

April 20, 2012

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Destination Madurai and Chennai in Tamil Nadu, Kolkata in West Bengal, and Bhubaneswar and Puri in Orissa, India
Period From January 10, 2012 to April 10, 2012 (for ninety one days)

1. Purposes

The main purposes of this dispatch are;

- 1) To conduct a fieldwork regarding village festivals in order to understand the rural social structure of the south India,
- 2) To visit the western parts of India such as Orissa and West Bengal so as to compare and contrast Tamil Nadu to the western parts of India,
- 3) To conduct periodical surveys at libraries in urban areas and to observe various facets of changes that were brought by the recent economic development in India. Particularly, I focused on the young workers' migration trend of non-agricultural jobs from rural to urban areas.

Regarding the field work mentioned in 1), the adjacent village to the one introduced in 2007 by a researcher at TNAU, one of the partner institutes of this program, was selected for this study.

2. Outlines

The outlines of the above activities;

- 1) I stayed in Madurai to conduct a fieldwork in north Madurai villages in Tamil Nadu and visited Madurai District Library and Theoretical Society in Madurai for literature surveys. I visited some villages during the *Pongal*, one of the most important festivals to celebrate a rice harvest in Tamil Nadu. Especially, I watched *Jallikattu*, a festival known as “bull taming”, which is taken place on the second or the third day of the *Pongal* in Madurai area. I conducted some supplementary surveys to understand the local socio-economic structure of the rural Madurai area. As a result, I gained the following findings: 1) Caste-based organizations are still existed not only at village or panchayat level but also in a regional

scale; 2) According to the places, host caste groups managed to conduct a Tamil Nadu state-wide public festival for *Jallikattu*, with the help of other various caste groups.

2) I visited both Bhubaneswar and Puri in Orissa, and Kolkata in West Bengal, spent some time to communicate with local people, and conducted a brief hearing survey.

I met Professor Tanabe in ASAFAS, Kyoto University at the Bhubaneswar airport reported briefly about the up-to-date of this dispatch. In Puri, I attended the wedding ceremony of a hotel coolie and learned how the rural workers in Orissa have migrated to urban areas for seeking for non-agricultural employment.

In Kolkata, I planned to stay in a rural area, but my plan was cancelled due to the strike occurred in the whole city on that day. Instead, I stayed at a house of a family who runs a Christian fellowship and educates children in neighborhood. The pastor, who used to help Mother Theresa when he was young, told me the histories and politics of the West Bengal.

All these experiences helped me realize the regional and cultural differences that exist in most in India.

3) I stayed in the Chennai city of Tamil Nadu and conducted literature surveys in Anna Central Library. I commuted from a hotel to the Library there by taking an auto-rickshaw and a public bus in order to grasp the urban lives of ordinary people in Chennai.

Chennai city is famous for its economic development because of more developed infrastructure than other areas of India. This well-developed infrastructure conveys mass commuters from rural areas to urban areas on a daily basis. As some scholars pointed out that the urban-led economic development along with the expansion of “urbanized” rural area in Tamil Nadu, is a supplementary outcome, I actually felt in the same way as they did through my observation.

3. Issues

During this dispatch, I focused on more input trainings (doing fieldworks in the villages, literature surveys), and less output trainings (paper writings and opinion exchange with other researchers). For the next dispatch, I would like to focus more on output trainings such as paper presentation and discussion.

4. Acknowledgements

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James Das, Christian Fellowship, Ms Hoikhonem Lunkim, Mr Rajasekaran Reddy, Masters' Student, TNAU, and Ms Kaori Harashima.

5. Note

For further details, please refer to the final report of this program that will be ready by the end of March, 2013.



1. Arena at *Jallikattu*



2. A bull managed to run away at *Jallikattu*



3. A Brahmin priest at wedding ceremony



4. Anna Central Library in Chennai