

## **Anthropological Survey of India and Nirmal Kumar Bose**

### **R.S. Negi**

Mr. Chairperson, Prof. R.K. Jain, Member Secretary, Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, Ms. Dipali Khanna, Co-ordinator of the programme, Dr. Ramakar Pant and friends.

I feel greatly honoured that the authorities of Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts have considered inviting me to deliver the seventh N.K. Bose Memorial Lecture. Further, I am elated that Prof. Jain is chairing this meeting, with whom I have been closely associated. We both are alumni of the Department of Anthropology, Lucknow University, and have been associated with the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya, Bhopal.

The previous six lectures were delivered by scholars of great repute who have carved out a niche for themselves in their respective fields, wherein Prof. Bose made noteworthy contributions to the field of anthropology, particularly in the domain of cultural anthropology. I, for a change, am a physical anthropologist but was trained in the tradition of general anthropology, under the guidance of D.N. Majumdar, a well-known anthropologist, who was contemporary of Nirmal Kumar Bose himself.

I came to know of Prof. Bose only after he took over the reins of Anthropological Survey of India (then known as Department of Anthropology). As such, I will confine my first lecture to his leadership in steering the course of AnSI for five years and the legacy he left behind. My second lecture will be on Rupkund human remains.

Nirmal Kumar Bose joined as Director of Anthropological Survey of India on 28<sup>th</sup> January 1959. He was at the helm of affairs for five years, till January 1964. His appointment as Director was on term basis, initially for three years which was extended by another two years.

Nirmal Kumar Bose was a multi-faceted personality. He was a social worker, social scientist, freedom fighter, humanist, teacher and, above all, he “thought himself as first and foremost an Anthropologist even though he found himself out of tune with current concerns of his professional colleagues” (Beteille, 1975). His biographer writes of him as “leading Anthropologist and, outstanding exponent of Gandhism, a rare example of versatile creativity and a Nationalist” (Sinha, 1986). But rather an interesting epithet was given by Raj Mohan Gandhi who describes him as a ‘left leaning Anthropologist’. This, in a way, indicates his compassion for the downtrodden and marginalized people, such as scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

Bose had a forceful personality and was a man of “strong likes and dislikes”.... “His usual statement was that nothing useful has been done in the Survey, and that the existing staffs were incapable of doing anything. He was of the view that the entire work of the Survey could be done by handful of people, and rest were redundant. He drastically slashed ongoing schemes under The Third Plan which had already been approved by the Central Advisory Board of Anthropology” (Thomas, 1991).

When Bose joined the Survey, the organization had completed thirteen years, having been established in 1945. The first and the Founder Director, Dr. B.S. Guha, who retired in 1954 had contributed substantially by bringing the Survey up to an efficient working institution with dedicated officers and staff. The research programmes undertaken were mainly the composite studies of tribal people of North East (NEFA, now Arunachal Pradesh) on the one hand and South West Peninsular region (Travancore, Cochin, Malabar, Annamalai and Nilgiri Hills), on the other. The modus operandi was to send field research parties comprising cultural and physical anthropologists, psychologists, biochemists, linguists, etc. to have a composite picture of tribes under study. It may be mentioned here that the visionary in

Guha motivated and inspired him to plan his new department with a holistic and multi-interdisciplinary perspective. The focus was on the four sub-disciplines of anthropology but, in addition, sections of allied disciplines, such as anatomy, bio-chemistry, linguistics, psychology, statistics and vertebrate zoology were also opened in the Survey. During Guha's time two branch offices, known as sub-stations, were opened at Port Blair and Shillong, respectively.

A Foreign Fellowship Scheme was introduced and the first Fellow was Dr. Lidio Chipriani, a noted Italian physical anthropologist, who joined in 1953. He worked in Andaman Islands and was credited to establish contact with the *Onges* of the little Andamans. It was he who took the first census of the *Onges*. After the completion of his Fellowship, he was appointed as anthropologist and continued to work in the Andamans as in-charge of the Andaman station of the Survey.

The AnSI was established as a specialized organization for advanced scientific research in anthropology. One of the objectives, among others, was to function as advanced training centre for post-graduate students in anthropology; the other was for tribal welfare and administration. As such an advanced training scheme was also introduced. (I joined the Survey in 1953 as a trainee under this scheme.)

