

Forest Conservation and The Tribal: A Study In Manatu Village Under Ranchi District of Bihar

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INTRODUCTION

Man is not only a part of his eco-system but also the most resource asset but also the most influential force in it. In this eco-system every effect is also a cause - an animal's waste becomes food for soil bacterial; what bacteria excrete that nourishes plants; and animals eat the plants. Such ecological cycles are being disturbed by deforestation.

Evolutionary Process of Culture Development and Deforestation

Taking the evolutionary process of development of culture and people, the cultural evolutionist like Tylor (1871) and Morgan (1877) viewed that the culture of mankind has passed through three successive stages of development e.g. Savagery, Barbarism, and Civilization.

It may be assumed that during the Savagery Period men did not know how to produce food while collect food from forest entirely. Even of their entire dependency on forest it may be presumed that they did not harm to any forest resources. So, the destruction of forest occurred during the period might be due to natural hazards/disasters.

While in the *Barbarism Period* men acquired the knowledge of domestication of animals and carrying out agriculture. In the early stage, shifting cultivation was practiced. But gradually in course of time the settled cultivation in plain areas by cutting down the trees and forest was started. And also the men started to construct their settlement by clearing of forest tracts. Resultantly, it may be said that the destruction of forest by men was initiated from this period to some extent. Even such destruction might be nominal considering the huge large forest cover and low population size.

But after the men entered into the age of *Civilization*, and in course of time with the continuous increased population growth, industrialization, urbanization, modernization, and complexity of human life, the rate of forest

destruction had has been increased rapidly, and become an acute environmental problem during the recent time.

Deforestation, Its Impact and Need for Forest Conservation

Undoubtedly, the victims of poverty destroy forests for fuel wood, household purposes etc. And to live in the world the people continuously destroy the very resources like forest which they will need very much tomorrow. Because the forests are not only the main source of oxygen, but also this forest store nutrients in the vegetation, retain and contribute towards the fertility of the soil. Apart from these, forests encourage the absorption of water by the soil, decreasing the loss of water by run-off to streams and rivers. Moreover, it reduce the possibility of soil erosion. Along with these, the forests also influence rainfall patterns by affecting the hydrological cycle. It has been observed that with increasing deforestation, the amount of rainfall tends to decrease in various parts particularly in hill areas and also plain areas. Forests preserve the ayurvedic medicines, gives various fruits, provide many shelters for the wild animals, and makes the link between many mythology with human beings.

Apart from these, the degradation of forests undoubtedly leads to the destruction of wild life habitats as their population have dwindled to dangerously low levels also making dangerous for human beings for survival. The continuous depletion of forests has also been another reason behind the frequent attacking of wild animal hoards into the adjacent human habitats for search in foods in turn endanger the human life as well as destruction of houses and agricultural products. All these would have endangered ecological balance in the world. Besides, the problem of deforestation no doubt endangered the country's rich biological diversity. Biodiversity is not only a source of wealth in agricultural activities, but also for various medicinal plants and pharmaceutical products, and a range of other

useful purposes too (Pachauri, 1998: 36). So the deforestation no doubt affect to a greater extent in these regards.

Taking the context of India's forest cover, the official estimate shows that 19.52 per cent of the total geographical area which is 329 million hectares. While at the time of independence, nearly 75.18 million hectares of about 22 per cent of the country's total area was having forests. Moreover, about 175 hectares of land is supposed to be waste land due to degradation, and 18 million hectares has been either non-cultivable or barren land (Singh et al., 1998).

In this context, the Survey of India and the National remote Sensing Agency revealed that out of the 19.52 per cent green cover, over 10 per cent is represented by closed forests, over 8.0 per cent form open forests, about 0.12 consists of mangrove forest, and only 1.10 per cent comprise of coffee plantations. At least 10 million hectares of degraded land requires to be brought under forest per annum in order to maintain ecological balance at this moment, as estimated (Singh et al., 1998).

With the rapid population increase in India, its forest resources are gradually declining since independence, and no doubt depleting at a very fast rate. The extent of rich forest has shrunk from 46.2 million hectares during 1972-73 to 33.77 million hectares during 1980-82, and is further estimated to be much below this level (Ibid.). Most alarming fact revealed by satellite pictures is that the annual loss of tree cover stood at around 1.3 million hectares at the beginning of 1980s (Government of India, 1982:7). While today, it is estimated to be 1.5 million hectares. Indeed, there has been a loss of about 12 per cent of tree cover in the 35 years since the 1952 Forest Policy. Indeed, between the first British document of 1854, when the tree cover was estimated at 40 per cent, and in 1952 there was a reduction of about 18 per cent of tree cover, or 0.18 per cent per year, while another 12 per cent was lost during the following 30 years, or 0.40 per cent per year (Fernandes, 1990: 36).

