

VILLAGE SURVEY SERIES No. 3

A MONOGRAPH
ON
VILLAGE LAKHRISH
(Sadar Subdivision, District Kalahandi)



CENSUS OF INDIA, 1961

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ORISSA

Village Survey Series No. 3

A MONOGRAPH

ON

VILLAGE LAKHRISH

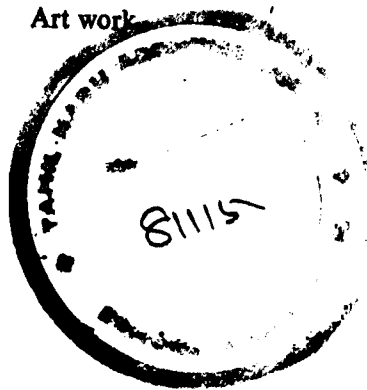
(In Sadar Subdivision, District Kalahandi)

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FOREWORD

APART from laying the foundations of demography in this subcontinent, a hundred years of the Indian Census has also produced 'elaborate and scholarly accounts of the variegated phenomena of Indian life—sometimes with no statistics attached, but usually with just enough statistics to give empirical underpinning to their conclusions'. In a country, largely illiterate, where statistical or numerical comprehension of even such a simple thing as age was liable to be inaccurate, an understanding of the social structure was essential. It was more necessary to attain a broad understanding of what was happening around oneself than to wrap oneself up in 'statistical ingenuity' or 'mathematical manipulation'. This explains why the Indian Census came to be interested in 'many by-ways' and 'nearly every branch of scholarship, from anthropology and sociology to geography and religion'.

In the last few decades the Census has increasingly turned its efforts to the presentation of village statistics. This suits the temper of the times as well as our political and economic structure. For even as we have a great deal of centralization on the one hand and decentralization on the other, my colleagues thought it would be a welcome continuation of the Census tradition to try to invest the dry bones of village statistics with flesh-and-blood accounts of social structure and social change. It was accordingly decided to select a few villages in every State for special study, where personal observation would be brought to bear on the interpretation of statistics to find out how much of a village was static and yet changing and how fast the winds of change were blowing and from where.

Randomness of selection was, therefore, eschewed. There was no intention to build up a picture for the whole State in quantitative terms on the basis of villages selected statistically at random. The selection was avowedly purposive: the object being as much to find out what was happening and how fast to those villages which had fewer reasons to choose change and more to remain lodged in the past as to discover how the more 'normal' types of villages were changing. They were to be primarily type studies which, by virtue of their number and distribution, would also give the reader a 'feel' of what was going on and some kind of a map of the country.

A brief account of the tests of selection will help to explain. A minimum of thirty-five villages was to be chosen with great care to represent adequately geographical, occupational and even ethnic diversity. Of this minimum of thirty-five the distribution was to be as follows:

- (a) At least eight villages were to be so selected that each of them would contain one dominant community with one predominating occupation, e.g., fishermen, forest workers, jhum cultivators, potters, weavers, saltmakers, quarry workers, etc. A village should have a minimum population of 400, the optimum being between 500 and 700.
- (b) At least seven villages were to be of numerically prominent Scheduled Tribes of the State. Each village could represent a particular tribe. The minimum population should be 400, the optimum being between 500 and 700.
- (c) The third group of villages should each be of fair size, of an old and settled character and contain variegated occupations and be, if possible, multiethnic in composition. By fair size was meant a population of 500—700 persons or

more. The village should mainly depend on agriculture and be sufficiently away from the major sources of modern communication, such as the district administrative headquarters and business centres. It should be roughly a day's journey from the above places. The villages were to be selected with an eye to variation in terms of size, proximity to city and other means of modern communication, nearness to hills, jungles and major rivers. Thus there was to be a regional distribution throughout the State of this category of villages. If, however, a particular district contained significant ecological variations within its area, more than one village in the district might be selected to study the special adjustments to them.

It is a unique feature of these village surveys that they rapidly outgrew their original terms of reference, as my colleagues warmed up to their work. This proved for them an absorbing voyage of discovery and their infectious enthusiasm compelled me to enlarge the inquiry's scope again and again. It was just as well cautiously to feel one's way about at first and then venture further afield, and although it accounts to some extent for a certain unevenness in the quality and coverage of the monographs, it served to compensate the purely honorary and extramural rigours of the task. For, the Survey, along with its many ancillaries like the survey of fairs and festivals, of small and rural industry and others, was an 'extra', over and above the crushing load of the 1961 Census.

It might be of interest to recount briefly the stages by which the Survey enlarged its scope. At the first Census Conference in September 1959 the Survey set itself the task of what might be called a record *in situ* of material traits, like settlement patterns of the village; house types; diet; dress; ornaments and footwear; furniture and storing vessels; common means of transport of goods and passengers; domestication of animals and birds; markets attended; worship of deities, festivals and fairs. There were to be recordings, of course, of cultural and social traits and occupational mobility. This was followed up in March 1960 by two specimen schedules, one for each household, the other for the village as a whole, which apart from spelling out the mode of inquiry suggested in the September 1959 Conference, introduced groups of questions aimed at sensing changes in attitude and behaviour in such fields as marriage, inheritance, moveable and immoveable property, industry, indebtedness, education, community life and collective activity, social disabilities, forums of appeal over disputes, village leadership and organization of cultural life. It was now plainly the intention to provide adequate statistical support to empirical 'feel', to approach qualitative change through statistical quantities. It had been difficult to give thought to the importance of 'just enough statistics to give empirical underpinning to conclusions', at a time when my colleagues were straining themselves to the utmost for the success of the main Census operations, but once the Census count itself was left behind in March 1961, a series of three regional seminars in Trivandrum (May 1961), Darjeeling and Srinagar (June 1961) restored their attention to this held and the importance of tracing social change through a number of well-devised statistical tables was once again recognised. This itself presupposed a fresh survey of villages already done; but it was worth the trouble in view of the possibilities that a close analysis of statistics offered, and also because the 'consanguinity' schedule remained to be canvassed. By November 1961, however, more was expected of these surveys than ever before. There was dissatisfaction on the one hand with too many general statements and a growing desire on the other to draw conclusions from statistics, to regard social and economic data as interrelated processes, and finally to examine the social and economic processes set in motion through land reforms and other laws, legislative and administrative measures, technological and cultural change. Finally, a study camp was organized in the last week of December 1961 when the whole field was carefully gone through over again and a programme worked out closely knitting the various aims of the Survey together. The Social Studies Section of the Census Commission rendered assistance to State Superintendents by way of scrutiny and technical comment on the frame of Survey and presentation of results.

This gradual unfolding of the aims of the Survey prevented my colleagues from adopting as many villages as they had originally intended to. But I believe that what may have been lost in quantity has been more than made up for in quality. This is, perhaps, for the first time that such a Survey has been conducted in any country, and that purely as a labour of love. It has succeeded in attaining what it set out to achieve: to construct a map of village India's social structure. One hopes that the volumes of this Survey will help to retain for the Indian Census its title to 'the most fruitful single source of information about the country'. Apart from other features, it will perhaps be conceded that the Survey has set up a new Census standard in pictorial and graphic documentation. The schedules finally adopted for this monograph have been printed in an Appendix.

NEW DELHI
The 24th May, 1962

A. MITRA
Registrar General, India.

PREFACE

Preparation of village monographs on 15 selected villages of Orissa is a special feature of 1961 Census. The background of the survey, its scope and its aim have been given by the Registrar General in his Foreword.

The present monograph which is the third of the series relates to village Lakhresh in Sadar subdivision of Kalahandi district. The village is mainly inhabited by the Kandhas, an interesting Scheduled Tribe of Orissa. The life of the Kandhas as depicted in the monograph may be of much interest to the reader.

Observations contained in this monograph are based on the results of local investigation carried out by an Investigator of this organization. I am grateful to the Officers and Scholars who helped in preparation of this monograph as mentioned in the panel of the acknowledgment and to Shri J. Mahapatra, Deputy Superintendent, Headquarters for making materials ready for the press.

CUTTACK
October 30, 1965.

M. AHMED
Superintendent of
Census Operations, Orissa.

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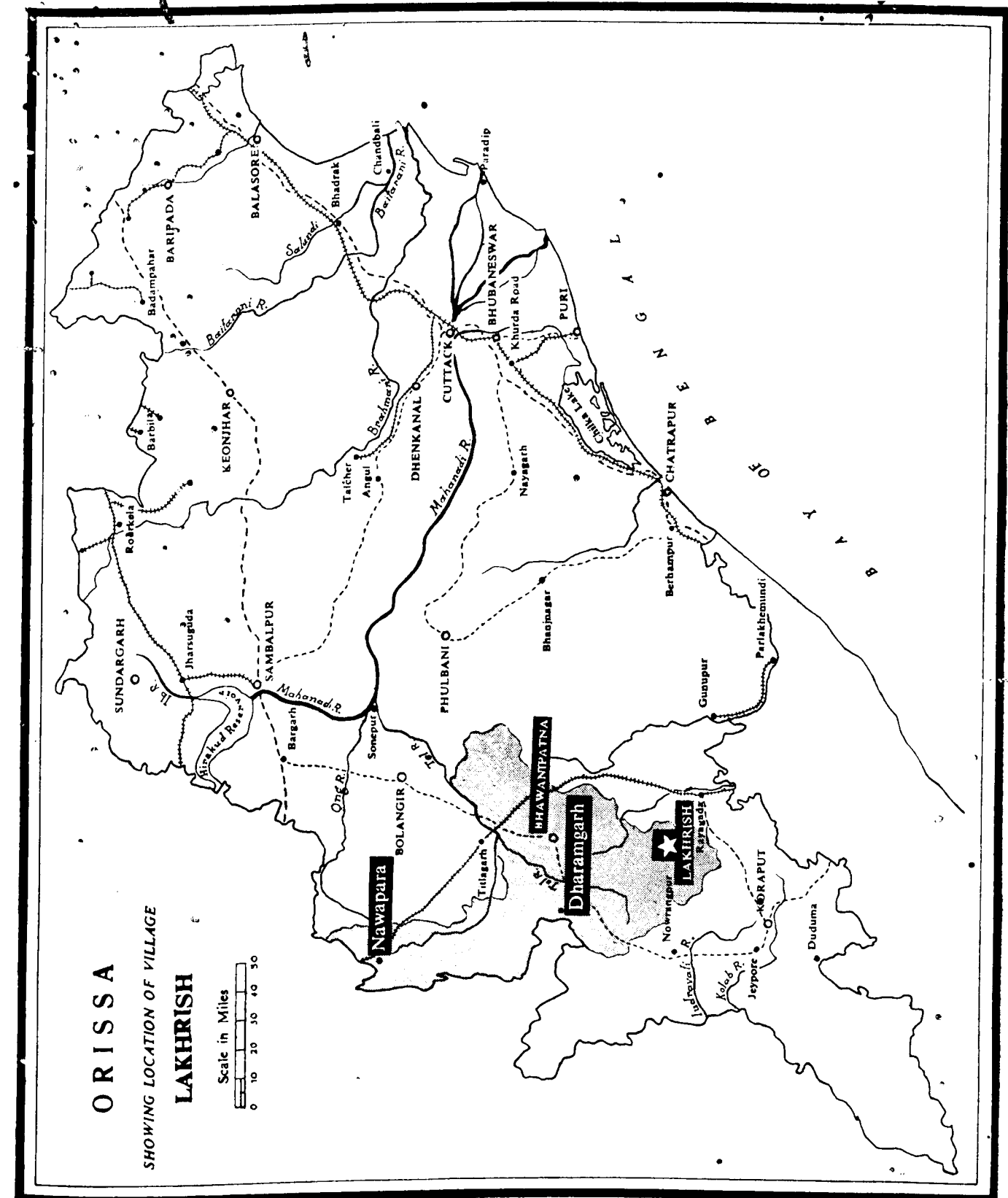
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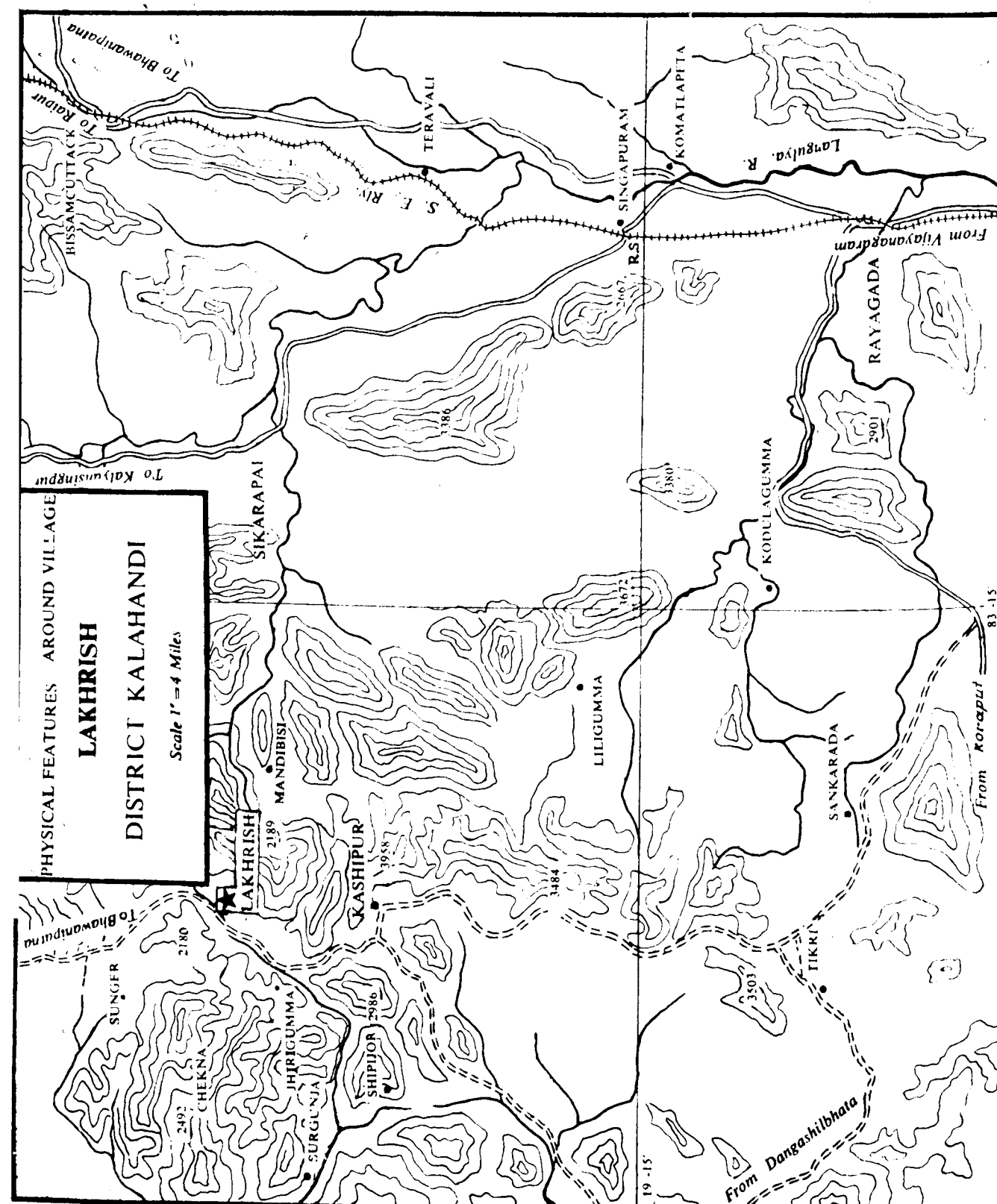
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CHAPTER I

THE VILLAGE

Introduction

The District of Kalahandi is in the western part of Orissa bordering Madhya Pradesh. The district was formed in 1949 by combining the princely state of Kalahandi and Nawapara subdivision of Sambalpur District. Lakhurish is a village within the jurisdiction of Kashipur police station, which was in Sadar subdivision at the time of the 1961 Census. Subsequently Kashipur police station was for reasons of geography and communications detached from Kalahandi District and included in Rayagada subdivision of Koraput District. But the selection of Lakhurish for purpose of this monograph was made with reference to the administrative position in 1961, on the basis of taking at least one village from a district in the first round before going on to others.

2. The village lies in an almost inaccessible area of dense forests and hills infested with tigers and other wild animals. Situated on a high plateau, it has a cool climate, and receives heavy rain almost the year round. The village is of a fair size, has an old and settled character, and is inhabited by people of different ethnic groups who function in a variety of occupations.

3. Kashipur was one of the four earliest special multi-purpose blocks in Orissa devoted entirely to the development of tribal people, and Lakhurish was in the block. Its inhabitants belong mainly to the Scheduled Tribe, Kandha while members of a Scheduled Caste, the Doms, are the second largest group. Agriculture is the chief occupation of the villagers, who, despite inducements to change and to develop, largely continue to live as they did before merger.

Communications

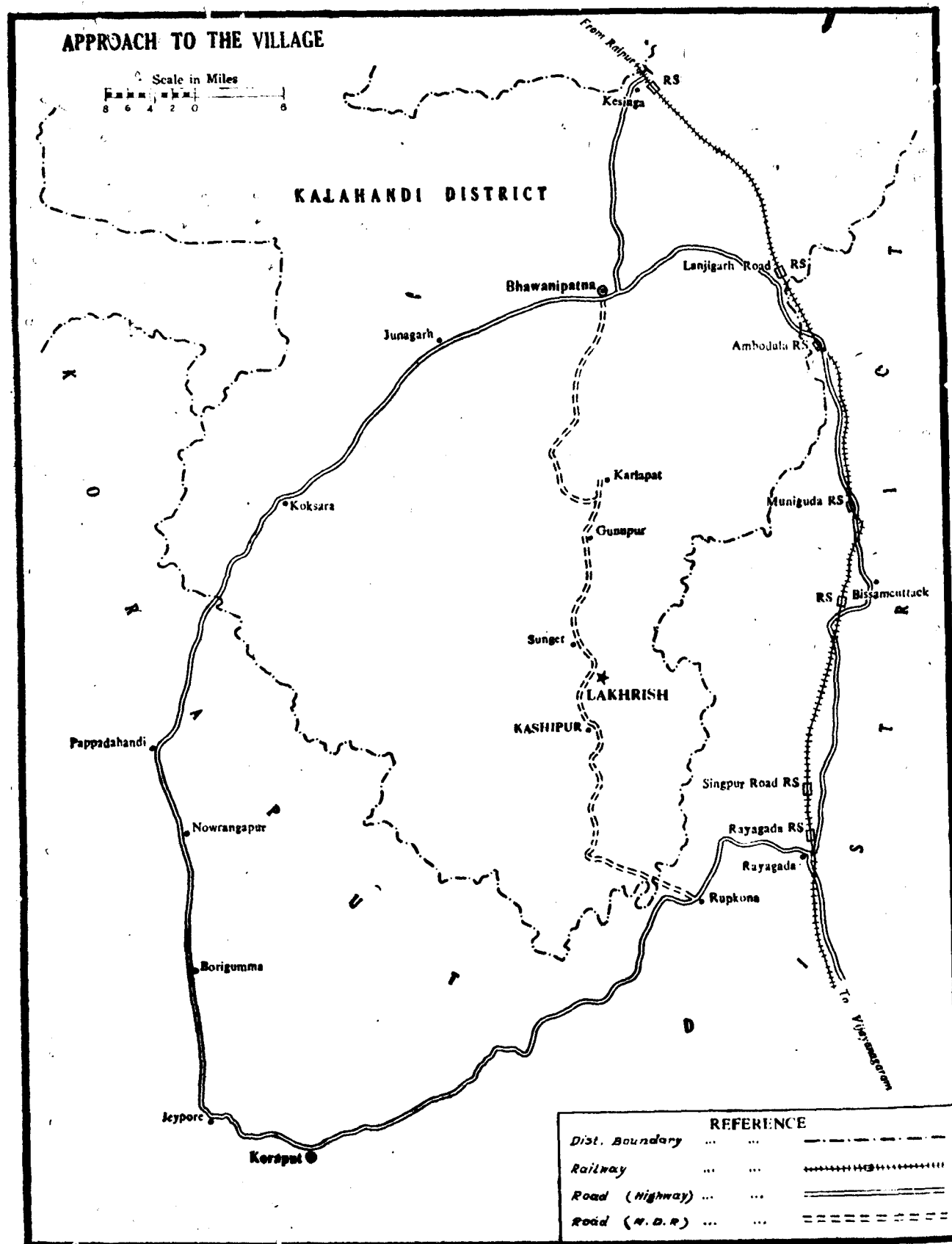
4. There is an earthen road from Bhawanipatna, the district headquarters, to Lakhurish via Karlapat, Gunupur and Sungar. The village lies between Kashipur and

Bhawanipatna, being seven miles to the north of Kashipur and 45 miles to the south of Bhawanipatna. This road can be used only in fair weather and is not maintained properly. It winds through dense forests, over unbridged streams and along the slopes of several hills. Even bullock carts find difficulty in plying.

5. An all-weather road runs from Bhawanipatna to Kashipur via Nowrangapur, Jeypore and Koraput. The last three places lie in Koraput District. Public buses ply on this route all the year round. One may also travel from Bhawanipatna to Kesinga railway station on an all-weather road on which buses ply all the year round. From Kesinga one may travel by train up to Rayagada, from where there is all-weather road to Kashipur. The distance from Bhawanipatna to Kashipur on this route is about 158 miles.