Dr. Guha also established a cinematography unit to make documentary films on the life and culture of tribal people. One such documentary on the *Onges* was very much appreciated and was even shown in the Parliament of India.

Dr. N. Dutta Majumdar joined as second Director in August 1954. He had a Doctorate in Anthropology from the North Western University, U.S.A. and belonged to Orissa cadre of the Indian Administrative Service. He did not make any change in the ongoing research programmes; his main emphasis was on ethnographic work among the tribes. During his time one more station was opened at Nagpur; the ethnographic gallery was remodelled and modernized; and a tribal map of India was published.

Dr. Majumdar led the expedition to Rupkund in September 1956 during the course of which we were able to collect a large number of skeletal remains, a human body from waist to knees with flesh (torso) and some cultural artefacts. Earlier in 1955 he, along with the cinematographer and one more person, had been on a reconnaissance tour to Garhwal. This was the year when Rupkund tragedy had come to limelight and there was pressure to resolve the mystery. He couldn't go to Rupkund due to the onset of winter, but collected useful documentary material, including folk songs, narrating the *Nanda Raj Jat* and the tragic happening of Rupkund from knowledgeable people. Dr. Majumdar left the Survey in May 1958 and joined his cadre.

During Dr. Majumdar's time S.C. Dube, S.C. Sinha and H.K. Rakshit joined the Survey; however both Dube and Sinha did not stay for long and left the Survey in a short period of time. In 1957, when S.C. Dube was in-charge, the Nagpur station took up a comprehensive, systematic area research programme in Bastar, then the second largest district after Ladakh, in India. The studies were to be undertaken both in physical and cultural anthropology among all major tribal populations. J.S. Tandon was to study the Bhatra in northern Bastar; K.N. Thusu, the *Dhurwa* in central Bastar; and D. Hajra, the *Dorla* in south Bastar. Anthropometric and Demographic work by H.K. Rakshit and Blood Group Genetic Survey and Sickle-cell trait by R.S. Negi and S.H. Ahmad was also undertaken. This programme was going on for two years prior to Dr. Bose taking over as Director of the Survey.

After Dr. Majumdar left, "Dr. A.K. Mitra, Deputy Director was given charge of current duties, pending the appointment of regular Director. During this time, the work of the Survey almost came to a standstill and near chaotic conditions prevailed. No major decision

could be taken and this condition went on for thirteen months before Prof. Bose joined in January 1959” (Thomas, *ibid*).

Bose joined the Survey with a vision on the basis of insight developed during his *Paribrajak* days, wandering in different parts of India, closely interacting with the rural peasantry, forest dwelling tribes and people of different vocations. He had also closely observed the abject poverty during his social work and relief work in Birbhum in the aftermath of famine, with keen observation of a field anthropologist. He wondered as to how those observations could be used in ameliorating the condition of the people. In a way he was already thinking in terms of applied anthropology.

As an anthropologist, he had a preconceived hypothesis that the ‘culture zones’ of India were not coincident with the linguistic zones. He had written an essay earlier on the ‘culture zones of India’ and wanted to test his hypothesis that Grierson’s North-South divide, on the basis of Indo-Aryan and Dravidian languages, is not coincident with the ‘culture zones’ and the ‘racial’ divisions. Instead he hypothesized of a North-West and South-East divide. Therefore, to test his hypothesis within a month or so of his joining the Survey, he launched the All India Material Culture Trait Survey (MCTS), initially in the form of a pilot survey, the report of which was to be placed before the Central Advisory Board for approval of the projects. While he appreciated the ongoing research programmes and the good work being done, he emphasized on a long term perspective research plan, to highlight the ‘various dimensions’ of the people of India from ‘anthropologic perspective’. He opined that instead of micro level, researches should be taken up at all India Level to cover all people in all regions of the country. All sections of the Survey were to formulate their research projects accordingly. Even prior to assuming the office of Director, AnSI, he had clear a vision and plan of action. This is evident from the fact that, as already mentioned, soon after joining the office, he launched All India Material Cultural Trait Survey (MCTS).

