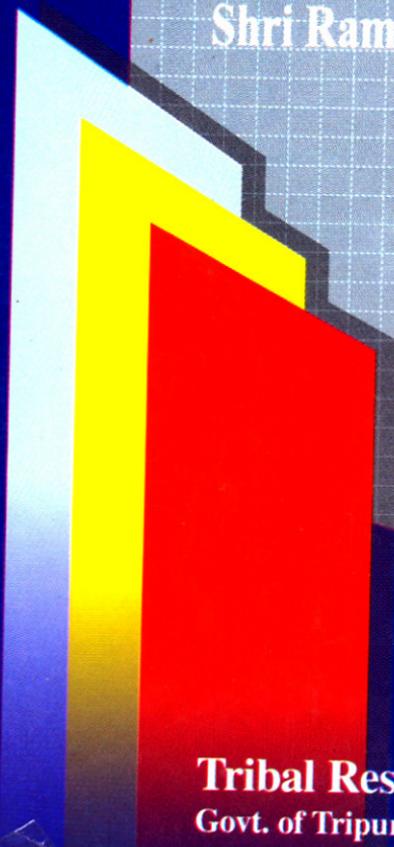




THE KUKIS OF TRIPURA

A SOCIO-ECONOMIC SURVEY

Shri Ram Gopal Singh (M. A.)



Tribal Research Institute
Govt. of Tripura, Agartala

THE KUKIS OF TRIPURA

A SOCIO-ECONOMIC SURVEY

Shri Ram Gopal Singh M.A.

TRIBAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
GOVT. OF TRIPURA
AGARTALA

Published by

TRIBAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Govt. of Tripura

Agartala

1st Edition—1985

2nd Edition—2002

Price : Rs. 50'00

Processed & Printed by

PARUL PRAKASHANI

16 Akhaura Road

Agartala

FOREWORD

The book titled "THE KUKIS OF TRIPURA" abled to create excessive demand among the research scholars, the 1st edition of the book has already exhausted. Considering the demand of the book for the readers, educationists, researchers and administrators attempt for printing 2nd edition of the book has been made.

Dated, Agartala
December, 2002

(J. C. Tripura)
Director
Tribal Research Institute
Govt. of Tripura
Agartala

FOREWORD

In every developmental effort of tribals special attention needs to be paid to the study of people as a whole especially of the tribes, their ethnic groups, culture, social structure, economy and political organisation. These studies in the form of monographs on individual tribe, their modes and mores, socio-cultural milieu, provide an invaluable temporal record which should serve as important indicators of changes and progress made in any subsequent evaluation.

2. The topicality of such studies is more relevant in Tripura where within a small geographical tract of 10,477 sq. kms., we have as many as 19 assortment of tribes, with distinct ethnic stocks such as those of Tripuris, Reangs and Kukis. In a plural society such as that of ours immigrants and autochthons, becomes intermingled with time, the more so where there is greater social mobility. "Assimilation is a process of interpretation and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments and attitudes of other persons of groups, and by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated with them in a cultural life" (R.E. Part & E.W. Burgess—Introduction to the science of Sociology).

3. Kukis are one of the autochthonous tribes. Shri Ramgopal Singh, who works in the Directorate of Reserch Department of Tribal Welfare, Govt. of Tripura has painstakingly brought out the socio-cultural milieu of Kukis, who are known in various names in different regions and who have got a number of sub-tribes, of which some have been included within the Schedule for Tripura. He had made an interesting study of their changing habitats, has found that demographic characteristics especially growth rate of population, rate of growth of literacy, their religious affiliations and has made an areawise study of the variation in these important indicators trying to establish a causal relationship. On the social side also his effort touches the social customs, village institutions, rituals and religious beliefs. He has made studies of about 10% of the Kuki families residing in Tripura, by taking a sample of 115 families in a total Kuki population of 7,775 persons (i.e. around 1,000 families) as per 1971 Census.

4. The monograph gives in a short compass the various factors of this important tribal group in Tripura, tries to establish a correlation on various primary data collated from field studies and helps all to have basic idea about this important component of State population. We are thankful to Shri R. Singh for having completed to study in addition to his own duties in the Research Directorate, that is at once informative and interesting.

S. L. Chatterji

Secretary to the Government,
Tribal Welfare Department, Tripura.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Sl. No.		
	Chapter—I	
1.	Habitat	1
	Chapter—II	
2.	History & Origin	11
	Chapter—III	
3.	Economic Activities	19
	(a) Hawaibari	37
	(b) Tuichakma	40
	(c) Hakpulen Kuki Para	42
	(d) Kanchanchhera	47
	(e) Jamthla	51
	(f) Khowalhring	52
	(g) Palkubari	55
	Chapter—IV	
4.	Social Customs & Institutions	56
	Chapter—V	
5.	Village Administration System	64
	Chapter—VI	
6.	Religious Belief	67
	Chapter—VII	
7.	Concluding Remarks	71
8.	References	76
9.	Questionaire—II	78

PREFACE

The Kukis are one of the autochthonous tribes of Tripura. According to the 1971 Census, the Kuki population in Tripura is only 7,775 persons. It is tenth in numerical position among the 19 scheduled Tribes of Tripura. They do not call themselves as Kukis. They call themselves as Hre-em. They are known as Kukis to the Bengalees and other plain living people. The Cacharis called them "Lushais". The manipuris called them "Khongjais". In the early Sanskritik texts they have been recorded as "Kirāts". In the Chin hills and generally on the Burma border all their clans are called "Chins". the Kukis are also known as "Darlong" in Tripura. The Tripuris called them "Sikam".

2. The Kukis of Tripura may broadly be divided into two major groups like "Darlong Kukis" and "Rokhim Kukis". According to them the Darlong Kukis are "Mar-Mi" means "men of north" while the Rokhim Kukis are "Sim-Mi" which means "men of the south".

3. The Kukis probably belonged to the Mongoloid racial stock. They are a short, sturdy race of men with a goodly development of muscle. Their language has been classified as belonging to the Austro-Asiatic group of Tibeto-Burman family.

4. The exact origin of this tribe is very difficult to trace out after so long distance of time. It is believed that probably they have come in the present area of Tripura in different waves in different times. The first wave which came into this land have become a faithful subjects of Tripura Rajahs and named as "Halams". So the Halams are known as "Mila-Kuki" in this State. Still now some clans of the Halam groups claim themselves to be as Kukis. The latter wave of them are probably the "Darlong" and the Lushais. In spite of some differences existing between the Kukis and the Lushais, they are practically the same group of people with common racial stock and do not actually signify two different tribes.

5. The Kukis are mainly inhabited in the Lushai Hills of Mizoram (Assam), a part of north-eastern Tripura, a part of southern Manipur, eastern range of Chittagong and a part of Western Burma. The main concentration of the Kukis in Tripura is in Kailashahar, Dharmanagar, Khowai, Udaipur, Kamalpur, Amarapur and sadar Sub-Divisions. The Kukis are 7,775 persons out of total tribal population of 4,50,544 in Tripura according to the 1971 Census. It is only 1.72% of the total tribal population of this territory.

6. The highest concentration of the Kukis is found in the North Tripura District. They are 3,227 souls. Among the sub-divisions, Kailashahar is the highest number of Kukis having 2,404 persons.

7. The life of the Kukis in the early days was very simple. They somehow eke out their living by means of jhum cultivation and preliminary method of economy. They usually purchased only salt and dry fish from the nearby market and sold jhum products. Usually they were not habituated in settled cultivation. In 1931 Census Report, no Kuki family was found to carry on cultivation (wet cultivation) as their primary or secondary occupation.

8. As the Kukis belong to the most minority tribal group of Tripura and are most backward in education as well as very weak in their economy, it is felt necessary to study this community as a whole. This monograph deals with the Kukis. What follows is divided into seven Chapters. The first Chapter describes the habitat of the Kukis, the second Chapter traces the history and origin of the tribe ; the next Chapter analyses their economic activities, while the fourth Chapter explains the social customs and institutions of this Community. The fifth Chapter sketches the village administrative pattern ; the sixth Chapter outlines the religious beliefs and practices of the Kukis. Finally, concluding remarks have been added.

9. The present survey was completed within a short period of three months. Within such short period it is not possible to present an all round information of a particular tribe or clan. So, there might be some sort of incomplete or deficiency of information which occurred unwillingly and may be excused. However, it is my belief that this monograph will throw some light to the future students of anthropology and sociology who are interested to deal with this particular tribe.

10. I convey my sincere gratitude to the Director of Research, Government of Tripura who have permitted me to conduct the field survey work of this monograph and writing this report. I am also thankful to the Linguistic Officer, Directorate of Research who had constantly been a source of inspiration. I am also thankful to the Department of Welfare for Sch. Castes & Sch. Tribes, Govt. of Tripura for having permitted me to continue this work. My sincerest gratitude is also to Shri J. Gan Choudhury, Lecturer of B. B. Evening College, Agartala for his kind guidance and reviewing this report.

11. I am also thankful to the Block Development Officers, Tribal Supervisors, Gaon-Pradhans, Tribal Extension Officers, other office personnels and the informants without whose help this survey work would not have been completed.

12. In fine, I owe to my colleagues of Directorate of Research for their valuable Co-operation and help in completing this report.

RAM GOPAL SINGH

Location and General boundary :

The State of Tripura lies approximately between 22°56' and 24°32' North latitudes, and between 91°10' and 92°20' East longitudes. It contains an area of 4.116 Sq. miles or 10,660 sq. kms. It is located in the eastern region of India. It touches both national and inter-national boundary. The State is bounded on the North, West and South by the Bangladesh districts of Sylhet, Comilla, Noakhali, Chittagong, and Chittagong Hill Tracts respectively. In the East, it meets with the Cachar district of Assam and Mizoram State (India). The eastern boundary of the State is marked by the river Langai which flows between the Haichek range of Mizoram and Jampui range of Tripura. The river Fenny marks the South-eastern border of Tripura and Bangladesh. In the past this princely State of Tripura had control over the entire Lushai Hills upto the river Dhaleswari. Following the Lushai disturbances during the year 1970, a portion of the hills was annexed by the then Indian Government unilaterally on the plea of controlling the Lushais. The sub-divisional headquarters are located in series on the western border of this State.

Topography :

During the time of British Rule in India, this small state was known as Hill Tipperah as the major part of the territory was hilly. 60% of area of this State still consists of hills which rises in a succession of ranges running mainly north and south.¹ Topographically Tripura may be divided into the following divisions of physical features; Hills, Hill Slopes, Tilla, Lunga, and Valley, Flat and plain low lands, Rivers and Lakes.

Hills and Hill Slopes.

The important ranges of Tripura are Deotamura, Baramura, Atharamura, Langtharai, Sakiantlang and Jampui Hill ranges. It is significant to note here that the ranges run in the north-south direction and they are parallel to each other making the surface uneven. The ranges do not join each other to form an endless line of ranges but there are flat lands, bushes, jungles and swamps in between any two ranges having a distance of 10 to 15 miles. The highest peak is Betling Shib, about 3,200 ft. high above the sea level. "These ranges" Writes Captain Bodgley, Officiating Deputy Superintendent of Topographical Survey, "also increases in the highest southwards from the plains of Sylhet and northwards from Chittagong district till they reach their highest near the watershed line of the rivers."² There are three other hill ranges besides the above six. They are Batchia Kalajhari and Sardiang. "The hills are narrow ridges, sometimes so narrow at the top as to be only knife-edged rock dangerous to walk along, covered with forest, thinner along the edges and spurs but close and tangled, and often impenetrable in the ravins and valleys."³ The hills do not rise up abruptly. There are numerous hillocks, tillas and peaks which stand out above the general level for which more than half portion of this State is hilly and are covered with dense bamboo jungles and huge forest timbers. At present due to increase of population and spreading out of the villages, habitations and jhumming, ward off these Jungles.

Forest and tilla lands are abundant in Tripura. It covers about three-fourth area of the State. "The so called tilla lands on the lowest and upland slopes are the only source from which new land may be won and it is these tilla soils which are most deficient. Much of the hills lie at slopes too steep for cultivation. Even on the gentle slopes the physical composition of the soil is loose and porous so that it does not hold water."⁴ The tribes occupy the hill slopes and tilla land for jhumming and orchard. Forest trees are abound in the Hill ranges.

The plain lands and river basins are thickly populated and agricultural products are cultivated there while tribal hamlets are found on the hills. The plain lands and river basins are more or less fertile. Paddy, Jute, Oil seeds, Vegetables etc. are grown there. The base lands of the hills are full of grooves, cane brakes and swamps.

Rivers :

The following are the main rivers in Tripura ; Fenny, Muhury, Gumti, Howrah, Khowai, Dhalai, Manu, Deo, Juri and Langai rivers. The Gumti is the principal river fed mainly by two tributaries-Raima and Chaima. The Chaima also known as Sarma rises in the Atharamura range of hills, and the Raima in the Langtharai range ; and they unite to form the Gumti just about a succession of rapids known as the Dambur Falls."⁵ The Gumti runs through Amarpur, Udaipur and Sonamura Sub-Divisions and then enters into Bangladesh westward. "Its principal tributaries are Kasigang, the Pitragang and Mailak Chhera all on the right bank."⁶

The Manu rising from the Sakhantlang range runs westward through Kailashahar and finally enters into Bangladesh. The Deo and Dhalai are both tributaries of the Manu, the former on its right and the latter on its left bank.

The Howrah rises from the Baramura Hill range, runs through Sadar sub-division westward and enters into Bangladesh. Agartala, the present Capital of the State stands on the bank of the river.

The rivers of Tripura are not suitable for navigation in the true sense. W.W. Hunter wrote in his Statistical Account, "No rivers in Hill Tipperah is navigable by trading boats of four tons burden or upward throughout the year."⁷ During the rains, the hilly Chherras become full to the brim with tremendous current. It is difficult to cross the rivulets and the small chherras in the hill areas during and just after a shower of rains. The water level, however, comes down within a brief period of two or three hours. And then they are accessible.

Climate :

The climate of Tripura is moderate. The tropical cancer passes through the middle of this State. The period from December to February is the cold season. March to May is the summer in Tripura. At the end of the summer the South-West monsoon season starts and it lasts upto September. The post monsoon season is during October and November. In the cold weather the mercury level of thermometer varies from 10.4°C to 25.5°C. In the summer the highest temperature recorded at Agartala was 42.2°C. The temperature begins to increase from the month of March and reaches to the highest point recorded in the month of May. From the first week of October the temperature gradually decreases.

In the summer season the relative humidity are between 50 to 65 per cent while in monsoon they are over 85 per cent.

Rainfall :

The average rain fall in Tripura is 82.7". Generally rainfall occurs during the months from April to October. The rainfall during the summer is mostly in the form of thunder, showers and storm. The rainfalls in the post monsoon months is not so much. In the cold season the sky remains clear. The valleys are colder at night and warmer during the day then the hills.

Flora :

Tripura is a State full of vegetation. In the forests of Tripura bamboo brakes, cane, garjan, sal, sundi, gamair, jarul, sonal etc. grow and it is full of grass land and swamps. "There are 280 species of trees, found in the territory. Of these only 64 trees are of recognised commercial importance."⁸ Besides, various indigenous medical herbs are also found in Tripura. These are amlaki, bel, dhutura, haritaki, kurchi, nim, tetul etc. Different kinds of bamboos found in this State cover a large area of the territory. Although the eleven species of bamboos have been so far identified in Tripura. Besides herbs, shrubs, sungrass etc. cover a vast areas of the forest of this State. Moreover, a large area of the territory is

also covered with vast expanses of grass. In the flat and low lands, the following crops are cultivated : Paddy, sweet potato, ginger, turmeric, arahar, mustard, musuri, khesari, jute, bodo paddy etc. On the tilla and jhum lands cotton, seasamun, jute (mesta, kirish), melon, maize etc. are cultivated.)

Fauna :

The hill ranges and forests of Tripura are closely connected with Chittagong Hill Tracts and Lushai and Mizo Hills. It is certain that the animals and birds of the State must be in resemblance to those of her neighbouring hill ranges. Secondly the western plain lands of this State is the border line with Bangladesh. So, it will not be surprising if we see the fauna of this State is the admixture of Mizo hills and Cachar and of Bangladesh.