6. Instead of going to Kesinga one may travel, however, from Bhawanipatna to Ambodala railway station over a strip of road usable only in fair weather. Buses run on it in fair weather direct from Bhawanipatna up to Rayagada via Ambodala and Muniguda and from Rayagada up to Kashipur. The distance on this route is nearly 98 miles. The distance of seven miles from Kashipur to Lakhurish may be traversed on foot or bicycle or by jeep.

7. To visit Lakhurish from outside the State, one may take train from Raipur, in Madhya Pradesh to Rayagada and may then proceed by road. One may also take train from Vizianagram, in Andhra Pradesh, up to Rayagada and then travel by bus to Kashipur. Travelling from Bhubaneswar, one must go up to Vizianagram and thence to Rayagada. To approach Lakhurish from Sambalpur it is necessary to go to Titlagarh, in Bolangir District by bus and then by train to Rayagada. The new DBK railway also furnishes an approach from Sambalpur to Titlagarh, but



the line has still to be opened to passenger traffic.

8. A number of footpaths link the village with other villages and market centres. Kalyansingpur, in Rayagada subdivision of Koraput District, is a centre where there is a weekly market. The villagers of Lakhurish cover the 18 miles to Kalyansingpur on foot.

Size and lay-out

9. The area of Lakhurish is 637.62 acres—a little less than a square mile. The number of inhabitants is 574. There are 130 families occupying an equal number of houses. The village consists of three hamlets, namely, Dompapa, Tentulipara and Godampara. Dompapa contains 42 households, exclusively occupied by people of the Dom community. Similarly, Tentulipara contains 42 households exclusively of Kandhas. Godampara is the original place of settlement and contains people of various communities. Of the 46 households in Godampara 32 belong to Kandhas, 6 to Lohars, 3 to Doms and 5 to other communities—Karan, Brahmin, Ghasi and Gauda.

10. Unlike most other villages in hill tracts, the dwellings in the hamlets are not scattered. They have been built in regular rows. Tentulipara has two rows of houses with an intervening street about 25 feet wide. Similarly Godampara has two rows of houses separated by a 35-foot-wide street. Dompapa lies to the west of Godampara, at a distance of about 100 yards. It consists of four rows of houses. As in the other two hamlets the direction in which the houses have been erected is east to west.

11. A nullah passes from north-east to south-west through the village. Another flows in from the east, takes two sharp turns and meets the first nullah to the west of the village. The stream formed by their junction is called Duiman nullah and is recorded in settlement documents as Kandabila nullah.

12. The unmetalled earthen road from Bhawanipatna to Kashipur runs through the village to the east of Tentulipara and west of the first nullah. Opposite the junction of the nullahs, starting from the main earthen road and crossing the first nullah a little above

the confluence, a winding footpath leads to Godampara. From the southern side of Kandabila nullah, a little away from the confluence, another footpath runs to Dompapa. Originating from the main earthen road to the west of the first nullah from Tentulipara hamlet, another path crosses the nullah to the east of Godampara and goes beyond.

13. There is one community dormitory at the western end of the street in Tentulipara with a "gudi"—a place of worship—in the middle of it. The gudi in Godampara is also in the middle of the street, but the dormitory is at the eastern end of it. The village primary school, fair-price shop and grain gola are at the approach to Godampara. There are no gudis or dormitories in Dompapa.

14. The village crematorium is almost equidistant from Tentulipara and Godampara. It lies to the right of the first constituent of Kandabila nullah and to the left of the footpath from Tentulipara to Godampara. There is one tank and a well in Godampara. Tentulipara has one well to its east. Dompapa has neither well nor tank. There is a poultry sub-unit of the block in the village, and this is located in Godampara.

15. By the eastern and southern sides of Kandabila nullah there is first class wet land known locally as "bahal". Wet land of a slightly inferior type is found adjoining the eastern boundary of the village between Tentulipara and Godampara. There is also some land of this type adjoining the western boundary of the village to the west of Kandabila nullah. Dry land, locally known as "mali", is found to the south of Godampara and to the east of the strip of "bahal" land. However, most of the arable land in the village consists of the lowest type of dry land, called "aat". Most of it lies in a hornlike block to the North-west of the village. The State Government is developing an orchard near the primary school.

Physical features and surroundings

16. Lakhurish stands in a very small valley, the mean height of which is nearly 2,200 feet above sea-level. It is surrounded by hills, among which are Gurimali Dangar, Dansaemali Dangar, Godmali Dangar and

Mandiramli Dangar. These hills are one to two furlongs from the village and are covered with thick forest growth. In contrast the hills at the edge of the village have a barren appearance because the Kandhas, who practise shifting cultivation from year to year by burning forests, have destroyed their lush vegetation. Very occasionally does one find a fruit tree on these hills. Godampara is on the plain, but Tentulipara and Dompapa are at the foot of the hills.

17. The soil of Lakhrish is mainly red and rocky. The area is slopy, and the slopes join to forming an edge, and the stream flows at this edge. The slope of the plateau is, in general, slightly from north to south.

18. During the rainy and winter seasons a variety of crops are grown on the bare hills. Scarcely a single inch is left empty in these times.

Flora and fauna

19. The cultivated area in and around the village contains very few trees. Scattered jack, mango, fig and other fruit-bearing trees are found in this area but the hills some distance away are very rich in vegetation and animal life. The climate is ideal for large trees such as Sal (*Shorea Robusta*), Kusum (*Slicera trijuga*), Kendu (*Diospyros melanoxylon*), Mohua (*Bassia latifolia*), Harida (*Terminalia chebula*), Bahada (*Terminalia balirica*), Sahaj (*Terminalia tomentosa*), Pipal (*Ficus religiosa*), and Dhamana (*Grewiatiliac folia*). There are also sago palms and creepers called Siali (*Dauhinia vahili*) and Kumbhi (*Bombax-mala paricum*), as well as thatch areas and varieties of herbs. In the forests are tiger, leopard, panther, jackal, bear, boar, deer, sambar, barking deer, peafowl, pigeon and wild fowl.

Climate

20. The climate of Lakhrish is cool because of its height above sea level. Because of heavy rain almost the whole year round and because of the surrounding forests, Lakhrish is quite damp. Summer is scarcely felt. In March, April, May and June the days are only fairly warm. The summer temperature ranges by day from 37° to 41° centigrade, but at night it falls to between 20° and 29° centi-

grade. The villagers sometimes have fires in summer nights to keep warm. In winter the villagers have to burn fires in their houses for whole days and nights. There are reports of thin layers of snow falling in this region on such nights. Sometimes small birds and animals succumb to the severe cold. Severe winter is felt from November to February. During winter day temperature ranges from 20° to 28° centigrade, while the temperature at night goes down to 12° centigrade.

21. This region gets rain throughout the year except in March and December. Heavy rain occurs during June, July, August and September. The average annual rainfall is nearly 65 inches.

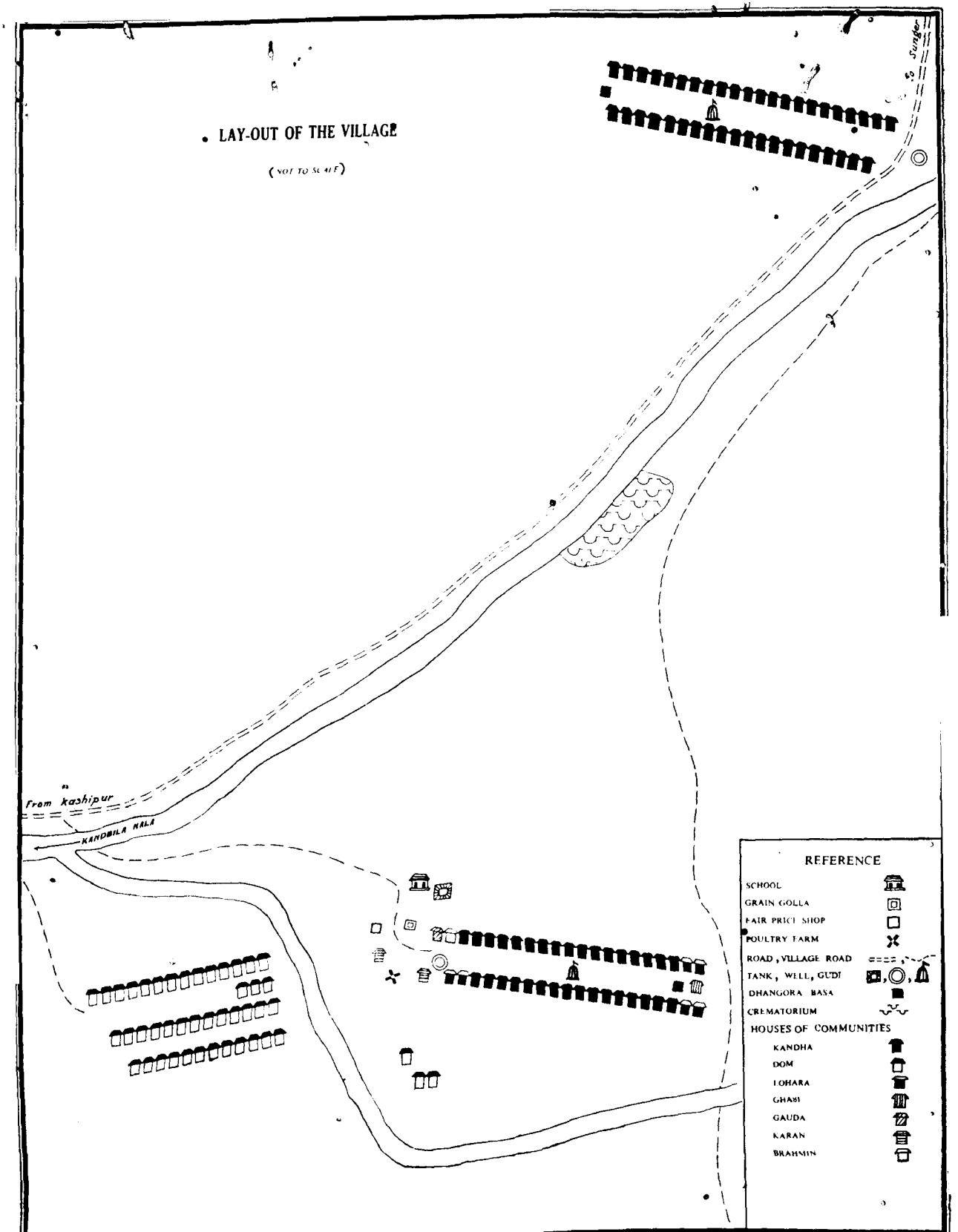
22. The two streams flowing through the village are the common sources of water. Previously the people used their water for drinking but the Government has constructed two masonry wells, one in Tentulipara and the other in Godampara. This was done in 1956 and 1959. The Doms of Dompapa are not, however, allowed to take water from these wells and must therefore turn to Kandabila nullah for their drinking water too. The nullah water supply is perennial. Besides being fed by the rains they also receive supplies from some natural springs.

23. There is also a tank near Godampara constructed by the Government in 1959 for fish breeding. Some inhabitants of Godampara bathe in this tank, but the majority of villagers use the streams for this purpose. The villagers also wash their clothes in them. Despite the impurity of the streams the villagers clearly prefer them to the wells, which are accordingly not used to their full capacity.

Institutions and public places

24. The bachelors' dormitory and the "gudi" are important factors in the tribal culture of Tentulipara. All the unmarried men of these hamlets sleep at night in the dormitories, which stand at the ends of the intervening streets. But the Doms are not a tribal people, and Dompapa accordingly does not have either a "gudi" or a dormitory.

25. Among welfare and administrative institutions there are the primary school and fair price shop, started after the inauguration



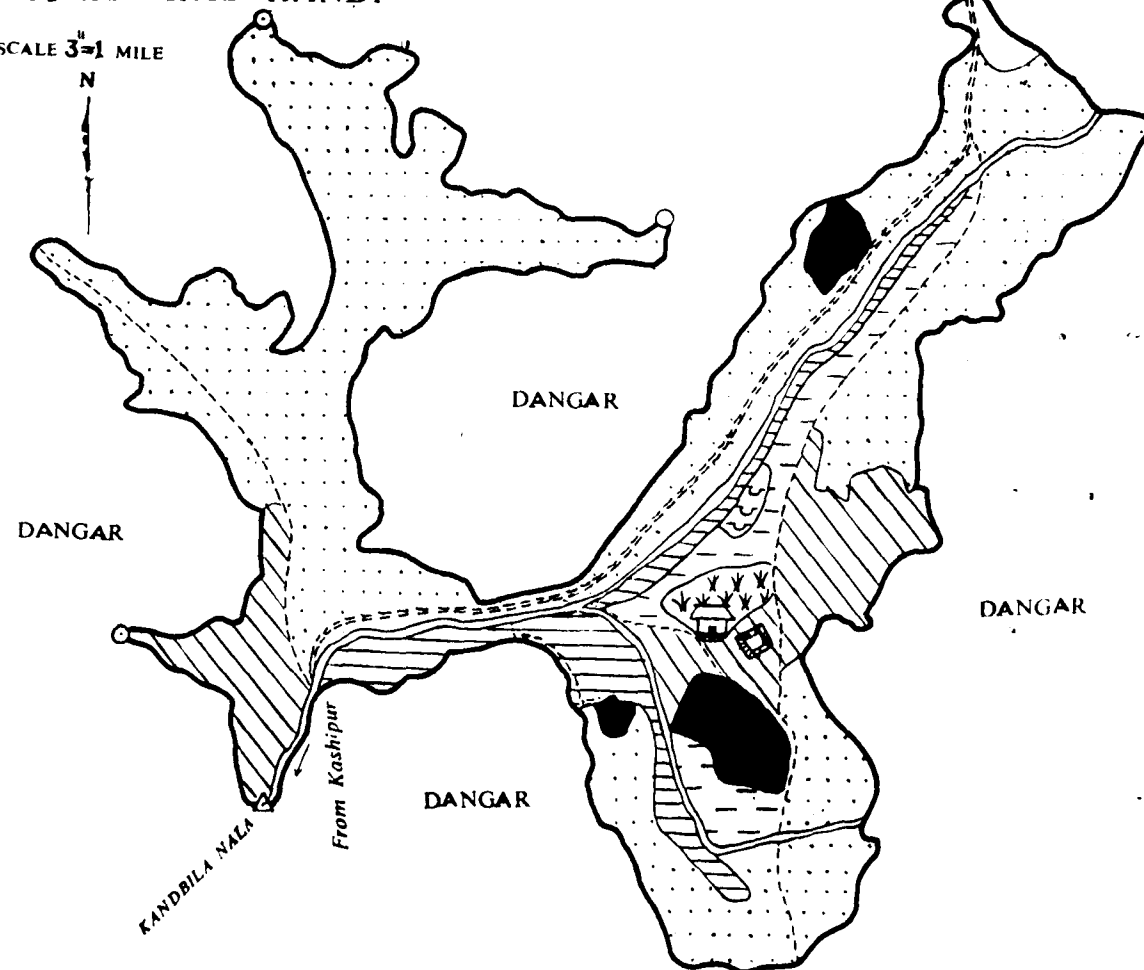
VILLAGE LAKHRISH

P.S. KASHIPUR

SUBDIVN. SADAR

DISTRICT KALAHANDI

SCALE 3"=1 MILE



REFERENCE	
VILLAGE BOUNDARY	VILLAGE SITE
BAHAL LAND (WET LAND)	BERNA LAND (WET LAND)
MAL LAND (DRY LAND)	AAT LAND (DRY LAND)
AGRICULTURE FARM	GRAZING GROUND
BURIAL GROUND	TANK
SCHOOL	
ROAD	FOOT PATH
STREAM	

of national planning. Though the school has not made much headway in spreading literacy the shop has made an impact on village life.

History

26. There are no records or popular traditions or sayings or legends which throw light on the settlement and growth of the village or how it got its name. The oldest households have lived in Lakhrish for four or five generations, and the village is probably no older.

27. Most of the villagers are Kandhas, who were once of nomadic habits. Shifting cultivation through burning forests and reclaiming virgin land set the pattern on their life. But the location of the village had certain advantages, among them the perennial streams, for permanent settlement. There was also flat land suitable for cultivation, and

the hills and jungles nearby were probably well stocked with game and materials needed for a settled existence. The Kandhas decided to settle here permanently.

28. The zamindar of Kashipur, who is still remembered as Budha Raja and worshipped by the villagers as a deity, later brought in Doms and Lohars to the village. The zamindar wanted the Doms to teach the Kandhas the plain methods of agriculture and the Lohars to make iron implements for them. The Kandhas benefited from the injection of this new blood and improved methods of cultivation. They hold the Doms in high regard, and latter, still said to be the advisers of the Kandhas, dominate the affairs of the village, though they are regarded as far inferior to the Kandhas in social status.

29. The other communities living in the village are temporary residents, being there in connection with Government work.

CHAPTER II THE PEOPLE

Ethnic Composition

The people of Lakhrish fall into three distinct communities: the Scheduled Tribes, the Scheduled Castes and the Non-Scheduled Castes. The table below shows the break-up of the village, community-wise.

Table 1
CASTES AND COMMUNITIES

Caste/community	No. of households	No. of population	Remarks
1	2	3	4
Kandha	74	338	Scheduled Tribe
Lohar	6	30	
Dom	45	196	Scheduled Caste
Ghasi	1	2	—do—
Gauda	1	2	
Karan	2	3	
Brahmin	1	3	
TOTAL	130	574	

2. The Kandhas, who belong to the Scheduled Tribes, form the majority in the village. This tribe, whose total population is 818,847, is spread over 13 districts of Orissa. The Kandhas used to indulge in human sacrifice and proved very difficult to handle during the first half of the last century when the British tried to put a stop to this practice. The nearby district of Baudh-Khondmals is the special agency area of Kandhamals (anglicized to Khondmals) where the Kandhas were subjected to special regulations. The Table 2 shows the regional distribution of the Kandha tribe in Orissa.

3. The Kandhas in Lakhrish number 338 living in 74 households. They have lived in this region almost from time immemorial. The second biggest community in the village

is the Doms, a Scheduled Caste. They number 196 and live in 45 households. The Doms are immigrants and were brought into the village by a zamindar of Kashipur four to five generations ago to teach the original settlers, the Kandhas, the methods of agriculture practised on the plains. There is another Scheduled Caste, the Ghasis, but there are only two of them in the village.

Table 2
REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF KANDHAS

Name of district	Males	Females	Total
1	2	3	4
Balasore	149	174	323
Bolangir	28,357	31,239	59,596
Baudh-Khondmals	96,947	102,059	199,006
Cuttack	2,298	2,442	4,740
Dhenkanal	9,722	10,841	20,563
Ganjam	26,056	27,261	53,317
Kalahandi	72,017	74,536	146,553
Keonjhar	2,065	1,983	4,048
Koraput	135,672	136,026	271,698
Mayurbhanj	110	83	193
Puri	15,779	16,066	31,845
Sambalpur	11,576	12,060	23,636
Sundargarh	2,000	1,329	3,329
TOTAL	402,748	416,099	818,847

4. The rest of the population of 38 belongs to the non-Scheduled Castes. There are 30 of the Lohar community, three Brahmins, two Gaudas and three Karans. The Lohars occupy six households and the others four. The last three communities are in the village because their members are in government service.

5. The Kandhas are generally dark in complexion, though some fair persons are also

found. An average male Kandha is about 5 feet 4 inches in height. They are slim but muscular. The females are slim too, but of shorter stature. The Kandhas have short but broad noses and high cheek-bones. Their main occupation is agriculture.

6. The Kandha tribe has six main divisions. They are Jhudia, Takaria, Kultia, Kurumal, Kutia and Majhi. There is an order of precedence or importance among these tribals and the groups are mentioned in that order. The Majhi Kandhas, also called Parajas, are the lowest category in this tribe, and the Kandhas of Lakhrish belong to this group.

7. The Majhi Kandhas have nine subdivisions. They are Santa, San-Santa, Pujhari, Basik, Andra Majhi, Pato Dari, Kisan, Bihi Majhi and Dhangora Majhi. The Majhi Kandhas, as a whole, belong to the tiger gotra. They do not kill the tiger. They believe that the animal is their brother and will not harm them.

8. There is no restriction among the various groups of Kandhas in ordinary social matters such as touchability, eating and water. But there are strict restrictions regarding marriage unions and permitted within the subdivisions of each of the six major groups. Marriage between the Takaria Kandhas and the Majhi Kandhas is also allowed, but not between other groups.

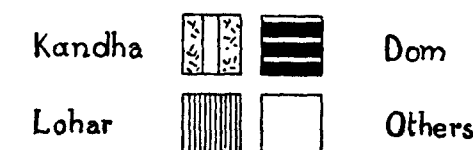
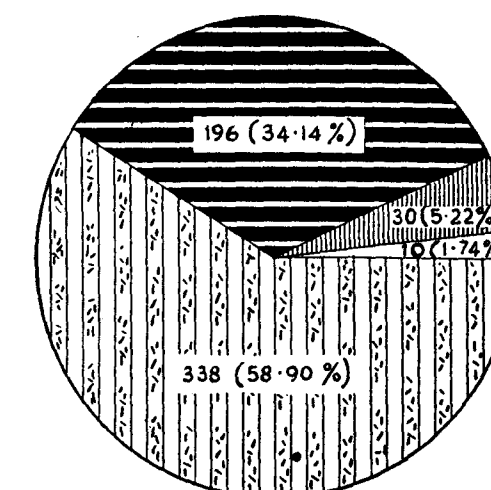
9. The Majhi Kandhas of Lakhrish speak a local dialect called Kui. This is their mother-tongue. But all of them know Oriya and speak with others in this language.