Hence, for carrying out the MCTS, he inducted seven fresh entrants as STAs, using the services of only nine from amongst the existing staff, with Dr. S.C. Sinha (who rejoined the Survey, having left earlier in 1957) as Co-ordinator. His method of inducting scholars was also unique. He got exemption from the compulsion of getting names from employment exchange; instead, he wrote to different professors of anthropology of different universities to recommend suitable scholars for the project in hand.

I came to know about Prof. Bose only after he had taken over as Director, AnSI and that too from a distance, since I was posted in Nagpur. However, an opportunity came sometime in the month of April 1959, when he visited Central India Station, Nagpur. I had just returned from field work in Bastar. I must say that the first encounter was not a very pleasant one which would be evident from the following. On his visit, he called a meeting of all the officials which was held in the office of linguist, Shri S.B. Bhattacharya, on the ground floor. Since my office was located on the first floor, it took me little time to reach the meeting venue. As I entered, I found everyone sitting quietly. As soon as I took my seat, the Director asked me that what my programme of work was. I replied that I was engaged in the genetic survey of tribal people of Bastar, which among other traits included Sickle-cell trait. Hearing that he flared up and expressed the opinion that I was copying others who were engaged in similar programmes in the West. I was taken aback but did not answer. Then he said that he would like me to do the work on fertility or the reproductive performance of tribal women; thereafter he took out a proforma *giving* details of the study to be undertaken. I glanced at the proforma, prepared by some medical specialist, *and* said how it could be possible to ascertain the exact age of women at menarche and menopause.

To begin with, approaching the females for ascertaining their respective ages, and that too in a tribal situation, was an arduous task, as even in the rural and urban areas it was difficult to ascertain exactly the respective ages. I felt that women scholars were better suited

to handle work of this nature. Prof. Bose further said that by virtue of being a Government servant, I would have to comply with the order. I responded by saying that though the order would be complied with yet the accuracy of results could not be guaranteed because of the nature of work. The meeting then came to an end. It was apparent that the Director was not happy with me and there was more to come.

In the evening, arrangements had been made for a meeting-cum- garden party in the lawns of the office. The entire office had assembled. During the course of the discussion that took place with regard to the programme of work undertaken by the Nagpur station of the Survey, Prof. Bose gave a talk, encouraging young anthropologists to make efforts to develop their own independent thinking and not always look towards the West and imitate what was being done there. He also mentioned that instead some sort of bickering could be observed with regard to the work culture. This was a rather unpleasant remark and I could not check myself to point out, in all humility, that the younger generation followed the example of the older generation only and what they would learn in a situation where the older generation itself was at cross purposes. He looked at me and asked what my age was and said he was more than twice my age then, but at that age he had published a book entitled "Cultural Anthropology" although he added that not much notice was taken of that book and that only three copies were sold. I wondered how I was concerned with that! May be the implication was that I was good for nothing. I did not inform that two of my articles out of a series of three were published in *Man* and that I was engaged with the Rupkund Human Remains work right from collection to analysis to report writing for the first two years of my induction into a regular job in the Survey. That was all I could do within the constraints of being a 'Government servant'. Pin-drop silence then prevailed in the meeting and everyone looked at me accusingly. So, in a way, the party was ruined.

As regards the book 'Cultural Anthropology', it is true that not much notice was taken of it in India. I had never seen any reference to it earlier and only came to know about it on that day. However, it was taken notice of by A.L. Kroeber, who wrote a review: "This booklet of 150 pages evidently aims to make certain general anthropological concepts more familiar to English-reading Indians. It discusses, in successive chapters, what is culture, General Nature of Culture, Structure of a Cultural Trait, Distribution of a Trait, Changes due to Contact, Evolution and Progress. This sounds as if it might be Wissler; but the work is an independent, simple reformulation, illustrated especially by Indian examples. The treatment is sane, moderate, and intelligent; and--to an Americanist--seems free of propaganda motivation." (Kroeber, 1929)

Attention may be drawn to the mention of illustration by Indian examples in the review which is a clear indication that even at that stage, Bose thought of indigenization of Indian anthropology, a concept followed by Indian scholars such as Vidyarthi, Saraswati, and others, much later.

