



LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT AMONG THE NICOBARESE OF KATCHAL ISLAND

Dr. D.V. Prasad

Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology, Indira Gandhi National Tribal University (IGNTU), Madhya Pradesh.

Abstract

The Nicobar island is a chain of twenty two Islands stretching from 9° 17' 48" North latitude and 92° 42' 15" East longitude of the Bay of Bengal are an integral part of Indian Union. Out of twenty two, only twelve islands are amenable for habitation and remaining islands are uninhabited ones. The Nicobarese one of the major indigenous community inhabiting in the different group of islands followed by the Shompen tribe which is restricted to interior part of Great Nicobar Island. The entire Nicobar is divided into three geographical regions known as northern, central and southern group of islands for administrative convenience. Car Nicobar Island is the northernmost one which is divided by little Andaman with 10 degree channel. The central group consists of Chowra, Teresa, Bompuka, Katchal, Kamorta, Nancowry and Trinket islands. Whereas Pulo Milo, Little Nicobar, Kondul, and Great Nicobar are belongs to southern group of islands. The present study comes under central Nicobar group of Islands and the empirical data was collected from Katchal Island.

Horticulture is the mainstay of the Nicobarese economy followed by pig rearing. Pig is considered king of the Nicobar Islands since it is significant not only from economic point of view, but also from socio-cultural and religious purpose too. Nicobarese rear their stock on par with their children and lot of care taken during its infancy. If any outsiders mishandles or ill treat their pigs, it is considered as great dishonor. They will be given heavy punishment in their council meetings. The survival of the Nicobarese depended on it.

The Nicobar Islands is worse affected with natural disaster i.e., Tsunami and Earthquake in 2004 in terms of loss of horticultural plantation, homestead, material culture, and livestock etc. However it is interesting to note that due to its incredible procreation rate, Nicobarese overcome the exigency of the post tsunami travails. Even now, majority of the Nicobarese still depend on the livestock for supplementation of protein requirements. With this backdrop, the present paper highlights the Nicobarese traditional management of livestock and its socio-cultural and ritual significance. It is interesting to note that despite of their religious conversion to Christianity and Islam, Nicobarese still maintain their stock.

Introduction

In recent past, the empirical case studies of indigenous knowledge on the issues relating to agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry, health, tangible cultural heritage, intangible beliefs and customs relating to management of natural resources and livestock for subsistence. Further they also attempted to demonstrate how traditional management of livestock and ethno veterinary knowledge is being preserved by tribal communities. The ethnographic case studies on the *Nicobarese* (Reddy, 1982), the Konda Reddy (Misra, 2005) Maler (Vidyarthi, 1963) and so on also attempted to highlight the role of traditional knowledge in managing the natural resources as well as livestock for livelihoods. The significance of women's indigenous knowledge in rural dairy industry in terms of breeding, feeding farm animals as well as pigs, chicken, ducks, and goats etc., can be observed in rural India. These studies delineated how the destruction of biological diversity and mono-cropping undermines women's contribution to agriculture by eroding biological sources of food, fodder, fertilizer, fuel, and fiber (Vandana Shiva, 1993). As such, the empirical studies in India and abroad demonstrated that traditional knowledge in management of natural resources and livestock are catalytic to meet the subsistence needs of the many rural and tribal communities. Whereas the literature on traditional knowledge of horticultural communities is scarce and hence an attempt is made to understand the traditional management of livestock by the *Nicobarese* of Katchal Island. Prior to understand the management skills of the *Nicobarese*, it is pertinent to understand scattered Islands of Nicobar archipelago.

The Nicobar Island is a chain of twenty two Islands of which only twelve islands are amenable for habitation and remaining islands are uninhabited ones. The *Nicobarese* belongs to Mongoloid stock inhabiting in the different group of Islands followed by the Shompen tribe which is restricted to interior part of Great Nicobar Island. The *Nicobarese* of all these islands are similar in physical appearance, food habits, and other material and non material cultural traits. But each island has its own identity in terms of origin folktales, language, material traits, and island specific rituals. In his study Syamchaudhuri (1977) observed the similarities and differences between the natives of different islands in terms of customs, traditions, dwelling pattern, dialects, etc. For the present study, Katchal of Central Nicobar is selected as it is one of the worse affected in 2004 tsunami and earthquake. Further it has recovered to normalcy quickly with their traditional knowledge and coping mechanisms. *Nicobarese* is a generic term used to refer the inhabitants of different Nicobar Islands. However, each and every island has its own identity and it reflects in their local nomenclature. The *Nicobarese* language is spoken in six variant dialects by the natives of Nicobar group of islands with marked difference in speech intonations and vocabulary. The entire



central group of islands i.e., Katchal, Kamorta, Nancowrie, and Trinket speak the similar dialect and it can be distinguished from other groups.

Objective of the Study

The study is basically a micro level study and attempts to understand the management of livestock by the *Nicobarese* of Katchal Island in post tsunami scenario. Further, it is to ascertain the significance of the piggery in *Nicobarese* socio-cultural and religious life along with its emotional attachment. It also tries to understand the identity of the *Nicobarese* through the maintenance of livestock by even after their conversion to new religious faiths like Christianity and Islam

Methodology

Since the present study is carried from anthropological perspective, holistic approach is adopted to understand the traditional management of livestock by the *Nicobarese* of Katchal Island. In order to collect the data, qualitative anthropological techniques are conceived as important for the study. These are mainly participant observation, case study, key informant interviews, group discussions, and non-formal interviews using a detailed checklist. Data from secondary sources such as books, articles, published reports, Census reports, and government documents have been collected.

Selection of Study Area

The 2004 tsunami disaster has had tremendous impact on the *Nicobarese* of Central Nicobar Islands in general and the *Nicobarese* of Katchal Island in particular. In erstwhile Island, all the houses and properties are washed away and thus they were rehabilitated in tin-made temporary shelters in new location which is inside the forest elevated areas from the erstwhile village. Their piggery and horticultural plantation is worse affected in giant tidal waves. The study island location is located in very remote and the relief has not reached in time. Despite of this, *Nicobarese* recovered speedily from the trauma of the disaster with their traditional knowledge in management of their livestock and horticultural resources.

Demographic Scenario of Katchal Islands

The total population of Katchal Island is 5312 consisting 2847 male and 2465 female (2001 Census). Of which, the *Nicobarese* population is only 2662 consisting 1372 male and 1290 female. After tsunami the demographic scenario of Katchal Island has had tremendous impact due to mortality in giant tsunami waves. As such following table clearly illustrate the existing population as per household census in 2008.

Table 1: Population Details of the *Nicobarese* of Katchal Island 2008

S. No	Name of the Village	Male	Female	Total
1	West Bay Katchal	64	61	125
2	Ponda	58	58	116
3	East Bay Katchal or Upper	148	128	276
4	Jhoola	115	103	218
5	Jhansin	94	76	170
6	Kapanga	213	193	406
7	E-Wall	105	98	203
	Total:	797	717	1514

The total population of Katchal is 1514 consists of 797 male and 717 female. The percentage of male population is slightly higher than female. When compared to 2001 population of Katchal, more than 45% of the *Nicobarese* population has come down. It is attributed that due to tsunami and earthquake majority of the population died and the rest are migrated to Port Blair city.

Ethnographic Account of *Nicobarese*

The *Nicobarese* of Central Nicobar belongs to Mongoloid stock and they are listed as one of the Scheduled Tribes of India. They generally speak the *Nicobari* dialect for communication within family and kin groups. *Nicobarese* of Katchal Island has their own their dialect which is slightly different from Car *Nicobarese* one, but all the *Nicobarese* understand and follow the written script of Car *Nicobarese* language. Besides this, Hindi is widely spoken with outsiders. However, Urdu and Gujarati also conversed by few *Nicobarese* who converted to Islam. Now-a-days the traditional dress *ngong* (petticoat) and *kisat* or *ning* (loin cloth) are being replaced by modern clothes. But the traditional dress i.e., loincloth is worn on during ritual occasions and it is customary for magico-religious practitioner. The present dress pattern of women i.e., *lungi* or *sarong* and a blouse, resembles the dress pattern of Burmese, Karen or Malay women. Among the *Nicobarese* Muslims, the men wear *pyjama* and round cap and women wear *Lungi* and blouse along with head scarf.



The *Nicobarese* are non-vegetarian and they eat fish, mutton, beef, pork and chicken. Their traditional vegetable foods are pandanus, yam, banana, coconut and wild roots, tubers. Further they also consume rice and pulses with the contact of non-tribes. Pork is their staple food and it is a religious taboo for *Nicobarese* Muslims. However it is observed that rearing of *chuok's* piggery still practiced and the pigs are freely roaming in Muslim households too. Further certain foods are prohibited for women during their life-cycle rituals and these restrictions were followed irrespective of their religious faith.

The social organization of *Nicobarese* could be understood from its maximal lineage system as it facilitates socio-economic integrity of its members. It is popularly known as *tuhet* in Car Nicobar and *chuok* in Central Nicobar. However, *tuhet* is more popular in the entire Nicobar Islands. Earlier it is the joint family who take care of its members in the *chuok*. The tendencies of nuclear family are emerging with the inter-religious marriages. Monogamy is the social norm among the *Nicobarese*, whereas rule of residence is bi-local in nature depending on the need of the members in the *chuok* and family. As a rule, marriage is not permitted among the consanguineous kins. Marriages within a *chuok* or *kinem* is allowed but provided they are not related consanguineously for at least below three generations. The custom of bride-price is prevalent in Chowra and Terressa islands only and rarely observed in other islands. Though divorce is allowed, it is discouraged by their *chachah* (traditional Village Council). Remarriage is permitted among the *Nicobarese*. The frequency of inter island and inter religious marriages are more in the study area when compared to other Nicobar Islands.

Cultivation of coconut, areca nut and other horticultural crops is a main economic activity besides fishing, and pig herding. Apart from this, they do engage in making cane and bamboo baskets, canoes, wooden or iron spears. Inter island exchange is a marked feature of the *Nicobarese* society which facilitates them to obtain scarce resources. The Island Council consists of Chief Captain and Vice Chief Captain, Secretary and members who are the Captains of all the villages of that particular island regulate the behaviour of *Nicobarese* and settle the disputes. In turn each village consists of village Council which consists of five captains who administer the activities in the village. Further each lineage is headed by one head who is known as *ma-ku-tuhet* also taken into consideration for council meetings by the Captains. They are in turn responsible for controlling their own group and assist village headman as and when required.

Though majority of them converted to new religious faith i.e., Christianity, and Islam still they believe in the animistic powers i.e., *kareava* (fetish of human and animal figurine) and *hentukui* (a fetish wooden board consists of sketches of their habitat and ecology) and hence appease both malevolent and benevolent spirits during ceremonial occasions. Observance of elaborate ancestral and spirit worship, magico-religious practices, and seasonal festival were part of their belief system and it is strictly followed by all the *Nicobarese*.

Livestock Management

Ha-un (pig), *mee* or *pokore* (goat), *kamuos* or *hayom* (fowl), *aam* (dog), *kumeo* (cat) are some of the livestock domesticated by the *Nicobarese*. Of which *Ha-un* constitute the major portion of their economy and hence the *Nicobarese* status is calculated in terms of number pigs possessed by each and every family or lineage. As such they maintain a large number of pigs that are freely roaming in their settlement as well as in mature coconut plantation. It is feeded with the *kutchu* coconut regularly and almost one third of the total coconut produce is reserved for feeding their pigs. The reproduction of this stock is very high in comparison to other livestock. Hence lot of care is taken for its rearing. Ill-treatment or misbehavior of the same is treated as serious offence. In case any Nicobari or outsider hit or beat the pig, then their village Council deals the matter sternly and the same treatment was given to the person concerned and impose handsome amount of fine to prevent repeat of the act.