Indian elephants are found in large number in the forests of Tripura. This is the valuable wild life of this State. In old days the Tripura Rajahs used to present elephants to the Nawab of Bengal in token of allegiance. Besides, deer, monkeys, panthar, leopards, civet, mangoose, bear, bats, squirrels, bison, pamgolin etc. are found in the forest of Tripura. Rhinoceroses are not seen in Tripura at present. But it is said that they were in this State in large number during the first decade of the present century. This is also quite evident from an order (1905) of the Rajah of Tripura that prohibited hunting of the rhinoceroses in this State for the said animal is decreasing in number.⁹

Royal Bengal tiger are also found in this State. Different kinds of birds are living in Tripura. Some birds are seen near the locality but some are living in the dense forests. Crow, bulbul, sparrow, pigeon, mynah, parrot, bhringaraj, wild cock, wild duck adjutant, horn bill, swallow etc. are the birds usually found in Tripura. Vulture, kites, dove, crane etc. are also found. Different snakes, python, cobra, frogs etc. are found here. The rivers and swamps are full of fishes, tortoise and scrab etc.

General population :

The total population of Tripura is 15,56,342 according to 1961 Census. Out of this population 4,50,544 are tribals. It is about 28.95% of the total population. They were 31.53% and 37.84% of the total population in 1971 and 1951 respectively. The gradual proportional decrease of the tribal population in comparison with other non-tribals is not due to less growth rate of this community but for unusual migration of non-tribals in large scale in this State from other places. However, the following table will show the growth rate of population in Tripura.

TABLE—I
Growth rate of population

Year	Population	Percentage of growth
1872	35,262	—
1881	95,637	171 %
1891	1,37,442	4 %
1901	1,73,325	26 %
1911	2,29,613	32.5 %
1921	3,04,437	52.6 %
1931	3,82,450	25.6 %
1941	5,13,010	34.14 %
1951	6,39,029	64.56 %
1961	11,42,000	78.71 %
1971	15,56,342	34.32 %

The population figure upto 1891 Census seems to be inaccurate as the Census could not have been undertaken perfectly due to inaccessible character of this State for want of communications and other difficulties in the remote corner of this State. Mr. L.S.S. O'mally opined in 1921 regarding Census report of Bengal, Orissa and Sikkim, 'The first Census of the State was admittedly incomplete and that of

1881 was also probably inaccurate. The first reliable Census was that of 1901 according to which the number of inhabitants was 27 per cent more than ten year before."¹⁰

It is interesting to note here that the population of Tripura increased 78.71% during 1951-61 and 36.32% during 1961-71 whereas India records growth rate only 24.57% during 1961-61. This abnormal increase was not due to the natural growth of population but to heavy influx of refugees from the erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) when communal riots broke out in large scale there after partition. The rush of heavy influx have up set the economic equilibrium of this small State.

The density of population is 149 per sq. km. in 1971 whereas it was only 107 per sq. km. in 1961. The density of population increased about 40% per sq. km. during last ten years.

The sex ratio in Tripura is (found to be) 940 females per 1000 males in 1971 and that was 932 in 1961. The female rate has also increased during ten years.

The literacy rate among the people of Tripura is 30.87% in 1971 and 20.25% in 1961. Literacy rate among the males and females are 40.95% and 20.55% respectively. The following table will show the literacy trend among the people of this State.

TABLE—II
Trend of literacy among the people of Tripura

Year	Total population	No. of literate person	% of literacy
1931	3,82,450	10,861	2.84%
1941	5,13,010	Not available	
1951	6,39,029	99,199	15.52%
1961	11,42,005	2,31,188	20.24%
1961	15,56,342	4,82,082	30.86%

The main religion of the people of Tripura is Hindu. Apart from it, there are Christians, Buddhists, Muslims etc. According to the Census report numerically the position of

the people in respect of the religious affiliation, Muslims stands second. it is also notable that the Christians are increasing in number. However, the following table will show the trend of religious affiliation of the people of Tripura.

TABLE—III

Trend of religious affiliation of the people of Tripura

Year	Total population	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Budhist	Others
1931	3,82,450	2,61,519	1,03,702	...	14,531	2,610
1941	5,13,010	3,46,792	1,23,570	328	7,724	35,636
1951	6,39,029	4,80,662	1,36,940	5,262	15,403	762
1961	11,42,005	8,67,998	2,30,002	10,039	33,716	250
1971	15,56,342	13,93,689	1,03,962	15,713	42,285	693

Administration :

The State of Tripura was ruled by the native kings independently upto October 15,1949 when she integrated with the Indian Union. Then Tripura became a part "C" State and was administered by a Chief Commissioner on behalf of the President of India. After the first General Election three Advisors were appointed by the President to aid and advice the Chief Commissioner in discharging his duties. The Advisory Regime came to an end in 1957. Then Tripura Territorial council was formed with 32 members which was headed by a Chairman. On the 21st January, 1972 Tripura attained the status of Statehood administered by a Governor with a Council of Ministers. The Tripura Terriotrial Council converted into Tripura Legislative Assembly on the 1st July, 1963. Till then the number of members in the Assembly was 32. After the attainment of Statehood, The Legislative Assembly is formed with 60 members in place of 32.

Before 1-8-70 the District Administration of the entire State was run by one District Magistrate & Collector. From the 1st September, 1970 Tripura has been divided into

3(three) Districts. There are 10(ten) Revenue Sub-Divisions in Tripura. The ten sub-divisions are distributed in the 3 Districts. North Tripura District consists of 3(three) sub-divisions namely Dharmanagar, Kailashahar, and Kamalpur ; West Tripura District consists of 3 (three) sub-divisions namely Sadar, Khowai and Sonamura ; South Tripura District consist of 4(four) sub-divisions namely Udaipur, Belonia, Amarpur and Sabroom. Each Sub-Divisions is under charge of one Sub-Divisional Officer.

The present Council of Ministers consists of 7 full-fledged Ministers, 3 Minister of States, and 1 Deputy Minister. The present Council of Ministers is a Congress party Ministry headed by the Chief Minister. Shri Sukhamoy Sengupta. There two Ministers belonging to Scheduled Tribe Community, one is full-fledged Minister Shri Haricharan Choudhury, from Noatia Community, the other is Deputy Minister Shri Hangsadhawaj Dewan belonging to Chakma Community. One member of the present Legislative Assembly belongs to Kuki Community (1976).

Origin of the Name of Tripura :

The story of the origin of the name of Tripura is dimly known. According to Captain Lewin, "the origin of the name of Tripura is doubtful."¹¹ This remark has been aptly made ; the scholars have not as yet come to an unanimous opinion. So, the opinions can not be conclusively united into a single one. Tripura was a princely State ruled by the descendents from Drujho, son a Jajati, who belonged to the Lunar dynasty of the Mahabharata. "From him, the succession is traced down in a direct line including thirty eight reign to his decendant Daitya."¹² It was probably Daitya's successor Tripura who gave his kingdom the name it still bears."¹³ Apart from this, there is another opinion which states, "Tripura has been coined from two Tripuri words-tui and pra. In tripuri dialect 'tui' means 'water' and 'pra' means near. It is believed that originally the land was known as Tuipra meaning a land adjoining the waters. It is claimed that in the long past the boundaries of Tripura extended

upto the Bay of Bengal.”¹⁴ Some believed that after the name of Goddess Tripura Sundari, the State had been named Tripura.

The small princely State was independent and under the rule of the native Kings upto October 15, 1949 when it marged with the Indian Union. During the Muslim period in India, it was several times attacked and invaded by the Muslims. The last ruler who ceded his right is H. H. Maharaaj Manikya Kirit Bikram Kishore Deb Barman Bahadur, a minor still then and the 179th ruler of this State.

HISTORY AND ORIGIN

Name

The Kukis, with whom the present monograph deals are the aboriginal tribes of Tripura having 7,775 souls in this territory according to 1971 Census. The Kukis do not call themselves as Kukis. They call themselves as Hre-em.¹⁵ They are known as Kukis to the Bengalees and other people. The Cacharis called them Lushais. This connotes something alarming ; Lu means head and Chai means to cut. Hence the word Luchai means head hunters. That the Lushais used to hunt heads at the time of funeral of the chieftains as late as the middle of the nineteenth century is now a matter of recorded history.¹⁶ Lushai is the corrupted form of Luchai. The Manipuris called them 'Khongjais' which means the people who used to live in a dispersed way.¹⁷ In primitive time they were known as Kirats to the plain settlers who came over to Tripura from East Bengal.¹⁸ In Chin Hills and generally on the Burma border all these clans are called Chins.¹⁹ The Kukis are also known as Darlong in Tripura.²⁰ According to them, the Darlongs were constantly engaged in fight with the Lushais and they would fight with their arms. As per Darlong dialect, 'dar' means shoulder and 'leng' means to cut. That they would cut the lushais with the help of their strong shoulder and hence they were named "Darleng" corruption Darlong. The Darlong Kukis are also known as Mar-mi meaning the men of the north and the Rokhum Kukis another section of the Kukis as Sim-mi means men of the South.

Physical features

The Kukis belong to the Mongoloid racial stock. They were like the Manipuri in physiognomy but the greater part bore more resemblance to the Kasias, having strongly marked Mongolian features with flat faces and thick lips.²¹ The Kukis are a short, sturdy race of men with a goodly

development of muscle. Their legs are, generally speaking, short in comparison with the length of their bodies, and their arms long. The face is nearly as broad as it is long and is generally round or square, the cheek bones high, broad and prominent, eyes small and almond shaped, the nose short and flat with wide nostrils. The women appear more squat than the men been, but are strong and lusty.²²

Language

Their language has been classified as belonging to the Austro-Asiatic group of Tibeto-Burman family. The following are the 20 (twenty) principal languages of the Tibeto-Burman family : Cachari or Bodo, Garo, Tripura or Mrung, Tibetan or Bhutia, Gurung, Murmi, Newar, Lepcha, Miri, Aka, Mishmi dialect, Dhimal, Kanawari dialect, Mikir, Singpho, Naga dialects, Kuki dialects, Burmese, Khyeng and Manipuri. The language of all the Kuki clans is similar with certain variations in intonation and accent as governed by the physiography of the land they are living in. It has certain affinity with the Manipuri Language.

Migration

In spite of some differences existing between the Kukis and the Lushais, they are practically the same group of people with common racial stock and do not actually signify two different tribes. The Kukis are found to be very old inhabitants of Tripura. "That the Kukis were known of old in Tripura is apparent from the Rajmala, as it represents Shiva falling in love with a Kuki girl who was in consequence put to death by his shrew of a wife. In another place the Kukis are represented in the name of his Raja of Udaipur who invaded Tripura, but was defeated, and Udaipur became the capital of Tripura. Again, the Kukis are brought forward as accusing the Tripura general Raja Chachag of a design to make Tamul which he had subjugated in the name of his master an independent State. This general flourished in A.D. 1512."²³

The origin of this tribe is very difficult to trace out after so long distance of time. It is believed that they probably

came to this present area of Tripura in different waves. The first wave which came to this land have become a faithful subject of Tripura Rajah and has been named as Halam. So, even to-day some clans of the Halam claim themselves to be as Kukis. The Halams are also known as Mila-Kuki in this State. The second wave probably was that of the Darlongs and the Lushais. The tribal subjects of the Tripura Rajas were divided into a twelve 'Dafa' or group and their headmen were known as 'Rai'. But the Kukis and the Lushais have their own Rajas for whom the title is granted by the Tripura Rajah Darbar for controlling and internal ruling of these communities. It is not as late as the middle part of the nineteenth century, the Kukis caused a series of troubles to the British Government and the Tripura Rajahs. They suddenly attacked many villages of British India and Tripura Rajah, killed many people, plundered villages and took many villagers as captives. In 1844 the Manipuri village of Kochabari was raided and this incidents moved the then Tripura Darbar of Rajah. In 1860, the Kukis after sweeping down the course of the Fenny, burst into the plain of Tipperah at Chagulneyah, a village once in the Zamindari of the Maharaja of Tripura, now in Bangladesh burnt or plundered 15 villages, killed 185 British subjects and carried off about a hundred as captives. It was ascertained that the main instigators of this invasion were four Hill Tipperah refugees of royal blood, who being driven away by the Raja of Tripura had lived sometime among the Kukis.²⁴

As stated earlier that the exact origin of the Kukis can not be traced out after so long lapse of time and years. It is only an attempt to go through the probable source of this tribe. However, different scholars expressed their opinions which can be put here for tracing out their origin. The first notice of this tribes appeared in the "Asiatic Researches" Vol-VII, in a paper from the pen of Surgeon, Mc Crea dated the 24th January 1799. They were described as a nation of hunters and warriors.²⁵ The Kukis are divided into clans, each under its own chief, whose office was not hereditary but elective, with a preference for particular families.²⁶ The

Lushai Hills of Mizoram (Assam), a part of north-eastern Tripura, a part of southern Manipur, eastern range of Chittagong and a part of western Burma are inhabited by these tribes.²⁷ The tradition of the Kukis representing their origin is, that they and the Mughls are the off-spring of the same progenitor, who had two sons by different mothers, the Kukis remain pagans, their elder brethern have become Buddhist.²⁸ Another opinion says, the Kukis and the Mughls lived in a village called Khuahs, having from 500 to 2,000 inhabitants.²⁹

It is believed that the original home of the Lushai-Kuki clan is in the Chin Hills. Col. Shakespeare observed, "Among inhabitants of the Lushai Hills are found a very considerable number of immigrants or decendants of immigrants from the Chin Hill. The existing Lushai chiefs all claim descent from certain Thangura, who is sometimes said to have sprung from the union of a Burman with Paihte woman, but, according to the Paihtes, the Lushais are descended from Boklua, an illegitimate son of the Paihte Chief Ngehguka. I estimate that Thangura must have lived early in the eighteenth century. His first village is said to have been at Tlangkua, north of Falam.³⁰ In course of time some lines were sprang up from the Thangura Chiefs. The Rokhum, the eldest branch, are said to have passed through the hills now occupied by the Lushais, and some of their descendants are said to be found on the Tipperah-Sylhet border.³¹ It is also believed that the descendants of the chiefs had to move from place to place for the search of good jhum land and aggression of the eastern clans who were stronger than them. Moreover, it was a practice of them that when the sons of a chief had become matured and married, they had to move to some other place with a horde of people and establish a village where they ruled over. Further Shakespeare state, 'It seems most probable that the country into which the various Thangura chiefs moved, under pressure from the Chins, was almost, entirely occupied by small communities having no power of cohesion. The greater part of these were absorbed, and now form the majority of the subjects of the Thangura

chiefs ; but some fled north and west into Manipur, Silchar, Sylhet and Tripura, where they are known as Kukis.³²

Another opinion indicates, 'They are nearest allied to the Lushais who adjoin them on the south, whom they closely resemble in appearance, language, dress and customs. And on the other hand, they seem related to the Chins of Burma.'³³

From the above mentioned opinions, it may be assumed that the Kukis living in Tripura are the descendants of the so called Thangura chiefs and their followers whose original home was in Chin Hills.

Population

According to the 1971 Census the tribal population of Tripura is 4,50,544 including 7,775 Kukis. The Kukis are 1.72% of the total tribal population of this territory. Out of the said Kukis, 3,606 are males and 4,169 females. The female population of the Kukis seems to be higher than the male population. The main concentration of the Kukis is in Sadar, Khowai, Dharmanagar, Kailashahar, Kamalpur, Udaipur and Amarpur Sub-Divisions. In 1961 they were only 5,531. The following table will show the trend of population of the Kukis in Tripura.

TABLE IV

The trend of Kuki population

Year	Total Kuki population	Male	Female
1872	2,041 (1874-75)		
1881	not available		
1891	3,824	1,881	1,943
1901	7,547	3,777	3,770
1911	2,281	1,140	1,141
1921	4,005	2,072	1,933
1931	1,479	740	739
1941	1,522	988	534
1951	2,721	1,097	1,624
1961	5,531	2,785	2,746
1971	7,775	3,606	4,169

TABLE V

Districtwise distribution of Kuki population as per 1971 Census.

District	Male	Female	Total
North Tripura	1,632	1,595	3,227
West Tripura	962	973	1,935
South Tripura	1,012	1,601	2,613

TABLE VI

Sub-Divisionwise distribution of Kuki population in Tripura. Variation of growth between 1961 & 1971 Census.

Name of Sub-Division	1961 Census			1971 Census			Variation
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Dharmanagar	132	136	268	233	130	363	+95
Kailashahar	900	858	1,758	1,174	1,230	2,404	+646
Kamalpur	204	224	428	225	235	460	+32
Khowai	557	548	1,105	679	653	1,332	+227
Sadar	379	362	741	283	320	603	-138
Sonamura		Nil			Nil		
Udaipur	33	27	60	247	340	587	+527
Amarpur	579	591	1,170	761	1,256	2,017	+847
Belonia		Nil			Nil		
Sabroom		Nil		4	5	9	+9

TABLE VII

Sub-Divisionwise distribution of Scheduled Tribes & Kuki Population and percentage of their variation from 1961 to 1971 Census.

