

ATOMIC ENERGY CENTRAL SCHOOL ,KAKRAPAR

CLASS :VII

SUB : SOCIAL STUDIES (HISTORY)

TRIBES, NOMADS AND SETTLED COMMUNITIES

MODULE-1

HANDOUT-1

Beyond Big cities: Tribal Societies

Societies in the subcontinent did not follow the social rules and rituals prescribed by the Brahmanas. Nor were they divided into numerous unequal classes . Such societies are called tribes. Members of each tribe were united by kinship bonds. Many tribes obtained their livelihood from agriculture. Some were hunter-gatherers or herders.

Who were Tribal People?

Contemporary historians and travellers give very scanty information about tribes. Tribal people did not keep written records. They preserved rich customs and oral tradition which were passed down to each new generation. Present day historians use such oral traditions to write tribal histories which are found in almost every region of the subcontinent. Powerful tribes controlled large territories. In Punjab, the Khokhar tribe were very influential during the 13th and 14th centuries. Later, the Gakkhars became more important . Their chief, Kamal Khan Gakkhar was made a noble (mansabdar) by Emperor Akbar. In Multan and Sind, the Langahs and Arghuns dominated extensive regions. They were subdued by the Mughals. The Balochis- were powerful tribe in the north and west. They were divided into many smaller clans under different chiefs. The distant north and eastern part of the subcontinent entirely dominated by tribes. The Mundas and Santals were the other important tribes that lived in this region and also in Orissa and Bengal. Maharashtra highlands and Karnataka were home to Kolis, Berads and numerous others. Kolis lived in many areas of Gujarat. Further in south there were large tribal populations of Koragas, Vetars, Maravars and many others. Bhils were spread across western and central India . The Gonds were found in great numbers across the present-day states of Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh.