

Indian Village Studies
Village Survey No. 16

BAMIN
A Socio-Economic Survey of
An Apatani Village in Subansiri District of Arunachal Pradesh

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P R E F A C E

This report on Bamin, an Apatani village situated in the Subansiri district of Arunachal Pradesh, embodies the results of the first point survey conducted during December, 1976 and January, 1977. Data relate to the calendar year, 1976.

The Apatanis of Arunachal Pradesh is comparatively an advanced tribal community, inhabiting a plateau where density of population is high. They are known for their settled-irrigated paddy cultivation which they have been doing since long past.

The land resources are limited and the average size of land holding is small. They do not use plough and bullock for tillage. But they cultivate paddy with great care and attention and the yield rate is high. The village, by and large, is self-sufficient in cereal production. But they take little interest in rearing livestock and depend largely on the supplies from outside the village. The traditional arts and crafts do not have significant bearing on their economy.

There is however a wind of change in the traditional economy of the village due to emergence of cash income from wage-paid employment and salaried jobs. The per capita income in the village is fairly high but scope for further improvement is limited.

Setting up of the Administrative Centre at Hapoli, improvement in educational facilities, roads etc. have acted as the forces of change. Apart from these changes the economy of the village appears to be stagnant. H.Y.V. paddy suitable to the plateau is yet to be evolved. The climate for rearing improved cattle, goats and poultry seems to be congenial. The economy will improve only when such secondary occupations are accepted by the villagers.

The report is prepared under my general guidance and supervision. It is jointly written by Dr. Umananda Phukan, Sri S.N. Buragohain and Sri G.C. Borthakur, and is typed by Sri Nagen Chandra Bora and Sri M.C. Dutta. Sri Noren Deka mimeographed the report. I am thankful to them.

I must also express my thankfulness to the Deputy Commissioner, Subansiri District and all other officials and non-officials for helping the research team in various ways. I am acknowledging their help separately. Special mention must be made of Sri Bamin Kanu, Vice-President, Subansiri District Council, who also belongs to Bamin village, for his kind help in establishing the rapport with the villagers. We owe our sincere thanks to the villagers of Bamin for their help and cooperation during field investigation.

Information collected from the people within the short period of contact is not adequate for a comprehensive socio-economic study. Yet, it is hoped that the present report would help in understanding the socio-economic life of this important tribal community. Comments on the study will be highly welcomed.

MARCH, 1978.

Dr. P.D. Saikia,
Director.

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Mr. Tamo Choubin, Head Gaon Bura (G.B) Bamin Village.

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Mr. Tamo Nibo , G. B. Bamin Village.

Mr. Tanya Redo, G.B. Bamin village.

Mr. Tanya Towo, G.B. Bamin Village.

Mr. Tilling Chilliang G.B. Bamin Village.

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CHAPTER ONE

I N T R O D U C T O R Y

1. The Scope and Method :

1.1. The Apatanis is an important tribal community inhabiting the Subansiri District of Arunachal Pradesh. In this report an attempt is made to examine the socio-economic characteristics of this community, based on a village study.

1.2. Village Bamin was purposively selected for the survey and it is one of the original Apatani villages situated in the Apatani valley. It was selected after making a brief reconnaissance of the entire Apatani valley and in consultation with local officials. The village, by and large, represents a typical village of the Apatanis.

1.3. A total survey of the village was conducted so as to arrive at a comprehensive idea of the life and living of the people. For this, the investigators camped in the village for about a month and obtained data by interviewing the head of the households. The reference year for the study is the calendar year of 1976.

1.4. There are certain limitations in making the study comprehensive as one would expect. This is because of the fact that many transactions in the village were not monetised and there were no use of standard weights and measures among the people. These difficulties and methods adopted in solving them are indicated at appropriate places. Secondly, the Apatanis call the outsiders Hailang and a Hailang is not generally trusted immediately. The establishment of rapport with them needed time. In this case rapport had to be established with the village headmen (Official) known as Gaonburas (briefly known as G.Bs . in the area) and through them with all the head of the households. The investigators had to work with the help of interpreters. As such, there were considerable difficulties in obtaining information.

Mention may be made of the fact that the investigators had to interview the people early in the morning and at evening after dusk as the people do not remain in the village during the day time. The temperature during the time of investigation (December-January) was touching the 0°C in the village.

1.5. Even with all these difficulties, sufficient care was taken to obtain correct information. The data presented in the report are nearest possible quantification

1.6. The report begins with a brief introduction to Arunachal Pradesh, the Subansiri District and the Apatani Valley. These information might help in understanding the proper background of the tribal community under study.

2. The Arunachal Pradesh :

2.1. The Arunachal Pradesh, the erstwhile North-East Frontier Agency, (NEFA), is a hilly territory between 26°28'N and 19°30' N latitude and 91°30' E and 97°30' E longitude with an geographical area of 83,578 sq.km. It is divided into 5 districts viz. Kameng, Subansiri, Siang, Lohit and Tirap. The area was declared to be an Union Territory and named Arunachal Pradesh in 1972.

2.2. The area has a hostile and difficult physical environment and it offers little scope for growth of population. It stretches from the snowy ranges from the great Himalayas to the plains. It is full of swift rivers, steep rocks and dense forests. The climate is capricious and has wide variations in it.

2.3. Road communication to many parts of the territory are yet to be developed. Many interior places of Arunachal Pradesh can be reached only on foot. Thus communication is one of the vital problem there.

2.4. The territory is very thinly populated, the density being only 6 persons per sq.km. in 1971. As per 1971 Census the population was only 467,511. The districtwise population of the territory and its variation from 1961 is shown in Table 1.1. The growth rate of population in Arunachal Pradesh was 38.91 per cent

during 1961-1971 and it was considered to be comparatively higher than earlier periods. It is reported (Borthakur : 1971 :80) that the higher rate of population growth in the territory was due to in-migration. The immigration was particularly relevant to Tirap and Lohit districts where the population growth was very high. Mention may be made of the fact that scheduled tribe population grew only by 23.78 per cent during that decade.

Table - 1.1.

Districtwise Population in Arunachal Pradesh.

District	Popula- tion 1971	Sex-Ratio per 1000 Males	Popula- tion 1961	Sex-Ratio per 1000 Males	Variations 1961-1971 (per cent)
Kameng	86,001	805	69,913	811	23.91
Subansiri	99,238	931	75,495	836	31.45
Siang	121,936	878	95,509	917	27.67
Lohit	62,865	773	36,050	893	74.38
Tirap	97,470	883	59,591	947	63.56
Total :	467,511	861	336,558	894	38.91

Source :- Census of India : Arunachal Pradesh : 1971
Series 24 Part II - A.

2.5. The people of Arunachal Pradesh is composed of a number of scheduled tribes. The proportion of scheduled caste is negligible being only about 0.08 per cent. Persons other than these two categories consists of only 20.91 per cent. There are more than 20 major tribal groups in the territory besides many sub-groups. Among them only a few communities have a population more than 10,000. They are the Nisis (formally called Daflas), the Adis, the Wanchos and the Apatanis.

2.6. All these communities of the area may be termed as pre-industrial communities. They depend, by and large, on a primitive system of cultivation known as shifting or jhum cultivation. This system of cultivation is peculiar to the hill areas and it cannot provide adequate

support for development.¹ Very insignificant proportion of the people are engaged in other occupations. Other occupations such as trade, commerce, service etc. have emerged only recently due to extension of the administrative

2.7. The system of agriculture that is followed in the area is labour intensive or rather a system which largely depends on labour. No bullock power and plough is necessary for it. Capital consists of the seed and some minor implements. Land is generally abundant and a family can cultivate as much as the family labour can manage. The size of the operational holding of a family, therefore, depends on the size of the family labour. The people dependent on shifting cultivation live in near subsistence level.

2.8. The economy of the area is still primitive as inter-tribal and inter-village transactions are made, by and large, in the form of barter. There are no standard weights and measures in vogue among the communities although the metric system is introduced in the markets of the administrative towns. The people still treasure traditional goods such as mithuns^{*}, beads, traditional bells and utensils. However, there are no studies to indicate the transitional phase of the economy of this backward area. The Agro-Economic Research Centre for North East India had made two village studies one on the

1. Shifting cultivation is rotation of fields. The new site is cleared by use of fire and is abandoned after one or two years of cultivation. Since there are forests in the area the practice is still feasible. But, it can not provide adequate food for the community and agricultural development is not possible without permanent cultivation. The problem has attracted attention of scholars, administrators and the policy makers. The Agro-Economic Research Centre for North East India has made some studies on this; Saha (1973) studied the nature of shifting cultivation in North East India, Bora & Goswami (1977) in their report for the Centre studied the comparative economics of crop production under shifting and terrace cultivation in Garo Hills of Meghalaya. These reports bring out clearly the problem of shifting cultivation. The present report, however studies a community who are not shifting cultivators although they live in the hills surrounded by people practising that primitive system. Mention of the system made to indicate that the Apatanis provide a contract.

* Semi wild bisons.

Gallongs at Pakam (Dutta and Barkataky :1972) and the other on the Noctes at Khonsa (Gohain :1970). These studies provide valuable insight into the socio-economic condition of the people studied. There are, however, many other official and non-official publications on Arunachal Pradesh.

2.9. There has been a consistent effort on the part of Government to improve the quality of life by imparting education by opening a network of schools and through other schemes for development. These have no doubt acted as the forces of change in the area. The change is reflected in adoption of modern dresses and some modern articles of daily use. The forces of the market is sure to make gradual inroads in to the life of these backward communities with the building of roads and communication lines.

3. The Subansiri District :

3.1. Subansiri is one of the remotest district of Arunachal Pradesh which can be reached from North Lakhimpur Town in Assam via Kimin. The road takes the course of the Subansiri River, one of the principal tributary of the Brahmaputra. The district headquarters is at Hapoli. The district is divided into Ziro, Daporijo and Koloriang sub-divisions.

3.2. The Principal tribal communities of the District are Nisis (Dafla group), Tagins (also a related group of the Daflas), the Apatanis, and the Hill Miris. There are other tribes also, but, their number is comparatively small. Table 1.2 shows the population belonging to different tribes.

3.3. The economy of the district is not different from the pattern already given for the territory as a whole. But the district is comparatively backward in many respects. Excepting the Apatanis, all other communities are shifting cultivators. Even then a variety of crops are grown including wet paddy. The wet rice cultivation by and large, is concentrated in the Valley

Table - 1.2.

Tribal Communities of Subansiri District and their Population, 1971.

Tribe/Sub-Tribe	Total Population	Sex Ratio
Mising Group (Dafla)	51,826	1,027
Tagin	13,105	1,016
Apatanis	12,859	995
Hill Miris	8,162	1,027
Sulung	1,480	984
Mikir	1,286	951
Bangro	710	1,040
Others	810	675
Total : :	90242	1,015

Source :- Census of India, 1971.

inhabited by the Apatanis. Table 1.3 shows the principal crops grown in the district and the yield rate. However, the area under the crops are approximations only and their yield rate also might vary to area. It may be mentioned here that the hills have potential for growing horticultural crops. The extension of horticultural crops is slow in Subansiri district compared to Kameng and Siang districts of Arunachal Pradesh. Apple is being successfully introduced in Kameng as indicated in a study by the Agro-Economic Research Centre (Gohain, 1975).

Table 1.3.

Crops	Area (acres)	Yield rate (kg)
Rice (Total)	51,348	800 kg Terraced & Wet 474 kg Jhum
Maize	8,805	400 kg.
Millet*	6,580	400 "
Pulses	780	400 "
Chillies	105	80 "
Potato	50	1,500 "
Mustard*	425	300 "
Sugarcane	20	-
Ginger	100	-
Local Tubers	400	-
Sweet Potato	300	-
Fruits	90	-

* These crops are mainly grown in the foot hills.

Source :- District Agricultural Officer : Subansiri, Hapoli.

4. The Apatani Plateau :

4.1. The Apatani Plateau¹ is located at an elevation of about 1500 mts. above the mean sea level and has an area of approximately 93 sq.km. There are eleven original Apatani villages apart from the Hapoli township and other comparatively newer settlements. Reru, Kalong, Tajang and Lumpia are collectively known as Bula. Michi and Bamin are generally regarded as one village Michi-Bamin. But for all practical purposes separate entity of the villages are recognised. The names of villages and the approximate area in each of the villages are shown in Table 1.4. At present the Apatanis also live in new settlements in and around the plateau. The settlements at Sero, Sebe, Bri, Muliang, Reeliang and Drabia grew during the past due to increase in the population of the original villages.

Table - 1.4.
Area under Rice in Apatani Valley

Name of the Village	Total area of the village sq.km.	Rice Cultivation		Total Rice (hect)
		Wet Rice (hect)	Terraced Rice (hect)	
Hong	16.0	60.0	10.0	70.0
Hari	21.0	55.0	5.0	60.0
Reru, Tajang & Lumpia Kalong	18.0	80.0	5.0	85.0
Haja	17.0	60.0	10.0	70.0
Duta	8.0	35.0	5.2	40.2
Madan Tage	7.0	45.0	5.0	50.0
Michi Bamin	6.0	50.0	5.0	55.0
Sero	16.0	16.0	4.0	20.0
Total :	109.0	401.0	49.2	450.2

Source :- District Agricultural Officer, Subansiri District, Hapoli.

4.2. The area presents a sharp contrast to the neighbouring areas because it is a flat land surrounded by high hills covered with pine trees. The well-laid paddy fields and the bamboo grooves presents a panoramic sight. Unlike the surrounding tribal communities the Apatanis prefer flat land at the bottom of the hills for habitation. Homestead land is very scarce and the villages occupy very small area. On the other hand the villages are comparatively much bigger in respect of population that of any other tribal community of Arunachal Pradesh. Had the Apatanis lived on the hill tops or the crest of the hills the problem of homestead would not have been there.

¹ Both the words 'plateau' and 'Valley' are used throughout the report with the same meaning. In fact, 'plateau' is the appropriate word.

4.3. The headquarters of the Subansiri district is located in the Apatani plateau. The Hapoli township occupies a southern part of the valley and it is a new settlement. Previously, the headquarters was started at Ziro, about 5 k.m. from Hapoli. Later it was shifted to Hapoli to save valuable cultivable land and pine grooves. The place known as Ziro still has its semi-urban look with the air-strip and a few shops.

4.4. Hapoli, the small administrative township appears to be growing. It has the Post & Telegraph Office, a branch of the State Bank of India, a Hospital, a small Cinema Hall, a small power house and the market. Among other things a Multipurpose Cooperative Consumer Society runs the retail and wholesale trade on foodstuff and other essential goods. There are privately owned retailers also. Daily market for vegetables, fish, goat, pigs, chickens etc. is run with supplies from the plains. There are several restaurants and tea stalls also. Services of barbers, cobblers, tailors and washermen are available. Because of the presence of these facilities at Hapoli the Apatani villages are exposed to many modern amenities. Some Apatani people are also availing these facilities and several of them have taken up trade and commerce as their profession.

4.5. The climate of the valley can be described as having a severe winter and moderate summer. The temperature and rainfall recorded at Ziro (Table-1.5) shows that the temperature does not reach much higher than 24°C even during summer and it goes down to 0°C in December. It is reported that it falls even below the freezing point. In some villages snowfall also takes place. Rainfall is heavy from March to September. The principal paddy growing season of the area falls within this period. Occasional winter showers are also reported.

4.6. The Apatani valley has different grades of land. This land resource was developed long past by the forefathers of the present generation. The cultivation field extends from flat land at lower levels to upper flat land. Some parts of the hill slopes are terraced

but proper terraced land is very small. The Apatanis have very elaborate system of bunding the flat land for retaining water for cultivation of wet paddy and this system is essential as the land has gradients.

Table - 1.5.

Temperature and Rainfall Recorded at Ziro, 1975.

Month	Temperature (°C)		Rainfall (in m.m.)
	Maximum	Minimum	
January	7.01	2.33	17.30
February	9.69	1.90	79.60
March	16.83	2.00	228.00
April	13.97	5.30	77.70
May	15.11	7.49	146.60
June	19.33	10.27	160.50
July	17.34	11.54	175.50
August	N.A.	N.A.	122.80
September	--	--	234.60
October	24.46	13.47	nil.
November	15.01	5.97	nil.
December	13.60	0.98	nil.

Source :- District Agril. Officer, Subansiri District, Hapoli.

It may be mentioned that for the cultivation of wet rice irrigation system is a necessity for the Apatanis and they use all land for cultivation of rice where irrigation is possible and leave other land of higher elevation to pine grooves, bamboo grooves, and millet. Even terraced hill slopes are planted with millets. In general the Apatani valley has a rich soil. This is revealed by the analysis of a few soil samples by the Agricultural Chemist of the Assam Agricultural University Table (1.6). It was found that soil is, by and large, sandy loam containing very high proportion of Nitrogen and Potash. The Phosphate content of the soil is found to be low. It speaks of the fact that fertility of the soil is high inspite of it being cultivated for generations. It might be the fact that the Apatanis take utmost care in maintaining the fertility status by additions of ash and dung.

CHAPTER TWO

THE VILLAGE SETTING

1. Introduction :

1.1. A brief description of Arunachal Pradesh, the Subansiri district and the Apatani valley was presented in the preceding chapter in order to give an idea of the general background in which the village Bamin, is situated. Bamin is one of the 11 original Apatani villages situated by the side of the main road, namely the Kimin-Ziro-Daporijo road. It is within 4 km. from Hapoli, the present district headquarters. The abandoned headquarters at Ziro (now known as old Ziro) is located within 3 km. from the village. Being connected with good road and situated near the district headquarters the Apatani valley and so also the Bamin village is comparatively in an advantageous position.

2. Lay-out of the village :

2.1. A brief description of the Apatani valley is given in the previous chapter. An Apatani village is a compact settlement on a patch of high land. Haimendorf (1962 : 14) described the Apatani village as an island which rises above flooded rice-fields as a ship above water. Bamin village is also surrounded by wet rice-fields, but it lay between one small hillock in the east and a high forested mountain in the west. The sun gets beyond this hill shortly after the mid-day and the village remains under its shade for the rest of the day which gives the village a damp and cold atmosphere. The village remains somewhat concealed from the eye from a distance as bamboo grooves are situated at its outskirts. The village houses are laid along a broad path and lanes. The broad path in the village also serves as the courtyard of the households situated along it. The wooden assembly platforms (lapangs) are also located on the side of this path.

2.2. The dwelling houses are constructed facing the path and lanes, as the case may be leaving not a patch of vacant land between the houses. This is particularly noticed along the main path of the Bamin village. But in the by-lanes, some spaces were seen between a few houses. In fact, two neighbouring houses use the same watershed for their roofs. Thus, the village Bamin appears to be very congestedly inhabited and in fact all Apatani villages are of similar settlement pattern.

3. House Type :

3.1. Dwelling houses of the tribal communities in Arunachal Pradesh is a house built on a raised platform (Chang). The Apatani house is also a chang house. But constructionally, an Apatani house is different from a neighbouring Nisi or Nisang house. The Nisis construct their houses upon the crest of the hill and have enough land between houses. They extend the house lengthwise to accommodate the growing family. But the Apatanis, by and large, cannot extend the house for want of land. In fact, some of the houses at Bamin are built on very narrow portion of high land and the rear of the platform are extended over low land. An Apatani house at Bamin is not very long, about 40 to 60 feet on an average excluding balconies both in the front and the rear of the houses. The platform is constructed upon wooden post with bamboos. The height of the platform varies between 3' to 6' according to the situation of the house. Some houses situated in the middle of the village were above 5' in height. The solid bamboo platform is very strong and tight. The construction of all houses follow the same pattern throughout the Apatani valley. The houses are mainly constructed by bamboo having split bamboo walls and roofs are covered mainly with rice straw, pine and bamboo stripes. A short ladder (Rake Aiba) leads upto the open balcony (Brago-simbia) and from this one enters into the first small compartment (Brachi) which again leads to the next big compartment (Ude). The back open balcony (Oko simbia) is reached after the main compart

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3.2. The main compartment (Ude) is used for cooking, sitting, sleeping etc. It has usually two hearths (Sansu). All the household activities centre round the main hearth where cooking is done. During winter, the fire is kept burning round the clock to keep the house warm. This fireplace is built on a raised earth in the centre of the house. People sleep near the fireplace on mats with very little warm coverings even in severe winter. As a matter of fact, the severe winter can hardly be felt inside the Apatani house when the fire burns.

3.3. Just above this fireplace a big pendent rack (rake) serves the purpose of storeroom of the Apatani house. All household articles such as firewood, rice beer, cane, baskets and food etc. are kept there.

3.4. There are usually two balconies, one in the front and the other at the rear of the house. They use a very small compartment (nekang) of the house attached to a side wall of the main compartment for attending to their natural call. The space between the platform and the ground serves as a shed for pigs. Poultry is kept in the first compartment of the house in bamboo cages.

3.5. As there is no window in the house it remains dark even in day time. The fire inside the house is the main source of light. But they use small pine sticks as a source of light when needed. These pine-sticks contain oil and give sufficient light.

3.6. The majority of the Apatanis do not have to bear substantial part of the labour cost for the construction of their dwelling houses. The house materials, bamboo, timber posts are generally collected from the bamboo grooves and pine grooves of the village. The owner gives invitation to the villagers in a particular day to construct the house. The villagers collectively construct the house within a day or two. But, the owner has to spend in giving a feast consisting of rice, meat and rice-beer. The nature and quantum of the feast, however, depends on the capacity of the house-owner.

Thus, the house building activity turns into a social function and social affair. It was reported that some of the building materials are donated by other co-villagers when a particular household has no such material. A rough estimate indicated that a house construction entails an expenditure of Rs. 1000.00 to Rs. 2000.00 depending upon the size of the household.

3.7. The Apatanis generally construct their granaries away from the dwelling houses. The danger of accidental fire is always present in the village as the houses are built with easily combustible materials and are very close to each other. When the granaries are constructed away the grains are easily saved from accidental fires. There were no pucca granaries at Bamin village, but some pucca granaries were noticed in other Apatani villages. The granaries are very small and are also built on platforms. They keep threshed paddy and millet in them (i.e. only the grain).

3.8. It appears that the traditional Apatani house is suited to the climatic condition. If the Apatanis have to change this house-type they would need to change their living pattern radically. They would have to add more new items, viz. warm beddings, cots and furniture etc. In such a case the present family life around the fire with hot food and the drink would have to be sacrificed to a great extent. It was seen at Hapoli township that whenever an Apatani constructs a modern house he also constructs a traditional house behind it which is mainly used for living.

4. Assembly platforms : (Lapangs) :

4.1. At Bamin village there are 4 large assembly platforms situated at different corners of the main path. These are constructed with broad wooden planks over wooden posts, about chest high from the ground. These platforms have special significance which would be discussed in a separate chapter. These platform also serve as the main place where the menfolk sit and gossip at times and also work.

5. Water Supply and Electricity :

5.1. The village is provided with regular supply of drinking water through pipes, hydrants and cisterns. These hydrants are located in the main street at suitable intervals and drinking water is available round the clock.

5.2. The electric lines also extend over to the village main street. But, the electric connections does not exist. It was reported that the lines were installed to provide street lights in the village and in fact some lights were provided in the past. But, these have been discontinued due to some administrative difficulties. The generating set at Hapoli is very small and it runs only for about 6 hours in the evening

6. Educational Facilities :

6.1. The village Bamin has a Government L.P. School within the village boundary. This offers facilities for some neighbouring villages also. The school is a nice pucca building with C.I. sheet roofing built on a wooden platform. It has the requisite wooden furniture. There is also, a teachers' quarters near the school. Bamin L.P. school has two qualified teachers and one belong the Apatani tribe. For higher education one has to go to Hapoli town. There is no college level education facilities within the district.

7. Health and Sanitation :

7.1. In general the people appears to be healthy. But there were a few people reported to be suffering from some chronic diseases. On enquiry it was revealed that there were several tuberculosis patients undergoing treatment at Hapoli. A few were reported to have been cured. The common cold is widespread. There were several people having some skin diseases. It was also ascertained from the Health Department at Hapoli that many cases of Venereal diseases exist among the Apatanis. This suggests that there should be some improvements in regards to personal habits and sanitation in the village.

Mention may be made of the fact that the mothers chew the food and feed their children mouth to mouth. This helps spread of the diseases. Further, many diseased dogs were seen to be inhabiting with the inmates of the households. The children are generally exposed to these dogs which sometimes lick them. The practice of taking medical help prior to performance of the rituals as prescribed by the priest (niho) is still to come.

8. Language :
8.1. The Apatani speak their own dialect. But all men can express simple things in Assamese language. The women, by and large, know no other language excepting their dialect. The medium of instruction in L.P. school is English, Hindi is also taught. It appears that they know the language of the neighbouring tribes particularly that of the Nisis. The languages of the neighbouring tribes have many common words.

9. Markets :
9.1. Napoli, the district headquarters is the main market not only for village Bamin but also for the entire area. There is a weekly market at Ziro where people gather and transact business. This is particularly for obtaining cotton, pigs, and pickle made of bamboo shoots, from the Nisis. It was observed that some Nisis visit the Apatani villages for exchange of these goods with paddy. In some Apatani villages there are some village shops also. It was also observed that some small birds and animals were being sold in the village itself. These birds and animals were killed in the forest.

CHAPTER - III.

DEMOGRAPHIC ASPECTS OF BAMIN

1. Total Population :

1.1. Bamin village had 73 households at the time of field investigation in December, 1976. These 73 households contained 310 persons in all. It may be mentioned that the population of the village was 367 persons in 1971, as per Census of India.

1.2. The variation of the total population between 1971 and 1976 may be explained by the fact that there were some out migration of households from the village. Although Apatanis are settled people, unlike the neighbouring Nisis yet the opportunity that were opened due to the growth of the district administrative centre at Hapoli and some new settlements at Sebe and other places had induced several families to migrate. Village leaders reported that between 1966 and 1975 about 19 families migrated out of the village to Hapoli, Sebe and other neighbouring places. However, number of people involved in these outgoing families and actual time of migration could not be ascertained. Thus the population of Bamin is decreasing due to emigration. It was earlier noticed that the Apatanis have increased at an annual rate of about 1.9 per cent. Further, it was difficult to ascertain the natural growth rate of population at Bamin, particularly because the respondents did not like to talk about dead persons. All deaths were reported to have taken place long back. Therefore it was not possible to ascertain the time of death of person in the village.

1.3. Moreover, some households have only temporarily settled at Hapoli. There are two households who have dwelling houses both at Hapoli and Bamin. But, the inmates generally live at Hapoli. The empty homes are looked after by their kins and fire in the hearth is always lit particularly in the evening. These two families were not taken as residing in the village and hence not enumerated.

Only rarely, a married couple would live with their parents. This may be due to their customary law of inheritance. The land is handed over to the new generation through inheritance. The ancestral property is inherited by the eldest son as a matter of customary right. Other sons inherit the acquired property of the parents. This traditional pattern was in practice in Bamin village.

3.3. It was also observed that the setting up of a new house for the newly wed couple is also a social responsibility, and the society had so far provided a plot of homestead land for such landless couple from the village land. But this practice could operate under limits due to gradual dwindling of land resource.

4. Average Size of Household :

4.1. The average size of the household was found to be 4.25 persons. This may be said to be low compared to people in the plains of Assam where it is 6.0 persons per household. The size is low because of predominance of nuclear type of families.

4.2. The distribution of households by size of family is provided in Table 3.2. Higher proportion of families are in the lower side of the average size of households (family).

Table - 3.2.

Distribution of Population by the size of the Household
Bamin : Arunachal Pradesh

Size of Household	No. of Household	No. of Persons		
		Male	Female	Total
1	4	3	1	4
2	12	12	12	24
3	13	18	21	39
4	13	27	25	52
5	12	34	26	60
6	10	29	31	60
7	4	17	11	28
8	2	8	8	16
9	3	14	13	27
10	-	-	-	-
Total	: 73	162	148	310

Average size of household = 4.25

5. Age and Sex Distribution :

5.1. The total population consisted of 162 males and 148 females giving an average sex ratio of 913 females per 1000 males. Table 3.3 gives the sex ratio of the population according to age group. Very high sex-ratio is prevalent in age group above 60 years. This might be due to the fact that male longevity is lower than female longevity.

Table - 3.3.

Proportion of Female per 1000 male and its distribution by Age and Sex : Bamin, Arunachal Pradesh.

Age-Group	Male	Female	Female per 1000 male (Approximate)
Below 5	24	23	958
5 - 15	41	38	926
15 - 25	24	21	875
25 - 35	22	20	909
35 - 45	20	23	1,150
45 - 55	20	14	700
55 - 60	8	2	250
60 & above	3	7	2,333
Overall	162	148	913

5.2. Distribution of population by age-group and sex provided in Table 3.4, indicates that proportion of people below 15 years of age is 40.60 per cent, 15-60 years is 56.13 per cent and above 60 years is 3.23 per cent.

Table - 3.4

Distribution of Population by Age and Sex Bamin; Arunachal.

Age-Group	Male		Female		Total	
	Nc.	P.C.	No.	P.C.	No.	P.C.
Below 5	24	14.81	23	15.54	47	15.16
5 - 15	41	25.31	38	25.68	79	25.48
15 - 25	24	14.81	21	14.19	45	14.52
25 - 35	22	13.58	20	13.51	42	13.55
35 - 45	20	12.35	23	15.54	43	13.87
45 - 55	20	12.35	14	9.46	34	10.96
55 - 60	8	4.94	2	1.35	10	3.23
60 & above	3	1.85	7	4.73	10	3.23
All Ages	162	100.00	148	100.00	310	100.00

These proportions are fairly comparable to other tribal villages. However, much reliance on age structure of the population can not be given due to the fact that the respondents were not able to give correct age. But it may be mentioned that proportion of people in higher age groups are less. This indicates higher mortality above the age of 55. Observation in the village indicates that there were higher incidence of diseases in older age and consequent early deaths are not unlikely. It may however be mentioned that among the Apatanis incidence of Tuberculosis is high. The primary reason might be their very congested and unhygienic living condition.

6. Marital Status :

- 6.1. Table 3.5 gives the distribution of population by age, sex and marital status. Overall proportions are 44.52% married, 51.93% unmarried, 2.90% widowed and 0.65% divorced.
- 6.2. It may be pointed out that there were no widowers in the sample but there were 9 widows. These widows were above 44 years of age. There is no restriction of widow marriage in the Apatani society.
- 6.3. There were two divorced males in the sample. However, these divorces were not of usual nature because one was a habitual drunkard and other had a quarrel with his spouse. It seems that the female can leave her husband without observing any formality provided she has valid grounds. Village elders generally decide the divorce cases and impose penalties in case of improper divorces.
- 6.4. Age of marriage of the females was reported by Haimendorf as very early. It appears that early marriage of girls has been gradually going down. In Bamin village there were 10 girls who were unmarried but were above 14 years. It is evident that one unmarried girl was above 24 years of age.
- 6.5. The marriage of male was found to have taken place early. Six out of 24 males in the age group of 15-25 were married. But there were cases of late marriage also. Five, out of 22 were unmarried in the age group of 25-35.

Table - 3.5.

Distribution of Population by Age, Sex and Marital Status, Bamin Village,
Arunachal Pradesh.

Age Group	MALE				FEMALE				TOTAL			
	M	U	W	D	M	U	W	D	M	U	W	D
Below 5	--	24	--	--	--	23	--	--	--	47	--	--
5 - 15	--	41	--	--	--	38	--	--	--	79	--	--
15 - 25	5 (3.53)	13	--	--	12	9	--	--	13	27	--	--
25 - 35	13 (22.35)	19	--	1	19	1	--	--	35	6	--	1
35 - 45	19 (27.14)	1	--	--	23	--	--	--	42	1	--	--
45 - 55	13 (25.71)	1	--	1	11	--	3	--	29	1	3	1
55 - 60	3 (11.43)	--	--	--	--	--	2	--	3	--	2	--
60 & above	3 (4.29)	--	--	--	3	--	4	--	6	--	4	--
Total :	70 (100.00)	90	--	2	63	71	9	--	133	161	9	2

There were two unmarried males. One in 35-45 age group and the other ⁱⁿ 45-55 age group. The chances of these aged unmarried males of getting married are remote as because suitable brides for them are wanting. However, there were few cases of unmarried ^{males} who could not afford to get intimate with females and at the same time failed to provide bride price for girls. However, the Apatanis in Bamin did not seem to stick very much ^{to} bride price. There is a movement in the Apatani valley to abolish bride price. This finds favour only among younger / the generation.

7. Literacy :

7.1. The overall rate of literacy in Bamin village was 22.76% of the population. This rate is 37.65% for the male and 5.41% for the female taken separately. This aspect is shown in Table 3.6.

Table- 3.6.

Distribution of Population by Sex and Educational Standard
Bamin : Arunachal Pradesh

Educational Standard	Male	Female	Total
Illiterate	101 (62.35)	140 (94.59)	241 (77.74)
Literate	7 (4.32)	--	7 (2.26)
Primary Standard	23 (14.20)	7 (4.73)	30 (9.67)
Upto M.E.	19 (11.73)	1 (0.68)	20 (6.45)
Matric Standard	10 (6.18)	--	10 (3.23)
Matriculate	--	--	--
I.A/P.U/H.S.	2 (1.24)	--	2 (0.65)
B.A./M.A. etc	--	--	--
Overall	162 (100.00)	148 (100.00)	310 (100.00)

8. Educational Status :

8.1. Bamin village is advantageously situated in respect of educational facilities. It has a well furnished Government L.P. School with two teachers. The government Higher Secondary School is situated within 3 km. (at Hapoli) There is also a craft centre at Hapoli where training facilities are available on weaving, carpentry, blacksmithy, etc.

8.2. Table 3.7 provides the educational status of the adult population i.e. population from 15^{years} to above. In Bamin village 80.43 per cent of adult population was found to be illiterate. Percentage of adult population in higher educational standard were very few. Only 10.33 per cent crossed the Middle English School standard and 0.65 per cent attained education above Matriculation standards.

9. School going Children :

9.1. Number of school going children in different age groups and in different educational level in Bamin village is shown in Table 3.8. Out of 39 students most of them were in Primary schools. Only 7 were attending High School at Hapoli 2 in lower classes and 5 in higher standard. Number of female attending school is very low and none was found in high school standard.

9.2. It is interesting to note that 2 persons in the age group of 25-30 years were attending higher level of education. One is in the final year M.B.B.S. course and other in B.A. course. These students were receiving Government Stipends for higher studies.

9.3. In terms of percentage to total persons in the age group of 5-15, only 40.50 per cent were attending school. This percentage is only 18.42 for girls in that age group and 60.97 for boys.

10. Economic Status :

10.1. In a society where self-employment is the rule it is very difficult to ascertain the Economic status of a person. At Bamin village even persons below the age of 15 were seen to be good workers helping the households in cultivation of crops and many other household activities that could be termed as earning activity. Even school going children go to the field particularly at the peak seasons and the school remains closed at such time. Therefore, it is difficult to make a conventional distinction between earners and dependents or workers, helpers and dependents. But, for the purpose of the present study the persons were categorised

Table - 3.7.

Educational Status of Adult Members by Age and Sex, Bamin, Arunachal Pradesh.

Educational Level	AGE GROUPS												
	15 - 25		25 - 35		35 - 45		45 - 55						
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Illiterate	7 (29.17)	21 (100.00)	10 (45.45)	20 (100.00)	30 (71.44)	15 (75.00)	23 (100.00)	33 (83.36)	13 (90.00)	14 (100.00)	32 (84.12)		
Literate	--	--	4 (15.13)	--	4 (9.52)	1 (5.00)	1 (2.33)	1 (2.33)	1 (5.00)	--	1 (2.94)		
Primary Standard Upto M.E.	3 (33.33)	--	1 (4.55)	--	1 (2.33)	1 (5.00)	2 (11.90)	1 (2.33)	1 (5.00)	--	--		
Matric Standard	9 (37.50)	--	5 (22.73)	--	5 (11.90)	2 (10.00)	1 (2.33)	1 (2.33)	1 (5.00)	--	1 (2.94)		
Matriculate	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--		
I. A/P.U/H.S.	--	--	2 (9.09)	--	2 (4.75)	--	--	--	--	--	--		
B.A./M.A. etc.	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--		
Total	4 (100.00)	21 (100.00)	22 (100.00)	45 (100.00)	42 (100.00)	20 (100.00)	23 (100.00)	43 (100.00)	20 (100.00)	14 (100.00)	34 (100.00)		

Contd/-

Table - 3.7 (Contd.)
 Educational Status of Adult Members by Age and Sex, Abamin, Arunachal Pradesh.

Educational Level	55 - 60		E		G R O U P S		Total		
	F		M		30 and Above		F		
	M	F	M	F	T	M	F	T	
Illiterate	3 (100.00)	2 (100.00)	10 (100.00)	3 (100.00)	7 (100.00)	10 (100.00)	61 (32.39)	37 (100.00)	143 (80.43)
Literate							6 (6.19)	--	6 (3.26)
Primary Standard							2 (2.06)	--	2 (1.09)
Upto M.E.							16 (16.49)	--	16 (8.70)
Matric Standard							10 (10.31)	--	10 (5.43)
Matriculate							--	--	--
I.A./P.U./H.S.							2 (2.03)	--	2 (1.09)
B.A./M.A. etc.							--	--	--
Total :	3 (100.00)	2 (100.00)	10 (100.00)	3 (100.00)	7 (100.00)	10 (100.00)	97 (100.00)	37 (100.00)	184 (100.00)

Table - 3.3.

No. of School going Children according to Age-Group - Bawin,

Age-Group (Years)	Primary		M.E.		H.E.		College		Total		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
5 - 10	10	5	--	--	--	--	--	--	10	5	15
10 - 15	15	4	2	--	--	--	--	--	15	2	17
15 - 20	--	--	--	--	5	--	--	--	5	--	5
20 - 25	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
25 - 30	--	--	--	--	--	--	2*	--	2	--	2
	25	9	2	--	5	--	2	--	32	7	39

* One Medical Student 5th Yr. M.B.B.S. (outside Assam)
One doing B.A. (Bombay)

as workers, helpers and non-workers. Person who is not independently engaged in earning activity but helps in productive pursuits of the family are taken as helpers. A student who occasionally helps is neither counted as a helper nor as a worker.

10.2. Another important system in Bamin and also in Apatani society is the existence of Patangs i.e. work brigades. These Patangs are usually a small group of boys or girls (usually between the age of 12 to 30 years) who work together. These Patangs were reported to help families on request in performing tasks which are not possible to be completed with family labour. Children join such Patang groups very early in their life. Such patang now-a-days can be hired on payment of wages. But when mutual exchange of labour on the basis of patang takes place the members of the patang are fed with meat, rice-beer etc. by the employing family. However, there are instance of employing a whole Patang in construction works outside the village by contractors. The traditional system was reported to be somewhat loose as a result of emergence of wage-paid-employment in certain cases and for attending schools by the children.

10.3. Dividing the people on the basis of workers, helpers and non-workers it was found that 34.51% of the population of Bamin village could be deemed as full time workers. The percentage of workers among male is 51.23% and it was 58.10% among the females. Higher percentage of female workers are found in this type of traditional society. Distribution of the population of Bamin by economic status according ^{to} age and sex is given in Table 3.9.

10.4. It will be evident from Table 3.9 that all persons in the age group of 15 years and above excepting the students were returned as workers and some of the persons below 15 years were also returned as workers, particularly among the females. The non-workers were mainly children and persons above the age of 60. Thus there were 39 male and 51 female non-workers out of 310 in Bamin village. The dependancy is only about 29% in the village. It will be slightly higher if the students are included as dependents.

Table - 3.9.

Distribution of Population by Age, Sex and Economic Status, Bamin.

Age Group	MALE				FEMALE				TOTAL					
	W		St		W		St		W		St		TOTAL	
	H	NW	H	NW	H	NW	H	NW	H	NW	H	NW	H	NW
Below 5	--	24 (61.54)	--	--	--	23 (45.10)	--	--	--	--	47 (53.75)	--	--	--
5 - 15	---	13 (33.34)	25 (67.57)	2	2	15 (29.42)	8 (100.00)	2	16 (100.00)	1.13	23 (35.00)	38 (73.34)	--	--
15 - 25	14 (16.87)	--	10 (27.03)	21 (24.42)	2	--	--	35 (20.71)	39 (23.03)	43 (25.44)	1 (1.25)	10 (22.22)	--	--
25 - 35	19 (22.38)	1	2 (5.40)	20 (23.25)	23	--	--	34 (25.74)	34 (16.23)	10 (5.92)	3 (4.55)	2 (4.44)	--	--
35 - 45	20 (24.10)	--	--	14 (16.23)	2	--	--	14 (16.23)	2	4 (4.55)	3 (5.33)	2 (4.44)	--	--
45 - 55	20 (24.10)	--	--	14 (16.23)	2	--	--	14 (16.23)	2	4 (4.55)	3 (5.33)	2 (4.44)	--	--
55 - 60	3 (9.64)	--	--	2 (2.33)	4	--	--	2 (2.33)	4	3 (4.55)	4 (5.00)	2 (4.44)	--	--
60 & above	2 (2.41)	1 (2.56)	--	4 (4.55)	4	--	--	4 (4.55)	4	3 (4.55)	4 (5.00)	2 (4.44)	--	--
	83 (100.00)	39 (100.00)	37 (100.00)	86 (100.00)	13 (100.00)	51 (100.00)	8 (100.00)	169 (100.00)	16 (100.00)	80 (100.00)	45 (100.00)	45 (100.00)	--	--

11. Members Staying Out :

11.1. Although there were 310 persons in 73 households in Bamin village some family members were staying outside the village. Table 3.10 gives the ^{number of} persons staying out for different purposes. These persons were counted in the population total of the village because they were only staying out temporarily. It is noteworthy that 12 persons were staying out in different parts of India as they were serving as sepoy in Border Security Force, Assam Rifles, etc.

Table - 3.10

Information about People Staying out.

Age Group	Reasons of Staying Out					
	Service		Studies		Others	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Below 5 Years	--	--	--	--	--	--
5 - 15 "	--	--	2	--	--	--
15 - 25 "	5	--	5	--	--	--
25 - 35 "	5	--	2	--	1	--
35 - 45 "	2	--	--	--	1	--
45 - 55 "	--	--	--	--	--	--
55 - 60 "	--	--	--	--	--	--
60 & above	--	--	--	--	--	--
All Ages	12	--	9	--	2	--

CHAPTER - IV

SOCIOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE APATANIS

1. Earlier Works on the Apatanis :

1.1. It seems that the existence of the Apatanis was unknown to the plains people till the early part of the last century. There is no mention of the Apatanis in the book of Mr. A. Mackenzie¹. The first mention of the Apatanis was made in a report by Major Graham on the Dafla expedition of 1874-75. Next source of information of the Apatanis is from Mr. Crowe, Manager of the Joyhing Tea Estate, who visited their area in December, 1889². It was stated therein that the first party of ^{the} Apatanis came down with Mr. Crowe to the plains of Assam. This means that before 1889, the Apatanis perhaps had no contact with the plains. One of the reasons for their not coming to the plains was reported obstruction created by the Daflas who were earning quite a lot by acting as middlemen between ^{the} Apatanis and the plains people.

1.2. The description of Mr. McCabe, the leader of the military expedition (1897) is very interesting and gives a picture of the Apatani country. He saw a magnificent plateau about ten miles in length, laid out in highly cultivated and artificially irrigated terraces well watered by the Keli river, flowing through the valley. He was surprised to see the valley which was dotted with isolated hillocks with pine groves. He saw no standing crops but the left-out stalks gave ample evidence of the rich paddy harvest.

1.3. After the military expedition of 1897, the Apatani area was visited by the Miri Mission in 1912 and Dr. Bor, then Political Officer, Balipara Frontier Tract in 1932, followed by Captain Lightfoot in the year 1936 and Dr. Haimendorf, the Special officer in 1944-45.

1. Mackenzie, A. (1884) : History of the Relations of the Government with the Hill Tribes of North-East Frontier of Bengal.

2. Chakravarty, L.N (1973) : Glimpses of the early history of Arunachal.

After the establishment of the administrative set-up, the area became more or less open. Dr. Haimendorf again visited the Apatanis in 1962. His works give most interesting and valuable information of the Apatanis particularly on their social, political and economic conditions as well as a comparative picture of various neighbouring tribes in relation to the Apatanis.³

2. Class and Clan Division :

2.1. The Apatani society is divided into two major endogamous classes - the Mite and the Mura. Haimendorf described the Mites as patrician and the Muras as plebeian. The origin of this division of unequal status is obscure. According to ^{the} Apatani tradition all the Mura were originally the slaves of the Mite; but today there is a large class of Mura who have been free for generations. It is learnt that in ^{the} Apatani society, the original slaves and their descendants constitute the Mura class.

2.2. In earlier times when slavery was practised the Apatanis did not own individual household slaves as in case of other neighbouring tribes. The slaves were provided with separate houses and some Mite clans had slaves common to the clan. The slavery was abolished after the setting up of regular administration. The Muras, i.e. slaves are no longer an economic category. They have assumed a social class, the distinction remaining only in restriction of inter-marriage between mite and mura class. However, the younger generation is against such social discrimination.

2.3. Both the Mite and Mura classes are also divided into a number ^{of} exogamous clans (halu). They believe that the members of a particular clan are descendants of a common ancestor. An Apatani clan is a very real social unit and its members are bound to each other by definite obligations of mutual help. The details of the names of the clans of the two classes of the Apatanis are given below

3. C. Von Furer Haimendorf: Ethnographic notes on the tribes of the Subansiri region (Shillong, 1947), Himalayan Barbary (London, 1955), Notes on tribal justice among the Apatanis, Man in India, Vol. XXVI (1946). The Apatanis and their neighbours (London, '62).

Mite Class :

Clans : (1) Pura (2) Danio (3) Haju (4) Kago (5) Taru (6) Taku Taro (7) Nada (8) Kime (9) Hibu (10) Puniyo (11) Takhe (12) Bulo (13) Tapi (14) Tilling (15) Rade (16) Ngaliang (17) Millo (18) Tailang (19) Loddo (20) Nako (21) Mom (22) Kure (23) Nani (24) Khoda (25) Habung (26) Padi (27) Kru (28) Nakre (29) Koj (30) Chigin (31) Tadu (32) Nami (33) Madan (34) Raso (35) Tamo (36) Hage (37) Mudo (38) Taso (39) Gyati.

Mura Class :

Clans : (1) Landi (2) Dogin (3) Nanding (4) Dusu (5) Narang (6) Tilling (7) Hano (8) Roto (9) Taniya (10) Hibu (11) Talo (12) Budi (13) Haju (14) Puna (15) Hidu (16) Miri (17) Danio (18) Tage (19) Tabiyo (20) Misso (21) Hihin (22) Rubu (23) Mom (24) Nani (25) Padi (26) Habung (27) Ayo (28) Chigin (29) Yasang (30) Yagi (31) Madan (32) Narang (33) Takho (34) Padu.

2.4. The Bamin village of the Apatanis which has been surveyed also consisted of both the Mite and Mura classes. The Mite class has two clans, viz. Raso and Tamo; the Mura class of Bamin has four clans, viz. Tilling, Hano, Roto and Taniyang. They follow the strict rule of class endogamy and clan exogamy. In no case class exogamy and clan endogamy is permissible.

3. Physical Features :

3.1. The Apatanis belong to the Mongoloid stock. The majority of the Apatanis possess light brown skin colour. Their stature is medium, though short statured people are also common among them. Facial hair is scanty. Their face is round and cheekbones are generally prominent with small round chin. Hair is generally straight with a tendency to form broad waves. The presence of the epicanthic fold is almost common. Physically, both the sexes are strong and sturdy.

4. Personal Adornment and Dress :

4.1. Apatani art is well expressed in weaving and in works of cane and bamboo. Only the women weave, using a small tension loom (Lobu Lome) which is simple, portable and inexpensive. They have a special attraction for yellow, red, white and black colours which they utilize generally for women's dress, namely Nim abi (black skirt) Ji abi (white skirt) Bilang abi (red and white skirt) etc. These coloured cloth is fastened round the waist which extends to the knees. The women folk also use various scarfs of different colours namely Misam Pulae, Jilung Pulae, Pramim Pulae etc. They wear these scarfs over the body which hangs from the shoulders upto the waist. The upper garment of women is known as Tapia Tare (Blouse).

4.2. The dress of Apatani menfolk is simple. Men invariably wear general shirt hanging below the shoulders and covering the upper half of the body. They carry a dao with a case, across the waist, particularly when going out to the field and jungles. The older Apatani man usually fasten round their waist a broad locally manufactured red cane belt (huri) with a flat pointed red tail (ahu). The young Apatani boys and girls, and many others use modern type of dress available in the market.

4.3. The menfolk bind their hairs into a knot (puding) in the front just above the forehead and put a long pin (Khotoo, Partoo) through the knot. The womenfolk tatoo their noses with single line and chins with several straight lines. They also wear circular wooden plugs put on both sides of the nose. The menfolk also have tattoo marks on their chin. These practices, though widely prevalent, is now being given up by the younger generation with the approval of the elders. The Apatani women decorate themselves with various colours of rings of bead neclaces. They wear a number of ornaments of silver. In ceremonial occasion, the womenfolk take much care to decorate themselves with rich ornaments and garments.

5. Food Habits :

5.1. Rice is the staple food for the Apatanis. Besides, a small quantity of millet and maize is used as staple diet. A considerable portion of rice and major portion of millet are used for preparing beer (Oh). Beer is a regular drink and it is taken in all occasions by all age groups without any social restriction. Generally menfolk drink more than women. Even the small children are given this drink. Milk is not used by the villagers.

5.2. The Apatanis are habituated to taking boiled diet. Besides rice, boiled vegetables, pumpkins, brinjals, ground, etc. are commonly used by them. Bamboo shoots, dried fish and meat are very popular items among the Apatanis. They are fond of beef, pork and flesh of any animals domesticated or wild.

6. Village Administration :

6.1. The village affairs of the Apatanis are managed in a somewhat informal manner by a council of clan representatives known as 'buliang'. The buliangs are men of character and ability having wealth and social status. There are three types of 'buliang' - akha buliang, yapa buliang, and ajang buliang.

6.2. "The akha buliang are the principal leaders of the village, who even when too old to take a very active part in the life of the community must be consulted on all important matters. The yapa buliang are middle-aged men who carry on the day-to-day conduct of the village affairs, settle disputes and keep the akha buliang informed of developments. The ajang buliang are youngmen who act as messengers and assistants of the yapa buliang and function in some respects as the leaders and spokesmen of the younger generation".

6.3. The buliang occasionally decides the cases of internal disputes. The Apatani society provides enforcement of laws through the buliang which act as the representatives

4. C. Von. Haimendorf, The Apatanis and their neighbours (London, 1962).

of public opinion. The buliang can also purchase mithuns from its fund. They spend a lot from this fund in celebrating Mloko, Morom and other festivals. And thus the buliang continue to provide effective village administration till now. Their authority has recently been formally confirmed by the administration to a particular extent. The village headmen or 'Gaonburas' are also playing an important role in various activities of village administration.

7. Work Brigade (Patang) :

7.1. The traditional labour force (patang) organisation among the Apatanis is playing a very important role in their economic activities. From early childhood generally every Apatani boy or girl belong to a Patang and this association continues to some extent in their later life. The labour force of boys and girls within the age-group of 12-16 is known as Hime Patang and the adult groups upto the age of 30 or so is known as Akhara Patang. The total members of a Patang group generally consist of not more than twelve individuals.

7.2. The Patang group generally works in turn on each other's field. No payment is made for such mutual assistance, but the person on whose field the group works is expected to provide a mid-day meal or at least rice-beer for the workers. The hiring of 'Patang' is however, only one of the means by which rich men obtain the necessary labour for the cultivation of their large holdings. Many poor men and women are to depend on the grain or money received as wages for daily labour to a great extent. Generally, an adult member receives a sum of rupees five, while a younger member gets only rupees two as wages for daily work.

8. Marriage :

8.1. The choice of a marriage partner of an Apatani is generally considered his or her personal affair and the parents and kinsmen generally do not interfere. Hence, the love marriage is common. In such cases, there is no need of a formal engagement or even a wedding ceremony.

8.2. In the case of wealthy families, however, marriages are often arranged by the parents. Such marriages are connected with greater formalities involving the exchange of valuable articles. The middle man who helps in negotiating such marriages is known as Guntang. After the agreement, the boy has to offer a Tibetan sword or one hundred rupees to the bride's family. It is known as 'Buno-Illio'. Again the parents of the boy have to pay a mithun ^{or} at least five hundred rupees to the bride's family. Of course, a rich family can, however, afford to pay even several number of mithuns. The boy's family also receive some 80/100 baskets of paddy from brides family. The payment of the bride-price may also be kept pending for sometimes depending upon the agreement of the two parties. The importance of paying bride-price in the form of mithuns was noticed to have been gradually lowering in recent marriages. Formerly, child marriage was widely prevalent among the Apatanis; but now it is being given up. Monogamy is the rule. Divorce is rare.

8.3. In the choice of their brides the Apatanis have to observe the rules of clan exogamy and class endogamy. In village Bamin, it is noticed that the individuals of Raso clan can marry only from Tamo clan of the village and from other Mite clans belonging to other Apatani villages. Similarly, the Tamo clan members can also marry from Raso clan and other Mite clans. The Mura clans of the village, viz. Tilling, Leno, Roto and Taniyang follow the rule of clan exogamy. They can marry from any Mura clans excepting their own. Breaches of the rule of clan exogamy and class endogamy are extremely rare. Among the Apatanis, neither patrilineal nor matrilineal cross-cousins are eligible as marriage partners, but a man may marry a girl of his mother's clan provided no consanguinous link can be traced. A man is also permitted to marry his wife's elder or younger sister, and even his younger brother's widow after the death of his wife.