Livestock are used by the *Nicobarese* of the study area in exchange to procure certain material objects like outrigger canoes, pandanus mats, hard wood for house making, sewing machines, and other consumable goods from other islands. The *Nicobarese* treat livestock as an asset and these form part of payments of fines imposed by village and Island Councils as part of dispute resolution. The livestock are not only economically useful, but has a social value too. It is customary to offer bride price in the form of pigs during marriage. It is obligatory to slaughter pigs during festive occasions, and during both the annual and life cycle rituals. Besides this, they also use this stock during initiation of any economic activity, merry making, and any get-together. It is used as a medium to appease their gods and spirits in times of crisis. If someone becomes ill, witch doctor offers a particular identified pig to the deity or spirit. Thus the livestock plays a pivotal role in the socio-cultural and religious life of *Nicobarese*. Due to its significance, *Nicobarese* take special care in rearing their livestock by arranging pens to protect them from the attack of wild beasts and dogs. Separate sties are used to shelter their piglings adjacent to their houses and are fed with coconut.

Each household or joint family or lineage possess good number of pigs and hence special care is taken for its rearing ranging from collection of *kutchu* coconuts, making copra, feeding, etc. Slaughtering of pig is mandatory during any ceremonial



occasion, life cycle and annual rituals, council meeting, visiting of guests, exchange for essential services and goods, and so on. Hence, rearing including not only feeding, but also its identification, shelter, etc. As such, *Nicobarese* identify the stock of each *tuhet* (lineage) with the marking cuts on their ears.

Ear-Cuts for Identification of Piggery

Nicobarese made identical cuts on the ears of their piglets in systemic way to identify or distinguish the piggery of one lineage or joint family to another. Generally, markings resemble the symbols of claw and eyes of the crab, circle, half moon, and similar identification cuts. It is an indigenous act performed by experienced people of that particular lineage or family. In case the marker cuts wrongly, the concerned pig is slaughtered and the person concern who marks are forced to consume the entire pork without sharing with the fellow *Nicobarese*.

As such different types of ear marks are found in livestock of the *Nicobarese* to identify the owner of the concerned pig. In case no such marks are found on the ears of the pig, it is treated as wild boar and anybody can hunt it for personal consumption. In case mistakenly hunted the domestic one in the forest, it is given back to the concerned family by identifying its symbol on its ear. Pig slaughtering during ceremonial or any other domestic purposes, *Nicobarese* first remove the elongated piece of pork right from the earmarks to tail and displayed in front of the concerned house to prove its identity. Otherwise it is believed that others may mistake of its authenticity.

Knowledge of Slaughtering and Consumption

Slaughtering of pigs is common during magico-religious practices, ceremonial and festive occasions, visit of guests, feasts followed by village and lineage council meetings, and likewise occasions by the *Nicobarese*. They use pointed stick for killing it by piercing it at the centre of fore limbs of the animal where exactly the heart is located.

Later some plantain pieces are kept inside the dead pig's mouth and tail is covered with empty tender coconut for making the pig ready for roasting. Wooden logs are arranged in such a way to make a platform where the pig is kept for exposing fire for roasting. It is done as a mark of respect or veneration towards their stock. A winnowing fan is made immediately with thick areca nut spathe and coconut torches made with dried branches of coconut tree. Each dried branch is tied tightly for slow burning of torch; otherwise it is burnt at once. In between they examine the pig by inserting the pointed stick to test whether the pig is roasted properly or not. In case stick pushes through smoothly it considered as proper roasting otherwise they roast it for some more time. A garland is prepared with tender coconut fronds for decorating the pig sty as well as to the person concerned who is roasting the pig. After completion of the task, they clean the roasted pig with a bunch of tender coconut fronds and avoid washing with water. Then it is kept on the cutting platform inside the house and pieces are cut for the proposed feast. In case pork is excess, they make *kawab* (drying moisture over heat) and store it for future consumption.