10. The Doms, as a class, are regarded as low in the caste set-up everywhere. But in Lakhrish because of the fact that they were brought in to teach the Kandhas new methods of agriculture they have slowly managed to secure for themselves a position of precedence over the Kandhas. They play a dominant role in village affairs. Though the Kandhas seek their advice they regard the Doms as very low, socially indeed untouchables. As a community the Doms flay dead animals and trade in hides and skins. In Lakhrish, their main occupation is agriculture. The Doms speak Oriya.

11. The community of Lohars is found everywhere, not only in Orissa but throughout the country. They are known by different names in different places. They prepare iron implements (from whence their name) for the village. Previously they used to smelt iron from ore by a crude process, but they now buy it readymade at weekly markets and fashion implements from it. Because of their preponderance the Kandhas of Lakhrish are recognised as superior to the Lohars socially. The Lohars, like the Doms, are also immigrants to the village. They speak Oriya diluted with tribal words and accents.

12. The single Ghasi household is also considered socially low by the Kandhas. The other four households of Gauda, Karan and Brahmin castes are of government officials posted for service in the village. They consider themselves socially superior to the other communities.

ETHNIC COMPOSITION



House and House type

13. There are 130 houses and equal number of households in the village. The following table gives the house type with number

of rooms as correlated to the number of persons occupying them.

Table 3

HOUSE TYPES				
House type	No. of houses	No. of rooms	No. of persons	Average no. of persons per room
1	2	3	4	5
One-roomed house	64	64	275	4.3
Two-roomed house	65	130	297	2.3
Three-roomed house	1	3	2	0.7
TOTAL	130	197	574	2.9

From the above table it is seen that one house is three-roomed, 64 one-roomed and the remaining 65 two-roomed.

14. The size of households in the village is given in Table 4 below. Out of 130 households 8 are large-sized having 7 to 9 members, 87 households with 4 to 6 members, 31 households with 2 to 3 members and only 4 households with one member. So the majority of households have a composition of 4 to 6 members. The village is of average-size families.

15. The houses in the three hamlets of Lakhrish, Dompara, Tentulipara and Godampara are built in rows in an east-west direction.

The houses face each other, some to the south and some to the north. The village streets run between the rows of houses. The 130 households have the same number of houses. All the houses in Dompara and some houses in Tentulipara consist of one room with thatched roof. Forty-one houses in Godampara have two rooms each, and of these 40 have pantile roofs. The improved type of housing in Godampara has been made possible because of a subsidy given by the Tribal and Rural Welfare Department of the State. Except for these, all houses are of a traditional pattern and design. From the social point of view there is no marked difference in the houses occupied by the Kandhas, Lohars, Doms and others.

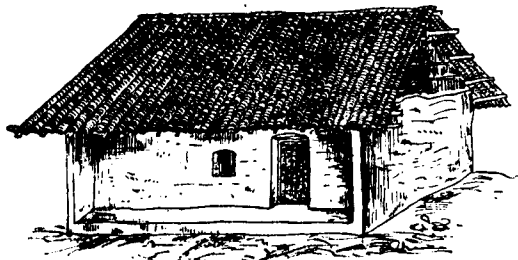
16. Only ten houses have brick walls, eight of sundried bricks and two of burnt bricks. Eighty-three houses have mud walls and 37 wood and wattled bamboo frames plastered with mud. The brick-walled houses have regular foundations. A slight foundation is also laid for houses with walls of mud. But the walls of wood and wattled bamboo are laid in excavated ditches.

17. The houses are not all of the same height. There are no beams to support the roof structure. Instead, poles are used to hold up the roof inside the rooms as well as in the verandahs. The maximum height of the roof is 10½ feet. One has to stoop to enter a house. The rooms do not generally have windows. As a result the houses are not well ventilated. The doors are made of wooden frames, fixed with wooden planks or with wattled bamboo

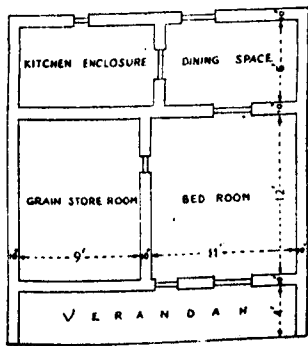
pieces woven into a sort of net.

18. A single-room house consists of one square room 10 feet × 10 feet, with a front verandah 5 feet × 10 feet. An area of about 3 feet × 10 feet at one end of the room is marked off by a low mud wall to serve as kitchen. The front verandah is also used for sleeping, dining and performing domestic chores.

19. The two-room houses have one living room, 9 feet × 12 feet, and another 11 feet × 12 feet. There is a back verandah, 6 feet × 20 feet, enclosed by mud walls, which serves as kitchen and dining place. Some households put up a middle wall with a door in the verandah to separate the kitchen from the dining area. The bigger room is used for sleeping and the smaller to store grain.



A TYPICAL HOUSE



GROUND PLAN
Scale 1" = 7' 6"

20. The only three-room house in the village has two rooms, each measuring 12 feet × 10 feet, and a storeroom, 8 feet × 10 feet. The first two are used as drawing-room and bedroom. This house also has an attached kitchen and an inside verandah three feet wide. The house, built in the shape of an L, is occupied by the Grama sevika of the Community Development Block posted to Lakhrish.

21. Houses which have small open spaces round them have fencing of greenery to serve as compound walls. The plinth of the houses is generally one foot above ground level. The houses have no doors as such, but improvised frames of tree branches and various kinds of leaves serve this purpose. These are removed and placed in position at the time of entrance and departure. The roofs of the houses, which are either of thatch grass collected from the forests or of tiles, slope equally at the front and back. One remarkable feature in the construction of these houses is that wood is used rarely because it is not readily available in the forests.

22. In a Kandha house the kitchen is the sacred place. Here are kept their household deities. The Doms keep their deities in the portion of the house used as store room. Since all the Doms have single-room houses their deities may be said to live with them. In two-room Kandha houses the rear verandahs are often painted with coloured earth. The Kandhas keep their domesticated animals, bullocks and cows, in the front verandah. If they are many, a separate structure is built for the animals. The Doms, as a rule, build separate structures for their animals. That is why a Dom's house is hygienically cleaner than that of a Kandha.

Dress

23. The dress worn by men and women of the Kandha and Lohar communities is similar. The Ghasi family also dresses the same way. The Doms too wear the same kind of apparel but are better clothed. The Karan, Gauda and Brahmin families follow the modes in the plains. The Kandha and Lohar men usually wear a langoti about 2 feet by 6 feet. Occasionally, they wear small napkins or towels of the same size. The Doms wear napkins of this size for everyday use. Sometimes they too put on langotis like the Kandhas.

24. The women wear sarees of 2½ feet by 12 feet for everyday use. On special occasions they wear slightly longer ones. Among the Kandhas and the Lohars, the sarees are folded and worn round the waist in such a way that the lower flap does not fall below the knees.

Table 4

SIZE AND COMPOSITION OF HOUSEHOLDS

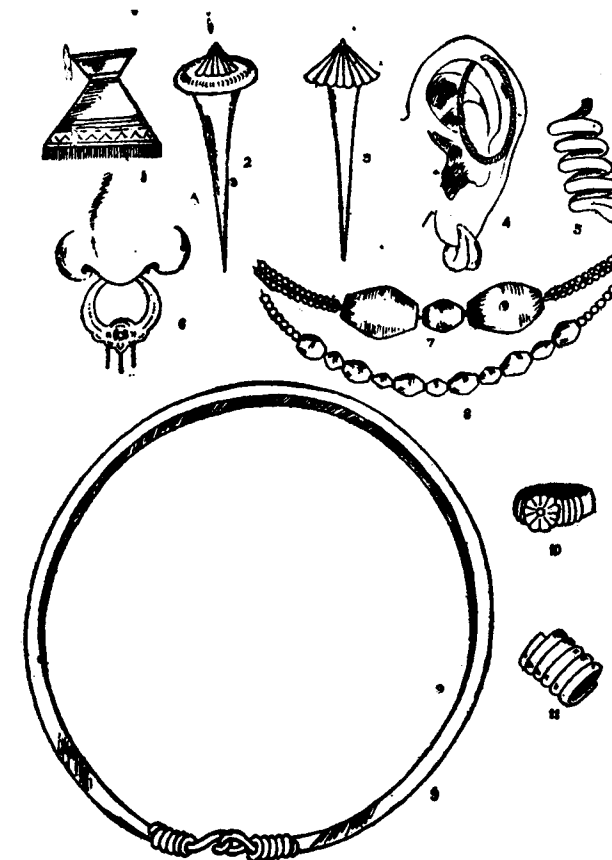
Total No. of Households	Single member			2—3 members			4—6 members			7—9 members			10 members and above		
	House-holds			H. H.			H. H.			H. H.			H. H.		
	Males	Females		H.	M	F	H.	M	F	H.	M	F	H.	M	F
130	4	1	3	31	43	45	87	204	217	8	25	36	—	—	—



DRESS OF A KANDHA MALE



DRESS OF A KANDHA FEMALE



ORNAMENTS

- | | | |
|-----------|--------------------------|------------|
| 1. Udha | 5. Nangul | 9. Khagala |
| 2. Guba | 6. Dandi | 10. Mandi |
| 3. Betha | 7. Haske | 11. Wathu |
| 4. Mandra | 8. Haske
(Kanthimali) | |

List of Ornaments

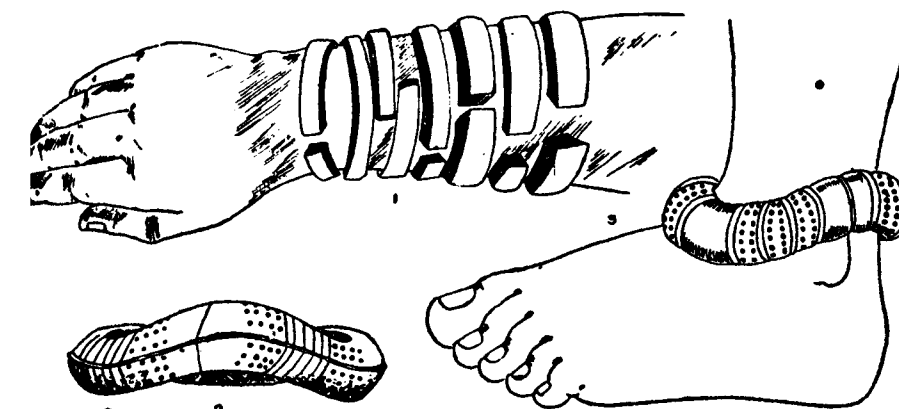
Parts of body	Name of ornament	Material	Weight
Head and hair	Udha	horn	—
	Guba	Silver	4 tolas
	Betha	Aluminium or silver	—
Ear	Mandra	Gold	½ to 1 tola
	Panchia Mundi	Gold or Brass	—
	Nangul	Silver	2 tolas
Nose	Dandi	Gold or brass	—
Neck and chest	Khagala	Aluminium	6 to 12 tolas
	Haske	Brass	5 tolas
	Kanthimali	Glass beads	—
Wrist and arm	Kataria	Silver or brass	—
	Bandaria		
Fingers	Mandi	Gold	½ to 1 tola
Leg	Ander	Aluminium	—
Toe	Wathu	Brass or aluminium	—

The rest of it is thrown across the chest and twisted at the back and tucked into waist leaving the back and a portion of the chest uncovered. Sometimes two pieces of cloth or two towels of small size are used in place of a saree. One is tied round the waist and the other covers the upper portion of the body. The Dom women also use the same size of sarees, but they cover the upper portion of their body carefully. They do not, however, use the two-piece dress of the Kandha and Lohar women.

Ornaments

25. The women of Lakhrish wear a variety of ornaments on different parts of their bodies. Most of these are of aluminium, except rings in the nose and the ears which are of gold or brass.

26. Three types of ornaments are worn in the ear. One, ring-shaped, worn in the upper ear lobe, is called "punchia mundi". Another in the lower part is called "mandra".



ORNAMENTS

- | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|
| 1. Bada | 2. Andu | 3. Andu |
|---------|---------|---------|

These are made of gold or brass. A third ornament, shaped like a serpent, called "nangul" and made of silver or aluminium, is used in place of the "mandra" in the lower part of the ear lobe.

27. The nose ornaments consist of three pieces of gold or brass. There are rings in each of the nostrils and one in the centre called the "dandi". The ear and nose ornaments are of everyday use. Then they have a necklace of glassbeads, called "haske", or a solid ring of silver or aluminium, called "khagla" which is worn round the neck by both young and old. These two are worn on special occasions.

28. The rings on the fingers, called "mandi" are of aluminium or brass. The toe-rings called "wathu" are bigger and coiled. Women of the Kandha and the Lohar communities do not wear glass bangles. They wear aluminium bangles called "bada", about six on each arm, and aluminium anklets called "andu". Married women of these communities, after giving birth to their first child, take off these bangles and anklets and never wear

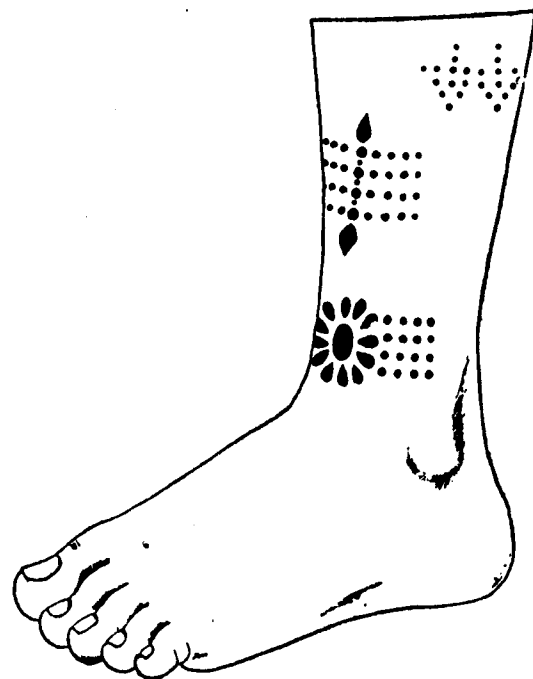


TATOO ON THE FACE OF A FEMALE

them again. But the Dom women continue to wear these ornaments even after marriage and child-bearing.

29. Tattooing is also a speciality among the women of the Kandha, Dom, Lohar and Ghasi communities. The girls are tattooed after they are ten years old. These tattoo marks are required by custom and girls must have them before they are married. The designs are simple and are made on the forehead, chin and legs.

30. The women do not have any particular hair styles. They keep long hair, which is combed once in three days after applying "tolo" oil made from mahua seed. The hair is parted in the middle, then combed back and tied into a bun on the neck but slightly to the right. The bun is made to look bigger by running black threads through it. A comb made of horn, called "udha", is always fixed on the heads of Kandha and Lohar women. They use these for setting in position stray locks of hair. They also use hairpins of aluminium or silver, called "betha" and "gubba", on special occasions.



TATOO ON THE LEG OF A FEMALE

31. The men generally cut their hair short and shave their beards once in two or three months. The moustache is not shaved but trimmed occasionally. There are no barbers in Lakhrih. The caste Hindus go to Kashi-pur periodically for shaves. Some of the men in each community act as barbers to serve other members of the same community.

Household articles

32. All households possess such essential articles as small bamboo baskets, large grain containers of bamboo called "dolis", bamboo

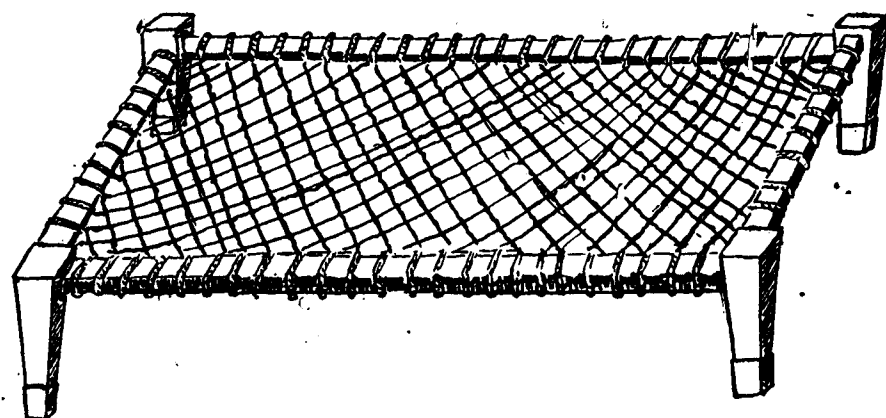
mats, a "jatra" made of stone or wood for grinding corn, a mortar and pestle for husking paddy, winnowing fans and brooms. Of all kinds of furniture the charpai, called khatel, is the most common and is used in almost all households. The head of the house usually uses the charpai. It is also offered to guests for sitting. Charpais are made of local material and are quite cheap. Yet there are only 128 in the whole of the village for a population of 574. Very few households have chairs, benches, stools or wall shelves. The following table shows the distribution of furniture among the different communities:

Table 5
POSSESSION OF FURNITURE

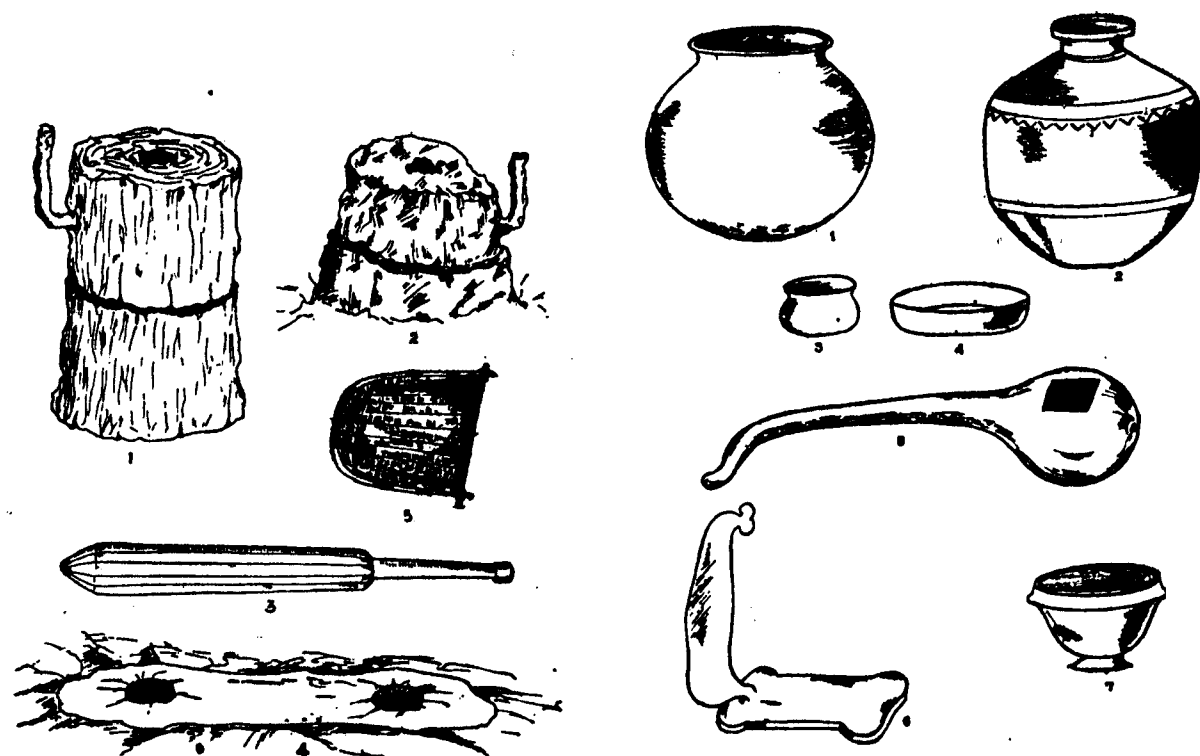
Caste/community	No. of households	Number of households owning						
		Bedstead	Charpai	Chair	Table	Bench	Stool	Wall shelf
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Kandha	74	—	73	1	—	—	3	2
Dom	45	—	44	1	—	—	—	—
Lohar	6	—	6	—	—	—	—	—
Karan	2	—	2	—	—	1	1	1
Brahmin	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
Ghasi	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
Gauda	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	130	—	128	2	—	1	4	3

33. The villagers do not have much use of utensils. Leaf cups, big and small, are used for a variety of purposes from drinking water and gruel to storing grain. Each household is satisfied with one or two earthen cooking pots (laibanjani tandi), pitchers (aitandi) and gourd ladles (jachka). A few households also have bell-metal cups called "mandis", aluminium plates called "tamias" and bowls called "baktis". Only one Kandha household,

whose elder is the village headman, has some brass pitchers, jugs, and bell-metal cups and plates. Most Dom households have aluminium, brass and bell-metal utensils besides earthen pots. Among other consumer goods, 24 households have hurricane lanterns, which they acquired in the course of the last five years. The Doms have 12 and the Kandhas seven. The Lohars have none and the other communities one each.



KHATEL



HOUSEHOLD ARTICLES

- | | |
|------------------|---------|
| 1. Jatra (Jalni) | 3. Kul |
| 2. Jatra | 4. Heni |
| | 5. Hesi |

UTENSILS

- | | |
|---------------|-----------|
| 1. Laibanjani | 4. Tamia |
| Tandi | 5. Jachka |
| 2. Altandi | 6. Panki |
| 3. Mandi | 7. Batki |

34. The villagers depend mainly on wood for light and heat. During winter every household has a great quantity of wood kept burning all 24 hours of the day. Even during summer they burn wood at night, and this serves them as light.

