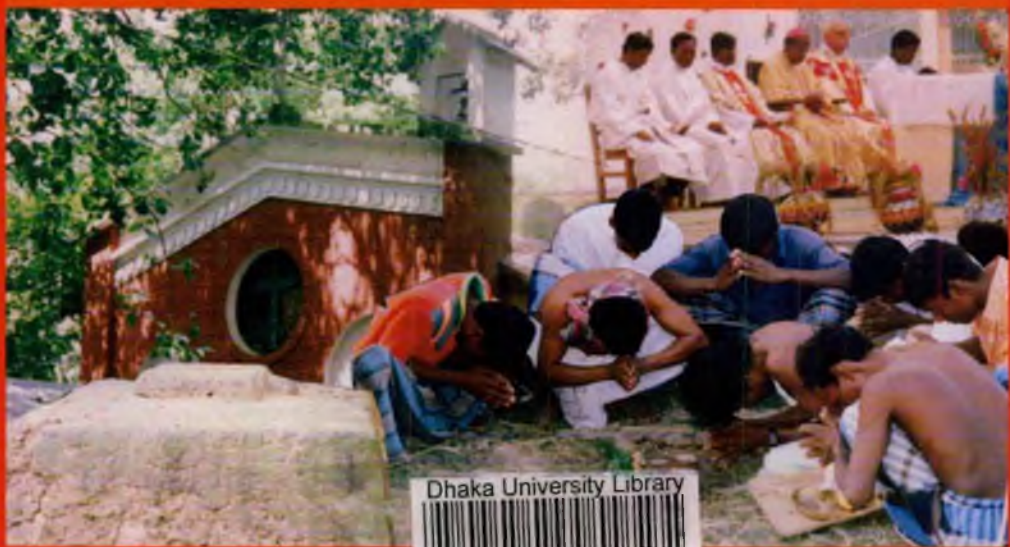




The Changing Life Styles of the
Santals
of the Barind Tract



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Declaration

The material embodied in this thesis is original and has not been submitted in part or full for any other diploma or degree of any university.

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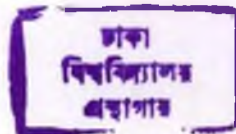
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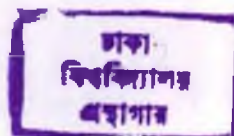
This is to certify that Mahbub Hasan undertook research work under my supervision and guidance on "The Changing Life Styles of the Santals of the Barind Tract" and submitted his thesis in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy in History of the University of Dhaka. In order to get first hand knowledge of the community he conducted fieldwork in the area of study from November 2000 to May 2002 concentrating on various socio-economic and cultural aspects and activities of the group concerned. This thesis is an outcome of his indepth study of the lifestyle of the Santals of the Barind Tract. His work has been satisfactory and I am confident that it will work as a basis for further research on comparable non-traditional societies of Bangladesh. I recommended this thesis for the award of the degree.

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Mahbub Hasan

Preface

In 1997, I had the privilege of attending a seminar on the Ethnic Communities of the Barind Tract, which was held in Rajshahi. The seminar was chaired by Professor Anwarullah Chowdhury of the Department of Anthropology, University of Dhaka. In the seminar, papers were presented on Santals, Gorad, Mahali, Turi, Oraon, Pahan, Rajbonshi and other communities of Barind Tract. The seminar helped me immensely in developing interest in the ethnic communities of the Barind tract. Since then my interest grew further on the issue, and I was greatly inspired by Professor Anwarullah Chowdhury to study the Santal ethnic community. He recommended to me some reading materials on Santals and later he guided me in preparing a study plan on this subject. Later on, I was granted an opportunity to do my M. Phil. on the topic under the supervision of Professor Jahanara Huq Choudhury of the Department of History, University of Dhaka who holds a doctorate degree in Social and Cultural Anthropology. As an anthropologist with vast experience in working with the ethnic communities like *Shandar Bedey* community, she encouraged and supported me to carry out the research. However, in order to carry out this work more efficiently, in 1997 I attended the Summer Science Course in Sociology and Anthropology, organised by the Department of Anthropology, University of Dhaka; and in 2000, I participated in an advance training course on Research Techniques in Social Sciences, arranged by the Bureau of Economic Research, University of Dhaka.

The present research work aims at analysing the change and continuity among the Santals – the second largest ethnic community, residing in the north-western part of Bangladesh known as the Barind Region. The factors responsible for the change and continuity are both ontogenetic and exogenous. The study reveals that the Santal community is undergoing a rapid socio-economic and socio-cultural transformation and change.

Mahbub Hasan

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The different ethnic communities of Bangladesh are struggling to maintain their life styles and culture, and to protect their distinct religious beliefs from the influence of the dominant culture and religions. More than twenty ethnic groups with their distinct culture and traditions are found in Bangladesh and among them Chakma, Marma, Rakhaine, Murang, Khasia, Garo, Santals, Oraon, Munda and Malpahari etc. are significant. Most of the ethnic population are concentrated in areas of Chittagong Hill Tracts, Sylhet, Mymensing, Rajshahi, Dinajpur and Rangpur. With this brief introductory overview of the ethnic population of Bangladesh, I would now like to introduce the Santals as the focus group of my thesis.

The Santals were originally hunters and gatherers and used to live in hill forests of middle-eastern India. Most of the anthropologists agreed that originally the Santals were the inhabitants of Chotonagpur and the Santal Pargana of India. However, in course of time, due to increase of population, deforestation and scarcity of wild animals and birds, they had to move out to different areas, mainly to plain lands for their livelihood. During the British period they migrated to different regions including Bangladesh in search of employment and were employed as agricultural laborers, laborers for installing railway tracks, laborers for clearing forest and reclamation of agricultural land. Local *zamindars* used to employ them as laborers in agriculture and agricultural activities.

The Santals have their own religion, traditions, and customs. Their social solidarity, religion, and distinct cultural traditions/traits are at stake today. A large number of people of this ethnic community have converted into Christianity. The Christianization process has brought significant changes in

their beliefs, traditions and life styles. In addition to that, influence of education, market penetration, and increasing interaction with the mainstream population are also working as important forces for the Santals to undergo cultural changes.

