



CENSUS OF INDIA 1981

Part - X D

SERIES - 3

ASSAM

HANDICRAFT  
SURVEY  
REPORT :

ENDI SILK  
INDUSTRY OF ASSAM

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## FOREWORD

**T**HE Indian Handicrafts are known the world over for their rich variety, grace, elegance and skilled craftsmanship. Nevertheless, a number of handicrafts because of their stiff competition with factory made products, non-availability of raw-materials, exorbitant increase in the manufacturing cost, lack of proper marketing facilities for finished products or due to a variety of other reasons have either become extinct or have reached the moribund stage. After independence, however, a number of schemes were introduced by different government agencies for their growth and development but still this sudden impetus have helped only a few crafts to flourish and thereby become spinners of foreign exchange for the country.

Despite the unique position being enjoyed by the handicrafts especially in the realm of national economy, the general awareness among the people in the country about our crafts and craftsmen had been deplorably poor. Nothing was practically known about the commodities produced, techniques employed for the manufacture of different objects, raw materials used, their availability, methods adopted for the sale of finished products etc. An attempt was therefore made in connection with the 1961 census to study about 150 crafts from different parts of the country with a view to provide basic information on those crafts which were selected for the study.

At the 1971 census, the study on handicrafts was not taken up but this was again revived in connection with the 1981 census. There has been, however, some difference between the studies taken up in connection with the censuses of 1961 and 1981. While the 1961 studies have covered both rural and urban crafts, the 1981 studies have focussed their attention only on traditional rural based crafts. That apart, the 1981 studies besides touching upon those aspects which were covered under the 1961 series, have laid emphasis on matters that are vital for the revival of rural crafts and thereby for the rejuvenation of the economy of the region particularly the villages. This is in consonance with the policy of the government to give due importance to the rural sector with focus on employment intensive strategy of development in which next to agriculture, the small scale industries and handicrafts play a significant role.

The formats required for undertaking the study were formulated by Dr. K.P. Ittaman under the able guidance of Dr. N.G. Nag, the then Deputy Registrar General, Social Studies Division. Dr. Ittaman who succeeded Dr. Nag as Deputy Registrar General, Social Studies Division co-ordinated the study undertaken in different States/Union Territories by the Directorates of Census Operations. The reports received from the Directorates were examined by Shri M.K. Jain, Senior Research Officer with the help of Smt. Suman Prashar, Assistant Director of Census Operations and Shri. Shyam Singh, Junior Investigator. I am grateful to all of them for organising this study.

The present report is the outcome of a study undertaken on Endi Silk Industry of Assam by the Directorate of Census Operations, Assam. I have immense pleasure in acknowledging the services rendered by Shri J.C. Bhuyan, Deputy Director and his colleagues in the Census Directorate for bringing out this publication.

New Delhi,  
the 1st June, 1988

**V.S. Verma**  
*Registrar General, India*

## PREFACE

**A**SSAM enjoys irrefutable reputation for its exquisite handloom products, especially the fabrics made of silk. The silk industry of Assam mainly comprises the culture of Endi, Muga and Mulberry silk. Endi and Muga culture are the exclusive monopoly of the people of Assam. Eri-culture and Endi-weaving has tremendous potentiality and given due care and attention, this industry can generate employment opportunity for more and more people and thus help solve the problem of unemployment to a considerable extent especially in the rural areas where economy till now is primarily agro-based.

In Assam the production of Endi and Muga silk are mainly concentrated in the Brahmaputra valley and is predominantly based in the rural areas. The present study is limited to various aspects of Endi-silk industry alone. Though this traditional craft is located throughout the rural areas of Assam yet one comes across the major and most important Endi-producing centres in the southern bank of the river Brahmaputra in the district of Kamrup. Rampur area, as is popularly known, comprising about twenty villages, in this part of Brahmaputra valley, boasts of producing the largest quantity of Endi-fabrics. Almost all the households located in this area have taken this craft as one of the sources of livelihood. Rampur area can therefore be considered as having ideal representative villages as far as practice of Endi-weaving is concerned.

The schedules devised for this study were canvassed in two sets of selected households in three selected villages in Rampur area having maximum concentration of craftsmen. The first set consisted of those households where the craft is still practised by one or more members of the households and the second set comprised those where the craft was once practised but has now been given up owing to various constraints. Utmost care was taken to elicit as much meaningful information as possible from the respondents. In this report an attempt has been made to study the various aspects of the craft as revealed by field survey. The analysis and observations are obviously based on data thrown out by the survey.

The field work was done by Shri T. D. Sinha, Statistical Assistant and Shri A. C. Deka and Shri S. Swargiary, Assistant Compilers under the guidance of Dr. S. K. Baruah, Investigator. Shri T. D. Sinha has done a commendable job in compilation and tabulation of data of Household Schedules canvassed during field survey and incorporated in this report as inset tables and also those appended to this report as Appendices III and IV. In this work he has been ably assisted by Shri A. C. Deka and Shri S. Swargiary. Dr. S. K. Baruah has prepared the first draft of this report and has also revised the same as per comments received from the Social Studies Division in Registrar General's Office. Credit goes to Shri A. Singh, Artist for illustration on the cover page. Shri N. Bhattacharjee, Assistant Director has edited the report.

We are much grateful to Dr. K. P. Ittaman, Deputy Registrar General, Social Studies Division for providing us with very useful technical guidance and most valuable suggestions in improving the report.

The State Khadi Board and Directorate of Sericulture and Weaving also deserve our sincere thanks for supplying us with various useful informations.

Above all we must express our heart-felt gratitude to Shri V. S. Verma, Registrar General, India for his patient and unfailing advice and guidance and constant inspiration in every stage of production of this report.

Guwahati,  
September 14, 1988

**J.C. Bhuyan**  
*Deputy Director of Census Operations*  
*Assam: Guwahati*

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## CHAPTER I

### HISTORY OF ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CRAFT

Assam is known for its exquisite handloom products especially the fabrics made of silk. Handloom and sericulture form an integral part of the cultural heritage of Assam and are found scattered all over the state, particularly in the rural areas. It is an important cottage industry in which many families find subsidiary occupation and others derive livelihood either directly or indirectly.

Silk weaving is the traditional and age-old cottage industry of Assam. Assamese women irrespective of caste and social standing know the art of weaving. In the past it was almost like a household affair and used to engage all the family members. Assamese women always boasted of weaving fine fabrics from Non-Mulberry (Endi and Muga) and Mulberry (Pat) yarns spun by their own hand from the cocoons reared in their own gardens.

This traditionally famous silk weaving is considered not only a status symbol for the Assamese womenfolk but also an indispensable aspect of the socio-economic life of the Assamese populace. Even to-day handloom woven cloth symbolises love and affection among the Assamese people.

Assam enjoys an enviable position in respect of its contribution to the sericulture and weaving in India. It ranks fifth among the silk producing states of India. The silk industry of Assam mainly comprises the culture of Endi, Muga and Mulberry silk, Endi and Muga culture are the exclusive monopoly of the people of Assam which occupies a unique position by producing 2/3rd of the total production of Non-Mulberry silk in India.

Of the three varieties, namely Endi, Muga and Pat, the first two are indigenous to the

state. These two varieties are found no-where in India except Assam and foot-hills of Meghalaya. Vigorous attempts to introduce Endi culture in some other parts of the country did not succeed. In Assam the production of Endi and Muga silk are mainly concentrated in the Brahmaputra valley. The geographical and topographical factors help Assam in being the largest silk producing state in the country. The fabric made from these two varieties of silk has great demand in and outside the state and abroad as well. It has earned foreign exchanges from various countries of the world. The major states in India where Endi-silk is exported are West Bengal, Bihar, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra etc. Besides the above, Assam Endi-silk also has good market in Sikkim and Bhutan. The important and main foreign countries where Assam Endi-silk is exported are Nepal, England, Japan etc.

The present study deals with the Endi-silk only. The Endi-silk of Assam is famous all over the world for its exquisite texture, durability and colour. It is easily washable. Assam produces 96% of Endi-silk produced in India. It is considered to be one of the major handloom products of Assam.

The Endi or Eri silk is the produce of polyvoltine worm known as "*philosamia ricinia*" which feeds on the leaves of the castor oil plants (*vicinus fragrans*) and the Kessuri tree (*Heteropanax fragrans*). The Endi or Eri worm derives its name from the castor plant locally known as "Eri" in Assam which constitutes its principal food.

The valley of the Brahmaputra and the surrounding hill areas are considered as the

natural home of Endi-silk worm from time immemorial. Endi culture is believed to be indigenous in this region. The humid and moist atmosphere due to heavy rainfall coupled with the growth of castor food plants has made this area a natural home for the Endi worms.

This traditional Endi-silk industry is widely spread all over the rural areas of Assam. In this region Endi weaving is practised solely by the women, who take it as a leisure time activity mainly to supplement the income earned by their menfolk from agriculture. The important and major Endi producing areas are located in the southern bank of the river Brahmaputra in the district of Kamrup. Almost all the households in the rural areas of this part of Kamrup district possess an Endi loom and have taken Endi weaving mostly as subsidiary occupation although in some cases as the principal source of income too. It is practised by all sections of the people irrespective of their castes and creed. In the past, most of the rural women used to produce Endi fabrics in their leisure time to meet their family requirement. Only excess fabrics were sold to the traders. The weavers did not practise this craft on commercial basis. But in the recent years there is a discernible trend among the weavers to take Endi weaving on a commercial basis. Most of the weavers in the South Kamrup, particularly the area under survey have taken Endi weaving on commercial basis. Many households of this region derive their livelihood indirectly or directly from it. Thus at present this industry has assumed great significance and has become one of the major sources of livelihood in this region. But weavers, in other than South Kamrup area have not yet adopted Endi weaving as a profession. Most of these weavers practise this weaving for their own consumption only. However, as the demand for the Endi fabrics is increasing, the number of commercial weavers are also increasing.

## History of origin

The Endi rearing and weaving is a traditional occupation of the people living in hills and plains, confined mostly to the Brahmaputra valley and the surrounding hill areas. Nothing is known about the antiquity and antecedents of this traditional cottage industry. It is believed to be indigenous in this area. Many believe that Assam is possibly the natural home land of the Endi worms from the cocoons of which 'Endi-silk' is produced. The leaves of Castor plants is the main food of the Endi worm and it is believed to have originated at the foot-hills of the Himalayas. According to some authors it might have originated in North America and India.<sup>1</sup>

Assam's association with this traditional silk industry dates back to time immemorial. Sri S.N. Choudhury in his book "Endi-silk Industry" mentioned that "the art of sericulture was known to the ancient Kamrup as early as the epic age and silk was used as early as the vedic age. Classical writers mentioned about production and trade in varieties of fine silk in and through the valley. References have been made to dyed Pat, Endi and Muga-silk. Greek scholars mentioned the country of "Seres" – probably about ancient Kamrupa which produced silk – that was known as "Sericum". The culture which evolved in China travelled to other parts of India through the river valley. Indeed a trade route existed like the famous silk road to Northern India, Bhutan and Tibet along the valley through the Kamrup. Some authors believe that sericulture originated initially in the Eastern Himalayas (probably Manipur) from where it went to China. Because the silk industry was mainly confined in the past to the Indo-Mongoloid and Tibeto-Burman elements in the area, it was contended that along with the migration to the land, some ideas were also introduced from China.<sup>2</sup>

1. S.N. Choudhury "The Endi-Silk Industry" published by Directorate of Sericulture and Weaving Department, Government of Assam, 1982.
2. S.N. Choudhury "Muga-Silk Industry" published by Directorate of Sericulture and Weaving, Government of Assam, Guwahati, 1981.

There is also an evidence to the existence of the art of producing silk as well as weaving of finest silk textile in this area in classical literature. The tradition has been continued to the present time.

According to historian Dr. P.C. Choudhury, "The art of sericulture and the rearing of cocoons for the manufacture of various silk cloths were known to the Assamese as early as the Ramayana and the Arthasastra. The former mentions Magadha, Anga, Pundra and the country of the 'cocoon rearers (Kosa Karanam Bhumih), which was no other than Kamrupa, lying to the east of Pundra. The classical writers, beginning at least with the first century A.D., made important mention about the production of silk and the silk trade in and through Assam. Schoff, on the basis of the Periplus, contends that the silk industry originated in China and travelled from there to Assam and other parts of India. In the opinion of Watt, it originated in Manipur in Assam. He also adds that this place was the home of the silkworm – that the real mulberry silk insect originated in Manipur and went from there into China. The evidence from the 'Arthasastra', the 'Harsacharita' and the classical writers among others prove that in the art of the rearing of silk cocoons and the weaving of the finest silk textiles, the weavers of Kamrup had a reputation equal to those of China. The tradition has been continued to the present time. This is confirmed by observations of some later writers. Qazim, for instance, writes that the silk of Assam was very excellent, resembling that of China. Taverniere remarks that the silk of Assam was produced on trees and the stuffs made of them were very brilliant. The industry therefore, was continued throughout the centuries and Assam's silk fabrics are much esteemed in India".\*<sup>1</sup>

Historical evidence also shows the practis-

ing of Endi culture in ancient Kamrup since many century ago. Kautilya had also mentioned that silk produced in ancient Kamrup was of a much superior quality when compared to those produced in other parts of India.\*<sup>2</sup> From remote antiquity, Assam enjoyed a reputation as producing silk of a high degree of perfection. Late Birinchi Kumar Baruah also mentions in his book "A Cultural History of Assam" that "the antiquity of the silk industry in India is uncertain, but the weight of evidence seems to be in favour of its importation from China. Schoff considers that it was imported by way of the Brahmaputra valley, and this seems very likely. Pliny shows some knowledge of the silk trade that was carried on through Assam. The Mahomedan historians noticed that the silks of Assam were excellent and resembled those of China. Tavernier writes of Assam silk "produced on trees" and adds that "the stuffs made of them were very brilliant". The royal presents which Ham-savega carried to Harsa included "silken cloths (Ksaumani) pure as the moon's light." "Soft loin cloths (Jatipattikah) smooth as birch bark" "sacks of woven silk", "wrappers of white bark-silk" and various kinds of smooth-figured textiles. The Arthasastra, while mentioning the varieties of textile commodities known as dukula, says, "that which is the product of the country Suvarnakudya is red as the sun (Balarkaprabham) as soft as the surface of a gem, being woven while the threads are very wet (mani-singdhodaka-vanam), of uniform (caturasra) or mixed texture (vyamisravana)" Kautilya also refers to the varieties of fibrous garments known as "patrona" and remarks that which is produced in the country of Suvarnakudya was the best.

The three varieties of Indian silk generally known as Pat, Endi and Muga are specially associated with Assam. The names Pat (Pattaja) and Endi (Eranda) no doubt originated from

\*1 Choudhury P.C.-- "The history of civilization of the people of Assam ", Guwahati - 1966.

\*2 J.C. Roy -- Textile Industry in Ancient India - Journal of Bihar, Orissa, Research Society - Vol.III.

Sanskrit, but Muga seems to be a characteristically Assamese name. It is said to be derived from the amber colour of the silk of the wild cocoon (palu). The rearing of the silk worms, even to-day, is the main occupation of many castes of Assam.

Assam was probably known even in the time of the Ramayana as a country of "cocoon rearers". In the Kishkindhyakanda for instance, while mentioning the countries one passes through going to the east, the poet refers to Magadha, Anga, Pundra and the "country of the cocoon-rearers" (Kosakaranam bhumi) which must be Assam.

A considerable amount of cotton is even now produced in Assam and the art of making cotton cloths has reached high perfection. Skill in the art of weaving and spinning has always been held to be one of the highest attainments of an Assamese woman. Almost all the terms expressing excellence of attainments in a woman can be traced to this idea of skill in spinning and weaving. When a proposal of marriage is made the first question asked about the bride is whether she knows bowa-kata, i.e. whether she is skilled in spinning and weaving. The Ahom kings established a department of weaving and maintained skilled weavers to supply the royal wardrobe with cloths. These weavers received grants of rent-free lands and other favours in return for their services.\*1

Captain Pemberton has also given indication of practising silk worms in Assam.\*2 Robinson in his report had also mentioned about the growing of castor tree (main food plant for endi worms) by almost every farmer in his own courtyard as well as his cultivable land.\*3

Late Kanak Lal Baruah, noted historian of Assam, is of the opinion that rearing of silk worms was practised in Assam since many centuries before Kautilya. The industry, therefore, has continued for centuries and Assam's silk fabrics are much esteemed in India.\*4

Some are of the opinion that as early as the seventh century Kumar Bhaskar Varma (600-650 A.D.) of ancient Kamrupa presented a valuable muga wrapper of golden colour to the celebrated Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang as a mark of respect shown from the royal throne. The great Hindu King of India Harshabardhana also received an Assamese Silk cloth known to be of the finest quality sent by the same king as a token of homage. The same cloth has been described to be as beautiful as the moon of the autumn season, as soft as the leaf of Bhurja (Abirch) and as white and fragrant as the jasmine.

The Ahom king Pratap Singha (1603-1641 A.D.) under the able supervision of Momai Tamuli Barbaruah (the father of Lachit Borpuhan, the hero of the famous battle of Saraighat), made spinning and weaving a compulsory craft to be cultivated by every woman of a household. During fairly a long period of Ahom rule (1223-1819 A.D.) in Assam the handloom industry reached the highest pitch of glory. Sri Sri Sankardeva (1449-1569 A.D.) thought it wise to send a fairly big size of cotton carpet to the Koch king Naranarayan as a mark of respect whereon the entire scenario of holy Brindavana was skilfully and attractively exhibited through use of multi coloured yarns. The great king was deeply moved by the Scenographic art and beauty of the said presentation. All these historical facts bear

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\*1 B.K. Baruah-- "A Cultural History of Assam (Early period)" Guwahati, 1951 (103, 104, 105).

\*2 Capt. R.B. Pemberton -- "The Eastern Frontier of British India", 1966.

\*3 William Robinson -- "A descriptive account of Assam", Guwahati, 1975.

\*4 K.L. Baruah -- "Early History of Kamrupa", Shillong, 1933.

ample proof of the high standard of handloom industry of Assam.\*<sup>1</sup>

There is a legend as to the origin of Sericulture in Assam. It is believed that a Brahmin girl gave birth to three children without having a husband. So, the society outcast her for the loss of her chastity. She had to live in the jungle with her children and there she came across a holy hermit who being sympathetic to her, applied some spiritual power and transformed her three children into three beautiful worms namely Eri worm, Pat worm and Muga worm.

Another legend is that long long ago, a Chinese lady who was married to a Tibetan prince brought three species of silk worms of different varieties along with her dowry from her parent's house. These worms were used to be reared in Tibet. From Tibet it probably came to Assam along with migration of Mongoloid and Tibeto-Burman people.

According to some scholars the history of producing silk material from the silk worm dates back as far as 3000 years ago and the discovery of silk thread from the insect was quite accidental. It is also believed that a fourteen year old Chinese empress, Silingshi while retrieving a cocoon that had accidentally fallen into her steaming cup of tea, found the delicate skin of the insect unfolding itself leaving small brown chrysalid behind. Since then the art of silk rearing, breeding and weaving has developed and expanded, advanced and magnified into what it is to-day. From China it came to Japan and then to India and silk has come to be an important source of trade and tradition.\*<sup>2</sup>

The Chinese records also indicate that the ancient route for trade in silk and other goods

was through Udalguri in Darrang district of Assam. Thus it may be assumed that rearing and weaving of silk cloth from worms might have come to Assam through Tibet.\*<sup>3</sup>

The cultivation of different varieties of silk worms was first taken up by the Bodo community of Assam. From them it gradually spread amongst the various other castes and tribes of Assam. This famous silk industry was found to have flourished during Ahom kings' rule. The Ahom kings of Assam patronised the development of sericulture. This patronage led to advancement, for it was obligatory on the part of every household to rear silk worm, reel the yarn and weave the fabric. The kings exempted the silk worm rearers from payment of land revenue and created a separate machinery to look after silk weaving activities.

Sericulture declined during the British regime and there was no development during the decade. This craft lost much of its eminence with the advent of the British. Because during that period the market was flooded with millmade cheap foreign textiles. But eventually the British also attempted to develop this craft on commercial basis but this did not succeed, because they had very little knowledge of techniques in rearing, spinning and reeling. The English traders in the year 1679 attempted to export several bales of Endi-silk from Assam to Europe. Though this traditional craft had to face lots of difficulty during the British rules, yet it had not lost its past glory and speciality. This rural based craft has been continuing to occupy a prominent place in the day to day life of the rural people of Assam. Till the opening of railways this famous culture remained confined to the rural areas of Assam. But, the endi cocoons slowly found their way to

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\*1. An article "Rongali Bihu and the Handloom Industry" by P.C. Dutta, published in "The Assam Tribune", Guwahati, 11th April, 1987.

\*2. An article "Silk worms to silk grown" by Purabi Konwar, published in "The Sentinel" Guwahati, 10 Aug., 1986.

\*3. "Facts about Assam Silk" by the Sericulture & Weaving Deptt., Shillong.

the important trading and weaving centres outside the periphery of the villages. A sizeable quantity of cocoons was also exported to spun mills and establishments abroad. Even the European mills flourished with endi cocoons from this region. Thus advancement in communications, especially railways, definitely provided impetus to the rearer and trader in developing this craft.

In the past endi cocoons and fabrics made of Endi-silk were exported to Bhutan, Tibet and other neighbouring countries. After the World War II, the Govt. started taking interest in developing this industry. After independence of this country in 1947 the Govt. of Assam have taken all possible measures to develop this traditional occupation. The government have established many organisations or agencies to develop this craft. The Directorate of Sericulture and Weaving, Khadi Board, Marketing Corporation etc. have been established to look after the growth and development of this silk industry. The establishment of spun mill at Jagiroad in Nagaon district by the State Government is a milestone in the history of development of this craft. It produces Endi fabric of various kinds which is marketed outside the state also.

#### **Names of important centres within the States and outside State**

Endi weaving and spinning are widely spread throughout the rural areas of Assam. The main Endi producing centres of Assam are situated on the southern bank of the river Brahmaputra in the district of Kamrup. The area west of Guwahati city covering Palasbari, Mirza, Rani, Barduar, Rampur in Kamrup and Raha in the Nagaon district are the most important Endi producing centres of Assam. Among them Rampur area is the largest producer of Endi fabrics. Its products are in great demand

in the market. Endi production, including rearing and spinning, is concentrated mainly in Rampur areas of Assam. Ninety percent of the Endi products of Assam come from this area. Besides Kamrup district, Endi weaving and spinning is also found in the rural areas of other districts. But majority of those weavers practise this craft during leisure time only and weaving is done mainly for home consumption and not for making profit by selling in the market.

The hill areas of Assam also produce large quantities of Endi worms but they spin and weave for their own domestic need. Large percentage of cocoons produced in these areas are procured by traders coming from other areas. Besides they also supply cocoons to the mill and also to the local weavers. This is one of the major occupation of the tribal inhabitants in the hill areas of the State. Besides Assam this craft is also practised by the tribal people of North Eastern region comprising Meghalaya, Manipur, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram. Apart from North East India, some other States of India also tried to introduce this famous silk. Though many states have attempted to practise this culture, they are yet to attain a degree of success. Bihar is perhaps the only other state which has achieved considerable success in this culture during the last decade.

The distribution of <sup>1</sup> Endi culture in various States other than Assam is given below:

(1) *Arunachal Pradesh*: From very ancient time the Endi rearing and weaving is being practised in the plains and foothills of Arunachal Pradesh.

(2) *Manipur*: Endi culture is also practised in Manipur State. There is one Endi seed granary which produces about 50,000 layings. About

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1. "Eri Silk Industry" by Dr. S.N. Chowdhury, published by Directorate of Sericulture & Weaving, Govt. of Assam, 1982.



300 families are at present engaged in this culture.

(3) *Meghalaya*: Meghalaya is another important centre where Endi culture is practised since long back. The Bhoi area of the Khasi Hills and Garo Hills of the state practise this craft traditionally. It is estimated that about 1,600 families are engaged in this craft. There are 2 Endi seed granges, 24 Endi concentration centres and 2 production centres. Most of the cocoons from the foothills of Meghalaya area are sold in the weekly market adjoining Assam.

(4) *Mizoram*: Endi culture is found to be practised in certain areas of the state. A large number of families are engaged in Endi culture. Govt. have introduced five Endi seed granary and 3 Endi concentration centres.

(5) *Nagaland*: In the plain areas of Dimapur this culture is practised by the plains tribal. Weaving is traditional in almost every Naga household. More than 3,000 families are engaged in Endi culture. There is an Endi seed granary and five Endi concentration centres in the state.

(6) *Tripura*: A few tribal families are found practising Endi culture in Cham Paknojar area from a long time. There is one granary and two Endi concentration centres in the state.

(7) *Bihar*: Endi culture has been recently introduced in this state where the Govt. has been very keen to popularise this culture. Bhagalpur is the main centre of Endi-silk trade. There is one Endi Research station at Ranchi also. There are five Endi seed supply stations at Bakutiarpur in Patna district, Bhagalpur and Sakra (Muzaffarpur district), Sitalpur (Saran district) and Begusarai (Munger district) and 28 Endi demonstration centres spread over the different districts of the state. Rearing and spinning are done by the agriculturist and the weaving is done by tassar silk weavers. But the cocoons produced are inferior in comparison

to that produced in Assam. The price of yarn is also less than that in Assam because of inferior quality. There is no marketing of Endi cocoons or yarn in the state.

(8) *Orissa*: In recent years, the Govt. of Orissa has tried to popularise this culture. But up-till now it has failed to yield the desired result. Khurdah district of the state is the main centre of Endi culture.

(9) *West Bengal*: Endi culture is found among the tribals of Koch-Bihar and Jalpaiguri district in the state. It is also practised in the hill areas. Most of the Endi products are utilised locally. There is about 1,500 families engaged in the culture. There is a training-cum-production centre in Jalpaiguri district.

(10) *Rajasthan*: Attempts are being made to introduce Endi culture in Jodhpur area of Rajasthan. But it is not yet popular among the people.

(11) *Uttar Pradesh*: In this state Endi culture is limited. It is confined to Suar (Rampur district), Tamukute (Deoria district) and Lakhimpur (Kheri district).

(12) *Andhra Pradesh*: Recently attempts have been made to introduce Endi culture because castor plants, the main food for the worm is found to grow abundantly in the state.

## Abroad

China is the only country other than India where Endi culture is known from a long time. Endi culture is known to exist in Shantung and Chekiang provinces of China from very old times. In the last decades country like Korea, Taiwan, Laos, Egypt have also tried to introduce Endi culture in their countries.

The Endi, Muga and Pat production in Assam during 1959-60 and subsequent years is shown in the table I.1

TABLE I.1

**Total production of Mulberry and Non-Mulberry silk in Assam  
(Figures are in thousand KG)**

| Years   | Endi<br>(Non-Mulberry) | Muga<br>(Non-Mulberry) | Pat<br>(Mulberry) |
|---------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| 1       | 2                      | 3                      |                   |
| 1959-60 | 2,25                   | 68                     | 26                |
| 1978-79 | 1,81                   | 24                     | 16                |
| 1979-80 | 1,91                   | 45                     | 8                 |
| 1980-81 | 1,51                   | 48                     | 44                |
| 1981-82 | 1,55                   | 44                     | 11                |

Following table shows the production of Non-Mulberry Silk, Endi and Muga in various states of India.

TABLE I.2

**Statewise production of Endi and Muga-Silk during 1982-83  
(In lakh KG)**

| State          | Endi        | Muga        | Total       |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1              | 2           | 3           | 4           |
| 1. Assam       | 1.42        | 0.37        | 1.79        |
| 2. Bihar       | 0.13        | —           | 0.13        |
| 3. Manipur     | 0.05        | —           | 0.05        |
| 4. Orissa      | 0.05        | —           | 0.05        |
| 5. Tripura     | 0.01        | —           | 0.01        |
| 6. West Bengal | 0.07        | —           | 0.07        |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>1.73</b> | <b>0.37</b> | <b>2.10</b> |

Source: Hand Book on Assam Sericulture Industry.

## **Particulars of community, caste and tribes associated with the craft in the past**

Since ancient times Endi rearing and weaving is practised by Indo-Mongoloid and Tibeto-Burman races of the states especially by the Tribals of the plains and hills, who are believed to be the earliest inhabitants of this region. From them this culture had spilled over to the other castes and tribes of Assam. According to some, the cultivation of different varieties of silk worms was first practised by the Bodo tribes and from them gradually this culture spread amongst the other people living in the hills and plains of Assam and Meghalaya. Bodo or Bodos are the plains tribal people of Assam. They inhabit the plains of Brahmaputra valley. They call themselves as 'Boro' or 'Bodo' although they are known as Kacharis in the Assam valley. The Bodos are Indo-Mongoloid, speak a language that belongs to Assam-Burma group of the Tibeto-Burman branch of Sino-Tibetan or Tibeto-Chinese speech family. The origin of the Bodos is obscure. But many among them hold the opinion that they are the direct descendants of Hirimba, the wife of Bhim. Bodos are believed to be among the earliest settlers in Assam.

One of the most important features of this craft is that there was no functional castes in the past and even at present there is none. This is quite unlike some other states of India where weaving tends to be associated with particular caste or sub-group. But in Assam people belonging to various castes and tribes have been practising this craft as one of the subsidiary or part time occupation from ancient times. There is no particular caste or tribe or community that is solely associated with the craft. This is a feature unique to the state of Assam.

In Assam this craft is practised by all sections of the people. While this is one of the major earning sources for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes population of Assam, the

other Hindus like Brahmins, Kayasthas, Kalitas, Keots have also practised this craft without any prejudice. In Kamrup district, particularly in South Kamrup, this traditional craft is practised by all sections of people, irrespective of their castes, creed or economic status. Thus it has played a significant role in the life of the people.

## **Different handicraft produce**

The Endi-silk produced in Assam is in great demand both in and outside the state. It has also been exported to many foreign countries. The Endi fabrics produced by the Assamese weavers are soft, fine and also durable. It is white with yellowish tinge, smooth as well as warm. It is easily washable. Endi-silk is known as poor man's silk and used by all sections of the people. Every Assamese households in rural as well as urban areas possess a wrapper made of Endi-silk generally used as warm cloth (wrapper) during winter season. People prefer this because of its durability and warmth.

The main produce of the Endi-silk is wrapper of various sizes. Besides, Endi shirting is also produced by some weavers.

The main items of apparels produced by the Assamese weavers are as follows:

1. Endi Bor-kapor - Gent's wrapper.
2. Endi Pashara - -do-
3. Endi Chaddar - Ladies' scarf
4. Endi Shirting - Cloth used for tailoring shirts.

The main and important Endi products are gents' and ladies' wrappers. A gent's wrapper has usually a length of 240 cms. and breadth of 120 cms. A medium quality wrapper of 40 counts require about 750 grams of yarns which is prepared out of one kilogram of Endi cocoons. A ladies scarf, which is almost two thirds of the size of an average gent's wrapper requires about two third of the quantity of

cocoons used in making a gent's wrapper. A lady's chaddar now-a-days is embroidered with beautiful floral designs and it is very popular among all sections of ladies, both in and outside the state. Shirting produced only by a few weaver is a recent product.

Even a vague estimation of the total number of households and craftsmen engaged in Endi-weaving in the state as a whole who earn their livelihood from practice of this craft is felt impossible. As oft repeated earlier, this craft is practised as a subsidiary occupation by females alone in their leisure. Moreover, a large section among these females weave the fabric primarily for domestic consumption. Though a survey<sup>1</sup> on handloom weaving industry as a whole comprising Endi, muga and pat silk, in Assam conducted by the Department of Sericulture and Weaving in the State Govt. during the year 1975-76 reported the total number of persons engaged as 786007 with corresponding number of looms as 684076, no data relating to the number of households and number of persons engaged exclusively in weaving Endi-silk is available. No other established records indicating the number of practising households or weavers who derive their livelihood from this craft is available. We have therefore perforce to desist ourselves from presenting any such figure other than our own estimation of number of practising households and craftsmen in the villages under survey presented elsewhere in this report.

If not more, it is equally difficult to arrive at any figure of actual cost of production of Endi fabrics. The overwhelming majority of the weavers is illiterate who are unable to comprehend maintenance of even crude accounts of cost of raw materials consumed in producing the fabrics. Further, deduction of cost of labour involved in production of Endi-silk is felt an impossibility. The women are at loom only

after attending to their normal household duties and there is no fixed time of hour of work at the loom. The weaving is always done in a piecemeal manner and a weaver never keeps a record of the duration of her stay at the loom. Moreover, manufacture of a same measure of fabric produced with yarns of different counts or size entails varying hours of labour put in to produce the same. Thus, no standard measure of hours of work can be deducted in case of production of different items of Endi-silk.

The sale price of the Endi products are shown below:

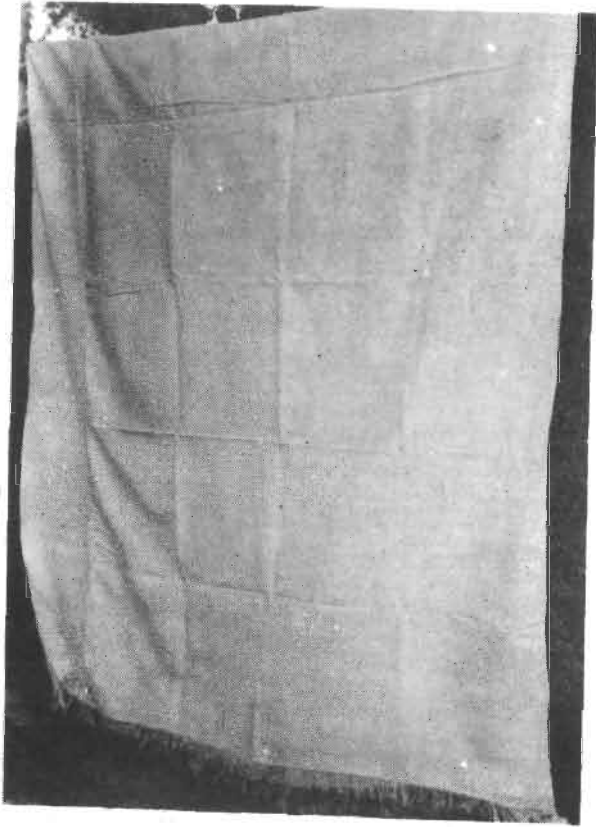
Bor Kapor (Gent's wrapper) varies from Rs. 300 to Rs. 600 depending upon its quality. The ladies scarf varies between Rs. 100 to Rs. 250 depending upon its quality. The sale price of Endi shirting per metre is around Rs. 50/-.

The finished products are mainly procured from the local weavers by the Khadi Board, Assam Govt. Marketing Corporation, local traders and middlemen. The Khadi Board is the most important organisation responsible for disposing the finished products. The organisation collects finished products from the local weavers and market the product through their network of retail sale outlets located in various parts of the state. Khadi Board market the products in other states also. This organisation usually supply the yarn to the weavers who in return get wages for weaving the Endi-silk. The wages of weaving per pair of Endi wrapper is around Rs. 100/-.

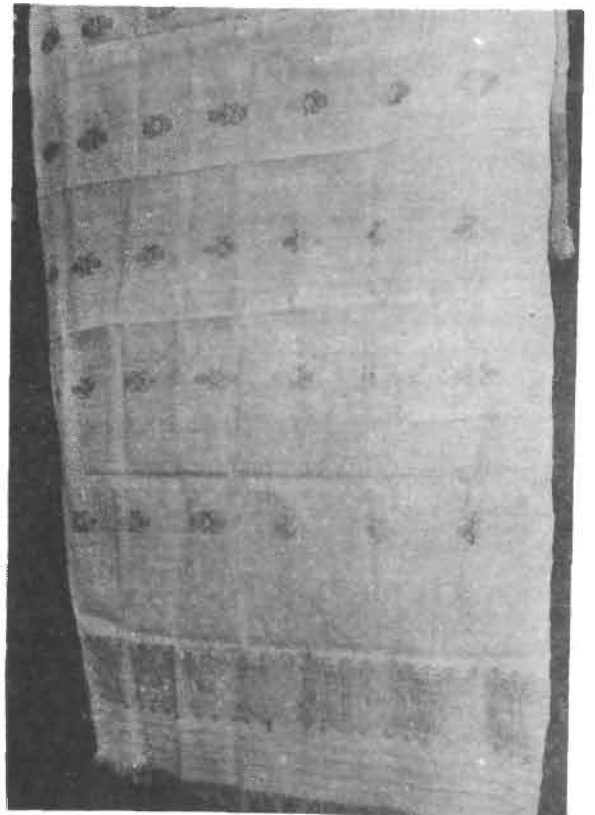
Assam Government Marketing Corporation also play important role in disposing the finished products. This organisation has opened 27 Emporia in all important towns in

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1. A Report on Survey of Sericulture and Handloom in Assam, 1980.



*A gent's wrapper (above)  
& a Ladies' scarf*





Assam including two emporia in New Delhi and Calcutta. The primary objective of the emporia is to market the handicraft and handloom products of Assam. The Emporia are given ample power to purchase handloom products from the rural areas where these are available. They collect the articles through procurement centres as well as by direct contact with the weavers.

Finished products are also sold through the local traders. These traders procure the finished products from local weavers at a low price and sell them in and outside the state at a much higher rate. These traders sell the products either by putting the articles for sale in a shop or through peddling from door to door.

Though information regarding sale price of a good quality male wrapper varying from Rs. 300/- to Rs. 600/- and that of ladies scarf varying between Rs. 100/- and Rs. 250/- could be collected from the local traders as well as retail shops of Khadi Board yet estimate of margin of profit could not be made as no information regarding the cost of yarn supplied by the board could be gathered.

Apart from the above, Endi finished products are also traded through the middlemen. These middlemen advance capital to the weavers and in return procure a big chunk of the products only to sell outside at an exorbitant margin of profit. Many weavers are found to be in the grip of such unscrupulous middlemen. A middleman never discloses the margin of profit. Thus the margin of profit earned by the middleman is anybody's guess. The average difference between the price at which a middleman sells a male chaddar and the price paid to a weaver from whom he purchases the material is around Rs. 50/- to Rs. 100/-. Similarly, in case of ladies chaddar the margin of profit varies between Rs. 50/- to Rs. 80/-. Moreover, quite a few middlemen provide the yarn to the weavers and by paying labour char-

ges for weaving which varies between Rs. 70/- to Rs. 80/- for a pair of Endi chaddar collect the finished product for sale. In such cases the cost of yarn could not be ascertained and as such it is not possible to give the margin of profit earned by the middleman.

Over and above, a few middlemen regularly loan money to the weavers' family whenever they are in distress and thus they hold these families in such a tight grip that the weavers have no choice than to handover their products to those middleman to negate the indebtedness. In such a situation it is obvious that the weavers do not get the expected price.

However, according to the Khadi Board of Assam total production of Endi-silk in terms of Rupees during 1985-86 was about Rs. 36,00,000/-. This production figure includes only Endi-silk sold through Khadi Board. During the year 1985-86, out of the total production, materials worth Rs. 20,00,000/- and Rs. 16,00,000/- were sold inside the state and outside the state respectively. This production figures exclude those sold by the weavers through the middleman or in the local market or used in the household by themselves.

The major places where Endi-silk is exported are Calcutta, Siliguri (West Bengal), Bhagalpur and Patna (Bihar), Kanpur (Uttar Pradesh), Ahmedabad (Gujarat), Bangalore (Karnataka), Coimbatore, Madras (Tamil Nadu) and New Delhi (Delhi). Besides the above, Assam Endi-silk finds good market in Sikkim and Bhutan. In the past there was a Marketing Centre of Endi in Kalimpong in West Bengal. However, no account of volume of Endi-silk exported to each of these centres could be gathered.

There are many organisations or agencies to help the growth and development of handloom industry of the state. The Directorate of Sericulture and weaving, Co-operative Department and Assam Government Marketing Corpora-

tion are the state level organisations for the development of Sericulture and Weaving Industry of Assam. The North Eastern Handicrafts and Handlooms Development Corporation also looks after the handloom and handicraft of North-Eastern India. Besides, All India Handloom Board (AIHB) works in close collaboration with the State Governments, Apex Primary Institutions, Handloom Development Corporations as well as the Handloom Trade and Industry. These institutions look after the growth and problem of various handloom industries of the state. All the above mentioned offices are located at Guwahati. The main function of the AIHB is to provide assistance under handloom development programme for modernisation of looms, training of weavers in modern techniques, development of co-operation, arrangement of credit, marketing etc. But it is interesting to note that though the above mentioned agencies or organisations are functioning in the state, yet the one and the only organisation which really helps promote the growth of this traditional industry is the Khadi Board of Govt. of Assam. This board provides all possible help for the growth of this craft. This board has opened a few centres in different Endi producing areas. The function of this board is to procure cocoons from different places and distribute them to local weavers for spinning. A spinner gets Rs. 70/- to Rs. 80/- as wage for spinning one kilogram of cocoons. The Board also supply Endi yarns to the local weavers who in return get wages for weaving the silk. Most of the poor weavers are benefited by this organisation. According to the local weavers, this organisation is of great help to the poor weavers. Many of the weavers are earning their livelihood either by spinning or weaving cocoons. There are about 13,000 registered weavers under this board.

There is no special training centre for Endi weaving in Assam. There are Govt. weaving and training centres all over the state but that training is meant for handloom weaving only.

The training acquired for spinning and weaving of Endi is traditionally inherited by the weavers. Every mother teaches her daughter in her childhood. Thus the Endi weaving may be called a traditional occupation. No special training is required for practising this craft. Training is felt necessary only if new tools and implements are introduced or modern method of weaving is implemented. Uptill now weavers follow the traditional method of weaving and for this no special training is required.

The present study concentrates on the Rampur area situated on the southern bank of Kamrup district. Because this region is the largest and major Endi-producing area of the state as well as India. Almost all the households of this region have taken this craft as one of the sources of income. Attempt is made to study the various aspects of this craft revealed by field surveys.

The Rampur area consisting of about 15 to 18 villages in the district of Kamrup is one of the oldest and major Endi production centre of the state and also of the country. This area is situated on the southern bank of the river Brahmaputra about 30-35 kms. from Guwahati city. The population of these villages is about 30,000. It is predominantly inhabited by the Assamese Hindus comprising various castes. The Endi-silk industry has been flourishing in these villages for several centuries. Handloom weaving particularly the Endi and rearing of Endi cocoons is the traditional and age-old craft of these villages. Almost all the households irrespective of castes or tribes of the villagers are engaged in this industry which provides them livelihood. Cultivation is also one of the major occupations of these villagers but majority of the households of the area earn their livelihood from cultivation only for about 3 to 4 months, the rest of the months of the year the households have to depend on endi weaving. Therefore endi weaving is found to be a major and important source of income of the households of this region. There is hardly a





*The Khadi Bhandar Office at Rampur area*



household in the area that does not practise this craft. This industries exclusive monopoly of this region. Endi-silk fabrics of Rampur area have got both aesthetic and utilitarian values. It is the oldest and most important cottage industry of this region. This has definite influence on the socio-economic set up of these villages. In fact it is inseparably associated with the life and culture of the people of this region. About 90% of the Endi-silk come from this region.

The adjoining areas of this region (Rampur) is inhabited by the tribal people mostly belonging to Bodo and Rava tribes. Both these tribes are expert in rearing Endi worms and this is considered to be their traditional occupation since time immemorial. The climatic condition of this region is also favourable for rearing Endi worms. They produce sufficient Endi cocoons which is the only raw material required for producing Endi-silk. The cocoons are obtained by the weavers themselves either by going to these tribal villages or through purchase in weekly hat – market held in their village or nearby villages. Apart from this, the Khadi Board of Govt. of Assam also distribute Endi cocoons to the local weavers at a nominal rate.

One of the interesting feature of this craft is that only womenfolk are engaged in this industry. The Endi weaving and spinning of cocoon is entirely done by the women. Males are not associated with this particular craft but for their role in marketing the finished products. It is customary and a regular feature of this area for a woman to know the art of spinning and weaving, because it always occupies a very important place in her life. The girls learn the art of spinning and weaving from their mothers or other elderly women in the family. Thus tradition has taught every girl to produce Endi fabrics of delicate texture and designs. After attaining puberty, majority of the girls engage themselves in weaving. The female child usually at the age of 10 to 14 years are engaged

in spinning the cocoons. Majority of the weavers are found to be engaged in weaving in the midst of their domestic work and leisure time. Most of the households in this area practise this craft for commercial purpose. The economic condition of the households of the area are entirely dependant upon this cottage industry.

As stated earlier, Endi fabric of Rampur area has a country wide appeal. It is famous for its durability and wonderful shades of colour. Endi-silk is warm and easily washable. The main Endi products of this region are 'Eri Bor-kapor', 'Eri Pashara', 'Eri Chaddar'-warm wrappers of different sizes. Recently weavers of this region have started producing Endi shirting which has instantly fascinated its buyers in and outside the state. Weavers of this region have earned a great applause for their fine products.

This traditional craft plays a pivotal role in moulding the rural economy of the state. It forms one of the major sources of income by providing both part time and full time employment to a large number of persons especially the women. This industry has a tremendous scope for expansion and development. With growing rural unemployment and under-employment, this industry definitely can play a much better role in providing adequate employment opportunity in years to come. To improve the rural economy and to uplift the lot of the people where the weavers predominate, the development of this rural craft is very essential. Though this rural craft has enough potentiality, it has not yet attained desired level of development. The rural women of the region have natural aptitude for weaving, therefore with little effort they can be persuaded to accept this craft on commercial basis.

In the following chapters an attempt has been made to present other aspects of the craft and the prospects of its future development.

## CHAPTER II

### CRAFTSMEN IN THEIR RURAL SETTING

As stated earlier, in the district of Kamrup, particularly the villages lying on the south bank of river Brahmaputra are the principal Endi-silk producing area of the state as well as in the country. There are about 20 to 30 villages in and around Palasbari and Chhaygaon P.S. which exclusively practise this famous handicraft of Assam. Endi weaving and rearing is the traditional and one of the primary occupations of this area. It is undoubtedly the best and major Endi producing centre of the state. For the purpose of the present study, we have selected three villages which are eminent Endi producing centres of Assam and known all over the state for their beautiful Endi fabrics. The villages are (1) Sanpara and (2) Rampur in Palasbari P.S. and (3) Jiakur in Chhaygaon P.S.

#### **The residential pattern of the surveyed villages**

The settlement pattern of the households of the three selected villages is uniformly similar to that obtained in Assamese villages in general. Houses in these villages do not follow any systematic pattern. Most of the houses are built at a little distance from either side of the village road in a very unplanned manner. A cluster of three to four thatched structures around a common courtyard is the typical household pattern. Houses are scattered in all the three villages and have more than one hamlet which are compact areas consisting of 50 to 60 households. The 'paras' or hamlets are interlinked by village Katcha road.

In the surveyed villages the houses are constructed on mud foundation having walls made of reed or split bamboo plastered with mud and cowdung. The roofs are thatched and pillars

and beams are made of bamboo or wood. Kitchen is generally separated from main dwelling houses. Apart from main dwelling house at least 3 to 4 other structures found around the courtyard, are usually used for keeping cattle, granary etc.

In many houses loom is also placed in one of such structures. Besides, majority of the houses have a small verandah in front. In some houses looms are placed in this verandah. Every houses has its own opening to the village main road.

It is observed that majority of the houses in these villages have kitchen garden where varieties of trees and plants like betel nuts, plantain and other fruits bearing trees are grown.

#### **Economic condition of the artisan households engaged in Endi weaving**

Economic life of the three selected villages is very simple. Land is the most important of the economic resources available in these villages. Agriculture is thus the main economic activity of the households. Besides agriculture, majority of the households practise Endi weaving as an additional source of income. However, the economic condition of artisans of these villages is far from satisfactory. They are mostly poor.

#### **Social status of the craftsmen engaged in the Endi weaving**

Majority of the households irrespective of caste of the villagers practise Endi weaving. There is no particular caste associated with this

craft. People belonging to even the highest rung in the social hierarchy e.g. the Brahmins also are found weaving. It is apparent therefore that the weavers have a position of pride in the society and they are never looked down upon.

Rearing of worms and production of Endi-silk are traditionally practised as household industry by inhabitants of these villages from time immemorial mainly as a subsidiary occupation. Women of these villages have a natural talent for weaving Endi-silk. They practise this craft to supplement family income. In the past all the households of these villages knew the art of rearing Endi worm which is a job easier than rearing other silk worms. Endi worms are domestically grown in almost every house. But at present the inhabitants of these villages are not commonly found rearing the worms. However, only a few households are still found rearing Endi worms in their gardens. Majority of households practise spinning and weaving which are done by the women-folk only. The Endi cocoons, the only raw-material required for the purpose, are usually procured from Khadi Board office (Govt. of Assam) and also purchased from the producers in the nearby villages and local markets. Besides, local traders and middlemen also play an important role in supply of Endi cocoons to the weavers. All the households of these villages irrespective of caste and creed, are directly or indirectly dependant on this traditional craft for their livelihood. The detailed description of the selected three sample villages are given below.

#### *Sanpara village:*

Sanpara is a medium sized Assamese village situated at a distance of about 43 kms. from Guwahati city. The village is bounded by Sikarhati village on the south, Jharobari village (block) on the north, Haropara village on the west and Kumani village on the east. The village is connected by a motorable road about 6 kms. long with national highway No. 37 at Bijohnagar town near Batorhat village. Buses leaving Jharobari village (block) which is only

1-1/2 kms. away from the village at regular intervals of 4 hours connect Guwahati city.

The village Sanpara falls under Palasbari P.S. which is about 15 kms. from the village. The Sub-Deputy Collector's office and Anchalik Panchayat office are located at Mirza about 10 kms. from the village, Block Development office is situated at Rani Block about 16 kms. from the village. The Post office of the area having money transaction facilities and a dispensary under the Health Service Scheme of the Govt. of Assam is located near Jharobari block. The nearest railway station Kamakhya is at about 33 kms. from this village. There are one primary, one middle and one secondary school in the village. For higher education, students have to go Mirza.

The village is situated on a plain surface. It is surrounded by jungles particularly on south-west direction. It has trees and bamboo groves scattered in and around thatched houses. Green paddy fields are seen all around the village. The climate of the village does not differ in any significant manner from that observed in other parts of the district and is characterised by a highly humid atmosphere and abundant rains. Topography and such climatic conditions makes the village an ideal place for rearing Endi-silk producing insect.

The area of the village is 320.11 hectares. The village according to 1971 census consisted of 474 households with a total population of 2,845 persons of which 1,441 were males and 1,404 females. According to 1971 census there were 600 workers of which 590 were males and only 10 were females. Total number of literate persons in the village was 1007 of which 721 were males and 286 were females. The present survey shows that there are about 520 households with a total population of 4,067 persons (approx.) the number of males and females being 2,114 and 1,953 respectively. The average size of a household works out to be 6.5 persons.

The table below gives the distribution of population of the village according to 1971 census and the present survey.

TABLE II.1

**Distribution of population with number of households of the village Sanpara**

| Source of data        | Area of the village in hectare | No. of houses | No. of households | Total population |       |         | Remarks         |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|------------------|-------|---------|-----------------|
|                       |                                |               |                   | Persons          | Males | Females |                 |
| 1                     | 2                              | 3             | 4                 | 5                | 6     | 7       | 8               |
| 1971 census           | 320.11                         | 474           | 474               | 2,845            | 1,441 | 1,404   |                 |
| Present Survey (1986) | —                              | 520           | 520               | 4,067            | 2,114 | 1,953   | Approx. figures |

All the inhabitants of Sanpara village belong to Assamese community and profess Hinduism. It is a multi-caste village mainly composed of Kalita, Baishya, Keot, Rajbangshi and Kaibartta. Among them Kalita, Keot and Baishya or Suri are the predominant castes staying in this village for many generations. The number of people belonging to Keot and

Kaibartta castes are not high. Kaibartta is the only Scheduled Caste community. People belonging to Kalita and Baishya (Suri) castes are economically much well placed and have attained a higher degree of cultural advancement and form about 75% of the total population. Following table depicts the castewise population of the village.

TABLE II.2

**Castewise distribution of population**

(Survey 1986)

| Name of the caste           | No. of households | Total population |              |              |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------|--------------|
|                             |                   | Persons          | Males        | Females      |
| 1                           | 2                 | 3                | 4            | 5            |
| Kalita                      | 227               | 1,600            | 825          | 775          |
| Baishya (Suri)              | 150               | 1,385            | 705          | 680          |
| Koch (Rajbangshi)           | 120               | 905              | 485          | 420          |
| Keot                        | 20                | 156              | 86           | 70           |
| Kaibartta (Scheduled Caste) | 3                 | 21               | 13           | 8            |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>520</b>        | <b>4,067</b>     | <b>2,114</b> | <b>1,953</b> |

The table II.2 depicts that among the five different castes living at Sanpara village. The largest population belongs to Kalita caste followed by those belonging to Suri or Baishya and Rajbangshi (Koch). In the sex composition of the village, there is a general preponderance of males over females.

Agriculture and Endi weaving are the major sources of earning livelihood of all the households in the village. It is observed that though cultivation is the prime occupation of these households, yet they earn their living from it only for 3 to 4 months in a year. The rest of the months of the year these households have to depend entirely on Endi weaving.

The villagers are totally ignorant of the history of the village. No written record or book-account about the origin of the village is found. However, it is certain that this is a very old village and the people are inhabiting this village for many generations. But none in the village could narrate when and how people came to live in this village.

According to some elderly villagers the name 'Sanpara' originated from a particular type of stone known as 'San seel'. This stone is used for sharpening various implements such as hoe, axe, knife and other agricultural tools. This 'san seel' stone was abundantly available in this area in the past. Therefore, many believe that the name Sanpara originated from the word 'san seel' ('san' meaning sharpening and 'seel' a stone).

However, according to some other elderly men the village is named after the name of the first head man 'Sanaram Baishya'.

There is no regular bazar inside the periphery of the village but there is a shop which sells grocery, food-grains and other sundry articles catering partly to the needs of the villagers. The villagers usually go to Jharobari block for purchase of other essential com-

modities. The nearest weekly Hat is held at Jharobari village where besides vegetables and other articles, the Endi-cocoons are sold.

#### *Rampur Village:*

Rampur village is famous all over India for its exquisitely beautiful Endi fabrics. It is one of the oldest and major Endi producing villages in Assam. Endi weaving is the traditional cottage industry of this village. It plays a very important role in the village economy. A special feature of this village is that all the women irrespective of castes know the art of spinning and weaving and who apparently have natural talents for weaving. There are many expert weavers in the village who have earned wide applause both in and outside the state. Srimoti Rebatī Kalita is known even outside Assam for her skill and craftsmanship in weaving Endi wrappers, which have great demand in and outside Assam. Another special feature of this village is that all the households practise this craft as household industry for many generations.

Greater Rampur comprises three parts namely Rampur-I, Rampur-II, and Rampur-III. Rampur-I is a small village with a population of 8 persons in 1971 census. Rampur-II and Rampur-III are two thickly populated villages. The population of Rampur-II and Rampur-III according to 1971 census were 5,393 and 2,132 respectively.

The Endi weaving is commonly practised by both the villages (Rampur-II and Rampur-III). But present study is limited to Rampur-II only because Endi weaving is mostly concentrated in this village. Almost all the houses irrespective of castes practise this as household industry since long.

The village is situated on plain land surrounded by paddy fields. It is bounded by Dora beel and Rampur-I on the north, National highway and Rampur-III on the south. Raja Pukhuri and Medhipara on the east and Saru

Tezpur on the west. The village is well connected with other nearby villages.

All the state owned and other public buses plying between Guwahati, Goalpara, Chhaygaon, Boko and Garo hills (Meghalaya) pass by the village. Besides, regular and frequent bus service between Guwahati-Boko and Guwahati-Chhaygaon has a stoppage at Rampur village. Therefore, in regard to communication, it is well connected with some of the important places of the district. There are many roads connecting the village with the National highway. These link roads are all 'Kutchra' but play an important role in the mobility of the villagers. The village roads also connect all important public places like Dispensary, Post Office, Khadi Bhandar office, Bank, Higher Secondary school of the village.

The nearest Railway Station from the village is at Kamakhya about 31 kms. away from the village and the nearest Telegraph Office is situated at Bijay Nagar, 4 kms. away from the village, and an important trading centre of the area. The village falls under Palasbari P.S. which is about 11 kms. from the village. The Block Development office and Anchalik Panchayat office are situated at Jharobari block about 15 kms. from the village. The only higher secondary school attended by both boys and girls is situated within the village. Besides this school, there is one high school, one middle school and 4 primary schools located inside the village. The village Rampur is privileged to have a hospital within its area where all kinds of medical facilities including treatment as indoor patients is readily available. The village Post Office is also functioning inside the village. The Punjab National Bank is the only bank at present serving the villagers. However, it needs to be mentioned here that no villager reportedly sought for any loan from the Bank for the specific purpose of processing Endi products.

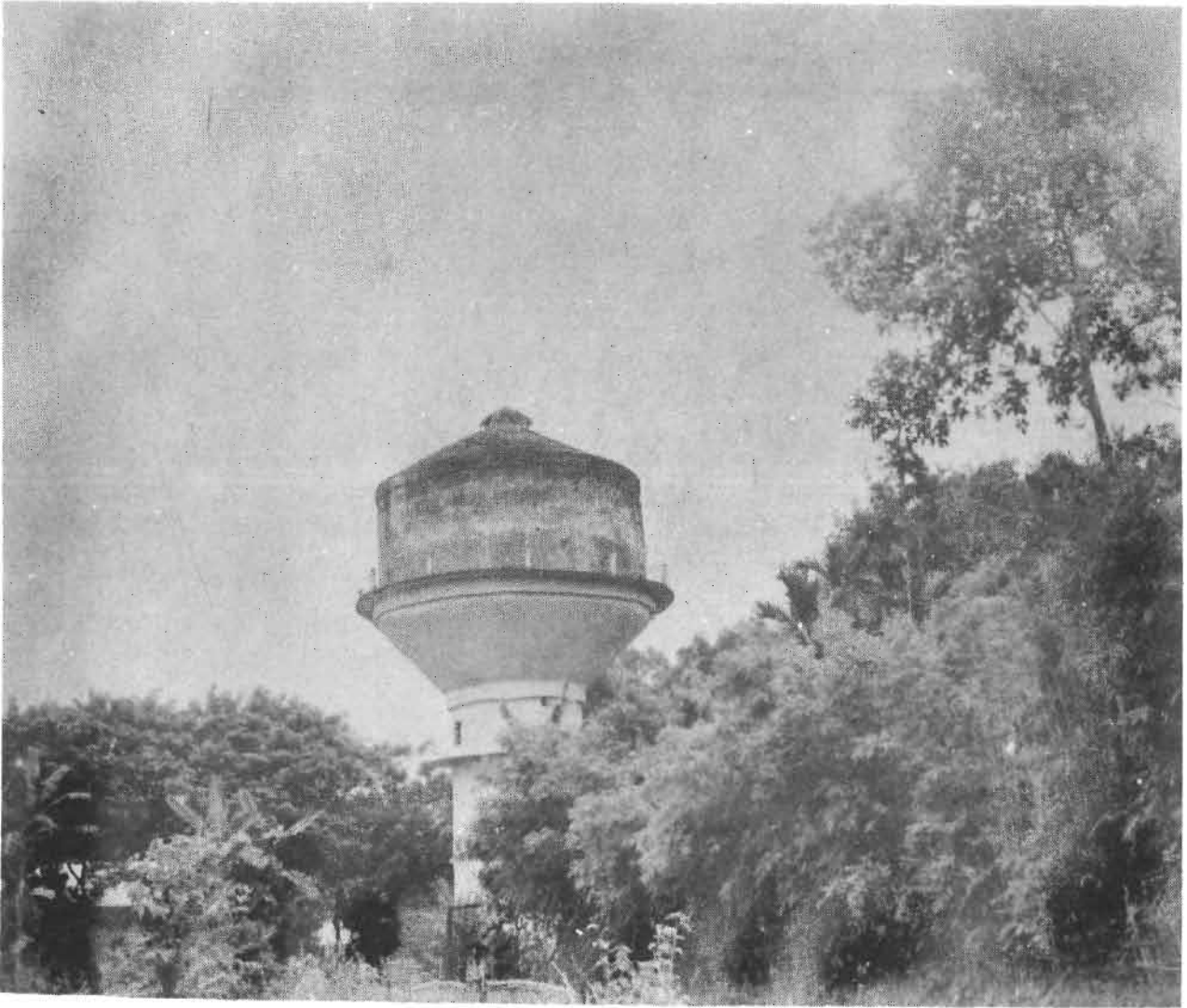
Over and above, a large number of retail and

wholesale shops including tea stalls etc. are found inside the village. There is a regular weekly Hat (bazar) where vegetables, food grains and other commodities are sold. One of the important items sold in this market is the Endi cocoons. The cocoons are brought to this market by the tribal communities who grow the worms. Generally people from nearby villages and hill areas come to this market with their merchandise of vegetables and other food grains.

A noteworthy feature of the village is that there is a huge protected water reservoir managed by the State Public Health Department which supplies drinking water to the villagers. Water is supplied through G.I. pipes and water taps are installed mostly at the crossing of the network of roads inside the village. Other sources of water supply are tube-wells and wells. These are used for drinking as well as for washing purpose. Rampur like many other villages in the district of Kamrup has no record of its past. The date of establishment of the village could not be ascertained. But the people of the village believe that it is a very old village and has antiquated history. But unfortunately there is no such written record or history to prove its antiquity. No record as to when and how people of various castes came to settle in this village has also been found. Moreover, there is no legend associated with the name of the village. Some people however believe that Rampur is named after Lord Rama.

According to 1971 census, the total area of the village (Rampur-II) was 181.70 hectares. The total number of households during 1971 census was 899 with 5,393 persons out of which 2,826 were males and 2,567 females. Total number of workers in the village during 1971 census was 1512 of which 1429 were males and only 83 were females. Total number of literate person in the village was 1659 of which 1121 were males and only 538 were females. The present survey of the village shows that there are about 960 households





*The water reservoir at village Rampur*



with a total population of 6,950 persons of which 3,585 are males and 3,365 females. The average size of a household works out to be 6.0.

Following table shows the distribution of population of the village according to 1971 census and the present survey.

TABLE II.3

Distribution of population with number of households in the village Rampur Part-II

| Source of data        | Area of the village in hectares | No. of houses | No. of households | Total population |       |         | Remarks             |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|------------------|-------|---------|---------------------|
|                       |                                 |               |                   | Persons          | Males | Females |                     |
| 1                     | 2                               | 3             | 4                 | 5                | 6     | 7       | 8                   |
| 1971 Census           | 181.70                          | 899           | 899               | 5,393            | 2,826 | 2,567   |                     |
| Present survey (1986) | —                               | 960           | 960               | 6,950            | 3,565 | 3,365   | Approximate figures |

The village is predominantly inhabited by Kalita caste followed by the Kaibarttas the only Scheduled Caste community in the village. Besides the above, a few households belonging to Nath (Jogi) castes are also found in the

village.

Following table shows the castewise distribution of the population in the village.

TABLE II.4

Castewise distribution of population

(Survey-1986)

| Name of the caste/<br>community | No. of households | Population |       |         | Remarks                             |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|------------|-------|---------|-------------------------------------|
|                                 |                   | Persons    | Males | Females |                                     |
| 1                               | 2                 | 3          | 4     | 5       | 6                                   |
| Kalita                          | 740               | 5,380      | 2,760 | 2,620   | Spread all over the village.        |
| Nath (Jogi)                     | 20                | 150        | 85    | 65      | Confined to a particular locality.  |
| Kaibartta (Scheduled Caste)     | 200               | 1,420      | 740   | 680     | To be found in certain hamlet only. |
| Total                           | 960               | 6,950      | 3,585 | 3,365   |                                     |

The Kaibarttas the only scheduled caste community are found to be grouped together in a separate locality known as Kaibartta Para. The Naths or Jogis are also clustered in a particular locality known as Nath Para. It is observed that the standard of the living of the Kaibarttas is a little inferior to that of other castes.

Agriculture and Endi weaving are the two major occupations of the villagers. Weaving has been the part and parcel of a woman's life. Almost every family in Rampur area possesses a loom and weaving is performed by all sections of the people irrespective of caste and social considerations. Weaving has been a way of life and a part of their culture. In this village, Endi weaving has emerged as a major or prime occupation of the people.

Rampur has a long tradition and heritage in producing Endi-silk. The Eri culture and weaving is believed to be as old as the village. No body in the village can tell when and how this famous craft came into the village. There is also no written record about it. From the present survey and other reliable sources we may assume that the Endi culture and weaving is the traditional occupation of this village practised by generation after generation. In the past both rearing of silkworms and weaving were practised by each household. But now the villagers practise only spinning and weaving. They purchase the Endi cocoons from different sources. In recent times only a few households are found to continue rearing of the worms.

In the past it was mainly a subsidiary occupation of the womenfolk. But at present it no longer remains as subsidiary occupation and has assumed the stature of a prime occupation. The majority of the households sustain themselves on this vital cottage industry.

#### *Jiakur village:*

Jiakur is another famous Endi producing village of the area. It is the traditional and one of

the principal activities having economic benefits to the villagers next to agriculture in importance. Jiakur is a familiar name throughout the state for Endi wrappers especially ladies scarf. People from various parts come to this village in search of its exquisite Endi products.

Jiakur is a medium sized village situated at a distance of about 51 kms. to the south-west of Guwahati city. It is under the Jurisdiction of Chhaygaon Police Station in the district of Kamrup. The village is bounded on the north by Kolohi river and Bortari gaon, on the south by Kukurmara village and national highway No. 37, by Kolohi river on the east and Amtola gaon on the west. The village is situated on a plain land. It is well connected with neighbouring villages and town. The national highway 37 passes nearby the village. All the state transport buses and other public service vehicles pass through this highway.

The village has social and economic relationship with all other nearby villages. For trading and marketing purposes the village solely depends upon Bijoynagar, which is only 14 kms. away from the village.

The village abounds in natural vegetation. Peepal, Mango, Castor, Bamboo etc. are to be found all around the village. Banana and Papaya are planted by the villagers in good number.

As earlier stated Jiakur is well connected with nearby villages and towns of the district. There are regular and frequent bus services between Guwahati-Chhaygaon and Guwahati-Boko, which pass through Kukurmara a village in the outskirts of Jiakur. Besides transport buses running between Guwahati and Garo hills in Meghalaya also pass through Kukurmara. In general, communication facilities are good and people can go to any place from Kukurmara very easily. The village is linked with national highway by a motorable road at Kukurmara.

The nearest Railway Station is situated at Kamakhya about 41 kms. from the village and the nearest Telegraph Office is at Chhaygaon. The local Post Office with Banking facilities is functioning at Kukurmara. The nearest bank is located at Chhaygaon.

There are only a few shops found inside the village. The villagers go to Kukurmara for purchase of various essential commodities. Drug stores, tea-stalls, book-stalls etc. are also located at Kukurmara. In general the village depends on Kukurmara for various commodities and essential consumer goods.

Medical facilities are easily available at Rampur village and Chhaygaon village. In regard to availability of facilities for education the village is not lagging behind. There are as many as 3 primary schools and 1 middle school in the village. The high school is situated at the neighbouring Kukurmara village. Students desirous of achieving higher education can easily do so in colleges located either in Chhaygaon situated at 6 kms. or Mirza village situated at 16 kms. from the village. The nearest higher secondary schools are at Chhaygaon and Rampur village.

The Block Development office and Anchalick Panchayat office are situated at Chhaygaon. The State Khadi Bhandar office is at Rampur, but it is observed that only a limited number of households have link with this office.

The main sources of water supply in the village are tube-wells and ring-wells. Drinking water is drawn mainly from tube-wells. Washing and bathing are done in the village ponds and river. It is observed that only a few houses have latrines.

According to the claims of the people in the village, Jiakur has a fairly long and antiquated history. Time of establishment of the village could not be ascertained as there are no written records about it. However, one thing is certain that it is very old village. Besides, there are in and around Jiakur reminiscents of places of

historical importance.

Nobody could tell for certain when and how the village was named as Jiakur. However, according to some there is a mythological story behind the origin of the name Jiakur. It is said that there were many deep holes in the bed of river Kolohi. The deep holes are known as 'Kur' in Assamese. It is believed that Sati Beula after having received the life of her husband returned from heaven to earth by this river way and took rest near such holes adjacent to the village. As the people saw Sati Beula's husband alive (Means Jia in Assamese) this village is known as 'Jiakur' meaning 'live hole'. Originally Jiakur was one big village but has since been divided into two parts namely Jiakur No. I, Jiakur No. II for revenue and administrative purposes. For our study we have selected Jiakur No. II, because the total number of households engaged in Endi-silk industry is much more in this part than in Jiakur No. I. Besides most of the residents of the village are migrant from Jiakur No. I which is situated on the north-west of Jiakur No. II. Enquiry reveals that due to heavy flood and erosion the people from Jiakur No. I shifted to this part.

The total area of the village according to 1971 census (Jiakur No. II) was 327.23 hectares. There were 320 residential households in the village during 1971 census with a population of 2,241 persons out of which 1,139 and 1,102 were males and females respectively. According to 1971 census total number of workers was 475 of which inexplicably only 1 was female. Total number of literate persons in the village was 678 of which 503 were males and 175 were females. The present survey of the village reveals that there are about 377 houses having equi-number of households with a total population of 2,632 persons of which 1,396 are males and 1,236 are females. The average size of a household is 7.

The Table II.5 shows the distribution of population of the village according to 1971 census and the present study.

TABLE II.5

## Distribution of population with number of household in the village Jiakur

| Source of data        | Area of the village in hectare | No. of houses | No. of households | Total population |       |         | Remarks         |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|------------------|-------|---------|-----------------|
|                       |                                |               |                   | Persons          | Males | Females |                 |
| 1                     | 2                              | 3             | 4                 | 5                | 6     | 7       | 8               |
| 1971 census           | 327.23                         | 320           | 320               | 2,241            | 1,139 | 1,102   |                 |
| Present Survey (1986) | —                              | 377           | 377               | 2,632            | 1,396 | 1,236   | Approx. figure. |

All the inhabitants of the village are Hindus and Assamese belonging to Kalita caste only. The majority of the population as in other village of the area are followers of Sakti Cult. Maha-purusia or the followers of Sri Sri Sankardev are very few in number. It is interesting to note that there is none in the village who was not born here.

Cultivation is the prime occupation of the villagers. A few educated persons in the village, earn their living from various kinds of jobs such as college and school teachers, small business, clerk, peon etc. The traditional occupation of the womenfolk of the village like other women of the surrounding area is Endi weaving. Though this is supposed to be a subsidiary occupation of the females, yet this is found to be one of the major sources of income of the people. Because the seasonal employment in cultivation cannot yield sufficient income to meet their requirements throughout the year, the villagers have to take to Endi-weaving which augments their earnings. It is very difficult to find a single household which does not practise this craft. All the women in the village know the art of spinning and weaving. Previously Endi culture i.e. rearing of Endi worms was common among the villagers. But now-a-days the villagers depend partly on Endi cocoons readily available in the nearby

markets and tribal villages where these are reared. Middleman thus play a vital role in the economy of this village. In this village we came across instance of middleman providing the yarn to the weavers and paying wages varying between Rs. 70 to Rs. 80 for a pair of Endi chadar. In such cases margin of profits earned by the middlemen could not be ascertained, as it is impossible to estimate the cost of yarn.

It is also observed that in this village a few middlemen regularly advance money to the weaver's family whenever they are in distress and thus have brought these families into such a tight grip that the weavers have no choice than to handover the product to these middlemen to negate the indebtedness. In such a situation it is obvious that the weavers do not get the expected price.

#### Demographic profile of the craftsmen in the selected villages

Attempt is made here to study the demographic profile of the craftsman belonging to those households which are engaged in the Endi-silk craft. The households are selected from three different villages namely Jiakur, Rampur and Sanpara which practise Endi-silk as household industry. The table II.6 shows the

distribution of the population of the selected households by age, sex and marital status.

The table II.6 reveals that there are altogether 343 persons of which 152 are males and 191 females. The sex ratio is 1,256 females per thousand males. The distribution of population among different ages shows that almost the entire excess of females over the males are obtained in the reproductive age-group 15–44 where there are 122 females as against 86 males.

The table also depicts that out of the total population of 343 half of it (174) is in age-group of 15–19. 222 or 64.72% are never married. 92 or 26.82% are married and 26 or 7.58% are widowed. It is interesting to note that there is not a single widower or divorced/separated male in the population. No widow is found below the age-group of 30–34 years. The divorced/separated females are distributed in the age-group 20–24 years and 30–34 years. But the number of such cases is very small or say negligible. Table also shows that no male is married below the age-group 20–24 years. In the case of females, nobody is found married below the age-group 15–19 years. This indicates absence of child marriage in these villages. None except one female in the age-group 30 years and above is unmarried.

Table II.7 prepared for the surveyed population shows the population classified by sex, age and educational level.

Table II.7 depicts that out of the total 343 persons only 97 or 28.28% are illiterate. Of these 32 or 32.99% are males and 65 or 67.10% are females. The remaining 246 or 71.72% are

literate of which 120 or 48.78% are males and 126 or 51.22% are females. Among the males the highest percentage (37.50) of literates has passed middle standard examination followed by those (27.50%) having passed Primary or Junior Basic examination. The same pattern is observed in case of the females too, the percentage being 36.51% and 30.16% respectively. It is interesting to note here that though the females do not lag far behind the males in overall literacy rates, the number of females having passed school leaving examination represents only 6.28% of the total female population as against 13.82% among the males. It is gathered that the girls either get married after having attained middle standard of education or are engaged in helping their mothers in domestic chores or spinning of Endi weaving. This certainly provides a great support to the income of the family. It is found to be the tradition in these villages that after school in their leisure girls must help their mother in spinning and weaving. This tradition is still continuing among the females of the villages of this region. This is a special feature of the villages in this region.

#### **Ethnic composition of the population in the surveyed households in the three selected villages**

In the surveyed population, there are four castes namely Kalita, Keot, Baishya and Rajbangshi. All these four castes are found to be engaged in Endi weaving. Kalita caste is the predominant in the population and found in large numbers in all the three selected villages. The Baishya, Keot and Rajbangshi are found in only one village namely Sanpara.





## II.6

## classified by Age, Sex and Marital status

| Widowed |    |    | Total population |     |     | Age-group |
|---------|----|----|------------------|-----|-----|-----------|
| P       | M  | F  | P                | M   | F   |           |
| 11      | 12 | 13 | 14               | 15  | 16  | 1         |
| —       | —  | —  | 16               | 10  | 6   | 0—4       |
| —       | —  | —  | 27               | 13  | 14  | 5—9       |
| —       | —  | —  | 58               | 28  | 30  | 10—14     |
| —       | —  | —  | 73               | 28  | 45  | 15—19     |
| —       | —  | —  | 48               | 19  | 29  | 20—24     |
| —       | —  | —  | 19               | 11  | 8   | 25—29     |
| 2       | —  | 2  | 22               | 6   | 16  | 30—34     |
| 9       | —  | 9  | 46               | 22  | 24  | 35—44     |
| 6       | —  | 6  | 25               | 15  | 10  | 45—54     |
| 9       | —  | 9  | 9                | —   | 9   | 55—69     |
| 26      | —  | 26 | 343              | 152 | 191 | Total     |

TABLE

## Distribution of population classified

| Age-group | Total Population |     |     | Educational |    |                                    |    |                         |    |
|-----------|------------------|-----|-----|-------------|----|------------------------------------|----|-------------------------|----|
|           |                  |     |     | Illiterate  |    | Literate without educational level |    | Primary or Junior Basic |    |
|           | P                | M   | F   | M           | F  | M                                  | F  | M                       | F  |
| 1         | 2                | 3   | 4   | 5           | 6  | 7                                  | 8  | 9                       | 10 |
| All ages  | 343              | 152 | 191 | 32          | 65 | 20                                 | 30 | 33                      | 38 |
| 0-4       | 16               | 10  | 6   | 10          | 6  | —                                  | —  | —                       | —  |
| 5-9       | 27               | 13  | 14  | 3           | 4  | 7                                  | 9  | 3                       | 1  |
| 10-14     | 58               | 28  | 30  | 1           | —  | 3                                  | 5  | 11                      | 13 |
| 15-19     | 73               | 28  | 45  | 2           | 4  | 2                                  | 7  | 4                       | 10 |
| 20-24     | 48               | 19  | 29  | 2           | 4  | 2                                  | 2  | 2                       | 6  |
| 25-34     | 41               | 17  | 24  | 2           | 10 | —                                  | 3  | 4                       | 6  |
| 35 +      | 80               | 37  | 43  | 12          | 37 | 6                                  | 4  | 9                       | 2  |

**Age, Sex and Educational level**

Level

| Middle |    | Matriculation or<br>Higher Secondary |    | Graduate and<br>above |    | Age-group |
|--------|----|--------------------------------------|----|-----------------------|----|-----------|
| M      | F  | M                                    | F  | M                     | F  |           |
| 11     | 12 | 13                                   | 14 | 15                    | 16 | 1         |
| 45     | 46 | 21                                   | 12 | 1                     | —  | All ages  |
| —      | —  | —                                    | —  | —                     | —  | 0—4       |
| —      | —  | —                                    | —  | —                     | —  | 5—9       |
| 12     | 12 | 1                                    | —  | —                     | —  | 10—14     |
| 10     | 16 | 10                                   | 8  | —                     | —  | 15—19     |
| 7      | 14 | 6                                    | 3  | —                     | —  | 20—24     |
| 7      | 4  | 3                                    | 1  | 1                     | —  | 25—34     |
| 9      | —  | 1                                    | —  | —                     | —  | 35 +      |

The following table shows the distribution of households by caste of head of household and population of sex.

TABLE II.8  
Distribution of households by caste of head of household and population by sex

| Name of caste of head of the household | No. of households | Percentage the total number of household | Population |      |        |
|--|-------------------|--|------------|------|--------|
|  |                   |  | Persons    | Male | Female |
| 1                                      | 2                 | 3  | 4          | 5    | 6      |
| Kalita                                 | 44                | 73.34                                    | 245        | 112  | 133    |
| Keot                                   | 2                 | 3.33                                     | 17         | 9    | 8      |
| Baishya                                | 6                 | 10.00                                    | 34         | 12   | 22     |
| Rajbangshi                             | 8                 | 13.33                                    | 47         | 19   | 28     |
| Total                                  | 60                | 100.00                                   | 343        | 152  | 191    |

Table II.8 depicts that there are altogether 60 surveyed households who practise Endi weaving in 3 selected villages. Caste-wise population of the above mentioned households shows that an overwhelming majority of population belongs Kalita caste followed by Rajbangshi, Baishya and Keot. It is interesting to note that females outnumber males in all the above castes except in the case of Keot where male and female are almost equal.

#### Family size of the surveyed households

We now attempt to study the family size of the households who practise Endi-silk weaving as household industry. The number of persons in any family of the selected sixty households is not very large. It reflects the normal size of an Assamese household.

Table II.9 shows the composition of the households by number of members and age of the head of the households.

The table II.9 depicts that all the head of the households are above 20 years of age. Of

them about 46.67% of the surveyed households have heads belonging to the age-group of 40-49 years followed by 14 households or 23.33% in the age-group of 30-39 years and 12 households of 20.00% in the age-group of 50-59.

The average number of persons among the surveyed households is 5.7. It is further seen that the highest number of households (15 or 25.00%) consists of 6-7 members, 11 or 18.33% households have 4 members closely followed by 10 or 16.67% households with 5 members each and 9 or 15.00% with 8-9 members. There are 2 or 3.33% of households in each of the size groups of single member and 2 members each.

#### Nature of relation of members to head of Sample households of the three selected villages

Attempt has also been made to study the composition of the sixty surveyed households in respect of details of relationships of the members with their head.

TABLE II.9

**Distribution of households classified by Age and Sex of head of the household and number of members**

| Age of head of the household | Number of households by sex of head of the household (M/F) |    | Number of of the households having members |   |   |   |   |     |     |       |
|------------------------------|--|----|--|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|-------|
|                              |  |    | Single                                     | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6-7 | 8-9 | 10-12 |
| 1                            | 2  | *  | 3  | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8   | 9   | 10    |
| Below 20                     | M  | —  | —  | — | — | — | — | —   | —   | —     |
|                              | F  | —  | —  | — | — | — | — | —   | —   | —     |
| 20—29                        | M  | 3  | —  | 1 | — | 1 | — | 1   | —   | —     |
|                              | F  | —  | —  | — | — | — | — | —   | —   | —     |
| 30—39                        | M  | 10 | —  | — | 1 | 5 | 3 | —   | 1   | —     |
|                              | F  | 4  | 1  | — | 1 | — | 1 | 1   | —   | —     |
| 40—49                        | M  | 18 | —  | — | — | 2 | 4 | 5   | 4   | 3     |
|                              | F  | 10 | —  | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2   | 1   | —     |
| 50—59                        | M  | 5  | —  | — | — | — | — | 2   | 1   | 2     |
|                              | F  | 7  | 1  | — | 1 | 1 | — | 2   | 2   | —     |
| 60—69                        | M  | —  | —  | — | — | — | — | —   | —   | —     |
|                              | F  | 3  | —  | — | 1 | — | — | 2   | —   | —     |
| Total                        | M  | 36 | —  | 1 | 1 | 8 | 7 | 8   | 6   | 5     |
|                              | F  | 24 | 2  | 1 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 7   | 3   | —     |

TABLE II.10

**Distribution of households classified by nature of relation of members to head of the households and number of members**

| Nature of relation of members to head of the household   | Number of households | Number of members |
|--|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1  | 2                    | 3                 |
| 1. Self.   | 2<br>(3.33)          | 2                 |
| 2. Self, Spouse.   | 1<br>(1.67)          | 2                 |
| 3. Self, Spouse, Unmarried sons and daughters.   | 30<br>(50.00)        | 177               |
| 4. Self, Spouse, Married son and son's wife with or without unmarried sons and daughters.  | 1<br>(1.67)          | 8                 |
| 5. Self, Spouse, Married brother, Brother's wife, with or without unmarried sons and daughters.                                    | —                    | —                 |
| 6. Self, Spouse, Married brother, Brother's wife, Married son, son's wife with/without unmarried sons/daughters.                   | —                    | —                 |
| 7. Self (Male), unmarried son/daughter.  | —                    | —                 |
| 8. Self (Female), unmarried son/daughter.  | 14<br>(23.33)        | 68                |
| 9. Self, Spouse with or without unmarried son/daughter and widowed father.   | —                    | —                 |
| 10. Self, Spouse, with or without unmarried son/daughter and widowed mother.   | —                    | —                 |
| 11. Self (Male), unmarried brother/sister  | —                    | —                 |
| 12. Other  |                      |                   |
| (a) Self, Spouse, married brother, Brother's wife, Brother's son's/daughter with or without sons and daughters and widowed mother. | 1<br>(1.67)          | 11                |
| (b) Self, Spouse, married brother, brother's wife, brother's sons and daughter unmarried brother with or without son and daughter. | 1<br>(1.67)          | 12                |
| (c) Self, Spouse, married son, son's wife with or without unmarried sons and daughters and widowed daughter.                       | 1<br>(1.67)          | 10                |
| (d) Self (Female) and divorced daughter  | 1<br>(1.67)          | 2                 |
| (e) Self (Female), married son, son's wife with or without sons and daughters and son's unmarried sons and daughters               | 4<br>(6.67)          | 29                |
| (f) Self (Female), with unmarried son and daughter, daughter's daughter and husband's widowed mother.                              | 1<br>(1.67)          | 6                 |
| (g) Self (Female), divorced daughter and unmarried son.  | 1<br>(1.66)          | 3                 |
| (h) Self (Female), married son, son's wife and son's unmarried sons and daughters.   | 1<br>(1.66)          | 7                 |
| (i) Self, Spouse, brother's widowed wife and brother's unmarried sons and daughters.   | 1<br>(1.66)          | 6                 |

The table II.10 reveals that the largest group consisting of 31 or 51.67% of the total households represent nuclear type family having head, his wife and unmarried sons and daughters. The second largest group consisting 14 or 23.33% households have self (female) and unmarried sons and daughters.