In fact, over 10 per cent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is lost due to environmental damage and degradation of natural resources. Taking the growth of forests, the current annual growth is only 88 million cubic meters,

where as potentially it could be as high as 139 to 235 million cubic meters (Pachauri, 1998: 35-36).

That is why, Forest Policy (New Policy) states as its objectives—the maintenance of environmental stability, conservation of natural heritage, checking soil erosion, increase in the tree cover, meeting people's fuel wood, timber and minor forest produce (MFP) requirements encouraging the efficient use of forest produce and creating a massive people's movement around afforestation and preservation (Government of India, 1988: 2.1).

FOREST AND THE TRIBAL

It is the fact that the dependence of tribal on forest produce is of much greater magnitude particularly among forest dwelling tribal as well as tribal residing adjacent to forest areas. Considering the dependency of tribal upon forest, the Government of India Forests and Tribal Review Committee in 1982 observed that forest not only provide food, medicinal plants, fodder and fuel to the tribal but also satisfy their deep rooted sentiments. A survey of the forest regions of Gujarat revealed that 22-27 per cent of the elderly persons and 70-72 of tribal children regularly go to the forests for collection of timbers, leafy vegetables, bamboo shoots and a host of other products. A study conducted by the Administrative Staff College, Hyderabad showed that during drought and adverse conditions, the tribal households live only on edible forest products. Besides the normal activities of the tribal minor forest produce (MFP) play a very important role. As much as 10-15 per cent of the income of the tribal households in Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh respectively, is derived from MFP (National Commission of Agriculture, 1976). In fact, the MFP has now become one of the most important sources of earning cash for the forest dwellers and revenue for the Forest Department (Roy Burman, 1977: 175).

Tribal being too aware of the importance of forest to their lives, they developed norms and conventions, guarded by myths and folklore, which forbade destruction of scarce and vital trees, limited their utilisation to certain seasons and otherwise promoted a culture that was protective of trees and animals. Their relationship with the forest and its resources was a symbolic

one, which was adequately expressed by the 'Chipko Movement' of the foothills of the Himalayas, a major feature of which was the practice of embracing a tree and holding on to it in order to protect it from the contractors and timber merchants (Dasgupta, 1977:105).

According to *Lepcha* (a Himalayan tribe) creed that there are certain places in the hills which are forbidden and considered as sacred i.e. divine place. If such areas are hampered by any cutting/felling of trees, deforestation and/or establishment of human settlement there. Then the *God* becomes annoyed, and consequently the natural calamity/disasters, dangerous and contagious diseases used to occur as curse and punishment for the human beings. Obviously, such creed might have played important role to protect the forest areas (Datta, 1977:26). Taking the tribal in Chotanagpur of Bihar (presently Jhrakhand), traditionally the tribal had developed a culture geared to keeping a balance between their own needs and environment imperatives. As a result their social, religious and cultural life had been intricately intertwined with the forests, which they preserved as a renewable resource (Gupta et al., 1981:99).

The tribal and all the forest dwellers maintained the entire eco-system as a *divine abode* and thus sacred. Among Chotanagpur tribes, three eco-systems were protected—one was the *Sarna*, a sacred grooves in the dense forest where teen-age males were initiated into adulthood. Other one was *Akhara*, where young boys and girls met to choose their life partners. The another one was the *Sasan*, the ancestral burial ground in the forest (Fernandes and Menon, 1987: 116-117). It was common to these ecosystems that no sickle or axe could be used in them. Only the minor forest product that could be gathered without damaging any trees, or twigs that could be cut in one's hand could be obtained (Gadgil and Vartak, 1974: 314-15). All these ecosystems were linked to the continuity of the tribe. In this way, the preservation of tribal was ensured by identifying the future of the tribe with their conservation of forests (Fernandes, 1990: 39).