Sub-divisions	1961 Census		1971 Census		Percentage of variation/growth	
	S/T	Kuki	S/T	Kuki	S/T	Kuki
Dharmanagar	33,700	268	39,656	363	+17.6%	+35.4%
Kailashahar	34,068	1,758	43,090	2,404	+26.5%	+36.7%
Kamalpur	19,932	428	25,801	460	+29.4%	+7.5%
Khowai	58,726	1,105	71,701	1,332	+22%	+20.5%
Sadar	97,218	741	1,15,940	603	+29.5%	-18.6%
Sonamura	8,251	Nil	11,237	Nil	+24%	Nil
Udaipur	21,154	60	31,194	587	+47.4%	+878.3%
Amarpur	29,525	1,170	50,874	2,017	+28.7%	+72.4%
Belonia	27,163	Nil	36,454	Nil	+35%	Nil
Sabroom	20,333	Nil	24,597	9	+20.9%	+100%

While going to examine the Table No. IV of the Kuki population, it is seen that the number of them fluctuates in a very irregular ways from one census to the other. If we see that the number of Kukis increased in a census, it is suddenly decreased in the subsequent one abnormally. Such irregularities, I think, is due to wrong response of the individuals and incorrect record of the census enumerators. Because in Tripura still it is not possible to make a clear list of the Kukis as there is no such one readily available, Some say, Molchums and Kaipengs are Kukis. But they are Halams according to Government records. It is my field experience that Hmara are treated as Kukis in Manipur and Mizo Hills, whereas they are Lushais in Tripura. The Lushais are sometimes included in the list of the Kukis. The Lushais are sometimes included in the list of the Kukis. The Lushais have sub-groups like Chuingow, Chuihang, Zadeng etc. but those are also sub-groups of the Kukis according to other opinions. So, it is very difficult to draw a clear demarcation line among the Lushais, Kukis and some groups of the Halams. Besides, in the long past the tribals changed constantly their clans. Specially the captives and defeated persons in a fight would usually lose their original clans and took over the names of the powerful chiefs. Those who fled away would however, maintain their entity but sometimes they also adopted the new clans with which they lived. It is said that Shri Parbamani Koloi of Taidubazar of Amarpur Sub-Division, South Tripura was originally a Kuki. But his forefathers lived in the Koloi village and gradually their descendants have become Koloi group of the Halam Community and now they are known as the Kolois.

The highest concentration of the Kukis is found in the District of North Tripura. They are 3,227 souls there. Among the Sub-divisions, Kailashahar has the highest number of Kukis with 2,404 persons. In the North District, it is seen that out of 3,227 persons. 1,632 are males and 1,595 are females. But in the South Tripura District, out of 2,613 persons males are 1,012 and the females are 1,601. So, the females are about 1,600 in every 1,000 males. It is a bit

abnormal. While analysing the field data collected from Udaipur sub-division under South Tripura District, it is seen from 18 surveyed families that out of 100 persons in Hakpulen Kuki para of Udaipur, 43 persons are males and 57 are females. In the Table VI, it is seen that the Kuki population decreased in the Sadar Sub-Division. They were 741 persons in 1961 Census but it came to only 603 in the 1971 Census.

The Table No. VII indicates sub-divisionwise percentage of variation of the Scheduled Tribes and Kukis of Tripura from 1961 Census to 1971 Census. The highest increase of Scheduled Tribe population from 1961 to 1971 is found in the Udaipur Sub-Division. It is 47.4% more than 1961 Census figure. The lowest increase in the Dharmanagar Sub-division. It is only 17.6%. When the Scheduled Tribe population and the Kuki Population of 1961 and 1971 Census in the Kailashahar Sub-division is examined, it is seen that the Scheduled Tribes increased 26.5% there while the Kukis increased 36.7% there. The highest increase of the Kukis is seen at Udaipur and Sabroom. As to Sabroom, there was no Kukis in 1961 Census, but 9 Kukis are found at Sabroom in 1971 Census. In Udaipur, there was only 60 Kukis in 1961 Census but the number increased upto 587 in 1971 Census. In Sadar sub-division the Kukis population decreased (-) 18.6% during 1961-71.

The literacy rate of the Kukis is very small. They were mainly Hindus in the past but now they are inclined to other religions. The following Table will show their literacy rate from 1911.

TABLE VIII
Literacy rate of the Kukis

Year	Total Kukis	No. of literate persons	Percentage
1911	2,281	3	0.13%
1931	1,479	62	4.19%
1961	5,531	507	9.17%
1971	7,775	946	12.16%

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES**Food gathering :**

The Kukis generally depend on different cereals during different parts of the year. Paddy, maize and different cash crops produced by themselves carry for six months or so. Even during the above six months, they have to supplement their diet by roots and tubers collected from the jungle. Gathering is mainly carried on by the young women and girls. They set out in the morning with a basket on the back and a chopper in the hand. Generally they collect various types of roots, vegetables, tubers for cooking purpose. The tribals are fond of pumpkin, ginger, onions, the flower of plantain, mushrooms and use a very large variety of wild leafy vegetables. 'A favourite dish is made from young bamboo shoots' 34 which is cooked with other vegetables, dried fish and burnt meat. It is a fact that now-a-days this bamboo shoots, different roots and flowers of plantain are the only means of livelihood for the general poor tribals during lean period of the year i.e. April/May and November/December.

Hunting :

The Kukis are almost omnivorous in meat and fish. They enjoy the flesh of deer, squirrels, the wild bear, hare and birds which they hunt. Monkey, elephant and dog meat are regarded as special delicacies by some of them. Bison and buffaloes are also included in it. They also reserve their domestic animals such as pigs, goats, duck, pigeons, chickens for special occasions of sacrifice or feasting and put eggs also to an important ritual use. In old days they used to eat certain kinds of snakes, frogs, cats and beetles. In one word, they eat the flesh of all animals and birds except beefs.

Hunting, in the past, played a significant role in their subsistence economy. The Kukis were regarded as a nation of hunters. Hunting is carried on exclusively by the males. They generally hunted elephant, wild boars, bison, tigers,

deer, birds, hares, etc. Near the villages and their jhum land they set their traps. Their favourite hunting is elephant. When killing of wild valuable animals have been prohibited by the Government, hunting of elephants, tigers, deer etc. have been decreased. One of the Kukis repented for this prohibition and it is learnt, had he been permitted to hunt elephant he would have sent the tusk of the hunted elephant to the house of Jawharlal Nehru (As he was then the Prime Minister of India and regarded him to be authority for permission) and he would enjoy the flesh of it delicaciously, he opined. From this statement, it is clear that elephant hunting was the most favourite game of all to them. They generally used to hunt with Silai, Soi, Chem etc. and traps. At present the practice of hunting is decreasing due to prohibition of killing wild life.

Fishing :

Fishing does not play an important role in their subsistence economy, expecting that it sometimes serves as an additional delicacy for their dinner. Fishing is generally carried on in the chheras and streams nearby their hamlets and swamps in the foot hills. It is mainly conducted by the young boys and olds. The following are a few fishing implements generally found in their households—Chakra, Pum, Lenchua, Jhapar, Ngoi and Gakoi etc.

Jhuming :

Generally the Kukis live on the top of the hills in a house built on a bamboo platform 5' to 6' high on the ground. They practice shifting cultivation. "All the hill tribes cultivate the soil in the same way, by the method known as jhum cultivation."³⁵ For jhum cultivation a piece of bamboo jungle is selected ; they cut down the jungle and cleared it in the month of November/December and set fire it in the dry months i.e. March/April. After the first rain fall, seeds of cotton, paddy, melon, pumpkin, sesamum etc. are sown by making hole with Chem (chopper). No ploughing is necessary. This type of cultivation is known as jhum cultivation or

shifting cultivation. In the early part of this century, majority of the Kukis practised shifting cultivation. The following table will show the occupational condition of the Kukis in Tripura in 1931.

TABLE—IX

Occupational position of the Kukis in 1931 Census.

Name of Community	Total Population	Primary occupation			Secondary occupation			Weaving Spinning	
		Jhum Cultivation	Other	Jhum	Cultivation	Other			
Darlong	1,479	392	—	16	509	—	175	348	377

From the above table it is seen that 56.6% of them adopted jhumming as primary or secondary occupation. While analysing the occupational mobility of the informants of 115 surveyed Kuki families, it is also observed that cent per cent of their forefathers were jhumias. In 1901 Census report it is seen that only 17 Kukis were engaged in occupation other than jhum cultivation out of 7,547 population. Of them 3 were Royal servants, 4 were service holders, 2 were tailors (making garments) and 8 were potters. So, it may easily be assumed that in the early part of the present century the Kukis mainly practiced shifting cultivation and jhumming was the only source of income for them.

The jhumias of Tripura did not pay any revenue for land. Instead, they would pay house tax annually to the Rajahs of Tripura. The rate of house tax (gharchukti Kar) would vary from Re. 1/- to Rs. 8/- per family. The royal servants were, however, exempted from the payment of the said house tax. It is said that the Kukis served as soldiers under the military force of Tripura Rajahs. They were "sometimes excused from all money payments, on the understanding that they must render military service when required."³⁶ At the time of assessment of the family tax locally known "gharchukti Kar" in the hills of the State of Tripura, it was assessed that only twenty six Kuki families would pay house tax at the rate of Rs. 5.25 per family in the year 1874-75.³⁷ But from the Gazette

publication dated 31st Baisakh (April/May), 1904 A. D. of the Tripura State Gazette, it is observed that there was no fixed rate of family tax for the Kukis. The Tripura Rajahs would realise a lump sum amount of Rs.60/- annually from the Kukis. This system was reviewed and house tax @ Rs. 3.50 per family for the Kukis was recommended.³⁸

In 1905 the market price of rice, paddy, cotton and sesamum per maund varied from Rs. 2.25 to Rs. 3.12; Re 1/- to Rs. 1.50; and Rs. 3/- to Rs. 8/- respectively. The rate of wages for "Taithung" (The practice of compulsory carrying goods of the Govt. officials from one place to another) per day was fixed at Re. 0.25 for males and Re. 0.19 for females from the Government.³⁹

The life of the tribals in those days was very simple. They somehow eke out their living by means of jhumming and priliminary method of economy. They usually purchased only salt from the nearby markets and sold their jhum products. So, their lives were happy, natural and full of enjoyments.

As days, months and years passed on, their surrounding environments have changed gradually and they had to coup with the changing pattern of economy in this small State. The adoption of Christianity played the prime role in changing their ways of living and subsequently their pattern of economy. The jhumias of to day have become a settled cultivators of tomorrow. Though they are gradually practising wet cultivation, still they have not completely discarded their old habit of shifting cultivation. It is true that the method of shifting cultivation has mingled with their ways of life and culture and religious beliefs.

The analysis of the field data collected from the Kukis families of different sub-divisions will clearly show their present nature of occupation.

The survey was undertaken in the Sub-Divisions Khowai, Udaipur, Kailashahar and Amarapur. The total number of families was 115 that came under survey. The following table will show the distribution of families surveyed and number of persons covered by this survey.

TABLE—X
Population sexwise of the surveyed families

Sl. No.	Name of the village	Name of Sub-divisions	No. of families	Male	Female	Total
1.	Hawaibari	Khowai	19	60	42	102
2.	Tuichakma	Khowai	19	48	46	94
3.	Hakpulen Kuki para	Udaipur	28	64	83	147
4.	Kanchanchhera	Kailashahar	20	93	72	165
5.	Jamthla	Kailashahar	7	28	26	54
6.	Khowalhring	Kailashahar	19	61	56	120
7.	Nupangroa	Amarpur	3	8	11	19
Average size of family—6.6 persons			115			701

The total population of all the sample families is 701; of them 362 or 51.6% are males and 339 or 48.4% are females. While going to examine the sex ratio of each village, it is observed that in the village Hawaibari 60 or 58.8% are males and 42 or 41.2% are females. In Tuichakma, 48 or 51% are males and 46 or 49% are females. The female population preponderates over the male population in the Hakpulen Kuki para of Udaipur. They are 83 or 56.4% females and 64 or 43.6% males. In the village Kanchanchhera, it is seen that 93 or 56.3% are males and 72 or 43.7% are females.

The average size of family for all the surveyed villages stands at 6.6. In certain individual cases the respective family size exceed the average of the total sample. The greatest number of family, I found in Kanchanchhera, in the family of Placid Thuamluia belonging to Hmar Clan having 17 members. The next also found in the same village in the family of Sana Darlong belonging to Boaja Clan having 14 members.

TABLE—XI
Occupational distribution of the families in total

Total No. of families	No. of persons		No. of families				No. of persons engaged		
	Cultivation	Jhum lab.	Dialy. lab.	Land- less	Busi- ness	other	Serv- ice	GREF Labour	Labo- urers
115	701	25	58	57	1	2	7	13	150

TABLE—XII

Villagewise distribution of occupation of the families

Sl. No.	Name of the village	Cultivation (Primary)	Jhum	Daily labour & cultivation	Service	Business	Others
1.	Hawaibari	4	...	15	1	...	...
2.	Tuichakma	5	...	14	2	...	...
3.	Hakpulen- Kukipara	12	10	8	...	1	...
4.	Kanchan- chhera	18	...	2	3	...	2
5.	Jamthla	3	4	5	...	...	...
6.	Khowalhring	11	8	12	1	...	...
7.	Nupangroa	...	3	2	...	...	...

About half of the head of the surveyed Kuki families reported to be engaged in cultivation and day-labourers as their primary and secondary occupation. Out of the 115 families, 53 families or about 46% of the families are cultivators. 25 families or 21.7% are Jhumias. 7 persons are engaged in service and 1 family is found to be engaged in business i.e. tea-stall-cum-grocery shop. One person is found to be engaged in practising medical practitioner. Another one is found to be engaged in compoundary business. It is observed from the survey that there are 13 persons who are engaged as GREF labourers and 150 persons are labourers. The labourers are regarded only those who earn for livelihood of their family working as a labour. But practically, the tribals would work in the field irrespective of males and females. It is observed from the 1971 Census report. "A high percentage of workers among the tribal population has been observed in Tripura as their working force constitutes 31.55% of the total tribal population against 27.79% noted in case of the State as a whole. This is so because of the participation of relatively high percentage of female population in the

aforsaid tribal working force which works out to 4.66% as against only 2.35% in case of general female population."⁴⁰

While going to classify the occupations of the surveyed families it is seen that generally the jhumias possess khas land to some extent but not enough to maintain their whole year round requirements of food and expenses with the yield they get from it. It is significant to note here that for the above reason almost the jhumia families work as daily labourer during the lean period of the year. Moreover, some cultivators also do not possess sufficient land holdings to meet their all year round subsistence requirements for which they are to earn as daily labourers for some time.

It is observed from the sample when their occupational mobility is examined that cent per cent of the grandfathers of the informants were jhumias i.e. jhumming was their only source of income. But the fathers of the informants were admixture of jhumias and cultivators. About 52% of their fathers were cultivators and 48% of them were jhumias. It will be helpful to note here that even if the Kukis are gradually practising wet cultivation method still they somehow engage in shifting cultivation also simultaneously, if jhum land is available in the vicinity.

The following table will show the occupational mobility of the informants and their earlier generations.

TABLE—XIII

Occupational distribution in different Generations

Generation	Cultivation		Jhum		Day-labour		Business		Service		Other	
	No.	P.C.	No.	P.C.	No.	P.C.	No.	P.C.	No.	P.C.	No.	P.C.
Grandfather	...	...	115	100%	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Father	60	52%	55	48%	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ego	53	46%	25	21.7%	58	50.4%	1	.9%	4	3.4%	2	1.4%

TABLE—XIV
Occupation through Generation

Sl. No. Ego	No.	Occupation of					
		Father			Grand-father		
		Cultivation	Jhum	Other	Cultivation	Jhum	Other
1. Cultivation	53	30	23	...	...	53	...
2. Jhumming	25	...	25	...	...	25	...
3. Day labourer	58	15	43	...	...	58	...
4. Business	1	...	1	...	...	1	...
5. Service	4	4	...	...	...	4	...
6. Other	2	2	...	...	...	2	...

While going to analyse the data collected from the surveyed families, it is found that, in total, 58 families possessed jote land and 57 families are landless. It is also interesting to note here that the landless 57 families are not purely landless. Because some of them possessed khas land which are not yet recorded in their names for which they can not be regarded as jote land holders. It is seen after minute examination of the data that there are 18 families among them who are not purely landless. So, the purely landless families stand 40 only. The possession of khas lands may also be seen among the jote land owners. However, the following table will show the land distribution among the surveyed families.