8.4. Parents are responsible to assist their sons in setting up a household. It is usual for fathers to buy house sites for their married sons if and when necessary.

9. Property Inheritance :

9.1. The rules of inheritance provide that the ancestral property is inherited by the eldest son. But men with several sons usually divide his property as their sons get married. Daughters usually do not receive any share other than their dowry of cloths and ornaments. The property is normally passed on the male line only.

10. Religious Beliefs and Practices :

10.1. The Apatanis believe in the existence of various deities and spirits (Ui) being capable of affecting their welfare and health. These forces are superior to all men in the power and cast an influence, often evil in nature upon the human life.

10.2. The Apatani deities and spirits are not arranged in the order of an accepted hierarchy. According to Apatani tradition two deities known as Kilo and Kiru are the most powerful. They are husband and wife and believed to influence the general welfare of man. Two other deities - Chandun and Didun are believed to be the creators of the earth and the sky respectively. The dual character of supernatural beings seems to be a characteristic feature of the Apatanis' spirit world.

10.3. The origin of man is associated with a deity of another category known as Hilo. Generally Hilo is a generic term referring to a number of separate deities. In one myth the term 'Hilo' is applied to a specific deity credited with the making of the first ancestor of the Apatanis, known as Abo Tani. The Apatanis and many other tribes, such as Adis, Nisis, Tagins and Miris are proudly claiming themselves as the direct descendants of their great legendary Human Father, i.e. Abo Tani, who is ascribed to be the first ever human being on this earth. These tribes are also the ardent believers in a cult called the 'Donyi - Polo'. By Donyi, they literally mean the Sun and Polo stands for the Moon.

10.4. According to Apatani belief, there are also many other deities which are specially associated with certain natural phenomena. Prominent among these are three deities collectively known as Korlang (Niri Korlang,) Tagun Korlang and Angun Korlang). A rite known as Korlang Ui is performed before the work of transplanting. Niri Korlang resides in the sky and provides protection against hailstorms; Tagun Korlang also dwells in the sky and is responsible for thunderstorms and excessive rains and Angun Korlang resides in the plains of Assam and protects the Apatanis visiting the plains against disease.

10.5. Besides deities, Apatanis believe in a host of spirits inhabiting the surface of the earth and most of them are worshipped only in connection with activities taking place in the locality where they are supposed to dwell. Some of them are benevolent while others are essentially malevolent in nature. The propitiations are made by way of rituals which are performed from time to time. Prayers are uttered and sacrifices offered by the local priests (Nyibo) to each of these powers. If these are neglected, their wrath may be aroused and cause some catastrophe. Every effort has thus to be made to secure the blessings of the super-natural powers.

10.6. The Apatanis worship their deities and spirits according to the forms and manners prescribed by the 'Nyibo' (Priest). In order to cure various diseases like dysentery, fever, malaria, pox, tuberculosis and other troubles and even to eradicate pests and diseases of crops they use to worship various spirits and deities believed to be associated with and sacrifice pigs, fowls, mithuns, cows, dogs, etc. At the time of sickness they call on the 'Nyibo' who diagnoses the disease and prescribes the necessary sacrifices for the cure of the illness. The 'Nyibo' is generally supposed to possess some supernatural powers and with the help of such powers he determines the cause and offers sacrifices to various spirits and deities. The 'Nyibo' gets lucrative fee for the services he renders to the villagers.

10.7. Observation in Bamin village indicated that a great amount of expenditure is involved in propitiating certain deities. In one case a child was suffering from conjunctivitis and the 'Nyibo' prescribed a ritual in which 12 fowls and 22 eggs were sacrificed. About Rs. 70.00 were spent in that ritual.

10.8. The 'Nago' a small isolated hut owned by the prominent Mite clan groups is a ritual centre which serves as a kind of shrine where important rites are generally performed. The 'Nago' is used by a group of clans and usually named after the most prominent clan of the group. The 'Lapang' an open wooden platform, is another focal point of social activities owned singly or jointly by individual clan or clan groups. On this 'Lapang' the clan members gather for gossip and work as well as on ritual and other formal occasions. Occasionally two or three closely allied clans may jointly own one 'Lapang' while very large clans may possess more than one 'Lapang'. Sometimes one 'Lapang' may also be owned jointly by both patrician (Mite) and slave (Mura) clans. In Bamin village there are four 'Lapangs' and one 'Nago'. The Hano Lapang is jointly owned by Raso (Mite) and Hano (Mura) clans; while Tamo Lapang is also owned jointly by Tamo (Mite) and Roto (Mura) clans. The Tilling and Taniyang clans own their individual Lapang. There is only one 'Nago' in the village Bamin and it is named after the most prominent Mite clan, the Tamo; and hence known as Tamo Nago.

11. Festivals :

11.1. The 'Morom' and the 'Mloko' are the two main festivals of the Apatanis, and these are associated with the agricultural activities. The 'Morom' festival is celebrated in the month of January. The principal public function at this festival is processions of youngmen and boys headed by a priest in ceremonial dress, move in single file from village to village. The priest satters husked rice grains as he walks across the fields and the boys and young men follow him and beat brass plates. In each village the procession group are entertained with rice beer and occasionally small snacks of food.

11.2. Apart from the procession, the wealthy men perform individual rituals at the 'Morom' which includes slaughtering of a number of mithuns, the meat of which is distributed throughout the Apatani valley. The performance of feasts lends the donor social prestige.

11.3. The 'Mloko' is the second great public festival of the Apatanis. It is performed by each village only once in three years. But a system of rotation assures the celebration every year in the valley. According to this system the Hang village performs the Mloko one year, the Hari, Tajang, Reru, Lumpia and Kalong the following year, and the other villages, viz. Hija, Duta, Madantage, Michi-Bamin in the third year.

11.4. As only one group of villages performs the Mloko every year, the celebration is an occasion for the inter village visiting and the entertainment of guests from other villages. There is, moreover, a regular exchange of gifts. Shares of sacrificial animals slaughtered during the Mloko are given to the 'buliang' of the village or village quarters linked by traditional ties to the village of those performing the rite.

11.5. Preparation for this festival takes several weeks. Long before the festival they use to purchase sacrificial animals and collect fire-woods. They also erect tall poles (babo) close to the Lapang which at the time of Mloko are used for a game of acrobatics performed on strong cane ropes attached to these poles.

11.6. The religious side of the Mloko consists mainly of sacrificial rites celebrated separately by the different clans, but intended for the general welfare of the people. The deities invoked are 'Kilo' and 'Kiru' as well as a deity known as Kiriliyari associated with the earth. The timing of the Mloko (March/April) at the beginning of the cultivating season and the worship of an earth deity are obvious to consider it a spring festival which aimed at the enhancement of the fertility of the land.

11.7. It seems that, in the celebration of the two great seasonal feasts of Morom and Mloko, the whole tribe acts as a single entity though different roles are accorded to the individual villages. The other festivals, such as Dree, Yapung etc. are also associated with their agricultural activities.

12. Forces of Change :

12.1. The close contact of the villagers with the various section of the people of the nearby Hapoli town is expected to have perceptible impact on their socio-economic life. The extension of the Hapoli town with modern amenities and their continuous trade relation with North Lakhimpur of Assam would certainly bring in changes in social, economic and cultural life of the Apatanis in near future. However, the Apatanis are still retaining the basic pattern of their social and cultural life. The Hapoli town, the administrative headquarters of the Subansiri district, is situated in the south-western corner of the Apatani valley. The construction works of road, bridge and building at Hapoli and nearby areas have enabled many Apatanis to earn cash wages. The Apatanis have also opened various shops and tea stalls in Hapoli and old Ziro market. Their outstanding capacity for trade has enabled them to have close contact with the plains people and other neighbouring tribes.

12.2. Another factor of change is education. There are several primary and Middle English schools within the Apatani valley itself. Besides a higher secondary school is located at Hapoli town, where a number of Apatani and other students are studying together. Today, a great transformation is coming over the Apatani valley due to influence of existing demonstration farms, hospitals, schools, markets, craft centres and so on. An increasing number of visitors from outside have also broken their age-old isolation.

CHAPTER FIVE

ECONOMIC RESOURCES

1. Introduction :

1.1. In this chapter an attempt is made to examine the economic resources at the disposal of the inhabitants of Bamin village in particular and the basic characteristics of the Apatanis in regard to the system of resource ownership in general.

1.2. The type of economy prevalent in the villages of the Apatani plateau of which Bamin village is a representative is a subsistence economy based on agriculture. Land is the primary resource of the Apatanis and they are basically settled farmers unlike the neighbouring hill tribes. The other major resource is the forest.

2. Land and Land System :

2.1. Before examining the land resource of Bamin village it will be worthwhile to have a glimpse of the general pattern of Apatani land system - categories and classes of land ownership in general. Haimendorf (1962) had elaborately described the Apatani land system. The traditional system has not undergone basic changes because there had been no interference from the administration to change it. Three categories of land, privately owned, clan land and common village land still exist.

2.2. Privately owned land comprises of all categories of cultivated land, homestead and sites for graneries. Clan land consists of land used for clan assembly platform (lapangs), burial grounds and forest tracts. Common village land consists of common pasture and unused land between private land and clan land. This category of land has greatly dwindled due to the growth of population.

2.3. Each village has a boundary and the boundary is known and respected. But it was not possible to get the precise area of Bamin village as its area was officially tagged to Michi, the neighbouring village.

The village Bamin has a hill inside its boundary which is covered with forest, mostly pine grooves, and it was reported that most of the clan land is situated above it. But the cultivated and the home-sted land are flat land.

2.4. Further, it was also not possible to know the area under different categories of land in Bamin village as the area is not cadastrally surveyed and there are no land records at any level. Moreover, the Apatanis would not like the idea of any land survey for the fear of imposition of land tax or land revenue. In spite of the fact that there is no record of registration of rights the Apatanis have the system of private ownership on land. Even the clan land is not common property of the village. There is also a doubt that the clan land is further divided into individual household land. This might be a new phenomenon particularly in land covered by forest tracts. Thus in the Apatani society individual ownership of land is recognised and respected. The system of settled cultivation has brought about the individual ownership of land. The neighbouring tribes which continue to adhere to shifting (Jhum) cultivation are still having community ownership of the major part of the cultivated land.

2.5. It is often referred that the Apatanis are terraced cultivators. It was observed that there are only a few terraces in the whole of Apatani valley and these terraces lay in the gentle slopes of the hills rising from the flat valley land. In Bamin village there were no terraced fields. The Apatanis use all available flat land for cultivation and the rice fields are irrigated. The fields are divided into plots by constructing bunds of different sizes which help retention of water. This gives the impression of terracing. But in fact this type of arrangements for cultivation of paddy is similar to the plains.

2.6. There is no standard value of land in the Apatani valley. The value of land is expressed in terms of Mithuns. Value depends on the fertility of the land. The Apatanis give immense importance to cultivated land. Paddy land is treasured.

3. Land Holdings of Bamin Village :

3.1. Accurate data on land holding of the households of Bamin village was difficult to obtain as the area is not cadastrally surveyed and as there is no standard unit of measurement of land. The Apatanis are in the habit of determining the size and the value of a particular plot of cultivated land by the size of the produce expressed in terms of basketful of paddy. The basket (Yagi) is the standard measure for many exchanges. Another criterion which has been tried to determine the size of holding is the barter value of the land to number of mithuns. In some cases the respondents gave their size of holding in acres. But judging from their general standard of understanding of this measure the size expressed in acres is also doubtful. Therefore, in determining the size of their holdings a mixture of different criterion was used relying more on Yagi (basket) measure of the produce for paddy land and barter value of land under bamboo grooves, etc. Measuring the size of holding in terms of size of the produce might appear to be unrealistic, but considering the fact that there were no considerable variations in the productivity of land due to vagaries of nature in the Apatani valley, this was the reliable method available. The yield and area relations were verified from officials of the local agriculture department.

3.2. Total land privately owned by the households in Bamin village has been estimated at 236.93 acres. (acre in place of standard hectare is used to avoid further conversion errors and the smallness of the size of holdings). It was found that 51.78 per cent of the total holding was under permanent crops and 48.22 per cent under seasonal crops. Table 5.1 gives the detailed classification of the holdings as per type of utilisation and according to the size class of ownership holding. It is evident that permanent crops included pine grooves and bamboo grooves.

Table 5.1

Land Utilization According to Size Group : (Ownership Holding)

Size Group	No. of Household	Total Area (Acres)	Utilization			Paddy Land	Total Area Under Per- manent Cultivation	Total Area Under Seasonal Crops.
			Pine Grooves	Bamboo	Others			
1 - Below 1 acre	3	2.46	0.15 (1)	0.15 (1)	0.33 (3)	1.83 (3)	0.30	2.16
2 - 1 - 2 acres	11	13.46	5.66 (9)	3.16 (6)	0.39 (5)	9.25 (11)	30.91	23.12
3 - 2 - 3 acres	23	59.03	15.58 (21)	15.33 (21)	1.12 (15)	27.00 (23)	27.16	28.96
4 - 3 - 4 acres	17	55.12	12.33 (14)	14.33 (17)	1.71 (17)	27.25 (17)	20.00	17.79
5 - 4 - 5 acres	9	37.79	11.00 (9)	9.00 (9)	0.79 (8)	17.00 (9)	12.50	8.33
6 - 5 - 6 acres	4	21.33	5.50 (4)	7.00 (4)	0.33 (4)	3.50 (4)	12.50	13.35
7 - 6 - 7 acres	4	25.35	5.00 (4)	7.50 (4)	0.85 (4)	12.50 (4)	4.00	2.56
8 - 7 - 8 acres	1	7.06	2.00 (1)	2.50 (1)	0.06 (1)	2.50 (1)	6.00	2.83
9 - 8 - 9 acres	1	3.33	3.00 (1)	3.00 (1)	0.33 (1)	2.50 (1)		
All Groups :	73	236.93	60.22 (64)	62.47 (64)	5.91 (58)	108.33 (73)	122.69	114.24

Figures in the bracket indicate No. of Households.