Households with other types of composition as detailed in the table represents insignificant proportions (about 1.67% each) of total surveyed households practising Endi weaving.

### Settlement history of the Surveyed households

Attempt has also been made to study the settlement history of the surveyed households. It is interesting to note that the overwhelming majority of the households are original residents of the surveyed villages. Out of 60 surveyed households, the heads of as many as 49 or 81.67% are non-migrant who reportedly were born in the same village where they live

now and remaining 11 or 19.33 % are migrant households. However, they too did not migrate from far distant places and reported the rural areas of the same district as their birth place. Out of these 11 migrant households 8 or 72.73% are residents of the surveyed villages for over last two decades while the remaining 3 heads of households are living in the village for different durations between 11 and 20 years.

Economic life of the people of the surveyed households is solely linked with cultivation and Endi weaving as these are the main sources of income. Cultivation is done entirely by the male-folks while Endi weaving is exclusively in the hands of womenfolk. Both the occupations have got almost the same degree of importance as all the households practise both the occupations for their livelihood. As mentioned earlier, the Endi weaving is no longer a subsidiary occupation of the people there. In fact, many households depend entirely on Endi weaving whereas some others derive their considerable part of income from this art.

TABLE II.11

**Distribution of households surveyed in the three selected villages classified by Traditional Occupation, Religion and Caste/Tribe/Community of head of the household**

| Name of Caste/<br>Tribe/Community* | Number of<br>households | Number of households where traditional occupation<br>of head of the household is |           |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|--|-----------|
|                                    |                         | Cultivation  | Weaving   |
| 1                                  | 2                       | 3  | 4         |
| Kalita                             | 44                      | 25   | 19        |
| Rajbangshi                         | 8                       | 6  | 2         |
| Baishya                            | 6                       | 3  | 3         |
| Keot                               | 2                       | 2  | —         |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>60</b>               | <b>36</b>  | <b>24</b> |

\* All the castes belong to Hindu religion.

Though the table II.11 shows as many as 36 households having heads who reported their traditional occupation to be cultivation (not all of them cultivators now), enquiry revealed that all these heads are invariably males and there are female members in these houses too who practise Endi weaving. The remaining 24 households have female heads who, besides

other female members, themselves practise this art.

Table II.12 below shows the distribution of households classified by number of economically active workers and their occupational diversity.

TABLE II.12

**Distribution of households classified by number of Workers and by Main Occupational Diversity  
(i.e. Different Members having Different Occupations)**

| Description of Occupational Diversity   | Number of Households | Number of workers |
|---|----------------------|-------------------|
|   | 1                    | 2                 |
| 1. No Occupational Diversity  | 10                   | 20                |
| 2. Weaving [Head of household and daughter (1)] Defence Service (Son)   | 1                    | 3                 |
| 3. Weaving [Head of household and daughter (1)] Mechanic (Son)  | 1                    | 3                 |
| 4. Weaving [Head of household and daughter (2)] Carpentry (Son)   | 1                    | 4                 |
| 5. Weaving [Head of household and daughter (2)] Tea-Stall worker (Son)  | 1                    | 4                 |
| 6. Weaving (Head of household) Shop-Keeper (Son)  | 1                    | 2                 |
| 7. Weaving [Head of household and son's wife (1)] Malaria Surveillance worker (Son)                           | 1                    | 3                 |
| 8. Weaving [Head of household and daughter (3)] Cultivation [Son (2)]   | 2                    | 7                 |
| 9. Weaving [Head of household and daughter (1)] Teaching (Son)  | 1                    | 3                 |
| 10. Weaving [Head of household and son's wife (1)] Cultivation (Son) Govt. Service, Clerk (Son)               | 1                    | 4                 |
| 11. Weaving [Head of household and daughter (1)] Cultivation (Son) Nurse (Daughter)                           | 1                    | 4                 |
| 12. Weaving [Head of household and daughter (2)] Mohorar (Son) Medical attendant (daughter), Cultivator (Son) | 1                    | 6                 |
| 13. Weaving [Head of household and Son's wife (1)] Teaching (Son) Tailoring (Son) Driver (Son) Business (Son) | 1                    | 6                 |
| 14. Weaving [Head of household and daughter (1)] Cultivation (Son) Shop-Keeper (Son) Mechanic (Son)           | 1                    | 5                 |
| 15. Cultivation [Head of household and Son (3)] Weaving [Wife (19), Daughter (12), Brother's wife (1)]        | 18                   | 53                |

(Contd.)



TABLE II.12(Concl.)

| Description of Occupational Diversity |  | Number of Households | Number of workers |
|---------------------------------------|--|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1                                     |  | 2                    | 3                 |
| 16.                                   | Cultivation (Head of household) Weaving [Wife and daughter (1)] Carpentry (Son) labourer (Son)                         | 1                    | 5                 |
| 17.                                   | Cultivation (Head of household) Weaving [Wife and Daughter (2), Son's wife (1)] Helper — Bus (Son)                     | 1                    | 6                 |
| 18.                                   | Cultivation [Head of household and Son (2)] Weaving [Wife (2), and Daughter (1), Son's wife (1)] Shop-Keeper [Son (3)] | 3                    | 12                |
| 19.                                   | Cultivation [Head of household and Son (2)] Weaving [Wife and daughter (1)] Business [Son (2)]                         | 1                    | 7                 |
| 20.                                   | Business (Head of household) Weaving (Wife)  | 1                    | 2                 |
| 21.                                   | Service— Panchayat Mohorar (Head of household) Weaving (Wife)  | 1                    | 2                 |
| 22.                                   | Statistical Assistant (Head of household) Weaving (Wife)   | 1                    | 2                 |
| 23.                                   | Medical attendant (Head of household) Weaving (Wife)   | 1                    | 2                 |
| 24.                                   | Driving (Head of household) Weaving [Wife and Brother's Wife (1)]Cultivation (Brother)                                 | 1                    | 4                 |
| 25.                                   | Mandal (Head of household) Weaving (Wife) Postal Peon (Brother) Clerk (Brother's Son)                                  | 1                    | 4                 |
| 26.                                   | Peon (Head of household) Weaving (Wife and daughter)   | 1                    | 3                 |
| 27.                                   | Biscuit Factory worker (Head of household) Weaving (Wife)  | 1                    | 2                 |
| 28.                                   | Daily Labourer (Head of household) Weaving [Wife and daughter (2)]   | 1                    | 4                 |
| 29.                                   | Daily Labourer (Head of household) Weaving [Wife and daughter (1)] Khadi Bhandar Peon (Son)                            | 1                    | 4                 |
| 30.                                   | Carpentry (Head of household) Weaving (Wife)   | 1                    | 2                 |
| 31.                                   | Tailoring (Head of household) Weaving (Wife)   | 1                    | 2                 |
| Total                                 |  | 60                   | 190               |

The table II.12 shows that only in 10 out of 60 households the workers profess the same occupation which is primarily cultivation or weaving. The most common occupational diversity is noticed among the households with male heads engaged in cultivation having their spouses engaged in weaving. The male workers in families having a female head (engaged in weaving) report a wide variety of occupational diversity. However, other female members in such families are also found to be engaged in weaving.

### Workers and Non-workers of the surveyed households of the three selected villages

According to the concepts adopted for the census, the work force consists of all persons who are engaged in economically productive activity. Such participation may be physical or

mental in nature. Works involve not only actual work but also effective supervision and direction of work. The definition of a worker as adopted for 1981 Census is a person who works for more than 183 days in a year.

The households surveyed in the three selected villages throw some light on the strength of workers. Among the 343 persons in 60 sample households, 190 or 55.39% are workers. Among the workers, females are in majority (60.53%). 44.61% of the surveyed populations are non-workers. Unlike the situation obtained in the case of workers, males and females constitute almost equal proportion of non-workers.

The following table shows the distribution of workers and non-workers by broad age-groups.

TABLE II.13

Number of workers and non-workers of sample households classified by broad age-groups

| Age-group<br>(broad) | Workers |       |         | Non-workers |       |         |
|----------------------|---------|-------|---------|-------------|-------|---------|
|                      | Persons | Males | Females | Persons     | Males | Females |
| 1                    | 2       | 3     | 4       | 5           | 6     | 7       |
| 0-14                 | 3       | —     | 3       | 98          | 51    | 47      |
| 15-34                | 109     | 38    | 71      | 53          | 26    | 27      |
| 35-59                | 75      | 37    | 38      | —           | —     | —       |
| 60 + years           | 3       | —     | 3       | 2           | —     | 2       |
| Total population     | 190     | 75    | 115     | 153         | 77    | 76      |

The population of the surveyed households can be divided into four broad age-groups: 0-14, 15-34, 35-59 and 60 + years. It is generally believed that the first group is made up of children and infants, the second and third groups of the work force and the last group embracing the aged people normally living a retired life. Obviously therefore, we find that

there is no male workers either in age-group 0-14 or in 60 + years and only 3 females workers in both these age-groups. The three non-school going child workers are found engaged in spinning and weaving of Endi-silk. The highest concentration of workers is found in the age-group 15-34 years.

However, it is interesting to note that there is not even a single non-worker of either sex in the age-group 35–59 years.. The highest number of non-workers are found in the age-group 0–14 who are mostly school-going children. During the survey it was observed that majority of the households have atleast two workers. Generally in a household, husband is a cultivator or businessman, clerk or teachers etc., but wife in all the cases is an Endi weaver, who earns the status of a worker because she provides income to the family by making and selling the Endi products. They work as such for more than 183 days during the year.

Another interesting feature of the surveyed population is that contrary to the commonly obtained situation where proportion of male workers to its total population is much higher than that in case of females the proportion of male and female workers in the instant case is calculated to be 49.34% and 60.21% respectively. The female participation rate is more because majority of the females after attaining 14 years of age start weaving Endis on a commercial basis.

The table II.14 shows the distribution of workers and non-workers classified by sex, tribe/caste and broad age-groups.

TABLE

## Distribution of Workers and Non-workers by

| Name of<br>Caste/<br>Tribe/<br>Community | Total<br>Population |     | Number of workers and |        |    |     |            |    |    |
|--|---------------------|-----|-----------------------|--------|----|-----|------------|----|----|
|  |                     |     | All ages              |        |    |     |            |    |    |
|  |                     |     |                       | Worker |    |     | Non-Worker |    |    |
|  | P                   | M   | F                     | P      | M  | F   | P          | M  | F  |
| 1  | 2                   | 3   | 4                     | 5      | 6  | 7   | 8          | 9  | 10 |
| Kalita                                   | 245                 | 112 | 133                   | 138    | 52 | 86  | 107        | 60 | 47 |
| Keot                                     | 17                  | 9   | 8                     | 9      | 5  | 4   | 8          | 4  | 4  |
| Baishya                                  | 34                  | 12  | 22                    | 17     | 6  | 11  | 17         | 6  | 11 |
| Rajbangshi                               | 47                  | 19  | 28                    | 26     | 12 | 14  | 21         | 7  | 14 |
| Total                                    | 343                 | 152 | 191                   | 190    | 75 | 115 | 153        | 77 | 76 |

II.14 (Contd.)

**Sex, Caste/Tribe/Community and Broad Age-group**

Non-workers by age-group

| Non-workers by age-group |    |    |            |    |    |             |    |    | Name of<br>Caste/<br>Tribe/<br>Community |
|--------------------------|----|----|------------|----|----|-------------|----|----|--|
| 0—14 years               |    |    |            |    |    | 15—34 years |    |    |  |
| Worker                   |    |    | Non-worker |    |    | Worker      |    |    |  |
| P                        | M  | F  | P          | M  | F  | P           | M  | F  |  |
| 11                       | 12 | 13 | 14         | 15 | 16 | 17          | 18 | 19 | 1  |
| 3                        | —  | 3  | 62         | 38 | 24 | 77          | 25 | 52 | Kalita                                   |
| —                        | —  | —  | 4          | 1  | 3  | 5           | 3  | 2  | Keot                                     |
| —                        | —  | —  | 13         | 5  | 8  | 9           | 2  | 7  | Baishya                                  |
| —                        | —  | —  | 19         | 7  | 12 | 18          | 8  | 10 | Rajbangshi                               |
| 3                        | —  | 3  | 98         | 51 | 47 | 109         | 38 | 71 | Total                                    |

TABLE

## Distribution of workers and Non-workers by

| Name of<br>Caste/<br>Tribe/<br>Community | Number of workers and |    |    |             |    |    |            |    |    |
|--|-----------------------|----|----|-------------|----|----|------------|----|----|
|  | 15—34 years           |    |    | 35—39 years |    |    |            |    |    |
|  | Non-worker            |    |    | Worker      |    |    | Non-worker |    |    |
|  | P                     | M  | F  | P           | M  | F  | P          | M  | F  |
| 1  | 20                    | 21 | 22 | 23          | 24 | 25 | 26         | 27 | 28 |
| Kalita                                   | 43                    | 22 | 21 | 55          | 27 | 28 | —          | —  | —  |
| Keot                                     | 4                     | 3  | 1  | 4           | 2  | 2  | —          | —  | —  |
| Baishya                                  | 4                     | 1  | 3  | 8           | 4  | 4  | —          | —  | —  |
| Rajbangshi                               | 2                     | —  | 2  | 8           | 4  | 4  | —          | —  | —  |
| Total                                    | 53                    | 26 | 27 | 75          | 37 | 38 | —          | —  | —  |

II.14 (Concl.)

**Sex, Caste/Tribe/Community and Broad Age-group**

| Non-workers by Age-group |    |    |            |    |    | Name of<br>Caste/<br>Tribe/<br>Community |
|--------------------------|----|----|------------|----|----|--|
| 60+ years                |    |    |            |    |    |  |
| Worker                   |    |    | Non-worker |    |    |  |
| P                        | M  | F  | P          | M  | F  |  |
| 29                       | 30 | 31 | 32         | 33 | 34 | 1  |
| 3                        | —  | 3  | 2          | —  | 2  | Kalita                                   |
| —                        | —  | —  | —          | —  | —  | Keot                                     |
| —                        | —  | —  | —          | —  | —  | Baishya                                  |
| —                        | —  | —  | —          | —  | —  | Rajbangshi                               |
| 3                        | —  | 3  | 2          | —  | 2  | Total                                    |

The table II.14 speaks for itself and does not require much elaboration. However it may be pointed out that the highest percentage (56.33%) of workers is in the Kalitas closely followed by Rajbangshis having 55.32 % and then Keots registering 52.94% of

workers. Baishyas returned exactly 50.00% of workers.

Following table shows the distribution of workers and non-workers by sex and educational level.

TABLE II.15  
Distribution of Workers and Non-workers by Sex and Educational Level

| Educational Level                  | Total population |      |        | Number of      |      |        |                |      |        |
|------------------------------------|------------------|------|--------|----------------|------|--------|----------------|------|--------|
|                                    |                  |      |        | Workers        |      |        | Non-workers    |      |        |
|                                    | Person           | Male | Female | Person         | Male | Female | Person         | Male | Female |
| 1                                  | 2                | 3    | 4      | 5              | 6    | 7      | 8              | 9    | 10     |
| Illiterate                         | 97               | 32   | 65     | 70<br>(36.84)  | 18   | 52     | 27             | 14   | 13     |
| Literate without educational level | 50               | 20   | 30     | 29<br>(15.26)  | 10   | 19     | 21             | 10   | 11     |
| Primary or Junior Basic            | 71               | 33   | 38     | 38<br>(20.00)  | 17   | 21     | 33             | 16   | 17     |
| Middle                             | 91               | 45   | 46     | 41<br>(21.58)  | 23   | 18     | 50             | 22   | 28     |
| Matriculation or Higher Secondary  | 33               | 21   | 12     | 11<br>(5.79)   | 6    | 5      | 22             | 15   | 7      |
| Graduate and above                 | 1                | 1    | —      | 1<br>(0.53)    | 1    | —      | —              | —    | —      |
| Total                              | 343              | 152  | 191    | 190<br>(55.39) | 75   | 115    | 153<br>(44.61) | 77   | 76     |

We find that 36.84% of the workers are illiterate and more or less equal proportions of workers have studied upto primary/junior basic and middle school level. Female workers numbering 52 out of a total of 65 illiterate female constitute exactly 80.00% and thus contribute in a major way to a high accentuation of illiterate workers. They are mostly weavers. Among the male workers 30.67% have attained middle standard of education. Around 24.00% of male

workers are either illiterate or have passed the primary/junior basic examination. Turning to female workers we find that 45.22% of them are illiterate. Female workers present almost the same pattern in other educational standard upto middle school level. As stated earlier non-workers are mostly school going children and obviously therefore we find here only 17.64% of non-workers as illiterate.



TABLE II.16

## Distribution of workers by different kinds of activities

| Present Occupation      | Sex | Total number of workers |
|-------------------------|-----|-------------------------|
| 1                       | 2   | 3                       |
| Cultivation             | M   | 37                      |
|                         | F   | —                       |
| Weaving                 | M   | —                       |
|                         | F   | 113                     |
| Govt. service           | M   | 2                       |
|                         | F   | —                       |
| Shop-keeper             | M   | 5                       |
|                         | F   | —                       |
| Tailoring               | M   | 2                       |
|                         | F   | —                       |
| Peon                    | M   | 3                       |
|                         | F   | —                       |
| School Chowkidar        | M   | 1                       |
|                         | F   | —                       |
| Daily Labour            | M   | 3                       |
|                         | F   | —                       |
| Carpenter               | M   | 3                       |
|                         | F   | —                       |
| Factory worker (Bakery) | M   | 1                       |
|                         | F   | —                       |
| Teaching                | M   | 2                       |
|                         | F   | —                       |
| Tea-stall worker        | M   | 1                       |
|                         | F   | —                       |
| Business                | M   | 3                       |
|                         | F   | —                       |
| Mechanics               | M   | 2                       |
|                         | F   | —                       |
| Handyman                | M   | 1                       |
|                         | F   | —                       |
| Clerk                   | M   | 2                       |
|                         | F   | —                       |
| Driver                  | M   | 2                       |
|                         | F   | —                       |

(Contd.)

TABLE II.16 (Concl.)

| Present Occupation | Sex | Total number of workers |
|--------------------|-----|-------------------------|
| 1                  | 2   | 3                       |
| Mandal             | M   | 1                       |
|                    | F   | —                       |
| Mohorar            | M   | 2                       |
|                    | F   | —                       |
| Nurse              | M   | —                       |
|                    | F   | 1                       |
| Defence Service    | M   | 1                       |
|                    | F   | —                       |
| Medical attendant  | M   | 1                       |
|                    | F   | 1                       |
| Total              | M   | 75                      |
|                    | F   | 115                     |

The table II.16 holds before us a lucid picture of the varied avocations of the persons engaged in economically productive works in the surveyed households. Even at the risk of repetition we have to say that almost the entire female working population are weavers, cultivators form 49.33% of male workers and the rest are almost evenly distributed among a variety of other occupations.

We now turn to find out the present occupation and traditional occupation of the villagers. Traditionally females of this region practise weaving as household industry. Among the males cultivation is traditionally the main source of livelihood. But, availability of cultivable land being extremely limited and a radical change in the outlook of the younger generation owing to spread of education among them the present generation males are found to foster a tendency to shun their parental occupation and take to various other occupations commensurate to their level of education.

A table II.17 is prepared to depict the traditional and present occupation of the surveyed population.









It is seen that out of 115 female workers the occupation of only two—one a nurse and another a medical attendant are different from their traditional occupation weaving. Among the 75 male workers only 37 or 49.33% are still found clung to their traditional occupation cultivation. The rest are found to have engaged themselves in various kinds of occupations other than cultivation.

### Non-workers by age, sex and type of activities

As stated earlier Non-workers constitute 44.61% of the surveyed population. Male and female non-workers are almost equal in number. Distribution of non-workers by age, sex and type of activities is shown in table II.18.

TABLE II.18

Distribution of Non-Workers by Sex, Age and Type of Activity

| Age-group      | Total number of non-worker |    |    | Number of non-workers by type of activity and sex |   |                   |    |                  |    |           |    |
|----------------|----------------------------|----|----|---|---|-------------------|----|------------------|----|-----------|----|
|                |                            |    |    | Infant  |   | Full time student |    | Household duties |    | Dependant |    |
|                | P                          | M  | F  | M   | F | M                 | F  | M                | F  | M         | F  |
| 1              | 2                          | 3  | 4  | 5   | 6 | 7                 | 8  | 9                | 10 | 11        | 12 |
| 0—14           | 98                         | 51 | 47 | 5   | 4 | 37                | 36 | —                | —  | 9         | 7  |
| 15—19          | 37                         | 19 | 18 | —   | — | 18                | 17 | —                | —  | 1         | 1  |
| 20—24          | 14                         | 6  | 8  | —   | — | 5                 | 5  | —                | 3  | 1         | —  |
| 25—29          | 1                          | 1  | —  | —   | — | 1                 | —  | —                | —  | —         | —  |
| 30—39          | 1                          | —  | 1  | —   | — | —                 | —  | —                | 1  | —         | —  |
| 40—49          | —                          | —  | —  | —   | — | —                 | —  | —                | —  | —         | —  |
| 50—59          | —                          | —  | —  | —   | — | —                 | —  | —                | —  | —         | —  |
| 60 +           | 2                          | —  | 2  | —   | — | —                 | —  | —                | —  | —         | 2  |
| Age not stated | —                          | —  | —  | —   | — | —                 | —  | —                | —  | —         | —  |
| Total          | 153                        | 77 | 76 | 5   | 4 | 61                | 58 | —                | 4  | 11        | 10 |

It is seen that full time students comprise the bulk (77.78%) of the total non-workers almost all of whom are below the age of 20 years. The highest proportion of dependents in both males (81.82%) and females (70.00%) is found in the age-group 0—14 years.

It is interesting to note here that there are very few females who returned themselves as engaged in household duties alone. It is precisely owing to the oft-repeated fact that females as a whole recorded comparatively as much less proportion of non-workers and that

the women above the age of 14 years are found engaged in Endi weaving.

### **Non-practising households**

In course of our field survey we studied a few households in the selected villages which once practised the craft but are not now doing to ascertain if the craft is flourishing or declining. As stated earlier, it is extremely difficult to find households in our selected villages which do not practise this traditional craft. Because, it is customary for the females of this area to know the art of sericulture and Endi weaving. In one way or other they are found to be engaged in this craft. However there are very few households which do not practise Endi weaving in these three selected villages. For the purpose of study of non-practising households a schedule was therefore canvassed among 15 households belonging to craftsman equally distributed among the three selected villages. Out of this 15 selected households, 12 belongs to Kalita caste, 2 to Rajbangshi and the remaining one belongs to Baishya caste. All the above non-practising households practised this craft in the past but at present due to

various reasons they have given up practising this household industry.

A table (II.19) is prepared to show the distribution of population of these fifteen households classified by age, sex and marital status.

The table II.19 shows that as in the case of practising households the females outnumber the males, in the non-practising households also, though marginally in case of the later. We find that persons in the broad age-group 15 – 54 which constitute the potential labour force account for an absolute majority (66.67%) of total population. Interestingly the sex-wise break-up also shows identical proportion of males and females in this age-group. It is seen that 57.58% of the population are never married a great majority of whom are below 20 years of age. 36.36% are married all of whom are above 20 years of age.

A table (II.20) is prepared to show the distribution of population of 15 non-practising households by age, sex and educational level.

TABLE

## Distribution of population by

| Age-group      | Never married |       |         | Married |       |         | Divorced or Separated |       |         |
|----------------|---------------|-------|---------|---------|-------|---------|-----------------------|-------|---------|
|                | Persons       | Males | Females | Persons | Males | Females | Persons               | Males | Females |
| 1              | 2             | 3     | 4       | 5       | 6     | 7       | 8                     | 9     | 10      |
| 0-4            | 4             | 3     | 1       | -       | -     | -       | -                     | -     | -       |
| 5-9            | 5             | 1     | 4       | -       | -     | -       | -                     | -     | -       |
| 10-14          | 6             | 3     | 3       | -       | -     | -       | -                     | -     | -       |
| 15-19          | 12            | 5     | 7       | -       | -     | -       | -                     | -     | -       |
| 20-24          | 8             | 3     | 5       | 1       | -     | 1       | -                     | -     | -       |
| 25-29          | 2             | 2     | -       | 3       | -     | 3       | -                     | -     | -       |
| 30-34          | 1             | 1     | -       | 3       | 2     | 1       | -                     | -     | -       |
| 35-44          | -             | -     | -       | 8       | 4     | 4       | -                     | -     | -       |
| 45-54          | -             | -     | -       | 5       | 3     | 2       | 1                     | -     | 1       |
| 55-69          | -             | -     | -       | 4       | 3     | 1       | -                     | -     | -       |
| 70+            | -             | -     | -       | -       | -     | -       | -                     | -     | -       |
| Age not stated | -             | -     | -       | -       | -     | -       | -                     | -     | -       |
| Total          | 38            | 18    | 20      | 24      | 12    | 12      | 1                     | -     | 1       |



## II.19

**Age, Sex and Marital Status**

| Widowed |       |         | Total Population |       |         | Age-group      |
|---------|-------|---------|------------------|-------|---------|----------------|
| Persons | Males | Females | Persons          | Males | Females |                |
| 11      | 12    | 13      | 14               | 15    | 16      | 1              |
| —       | —     | —       | 4                | 3     | 1       | 0—4            |
| —       | —     | —       | 5                | 1     | 4       | 5—9            |
| —       | —     | —       | 6                | 3     | 3       | 10—14          |
| —       | —     | —       | 12               | 5     | 7       | 15—19          |
| —       | —     | —       | 9                | 3     | 6       | 20—24          |
| —       | —     | —       | 5                | 2     | 3       | 25—29          |
| —       | —     | —       | 4                | 3     | 1       | 30—34          |
| —       | —     | —       | 8                | 4     | 4       | 35—44          |
| —       | —     | —       | 6                | 3     | 3       | 45—54          |
| 3       | —     | 3       | 7                | 3     | 4       | 55—69          |
| —       | —     | —       | —                | —     | —       | 70+            |
| —       | —     | —       | —                | —     | —       | Age not stated |
| 3       | —     | 3       | 66               | 30    | 36      | Total          |

TABLE

## Classification of population by

| Age-group | Total population |    |    | Illiterate |    | Literate without educational level |   |
|-----------|------------------|----|----|------------|----|------------------------------------|---|
|           | P                | M  | F  | M          | F  | M                                  | F |
| 1         | 2                | 3  | 4  | 5          | 6  | 7                                  | 8 |
| All ages  | 66               | 30 | 36 | 7          | 11 | 1                                  | 3 |
| 0-4       | 4                | 3  | 1  | 3          | 1  | -                                  | - |
| 5-9       | 5                | 1  | 4  | -          | 1  | 1                                  | 2 |
| 10-14     | 6                | 3  | 3  | 1          | -  | -                                  | - |
| 15-19     | 12               | 5  | 7  | -          | -  | -                                  | 1 |
| 20-24     | 9                | 3  | 6  | -          | -  | -                                  | - |
| 25-34     | 9                | 5  | 4  | 2          | 1  | -                                  | - |
| 35+       | 21               | 10 | 11 | 1          | 8  | -                                  | - |

**Age, Sex and Educational Level**

|  |  | Educational level          |    |        |    |                                      |    |                       |    |               |
|--|--|----------------------------|----|--------|----|--------------------------------------|----|-----------------------|----|---------------|
|  |  | Primary or<br>Junior Basic |    | Middle |    | Matriculation or<br>Higher Secondary |    | Graduate and<br>above |    | Age-<br>group |
|  |  | M                          | F  | M      | F  | M                                    | F  | M                     | F  |               |
|  |  | 9                          | 10 | 11     | 12 | 13                                   | 14 | 15                    | 16 |               |
|  |  | 4                          | 10 | 9      | 9  | 7                                    | 2  | 2                     | 1  | All<br>ages   |
|  |  | —                          | —  | —      | —  | —                                    | —  | —                     | —  | 0—4           |
|  |  | —                          | 1  | —      | —  | —                                    | —  | —                     | —  | 5—9           |
|  |  | 1                          | 3  | 1      | —  | —                                    | —  | —                     | —  | 10—14         |
|  |  | —                          | 1  | 2      | 5  | 3                                    | —  | —                     | —  | 15—19         |
|  |  | —                          | 2  | 1      | 3  | 2                                    | 1  | —                     | —  | 20—24         |
|  |  | —                          | 1  | 3      | —  | —                                    | 1  | —                     | 1  | 25—34         |
|  |  | 3                          | 2  | 2      | 1  | 2                                    | —  | 2                     | —  | 35+           |

It is seen that 48 persons out of 66 or 72.73% are literate. 37.50% of literates have passed middle school level examination followed by 29.17% in the primary/junior basic standard, 18.75 migration while 6.25 were graduate and remaining were literates without any educational level.

The average size of a household for non-practising households works out to be 4.4.

Following table shows the nature of relationship and number of households and members in each set of family composition.

TABLE II.21

**Distribution of Households Classified by Nature of Relation of Members to Head of the Household and Number of Member**

| Nature of relation of members to head of the household |   | Number of households | Number of members |
|--|---|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1  |   | 2                    | 3                 |
| 1.   | Self  | 3                    | 3                 |
| 2.   | Self, Spouse  | —                    | —                 |
| 3.   | Self, Spouse, Unmarried Sons and Daughters  | 9                    | 46                |
| 4.   | Self, Spouse, Married Son and Son's wife with or without Unmarried Sons and Daughters                             | 1                    | 8                 |
| 5.   | Self, Spouse, Married Brother, Brother's wife, with or without Unmarried Sons and Daughters                       | —                    | —                 |
| 6.   | Self, Spouse, Married Brother, Brother's wife, Married Son, Son's wife, with/without Unmarried Sons and Daughters | —                    | —                 |
| 7.   | Self (male), Unmarried Son/Daughter.  | —                    | —                 |
| 8.   | Self (female), Unmarried Son/Daughters  | 1                    | 3                 |
| 9.   | Self, Spouse, with or without Unmarried Son/Daughter and widowed Father   | —                    | —                 |
| 10.  | Self, Spouse, with or without Unmarried Son/Daughter and widowed Mother   | —                    | —                 |
| 11.  | Self (male), Unmarried Brother/Sister   | —                    | —                 |
| 12.  | Others -Self, Spouse and Unmarried Sister.  | 1                    | 6                 |
| Total  |   | 15                   | 66                |

We find that 60.00% of the households are nuclear type which represent 69.70% of the total population obtained in the non-practising households surveyed.

The table II.22 shows the distribution of non-practising households by age and sex of head of households and size class of households.

TABLE II.22

## Distribution of households classified by Age and Sex of head of the household and number of Members

| Age of head of the household | Number of household by Sex of head of the household | Number of households having members |   |   |   |   |     |     |       |   |
|------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|-------|---|
|                              |   | Single                              | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6-7 | 8-9 | 10-12 |   |
| 1                            | 2   | 3                                   | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8   | 9   | 10    |   |
| Below 20                     | M   | —                                   | — | — | — | — | —   | —   | —     | — |
|                              | F   | —                                   | — | — | — | — | —   | —   | —     | — |
| 20—29                        | M   | —                                   | — | — | — | — | —   | —   | —     | — |
|                              | F   | —                                   | — | — | — | — | —   | —   | —     | — |
| 30—39                        | M   | 4                                   | — | — | 1 | 2 | —   | 1   | —     | — |
|                              | F   | —                                   | — | — | — | — | —   | —   | —     | — |
| 40—49                        | M   | 3                                   | — | — | — | — | 1   | 1   | 1     | — |
|                              | F   | —                                   | — | — | — | — | —   | —   | —     | — |
| 50—59                        | M   | 2                                   | — | — | — | — | —   | 1   | 1     | — |
|                              | F   | 2                                   | 1 | — | 1 | — | —   | —   | —     | — |
| 60 and above                 | M   | 2                                   | — | — | 1 | — | —   | 1   | —     | — |
|                              | F   | 2                                   | 2 | — | — | — | —   | —   | —     | — |
| Total                        | M   | 11                                  | — | — | 2 | 2 | 1   | 4   | 2     | — |
|                              | F   | 4                                   | 3 | — | 1 | — | —   | —   | —     | — |

Table II.22 depicts that a single majority of 4 households reported having 6-7 members each followed by 3 single member households. There is no household with more than 9 members.

Table below II.23 shows the distribution of workers and non-workers in 15 non-practising households by caste, sex and broad age-groups.

TABLE

## Distribution of Workers and

| Name<br>of<br>Caste | Number of workers and Non- |   |   |                 |   |   |            |    |    |                 |    |    |           |    |   |
|---------------------|----------------------------|---|---|-----------------|---|---|------------|----|----|-----------------|----|----|-----------|----|---|
|                     | 0—14 yrs.                  |   |   |                 |   |   | 15—34 yrs. |    |    |                 |    |    | 35—59 yrs |    |   |
|                     | Workers                    |   |   | Non-<br>workers |   |   | Workers    |    |    | Non-<br>workers |    |    | Workers   |    |   |
|                     | P                          | M | F | P               | M | F | P          | M  | F  | P               | M  | F  | P         | M  | F |
| 2                   | 3                          | 4 | 5 | 6               | 7 | 8 | 9          | 10 | 11 | 12              | 13 | 14 | 15        | 16 |   |
| Kalita              | —                          | — | — | 14              | 6 | 8 | 5          | 2  | 3  | 16              | 6  | 10 | 10        | 8  | 2 |
| Rajbangshi          | —                          | — | — | 1               | 1 | — | 4          | 4  | —  | 3               | 1  | 2  | —         | —  | — |
| Baishya             | —                          | — | — | —               | — | — | 2          | —  | 2  | —               | —  | —  | —         | —  | — |
| Total               | —                          | — | — | 15              | 7 | 8 | 11         | 6  | 5  | 19              | 7  | 12 | 10        | 8  | 2 |

**Non-workers by Caste, Sex and broad age-groups**

| workers by age-group |    |    |          |    |    |             |    |    | Total Population |    |    |             |    |    | Name<br>of<br>Caste |
|----------------------|----|----|----------|----|----|-------------|----|----|------------------|----|----|-------------|----|----|---------------------|
| 35—59 yrs.           |    |    | 60+ yrs. |    |    |             |    |    | Workers          |    |    | Non-workers |    |    |                     |
| Non-workers          |    |    | Workers  |    |    | Non-workers |    |    | Workers          |    |    | Non-workers |    |    |                     |
| P                    | M  | F  | P        | M  | F  | P           | M  | F  | P                | M  | F  | P           | M  | F  |                     |
| 17                   | 18 | 19 | 20       | 21 | 22 | 23          | 24 | 25 | 26               | 27 | 28 | 29          | 30 | 31 | 1                   |
| 5                    | —  | 5  | 1        | 1  | —  | 2           | —  | 2  | 16               | 11 | 5  | 37          | 12 | 25 | Kalita              |
| 1                    | —  | 1  | 1        | 1  | —  | —           | —  | —  | 5                | 5  | —  | 5           | 2  | 3  | Rajbangshi          |
| 1                    | —  | 1  | —        | —  | —  | —           | —  | —  | 2                | —  | 2  | 1           | —  | 1  | Baishya             |
| 7                    | —  | 7  | 2        | 2  | —  | 2           | —  | 2  | 23               | 16 | 7  | 43          | 14 | 29 | Total               |

The table II.23 shows that only 34.85% of the total population are workers. However, the sex-wise break-up shows that 53.33% of the males reported to be workers as against only 19.44% workers among the females. The percentage of workers among the Baishyas is the highest (66.67%), while the Rajbangshis returned exactly 50.00% workers. It is to be

noted here that almost the entire working force is distributed evenly between the age-groups 15–34 and 35–59.

Table II.24 shows the distribution of non-workers in the non-practising households by type of activity.

TABLE II.24

**Distribution of Non-workers by type of activities**

| Number of Non-workers |    |    | Number of Non-workers by type of activity and sex |   |         |    |                |    |           |    |                    |    |
|-----------------------|----|----|---|---|---------|----|----------------|----|-----------|----|--------------------|----|
|                       |    |    | Infant  |   | Student |    | Household duty |    | Dependant |    | Seeking employment |    |
| P                     | 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 |
| 43                    | 14 | 29 | —   | — | 9       | 12 | —              | 15 | 3         | 2  | 1                  | —  |

It is seen that about 48.84% of the non-workers are students and about 34.88% (all females) are engaged in household duties. Dependants are under the age of 14 years. A lone male reportedly was seeking employment. It can therefore be said that unemployment has not been a problem in the surveyed households not-practising the craft now for reasons to be described in the following pages.

Table II.25 indicates the reasons for giving up the craft as enunciated by the selected households.

As reported the womenfolk of necessity have to be busy in day to day household works and as such they have little leisure to attend to weaving. This apparently is the prime reason for not practising the craft. Lack of adequate finance and poor health and old age of the erstwhile practising craftsmen are the other two reasons put forward for giving up the craft.

As mentioned earlier, in the absence of any

recorded data, it is well-nigh impossible to say for certain as to when and how this famous craft came into being in this part of the state and more particularly in these villages under our survey. But there is no denying the fact that Eri-culture-cum-Endi-weaving is an age-old household industry of all these villages, the knowledge of which has been handed down from one generation to another. A very interesting feature of this craft is that no male ever practised this craft. It can, therefore, be said that the womenfolk are the born weavers.

Endi weaving is practised in these villages by all the female inhabitants, irrespective of caste and tribe. There is no social bar or taboo in practising the craft. All the women, whether rich or poor, high or low caste know the act of weaving and practise this as a subsidiary occupation.

Though Endi weaving is commonly practised by the villagers of this area (Kamrup district), it is found to be in its highest form in the



three surveyed villages namely Rampur, Sanpara and Jiakur. These villages are the highest Endi producing areas of the state. But unfortunately despite this craft being practised by women belonging to all sections of the society in these villages the craft is not practised in a scale to make a sufficient impact on the economic condition of the weavers as Endi weaving is still regarded as an occupation which provides only a part-time employment and it is still a women's domain. The development of this famous craft is lagging behind due to many reasons, one of which is that weavers engaged in this craft still adopt traditional and age-old method of weaving. Looms used by the weavers are primitive shuttle-looms. Besides, weaving is done with outdated tools and machineries in an out-dated manner. And as such the productivity is low. The weavers have not yet tried to modernise their looms and method of weaving. Marketing poses a great problem to the weavers. Apart from this, exploitation by middleman acts as a major hindrance to proper development and modernisation of methods of weaving. The sole intention of the middlemen being to earn as much money through the toil of the weavers as possible, they care least for any development of techniques of weaving. The weavers, being backward in their out-look, themselves cannot afford any modernisation of the craft. In short, existence of a market that does never pay the weavers a price commensurate to her labour, fluctuating and ever increasing price of raw materials, lack of diversification of products can be described as the main factors deterring proper development of the craft.