The task of cutting the roasted pig is done by the experienced and elderly men. While the younger ones assists them in separation of limbs and its other parts. It is customary to make 26 parts while cutting the roasted pig during funeral as per the size advised by the elderly people who gathered in the occasion. The details of the customary parts are mentioned in below for understanding the ritual importance of pig during rites and rituals.

Table 2: Customary Parts during Ritual Killing of Pigs

S. No	Name	No. of Pieces
Outer Parts		
1.	Hinliyo	One piece
2.	Ok	Six Nos.
3.	Ung-Pong	One Pair
4.	It-Saich	One Pair
5.	Kanang-Ret	One Pair
6.	Toom	One Pair
7.	Viong	Single
8.	Tinyuak	One Pair
9.	Hinko-o	Single
10.	Sama	Single
11.	Hinko-o-Kuilaich	Single
12.	Kin-moa-wa (Lah)	One Pair
13.	Kin-moa-wa (Lah)	One Pair
14.	Ok-Kui	Single



15.	Ok-Sama	Single
Inner Parts		
16.	Uk-ngoko	Single
17.	Kuipanivo	Single
18.	Hinhoawsa	Single
19.	Siaf	Single
20.	Ha-nyango	Single
21.	Kinpong	Single
22.	Ati	Single
23.	Pin fang	Single
24.	Up-Yua-po	Single
25.	Pahaliom-Oal	Single
26.	Kupian	Single

Soon after cutting of pig, a bunch consists of four elongated pieces of pork i.e., *it-saich*, *tinyuak*, *hinko-o*, *ok* are known as 'hinroova' are separated and chopped into small pieces are offered to the guests who assembled in the house. Along with another bunch consists of four elongated pieces i.e., *ati*, *up-yua-po*, *kin-moa-na*, *kinpong* also separated and chopped into small pieces are offered to *pati yom* (elderly people of the biggest or richest *tuhet*).

In case first piece of *Hinroova* is exhausted, then next three pieces are served to the guest i.e., in place of *it-saich*, two pieces of *tinyuak* may be offered to guest along with *hinko-o* and *ok* by requesting apology for the inconvenience. Keeping in view of the importance of the raw pork, they have to cut the roasted pig very carefully to serve guests. In case any one wrongly cut the piece, the gathering ridicule of the act and the concerned person is abused verbally there itself. In case, they distribute raw pork without proper decorum leads to internal squabbles may be resolved through traditional stick fight. In some other cases, the infuriated guest may donate a fatty pig to them in retaliation of their dishonor.

Hunting of Sarual (Wildboar or *Sus scrofa*)

During leisure time and traveling to other places, *Nicobarese* catch wild boar in the forest. It is done occasionally since they are pre occupied with horticulture works on regular basis. They are being assisted by dogs in tracking the animals in the deep forest. Generally they use traditional implements like cross bow, *hinkuoñn*, *tanam*, traps, and ropes.

The physical features of the wild boar are different from domestic ones as it possesses compact body, small in size and move swiftly. *Tanam* is the traditional implement used to hunt it. Actually it is ancestor for the domestic ones. The *Nicobarese* states that in case domestic pig run away during its infant stage also may turn into wild one and anyone can hunt since it is lagging identity marks of any *tuhet*.

Pig Trapping Tools and Techniques

Nicobarese generally use the technique of *hinkuoñn* for catching the pig. In this method, a rope is tied at different points in the soil dibbled sticks and a round rope trap is placed on ground near to its feeding platform or water points. Finally it is attached to stick which is in the custody of hunter who hides in the nearby bush or tree. Whenever it entangles the prey it tightly pull and caught by the waiting hunting party.

Hinkuoñn

It is a kind of trap used to catch pigs in the forest. An elongated rope is tied to a stick and a knot is made intermittently to facilitate easy tie of the rope to the leg of the pig. It is kept nearer to the regular feeding place and call their hogs. When the pigs turn up for feeding are caught into trap.