3.3. The average size of ownership holding is 3.25 acres. It is apparent that majority of the holdings (Table 5.1) are small. No transfer of land from one household to another was reported in Bamin village. It is possible that the land holdings got fragmented over time due to establishment of new families.

4. Operational Holdings :

4.1. No leasing in, leasing out and usufructuary transfer of land for cultivation purpose was reported in Bamin village. Therefore, there is practically no difference between the ownership holding and operational holding in Bamin. But, for the purpose of analysis operational holding includes only those land which is cultivated with seasonal crops. The land under pine grooves, bamboo grooves and homestead land were excluded. It also includes vegetable plots (Balu).

4.2. In Table 5.2 distribution of operational holdings of the village according to size groups is shown. It is evident that 114.24 acres out of 236.93 acres were under seasonal crops and this was the total operational holding of the households. Of this 94.83 per cent or 108.33 acres is paddy land. The rest 5.17 per cent is used for raising different crops like vegetables, maize, tobacco and to some extent millets. The average size of operational holding per household is only 1.56 acres. This is indeed a very small size of operational holding.

4.3. It is also evident from Table 5.2 that 63.0 per cent of the households operated less than 2 acres of land, 34.26 per cent operated land between 2-3 acres and only about 2.74 per cent of the households operated more than 3 acres but less than 5 acres of land. It may be pointed out that the Apatani cultivation is done only with human labour and no draught animal or implements excepting the hoe is used. It is therefore,

1. In fact even settled farming of the Apatanis depend on family labour like that of the shifting cultivators where the area operated is dependent on labour available. The main difference between shifting cultivation and settled cultivation is that the area operated in the former case can be increased when more labour is available but in the later case the area is static.

Table 5.2

Distribution of Operational Holding According to Size Group.

Size of Holding	No. of Household	Total Area (Acres)	Paddy land (Acres)	Others (Acres)
Below 1 acre	11 (15.00)	7.13 (6.24)	6.33 (5.24)	0.80 (13.54)
1 - 2 acres	35 (47.94)	43.65 (38.21)	41.50 (38.32)	2.15 (36.38)
2 - 3 acres	25 (34.26)	55.30 (43.41)	53.00 (48.92)	2.30 (33.92)
3 - 4 acres	1 (1.37)	3.33 (3.35)	3.50 (3.23)	0.33 (5.58)
4 - 5 acres	1 (1.37)	4.33 (3.79)	4.00 (3.69)	0.33 (5.53)
All Groups	73 (100.00)	114.24 (100.00)	108.33 (100.00)	5.91 (100.00)

N.B. :- Figures in brackets indicate percentages.

difficult on their part to cultivate a large holding with human labour only. On the other hand the necessity of hired labour in peak season is reported to be very high and as family labour is not sufficient (families being nucleated families) scarcity of labour is felt. However, a doubt persists that some households have concealed their total land holdings which might be higher than what is reported. But, Bamin village apparently does not have very big land holder. The small holdings give the Apatanis only a subsistence living and further growth of population would not give the Apatanis adequate means to live on the existing paddy land. Apatanis must grow some crops on hill slopes in terraces or some of them will have to migrate to some other place where flat land is available.

5. Pine and Bamboo Grooves :

5.1. The respondent reported possessing forest land which fall under the category of clan land. The area under pine grooves is shown in Table 5.1 and 64, out of 73 households possess varying size of pine grooves. These pine grooves provide the Apatanis regular source of firewood and timber. The timber is used for construction of houses. The Apatanis know how to conserve the pine grooves and they allow the small plants to grow in the grooves.

5.2. The forests beyond the village boundary also provide the inhabitants of Bamin village the avenues for games and collection of firewood. It may be mentioned that the Mithuns which are semi-wild are let loose in the forest and these mithuns are valuable property for them. Without the forest it would be difficult to rear the mithuns.

5.3. The Apatanis possess Bamboo grooves on the flat land and these bamboos are cultivated. The bamboo is the main house building material and also serves as firewood. The Apatani bamboo is a speciality in the region. It is small in diameter and straight. The bamboo grooves are well fenced and protected from animals.

6. Livestock and Poultry :

6.1. Livestock and poultry has an important role in the Apatani economy. The main traditional animal which the Apatanis prize is the Mithun, or the Bos Frontalis. It has a very special role to play in the social system of the Apatanis and it is also a measure of wealth. The traditional way of judging the social status and economic power by the number of mithuns owned and number of mithuns sacrificed still persists among the Apatanis though not in the manner as in the past. One can judge the wealth of a Apatani household by the stack of mithuns horns on the side wall of the main house which speaks of the number of mithuns sacrificed. The long coiled ropes kept in the house speak of the fact that the household owns mithuns. It may be said that the payment of bride-price, ransoms and fines were paid in mithuns. But these practices have gradually gone down. Yet, the mithuns still dominate the economic scene. Pig, cow and poultry are reared but not in any worthwhile scale. The animals are invariably needed for sacrifices.

6.2. Sacrifice of animals like mithuns, pig, cow and poultry at most of the religious rites and communal rites is a must for the Apatanis. Individuals who want to rise in social esteem, mithuns and pig must be slaughtered. The sacrifices give rise to the demand for these animals. The cow is not reared for its milk but for beef.

6.3. Since the Apatanis are primarily agriculturists without use of the bullock they do not rear it. The cow makes its own living as a stray cattle in the off agricultural season and in enclosed areas in the agricultural season. The animal is not housed. The Apatanis do not know how to house and take care of the cow. The mithuns are also not reared in the household. They are entrusted to the neighbouring Nisis (Daflas) and the Hill Miris who let them loose in the forest. The animals are caught with long ropes whenever needed for sacrifice. Pig and poultry are two items that the Apatanis keep in the households.

Pigs are to a great extent an essential domestic animal of the Apatanis. But it was observed that the pig is not reared as a household enterprise. Pig is taken from the Nisis or purchased from the market at piggling stage. The pig is housed below the platform of the house in an enclosure. The food given to it consists of the household refuse and human excreta which comes straight to the pigsty from the compartment used as latrine above. The poultry is kept open during the day time and are enclosed in a portable cage. The cage is kept inside the living room during the night. The number of poultry must therefore, be small for each household. The Apatanis need fowls and eggs in large number for sacrifice and their own stock in Bamin can not meet the demand. The demand is usually met from supplies from outside the Apatani valley. The principal source of protein for the Apatanis is the meat which they take in a regular manner after sacrifice or otherwise.

6.4. Dog is the common household pet of the Apatanis which share the common hearth and the platform of the inmates. The dog meat is not a taboo for the Apatanis but they do not slaughter it for the purpose of meat alone. It is sacrificed at a special ritual one of which is said to be connected with war. The dog inside the house is a kind of scavenger as it takes all the left-overs of food taken by the inmates. But, it might be also a source of diseases because it lives very close to the children and is not cleaned. Mention may be made of the facts that large number of pups are regularly brought from the plains for the Apatanis.

6.5. The number of animals and birds owned by the households is shown in Table 5.3. It appears that the number of mithuns owned by the households is low. It was observed that respondents were reluctant to give the exact number of mithuns owned by them as it reveals their wealth to the outsiders. Only 21 households out of 73 have reported to own mithuns. Only 3 households had 5 or more mithuns. It is reported that many mithuns died of epidemic a few years back and consequently the number has greatly reduced.

Table- 5.3.

Animals and Poultry birds : Bamin, 1976-77.

Sl. No.	Name of Animal/Poultry	Numbers
1.	Mithuns	51 (21)
2.	Cow/Bull	102 (39)
3.	Pig	71 (71)
4.	Poultry	572 (66)

(Figures in the bracket indicate No. of H.H.)

7. Consumer Durable Goods :

7.1. It is customary in the economic parlance to consider possession of durable consumer goods as one of the indicators of the standard of living. But, it would be difficult to judge the standard of living of the Apatanis by the indicator as because they have been prizing some traditional goods, beads, bells, swords etc. as the symbol of economic power. Their traditional pattern of living i.e. household arrangements and furnishing, which have been described earlier does not make a place for modern furnishings. Even then, the inclusion of some modern durable goods due to the impact of education and the market forces was noticed to a certain extent. Those Apatanis who have taken to service or salaried jobs have acquired watches, radios and bicycles. But that is only a lone instance . But, the core of the Apatani household in Bamin village is observed to be basically traditional.

Table - 5.4.

Durable Consumer Goods in Use, Bamin, 1976-77.

Sl.No.	Name of the articles	No. in use.
1.	Radio	4 (4)
2.	Watch/Clock	13 (13)
3.	Sewing Machine	--
4.	Bicycle	12 (12)
5.	Gun	5 (5)
6.	Torch	24 (24)
7.	Aluminium Utensils	287 (73)
8.	Lantern	-- --
9.	Bucket	77 (65)
10.	Wooden Furniture	13 (11)
11.	Brass Utensils	21 (16)

(Figures in bracket indicate No. of H.H. owning the items)

7.2. In Bamin village there were 4 radios, 13 watches, 12 bicycles, 5 guns and 24 torch lights which may be termed as modern durable goods. But, the village had not a single kerosine lamp. They still use pine-sticks for the light. The wooden furniture in the household were meant for official visitors to sit outside in the open or on the assembly platforms.

7.3. Earthen, wooden and bamboo utensils are still in use but many iron and aluminium kitchen wares were noticed in the households of Bamin village. Bamboo mugs, baskets, traditional swords, bells etc. were not enumerated.

8. Tools and Implements :

8.1. Apatanis do not use much tools and implements. The iron hoe, the sickle and the dao are the main. The hoe and the sickle are the only agricultural implements. They use some bamboo and wooden spade to dig the earth. Axe is also used in felling trees and chopping firewood. Almost all adult Apatani carries the dao and also the sword. The number of implements owned is shown in Table 5.5.

Table - 5.5.

Tools and Implements in use : Bamin , 1976-77.

<u>Sl. No.</u>	<u>Tools and Implements</u>	<u>Number in use</u>
1.	Iron hoe	160 (73)
2.	Dao	130 (73)
3.	Axe	71 (67)
4.	Sickle	205 (73)
5.	Mortar and Pestle	72 (72)

(Figures in bracket indicate No. of H.H. owning the implements).

8.2. Besides these the Apatanis also use Bows and Arrows and spears for hunting. They also use special Apatani water-proofs prepared with bamboo and leaves which covers the entire back and the head. The Gun is also used in hunting. As there were no artisans in the village Bamin there were none who possessed special tools and implements.

CHAPTER SIX
ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES AND INCOME

1. Introduction :

1.1. Economic activities comprise of those activities and occupations which are directly or indirectly involved in generating income and resources. The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the economic activities of the Apatanis at Bamin village.

1.2. It has been already pointed out that there are obvious limitations in quantifying the economic activities of a traditional society like that of Bamin and the estimate of income is bound to suffer from these limitations.

1.3. A general observation made at the time of field investigation was that the womenfolk does most of the work in the paddy field including hoeing and the menfolk does many other activities like hunting, collection of firewood etc., etc. The entire able bodied men and women leave the village early in the morning and return in the evening, unless required to stay in the households to perform some rituals. Thus, during the day time an Apatani village remains deserted. One can find only the children playing on the streets and some old busking in the sun in balconies of their houses. The womenfolk return in the afternoon before the menfolk arrive to cook the food for the family. This, however, does not mean that all the persons go out for economic activities. One can see batches of women walking to the Hapoli town with coloured umbrellas and also the basket hung on their back.

2. Agricultural Enterprise :

2.1. Agricultural land in the Apatani valley may be classed into two grades : (i) the paddy land and (ii) non-paddy land. The paddy land is flat and well-bunded to retain water and only paddy is grown. Non-paddy land are comparatively higher in elevation but flat i.e. not usually in hill slopes. Such non-paddy land are mostly covered by bamboo grooves and some pine trees. Apart from that there are patches of small land inside the paddy fields which are not suitable for paddy but are used for growing vegetables, maize and other crops. These are

known as Balu. Such balu also exist near the homestead. Some non-paddy land are used for growing millets.

2.2. Apatani agriculture is very much labour intensive. They work in the paddy fields almost round the year. Further, no draught animal or plough is used for the cultivation of the soil. The preliminary tillage operation is done during the winter - i.e. before the onset of heavy rains, with iron hoes which takes lot of their time. Further, puddling of the soil is done by their feet. There are other works in the paddy ^{field} of which repairing or relaying of field bunds to retain water is the main. Compared to paddy cultivation in the plains the Apatani paddy cultivation is far more labour intensive. However, it was not possible to estimate, during the present investigation, the intensity of labour use at Bamin. But, agriculture at Bamin is not different from the agriculture in the Apatani valley.