#### **Agencies for development of the craft**

There are many organisations or agencies now to help the growth and development of handloom industry of the state. The Directorate of Sericulture and Weaving, Co-operative Department and Assam Govt. Marketing Corporation (AGMC) are the state level organisations for the development of Sericulture

and Weaving industries of Assam. The North Eastern Handicrafts and Handlooms Development Corporation also looks after the handloom and handicrafts of North Eastern India. Besides, All India Handloom Board works in close collaboration with the State Govts., Apex-primary Institutions and Handloom Development Corporations. Also, Handloom Trade and Industry at present look after the growth and problem of various handloom industries of the state. The above Board provides assistance under handloom development programme for modernisation of looms, training of weavers in modern techniques of production, arrangement of credit, marketing of finished products etc. But it requires to be mentioned here that despite functioning of the above mentioned agencies or organisations in the State, no help in the form of any training or other facilities are reportedly provided to the Endi weavers of Rampur area. The only organisation which helps to promote the growth of this industry is the Khadi Board of Govt. of Assam. This Board provides all possible help for the growth of this traditional craft.

There are three branch offices of the Board in this area which distribute Eri cocoons and Eri yarns to the weavers at a very reasonable price. The spinners get a pre-determined wage for spinning the cocoons. There are large number of young and adult females who earn their livelihood by spinning the cocoons. Besides they supply Eri yarns to the weavers, who in return get wages for weaving the cloth. Almost all the females of Sanpara and Rampur village are engaged as spinners or weavers by this board. But weavers of village Jiakur is not linked with this board. They are not taking any help from this office. The weavers here are directly linked with a middleman who is a leading businessman of Bijoynagar- a nearby business centre. The middleman provides Eri yarn to the weavers who in return weave Endi cloth for him getting only the wages for it. Thus the middleman takes the major share of profit.

TABLE II. 25

**Households Reported Reasons for giving up the craft classified by Sex,  
Religion and Caste/Tribe/Community of head of the household**

| Caste/Tribe/<br>Community of<br>head of the<br>household | Sex of head<br>of the house-<br>hold (M/F) | Number of<br>households | Number of households having |                 |                            |
|--|--|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
|  |  |                         | Less than 5 years due to    |                 |                            |
|  |  |                         | Lack of<br>finance          | Lack of<br>time | Poor health<br>and old age |
| 1  | 2  | 3                       | 4                           | 5               | 6                          |
| Kalita   | M  | 9                       | 2                           | 2               | —                          |
|  | F  | 3                       | —                           | —               | —                          |
| Baishya  | M  | —                       | —                           | —               | —                          |
|  | F  | 1                       | —                           | —               | 1                          |
| Rajbangshi   | M  | 2                       | 1                           | —               | —                          |
|  | F  | —                       | —                           | —               | —                          |
| TOTAL  | M  | 11                      | 3                           | 2               | —                          |
|  | F  | 4                       | —                           | —               | 1                          |

(Contd.)

TABLE II. 25 (Concl.)

| given up the craft since |                 |                            |                    |                 |                            | Caste/Tribe/<br>Community of<br>head of the<br>household |
|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--|
| 5—9 years due to         |                 |                            | 10—19 years due to |                 |                            |  |
| Lack of<br>finance       | Lack of<br>time | Poor health<br>and old age | Lack of<br>finance | Lack of<br>time | Poor health<br>and old age |  |
| 7                        | 8               | 9                          | 10                 | 11              | 12                         | 1  |
| —                        | 4               | —                          | —                  | 1               | —                          | Kalita   |
| 1                        | —               | 2                          | —                  | —               | —                          |  |
| —                        | —               | —                          | —                  | —               | —                          | Baishya  |
| —                        | —               | —                          | —                  | —               | —                          |  |
| —                        | —               | 1                          | —                  | —               | —                          | Rajbangshi   |
| —                        | —               | —                          | —                  | —               | —                          |  |
| —                        | 4               | 1                          | —                  | 1               | —                          | TOTAL  |
| 1                        | —               | 2                          | —                  | —               | —                          |  |

All the households belongs to Hindu religion

Another interesting feature is that there is no Weavers' Co-operative Society functioning in this area. Though the Govt. of Assam have introduced Weavers' Co-operative Societies to look after the interest of the weavers, but unfor-

tunately such societies in the state are virtually defunct. Moreover, our survey reveals that the weavers of this area totally lack initiative in forming a co-operative society for an integrated development of the craft.

## CHAPTER III

### PROCESS OF LEARNING

South Kamrup particularly villages in and around Rampur are famous for Endi fabric. They have a long tradition and heritage in producing Endi-silk. Women of these villages have traditional talent in weaving. Spinning and weaving has always been their way of life. A loom in every household is considered to be a proud possession. Women practise this craft to augment their family income. One of the interesting feature is that Endi weaving is performed by all sections of the people irrespective of their caste and creed. Till very recently the suitability of a bride was adjudged by the degree of the artistry acquired by her in weaving.

This famous and traditional craft is practised by women belonging to various age-groups. Even the female children take to spinning and weaving spontaneously. They are born and reared in a surrounding of Endi cocoons and looms and thus automatically grow up to the status of an expert weaver or spinner. Enquiry revealed that girls at a tender age are taught spinning the Endi cocoons and they always sit beside their mother's or sister's loom and in a short time learn to manipulate the throw shuttle - which is the traditional loom used for Endi weaving. During our survey we came across instances when, in one case for example, a female coming to this village as a bride without

any knowledge of Endi weaving acquired the skill in weaving in a very short time of about a fortnight. These females acquire the knowledge of spinning and weaving from their mother-in-law or other elderly women of the households.

We now give the modes of acquisition of skill of weaving by the weavers and draw biographical sketches of some of the expert weavers of the surveyed units.

#### **Modes of acquisition of skill**

The table III.1 shows that almost the entire lot of women engaged in this craft had their lesson in art of weaving from their mothers which clearly corroborates our earlier statement that the art of weaving is being handed down from one generation to the next.

This is the usual practice of this region that the mother generally engages her grown up daughter in weaving in their leisure time. So the girl gradually inculcates the habit of weaving and becomes expert weaver as she attains womanhood.

Table III.2 shows the distribution of the craftsman classified by relationship with the head, the period of engagement in the craft and the person who imparted training to them.

TABLE III.1

**Distribution of persons engaged in the craft classified by relationship with the head and the person from whom training received**

| Relationship with the head | Number of persons engaged in the craft | Number of persons engaged in the craft where the relation noted in col. 1 received training from |          |                  |
|----------------------------|--|--|----------|------------------|
|                            |  | Mother   | Sister   | Husband's mother |
| 1                          | 2                                      | 3  | 4        | 5                |
| Self                       | 24                                     | 20   | —        | 4                |
| Son's wife                 | 5                                      | 4  | —        | 1                |
| Daughter                   | 45                                     | 44   | 1        | —                |
| Brother's wife             | 2                                      | 2  | —        | —                |
| Wife                       | 37                                     | 31   | —        | 6                |
| <b>Total</b>               | <b>113</b>                             | <b>101</b>   | <b>1</b> | <b>11</b>        |

TABLE

## Distribution of Craftsman classified by Relationship with the Head,

| Period engaged in the Craft | Number of Persons engaged in the Craft | Number of Persons engaged in the                        |                  |                                  |                  |
|-----------------------------|--|---|------------------|----------------------------------|------------------|
|                             |  | Self (head of the household) who received training from |                  | Wife, who received training from |                  |
|                             |  | Mother  | Husband's mother | Mother                           | Husband's mother |
| 1                           | 2                                      | 3   | 4                | 5                                | 6                |
| Less than 5 years           | 26                                     | —   | —                | 1                                | —                |
| 5—9 years                   | 21                                     | —   | —                | 3                                | —                |
| 10—19 years                 | 22                                     | 1   | 1                | 7                                | 4                |
| 20+ years                   | 44                                     | 19  | 3                | 20                               | 2                |
| Total                       | 113                                    | 20  | 4                | 31                               | 6                |

III.2

person from whom training received and the period engaged in the Craft

Craft who are related to head as

| Son's wife who received training |                  | Daughter who received training from |        | Other females (Brother's wife) who received training from |                  | Period engaged in the craft |
|----------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|--------|---|------------------|-----------------------------|
| Mother                           | Husband's mother | Mother                              | Sister | Mother  | Husband's mother |                             |
| 7                                | 8                | 9                                   | 10     | 11  | 12               | 1                           |
| 2                                | —                | 22                                  | 1      | —   | —                | Less than 5 years           |
| 1                                | 1                | 15                                  | —      | 1   | —                | 5—9 years                   |
| 1                                | —                | 7                                   | —      | 1   | —                | 10—19 years                 |
| —                                | —                | —                                   | —      | —   | —                | 20+ years                   |
| 4                                | 1                | 44                                  | 1      | 2   | —                | Total                       |

The above table gives an additional information about the length of time a weaver is engaged in this household industry. It is seen that almost identical proportions of weavers are engaged in this craft for different periods below 20 years. Almost the entire lot of weavers who reported their engagement in the craft for less than 5 years, is for obvious reasons. The daughters form the absolute majority again among those who are engaged in the craft for 5–9 years. Majority of the weavers reportedly

engaged in the craft for 10–19 years are housewives. Lastly, 44 out of 113 or 38.94% of the weavers who are all housewives are in the trade for the last 20 years or more.

### Duration and terms and conditions of training

Following table (III.3) prepared from the survey data shows the duration of training and terms and conditions of training of the weavers engaged in the craft.

TABLE III.3

**Distribution of persons engaged in the craft classified by relationship with the head, the persons from whom training received, period of training and terms and conditions of training**

| Relationship with the head | No. of persons engaged in the craft | Number of persons engaged in the craft who received training from |                                     |   |                                     |                                     |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|                            |                                     | Mother for the period   |                                     | Husband's mother for the period               |                                     | Sister for the period               |
|                            |                                     | 6 months to 2 yrs. on no terms and conditions                     | 2 + yrs. on no terms and conditions | 6 months to 2 yrs. on no terms and conditions | 2 + yrs. on no terms and conditions | 2 + yrs. on no terms and conditions |
| 1                          | 2                                   | 3   | 4                                   | 5   | 6                                   | 7                                   |
| Self                       | 24                                  | —   | 20                                  | —   | 4                                   | —                                   |
| Son's wife                 | 5                                   | —   | 4                                   | —   | 1                                   | —                                   |
| Daughter                   | 45                                  | 5   | 39                                  | —   | —                                   | 1                                   |
| Brother's wife             | 2                                   | 1   | 1                                   | —   | —                                   | —                                   |
| Wife                       | 37                                  | 2   | 29                                  | 1   | 5                                   | —                                   |
| <b>TOTAL</b>               | <b>113</b>                          | <b>8</b>  | <b>93</b>                           | <b>1</b>                                      | <b>10</b>                           | <b>1</b>                            |

The table III.3 reveals that for obvious reasons there were no terms and conditions laid down to the training imparted to the weavers by their mother, husband's mother or sister. It is obligatory on the part of the females to learn the art of weaving from their mother or elderly females and to impart training to daughters is customary. It is further seen that

excepting a few all the weavers had received training for more than two years and it is just because almost all the weavers had lessons in weaving from their mothers.

The following table (III.4) shows the distribution of persons engaged in the craft by source from where they acquired the art of weaving and relationship with head of the household.



TABLE III.4

**Distribution of persons engaged in the craft classified by relationship with the head of the household and source of acquirement of skill**

| Relationship with the head          | No. of persons engaged in the craft | Number reported having acquired skill traditionally through engagement in every stages in spinning and weaving | Remarks   |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| 1                                   | 2                                   | 3  | 4   |
| Self (Female head of the household) | 24                                  | 24   | Only one method i.e. weavers traditionally learning art of weaving from mother or other elderly persons who are without any exception female members of the family. |
| Wife                                | 37                                  | 37   |   |
| Daughter                            | 45                                  | 45   |   |
| Son's wife                          | 5                                   | 5  |   |
| Brother's wife                      | 2                                   | 2  |   |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>113</b>                          | <b>113</b>   |   |

The table III.4 re-confirms the oft-repeated observations that Endi weaving is a heritage in these villages and that the skill in the same is acquired through active participation in the different stages of production by the family members. Our survey further reveals that no restriction has ever been imposed on learning the art of spinning or weaving by any member of any family. No male ever takes part in any stage of spinning and weaving except in a few households where the males help females in procuring the cocoons or marketing the finished

product.

#### **Adequacy of training**

During the survey an assessment was made as to the adequacy of the training received by the weavers, availability of better training facility as also their preference for having better training facilities to improve their skill.

A table (III.5) prepared in this context is placed below.

TABLE III.5

**Assessment of Training received by the Persons as related to the Period Engaged in the Craft, Availability of Better Training Facility and Intention to Receive Better Training**

| Period engaged in the craft | Number of persons engaged in the craft | Number who consider the training received is |            | Number reporting availability of better training facilities | Number in favour of       |                               |
|-----------------------------|--|--|------------|---|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
|                             |  | Adequate                                     | Inadequate | Description of better training available                    | Receiving better training | Not receiving better training |
| 1                           | 2                                      | 3  | 4          | 5   | 6                         | 7                             |
| Less than 5 years           | 26                                     | 26   | —          | Not available   | 3                         | —                             |
| 5—9 years                   | 21                                     | 21   | —          | •   | 4                         | —                             |
| 10—19 years                 | 22                                     | 22   | —          | •   | 2                         | —                             |
| 20+ years                   | 44                                     | 44   | —          | •   | —                         | —                             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                | <b>113</b>                             | <b>113</b>                                   | <b>—</b>   | <b>•</b>  | <b>9</b>                  | <b>—</b>                      |

It is seen that almost the entire lot of weavers consider the training received by them as adequate. It has earlier been said that all the weavers reportedly acquired the skill from other elderly female members (mostly mothers) and it can therefore be concluded that the age-old methods of spinning and weaving are still in vogue and no modernisation of techniques is conceived by any one.

### Biographical sketches of selected craftsmen

We now give biographical sketches of a few selected weavers in the villages under survey and thus focus the various aspects of the craft, especially the skill and technique, training and commercial aspects. For this purpose, a few weavers belonging to the following categories are selected from the three surveyed villages.

1. *Category I* — Master weaver
2. *Category II* — Very old weaver

3. *Category III* — New entrants or amateur weavers

In this connection, it is to be stated that this craft is practised by the womenfolk in their leisure time only. Our probing enquiry revealed that not a single weaver works at her loom for any long stretch at a time and practically the entire operation of weaving is done in a piecemeal manner, i.e. a woman sits at her loom whenever she gets opportunity to do so and she never keeps a record of the time she spends for her each duration of stay at the loom. Moreover, different other stages of preparation of raw materials precede the actual weaving of Endi materials and none of the weavers interviewed could give any account of time spent either for preparation for the weaving or for actual weaving itself nor could we hazard any guess on this account. It is therefore well-nigh impossible to consider the time spent on weaving as a factor in calculating the cost of production.

## Village Rampur:

### (1) *Srimati Rebati Kalita (Master weaver)*

Srimati Rebati Kalita is an expert weaver of Rampur village. She is known all over the district for her beautiful Endi products. Her product is of great demand even outside Assam - particularly in the State of Bihar. She is capable of producing fine, soft and beautiful gents' wrapper.

Srimati Kalita who is a widow, was born and brought up in Rampur area. She is about 48 years old. Her husband died 7 years back. Rebati is an illiterate woman. She does not have a child. Endi weaving is her one and the only occupation which wins her bread. She is an expert spinner too and can produce very fine Endi-silk (thread) from the cocoon. No female in the area can excel her skill in spinning fine yarn. She always uses thread spun by herself.

Rebati can be ranked without hesitation as the best weaver of the area. Her product is always superior to those produced by others and also fetches a much higher price both in and outside Assam.

She had taken to Endi weaving as livelihood after the death of her husband. She has learnt this art from her mother who too was an expert weaver even as a child. She used to help her mother in weaving during her leisure time, and was taught to spin the cocoon even when she was only a school girl. Her mother also taught her how to prepare a wrap for weaving and also art of weaving. Thus from childhood she acquired the technique and knowledge of spinning cocoon and weaving. She had associated herself with this craft since the age of 14 years. At present she spends most of her time in weaving, because it is her only occupation.

According to Rebati there is no need of further improvement or modernisation of techni-

que because tools and equipments used for weaving are not changed. They still use the traditional and old loom and the other equipments and tools required for the purpose are also age old. Special training according to her will be meaningful only when modern method of weaving is introduced in this craft.

At present she is not facing any problem except about procurement of raw materials. The price of the raw material i.e. cocoon is soaring high and it is difficult to procure the best quality cocoon. Besides the middleman has posed a big hindrance by depriving her of her due share of profit from sales of the output.

Annually she can produce two pairs of best quality Endi wrappers for use by males. Recently she sold her product at a rate varying between Rs. 1000/- and Rs. 1400/- per pair which was the highest in the area.

### (2) *Srimati Sumati Medhi (Master weaver)*

Srimati Sumati Medhi is also an expert weaver of Rampur village. Her product is also much sought after and is sold at a high price in the market. Srimati Sumati is 37 years old and is married. She is a mother of two children. Her husband is a cultivator. She too inherited the knowledge of spinning and weaving from her mother who was an expert weaver. She practises this craft in her leisure time and thus helps augment earnings for a better maintenance of the family. She says that she does not require any further training because the training she had from her mother is good enough for her to practise this craft. According to her there are no other problem except getting the raw material which she is facing even at present. She used to procure raw material from Govt. Khadi Bhandar but according to her it is very difficult to obtain the best quality cocoons.

She can produce on an average 4 pairs of Endi wrappers or 'bor kapor' per year which sell at the rate of Rs. 400 - 600/- per pair.

*(3) Srimati Numali Das (Old weaver)*

Srimati Das is widow and about 60 years old. She has two children. She was born in the nearby Gunaimani village. She still practices Endi weaving. It is a major source of income of her family. After the death of her husband, she earns her living from this traditional craft only. She has inherited knowledge of the craft from her mother. She says that in the days of her childhood Endi weaving and spinning was compulsory for the female folk. Every mother taught her child the art of weaving and spinning which was treated as an essential qualification for making good bride. It was therefore customary for a female to know the art of spinning and weaving.

Last year she produced 2 pairs of Endi wrapper (Bor Kapor) which were sold at Rs. 400 - Rs. 500/- per pair. According to her there is no problem in running the craft. She however, had expressed difficulty in getting adequate finance for procuring the raw material. She said that training she acquired from her mother was enough.

*(4) Srimati Karuna Medhi (New entrant in the craft)*

Srimati Karuna Medhi of Rampur village is practising Endi weaving from the age of 14 years. She is about 18 years now and read upto class VII. She is unmarried. She learnt the technique of spinning and weaving from her mother. She used to assist her mother at the loom during her leisure. Gradually she has acquired the art and has now assumed a significant role in rendering financial assistance to the family. She usually weaves Endi-shirting which has great demand in the market. Last year she produced about 40 metres of shirting and sold at a lucrative price.

According to her there is no need of further training. Because they still practise this craft on their traditional loom. Unless the modern loom is introduced no special training is required.

**Village Jiakur:**

*(1) Srimati Binita Choudhury (Master weaver)*

Srimati Binita Choudhury is an expert Endi weaver of village Jiakur. She has specialised in making ladies shawal (wrapper) that has got a great demand in the market. She can produce 3 pairs of shawals a year. Her products are sold at the rate of Rs. 1000/- - Rs. 1200/- per pair.

She is 26 years old and still unmarried. She has read upto class X. She started weaving at the age of 14. She acquired the knowledge of spinning and art of weaving from her mother. Endi-weaving is a traditional occupation in her household. She aids her parents by practising this craft on a commercial basis. According to her she requires no more training because she still practises weaving in traditional loom. At present she is not facing any problem in running this traditional household industry. The only problem, according to her, is interference by the middleman who unscrupulously takes away a big share of the profit. She opines that exploitation of the middleman should be immediately stopped and that the govt. should step forward with necessary help to the Endi-weavers on a larger measure to put the industry in a balanced frame.

*(2) Srimati Patu Talukdar (Master weaver)*

Srimati Patu Talukdar of village Jiakur is another expert weaver. Her product has also great demand and widely acclaimed for its exquisiteness.

Srimati Talukdar is about 43 years old and is mother of 9 children. She practises Endi-weaving to render financial assistance to her husband who is a cultivator.

Endi weaving is a traditional occupation in their household. She has acquired optimum



*Smti. Rebati Kalita — famous weaver of Rampur village  
busy in spinning (above) and weaving*





skill in Endi weaving only after her marriage. But she used to help her mother in weaving even before her marriage. She thus acquired the art of spinning and technique of weaving from her mother.

According to her too the training received from her mother is sufficient and no further training is felt necessary.

The only problem she is facing is in the procurement of raw material which is more often of inferior quality because it is obtained through middleman. According to her this is exploitation by the middleman and it should be stopped immediately.

*(3) Srimati Thanda Bala Kalita (An old weaver)*

Srimati Thanda Bala Kalita is one of the oldest Endi-weavers of Jiakur village. She practises this craft as a subsidiary occupation. She is 63 years old and is married. She told that she had acquired the art of weaving from her mother. She started weaving and spinning from the age of 13 years. After her marriage she took to weaving regularly as a subsidiary occupation. Normally she produces one pair of Endi wrapper which is sold at a reasonably good price. She said that owing to her old age and ill health she cannot produce more than 2 pairs of Endi-wrapper. However, she is being helped by her daughter in weaving. According to her old method of weaving is good because it is simple and can be adopted easily. Tools and equipments of the loom are also locally made and are easily available, except in procurement of raw material she has not faced any problem so far. She told that Govt. should arrange an uninterrupted supply of raw material at a reasonable price so that the industry is run smoothly. If the Govt. does not come forward to help the weaver the middleman will take advantage and the industry will suffer incalculable damage.

*(4) Srimati Binita Kalita (New entrant in the craft)*

Srimati Binita Kalita is a new entrant to this craft. She was born in the village Jiakur. She is 15 years old and a student of class VI. Her mother is an expert weaver. Endi weaving is the traditional occupation of their family. She acquired the knowledge of Endi weaving from her mother who herself learned the art of weaving when she was only 12 years old. Binita started weaving from the age of 13 years. She is very keen, energetic and good in weaving. She, with assistance from her mother, produces 3 pairs of Bor Kapor (Gents wrapper) in a year and these are usually sold at a price of Rs. 800/- per pair. She feels she does not require any further training in weaving because the training received from her mother is good enough. She did not narrate any difficulty encountered by her. However, she too desires that state administrative machinery should assist the craftsman by way of providing raw materials at reasonable price. The govt. can also arrange sale of their products at a price that would compensate the cost of materials and labour put behind in manufacturing the same.

**Village Sanpara:**

*(1) Srimati Bhabuki Bala Das (Master weaver)*

Srimati Bhabuki Bala Das is an expert Endi weaver of the village Sanpara. She is known in and around the village for her fine Endi products. She practises this craft as one of the main occupations of the family. She is born and brought up in this village.

She is about 42 years old and is mother of 4 children. Her husband is a cultivator. Cultivation and Endi weaving are the two main occupations of their family.

Srimati Das started weaving at the age of 14 years and became an expert weaver by the

time she attained the age of 19 years. She has acquired the technique and art of weaving from her mother. She said that when she was a child she used to help her mother in spinning the cocoon and also in weaving Endi. She said technique and skill learned from her mother is enough to run the industry. According to her further training is necessary if modern method of weaving is introduced in this craft. She did not cite any specific problem being faced by her. However she said that marketing facilities should be improved considerably so that they can sell their product without any problem and at a price the product deserves.

She produces 4 pairs of good quality Bor Kapor (Gents' wrapper) in a year the sale price of which varies between of Rs. 400/- and Rs. 500/- per pair. She said that Endi weaving is no longer a subsidiary occupation in case of most of the weavers.

*(2) Srimati Sujala Kalita (Master weaver)*

She is born and brought up in the village Sanpara. She is 22 years old and is a matriculate. Her mother is also an expert weaver and her father is a cultivator. Endi weaving is a traditional occupation of this household.

Srimati Kalita started weaving from the age of 15 years. She has acquired the knowledge and skill of weaving from her mother. She is an expert spinner too. Her mother taught her various process of weaving step by step. She has not received any special training of weaving other than that from mother. She says no further training is required by her.

She became an expert weaver at the age of 20. She used to produce 3 to 4 pairs of Endi-wrappers annually. Her product is sold at the rate of Rs. 300/- to Rs. 500/- per pair. Thus Srimati Kalita renders great financial help to her parents. Weaving is now a whole time occupation for her. According to Srimati Kalita market-

ing facilities need be improved considerably because to run this traditional craft in a healthy manner, proper marketing facility is a sine-qua-non. She says that the marketing facility provided by the local office of the State Khadi Board leaves much to be expected. An interesting observation made by her is that good quality Endi can be produced only in locally made throw – shuttle loom as is being used by her.

*(3) Srimati Sabuki Bala Das (old weaver)*

She is an old weaver of village Sanpara. She is about 61 years old and is a widow living with her only son. She practises this craft as subsidiary occupation and makes 1 to 2 pairs of Endi wrappers annually. Her products are sold at the rate of Rs. 300/- 400/- per pair.

She had acquired the knowledge of weaving from her mother when she was just 15 years old. During her young age she was an expert weaver and used to produce 3 to 4 pairs annually. But due to old age and ill health she cannot produce more than two pairs of wrapper now.

She said that Endi weaving is the traditional occupation of their family. In past it was compulsory for a female to know the art of weaving and the mothers used to teach their daughters the art of weaving. It was customary for a female child to help her mother in weaving.

She said training acquired from mother is enough to pursue the craft in the traditional manner. Reportedly she has not faced any problem except marketing the product. She intends to remain engaged in the craft as long as her health permits her to do so.

*(4) Srimati Sarubala Das (A new entrant in the craft)*

Srimati Sarubala Das is a 19 years old weaver who was born in the village. She started



spinning the cocoons from the age of 9 years and took to weaving at 14 years. Her mother is an expert spinner and weaver. Srimati Das has read upto class X. Now she is engaged in weaving Endi and thus helps her mother in sustaining the family.

From her very childhood she was keen to learn the techniques of weaving and she always helped her mother in weaving. Mother taught her the process of weaving step by step and

within a very short time she acquired the knowledge and become an expert weaver of Endi. She can produce 5 pairs of Endi wrappers annually which are sold at the rates varying between Rs. 300/- to Rs. 400/- per pair.

She said that the training imparted by her mother was sufficient to weave in the traditional loom. According to her no major problem has ever cropped up in her way while practising the craft.

## CHAPTER IV

### MANUFACTURING PROCESS

#### Place of work

Endi weaving is a household industry. All the households practise this craft in their own residential compound. No separate place or workshop is required to run this craft. All the weavers carry on this industry in their respective houses. Weavers use part of their dwelling houses as workshop. There is not a single well furnished or commercial workshop in any of the villages situated in and around Rampur area. There is no common workshop for the village weavers. Almost all the households whether rich or poor have their own workshops for weaving Endi. It is almost customary in these villages to have a loom in the house. Besides, the houses in this area are so constructed that, there is always provision for keeping one or more looms for the purpose of Endi weaving. Generally, a part of the dwelling house is used as workshop or for installing the loom. In some cases, the households use a corner of the verandah of the house as workshop for keeping the loom. In a few other households a separate structure is made in the compound for

installing the loom. These structures are generally made of bamboo and thatch. In fact there is no definite place for keeping the loom. The type of construction and area of the workshop depends upon the economic condition of its owner. But in most of the cases hygienic condition and ventilation in the workshop are found to be poor. The common sight of a workshop is a structure with a thatched roof with or without walls.

It is seen that all the 113 weavers of the surveyed households are engaged in this craft in their own household. Not a single weaver reported going outside her own house for weaving nor a single weaver is found in any household who is not a member of that household.

Following table (IV.1) prepared from the data collected during survey shows the distribution of classified by broad age-group, place of work and duration of engagement in the handicraft in relation to head of the household and other members.

TABLE IV.1

**Craftswomen classified by broad age-group, place of work and duration of engagement in the handicraft in relation to head of the household and other members**

| Age-group | Duration of engagement in the handicraft | Number of head of the households engaged in the handicraft | Number of persons other than the head of the household engaged in the handicraft | Place of work                           |   |
|-----------|--|--|--|---|---|
|           |  |  |  | Number of head of the household engaged | Number of persons other than head of the households engaged |
| 1         | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5                                       | 6   |
| 0-14      | Less than 5 yrs.                         | —  | 3  | —                                       | 3   |
|           | 5-9 yrs.                                 | —  | —  | —                                       | —   |
|           | 10-19 yrs.                               | —  | —  | —                                       | —   |
|           | 20 + yrs                                 | —  | —  | —                                       | —   |
| 15-34     | Less than 5 yrs.                         | —  | 23   | —                                       | 23  |
|           | 5-9 yrs.                                 | —  | 21   | —                                       | 21  |
|           | 10-19 yrs.                               | 2  | 20   | 2                                       | 20  |
|           | 20 + yrs                                 | —  | 3  | —                                       | 3   |
| 35-59     | Less than 5 yrs.                         | —  | —  | —                                       | —   |
|           | 5-9 yrs.                                 | —  | —  | —                                       | —   |
|           | 10-19 yrs.                               | —  | —  | —                                       | —   |
|           | 20 + yrs                                 | 19   | 19   | 19                                      | 19  |
| 60+       | Less than 5 yrs.                         | —  | —  | —                                       | —   |
|           | 5-9 yrs.                                 | —  | —  | —                                       | —   |
|           | 10-19 yrs.                               | —  | —  | —                                       | —   |
|           | 20 + yrs                                 | 3  | —  | 3                                       | —   |
| Total     |  | 24   | 89   | 24                                      | 89  |

It is seen that for obvious reasons 22 out of 24 females heads of households are aged 35 and above and as stated earlier all of them are craftswoman engaged in weaving Endi production for over 20 years, conversely 67 (75.28%) out of other 89 female weavers reputed their age between 15 to 34 years and their engage-

ment in the craft is almost evenly spread over less than 5-9 years and 10-19 years. Child workers form a very negligible proportion. As already said all these craftswoman irrespective of age are members of the surveyed households who do weaving in handloom placed in their dwelling houses.

TABLE IV.2

Place of work of persons engaged in the craft classified by area occupied and number of persons working therein

| Place of work              | No. of persons engaged in the craft | Occupied area of the place of work  |            |  |            |  |          |  | Remarks  |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|------------|--|------------|--|----------|--|--|
|                            |                                     | 3-5 sq. mtrs. and number of persons working at the place of work noted in col.1 |            | 6-10 sq.mtrs. and number of persons working at the place of work noted in col. 1 |            | 11-16 sq.mtrs and number of persons working at the place of work noted in col. 1 |          | 17-24 sq. mtrs. and number of persons working at the place of work noted in col. 1 |  |
|                            |                                     | Single  | 2-5        | Single   | 2-5        | Single   | 2-5      | 2-5  |  |
| 1                          | 2                                   | 3   | 4          | 5  | 6          | 7  | 8        | 9  | 10   |
| Part of the dwelling house | 113                                 | 5<br>(5)  | 14<br>(31) | 16<br>(16)   | 20<br>(49) | 1<br>(1)   | 3<br>(8) | 1<br>(3)   | Figures shown in the bracket are number of persons |

It is seen that an absolute majority (60.00%) of the surveyed households with an almost equal percentage (57.52) of total craftswomen have workshops measuring 6-10 sq. metres followed by 10 households (31.67%) with 31.86% of workers reporting possession of workshops measuring 3-5 sq. metres. As regards size-class of number of workers in these work shops, all of which are nothing but a part of the dwelling house, it is seen that weavers working alone at the loom constitute only 19.47% of the total workers engaged in the craft and almost the entire lot of whom (72.73%) have working place measuring 6-10 sq. metres.

None of the weavers reported any problem regarding accommodation for practice of the craft.

#### Purity and pollution associated with the craft

In the strict sense of the term, there is no purity and pollution associated with the craft. The craft is practised by the females only. After completion of normal household duties, womenfolk in their leisure practise this tradi-

tional craft. No religious ceremony or other social function is observed either before starting the weaving or at the completion of weaving, or as a matter of fact at any other stage in the process of weaving. However, women usually abstain from weaving during their menstruation period. During this period they are regarded as polluted and prohibited from doing even normal household duties in the kitchen, cowsheds and also they are not allowed to practise weaving. Apart from this, it is customary to remain absent from weaving during the pollution period normally observed after the death of any member of the family. The pollution period as observed by inhabitants of Rampur area is normally about one month. But in case of death of the head of the household women stop weaving for a longer period. Other than these two, for no other reason women refrain from weaving.

Following table (IV.3) prepared from the data as collected during survey shows the purity and pollution associated with the craft classified by religion, caste and community of the head of the households.



*A weaver at work in the loom placed in the corner of the verandah*





*A village woman purchasing endi yarn from Khadi Bhandar office*



*An assembly of weavers and spinners at Khadi Bhandar office*





TABLE IV.3

**Households reporting about the pollution associated with the craft classified by Religion\*,  
Caste/Tribe/Community of head of the household**

| Caste/Tribe/<br>Community<br>of head of the<br>household | Number of<br>households<br>engaged in<br>the craft | Number of households<br>reported pollution |                                     | Number of households<br>reported about the<br>pollution associated<br>with the craft |   | Remarks   |
|--|--|--|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|
|  |  | Associated<br>with the<br>craft            | Not associated<br>with the<br>craft | During the<br>mourning<br>period in<br>case of<br>death                              | During the<br>menstrual<br>period of<br>the female<br>weavers |   |
| 1  | 2  | 3  | 4                                   | 5  | 6   | 7   |
| Kalita   | 44   | 44   | —                                   | 44   | 44  | None reported any<br>interruption in<br>weaving in case of<br>a birth in the<br>family, except when<br>the mother of the<br>newly born is her-<br>self a weaver |
| Baishya  | 6  | 6  | —                                   | 6  | 6   |   |
| Rajbangshi   | 8  | 8  | —                                   | 8  | 8   |   |
| Keot   | 2  | 2  | —                                   | 2  | 2   |   |

\*All the households belong to Hindu religion

It is seen that all the 60 households irrespective of caste of the head reported pollution associated with the craft and all of them attributed pollution to a death in the family or when the weaver, who is without any exception a female, passes through her menstrual cycle.

#### **Raw materials required for the craft**

We now try to find out from where raw materials are procured by the local weavers. A table showing the main areas from where the raw materials are usually procured by the weavers is presented below which also indicates the mode of transport and problem faced by the weavers in procuring the raw materials.

TABLE IV.4

**Raw materials used for manufacture of different items of craft classified  
by area from where procured by mode of transport and problem faced**

| Name of raw material used for making the handicraft items | Number of households procuring raw material | Number of households which have procured from |   | Number of households reported having faced problem for procuring the raw materials | Remarks   |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|
|   |   | Local market and Khadi Bhandar                | Others – From different market place and hats, home delivery by private business man and Endi culture at home |  |   |
|   |   | On foot                                       | By bus/bi-cycle/ on foot  |  |   |
| 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5  | 6   |
| Cocoon  | 60  | 26  | 34  | 8  | Bagan, Bijohnagar, Boko, Chhaygaon and Hahim are the places from where raw materials are obtained by households indicated in col. 4 |
| Yarn  | 20  | 10  | 10  | 2  |   |

Endi cocoons and Endi yarns - the two main raw materials used by the weavers to produce various items are procured by the majority of the households from either local market or local office of Khadi Bhandar. The other places from where the raw materials are procured are also within a distance of less than 20 kms. from the villages under the survey. Transportation of raw materials therefore does not pose any problem. The main mode of transport for procuring the raw materials are bus, cycle or going on foot. The villages in Hahim, Boko and Chhaygaon circles are inhabited by people mostly belonging to Rabha and Bodo tribes who rear and sell the Endi worm which is considered to be the principal source of income for them. Rampur being situated near the National Highway, facilities of bus service can be easily availed of by the villagers for their journeys to and from the villages. However, the fact remains that most of the weavers go on foot to

the local or Khadi Bhandar office to procure raw materials. Reportedly only one household rears cocoons at its own yard for production of yarn. Generally Endi yarns as procured from market are used by the weavers who have limited time at their disposal for weaving. However, as stated earlier, majority of weavers produce Endi yarns by spinning the cocoons themselves.

The table IV. 4 also reveals that 10 households reported difficulty in procuring raw materials for their loom. The only and main difficulty faced by these households for procuring raw materials is non-availability of adequate finance. According to them, the cost of raw materials is very high and they always find it difficult to arrange appropriate finance to procure raw materials and this really hampers smooth running of the craft. The respondents did not report any other difficulty faced by them.

## Consumptions of raw materials

The table below shows the approximate an-

nual consumption of raw materials for manufacturing different items classified by educational level of head of the households.

TABLE IV.5

**Average annual consumption of raw materials for manufacturing different items of handicraft classified by educational level of head of the household**

| Educational level of head of the household | Number of handicraft items manufactured | Number of households manufacturing handicraft items | Average approximate annual consumption of each raw material (in Kg.) |             | Remarks   |
|--|---|---|--|-------------|---|
|  |   |   | Endi cocoon  | Endi thread |   |
| 1  | 2                                       | 3   | 4  | 5           | 6   |
| Illiterate                                 | Gents' wrapper<br>94                    | 37  | 47   | 17          | Figures in col. 2 against gents' wrapper and ladies scarf indicate number of pieces whereas that against Endi cloth indicate length in metre. |
|  | Ladies scarf<br>124                     | 30  | 42   | 11          |   |
|  | Endi cloth<br>250                       | 22  | 75   | 21          |   |
| Literate without educational level         | Gents' wrapper<br>22                    | 6   | 11   | 2           |   |
|  | Ladies scarf<br>22                      | 5   | 7-1/2  | —           |   |
|  | Endi cloth<br>32                        | 3   | 10   | 1           |   |
| Primary or Junior Basic                    | Gents' wrapper<br>30                    | 8   | 15   | 4           |   |
|  | Ladies scarf<br>20                      | 4   | 7  | 1           |   |
|  | Endi cloth<br>44                        | 4   | 13   | 2           |   |
| Middle                                     | Gents' wrapper<br>28                    | 8   | 14   | 3           |   |
|  | Ladies scarf<br>8                       | 2   | 3  | —           |   |
|  | Endi cloth<br>42                        | 4   | 13   | 3           |   |

Table IV 5 depicts that it is mostly those households whose heads are illiterate that produce the bulk of the handicraft items. As a natural corollary the raw materials consumed by such households register the largest quantities.

Endi wrappers and cloth being a warm material its use is less or almost nil during summer days and consequently there is a steep fall in production of these items.

It is also observed that the number of households whose heads have attained certain degree of educational level or are even just literates is much less than those with illiterate heads that are engaged in Endi weaving.

Regarding consumption of raw materials it should be noted that while only a few households purchase Endi threads directly from market, the majority of the households purchase Endi cocoons from which the threads are made.

We have to reiterate here that the sole motive behind production of Borkapor etc. is sale and only an infinitesimal quantity is consumed by the households that produce the items. The weavers or any other members of the households show scant interest in maintenance of any records of production and sale. Moreover, the materials are produced in a piece-meal manner and no weaver could furnish any account of raw materials consumed in a month. Rough estimates could therefore be attempted for annual consumption only. It is estimated that on an average around 260 kg. of Endi and about 65 kg. of yarn are used by the weavers in the surveyed households in a year. Though seasonal variation in consumption of raw materials could not be gathered for reasons given above, it needs to be mentioned here that the summer months is normally a period of quiet activity at the loom.

The total production of the Endi in the State

in 1984-85 was 1.50 lakh kgs. Following table shows the production of Endi in the State since 1971.

TABLE IV.6

Production of Endi in the State since 1971-72

(in lakh kgs.)

| Year    | Production of Endi |
|---------|--------------------|
| 1971-72 | 2.30               |
| 1972-73 | 1.99               |
| 1973-74 | 2.20               |
| 1974-75 | 1.45               |
| 1975-76 | 1.48               |
| 1976-77 | 1.24               |
| 1977-78 | 1.21               |
| 1978-79 | 1.81               |
| 1979-80 | 1.91               |
| 1980-81 | 1.51               |
| 1981-82 | 1.55               |
| 1982-83 | 1.47               |
| 1983-84 | 1.23               |
| 1984-85 | 1.50               |

Source: Directorate of Sericulture, Govt. of Assam.

The market price of the Endi cocoons varies from Rs. 70/- to Rs. 80/- per kg. (inferior quality), the superior or fine quality costs between Rs. 80/- and Rs. 120/- per kg. The price of the yarns also varies according to its quality. The average price varies from Rs. 250/- to Rs. 350/- per kg.

A few villagers of Rampur area are devotedly attached to the rearing of Endi seeds. All round efforts have also been made to increase production of Endi-silk by increasing the number of Endi seed grainage for production and distribution of improved seed. For distribution

of food plant, 81 Eri concentration centres run by Sericulture Department are at present functioning in Assam. Assam is producing 1.12 lakh kg. of cut -cocoon per year against India's total production of 1.83 lakh kg. It is expected that very soon the production would increase to 2 lakh kg. per year.

### **Different handicrafts produced by the households**

The main produce of Endi-silk is wrappers of various sizes. These wrappers are used as warm cloth during winter season. Endi-silk is known as poorman's silk and used by all sections of people. Endi wrapper produced in these selected villages is known for its durability and attractive texture. It is a fine golden tinge of cloth which brightens with every wash. The produce of these selected villages has great demand in and outside the state. People prefer Endi wrapper because of its durability and warmth. Now-a-days a few weavers also produce Endi shirting also has great demand.