It is said that Bose's taking over as Director of the Anthropological Survey ushered in a 'Turning phase' in its history. As stated above, the programme in the Survey was to study the tribal populations in comparatively isolated regions of the country, such as NEFA in the north-east; forest dwelling tribes in Western Ghats; and Nilgiri and Annamalai hills in the southern peninsular region; and the Bay Islands. There was one exception and that was the UNESCO sponsored studies on 'Social Tension among the Refugees from Eastern Pakistan' in 1950s, in West Bengal, in other words communal tension. Other than the isolated areas Elwin had his interest in middle India, that is, M.P. and Orissa, but he left the Survey after completion of his term. He was appointed as Adviser to the Governor of Assam, on tribal matters; with that AnSI was banished from NEFA, as all 'others' were. So when Bose took over, NEFA was no longer within the ambit of research programmes of the survey.

Bose, it may be reiterated, had a vision and a plan action already in mind before he joined AnSI. While appreciating the good work in progress in the Survey then, he visualized a long-term perspective research plan, to bring out and highlight the ‘various dimensions’, both cultural and physical, of our vast country from ‘anthropological perspective’. India being a vast country inhabited by varying ethnic groups, speaking different languages, following different religions, with different food habits and dietary patterns, different dressing patterns, living under different ecological settings, such as, mountainous regions, river valleys and plains, desert, forest and coastal plains, necessitating different settlement and housing patterns, it was therefore not enough to limit the studies at ‘micro level,’ amongst the tribal populations inhabiting isolated pockets only, for the emergence of a comprehensive picture of Indian Civilization. He therefore planned a long-term perspective for Anthropological Survey of India (then known as Department of Anthropology).

In August 1959 Bose placed before the Central Advisory Board his long-term plan for the coming 10-15 years. He argued that it was his belief that the problems taken up for investigation should be of academic significance as well as being of practical national importance. Also, the nature of problems should be such that investigations could be carried out anywhere in the country and “gradually expanded both in space and in depth of analysis so that eventually all of them can be knit together into one common pattern”. Thereafter, he proposed the research programmes to be undertaken in social/ cultural anthropology and allied disciplines of linguistics, psychology and physical anthropology, including osteology, morphology, human biology, demography, prehistory and allied disciplines of biochemistry.

For cultural anthropology, he worked out an imaginative phasing of research.

- Phase I. Study of distribution of material traits all over India and mapping out the pattern of their distribution vis-a-vis linguistic areas.
- Phase II. Study of few important ancient craft techniques--pottery and metal craft.
- Phase III. Study of social organization of crafts and of caste organization in different regions of India.
- Phase IV. Study of superstructure of Indian society--through the study of temple, *matha* and kingship.
- Phase V. Study of the process of modernization in caste and occupation, tribal movements and social movements in different regions of India. (Sinha, 1970)

All the studies under various phases were planned on all India basis. MCTS under phase I, had already been launched within one month of his joining and the report, ‘Peasant Life in India: A Study in Indian Unity & Diversity’ was published in 1961. Pottery Techniques in Peasant India and Metal Craftsmen of India, were launched soon after, all others were to follow. Thus Bose initiated for the first time large-scale all India surveys in place of micro level studies.

This substantiates the above statement that Bose had a definite design in mind with regard to his plan of work as Director of the Survey even before he actually took charge of the organization. As regards researches in physical anthropology, he gave importance to anthropometry admitting “although the value of anthropometric characters has been somewhat reduced now- a- days by the importance attached to other genetic traits, yet, for the purpose of general survey in which many anthropologists can participate in team work, it still retains its value to some extent. This is particularly true of a country like India where all reconstructions have so far been based upon an insufficiency of data; both from the point of view of numbers as well as of geographical distribution.” (Bose, 1963)

He planned to cover all (then 522) districts and all important communities in them, such as, “from ‘high’ through artisan to agricultural, fishing and pastoral communities,” to be measured for 11 characters so that a broad picture of the physical features of the Indian people could be presented. The target set was a total of at least 50,000 people. Later, All India Anthropometric Survey was launched under the leadership of H.K. Rakshit.

He did not take much interest in other sections. Human Biology section was engaged in Blood Group genetic surveys, among the Brahman, Duley, Bagdi and the Muslims in Hooghly district of West Bengal; among the tribal populations of Bastar and Koraput Districts of M.P. and Orissa respectively and the Mahars in the Nagpur city and environs. Earlier, during a pilot survey in Nagpur city, presence of Sickle-cell trait was detected.

During Guha’s time Dr. S.S. Sarkar was in-charge of Human Biology section and it was he who initiated Blood Group studies in the survey but sadly he had to leave the survey under unpleasant circumstances. In the meantime Dr. E.C. Buchi, a Swiss national from Zurich University, was appointed on contract basis in 1950 as Superintending Anthropologist. He was the overall in-charge of Physical Anthropology division. Buchi, on joining the Survey, observed and realized that researches in India were largely being carried out in the framework of old typological thinking and needed a new approach. His very first study in India among the Tibetan refugees was within the new conceptual framework as study of a *Mendelian* population rather than an assemblage of individuals. He was thus one of the foremost scientists to set the future course of researches in Physical Anthropology in general and human population genetics in particular, in India. He was also in-charge of the Training Scheme in the Survey. However, he left India in 1956 due to personal reasons. After him S.R. Das was made in-charge of the Human Biology section. Das also had trained under Buchi.

Prof. Bose had some kind of prejudice against the Human Biology section. The reason is unknown but perhaps the Sarkar episode, of which he must have been in the know, was at the root of it. It so happened that a young researcher, who had worked in Hooghly district, had written a paper on his work and submitted it for publication. The Director thought that it was a good opportunity to assess the work of Human Biology section and especially the guidance imparted by the head since he had been profusely acknowledged by the author. He thus referred the paper to Prof. J.B.S. Haldane, who was then in ISI Calcutta, for a critical evaluation. Prof. Haldane was appreciative of the efforts of the young researcher. Only the gene frequency calculations done up to six decimal points were not necessary since the sample size was less than 200. That was good enough for questioning the guidance of the in-charge of the section.

In case of skeletal studies, not much work had been done on human skeletons and the Survey envisaged a programme of craniological study of all the cranial material available in India. That project had started with the collection in the Survey but no mention was made of the Rupkund material which was collected and brought to the Survey during Rupkund expedition of 1956. However, in reply furnished to a Parliament question raised in the Lok Sabha in respect to the findings of the human skeletal remains in Rupkund regarding their preservation in November 1959 and whether the scheme to protect the Rupkund site from vandalization had been prepared or not, it was stated that:

“We are not aware of any scheme for the preservation of Rupkund as a protected monument. There is firstly no monument; secondly, remains of the bodies of pilgrims or of objects, which they carried, lie scattered over an ill defined area. They are exposed from time to time from under the snow. None of these objects are fossilised. The remains, as have been found out, are roughly about 600 years or so old; and do not represent any object of either great historical or anthropological interest. They have a place in local legend and history only. Considering the nature of the place and the historical interest which attaches to these remains, we do not see how they can be suitably protected.” (AnSI Archive file, SI. No.32)

(quoted by Jayanta Sarkar and R.K. Bhattacharya in *Nirmal Kumar Bose: Director Anthropological Survey of India in Passage through Indian Civilization*, AnSI Kolkata, 2002).

However, Rupkund is a small bowl shaped lake and the human body remains are scattered within a well defined lake shore. The tragedy may have occurred some 900 hundred years ago and is a hugely an emotive issue for the people of Uttarakhand, hence of anthropological importance; the historicity of the event, of course, has not yet been firmly established. Rupkund has emerged on the tourist map that has also resulted in vandalism, as the tourists pick up bones and take them as souvenir. A Site Museum could have been developed at Rupkund, although it is a difficult proposition since it remains open to access for only about two months in the year and the accessibility itself is not easy. However, it is necessary to take some measures to check vandalism.

The report on Rupkund remains was completed in 1958 before Bose joined; however, it was not published for some unknown reasons. Maybe some complaint made by Swami Pranavanand, a wanderer scholar and a great explorer, had influenced the decision.

