INTRODUCTION:

In spatial and cultural consideration Indian tribal population is at widely different stages of social as well as economic development. Hence they do not form any permanent crystalline structure. The concept of tribe is thus of paramount importance to understand tribes in Indian culture.

The term "tribe" has been derived from a Middle English term TRIBUZ which has a "Latin root". The term means three divisions into which the early Romans were grouped. The meaning of the term thus varies from nation to nation.

The Oxford Dictionary defines a tribe as a group as a group of primitive or barbarous clans under recognized chiefs. The western scholars used the said concept with a slight modification here & there. And a new defines arese that a tribe is a group of people speaking a common dialect and inhabitant of a common territory. He has not mentioned anything regarding cultural unity of the tribe.. His definition does not include spatial concentration as a special feature of the tribe.

Dictionary of Anthropology defines a tribe as a social group, usually with definite area, dialect cultural homogeneity and unifying social organization. It may include several subgroups, such as sibs, or villages. A tribe ordinarily has a leader and may have a common ancestor and patron deity. The families or small communities making up the tribe are linked together through social, religious, family or blood relations. A tribe is variably described in Indian society.

The tribes are also termed by different names viz ADIVASIS (first settlers or authonous) BHUMI-PUTRA (sons of the soil), JANAJATI (folk people), ADIMJATI (Original community), VANYABASI (inhabitants of forest), VANYAJATI (castes of forest), and UPAJATI (Sub caste). ANUSUCHIT JANAJATI (Schedule tribes), GIRIJAN (Hill dwellers) & so on. But none of the term except the term ADIVASI seems to be appropriate. The tribe connote be designated by any term with suffix JATI since the connection of JATI though meaning nation or tribe also widely quoted with caste system in Indian context.

The Imperial Gazetteer of India as early as 1891 first defined the tribe as "A Tribe is a collection of families bearing a common name, speaking a common dialect, occupying or professing to occupy a common territory and is not endogamous though originally it have been so."
Transformation is the key attribute of all geographic phenomena. It involves the study and interpretation of the processes responsible for introducing changes in the landscape under the impact of man's economic activities, the nature and dimension of emerging patterns and the improvements brought in through them in existing socio-economic milieu of a region. The effects of such transformation may be well adjudged through habitat system, which may help in evaluation the present planning programmes and suggesting suitable corrective measures to make them more effective and purposeful.

The term transformation as the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary explains is a change in the shape, appearance, quality or nature of something. The term transformation involves complex and multidimensional phenomena. It is defined and interopera ted in different ways. The concept of transformation has been changing over space through the time. The word transformation can be used both for the development as well as in gauging deteriorating the status of something. Transformation thus can be referred to either development and or deterioration causing degradation.

The traditional irrigation technology has undergone a process of transformation with development of irrigational network and associated facilities attempts have been made to ensure the agricultural production against drought by ensuring the availability of required quantity of fresh water. From the less effective and to the inanimate energy sources traditional means of irrigation have been replaced by more efficient power supported irrigational facilities.

Agricultural development depends largely on the extent of new technological innovations adopted by the farmers. Theoretically it is assumed that the adoption of new technology by the farmers would move in the areas with better irrigational facilities than the dry farming area do not have the facilities of irrigation. This certainly would induce socio-economic changes depending on the extent and the intensity of new technologies being adopted in the region. Differential performance of the rainfed farming areas and the irrigated areas could give clear indications to suggest the nature and type of technology to be used and ensure the socio-economic changes over a period of time.

Since 1950, India has adopted centralized planning which is essentially top to bottom in nature. Having implemented this setup for more than 50 years, it would be of interest to note the socio-economic changes it has brought at village level. On the one hand all government agencies and functionaries claim that every possible effort is being made for the overall balanced rural
development. To achieve the target more than hundred schemes aimed at rural development as well as tribal development with target people and target areas are systematically implemented in the regions of the country and region under study is not an exception to this. On the other hand there are people who argue that majority of villages in India are still static. It would, therefore be of interest to study how far villages in India as well as in the study region have changed. This study aims at finding out the direction, pace and magnitude of tribal transformation.

