkhand movement has slowly been transformed into a movement for the 'development' of tribals as much as that of their non-tribal neighbour, which is the ideological victory of the dominant communities over the tribals within the movement. Whenever the movement became militant, the government responded in terms of development. The tribals are being made to increasingly clamour for developmental projects.

Therefore, from ethnicity via development to regionalism - the movement has traveled a long path on the ideological road towards

integration and assimilation with the dominant communities. From being a movement of tribal autonomy and identity it has been transformed into a movement for decentralized administration.

Today, the Jharkhand movement is divided into several groups and parties and has to struggle hard to maintain its distinct ideology and organizational identity. Such a state of affairs within the movement has often been blamed on the character of tribal leadership, the divide and rule policy of the government, the weak pan tribal consciousness etc. Jharkhand movement was and continues to be a struggle to resist the imposition of the ideology and dominance of the non-tribal communities and the ruling structure created by them. Having dragged the tribal aspiration for autonomy to a regional platform an inverse ideological somersault is performed to reconstruct a nationality on the basis of the region. Ethnically in all manifestation is shunned and regionalism is encouraged; ethnic exploitation is underplayed and issues of regional development and imbalances dominate, Jharkhandi culture instead of tribal culture, Jharkhandi identity instead of tribal identity and at least Jharkhandi nationality instead of tribal nationality is supposed to capture and dominate the movement.

During its long years of existence, the movement itself has not thrown up any important tribal intellectual who could speak for the movement or ideologise the struggles and aspirations of the tribal masses. Several attempts were indeed made by the educated tribals to put down in writing some concrete situation or incident, but these indigenous attempts, unfortunately are too few and are infirmed by a tribal style of writing that the dominant communities have found easy

and useful to ignore more or less completely. On the other hand, there is an excess of writings on the different aspects of the movement by the non-tribal intelligentsia. The role played by the few tribal intellectuals is generally passive. While it is not contended that the non-tribal intellectuals within the movement have all collectively sworn to thwart the aims and objectives of the movement, the very presence of these intellectuals within the movement and their relationship with the tribal activists is not devoid of control of the movement and often than not reflects the ethnic relationship in the larger society.

In the context of Jharkhand, conditions favourable to the dominant communities and their ideology existed from the very beginning - the long rule of some kind of Hinduised rajas in the area, the intervention of the British more than not on the side of the zamindars and local rajas, the expansion of industrial developmental and administrative activities in the area and equally large scale immigration of non-tribals to the area increased the hegemony of advanced communities. The 'joining of hands' with the movement in the context of dominance and exploitation is clear from several other changes within the movement.

The class and community base of the movement has also shifted to a considerable extent. The emergence of Ranchi University students and staff as one of the focal points within the movement has meant just a substitution of the traditional rural forces by the urban ones. Even with regard to the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha which is the dominant force of the movement, agrarian and jungle based movements have become things of the past. The leadership among the tribals is busy

bartering away large part of tribal land to the non-tribal within the movement in return of political and financial support. A small section of educated tribals whose interests are affected, are on the ascendance within the movement. It is this emergence of sectional interests among the tribals that has contributed much towards the inclusion of and adjustment with the non-tribal communities.

The merger of Jharkhand party with the Congress in 1963 and the subsequent alliances with the party during elections, led the extreme ideological confusion within the movement which exists even today. Thus the Jharkhand movement never overcame of its initial weakness such as factionalism and personality clashes among the leaders. These are some of the prominent reasons for the split in the Jharkhand movement. Disagreements among the leaders regarding major issues like participation in the elections and attitude towards Congress, often came out in the open to weaken the movement further. The lack of genuine ideological bond allows petty personal matters to take precedence over collective interest.

Emergence of new groups like the Jharkhand Liberating Front (1986), the Jharkhand People's Party (1991) complicated the matters even more. Even the more established groups like the Jharkhand Party, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha or All Jharkhand Student's Union have two or more factions.

Difference in language, religious rites and background history of different communities weaken the case for a separate Jharkhand state.

Moreover the Centre tried of shift the responsibility for decision on Jharkhand is the primary responsibility of the four state governments.

As such we find the Jharkhand movement has suffered historically from certain inherent weakness. For example, there are clear cut ethnic, political and linguistic differences among some two dozen tribes in Bihar. It is the intra-tribal prejudices which have prevented the emergence of a common political forum in the region. Even in the Chotanagpur - Santhal Paragna region, the tribals are easily outnumbered by non-tribals. The Jharkhand leaders have only been partly successful in drawing the non-tribals into their fold. All these factors linked with the current style of political functioning, came in the way of conventional political parties of the region responding to the aspirations of the Adivasis expressed through their urge for a Jharkhand state of their own. The movement lacks three basic characters, objective thinking collective thinking and, planned working¹. Lack of unity among the top leaders still seems to be the weakest point in the movement. Even with the commonality of aim the tribals remain divided among themselves. A pan-tribal polity does not seem to have fully and effectively developed.

The movement has not yet taken a mass character all over the proposed Jharkhand area under a commonly accepted strong, sincere, dedicated and effective leader. It may not be easy for the movement to face effectively the counterforce on four fronts the central government and the four state governments, Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal.

The decline and split in the various Jharkhand parties itself caused great harm to the Jharkhand movement. The decline of Jharkhand parties and organizations credibility among the people was caused by dissidence within the party which in turn was due to differences within the main leaders. It was due to weakness of leadership in the movement; deepening split between the advanced Christian and relatively backward non-Christian tribals; Non-inclusion of agrarian programmes as the main issues of the tribals; and urban oriented leadership. The fragmentation and factionalism of Jharkhand organisations were the weakest point of the whole Jharkhand movement and can be considered as the main reason for its decline.

By and large, the tribal leadership was unable to adjust with the new and changing situations which they had to face in politics, both at state and central level. Their cultural compulsiveness stands in the way of smooth negotiation with their colleagues, who are politically more assertive, vocal and astute. There is also mutual rivalry among the various splinter groups. Both the tribals and non-tribals are pulling the movement in the opposite directions to serve their respective interests. The total non-tribal population is much more than the tribal population for variety of reasons. Tribal elite use the movement and the support of the tribal people to serve their own selfish interests of attaining power and prestige. Moreover, Jharkhand movement is no longer homogenous. There are conflict of interests between the tribal elite from more educated tribes and the rest. Non-tribals like merchants, traders, businessmen have joined the movement for their own ends. They have sought allies among the tribal elite by obliging them in

¹ Kesari B. P. *Jharkhand Andolan Ki Vastwikta*, 1980.

many ways and are exerting their own pressure on them. The protagonists of the movement always made alliance with the ruling party. To say, the tribal leadership of the movement adopted politics as an instrument to solve their own personal problems.

On the other hand, national political parties have always betrayed the tribal sentiments. BJP by opting for the Sanskrit name 'Vananchal' has divorced the region from the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha. Thus the Jharkhand movement is fast losing its edge, due to its inner contradictions, Laloo Yadav's machinations and Congress / BJP using the sentiments generated by the movement for their own political purposes.

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