Incidentally, I was a member of the Human Biology section and also engaged in Rupkund work from collection to finalisation of report for about two years.

One of the areas of his interest was “to build up academic background of young students in the discipline by imparting training and guidance both in field work and report writing” (Bhattacharya and Sarkar: Eds, 2002). He had a concern for young research workers. He, therefore, instituted a Fellowship Programme and discontinued the Training Scheme which was in the Survey right since its inception. This Scheme had done good work in earlier stages to build up academic atmosphere and produce competent research workers who did excellent work in their respective fields. But by the time Bose joined, the scheme had become ineffective due to various reasons and, therefore, was discontinued. The new Fellowship Scheme was introduced with a vision of Prof. Bose establishing 20 fellowships in the Universities or recognized institutions to carry out work approved by the AnSI. In addition 4 Fellows as specialists in their respective disciplines from outside the Survey were also inducted for supervision of the research work to be undertaken by the Fellows. (Bhattacharya and Sarkar: Eds, *ibid*)

My second encounter with Prof. Bose took place in January 1963 when my research proposals were not being responded to and I used to make the following observation in my daily diary sheet: ‘No work, library reference work’. I was summoned to Calcutta where I was asked to report to the Director’s office. The Director had my daily diary sheet in front of him. Pointing out to it he asked what the entire thing was all about. I replied: ‘Sir, this is the factual report; since my research proposals were not being responded to, I had only library reference work to do’. After a pause he said that he had seen my research proposals and advised me to meet Dr. Sen, the Deputy Director (physical), who would take a decision. While I was leaving, he added that he would like to visit Bastar and hence I should prepare an itinerary for him. So, I prepared the itinerary in a couple of hours with the help of secretarial assistance made available to me. In the afternoon, I placed before him the itinerary which covered about ten days; along with it, I also gave brief notes about the people and the localities to be visited. Looking at the itinerary, particularly the notes, he seemed to be satisfied and said that I would hear from him in due course about the date of his visit.

Back in Nagpur, I started making preparations for field work as my proposal had been accepted; at the same time I also had to wait for a word from Director’s office about his visit. However, since it was not forthcoming for quite some time, I thought it appropriate to leave for south Bastar in order to start my field work.

On the 2nd of February, 1963, I was informed telegraphically that the Director would be visiting Bastar and that I should receive him at Raipur Railway Station on 13th of February. On the appointed day, I received the Director at Raipur Railway Station. His party

included S. Bose, Human Ecologist of the Survey, and Meera Guha of Calcutta University, who had arrived earlier in the morning. Our office station wagon, sent from Nagpur, was already there to take us to Bastar. From the railway station, I escorted the Director to the circuit house so that he could freshen up and get ready for the long onward journey to Bastar. Jagdalpur, the district headquarter of Bastar, is situated at a distance of 184 miles from Raipur but that day we had to travel up to Pharasgaon only which is about 40 to 45 miles short of Jagdalpur. So, we still had to travel some 140 miles.

After a short while Prof. Bose emerged from the circuit house and I was surprised to see him clad in a green overall and a hat. He said that it was his field dress and we took off from Raipur on the highway to Bastar. We had travelled up to Abhanpur, some 12 to 15 miles from Raipur, when Prof. Bose said that we would take a detour to Rajim, about 10 miles from Abhanpur on the banks of Mahanadi. At Rajim, there is a group of temples, the main being that of Rajivlochan temple. Prof. Bose wanted to have another look at the temples in view of the fact that a long time had elapsed since he had last studied those temples (in 1930s). After going around the temples for some time, Prof. Bose made some enquiries from the priest and took some photographs. We then left the place back to Abhanpur and thence onwards to Pharasgaon, which was the centre of Dandakaranya project for the settlement of refugees from the then East Pakistan.

Pharasgaon area is inhabited by the Muria and the San Bhatra. As a matter of fact, there is a lateral mobility from Muria to San Bhatra and to Majole Bhatra. The process stops there, as Majole Bhatra cannot move on to become Bade Bhatra.