The main items of Endi produced by the weavers of three selected villages are as follows:

1. *Endi Bor-Kapor* - Gents' wrapper
2. *Endi poshara* - (do)
3. *Endi chaddar* - Ladies' scarf
4. *Endi shirting* - Cloth used for tailoring shirts.

Gents' wrapper has usually a length of 240 cms. and breadth of 120 cms. A ladies scarf is almost two third of the size of an average gents' wrapper.

It has earlier been stated that it is extremely difficult to give any item wise account of the produce of each household as none maintains any record. Moreover, the womenfolk engage

themselves in the craft in their leisure only and the whole work of weaving is done in a piece meal manner and no finished product is obtained within the span of a month. However, we give below a rough estimate of the annual production of the three selected villages as a whole.

#### *Sanpara village:*

1. Endi Bor-Kapor - 1200 pairs.  
(Gents'wrapper)
2. Ladies scarf - 900 pairs
3. Shirting - 2500 metres.

#### *Rampur village:*

1. Endi Bor-Kapor - 2800 pairs.  
(Gents'wrapper)
2. Ladies scarf - 2500 pairs.
3. Shirting - 3000 metres.

#### *Jiakur village:*

1. Endi Bor-Kapor - 1000 pairs.  
(Gents'wrapper)
2. Ladies scarf - 2000 pairs
3. Shirting - 2000 metres.

It is to be noted that though all the three villages produce both kinds of wrapper, the village Jiakur claims to have specialists in producing ladies scarf.

Endi-silk is a warm cloth. It can be used only during winter season. Therefore it is obvious that during winter season demand for Endi wrapper is high. Thus the months of September, October and November witness brisk activities at the loom.

## **Tools and implements used in practice of the craft**

Weavers still use traditionally old tools and implements for the purpose of Endi weaving. The design of these tools and implements has not undergone any change over the decades. These are usually manufactured by the local carpenters. It is readily available in the local market at a very reasonable price. A few of the important tools and equipments are described in Appendix - I. However, we feel tempted to describe here the looms which are the main implements required for weaving Endi-silk.

### **Looms**

A frame for holding the warp ends under tension so that weaving can be done. Looms used for weaving are old and of a simple type and are locally made. The manufacturing process of this loom is also simple. Throw shuttle and fly shuttle looms are the two important types of looms used by the weavers in the rural areas of Assam. Among the two, throw shuttle loom is commonly used in the rural areas. The common and favoured loom for weaving Endi is the throw shuttle loom. Endi weaving is said to be easier in this kind of loom. But it requires great skill and patience to produce better quality Endi-silk. The method of weaving in this type of loom is very simple. Though the process of weaving is slow and tedious in this loom, it is still preferred by the local weavers. All the households of Rampur area use locally made throw shuttle loom for the purpose of Endi weaving.

Besides the throw shuttle loom, a fly shuttle loom is also found in use among the rural population. This type of loom is used for weaving Muga or Mulberry (pat) silk and cotton cloths. But Endi weaving is not done in this kind of loom by the weavers of Rampur area. Though this type of loom is provided by the Khadi Board, weavers do not prefer to use this for Endi weaving, as according to them, best

quality Endi-silk can not be produced in this type of loom.

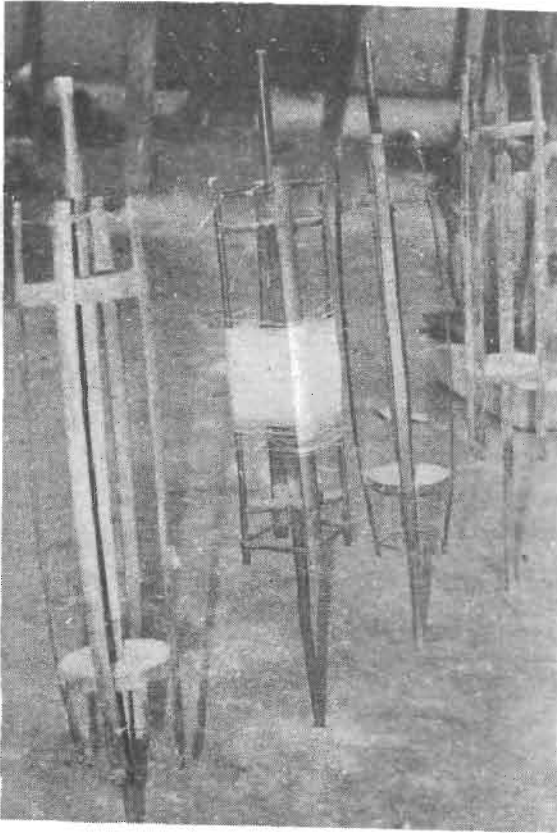
### **Throw shuttle loom**

This is a traditional loom. It is very simple and commonly found in almost every Assamese households in the rural area. It is locally made and manufacturing process is also simple. It is fitted to four bamboo or wooden posts fixed on the ground to make a rectangular structure which is about 117.6 cms x 76.2 cms. and are joined together at the top of the cross bamboo beams. In the loom arrangement is made with the help of two solid wooden bars fixed horizontally on both sides of the loom to keep the wrap. It is manually operated by hand. The reed through which the warp passes is fixed on the stay in the loom. The treadles or pedals are attached to the healds and in conjunction with the rod to make necessary shedding for the shuttle to pass through in the process of weaving. The shuttle contains the prin on which the weft yarn is wound. The warp beam is primarily designed to provide necessary tension while weaving and also to reel the woven cloth or silk. The shuttle or Makoo travels to and fro and is thrown by the hand of the weavers from one end to the other. The lengthwise threads are locally known as 'dig' while the weft thread is known as 'bani' (picks).

### **Fly shuttle loom**

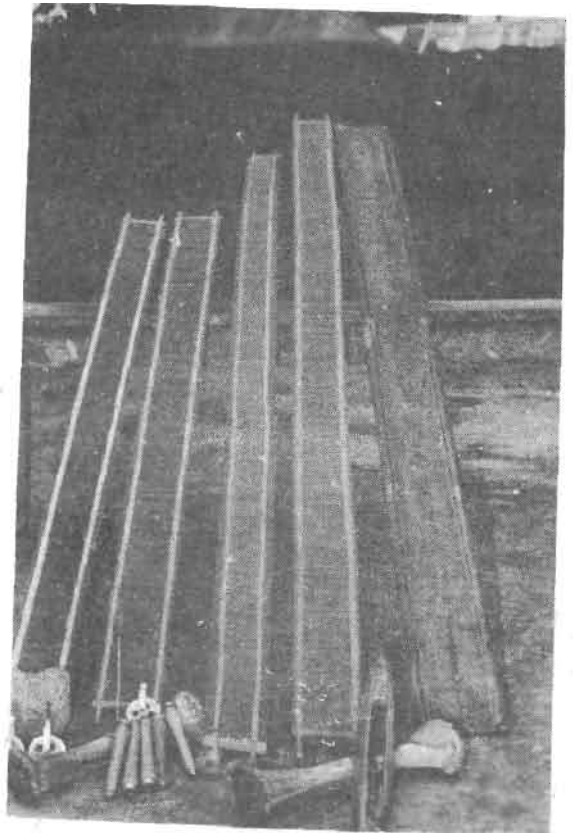
This is an improved type of frame loom which considerably increases the output of the weavers. This loom is usually used for weaving Muga or pat silk and other cotton cloth. It is not very common among the Endi weavers.

The loom is made of wood in such a manner that it can be fitted up and dismantled easily. The shedding is done in the same way as in throw shuttle looms but the shuttle is driven across the shed by a string pulled by the hand. The beating up of the weft is done by a reed made of steel fitted on to a stay which gain os-



*'Ugha' — a reeling appliance*

*A few important implements used in Weaving*







cillating motion by the hand. This loom is yet to be popular among the rural Assamese women. A few rich families who practise weaving on a commercial structure use this type of loom. Weaving can be done more swiftly in this loom than in a throw shuttle loom.

### **Rearing of Endi worms**

It is essential to have a fore-knowledge of the art of rearing Endi worms before any discussion on the manufacturing process of Endi products is held. Endi-silk is produced from the cocoons of a worm known as *Philosamia Racini*. This worm is also known as polyvoltine. It feeds itself on the leaves of castor oil plant (*Ricinis communis*) and Kersu tree (*Heteropanax fragras*). The Endi cocoon is the main and the only raw material required for production of Endi-silk.

The lower Assam valley of the Brahmaputra and the surrounding Hills are considered as the natural abode of *Philosamia racini* – the Endi worms. The humid and moist atmosphere due to heavy rain fall coupled with the growth of food plants has made this area an ideal home for this particular worm. Thus geographical and topographical factors help rearing of Endi worms in a large quantity.

Endi culture is of indigenous origin of this area. It is prevalent mainly among the tribals of Assam and northern foot-hills of Meghalaya. It is carried out traditionally by the village women-folk at their leisure which enables them to sustain their families. The variety of worm required for weaving is not to be found in wilderness. It is to be reared indoor and fed on the leaves of castor plants. The worms are hardy and less susceptible to disease. The body of Endi worm contains six pointed fleshy thorns.

Rearing Endi worm does not involve any complicated technique which calls for specialised training. The appliances can easily be made by the rearer himself with old and in-

digenuous materials. Worms can be reared upto six generations in a year, is properly fed and kept. Beside the cost of production, in comparison to the mulberry silkworm, is much less.

A complete life cycle of this particular worm is about 44 to 85 days in summer and 81 to 85 days in winter. Optimum temperature and humidity required for rearing are 23° C to 25° C and 80% and 85% respectively. The life of the Endi-silk worm has five stages i.e. eggs (koni), larve (polu), Cocoon (Kholo), Rupa and Moth (chakari).

The cocoon which are preserved for breeding purposes are kept in a bamboo basket having a narrow mouth locally known as 'Kholoi' or 'Kok'. The mouth is sealed with a piece of cloth to protect the cocoons from damage likely to be caused by rats and insects. The moths usually emerge after 12 to 15 days in the hot season and 20 to 25 days during the winter season. After a day the female moths which can easily be distinguished are tied to some bamboo sticks in such a way that they can easily move for mating and laying eggs. But the males though left untied do not attempt to fly away leaving the females alone. After mating each female lays about 300 eggs. The life of the moth ends here.

The moth of the genus *philosamia* also known as *samia* to which the Endi worm belongs is brownish green in colour and possesses narrow crescents on the wings instead of the usual central eye spots like other species of saturnids. The eggs are collected by the rearer and wrapped in a piece of cloth with a lose knot at the top which is hung on the wall of the house. They are kept in a safe place till the hatching takes place. Generally it takes about 9 to 22 days to hatch in different seasons. Hatching normally takes place in the morning between 6 to 10 a.m. The time for hatching varies according to season and temperature. During the summer days the hatching takes not

more than a week while in winter it takes about 15 days. In temperate weather about 10 days are required for this purpose.

The knots in which the eggs are kept are opened just when tender and the young worms begin to come out from the eggs. These young worms are then transferred to a bamboo tray on which the young worms are supplied with tender leaves of castor plants. First feeding to the hatched larvae is given after 2 hours of hatching. Generally leaves are chipped in small pieces to make them soft. As the worms grow day by day, older castor leaves are given to them.

Sometimes a piece of bamboo, nearly 5 to 6 feet in length is suspended horizontally with the help of ropes tied on both ends from some parts of the roots and older leaves are made into bundles and placed on the bamboo piece to allow them to feed freely. The Endi worms find it easy to crawl up the leaves, if ventral side of the leaves is kept downwards. The quality of leaves and quantity of feed depends upon different stages of development. Adequate spacing is also very important for their uniform growth. The old leaves are to be taken out and the ventral side of the leaves need be kept downwards on the larvae at the time of feeding.

The newly hatched Endi-silk worms always remain bundled together and do not easily move out. They do not also usually eat matured leaves. The worms moult four times before they mature which is locally known as 'Saiura', 'Boga para', 'Tiniulua' and 'Maikiulua' corresponding to the first, second, third and fourth month respectively. It usually takes 17 to 45 days to mature from hatching to cocooning depending upon the weather.

Moulting stage is the most delicate stage. The Endi worms shed their skin (moult) four times during their larval period and once again inside the cocoons to become pupa. In other words the life of Endi worm undergoes four

stages of moulting. During this period they take rest without movement and also do not eat leaves.

In the first stage of moulting the body is only a quarter of an inch in length and colour of the body is then light blackish. As it grows the colour of the body changes to orange with 12 rings in the body. In the third stage it is changed into white colour and in the last stage the body becomes green. The adult-worms in the last stage is about 7.5 cms. in length. Generally Endi-silk worms mature on 5th to 7th day after the 4th moult. As soon as the worm attains maturity or at the time of discerning it remain motionless on the bundle and is ready to enter into its cocoon stage. At that time worms also cease to take their food and climb up at the top of the bundle. After sometime they start moving in search of a better place for cocooning. Most of the matured Endi-silk worms move away from the rearing trays or bundle of leaves between the hours of 8 a.m. to 2 or 3 p.m. This is known as 'paka' (ripe) worms. Worms which show these symptoms are collected and placed on a big bamboo basket filled with dried plantain, where it begins to spin on its own the same day leading to formation of cocoon. Ripe Endi worms should not be disturbed when they start spinning. It takes four to five days depending on climatic condition to attain the shape of cocoons ready for spinning. Thus the life cycle is completed. When the cocoons are required to be kept for reproduction those maturing on 3rd to 4th days are selected and the rest is used for preparation of commercial seeds.

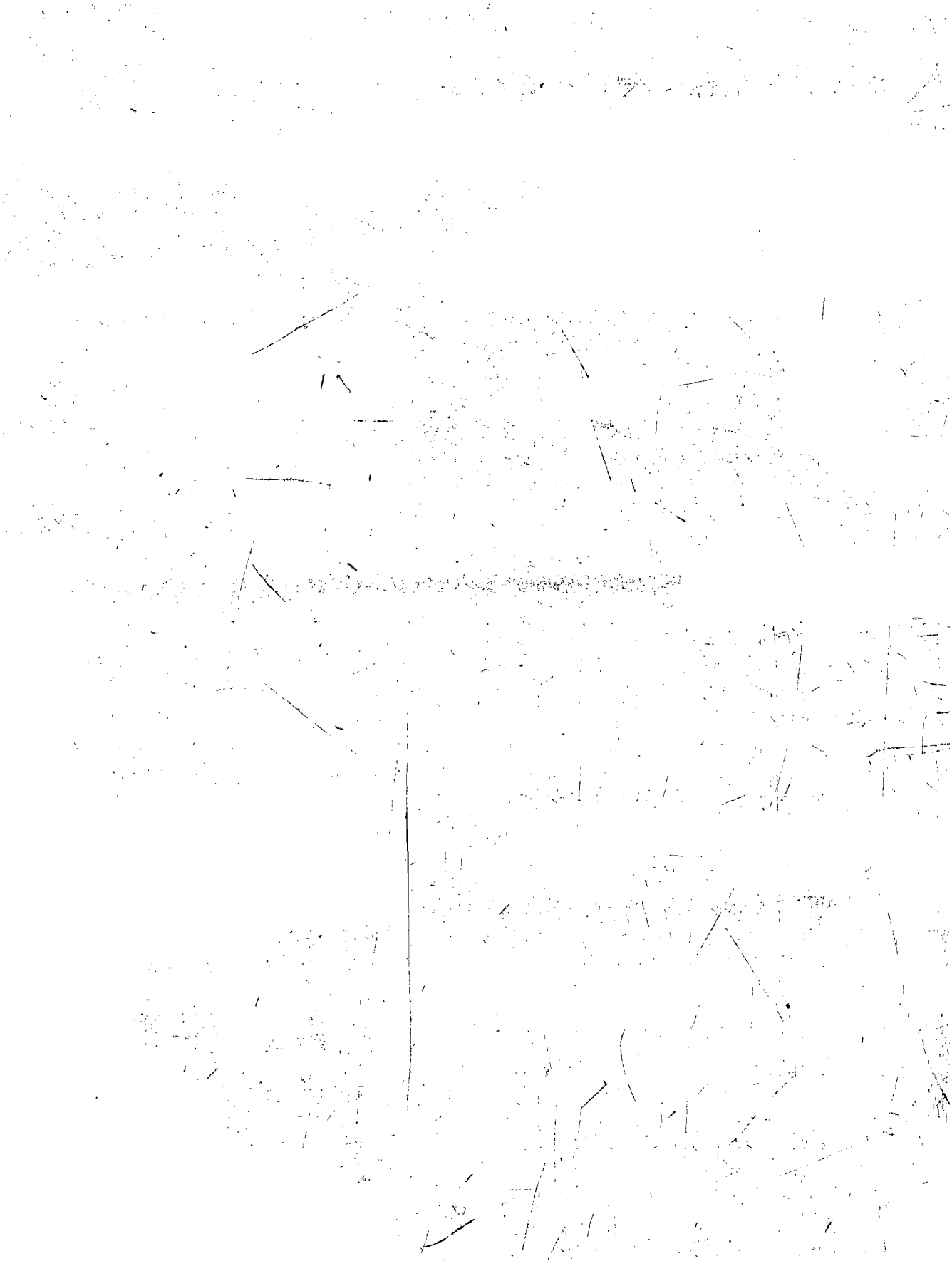
Rearing of worms was once a households affair of the people inhabiting the rural areas of southern parts of Kamrup district. Both tribal and plains people of this area have knowledge and practised this Endi culture for many generation. They have learnt the method of rearing from their forefathers. The climatic condition of this part is also favourable for rearing this particular type of worm. Besides, the cas-



*Two young girls extracting the chrysalis*



*The traditional method of spinning*



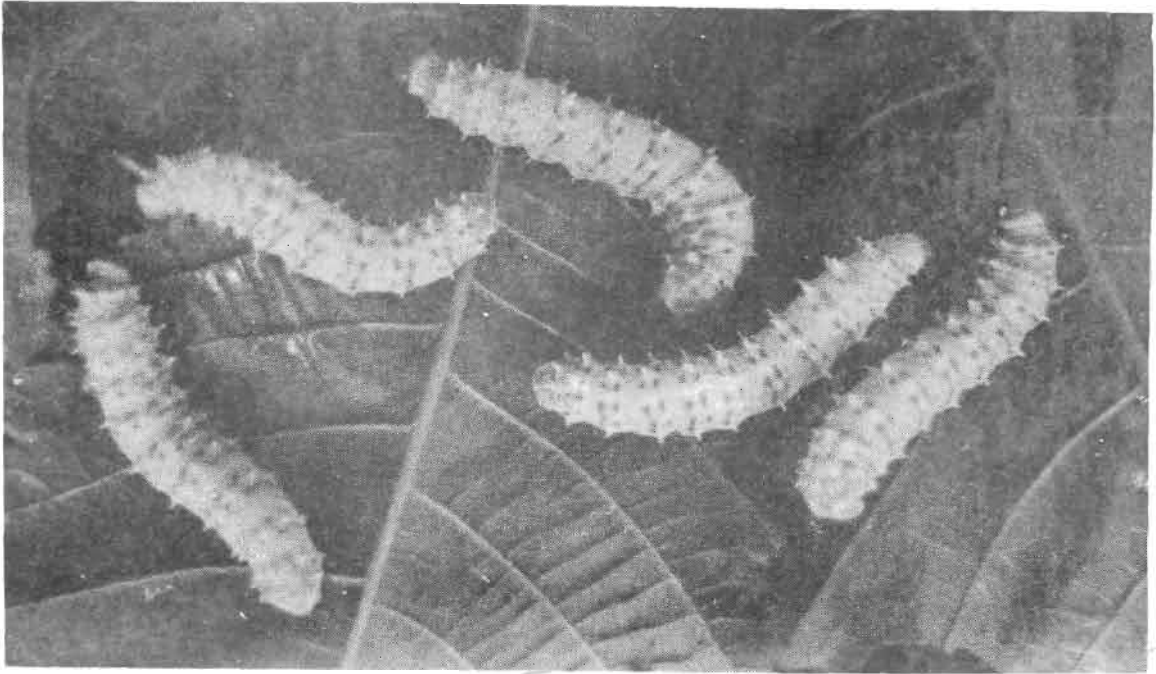


*Two minor girls busy in spinning with a 'takli (a drop spindle) — an inherited skill.*

*An aged woman spinning the thread with rapt attention*







*Philosamia Bacini* — the endi worm . -



*The Endi cocoon*





tor plant leaves, which are the only food for the worm, grows abundantly in this area. But recently except for a few the plains people have given up rearing the worm for the reasons given in the next paragraph. Rearing of worms at present is predominantly practised by the tribal people mostly belonging to Bodo, Kachari, Rabha and Mikir tribes. It is said to be a traditional occupation for some of them. While for one it is a subsidiary occupation, for some others it is the sole occupation.

Many causes may be attributed for the plain people not practising the rearing now. Easy availability of Endi cocoons is one of the main reasons. Apart from this, rearing of Endi worms to the stage of its spinning for formation of cocoons takes a great length of time. Women of the plains area prefer to practise spinning and weaving only. Because the raw material, Endi cocoons or yarns is easily available locally or from other sources. Govt. of Assam has attached great importance to enhance the production of Endi cocoons in the state. The department of Sericulture at present has 23 Endi seed grainages for production and distribution of disease-free Endi cocoons. The centres distribute food plant leaves to Endi worm growers as most of the growers do not have their own garden for growing castor seed plant. In addition to grainages, 237 sub-centres have also been established. The function of these centres is to distribute castor leave, free of charge, to the worm rearers so as to increase the production of Endi cocoons. Besides, the Sericulture office, the Khadi Board of Govt. of Assam has also given due importance to develop this craft by producing more Endi-silk and also help the local weavers in marketing their product. The Khadi Board has also organised some centres in the state especially in the Endi producing areas. The principal function of these centres is to distribute Endi cocoons and also Endi yarns to the local weavers. At present the weavers of the villages covered by these centres can easily procure Endi cocoons or Endi yarns at a very reason-

able rate. Besides distributing cocoons and yarns, the centres have also engaged large number of local weavers and spinners on wage basis. The centres also help the local weavers in marketing the finished product. Thus the Board has come a long way in developing this rural based craft by distributing Endi cocoons and Endi yarns at a reasonable rate to the local weavers.

### **Method of spinning**

Spinning is done mostly by traditional method. Village areas in and around Rampur is known to be traditional home of Endi spinners. The spinning of Endi cocoons is commonly practised by all the sections of the people irrespective of castes and creed. Females of all ages without any exception know the art of spinning. The tradition taught them to be expert spinners. It has always been a subsidiary source of income.

The Endi cocoon is open mouthed and has to be spun like cotton. The Endi cocoon cannot be reeled like Mulberry or Muga cocoons. The Endi moth emerges without disturbing the cocoon and its fibre. Hence all cocoons can be utilised for spinning after proper cleaning. Nothing is wasted in Endi cocoon by spinning. The yarn spun out of fibres is regular and fine, if the spinning is done with a little care. It is a very slow and tedious method. Endi cocoon is spun because the filament of the Endi-cocoon is very thin and tender and hence it cannot be reeled.

Before starting spinning of the cocoons the chrysalis which are still alive inside is required to be destroyed by exposing them either to the hot sun or by boiling the cocoons in water. After that cocoons are cut open and the chrysalis extracted. In a few cases however the chrysalis is extracted by cutting the cocoons without boiling or exposing them to the sun. The cocoons should be always cleaned properly. The uncleaned cocoons spoil the

quality of the yarn. Besides clean and empty cocoon fetch a higher price.

After that the cocoons which are ready for spinning is to be boiled to make it softer for easy spinning. Next stage is degumming. Prior to spinning, Endi cocoons are required to be degummed in an alkaline solution. For preparation of the solution an indigenous process is used. Ashes of certain leaves or straws are used for preparation of the solution. The quantity of alkaline ash required is half the weight of the cocoon used. Boiling for two-three hours in an alkaline solution is sufficient for degumming and fibre comes off easily when pulled. Over boiling should be avoided as this weakens the filaments. Soda and potash solution are generally used in preparation of alkaline solution. A cauldron is used for the purpose of degumming.

Once the cocoons are boiled these are taken out and wrapped in a green arum or plantain leaf and left as such for 3 to 4 days. This process loosens the inner content of the cocoon. After that cocoons are thoroughly washed with clean water to remove other particles. The flattened cocoons are then dried and preserved for spinning at a suitable time.

### **Reeling Appliances**

There are two different methods of spinning the Endi cocoons. The most common and popular method is spinning by drop spindle, locally known as 'takli' or 'takuri'. The second important method is spinning on a spinning wheel locally known as 'Charkha' or 'Jatar.' This 'Charkha' or 'Jatar' is an improved labour saving device.

Takli is a simple device in which the twisting of thread is done by hand. For spinning on the 'Takli' the cocoons are to be placed in a vessel filled with water and are taken out one at a time for spinning. At first mouth of the cocoon is broadened with hand and then placed on the one end of a bamboo stick about 8 inches long. Some fibres of the cocoons are so arranged

that it is connected with the top of the takli, which will in turn be caused to move with one hand for twisting the fibres and finishing the same into thread. The uniformity of the thread is preserved by rubbing it between two fingers while twisting is in progress. The twisted thread is wound on the lower part of the handle of the takli and made like a bobbin.

The second method is quite different and is a much improved labour saving device. Here a spinning wheel or charkha (Jatar) is used. In this spinning method, only dried cocoons are used. At first the spinner takes some cocoons in hand and some fibres of a cocoon are attached on the spindle head of the charkha, while it is operated by peddling. The spindle of the charkha with a rope wheel attachment when in operation rotates at high speed and as a result the thread is twisted and wound on the spindle itself in the shape of a bobbin. During the process, rubbing of the twisted thread with fingers of the other hand is required to preserve the uniformity of the thread. The fibres of the cocoons in hand is connected one after another with the end of the thread already twisted and wound on the spindle and the production of thread thus continues.

The method of spinning as described above is old and traditional. It involves quite a lot of wastage and is also time consuming.

A new and improved typed of spinning wheel or machine has been evolved by Research centre of Khadi and Village Industries Commission at Wardha. This charkha or wheel is known as Ambar Charkha. Yarns of various counts with the required twist can be produced with the machine by a change of gear system. About 10 to 12 hanks of 20 to 100 counts can be spun per day without any strain and difficulty in operation. But this charkha is yet to gain popularity in the villages under our survey.

### **Various stages of manufacturing process**

Weavers of Rampur area still practise the traditional and old method of weaving. Before

raw Endi-silk is taken up for weaving it has to undergo certain preparatory processes like wetting, wrapping etc. The different processes which are involved in the manufacture of Endi cloths are described below.

Silk thread produced from the cocoons is wound on a Seriki (a contrivance for winding) to make a wrap. There are few weavers, who purchase ready made wraps from the local market or Khadi Bhandar office.

### **Stage I – Wetting**

The first stage in the art of weaving consists of preparation of the yarn for weaving. The preparation of wrap requires great care and caution.

At first the hanks of yarn are to be unfastened and thoroughly examined, then the knots are loosened and the loose hanks are placed in a reservoir of water for washing. The water of the reservoir has to be changed frequently. Washing with water is done according to necessity. There are some weavers who used to boil the yarn or wrap with rice or paddy or some time with maida (flour) or sagodana with water to make the thread stronger. This process is locally known as 'Mardia'.

After that the yarn or wraps are taken out of water and dried in the Sun - the unnecessary particles stuck on the wraps are then removed after which the wrap is ready for the next stage.

### **Stage II – Winding**

When wetting of yarn is finished it is to be wound on the reels. Winding of the yarn is done on bobbin or 'Ugha' a kind of reel for winding thread. A wrapping 'charkha' locally known as 'Jator' is used for the purpose. The hanks of wrap are deposited over a bamboo shift, kept at the left hand side of the worker. By rotating the wheel of the charkha with the help of the handle the yarn is spun into an attached

bobbin. The required number of bobbins or ugha is thus prepared. During this process utmost care is taken so that no individual strands of thread get mixed with each other. The ends of broken threads have to be tied together with a small knot and some time broken thread are brought together and twisted with hand to make a continuous thread.

### **Stage III – Warping**

The most important stage is warping. The warping is performed in different ways in different places. It is performed according to convenience. There are four main types of warping – namely

1. *Stick warping*
2. *Zig Zag warping*
3. *Peg warping*
4. *Drum warping*

(1) *Stick warping*: It is generally done at an open space. In this method weaver has to move one stick to another and back repeatedly with filled up bobbins arranged in a cage.

(2) *Zig Zag Warping*: This is done when there is no sufficient space for warping. By this method warping can be done even inside a house by putting the sticks in a zig zag way.

(3) *Peg warping*: This method is applied when there is no sufficient space for warping – it is done by putting pegs on the wall of the house.

(4) *Drum warping*: It is more commonly found. It can be done indoor and in a small space. A book creel is used for the purpose. By this device a weaver can save time.

The most common methods of warping to be obtained in the Rampur area are stick warping and Drum warping.

Large number of weavers of this area adopt the stick warping method. The ends of thread

are taken from the 'Ughas' which are arranged serially and then drawn with the help of a 'heck'. The weaver then moves from one stick to another and back repeatedly with the heck. Thus warp is formed. This is usually common among the poor weavers and also those who weave a small quantity of Endi-silk.

*Drum Warping:* At present, this method is more commonly used by all sections of the people in Rampur area. This method is found to be popular because of its simple techniques and requirement of very little space. Moreover it is a time-saving device.

A book creel is used for the purpose. About 80 to 120 bobbins can be placed within this creel and warping can be carried on with many threads at a time.

The Drum is a big wooden reel of 1 1/2 to 5 yards circumference which is made to revolve vertically or horizontally fixed in a suitable frame work. The bobbins are placed in a book-creel by the side of the drum. The ends are taken from the bobbins and drawn separately through eyes of a row of needles arranged in a 'heck'. This arrangement helps in forming lease. The warp is wound on the vertical drum spirally and heck slides up and down. When the warp is cut off and unwound, it is brought to the form of a fall for the next operation.

Two posts, out of which one is ultimately fixed in the slit of the warpers beam are fixed into the ground 30 yards apart or less depending on the length of the Endi to be woven. Fifty ends of threads (one from each bobbin) are pulled out and are tied to the first post. The wooden frame containing the bobbins is then moved round the post thus realising the warp threads from the bobbins and transferring them on to the post.

At suitable intervals, between the two posts, bamboo chips are planted to keep the warp threads passing on to the rods in position.

After the required quantity of warp has been passed on to the post or rod they are uprooted from the ground and one of the posts or rods is fitted into the slit of the warper beam and the warp threads are wound on it and the other rod is removed. The warp threads are then ready for the next stage.

#### **Stage IV - Denting**

The next process of drawing the warp ends through the reed is known as denting. In this process, the warp threads are passed through the reed. For this two persons are required, one to pick up the threads in succession and pass them through the reed and the other to pull towards the weavers' beam with the help of a hook.

#### **Stage V - Beaming**

The act of spreading the warp yarns and winding evenly and lightly upon a weaver's beam is called beaming. The ends of all the warp threads passed through the reed are then rolled over the beam to give a taut surface before the weaving is started. It is necessary that all the threads should have uniform tension and lease rods are therefore inserted in the warp at intervals to avoid inter-mixing of threads.

#### **Stage VI - Heald Knitting**

Next process is heald knitting. After the beam is prepared, it is put on a frame or fixed on a loom. The local loom consists of four bamboo or wooden posts fixed in the ground so as to make a rectangle of about 5'-1" x 2'-6" or 177.8 cm. x 76.2 cm. and are joined together at the top by a cross bamboo beam. An arrangement is also made in the loom with the help of two solid wooden bars fixed horizontally on both sides of the loom to keep the warp. It is also essential that warp is stretched tightly so that the threads of the warp are in uniform tension. Lease rod is then pushed in the warp

causing a slight opening in it. Then one and of the thread with which healds are to be knitted on the warp is passed through this opening from the right to the left. The heald knitting is done with the help of a hollow piece of bamboo which is locally known as 'Boh tola chungu' and the process of knitting heald is known as 'Boh tola'. During this process care is to be taken so that the threads in the warp all pass through the same sequence in which they pass through the loops of the reed.

There are two heddles in the loom, one heddle is passed under every alternate warp and the remaining warps are tied to the second heddle. Each thread of the warp is passed through the loops in the heddle. Generally the first thread of the warp is passed through the first heddle and the second through the second heddle. The process is continued in sequence till all the threads are exhausted.

After the heddle knitting is completed both the heddles are connected with treadles or pedals, made of two small pieces of bamboo, by ropes which can be operated by the weavers' feet and also connected by rope with two 'Nachani' or pulley made of iron, bamboo or wood which are hung from a post placed vertically over the top of the loom. The heddles can be moved up or down by the movement of the pedals or treadles at the feet of the weaver. As the heddles move up and down a passage or shed is created in the warp through which the shuttle can be plied.

### **Stage VII - Shedding**

The next process is shedding. The process of shedding (Opening of the warp) is done by the heddles which are operated with the help of

feet. Mechanism is that when one of the treadles or pedals is depressed by the foot the heddles connected with it go down while those connected with the other treadle go up thus forming a shed or passage in the warp. Then the shuttle is thrown across the shed by one hand from one side and caught by the other at the opposite side of the warp. The weft thus passed through the gap or shed must be beaten up with a reed known as 'Rash' which is made of bamboo fitted on to stay which is given to and fro motion by hand during weaving. Weavers usually throw the shuttle from the right hand side to the left.

The weaving thus comprises interlacing the weft yarn with the warp yarns at right angle. There are three principal stages which actually govern the art of weaving namely (1) Shedding, (2) Picking and (3) Beating.

Shedding is the process by which a passage or shed is formed by the heddle when the treadles or pedals is depressed by foot. The picking motion consists in propelling the shuttle by the shed or passage lastly beating the filled in weft yarn into position with reed. The process thus continues and how fast these three motions can be affected depends upon the dexterity in weaving.

### **Number of persons engaged in the craft, their relation with head of the practising households and duration of engagement in the craft**

A table is (IV. 7) prepared from the survey data to show the number of persons engaged in Endi weaving, their relationship with the head of the household, period of engagement in the craft, and nature of work performed by them.

TABLE IV.7

**Distribution of craftsmen classified by relationship with the head, period of engagement in the craft and nature of work performed**

| Period of engagement in the craft. | Number of persons engaged in the craft. | Number of persons engaged in the craft who are related to head of the households as |                      |                          |                        |                              | Remarks  |
|------------------------------------|---|---|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|--|
|                                    |   | Self (head of the household)  | Wife who performed   | Son's wife who performed | Daughter who performed | Brother's wife who performed |  |
|                                    |   | Spinning & weaving  | Spinning & weaving   | Spinning & weaving       | Spinning & weaving     | Spinning & weaving           |  |
| 1                                  | 2                                       | 3   | 4                    | 5                        | 6                      | 7                            | 8  |
| Less than 5 years                  | 26<br>(23.01)                           | —   | 1                    | 2                        | 23                     | —                            | Endi weaving in Rampur area is a females' domain and as such no male takes part in it. |
| 5—9 years                          | 21<br>(18.58)                           | —   | 3                    | 2                        | 15                     | 1                            |  |
| 10—19 years                        | 22<br>(19.47)                           | 2   | 11                   | 1                        | 7                      | 1                            |  |
| 20 + years                         | 44<br>(38.94)                           | 22  | 22                   | —                        | —                      | —                            |  |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>113</b>                              | <b>24</b><br>(21.24)  | <b>37</b><br>(32.74) | <b>5</b><br>(4.43)       | <b>45</b><br>(39.82)   | <b>2</b><br>(1.77)           |  |

There are altogether 113 females among the surveyed households found to have been practising Endi weaving out of which a single majority of 44 or 38.94% are engaged in this craft for 20 years or more and all of them are housewives.

The number of workers in the remaining period of engagement are more or less evenly distributed and 39.82% of them are related to the head as daughter.

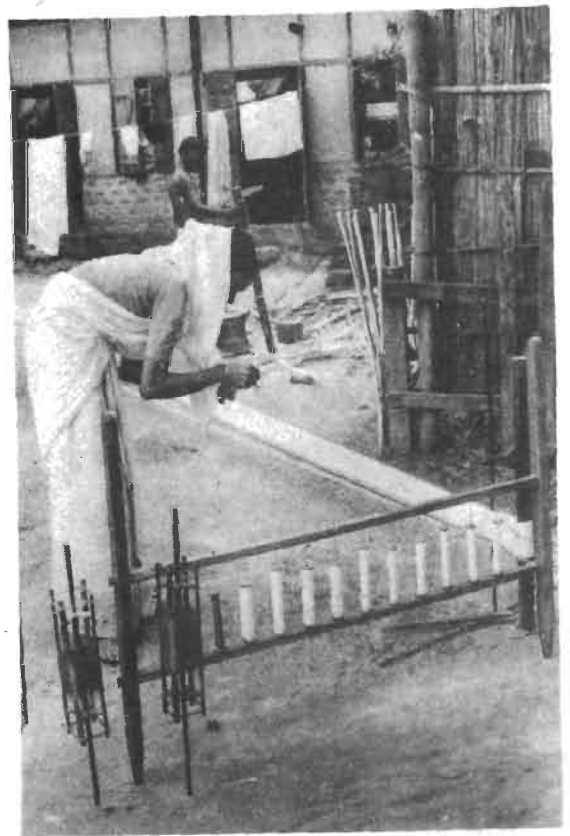
Spinning and weaving the two main works connected with the craft are performed by all the females who acquire the knowledge of techniques of spinning and weaving automatically from their elders.

#### Designs used in the craft

Time and again we have said that the weavers of Rampur area manufacture gents' wrappers, ladies' scarves and of late cloth for shirt. We now attempt to discuss the intricacies of the products. Endi-silk is warm, durable and has a golden tinge in colour. The gents' wrapper is a plain and simple cloth with no design embroidered on it. Designs are mostly woven in the ladies scarf which is smaller in size. The designs woven in the scarves are simple and mostly consist of floral designs. Abstract figures of common flower creepers and animals are to be commonly found. These designs are woven in the shawl with beautiful colour combination. Local Endi weavers have their own distinctive designs of artistic expression



*Two views of drum warping operation*









*A young girl winding yarn with a 'Jator' and a 'Chereki'*



of their appreciation of nature which are found to be strictly local in character. The attractive designs made of beautiful colour combination in the ladies scarf greatly enhance the beauty of the apparels and put them in great demand in and outside the state. Making of various designs in the shawl requires a high degree of skill on the part of weavers, which is observed to be spontaneously acquired by them.

It is found that craftsmen in 41 (66.30) of the 60 surveyed households adopt designs on their products. The highest proportion of such households is observed in case of those households which have reported their heads to be illiterate.

Table IV.8 depicts that a great majority of weavers in all the households professing Hin-

duism as religion and belonging to Kalita, Baishya, Rajbangshi and Keot caste embroider their products with designs which are almost identical. The highest proportion of such households is obtained among the Kalitas. No household belonging to any caste reported to have any myths and legends associated with the designs.

No new designs are found to have been introduced by the weavers in the recent years. During the survey it was observed that the weavers still adhere to the traditional design in their product which were adopted by their ancestors and they cannot conceive of introducing any radical change in the design or pattern of drawings on the Endi products.

TABLE IV. 8

**Designs used by the weavers in their products classified by myths and legends associated and Religion, Caste/Tribe/Community of the head of the household.**

| Caste/Tribe/community of the head of the households | Name of design used by the households | No. of households making use of design | Remarks  |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| 1   | 2                                     | 3                                      | 4  |
| Kalita  | Plain                                 | 43                                     | 1. None reported any myths and legends associated with the design. |
|   | Floral etc                            | 33                                     |  |
| Baishya   | Plain                                 | 6                                      |  |
|   | Floral etc.                           | 2                                      |  |
| Rajbangshi  | Plain                                 | 8                                      |  |
|   | Floral etc.                           | 5                                      |  |
| Keot  | Plain                                 | 2                                      | 2. All the households profess Hindu religion                       |
|   | Floral etc.                           | 1                                      |  |

## CHAPTER V

### MARKETING

Assam produces about 1.50 lakh kg. of Endi cocoon per year which constitutes about 90% of India's total annual out-put of Endi cocoon. It is well-nigh impossible to give accurate figures of out-put in Assam because Endi weaving and spinning of Endi cocoons is a household industry of Assamese family in the rural areas and no proper accounts of output and utilisation is available with them.

The Endi products of Assam is a much sought after article in and outside the state for its durability and attractive texture. An interesting feature of the material is that the golden tings of the cloth brightens with every wash. It earns foreign exchange from many countries.

In the past, particularly by the end of 18th century, there was a regular trade of Endi yarn and Endi cocoons between Assam and West Bengal (Calcutta). Past records also indicate that about 25,000 kilogram of Endi cocoon were exported to Europe during that period. In the past cocoons were collected by weavers from households rearing them and the Endi fabrics produced were procured by traders in exchange of commodities and then these were traded outside the state or country. Apart from this there was a clear instances of business between Bhutan and Assam. The records show that about seventy years back, 2000 pieces of Endi cloth or Endi yarn valued at Rs. 43,000/- were exported to Bhutan from Assam annually. Records also indicate the production of Endi yarn before the first world war and is reckoned at 27,000 kg. from Kamrup, Darrang, Nagaon and Lakhimpur districts of Assam.