Economic development of a country as well as of the region leads to differentiation of its economic structure when the productivity of its work force records a constant increase in per capita income. As a result a greater proportion of increased income is spent specially on manufactured goods and services, since the consumption of food normally exceeds to a certain limits. This together leads to the development of such industries and consequently, the transformation of working population engaged by agriculture and allied activities sector to manufacturing and service sectors. Over the period of time correspondingly the proportion of workers engaged in the agricultural sector records a declining trend. The decline of population in agriculture and their increase in manufacturing and service sectored automatically leads to the migration of population from rural to urban areas after assessing the certainty of employment opportunities.

The socio-cultural transformation of primitive societies has occurred rather rapidly in recent history of mankind. Tribal societies have not remained immune to the changes. The process of transformation has generally been canalized through the phenomenon of urbanization, although the impact of non-urban agencies for example missionaries has not been less spectacular. A new hybrid culture, characterizing the transition phase of urbanized transformation begins to take shape in the region.

Tribal societies came under stress due to several factors. The extension of commerce, military incursions on tribal land, and the resettling of Brahmins amidst tribal populations had an impact, as did ideological coercion or persuasion to attract key members of the tribe into "mainstream" Hindu society.

**SELECTION OF STUDY AREA**

Astronomically Dhule district extends between 20° 38' to 21° 38' north latitude and 74° 52' to 75° 11' east longitude. Dhule district, formerly known as west Khandesh is located in northern part of maharashtra State. The district headquarters is located at Dhule town. For
administrative convenience, the district is divided in 4 talukas viz, Dhule, Sakri, Shirpur, Shindkheda. The Dhule district with an geographical area of 8063.11 sq. km. Which is 2.4 per cent of the goegraphical area of the state. out of which 2090 sq. km. covered by forest, where as cultivable area is 3092 sq.km. and net sown area is 1930 sq.km. Agriculture is the main occupation of the people. The major part of the district comes under Tapi basin. It stretches 108 km. from west to east and 112km.from south to north direction. The area of the district is represented in survey of India degree sheets No. 46k, 46O, 46G and 46H on the scale of 1:250000. The district is bouded by Nandurbar district in the north west, Nashik district in south and Jalgaon district in east.

According to 2001 census Dhule district has total 678 inhibited villages and 17, 07,947 people are residing within the district. With 25.97% of scheduled tribe population in the state. on other hand at the tahsil level wide variation too are found in the Dhule region. Sakri tahsil ranks first with 39.50% tribal population followed by shirpur, Dhule, and Shindkeda tahsils, with 30.86%, 18.29% and 11.33% of total tribal population respectively. One finds a close an association between the geographical environments with the highest share of tribal population in certain tribal areas.

Several ranges of Satpuras lie in the northern part of the study region while the sahyadri's offshoots alongwith several dykes are found on the western side. The Satpuras with a broad belt of mountain land stretches like wall along northern border with number of hills ridge with varying height. One such hill range in the central part with 600 metres above sea level, and then the slope steadily declines towards the Narmada.

Physiographicaly, the study area is the part of middle Tapi basin. The district can be divided into three major physiographic divisions namely satpura Ranges. Alluvial plain of Tapi and Dhanora and Galna Hills. The highest point within district is 1295 m. which can be observed in the south of village senvad Tal. Sakri while the lowest elevation is 139m. along Tapi River near village Anturli Tal. Shirpur. Major part of the district is occupied by the 'Deccan Basalt' of the upper cretaceous to Lower Eocene period Second lithological unit is the 'Recent Alluvium' Which occurs along the Dhule district is drained by the Tapi and its tributaries. The district can be broadly divided into 2 physiographic units namely Tapi valley proper and the region of the dykes and residual hills of the Sahyadri Spurs with eastward trending streams in between. The Tapi River valley is observed on both sides of Tapi River in parts of Shirpur and Sindkheda
talukas, whereas the region of dykes and residual hills of the Sahyadri Spurs comprises southern part of Sindhkheda and entire Sakri and Dhule talukas. The district is drained by Tapi River and its tributaries. Tapi River flows westward through the central part of the district. Panjhra and Aner rivers are the main tributaries of Tapi flowing northward and southward respectively to join Tapi River.