Another way of preservation was the restriction on the cutting of trees or killing of animals. Trees which are economically crucial like *Sal* and *Peepal* were kept under total protection among

the tribes. Other economically important trees viz. *Mahua*, *Mango*, *Jackfruit* and *Salap* could be cut by the tribes only for specific purposes as per their very strict regulations. The rest of the species were not protected by such restriction. These social control mechanisms obviously played overwhelming role to ensure that when trees had to be cut or animals hunted, the destruction was minimal and there was an equitable distribution. Besides, the myths of *Vana devta* also made sure that each of the tribal adhered to these rules (Fernandes, et al., 1988: 165-170). Moreover, according to the tribal myth, their spirits reside in an around the village situated in the forest, which also contribute in the maintenance of such restriction. On the whole, the tribal combined religious myths, creeds, social control mechanisms and technology to keep continue a balance in between human needs and environmental imperatives. So that, it may be said that the dependence of tribes on forest was rather constructive. With using the forest resources on which they depended, the tribes also preserved it for posterity (Fernandes, 1990: 39), and use of forest products by tribes was never at the cost of forest regeneration (Dasgupta, 1997:105). So the symbiotic relationship between tribal people and the forests had has been very common and important.

Though the tribal was having positive and constructive attitude towards the forest in the past as highlighted by some studies, but the recent trend shows some deviation from their earlier attitude towards forest to some extent. Fernandes (1993) cited that the tribal value system and their attitude towards forest are also changing. Tribal and other forest dwellers destroy forest today through the sale of firewood, and India has an estimated 2 to 3 million head loaders selling it (Agarwal, 1985: 72). Indeed, with the rapid population growth, the consequent growing settlements and residential houses i.e. township and the people's increasing requirements of wood for various purposes along with industries, mines, power projects and river valley programmes, the contractors had has been to carry on depletion of forests by means fair or foul, as well as forest wood smugglers who also carry on depletion of forests. While the tribal and non-tribal are seen as the active agents carrying forest products

on his head, he is employed by one of the contractors and is normally paid low wage.

This had has been because the forest economy itself, which can no longer sustain the tribal the way it did earlier. The regular and frequent cutting of trees for supplying firewood and wood for other purposes today is a reflection of the serious depletion of the forest resources and the damage done to forest economy by the corporate sector and their middle –men has been quite significant. Tribal who have traditionally depended on natural resources like forest and have been marginalized by measures and legislations on forest as well as the growing commercial-industrial need and interests. Thus, the control of these resources is transferred from the communities that have survived on them for centuries, to the corporate sector to whom they are not a mode of survival, but a source of profit (Fernandes, 1990:36).

Generally speaking, the tribal poor took good care of the forest until are induced by their poverty, mortgages and middle-men etc., their position became precarious, when they too turned ‘predator’ (Mahapatra, 1992: 39; Saldhana, 1993: 76). Above al, there has now been the feeling of the tribal communities that forest no longer belong to them and indeed belong to the forest officials and contractors. They are no longer responsible for the well being of the forest, nor would what they

believe or feel make any difference to the way forest would be unchanged. Taking all these into consideration the study in *Manatu* village reveals somewhat interesting and encouraging in the context of forest conservation.

FOREST CONSERVATION INMANATU VILLAGE

The Village

Manatu mainly a tribal village is situated at a distance of one and half kilometer eastwards from the National Highway No. 33. Administratively, the village falls under the jurisdiction *Ormanjhi* Development Block and *Ormanjhi* Police Station of Ranchi District. The village is comprised of three clustered settlements (locally known as ‘tolla’) namely, *Manatu Barotolla*, *Karmalitolla*, and *Putkatolla*. Though the village is located at a distance only 30 kilometers from Ranchi town in the north. Yet, it has no sign of urbanization while the village is much rural and surrounded by the forest under *Chutupalu Ghati* (Forest). In fact, the surrounding north-eastern side of the village is having to some extent dense forest, while its southern side has comparatively less forest. Moreover, the village itself has the varieties of trees like, Sal, Mahua, Tilai, Doi, Putri, Kendu, Khair, Kusum, Bel, Aason, Piar, Behera, Palas etc. Earlier the entire surrounding areas

Table 1: 1 Land use pattern in Bihar and Chotanagpur Tribal Region, 1981-82

Type of Land	Bihar State		Chotanagpur Region		Ranchi District	
	Area	Percentage	Area	Percentage	Area	Percentage
Total area	17330	100.0	7971	46.0	1822	10.5
Forest	2828	100.0	2217	78.4	339	12.0
Barren land	1010	100.0	569	56.3	108	10.7
Land put to non-agricultural use	1738	100.0	552	31.8	99	5.7
Permanent pasture and other grazing land	138	100.0	106	76.8	3	2.2
Culturable waste other than fallow land	448	100.0	342	76.3	74	16.5
Land under miscellaneous trees and grooves	208	100.0	62	29.8	10	4.8
Other fallow land	961	100.0	780	81.2	188	19.6
Current fallow	2060	100.0	1094	53.1	214	10.4
Orchards	128	100.0	5	3.9	4	3.1

Source: Government of Bihar, State Report on Bihar Forest, 1977, Department of Forest, Ranchi.