TABLE—XV

Villagewise and familywise distribution of land under possession

Sl. No.	Name of village	No. of Kuki families	No. of families possessed land	Quantity of land possessed		Average land holding per family		Average land holding per land holding families	
				L.	T.	Lunga	Tilla	Lunga	Tilla
1.	Hawaibari	19	6	17K.	10K.	.9K.	.52K.	3K.	2K.
2.	Tuichakma	19	8	30K.	19K.	1.6K.	.1K.	4K.	3K.
3.	Hakpurlenku- kipara	28	12	14K.	42K.	.5K.	1.5K.	1K.	2.6K.
4.	Kanchanchhera	20	18	85K.	68K.	4.2K.	3.4K.	4.9K.	3.8K.
5.	Jamthla	7	3	9K.	12K.	1.3K.	1.7K.	3K.	4K.
6.	Khawalhring	19	11	22K.	44K.	1.2K.	2.3K.	2K.	4K.
7.	Nupangroa	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

'K' represents Kani i.e. 40 acre L—Lunga, T—Tilla
Average land holding pdr family—Lunga : 1.4 Kanis
Tilla : 1.6 Kanis, Khas : 2.1 Kanis

TABLE—XVI
Villagewise and familywise distribution of Khas land under possession.

Sl. No.	Name of Village	No. of families	No. of khasland holding families	Quantity of khasland under possession	Average quantity of khasland per family	Average quantity of khasland per khasland holding family
1.	Hawaibari	19	13	7K.	4K.	5K.
2.	Tuichakma	19	12	12K.	6K.	1K.
3.	Hakpulenkukipara	28	16	45K.	1.6K.	2.9K.
4.	Kanchanchhera	20	10	111K.	5.5K.	11K.
5.	Jamthla	7	4	25K.	3.7K.	4K.
6.	Khowalhring	19	8	32K.	1.7K.	5K.
7.	Nupangroa	3	3	15K.	5K.	5K.

'K' represents Kani i.e. .40 acre.

From the above table it is seen that in the village Hawaibari the average land holding per family is 9 Kani Lunga and .52 Kani tilla. Average of the landholding families possess about 3 Kani Lunga and 2 Kani Tilla. In the village Tuichakma also it is seen that the average land per family is 1.6 Kani Lunga and 1 Kani Tilla. Average of the landholding family possess 4 Kani Lunga and 3 Kani Tilla land. In the Hakpulenkukipara the average landholding per family is 5 Kani Lunga and 1.5 Kani tilla. Average of the landholding family possess about 1 Kani Lunga and 2.6 Kani Tilla. For the Kanchanchhera village it is found that the average landholding of the families is 4.2 Kani Lunga and 3.4 Kani Tilla. The average landholding per landholding families are 4.9. Kani Lunga and 3.8 Kani Tilla. In the village Nupangroa, the Kuki families do not possess any land except Khas land.

The maximum Khas land possession is found in the village Kanchanchhera. Most of the Khas lands are tilla land and there is very low quantity of Lunga or chhera land under

khas land. It is observed from the tabel No.XVI that in the Kanchanchera, Hakpulen Kuki para, Jamthla, Khowalhring and Nupangroa villages maximum families possess khas land. In Kanchanchhera the average possession of khas land per family is 5.5 Kani and the average of the khas land holding families is 11 Kani. In Jamthla, the average khas land per family is 3.7 Kani and average of the khas landholding families is 6.2 Kani. In the village Khowalhring, the average quantity of khas land per family is 1.7 Kani and average khas land per khas landholding family is 4 Kani. In the village Nupangroa, the average khas land per family and khas land holding family is 5 Kani.

This will be notable to mention here that most of the families who possess khas land are practising jhum cultivation. Because the Kukis have not yet accustomed well with the wet cultivation method. But it is observed during my survey that the khas landholding families in the village Kanchancherra utilised the khas tilla land in pine-apple garden. They are trying to extend their garden from their own source.

The main livestock found in the Kuki families is poultry-bird and pigs. It is seen from my survey that 46 families possess poultry-birds numbering 344 and 34 families of them possess pigs numbering 54. The following tables will show the distribution of the livestock among the families, and villages.

TABLE XVII

Distribution of livestocks.

No. of Kuki families	No. of families possess livestock	No. of pigs	No. of poultry birds	No. of Milch cow	No. of bull	No. of buffalo	No. of goat
115	59	54	344	20	66	19	20

TABLE XVIII

Villagewise and familywise distribution of livestock.

Sl. No.	Name of livestock	Number of families possess livestock in						
		Hawai- Bari	Tuichakma	Hakpulen- Kuki para	Kanchan- chhera	Jamthla	Khowalh- ring	Nupang roa
1.	Piggery	5	4	4	10	2	7	2
2.	Poultry	3	4	8	16	4	9	2
3.	Bull	4	4	2	11	2	3	...
4.	Milch	1	4	3	7	...	2	...
5.	Buffalo	...	...	3	1	1	3	...
6.	Goat	1	5	2	...	...	...	...

TABLE XIX

Villagewise distribution of livestock with number of families possessed

Sl. No.	Name of Village	No. of families possessed	No. of pigs	No. of poultry birds	No. of bull	No. of Milch cow	No. of buffalo	No. of goat
1.	Hawaihari	8	7	13	8	1	...	5
2.	Tuichakma	10	5	24	7	4	...	9
3.	Hakpulenkuki para	7	3	33	6	4	10	6
4.	Kanchanchhera	17	24	203	36	9	2	...
5.	Jamthla	5	3	26	4	...	1	...
6.	Khowalhring	10	8	35	5	2	6	...
7.	Nupangroa	2	4	10	...	...	...	...

It is observed from the analysis of the data that in total 34 families possess pigs, 46 families possess poultry birds, 26 families possess bull, 17 families possess Milch cow, 8 families possess buffalos and 9 families possess goat etc.

TABLE XX

Implements possessed by the 155 families.

Sl.No.	Name of implements	Number
1.	Plough	50
2.	Ladder	40
3.	Chopper (Dao)	289
4.	Spade	79
5.	Skythe	107

The tribals are generally very indifferent in their individual ways of life. They do not keep any records or accounts of their income and expenditure. In most cases they are so indifferent that they can never tell the exact ages of the members of their families including ownself. The day of the week when he was born or his children were born can never be said. So, it is very difficult to calculate the actual income and expenditure of the families. However, from personal interview and interrogation with the head of the families and their representatives along with respective local Government servants and village leaders, the approximate income of the families has been calculated from their oral information. It is observed from the interrogation that the approximate monthly income of the sample families varies from Rs. 100/- to Rs. 600/- and above. The monthly income on 21 families is under Rs. 100/-. 49 families are calculated within Rs. 101/- to Rs. 200/- income groups. 23 families are in the group of Rs. 301/- to Rs. 400/-. Only 4 families are found in the income group of Rs. 401/- to Rs. 500/- and 3 families are in the group of Rs. 501/- to Rs. 600/- above groups. For comprehensive study, the graphical representation of the income groups of the families are given herewith. This will somehow, display the income rate of the sample families on which the economic status of the community is marked.

It is known fact that the tribals are very simple, dependable and easy living. When they have cash money in hand and crops are harvested, they do not hesitate to spend any amount for which they generally loss the similarity between their income and expenditure at that time. They do not lay by anything for the future rainy days. As a result during the lean period of the year, they had to depend on their physical labour with the income of which they had to spend half starvation. Those who have landed property, would go to the village mahajans for loan offering their land as security and thus becoming a landless though they have sufficient land under their names. And those who have not so much land, would deposit the product to the house of the mahajans as interest remaining nothing for them but the

hard labour they rendered in the field for producing the crop. When they get no loan, specially the labourers as nobody believes them because they have nothing to offer as security against the loan, have to supplement their food by gathering roots, tubers, bamboo-shoots and flowers of plaintain and selling forest product like fire-wood, sun-grass etc. in the nearest market.

While making minute examination of the role of indebtedness in their economy, it is observed that indebtedness is a serious problem affecting the bulk of the tribal people. Borrowing is frequently occurred for meeting their cash needs primarily for purchasing their food crop and secondarily for other purposes like treatment of illness, education, agricultural purposes, social ceremonies etc. It is observed from the survey that 71 families of the 115 sample families are suffering from debt in one form or another. It is 61.9% of the families who are indebted either to the village money lenders or to the other agents. It is observed from the survey that 44 families or 38.1% of the sample families are not debt. However, the following table will show the villagewise population and their per family debt.

Table XXI
Villagewise distribution of population and their per family debt

Name of the village	Kuki population	No. of families	No. of borrower families	Total debt	Per family	Debt per borrower family
				Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Hawaibari	102	19	12	10,200/-	537/-	850/-
Tuichakma	94	19	14	13,343/-	732.3	953/-
Hakpulen	147	28	17	3,350/-	120/-	197/-
kukipara						
Kanchanchhera	155	20	13	3,800/-	190/-	292.3
Jamthla	54	7	3	350/-	50/-	116.6
Khowalhring	120	19	11	1,850/-	96.4	168.2
Nupangroa	19	3	1	100/-	33.3	100/-

It is observed from the above table that in total 71 families are in debt. The total amount of their debt has been calculated at Rs. 42,993/-. So the amount of debt per borrower family comes to Rs. 605.5. It is also observed that 12 families in the village Hawaibari are in debt having an amount of Rs. 10,200/-. In the village Tuichakma the total amount of debt is Rs. 13,343/-. It is the highest amount of the debt of all the surveyed villages. The lowest amount is seen in the village Nupangroa. The borrower family is also lowest and the Kuki family is also only 3.

The following table will show the distribution of the head of the families by their occupational categories and different debt size groups.

TABLE XXII

Distribution of the head of the families by their occupational categories and different debt size groups.

Occupation (Primary)	Families with no debt	Rs.100 and below	Rs.101 to Rs.200	Rs.201 to Rs.500	Rs.501 to Rs.1,000	Rs.1,000 and above
Agriculturist	10	2	27	11	...	3
Labourers	35	7	13	3	...	...
Jhumias	18	...	6	1	...	...
Service holders	2	1	...	3	...	1
Others	2	...	...	...	...	...

It is observed from the above table that by occupation, 10 agriculturists are not indebted, 2 agriculturists are indebted in the groups of amount below Rs. 100/-. 27 families are indebted from Rs. 101/- to Rs. 200/-, 11 families are from Rs. 201/- to Rs. 500/- and 3 families are indebted above Rs. 1,000/-. In total 43 families of agriculturists are indebted with an amount varying from Rs. 100/- to above Rs.1,000/-. Regarding the labourers, it is found that 35 families of them are not indebted. 7 families are indebted below Rs. 100/-; 13 families are in between Rs. 101/- to Rs. 200/- and 3 families are indebted with an amount from 201/- to Rs. 500/-. In summing up, it is seen that 23 labourers are indebted with

different amount varying from Rs. 100/- to Rs. 500/-. It is interesting to note here that the Jhumia families are going without debt except 7 families. The amount of their debt is also very little amount. Only 1 family is found to be in debt with an amount above Rs. 200/-. In respect of the Service holders, it is observed that 1 family is indebted at Rs. 100/- and below; 3 families are in Rs. 201/- to Rs. 500/- and 1 family is indebted above Rs. 1,000/-. In total 5 Service holder families are indebted. For acute study of the different debt size groups by their occupational categories, it will be very convenient to explain here that by occupation, some Agriculturists are also Service holders and some jhumia families are labourers. So, in this case while going to classify the heads of the families by their occupational categories, such families are included in both categories of occupation. As a result, the total number of the families is considered by their occupation, it may vary with the total of the sample families.

TABLE XXIII

Distribution of families by their occupational categories (Primary) and rate of interest (range) paid by them for cash loans.

Occupation (Primary)	No. interest	Rate of interest (range)						Total borrower families
		Less 6%	6% to 10%	10% to 25%	25% to 50%	50% to 100%	above 100%	
Agriculturists	30	...	2	2	...	9	...	43
Labourers	5	...	...	...	3	15	...	23
Jhumias	...	...	...	...	1	6	...	7
Service holders	2	1	...	2	...	...	...	5
Others	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

From the above table it is observed that 30 families of the Agriculturist borrowed money from their friend circle without interest 2 families paid interest @ 10 to 25 per cent and 9 families paid 50% to 100% interest. In respect of the labourers, 5 families paid no interest, 3 families paid @ 25% to 50%

Climate :

The climate of Tripura is moderate. The tropical cancer passes through the middle of this State. The period from December to February is the cold season. March to May is the summer in Tripura. At the end of the summer the South-West monsoon season starts and it lasts upto September. The post monsoon season is during October and November. In the cold weather the mercury level of thermometer varies from 10.4°C to 25.5°C. In the summer the highest temperature recorded at Agartala was 42.2°C. The temperature begins to increase from the month of March and reaches to the highest point recorded in the month of May. From the first week of October the temperature gradually decreases.

In the summer season the relative humidity are between 50 to 65 per cent while in monsoon they are over 85 per cent.

Rainfall :

The average rain fall in Tripura is 82.7". Generally rainfall occurs during the months from April to October. The rainfall during the summer is mostly in the form of thunder, showers and storm. The rainfalls in the post monsoon months is not so much. In the cold season the sky remains clear. The valleys are colder at night and warmer during the day then the hills.

Flora :

Tripura is a State full of vegetation. In the forests of Tripura bamboo brakes, cane, garjan, sal, sundi, gamair, jarul, sonal etc. grow and it is full of grass land and swamps. "There are 280 species of trees, found in the territory. Of these only 64 trees are of recognised commercial importance."⁸ Besides, various indigenous medical herbs are also found in Tripura. These are amlaki, bel, dhutura, haritaki, kurchi, nim, tetul etc. Different kinds of bamboos found in this State cover a large area of the territory. Although the eleven species of bamboos have been so far identified in Tripura. Besides herbs, shrubs, sungrass etc. cover a vast areas of the forest of this State. Moreover, a large area of the territory is

also covered with vast expanses of grass. In the flat and low lands, the following crops are cultivated : Paddy, sweet potato, ginger, turmeric, arahar, mustard, musuri, khesari, jute, bodo paddy etc. On the tilla and jhum lands cotton, seasamun, jute (mesta, kirish), melon, maize etc. are cultivated.)

Fauna :

The hill ranges and forests of Tripura are closely connected with Chittagong Hill Tracts and Lushai and Mizo Hills. It is certain that the animals and birds of the State must be in resemblance to those of her neighbouring hill ranges. Secondly the western plain lands of this State is the border line with Bangladesh. So, it will not be surprising if we see the fauna of this State is the admixture of Mizo hills and Cachar and of Bangladesh.

Indian elephants are found in large number in the forests of Tripura. This is the valuable wild life of this State. In old days the Tripura Rajahs used to present elephants to the Nawab of Bengal in token of allegiance. Besides, deer, monkeys, panthar, leopards, civet, mangoose, bear, bats, squirrels, bison, pamgolin etc. are found in the forest of Tripura. Rhinoceroses are not seen in Tripura at present. But it is said that they were in this State in large number during the first decade of the present century. This is also quite evident from an order (1905) of the Rajah of Tripura that prohibited hunting of the rhinoceroses in this State for the said animal is decreasing in number.⁹

Royal Bengal tiger are also found in this State. Different kinds of birds are living in Tripura. Some birds are seen near the locality but some are living in the dense forests. Crow, bulbul, sparrow, pigeon, mynah, parrot, bhringaraj, wild cock, wild duck adjutant, horn bill, swallow etc. are the birds usually found in Tripura. Vulture, kites, dove, crane etc. are also found. Different snakes, python, cobra, frogs etc. are found here. The rivers and swamps are full of fishes, tortoise and scrab etc.

subsistence requirements. In respect of the service-holders, it is observed that 5 families of them are indebted for purchasing ration, 3 are indebted for medical purpose and another 5 are indebted for other reasons like education, travelling etc.

While going to examine the sources of borrowing more effectively that the private money lenders are those who use to lend money to the poor villagers or the borrowers charging a higher rate of interest if no security is offered in the form of landed property. They generally realise the interest at the end of the year or at the time of harvesting seasons. Friend circles are those who are well acquainted with the borrower and residing with the borrowers in the same village or closely relative to the borrowers. They generally do not charge any interest for the loan. The private money lenders may or may not be an inhabitant of same village of the borrowers.

As the case of land alienation of the families do happen for various reasons and in most cases due to downfall of the economic stability of the families, it will not be completed to gauge the economic condition of a particular community if this point is omitted. So, the cases of land alienation by the surveyed Kuki families are tried to examine at my best level by analysing the field data collected from them.

While going to examine the cases of land alienation by the kukis of the surveyed families, it is observed from the field data that there are two kind of land alienations are prevailing among them by mortgaging the land for cash loan and by selling the lands to another persons. Mortgage has also been found to be two types—mortgaging the land agreeing to repay the amount within stipulated period of time and the failure to do so within that time meant loss of the mortgaged land and the other is "nagad khajana". "Nagad khajana" is such type of mortgage that a rate is fixed for standard area of land for a fix period. After the expiry of the period the land automatically goes to the owner. Such system of mortgaging land could be found in the tribal areas in Tripura and it is known in different names in different area. Such system is known as "Kata Bandhak" in the area of Mohanpur Block

under Sadar sub-division of West Tripura District. In Udaipur sub-division and in the area of Ranikilla M.T. Colony where Hakpulen Kuki Para is situated, "Nagad khajana" is common there.