Food habits

35. All the permanent families in Lakhish are non-vegetarians. They kill domestic birds and animals for food and also hunt in the jungles nearby and fish in the streams. Their staple food is ragi, kosala and rice. Ragi gruel is taken throughout the year, and kosala and rice once in a day to break the monotony. The principal meals are usually taken with salt and chillies, and occasionally with boiled green leaves and vegetables. Fish and meat are eaten when available. But meat is an indispensable item for social and religious functions and goats, sheep, cows and buffaloes are killed by Kandhas and Lohars. The Doms and Ghasis eat beef and pork. People of all four communities eat the meat of fowls, pigeons and peafowl. The Kandhas and Lohars also eat rats, non-poisonous snakes known as "dhamona" and large reptiles like "godhi".

36. Food is cooked in earthen pots. Sometimes vegetables, roots, mushrooms, and even fish, fresh or dried, are just baked on a fire and eaten with salt. Vegetarian and non-vegetarian curries are generally prepared by boiling and adding only chillies and salt. But a few households have now learnt to use groundnut oil, onions and spices to make their curries. The food habits of the Brahmin, Karan and Gauda families are, however, different. They are similar to those of people in the plains.

37. Liquor is drunk by the Kandha, Dom, Lohar and Ghasi communities. Both men and women drink "mohua" liquor and sago palm and date palm juice. Their favourite alcoholic beverage is "handia", which is prepared by every household. Liquor is an important item at religious functions, and social etiquette demands that guests and visitors be offered liquor.

Beliefs and practices concerning birth

38. The social customs of the Kandhas and Doms have many interesting features.

The Kandhas, for instance, do not make prior arrangements for child-birth. Delivery takes place in the main living-room of the household. At the time of delivery, one or two elderly Kandha women who are familiar with the process are called in to handle the case. After delivery the umbilical cord and the placenta are buried near the house. The child is bathed in tepid water. The mother cleans her clothes and washes in warm water. She does not eat or drink on the day of birth. She is not allowed to touch cooking pots or other household articles for five days as she is considered defiled. Even members of her family do not touch her. If anybody accidentally touches mother or child during these days he or she is required to take a bath. On the fifth day the room is cleaned by the mother with cowdung. After boiling her clothes with ash, she washes them in the stream, then bathes herself and returns home. The head of the household or the father of the newborn next sacrifices a fowl to the household deity in the kitchen. Some households perform this sacrifice on the seventh day after birth. The cooking utensils of the household are not thrown away. Other members of the family are not considered defiled and outsiders may eat with the family if food is cooked separately.

39. The Kandhas observe no other ceremony in connection with child-birth. The child is named later by the parents, but there is no special naming ceremony. It is customary for a child to be named after the paternal grandfather or great grandfather if it is a boy and after the paternal or maternal grandmother or great grandmother if a girl. Nowadays Hindu names and names derived from the day of birth are given to children.

40. Among the Doms the mother of a newborn child is considered defiled for thirty days. During this period all the members of the household are also considered polluted and are not touched physically by outsiders. On the seventh day the mother washes her clothes and cleans the room with cowdung. From this day mother and child become touchable by other members of the family. But they are kept secluded for 30 days. On the 30th day the mother once again cleans the room, washes her clothes in the stream,

bathes and returns home. No special purification ceremony is held in the house. On that day the mother resumes her normal household duties. The Doms do not observe any name giving ceremony.

41. There is no rigid restriction on the diet of the mother. In both communities the mother is allowed to eat anything except meat, fish and eggs. That is, the mother has only a vegetarian diet as long as her child is breast-fed. The child may be taken outside the house at the end of the period of profanation, and when it is two or three months old it is taken even to distant fields by its parents.

42. The Kandhas do not observe any ceremony when a girl attains puberty. Some hours after her first menstruation starts the girl applies turmeric and oil on her body and bathes in the stream. She cleans her clothes with ash. On returning home, she changes her clothes and does her work as usual. No restriction is imposed on her diet and movement. She cooks for the family and mixes with others as freely as before.

43. The Doms keep a girl secluded for 10 days, during which she is not touched by others as she is considered profane. She can, however, work outside the house, but is not allowed to cook or touch household articles used by other members of the family. On the 11th day the girl washes her clothes in the stream and bathes, after which she is considered clean.

Beliefs and practices connected with marriage

44. The Kandhas, Lohars and Doms favour early marriages. Child marriage is permissible, but it is rare because it is quite expensive. There is only one case of child marriage in this village in the Kandha community, when a boy of 10 married a girl of the same age. The girl lives with her parents in a different village, and the marriage will be consummated when she attains puberty.

45. The marriageable age for girls varies from 15 to 17 and for boys from 16 to 20. Polygamy, widow marriage, divorce and remarriage are permissible in these communities. One Lohar and three Doms have two wives each. One of these Doms, aged 50, married

for the fifth time after divorcing his first three wives. The fourth and fifth wives live with him. The fourth wife, who is over 30, was married at 15 and the fifth wife of 23 years has been married for five years. Another Dom, about 35, has two wives aged 30 and 22 years, and the duration of their marriages are 15 and 5 years respectively. The third Dom married a widow two years ago. His first wife is 58 and he is about 60, and they were married 40 years ago. The Lohar is about 50 and married his first wife 32 years ago. She is now 47. He married again four years ago, choosing a young widow of about 20. Though polygamy is permissible among the Kandhas they do not practise it.

46. Divorce is discouraged by the caste panchayat and elders of the village. Yet divorces are not infrequent. An instance has been cited above of a man who divorced three wives and married a fourth and a fifth. A young widow is generally married to the younger brother of her dead husband or to a man of a different household if there is no possibility of such a marriage. Widows are generally married to widowers or are taken as second wives. Parallel cousin marriages are not only permitted but are preferred to other relationships. Seven such marriages have been noted and there is one instance of marriage with an elder brother's widow, and one with a wife's young sister.

47. The age and marital status of the villagers has been shown in Table No. II of the appendix. In the group up to 14 only one boy is married. Marriages generally take place between the ages of 15 and 20. Only 11 males and 4 females are not married in this group. There are no widowed persons in it, solely because all the marriageable widows and widowers have been allowed to marry. Except the Grama sevika all males and females between 25 and 59 are married. In this group there are one widower and 16 widows. They are above 40, with the exception of three females who are below 30 and expect to remarry as soon as they get grooms. In the last group 7 persons are married and 14 are widowed, and they will probably die in that state as they are too old to marry again.

48. The marriage rites of the Kandhas and the Lohars are similar. The Doms have separate customs.

49. Margasira, Pausa, Magh and Baisakh are considered auspicious months for marrying. Marriage negotiations are usually settled a few months before a wedding. The groom's parents or guardians generally choose a girl of a family known to them. They take the help of a "desari" to ascertain which girl is suitable as a daughter-in-law.

50. The boy's father or guardian takes rice in a leaf-cup with a few copper coins to the house of the desari. The desari cleans a spot in front of his house with cowdung and places the cup containing the rice and coins on it. He burns incense and worships, in the name of all the village deities, Dharam Debata, Suraj Debata, Dangar Debata, Budha Raja, Patra Debata and Kandul Boja, during which he chants mantras. After worship he takes a handful of rice, casts it on the ground and pairs the grains in the name of one of the proposed brides. If the grains end in pairs the match is considered good. Failing this, he repeats the process in the names of other likely girls, one at a time. Then on a Wednesday or a Saturday the parents of the boy and some members of the same caste go to the proposed bride's father or guardian who is informed beforehand of the visit.

51. The parents of the boy carry a bottle of liquor with them, and this is drunk while the match is discussed with girl's parents in the presence of some elders. If the girl's parents agree to the marriage the boy's parents buy more liquor and serve all present. After the deliberations, and irrespective of their outcome, the girl's parents feed the visitors. If matters have turned out favourably the parties decide on the bride price which ranges from Rs. 60 to Rs. 100 in cash. The price is generally paid after the birth of a child to the couple. The day for the wedding is tentatively fixed when the match is made.

52. The parents of the boy then return home and begin making arrangements for the ceremony. They buy rice, goats, sheep and erect a pandal of leaves in front of their house. The bridegroom's father sends three males and

two maidens to invite the bride over. Accompanied by them and by some elders of her village, she sets out for the bridegroom's village at an auspicious time on the advice of the desari to the thunderous rhythm of drums called "nisan" and "dhapa".

53. The party is received at the outskirts of the village by boys, girls and elders from the groom's village. The "jani", priest of his village, sacrifices one chicken at the bride's feet, and showers "arua" (raw unboiled rice) on her. The young men and women of both villages dance singing humorous songs. The procession marches on to the house of the bridegroom with the young people still dancing and singing to beat of the drums.

54. On the wedding day the bride and groom eat food prepared from arua. The groom continues to stay in the "dhangora basa" till he is escorted to his house on the arrival of the bride. All the wedding guests are given liquor. The young people of both parties dance in front of the house, singing songs, full of sexual allusions. The bridegroom and bride are taken inside the house. A new spade and a rope of buffalo hide are placed on a spot cleansed with cowdung. The couple place their right feet and left feet respectively on the spade and rope and the jani showers some arua on their feet, sacrifices a fowl and smears its blood on the feet of the couple as well as on the spade and the rope. This function is held at the auspicious moment decided by the desari.

55. The wedding having been solemnised, the guests are entertained sumptuously. Next morning all the guests leave the village. The bridegroom sleeps in the dhangora basa with his bachelor friends, and the bride sleeps alone in the house allotted to the couple. On the seventh day the newly weds, accompanied by an elderly male and a female, visit the bride's parents. There too they live separately for three days. On the fourth day the bride's father presents the couple with new clothes and cakes and sends them home.

56. After they return, the husband continues to sleep in the dhangora basa. According to tradition, the bachelors are supposed to object to the newly married man's living in his

new home with his wife. So the father of the boy sends ragi flour and jaggery to the bachelors with a request that his son be released from the association of the dhangora basa so that he might live as a married man. The bachelors make cakes and eat them, after which they literally carry the man to his new home, get the door opened, push him inside and leave him alone with his wife. This practice is observed to assert the supremacy of the community over the individual.

57. Among the Doms, marriage negotiations are conducted between known families. The talks are initiated by the boy's father. The parents of the boy visit the house of the proposed bride's father for discussions regarding the match. As the Doms claim to be more sophisticated than and socially superior to the Kandhas they demand a high bride price, ranging from Rs. 100 to Rs. 200. In addition one or two cans of liquor, five to seven slingloads of cakes and sweetened fried rice, the same number of sarees and a gold or silver necklace are also given to the bride's father.

58. If the parents of the boy and girl come to an understanding the proposal is finalised and the marriage day fixed immediately. The bride price is paid, either during the discussion or later date, but always before the wedding. Weddings take place in the months of Margasira, Paush, Magh and Baisakh. The Doms consider Wednesdays auspicious for marriage as well as for other functions.

59. The day before the wedding a male is sent to invite the bride. On this day the bride is bathed by her maiden friends after turmeric and oil are rubbed on her body. She is also bathed in the same way the following morning. She then wears a new saree and the ornament given by the bridegroom's father. The bride, her parents, friends and relatives eat and set out for the groom's village accompanied by a party of musicians beating drums and playing pipes. When they reach the village they are welcomed by men and women singing humorous songs. The bride is taken in procession to the house of the groom and seated on a new bamboo mat. A bamboo box containing new clothes for the couple is

brought out. An earthen lamp and a brass or bell-metal jug filled with water are also brought. The bride and groom put on new clothes from the box and sit side by side on the mat.

60. The bridegroom's sister's husband, who is known as the "bhatta", officiates as priest in the wedding ceremony. He binds the right hands of the bride and the groom with a piece of thread. Grains of rice are heaped in front of them and they are asked to count the grains with two fingers. The groom counts first and then the bride. If her count tallies with that of the groom this is considered a good omen and she is not subjected to questioning. But if she counts less the bhatta asks her what happened to the missing grains. She has to explain that some were eaten by fowls or pigeons and such answers generally evoke laughter from the onlookers. After this bride and groom drink liquor and eat. Then the bride joins the women and the groom the men and all dance before the house to the music of drum and pipe. All the guests are given liquor and food. Generally pigs and goats are killed at marriage feasts. Consummation takes place the second day after the wedding. After a week the couple, accompanied by one or two persons, visit the bride's parents, with whom they spend a day or two before returning home.

61. The Kandhas observe the usual wedding function in the case of child marriage, and there is no further function when the girl is brought to live with her husband after she attains puberty. Caste men are, however, invited to a feast. Hence a child marriage is more expensive than one of adults, and only moneyed people hold such marriages. In the case of polygamous marriages the wedding ritual is observed if the bride is not a widow. In the case of widow marriage the relatives of the groom and the bride are simply entertained to a feast.

62. Divorce is sanctioned by the caste panchayat if attempts to reconcile the parties fail. On marrying a divorced woman her second husband pays compensation equal to the bride price, the cost of materials given to the bride's father and the marriage expenses.

The panchayat realises in all a little less than the total expenses from the second husband before giving approval for the divorce. This measure is designed to discourage divorce and to restore happy family life as far as possible.

63. Marriage by capture or forcible marriage is also prevalent among the Kandhas, Doms and Lohars. A young man plans with his friends to kidnap the young woman of his choice and keeps watch on her movement for some days. They lay in ambush and kidnap her when she is alone on her way to market or to the jungle and carry her off to his house. Sometimes the girl is taken away from her village in spite of oral as well as physical opposition from her parents and relatives. If the parents of the girl agree to the marriage the elders of both parties meet and finalise the bride price. If they do not agree because of the unsatisfactory economic condition of the boy's parents the issue is brought before the caste panchayat. The panchayat generally tries to compromise in favour of marriage. The parents of the girl take her away in case they do not accept the decision of the panchayat.

64. Sometimes married women with or without children are enticed away. The young man concerned knows, there is no rigorous punishment for the act. All he has to do is to pay compensation to the woman's husband. But the amount may be heavy, and varies according to whether the woman has children or is childless. If the enticed female is only betrothed to a man the compensation to be paid by her enticer is less.

65. Pre-marital sex is permitted between young men and women if they are within marriageable relationship. If a woman becomes pregnant as a result she is married to the young man responsible for her condition.

66. Payment of dowry is not compulsory. Rather, the practice is despised. But some well-to-do persons present their daughters with metal utensils when they leave for their husbands' homes.

Beliefs and practices connected with death

67. The Kandhas burn their dead in the crematorium to the north of the village, no

more than a furlong from Godampara. The bodies of small children and of those who die of smallpox are buried. On death, the body is immediately removed from the interior of the dwelling to the courtyard, and the members of the family and close relatives put grains of rice smeared with turmeric into the mouth of the dead person. In this way they give the last symbolic meal to the departed. The family and relatives weep near the body. If the dead person was a married male the ornaments worn by his widow are removed. Relatives cover the body with new clothes. The corpse is placed on a cot and carried to the crematorium. Drums are beaten on the death of a prominent person in the village.

68. Wood for the pyre is taken from the house of the dead and the deficiency, if any, is met from the neighbouring forest. The funeral pyre is made ready in the crematorium by some members of the caste before the body is taken there. The corpse and the bier are placed on the pyre. The head, with face downward, points to the east. The body is covered with cloth and pieces of wood. Then a male not related to the dead person sets fire to the pyre near the head after moving three times round it.

69. As soon as the pyre catches fire all the mourners leave the crematorium and go to the stream. There they rub their bodies with bark of "baring" in the belief that thereby they will avert possible visitations by the "duma" or soul of the dead. When rubbed on the body this bark gives a lather. The mourners also rub their left toes with cowdung and mango leaves. After bathing, they return home but do not mix with other members of household for three days as they are considered defiled for having participated in the funeral.

70. On the third day after the funeral the clothes of the dead person's family are washed by the women and the house is cleaned with cowdung. The jani mixes the milk of a black cow, mango leaves and resin in a jug and sanctifies it by chanting mantras. Then he sacrifices a fowl near the jug, sprinkles the milk all round the house and on all the members of the household as well as on those who

took part in the cremation. This function is called "ambopani gadhua" literally "mango-water bath".

71. The Kandhas do not throw away the old cooking pots, nor do they give feasts to the men of the caste, and the funeral function is performed after a year. The function, called "Dossa" is performed any day and month. On this occasion after the lapse of a year the house is cleaned, a goat is slaughtered and a feast of rice and mutton curry held to which all the caste people of the village, relatives and also people belonging to other village communities are invited. After the feast the dress, utensils and implements of the dead person are gifted to the Doms. The average expenditure on this funeral observance is about Rs. 100.

72. The Doms also place grains of rice in the mouth of the dead. The body is placed on a cot and carried to the crematorium by members of the family and caste. It is placed on the pyre with the head to west in the case of males and to the east in the case of females. The pyre is set alight and the mourners stay till it is completely burnt.

73. A relative of the dead person prepares an earthen effigy of him and a cup out of jamun leaves, and these are placed in the centre of the point of cremation. The assembled persons place grains of rice in the leaf cup, which is kept near the effigy. Thereafter they go to the stream and bathe, rubbing their bodies with baring bark and mango leaves.

Members of the bereaved family are not touched physically by their kinsmen till they are purified.

74. The purification ceremony is held between the seventh and eleventh day of the funeral, according to the convenience of the household. The day before, the observance, the son-in-law or brother-in-law of the dead person cooks rice and mutton curry in new earthen pots and takes the food to the stream accompanied by members of the family. Another earthen effigy is set up on the bank and each person feeds it. The remaining food and the effigy are then thrown into the stream. The group returns home after bathing.

75. The son-in-law or brother-in-law next cooks rice and fowl curry in new earthen pots. The male members of the family are served first, and then the females. Next morning, the house is cleaned and all the family clothes are washed in the stream. The males of the household are shaved by other men of the caste beside the stream. On their return home their relatives bring rice, vegetables and liquor. A meal with meat is served to fellow-villagers of the same caste and to the relatives. The minimum expenditure on a Dom funeral ceremony is about Rs. 100.

76. There is only one crematorium in Lakhrish, and the different communities use different parts of the crematorium although there is no demarcation for the purpose. None of the communities erect tombs or memorial stones to their dead in the crematorium.

CHAPTER III

THE ECONOMY

Resources

In spite of being relatively secluded Lakhrish has felt the impact of outside influences. The main channel of these influences is the extension and welfare activity of the community development block. Nevertheless, the village has not been economically integrated with the rest of the district to which it belongs, and to this extent it is a self-sufficient unit.

2. Land is the chief material resource of Lakhrish; and most of its inhabitants make a living from agriculture. The cultivated area is 529.57 acres, but the villagers do not regard its cultivation as sufficiently profitable. Much of the land has been denuded of its fertile top-soil and its surface now consists mostly of red rocky material whose fertility is very low. For the same reasons the villagers have not cultivated about 50 acres of waste land. Instead, they have turned to the slopes of the surrounding hills, known as "dangar", to grow a variety of leguminous plants on a multiple-crop basis. The forests surrounding Lakhrish provide animal and vegetable foodstuffs, fuel and building materials. These factors combine to make the village economy self-subsisting to a large degree.

3. Out of total 130 households 116 are directly dependent on agriculture. Because of poor and inadequate capital resources there is little trade or industry. Paucity of capital also impedes the introduction of improved agricultural practices and the productivity of labour is very low. There is a fair amount of underemployment. Livestock are neglected and much of the forest wealth has been destroyed or damaged. Cultivation of the hill slopes is done only with spades, a clear indication, if any is needed, of the low technical level of the village economy.

New factors

4. Since 1951, however, several new and important factors have been introduced into

the economic life of Lakhrish. Formerly, the village was linked with Kashipur by only a footpath. With the inauguration of the community development block, with the headquarters at Kashipur and specially aimed at the welfare of the tribal people, a road negotiable by jeeps has been built linking Kashipur, Lakhrish and Sunger. Trucks also ply on this road in fair weather.

5. Community development has brought village-level workers to Lakhrish. From them the villagers have learnt about improved methods of cultivation although they have not felt impelled to adopt them right away. A co-operative society has been established at Kashipur and 18 villagers of Lakhrish have obtained land improvement loans from it. The Soil Conservation Department has spent a considerable amount of money in the village to check erosion and denudation by building contour ridges on the hill slopes. As climatic and other conditions favour the cultivation of fruit a model orchard has been established by the Department of Agriculture. Nineteen pairs of bullocks for draught purposes and improved agricultural implements have been supplied free of cost to selected villagers. A poultry farm has also been established.

6. On the social side the Government has built model houses, well-ventilated and roofed with fire-proof tiles, and given them free to families belonging to the Kandha and Lohar communities. The effect of this was immediate, and quite a large number of other households have covered their homes with tiled roofs. A fair price shop, for which the Government provided the initial capital and running expenses, has been established. The villagers are now using sugar, tea, sweets, kerosene oil, matches and soap besides other simple consumer goods on a scale they had not been used to before. All these innovations have almost imperceptibly influenced village life.