2.3. Haimendorf (1962) had elaborately described the Apatani agriculture. There had been no changes at all in the agricultural practices in the valley and so also at Bamin during the last 30 years. Efforts on the part of the Administration to induce the Apatanis to take to the plough and some modern inputs like fertilizers and pesticides have been reported. But, continued adoption of these inputs are rare. This is particularly true to Bamin village. The use of the bullock is difficult because the Apatanis must learn their upkeep first¹. It was also reported that use of HYV paddy strains is possible in the Apatani valley. But, it is likely that it would upset the traditional varieties for which the Apatanis have special attachment particularly in regards to their suitability to different grades of land in the valley.

1. As a matter of fact change in the method i.e. introduction of the plough/tractor might upset the present land distribution. The plough would facilitate cultivation of more areas by a household and there may be attempts at increasing the size by acquiring land from other (poor) households. Co-operatively owned small tractors (power tillers) would be more suitable which would only assist tillage operations. But that too would replace many women workers who does the tillage.

3. Paddy Cultivation :

3.1. Transplanted paddy under irrigated condition is the main crop of Bamin village. They sow the seeds in nurseries, uproot them when they grow up and transplant them in the puddled fields. The nurseries are small plots near the village and near the graneries which are generally kept submerged under water so that no weeds grow and the seeds can be sown without much tillage operations before sowing. Actual sowing of seeds starts in February and continues till March. The sowing season of paddy is earlier than the sowing season of paddy in the plains of Assam. The nurseries are divided into small plots and different varieties are sown in separate plots. It takes 8 to 10 weeks for the seedlings to be ready for transplantation. It might be possible that the seedlings take a longer time to grow up due to low level of temperature in the plateau. The women uproot the seedlings, tie them in bundles and carry them for transplantation in the fields.

3.2. The skill of the Apatanis in paddy cultivation may also be judged from their knowledge of varieties of paddy. There are many paddy varieties in the valley and they can be divided into (i) early maturing Mipiya and (ii) late maturing Emo. They are also further sub-divided into several varieties. Some of the sub-divisions of Emo are, Alang Emo, Ampu Emo and Nalang Emo. Among these Emo varieties Ampu Emo matures earliest. Similarly, Mipiya has another variety known as Piaping. The Mipiya variety matures in August and reported to give lower yield than Emo. So, Emo variety is the main variety in Bamin village. There are two factors which are relevant in considering the use of certain variety. First, it is the type of soil and second, the economy of the household. A poor household would need an early harvest to tide over the scarcity period (pre-harvest) and put some area under Mipiya. Even then, lower grades of land which retain water for longer period is not considered suitable for Mipiya variety. A type of Emo which can stand more water is suitable for such land. But it is not known that any systematic study on the Apatani varieties of paddy has been undertaken by Agricultural scientist. But it might be possible that some of their varieties

may be developed as High Yielding ones. Again, any attempt at introducing high yielding varieties of paddy, a complete study of the local Apatani varieties must be preceded. These local varieties appear to be best suited to the ecological conditions of the valley and give comparatively a high yield.

3.3. Transplanting of paddy starts from the middle of April and continues through May to June. The transplanting is done mainly by women and girls. During the growing period weeding is reported to be done for 2-3 times. The harvesting of paddy starts in the month of August (for Mipiya variety) and continues till early November. But, the peak harvesting period is middle of October when the Emo variety starts ripening. The major part of the paddy is harvested within about 15 days in October.

4. Other Crops :

4.1. Two other field crops which are important in the Apatani valley are Millet and Maize. But at Bamin maize is grown in very limited scale and restricted to the vegetable plots (balu) and near homestead. Millet is important as it is mainly used for brewing the Apatani 'Oh' (beer). Some poor families also use as food - specially during lean months. Millet is also a transplanted crop like paddy and is grown in the field bunds of paddy fields and near road side land. Some high land which are not suitable for paddy are also transplanted with millet. In growing millet also the Apatanis take great care in planting them in rows in beds. Table 6.1 shows the crop season.

Table - 6.1.

Sowing and Harvesting time of different crop of Bamin village, Arunachal.

Name of Crops	Sowing/Trans-planting season	Harvesting Season.
1. Paddy	February-May	September-October.
2. Paddy(wt)	May-August	October-December.
3. Maize	February-April	July-October.
4. Millet	February-May	October-December.
5. Sweet Potato	April-May	November-January.
6. Mustard	Sept.-November	November-January.
7. Potato, Veget. Chillies, etc.	April-May	November-January.

Source:- Deptt. of Agri., Arunachal (District Agricultural Office, Ziro).

4.2. Some crops like tobacco, beans and other vegetables are grown in the Balus (garden plots) in limited scale. There were no fruit-trees at Bamin excepting a small Apple orchard in the village school compound. There are no suitable land for orchards as most of the available area is devoted to bamboo grooves. The bamboo grooves are also well maintained and well guarded with fencing.

5. Area and Field of Crops :

5.1. The area and production of principal crops i.e. paddy, millet and maize according to the size classes of operational holdings is shown in Table 6.2. It may be noted that area under millet and maize could not be ascertained as these were inter planted with paddy and vegetables. For maize and millet only production data is available.

Table - 6.2.

Area and Production of Crops : According to Size of Operational Holdings.

Size of Holding	No. of H.H.	Paddy		Other field crop		Per acre yield of paddy (in qtls)
		Area (Acres)	Production (Qt)	Millet (Prodn) (Qt1)	Maize (Prodn) (Qt1)	
Below 1 Acre	11 (15.07)	6.33	61.00	12.05	2.30	9.63
1-2	35 (47.94)	41.50	464.00	60.95	6.55	11.18
2-3	25 (34.25)	53.00	555.00	35.90	7.35	10.47
3-4	1 (1.37)	3.50	40.00	3.00	1.00	11.43
4-5	1 (1.37)	4.00	50.00	3.00	0.40	12.50
All Groups	73 (100.00)	108.33	1170.00	114.90	17.60	10.89

Figures within brackets are percentage to total households.

5.2. Total area under paddy was estimated at 108.33 acres and the estimated production was 1170.00 quintals. This gives an average yield of 10.83 quintals per acre. This rate may be considered as fairly high¹. The average yield

1. Officials of the Department of Agriculture at Hapoli agrees that the yield rate in the Apatani valley is high.

per acre according to size-groups of operational holding showed some variances. The highest yield rate of 12.50 quintals per acre was found in the highest size group i.e. 4-5 acre size and lowest 9.63 qtls. per acre in lowest size-group. The yield rate depended on variety of paddy grown (Mipiya or Emo) and grades of land. Households having smaller area are by and large deficit households and grow the early maturing variety to tide over the lean period. Consequently, they obtain lower yield rate. It might be also possible that higher size groups own better grades of land and therefore their yield rate is better. But, this could not be ascertained.

6. Other Activities :

6.1. Besides, taking active part in agricultural activities the Apatani womenfolk at Bamin weave their traditional garments in tension looms. They spin the thread for their looms out of cotton obtained from the Nisis in exchange of paddy. Small spindles (taklis) are used in spinning the thread. It may be mentioned here that there is a craft centre at Hapoli, not far away from Bamin where improved looms are installed and training is imparted to tribal girls. A Kasturiba Seva Kendra also exist at Hong, a nearby village where womenfolk are trained to use the Ambar Charkha and modern looms. But, such looms do not exist in any household of Bamin village. At Bamin, the traditional dress is only woven. Observations indicate that this is basically a spare time occupation of the women and it is losing its importance due to the advent of the modern dress. The new generation of men have gradually taken to the modern dress. It is only in the women section the traditional dress commonly persists.

6.2. Apatani handicrafts are restricted to the making of household articles, the baskets and some minor bamboo and wooden materials. These articles ^{are} rarely sold.

6.3. The households at Bamin are in need of considerable quantity of firewood for the purpose of cooking their food and also to keep themselves warm in the severe winter.

They collect firewood from the pine and bamboo grooves and keep a ready stock of it. Those who have no pine and bamboo grooves collect the firewood from forest. No household reported sell of firewood. But, Apatanis from other villages were seen selling bundles of firewood at Hapoli town.

6.4. People of Bamin occasionally hunt animals and birds in the nearby forests. They use bows and arrows (Apu-ali) and spears (adang) as their main tools of hunting. The gun is also sometimes used. It was reported that no big game is available. The common games are the flying squirrials and birds. They also use a common trap (payu) to catch birds. Fishing is not important for the people of Bamin and it is only possible during summer.

7. Wage-paid Employment :

7.1. There were two types of wage-paid employment at Bamin. First is on the basis of regular employment on the monthly salary basis which is classed under 'salaried jobs'. There were 15 persons from Bamin village who were employed in 'Salaried jobs' either at Hapoli town or elsewhere. Most of these persons are employed as sepoy in B.S.F. and petty jobs. One was a Chainman in the Survey of India party. Development of this occupation was possible because of extension of education whatever low the level might be.

7.2. There were another 13 persons in Bamin village who were engaged as casual labourers. These persons generally go out to Hapoli or any other construction sites to work under contractors. They were drawn from very low land holding groups. A few of them were working in a new settlement project at Tally valley*, some miles away from Bamin, as casual labour. It was observed that wage-paid employment as casual labour does not find favour in the Apatani society. Yet, observations

* Tally valley is a new settlement project in Subansiri district. It is reported that the valley is larger than the Apatani valley and the temperature there reaches far below than the temperature in the Apatani valley. Roads to the valley is under construction and when the valley is reclaimed some Apatanis will also be settled there.

elsewhere indicated that small groups of women even work as casual labour at Hapoli under contractors. They were seen doing earthwork. These were mostly non-agricultural labour. But, full-fledged agricultural labour does not exist in Bamin probably due to the patang system described earlier in this report.

7.3. The persons engaged in salaried jobs could afford to purchase some modern articles of use such as the bi-cycle, wrist watch and an air-rifle. They also use mostly modern dress. The wind of change that is blowing in the village thus generates from cash flow into the people either from salary, wage and sale of surplus.

8. Income of the Households :

8.1. The brief description of activities of the people of Bamin village indicated that the main source of household income was agriculture i.e. raising of the paddy crop. There were also 'other sources' of income besides the production of crops, viz. livestock and poultry, salary, wages, arts and crafts, business and professions and remittances. These are detailed in Table 6.3 and Table 6.4. The distribution of these income by operational holding groups (Table 6.5) and levels of income (Table-6.4) are also shown.

8.2. The concept of income used is residual income i.e. income generating to the family labour. The cost of production of crops was cost of seeds and in some cases of hired labour. The cost of family labour is not imputed in arriving at net income. Moreover, a part of the village economy is not yet monetized. Payments in marriage and rituals are generally done in traditional goods and articles. It may be mentioned here that estimates of some income were excluded for difficulties of qualification and irregular nature. Income from hunting, fishing and collection of firewood etc. could not be ascertained.

8.3. Total income of the households of Bamin village from all accountable sources was estimated at Rs. 1,74,802.57. The overall per household income for the reference year was Rs. 2394.55 and the per capita income was Rs. 563.87.

Table 6.3

Value of Produce According to Size Group
(Operational Holding)

Size of Holding (Operational)	No. of Households	Value of Produce (in Rs.)		
		Crops	Vegetables etc.	Livestock
1	2	3	4	5
Below 1 acre	11	6736.76	93.00	270.00
1 - 2 acres	35	43960.77	417.00	1210.00
2 - 3 acres	25	55117.54	365.00	392.00
3 - 4 acres	1	4132.50	12.00	30.00
4 - 5 acres	1	4915.00	26.00	30.00
All Groups	73	119362.57	913.00	2432.00

Table 6.4

Distribution of Households According to Size of Income
and Sources of Income.

Groups	No. of House- Persons		Agriculture	Wages	Sources of Income			Remittance	Arts & Crafts
	holds	No. of			Livestock/ Poultry	Salary			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Below 1000	7	9.59	14	3074.51 (7)	--	150.00 (5)	--	--	41.00 (2)
1000 - 2000	20	27.4	32	23467.24 (20)	1930.00 (4)	560.00 (15)	600.00 (1)	1330.00 (3)	393.00 (12)
2000 - 3000	29	39.73	123	78.07	6.42	2.20	2.00	4.42	1.81
3000 - 4000	11	15.07	60	51765.43 (29)	4250.00 (7)	1047.00 (27)	600.00 (1)	6140.00 (6)	792.00 (19)
4000 - 5000	1	1.37	7	74.47	6.11	1.51	0.86	3.83	1.14
5000 - 6000	2	2.74	8	25479.64 (11)	2600.00 (2)	445.00 (10)	1800.00 (1)	1200.00 (1)	336.00 (8)
6000 - above	3	4.11	16	70.08	7.15	1.22	4.95	3.30	0.92
				4132.50 (1)	--	30.00 (1)	--	--	--
				83.41	--	0.64	--	--	--
				6151.50 (2)	--	40.00 (2)	4200.00 (1)	--	48.00 (2)
				57.14	--	0.37	39.01	--	0.45
				5731.75 (3)	--	60.00 (3)	13680.00 (3)	--	90.00 (2)
				29.35	--	0.30	59.29	--	0.46
All groups	73	100.00	310	119862.57 (73)	8780.00 (13)	2432.00 (63)	20380.00 (7)	3670.00 (10)	1700.00 (45)
				62.57	5.02	1.39	11.94	4.93	0.27

Table 6.4 (Continued)

Distribution of Households According to Size of Income and Sources of Income.