Note: The districts are included for showing the Chotanagpur region like Santhal Parganas, Hazaribagh, Ranchi, Giridih, Dhanbad, Palamu, and Singbhum, as per 1981. In recent times some of the districts are divided into number of new districts.

were having dense forest, and the Manatu village was established within the forest.

Though the villagers could not recall exactly, but as per their belief the settlement of this village in the area might have started some 250 years ago approximately, when the area was entirely covered with dense forest populated by various wild animals. Their forefathers initially came to this place mainly for hunting wild animals, food gathering and collection of other forest products. The villagers have the myth behind the naming of the village as *Manatu* which means agreeing. The mythological perception was that their forefathers prayed to God (Vanadevta) for saving their lives, and God (Vanadevta) agreed and permitted them to settle there where they found themselves safe in the midst of forest.

The village does not have any school. Resultantly, the parents used to send their children to nearby school located at *Chutupalu* (a relatively developed village). Moreover, no health services are available in the village. For any medical reason/treatment they have to go to a primary health center at *Chutupalu* and/or *Ormanjhi* Block Health Centre. But the villagers mostly depend on their traditional medicine for minor treatments. Besides, the village does not have any Post-Office, Telegraph Office, no electricity, and other modern amenities. The house types are mainly thatched and mud houses with tiled roof in the village. Settlement pattern is mainly clustered with 15 to 25 houses in one place and thus congested.

Taking into consideration of their access to mass media, it was found that 17 families in the village are having radio sets, and 6 families possess TV sets (with battery). Only one person who is a regular reader and subscriber of *Sarsaline*, a Hindi magazine. No other magazines and newspapers are subscribed/read by the villagers.

The Villagers

Majority of the villagers are traditionally cultivators which they have been continuing from generation to generation without any adoption or inclusion of any modern techniques and even not using high yielding varieties of seeds/grains. They used to grow low yield/qualities of paddy. Apart from paddy, maize (makai), gram (chana), and seasonal vegetables also are cultivated by them. Moreover, they used to collect minor forest

products from the adjacent/surrounding forests.

The village is inhabited mainly by tribal belonging to various tribal communities. The total households in the village is 102 with a population of 528 – 281 males and 247 females. Community-wise, *Mundas* constitute the highest percentage (33.3%) of the total households in the village, followed by *Karmalis* (31.4%). Next is the *Chick Baraik* (21.6%). Rest are the *Mahali*, *Lohra*, *Kurmi* etc. (Table 2).

Table 2: Household and population according to community in Manatu village, 1998

Community	Household		Population	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Lohra	5	4.9	26	4.9
Chick Baraik	22	21.6	115	21.8
Munda	34	33.3	178	33.7
Mahali	6	5.9	31	5.9
Karmali	32	31.4	164	31.0
Kurmi	2	1.9	9	1.7
Sundi	1	1.0	5	1.0
Total	102	100.0	528	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 1998

The majority of the population in the village are in the age group between below 10 years to 10-18 years (51.8%). In all cases of age groups, the male population are comparatively more than female, except the age groups like 19-30 and 46-60. In cases of 19-30 and 46-60 years age groups, the number of females are more than males. While in other age groups, the number of males are more than that of females. The sex ratio in the village has been 879 (Table 3).

Educationally, the village is relatively backward. Though majority of the total population are illiterate (68.6%), even then the percentage of below matriculates has been good (29.7%). While only 1.3% and 0.4% are matriculate and graduate respectively. Among below matriculates the percentage of females has been much less (30.0%) than that of males (70.0%). The percentage of females among illiterates is relatively more (55.0%) than that of male (45.0%). It indicates that educationally the females in the village are much backward than the males (Table 4).