7. In addition, certain social and administrative reforms, have influenced considerably the economic life of Lakhrish. Before 1956 the zamindar of Kashipur used to collect land rent from the villagers through his gountia, a hereditary agent for this purpose—who was rewarded with the privilege of using a sizeable area of land without paying rent. This land was customarily called “bhogra” land. This apparently reasonable and innocuous system was, in fact, a pernicious influence on the social life of the village. Through his power as rent collector the gountia exerted a hold on the tenants and through him the zamindar played a dominant and divisive role in village affairs. In 1956 the gountia system was abolished and the major part of the bhogra land held by him was settled in his favour in terms of tenancy. The rest was handed over to the village panchayat to lease out and collect rents for the grama fund. Added to this was the practice of “bethi” under which the villagers used to provide unpaid labour to the zamindar for various purposes from cultivation to household chores. The zamindar did not even give these labourers food during the period of free service. The system was different from slavery only inasmuch as the slaves were permanently maintained by the owner, who could sell them if he liked, while the bethias were not so bound. But whereas slavery imposed definite social and economic responsibilities on the owner the bethia system imposed none on the zamindar. The village panchayat selected villagers in turn to perform bethi.

8. With the abolition of zamindari, bethi came to an end. This change is probably the most significant new factor in the social and economic life of the village in recent times. But the zamindar, while exacting free services from the villagers, did to some extent fulfil certain social needs. He supplied the element of leadership to his tenants. He did also provide a quicker and cheaper method of settling disputes among them. The zamindar also occasionally performed benevolent acts. As a result even now the villagers worship the old dead zamindar as a deity named Budha Raja. To stay in his good graces the tenants used to make the zamindar presents of goats,

vegetables and fruits at Dasahara. These gifts were known as “bhetti”, and though the zamindari system has been abolished and revenue collection is made direct by Government officials bhetti continues to the present day so far as the old zamindar’s family is concerned.

Occupation structure

9. Of the 130 village households 116 are engaged in agriculture, 20 of them only as hired labour. Thus nearly 90 per cent of the villagers derive their income from cultivation, supplemented generally by subsidiary occupations like livestock breeding, hunting and gathering forest produce.

10. The Kandhas practise agriculture as their primary occupation. Blacksmithy is the main occupation of two Lohar households which also engage in shifting cultivation on the hill slopes. The Doms are primarily cultivators and agricultural labourers, but they also rear livestock and engage in retail trade.

11. Of a total population of 574 persons 270 are engaged in cultivation on their own behalf. The number of agricultural labourers is 35, of whom 24 are women. Of the 270 cultivators, 134 are males and 34 in all are below the age of 14. They help their parents in the fields. The large bulk of farmers, 112 males and 120 females, are between 15 and 54 years of age. Only three males and one female are above 60.

12. Of the 35 labourers a male and a female are below 14 years of age. Agricultural labour is engaged mostly on daily wages. Not a single labourer works on an annual or long-term basis. Of the five persons engaged in household industry two Doms work as carpenters, two Lohars as blacksmiths and one Ghasi makes aluminium rings and bangles. These artisans sell their goods for ready cash.

13. Three males and one female, all adults, are engaged in retail trading. They all belong to the Dom community. They purchase tobacco, salt, dry fish, jaggery and other household essentials at the weekly markets at Kashipur and Sunger for sale to their fellow-villagers.

14. Eight adult males, four females, and two others below 14 years, perform other paid services. Five are in regular Government service, and they comprise a social worker in the Tribal and Rural Welfare Department, a lower primary school teacher, the salesman at the fair price shop, a fieldman of the Department of Agriculture and a Grama sevika of the Community Development Department. Five of the remaining seven are cowherds, one, a Dom, is the village chowkidar, and the last is the servant of the Grama sevika. Table III in the Appendix gives the statistics of workers by sex, broad age group and occupation.

15. Among the non-earning groups 34 youngsters go to school. One adult female is engaged solely in household duties. Mere dependants form the large bulk of non-earners. Of the total of 248 non-earning or non-worker population 175 belong to the households of cultivators, 41 to those of agricultural labourers, 11 to households engaged in crafts, a similar number to households of traders and 10 to those engaged in other services. Most of the non-earning population is below 14 years of age and the number in this group is 224. Of the 213 mere dependants only 23 are adults, 17 being over 60. All able-bodied males and females except six are engaged in gainful economic activity. Table IV in the Appendix gives the statistics of workers by sex, broad age groups and nature of activity. The following table lists occupation data obtained during the 1951 Census and during the present survey:

Table 6
OCCUPATIONAL TRENDS

Name of occupation	Number in 1951	Number in 1961	Percentage growth or decline per annum
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Cultivators and dependants	409	445	(+) 0.88
Agricultural labourers and dependants	22	76	(+) 24.54
Workers in household industry and dependants	13	16	(+) 2.3
Traders and dependants	35	15	(-) 5.71
Other workers and dependants	2	22	(+) 100.0

It will be seen that all the occupational groups except the traders rose in numbers. Trading in Lakhrish has always taken the form of door-to-door hawking. With the establishment of the fair price shop some households and individuals engaged in this occupation have switched to other forms of earning. Some of them have joined the ranks of agricultural labourers, who have had a growth rate of nearly 25 per cent yearly. Petty traders, who had little or no land or other capital resources, would obviously find it very hard to turn to any occupation other than farm labour.

16. The fair price shop and easier road communications with fairly distant marketing centres and with Kashipur and Sunger have not, however, completely satisfied popular demands for consumer commodities. The villagers do not always have ready cash for shopping and barter transactions are therefore sometimes carried out at the door by the housewife. This accounts for the continuance of the old practice of retailing by village families although their business is fast declining.

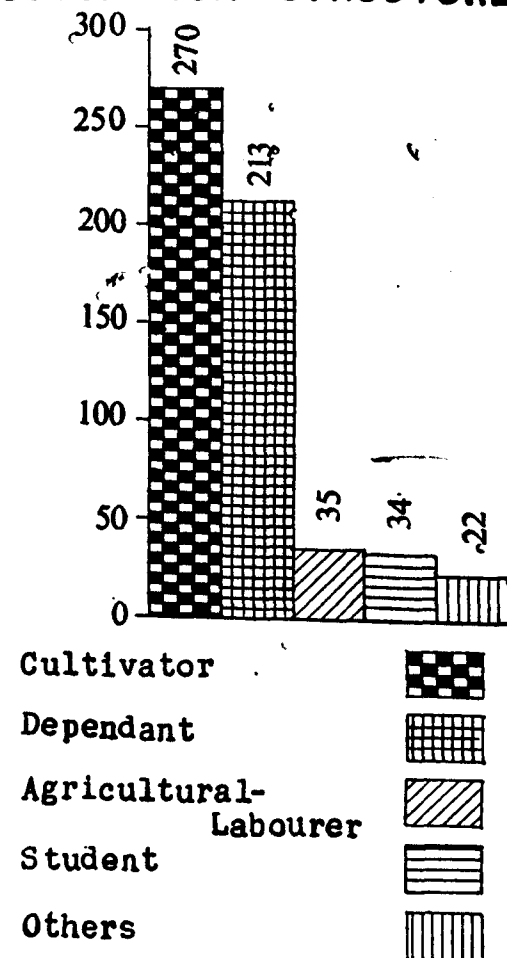
17. Agricultural labour is by no means an attractive source of livelihood, yet the number of labourers has more than trebled. Members of other occupational groups have been compelled by circumstances to join this group. The growth rate among cultivators and their dependants has been less than 1 per cent yearly. Some small cultivators have become labourers. Agricultural labour is often a subsidiary occupation of poor cultivating households.

18. Household industry has had an absolute increase of only three persons over a decade. This is due to the crude nature of the traditional processes undertaken to cater only to limited local needs, and consequently there has been no scope for increase. The increase in number of persons performing services is mostly the result of the arrival of more transients. Several Government officials posted to the village and their dependants have enlarged this group.

19. The only occupational group to register a substantial increase is thus agricultural labourer. Its increase, at the expense partly of other groups, indicates a general deterioration in the village economy. The occupational

distribution of the villagers may be represented in the following diagram:

OCCUPATION-STRUCTURE



20. The heads of 130 households were asked questions relating to the type of employment they wanted for their sons. Of 96 cultivators 45 desired to see their sons follow the same occupation. The remaining 51 desired their sons to enter Government service. Eight agricultural labourers were against occupational change, but five of them wanted their sons to be cultivators and seven others desired their sons to seek Government employment.

21. Of the four households engaged in domestic industry one desired no change of occupation, but the other three wanted their sons to follow their occupation, another wanted his sons to be owning cultivators and the third felt that his offspring should be agricultural

labourers. The last-mentioned householder could give no reason for his choice.

22. The seven households performing other services desired no change for their sons. Thus 62 householders were for no change while 61 householders wanted to see their sons holding Government jobs. The only two other occupations chosen for a change were cultivation of owned land and agricultural labour. Six households desired a change to cultivation and one to agricultural labour. None wanted industry or trade. The pattern of employment aspiration of the villagers seems to point to a lack of enterprise.

Labour force

23. The labour force consists predominantly of persons between 15 and 59. In Lakhrish 291 persons are in this age group, and they are the optimum number for whom the village could, at its prevailing economic level, provide work. But the actual number of gainfully employed persons is 326, 35 in excess of the optimum. The reason for this is that 38 persons below 14 years and four above 60 are working for remuneration, against which seven persons between 15 and 59 are not participating for one reason or another in gainful economic activity.

24. More than half the labour force between 15 and 59 consists of women. Of 152 females in this category 146 actually engage in earning occupations from cultivation to trading. Of the remaining six, one belonging to the only Brahmin household in Lakhrish, is occupied solely with household duties. Among the other high-caste families in the village the only Gauda household has no females. One Karan household consists of a male social worker, the other two females, one of whom is the Grama sevika, belonging to the 15-59 age group and working while the other, below 15 years, is also working as her maid servant.

25. Abstention from gainful employment is not a matter of caste but due to economic factors. Among such communities as the Kandhas and Doms, who in general do not regard working as socially degrading for females, five women between 15 and 59 years do not work for wages. It has been noted among these communities that the greater the

economic stability of a household the less inclination there is for the women to work.

26. There are 18 females below 15 and 60 working, mostly in cultivation. The old woman who works in the fields belongs to the Kandha community. Males and females of the Dom community are noticeably industrious. They generally continue working so long as their physical condition permits them to. The only male Dom in the working age group who is not employed is a blind youth of about 16.

Land

27. The total area of the village is 637.62 acres, of which 529.57 acres are cultivated. The remaining 108.05 acres are of the following types:

1. Gochar—common grazing ground	11.71
2. Jalachar—area under water	5.7
3. Communal land, crematorium, village road and public places	18.10
4. Waste land	30.50
5. Cultivable waste	22.77
6. Area occupied by Government institutions	0.6
Total	108.05

28. The total cultivated area is owned and tilled by people belonging to only three communities, Kandha, Dom and Lohar. The people of the other four communities in the village, Karan, Brahmin, Gauda and Ghasi, own no land and do not engage in cultivation on any other basis, for instance, share cropping. While the first three communities in the second group are temporary residents, the Ghasis are permanent. The 529.57 acres of cultivated land are divided among 110 households. In addition about 100 acres of hilly land are also cultivated by some of these households. Table V in the Appendix gives the details.

29. Forty-seven households own fewer than five acres each. In this category one household owns from 20 to 50 cents, another

between 50 cents and an acre, 10 households between one acre and 2.4 each, and 35 households from 2.5 to 4.9 acres each. In the second category 44 households own from five to 10 acres each and 19 households above 10 acres each. Twenty-five households—19 Kandhas and 6 Lohars—obtained land free from the Government under the colonization scheme of the Tribal and Rural Welfare Department. About 91 acres were purchased from the former zamindar of Kashipur out of a departmental grant for this purpose. Ownership rights have been conferred on the cultivators concerned.

30. Some villagers also hold land in forms other than ownership. When the post of gountia was abolished part of the rent-free bhogra land held by this functionary was given to him and the rest, nearly 1.5 acres, was handed over to the Grama panchayat. The panchayat has leased out this land to individual tenants on annual rent. For statistical purposes, this leased land has been shown as being owned by the tenants in dealing with the various groups of landholders mentioned earlier.

31. The practice of sharecropping also obtains in this village. Some of the comparatively big landowners have let out some portions of their land to smaller landowners on this basis. The usual share of the owner is half the net produce, and this is calculated by deducting from the gross produce the amount of seed sown. These two types of land—one held from the Grama panchayat on lease and the other held from other landowners in the village on a sharecropping basis—are held by 31 households. Two households cultivate five cents or less of such land, one cultivates between 20 and 50 cents, five between 50 cents and 1 acre, two from 1 acre to 2.4 acres, eight from 2.5 to 4.9 acres, 11 from five to 10 acres and two households above 10 acres. The 31 households comprise 12 Kandhas, 14 Doms and 5 Lohars.

32. Similarly, 19 households—13 Kandhas and 6 Lohars—hold dangar land on hill slopes, and the distribution of such land according to the size of each holding: three households hold 50 cents to an acre; three from an acre to 2.5 acres; nine from 2.5 acres

to five acres; and four households above five acres to 10 acres.

33. The tenure of dangar land is less substantial than ownership. This land has not been surveyed and accordingly leases are based on the number of "kudukis" (spades) a tenant owns. Dangar land is not cultivated with plough and bullocks but with spades by digging small, shallow pits for planting seeds. The number of spades owned would, therefore, roughly indicate a household's ability to cultivate this type of land.

34. It is estimated that one kudoku of land is slightly less than an acre. Land for 89 kudukis has been leased on a total annual rent of Rs. 44-50, that is, at the rate of 50 paise per kudoku. The land revenue paid for other cultivated areas in the village is Rs. 303-30 besides Rs. 48 paid as cess and another Rs. 48 as "nistar" (forest cess).

35. Land in Lakhrish is in general of low fertility. Cultivable land is divided into five categories: "bahal", "berna", "mal", "aat" and "gharbari". The last named category comprises homestead plots on which, besides building residential houses, people also grow rabi crops and vegetables. The other four categories are paddy lands, in order of degree of fertility. The first two categories are wet land and the next two dry. Wet land consists, however, only of a few acres, and except for the first category paddy land is not very fertile. The bahal plots adjoin the two nullahs flowing through the village. Most of it is along the nullah which runs from Tentulipara towards Godampara. Denundation of top soil because of heavy rain accounts for the low fertility of most of the village land.

36. Three Kandha households lost land by way of sale during the present generation. On the other hand 19 Kandha and 6 Lohar households gained, as mentioned earlier, during this period about 91 acres of land provided by the Government as a measure of tribal welfare. Besides, 11 Dom households also purchased land out of their savings in the same period.

Agriculture

37. Paddy is the principal crop grown on bahal, berna, mal and aat land. Late varie-

ties of paddy are grown on bahal land, which is watered by the nullahs. The usual varieties of paddy are grown on berna and mal land while early paddy is grown on aat land. Maize and beans and vegetables like tomatoes, cucumbers, gourds, pumpkins, chillies and plantains are grown on plots attached to homesteads. As a result of the extension activities of the community development block, cauliflower, radish and potatoes are also being grown on these plots.

38. After the harvest of early paddy oil-seeds like mustard and til are grown on aat land. Similarly, maize and bajra are grown on homestead plots during the rains, and after their harvest vegetables are grown in winter. Gharbari and aat land thus yield two crops a year. Rabi crops such as kandul, kating and black gram, cereals such as ragi, koian, bajra, jhari, kosala and gurji, and oil-seeds such as gingelly are grown on dangar land. The periods of sowing and harvest of various crops are indicated in the table below.

Table-7
SOWING AND HARVEST

Name of crop	Month of sowing	Month of harvest
1	2	3
Late paddy	March and June	December
Early paddy	June	September
Ragi	May	January
Kosala	May	October
Kangu	May	January
Gurji	May	August
Jhari	May	August
Kandul	May	January
Kating	May	January
Alsi	May	November
Koian	May	November
Mustard	September	December
Black gram	May	January
Bajra	May	August

The table shows that sowing and harvesting are performed almost all the year round. February, April and July are the only three months when neither of these processes is performed. Heavy rain falls in July and brings all agricultural activity to a halt. Fields are cultivated and prepared for sowing in other months, including February and April. Thus the farmers of Lakhrish labour all the year round to extract a meagre living from the soil.

39. The land gets a lot of water and is liable to flood in July and August. Late paddy is, therefore, sown very early so that by the time the floods come the plants are sufficiently tall to survive. This is why paddy is sown on bahal land in March. The particular variety of paddy seed sown takes a little longer than usual to ripen. Though sown as early as March it is harvested only in December.

40. The cultivators also take plenty of interest in the bahal land. They manure it with cowdung and remove weeds from the growing crops. Paddy grown on other land does not take so long to mature nor is it tended so carefully. Late paddy is also sown on berna and mal land in June and is harvested in November. This crop is locally called "beda".

41. Early paddy is sown in June, but as it takes less time to ripen it is harvested in September. This crop is locally called "bhodei" after the month of Bhadrap (August-September) when the crop is harvested. Mustard is sown on aat land after the early paddy is gathered and is harvested in December. Rabi crops are sown on dangar land in May. The system of mixed cropping is employed and harvesting continues right from August up to January as the period of ripening of the various crops varies. Gurji and jhari are harvested in August, kandul and kating in January.

42. In bahal land the agriculturists generally prepare the paddy fields in March, April and May, and the seed is sown in June. Earlier, in May, they sow rabi seeds on dangar land with spades. Having harvested early paddy in September, they grow mixed crops of mustard, til and other oil-seeds on aat land.

Thereafter they go on harvesting various crops.

43. As the other farming operations are very few, in fact almost nothing, the agricultural calendar in Lakhrish is really very primitive, consisting of sowing for a month or two and then harvesting. There is a good deal of underemployment in the village economy. Agriculturists do not often have a full day's work in their primary occupation even during the busy season and are for the most part completely idle in other seasons when they have no gainful jobs.

44. Both wet and dry land, with the exception of dangar land, are tilled with traditional wooden ploughs. Paddy land is usually ploughed twice before the seed is sown. The ploughed fields are levelled and the ridges are repaired before sowing. This is done in order to maintain a sufficient quantity of water in the fields during the rains. Though men and women both toil in the fields ploughing is done by men alone. Women repair ridges and level plots before sowing and perform various operations subsequent to this.

45. Work generally starts about 8 O'clock in the morning and ends about 3 O'clock in the afternoon. People engaged in such field work do not return home for the midday meal. Food is taken by them to the fields when they set out in the morning. After the day's work is done they eat in the fields and while returning home collect firewood and leaves from the nearby jungle.

46. Before sowing the agriculturists of Lakhrish observe certain ceremonies. The Kandhas and Lohars observe similar practices in this regard but the Doms have different ones. Improved seed is not much in use in the area. Instead, agriculturists use their own seed set aside from the previous year's harvest. Curing of seeds is unknown to the villagers. Sowing by broadcasting is the practice and transplantation of young plants is not done.

47. All the cultivated area in the village is rainfed. There are no irrigation facilities, and these are really not necessary as rainwater is more than sufficient for the requirements of

agriculture. But some minor irrigation projects may be feasible along the water channel flowing through the village. Such works would help ensure more even distribution of water to the fields if intensive cultivation is undertaken.

48. The cultivators do not make much use of manure. Chemical fertilisers have not made any headway in the village. Green manuring is not customary and cowdung is not widely used except on bahal land, where it is spread on the ploughed fields before sowing, but even these applications are inadequate. As weeding is restricted only to this type of land, it is a sad sight to find rank wild grass growing side by side with paddy, so much so that it is often difficult to distinguish grass from paddy.

49. Having thus completed the preliminaries of agriculture, the cultivators sit back and wait for the harvest. No other operations are undertaken in the meantime, except planting "karada" (*Cleistanthus collinus*) twigs to ward off pests. Dusting and spraying of chemical pesticides is rare. When the crops ripen the cultivators harvest them and take the ears of paddy to the threshing floor on their heads or in slings. Women have a big hand

in gathering the harvest. On the threshing floor grain is separated from straw by treading. This process is done by men and bullocks. The tools and implements used by the agriculturists are represented in the sketches below.

Agricultural implements

50. "Nengel" is the traditional wooden plough. Its blade, trunk and handle are made of one piece of solid wood, usually from the "saragi" tree. This wood is hardy but not too heavy. The plough blades used in the village are much narrower than those used in villages on the plains. The ploughshare fixed at the end of the blade is quite sharp, and the blade spears through the hard rocky soil, making grooves when drawn. The plough stilt at the rear which the tiller grasps is manipulated while making furrows. It serves as a sort of steering wheel for the primitive and rudimentary implement, powered by draught animals.

51. When in use the plough stilt is nearly three feet above ground level. The plough rod is a long separate piece of wood, roughly circular, and fixed on the middle of the plank, piercing it and bulging out on the reverse side, where it is tightened by a wooden peg. The

rod is normally eight feet long. The "juad" is tied to the other end of the rod when tilling. This is carved out of a piece of straight slender wood and is five feet long. There are four sticks fixed on the two ends of the rod, and in between these sticks the two draught bullocks are yoked with ropes round their necks. The juad is narrow in the middle for a length of four feet and is broader and thicker at the ends, which rest on the shoulders of the bullocks.

52. Another wooden implement, 7' x 1' x 1/4', called the "mai" is used partly to break up the bigger sods and partly to level the ploughed field. Ropes are attached to its sides and attached to the juad. The mai is quite heavy, and the ploughman does not stand on it as it moves, as is done on the plains. This implement does not, however, break up the big heaps of earth deposited at various points in the ploughed field. For this purpose a "kurulu" is used. This is a wooden plank 2 1/2' to 3' high breadthwise. There are two holes on each side of the plank to which ropes are tied, and these are stretched and tied to the juad. On the reverse of the plank there is a small handle on which the tiller exerts varying degrees of pressure to flatten the soil turned up in ploughing.