Indigenous Shelter for Livestock

In Katchal, mainly three kinds of shelters are in use for keeping the livestock by the *Nicobarese*. They are mainly *kinchitah* (pig shelter), *nyi mey* (goat shelter), and *ungyöngo kamus* (fowl shelter). The shelter for *Nicobarese* livestock needs no expenditure of time and labour. Further they also use no nails or thread for making the pig sty at their residence. The First they cut the *ballies* in different sizes and dibble in ground vertically in rectangle shape. Later on they insert the sized *ballies* horizontally in four sides. One tin sheet or coconut thatch is kept upon it to protect them from rain and sun light. Whereas in case of goats, they built small stilt structures resembling their traditional huts to keep them in safe custody. *Nicobarese* also prepare different varieties of wooden partitions in various sizes to keep their fowl. In upper Katchal, it is found that



indigenous poultry is being maintained by the *Nicobarese* in line with modern ones. For this, they are utilizing the space under the stilt platform of their traditional house. In morning time, the birds are let out and evenings are driven to this poultry from the protection of pigs and dogs.

Ngöngö (Pig Sty)

It refers to a sty made with spilt bamboo to keep piglets in their horticultural gardens. Generally, elder swine are left free in forest and call morning and evening to feed the *kutchu* copra. Whereas special care has been taken for rearing the piglets at their farm houses as elder ones are ferocious and may quarrel with these piglings while feeding.

Nökö Ha-un (Feeding Platform)

All the *Nicobarese* maintain one wooden stilt platform (2x3 meters) size in their horticulture plantation to feed the pig. It is a common place where the *kutchu* copra is kept and given a tuned call to his stock every morning and evening by the concerned owner. It is observed that only the pigs of the concerned *tuhet* are turn up after listening such tuned call from his master. The calling of pigs is vary from one *tuhet* to another ranging from vocal tunes to beating bamboo pieces in a particular rhythm.

Sualoo (Feeding Container)

An elongated hardwood (5 feet) is scooped in the middle till it reaches a shape of container. It is used to keep sliced *kutchu* coconut to feed the pigs twice a day on regular basis.

Int pö-Nyio (Ritual Offering)

Monthly offering or *puja* performed by *menlouna* (witch doctor) to appease the *kareava* and *intukui*. During the appearance of new moon at the beginning or ending of every month, *puja* is performed by *menlouna* after sacrificing a small pig or cock. The blood of the sacrificed animal or fowl is smeared to the wooden effigies. Further the blood is mixed with scrapped *kutchu* copra and the resultant pastry is known as *laniov*. Another paste is made by mixing with the wild leaves with the sacrificial blood of the animal. The leaves used for this are known as,

- *Sih-Oom*
- *Yeye*
- *Inhin-anho*
- *Huklik*
- *Sin-ail*

This mixture is known as 'kinloomng' and it is daubed on the body of the *menlouna* and the present gathering including the wooden effigies. At first instance *laniov* is daubed by *menlouna* starting from right hand to left hand and the entire body. There after *kinloomng* is daubed over it. The container used for preparation of herbal concoction made with sacrificial blood of the pig or fowl along with coconut milk are termed as *kinlong*. *Deeva* (oil lamp) kept in front the *intukui* which is filled with coconut oil and cotton is used for lightening.

As a part of this, piece of pork extracted from head to tail which is wrapped in new cloth (yellow) and is hanged to the roof of the concerned house where *intopo-nyi* was performed. *Nicobarese* believe that it may restrict the entry of evil spirits. Otherwise the spirits may attract the house and affect the members of the family in the form of diseases like dysentery, fever, and so on.

Apart from such offering to fetishes, *Nicobarese* of the study area also appease their ancestors through slaughtering many pigs during reburial ceremony. It is celebrated by the concerned joint family or *tuhet* whenever they procure requisite resources and livestock. It is a kind of marathon ritual ceremony of exhuming the bones of the dead relatives from the grave and reburial at their homestead or make fetishes.