Next morning, Prof. Bose had a quick survey of the Dandakaranya project area before leaving for Bade Dongar on way to Narayanpur. Bade Dongar is a fairly large Muria settlement where we could see the typical Muria settlement pattern. The village is spread in a large area with individual homesteads separated from one another by enclosed Badas(enclosures). Within the Bada there was a living hut and small sheds for poultry, pigs and cattle. Rest of the land was used for kitchen garden or cultivation. The village was multi-ethnic as Halba and Mahra families also lived there. We went around the village talking to people, making notes, taking photographs, etc.

In the afternoon, we proceeded to Narayanpur, which at that time was Block Headquarters and a seat of Naib Tehsildar(at present, Narayanpur is a district). Those days *Marhai* used to be held at Narayanpur. *Marhai*, an annual event, is a Mela-cum-bazaar eagerly awaited by the people. It is attended by villagers from far and wide in large numbers. Apart from trading and exchanging goods, the *Marhai* is more of a socio-cultural gathering of people. It holds a special attraction for the young people for exchanging love tokens and merry-making. Throughout Bastar, the institution of *Marhai* is quite an important component of social organization. Since no accommodation was available at Narayanpur, as the guesthouse was already booked for the visiting officials, we moved on to Garhbangal, a village nearby, for night halt. The village had large Ghotul (dormitory), where young boys and girls came for night stay. The village also became famous as one of the young lads named Chendru was taken by a Swedish film director to Hollywood for acting in a film.

The next morning, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of February, we preceded to Orchha, which is situated on the northern fringe of Abuj Marh, the abode of the Maria. In this tract *Jhum* (shifting cultivation) is practised. On the western side, the Abuj Marh is bounded by Gadchiroli of Chanda district, Maharashtra. Presently the whole area is the stronghold of the Naxalites.

The Abuj Marh *Marias*, living in thickly forested hills, were virtually isolated from the outside world as the whole area was quite inaccessible. They used to venture out to weekly markets in the neighbouring areas and occasionally some of them visited Jagdalpur (the then state capital). They were known to take part in the annual Dushera festival, held at



Jagdarpur, as well as pay homage to the Raja of Bastar. At Orchha, the Abuj *Marias* also have their own *Marhai* sometime in March/April.

In Abuj Marh, *Jhum* is practised. On the way to and back from Orchha, we could see some plots under *Jhum*. There it was decided by Prof. Bose that the human ecologist, who had been working on shifting cultivation, would return to Abuj Marh to take up the study among the *Marias*, thus adding to the research programme of carrying capacity of land under shifting cultivation. From Orchha, after having a quick survey of the surrounding areas, we turned back to Narayanpur and Garhbangal village thence to Jagdarpur via Kondagaon for night halt.

On the third morning of our tour, we went to Chitrakut Falls on the Indrawati, which are said to be the Indian counterpart of the Niagara Falls, and then to Kinjoli, situated 20 km Northeast of Jagdarpur, a multi-ethnic but predominantly, a Bhatra village. I had stayed in this village for more than a month at a stretch while working in the Bhatra area. As a matter of fact, Kinjoli was sort of a field station of ours since my friend and colleague, Tandon, had worked in the Bhatra area from 1957 to 1961. He used to live in the village, four to six months each year; so the people were well aware of the activities of Anthropological Survey. The village was divided into six hamlets, two of which were quite far away, rather closer to other villages than the parent village, and as such their socio-economic interaction with the parent village was minimal. The other four hamlets were compactly situated within the main village boundaries, but distinctly set apart as to be recognizable units. The principal region for such setting was apparently based on the segregation of the higher and lower placed groups in the social hierarchy. The village was set along a linear pattern but not clearly one dimensional. A main thoroughfare divided the village into two halves and from it stretched small lanes on each direction to various *Parhas*. The central place in the village was prominently distinguishable as the village Thanagudi, the school house, the Panchayat Ghar and a small village teashop were located around it.