53. The "habini" is a thick iron rod pointed at one end and rounded at the other and about 3 1/2' long. With this the cultivator removes the clods of earth. This implement is also used to dig pits and prepare ridges. The "daili" is a small and slightly bent sickle used to uproot weeds in paddy fields. "Ela", the sickle, has a serrated iron blade fitted to a smoothened and polished piece of wood which serves as handle. The spade is called "rafa" and has a sharp cutting edge to remove soil. Its iron blade is sharpened on a whetstone and is roughly rectangular. The handle is a wooden rod nearly 3' long fixed on the blade at its neck. The rafa is also called a kuduki and is generally used to cultivate dangar land. The ela is used to cut the tender branches of shrubs and other wild plants on this land before they are burnt.

54. Cultivators attach much importance to dangar cultivation. The hill slopes are cultivated consecutively for not more than two

years and then left fallow for four or five years, during which small shrubs and trees grow on it. When the land is again taken up for cultivation this vegetation is cut and burnt during summer and fertilises the soil.

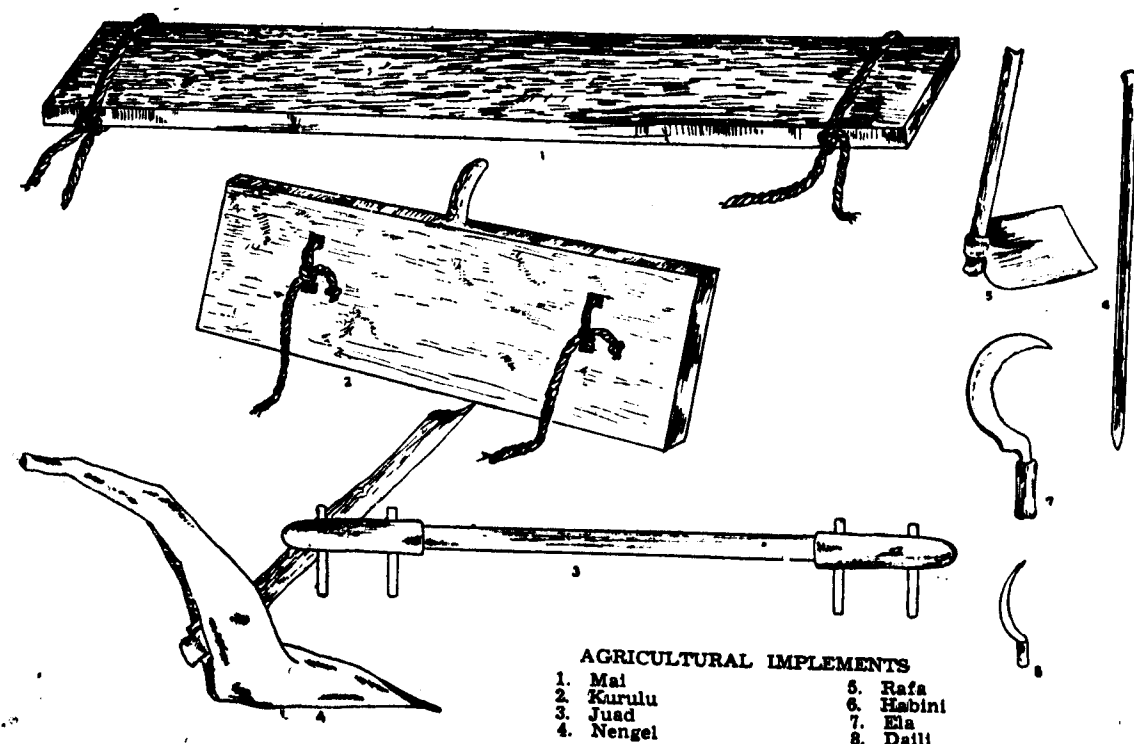
55. With the onset of the first rains the surface soil is loosened with spades and seeds planted in grooves. Different varieties of seed are sown in the same area and various crops grow together and ripen at different periods. As a result if one crop, say "jhari", is gathered in August, another, "kating", is harvested as late in January.

56. Because they gather several crops from the same field over a number of months the agriculturists of Lakhrish consider this type of cultivation much more profitable than regular ploughed cultivation on other land. The gross produce from such cultivation is low, but on the other hand the cost of cultivation and the time expended on it is also low. On the whole this method of agriculture suits the Kandhas.

57. Women play a large part in agricultural activities and are not reluctant to perform manual labour, which is invested with dignity. The former Gountia also toils in his fields with the members of his family. Besides, agriculturists with fairly large holdings hire farm hands. The picture of the well-to-do peasant maintaining his family in idleness and himself only supervising hired labourers is totally absent from Lakhrish. On the other hand the practice of rendering and receiving help in agricultural functions is prevalent. Farmers often borrow implements from their neighbours during the peak period of cultivation and lend others in turn.

58. Most of the agriculturists of Lakhrish do not maintain accounts of their farm operations or of their income and expenditure. Bahal land yields nine to 10 maunds of late paddy per acre per year. For the same period and area berna and mal land yield nearly five maunds whereas aat land yields only three.

59. Since some manuring and weeding is undertaken on bahal land the cost of farming such land is higher than that of other land and works out at nearly Rs. 20 per acre per annum.



The corresponding figure for the other three types of land mentioned above is only Rs. 12. These computations include the opportunity-cost or alternative earnings of household labour employed in agriculture.

60. The actual money cost involved is always small and is usually for paying the hire of farm hands and buying implements like spades. Cash for such expenditure generally comes out of a farmer's savings or may be partly borrowed from a richer farmer. But cash is more necessary to meet household expenses during the peak period of cultivation and other processes of agriculture than for meeting the expenses of agriculture itself. Some farmers therefore take advances against their crops from traders and agree at the same time on the price at which they will sell their produce after harvest. Some cultivators also borrow from merchants living in the village or outside it on the understanding that principal and interest will be paid in kind after the harvest. In such cases the moneylender recovers his dues at the prevailing market price. If the lender lives away from the village the farmer carries the produce to his house in repayment.

61. But a large number of agriculturists in the village do not follow these practices. They generally store their produce in their houses to sell it at what they consider an appropriate time. Traders come to the village to buy local produce and they move from house to house collecting it. The farmers generally ascertain the rates prevailing in the neighbouring markets before they dispose of their goods through such transactions. If the traders do not offer the prevailing market prices the farmers take their produce to the markets for sale.

62. The agriculturists do not, however, sell all their produce at once but store at least a part of the marketable surplus for sale later when they need money for various purposes. Accordingly on market days one finds males and females carrying baskets of paddy, rice and pulses on their heads to the markets, and with the proceeds of the sales they buy household articles of consumption such as oil, salt, tobacco, sweets and dry fish and cloth. A part of the surplus produce is also exchanged

for goods taken by vendors of the Dom community from door to door.

63. There has not been much noticeable change in the cropping pattern in recent years, but some villagers have taken to growing cauliflower, cabbage, potato and tomato, mostly on gharbari land. These vegetables are also cultivated as a second crop on mai and aat land. Tomatoes are also grown on dangar land.

64. From the livestock statistics furnished in Table VI of the Appendix, it is evident that milch cattle are very few numbering only twelve in the village. So villagers do not engage themselves in preparation of dairy products. The poultry birds are reared by most of the households except those belonging to Brahmin, Karan and Gauda communities. A poultry unit with improved birds was established here. 87 households had 215 fowls. Only one Dom household is engaged in sale of buffaloes and bullocks in subsidiary capacity.

65. The cattle get enough fodder in the village forests for which cess is realised by the villagers. There are five cowherds including two girls all belonging to Dom community. These cowherds are paid in term of grains annually. The rate of payment is 5 *manas* (one *mana* equivalent to 4 standard seers) of paddy or ragi for one buffalo, 3 *manas* for a bullock or a cow and 1½ *manas* for a goat or a sheep. Calves below 2 years are not charged for. The payment is made in instalments but major portion is generally paid at the time of harvest. Besides this fixed payment they are also entitled to get 3 *manas* of paddy from every household. They also collect *gundi peja* (gruel) from respective households every evening. Cowherd of one hamlet is not allowed to tend cattle of another hamlet.

66. A poultry sub-unit of the Community Development Block is located here. It has a good number of improved birds. This is attached to Mahila Samiti of the village. The eggs are given biweekly to the weak and expectant mother who is a member of this samiti. This unit was started as a part of the Community Development Block's nutrition pro-

gramme. Improved birds are distributed to the villagers for improving the breed.

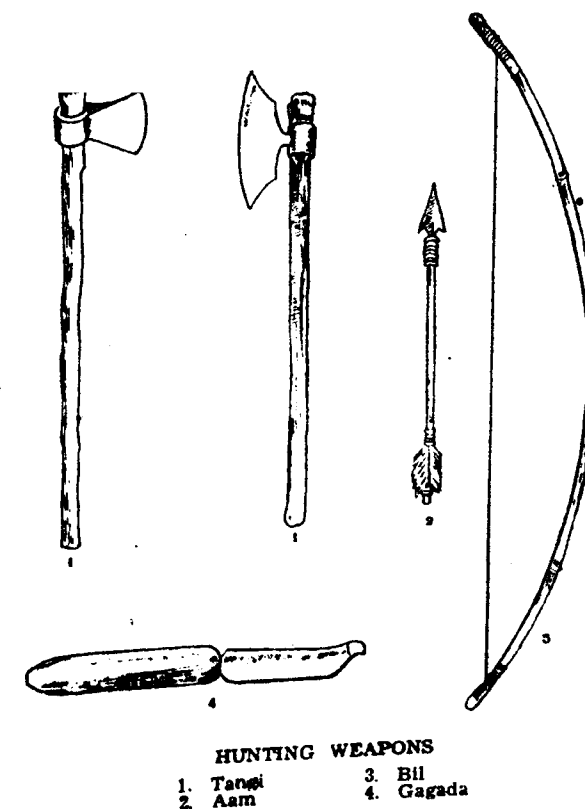
67. No particular establishment is engaged primarily in animal husbandry. The cattle of the area are of poor breed and the people have not taken any step in improving the cattle wealth of the village. There is a veterinary dispensary at Kashipur for the treatment of diseases of cattle and for improving the breed. The assistant veterinary surgeon regularly visits the village for treatment. The villagers do not generally carry the cattle to dispensary for impregnation with high pedigree bull.

68. Fish breeding was not practised in Lakhrish, and the villagers used to catch fish from the nullahs and paddy fields during the rainy season. Lately, however, a fish tank has been constructed with a grant from the community development block. The tank is managed by the grama panchayat, and the villagers can now buy fish almost all the year round. In the village 2 Kandha and 2 Dom households are engaged in selling of fish in subsidiary capacity.

Forestry

69. The village has 30.5 acres of forests. This is technically known as "village forest" and is utilised to the full to meet the daily requirements for tooth-sticks, leaves for cups and plates, fuel and timber for building and other purposes. The forest also provides various kinds of fruit, roots, tubers, edible leaves, bamboo, thatch grass and siali creepers for ropemaking. Mahua flowers and seeds and kusum seeds are also collected in large quantities. Mahua flowers are used to prepare cakes and to brew liquor. Some are also sold in the neighbouring markets.

70. Oil is extracted from mahua and kusum seed. This oil is used to massage the body as well as for cooking. The villagers also collect honey from the forest. For making use of the forest for these manifold purposes, the villagers pay a cess. Hunting of birds and animals is conducted occasionally by the villagers and for this purpose they use "tangi" (axe), "aam" (arrow), "bill" (bow) and "gagada" (knife). These hunting implements are shown below.



HUNTING WEAPONS
1. Tangi
2. Aam
3. Bill
4. Gagada

71. There are reserved forests beyond the village limits managed and controlled by the State Forest Department. There are various species of valuable trees in these forests and the villagers are forbidden to exploit them without a licence. Timber is obtained from them for house construction under permits obtained from the forest range officers nearby. Coupes are auctioned annually by the Forest Department. Those coupes are held and worked by contractors.

72. There is no particular establishment in the village for utilising forest produce. The tribal people of the village gather such produce only as a subsidiary occupation to eke out their earnings from other sources. Forest produce so gathered is sold in the neighbouring markets. Sometimes traders come to the village to buy it.

Income and expenditure

73. Table VII in the Appendix shows the distribution of households according to occupation and income. Of the 96 cultivator households four earn less than Rs. 25 a month, 74 between Rs. 26 and Rs. 50, 16 between Rs. 51 and Rs. 75 and 2 between Rs. 76 and 100. No cultivator earns more than Rs. 100 a month. The monthly income of the three trader households is between Rs. 26 and Rs. 50. Viewed incomewise, nine households in all earn below Rs. 25 a month, 96 households between Rs. 26 and Rs. 50, 21 between Rs. 51 and Rs. 75, 3 between Rs. 76 and Rs. 100, and only one household above Rs. 100 a month. The last named household is that of the Grama sevika.

74. Except the four households in the two higher-income groups the others spend a very substantial part of their earnings on food. Table VIII in the Appendix indicates the expenditure pattern of these households. The nine earning Rs. 25 or less a month spend Rs. 17 to Rs. 18 on food and only Rs. 2 to 3 on other items.

75. Expenditure on food ranges from Rs. 24 to Rs. 35 and that on other items from Rs. 3 to Rs. 11 among the 96 house-

holds in the next group earning between Rs. 26 and Rs. 50. In this group, the three trader households spend most on food and least on other items. These three households accordingly appear worst off in this group.

76. The four households listed under other working services spend less on food and more on other items and are accordingly the best off people in this income group.

77. In the next group expenditure on food varies from Rs. 43 to Rs. 47 a month whereas that on other items is from Rs. 5 to Rs. 26. The household listed under other working services appears to enjoy the highest standard of living in this group as it spends on other items more than half what it spends on food. This is the household of the Brahmin saïesman of the fair price shop.

78. Next to this household the 16 cultivator households spend Rs. 44 on food against Rs. 13 on other items. The economic well-being of these households is probably less than that of the four households in other working services in the income group just below who spend Rs. 11 on other items while spending only Rs. 24 on food. The two households of agricultural labourers in this income group are probably worst off economically.

79. Again, the household in other working services of the group between Rs. 76 and Rs. 100 has the highest standard of living among the three households in the group. It spends Rs. 51 on other items while spending only Rs. 34 on food. The other two households spend much less on other items than they spend on food. The household of the Grama sevika in the highest income group spends Rs. 39 on food and nearly double that amount on other items.

80. Two points thus emerge from this study of the village expenditure pattern. On the whole those employed in other working services are among the best off people in the village. This is why many parents indicated such services as the employment aspiration for their sons. Secondly, the proportion of income spent on food decreases as total in-

come rises. This trend is discernible in Lakhrish. Unlike Sikkhapali (a village in Koraput district dealt with in another monograph), the people of Lakhrish are not living below subsistence level.

Indebtedness

81. Out of 130 households 43 households (33.1 per cent) are in debt. The community-wise distribution and extent of debt is given in the following table.

Table 8
EXTENT OF INDEBTEDNESS COMMUNITYWISE

Community	Total number of Households	Number of Households in debt	Percentage of Col. 3 to Col. 2	Households under debt in the range of				Remarks
				Rs. 20 and below	Rs. 21 to Rs. 50	Rs. 51 to Rs. 100	Rs. 101 and above	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Kandha	74	18	24.3	4	11	3	—	
Dom	45	23	51.1	6	9	5	3	
Lohar	6	2	33.3	1	—	1	—	
Karan	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Brahmin	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Ghasi	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Gauda	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	

82. It is clear from the above table that extent of indebtedness is 51.1 per cent among the Doms, 33.3 per cent among the Lohars and 24.3 per cent among the Kandhas. Among the Kandhas 4 households have taken loan of Rs. 20 and below; 11 from Rs. 21 to 50 and 3 from Rs. 51 to 100. Among the

Doms 6 households took loan of Rs. 20 and below; 9 between Rs. 21 and 50; 5 between Rs. 51 and 100 and 3 of Rs. 101 and above. The position of indebtedness in relation to income-groups has been furnished in the following table.

Table 9
INDEBTEDNESS BY INCOME GROUPS

Income group	Total No. of households	No. of Households in debt	Percentage of Col. 3 to Col. 2	Average indebtedness for Households in debt	Total amount of debt
1	2	3	4	5	6
Rs. 20 & below	6	2	33.3	Rs. 20.00	Rs. 40.00
Rs. 21 to 30	15	5	33.3	Rs. 28.60	Rs. 143.00
Rs. 31 to 40	53	14	26.4	Rs. 55.36	Rs. 775.00
Rs. 41 to 60	44	18	40.9	Rs. 41.39	Rs. 745.00
Rs. 61 to 80	8	4	50.0	Rs. 88.50	Rs. 354.00
Rs. 81 to 100	3	—	—	—	—
Rs. 101 & over	1	—	—	—	—
Total	130	43	33.1	Rs. 47.84	Rs. 2,057.00

83. From this table it is evident that 56 per cent of households in the income-group Rs. 61 to Rs. 80 are under debt, the average indebtedness per household being Rs. 88.50. The income group of Rs. 41 to 60 has the indebtedness of 40.9 per cent of households with average indebtedness of Rs. 41.39. In the both income-groups of Rs. 20 and below and Rs. 21 to 30 the percentage of households in debt is 33.3 with the average indebtedness of Rs. 20 and Rs. 28.60 respectively. 26.4 per cent of households in the income-group of Rs. 31 to 40 is indebted with average indebtedness of Rs. 55.36. None of the households in the income-groups of Rs. 81 to 100 and Rs. 101 and above is under debt.

84. Of the 43 households in debt, 15 took loan from the Agricultural Credit Co-

operative Society, Kashipur of which they are members. The amount of loan such obtained is Rs. 515/- at the rate of interest of 4½ per cent per annum. The remaining 28 households obtained loan from private money-lenders of Kashipur, Rayagada and Sikarpai. The rate of interest from money-lenders is as high as 50 per cent per annum. The loans in terms of cash and kind are taken from private money-lenders and during the survey only 2 households took grain in loan for consumption. In 1961 no person took paddy loan from Grain Golla Co-operative Society at Kashipur as they were not the members. The private money-lenders advance loans against security or they mortgage ornaments and metal utensils. The following table gives an idea of the purpose of loan.

Table 10
INDEBTEDNESS BY CAUSE OF DEBT

Cause	Amount of debt	Number of families in debt	Proportion of debt due to cause to the total amount of debt
1	2	3	4
(a) Purchase and improvement of land	Rs. 270	3	13.1
(b) House construction or repairs to existing building	Rs. 170	2	8.2
(c) Marriages	Rs. 180	2	8.7
(d) Funeral	—	—	—
(e) To give dowry	—	—	—
(f) To clear out standing debts	—	—	—
(g) Sickness	—	—	—
(h) Ordinary wants	Rs. 282	11	13.7
(i) Household cultivation	Rs. 1,130	24	54.8
(j) Industry run by household	—	—	—
(k) Business run by household	Rs. 25	1	1.2
Total	Rs. 2,057	43	

85. It is seen that out of the total amount of debt of Rs. 2,057 an amount of Rs. 1,130 or 54.8 per cent was taken for household cultivation which includes purchase of bullocks; Rs. 282 or 13.7 per cent for meeting ordinary

wants, Rs. 270 or 13.1 per cent for land purchase and its improvement; Rs. 180 or 8.7 per cent for marriages; Rs. 170 or 8.2 per cent for house construction and Rs. 25 or 1.2 per cent for business.

CHAPTER IV SOCIAL LIFE AND VILLAGE ORGANIZATION

Population

The population of Lakhrish in 1961, when the present survey was conducted, was 574. It was 488 at the time of the 1951 Census. There has thus been an increase of 86 persons in a period of ten years. Figures prior to 1951 are not available. This gives Lakhrish a rate of 1.76 per cent annual increase in population, which is representative of the Kalahandi District in which the village is situated.

2. The density of population for the village, 580 per square mile, is very much higher than that of the subdivision (144 per square mile), district (195 per square mile) and State (275 per square mile). The pressure on land has been so heavy that the people have cleared and are cultivating the slopes of the surrounding hills.

3. During the ten years 1951-1961 Lakhrish has had 232 births and 144 deaths. In the table of births and deaths shown below for five years, from 1957 to 1961, it will be seen that the birth rate has been almost stable, while the death rate has been declining. The relatively large number of deaths in 1958 and 1959 was due to epidemics of cholera and smallpox.

Table 11
BIRTH AND DEATH

Year	No. of births	No. of deaths
1	2	3
1957	32	9
1958	25	24
1959	28	30
1960	35	11
1961	22	8
TOTAL	141	82

4. The population of Lakhrish has not varied much in the decade. During this period four households of Doms, consisting of 16 persons, emigrated. Two households left the village in 1951 after their houses burnt down in an accidental fire. One family purchased land in Maskaguda village, 30 miles away, and settled there. The fourth Dom family migrated to Sarambai village, within the jurisdiction of Kashipur Police Station, where its members are working as labourers. Against this migration six families of 14 members came into the village during the ten years. Four of these came on government service, and they are transients. One family of Doms and another of the Ghasi community immigrated during the present generation. Another household of Doms and one of the Lohar community immigrated one generation ago. There has been no other immigration during the last five generations. The 74 households of Kandhas, 43 of Doms and 5 of Lohars immigrated to Lakhrish about five generations ago. The village itself may be said to be not more than five generations old.

