

Tribal meditation for bureaucrats

By Our Special Correspondent

BANGALORE, MAY 24. If you find senior members of the Civil Service dancing to tribal music in Bangalore, it should not be surprising.

Some officers of the State Government are in for a new exercise in team building during the first week of June. The man behind it is Murali Menon, who claims to have evolved ZenLP, a combination of Zen meditation and Neuro Linguistic Programme.

To promote anything from drug-free healing to improve concentration and team spirit, he has drawn on his research into the customs and practices of the tribal people of Orissa and other places.

"Tribal meditation generates certain powers which build up

the body's immune system. That could explain how most of the tribal people living in areas far from any medical help remain free of malaria while many even in cities catch it," Mr. Menon says.

There are cases of tribal people who have cured themselves of malaria faster without any medication. The Zen meditation system, which has now found acceptance in the West, is similar to what the tribal people in India have practised for centuries. Practitioners of modern medicine all over the world are now trying out alternative healing therapies and there are enough reasons why tribal meditation should be tried out, he says.

Case studies by researchers in the tribal belts of Madhya Pradesh and Orissa have shown

that there is much to learn from the aboriginals of India. In the Similipal Tiger Reserve area, an ailing person was asked to plant a Sal sapling and water it everyday closing his eyes for some moments and then look at the sun. "This ritual is a way of asking for positive energy and usually heals a person," Mr. Menon says.

How does tribal dance help in corporate team building? "The tribal people rely on one another to survive in the midst of wild animals and illness with no medical help and no reliable weapon for protection.

They express this through their traditional dances. If that spirit of cooperation can be cultivated by those in charge of a government department or a corporation, the results can be amazing," he says.