In the Tapi valley proper, the soils are deep black and extremely fertile except in some portions near the main river and its tributaries, which have cut down the land very badly and removed the top soil. Otherwise the soils grade from the deep fertile soils to coarse shallow to stony soils away from the river either northwards towards the Satpudas or southward towards the residual hills and dykes.

The climate of this district is on the whole dry except during the south-west monsoon season. The year may be divided into four seasons. The cold season from December to February is followed by the hot season from March to May. The south-west monsoon season this follows thereafter lasts till September. October and November constitute the post-monsoon season. The average annual rainfall in the district is 674.0 mm. (26.53”). The rainfall is heavier in the hilly regions of the western ghats and the Satpuda ranges. Navapur near the western border has an annual rainfall of 1097.1 mm. (43.19”). The rainfall during the south-west monsoon constitutes about 88 per cent of the annual rainfall, July being the rainiest month. Some rainfall is received mostly as thunder-showers in the post-monsoon season. Except during the south-west monsoon season when the humidity is above 70 per cent, the air is rather dry over the district during the rest of the year. The driest part of the year is the summer season when the relative humidity is only 20 to 25 per cent in the afternoons. From about the latter half of February, temperatures increase steadily till May which is the hottest part of the year with the mean daily maximum temperature at 40.7° C (105.3° F) and the mean daily minimum at 25.80° C (78.4° F). Hot, dry winds blow during April and May and the heat is intense with the maximum temperatures going above 45° C (113.0° F) on some days. Thunder-showers occur during the afternoons and bring welcome-relief from the heat on some days. With the onset of the southwest monsoon by about the second week of June there is an appreciable drop in day temperatures and the weather is pleasant in the south-west monsoon season. By about the beginning of October when the south-west monsoon withdraws, day temperatures begin to rise and a secondary maximum in day temperature is reached in October. The night temperatures, however, steadily decrease. From
November, both day and night temperatures drop rapidly till January which is the coldest month with the mean daily maximum temperature at 30.3 °C (86.5 °F) and the mean daily minimum at 16.2 °C (61.2 °F). During the cold season, cold waves which sometimes affect the district in association with western disturbances which pass across North India the minimum temperature may drop down to about 8 °C to 9 °C (40.4 °F to 48.2 °F).

Winds are generally light to moderate with some strengthening in force during the summer and monsoon seasons. During the southwest monsoon season, winds are mainly southwesterly to westerly. In the post-monsoon season winds are light and variable in directions in the mornings and north-easterly in the afternoon. In the winter and summer season’s winds are mostly from directions between south-west and north-west, with northerly or north-easterly winds blowing on some afternoons.

The density of population in the region comes to 212 persons per sq.km. (Census 2001). The literacy rate in the region is 71.6 per cent according to census 2001. Proportion of urban population is very low with 16.11 per cent of total population in the Dhule region and 79.89 per cent of the total is living in rural areas. Dhule Shirpur and Dhodaicha are the main urban centres in this region.

The tribals of Dhule are engaged in a continuous struggling for their existence due to the transformation of tribal environment in the last few decades. Community development is the method of rural extension agency through which the five-year plan seeks to initiate a process of transformation of the social and economic life of the villages. The community development too was launched in 1952 with similar philosophy. With the launching of the community development programme in the region an attempt has been made to initiate process for the upliftment of the tribal population with the implementation of integrated tribal development programmes. Till this date hundreds of rural and tribal development programmes have been launched in the region, ensuring the overall development and transforming the rural and tribal areas of the study region. Along with these efforts have also been made by the cooperative sector and the private sector by diversifying the developmental activities in the study region.

In Dhule region developmental programmes have been playing an important role in transforming the rural environment with indication of number of activities. Specially with implementation of integrated tribal development plan since April 1977 and integrated rural development programmes since 1978-79 on a large scale the diversification of agricultural and
non agricultural activities have been noticed. Over the period of time efforts have been made by
government functionaries and non-governmental organisation to identify the target area and
target people before finalising the implementation of schemes and programmes considering the
requirements as well as the availability of resources. Gauging the emerging requirements of the
infrastructure needful additions have been in various parts of the study region not only to support
the pace of implementation but also to sustain the achievements made in various parts of the
region with the implementation of different schemes/programmes.