It is observed from the survey that 6 families mortgaged 8 Kanis of land as security of loan and 13 families sold 19 Kanis of land during the last two years for treatment of illness and purchasing rations. In some cases land has been sold for social ceremonies like Sradha of deceased father and wife.

(a) Hawaibari :

Hawaibari is a village situated at the feet of the Baramura Hill Range in the area of Teliamura Block (C.D.) of Khowai Sub-Division under West Tripura District. It is located on the south side of Assam-Agartala Road about 8.5 kms. away from Teliamura Block office. Standing on the Assam-Agartala metalled Road one must be easily attracted the sight of a cluster of houses erecting on the elevated earthen foundation with deep green background amidst the high tilla lands which are the off shoots of the Baramura Hill range. A traditional Kuki house is generally constructed on a bamboo platform of about 5' to 6' high. But the Kukis living in this village have followed the system of constructing house as done by their neighbouring Bengalee people. 53% of them constructed mud wall house on earthen piles of foundation. Less than 50% of the Kukis are living in huts in this village. The roof is usually thatch and no C.I. sheet roofed Kuki house may generally be found here.

The village has a mixed population of tribals and non-tribals. Among the tribals, only 19 Kuki families came under the survey. This 19 families have 102 souls of different ages and sex. They are not the original inhabitant of this village. They have migrated from different places of Tripura and major part of them have come from the south like Udaipur and Ampa a few decades ago. The only Kuki member of the present Tripura Legislative Assembly is an inhabitant of this village. While going to classify the Clan divisions of this 19

families, it is observed that there are 8 Rokhum Clans, 8 Betu families and 3 Pautu families of Kuki tribe. The wives of them generally belong to the above said clan groups except one who is outside of the above groups and belonging to Noatia Community. There are 60 males and 42 females and 27 minors in this sample families. The average size of the family contains about 5.4 persons.

The prime occupation of the Kukis of Hawaibari is agriculture. But most of them depend on the income as daily labourers. It is observed from the survey that 6 Kuki families are land owners having 17 Kanis of Lunga land and 10 Kanis of Tilla land. So, the percentage of land owners is 31.5% of the total Kuki families here and 68.5% of them are labourers. The average land holding of the land holding families is 3 Kanis Lunga land and 2 Kanis Tilla lands. There are 6 persons engaging as labour in the GREF. They earn cash income from this source. There is one service holder in this village who is also a cultivator. It is observed from the survey that 8 families or 42.1% of them possess livestock. There are 7 nos. pigs, 13 nos. of poultry birds, 8 nos. bullocks, 1 no. milch cow and 5 nos. of goats under the possession of the families. Generally the Kukis living in this area are to depend on the nearby Tusingrai market and Teliamura market in purchasing all domestic requirements. The possession of cultivable Lunga land is not so enough to meet the food grains of the families for the whole year round. They have to supplement the short fall of ration by means of cash money which they either earn rendering physical labour or borrowing from the village money lenders offering their lands as security or paying a higher rate of interest. While going to examine the trend and mode of indebtedness among the sample Kukis here as per occupational categories, it is observed that one agriculturist has no debt, one of them is indebted within the amount from Rs. 101/- to Rs. 200/-, another one of them is indebted the amount varying from Rs. 201/- to 500/-. Only one agriculture family found to be indebted for an amount above Rs. 1,000/-. As to the labourers, it is observed that 9 of them are not indebted, 3 of them are

indebted for an amount below Rs. 100/-, 2 of them are indebted for an amount from Rs. 101/- to Rs. 200/-. Only one labourer found to be indebted for an amount from Rs. 201/- to Rs. 500/-. In total 60% of the labourers are not indebted. It is learnt from the survey that nobody believes the labourers for lending money as they have nothing to offer the security of the loan they want. The only one service holding family is found to be indebted for an amount from Rs. 201/- to Rs. 500/-.

The literacy rate among the people of this village is not so disheartening. There are 2 persons who have passed the Higher Secondary Examination. Most of them including the females can read and write. Moreover, there is an educational Home for the children conducted by the Christian authority. It is said that 12 minor children are receiving education from the said Home staying there.

During the Survey, it is reported that there are 13 Christian families, 2 Hindu families and 4 Sansariks who are neither Christian nor Hindus. On interrogation, it is informed that they do not go to the Church nor do they observe any pujas like the Hindus. They are working, eating living and nothing more is the version of Sansarik according to the opinion of one of them. The adaption of Christianity has changed their ways of life in this area. It is reported that all the Christian families have given up the habit of drinking liquor. Only the Hindus reported to have drinks. But excessive drinking habit is not as usual now to them.

As has been stated earlier that more than 50% of the Kuki families living in this village are labourers living from hand to mouth. The GREF in contributing something to pave a fix source of income. But there is a drawback in the payment system of the GREF. Because the labourers are not paid regularly. It was reported that the labourers would get their wages after one and a half month. During this long gap of period, the families have to depend on credit purchase from the Traders who would usually charge a higher rate of cost for the commodities they said on credit. Moreover, the tribals also do not hesitate to purchase their daily

requirements on higher rate on the anticipation of getting a cash money as wages and for want of any other alternative but purchasing on credit.

The tribals are usually not habituated to keep any records for their income and expenditure for which it is very difficult to calculate the actual income of them. However, from their oral information it is found that 3 families earn less than Rs. 100/- per month, 5 families earn Rs. 150/- per month, another 5 families earn Rs. 200/- per month, only 1 family earns Rs. 250/- per months, families earn within Rs. 300/- to Rs. 350/- per month and 2 families earn more than Rs. 500/- per month. It is observed from it that more than 50% of the families earn about Rs. 200/- per month in average.

(b) Tuichakma :

Tuichakma is a village of South Pulinpur Gaon-Sabha under Teliamura Block (C.D.). It is situated within Khowai Sub-division under West Tripura District. This is the adjacent village of Hawaibari standing on the north side of Assam-Agartala Road about 9.5 km. away from Teliamura Block Office. As the Baramura hill range runs north and south direction, one must not be surprising if it is found at the feet of the Baramura hill range just opposites to Hawaibari with a background of natural green scenery. The villagers of Tuichakma also have constructed their houses on the elevated earthen foundation. About 60% of the Kuki families have constructed mud wall house on the earthen piles of foundation. 40% of them live in huts. The roof is of usually thatch and no C.I. sheet roofed Kuki house generally be found in this village.

The population pattern of this village is like that of Hawaibari. There are tribals and non-tribals in this village. 19 Kuki families have been made survey in this village. These 19 families consist of 94 persons out of which 48 are males and 46 are females. The Kukis of this village are not the original inhabitant of it. They also have migrated from different parts of Tripura like Ampu and Udaipur. While going to classify the clan divisions of them, it is found that

there are 8 Betu families, 5 Pautu families, 3 Omrow families, 1 Remla family, 1 Rokhum family and 1 Balte family of Kuki tribe. Going to observe the clan group of the housewives, it is found that they generally belong to the above said group except three informants. They belong to Rupini and Bongchhor of Halam Community and one belongs to Thirthu clan of Kuki tribe. The average size of the family contains about 5 persons.

Notwithstanding the source of income of the people of this locality is agriculture, most of the surveyed Kuki families engaged in the occupation as labourer. It is observed from the survey that 8 Kuki families are land-owners having 30 Kanis of Lunga land of 19 Kanis of Tilla land. The landowners are 42% of the sample families and the rest 58% of them are landless labourers. The average landholding of the landholding families is 4 Kanis Lunga land and 3 Kanis Tilla Land. While going to observe the occupation of them, it is found that 26.3% of them are agriculturist, 73.6% of them are labourers. 2 families are services holders. There are 7 persons engaged in GREF labour. They earn cash money for their family from this source. It is reported that 10 families possessed livestocks. The number of livestock in this village are 5 number of pigs, 24 number of poultry birds, 7 number of bullocks, 4 number of milch, and 9 number of goats. The Kukis of this village also depend on the Tusingrai market and Teliamura market from where they usually purchase all kinds of domestic requirements. As 58% of the families have to spend the cash income to meet their domestic expenses being landless labourers, they have supplemented their shortfalls during the lean period of the year by taking loans from the village money lenders. Not only the labourers but also the landowners take loan from the village money lenders mortgaging their lands as security of the loan and paying a higher rate of interest. It is observed that 14 families or 73.7% of them are indebted. As per occupational categories, it is seen that 2 agriculturists, 7 labourers are not indebted. One agriculturists is indebted below Rs. 200/- and 2 of them are indebted above Rs. 1,000/- As to the labourers, 4 are

indebted below Rs. 100/-, 2 of them are below Rs. 200/- and one of them is indebted above Rs. 200/-. One of the service holder is indebted for an amount below Rs. 500/- and the other is above Rs. 1,000/-. It is significant to note here that all the service holder of this village are indebted.

Literacy rate of the village is comparatively low than that of Hawaibari. It is calculated that only 25% of the total population. The persons who have the primary level of education have been included in calculating the literacy are of the people. It is said that 5 minor children from this village are receiving education from the educational Home at Hawaibari conducted by the Christian authority.

While going to survey, it is reported that there are 3 Christian families, 14 Hindus families and 2 Sansarik families in this village. To calculate the income groups of the people, it is observed that 42% of them are earning less than Rs. 200/- per month, 40% of them are earning less than Rs. 300/- per month. Only 18% earn more than Rs. 300/- per month.

To examine the cases of land alienation of the sample families in this village and nearby Hawaibari village, it is observed that two kinds of land alienation could be found in these villages. One is mortgaging the land to other persons from whom they receive loan during their need by offering land as security. The other is selling the land for meeting cash need of them. It is observed that in most cases the Kukis receive loan or sold land for non-productive purposes like purchasing ration, meeting medical expenses and in few cases for social ceremonies.

(c) Hakpulen Kukipara

Hakpulen Kuki Para is a Kuki village under Ranikilla M.T. Colony. Ranikilla Colony was established in the year 1956 with 107 tribal families of various communities having 383 souls of different ages and sexes. It is situated about 40 kms. away from Radhakishorepur, the Sub-Divisional and District Headquarters in Udaipur Sub-Division of South Tripura District. It is located on the trijunctional border of Udaipur, Belonia and Sonamura Sub-Divisions in a hilly corner of the State

having no communication facilities specially in the rainy season of the year. The nearest V.L.W. Centre, High School, Dispensary and Motor Service station is Tulamura which is about 8 kms. away from this Kukipara. Three hilly streams or chheras are to cross for getting the said medical, education and bus service facilities from there and the said streams become vigorous with tremendous current after a heavy shower of rain when they fill to the brim. But within a short period of a few hours after the showers, the water level comes down and they might be crossed easily. Recently an unmetalled road from Tulamura through this Colony has been constructed which is not yet motorable during rainy season. So, headload and walking on foot are the only means of communication with other growth centre of the region.

As time passed on, only 69 settled tribal families comprising Kuki, Noatia, Jamatia, Garo, Reang and Tripura are existing in the Colony area at present. On investigation, it is learnt that the other 38 families left the Colony for unknown reasons. Of the 69 families in the Colony there are 18 Kuki families all of whom belong to Rokhum Clan of Kuki tribe. Moreover, 10 other Rokhum Kuki families have migrated there for settlement from different parts of the State. Most of the newly migrated families are from neighbouring Mikrasa Tribal Colony under Sonamura Sub-Division. Only one family is found to have migrated from Hawaibari area of Teliamura. So, in total, the Kuki families residing in the Colony stand to 29 at present having 146 souls of different ages and sexes. All the Kuki families are residing in a compact hamlet called Hakpulen Kukipara in the extreme south of the Colony area about 3 kms. away from the nearest market Duptali where the quarter of the Colony Supervisor and an Animal Husbandary Unit exist. It is also observed that 12 families of them are Christians and the rest 16 families are Hindus.

It is learnt from the record of the Colony Supervisor that while giving settlement of the tribal families in the Colony, tilla land for 98.06 acres, 179.93 acres Lunga land, 11.08 acres of plain and 16.14 acres of homestead land have been distributed to the Colony inmates. But till now they are not well acquaintant with the area of their own land allotted to them.

There are 9 R.C.C. wells and 5 Tubewells in the Colony. But only 2 R.C.C. well and 3 Tubewells are active now and the others are inactive and no repairing work has yet been made for which pure drinking water is a problem in the dry season. There is a pond in the Kukipara which needs re-excavation soon.

There is a primary school at Duptali that is a market place in the extreme north of the Colony area. There is no Balwadi Centre in the Colony or nearby it. So, the children under 6 years of age get no facilities of any kind of education. The Christian Instructor (Village Pastur) of the Kukipara has started an Educational Home for the Chirstian tribal children with his private capacity and the minor children are getting pre-primary and primary education from him. The literacy rate of the Kukis in this village is very deplorable. Only one Kuki boy of 12 years is reading in Class VI at Tulamura crossing a distance of 12 kms. daily and two hilly rivulets—a natural barrier. it is learnt that the said boy is the most literate person among them. About 13 Kuki boys and girls are receiving education from the said Home. The Government primary school at Duptali is about 3 kms. far from the Kukipara.

As has been stated earlier, one unmetalled road has been constructed from Tulamura recently through this Colony crossing three hilly streams which become inaccessible just after a heavy shower for a few hours. So, headload and walking on foot are the only means of communication during rainy season. In dry season, bull cart or jeep may be treated as a means of communication.

The villagers of the Kukipara are getting treatment from the Tulamura Government Dispensary which is about 12 kms. away from there. The village Ojhais are playing a prime role among them for treatment of illness.

Duptali is the nearest market about 3 kms. away from the Kukipara. The market meets twice a week on Tuesday and Saturday. There is a small grocery shop-cum-tea stall at Kukipara. The villagers purchase day to day commodities from it. For purchase of clothes and other commodities they would either go to Tulamura or Udaipur. The Kukis generally sell agriculture product and forest product in the Duptali market for earning cash money.

There is a Village Panchayat at Duptali. The Colony is under the Duptali Gaon-Sabha area. A Kuki leader of about 87 years old is a member of the said Gaon-Sabha. The old Kuki leader is looking after the interest and development of Kukipara as a whole.

The economic condition of the Kukis living in the Kukipara is not satisfactory. 18 Kuki families have been given settlement with lands and loans, grants etc. in the colony. But it is found that 75% of them have become landless in true sense. As the population increases within this 20 years from the date of establishment of the colony, the sons of the heads of the families have separated from their parents who initially allotted with about 5 Kanis of Tilla and Lunga land, certainly distributed the lands between the family of the parent and the family of his son. Moreover, almost the Kuki families are not so much habituated with settled method of cultivation rather they are well acquainted with jhumming. Fathers of them were jhumias. They would somehow eke out a living by means of jhumming. So, they failed to adjust themselves with the increasing population, advanced economy and present problems. As a result, either they sold the land allotted to them or mortgaged the land for meeting immediate expenses of

treatment, ill harvesting, want etc. There is a system of mortgaging land called "Nagad Khajana" prevailing in this area. A particular land is mortgaged for a particular period in exchange of a fix rate of cash amount. The rate is now calculated to be Rs. 100/- for 1 kuki of Lunga land for one year. It is observed that Shri Bengthuleng Kuki has lost the possession of his 1 Kani Lunga land for many years as he took loans from different hands and the land is scheduled to transfer from one hand to other year after year according to the above mentioned rate of "Nagad Khajana". It is also found that the Kukis here are indebted in one form or another. The amount of indebtedness varies from Rs. 100/- to Rs. 500/-. The rate of interest is always at 100%.

Ten Kuki families were reported to have been given plants and seedlings under revitalisation scheme of the Tribal Welfare Department. But the plants are disappearing day by day due to lack of proper nourishment, it is said. 3 Kuki families are given settlement under Rs. 1910/- scheme of the T.W. Department. It is reported that 3 Kuki families are not still getting Parcha for the land allotted to them at the time of giving settlement in the Colony.

The principal economy of the area is agriculture. The lunga lands allotted to them may be cultivated Boro crop if irrigation facilities may be provided by construction of reservoirs and seasonal bunds. Chemical fertiliser are not usually used by them. They are still following old method of traditional cultivation.

It is observed from the survey that 7 families possess poultry birds, pigs, cattle and goats numbering 3 pigs, 33 poultry birds, 6 bulls, 4 milch cow, 10 buffaloes and 6 goats. 18 families of them depend on jhumming and daily labour. Only 12 families depend on agriculture. Only one family is depending on the income of agriculture and grocery shop-cum-tea stall.