At the end of the last century with the establishment of spun silk mills in Europe the

demand of Endi cocoons increased considerably and huge quantity of cocoons were exported to these mills. But the demand for it gradually declined, due to lack of organised procurement and also supply of inferior quality cocoons.

At present about 25 percent of total Endi yarn is utilised by the local spun mill at Jagiroad (Nagaon district) and the rest is used by the local spinners themselves. The raw material or the Endi cocoon required for the craft are locally available. Besides the cocoons produced by the tribals in the hill areas are sold in the market of the foothills. Traders procure cocoons from the market and sell it at higher price to the weavers. Very often cocoons are bartered for other commodities. Now-a-days about 25% of the total production in Assam is utilised by the local spun mill and remaining portion is used by the spinners themselves. In recent years traders used to procure cocoons for the newly established spun silk mill at Bhagalpur (Bihar).

The weavers normally procure Endi cocoons from the local market. The main centre of spinning and weaving of Endi cloth in Assam is located in South Kamrup. A large quantity of Endi cocoons are procured from the adjoining hill areas of Meghalaya state as well, Endi cocoons are also available in fair held annually in Bhutan, North Kamrup and Darrang district. Besides there are a few weavers who utilise cocoons produced by household itself.

The cocoons with chrysalis for seed purposes are sold at Rs. 20/- to Rs. 25/- per 1,000. The empty cocoons in the village markets are sold Rs. 80/- to Rs. 120/- per kilogram. The price varies according to season and quality.

Cocoons are available in the local market after the spring and autumn harvest. The middleman or traders procure Endi cocoons from various places and then sell these keeping a high margin of profit. Traders manipulate the price according to the needs of the weavers.

The price of home made yarn is valued at round Rs. 220/- per kg. which is used by the weavers in loom to produce Endi-fabric. The price of finished fabric (wrapper) varies according to its quality. Presently it is sold at Rs. 200/- to Rs. 600/- each depending on quality. Ladies scarf is sold at Rs. 100/- to Rs. 200/-. Besides the wrappers a few weavers now-a-days produce Endi cloths for shirting. This is sold at Rs. 35/- to Rs. 50/- per metre.

The local spun silk mill produces Endi yarns of various counts such as 60/2, 140/2, 210/2 and price ranges from Rs. 200/- to Rs. 350/- per kilogram. There is no rational basis for fixing the price of Endi yarns or Endi fabric either at the household industry level or at the farm level. Due to the entrance of the middleman in the craft many weavers have suffered and are forced to sell off their products at very low price. There is no organised marketing facilities in the area. In absence of marketing facilities the middleman or trader take full advantage from the poor weavers and the industry suffers from stagnation.

In the past co-operatives were established in Assam for purchase of Endi cocoons and for distribution at a reasonable price to the weavers. However, our survey reveals that there is ample scope for the Sericulture and Weaving department of the state govt. to do much for the benefit of the weavers who constitute sizeable chunk of the poorer section of the people living in rural areas. The main problem is that a good number of weaving co-operatives that were formed with the help of the co-operative department has to largely depend on other institutions including Banks for financing and the result is that only a small percent-

age of weavers co-operative are functioning while some middlemen are still reaping the benefit. This industry has suffered due to absence of organised marketing facility and non-fixation of just price of Endi and Endi yarns or Endi fabric on a rational basis.

The rupee value of total production of Endi-silk during 1985-86 according to Khadi Board of this region was about 36 lakhs. Out of the total production materials worth Rs. 20 lakhs was sold inside the state and remaining Rs. 16 lakhs was sold outside the state. This production however excludes the products sold by the weavers themselves through middlemen or in the local market or the articles used by the family members in the household. If this production is taken into consideration then the total production would be higher than the above figure. In other words the above production figure includes only the Endi-silk sold through Khadi Board.

An attempt is made to find out the cost of production of Endi fabric, particularly of the three selected villages namely Sanpara, Rampur and Jiakur under our survey. Following are the main articles produced by the weavers of this region.

The sale price of Bor-Kapor varies from Rs. 200/- to Rs. 600/- each depending upon its quality and that of a Lady's scarf varies between Rs. 100/- and Rs. 200/- depending upon its quality. The sale price of Endi shirting per metre is around Rs. 40/-.

### **Cost of production**

It is extremely difficult to make any fair estimation of cost of production and the margin of profit gained by the weavers. Because majority of the weavers of this region take to weaving after all the domestic works are over and there is no fixed time for the purpose. The weavers are not found to maintain any accounts of the raw materials and it is difficult to

arrive at even a very rough estimate of labour costs. The cost of Endi fabric also depend on the quality.

An Endi wrapper the main product of the region has usually a length of 240 cms. and a breadth of 120 cms. A medium quality wrapper of 40 counts requires about 750 grams of yarn which is spun out of one kilogram of Endi cocoons. It is seen that on an average a weaver can weave about half metre of Endi fabric on a local throw shuttle loom and about two metres in a fly shuttle loom per day if one continuously sits at the loom during normal working hours in a day. The ladies scarf which is smaller than gents' wrapper require about two-third of the quantity of cocoon required for the gents' wrapper.

If the estimated average price of Endi cocoons is Rs. 100/- per kg. then on an average cocoons worth Rs. 100/- will be required for a gents' wrapper. The average charges paid for spinning yarn out of every 250 gms. of cocoon, is Rs. 20/-. The charges for spinning yarn for a gent's wrapper therefore works out to be around Rs. 80/-. The making charge for a wrapper varies between Rs. 35/- and Rs. 40/-. With sizing and finishing the cost of production of a good quality gent's wrapper turns out to be around Rs. 220/-. The market price of such a wrapper is normally Rs. 300/- and above. However, we must hasten to add here that most of the weavers themselves spin the yarn required for the fabrics manufactured by them.

Following are the estimated production of Endi fabric of the three selected villages.

#### 1. Sanpara

(1) *Endi Bor-Kapor*: estimated annual production 1200 pairs valued at about Rs. 4,80,000/-

(2) *Ladies scarf*: estimated production 900 pairs and total value is Rs. 1,00,000/- approx.

(3) Shirting total production was 2500 metres and estimated money vale was about Rs. 90,000/-.

#### 2. Rampur village

(1) Total production of Gent's wrapper is about 2800 pairs, the money value of the production is about 6 lakhs.

(2) The estimated production of Ladies scarf is 2,500 and the money value of these production is about Rs. 250,000/-

(3) Estimated production of Endi shirting is 3,000 metres and money value of which is Rs. 1,10,000/-.

#### 3. Jiakur Village

(1) The estimated production of Bor-Kapor as reported by village elders is 1000 pairs, the money value of which is Rs. 300,000/-.

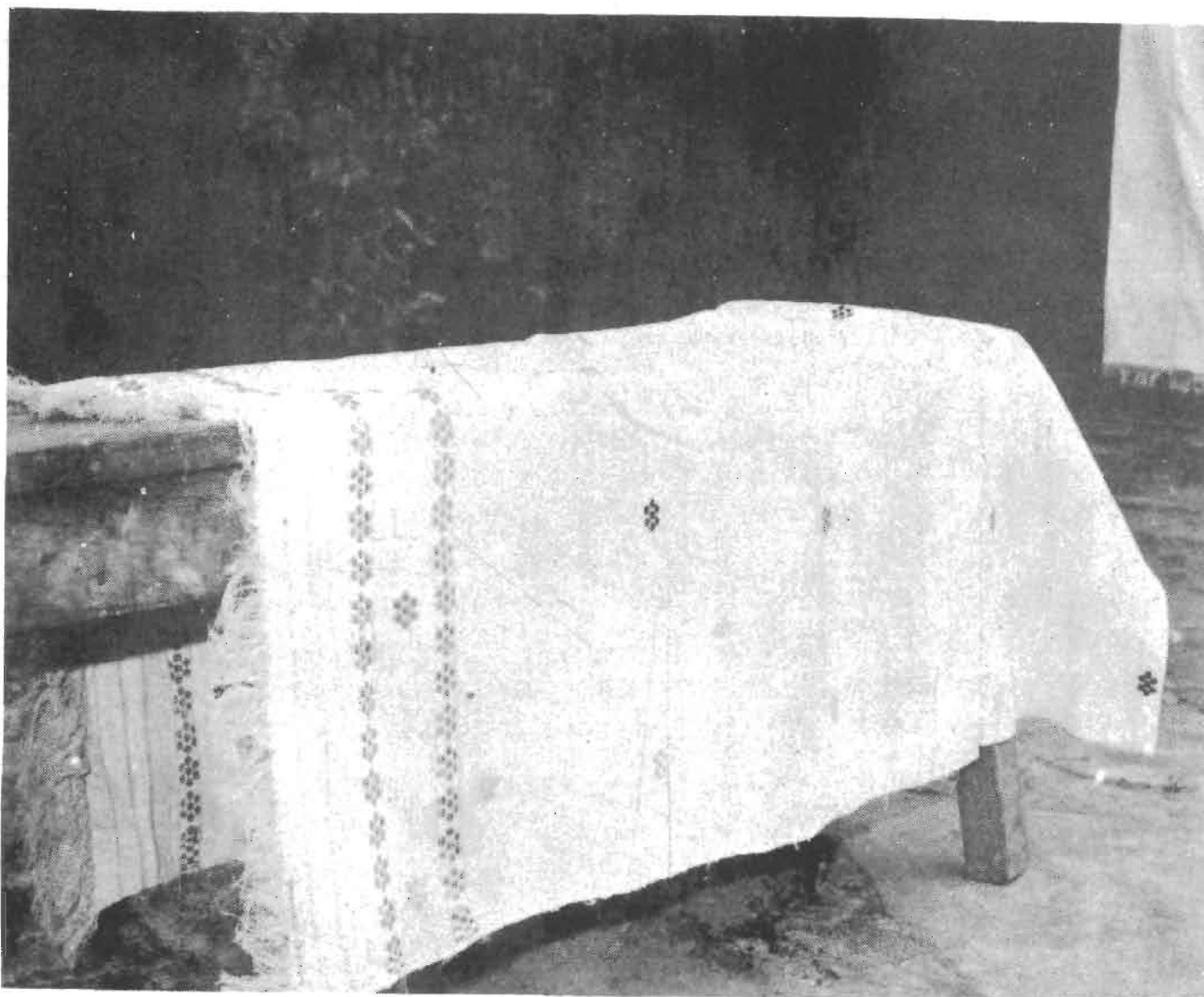
(2) The estimated annual production of Ladies scarf is 2000 pairs, the money value of which is calculated to be Rs. 2,00,000/- approx.

(3) The estimated production of Shirting is about 2000 metres and the money value of which is about Rs. 80,000/-.

When the production of three villages namely Sanpara, Rampur and Jiakur are taken together the money value of the same comes to as follows:

|                  |   |                 |
|------------------|---|-----------------|
| (1) Bor-Kapor    | - | Rs. 13,80,000/- |
| (2) Ladies scarf | - | Rs. 5,50,000/-  |
| (3) Shirting     | - | Rs. 2,80,000/-  |

Our enquiry revealed that weavers in Jiakur village do not sell even a single piece of their products through govt. agency, whereas those



*An embroidered lady's scarf*







*An elderly woman busy in hand knitting operation*



in other two villages sell some portion of their product through Khadi Board of Govt. of Assam from whom they obtain the raw materials and weave the materials in lieu of labour charges alone. Besides, Govt. Emporia and State Marketing Corporation etc. are also marketing the product. Apart from this, the local traders and also weavers themselves sell the product in weekly market. Some traders also procure the product from the weavers and sell them at a higher price in different places. Besides, there are middlemen who supply yarn to the

weavers and order them to weave wrappers of different qualities giving a nominal making charge. The finished products are obtained from the weavers and sold keeping a huge margin of profit. Enquiries revealed that weavers of the village Jiakur are totally in the clutches of a middleman who happens to be a rich merchant having his home in the far west of the country. He has been dealing in these articles for last many years and has made an inroad into almost all the weaving households of the village by advancing loans to them.

TABLE V.1

Number of households manufacturing different items by Caste/Tribe of the head of the household

| Caste/Tribe | Number of households producing |              |                     | Remarks   |
|-------------|--------------------------------|--------------|---------------------|---|
|             | Gent's wrapper                 | Ladies scarf | Cloths for shirting |   |
| 1           | 2                              | 3            | 4                   | 5   |
| Kalita      | 43                             | 31           | 22                  | 1. All the households reported production of 1-10 pieces per annum. |
| Baishya     | 6                              | 4            | 3                   |   |
| Rajbangshi  | 8                              | 5            | 8                   | 2. All the products are sold strictly against payment in cash only. |
| Keot        | 2                              | 1            | —                   |   |

It is gathered that the entire lot of products is sold against cash payment only. The table indicates that not a single household produces more than 10 pieces of either Gents' wrapper or Ladies scarf. It is interesting to note that not a single household reported to have produced a material for use during a special ceremony like a wedding in the family of the craftsman.

#### Places of sale of the articles

We now try to find out the places of sale of the items produced by the surveyed households engaged in manufacture of Endi products. For this purpose a table prepared from the survey data to show number of households engaged in production of various items and places where the articles are sold is reproduced below:

TABLE V.2

## Number of households producing various Endi items classified by place of sale of the articles

| Name of the articles produced. | No. of households engaged in production of the items | No. of households reported having sold the articles at               |               |                                      | No. of households reported having sold the articles at |                | Remarks                              |
|--------------------------------|--|--|---------------|--------------------------------------|--|----------------|--------------------------------------|
|                                |  | Market   |               |                                      | Bi-weekly Hat  |                |                                      |
|                                |  | Inside the village at home directly to consumers and to business-men | Other village | Outside the village at Guwahati city | Inside the village                                     | Other villages |                                      |
| 1                              | 2  | 3  | 4             | 5                                    | 6  | 7              | 8                                    |
| Gent's wrapper                 | 59   | 39   | 45            | 8                                    | 8  | 29             | Products are not sold in any 'mela'. |
| Ladies scarf                   | 41   | 27   | 37            | 7                                    | 2  | 23             |                                      |
| Cloths for shirting            | 33   | 29   | 28            | 10                                   | —  | 18             |                                      |

It is seen that 59 households are reportedly engaged in production of Bor-Kapor, 41 produce Ladies scarf and 33 manufacture Endi-silk cloths for shirting. We shall do well to remember here that no single household produces any of these items to the exclusion of any other. All the households reported production of the items for commercial purpose alone.

It is observed that a great majority of households producing different varieties of Endi articles do sell their products at the source of production or at nearby villages where they

find an easy market for their products and very few venture out to a distant place like Guwahati city to dispose off the articles. Uparhali which is treated as an important centre for trade and commerce constitutes a good market for the Endi products. Our survey revealed that all the villages in and around Rampur area are linked with Bijoy nagar in one way or other for trading their products which do not enlist Endi fabrics alone.

The table V.3 shows the quantity of finished products sold and the manner of disposal.

TABLE V.3

**Distribution of households classified by quantity of finished products sold and channels through which it is disposed off**

| Name of the finished products. | No. of households producing the items | Quantity sold by the households in broad range |                   | Number of households disposing off finished products through |            |                   |                    | Remarks  |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------|--|------------|-------------------|--------------------|--|
|                                |                                       | Broad range                                    | No. of households | Directly to consumer   | Middle-man | State Khadi Board | Other business man |  |
| 1                              | 2                                     | 3  | 4                 | 5  | 6          | 7                 | 8                  | 9  |
| Gent's wrapper                 | 59                                    | 1-10 piece                                     | 59                | 45   | 5          | 8                 | 45                 | The same set of households sell their products to different persons and agencies |
| Ladie's scarf                  | 41                                    | -do-   | 41                | 38   | 7          | 11                | 33                 |  |
| Shirting                       | 33                                    | -do-   | 33                | 32   | 3          | 4                 | 26                 |  |

It is seen that more than 75% of the households making gent's wrapper sell the same directly to consumers as well as to other businessman – the latter acting as middleman earn a sizable profit.

In case of marketing of Ladies' scarfs, a little over 92.7% of the households producing them sell directly to the consumers as against about 80.5% selling it to other businessman. About 97% of the households weaving cloth for shirts sell their product directly to consumers either

at home or market places within as well outside the village areas, 78.79% of the same lot of households dispose off their product to other businessman.

A very small percentage of the households therefore sell their products either to middlemen or to State Khadi Board offices. Significantly enough, other businessman play a dominant role in ultimate disposal of the products of hard toil by the poor weavers who are deprived of their due share of profit.

TABLE

## Terms and conditions and margin of profit related to sale of finished products through

| Educational level of head of the household | Name of the handicraft items | No. of households manufacturing handicraft items | No. of households                                |         |      |
|--|------------------------------|--|--|---------|------|
|  |                              |  | Directly to the consumer at the margin of profit |         |      |
|  |                              |  | profit below 25%                                 | 25%-50% | 51%+ |
| 1  | 2                            | 3  | 4  | 5       | 6    |
| Illiterate                                 | Gent's wrapper               | 37   | 12   | 21      | 4    |
|  | Ladies scarf                 | 30   | 12   | 14      | 4    |
|  | Cloth for shirting etc.      | 22   | 9  | 13      | —    |
| Literate without educational level         | Gent's wrapper               | 6  | 2  | 4       | —    |
|  | Ladies scarf                 | 5  | 2  | 3       | —    |
|  | Cloth for shirting etc.      | 3  | 1  | 2       | —    |
| Primary or Junior basic                    | Gent's wrapper               | 8  | 2  | 6       | —    |
|  | Ladies scarf                 | 4  | 1  | 3       | —    |
|  | Cloth for shirting etc.      | 4  | —  | 4       | —    |
| Middle                                     | Gent's wrapper               | 8  | 3  | 5       | —    |
|  | Ladies scarf                 | 2  | 1  | 1       | —    |
|  | Cloth for shirting etc.      | 4  | 1  | 3       | —    |

V.4

**different channels classified by educational level of the head of the household**

disposing off the products

| Middlemen against payment of advance at the margin of less than 25% profit | Other business-men at the margin of profit of less than 25% | Khadi Board on other terms and conditions viz. wages for weaving | Remarks  | Educational level of head of the household |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| 7  | 8   | 9  | 10   | 1  |
| 5  | 37  | 8  | Same household disposes off the finished products through different agencies | Illiterate                                 |
| 5  | 28  | 11   |  |  |
| 3  | 18  | 4  |  | Literate without educational level         |
| —  | 6   | —  |  |  |
| 1  | 4   | —  |  |  |
| —  | 2   | —  |  |  |
| —  | 2   | —  |  | Primary or Junior Basic                    |
| 1  | 1   | —  |  |  |
| —  | 4   | —  |  |  |
| —  | —   | —  |  | Middle                                     |
| —  | —   | —  |  |  |
| —  | 2   | —  |  |  |

## **Margin of profit**

It is seen that 36 out of 59 households (61.02%) weaving Gents' wrapper sell the product keeping a margin of profit between 25% and 50% and only about 6.78% sell the product at a profit exceeding 50% directly to the consumers whereas in case of Ladies' scarf about half of the households producing the same sell it at a profit varying between 25% and 50% and about 10.0% of the households sell the article earning a profit of over 50.0%.

As told earlier a substantial number of weavers dispose of their products to middlemen and the table above indicate that 76.27% and 80.49% of the households weaving Gents' wrapper and Ladies scarf respectively sell these products to middlemen keeping a margin of profit below 25.0%. As regards cloth woven for shirt, 78.79% of the households producing the material sell the same to businessmen for a profit below 25.0%. It is evidently clear that these businessmen do hard bargaining and purchase the materials at as low a price as possible only to earn a substantial margin of profit by subsequently selling the materials to actual users at a much higher price.

It is further observed that whatever proportion of the finished products of all three varieties are sold to State Khadi Board is so done only in exchange of wages for weaving as the necessary raw materials are provided by the Khadi Board.

However, we shall do well to remember here that the accounts of profit as given above are derived from the narrations of the weavers an overwhelming majority of whom is illiterate and is inept in maintaining any sort of reliable accounts of cost of production, sale price etc. and is therefore prone to rely on wild guesswork.

## **Problems in disposal of finished products**

Probing enquiry was made during the survey to elicit information about any problems en-

countered by the households in disposing off the finished products. The survey reveals that there is no problems as such faced by any household in selling the finished products. This craft is practised by the womenfolk in their leisure time. In fact the households do not fully depend on this craft for their livelihood. As such quantity of production of various items of Endi-silk is not so high as to cause accumulation of unsold articles. Whatever quantity is produced by the weavers finds a ready market in the businessmen and traders in and beyond Rampur area as also in the actual consumers of the materials who reportedly come to the villages to procure varied items of Endi products from the weavers. Thus there are no acute problem reported to have been faced by the households in disposing the finished products. But the traders or businessmen quote minimum price for various items of Endi products whereas they sell the items at much higher rate in different places or markets.

Thus the only problem faced by the weavers is the low profit from the sale of finished products. The craft is a female's domain and it is seen that no male member of a family takes any active part or interest in it. Females always find it difficult to carry their finished product to distant places or markets in order to procure better and competitive prices for the materials and are usually found inclined to sell their products at home, even if the price paid for the same is much below their expectation. However, as a redeeming feature, in recent years many local men have entered into these business and it is hoped that in due course of time they will be able to sell the finished product in various markets and places in and outside the state at an expected margin of profit which will trickle down to benefit the weavers of the Endi materials.

Endi-silk of Rampur area being in great demand for its quality and texture; people from various parts of the State come to this area to purchase good quality Endi wrappers for use



by themselves. Besides, traders and businessmen both local as well as from outside come to this area to purchase Endi-silk products. After procuring the product these traders and businessmen send the articles to various trading centres in and outside the state for sale. Apart from this, local Khadi Board and Marketing Division also procure the various items of Endi produce from the local weavers and sell them in various trading centre in and outside the state. This organisation has exported Endi wrapper for use both by male and female every year to foreign countries like Japan, England, Nepal etc.

Though the weavers of Rampur area produce Endi-silk to meet the local as well as demand from outside, the total volume of production of this area is not very high precisely owing to the reason that the production was

not taken in a commercial basis having all necessary infrastructure. The women used to produce Endi-silk as a leisure time venture primarily keeping in view the household needs only and any excess product only were sold in the market. But in recent years the production of this area is showing healthy signs of growth because many households have taken up this household industry on a commercial basis. It was observed during the survey that many households of Rampur area have geared up to produce various item of Endi-silk to meet the increasing demand for the materials. But it is feared that production cannot be increased to the desired level so long the craft is confined to the women-folk only who still sit at the loom only after attending to their routined domestic chores and hardly can devote full time to weaving.

TABLE V.5

**Particulars of households which reported to have met the demand for finished products and those which have not met the demand classified by literacy of head of the household**

| Literates<br>or<br>Illiterates | Name of the<br>materials<br>produced | No. of<br>households<br>producing<br>the materials | Number of households reported to<br>have met the demand for finished<br>products |                             | Remarks   |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--|-----------------------------|---|
|                                |                                      |  | Local demand<br>fully  | Outside demand<br>partially |   |
| 1                              | 2                                    | 3  | 4  | 5                           | 6   |
| Illiterates                    | Bor-kapor                            | 37   | 37   | 37                          | The first priority<br>of the sale was to<br>local people and<br>as such the demand<br>of outside customers<br>who constitute mostly<br>businessmen could be<br>met only partially |
|                                | Ladies scarf                         | 30   | 30   | 28                          |   |
|                                | shirting                             | 22   | 22   | 13                          |   |
| Literates                      | Bor-kapor                            | 22   | 22   | 8                           |   |
|                                | Ladies scarf                         | 11   | 11   | 5                           |   |
|                                | Shirting                             | 11   | 11   | 8                           |   |

It is seen that irrespective of having a literate or an illiterate head all the households producing different Endi materials have fully satisfied the local demand including that of the weavers' households. The demand of the buyers from outside Rampur area could be met only partially as the quantity of articles produced was not

sufficient to fully meet the demand from within and outside the area and for reasons stated earlier the weavers prefer selling their products to the consumers in local markets especially in view of the fact that there is a constant local demand for their products than to traverse long distances to find outlet for their products.

## CHAPTER VI

### CRAFTS AND EMPLOYMENT

Endi culture and weaving play a pivotal role in the economic life of the villages in and around Rampur area. Endi weaving of this part is very old and traditional. People of this part think that this traditional craft is as old as the villages. Thus there is absolutely no doubt that Endi rearing, spinning and weaving has been practised by the womenfolk of this part of the country from very ancient times in spite of many ups and downs in the practise of the craft. Many believe that womenfolk of this area learnt the skill of rearing, spinning and weaving from the tribal people - the Bodos, Garos, Kacharis and Rabhas living in and around Rampur area.

In the initial stage, the womenfolk of this area practised this art only to meet the domestic needs. Only a few poor widow practised this craft as subsidiary occupation or bartered their product in exchange of other commodities. It is difficult to arrive at any figure about the number of households that were engaged in this craft in the beginning because the craftsmen engaged in this craft does not belong to any functional caste. All females belonging to various castes and creeds have been practising this craft in their leisure since time immemorial. This is a female dominated craft and no male contributed anything towards its development except assisting the womenfolk in marketing the product which too is of recent origin. In the olden days Endi worms rearing was common sight in almost all households. The castor plants were also grown in their own gardens.

#### Origin of the craft in the selected villages

It was found extremely difficult to elicit correct information from the vague memories of

mostly illiterate weavers or other related persons about origin of the craft in these villages. However, information as could be gathered from the respondents in the selected households about the period during which this craft came into being in this area indicate that about 80% of the respondents believe that Endi culture has been in existence in this part of the country even before the beginning of the present century. The remaining 20% of respondents pleaded ignorance about the time this craft made its appearance in this part. This also shows that the craft is very old. As stated earlier all the practising households have reported to be engaged in this craft for over last 20 years and almost all of them told in unequivocal terms that the craft is as old as the village.

In the past Endi worm rearing, spinning and weaving were all done together in a household and was mostly a household affair. All adult females knew the art of spinning and weaving. They produced quantity of Endi yarns required to meet their own needs.

In the past this cottage industry was not known to other parts of the country. Though there were instances of cocoons and Endi fabrics being exported to Bhutan and Tibet. Besides, Khasi traders used to come to this part for the Endi-silk, thus establishing a link between this part and the Khasi hills. The manufacture of Endi-silk fabrics enjoyed the patronage of Ahom kings who took a keen interest in the development of this craft. Before the 2nd World War this craft was mostly confined to this area only. As the communication improved it found its way to many important trading and weaving centres. During the British

period this craft had to have the first bitter taste of competition from mill made cheap foreign textiles which made an inroad in the Indian market. But this was for a short period only and this famous fabric slowly and steadily regained its popularity. With the opening of railways and other transport facilities Endi-silk again captured wider markets including in foreign countries.

### **Number of households and persons engaged in the craft during various decades**

Attempt is made here to ascertain the approximate number of households and persons engaged in the craft during different periods or decades. As mentioned earlier it is extremely difficult to arrive at any reliable number of households or persons engaged in this traditional craft at any point of time. As early as 1940, before the second world war the Endi-silk was very much confined to these villages except that a few traders from outside came to these villages for procuring Endi-silk. In those days rearing, spinning and weaving were done in the household itself. All the households living in these villages had practised this craft for their own consumption and not for commercial purpose. The approximate number of households engaged in the craft in the three selected villages during 1940's were about 1000 with an approximate number of 1500 adult females engaged in the craft. Endi is known as poorman's silk and it forms an essential item of apparel during winter. In those days all the adult females irrespective of castes and creeds engaged themselves in Endi weaving and they completed the weaving before winter stepped in.

After independence, during 1950's a few weavers of these villages began to practise the craft as subsidiary occupation. As the communication improved and this part of the state was better linked with other parts of the state and country, Endi-silk became more popular

and demand for it also increased and the weavers began to adopt this craft on a commercial basis. Local traders and even traders from other parts used to procure Endi-silk from the weavers giving them a nominal price and sold it at a much higher rate at different markets in and outside the state. As the demand for this famous silk gradually increased more and more weavers began to practise weaving on commercial lines. The number of households of these three village involved in this craft during this period is estimated to be about 1500 and number of weavers about 2000. Almost all the households possessed atleast one loom.

Thus this famous cottage industry grew slowly and became part and parcel of life of inhabitants of these villages. During 1960's this craft assumed greater dimension as a commercial venture and embraced almost all the adult females of these villages and though treated as a secondary occupation proved to be a fruitful source for augmenting family income. Many weavers became expert and earned reputation in weaving even outside these villages. In this decade government also came forward with new projects and policies for the improvement of this traditional craft. The weavers then could procure Endi cocoons from the government at a very reasonable price. Besides, the government also engaged weavers on wage basis. Thus production of Endi-silk in this area had definitely increased. The number of households engaged in this cottage industry during 1960's is estimated to be about 1600 and approximate number of women engaged to be about 2500. Entrance of middlemen or rich merchants was an important feature of the decade. These middleman or rich merchants used to procure Endi-silk from the weavers giving them a very nominal price and they sold the product at a very high rate in different markets. Thus these middlemen started exploiting the poor weavers by taking major share of profit.

During 1970's this traditional and exquisite

fabric found its way into many markets in the country as well as in foreign countries. More and more weavers of these villages began to practise this craft on commercial purpose. All the households irrespective of castes and creed were found to be engaged in weaving Endi products. Widows and many poor females of these villages were found to earn their living from it. Young girls were also helping their mothers in their leisure times. The marketing of finished products became much easier than before and weavers could sell the product through different agencies. In this decade middlemen became more active and they captured many weavers especially the skilled ones by giving them advances and loans. To stop this exploitation the government of Assam has established local Khadi Board office. The main function of this office is to supply cocoons and to engage weavers on wage basis. Besides, through it the weavers could market the finished product.

During this period the approximate number of households engaged in this traditional craft is estimated to be about 1700 and number of weavers more than 2500.

With the advancement of years and also with the improved marketing facilities more and more households of these villages took-up Endi weaving as subsidiary or whole time occupation in the present decade. More and more females associated themselves with the craft in their leisure time. Even small girls also started earning money from spinning the cocoon. Economic condition of the villagers increasingly got linked with this craft. Except the

invalid and disabled, all the females of these villages were engaged in this industry.

In the present decade there are many expert Endi weavers who are known even outside the state. The Endi woven by these weavers are very fine and smooth. It has a great demand and sold at a very high price. Ladies scarf has become more popular. Bordering the scarf with floral design is a new feature introduced during the present decade and this has become popular. Various schemes have also been taken up by the govt. to encourage local weavers. Khadi Board supply the cocoons or yarns to the weavers at a very reasonable price. Endi production in these parts are found to be increasing each year and more and more households are getting engaged commercially in this craft. Thus Endi weaving in these villages has played a very significant role in the life of the people. It has become an integral part of their life.

The approximate number of households engaged in this craft in the selected villages during the present decade is about 1900 and approximate number of weavers more than 4,000.

Attempt was also made to find out reason for increase in number of households and persons engaged in the craft during last four decades. For this purpose a table is prepared from the survey data to show the reason of increase in the number of households and persons engaged in the craft during the last four decades.

TABLE VI. 1

**Reasons reported by households for variation in the number of households and persons engaged in the craft during last four decades classified by broad age-group**

| Broad age-group of head of the household | Number of households engaged in the craft | Number of households reported reason for   |   |
|--|---|--|---|
|  |   | Increase in the number of the households and persons engaged in the craft during last four decades |   |
|  |   | To improve economic condition of the households  | Just a source of extra income though not considered absolutely essential in improving overall pecuniary condition |
| 1  | 2   | 3  | 4   |
| 0-14                                     | —   | —  | —   |
| 15-34                                    | 6   | 4  | 2   |
| 35-59                                    | 51  | 38   | 13  |
| 60+                                      | 3   | 3  | —   |
| All households                           | 60  | 45   | 15  |

The table above (VI.1) clearly depicts that an overwhelming majority of 75% of the households assigned reason for increasing number of households with corresponding increase in the number of persons taking to Endi weaving as a means to improve the overall economic condition of the households. Only 25% of the respondent households affirmed that Endi weaving is just a source of extra income without having much to do in improving the general economic condition of the weavers families though it cannot be disputed that any addition-

al income in the ultimate analysis is usually channelled back in improving the overall economic condition of a family. But according to them, they just spend their leisure time on this.

**Caste-wise distribution of households engaged in the craft**

Table VI.2 shows the caste-wise distribution of households engaged in the craft and method by which these households got themselves associated with the craft.

TABLE VI.2

**Households reported having associated with the craft by Religion, Caste/Tribe/Community of head of the households and method by which associated with the craft**

| Religion | Caste/<br>Tribe/<br>Community | No. of households<br>engaged in<br>the craft | Households reported<br>having associated<br>with the craft<br>traditionally through<br>inheritance from<br>mother to daughter | Remarks  |
|----------|-------------------------------|--|---|--|
| 1        | 2                             | 3  | 4   | 5  |
| Hinduism | Kalita                        | 44   | 44  | Reportedly there is<br>no other method<br>by which any of the<br>surveyed households<br>got itself associated<br>with Endi weaving |
| -do-     | Baishya                       | 6  | 6   |  |
| -do-     | Rajbangshi                    | 8  | 8   |  |
| -do-     | Keot                          | 2  | 2   |  |
| Total    |                               | 60   | 60  | —  |

The table VI.2 explicitly shows that irrespective of caste or community all the households are associated with the craft through inheritance alone and this clearly indicates that Endi weaving in this part of the country is a traditional craft.

### **Role of the Craft in Village Economy**

The traditional cottage industry plays an important role in the village economy. In terms of employment it is next to agriculture. Endi weaving in this part is the main source of employment for the womenfolk in particular. It gives both part-time and full-time employment to a large number of women of this region. In recent years there is a welcome trend to take Endi weaving as a full time occupation. This trend deserves encouragement as this will provide employment to a large number of womenfolk. In the past women of this part practised Endi weaving as a leisure time activity to supplement the income from agriculture. But in recent years the percentage of commercial weavers is increasing considerably. Majority of the house-

holds are taking Endi weaving as one of the source of income or to supplement income from agriculture. Thus it directly or indirectly solves the problem of unemployment among the womenfolk in particular. During the survey no unemployment among the females was found. Even the school going girls help their mothers in weaving or earning money by spinning Endi cocoons on wage basis. Endi weaving being a females' domain, it does not in any substantial manner help solve unemployment among the males. However the fact remains that in recent times quite a few males have also associated themselves with the craft in the matter of sale of the finished products.

There has been a steady increase in the persons engaged in this craft during the four decades (1940-80). In the past, Endi-silk of this area was confined to the rural areas only but with the improvement in communication system, the Endi-silk found their way into many trading centres within and outside the state. Formerly womenfolk used to practise this craft only as a leisure time activity only to meet the

domestic need of the material. But as the demand for the silk has gradually increased and traders from various parts have come to this area for procuring the products, the weavers of this area have begun to practise the craft on a much larger scale. Recently there has been a great demand for the silk even outside the country. Thus as the demand for it increases, more and more females of this area have started taking Endi weaving either as subsidiary or sole occupation. Another probable reason may be that ever increasing cost of living, where agriculture alone cannot provide livelihood for the household for the whole year, the womenfolk felt the need for practising this craft on a commercial scale to augment the family's income. Thus almost all the households of these areas possess a loom, where one or two weavers are engaged in weaving regularly. It was also gathered during the survey that all the females remain busy round the year either spinning or weaving. Besides, facilities now-a-days being offered by the government to develop this household industry is another important factor contributing to its growth on commercial lines. The local Khadi Board's office is helping the weavers by supplying cocoons at a reasonable price and also help them in marketing the finished products.

Since very ancient time, Endi weaving is practised by the womenfolk in their leisure to meet their own requirements. All the households in the past used to produce their requirement in their own loom. They did not produce more than their own requirement as there was no local demand for the products. However there were a few women or widows in the selected villages who reportedly practised this craft on commercial basis for their sustenance. But they found it difficult to dispose off the finished product. The main reason for this may be due to the lack of demand for the product and poor marketing facilities. But no such case was detected among the surveyed households.

It is gathered that all the surveyed

households irrespective of castes/community and religion considered this craft in the past as non-lucrative. No household belonging to any caste considered this craft as a source of livelihood. They attributed lack of demand for the product as the reason for this.

As said earlier non-existence of marketing avenue of facilities restrained demand in the production centre only. It was observed during the survey that recently many households have started to practise this craft on a commercial basis. Many households have to depend on it for their livelihood atleast for a few months of the year as earning from agricultural products alone cannot meet the demand for the hole year. Besides a few households are also practising this craft as subsidiary occupation to add to their income from agricultural and other sources. The demand for Endi-silk has also been increasing day by day in and outside the state. Thus this industry provides gainful employment to the local women.

An enquiry during the survey about attitude and opinion towards the craft of non-practising household revealed that these households are in the opinion that the practise of this craft is very essential as it provides an additional source of income to the family. All the 15 non-practising households wish to practise the craft on commercial lines but unfortunately, lack of finance, time and manpower prevent them from practising the craft. Every non-practising household desires that the female should learn the art of weaving not only as a tradition but also as a source of livelihood to render financial help to the family in particular.

During the survey we tried to elicit from the surveyed households whether they consider this craft as a source of gainful employment or not and also various factors considered by them to make this craft a source of gainful employment.

Our enquiry during the survey reveals that all



the households belonging to various castes consider this traditional craft as a source of gainful employment. Moreover, in their opinion this craft has enough potentiality and will definitely provide better employment to the younger generation particularly to the women-folk of the region. The table also indicates that this craft can be made more profitable if the demand for the finished product and marketing facilities are available. If the demand for the product increases their production have to be increased. To increase the volume of production, more and more weavers will have to practise this craft on commercial lines. As the production increases with the rise in demand

the margin of profit will automatically rise. In view of the respondents a systematic and organised market for the Endi-silk will act as the prime factor for renewed activity in the households associated with the craft resulting in induction of more and more weavers, more production, more profit and an accelerated growth of the cycle.

During the survey an attempt was made to assess the financial condition of the households who are practising the craft and the information as could be gathered is presented below:

TABLE VI.3

Households reported having improved/not improved their financial condition with reasons thereof classified by Literates or Illiterates head of households

| Literate or illiterate head of households | No. of surveyed households engaged in the craft | Number of households reported about their financial condition |                               |                     |              |
|---|---|---|-------------------------------|---------------------|--------------|
|   |   | Improved due to   |                               | Not improved due to |              |
|   |   | Increase in production  | Increase in number of weavers | Lack of finance     | Lack of time |
| 1   | 2   | 3   | 4                             | 5                   | 6            |
| Illiterate                                | 38  | 15  | 7                             | 11                  | 5            |
| Literate                                  | 22  | 8   | 3                             | 8                   | 3            |
| Total                                     | 60  | 23  | 10                            | 19                  | 8            |

It is seen in the table VI.3 that 55.0% of the surveyed households affirmed that improvement in their financial condition is directly linked with practice of the craft. Out of 33 households who said so, 69.70% attributed this to increase in production without any addition to the number of craftsman. 45.0% of the practising households reported to have not been able to reap any significant gains in terms of

money from the craft owing mostly to not having adequate finance while quite a few narrated lack of sufficient time that could be spared for weaving. Majority of literates are of the view that economic condition can be improved by increasing the production and not number of weavers and it has not improved due to lack of finance and not lack of time. Thus lack of finance and shortage of time are the two

main reasons for the households who consider that their financial position did not improve despite their women being at loom producing Endi-silk.

### Attitude towards the craft

During the survey an attempt was made to

find out whether the present generation is interested or not to practise this craft. Apart from this, enquiry was also made to know the opinion of the households whether they want their children, mainly daughters, to practise this craft or not. Information as could be obtained is presented below:

TABLE VI.4

**Households wanting/not wanting to have their daughters engaged in the craft with reasons thereof classified by Educational Level of head of the households**

| Educational level of head of the household | Number of households engaged in the craft | Number of households wanting to have daughters engaged in the craft |   |
|--|---|---|---|
|  |   | To keep up the tradition  | To make it a source of living as well as to keep up the tradition |
| 1  | 2   | 3   | 4   |
| Illiterate                                 | 38  | 17  | 21  |
| Literate without educational level         | 6   | —   | 6   |
| Primary or Junior basic                    | 8   | 3   | 5   |
| Middle                                     | 8   | 2   | 6   |
| Total                                      | 60  | 22  | 38  |

The table VI.4 depicts that 36.67% of the surveyed households expressed their opinion in favour of their daughters to be engaged in this craft to keep up the family tradition, as against a great majority of 63.33% assigning an additional reason of considering it as a source of living. When educational level of the head of these households is considered it is seen that out of 38 households whose heads are illiterate, 17 or 44.74% of the household prefer their daughter to keep up the tradition and remaining 21 or 55.26% wants their daughter to practise this craft as source of living as well as to

keep up the tradition. All the 6 households whose heads are just literates without having attained any educational standard prefer their daughter to be at the loom just to keep up the tradition. It is also seen that out of the 8 households whose heads have attained primary or junior basic level, 3 households or 37.50% wants their daughter only to practise this craft to keep up the tradition and remaining 5 or 62.50% prefer their daughter to practise this craft as source of income as well as to keep the tradition. Similarly, out of another 8 households whose heads have attained middle

standard, only 2 or 25.00% wants their daughter to practise the craft just to keep up the tradition and remaining 6 or 75.00% households prefer their daughter to take up this craft as a source of income as well as to keep up the tradition.