5. There are 301 females to 273 males. In 1951, there were 238 females to 250 males. The reverse in the sex ratio in the course of a decade is explained by more female child-births, more boys than girls marrying outside the village, thus bringing more females than males into the village, emigration of more males than females, and more females than males coming with the six immigrant households. The ratio of females to males works out to 1.102 females for every 1,000 males which compares with 1,018, 1,023 and 1,915 for the subdivision, district and State respectively. Marriage takes place at an early age. Almost all persons above 25 years are married. None of the villagers is divorced or separated.

Types of family

6. The family structure in the village shows that the majority of them are of simple

type consisting of a married couple and their unmarried children. The percentage of family under this type is 66 per cent. The intermediate type of family consisting of married couple and unmarried brother, sister and one of the parents records 16.2 per cent of the total number of families. The joint family consisting of married couple with married son is 5.4

per cent of the total number. There are certain families which do not come under above categories have been put under other types which records 12.3 per cent of the total number.

7. The following table gives the nature of family on the basis of caste and tribe.

Table 12
TYPES OF FAMILY BY CASTE AND TRIBE

Caste/Tribe	Total number of households	Types of families living in the households				Remarks
		Simple	Intermediate	Joint	Other	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Kandha	74	55	10	3	6	
Dom	45	27	8	3	7	
Ghasi	1	1	—	—	—	
Lohar	6	2	3	1	—	
Karan	2	—	—	—	2	
Gauda	1	—	—	—	1	
Brahmin	1	1	—	—	—	
Total	130	86	21	7	16	

From the above table the simple type of family dominates over the other types. Among the Kandhas out of 74 households 74.3 per cent is of simple type, while among the Doms 60 per cent of their households belong to this category. The only household of Ghasi and Brahmin also come under this type. However, 33.3 per cent of the total Lohar households have been recorded as of simple type.

8. Among the Lohars, however, 3 households are of intermediate type out of which two families consist of married couple with unmarried children and widow mother whereas the other family consists of married couple with unmarried brother and widower father. Among the Kandhas 13.5 per cent (10 households) has been recorded under intermediate type. A majority of them falling under this type (8 households) consists of married couple with unmarried children and widow mother while one household consists of married couple with unmarried children and widower father and the remaining one family is composed of married couple with unmarried brother and widow mother. The Doms, however, on the

other hand record 17.8 per cent (8 households) under intermediate type. The family composition of this type among the Doms represents 5 such households with married couple, their unmarried children and widow mother. The two households of the Doms consist of married couple with unmarried children and widower father and the remaining one has married couple with unmarried brother and widow mother.

9. The number of joint families is the lowest in comparison to other types of families recorded in the village. Among the Kandhas and the Doms there are only 6 such families having 3 each community while Lohar records one under this type. In all the cases the joint family consists of married couple with unmarried children and a married son and his wife.

10. The total number of families falling under the other type is 16. The majority of them (13) belong to Kandha and Dom community having 6 and 7 households respectively. The other important feature is that the Karan and Gauda are having 2 and 1 households

respectively which come under this type only. The family of the Karan and Gauda is unimember who are living in the village alone being posted here in Government service. Among the Kandhas two households which come under this type consist of one member each who are widows, while one household each consisting of widow with unmarried children; married couple with unmarried children and a widow daughter-in-law and her children; married couple with the brother of the head of the household and his wife with their children. There is one more such household which has been treated under this type consists of married couple with dependent mother and father. In this case the parents are dependent to the head of household who is the earner. The composition of the family is that of other type than a joint family. Among the Doms one household of a widow is a unimember family, the other households are having the following composition:

1. Married couple with unmarried cousin brother and a widow sister
2. Married couple with widow mother and sister's daughter
3. Widow with unmarried children (2 households)
4. Married couple with unmarried children and wife's brother and his wife
5. Married couple with unmarried children and daughter's son

Literacy and education

11. The lower primary school was started in 1956 in a building constructed at Government cost. The school's running expenses are also paid by the Government. It has one teacher who belongs to Kashipur but lives in Lakhrish.

12. At the time of the survey the number of pupils was 58 boys and girls, of whom 19 boys and 4 girls were Kandhas and 6 boys and 2 girls Doms. Two Lohar boys and one girl also attended school, but not regularly. In spite of the free distribution of reading and writing materials and clothes to tribal pupils the villagers show little interest in sending their children to school regularly. Even the free

supply of milk has not brought about any improvement.

13. In 1951 not a single villager was recorded as literate because there was no school in the village and nobody sent his children to the school at Kashipur. During its seven-year existence the school has produced one female literate of lower primary standard.

14. Table IX in the Appendix shows five male and one female literates. Four males and one female are of lower primary standard while one male is of higher secondary standard. Communitywise, one male is a Kandha, another male and a female Karans, one male is a Brahmin and two others Gaudas. Thus the contribution of the school to literacy and education is negligible. The Kandha boy, after completing his studies in the village school, was sent to an ashram school at Gorakhpur situated in the same police jurisdiction. He found it difficult to remain there as he had never been away from home before. His stay at the ashram school was shortlived, and on returning home he joined his parents in cultivation.

15. Although many children are enrolled as students in Lakhrish every year the majority attend school for only a few days, and their names are then struck off the roll. The adults are also not interested in education. A night school was opened for them in 1960, but it closed after some months because pupils were lacking.

Social legislation and reforms

16. Being illiterate, the villagers are generally unaware of social legislation and reforms introduced by the Central and State Governments. So long as such reforms are not imposed on them it would be futile to expect them to derive any advantage from such measures. Untouchability still persists, but it is not as rigorous as it was a decade ago. Previously, whoever accidentally touched a Dom or a Ghasi used to bathe immediately. Now too, nobody willingly touches a member of these communities, but if by chance a person of another community comes in touch with one he is not required to purify himself. The Doms and the Ghasis are not allowed to draw water from the village wells, but Dom children

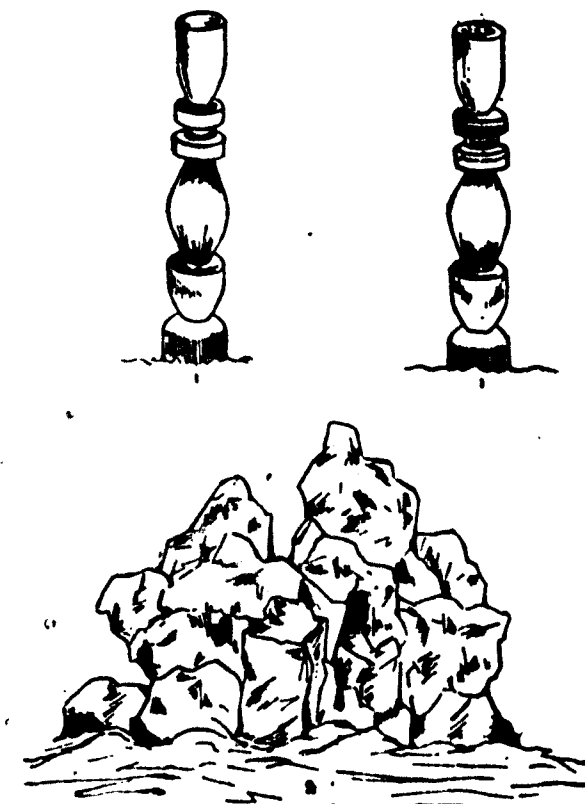
are allowed to sit with other children at school.

Religious beliefs and practices

17. The Kandhas worship Grama Devati, the goddess of the village, Bima the goddess of the home, and other female deities such as Khandual, Sat Bhaen (seven sisters), Kandul Boja, Jinaand Duma. Except Grama Devati and Khandual they have no physical form.

18. All are worshipped as home deities in every household. Grama Devati is given the shape of two wooden pillars, each about three feet high, and Kandual a heap of stones near the thatched shed called gudi. Tentulipara and Godampara have separate Grama Devatis, Khanduals and gudis.

19. Gudis are meant for the assembly of people during fairs and festivals, but no worship takes place there. Grama Devatis are located in the open. The Doms have no religious institutions of their own, but they believe and take part in the worship of some of the deities of the Kandhas.



VILLAGE DEITIES
1. Grama Devati
2. Khandual

20. The Kandhas and the Doms, more particularly the former, believe in malevolent and benevolent spirits which are said to be the cause of suffering or happiness to human beings and cattle. These spirits are believed to bring about death, disease, accident or loss of property. The villagers are also strong believers in the powers of desaris and gurumais, who are said to be the chosen agents of gods and spirits and bestowed with the power to detect malevolent forces and drive them out. Some desaris and gurumais are greatly feared in the belief that they have powers of life and death and can cause harassment in any way they like with their mantras. They can also cause depredation by turning themselves into tigers or snakes.

21. The spirit of a dead person is called "duma". There are different kinds of dumas, some malevolent, others benevolent. It is said that dumas in the shape of human beings attack men, women and children. They are said to be jet black in complexion, with large eyes, big teeth and dishevelled hair. When a malevolent duma enters a person's body the victim suffers from loose motions and vomiting. A desari is immediately called to drive away the duma. The desari chews the roots of certain plants and while chanting mantras spits the chewed pieces on the victim. Another kind of root is given to the victim to be worn as a chain round his neck. The relatives of the victim also vow to sacrifice a fowl or a goat before the village deity.

22. "Bagha duma" is the spirit of a person killed by a tiger. This spirit is said to be mischievous, as it takes the shape of a hare, jackal or monkey and rolls rocks down from hilltops and shakes the branches of trees to frighten human beings. Bagha dumas enter human bodies and cause stomach disorders. A desari detects such a spirit by putting grains of rice into a bowl of water while uttering the names of various dumas.

23. If a grain of rice floats when he utters a particular name he holds this particular bagha duma responsible for the trouble and drives it away in the following manner. The victim is seated on the floor, completely covered with a cotton sheet. Under the sheet a mixture of wax from his ears, the seeds of a

tree called "araka" and leaf plates with orts is burnt. The desari chants mantras and spits out the chewed roots of plants on the victim, after which another root is tied round his neck as a protection from further evil.

24. "Ghungi Devati", also known as "Kaisundari", resides on mango and jack trees. This spirit generally attacks persons who are destined to die soon. The spirit enters the body, causes bleeding from the nose, and twists the neck of its victim. The gurumai is called upon to exercise the spirit. Seated on a new winnowing fan, she sifts grains of rice by hand, and in this process she works herself into a trance and asks the spirit to leave the victim.

25. The spirit announces through the gurumai a desire to eat the flesh of goats or fowls and sacrifices are made accordingly. The gurumai pours water from a jug on the victim three times with a ladle. Two or three grains of rice are soaked in water and fixed on his forehead. Ghungi Devatis are female spirits, and it is believed that it is very difficult to drive one away and that few people survive a visitation by one of them.

26. Kandul Boja which appears in the shape of a tiger, is venerated as a god. It is worshipped once a year, in the month of Phalgun. Pigeons and fowls are sacrificed any Saturday or Sunday of the month in an open place by the villagers. If the annual sacrifice is not done in time the god attacks and destroys human beings and cattle.

27. Smallpox is considered the visitation of a goddess. On the third day the gurumai is called and she performs worship under the cot on which the patient is lying with bananas, coconuts, milk and incense. The gurumai also vows to sacrifice animals or birds to propitiate the deity.

28. About a week later the patient is bathed in turmeric water. After six months, when all the patients of the village have recovered completely from the disease, the promised sacrifices are made on behalf of individual sufferers on a small platform with a leaf canopy made of twigs from the jamu and bael trees. The ceremony is performed on the outskirts of the village.

29. Cholera is known as "Mardi" and cattle disease as "Khura," and these are believed to be caused by a spirit called Sat Bhaen. Vows are made for the recovery of the afflicted and birds or animals are sacrificed later by the jani in the name of the spirit any Saturday on the outskirts of the village.

30. Fevers, headaches and other common diseases are also said to be caused by spirits. No medicine is administered or worship performed during the first three days of the ailment. On the fourth day the gurumai visits the patient and identifies the troublesome spirit merely by examining the hand of the sufferer or by counting rice in a winnowing fan. The patient is asked to make a vow, after which the gurumai blows air from her mouth over his body. On recovery the patient sacrifices a goat or a fowl in fulfilment of the vow.

31. The Kandhas have some superstitions with regard to lagna, the time of birth. Whether the moment is auspicious or not is determined by a desari through a study of the stars. Birth during Baradoin Lagna is considered inauspicious. Persons born at this time are destined to die an unnatural death, caused generally by tigers, snakes or other wild creatures. But attempts are made to change such a fate through the intervention of a desari, who performs worship for this purpose at some rocky place near the village.

32. He draws nine adjacent rectangles with rice flour on a large stone slab, places an egg, a chicken and an earthen lamp on this space and covers them with a new bamboo basket. This function is held on a Saturday evening. Next morning, if the puja materials are found intact, a pig is sacrificed at the same place by the desari, who at the same time chants mantras appealing to the animals not to attack the child concerned.

33. If the chicken is found missing a tiger is believed to have visited the spot by night and eaten it. In this event it is beyond the powers of the desari to save the child. It is doomed to be killed by a tiger sooner or later, and only extra precautions can be taken to prolong its life as long as possible.

34. The most popular belief relates to the almost supernatural powers supposed to be

exercised by desaris and gurumais. It is said that they can turn into tigers by rubbing against anthills, and then attack human beings and cattle. Such activities of wicked desaris and gurumais who are also called "pangunias," are thwarted with the help of good desaris performing worship in lonely places.

35. All the village folk are scared when they learn that a man or woman is pangunia. Such a person is thought capable of doing almost anything, particularly harmful deeds, including death, through the supernatural powers he has mastered. These evil arts are acquired through the practice of ascetic exercises, followed by sacrifices, under the guidance of a guru. Pangunias are at times engaged by some persons to take revenge on their adversaries.

36. Clay images of the persons concerned are set up at lonely spots on the banks of rivers or streams and animal or bird sacrifices are performed before them. A thorn or iron nail is then stuck into the foot of the image. As a result of these observances it is believed that the person concerned will die sooner or later unless they are detected and counter-measures taken through a powerful pangunia or benevolent desari. There is, however, little chance of survival if the pangunia performs the ceremony after planting a banana tree near the image.

37. Pangunias are also believed to be capable of causing slow death and various diseases. They distribute philtres called "mohini," especially to young men and women, so that they may fall in love with each other.

38. The Kandhas wear amulets round their necks to ward off bad dreams such as attacks by tigers and encounters with evil spirits. A gurumai sacrifices a fowl before the village deity and presents the amulets, made of hollowed aluminium, copper, iron or silver and purchased in the nearby markets, in which the roots and leaves of beneficent plants are placed. The plants from which these roots and leaves are obtained are known only to the gurumai. Some also wear tiger claws round their waists because they are said to be efficacious in combating the evil eye.

39. The Kandhas even now resort to the following methods to detect crime, generally

theft. A desari asks each member of a suspected household for a grain of rice, and drops the grains one at a time into a bowl of water in the presence of the villagers. If any grains float on the water the guilt of the household is considered proved, but nobody is specifically named or identified by this method. The head of the household is, however, compelled by the villagers to return the stolen articles or, in case this cannot be done, pay compensation equal to their value.

40. Another method is also employed to detect a thief. The owner of the stolen goods goes to a desari with some rice in a leaf cup and an anna. The desari draws on the floor a figure roughly representing the multiplication sign and places some grains of rice on each of the four corners. He then meditates for some time and finally gives the sex and approximate age of the thief but not his name. The owner of the stolen goods is instructed to spread particulars of the theft in the village. These steps are sometimes successful as the stolen articles are left secretly near the house of the owner or at some other place.

41. The Kandhas are generally truthful and attach much importance to the sanctity of oaths. Only under very painful circumstances do they avoid giving direct answers. A Kandha will court death touching a tiger skin rather than tell a lie.

42. Fruits and other agricultural crops are considered gifts of God. Offerings from a new harvest are made to the household goddess before the family consumes any part of it. The villagers have festivals for eating new grain, vegetables and fruits. It is believed that if new grain is eaten without an offering to the goddess, she will be displeased and will visit disease and misfortune on the village as a whole or on the erring household.

Community festivals

43. Some festivals observed in this village and some others observed at Kashipur in which the people of Lakhrish take part are described below.

44. Chait parab is observed on the last Thursday of Chaitra by the Kandhas. The preceding Wednesday all their houses are cleaned and clothes washed. Rice is cooked

and curry prepared with new red gram and bean. Some households also prepare fish and mutton dishes. These preparations are offered to the home deities and then eaten by the members of the household. In the afternoon some villagers plant two banana shoots and one simuli tree in front of the village gudi. The trees are planted in a row and earthen altar is constructed round them by girls. They decorate the trees and the altar with rice flour, powdered red earth and charcoal. The Kandhas drink liquor and dance around the altar singing. Drums are played during the dance. The jani offers red gram, beans and mangoes to the village deity, and then these eatables are consumed by the gathering.

Am Nuakhai

45. Am Nuakhai is the Dom festival for eating new mangoes. It is held any Tuesday in Baisakh. Every household sacrifices a he-goat or a buffalo near the village deity. If a goat is to be sacrificed the head of the household fasts five days. In the case of a buffalo the period of fasting is nine days, including the day of the festival. At the time of sacrifice the Doms drink liquor and feast on rice and mutton curry.

Bali Jatra

46. The Kandhas celebrate Bali Jatra on the last Sunday of Baisakh. Nine days before the festival unmarried girls collect baskets of soil near the village deity. Seven baskets are placed under the shade of the gudi and sown with bean seed and regularly watered. On the seventh day a platform is constructed near the gudi. Miniature ploughs and axes are fashioned out of simuli wood by each cultivator on the eighth day. The seven baskets in which the bean seeds have germinated are placed on the platform on the ninth day. The ploughs and axes are sanctified by the jani. Each cultivator takes a plough, an axe and some germinated seeds. Some seeds are scattered round the village and the rest in the paddy fields. After this festival farmers sow paddy on dry land. On this occasion the Kandhas prepare cakes of rice flour and other delicacies to go with them. They drink liquor and dance near the gudi at night.

Rani Parab

47. On the third Wednesday of Ashadh.

Kandha girls gather ragi plants and take them on a plate to the house of the gountia. All the Kandha cottages are cleaned on this day. The following Thursday, about noon, three married women and some unmarried girls carry the plate containing the ragi plants from house to house accompanied by males beating drums. Females in every household sacrifice fowls before the sacred plants and offer incense. The plate is finally brought to the gudi. In the evening the villagers sacrifice a he-goat before the deity. The ragi plants are then distributed among the farmers, who plant them in their fields. After this festival the Kandhas eat new grain-rice, kosala, ragi and vegetables like pumpkins and yams. Siali leaves are burnt in every household in the belief that evil influences are warded off. Bhajias and muas of kangu and rice are prepared in every household. Liquor is drunk and dancing continues till late at night.

48. The Kandhas say that this festival is their "nabanna" for eating new grain. Nabanna is also observed in other parts of the State. The word means "eating new grain."

49. The Doms observe Nabanna any Tuesday in Bhadra when the early paddy is harvested. They clean their houses and wash their clothes on this chosen day. New grain cooked in fresh earthen pots is offered to the household gods and everybody drinks. From this day the Doms eat only new grain.

Dasahara

50. Dasahara is not observed in Lakhrish. But most of the villagers go to Kashipur to witness this festival held in the temple of the goddess Manikeswari. The Kandhas sacrifice fowls and pigeons at the gudi, the day before Dasahara. The villagers suspend their work and spend the day in a holiday mood drinking. In the evening some prominent Kandha males take fruit, vegetables and a he-goat to the temple of Manikeswari, the goddess of the former zamindar. The goat is sacrificed and the villagers spend the night at Kashipur. Next morning the carcass of a goat that has been sacrificed and one rupee are given to them. A piece of red cloth is also presented to the leader. The money is spent on drink.

and the carcass is carried back to Lakhrish and distributed among the villagers.

Diali

51. The festival called Diali is observed only by the Doms on the new moon day of Kartika. Nine days earlier the unmarried girls in each household collect earth and construct an altar upon which nine small bamboo baskets filled with soil are placed in a line. Bajra seeds are allowed to germinate in the baskets and turmeric water is sprinkled on them daily. On new moon day the head of the household wears clean clothes after a bath and sacrifices a fowl in the kitchen in the name of the house god. Cakes are prepared in every household, and there is a drinking and feasting.

52. The next day pigs or goats are sacrificed before the deity in every household and time is spent in further drinking and feasting. The following day the baskets containing the germinated bajra seeds are brought into the courtyard. Unmarried girls carrying pitchers full of water on their heads move around the baskets three times in the presence of the naik, the dhangora naik, the bisoi and the kumari. Later, the girls bathe in the water from the pitchers, which is considered sacred. This ceremony is performed in every household. The seeds are then scattered on the eastern and western side of the house.

Taki Parab

53. Taki Parab is by far the most important festival of the Kandhas of the Majhi group. The earth, or "dharani" as they call it, is worshipped as their supreme god every year with animal sacrifices so that there may be peace and prosperity in the village. Taki Parab is akin to "merriah"—human sacrifice.

54. It is said that in the past human beings, both male and female, used to be purchased for this sacrifice. The victim used to be guarded closely to prevent escape. On the day preceding the ceremony the victim used to be taken from house to house, where his last desire was fulfilled. The victim was kept throughout captivity in a state of intoxication.

55. Since the banning of human sacrifice the Majhi Kandhas have been sacrificing buffaloes or sheep instead. A group of neigh-

bouring villages in this region often combine to perform Taki Parab, sacrificing sheep. In this case the festival is held for 10 to 12 years, continuously in one village, and then in the others belonging to the group in turn. There are specified places of worship in each village.