Kinrooka: (Reburial Ceremony)

Kinrooka is an elaborate death ritual among the *Nicobarese* of Katchal observed after one year or based on the availability of resources to the marathon event. It is celebrated for a period of one month and it is observed to dug-out the bones of the dead and the same was reburied at other place. The process that starts from the observance of *fanya* (cutting of wood) for making new canoe and ends with *hachuva* (stick fight) in the village. It is celebrated when a concerned *tuhet* gains the capacity and resources to celebrate it i.e., cloth, pigs, yams, coconuts and other fruits and vegetables. On this occasion, every *tuhet* in the village/island and the family *hol* (friends) are invited to take part in the proposed event.

Whenever the date for proposed ceremony approaches the concerned bereaved family members and villagers select a wild jack fruit tree in the forest and axe it down for making an outrigger canoe. A team consisting of ten to fifteen males employed



continuously in hollowing the log until it turns into the shape of canoe. Every *tuhet* in the village supply food for canoe makers at work's site in alternative days. After completion of the task of making new canoe, a ritual known as *hanucha* is observed inside the forest (where the canoe is located) to shift the canoe to the sea coast. The ritual is initiated by *menlouna*. Soon after reaching the sea coast, the canoe is smothered by exposing slightly to fire. Lot of precaution is taken while heating the newly made canoe. Later on ritual known as *katchaha* is observed at coast wherein the canoe is decorated with tender coconut spathe or sheath of the flower of the giant palm tree and new clothes. They sacrifice a pig on the spot and pieces of pork also tied to it.

On fifth day, the concerned families start decoration of their huts by removing all the *katchada* (waste material) and along with decoration of *gholghar* (bee-hive community hut) with stitched cloth. The entire process took long time as it is tedious to wrap the bundles of cloth in a systematic design. First they stitch white, black, and red cloth in their traditional manner and simultaneously tied to its roof. This sort of decoration of community house is referred as *kanachnyi-tai*. Whenever the bones of the dead are dug-out, they remove all the decorated cloth and it is replaced by tender coconut spathe. Afterwards they observe *lanyat-la* i.e., removal of bones from the old grave. On this occasion, *menlouna* roam around the grave with chantings. Thus collected bones are washed thoroughly and place inside the *gholghar* for worship. At the end of ceremony, the same bones are reburied in new graveyard. Many pigs are slaughtered on this occasion and grand feast is arranged for the invitees. Stick fight is followed by this feast. At the end, the remaining pork is distributed to the invitees as well as the villagers.

The traditional knowledge of the community is explicit at each and every stage of this ceremony in terms of hunting wild boar, slaughtering techniques, preservation of pork, preparation of traditional foods and beverages, etc. Further the knowledge is transmitted to the younger generation through folk tales, songs and stories throughout the nights. It reinforces the village *manula* (cooperation) and encourages them for collective participation in different tasks. In spite of conversation to Christianity or Islam, *Nicobarese* still observe these type of ceremonies to mark their solidarity and adherence to their traditional system.

Conclusion

From the above data, it is clear that despite of natural disasters and conversion to new religious faiths, the *Nicobarese* still maintain the reminiscences of their traditional knowledge and it is reflected in management of their livestock. The knowledge which is acquired from their fore fathers are still used in not only in coping the disasters, but in domestication of pigs as well as hunting of wild pigs. The knowledge of feeding, slaughtering during ceremonial occasions, use of its sacrificial blood for medicinal purposes are possible with the application of their age old traditional knowledge which is passed from generations together to the *Nicobarese* of the study area in Central Nicobar Islands. The age old practice of Kinrooka and slaughtering hundred of pigs reflects the supply of protein to all the *Nicobarese* irrespective of age and sex. The practice is followed by all the *Nicobarese* even after their conversion to new faiths. Due to relief works after tsunami in the Katchal Island, all the *Nicobarese* houses resemble European model and it is not amenable for rearing of pigs. To overcome this problem, they are building new huts in their horticultural plantation i.e., *tavats* for rearing of pigs. Hence, it is the need of the hour to document the endangering traditional knowledge of the *Nicobarese* regarding their livestock management.

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