It is reported that Shri Lenkatang Kuki of the village was butted by a wild bison a few years back and

while he was under treatment, he had to take loan of Rs. 100/- mortgaging 1 kani Lunga land to a non-tribal people and he lost the said land as the amount of the loan increased with 100% interest. Afterwards, he took loan of Rs. 500/- Nagad Khajana for 3 kanis of land turning him into a daily labourer.

(d) Kanchanchhera :

Kanchenchhera is a village situated under Chowmonu T.D. Block in Kailashahar Sub-Division under North Tripura District. It is located on the right side of Assam-Agartala Road about 17 km away from Kumarghat and about 25 km away from Chowmonu Block Office. There is an approach road from Kanchanchhera market (82 miles market) to this village. They are known as Darlong Kukis for which the hamlet where they live in is also known as Kanchanchhera Darlong Basti. Amidst the bamboo jungles and high and low tilla lands, a cluster of houses may be found from this Kanchanchhera market having a background of natural green forest. The Kukis living in this village construct their houses on the elevated earthen foundation. Houses made on the bamboo platform of about 5 to 6 high may also be found in this village. So, there is a mix pattern of houses. One must find the tradition houses of the Kukis and modern pattern of houses in this village. It is reported that construction of a building for a Kuki Jawan is going to be completed. It is constructed by the Government as a reward of galantry in fight with Pakistan. The roof of Kuki houses is of usually thatch and C.I. sheet roofed. Kuki house may also scarcely be seen here.

The village has a mixed tribal population like Kuki, Noatia, Reang and non-tribals. Among the tribals, only 20 Darlong Kuki families have been made survey. This 20 families have a population of 165 persons out of which 93 are males and 72 are females. While going to classify the clan division of the 20 families, it is observed that there are 6 Khowaltu families, 5 Khulukte families, 2

Laitui families, 1 Boajal family, 1 Hnamte family, 1 Maisak family, 1 Chuingaow family and 3 Hmra families of Kuki tribe. The wives of them belong to above said clan groups and some of them are found to be belonged to Puiloi, Pautu, Maisak, Invong, Vanghroiwi clan groups of Kuki tribe. The average size of the family contains 8.2 persons.

The prime occupation of the Darlong Kukis of Kanchanchhera area is a agriculture and Pine-apple gardening. 18 families or 90% of them posses lands. The average land holding per land holding family is 4.9 kani Lunga and 3.8 kani Tilla land. Moreover, 50% of the families posses Khasland about 5.5 Kanis in average per family. It is observed from the survey that each and every family has a pine-apple garden of about 1 acre area at least. During the agriculture season, they engaged mainly in cultivating the Lunga lands and few are in jhuming. In other part of the year they remain engaged in pine-apple garden. The product of pine-apple plays an important role in their economic activities. This is the means of earning cash money for them. It is harvested from May/June and lasts for about 2 months. Generally "Kelenga" variety of pine-apple is mainly cultivated here. The unity of this tribe is praiseworthy. Monopoly market of pine-apple may been area. An agent of them has opened an pine-apple may be seen in this area. An agent of them has opened an pine-apple store in the Kanchanchhera market and all the producers in this area deposit pine-apple in the store and the supply of it is made through this agent. None of the individual producer would sell it. Even a pair of pine-apple has to be purchased from this agent otherwise it will not be available. Moreover more than 50% of the families go for about 6 months with the yield of crop cultivated by them. The remaining period is carried on with the cash money they earn from the source of gardening and others.

There are two landless families who mainly possed Khas lands. There are 3 service holders who are also

cultivators. It is reported that one family of them is engaged in practising allopathy medicine and another family, in compoundary works. It is observed from the survey that 17 families possessed livestock. It is observed from the survey that 17 families possessed livestock. It is 85% of the total Kuki families in the village. There are 24 nos. pigs, 203 nos. poultry birds, 36 nos. bullocks, 9 nos. milch cows and 2 nos. buffaloes under the possession of the families. Generally the Kukis living in this area depended on the Kanchanchhera market from where they would purchase daily essential commodities and sell their agricultural products. During the lean period of the year specially in the months December and April, they have to maintain their domestic expenses by taking loan from their friend circles. It is observed from the survey that 5 agriculturists are not indebted, one of them is indebted to an amount below Rs. 100/-, 5 of them are indebted below an amount of Rs. 200/- and 7 of them are indebted to an amount from Rs. 201/- to 500/-. The 2 labourers in the village are not indebted. One service holder family out of 3 is indebted to an amount below Rs. 500/-. It is significant to note here that most of the indebted families borrowed money from their friend circles for which they would not usually pay any interest. The tie of their unity and mutual help may also be mentioned here. It is learnt from the survey that the cause of indebtedness is mainly for purchasing ration and meeting educational expenses. The number of borrower families in the village is 13 or 65% of the total family. All of them do not pay any interest for the loan they have taken. It is reported that the source of taking loan are mainly tribal friend circles.

It is also observed that the mutual help and assistance among themselves may be regarded an important factor to constitute their unity stronger and rigid. If any family of them is fallen into hard distress due to illness or wants and poverty, the others extend their assistance, whatever might be, to stand and live.

As for example, Neya Kuki was in a bad position due to illness and poverty for which he failed to cultivate and cleared up the jhum land and pineapple garden in time though the proper time was passing away, all the young boys and girls of the village rendered their service voluntarily in the jhum field and garden so that the family can not turn from bad to worse.

The literacy rate among the people of this village is not so disheartening. There are 4 young Kuki boys who have passed the Higher Secondary Examination. 80% of them including the females can read and write. Moreover, there is a primary school in this village conducted by the Christian authority. No Government school except one Balwadi Centre is in this village. Few Kuki children are attending the Balwadi Centre. The students of the primary school are mainly young Kuki boys and girls.

No Hindu Kuki family may be found in this village. All of them are Christians. It is significant to note here that the Christians of Khowai and Udaipur Sub-Divisions have given up the habit of drinking liquor. But the Christians of this area and Kailashahar area addicted to drinking habit. Specially the young groups are the prey of this habit.

While going to observe their religion, it is learnt that among the Christian young groups there found a group of them who are known as "Piyangtha".

The "Piyang-thas" are in the opinion that there should be no restrictions or taboos in drinking and food. They would not obey even the rules of any religion. This Piyang-thas may be compared with the Sansariks found at Hawaibari area of Khowai Sub-Division. The only difference is that the Sansariks do not go to the Church but the Piyang-thas are Christians.

As stated earlier that the Kukis would not usually keep any records for their income and expenditure. So, it is difficult to calculate the actual income of them. However, from their own statement it is found that in average, they earn about Rs. 300/- per month. 8 families

of them earn less than Rs. 200/- per month and 12 families earn more than Rs. 200/- per month.

(e) Jamthla :

Jamthla is a village situated between the Longtarai and Sakhentlang Hill range in the area of Kaulikura Gaon-Sabha under Kumarghat Block of Kailashahar Sub-Division under Tripura North District. It is located on the western side of the Kumarghat-Kailashahar Road about 24 kms. away from Kumarghat Block office. The traditional Kuki houses may be seen here. They generally construct their houses on a bamboo platform of about 5' to 6' high which is known as "Gairing" in Kok-Borok language. But the Kukis called it "Itu" in their language. The roofs are of usually thatch and no C.I. sheet roofed houses may be found here.

The village has a mixed tribal population. Among the tribals, only 7 Darlong Kuki families have been made survey. This 7 families have 54 souls of different ages and sex. There are 28 males and 26 females of these families. While going to classify the clan division of this 7 families, it is observed that there are 1 Khropheng family, 4 Nagan families, and 2 Sangate families of Kuki tribe. The average size of the family contains 7.7 persons.

Jhumming and day labour are the main source of income of these families. Moreover, they would self forest products in the nearby Jalai market. It is the prime source of earning cash money for them. As to their occupations, it is observed that 3 families are cultivators, 4 are jhumias and 5 are daily labourers and cultivators also. It is reported that 3 families of them possessed cultivable land. The average land holding of these 3 families is 3 Kanis lunga and Chera land and 4 Kanis Tilla land. The remaining 4 families are landless and possessed khas land of about 6.2 kanis in average. 5 families or 70% of them possessed livestock. There are 3 nos. pigs, 26 nos poultry birds, 4 nos. bulls and 1 no. buffalo. Generally the Darlong Kukis living in this area

are to depend on the nearby Jalai bazar which is about 6 kms. away from this village for purchasing all kinds of domestic requirements. The possession of cultivable Lunga and Chera lands are not enough to meet the food grains required for the families for the whole year round. Specially the yield of crops in the Chera land is very low. They have to supplement the shortfall of ration by means of purchasing food grains with the cash money which they either earn by rendering physical labour or borrowing from the village money-lenders offering their lands as security or paying a higher rate of interest. Those who have no lands to offer as security or do not get any loans have to depend on food-gathering like tubers, roots, bamboo shoots and flowers of plantain.

While going to examine the borrowing habit and indebtedness of the sample families, it is observed that 3 families of them received loan from the village money lenders, 4 families of jhumia and daily labourers are not indebted. 2 agriculturists and 1 daily labour families are indebted to an amount less than Rs. 200/-. It is learnt from the survey that nobody believes the labourers for lending them money as they have nothing to offer as security of the loan they want.

The literacy rate among the people of this village is very low. There is a primary school in its nearby village Khowalhring. Their children are receiving primary education from that school. There is no Balwadi Centre in or nearby the village for which the children below 6 years of age are getting no scope of pre-primary education. The Social Education Centre is at Jalai bazar which is about 6 kms. away from their village.

The people of this village are Christians and no Hindu family may be found in this village. It is also observed from the survey that majority of them are labourers, and their monthly income does not exceed Rs. 200/- per month in average.

(f) Khowalhring :

Khowalhring is a village situated between the Longtarai and Sakhantlang Hill ranges in the areas of

Kaulikura Gaon-Sabha under Kumarghat Block of Kailashahar Sub-Division under North Tripura District. It is located on the western side of the Kumarghat-Kailashahar Road about 23 kms. away from Kumarghat Block office. They generally live in huts which are constructed on a bamboo platform of about 5' to 6' high from the ground which they call "Itu" and generally known as "Tong-ghar" in tribal language here. The traditional Kuki houses may be seen here. The roofs of their houses are of thatch and no C.I. sheet roofed houses may be seen in this village. The Kukis living in this village are also known as Darlong.

The village has a mixed population. Among the tribals only 19 Kuki families have been made survey. This 19 families have 120 souls of different ages and sex. There are 61 males and 59 females of these families. While going to classify the clan divisions of this 19 families, it is observed that there are 3 Ngan families, 7 Khowalhring families, 7 Sangate families and 2 Pachuai families of Kuki tribe. The average size of the family contains 6.3 persons.

The prime occupation of the Kukis of this village is agriculture and jhumming. Besides, the jhumias and some agriculturists are engaged in the occupation as daily labour. It is observed from the survey that 11 families of them are agriculturists, 8 families are jhumias and 12 families are daily labourers. One family is working as part time social worker under Education Department staying at home. It is also observed that 11 families or 58% of them possessed lands. The average land holding per land-holding families is 2 kanis Lunga and Chera land and 4 kanis Tilla land. The average quantity of khas land under possession is about 4 kanis per family.

It is found that 10 families or about 52% of them possessed livestock. There are 8 nos. pigs, 35 nos. poultry birds, 5 nos. bullocks, 2 nos. milch cows, 6 nos. buffaloes.

Generally the Kukis living in this village depend on the nearby Jalai bazar which is about 6 km. away from

this village for purchasing all kinds of domestic requirements. For purchasing cloths, etc. either they would go to Kailashahar or Kumarghat. The possession of cultivable Lunga and Chera lands are not enough to meet the food requirements of the families for the whole year round. The production of crops in the Chera lands is very low in comparison with Lunga lands. They have to supplement the shortfall of food by means of purchasing food grains with the cash money which they earn by rendering physical labour and selling forest products or borrowing from the village money-lenders offering their lands as security or paying a higher rate of interest. Those who have no land to offer as security or do not get any loan have to depend on tubers, roots, bamboo shoots and flowers of plantain when they failed to sell the forest products.

While going to examine the borrowing habit and indebtedness of the families, it is observed that 11 families are indebted to the village money lenders and co-operative society. 10 agriculturists are indebted to an amount below Rs. 200/- and 1 agriculture family is indebted below Rs. 100/-, 10 labourers are not indebted. Only 2 labourers are indebted to an amount below Rs. 200/- 8 jhumia families are not indebted. It is learnt from the survey that nobody believes the jhumias and labourers for lending money as they have nothing to offer the security of the loan they want. The only one service holder family is indebted to an amount below Rs.100/-.

The literacy rate among the people of this village is very low. There is a primary school in this village. Their children are getting primary level of education from this school. There is no Balwadi Centre in this village for which the children below 6 years of age are getting no scope for pre-primary level of education. There is an Adult Literacy Centre in this village. This Centre is some how rendering education among the adult people for reading and writing. The Social Education Centre is at Jalai bazar which is about 6 km. away from this village.

The people of this village are Christians and no Hindu family may be found among the Kukis in this village. It is also observed from the survey that the general Kuki families in this village earn about Rs. 200/- per month in average.

(g) Palkubari :

Nupangroa is a village situated on the right side of Teliamura-Ampi Road in Amarpur Sub-Division under South Tripura District. It is about 5kms. away from Taidu Bazar that stands on the above said road. The general population of this village is Kaipeng group of Halam Community. There are only 3 Rokhum Kuki families who have migrated here from Hawaibari a few years ago.

While going to write about Nupangroa, I can not help mentioning the Kuki population of Amarpur Sub-Division. I am a little doubt the number of kukis recorded in this Sub-Division in 1971 Census to be a little more than the actual figures. Wherever I go and asked to my friends and relatives who were and are still serving in the different places of Amarpur Sub-Division about the Kuki villages, none of them assured me about the number of Kuki population and villages there. In 1971 Census, the Kuki population of this Sub-Division is recorded 2017 persons. I think, the Kaipeng and Molchums must have been recorded as Kukis. But they are Halams according to 1931 Census Report of Tripura. It will not be surprising to include these groups of Halam Community into Kukis as their language, social customs etc. are as same as those of the Kukis. However, the 3 Kuki families which came under my survey consists 19 persons having 8 males and 11 females. The average size of the family contains 6.3 persons.

The general occupation of them is jhuming. They are Hindus. It is reported that they have now shifted their dwellings to further north-west.

SOCIAL CUSTOMS AND INSTITUTIONS

Clain :

The Kukis are divided into several Clans. As stated in the foregoing chapter that the Kukis live in the neighbouring States of Tripura also, it will not be irrelevant to place here the different clans of them recognised in the states around Tripura. The Kukis are nomadic by nature and have the habit of changing frequently their place of living migrating from one state to another in search of fertile jhum land and other reasons.

Manipur :

There are two clans of the Kukis in Manipur : The Old Kuki clan and the New Kuki clan. The Old Kuki clan includes : (i) Kom, (ii) Amal, (iii) Hmar, (iv) Kireng, (v) Chothe (vi) Purum, (vii) Mantak, (viii) Gangte, (ix) Vaiphel, (x) Hiroi or Langang. **New Kuki Clan includes :** (i) Thadan, (ii) Singsol, (iii) Chungloe (iv) Haukib (v) Simte, (vi) Vungson, (viii) Changut (viii) Manvung.⁴¹

Mizo Hills :

The following are clans of the Kukis of the Mizo Hills : (i) Lushai (ii) Ralte (iii) Kawihring (iv) Kaingte (v) Rentlei (vi) Changthu (vii) Paihte or Veite (viii) Pawi or Pawaite or Poi (ix) Hmar (x) Lakher (xi) Thado (xii) Chawte (xiii) Ngnte (xiv) Than (xv) Pautu (xvi) Rawite (xvii) Zawangte, (xvii) Vangchia.⁴²

Tripura :

The Kukis in Tripura includes the following— (i) Balte (ii) Belalhut (iii) Chhaliju (iv) Hazango (v) Fun (vi) Jangtei (vii) Khareng (viii) Khepahong (ix) Paitu, Paite (x) Kuntei (xi) Kaifang (xii) Lentai (xiii) Mizel, (xiv) Namte (xv) Rangchan (xvi) Rangkhele (xvii) Thangluya.⁴³

According to another record the following are the Kukis in Tripura : (i) Paitu (ii) Chotlang (iii) Khareng (iv) Baibek (v) Amrai (vi) Chemlen (vii) Balte (viii) Riyete (ix) Balta (x) Rangchon (xi) Rangchiya (xii) Chhailoi (xiii) Jangtei (xiv) Pailai (xv) Beltu (xvi) Paite (xvii) Phum (xviii) Phuntei (xix) Lentai (xx) Hraltei (xxi) Sawalai (xxii) Pawakhi (xxiii) Dhuam (xxiv) Bordo (xxv) Chhaljen (xxvi) Range.⁴⁴

It is said that the Darlong Kukis in Tripura have two main divisions: (1) Thangur and (2) Pachuai. Between them the Thangur group claims to be higher status in the social rank of the Kukis.