Groups	No. of Households	No. of Persons	Sources of Income				Average per Household	Per Capita
			Forests	Business & Profession	Vegetables etc.	Total		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Below 1000	7 9.59	14	350.00 (4)	--	47.00 (2)	3682.51	523.21	261.60
1000 - 2000	20 27.4	32	1100.00 (6)	340.00 (2)	1.28	(100.00)	1502.96	366.57
2000 - 3000	29 39.73	123	3255.00 (17)	1320.00 (2)	0.80	(100.00)	2397.04	565.15
3000 - 4000	11 15.07	60	1320.00 (7)	3020.00 (3)	0.50	(100.00)	3307.51	606.37
4000 - 5000	1 1.37	7	500.00 (1)	--	0.50	(100.00)	4674.50	637.78
5000 - 6000	2 2.74	3	300.00 (1)	--	0.26	(100.00)	5332.50	1345.63
6000 - above	3 4.11	16	60.00 (2)	--	0.24	(100.00)	6531.25	1233.98
All Groups :	73 100.00	310	6335.00 (38)	4630.00 (7)	0.31	(100.00)	2394.55	563.87
			3.94	2.63	0.52	(100.00)		

Table G.5

Distribution of Sources of Income According to
Size Group of Operational Holding.

Size Groups	No. of Households	No. of persons	Sources of Income					Remittance	Arts & Crafts
			Agriculture	Wages	Livestock/ Poultry	Salary			
Below 1 acre	11	27	6736.76 (11) 76.50		279.00 (9) 3.06	900.00 (1) 6.80	480.00 (1) 5.44	59.00 (3) 0.67	
1 - 2 acres	35	145	43980.77 (35) 56.12	4780.00 (9) 5.43	1210.00 (23) 1.39	17850.00 (4) 20.50	6990.00 (8) 8.01	705.00 (21) 0.81	
2 - 3 acres	25	126	55117.54 (25) 80.16	4000.00 (4) 5.32	392.00 (23) 1.30	2400.00 (2) 3.49	1200.00 (1) 1.75	906.00 (20) 1.32	
3 - 4 acres	1	7	4132.50 (1) 88.41		30.00 (1) 0.64				
4 - 5 acres	1	5	4915.00 (1) 92.73		30.00 (1) 0.57			30.00 (1) 0.57	
All Groups :	73	310	119862.57 (73) 63.57	8780.00 (13) 5.92	2432.00 (63) 1.39	20330.00 (7) 11.94	8670.00 (10) 4.96	1700.00 (45) 0.97	

Continued :-

Table G.5 (Continued)

Distribution of Sources of Income According to Size Group of Operational Holding.

Size Groups	No. of House-holds		Forests	Trade/P. Business	Sources of Income		Average per Household	Per Capita
	2	3			Vegetables etc.	Total Income		
Below 1 acre	11	27	350.00 (4) 3.96	240.00 (1) 2.72	93.00 (5) 1.05	3823.76	802.61	326.99
1 - 2 acres	35	145	2095.00 (15) 2.40	4200.00 (4) 4.81	417.00 (29) 0.48	87237.77	2492.50	601.63
2 - 3 acres	25	126	3640.00 (17) 5.29	240.00 (2) 0.35	365.00 (23) 0.53	100.00	2750.42	545.72
3 - 4 acres	1	7	500.00 (1) 10.70	--	12.00 (1) 0.26	100.00	4674.50	637.73
4 - 5 acres	1	5	300.00 (1) 5.66	--	46.00 (1) 0.49	5301.00	5301.00	1060.20
All Groups	73	310	6385.00 (38) 3.94	4680.00 (7) 2.63	913.00 (53) 0.52	174802.57	2394.55	563.87

8.7. No household in Bamin reached the income level of Rs. 6000.00 and above solely with agricultural income. There were three households in this income groups which had 69.29 per cent of their income from salaried jobs. These three households could be classed as having salaried jobs as their primary occupation¹. This is a new dimension in the traditional Apatani society. The emmergence of a class which can be distinguished as a salaried job households. Apart from the point of value judgement, it is the creator of the presently held income disparity in the village. The other fact is the possession of land.

8.8. Judging from the living standards at Bamin no household appears to be richer than the general standard. Private conversations of the people at Bamin indicated that there were two or three households which are considered to be richer than the common standard. These households said to have been owning a larger number mithuns and a larger area under pine and bamboo grooves. But it is apparent that no household is richer on account of growing paddy, the main crop of the Apatanis because the land distribution appears to be not much skewed. The traditional way of considering wealth by the size of holding of traditional goods still persists in the Bamin village.

8.9. There is a section of people who could not produce their own requirement of paddy in the Bamin village. The per capita production of paddy and millet according to operational holding group is given in Table 6.6.

1. No occupational classification of the household was attempted at in this report as all other households are primarily agricultural.

Table - 6.6.

Per Capita production of Paddy and Millet at Bamin Village.

Operational Holding Class (Acres)	No. of House-hold	(In Kg.)		
		Per Capita Paddy	Production of Millet	of Maize
Below 1	11	225	45	8.5
1.00 - 2.00	35	320	42	5.6
2.00 - 3.00	25	440	28	5.9
3.00 - 4.00	1	572	43	14.3
4.00 - 5.00	1	1,000	60	8.0
Over all		377	33	5.6

8.10 Considering the fact that people of Bamin village mainly depend on cereals for food and drink both millet and paddy are the essential for their living. About 165 kg of rice per capita per annum besides millets for the drink (beer) is necessary. This gives an annual requirement of 240 kg. of paddy per capita (70% paddy rice ratio) for the food alone. Thus 15.07 per cent of the households were deficit in paddy. Except for them the other households appear to be self sufficient. But again, there are inter household exchanges by way of payment in kind in exchange of labour. Those who can not meet the requirement of paddy use millet and maize also for their food.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

1. In the foregoing chapters the socio-economic life of the Apatanis of Bamin village is depicted. The village is situated in the Apatani valley of the Subansiri district of Arunachal Pradesh. This is a typical Apatani village selected purposively. The basic data relate to the year 1976.
2. The Apatanis is an important tribal community of Arunachal Pradesh and it ranks third amongst the tribal communities of the Union Territory in respect of population. The Apatanis inhabit a plateau roughly about 93 sq.km. in area at an elevation of about 1500 meters. The area is very thickly populated with about 12 thousand people. This is the highest density in the hills of the North-East in respect of rural population.
3. Bamin like other Apatani villages is situated on the foot of a hill surrounded by paddy fields. The village is laid with closely built houses on raised platforms along a broad path and a few lanes. The clustering of the households is marked in case of all the Apatani villages.
4. The Apatani population was found to be growing at about 1.9 per cent per annum between 1961-1971 and this rate of population growth is a little lower than the growth rate of tribal population of the district. Due to growth of population over several years some new settlements within the valley are established. There were out-migration from Bamin also. The growth of an administrative Centre at Hapoli (Ziro) also helped out-migration from the village.
5. Bamin had 73 households with a population of 310. This shows that average household size is about 4. The family type is predominantly nuclear. The sex-ratio is 913 females per 1000 males. The proportion of population below 15 years of age is 40.60 per cent and that of above 60 years is 3.23 per cent. The population in potential working age group i.e. 15-60 years is 56.13 p.c.

The working population is not restricted to this age group alone. About 60.00 per cent of the population are actually participating in work. The percentage of overall literacy is 23.26. It was found that the literacy is more or less confined to lower age groups. Further, female literacy was found to be very low. Higher education was availed by only a few individuals.

6. The age of marriage of girls is around 15 years and that of boys is around 17 years. Divorce is not common. Widow marriage is prevalent. A few widows that were found in the village were not in the reproductive age group. There is no polygamy in the village and for that matter the Apatanis do not usually marry more than one wife. The choice of marriage partner is usually left to the respective boys and girls. They are to adhere to the usual restriction of clan exogamy. Further, they are to restrict the choice of partner to their own class, i.e. a Mite must choose within Mite class and Mura must choose within Mura class. The social division between Mite and Mura which originated from Masters and Slaves still exists. Although bride-prices exists it is not strictly enforced in many cases. The younger generation is against bride-price.

7. Basic economic resource of Bamin is land. Land is divided into forest and cultivated land. The forest land and cultivated land is privately owned. This system is different from communal land ownership of other neighbouring tribal population. However, the cultivated land is limited in the valley and extension of area is not possible. The cultivated land may be divided into wet paddy land and land which is used for millet, maize and other vegetable crops. Bamboo grooves are also maintained in non-paddy land. Forest consists mainly of pine grooves. Homestead land is also very scarce because the Apatanis prefer flat land for their habitat. Thus, suitable land for the Apatanis is very limited but in case of other tribal groups in the neighbourhood the supply is relatively unlimited because they practise shifting cultivation. Bamin village has a definite boundary like all other villages in the area.

8. Although exact data on land holding is difficult to be obtained on account of the absence of land records, it was estimated that the average size of ownership holding is 3.25 acres. No leasing in or leasing out of land was observed in the village and as such there is no divergence between ownership holding and operational holding. The distribution of operational holding shows that there were no operational holding above 5 acres (about 2.0 hectares). But more than 96% of the households had land below 3 acres. There is apparently no much inequality in the land holding pattern.

9. The Apatanis need a considerable number of animals and birds viz. mithun, cows, pigs, dogs and poultry birds for ritualistic sacrifices and for meat. But the ownership of such animals and birds are comparatively small. They own small stock of poultry. The mithun is kept away from the village in semi-wild condition and the cattle is not housed. The Apatanis depend on supplies from the Nisis and from the plains.

10. Bamboo grooves and Pine grooves are important for the Apatanis. The firewood, timber etc. are collected from the pine grooves. The bamboo grooves which are tended with care supplies the house building and fencing materials.

11. The Apatanis are far more advanced in cultivation of paddy than any other tribal community of the area. The system of paddy cultivation with irrigation has been continuing in the valley from a very long time. The Apatanis, however, do not use the plough and the bullocks. Iron hoe is used for tillage. They take much care in preparation of the fields, raising seedlings and selecting seedsetc. They do not leave a single patch of land during cultivation season. Land being scarce, they use all the suitable land for growing crops. They plant millet seedlings even on the field bunds. Paddy, millet, maize and vegetables are their main crops. At Bamin, only paddy and millet are important crops. They have no land for horticultural gardens. The available plots are being

The brighter aspect is that the exploitative mechanism due to generation of surplus is not possible. No sale or purchase of land was reported in the village. Sale and purchase of bamboo grooves were reported in other Apatani villages. No information on lending and borrowing could be obtained.

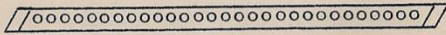
16. Growth of Hapoli township and development activities have so far created a wind of change in the traditional village economy and has partly replaced the old barter system. The conflicts with neighbouring tribes have been eliminated from the Apatani valley. Growth of the administrative centre and construction of roads linking the valley with plains have reduced the isolation. The spread of education has exposed the Apatanis to the modern world. The villagers of Bamin and also the Apatani valley is favourably situated in respect of educational facilities up to Higher Secondary level. Drinking water facilities have been extended to the villages and the hospital facilities are available at Hapoli.

17. The younger generation was found to be aware of the evils of certain social customs. For example, tattooing of the faces, wearing of big nose beads by females and the payment and demand of bride-prices considered to be undesirable. The youth organisation of the valley is taking steps to do away with these traditional customs.

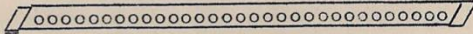
18. Despite all the changes the village economy appears to be stagnant. This is due to lack of investment in agriculture, livestock, poultry and the like. The land resources being limited and the cultivation having reached a point of maximum production under the traditional system it is no longer possible to sustain a growing population. Alternative avenues of employment are also limited.

Suggestions :

- (1) Improvement in the cultivation of crops, particularly paddy by addition of fertilisers and organic manures needs to be introduced. Feasibility of evolving proper high yielding variety suitable to the area with the local strains as the basis would increase the yield potential of paddy. The possibility of raising a second crop should also be examined.
- (2) Improvement in the livestock and poultry enterprises in the Apatani valley is possible and it should be undertaken in scientific lines and if possible on commercial basis. The climate seems to be congenial for improved breeds of cattle and goat. Piggery and poultry farming in commercial basis may also be encouraged.
- (3) Introduction of powertillers might be helpful. But it might lead to displacement of women workers to a considerable extent and generate tendency to make the sizes of operational holdings bigger by the affluent few. Co-operative owning of powertillers may be encouraged. In such a case alternative employment avenues for the women will be necessary. Weaving, tailoring etc. might be a secondary source of employment for the women.
- (4) Provision of employment in a regular basis by starting forest based industry might absorb a part of the population who are dependent on very small holdings.
- (5) The households with smaller holdings are facing economic hardship and uncertainty. Such household with small holdings should be resettled in some other suitable area.
- (6) Education on Health and Hygiene should be improved so that the spread of tuberculosis and venereal diseases could be checked.



A P P E N D I X



APPENDIX

Retail Prices of Different Commodities at Ziro,
December-January, 1976-77.

Sl. No.	Name of Commodities	Unit	Price
1.	Rice (Coarse)	Kg.	1.50
2.	Rice (Fine)	Kg	2.20
3.	Sugar (Controlled)	Kg	2.25
4.	Masurdal	Kg	2.60
5.	Arahardal	Kg	2.60
6.	Mustard Oil (Controlled)	Lt.	8.50
7.	Washing Soap	Ball	2.00
8.	Toilet Soap	Piece	1.20
9.	Potato	Kg	1.70
10.	Onion	Kg	1.30
11.	Kerosene Oil	Lt.	1.30
12.	Salt	Kg	0.40
13.	Pork	Kg	8.00
14.	Beef	Kg	5.00
15.	Mutton	Kg	12.00
16.	Chicken (Whole)	Kg	12.00
17.	Egg	Doz.	8.00
18.	Fish	Kg	8.00-12.00
19.	Fish (Dried)	Kg	14.00
20.	Tea	Kg	15.00