Soon after we arrived in Kinjoli, word spread around the village that 'Negi has come'. Men, women and children flocked around me and wanted to know where I had been so long and why did I not come earlier; where Tandon was; and where my companion in the field was. They had crowded me and held me in tight embrace, imploring me to stay back. Prof. Bose was standing at a distance, observing the scene. I told the people that I could not stay back as I had to accompany my senior officer. Someone in the crowd exclaimed 'Oh that *Dokra!!!*' (old man, in local dialect), which was quite embarrassing since Prof. Bose was within ear shot, but with a smile on his face, he turned away and that also marked a turning point in his attitude towards me. Here, I must mention that the itinerary prepared by me included all those places where I had worked and lived, amongst different people of Bastar, such as the Bhatra, Muria, Dhurwa, Maria and the Dorla, inhabiting its different regions. The Kinjoli episode perhaps made him see that here was a real field worker in his own tradition. For the earlier two days, he hardly spoke to me but from then onwards whenever he spoke or narrated something while travelling in the vehicle, he would hail me and ask: 'Negi, are you listening?' This was because I used to sit in the front, by the side of our driver, Mozarkar.

To make a rather long story short, I escorted Prof. Bose for the next eight days to different regions of Bastar including Kotamsar, Tirathgarh Falls and Sukma in the Dhurwa tract, where another colleague had worked, Dantewada, Barsur, Bhairamgarh at the foot of Abuj Marh and the Bison Horn Maria tract. Barsur, situated about 12 miles from Dantewada, was earlier the capital of Kaktiya king of Bastar and has a group of temples. The Bison Horn Maria follow the practice of erecting exquisitely carved memorial log poles in memory of the ancestors and we came across some of them in this tract. There is a sizeable population of Telugu speaking Telangas in the area. There from, we visited Bijapur, Geedam, Kutru and Lanka Marh on the southern fringe of Abuj Marh, making quick surveys of the lifestyle of

different people of the region. I also took him to Bhadrachalam, south of Konta, on the confluence of Sabri and Godavari where the Ram Chandra temple is located. Sabri is a river flowing by the eastern boundaries of Bastar and there is a regular boat service between Konta and Bhadrachalam. During those eight days and nights I could feel a close communicative companionship between Prof. Bose and myself, rather than a distant aloofness between a superior officer and a subordinate. During the day time, while in field, he used to discuss his observations and make valuable comments on whatever observations were made and during the evenings, both of us used to sit around a campfire, till quite late into the night. Those campfire sittings were very educative for me as he used to narrate his experiences as a wanderer in his earlier days. He also told me many things that he experienced in Noakhali while with Gandhi.

One day in Dantewada, we came across an Ex-Army cook who had worked in the officers' messes. Prof. Bose asked him whether he could prepare us a good meal. He readily agreed and that night we had a sumptuous dinner. Prof. Bose was quite happy and besides paying the cost, gave him a handsome tip.

Eventually, after those eventful eight days, the tour to Bastar came to an end. In those eight days, Prof. Bose was able to have a **bird's eye** view of Bastar, covering almost the entire geographical area of the district with the exception of the inside of Abuj Marh due to paucity of time. We crossed over Indravati on a ferry near Bhopalpatnam to enter Chanda district of Maharashtra and returned to Nagpur via Sironcha and Chanda around 12:30 p.m. on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February 1963. On the way, we passed through the historical Chanda Fort.

At Nagpur, the Director inspected the Central India Office of the Survey and discussed with the research personnel about their work. In the evening, he visited the Hanuman temple at Telankhedi. The next morning, i.e. on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February, he left for Calcutta.

In a way, Bose's taking over as Director was a turning point in the academic researches in the Anthropological Survey of India. His legacy continued. One more regional office was also opened at Ooty which was later shifted to Mysore, during his time.

In September 1967 a seminar on Research Programs on Cultural Anthropology and Allied Disciplines was held in the Survey, in which papers on Tribal Solidarity Movements; Comparative Study of the Fisher Folk; Complex Religious Institutions; Comparative Study of Nomads; Impact of Industrialization and Urbanization on the Tribes; Ethnographic Research; Area Studies; Ethnomusicology; Psychology and Linguistics, were presented. Bose inaugurated the Seminar. In his Inaugural he said: "I am glad that a systematic work is continuing in the Anthropological Survey of India with the object of giving rise to a more concrete and a fuller picture of Indian civilisation and also of the various components which go to make it up." Needless to say, all these programmes were initiated by him under his Long-Term plan work in the Survey while he was the Director. Thus his legacy continued.

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