The Thangur groups is also sub-divided into the following sub-groups : (i) Than ring Bawng (ii) Bawlte (iii) Rante (iv) Zate (v) Invang (vi) Hnamte (vii) Tangsa suan (viii) Chawangkal.

The Pachuai clan is also sub-divided into the undernoted sub-groups :—(i) Bawlte vang Hrawi (ii) Vang hrawi (iii) Baite (iv) Taulte (v) Puilawi (vi) Thrithu bawng (vii) Lawnte (viii) Tlangte (ix) Tualngin (x) Bethu (xi) Sangete (xii) Saite (xiii) Khowalhring (xiv) Railwai (xv) Hualzang (xvi) Hmante (xvii) Sawang khar (xviii) Thlukte (xix) Thlukte bi rawn.

But another opinion says that the Pachuai group has only the following groups as (i) Chuingow (ii) Chuihang (iii) Zadeng (iv) Khowalhring and (v) Rongkhum.

Col. Shakespeare found the following clans included in the term Lushai⁴⁵ : Chawte, Chongthu, Hnamte, Kawlin, Kawlhring, Kaingte, Ngante, Paotu, Rentlei, Vangchhia, Zawangte and the under-mentioned clans which though not absorbed have much influenced by the Lushais-Fanai, Ralte, Paihte, or Vuite, Rangte. Moreover, he added a list of families and branches of the Lushai clan such as : (i) Thangur (Rokhum, Rivang, Pallian, Zadeng, Thangluah, Sailo, Cheikhual) (ii) Pachuao (Cherlai, Chhawthliak, Chhaolak, Chenglai,

Darchaw, Lalbawn, Lianthun, Lianghor, Vanpuahrim, Vanchuao) (iii) Changte (Darchum, Pamte, Vokngak, Kawalchi, Padmatu, Tumphe, Langte, Ngakchi, Chonglun) (iv) Chongte (Tuichung, Lungte, Muchhip - Chhuak, Pamte) (v) Chuachang (Van-puiathla, Hmumpel, Zongpam, Lelterm, Chumthluk, Aohnun) (vi) Haonar (Haothul Haobul, Tui-thang, Shenlei) (vii) Grasel (Shelpuia, Suntlunk, Sumkhun, Sazal) (viii) Rualbang (Chalbuk, Sialchung, Bailihi, Chumkal, Khupao, Fangtet, Taihlem, (Chatluang). (ix) Hualngo (Chalthlung, Khupno, Tuazol, Chaput, Bochung) (x) Lungthua (Sialchung, Ngalchi, Ngalchung, Phungchi, Ngaphawl) (xi) Tochong (Topui, Chhakom, Muchip-chhuak, Chamblar, Tobul) (xii) Vangchong (Vaulung, Sumkhum, Chamblar, Chengrel, Kailhim) (xiii) Kawl (Buema, Hring, Borun).

Tripura District, Gazetteer states, "The Kukis as a tribe are in fact divided into fifteen clans v...Paitu, Belalhut, Thangulus, Lalifang, Bangkhai, Mizel, Namtu, Chatya, Phun, Kuntei, Lentei, Jangtei, Rangehan, Balte, Khoreng. Of these groups, people belonging only to the first five clans are found in Tripura.⁴⁶

While making field investigation for 115 families of the Kukis in the different Sub-Divisions of Tripura, the following clans of them have come to my notice. (i) Rokhun clan : 34 Families, (ii) Betu clan-16 Families, (iii) Pautu clan-3 families, (iv) Omrow clan-3 families, (v) Balte clan-1 family, (vi) Remla clan-1 family, (vii) Khualtu clan-6 families, (viii) Khlukte clan-5 families, (ix) Laithui clan-2 families, (x) Boajal clan-1 family, (xi) Hnamte clan-1 family (xii) Maisalk clan-1 family, (xiii) Chuingow clan-1 family (xiv) Hmar clan-3 families, (xv) Khropheng clan-1 family, (xvi) Ngan clan-7 families, (xvii) Sangate clan-9 families (xviii) Khowalhring clan-7 families. Their housewives belonged to the above clans and Pulloi, Invong, Vanghrowi, Thirthu etc.

Birth :

The Kukis generally welcome a male child. On the occasion of a child birth, usually they do not observe any customs. But after the birth of a child, a feast is given. The feast is given after three days of birth in case of a girl, and after five days for a boy. It is said that the new-born baby partakes the feast. "The mother gives rice to the child from her own mouth as bird feed their young, and this is occasionally continued till the child is weaned."⁴⁷ For a period of a month after the birth of a child, the mother usually does not participate in arranging any religious ceremony nor does she touch the sacred puja materials during that period.

Marriage :

The Kukis are endogamous tribe. They do not marry outside their tribe. It was observed from my survey that only three families married other than Kuki tribe in the sample 115 families. The Kukis do not observe any social customs for marriage. Marriage generally takes place when the boys and girls have become matured. When young boys and girls mutually select each other as their mates, their parents send proposal for their marriage through a mediator. It is their belief that no marriage proposal should be intimated during the month "Khal Thal" i.e. Agrahayan (December/January) as it is a very in auspicious month to them. When the marriage proposal is settled, the parents of the boy has to pay an amount of Rs. 8/- to the parents of the girl as a token of agreement. If Rs. 16/- is paid, the boy may sleep with the girl before marriage. Two bottles of rice beer and a cock are required for the ceremony. Ojhai or the priest recite some spells in the name of the new couple and then the ceremony is solemnised with dancing, drinking and feast. Marriage by rendering service to the house of the girl like other tribals in Tripura is not a common rule of the Kukis. But after living with other tribals for

a long period some of them have imitated this customs. Monogamy type of marriage is prevalent among them. But Polygamy is also not uncommon. The widows also may re-marry. But it will not be done within one year of the death of her husband since this period is regarded as funeral one. Among the Christians, the marriage is held in Church and a marriage certificate is given to the new couple by the Church authority. Then a feast is given on the occasion of the marriage. Occurrence of adultery and incest is negligible. Premarital cohabitation though an offence is over looked owing to the fact that such an action is always ended in marriage. Child marriage is not in vogue. Marriage may be dissolved at the will of the both parties. It is nothing but a social contract to them.

Disposal of the dead :

The dead body is buried. On the death in a family, notice is sent to all the relatives and friends. The dead body is dressed with fine clothes and his weapons and favourite dresses are kept beside him. There is a big feast. Food and drinks are given in front of the dead body. As they believe that the dead person is to walk a long way in the world other than this material one, he has to drink and take food on the way. On the death of a leader or Chief or Lal (Raja) several heads are buried with him. It is their belief that the Chief who counts more murders at his credit and hunted heads attains greater happiness in the future life, because all those who are buried with him become his slaves hereafter. It is also said that when a chief dies, his favourite slave is also buried with him. The slave is generally half-buried leaving his upper portion on the ground and he will ring a bell till death proclaiming the death of his favourite chief. It is also said that the dead body of the chief or Lal is placed in a huge dug-out log and encircling the log with a ring of fire which is kept burning for ninety days. After such ritual the bones and skins of the

deceased are buried in a pre-selected hole with tribal pomp and grandeur when cut-off heads of the plain dwellers are thrown into it. The Christians however, bury their dead body according to Christian convention.

Cannibal :

Some say that the Kukis were cannibals in the past. They ate the flesh of human body. I could not find any substance in such stories while I saked and talked with the old men of this community during my survey. But it is said that probably such bad rumour was spreaded due to the following convention of them. The Kukis were very expert warrior and hunters with a furious nature. They would never spare anybody from taking revenge for any harm or insult to them. It is their belief that the extreme revenge for any such insultation or harm is to take food cooked on the skull of the person against whom the revenge would be taken. Probably the skulls of such forlorn persons might have been seen in their houses which led to such rumours. These may be stray incidents.

Utensils :

The Kukis generally used wooden utensils. Their cooking utensils however were made of clay. The cooking vessel for rice is called "Bo-bel" in their language and that for curry is called "Un-bel". They have no distinction of caste; all eat together in a wooden plate which they call "Khleng". It is shaped like a big water tub. They would keep water in "Tui-Um" and drink water in "Tui-thei". But now-a-days silver vessels, glass, plates etc. are used as their domestic utensils. In the modern Christian Kuki house, modern type of utensils may be seen.

Costume :

In the long past, the Kukis were in the state of nudity. They seldom wore clothes. The only clothing worn by a

male is one long piece of cotton cloth and a turban, called "Mosol-rem" in their language. But gradually they have become habituated in wearing "Pom-pur" (Shirt) and "Pon-seng" (Dhuti). The women wear "pon-jel" (Pachhara) on the waist and "Pon-sil" on the body. But at present, after the adoption of Christianity and coming in contact with other communities, the women and girls generally wear skirts, blouses and long gown etc. The boys would wear pant, shirts etc. It is said that they were fond of wearing black coloured gown or frock. When groups of women in such black long gown went to work in the Jhum, people belonging to other tribes would tease them saying that flock of crows had descended on the fields. Modern Kuki girls wear a cloth on their waist which they weave with their indigenous looms. They embroider their clothes every beautifully. The Kuki women are expert weavers.

Ornaments :

The Kuki women generally adorn herself with a special kind of garland which they call "Misi" or "Rathoi". It is made with pieces of reddish glass like materials. There is a fine story about this "Mishi". The summary of the story is like this. Nirlai Kuki was a Ojhai. Once he went to collect beads for this Rathoi. The beads are said to be the fruits of Rathoi tree. The owner of this tree was a tiger. The tiger was also an expert magician. Nirlai had to fight with this tiger for a long period with the help of his magic charm. At last he defeated the tiger and collected all the Mishi fruits and placed them into a small bamboo pipe. On his way to come he found his daughter taking bath. He failed to recognise his daughter and asked her to be his spouse as he had brought many valuable mishi beads and he would adorn her with a garland of these beads. The girl said that she need not be his spouse because her father had also gone to collect mishi fruits and he must return with mishi beads as he was an expert magician. On

asking the name of their father, Nirlai recognise her to be his daughter and they came home together. When the mishi breads were poured down from the bamboo pipe an old woman stole it but at last returned. The bride must be given a mishi garland at the wedding, women generally make hole in their ear and a special carring made of bamboo strip worn in it. It is called "Nabe". The "Nabe" is a fine piece of art work. Now-a-days the Kuki girls and women adorn themselves with necklace, earrings, bangles etc.

The Kukis had a general idea of the season. They have divided the year into two broad seasons—"thal" i.e. dry season and "Fur" i.e. rainy season. The month of Agrahayan is called Khla-Thal by them.

VILLAGE ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM

The village system among the Kukis may be described as a small state under the rule of a Chief. The leader of their village is called "Sangalthong" in their language. The adult Villagers elect their village chief. The election of the chief is generally done from a certain group of their community. The villagers decide to whom the Chieftainship will be conferred and they go to his house with a bottle of rice-beer and request him to be the leader of the village. If any chief or leader refused or resigned his post or leadership, he had to pay Rs. 16/- to the villagers.

The village leaders or the chiefs settle all kinds of disputes within the village with the help of other villagers. There is a village council under the leadership of the village chief in every village. Inter village disputes are settled by the Ujirs. The Ujirs are appointed by the Kuki Raja or Lal for a certain area. During the reign of Tripura Rajah, separate Raja or lal of the Kukis was appointed by them. He would control and look after the Kuki customs and rule over the Kuki subjects. He was responsible to the Rajah of Tripura. The title of Kuki Rajah was granted by the Tripura Raj Darbar. In Kuki language, the Rajah of Tripura is called "Reng" and the Kuki Raja is called "Lal". The words 'reng' and 'lal' connoted the position of an Emperor and that of a King respectively.

Generally a certain group or clan of the Kukis has the hereditary right to be the Lal. They are Thangur group of them. Only the sons of a Lal or chief has the right to establish separate village under him. According to the opinion of the Darlong Kukis, the Thangur group is higher in social status than that of the Pachu groups.

The Kuki Raja or Lal would appoint some Ujirs for different area and with the aid and help of the Council of Ujirs, he would rule and control over the Kuki subjects under the Tripura Rajah. Copy of the following declaration will ascertain the appointment of Ujirs which I have collected it during my survey.

COPY

Choungura Kuki of Bero-Bari (Saidarbari-Gokulnagar) has been appointed as a Ujir of Bero-Bari. He will see over the people of said village as well as Kuki custom and rules. He will give all necessary orders to his people and will also receive all report from his people to take consideration on behalf of himself for compromise etc. according to Kuki custom.

As that he should be free from many sort of Taxes as family-rent and as house tax according to the custom and the rule of this State.

Information has submitted to the Divisional Officer of Kailashahar on the 25.8.1343 T.E.

Sd/- Illegible
13/12

Sd/- Raja Ngurchhai Lien,
Fatikroy Kuki Area.
13.12.1933 A.D.

During the reign of Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya Bahadur, Gram Mandals or Village Councils were formed in the villages for efficient running of administration in the remote corner of the State. The Gram Mandals were like the Gaon-Panchayats of present era. The Mandal Sardars would aid in all respect with the Government for the welfare activities and other functions of the administration in their respective areas.

When India attained independence and Tripura was integrated with the Indian Union, the village administration System of the Kukis has become greatly changed. The rule of the Tripura Rajah has been ended

and in stead a democratic pattern of administration has installed in Tripura Administration system. This wave touched the Kuki village administration. There was created a vacuum in the place of Kuki Raja or Lal. In the Kuki hamlets, however, the Sardars or the Chiefs became dominant. In the hamlets of Christian Kukis, the village Pasturs or Dickons have become the leaders. Generally the Kukis do not have internal discords or family feuds. Their bond of unity is very praiseworthy.

At present, after the introduction of the Village Panchayats by the Administration, the Kukis are also participating the Gaon-Panchayat system. Some Kuki Panchayat members may be found everywhere and there is one Kuki among the members in the present Tripura Legislative Assmebly. Even then, the Kukis settle their disputes within the village with the help of either the village leaders or village Pasturs and Dickons.

RELIGIOUS BELIEF

The Kukis generally believe in a Supreme God who is just benevolent and good. They also believe in a future state. All the deceased persons will be born there according to their activities in this present world, for which they would bury the cut-off heads of the plain dwellers with the dead body of their Chief. Because they believed that the more the numbers of heads buried with the deceased person the greater will be the happiness he will attain in the future life.

Pathien :

The most benevolent God is "Pathien". He rules over this material world and all the diseases, misfortune and civil spirits may be driven off if he can be propitiated. The village magician or village ojha's who specially worship Pathien is called "Thiam-pu" or "Jalned". For the treatment of illness, Thiam-pu sits beside the ailing person and feel the pulse and asks some questions. Then he covers his face with a piece of white cloth about 4ft. long. Over piece of a burning charcoal which they call "Meirik-Al", Bero i.e. incense is Sprinkled. By smelling the incense smoke and reciting some magic spell Thiam-pu will tell who will be appeared with what. Sometimes, Longtherai, Burahha, Dain etc. all evil spirits are to be appeased with a white cock, a black cock, a white goat, a black goat etc. Then according to the result of this test, Thiam-pu worship Pathien to propitiate the evil spirits and make the patient cured. After giving to Pathien, if the patient does not come round, Thiam-pu will again appeal to "Lushari" for the patient. It is their belief that Lushari is the supreme God in Heaven and if Pathien fails to cure any patient by appeasing the evil spirits, appeal is made to Lushari by the Thiam-pu to make the patient cured. This is like an appeal to the Higher Court if the party is defeated in the Lower Court.

Shib or Tarpa :

In the month of Baishak (April/May), Shib or Pathien or Tarpa is worshipped by the Kukis. "A" "Sole" (Bison) or buffalo is sacrificed to Pathien at the time of worship. The big knife with which the bison is cut down is called "Sal" by them. They cut the bison or buffalo at the time of sacrifice by the Sel reciting some magic spell in it with one stroke only. A high alter is arranged for Pathiens' seat at the place of worship. A water-pot as the symbolic representation of Pathien or Shib or Tarpa is placed in front of the seat. Then a branch of cotton tree is planted before the water-pot. A cotton thread Spun by their indigenous spinning-wheel is strung. One end of the thread is fastened to the branch and the other end to the post where the bison or buffalo is tied for sacrifice. Nobody is allowed to cross the thread under it. It is their belief that if anyone crossing the thread, will become mad. Generally Pathien is worshipped for the welfare of the village and the human being as a whole. For sacrificing the bison or buffalo, four cocks and four bottles of rice-beer are required. At the time of worship, the following spell is recited—

"He Ram Pathien Omloso"

Meaning : Oh! Ram Pathien come and sit here.