I. Statement of the Problem

The present research proposes to investigate into the changing pattern of life styles of the Santal ethnic community of Barind tract. Barind tract covers a large part of Rajshahi district in the north-west part of Bangladesh. The region is inhabited by a numbers of ethnic communities like Santals, Oraons, Turis, Rajores etc. along with the Bangalee population. The ethnic communities mentioned above are settled in the plain land of Barind region where the ethnic communities and local Bangalee people live side by side. However, the hamlets of ethnic communities are distinguishable from the hamlets of Bengali people. At places of the Barind region, villages inhabited by the ethnic communities are separable from those of Bengali population. It means that some of the villages are exclusively inhabited by the ethnic communities and some other by Bengali population. It is assumed that the ethnic communities, specially the Santals, first settled in this area but later on Bengali population also settled there.

The climate of the Barind region is rather extreme. It is very hot during the summer and very cold during the winter. It produces one paddy crop in a year. Small part of this region, however, has been brought under irrigation. Two or more crops are now cultivated in the irrigated lands. Thus it is apparent that irrigation initiated an increase in production in these areas.

The present research, however, will concentrate only on the Santals ethnic community and the emphasis of present study will be on the understanding of changing pattern of their life styles. In other words, it will

seek to understand the changes that took place and the changes that are taking place in their way of life and culture.

Contents of the Chapters

The present study is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter is devoted to the statement of the problem, objectives, scope and importance, hypothesis, methodology and review of literature. The second chapter covers the regional background; the Santal village, household and population are discussed. The chapter three deals with the changing social life of the Santal that encompasses their family, marriage, clan and kinship. Issues pertaining to housing, costume, food, land holding and land alienation, economy of the village, income and expenditure are incorporated in chapter four. The fifth chapter focuses on the type of traditional political organizations, role of political organization and the pattern of new leadership. The chapter six identifies the changes taking place regarding their religious beliefs, festivals and rituals. The impact of Hinduism and Christianity is also covered in this chapter. Finally, the major findings on the changes in the lives of *the Santals* have been summarised and stated, as a concluding statement, in the last chapter.

II. Objectives of the study

The objective of the present study is to understand the changes in traditional life styles of the Santals of Barind area. The main objective of the study is to ethno-historically analyze continuity and change in the Santal community of Barind Tract. In other words, the study is aimed at investigating the patterns of integration and isolation of the Santal community into the society at large and stress on the changes that took place in the life of the Santals. Specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- a) To record or document the history of an ethnic community living in the fringes of Bangladeshi society and under the influence of the dominant cultural atmosphere
- b) To understand the adaptation and resistance of the socio-cultural changing process;

Besides these, the following issues deserve investigation for knowing about the life styles of the Santals of Barind Tract:

- To find out whether the Santal households in the village Joykrishnapur are local or constitute a migratory community.
- To find out the nature and period of their migration to the village.
- To find out the extent of literacy among the Santals and their aspiration for education.
- To find out as to how far do they think education is necessary for different purposes in the society and what values do they attach to the same.
- To find out the nature and extent of exposure of the Santals to different mass media such as radio, television, newspaper and so on.
- To describe the tribal and clan groupings in the village the Santal households belong to and the functions they perform for them.
- To analyze the composition and size of family among the Santal households in the village.
- To describe the rate of marriage and marital network among the Santals in the village.
- To find out the age at marriage among the Santals and their attitude towards preferable age at marriage as well as the qualities they would like to have in their spouses.
- To find out the nature and type of houses owned by the Santal families in the village.

- To find out the nature of ownership of house among the Santal households.
- To find out the nature and extent of landholding by the Santal households in the village.
- To describe the patterns of ownership of land and inheritance of land among the Santal households in the village.
- To describe the nature of agricultural production and production relations among the Santal households themselves
- To describe the nature of agricultural economy in terms of available cultivable land, its nature of irrigation and types of agricultural produce.
- To describe the nature of occupations pursued by the Santals in the past and their present occupations and thereby assess changes in their traditional occupational structure.
- To analyze the pattern of their expenditure on various necessities of life.
- To assess the disparities in income and expenditure of various Santal households in the village.
- To know about the Santals traditional political organization and the pattern of new leadership.
- To find out the religious beliefs and practices among the Santals in the village.
- To find out the nature and extent of their conversion to Christianity
- To find out their socio-religious isolation as well as assimilation into the society at large.

III. Scope and Importance of the Study

Like other ethnic communities of the Barind region, the Santals have undergone rapid transformation in terms of their traditional socio-cultural life.

Their traditional life and the changes in it are not known to us as no systematic investigation has been made so far into the society and culture of this somewhat isolated communities. Although in the early 1990's, Ahsan Ali carried out an anthropological study on the Santals of the Barind Tract and West Bengal, (which was published from India), no systematic, full-length study has been conducted in Bangladesh on this subject in recent days. Therefore, the present research is an humble effort towards that direction. However, I attempted to study one particular Santal village to get an in-depth knowledge on the life styles of the Santal ethnic community.

The study has tried to grasp the socio-cultural history of an eroding ethnic community. It has covered the demographic, social and political institutional changing processes. The gradual changes in life and livelihood and in the marginalisation process of the Santals. It further tried to show the influence of the church, the development programmes of the NGOs as well as exposure to other external agents. From the academic point of view, the study proves its importance by documenting the socio-economic and cultural history of a community. It hopes to enhance understanding for further studies on social history especially the history of ethnic culture. The present study is an effort to document the present period through the lens of history. The struggle for livelihood and preservation of their ethnic identity by the Santals will help to understand the socio-politico-economic dimensions of the history of a community. At the same time it is important to document the influence of modernity in the name of technological intervention that leads (an ethnic community) to cultural erosion of an ethnic community and transforming it into a market-oriented society. Besides it tries to understand the transformation of the history of the Santals community from a subsistence economy to a market dominated one.

IV. The Hypothesis

The traditional life, culture and society of the Santals are changing fast. Their life styles have undergone drastic changes in the course of last 100 years. It is assumed that changes have taken place in their family, marriage, kinship, income, occupation, religion, beliefs, and rituals. Therefore, to give a proper description, collection and analysis of data, some general hypotheses have been formulated which are as follows:

- The Santals of the Barind Tract are going through the process of transition from the tradition to modernity as a result of both direct and indirect forces of social change such as urbanization, education, conversion to Christianity, mass media, political upheavals and expansion of transportation and communication network.
- Their traditional occupational structure and communal economy are breaking down and new avenues are opening up for socio-economic and occupational mobility and diversification.
- The traditional tribal clan, family and religious and political organization of the Santals community are going through changes due to the effect of modernity and conversion to Christianity.