56. At Lakhrish, Taki Parab has not been held for more than a generation as nobody recalls the last festival of this held there. The place of worship is about five furlongs to the west of the village at the foot of a hill and is marked by a heap of small boulders.

57. The group to which Lakhrish belongs consists of 12 villages. In 1961 Taki Parab was held at Padikhal, about a mile from Lakhrish. From there the festival will shift to Rautaghati, about four miles away.

58. The festival is held on the last Sunday of Pausa. So from the preceding Friday the houses are cleaned and clothes washed. Everybody buys new clothing for use on this day. On the preceding Saturday the villagers eat cakes and mutton curry, wear new clothes and proceed to the village of worship beating drums and carrying weapons. The residents of the host village feed them till the end of the festival.

59. On Saturday morning a sheep purchased earlier for the sacrifice is intoxicated and taken from door to door by the jani. During this journey the housewives felicitate the sheep with lighted earthen lamps and incense and offer it food on plates. The animal is finally brought to the gudi.

60. In the late hours of the night the jani kills the sheep in the gudi by strangulation so that no blood is shed. Spilling of blood at the time of killing is a bad omen for the village. The killing is done by the jani alone, unseen. He then covers the carcass with a cloth and keeps watch over it till daybreak. In the morning, about 9 o'clock, the jani holds the carcass aloft and moves towards the place of worship surrounded by men and women. Drums are played, and young men and women dance to their beat.

61. About 100 yards away from the place of worship the sheep is suspended from a wooden pole. No sooner is this done than the jani gives a signal, at which there is mad rush from all sides to cut pieces of flesh from

the carcass. The desire for a piece of flesh is so great that the men, staggering under the influence of liquor, do not bother about personal injuries as they thrust their knives into the dead animal. Every piece of flesh is quickly removed and the skeleton is taken to the place of worship.

62. There the head of the sheep is thrust between two wooden posts about 2½ feet high. A log is pressed on the neck and tied to the posts. The gurumai of the village approaches and performs the prescribed worship. She next forecasts the weather, crops and other important events in the village in the next year. With this she leaves, and again there is a rush to get any remaining pieces of flesh on the skeleton. Some time later a person known as the "Rupia" is brought to the place of worship on a stringed cot by four persons. He cleans the place and deposits the articles of worship at a distant, lonely place so that nothing is eaten by human, animal or bird. It is believed that whoever eats these materials dies instantaneously.

63. In the afternoon the villagers kill a buffalo and entertain all the Kandha people of the neighbouring villages. The married men and women and old persons return to their villages after the feast. But the young men and women stay on to take part in the community dance, the highlight of the occasion. They drink and dance throughout the night to the beat of drums. Next day, after eating early, the young men and women go to the jungle and spend the day dancing and drinking and having sex relations.

64. The flesh of the sacrificial sheep is held sacred and is preserved in every household for use as a cure for various diseases. A small portion of the flesh is buried in the fields in the belief that the dharani debata will be pleased and grant bountiful crops. Some families bury the flesh under the floor where the cooking pots are kept in the belief that it ensures a steady supply of food for the household.

Leisure and recreation

65. There are two institutions where young and old alike spend their leisure. Of these, the dhangora basa where the bachelors

of the village sleep at night, is the oldest traditional institution. Here they spend the evening beating drums, dancing, and singing. Sometimes girls and even older folk join. When the visitors leave the bachelors talk among themselves, exchanging experiences and discussing the problems they face in their daily occupations.

66. The other institution is the community centre, constructed out of a Welfare Department grant six years ago. It contains a library of mythological books and a radio receiver. The social worker collects men and women at this centre every evening to read out some of the epics and explain them. But the big attraction is the radio, which is operated by the social worker. A falling-off in attendance was noticed when the battery of the radio ran down and the set did not work.

67. The climate of Lakhrish is rather cold most of the year in view of its high altitude. Hence during their leisure hours the people sit around a fire and gossip while smoking cigars prepared by them from the siali leaf.

68. A visit to the market is also another form of recreation. So every Wednesday and Thursday many people, specially the young, go to the weekly markets at Kashipur and Sunger.

69. Some of the games played by the village children are described below. These games are played throughout the year, and there are no particular seasonal games.

70. "Khara dian" or hare jump is played by a large number of boys and girls who sit in a circle holding hands. One of them who sits in the centre is the hare. He tries to escape from the enclosure by hopping in imitation of a hare on hands and legs. If the hare touches the arms of any person in the circle while doing so the latter becomes the hare, and the former hare takes his place.

71. "Bagha chheli," the tiger and goat game, is played by boys and girls. One of them is chosen tiger and the rest, standing in a line and holding the loin cloth of the boy or girl in front, are goats. The strongest boy in the team is placed at the head of the line. The tiger tries to attack the goats on the flank, but the leader contrives to move the line dexterously and face the tiger, which cannot attack

from the front. The tiger keeps on prowling till he succeeds in grabbing a goat. This game then continues with another tiger.

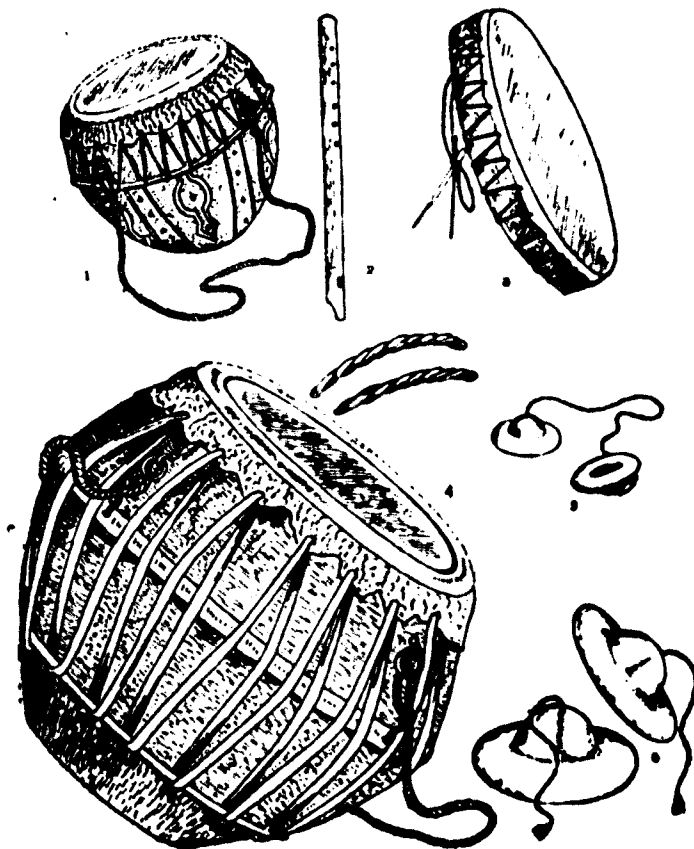
72. "Gilli danda" is also a popular game among the boys, but it is known as "khedo".

73. The tiger and fowl game is played by boys and girls. One of them, the fowl, is encircled by a large number of boys and girls who stand holding hands and do not allow the tiger to enter the enclosure. If the tiger enters the circle the fowl goes out. The tiger chases the fowl in and out of the enclosure until it is caught. A new tiger and fowl are then chosen and the game continues for a fairly long time.

74. Dancing is the most popular form of recreation for men and women of all ages, especially the young. Young males and females stand in two separate lines holding hands and facing each other. Special costumes

are worn for this dance, performed to the beat of drums. The two lines move one step forward and then one back. During the dance the young men sing songs making fun of the girls, who reply suitably. These exchanges occasion much laughter as the dance proceeds.

75. The musical instruments used by the Kandhas are shown in the illustration below. These instruments are kept in the dhangora basa, and every young man learns to play them under the guidance of a senior. The kettle drum is called "tamka". The body of the small variety is made of iron and that of the larger of the hollowed trunk of a sago palm. These drums are played with dried leather thongs. The bamboo flute is called "hurudi". The "dabwa" is a versatile musical instrument played with two small sticks. The "gini" and the "tal" are not tribal musical instruments. They seem to be recent introductions from the plains.



MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

- | | |
|--------------|----------|
| 1. Luhutamka | 4. Tamka |
| 2. Hurudi | 5. Gini |
| 3. Dabwa | 6. Tal |

Health and sanitation

76. The region in which Lakhrish is situated is unhealthy. But this is compensated by the location of the three hamlets of the village. The hamlets lie at the foot of the hills, on naturally raised platforms appearing like mounds. As a result, rainwater drains off immediately into Kandabila nullah. The surroundings of the village are neat and clean, and the villagers also strive to keep their home surroundings in the same condition.

77. But the village, like the whole region, is very malarious. Most of the villagers are victims of this disease, which saps their vitality and leaves them emaciated. Since 1958 DDT is being sprayed in the village twice a year under the supervision of the malaria inspector stationed at Kashipur, and as a result the disease has been checked to some extent. Measles and smallpox break out in the village every two or three years. Other common diseases are coughs, colds and bowel and skin troubles. When they fall sick the villagers do not take medicines and hardly visit the dispensary at Kashipur. They believe that the diseases are caused by evil spirits, and in order to appease them for a cure they perform sacrifices on the instructions of the desari and gurumai.

Village organization

78. Before statutory panchayats were introduced there was a village committee for the entire village. Heads of households belonged to it, and the gountia was the central figure. The panchayat generally deliberated on matters in which the entire village was interested. It used to decide when worship and sacrifices had to be observed on outbreaks of smallpox, how many persons were to be sent to the zamindar for bethi work, when community festivals were to be conducted and similar matters.

79. Maintenance of places of worship and of the community houses in each hamlet was, however, the responsibility of the residents of the hamlet. The panchayat generally kept out of those matters. Petty disputes were decided by the panchayat, and its decisions were binding on the disputants. In case of disobedience the decision was enforced by a social boycott

of the persons concerned till he accepted it. Sometimes penalties were imposed and collected in cash or kind and added to the community chest for festivals. The panchayat met in the dhangora basa of Godampara as the gountia lived in this hamlet.

80. Besides the village panchayat there were the caste panchayats of the Kandhas, Doms and Lohars. These bodies had limited functions relating to their respective castes, such as to enforce the code of social conduct and to take decisions on divorce, adultery and similar problems. If such disputes concerned persons of different communities the matter was placed before the village panchayat.

81. The head of the panchayat of the Kandhas was known as "bada majhi". The jani, his assistant the pujari and the challan were important members of the caste panchayat. All the elderly males of the community living in the village were invited to take part in its deliberations.

82. Caste panchayats were also formed by grouping a number of villages, and the head of the larger organization was selected from the bada majhis of the associated villages. The head of this organization was called the "umra". Matters affecting the rules and customs of the community which could not be decided at the village level were referred to the larger panchayat.

83. These caste panchayats continue to function to this day fairly vigorously. Most villagers want this institution to continue as they hold that they have been saved the expenditure they would have incurred by seeking redress in courts of law in petty disputes. They are also afraid that law courts have different norms of judgment to which they are not used.

84. The head of the Dom panchayat is called a naik and his assistants are known as bissoi, kumari and dhangora majhi. The bissoi is the naik's deputy. The Kumari acts as barber and shaves the Doms ordinarily as well as at funerals. The dhangora majhi is in charge of serving food at social or religious function. The Doms have no larger caste organization beyond the village.

Administrative units

85. Before the merger of the State of Kalahandi the entire Kashiipur zamindari constituted one unit for purposes of revenue administration as well as for maintenance of law and order. The Tahsildar was the highest revenue officer and had magisterial powers. The zamindari had one police station and two outposts. There was a sub-jail and a sub-treasury at Kashiipur of which the Tahsildar was in charge. After merger and reorganization this administrative set-up continues with the tahsil headquarters at Kashiipur. Smaller divisions called circles have also been created under Naib tahsildars who are responsible for collecting land revenue.

86. Kashiipur block covers all five grama panchayats of the tahsil. This has been re-constituted as Kashiipur panchayat samiti. Lakhrish is in Kashiipur grama panchayat. Phaguna Majhi has been nominated a member of the grama panchayat, but Lakhrish has no representative in the samiti.

87. The Grama sevika has started a mahila samiti in the village and a Kandha

female has been appointed its secretary. She gets an honorarium of Rs. 15 a month. The samiti distributes milk powder and eggs to children and expectant mothers. The Grama sevika strives to teach cleanliness and hygiene to the women and children.

88. There is a village chowkidar who maintains records of births and deaths. The chowkidari system goes back to the zamindari period. The chowkidar reports birth and death statistics to Kashiipur police station once a week. He keeps a record of strangers who arrive in the village and reports to the police on the movements of suspicious characters and on crimes. He patrols the village at night. He has been given a uniform but gets no pay for his services, nor does he enjoy the occupancy of jagir land.

89. But he collects food from every household in the evenings. This is called gundi peja, and during the harvest each household gives him three manas each of paddy, kosala and ragi. This is equivalent to 36 standard seers of grain.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

A herculean task faced the workers of the community development block who have embarked on a number of projects to promote the economic and social advancement of the people of Lakhrish. The village is almost cut off from the mainstream of social and economic activities in the State, and the caste stratification noticed elsewhere has fully manifested itself even in this small and primitive community. The Kandhas and the Doms have separate hamlets, and the Doms kept secluded in the village. They are not allowed to fetch water from the common wells excavated at Government cost.

2. Although their dwellings are poor and their clothing is scanty the villagers take much pleasure in adorning their bodies with ornaments. Their awareness of an interest in social reforms is negligible.

3. Ghosts and spirits, sorcerers and priests, the gountia and the caste panchayats dominate the whole social fabric of the village. Intra-family relationships are generally loose.

4. On the whole, the society of Lakhrish appears to have hardly made any significant headway since the days of the feudal and tribal chiefs. Much publicity of good quality and

social education with long-term perspectives are greatly needed at present to stir the villagers out of their indolence.

5. The existing factor-conditions in the village economy are not at all conducive to a good standard of living. The pressure on land is heavy. The cultivators till hill slopes with spades, and on the other hand the fields on the plateau have not been put to good use. Besides sowing and harvesting the agriculturists hardly give any care to their land.

6. With a systematic and phased programme of agricultural extension they may be persuaded to adopt improved agricultural practices. To encourage the proper cultivation of relatively dry types of land the nullah flowing through the village may have to be dammed. The hill slopes may have to be terraced for cultivation.

7. The only relieving feature is the more than satisfactory participation rate of the village population in gainful labour. The females ungrudgingly help their menfolk in the fields. The capable old men help the younger ones. With intensive cultivation the existing underemployment in agriculture can largely be remedied.

APPENDIX

TABLE I
SETTLEMENT HISTORY OF HOUSEHOLDS

Caste/Community	Households	Number of households settled				
		More than five generations	Between four and five generations	Between two and three generations	One generation ago	Present generation
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Kandha	74	—	74	—	—	—
Dom	45	—	43	—	1	1
Lohar	6	—	5	—	1	—
Karan	2	—	—	—	—	2
Brahmin	1	—	—	—	—	1
Ghasi	1	—	—	—	—	1
Gauda	1	—	—	—	—	1

TABLE II
AGE, SEX AND MARITAL STATUS

Age groups	Population (all marital status)			Never married			Married			Widowed			Divorced or separated		
	Total Males Fe-males			Males Fe-males Total			Males Fe-males Total			Males Fe-males Total			Males Fe-males Total		
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
0 to 14 years	262	127	135	126	135	261	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
15 to 24 years	63	28	35	11	4	15	17	31	48	—	—	—	—	—	—
25 to 59 years	228	111	117	—	1	1	110	100	210	1	16	17	—	—	—
60 years and above	21	7	14	—	—	—	5	2	7	2	12	14	—	—	—
Total (all ages)	574	273	301	137	140	277	133	133	266	3	28	31	—	—	—

TABLE III

WORKERS CLASSIFIED BY SEX, BROAD AGE GROUPS AND OCCUPATION

(All workers are divided into nine occupation groups, namely, occupation group No. I—cultivator; No. II—agricultural labourer; No. III—workers in mining, quarrying, livestock, forestry, fishing, hunting, etc.; No. IV—household industries; No. V—manufacturing other than household industries; No. VI—construction; No. VII—trade and commerce; No. VIII—transport, storage and communications; No. IX—other services)

Age groups	Total number of workers			Occupation No. I (cultivator)			Occupation No. II (agricultural labourer)			Occupation No. IV (household industry)			Occupation No. VII (trade & commerce)			Occupation No. IX (other services)			Remaining occupations III, V, VI & VIII			
	P M F			P M F			P M F			P M F			P M F			P M F			P M F			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
All ages	326	161	165		270	134	136	35	11	24	5	5	—	4	3	1	12	8	4	—	—	—
0—14	38	20	18		34	19	15	2	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	2	—	—	—
15—59	284	138	146		232	112	120	33	10	23	5	5	—	4	3	1	10	8	2	—	—	—
60 & above	4	3	1		4	3	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

TABLE IV

NON-WORKERS BY SEX, BROAD AGE GROUPS AND NATURE OF ACTIVITY

(All non-workers are divided into four groups : Group I —full-time students or children attending school
Group II —persons engaged only in household duties
Group III —dependants such as infants and children not attending school and persons permanently disabled
Group IV —retired persons not re-employed; rentiers; persons living on agricultural or non-agricultural royalty, rent or dividend; beggars, vagrants, persons seeking employment, persons having unspecified sources of existence)

Age groups	Total non-workers			Students		Engaged in house- hold duties		Dependants		Others		
	P M F			M F		M F		M F		M F		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
All ages	248	112	136		27	7	—	1	85	128	—	—
0—14	224	107	117		27	7	—	—	80	110	—	—
15—59	7	1	6		—	—	—	1	1	5	—	—
60 and above	17	4	13		—	—	—	—	4	13	—	—

TABLE V

CULTIVATED LAND HELD BY CASTE/COMMUNITY

Caste/community	Number of households having no land	Number of households having land	
		Number of households	Area of land held (in acres)
1	2	3	4
Kandha	4	70	354.17
Dom	11	34	152.64
Lohar	—	6	22.76
Karan	2	—	—
Brahmin	1	—	—
Ghasi	1	—	—
Gauda	1	—	—
Total	20	110	529.57

TABLE VI

LIVESTOCK

Caste/Tribe	Draught cattle				Milch cattle		Goats and Sheep		Fowls		Others
	Bullocks		Cows/buffaloes		Cows/buffaloes		No. of households owning	Number of goats and sheep	No. of households owning	Number of fowls	
	No. of households owning	Number of Bullocks	No. of households owning	No. of cows/buffaloes	No. of households owning	No. of cows/buffaloes					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Kandha	63	113	49	123	2	2	8	14	55	126	
Dom	20	46	14	69	5	10	2	3	28	78	
				(including 10 buffaloes)		(including 6 buffaloes)		(including 1 sheep)			
Lohar	6	11	2	3	—	—	3	6	3	7	
Karan	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Brahmin	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	4	
Ghasi	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Gauda	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Total	89	170	65	195	7	12	13	23	87	215	

TABLE VII

MONTHLY INCOME PER HOUSEHOLD BY OCCUPATION GROUPS

Occupation	Number of households in the monthly income groups of				
	Rs. 0-25	Rs. 26-50	Rs. 51-75	Rs. 76-100	Rs. 101 and above
	2	3	4	5	6
Cultivation	4	74	16	2	—
Agricultural Labour	5	13	2	—	—
Household Industry	—	2	2	—	—
Trade	—	3	—	—	—
Other Services	—	4	1	1	1
Total	9	96	21	3	1

TABLE VIII

AVERAGE MONTHLY EXPENDITURE PER HOUSEHOLD BY INCOME GROUP AND OCCUPATION

Occupation	Income groups														
	Rs. 0-25			Rs. 26-50			Rs. 51-75			Rs. 76-100			Rs. 101 & above		
	Expenditure			Expenditure			Expenditure			Expenditure			Expenditure		
	No. of house-holds	Food	Others	No. of house-holds	Food	Others	No. of house-holds	Food	Others	No. of house-holds	Food	Others	No. of house-holds	Food	Others
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Cultivation	4	18-00	3-00	74	31-00	6-00	16	44-00	13-00	2	50-00	31-00	—	—	—
Agricultural Labour	5	17-00	2-00	13	32-00	4-00	2	47-00	5-00	—	—	—	—	—	—
Household Industry	—	—	—	2	29-00	5-00	2	43-00	8-00	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trade	—	—	—	3	35-00	3-00	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other Services	—	—	—	4	24-00	11-00	1	43-00	26-00	1	34-00	51-00	1	39-00	74-00

TABLE IX

EDUCATION

Age groups	Total population			Illiterate		Literate and educated		Literate without educational standard		Primary or Basic		Matric or Higher secondary		Inter-mediate		Graduates		Any other qualification	
	P	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
All ages	574	273	301	268	300	5	1	—	—	4	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
0—14	262	127	135	126	135	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15—24	63	28	35	26	35	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25—59	228	111	117	109	116	2	1	—	—	1	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
60 and over	21	7	14	7	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

TABLE X

RANGE OF INFORMATION

Caste/Community	Total No. of households	Number of households which know the name of					Remarks
		Panchayat headquarters	Thana headquarters	Tahsil/ Taluk headquarters	District headquarters	Principal river of the district	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Kandha	74	73	73	73	73	—	—
Dom	45	44	44	44	44	—	—
Lohar	6	6	6	6	6	—	—
Karan	2	2	2	2	2	—	—
Brahmin	1	1	1	1	1	—	—
Ghasi	1	1	1	1	1	—	—
Gauda	1	1	1	1	1	—	—