Thus it is observed that the income factor is primarily associated with practising of the craft by the present generation of weavers of Endi-silk as well as their desire for holding on and carry forward the same by their successors.

As earlier said Endi weaving in this part of the country is as old as its people. Almost every household or family in this part has a loom that is treated as a proud possession. It is a status symbol for the womenfolk to know the intricacies of weaving and has always been a way of life. It is considered to be an indispensable aspect of their socio-economic life. A female of this part boasts of weaving fine Endi wrappers. It symbolises love and affection among the people. But this is not quite so in some other parts of the country where weaving tends to be associated with particular caste and it does not claim any social status. In fact Endi weaving in Rampur area is inextricably linked with the culture and tradition of its inhabitants.

During the survey an attempt was made to assess the social status of the weavers in particular. The enquiry reveals that there is no stigma attached to the profession for which the weavers are looked down upon by the society.

On the contrary, the weavers occupy a position of pride and the people encourage the weavers to keep alive the industry, which they consider to be an integral part of their life and living.

That is why we notice the presence of amateur weavers in this industry, who practise weaving as folk art. The people of this area always encourage younger generation to take up this traditional industry as a source of livelihood. All females consider it obligatory to know the art of weaving. They have acquired the technique of weaving traditionally from their mothers. Thus this craft has cast a definite influence on the socio-cultural life of the rural society in general and the weavers' community in particular.

#### **Attitude of younger generation**

During the survey it was noticed that younger generations have taken keen interest in the craft. Majority of young girls in their leisure time practise this craft as a subsidiary occupation. Even small girls after school hours help their mother by spinning the cocoons. In recent years, many young girls have taken this craft on commercial basis to meet the increased demand for the Endi-silk. Thus this traditional craft has helped the young girls and housewives to lend a helping hand to the males in winning bread for the family though the craft does not in any significant manner help solve unemployment problem among the males.

TABLE VI.5

**Households reported about younger generation of their community taking interest in the craft with reasons thereof classified by Caste/Community of head of the household**

| Caste/Community of head of the household | No. of households engaged in the craft | As a source of income | To learn it as a traditional art | Remarks                                   |
|--|--|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| 1  | 2                                      | 3                     | 4                                | 5   |
| Kalita                                   | 44                                     | 37                    | 7                                | All the households profess Hindu religion |
| Baishya                                  | 6                                      | 5                     | 1                                |   |
| Rajbangshi                               | 8                                      | 6                     | 2                                |   |
| Keot                                     | 2                                      | 2                     | —                                |   |

It is seen in Table VI.5 that the younger generations in the entire lot of households under our survey reported having keen interest in the craft. Further, it is seen that 83.33% of the surveyed households reported that the younger generation's interest in the craft veers round their concept of the craft as a means to augment the family income and only a small fraction considers adopting practice of the craft

merely to continue the tradition of weaving.

#### **Reasons for adopting the craft and period of engagement**

We now reproduce a table showing the distribution of households by circumstances which compelled or motivated the household to practise the craft alongside the period of engagement in the craft.

TABLE VI.6

**Household reporting circumstances which compelled/motivated them to take up the craft  
classified by Religion, Caste/Tribe/Community of head of the household**

| Caste/Tribe/<br>Community of<br>head of<br>the household | No. of households<br>engaged in the<br>craft | Motivated to take<br>it as a source of<br>livelihood besides<br>as traditional art | Motivated to take<br>it as a source of<br>extra income<br>besides as<br>traditional art | Remarks   |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| 1  | 2  | 3  | 4   | 5   |
| Kalita   | 44   | 24   | 20  | 1. All the households<br>have taken up the<br>craft since 20 years<br>and more. |
| Baishya  | 6  | 5  | 1   |   |
| Rajbangshi   | 8  | 2  | 6   |   |
| Keot   | 2  | 2  | —   | 2. All the households<br>profess Hindu<br>religion                              |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>60</b>                                    | <b>33</b>  | <b>27</b>   |   |

The table VI.6 shows that irrespective of caste of head of the surveyed household majority (55.0%) of them were motivated to take up Endi weaving mainly as a measure of earning livelihood at the same time keeping up the traditional craft in their families. The rest (45.0%) of the households consider it as a secondary occupation alongside treating it as a traditional art that they cherish and wish to keep alive. Caste-wise analysis indicates an exception in case of Rajbangshis only where

75.0% of the households reportedly have taken to weaving as a source of extra income besides clinging to it as a traditional craft. As earlier stated there is a clear indication that Endi weaving is practised mainly for economic upliftment of the weavers' families. It had been our endeavour during field survey to gauge satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the households practising the craft and a table prepared in this context is reproduced below:

TABLE VI.7

**Households having satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the occupation with reasons thereof classified by Literate or Illiterate head of households**

| Illiterate or literate head of household | Nos. of households engaged in the craft | Number of household reporting satisfaction with the craft for being a |                        | Number of households reporting dissatisfaction with the craft due to  |
|--|---|---|------------------------|---|
|  |   | Source of livelihood  | Source of extra income | High cost of raw materials and lack of organised marketing facilities |
| 1  | 2                                       | 3   | 4                      | 5   |
| Illiterate                               | 38                                      | 23  | 4                      | 11  |
| Literate                                 | 22                                      | 8   | 6                      | 8   |
| Total                                    | 60                                      | 31  | 10                     | 19  |

The table VI.7 reveals that a great majority of 68.33% of the surveyed households are satisfied having their women practising Endi weaving and out of the 41 households who reported so, 75.61% derive satisfaction considering practice of the craft as a source of livelihood. 31.67% of the respondent households reported

their dissatisfaction with the craft which according to them has been prompted by high cost of raw materials and lack of an organised market for disposal of their finished products. It is to be noted here that as against 63.33% of the household having an illiterate head, 36.37% of the households have a literate head.

TABLE VI.8

Number of households having associated traditionally with the craft with period of association classified by Religion, Caste/Community of the household.

| Caste/<br>Community<br>of the<br>household | Number of<br>households<br>engaged in<br>the craft | Number of house-<br>holds reported<br>their associa-<br>tion with the<br>craft |                      |                           | Remarks                                      |
|--|--|--|----------------------|---------------------------|--|
|  |  | Traditionally  | Two gene-<br>rations | Three<br>genera-<br>tions |  |
| 1  | 2  | 3  | 4                    | 5                         | 6  |
| Kalita                                     | 44   | 44   | —                    | 44                        | All the households<br>profess Hindu religion |
| Baishya                                    | 6  | 6  | 1                    | 5                         |  |
| Rajbangshi                                 | 8  | 8  | 2                    | 6                         |  |
| Keot                                       | 2  | 2  | 2                    | —                         |  |
| Total                                      | 60   | 60   | 5                    | 55                        |  |

The table VI.8 shows that 91.67% of the surveyed households have been practising this craft for three generations and more. It is further observed that while 83.33% of the Baishya and 75.0% of the Rajbangshi households belong to this group, the entire lot of Kalita households proudly claim to be in this group. The Keots reportedly have been practising Endi weaving for two generations only. However, the figures above corroborates that has been stated in the foregoing paragraphs that Endi weaving is traditional craft in this region and that knowledge of its rather simple technique is being spontaneously handed down from one generation to another where the younger generation ungrudgingly accept the training in weaving from the elderly persons. Also, we sought to ascertain during the survey whether the households engaged in this craft have any

intention to give up practising this traditional craft. It was heartening to note that there is no such intentions among any of the households who are at present practising the craft. On the contrary, they are in favour of developing the craft, and in keeping pace with the increasing demand for Endi-silk there is a discernible trend among the practising households to adopt the craft purely on a commercial basis. Moreover, according to a great majority of respondents, given due care in maintenance of a steady supply of raw materials at reasonable prices and creating necessary infrastructure for a well organised market for the finished products of the loom, this apparently orthodox craft can generate employment opportunities for both males and females and obviously therefore, discarding this age-old craft cannot even be remotely thought of by them.

## CHAPTER VII

### CONCLUSION

We have seen in the foregoing paragraphs that handloom weaving is an integral part of the cultural heritage in Assam. Assamese women irrespective of castes and social status take pride in knowing the art of spinning and weaving. Weaving has always been a way of life of an Assamese woman. Mahatma Gandhi in course of a visit to Assam observed that 'Assamese women are born weavers, they can weave fairy tales in their clothes'<sup>1</sup>. Almost every family particularly in rural areas, possesses a loom and weaving is performed by all sections of people. A loom in the house is considered as much a member of the family as any other and in folk songs it is said a loom in the backyard sheds tears along with other members at the time of a daughter leaving the parental house after her marriage. Till a few decades back the suitability of an Assamese bride was adjudged in terms of the artistry and skill acquired by her in weaving. Even to-day handloom weaving symbolises love and affection among the Assamese people. It has always played a significant role especially in the tapestry of life of the rural populace.

Endi-silk weaving is the traditional and age old cottage industry in Assam. Though nothing in particular is known about its antiquity and antecedent, it is believed to be of indigenous origin particularly belonging to this region. According to historians, Assam's association with this traditional silk dates back to many centuries. The art of sericulture was known to ancient Kamrup in the epic age and silk was used as early as the Vedic age.

The silk industry of Assam mainly comprises

the culture of Endi, Muga and Mulberry silk. Of the three, Endi and Muga are the exclusive monopoly of the people of Assam and believed to be indigenous to the state. The climatic, geographical and topographical factors help Assam in being the largest silk producing State in India. The fabrics made from these two varieties of silk are greatly sought for in and outside the state.

Endi weaving is a vital household industry of Assam. It is the highest Endi producing region in the world. Assam produces 90% of the total Endi-silk produced in the country. Eri or Endi-Silk is the produce of polyvoltini worm known as *philosamia Ricinia* which feeds on the leaves of the castor plants. Thus Endi worm derives its name from its main food i.e., leaves of the castor plants locally known as Eri. The climatic conditions and environments of the region are also suitable for thriving Endi worms and their food product.

The Endi-silk industry is widely spread all over the rural areas of Assam. It is carried out traditionally by the village womenfolk at their leisure time. The Valley of the Brahmaputra and the surrounding hill areas are considered as the natural abode of Endi-silk worm. The major and important Endi producing areas are located in the southern bank of the river Brahmaputra in the district of Kamrup. The area west of Guwahati city covering Palasbari, Mirza, Rani and Rampur in the district of Kamrup are the main production centres of the state. Among them Rampur area comprising about twenty villages is the principal Endi producing region of the state. Almost all the

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1. Pakyntein E.H. --" Selected Handicrafts of Assam," Census of India, Vol. III - Assam, 1961.



households in this region possess an Endi loom. Endi weaving is practised by the village womenfolk at their leisure time partly to meet their own requirements of the fabrics but in most cases on a commercial basis.

Endi weaving is a female prerogative. Males generally do not take part in it. Dexterity of the women at loom is well known. Each female of this region possess in born talent in weaving and potentiality to become expert weavers. Knowledge of the art of weaving passes from mother to daughter, generation after generation.

There are many expert weavers in this region. They are known not only to this region alone but all over the state. They can produce very fine Endi-silk. Their product has great demand even outside the state. In the beginning they were amateur weavers but with the passage of time, their talent, natural ability and experiences have made them expert weavers who now produce excellent silk, particularly gents' wrapper on a commercial basis and ladies' scarves.

There is not a single woman of this region without having the knowledge of weaving. Each woman of this region cherish the desire to be an expert weaver. Even a mother wishes to see her daughter at the loom as an expert weaver. That is exactly why the mother trains her daughter in weaving from her very childhood. Weaving is considered as a symbol of prestige and pride to them. It is almost customary for the females of this region to know the art of weaving.

From ancient time this craft is practised by the females in their leisure times. This tradition is still found to be continuing. Every household of this region, is practising this craft as a source of extra income to the family. In the past females practised this craft to meet the family requirement only and any excess produce was sold to the traders.

In recent years, households of this region have started to practise this craft on commercial basis. It fetches extra income to the household. The number of commercial weavers are therefore increasing every year. But we shall do well to recall here that on an average a weaver can weave three pairs of wrappers in a year due to two factors, firstly, weaving is done as a leisure time activity and secondly, it is in demand only during the winter months and as such production also is seasonal. Therefore, economic return to a household from Endi weaving is very low and that is why only a few households have adopted it as a principal occupation for livelihood. The majority of households still practise this craft as a subsidiary occupation.

But, despite the above factor, this traditional industry occupies an important place in the rural economy. It gives both part time and full time employment to a large number of persons particularly to the womenfolk. Thus this industry can solve to a certain extent the problem of rural unemployment. The growth and development of this industry will certainly generate employment avenues.

This craft has enough potentiality to develop. But unfortunately this could not achieve the desired progress owing to a number of constraints which have impeded its proper growth and development. Unless due care is taken immediately this traditional craft may be exposed to the hazard of losing its inherent glory and fame.

There are many serious constraints to be overcome in the development of this craft. Inadequate supply of raw materials, poor productivity, lack of proper marketing facilities are some of the hurdles to be overcome.

The non-availability of good quality raw material is one of the major problems faced by the weavers to run the craft smoothly. Weavers are exploited by the middlemen and in most

cases they do not get a remunerative price for their product. Middlemen and traders not only exploit the weavers but the consumers of the finished product as well. These traders and middlemen procure raw materials from different sources at a cheaper rate and sell the same to the weavers keeping as much margin of profit as possible. Till now majority of weavers are at the mercy of private traders or middlemen so far as supply of yarn is concerned. Unless these middlemen are eliminated from the arena of this craft, exploitation of the weavers in the matter of supply of raw material cannot be stopped. This industry can not make proper progress unless there is an assured market for steady supply of raw materials at reasonable rates.

The poor productivity is another factor regarding its improper development. Inadequate supply and exorbitant price of raw materials and lack of proper marketing facilities, uncertainty about guaranteeing a price commensurate to the volume of labour and cost of raw materials discourages the weavers to put the best of their endeavour in production of Endi-silk. Because of its poor return weavers still practise this craft as a part time occupation only with outdated tools and machineries.

Modernisation of this industry is very essential if productivity has to increase. The low yielding throw shuttle should be replaced by the more productive fly shuttle. In addition, the hand operated loom should be replaced by semi-automatic loom. Because automatic loom has the capacity for higher production with same amount of effort and time. This obviously invites the question of supply of electricity to the rural areas which are the natural abode of the weavers. Needless to say, much remains to be achieved in this respect. Besides, the weavers should be trained to adopt improved techniques of production which will definitely increase production.

Marketing is the most important aspect in-

fluencing its proper growth and development. This industry cannot progress unless there is an assured market for raw materials and finished products. It is essential that the weavers get a remunerative price for their investment of money and labour. For this, an effective market of yarn and fabric is essential. To compete with modern mill made fabrics, this industry has to produce standard quality product of appropriate volume at a competitive price. Good quality of yarns and modern looms are essential pre-requisites for output of standard quality. At present the marketing facilities are none too satisfactory - the weavers have to depend upon local traders, businessmen and middlemen for the raw materials and sale of finished product. If immediate steps are not taken to improve the marketing facilities the future of this industry appears to be very gloomy.

There are many agencies and Govt. organisations to help the growth and development of handloom industry in the state. The Khadi Board, Assam Govt. Marketing Corporation, Directorate of Sericulture and Weaving and Co-operative deptt. are some of the important organisations who are at present looking after the growth and development of this craft. All the above organisations are located in the Guwahati city which is not far from the main Endi producing areas of the state. The main function of the above agencies and organisations are to provide assistance under handloom development programme for modernisation of looms and training of weavers in modern techniques, development of co-operative society, arrangement of credit and marketing etc. But, it is to be noted here that much is expected to be done by these agencies or organisations for betterment of the lot of the poor Endi weavers. The only and main organisation which renders substantial help to promote growth of this traditional craft is the Khadi Board office of the State Govt. This Board has opened offices or centres in suitable places and they provide all possible help to the weavers by way

of distributing raw materials at a reasonable rate and marketing the finished product which is of some help to poor weavers of this region. However, there is still scope for this institution to step up its activities for an integrated and overall development of this traditional craft which in turn would bring into its fold many more workers.

One most disheartening aspect of this craft is absence of co-operative society. There were a few co-operative societies at the instance of the State Govt. in the past, but due to financial constraints these are now in a morbid state. At present not a single co-operative society is found to be functioning.

Besides, the weavers of Rampur area expressed serious doubts about the intent and nature of functioning of the co-operative societies in whatever form they existed in the past. But, it is no denying the fact that to improve the lot of the weavers, co-operative societies is a must. All the weavers of the region should be brought under a multiple purpose co-operative society. Distribution of raw materials and marketing of the finished product should be the main function of the society. In fact, co-operative societies can play a vital role in the development of the craft.

To sum up-Endi weaving is an important cottage industry engaging thousands of rural people who earn their livelihood from it either directly or indirectly. It is practised from ancient time to the present day inspite of ups and downs faced by the industry at various stages of its development. It occupies an unique place in the socio-economic life of the people.

But this famous industry is still found in its rudimentary stage. No proper or scientific method has been adopted upto now to develop practice of this craft. Weaving is still practised in an age-old method using a traditionally old loom. This industry has been facing immense problems which have prevented it from grow-

ing to the expected level.

Unless corrective measures are taken immediately, this industry will fail in playing its role in even partially solving the problem of growing unemployment and under-employment especially in the rural Assam. This traditional industry has unmatched potentialities and tremendous scope for expansion and development and hence can be utilised as an effective tool for generating employment in the rural sector as also for augmenting earnings of the rural folk primarily dependent on agriculture. A scientific approach through micro-level planning is necessary for achieving the object. The schemes of development of this industry should comprehend introducing of modern technology, providing guidance and training to the craftsmen, arranging steady supply of standard quality raw materials at reasonable prices, meeting credit requirement of the artisans and elaborate facilities for marketing the finished products giving the weavers their due share of profit. In a nutshell, the entire business of Endi weaving should be made to run on a commercial basis.

Most of the weavers find it difficult to arrange adequate finance for purchase of raw materials. They have no alternative than to approach the unscrupulous traders or middlemen to procure raw materials mostly in the form of a debt and are thus compelled to sell the finished products to the same set of persons at whatever prices offered by them - which is usually much below the due price. This serious problem can be solved only by establishment of centres by the Govt. and other organisations for sale of raw materials and marketing of Endi fabrics at just prices. As an incentive to the weavers they must be given the due price for their products. Another vital step needed to be taken is the establishment of proper network of co-operative societies. The weavers should be motivated to form Co-operative Societies as measure to solve the twin problem of procurement of good quality raw materials and the sale

of output at just prices. Banks have a significant role to play in this regard by way of providing loans to Co-operative Societies. Though much has been proclaimed about Bank-financing of Co-operative societies yet there is no denying the fact that much remains to be done in this respect.

This being a task of great magnitude, no solo effort on the part of any one individual or a group of individuals can bring forth the desired result and therefore the Govt. machinery with all the resources available at its disposal should

step forward and assume upon itself the task of lifting the craft from its present stagnating condition to a bright and prosperous future. It should be the avowed intention that the benefit of all the developmental programmes and schemes when actually implemented percolates down to the level of the weavers who bring fame and glory to the craft. The craftsmen should in turn, contribute by way of engagement of more and more rural populace in this industry and thus accelerate the rural economic progress of the state in general and the areas where it is practised in particular.

## **APPENDIX – I**

**A FEW TOOLS AND IMPLEMENTS USED IN DIFFERENT STAGES OF MANUFACTURE**



## APPENDIX - I

### A FEW TOOLS AND IMPLEMENTS USED IN DIFFERENT STAGES OF MANUFACTURE

1. *Ugha* : A kind of reel for winding thread. This is made of bamboo.
2. *Sereki* : It is slightly bigger than ugha - this is another contrivance for winding and is made of bamboo.
3. *Rash* : A reed - through which the warp passes. It is made of bamboo and fitted on to a stay.
4. *Stay* : It is a movable frame in which the reed or rash is fitted. It is made of bamboo. The beating up of the weft is done by a reed fitted on to a stay. This is known as beater and also called batten.
5. *Chani* : A kind of pulley - It is connected with heddles with a rope. This used for raising the warp.
6. *Goroka* : A kind of treadle - which is made of small piece of bamboo connected with the treadle with a rope. When this treadle or padal is pressed with foot a shed or opening is formed in the warp — through which the weft is passed.
7. *Makoo* : Throw shuttle -made of wood, surface of which is highly polished or finished. A hollow is carved in the middle and both the ends of it are tapering. A prin locally known as 'Mohura' with weft can be fixed at the hollow portion. The prin is used for making stack.
8. *Mohura* : It is a prin - made of piece of reed used for winding the weft require for weaving.
9. *Seri* : A base rod - made of flat wood or bamboo.
10. *Jatar* : A small wheel for winding thread in the prin.
11. *Bobbins* : It is made of wood - used for winding the thread required for wrapping.
12. *Beams* : There are two beams which are required during weaving. The beams are round in structure and made of wood. These are used for winding the wrap for weaving and winding the woven cloths.
  - a) *Beak beam* : The stationary upper beam behind the loom directly over the wrap beam that helps to keep the wrap at a tension by giving it a smooth surface to glide over. It is called slabstock.
  - b) *Breast beam* : Stationary top beam at the front of the loom over which the woven cloth passes to the cloth beam below.
  - c) *Cloth beam* : The rotating lower front beam of loom on which the finished cloth is rolled as it is woven.
13. *Butterfly* : A hand bobbin arrangement of weft yarn, used without a holder and made by winding the yarn around the fingers in a figure of 8.
14. *Cross* : Formed as warp ends cross in alternate succession around pegs on a warping board or reed. Also called lease.
15. *Dent* : The space between two bars in a reed. Reeds come in various sizes according to the number of dents per 10 cm. they carry.

16. *Boh* : A heddle - it is made of thrive thread. There are two pairs. It is a series of vertical cords each having in the middle a loop to receive a wrap thread and passing round and between paralled bars.
17. *Lashes* : Long loops of cord attached to the neddle rod of a frame loom. The alternate warp end pass through these to form one of the sheds.

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*Main source: "Eri-Silk Industry" by Dr. S.N. Chowdhury, 1982.*



## **APPENDIX – II**

### **BASIC TERMINOLOGY OF WEAVING**



## APPENDIX - II

### BASIC TERMINOLOGY OF WEAVING

1. *Count* : Size of a spun yarn.
2. *Degumming* : The process of removal of natural gum from the silk by boiling in soap solution.
3. *Denier* : Size of the reeled yarn.
4. *Filament* : An individual strand of fibre - the smallest unit in any type of fabric.
5. *Kharika* : Straw stick on which egg laying is prepared.
6. *Moulting* : Shedding of the skin by the larva.
7. *Maltivoline* : Continuous life cycle all the year round.
8. *Raw silk* : Silk as reeled from the cocoon. It contains its original gum or sericin.
9. *Reeling* : A process of unwinding yarn from cocoon.
10. *Randita* : The number of kilos of cocoons required for one kilo of raw silk.
11. *Seed cocoon* : Cocoons from which moths are allowed to emerge for preparation of egg layings.
12. *Sericulture* : The art and science of rearing and raising silkworm for the production of silk.
13. *Spinning* : The process for producing single yarn out of discontinuous filament of silk. which silkworm produces cocoon is also known as spinning.
14. *Takli* : A simple rod like metal stick on which is appended a round load for spinning Endi-silk. Drop spindle.
15. *Beaming* : Winding the warp into the warp beam under tension.
16. *Dent* : The space between two bars in a reed.
17. *Piecing* : Starting a new thread where an old has ended.
18. *Ply* : A number of single threads that have been twisted together in a length of thread.
19. *Quill* : A paper tube on which the weft is wound for insertion in a boat shuttle.
20. *Selvedge* : Warpwise edge of the cloth.
21. *Sett* : The number of warp ends per centimetre.
22. *Shed* : The 'V'-shaped opening formed by the raising or lowering of warp ends, through which passes the shuttle carrying the weft thread.

23. *Sleying* : Threading the warp through the dents in the reel.
24. *Tension* : The degree of tightness to which the warp is stretched in the loom.
25. *Tension stick* : • A thin flat stick inserted into the warp in a frame loom to adjust the tension.
26. *Treadles* : Foot pedals that are attached to the shaft on the floor looms to rise or lower them.
27. *Warp* : The threads running lengthwise in a loom and through which the weft threads are passed to form the cloth.
28. *Warp beam* : The rotating lower back beam around which the unwoven warp is wound and stored.
29. *Warp and bar* : The rod at the back of the frame loom around which the warp is measured and wound. Also called a warping drum.
30. *Weave draft* : The draft that indicates the pattern of weave.
31. *Wed* : Piece of woven cloth.
32. *Weft* : The yarn that is interwoven with the warp ends. Also called filling.

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*Main Source: "Eri-Silk Industry" by Dr. S.N. Chowdhury, 1982*

**APPENDIX – III**  
**TABLES BASED ON HOUSEHOLD SCHEDULES**  
**(PRACTISING HOUSEHOLDS)**



TABLE - 1

**Distribution of households classified by Religion, Caste/Tribe/Community, Sex and Educational Level of Head of the Household**

| Name of Religion | Name of Caste/<br>Tribe/<br>Community | Number of households by educational level<br>of head of the household |    |            |                          |  |                 |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|---|----|------------|--------------------------|--|-----------------|
|                  |                                       | Number of households<br>by sex of head of<br>the household            |    | Illiterate | Literate<br>without edu- | Primary<br>or Junior<br>cational level | Middle<br>basic |
|                  |                                       | M   | F  |            |                          |  |                 |
| 1                | 2                                     | 3   | 4  | 5          | 6                        | 7                                      | 8               |
| Hinduism         | Kalita                                | 25  | 19 | 30         | 6                        | 3                                      | 5               |
| "                | Keot                                  | 2   | —  | 1          | —                        | 1                                      | —               |
| "                | Baishya                               | 3   | 3  | 3          | —                        | 2                                      | 1               |
| "                | Rajbangshi                            | 6   | 2  | 4          | —                        | 2                                      | 2               |
|                  | Total                                 | 36  | 24 | 38         | 6                        | 8                                      | 8               |

TABLE - 2

**Distribution of households classified by Migration status with reference to Place of Birth and Reasons for Migration in relation to Head of the Household**

| Migration status with reference to<br>place of birth of head of the household |  | Number of<br>households | Number of households which<br>have migrated due to |            |
|---|--|-------------------------|--|------------|
|   |  |                         | Marriage   | Settlement |
| 1   |  | 2                       | 3  | 4          |
| A.  | Non-Migrant (Born in the village)                    | 49                      | —  | —          |
| B.  | Migrant:   |                         |  |            |
|   | Born outside the village but<br>in the same district |                         |  |            |
|   | Rural  | 11                      | 10   | 1          |
|   | Urban  | —                       | —  | —          |
| Total   |  | 60                      | 10   | 1          |



TABLE - 3

**Households classified by Sex, Broad Age-groups and Subsidiary Occupation  
in relation to Head of the Household**

| Age-group | Sex    | Number of households | Number of households having no subsidiary occupation | Number of households having subsidiary occupation |             |          |                 |
|-----------|--------|----------------------|--|---|-------------|----------|-----------------|
|           |        |                      |  | Cultivation                                       | Shop-keeper | Business | Village headman |
| 1         | 2      | 3                    | 4  | 5   | 6           | 7        | 8               |
| 15-34     | Male   | 4                    | 3  | 1   | -           | -        | -               |
|           | Female | 2                    | 2  | -   | -           | -        | -               |
| 35-39     | Male   | 32                   | 23   | 5   | 1           | 2        | 1               |
|           | Female | 19                   | 19   | -   | -           | -        | -               |
| 60 +      | Male   | -                    | -  | -   | -           | -        | -               |
|           | Female | 3                    | 3  | -   | -           | -        | -               |
| Total     | Male   | 36                   | 26   | 6   | 1           | 2        | 1               |
|           | Female | 24                   | 24   | -   | -           | -        | -               |

TABLE

## Distribution of Workers classified by Sex,

| Age-group | Sex    | Total number<br>of workers | Number of<br>workers<br>having<br>subsidiary<br>occupation | Number whose main              |             |  |                             |
|-----------|--------|----------------------------|--|--------------------------------|-------------|--|-----------------------------|
|           |        |                            |  | Cultivation and also<br>having |             |  | Business and<br>also having |
|           |        |                            |  | Business                       | Shop-keeper | "Gaon Burha"<br>(Head man<br>of village) | Cultivation                 |
| 1         | 2      | 3                          | 4  | 5                              | 6           | 7  | 8                           |
| 0-14      | Male   | —                          | —  | —                              | —           | —  | —                           |
|           | Female | 3                          | —  | —                              | —           | —  | —                           |
| 15-34     | Male   | 38                         | 8  | —                              | —           | —  | 2                           |
|           | Female | 71                         | 1  | —                              | —           | —  | —                           |
| 35-59     | Male   | 37                         | 10   | 2                              | 1           | 1  | 1                           |
|           | Female | 38                         | —  | —                              | —           | —  | —                           |
| 60+       | Male   | —                          | —  | —                              | —           | —  | —                           |
|           | Female | 3                          | —  | —                              | —           | —  | —                           |
| Total     | Male   | 75                         | 18   | 2                              | 1           | 1  | 3                           |
|           | Female | 115                        | 1  | —                              | —           | —  | —                           |

**Broad Age-groups, Main Activity and Subsidiary Occupation**

| occupation is                     |  |                         |                                 |                                |                               |                                |                               |        |       |
|-----------------------------------|--|-------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------|-------|
| Shop-keeper<br>and also<br>having | Statistical<br>Assistant<br>and also<br>having | Peon and<br>also having | Carpenter<br>and also<br>having | Surveyer<br>and also<br>having | Mohorar<br>and also<br>having | Teaching<br>and also<br>having | Nursing<br>and also<br>having |        |       |
| Cultivation                       | Cultivation                                    | Cultivation             | Cultivation                     | Cultivation                    | Cultivation                   | Business                       | Weaving                       |        |       |
| 9                                 | 10   | 11                      | 12                              | 13                             | 14                            | 15                             | 16                            | 2      | 1     |
| —                                 | —  | —                       | —                               | —                              | —                             | —                              | —                             | Male   | 0—14  |
| —                                 | —  | —                       | —                               | —                              | —                             | —                              | —                             | Female |       |
| 3                                 | 1  | —                       | —                               | —                              | 1                             | 1                              | —                             | Male   | 15—34 |
| —                                 | —  | —                       | —                               | —                              | —                             | —                              | 1                             | Female |       |
| —                                 | 2  | 1                       | 1                               | 1                              | —                             | —                              | —                             | Male   | 35—59 |
| —                                 | —  | —                       | —                               | —                              | —                             | —                              | —                             | Female |       |
| —                                 | —  | —                       | —                               | —                              | —                             | —                              | —                             | Male   | 60+   |
| —                                 | —  | —                       | —                               | —                              | —                             | —                              | —                             | Female |       |
| 3                                 | 3  | 1                       | 1                               | 1                              | 1                             | 1                              | —                             | Male   | Total |
| —                                 | —  | —                       | —                               | —                              | —                             | —                              | 1                             | Female |       |

TABLE - 5

**Distribution of persons engaged in the Craft classified by Relationship with the Head, Nature of work performed and the Person Imparted Training**

| Relationship<br>with head | Number of<br>persons<br>engaged in<br>the craft | Number of persons engaged in the craft<br>by nature of work performed              |          |                     |
|---------------------------|---|--|----------|---------------------|
|                           |   | Spinning and weaving, where the relation<br>noted at Col. 1 received training from |          |                     |
|                           |   | Mother   | Sister   | Husband's<br>mother |
| 1                         | 2   | 3  | 4        | 5                   |
| Self                      | 24  | 20   | —        | 4                   |
| Son's wife                | 5   | 4  | —        | 1                   |
| Daughter                  | 45  | 44   | 1        | —                   |
| Brother's wife            | 2   | 2  | —        | —                   |
| Wife                      | 37  | 31   | —        | 6                   |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>113</b>                                      | <b>101</b>   | <b>1</b> | <b>11</b>           |

TABLE - 6

**Distribution of persons engaged in the Craft classified by Relationship with the Head, the person imparted Training, Period of Training and Remuneration**

| Relationship with the head | Number of persons engaged in the craft | Number of persons engaged in the craft who received training from |                                   |  |                                   |                                   |
|----------------------------|--|---|-----------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
|                            |  | Mother for the period   |                                   | Husband's mother for the period              |                                   | Sister for the period             |
|                            |  | 6 months to 2 years and paid no remuneration                      | 2+ years and paid no remuneration | 6 months to 2 years and paid no remuneration | 2+ years and paid no remuneration | 2+ years and paid no remuneration |
| 1                          | 2                                      | 3   | 4                                 | 5  | 6                                 | 7                                 |
| Self                       | 24                                     | —   | 20                                | —  | 4                                 | —                                 |
| Son's wife                 | 5                                      | —   | 4                                 | —  | 1                                 | —                                 |
| Daughter                   | 45                                     | 5   | 39                                | —  | —                                 | 1                                 |
| Brother's wife             | 2                                      | 1   | 1                                 | —  | —                                 | —                                 |
| Wife                       | 37                                     | 2   | 29                                | 1  | 5                                 | —                                 |
| <b>Total</b>               | <b>113</b>                             | <b>8</b>  | <b>93</b>                         | <b>1</b>                                     | <b>10</b>                         | <b>1</b>                          |

Note: All the households reported that the training is obligatory.

TABLE - 7

**Distribution of households Manufacturing Handicraft Items for purpose as related to Educational Level of Head of the Household**

| Educational level<br>of head of the<br>household | Name of<br>handicraft<br>items manu-<br>factured | Number of<br>households<br>manufac-<br>turing<br>handicraft<br>items | Number reporting<br>purpose for which<br>the particular item<br>is used |                      | Remarks   |
|--|--|--|---|----------------------|---|
|  |  |  | Used as<br>winter-<br>wrapp er  | For shirting<br>etc. |   |
| 1  | 2  | 3  | 4   | 5                    | 6   |
| Illiterate                                       | Bor-kapor  | 37   | 37  | —                    | The total number<br>of households shown<br>in col 3 and 4<br>is apparently more<br>than the actual<br>number of household<br>surveyed because<br>the same household<br>reported producing<br>different articles<br>as stated in<br>Colmn. No. 2 |
|  | Scarf  | 30   | 30  | —                    |   |
|  | Cloth for shirting<br>etc.                       | 22   | —   | 22                   |   |
| Literate without<br>educational level            | Bor-kapor  | 6  | 6   | —                    |   |
|  | Scarf  | 5  | 5   | —                    |   |
|  | Cloth for shirting<br>etc.                       | 3  | —   | 3                    |   |
| Primary or Junior<br>Basic                       | Bor-kapor  | 8  | 8   | —                    |   |
|  | Scarf  | 4  | 4   | —                    |   |
|  | Cloth for shirting<br>etc.                       | 4  | —   | 4                    |   |
| Middle   | Bor-kapor  | 8  | 8   | —                    |   |
|  | Scarf  | 2  | 2   | —                    |   |
|  | Cloth for shirting<br>etc.                       | 4  | —   | 4                    |   |

TABLE - 8

**Distribution of households manufacturing Handicraft Objects by number of Items manufactured in a year and Seasonal Variation in the production of the Items as related to Educational Level of Head of the Household**

| Educational level of head of the household | Name of handicraft items manufactured | Number of households manufacturing handicraft items | Number reporting number of items manufactured in a year |                         | Remarks   |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|-------------------------|---|
|  |                                       |   | Bor-kapor, Scarf  | Cloth for shirting etc. |   |
| 1  | 2                                     | 3   | 4<br>Less than 10                                       | 5                       | 6   |
| Illiterate                                 | Bor-kapor                             | 37  | 37  | —                       | 1. Seasonal variation could not be ascertained as the females engaged themselves in weaving only in leisure time. |
|  | Scarf (Ladies)                        | 30  | 30  | —                       |   |
|  | Cloth for shirting                    | 22  | —   | 250 mtrs.               |   |
| Literate without educational level         | Bor-kapor                             | 6   | 6   | —                       | 2. Cloth for shirting cannot be measured in terms of number hence shown in metre.                                 |
|  | Scarf (Ladies)                        | 5   | 5   | —                       |   |
|  | Cloth for shirting                    | 3   | —   | 32 mtrs.                |   |
| Primary or Junior basic                    | Bor-kapor                             | 8   | 8   | —                       |   |
|  | Scarf                                 | 4   | 4   | —                       |   |
|  | Cloth for shirting                    | 4   | —   | 44 mtrs.                |   |
| Middle                                     | Bor-kapor                             | 8   | 8   | —                       |   |
|  | Scarf                                 | 2   | 2   | —                       |   |
|  | Cloth for shirting                    | 4   | —   | 42 mtrs.                |   |

TABLE - 9

**Particulars of Finished products Sold Locally/Exported classified by Educational Level of Head of the Household**

| Educational level of head of the households | Name of handi-craft items | Number of households manufacturing the items | Quantity sold in broad ranges (per annum) |                   | No. of households reported having sold finished products locally (within the Dist.) | Remarks   |
|---|---------------------------|--|---|-------------------|---|---|
|   |                           |  | Broad ranges                              | No. of households |   |   |
| 1   | 2                         | 3  | 4   | 5                 | 6   | 7   |
| Illiterate                                  | Bor-kapor                 | 37   | Below 10 pieces                           | 37                | 37  | Figure shown in column. 3, 5 & 6 are more than the actual households as same household produces different kinds of handicraft items |
|   |                           |  | 11-20 pieces                              | —                 | —   |   |
|   |                           |  | 21+ pieces                                | —                 | —   |   |
|   | Scarf                     | 30   | Below 10 pieces                           | 30                | 30  |   |
|   |                           |  | 11-20 pieces                              | —                 | —   |   |
|   |                           |  | 21+ pieces                                | —                 | —   |   |
|   | Cloth for shirting etc.   | 22   | Below 10 pieces                           | 10                | 10  |   |
|   |                           |  | 11-20 pieces                              | 12                | 12  |   |
|   |                           |  | 21+ pieces                                | —                 | —   |   |
| Literate without Educational level          | Bor-kapor                 | 6  | Below 10 pieces                           | 6                 | 6   |   |
|   |                           |  | 11-20 pieces                              | —                 | —   |   |
|   |                           |  | 21+ pieces                                | —                 | —   |   |
|   | Scarf                     | 5  | Below 10 pieces                           | 5                 | 5   |   |
|   |                           |  | 11-20 pieces                              | —                 | —   |   |
|   |                           |  | 21+ pieces                                | —                 | —   |   |
|   | Cloth for shirting etc.   | 3  | Below 10 pieces                           | 2                 | 2   |   |
|   |                           |  | 11-20 pieces                              | 1                 | 1   |   |
|   |                           |  | 21+ pieces                                | —                 | —   |   |
| Primary or Junior Basic                     | Bor-kapor                 | 8  | Below 10 pieces                           | 8                 | 8   |   |
|   |                           |  | 11-20 pieces                              | —                 | —   |   |
|   |                           |  | 21+ pieces                                | —                 | —   |   |
|   | Scarf                     | 4  | Below 10 pieces                           | 4                 | 4   |   |
|   |                           |  | 11-20 pieces                              | —                 | —   |   |
|   |                           |  | 21+ pieces                                | —                 | —   |   |
|   | Cloth for shirting etc.   | 4  | Below 10 pieces                           | 1                 | 1   |   |
|   |                           |  | 11-20 pieces                              | 3                 | 3   |   |
|   |                           |  | 21+ pieces                                | —                 | —   |   |

(Contd.)