After the worship, the water level of the water-pot is examined by the Thaim-pu. If it increase, the result of the worship is good and Pathien is much pleased, if not the result is bad.

Luxmi-puja :

In the month of Agrahayan (December/January) when "Bopui" paddy is harvested Laxmi Puja is performed. Bopui is a special kind of jhum paddy. At the time of Laxmi Puja, the following materials are required. Pig-one, rice-beer-15 bottles, cock-12 nos. goat-4 nos., duck-2 nos. and egg-one. At first the goddess of the family is worshipped. A new earthen vessel is filled with newly harvested rice and the eggs are placed on the rice.

Then pebbles of Mainung-ma are placed. Thereafter, Ganga, Thunirao, Banirao, Burachha etc. are worshipped one after another. Then the two goats are sacrificed in the name of goddess Artci. The duck is sacrificed in the name of god Jam-dudu Kal-dudu. The seat of goddess Luxmi is adorned with Mainuma Kathama leaf for appeasing evil spirits, Dain puja is performed at a corner of the place without the knowledge of anybody.

Indroi :

Indroi is the family god. As the Manipuris have family god "Yum-lei", the Kukis also worship their family god Indroi. It is worshipped once in a year by every family for the betterment and benevolence of the members of the family and for their fortune.

Rodona :

At the end of the month Sraban (July/August) the God Rodona is worshipped. It is worshipped once in a year for not entering bad diseases in the village and fortune of the families.

Twalpathien :

The puja of Twalpathien is specially held at any time of the year decided by the elders of the village. It is worshipped when there is a good season and circumstances in the area when it is wanted to retain such a season round the year. To perform this puja, a date is fixed by the villagers and an invitation is sent to this God informing him that the puja will be held the next day and he would please take the offer. Then this puja is performed on appointed day.

Dairoi :

Dairoi is specially worshipped by anyone who wished previously to worship Him at any occasion. When his desire is fulfilled, he worships Him. The puja is generally held in the jungle by sacrificing a goat.

Khawahulal :

Khawahulal is the god of the village. While the other tribals of Tripura perform Kerpuja for the benevolent of the village, the Kukis perform the puja of Khawahulal. On the date of this puja nobody is allowed to enter the village from morning till late at night upto the end of the puja.

Jhum-puja :

The Kukis generally perform Jhum puja at the time of jhum cultivation. At first a site for jhum is selected and before clearing up the jungle, the puja is performed. For performing the puja, two banna plants are posted at the place where the jhum will be cultivated and seven pebbles which they call Mainung-ma are placed there. A sepcial wild leaf is placed in between the two banana plants and before the pebbles. The long leaf is called Mainu-ma Kathama leaf.

At present the young Kukis are pro-Christian. Moreover, the Kuki Christians perform their religious ceremonies according to Christian convention. They go to Church every Sunday. On the 1st January, every year they celebrated the New Year's Day. On 25th December, they observe X-mas Day festival. Besides the Kuki christians observe Easter Monday, Easter Saturday etc. festivals of the Christian faiths.

The following will show the trend of the Kukis to the religious affiliations.

TABLE—XXVI
Religious affiliations of the Kukis.

Year	Kuki Population	Christian	Hindu	And mist	Religion not stated.
1901	7,547	...	7,547	...	...
1911	2,327	...	2,281	46	...
1921	4,005	...	4,005	...	...
1931	1,479	172	1,207	...	...
1941	1,522	...	1,522	...	...
1961	5,531	2,345	3,185	...	1

CONCLUDING REMARKS

While going to write the concluding remarks of this monograph which deals with the socio-economic condition of this tribe, I can not but note here a few lines about the Kukis in Tripura. In the different places of this small State, when I went to collect the field data of the Kukis, some asked me, "Who are the Kukis?" Though the question is very simple and small one but the answer was difficult to my part. As stated in the foregoing Sections that the inclusion of some clans of them into that of Halams made me difficult to draw a clear line of the Kukis. The clans of the Kukis may be decided in a barmonic way so that all the institutions of this State may get a clear idea about the Kukis.

The fathers and grand-fathers o the Kukis were mainly Jhumias. So, this may be assumed that they are not well acquainted with the method of wet cultivation. Proper care might be taken to guide them and to make them habituated with wet cultivation method while further settlement of the landless Kuki families are made.

The Tribal Supervisors of every Colony should be well acquaintant with all developmental schemes of the Government implemented in their respective Colony area. The Supervisors will be the pivot of all developmental programmes of the tribals in the Colony.

A Tribal Colony should always have one Primary school and a Balwadi Centre in the middle of the Colony area so that the young futures of the Colony may be imparted education to some extent as to uplift them into the standard of other developed people of the country.

The Tribal Supervisors will be well apprehended of their duties and responsibilities. They should be a friend, guide and philosopher of the colony inmates. It is reported by the Colony Supervisors that when he gives any direction or advice to the Kukis for sanitation or such kinds which are ubecoming to them, they always try to steer clear of him. It is only due to

lack of proper hearty relations between the Government personnels and the Kukis. Care must be taken while giving such advice regarding their ways of living. As our Late Prime Minister J. Nehru observe, "I am not at all sure which is the better way of living, the tribal or our own. In some respects I am quite certain their's is better. Therefore, it is grossly presumptuous on our part to approach them with an air of superiority, to tell them how to behave or what to do and what not to do. There is no point in trying to make them a second rate copy of ourselves." So, the Government personnels who would work among the tribals should be trained up in such a way that they could easily go into the heart of the tribals.

The Kukis should be made habituated in the modern method of agriculture. There should be a system to supply manure into the Colony area by the Supervisors. The Kukis will be encouraged if the manure is available in their colony and will use it.

The Kukis would not use any implements for agriculture. They should be encouraged to cultivate their lands by modern implements and be taught of using insecticides, green manure, fertilisers.

The Kukis in the Colony and outside the colony areas should be encouraged for cultivation of Boro Crop. If irrigation facilities are provided to them, they can easily cultivate Boro Crop in the area wherever possible.

Each and every Tribal Colony should be constituted a separate Goan Sabha. As the colony area falls under the Goan Sabha of outside areas, the Pradhan of outside the Colony area looks after the development Schemes of the Block for the Colony area which may well be done by a colony inmate Pradhan, it is presumed.

Each and every Tribal Colony should have a co-operative of its own and the Supervisors should be made Ex-Officio Secretary of the Co-operatives. The Banks are not willing to extend their financial assistance in the remote corner where supervision by them is difficult. Banks should be requested to extend their help to the Colony inmates under the Supervision of the Colony Supervisors.

Cattle rearing may be helpful to them. As milks are supplied to the Agartala Dairy from the different places, they can easily supply milk and earn cash money.

Taungia cultivation may be done in experimental basis. This kind of cultivation originated in Burma and has proved successful in parts of West Africa as well as in the Garo and Mikir Hills of Assam, is a method of transforming jhums into regular forest. Moreover, scientific method of jhuming may also be done on experimental basis.

Colony Supervisors may be delegated some powers to control the colony inmates if they try to avoid him in case of suggestions given regarding sanitation etc.

Migration and immigration from and to the Tribal Colony should be restricted. Colony should have the characteristic of a true colony. It is always found that the outsiders are living in the colony area. This causes land alienation and mortgaging land by the colony inmates more rapidly and they are becoming landless again.

In the North Tripura, pine-apple cultivation proved much successful. This should be organised in the West Districts among the Kukis. There should establish one pine-apple canning centre in every Districts at the Head Quarters. A few years back, the pine-apple producers of Kanchan-chhera area suffered much for want of market. They tried upto Gauhati from their initiative but failed. If Government helps them, they can easily get the market and earn cash money.

The unity and mutual help of the Kukis are praiseworthy. This bond of unity and co-operation should be encouraged.

The Christian authority is helping the Kukis by establishing Educational Home in the remote corner of this State in the Hills. Government initiative may also be taken to help them in this respect.

The Kukis are not willing to take loan from the Govt. and co-operative. It is their experience that the process of getting loan is very stiff. The process of giving loan by the Government may be made easiest.

Some Basic Suggestions :

As to identify the Kukis clearly for Tripura and to make a uniform understanding for all the institutions, the list of the Kuki clans prepared by Soumendra Deb Barma in his Tripura Census Report —1931 may be taken as a base and Thanguras and Pachuai groups may be added to that list.

It is true that the Kukis are not yet well acquaintant with wet cultivation method of agriculture. To encourage and train them in wet and settled cultivation, the following measures may be taken up in the Kuki inhabited area :—

(i) To introduce more demonstrations of cultivation in different seasons of various food crops.

(ii) To urge on the extension work in the Kuki area.

(iii) To pursue and make personal contact with the Kukis by organising group discussions with them explaining the method of settled cultivation and the benefit thereof.

(iv) To organise competition among the Kuki cultivators and awarding prizes for the meritorius performers.

It is learnt that Agriculture Department organise competitions for the progressive cultivators at Block, State and National level. The prizes for the best performers is also attractive. Following this system, such competitions may be organised for the Kukis only as it is a fact that competition has a good result to the competitors in encouraging them to incline towards the work entrusted with them. There is no separate prize system for the tribal cultivators in the Agriculture Department at present. This system may be introduced.

(v) While giving settlement of the Kuki Jhumias, no system of cash payment maybe provided. Instead, cultivation in the land allotted to them for the first year may be made from the Government initiative by purchasing their physical labour and making practical teaching in the field of settled cultivation. After harvesting the crop, 50% of the crop may be purchased by the Government in cash. This will meet the both ends. In one hand, the Government will clearly understand if the yield from the land allotted the them will be enough to

maintain their families and on the other hand the Kukis also will get practical training in the method of settled cultivation.

(vi) It is said that at the time of providing free distribution of seeds, seedling of different plants under Tribal Welfare Scheme, sometime the inferior and residuary seeds, plants are distributed freely to the tribals at the end of the season after selling the good qualities in cash in time. This will surely dishearten the tribals who are usually declining towards the method of settled cultivation. If it is true, proper care should be taken to prevent such practices.

(vii) Besides the above mentioned suggestions, it may be pointed out here that in most cases the tribals are deprived of getting the actual price of their agricultural products. The reasons are various of which the following may be mentioned. Due to difficulties in communications of the interior places where they usually living and the other growth market places, they can not sell their crops in market price. More over, they often become the prey of the village money lenders. During the loan period of the year they often go to the village 'mahajans' for loan or dadan' selling their agricultural crops before harvesting from the field comparatively very low price. This kind of selling crops in the field is specially done in case of jute. Before harvesting the jute, they would sell the crop at the rate of approximately Rs. 10/- (ten) per maund.

If the market of the agricultural products of the tribals are assured by the Government and special measure for creating fund for giving advance of the price of the crop before harvesting during loan period of the year to the tribals, they may somehow get rid of this practice.

(viii) Last of all, it may be suggested that the developmental schemes and works of the tribals may be implemented from the village level to the State level by an independent Government organisation.

REFERENCES

1. Census of India, 1961 ; p.1.
2. W.W. Hunter, A Statistical Account of Bengal, Vol.-VI ; p. 4 74
3. Ibid ; p.473.
4. Techno-Economic Survey of Tripura, National Council of Applied Economic Research, 1961. p. 7.
5. W.W. Hunter, A Statistical Account of Bengal, Vol-VI, p.475
6. Ibid, p.475
7. Ibid, p.474
8. Tripura District Gazetteer, Education Department, Tripura, Agartala ; p.29
9. Tripura Gazette Sankalan, Education Department, Tripura, Agartala, p. 26
10. Somendra Chandra Deb Barma, Tripura Census Bibarani, 1931 ; p.2
11. Lewin Capt. T.H.J., Hill Tract of Chittagong and the dwellers there in, 1869, Calcutta, p.79
12. W.W. Hunter, A Statistical Account of Bengal, Vol-VI, p. 463
13. The Profile of Tripura, Publicity Department, Tripura, Agartala, p.7
14. Tripura District Gazetteers, Edn. Deptt., Tripura, Agartala, p. 1
15. S.B.K. Deb Barma, The Tribes of Tripura, Directorate of Research, Tripura, Agartala, p.73.
16. Tripura District Gazetteer, p. 155
17. R. K. Snahal, Satjal, Imphal, 1970 ; p.155
18. Tripura District Gazetteer, p.155
19. Lt. Col. Shakespeare, Lushai-Kuki Clan, Introduction xiii.
20. Somendra Ch. Deb Barma, Tripura Census Bibarani, 1931, p. 87
21. E.T. Dalton, Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal, Reprint, 1973, p.49
22. Lt. Col. Shakespeare, Lushai-Kuki Clan, p. 1-2.
23. E.T.Dalton, Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal, p.110
24. B.C. Chakraborty, British Relations with the Hill Tribes of Assam since 1858 ; Calcutta, 1964, p.50
25. Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal, p.49.
26. Ibid, p.49
27. B. C. Chakraborty, British Relations with the Hill Tribes of Assam since 1958, p.47

28. E. T. Dalton, Tribal History of Eastern India, Reprint, 1973, p.112.
29. Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal, p.49
30. Lt. Col. Shakespear, Lushai-Kuki Clan, p. 2-3.
31. Ibid, p.3
32. Ibid, p.5
33. L. A. Waddel, The Tribes of Brahmaputra Valley, Reprint, 1975, p.52
34. V. Elwin, A Philosophy for Nefa, p.78
35. W.W. Hunter, A Statistical Account of Bengal, Vol-VI, p.501
36. Ibid, p.306
37. Tripura Gazette Sankalan, Education Department, Tripura, Agartala.
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid.
40. Tripura—A portrait of population, Census of India, 1971, p.182
41. Census of India, 1961, p. 100
42. Ibid. p. 86
43. Profile of Tripura, Publicity Department, Tripura, Agartala, p. 12
44. Tribes of Tripura, S.B.K. Deb Barman, Directorate of Research, Tripura, Agartala, p. 73
45. Lt. Col. Shakespeare, Lushai-Kuki Clan.
46. Tripura District Gazetteer, Education Department, Tripura, Agartala, p. 155.
47. E.T. Dalton, Tribal History of Eastern India, Reprint, 1973, p. 47

REFERENCE BOOKS CONSULTED

1. This is Tripura, Publicity Department, Tripura, Agartala.
 2. Indebtedness among the Tribals of West Bengal, S.K. Basu
 3. Trends of occupation pattern through generations in Rural areas of West Bengal, A. K. Das.
 4. Tripura District Gazetteer, Education Department, Tripura, Agartala.
-

A Sample Socio-Economic Survey of the Scheduled Tribe of Tripura

QUESTIONNAIRE—II
(For individual informant)

1. Name of the village.....Goan-Sabha.....
.....Block.....Sub-Division.....
.....District.....

2. Name of the informantAge.....

3. Name of the Community.....Tribe.....

4. What is the total members in your family :
Minor
Male Female Total
Adult Minor Adult
(0-11 yr) (0-11yr)

5. How many of you are literates :
Male Female Total

6. Number of educated persons :
S.F./H.S. Graduate Upwards Technical Total

7. How many children of the school going (0-11) are actually attending school :
Male Female Total

8. Reason for non-going school specially for 0-11 yrs children :

9. How many members in your family are married :

Age at first marriage	Same village	Outside the village with distance	Community of wife (gotra)	No. of living wife	Causes of divorce if any
-----------------------	--------------	-----------------------------------	---------------------------	--------------------	--------------------------

(a) Father

(b) Son

(c) Brother

(d) Sister

10.No. of widow in the family :

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

A. Occupation :— Primary.....Secondary with
Callings.....

B. Land (in acre) :

i) Owned & cultivable		ii) Owned but letout on barga	
Tilla	Lunga	Tilla	Lunga

iii) Land taken on barga	iv) Land lying fallow
Tilla	Lunga

v) Orchard Stead	vi) Share cropping Tilla Lunga	vii) Home
------------------	-----------------------------------	-----------

C. Area shown under principal food and cash crop (during the preceeding year) :

Food corp	Area	Yield in acre	Cash crop acre	Area	Yield in
Rice			Jute		
Wheat			Sugar cane		
Millet			Oil seed		
Maize			Other cash		
Other food grain including pulses			crop (Specify)		

RABI AND KHARIF SEASON

Name of the crop	Area	Yield in acre
------------------	------	---------------

D. LIVE STOCK

Poultry	Piggery	Milch	Other cattle	Bull	Buffalo
---------	---------	-------	--------------	------	---------

E. IMPLEMENTS POSSES :

Name of the implements	No.
------------------------	-----