Occupational distribution of the head of households has been analysed in Table 5. It highlights the general occupational pattern

Table 3: Distribution of population by sex ratio and age in Manatu village, 1998

Age (in years)	Male		Female		Total		Sex ratio (No. of female per thousand male)
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Below 10	100	35.6	89	36.0	189	35.8	890
10-18	50	17.8	34	13.8	84	16.0	680
19-30	48	17.1	53	21.5	101	19.1	1104
31-45	54	19.2	46	18.6	100	18.9	852
46-60	22	7.8	24	9.7	46	8.7	1091
60 and above	7	2.5	1	0.4	8	1.5	143
Total	281	100.0	247	100.0	528	100.0	879

Source: Field Survey, 1998

Table 4: Population by sex and education in Manatu village, 1998

Education	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Graduate	2	0.7	-	-	2	0.4
Matriculate	6	2.1	1	0.4	7	1.3
Below Matriculate	110	39.2	47	19.0	157	29.7
Illiterate	163	58.0	199	80.6	362	68.6
Total	281	100.0	247	100.0	528	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 1998

adopted by the villagers, in which majority of them are agriculturists (66.7%). Besides, a considerable percentage of them are involved as agricultural/daily labourers (17.6%). So, major occupation in the village has been agriculture though number of tribal like Mahalis in the village are also involved in *basketry* (Table 5). The people of this village are

Table 5: Occupational distribution of the Head of household in Manatu village, 1998

Main occupation	Head of the household	
	No.	%
Cultivator/farmer	68	66.7
Agricultural/daily labourer	18	17.6
Service	7	6.9
Unemployed	6	5.9
Housewife	2	1.9
Artisan	1	1.0
Total	102	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 1998

mainly poor. According to monthly income, majority of the households are having monthly income less than Rs. 1500/- (80.4%) as shown in Table 6.

The common language of the villagers is the *Sadri* which they used to speak to interact among the tribal only. But at the time of interaction with non-tribal they used to speak in *Sadani* dialect.

Table 6: Household according to monthly income in Manatu village, 1998

Monthly income (in Rs.)	Household	
	No.	%
Less than 1,500	82	80.4
1,501 - 3,000	12	11.8
3,001 - 5,000	7	6.9
5,001 and above	1	0.9
Total	102	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 1998

FOREST CONSERVATION

Traditionally the tribal of *Manatu* village had a culture geared to keeping a balance between their own needs and environmental imperatives. As a result, their socio-cultural and religious life had been intricately intertwined with the forests, and in the past they too preserved the forest as a renewable resources in the society. But later on the people of the village since last few years were also engaged in deforestation for meeting their immediate needs and demands (as reported by the villagers). But today, the people of this village have been playing positive and constructive role towards the conservation of forest as a whole. Although the majority of the people in the village are illiterate and almost all are unaware about the constitutional laws concerned with forest and

forest policy, the villagers themselves have developed the idea of protecting the forest for their own benefits.

At present, the villagers have been sincerely looking after and taking care for protecting the forest cover about 1 kilometer towards north of the village, more than half kilometer towards east up to *Saher* village, 1 kilometer towards south up to a small stream locally known as *Vera Nullah*. The significant contribution to make the villagers aware about the protection of forest was done by a social worker who visited the village on behalf of a social welfare group locally known as '*Hull Kranti Dal*' in this region. That social worker motivated the villagers significantly to preserve the forest for their own survival and the continuity of tribe. The awareness of forest protection by themselves has also been developed among them due to influence of mass media (mainly the TV, Radio) to some extent (as reported by the villagers).

As regards to the protection of forest by themselves, the villagers are now unanimous in their decision and no villagers do any harm to the forest trees and can cut a single tree and do harm without prior permission given by the villagers together. Indeed, in case of any essential requirement, the concern villager has to call a meeting for permission. The meeting used to be held in the evening, and any decision taken in such meeting has to be normally abided by the concern villagers. Through such meeting if the villagers unanimously give permission then one can cut any tree as per requirement. Even in such case the villagers unanimously decide the number of logs to be cut without causing any harm to trees, and for that also the concern villager/family should have to pay a minimum amount towards development and welfare fund of the village. In this context, it was said that the villagers can get maximum 10 logs (locally known as *balli*) at a time with a half of the cost available in the market. Such permission is given only when there is real urgency to have such logs for construction and repairing of house and that also should be in a restricted way without causing any harm to the survival of trees in the forest.

Apart from these, the villagers have the right to collect dry leaves, dry twigs and shrubs for fuel consumption, collect *Kendu* fruits for eating and

Kendu for selling the same to the *Bidi* makers, collect *Mahua* fruits for extraction of oil and also for eating, and *Mahua* flower for the preparation of traditional liquor locally known as '*Handia*' for self consumption as well as selling the same to the other people. The villagers can also collect the logs of big trees like *Sal*, *Mango*, *Kusum*, etc. permissible as per their own perception vis-à-vis rule formulated by themselves.