TABLE - 9 (Concl'd.)

| Educational level of head of the households | Name of handi-craft items | Number of households manufacturing the items | Quantity sold in broad ranges (per annum) |                   | No. of households reported having sold finished products locally (within the Dist.) | Remarks |
|---|---------------------------|--|---|-------------------|---|---------|
|   |                           |  | Broad ranges                              | No. of households |   |         |
| 1   | 2                         | 3  | 4   | 5                 | 6   | 7       |
| Middle                                      | Bor-kapor                 | 8  | Below 10 pieces                           | 8                 | 8   |         |
|   |                           |  | 11-20 pieces                              | —                 | —   |         |
|   |                           |  | 21+ pieces                                | —                 | —   |         |
|   | Scarf                     | 2  | Below 10 pieces                           | 2                 | 2   |         |
|   |                           |  | 11-20 pieces                              | —                 | —   |         |
|   |                           |  | 21+ pieces                                | —                 | —   |         |
|   | Cloth for shirting etc.   | 4  | Below 10 pieces                           | 3                 | 3   |         |
|   |                           |  | 11-20 pieces                              | 1                 | 1   |         |
|   |                           |  | 21+ pieces                                | —                 | —   |         |

TABLE - 10

**Details of households reported having Faced Problems to Dispose off Finished Products classified by Educational Level of Head of the Household**

| Educational level of head of the household | Name of handicraft items | Number of households manufacturing the items | Number of households reported having faced problems to dispose off finished products due to lack of proper marketing facility | Remarks   |
|--|--------------------------|--|---|---|
| 1  | 2                        | 3  | 4   | 5   |
| Illiterate                                 | Bor-kapor                | 37   | 30  | As it is a female oriented craft there is acute shortage of                     |
|  | Scarf                    | 30   | 28  |   |
|  | Cloth for shirting etc.  | 22   | 17  |   |
| Literate without Educational level         | Bor-kapor                | 6  | 5   | menfolk to dispose off the finished product in various market and other places. |
|  | Scarf                    | 5  | 3   |   |
|  | Cloth for shirting etc.  | 3  | 3   |   |
| Primary or Junior Basic                    | Bor-kapor                | 8  | 8   |   |
|  | Scarf                    | 4  | 3   |   |
|  | Cloth for shirting etc.  | 4  | 2   |   |
| Middle                                     | Bor-kapor                | 8  | 8   |   |
|  | Scarf                    | 2  | 2   |   |
|  | Cloth for shirting etc.  | 4  | 3   |   |

TABLE - 11

**Distribution of households reported about starting of the Craft in the Village classified by Broad Age-group of Head of the Household**

| Broad age-group of head of the household | Number of households engaged in the craft | Number of households reported about the starting of the craft in the village |                  | Remarks |
|--|---|--|------------------|---------|
|  |   | Before 1900  | Period not known |         |
| 1  | 2   | 3  | 4                | 5       |
| 0-14                                     | —   | —  | —                |         |
| 15-34                                    | 6   | 5  | 1                |         |
| 35-59                                    | 51  | 41   | 10               |         |
| 60+                                      | 3   | 2  | 1                |         |

TABLE

## Number of households reporting about the number of households and persons Engaged

| Broad age-group | Number of households engaged in the craft | Number of households reported about the member of households |     |     |             |     |     |             |     |     |
|-----------------|---|--|-----|-----|-------------|-----|-----|-------------|-----|-----|
|                 |   | Before 1940  |     |     | 1940-1950   |     |     | 1951-1960   |     |     |
|                 |   | Less than 5  | 5-9 | 10+ | Less than 5 | 5-9 | 10+ | Less than 5 | 5-9 | 10+ |
| 1               | 2   | 3  | 4   | 5   | 6           | 7   | 8   | 9           | 10  | 11  |
| 15-34           | 6   | --   | --  | 6   | --          | --  | 6   | --          | --  | 6   |
| 35-59           | 51  | --   | --  | 51  | --          | --  | 51  | --          | --  | 51  |
| 60+             | 3   | --   | --  | 3   | --          | --  | 3   | --          | --  | 3   |

**in Craft in the Village during different period classified by Broad Age-Group of Head of the Household**

engaged in craft in the village during the period

| 1961-1970   |     |     | 1971-1980   |     |     | At present  |     |     | Broad age-group |
|-------------|-----|-----|-------------|-----|-----|-------------|-----|-----|-----------------|
| Less than 5 | 5-9 | 10+ | Less than 5 | 5-9 | 10+ | Less than 5 | 5-9 | 10+ |                 |
| 12          | 13  | 14  | 15          | 16  | 17  | 18          | 19  | 20  | 1               |
| —           | —   | 6   | —           | —   | 6   | —           | —   | 6   | 15-34           |
| —           | —   | 51  | —           | —   | 51  | —           | —   | 51  | 35-59           |
| —           | —   | 3   | —           | —   | 3   | —           | —   | 3   | 60+             |

(Contd.)

TABLE

| Broad age-group | Number of households engaged in the craft | Number of households reported about the persons engaged |       |     |              |       |     |              |       |     |
|-----------------|---|---|-------|-----|--------------|-------|-----|--------------|-------|-----|
|                 |   | Before 1940   |       |     | 1940-1950    |       |     | 1951-1960    |       |     |
|                 |   | Less than 10  | 10-19 | 20+ | Less than 10 | 10-19 | 20+ | Less than 10 | 10-19 | 20+ |
| 1               | 2   | 21  | 22    | 23  | 24           | 25    | 26  | 27           | 28    | 29  |
| 15-34           | 6   | -   | -     | 6   | -            | -     | 6   | -            | -     | 6   |
| 35-59           | 51  | -   | -     | 51  | -            | -     | 51  | -            | -     | 51  |
| 60+             | 3   | -   | -     | 3   | -            | -     | 3   | -            | -     | 3   |

| in craft in the village during the period |       |     |              |       |     |              |       |     |                 |
|---|-------|-----|--------------|-------|-----|--------------|-------|-----|-----------------|
| 1961-1970                                 |       |     | 1971-1980    |       |     | At present   |       |     | Broad age-group |
| Less than 10                              | 10-19 | 20+ | Less than 10 | 10-19 | 20+ | Less than 10 | 10-19 | 20+ |                 |
| 30  | 31    | 32  | 33           | 34    | 35  | 36           | 37    | 38  | 1               |
| -   | -     | 6   | -            | -     | 6   | -            | -     | 6   | 15-34           |
| -   | -     | 51  | -            | -     | 51  | -            | -     | 51  | 35-39           |
| -   | -     | 3   | -            | -     | 3   | -            | -     | 3   | 60+             |

TABLE - 13

**Households reported Having the need to observe Purity/ Pollution associated with the Craft with Reasons thereof classified by Broad Age-group of Head of the Household**

| Broad age-group of head of the household | Number of households engaged in the craft | Number of households reported having need to observe the Purity/Pollution associated with the craft because of |  | Remarks  |
|--|---|--|--|--|
|  |   | Health reason of the weavers (female) during the menstrual period  | Religions customs to be followed during the mourning period in case of death |  |
| 1  | 2   | 3  | 4  | 5  |
| 15 – 34                                  | 6   | 6  | 6  | Reason shown in Column No. 4 is in addition to reason shown in Column No. 3. |
| 35 – 59                                  | 51  | 51   | 51   |  |
| 60+                                      | 3   | 3  | 3  |  |



**APPENDIX – IV**  
TABLES BASED ON HOUSEHOLD SCHEDULES  
(NON-PRACTISING HOUSEHOLDS)



TABLE - 1

**Distribution of households classified by Religion, Caste/Tribe/Community, Sex and Educational Level of Head of the Household**

| Name of religion | Name of Caste/Tribe/Community | Number of households by sex of head of the household |        | Number of households by educational level of head of the household |                         |        |                                   |                    |
|------------------|-------------------------------|--|--------|--|-------------------------|--------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
|                  |                               | Male   | Female | Illiterate   | Primary or Junior basic | Middle | Matriculation or Higher Secondary | Graduate and above |
|                  |                               |  |        |  |                         |        |                                   |                    |
| Hinduism         | Kalita                        | 9  | 3      | 3  | 3                       | 2      | 2                                 | 2                  |
| "                | Rajbangshi                    | 2  | —      | 2  | —                       | —      | —                                 | —                  |
| "                | Baishya                       | —  | 1      | 1  | —                       | —      | —                                 | —                  |
| Total            |                               | 11   | 4      | 6  | 3                       | 2      | 2                                 | 2                  |

TABLE - 2

**Distribution of households classified by Traditional Occupation and Religion,  
Caste/Tribe/ Community of Head of the Household**

| Name of religion | Name of Caste/Tribe/Community | Number of households | Number of households where traditional occupation of head of the household is |             |
|------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|---|-------------|
|                  |                               |                      | Weaving   | Cultivation |
| 1                | 2                             | 3                    | 4   | 5           |
| Hinduism         | Kalita                        | 12                   | 3   | 9           |
| "                | Rajbangshi                    | 2                    | —   | 2           |
| "                | Baishya                       | 1                    | 1   | —           |
|                  | <b>Total</b>                  | <b>15</b>            | <b>4</b>  | <b>11</b>   |

TABLE - 3

**Distribution of Workers and Non-Workers classified by Sex and Educational level**

| Educational level                  | Total population |           |           | Number of workers |           |          | Number of non-workers |           |           |
|------------------------------------|------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|----------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|
|                                    | Person           | Male      | Female    | Person            | Male      | Female   | Person                | Male      | Female    |
| 1                                  | 2                | 3         | 4         | 5                 | 6         | 7        | 8                     | 9         | 10        |
| Illiterate                         | 18               | 7         | 11        | 4                 | 3         | 1        | 14                    | 4         | 10        |
| Literate without educational level | 4                | 1         | 3         | —                 | —         | —        | 4                     | 1         | 3         |
| Primary or Junior basic            | 14               | 4         | 10        | 4                 | 3         | 1        | 10                    | 1         | 9         |
| Middle                             | 18               | 9         | 9         | 9                 | 6         | 3        | 9                     | 3         | 6         |
| Matriculation or Higher Secondary  | 9                | 7         | 2         | 3                 | 2         | 1        | 6                     | 5         | 1         |
| Graduate and above                 | 3                | 2         | 1         | 3                 | 2         | 1        | —                     | —         | —         |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>66</b>        | <b>30</b> | <b>36</b> | <b>23</b>         | <b>16</b> | <b>7</b> | <b>43</b>             | <b>14</b> | <b>29</b> |

TABLE

## Distribution of Workers classified by Traditional

| Traditional<br>occupation<br>of head<br>of the<br>household | Sex of<br>head<br>of the<br>house-<br>hold | Total<br>number<br>of<br>workers | Number of workers                         |                 |          |          |                      |                        |                 |
|---|--|----------------------------------|---|-----------------|----------|----------|----------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
|   |  |                                  | 15 – 34 years where present occupation is |                 |          |          |                      |                        |                 |
|   |  |                                  | Same as<br>in col.1                       | If different    |          |          |                      |                        |                 |
|   |  |                                  |   | Shop-<br>keeper | Spinning | Business | Medical<br>attendant | Contractor<br>(Timber) | Forest<br>guard |
| 1   | 2  | 3                                | 4   | 5               | 6        | 7        | 8                    | 9                      | 10              |
| Weaving   | Male                                       | —                                | —   | —               | —        | —        | —                    | —                      | —               |
|   | Female                                     | 2                                | —   | —               | 2        | —        | —                    | —                      | —               |
| Cultivation   | Male                                       | 21                               | 2   | 1               | —        | 1        | 1                    | 1                      | 1               |
|   | Female                                     | —                                | —   | —               | —        | —        | —                    | —                      | —               |

**and Present Occupations, Sex and Broad age-group**

| by age-group |   |              |            |          |              |                                       |    | Sex of head of the household | Traditional occupation of head of the household |
|--------------|---|--------------|------------|----------|--------------|---------------------------------------|----|------------------------------|---|
| Teaching     | 35 – 59 years where present occupation is |              |            |          |              | 60+ years where present occupation is |    |                              |   |
|              | Same as in Col. 1                         | If different |            |          |              | Same as in Col. 1                     |    | 1                            | 2   |
| 11           | 12  | Clerk (Bank) | Contractor | Teaching | Daily labour | Peon                                  | 18 |                              |   |
| —            | —   | —            | —          | —        | —            | —                                     | —  | Male                         | Weaving   |
| —            | —   | —            | —          | —        | —            | —                                     | —  | Female                       |   |
| 2            | 2   | 1            | 1          | 3        | 2            | 1                                     | 2  | Male                         | Cultivation                                     |
| —            | —   | —            | —          | —        | —            | —                                     | —  | Female                       |   |

TABLE

## Distribution of Workers classified by Traditional and Present occupation, Sex and

| Traditional<br>occupation<br>of head<br>of the<br>household | Sex of<br>head<br>of the<br>household | Total<br>number of<br>workers | Number of workers                       |  |                               |                    |
|---|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|--|-------------------------------|--------------------|
|   |                                       |                               | 15-34 years where present occupation is |  |                               |                    |
|   |                                       |                               | Same as<br>in col.1                     | If different, the reason for leaving<br>the traditional occupation |                               |                    |
|   |                                       |                               |   | Present<br>occupation<br>more paying                               | Want of<br>cultivable<br>land | Lack of<br>finance |
| 1   | 2                                     | 3                             | 4                                       | 5  | 6                             | 7                  |
| Weaving   | Male                                  | —                             | —                                       | —  | —                             | —                  |
|   | Female                                | 2                             | —                                       | —  | —                             | 2                  |
| Cultivation   | Male                                  | 21                            | 2                                       | 5  | 2                             | —                  |
|   | Female                                | —                             | —                                       | —  | —                             | —                  |



**Broad age-group and the Reason for Leaving the Traditional Occupation**

| by age-group | 35 – 59 years where present occupation is |   |                         |                 | 60+ years where present occupation is | Sex of head of the household | Traditional occupation of head of the household |
|--------------|---|---|-------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
|              | Same as in Col. 1                         | If different, the reason for leaving traditional occupation |                         |                 |                                       |                              |   |
|              |   | Present occupation more paying                              | Want of cultivable land | Lack of finance |                                       |                              |   |
|              |   |   |                         |                 |                                       |                              |   |
| 8            | 9   | 10  | 11                      | 12              | 2                                     | 1                            |   |
| —            | —   | —   | —                       | —               | Male                                  | Weaving                      |   |
| —            | —   | —   | —                       | —               | Female                                |                              |   |
| 2            | 5   | 2   | 1                       | 2               | Male                                  | Cultivation                  |   |
| —            | —   | —   | —                       | —               | Female                                |                              |   |

TABLE - 6

**Distribution of Non-Workers by Sex, Age and Type of Activity**

| Age-Group    | Number of Non-Workers |           |           | Number of Non-Workers by type of activity and Sex |           |                |           |                    |          |           |          |
|--------------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|---|-----------|----------------|-----------|--------------------|----------|-----------|----------|
|              |                       |           |           | Full-time student                                 |           | Household duty |           | Seeking employment |          | Dependent |          |
|              | Person                | Male      | Female    | Male  | Female    | Male           | Female    | Male               | Female   | Male      | Female   |
| 1            | 2                     | 3         | 4         | 5   | 6         | 7              | 8         | 9                  | 10       | 11        | 12       |
| 0-14         | 15                    | 7         | 8         | 4   | 6         | -              | -         | -                  | -        | 3         | 2        |
| 15-19        | 10                    | 5         | 5         | 5   | 4         | -              | 1         | -                  | -        | -         | -        |
| 20-24        | 7                     | 2         | 5         | 1   | 2         | -              | 3         | 1                  | -        | -         | -        |
| 25-29        | 1                     | -         | 1         | -   | -         | -              | 1         | -                  | -        | -         | -        |
| 30-39        | 1                     | -         | 1         | -   | -         | -              | 1         | -                  | -        | -         | -        |
| 40-49        | 2                     | -         | 2         | -   | -         | -              | 2         | -                  | -        | -         | -        |
| 50-59        | 5                     | -         | 5         | -   | -         | -              | 5         | -                  | -        | -         | -        |
| 60+          | 2                     | -         | 2         | -   | -         | -              | 2         | -                  | -        | -         | -        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>43</b>             | <b>14</b> | <b>29</b> | <b>10</b>   | <b>12</b> | <b>-</b>       | <b>15</b> | <b>1</b>           | <b>-</b> | <b>3</b>  | <b>2</b> |

TABLE - 7

**Households reported reasons for giving - up the Craft classified by Sex and Educational level of Head of the Household**

| Educational level of head of the household | Sex of head of the household | Number of households | Number of households having given-up the craft since |              |                         |                  |                               |                         |                               |   |
|--|------------------------------|----------------------|--|--------------|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
|  |                              |                      | Less than 5 years due to                             |              |                         | 5—9 years due to |                               | 10—19 years due to      |                               |   |
|  |                              |                      | Lack of finance and time                             | Lack of time | Poor health and old age | Lack of finance  | Lack of time and helping hand | Poor health and old age | Lack of time and helping hand |   |
| 1  | 2                            | 3                    | 4  | 5            | 6                       | 7                | 8                             | 9                       | 10                            |   |
| Illiterate                                 | Male                         | 2                    | 1  | —            | —                       | —                | —                             | —                       | 1                             | — |
|  | Female                       | 4                    | —  | —            | 1                       | 1                | —                             | —                       | 2                             | — |
| Literate without educational level         | Male                         | —                    | —  | —            | —                       | —                | —                             | —                       | —                             | — |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  | —            | —                       | —                | —                             | —                       | —                             | — |
| Primary or junior basic                    | Male                         | 3                    | 1  | —            | —                       | —                | —                             | 1                       | —                             | 1 |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  | —            | —                       | —                | —                             | —                       | —                             | — |
| Middle                                     | Male                         | 2                    | 1  | 1            | —                       | —                | —                             | —                       | —                             | — |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  | —            | —                       | —                | —                             | —                       | —                             | — |
| Matriculation or Higher Secondary          | Male                         | 2                    | —  | —            | —                       | —                | —                             | 2                       | —                             | — |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  | —            | —                       | —                | —                             | —                       | —                             | — |
| Graduate and above                         | Male                         | 2                    | —  | 1            | —                       | —                | —                             | 1                       | —                             | — |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  | —            | —                       | —                | —                             | —                       | —                             | — |
| Total                                      | Male                         | 11                   | 3  | 2            | —                       | —                | —                             | 4                       | 1                             | 1 |
|  | Female                       | 4                    | —  | —            | 1                       | 1                | —                             | —                       | 2                             | — |

TABLE - 8

**Households reported reasons for giving-up the Craft classified by  
Sex and Occupation of Head of the Household**

| Occupation<br>of head of the<br>household | Sex of head<br>of the<br>household | Number of<br>households | Number of households having given-up the craft since |                 |                                   |                    |  |                               |  |
|---|------------------------------------|-------------------------|--|-----------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|--|-------------------------------|--|
|   |                                    |                         | Less than 5 years due to                             |                 |                                   | 5—9 years due to   |  |                               | 10—19 years<br>due to                  |
|   |                                    |                         | Lack of<br>finance<br>and time                       | Lack of<br>time | Poor<br>health<br>and old-<br>age | Lack of<br>finance | Lack of<br>time and<br>helping<br>hand | Old-age<br>and poor<br>health | Lack of<br>time and<br>helping<br>hand |
| 1   | 2                                  | 3                       | 4  | 5               | 6                                 | 7                  | 8                                      | 9                             | 10                                     |
| Cultivation                               | Male                               | 4                       | 1  | —               | —                                 | —                  | 1                                      | 1                             | 1                                      |
|   | Female                             | —                       | —  | —               | —                                 | —                  | —                                      | —                             | —                                      |
| Teaching                                  | Male                               | 2                       | —  | —               | —                                 | —                  | 2                                      | —                             | —                                      |
|   | Female                             | —                       | —  | —               | —                                 | —                  | —                                      | —                             | —                                      |
| Contractor                                | Male                               | 1                       | —  | 1               | —                                 | —                  | —                                      | —                             | —                                      |
|   | Female                             | —                       | —  | —               | —                                 | —                  | —                                      | —                             | —                                      |
| Daily labourer                            | Male                               | 1                       | 1  | —               | —                                 | —                  | —                                      | —                             | —                                      |
|   | Female                             | —                       | —  | —               | —                                 | —                  | —                                      | —                             | —                                      |
| Shop—keeper<br>(Tea—stall)                | Male                               | 1                       | 1  | —               | —                                 | —                  | —                                      | —                             | —                                      |
|   | Female                             | —                       | —  | —               | —                                 | —                  | —                                      | —                             | —                                      |
| Peon                                      | Male                               | 1                       | —  | —               | —                                 | —                  | 1                                      | —                             | —                                      |
|   | Female                             | —                       | —  | —               | —                                 | —                  | —                                      | —                             | —                                      |
| Clerk                                     | Male                               | 1                       | —  | 1               | —                                 | —                  | —                                      | —                             | —                                      |
|   | Female                             | —                       | —  | —               | —                                 | —                  | —                                      | —                             | —                                      |
| Non-worker                                | Male                               | —                       | —  | —               | —                                 | —                  | —                                      | —                             | —                                      |
|   | Female                             | 4                       | —  | —               | 1                                 | 1                  | —                                      | 2                             | —                                      |
| Total                                     | Male                               | 11                      | 3  | 2               | —                                 | —                  | 4                                      | 1                             | 1                                      |
|   | Female                             | 4                       | —  | —               | 1                                 | 1                  | —                                      | 2                             | —                                      |

TABLE - 9

## Households reported reasons for giving-up the Craft classified by Broad age-group of Head of the Household

| Broad age-group of head of the household | Sex of head of the household | Number of households | Number of households having given up the craft since |              |                         |                  |                               |                         |                               |   |
|--|------------------------------|----------------------|--|--------------|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
|  |                              |                      | Less than 5 years due to                             |              |                         | 5—9 years due to |                               | 10—19 years due to      |                               |   |
|  |                              |                      | Lack of finance and time                             | Lack of time | Old age and poor health | Lack of finance  | Lack of time and helping hand | Poor health and old age | Lack of time and helping hand |   |
| 1  | 2                            | 3                    | 4  | 5            | 6                       | 7                | 8                             | 9                       | 10                            |   |
| 15—34                                    | Male                         | 1                    | 1  | —            | —                       | —                | —                             | —                       | —                             | — |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  | —            | —                       | —                | —                             | —                       | —                             | — |
| 35—59                                    | Male                         | 8                    | 2  | 2            | —                       | —                | 4                             | —                       | —                             |   |
|  | Female                       | 2                    | —  | —            | 1                       | 1                | —                             | —                       | —                             |   |
| 60+                                      | Male                         | 2                    | —  | —            | —                       | —                | —                             | 1                       | 1                             |   |
|  | Female                       | 2                    | —  | —            | —                       | —                | —                             | 2                       | —                             |   |
| Total                                    | Male                         | 11                   | 3  | 2            | —                       | —                | 4                             | 1                       | 1                             |   |
|  | Female                       | 4                    | —  | —            | 1                       | 1                | —                             | 2                       | —                             |   |

TABLE - 10

**Distribution of households having members with necessary Skill to practise the craft and reported reasons for not practising the craft classified by Religion, Caste/Tribe/Community of Head of the Household**

| Religion, Caste/Tribe/<br>Community of head<br>of the household |                           | Sex of head<br>of the house-<br>hold | Number of<br>households | Number of<br>households<br>having no<br>members<br>with neces-<br>sary skill<br>to practise<br>the craft | Number of households having members<br>with necessary skill to practise the<br>craft but not practising the<br>same due to |                                     |                                 |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|--|--|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Religion  | Caste/Tribe/<br>Community |                                      |                         |  | Lack of<br>finance   | Lack of time<br>and helping<br>hand | Employed<br>in other<br>service |
| 1   | 2                         | 3                                    | 4                       | 5  | 6  | 7                                   | 8                               |
| Hinduism  | Kalita                    | Male                                 | 9                       | 1  | 2  | 2                                   | 4                               |
|   |                           | Female                               | 3                       | 3  | —  | —                                   | —                               |
| •   | Baishya                   | Male                                 | —                       | —  | —  | —                                   | —                               |
|   |                           | Female                               | 1                       | —  | 1  | —                                   | —                               |
| •   | Rajbangshi                | Male                                 | 2                       | 1  | 1  | —                                   | —                               |
|   |                           | Female                               | —                       | —  | —  | —                                   | —                               |

TABLE-11

**Distribution of households having member(s) with necessary Skill to practise the Craft and reported reason for not-practising the Craft classified by Educational level of Head of the Household.**

| Educational level of head of the household | Sex of head of the household | Number of households | Number of households having no member with necessary skill to practise the craft | Number of households having member (s) with necessary skill to practise the craft but not practising the same due to |                               |                            |
|--|------------------------------|----------------------|--|--|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
|  |                              |                      |  | Lack of finance  | Lack of time and helping hand | Employed in other services |
| 1  | 2                            | 3                    | 4  | 5  | 6                             | 7                          |
| Illiterate                                 | Male                         | 2                    | 1  | 1  | —                             | —                          |
|  | Female                       | 4                    | 3  | 1  | —                             | —                          |
| Literate without educational level         | Male                         | —                    | —  | —  | —                             | —                          |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  | —  | —                             | —                          |
| Primary or junior basic                    | Male                         | 3                    | 1  | 1  | —                             | 1                          |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  | —  | —                             | —                          |
| Middle                                     | Male                         | 2                    | —  | 1  | 1                             | —                          |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  | —  | —                             | —                          |
| Matriculation or Higher Secondary          | Male                         | 2                    | —  | —  | 1                             | 1                          |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  | —  | —                             | —                          |
| Graduate and above                         | Male                         | 2                    | —  | —  | —                             | 2                          |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  | —  | —                             | —                          |
| Total                                      | Male                         | 11                   | 2  | 3  | 2                             | 4                          |
|  | Female                       | 4                    | 3  | 1  | —                             | —                          |

TABLE - 12

**Distribution of households having member(s) with necessary skill to practise the Craft and reported Reasons for not practising the Craft classified by Occupation of Head of the Household**

| Occupation of head of the household | Sex of head of the household | Number of households | Number of households having no members with necessary skill to practise the craft | Number of households having member (s) with necessary skill to practise the craft but not practising the same due to reasons |                               |                            |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|---|--|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
|                                     |                              |                      |   | Lack of finance  | Lack of time and helping hand | Employed in other services |
| 1                                   | 2                            | 3                    | 4   | 5  | 6                             | 7                          |
| Cultivation                         | Male                         | 4                    | 2   | 1  | —                             | 1                          |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —   | —  | —                             | —                          |
| Teaching                            | Male                         | 2                    | —   | —  | —                             | 2                          |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —   | —  | —                             | —                          |
| Contractor                          | Male                         | 1                    | —   | —  | 1                             | —                          |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —   | —  | —                             | —                          |
| Daily labourer                      | Male                         | 1                    | —   | 1  | —                             | —                          |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —   | —  | —                             | —                          |
| Shop—keeper<br>(Tea—stall)          | Male                         | 1                    | —   | 1  | —                             | —                          |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —   | —  | —                             | —                          |
| Peon                                | Male                         | 1                    | —   | —  | 1                             | —                          |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —   | —  | —                             | —                          |
| Clerk                               | Male                         | 1                    | —   | —  | —                             | 1                          |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —   | —  | —                             | —                          |
| Non—worker                          | Male                         | —                    | —   | —  | —                             | —                          |
|                                     | Female                       | 4                    | 3   | 1  | —                             | —                          |



TABLE - 13

**Households having member(s) with necessary Skill and who are not practising the Craft now but are considering to take-up the Craft as an occupation classified by Sex, Religion and Caste/Tribe/Community of Head of the Household**

| Religion, Caste/Tribe/<br>Community of head<br>of the household |                           | Sex of head<br>of the house-<br>hold | Number of<br>households | Number of<br>households<br>having no<br>member with<br>necessary<br>skill to prac-<br>tise the craft | Number of households having<br>member(s) with necessary skill not<br>practising the craft now but are |   |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|--|---|---|
| Religion  | Caste/Tribe/<br>Community |                                      |                         |  | Considering to<br>take-up the craft<br>as an occupation   | Not considering to<br>take-up the craft<br>as an occupation |
| 1   | 2                         | 3                                    | 4                       | 5  | 6   | 7   |
| Hinduism  | Kalita                    | Male                                 | 9                       | 1  | 4   | 4   |
|   |                           | Female                               | 3                       | 3  | —   | —   |
| "   | Baishya                   | Male                                 | —                       | —  | —   | —   |
|   |                           | Female                               | 1                       | —  | 1   | —   |
| "   | Rajbangshi                | Male                                 | 2                       | 1  | 1   | —   |
|   |                           | Female                               | —                       | —  | —   | —   |

TABLE-14

**Households having member(s) with necessary Skill and who are not practising the Craft but now are considering to take-up the Craft as an occupation-classified by Sex and Educational level of Head of the Household.**

| Educational level of head of the household | Sex of head of the household | Number of households | Number of households having no member (s) with necessary skill to practise the craft | Number of households having member(s) with necessary skill not practising the craft now but are |   |
|--|------------------------------|----------------------|--|---|---|
|  |                              |                      |  | Considering to take-up the craft as an occupation   | Not considering to take-up the craft as an occupation |
| 1  | 2                            | 3                    | 4  | 5   | 6   |
| Illiterate                                 | Male                         | 2                    | 1  | 1   | —   |
|  | Female                       | 4                    | 3  | 1   | —   |
| Literate without educational level         | Male                         | —                    | —  | —   | —   |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  | —   | —   |
| Primary or junior basic                    | Male                         | 3                    | 1  | 1   | 1   |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  | —   | —   |
| Middle                                     | Male                         | 2                    | —  | 2   | —   |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  | —   | —   |
| Matriculation or Higher Secondary          | Male                         | 2                    | —  | 1   | 1   |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  | —   | —   |
| Graduate and above                         | Male                         | 2                    | —  | —   | 2   |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  | —   | —   |

TABLE - 15

**Households having member (s) with necessary Skill and who are not practising the Craft now but are considering to take-up the Craft as an occupation classified by Sex and Occupation of Head of the Household**

| Occupation of head of the household | Sex of head of the household | Number of households | Number of households having no member (s) with necessary skill to practise the craft | Number of households having member(s) with necessary skill not practising the craft now but are |   |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|--|---|---|
|                                     |                              |                      |  | Considering to take-up the craft as an occupation   | Not considering to take-up the craft as an occupation |
| 1                                   | 2                            | 3                    | 4  | 5   | 6   |
| Cultivation                         | Male                         | 4                    | 2  | 1   | 1   |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —  | —   | —   |
| Teaching                            | Male                         | 2                    | —  | —   | 2   |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —  | —   | —   |
| Contractor                          | Male                         | 1                    | —  | 1   | —   |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —  | —   | —   |
| Daily labourer                      | Male                         | 1                    | —  | 1   | —   |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —  | —   | —   |
| Shop-keeper                         | Male                         | 1                    | —  | 1   | —   |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —  | —   | —   |
| Peon                                | Male                         | 1                    | —  | 1   | —   |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —  | —   | —   |
| Clerk                               | Male                         | 1                    | —  | —   | 1   |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —  | —   | —   |
| Non-worker                          | Male                         | —                    | —  | —   | —   |
|                                     | Female                       | 4                    | 3  | 1   | —   |

TABLE - 16

**Number of households disinterested in having their Sons/Daughters sticking to their  
Traditional occupation but like to have them engaged in occupation of their liking  
classified by Sex and Present occupation of Head of the Household**

| Occupation of head of the household | Sex of head of the household | Number of households | Number of households reported that their Sons/Daughters should not stick to the traditional occupation but should follow the occupation of their liking due to | Remarks  |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| 1                                   | 2                            | 3                    | 4  | 5  |
| Cultivation                         | Male                         | 4                    | 4  | Manfolk do not practise the craft. In every household it is desired that the female should learn weaving not only for continuity of a tradition but also as an occupation. |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —  |  |
| Teaching                            | Male                         | 2                    | —  |  |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —  |  |
| Contractor                          | Male                         | 1                    | 1  |  |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —  |  |
| Daily labourer                      | Male                         | 1                    | 1  |  |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —  |  |
| Shop-keeper                         | Male                         | 1                    | 1  |  |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —  |  |
| Peon                                | Male                         | 1                    | 1  |  |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —  |  |
| Clerk                               | Male                         | 1                    | 1  |  |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —  |  |
| Non-worker                          | Male                         | —                    | —  |  |
|                                     | Female                       | 4                    | —  |  |

TABLE - 17

**Number of households disinterested in having their Sons/Daughters sticking to their Traditional occupation but like to have them engaged in occupation of their liking classified by Sex and Educational level of Head of Household**

| Educational level of head of the household | Sex of head of the household | Number of households | Number of households reported that their Sons/Daughters should not stick to the traditional occupation but should follow the occupation of their liking due to | Remarks  |
|--|------------------------------|----------------------|--|--|
|  |                              |                      | (Only in the case of Son) The income from traditional occupation of cultivation is not enough due to small agricultural land                                   |  |
| 1  | 2                            | 3                    | 4  | 5  |
| Illiterate                                 | Male                         | 2                    | 2  | Manfolk do not practise the craft. In every household it is desired that the female should learn weaving not only for continuity of a tradition but also as an occupation. |
|  | Female                       | 4                    | —  |  |
| Literate without educational level         | Male                         | —                    | —  |  |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  |  |
| Primary or Junior basic                    | Male                         | 3                    | 3  |  |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  |  |
| Middle                                     | Male                         | 2                    | 2  |  |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  |  |
| Matriculation or Higher Secondary          | Male                         | 2                    | 1  |  |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  |  |
| Graduate and above                         | Male                         | 2                    | 1  |  |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  |  |

TABLE - 18

**Number of households disinterested in having their Sons/Daughters sticking to their Traditional occupation but like to have them engaged in occupation of their liking classified by Sex and Broad Age-group of Head of the Household**

| Broad age-group of head of the household | Sex of head of the household | Number of households | Number of households reported that their sons/daughters should not stick to the traditional occupation but should follow the occupation of their liking due to | Remarks  |
|--|------------------------------|----------------------|--|--|
|  |                              |                      | In the case of Son(s) the income from cultivation is not enough due to small agricultural land   |  |
| 1  | 2                            | 3                    | 4  | 5  |
| 0-14                                     | Male                         | —                    | —  | Men do not practise weaving. In case of female where the traditional occupation is weaving all the households desire the daughter become interested in weaving as tradition as well as an occupation if necessary. |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  |  |
| 15-34                                    | Male                         | 1                    | 1  |  |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  |  |
| 35-59                                    | Male                         | 8                    | 6  |  |
|  | Female                       | 2                    | —  |  |
| 60+                                      | Male                         | 2                    | 2  |  |
|  | Female                       | 2                    | —  |  |

TABLE - 19

Households reported reasons for prosperity/adversity of the Craft in recent past and given suggestions to develop the Craft, classified by Religion, Caste/Tribe/Community of Head of the Household

| Religion, Caste/<br>Tribe/Community<br>of head of the<br>household |            | Sex of<br>head<br>of the<br>house-<br>hold | Number<br>of<br>house-<br>holds | Number reporting reasons<br>for prosperity/adversity<br>of the craft |   |   | Number of households<br>suggested measures<br>to develop the craft |   |    | Remarks  |
|--|------------|--|---------------------------------|--|---|---|--|---|----|--|
| Religion   |            | Caste/Tribe/<br>Community                  |                                 | Reason for prosperity  |   |   |  |   |    |  |
| 1  | 2          | 3  | 4                               | 5  | 6 | 7 | 8  | 9 | 10 | 11   |
| Hinduism   | Kalita     | Male                                       | 9                               | 4  | 9 | 9 | 6  | 8 | 9  | Reason shown<br>in col. 5 & 6<br>and 8 & 9 are<br>in addition to<br>reason shown<br>in col. 7 and 10<br>respectively |
|  |            | Female                                     | 3                               | —  | 3 | 3 | 1  | 3 | 3  |  |
| *  | Baishya    | Male                                       | —                               | —  | — | — | —  | — | —  |  |
|  |            | Female                                     | 1                               | —  | — | 1 | —  | 1 | 1  |  |
| *  | Rajbangshi | Male                                       | 2                               | —  | 1 | 2 | 2  | 2 | 2  |  |
|  |            | Female                                     | —                               | —  | — | — | —  | — | —  |  |

TABLE - 20

Households reported reasons for prosperity/adversity of the Craft in recent past and given suggestions to develop Craft classified by present occupation of Head of the Household

| Occupation of head of the household | Sex of head of the household | Number of households | Number reporting reason for prosperity/adversity of the craft |                                |                            | Number of household suggested measures to develop the craft               |                         |   | Remarks  |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|---|--------------------------------|----------------------------|---|-------------------------|---|--|
|                                     |                              |                      | Reason for prosperity   |                                |                            | To provide good quality raw materials at reasonable rates and convenience | To provide easy finance | To provide organised marketing facility |  |
|                                     |                              |                      | Availability of raw materials                                 | Demand of the finished product | As a good source of income |   |                         |   |  |
| 1                                   | 2                            | 3                    | 4   | 5                              | 6                          | 7   | 8                       | 9                                       | 10   |
| Cultivation                         | Male                         | 4                    | 2   | 3                              | 4                          | 4   | 4                       | 4                                       | Reason shown in col. 4, 5 and in col. 7, 8 are in addition to the reason shown in col. 6 and 9 respectively. |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —   | —                              | —                          | —   | —                       | —                                       |  |
| Teaching                            | Male                         | 2                    | 1   | 2                              | 2                          | 1   | 1                       | 2                                       |  |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —   | —                              | —                          | —   | —                       | —                                       |  |
| Contractor                          | Male                         | 1                    | 1   | 1                              | 1                          | 1   | 1                       | 1                                       |  |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —   | —                              | —                          | —   | —                       | —                                       |  |
| Daily labourer                      | Male                         | 1                    | —   | 1                              | 1                          | —   | 1                       | 1                                       |  |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —   | —                              | —                          | —   | —                       | —                                       |  |
| Shop-keeper                         | Male                         | 1                    | —   | 1                              | 1                          | —   | 1                       | 1                                       |  |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —   | —                              | —                          | —   | —                       | —                                       |  |
| Peon                                | Male                         | 1                    | —   | 1                              | 1                          | 1   | 1                       | 1                                       |  |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —   | —                              | —                          | —   | —                       | —                                       |  |
| Clerk                               | Male                         | 1                    | —   | 1                              | 1                          | 1   | 1                       | 1                                       |  |
|                                     | Female                       | —                    | —   | —                              | —                          | —   | —                       | —                                       |  |
| Non-worker                          | Male                         | —                    | —   | —                              | —                          | —   | —                       | —                                       |  |
|                                     | Female                       | 4                    | —   | 3                              | 4                          | 1   | 4                       | 4                                       |  |



TABLE - 21

Household reported reasons for prosperity/adversity of the Craft in recent past and given suggestions to develop the Craft, classified by Educational level of Head of the Household.

| Educational level of head of household | Sex of head of the household | Number of households | Number reporting reasons for prosperity/adversity of the craft |                                |                            | Number of households suggested measures to develop the craft             |                         |   | Remarks  |
|--|------------------------------|----------------------|--|--------------------------------|----------------------------|--|-------------------------|---|--|
|  |                              |                      | Reason for prosperity  |                                |                            | To provide good quality raw materials at reasonable rate and convenience | To provide easy finance | To provide organised marketing facility |  |
|  |                              |                      | Availability of raw materials                                  | Demand of the finished product | As a good source of income |  |                         |   |  |
| 1                                      | 2                            | 3                    | 4  | 5                              | 6                          | 7  | 8                       | 9                                       | 10   |
| Illiterate                             | Male                         | 2                    | —  | 2                              | 2                          | 2  | 2                       | 2                                       | Reason shown in Col. nos. 4 & 5 and Col. nos. 7 & 8 are in addition to reason shown in Col. nos. 6 & 9 respectively. |
|  | Female                       | 4                    | —  | 3                              | 4                          | 1  | 4                       | 4                                       |  |
| Literate without educational level     | Male                         | —                    | —  | —                              | —                          | —  | —                       | —                                       |  |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  | —                              | —                          | —  | —                       | —                                       |  |
| Primary or Junior basic                | Male                         | 3                    | —  | 2                              | 3                          | 2  | 3                       | 3                                       |  |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  | —                              | —                          | —  | —                       | —                                       |  |
| Middle                                 | Male                         | 2                    | 1  | 2                              | 2                          | 2  | 2                       | 2                                       |  |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  | —                              | —                          | —  | —                       | —                                       |  |
| Matriculate or Higher Secondary        | Male                         | 2                    | 2  | 2                              | 2                          | 1  | 1                       | 2                                       |  |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  | —                              | —                          | —  | —                       | —                                       |  |
| Graduate and above                     | Male                         | 2                    | 1  | 2                              | 2                          | 2  | 2                       | 2                                       |  |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  | —                              | —                          | —  | —                       | —                                       |  |

TABLE - 22

**Household reported for reason for prosperity/adversity of the Craft in recent past and given suggestions to develop the Craft, classified by Broad Age-group of Head of the Household**

| Broad age-group of head of the household | Sex of head of the household | Number of households | Number reporting reasons for prosperity/adversity of the craft |                                |                       | Number of households suggested measures to develop the craft              |                         |   | Remarks  |
|--|------------------------------|----------------------|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---|-------------------------|---|--|
|  |                              |                      | Reason for prosperity  |                                |                       | To provide good quality raw materials at reasonable rates and convenience | To provide easy finance | To provide organised marketing facility |  |
|  |                              |                      | Availability of raw materials                                  | Demand of the finished product | As a source of income |   |                         |   |  |
| 1  | 2                            | 3                    | 4  | 5                              | 6                     | 7   | 8                       | 9                                       | 10   |
| 15-34                                    | Male                         | 1                    | —  | 1                              | 1                     | 1   | 1                       | 1                                       | Reason shown in Col. nos. 4, 5 & 7, 8 are in addition to reason shown in Col. nos. 6 & 9 respectively. |
|  | Female                       | —                    | —  | —                              | —                     | —   | —                       | —                                       |  |
| 35-59                                    | Male                         | 8                    | 3  | 7                              | 8                     | 7   | 7                       | 8                                       |  |
|  | Female                       | 2                    | —  | 2                              | 2                     | 1   | 2                       | 2                                       |  |
| 60+                                      | Male                         | 2                    | 1  | 2                              | 2                     | 1   | 2                       | 2                                       |  |
|  | Female                       | 2                    | —  | 1                              | 2                     | —   | 2                       | 2                                       |  |