It is also interesting that together with protecting the forest the villagers already stopped their Annual 'Hunting Festival' in order to let the all wild forest animals (whatever available) alive and protected for preserving the eco-system in the forest.

Though in the beginning step was taken unknowingly about the scientific reason for protection and preservation of forest. The people were pleased to know from the members of '*Hull Kranti Dal*' (as reported by the respondents) as regards to the benefit of forest preservation. These are – that the preservation of forest not only save the woods and fuel for the requirements of future generation, but also save the habitation of the wild animals, check the soil erosion, keep the eco-system balanced to bring rains and maintain convenient temperature, save from air pollution, supply of medicinal plants, foods etc. As a whole they are very much intended to protect the forest with a view to create a healthy environment the most essential for the people living in and around the village/area and/or the region as well as for future generation and for continuity of tribe. So it may be said that the villagers are now entirely aware about the benefits of forest conservation. Indeed, the elderly and adult villagers have started such preservation of forest with aspiration that their off springs will certainly be benefited from such preservation in future.

A committee of seven members is formed for looking after the forest, planning and implementation of forest preservation with the active cooperation of all the villagers as a whole. The task is distributed in a rational way that one member of each from two families are supposed to make a round everyday to keep vigil over the forest under their protection with a view to look after the forest and check any sorts of attempt by the outsiders or even neighbouring villagers to cause any harm to the forest. Such round in the forest they used to

maintain to ensure that no villagers/unsocial element/forest wood smuggler/outsideers can cut any trees illegally. In case of any such occurrence vis-à-vis attempt the culprit is bound to pay Rs.50/- as a fine failing which that person used to be handed over to the nearest Police Station for legal action.

The meeting used to be held once in a week mainly on each Saturday, and one representative from each family used to attend in the meeting irrespective male or female. Actually, the females of this village also used to take active part in the forest protection. In such meeting they normally discuss about their planning, problems and solution for the improvement of preservation of forest. Even the children of this village are also very aware and help their parents to protect the surrounding forest areas.

The villagers though do not plant any trees by themselves but they normally preserve whatever the plants resources available in the forest under their protection. So, they do not indeed perform any afforestation. But obviously there has been the natural growth of plants/trees in the forest. And as the deforestation is checked by the villagers along with natural growth of plants and trees, the protected areas are going to have a dense forest in near future. As expressed by the villagers that they are very keen and willing to undergo training related with forest and environment protection in a better possible way. But yet not received any such training from the Forest Department or from any other Government organizations.

CONCLUSION

Now, the people of *Manatu* village are too aware of the importance of forest to their lives. They not only reinforced their traditional norms and conventions guarded by their myth and folklore behind destruction of environment which prohibits cutting of scarce and vital trees, restrict their utilisation of forest resources, and to promote a culture heritage that had been protective of forest. But also physically they used to take the initiatives to protect the forest from any sorts of deforestation caused by human beings. And thus contribute to a greater extent to conserve the environment in the area.

As per their perception that they always belong to forest and reciprocally the forest too

belong to them, and they are having a permanent relationship with the forest. This obviously helped to create a situation towards forest vis-à-vis environment protection. Resultantly, it may be said that the villagers of *Manatu* are maintaining an excellent and exemplary task by protecting forest from their own and not due to any external factors and without getting any sort of cooperation from the Forest Department. This may obviously encourage the others to protect the forest for conservation of environment.

It also articulates to the fact that only the various measures and legislation on forest in order to control the deforestation caused by human beings will not yield the desired results, until people's sincere participation is there. And, when initiatives come from the local/concerned people themselves for participation, rather than from external forces/sources, the results are no doubt best. The protection vis-à-vis conservation of forest by the tribal villagers themselves in *Manatu* village may be considered as an important example in this regard considering the present day rapid depletion of forest both by tribal and non-tribal. So the initiatives are also required to be taken to provide the tribal in *Manatu* village with the proper training and the cooperation as well from the end of other neighbouring villages and the Forest Department too, so that they can conserve the forest and environment in a best way.

KEY WORDS Environment. Forest. Conseration. Deforestation. Tribals.

ABSTRACT It is the fact that only the various measures and legislation on forest in order to control the deforestation caused by human beings will not yield the desired results, until people's sincere participation is there. And, when initiatives come from the local/concerned people themselves for participation, rather than from external forces/sources, the results are no doubt best. This study deals with mainly that how the tribal of *Manatu* village has been maintaining an excellent and exemplary task by protecting forest from their own and not due to any external factors, and thus contributing to a greater extent to conserve the forest and environment in the area.

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