V. Methodology

The present research has not been done within the boundary of History alone. The approach is rather multidisciplinary in the sense that it has involved the methods of other disciplines like Sociology and Anthropology. The methodology of the present study is primarily an anthropological one. I conducted intensive fieldwork in a Santal village of the Barind Tract of Bangladesh for the purpose of the present study. For my present research, I relied on participant observation. Although this anthropological method was the principal method of investigation, I also collected information from secondary sources and to some extent

followed the historical analytical method. Besides, I had to depend on key informants for some basic data. I also conducted household census and used semi-structured interview schedule. Therefore, it was not a single method but the combination of several methods that I followed for the purpose of the present research. I also discussed the rationales of selecting the village, my entry into the village, the methods used for data collection etc.

The present study is an outcome of a fieldwork that I conducted in Joykrishnapur village under Pakri union of Godagari *Thana* of Rajshahi district from 2000 to 2002. The village Joykrishnapur was selected purposefully where sizeable number of Christian and non-Christian Santals live. The village is located approximately 33 kilometers westward from the center of Rajshahi city.

There are 58 households in Joykrishnapur and among them 44 are Santals (8 households are Christian Santal and 36 are Animist Santal, total Santal population is 284) and 14 are Muslim families. Santal households are located contiguously in the same neighborhood of the village. For the purpose of the present study, the heads of all the Santal households are treated as the subjects or respondents. During the period of my fieldwork, I made frequent visits to the study area (Joykrishnapur village) and interviewed both Christian and non-Christian Santals in order to comprehend why they are becoming Christians and also what other external factors are adversely affecting their cultural solidarity and traditions. Besides, informal discussions with the Santals, author's own observation and reports provided by the key informants were also considered as important sources of information which I needed for understanding the pattern of cultural change among the Santals.

Different Phases of Field Work:

At the first phase of my field work the study was concerned with the selection of the village and the listing of heads of households for the purpose of household survey. This phase was conducted in November 2000.

In the second phase of the study, data regarding the villages and the households were collected. At this stage, household census questionnaire was used to collect information from household heads. Besides, semi-structured interview schedule was used for 9 respondents. The respondents were selected at random. Through these techniques, information was collected on the socio-economic life of the Santals. Around 2 hours time needed to fill up a household census questionnaire and 3 hours spent for each semi-structured interview. This phase was conducted in July –August 2001.

The third phase was devoted to the analysis of beliefs and practices of the people and their patterns of interaction with other people. Hence, at this stage of investigation, informal interviews and participant observation were also used. It took about 3 to 4 hours to complete an interview with a respondent. This phase was conducted in May 2002.

During my fieldwork in Joykrishnapur, I observed the daily life of the Santals, and their families and participated in some of their social activities. I also visited the neighboring Christian Santals such as *Shurshunipara* and *Juktipara* in order to have an understanding of their traditions and the changes that might have taken place in their life. For having fair idea of the ethnic group living in the village, I established successful rapport by living among the Santals. During my fieldwork, I extensively used audio-visual method to portray the present lifestyles of the Santals of the Barind tract.

Selection of the Village

As mentioned earlier the Santals mainly live in the northern district of Rajshahi, Naogaon, Chapainoabgonj and Dinajpur in Bangladesh. In November 2000, I prepared myself for field work. In this regard I consulted Dr. Ahsan Ali of Dhaka University who studied two Santals villages in Barind Tract for his Ph.D. Besides, as an Executive Director of '*Ashrai*', an NGO which is working with ethnic communities of Barind Tract, Dr. Ali has a fair idea about the area. However, as he was aware of my study objective, he advised me to select a

Santal village of Godagari *Thana* of Rajshahi district. Consequently in November 2000, I went to *Ashrai's* Godagari area office, which is situated in Kakonhut. It is worth mentioning that at Godagari *Thana* area, *Ashrai* runs programmes such as savings and credit, education, water and sanitation etc. Anyway, at the office, I met some of the staff of *Ashrai*. Among the staff, a few are Santals. I talked to them about my study objective. During our discussion, I met a Santal woman (Ms. Andrina) who was very resourceful about Santal life and culture. We listed 33 Santal villages/hamlets that are adjacent to Kakonhut. These Santal villages/hamlets consist of 10 to 30 (a few hamlets are found where there are more than 30 Santal households) households and the members of the majority households of these hamlets are Christian. However, Andrina suggested Joykrishnapur to be chosen as the research area because this village was rich in term of Santali culture. Taking her suggestion into consideration and for following reasons, the village Joykrishnapur was selected for the study:

Firstly, Joykrishnapur is a village where Animist and Christian Santals as well as Muslims live; Secondly, that among the Santal villages in Godagari area it has the larger (44) number of Santal households; Thirdly, the village is neither too far from nor too near to the urban center. The nearest urban place to the village is Kakan Hut at a distance of 4 km. Finally, the village has a Santali medium school.

Entry into the Village:

Ashrai has been conducting the savings and credit programme in Joykrishnapur since 1999. The Area Officer of Godagari area Mr. Mohammad Salim introduced me to the village. At first, we went to the *Manjhi's* (village headman) house and met him. I briefly informed him about the purpose of my study. Afterwards, he organized a meeting where the village officials and some villagers assembled. In this formal meeting I introduced myself and told them about my objectives. I told them precisely what types of work I intend to do in the village. The *Manjhi* took opinion from the villagers and they finally agreed

to help me. The villagers nominated a person (Lalon Hembrom) to help me in my research work. Besides, I also found some young men (Ukil Hembrom, Michile Soren, Himel Hasda) who showed their enthusiasm to help me. They were all college students. However, these people helped me to successfully carryout my fieldwork at Joykrishnapur. Besides, I also visited Christian dominant Santal village namely Shurshunipara (where the local Church of this area is situated) and Juktipara. Ms. Andrina lived in Shurshunipara and she took me to visit the Church and meet the priests.

VI. Review of literature

In order to understand the lifestyles of the Santals, I looked into the accounts of different researchers and ethnographers. Apart from the literature on the Santals I also read some works on the different ethnic communities of Bangladesh which helped me to understand about the lifestyles of other ethnic communities living in Bangladesh. Besides, some of these works benefited me understand the methodology of studying a community. However, the major contents of different works given below:

Among the ethnographers, Dalton's (1872) account is very important document for the current researcher. However, Dalton had spent a number of years in Assam and Chotonagpur, gives a lucid, accurate and at the same time vivid picture of the lives and living conditions of the tribal of the entire eastern region of India with whom he had personal contact. Some accounts of the tribes of Sikkim and Bhutan are also included in this masterpiece. The author does not only give his own account of these tribes but has also included reports of other authorities in their own fields. More than sixty tribes, which the author classified into nine groups, are covered in this study, which still provides an authentic baseline data for the study of cultural dynamics among these tribes. Section 6 , pp 207-18 , contains a vivid description of the Santals who from part of the Kolarian group. The author gives a detail analysis of the Santals's geographical distribution, their habitat, houses, origins, the Kharwar

movement, physical characteristics, social organisation , tribal polity , festivals, religious beliefs, ancestral worship, food, music, dance, marriage, hunting expeditions, dress and funeral ceremonies.

Risley (1891), in his book gave a brief ethnographic description of the various castes and tribes of Bengal in alphabetical order. The description on the Santals, to be found in Vol 1, pp 224-35, contains the first statement in English on the Dantal Law of Inheritance. The glossary at the end of Vol 2 contains a list of all tribes of Bengal, including the Santals, giving the names of their clans and totems, their sub-clans and totems, and also the various titles by which each tribe was known.

The Statistical Account of Bengal was published in 20 volumes during the years 1875-77. The work was entrusted to W. W. Hunter, the then Director –General of Statistics to the Government of India. The province of Bengal was a very big one. It included areas, which now comprise Bangladesh and the States of West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The present volume (14) was first published in 1877. As in other volumes, this volume starts with a description of the geography, general aspects and physical features of the area. It proceeds to a description of its peoples, their occupations, ethnical divisions and creeds, their material conditions and distribution. Agriculture follows with a great deal of revealing information on land tenures, prices and wages, rates of rent and size of land holding and of the natural calamities to which the District is subject. Commerce, means of communication, manufactures, capital and interest, and other industrial aspects form the next item. The working of the District administration is then discussed in great detail. This volume, like all the other volumes, contains an immense wealth of knowledge.

O'Malley's account (1910) deals with the traditions, migrations, origins, physical characteristics, dances, internal structure, communal system, out casting, villages, mythology, religion, witchcraft, taboos, magic, birth

ceremonies, marriage, polyandry, divorce, funeral ceremonies, inheritance and partition, and the kharwar movement. The account of O' Mally is very important to us because he described about the Santals in detail and this information can be treated as baseline data to understand the life styles of the Santals of the past and present.

Hemram's (1982) book titled "Austic civilization of India (pre-vedic Kherwal civilization). The book deals with pre-vedic history of India through Austric culture and on the basis of Austric language. We know the Santals are a group of Austric people of India. And it is the Austric civilization which developed before the Aryan invasion to India and therefore, Austric civilization is the most ancient one. So it is proved that the Santals, as succeeding of Austric civilization, have a glorious heritage, which they are forgetting nowadays. Hemram sought to reawaken the Santals. Hemram's presentation is unique in a sense that he has attempted to establish a cultural link between periodic India and the present one. He has analyzed the historical development of folk culture and its transformation of modern one with careful investigation and comparative statement thereof. With the help of existing philosophy of the Kherwals of India, the author has explained the conception of Hindu religion, thereby he has given a deeply deserving importance to Adivashi culture. However, we have been benefited from the book as we have been able to know the pre-vedic culture as well as the prehistoric heritage of the Santals.

Sattar's (1971) book deals with the aboriginal tribes of the Bangladesh. Almost every hilly recluse of the area is the home of some primitive tribe or its offshoots. The data is solely based on the author's personal observations during the course of extensive journeys among the different tribal locations of the area which he made for over a decade thus acquiring a first hand knowledge about the lives and manner of living of these peoples. Among the fifteen tribes dealt with in this book, there are the Santals. In pages 52-102, the author analyze the life of the Santal at the village of Birol, Dinajpur district. A good portrayal is

given of the Santals' story of creation, migrations, rebellion, geographical distribution, social organisation, marriage laws, superstitions, kinship terms, spirits religious belief, festivals, magic, agriculture, dress, tattoo, food, drink, inheritance, dances, language, death, education, and belief in the after life. It also contains a number of songs in Santali with an English translation.

Jalil's (1991) account is an important source to have brief idea about the Santals of Bangladesh. In his book he precisely described about the ethnic origin, clinic identity, social, economic political and religious life, folklore etc of the Santals. In his account, Jalil emphasized on the folklore and folk culture of the Santals. Many songs and music rendered by the Santals are also discussed in his book.

Among the recent studies done specifically on the Santals, Ali's (1998) work is valuable. He analyzed the social, economic, religious and political life of the Santals of barind tract and and a village of West Bengal of India. Ali opined that "possibly because of lack of more land due to deforestation as well as need for employment facilities, they had to migrate to the eastern part of Bengal. In his work, Ali also wanted to show the changes that have taken place in the life of Santals of Barind Tract and West Bengal, India. Ali's work help me a lot to get valuable information on the Santals.

Bhowmic (1996) works focuses on the Santals history of literature, folk songs and rhymes. The songs are based on their religious rites. Actually this is very good work on Santals folklore.

Troisi (1976) works is like a small hand book on the Santals. In this book the author briefly states the writings on the Santals. This book can be used as a guide to review the literature on the Santals.

Sen (1984) in work states about the origin of the Santal and their settlement in the Jungle- Mahals, the impact of the Santal rebellion and the after math (1855-1861) etc. were elaborately discussed.

M. Ali's (1980) works is also a very important source to know about the adivashis of Dinajpur district of Bangladesh. In this he treated the Santal as one of the oldest settler in Dinajpur. He described about the socio-economic life of the Santals. He also gives some statistics on the adivashis of Dinajpur.

Selina Ahsan's (1993) work deals with the total lifestyles of another ethnic group of Bangladesh named the Marma, the second largest hill tribes in Bangladesh who live in Chittagong hill tracts area. This research work described about various socio-cultural and religious aspect of the Marma society. More specifically the book discusses about social organization, life cycle, material culture, economic organization, political organization, super natural world, beliefs and taboos.

Chakma (1985) in his book gives a brief description on the history of tribals of Bangladesh. The book also gives a vivid description of social-cultural and day to day lifestyle of Chakma, Marma, Tripura, Mro, Khumi, Garo, Hasom, Khashia etc. ethnic communities of Bangladesh.

Jengcham (1994) explains the details of Garo tribe in his book. In his book he explains the origins and ethnic abode, advent, and settlement in different regions in Indian subcontinent and Bangladesh, physical structure, there past and present occupation, health, education, language, religion, law of inheritance etc.

Chokroborti (1998) wrote a book on Pathro ethnic community of Sylhet where he gave the demography of ethnic communities in Bangladesh and social, cultural and economic life of Pathro community.

Mojid (1992) narrate the ethnic origins of Rakkhain, land dispute and role of administration in details. He gave much attention in the role of public administration and problems of Rakkhain's community encounter in their livelihood.

Bessaignet in his book gives an idea of different ethnic communities of Chittagong hill tracts particularly the Chakma, Mro and Mogh communities . He attempts to give an overview of their lifestyle, social institution, their festivals and their mode of revenue collection of various tribes.

J. Choudhury (1998) works on the nomadic Shandar community of Bangladesh explores the relationships between a woman's financial contribution to the family fund and her status and authority in the family. It focuses also on the Shandars's desire for upward mobility and assimilation in the mainstream society, as reflected in their recent practices of purdha and patriarchy. The study investigates the effects of such processes on the status of the women in the community and concludes that they are largely detrimental to women's position in the family and society.

Islam's Ph.D. thesis (1986) gives an ethnographic account of the Garo tribal community of Bangladesh. The researcher has extensively gone through the every aspects of life styles of the Garo social organization, production organization, occupational and economic structure, education, religion etc. Islam's research method helped us a lot to study the Santal village of Joykrishnapur.

Chapter 2

The Santal Village under Study and its Demographic Characteristics

In this chapter, I have dealt with the land and people of the Barind tract. The section on land focuses on the geographical location, topography of the region, lifestyle, education and socio economic condition of the region.

I. Regional Background

The Barind Tract is a triangular wedge of land in northwest Bangladesh situated between the floodplains of the Ganges and the Jamuna. It is located between North latitude $25^{\circ} 25'$ to $25^{\circ} 10'$ and East longitude 88° to 89° . The Barind region expands over about 70% in Bangladesh territory and 30% of India. In Bangladesh, the tract covers an area of 3266 sq. miles. The region known as Varendra in Sanskrit literature and Barendra in modern Bengali is a tract of comparatively high land which includes portions of Malda, Rajshahi, Dinajpur, Rangpur and Bogra district of the old Rajshahi Division of British India. However, the word 'Barind' means elevated land, or hills. Since this land is the most elevated in greater Rajshahi district, it is assumed that the name came into being for this reason.

Geologically, *Barind* is the part of old alluvium of middle pleistocene age, later slightly raised and compressed to the surrounding area due to tectonic movement. A characteristic feature of this old alluvium is the abundance of impure calcareous matter in the form of irregular concretions - locally known as *Kanker*. The *kanker* concretions are formed due to the separation of the calcareous and ferruginous material of the alluvial deposits into nodules (Rajshahi District Gazetteer: 1976: P: 3). A stiff soil of reddish clay loam distinguishes it from the rest of the district. This light loam is called *Do-ash* soil. However, the soils of the entire Barind Tract comprise four types:

- a) Shallow red-brown terrace soils characterized by the presence of a compact clay substratum;
- b) Deep red-brown terrace soils over red mottled substratum;

- c) Brown mottled terrace soils have a pale brown, strongly mottled sub-soil overlaying a red mottled substratum; and
- d) Grey terrace soils marked by gray, leached silty top soil grading into red mottled clay to a depth of several meters.

Topographically, Barind is a dome-shaped slightly elevated land, ranging in height from 20 to 40 feet. The surface is moderately undulating, with large level land passing into relatively low lying area with gradual, gentle slopes. Sprout from large streams flowing across the area, there are short streams of local origin which have made deep channels locally known as *Kharis*. However, the Barind tract is less affected by any natural calamities like flood, cyclone, tidal waves, salinity etc. But this tract experience frequent drought and has started showing signs of desertification. Nowadays, the area is considered as an ecologically fragile zone with extreme low vegetative cover. The soil is very low in organic matter and is devoid of minerals. It is alleged that increased ground water abstraction has reduced the availability of ground water for irrigation.

The most important river of this region is the Teesta. On the Rajshahi side, the Atrai and its principal tributary, the Jamuna, are the main channels. The tributaries of the Atrai now act as drainage channels in the dry season through which a large volume of ground water is transported. Originating from the Himalayas, the Mahananda river flows southward, through Purnea, and bisects the old Malda district into its western alluvium and eastern Barind. The Karotoa and the Punarbhaba, two important tributaries of the Atrai river, act as drainage canals in the dry season, covering the level Barind tract (Ali:1998:53).



NATIONAL MARTYRS MEMORIAL in the neighbourhood of Dhaka at Savar.



THE CENTRAL HAJIRED MINAR - Memorial of The Great Martyr of 1952.



THE SUPREME COURT.



JAYI SANGSAD BHABAN, DHAKA.

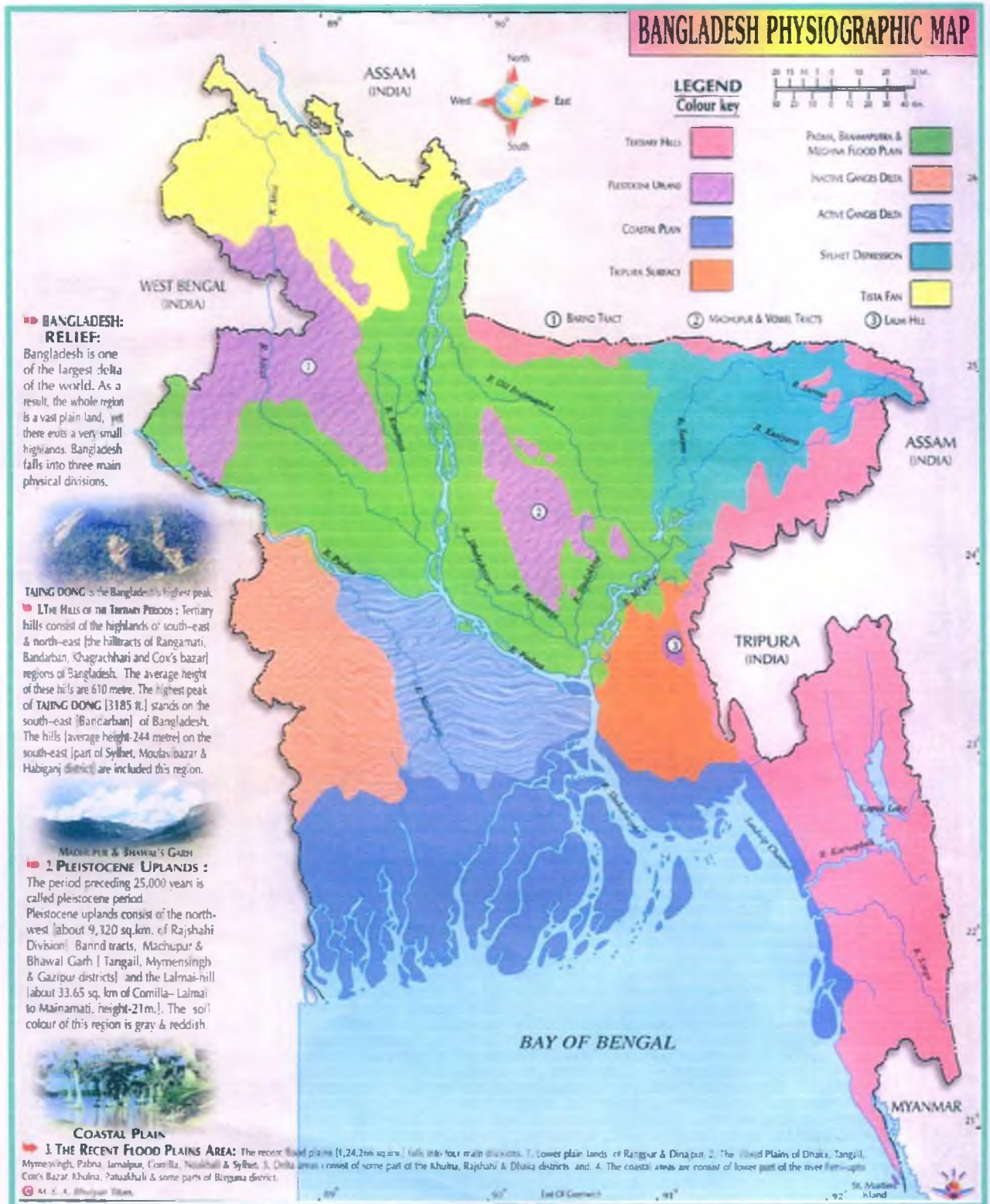
SELECTED GENERAL INFORMATION

ETHNICITY: The People's Republic of Bangladesh. **STATE:** The Capital of Republic is the City of DHAKA. **GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:** Between 22° 34' & 26° 35' North Latitude & Between 88° 01' and 92° 41' East Longitude. **BOUNDARY:** North: India; South: The Bay of Bengal; East: India & Myanmar; West: India. **AREA:** 147,570 sq. Km. or 56,977 sq. miles. **TERRESTRIAL WATER:** 12 Nautical Miles. **POPULATION:** 100 million & Over. **RELIGION:** 86.6% Muslims; 12.1% Hindus; 0.1% Christians; 0.3% Others; 0.4% Others. **LANGUAGE:** Bangla - English is widely spoken. **IMPORTANT DAYS:** Shaheed Day: 21 February; Independence Day: 16 March; The Victory Day: 16 December; Labour Day: 15 August; May Day: 1st day of May; April-Fool: 1st day of April; Buddha Purnima: 14 December. **NATIONAL ANTHEM:** Jaiy Sangsa (Assar Sonar Bangla My Bengal of gold, I love you, my eyes are filled with you...) - the first ten lines of Rabindranath Tagore's 'A - SONGS (Military Martial Music)'. **CHIEF OF STATE:** The first Vice-President: General Ziaur Rahman. **PRIME MINISTER:** Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. **PARLIAMENT:** Jatiy Sangsa. **GOVERNMENT:** Unitary form of government. **SEASONS:** Winter - January to March (November - February); Summer - March to June; Monsoon - July - October. **MAJOR CITIES:** Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, Rangpur, Comilla, Thakurgaon, Rajshahi & Ranganati. **RAILWAY STATION:** Dhaka & Chittagong.

SELECTED GENERAL INFORMATION

- ✓ **POPULATION:** 100 million & Over.
- ✓ **CURRENCY:** Taka (Tk) 100 = 1 Rupee.
- ✓ **SATELLITE:** Earth Station: Talmabad - Dhaka, Berhonia - Rangamati.
- ✓ **ETHNIC HERITAGE:** The Population of Bangladesh is a mixture of Dravidians, Aryans & Mongolians, belonging to the black-haired, dark-skinned & short featured Austro-Mongoloid group. Hill tribes have their distinctive racial features.
- ✓ **FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF STATE POLICY:** The principle of absolute trust & faith in the Almighty Allah, nationalism, democracy & socialism meaning economic & social justice constitute the fundamental principles of state policy.
- ✓ **ORGANS OF THE STATE:** The Executive comprises three basic organs: 1. The Legislature, 2. The Judiciary, 3. The Executive.
- ✓ **JUDICIAL SYSTEM:** The Supreme Court of Bangladesh is the highest judiciary in the country & comprises the Appellate Division & the High Court Division.
- ✓ **PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION:** Bangladesh has a unitary form of government. The President is the head of the state & the Prime Minister is the head of Government. The Prime Minister is assisted by a Council of Ministers. The permanent officer in charge of the Ministries / Divisions is designated as Secretary who belongs to the Civil Service. There are 35 Ministries & 82 Divisions.

The citizens of Bangladesh are known as Bangladeshis.



The climate of the area is characterized by an oppressive hot summer, high humidity nearly all the year round, and well distributed rainfall during the monsoon months of May- August. The average rainfall during the period of 1983-84 was 2016.4 mm but in 1995 it was only 1378 mm (Source: 'Bangladesh' Meteorological Association -1995). The summer period lasts for 180 to 210 days and the winter lasts for 115 to 140 days. The maximum rainfall (more than 200 mm per month) occurs between June and September. Temperatures in the Barind Tract are also very extreme compared to other parts of Bangladesh. During summer this area is very hot (temperature above 40 degree centigrade) and in winter it is colder than the rest parts of Bangladesh (temperature remains below 10 degree centigrade).

Socio-economic Condition of Barind Tract

The village under study is situated in the north west side of Rajshahi district. Therefore, attempts have been made here to provide some basic facts on Rajshahi district. The total population of Rajshahi district is 1887018. Population density in Rajshahi district is slightly higher than the national average. In 1991, the population density per square km. in greater Rajshahi district was 784 while it was 720 nationally. The family size of the Rajshahi district is 5.21 and in Bangladesh is 5.45 (Bangladesh Population Census 1991-Zilla: Rajshahi).

Table No 2.1: Dwelling Households by Religion and size of Households in Rajshahi.

Locality & Religion	Total Households	Average Size (Person)	Percentage
Muslim	330023	5.22	92.67
Hindu	19717	5.33	5.70
Buddhist	121	4.66	.03
Christian	2040	4.71	.54
Others	4066	4.58	1.05
Rajshahi District	355967	5.21	100

Source: Bangladesh Population Census 1991; (Zilla: Rajshahi)

The majority of the population in Rajshahi district (92.67%) are Muslim by faith. There are few Hindu, Christians, Buddhist and Animist families. However, according to the report of 1991 Population Census, the total size of the ethnic population was 1505978 or 1.13% of the Bangladesh's total population. Among them, a total of 1887015 people live in Rajshahi district and among them the number of ethnic people are only 44147. The number of Santals is 20648, which is almost 45% of total ethnic population of the Rajshahi district (Population Census of Bangladesh, 1991).

Table No 2.2: The Santals with Household (HH) and Population (POP) in Rajshahi district

Locality and race	Total		
	Number of HH	POP	HH size
Rajshahi Zilla	9000	44147	4.91
Santal	4381	20648	4.71

Source: Bangladesh Population census 1991; Zilla: Rajshahi

The literacy rate in Rajshahi district (30.59%) is lower than the national average (32.4%) (7 years and over). In Rajshahi district, only 4.30% of the households get their drinking water from tap, 84.34 % from tubewell, 0.61% and 0.08% from ponds and channels/rivers respectively. In this district, 12.43% of households have sanitary latrines, 23.96% have non-sanitary latrines and 63.61% of households use open space. Only 12.66% of the households have electricity (Bangladesh Population Census 1991-Zilla: Rajshahi).

Table No 2.3 : Distribution of Households by Main Source of Income in Rajshahi District.

Source of Income	Percentage
Agriculture/ Farming	38.73
Agricultural Labourer	23.64
Business	12.44
Others	25.19

Source: Bangladesh Population census 1991; Zilla: Rajshahi.

It is evident from the statistics that the majority of the people of Rajshahi district still depend upon agriculture for their livelihood. Among them 38.73% out of total percentage of households are land owner and share cropper, 23.64% are agricultural labourer, 3.50% are non agricultural-labourer and 12.44% are involved in business. In respect of land ownership 51.91% people own land and 48.09% do not own land in Rajshahi district.

Barind region is rich in vegetation and faunal wealth, as it abounds in varieties of bamboos, Babla (accacia), Neem (melia indica), Sal (shorea robusta), a variety of datee-palms and mango(magnifera indica) groves. Most of the villagers rear cows, bullocks, goats, pigs, dogs and poultry, like hen, goose etc. Paddy is the main crop of this region. Nowadays a different IRRI (highly yielding variety rice) is widely cultivated in the Barind Region. Different types of paddy namely Pariza, Shorna etc. are grown all the year round. This has been made possible by the application of modern irrigation technologies. During fieldwork, we have found that the above mentioned crops are grown by the Santals of Joykrishnapur.

The road communication with the Barind districts (Rajshahi, Nogaon, Capai Nobabganj, Rangpur, Dinajpur, Joypurhut) has improved a lot. These districts have also good highway networks connecting them with Dhaka, the capital city. Buses, trucks and other motor vehicles keep these roads busy. However, Thanas to Thana and Unions are also linked with pacca (metalled) and semi-pacca (half metalled) roads. Buses, tractors, trucks and three wheeler vehicles ply along these roads. But the internal road communication is yet to develop. Almost all the internal roads are non-metal and are locally known as *dahar* (in Santali) and the mode of communication in these places are bullock carts and non motorized three wheeler rickshaw vans. There is also railway network among the different districts of Barind region. Due to good road and railway network, the people of Barind region get opportunity to move from one

place to another. Besides, the local level administrative units are also under the coverage of telephone and mobile phone network.

Ethnic Communities of the Barind Tract

According to the Census Report 1991, Bangladesh has at least 27 ethnic communities who live in the north and northwest border areas, the north-central region and the three hill districts in the southeast of Bangladesh known as Chittagong Hill Tracts. The Chakmas are the biggest ethnic community in Bangladesh and they live in the Chittagong Hill Tracts area. The Santals are the second largest in number and most of the Santals live in the Barind region (Population census report 1991). However, there are 18 other ethnic groups live in the Barind region Among them Oraons, Pahans, Mundas, Turi are significant (Chowdhury, A & Ali: 2000).

The Santals

Anthropologists put in a lot of efforts to determine the origin of the word *Santal*, but none could reach any conclusion. It is commonly believed that their name has been derived from Santal Pargana, the place of their principal settlement (Sattar:52-53). The name Santal, according to Skrefsrud (1887), is a corruption of the word 'Saontar'. This was adopted by the Santals when they lived in the area around Saont, now known as Silda Pargana in Midnapore District of west Bengal (Ali: 1998:30). W. B. Oldham (1894) was of the opinion that "Santal" is an abbreviation of the word "Samantawala". According to this author "Samantha" is another name given to the country around Saont (Ali: 1998:30). Ali (1998) opined that despite these variegated names, most anthropologists agree that "Santal" is a name given to this tribe by the non-Santals. The word "Santal" has now become the standard form in english literature and it is used in the census reports of India also (Ali: 1998:31).

Origin of the Santals

On the basis of the Santal traditions, many scholars offered different theories to investigate the origin of Santals. Colonel Dalton (1872) believed that the Santals came from North-East India, and found their way to the Chota Nagpur plateau and the adjoining highlands by the line of their Sacred stream, the Damodar river. Geographically, Dalton has located the Santals:

... in a strip of Bengal extending for about 350 miles from the Ganges to the Baitarani, bisected by the meridian of Bhagalpur or 87^o east longitude, and comprising the following districts- Bhagalpur, the Santal parganas, Birbhum, Bankura, Hazaribagh, Manbhum, Midnapore, Singhbhum, Mayurbhanj and Balasore (Dalton : 1872: 206).

Risley (1891) looked at the Santals from a slightly different angle when he tried to discover their anthropological origin. From their physical characteristics the Santals were regarded by him as a typical example of pure Dravidian stock (Ibid: 1891: 224). Besides, Risley also opined that there is no doubt that the influx of the Hindus had in fact driven the Santals from their original home (Sen:1994:27). But according to some scholars, Risley was mistaken in classifying them as Dravidians. The word "Dravidian" is not the name of any race, rather it is the linguistic classifications of the name. Secondly, no Dravidian language is used in the Gangetic valley. From the above statements, it is very difficult to say anything definite about the origin of the Santals, or the race the Santals belong to. But it is clear that the Santals of the Barind tract migrated from the Santal Parganas of India.

Physical Characteristics of the Santals

O' Malley (1910) opines that a Santal is a man of medium stature, but muscular and sturdily built, wiry and capable of great physical endurance. His complexion is dark, varying from brown to an almost jet black color. He also noticed the Mongoloid influence among the few Santals. Risley (1891) opined the physical characteristic in different manner. He says, "In the point of

physical characteristics the Santals may be regarded as typical examples of the pure Dravidian stock. The proportion of the skull, approaching the dolichocephalic type, conclusively refute the hypothesis of their Mongoloid descent'' (Risley:1891:224).

During our fieldwork we observed that the Santals are medium in size as like as the Bangalee people. Their complexion is dark-brown and height is five feet to five feet seven inches in average. Most of the Santals people physical structure is similar to that of Austro-Asiatic race. But there are few Santals found in the study village having fare skin and bearing some similarity with Mongoloid race.

Language

The Santals speak an independent language of their own, known as "Santali". It is a language belong to Munda family (Austro-Asiatic language). According to Campbell, Santali has reached a much higher stage of development than any other sister language. Through the passage of time it has drawn upon other languages, but the influence of Bangal seems to be the most important (Sen:1984:24). Santali does not have any script, though legends flow from generation to generation through oral tradition. They adopted the Roman script under the influence of the Christian missionaries, the Bengali script and the Hindi script by the influence of their neighbours in respective territories (Sen: 1984: 24).

In Santal populated rural areas the Santals speak to each other in Santali language. But when they speak to others, they speak in Bengali. Children generally learn both the languages at an early age. But in the peri-urban setting of the Santal neighborhoods, the picture is quite different. Here, the Santal Christians who are more or less educated and economically quite well off, do not speak within themselves in Santali language. They speak in Bengali. It is

observed that the third/fourth generation convert Christian children hardly know the Santali language.

Causes of Migration to Barind Tract

The Santals occupy a very important place among the ethnic groups of Bangladesh. Previously, the Santals were considered to be one of the oldest settlers in the sub-continent. But, the ancestors of present Santal community living in Bangladesh began to settle here from the early part of 19th century.

The migration of the tribal communities, mainly the Santals, to this region may have occurred for a variety of reasons. They may be summarized as follows:

- a) Lacey (1931) observes that one of the factors for their migration to Barind region was the failure of the great Santal Rebellion in 1855. The after effect of the rebellion was that the Santals faced extreme poverty and many of them migrated to different parts of British Bengal such as, North Bengal, Assam and Orissa in order to earn their livelihoods. Their stringent financial condition compelled them to migrate to the arid uplands of Barind comprising the parts of Dinajpur Rajshahi Bogra and Malda in and around 1901 A.D (Ali: 1998: 40).
- b) It is a reasonable guesswork that there was a slave trade run by the Imperial masters and their hired stooges in India with aborigines of the Beerbhoom region who were imported for the reclamation and cultivation of the barren lands and jungles of this tract. According to Hunter (1876) there is no doubt that slavery was there among the aborigines who used to provide the manpower for English enterprise in this sparsely populated fertile land of Bengal (Hunter: 1876: 226-7).
- c) According to O'Malley, the main reason for their emigration from the district (Hazaribagh) appears to be that they are an extremely prolific race, and that the cultivable portion of the jungles in the Santal Parganas

becoming exhausted. There is, therefore, not sufficient scope for reclamation, and also the rate of reclamation does not keep pace with the rate of growth of population (O' Malley:1910: 63-64). He also added that the Santals emigrated from their homeland to those districts which are known to abound most in forests, and where they are welcome by the *zamindars*, who invited them to settle. By choice they selected the most wild spots and so great is their predilection for the wildest places, that they are seldom known to remain at one station longer than it takes to clear and bring it into cultivation. (O'Mally:1910:98)

It is worth mentioning here that the primary cause of their migration to Barind was undoubtedly due to economic depression. However, it appears that their choice for this place was influenced by the availability of cultivable land at Barind. The *Zamindars* and *Jotedars* engaged the Santals for clearing the jungles and *danga* (high) lands. This gave them an incentive to migrate to Barind region in as much as it lured them to getting ample employment opportunities. Thus, the Santals from Damin-i-koh (Santal Parganas in India) who settled here mainly as *bargadars* (share croppers) under the Permanent *Zamindary* Settlement of Bengal played an important role in the extension of agriculture in this region.

II. The Joykrishnapur Village

The village under study Joykrishnapur is situated near. Kakonhut which is located at the core point of Godagari *Thana* under Rajshahi district. It is located around 30 Kilometers north-west of Rajshahi divisional Headquarters, 20 Kilometers north-east of Godagari thana Sadar and four Kilometers west of Pakri Union Council. Joykrishnapur is situated in the east of Kakonhut, about three km. from Kakonhut. Kakonhut is an important place for business and commercial activities. This is connected by both roads and railway with Rajshahi. One can go easily from Rajshahi to Kakonhut by train, bus or any others vehicle.

Grameen Bank, Rupali Bank, primary and secondary schools, a college, railway station, village market (*hut*), bus stand, cinema hall, a petrol pump a police camp, and several other institutions are situated at Kakonhut.

Joykrishnapur is surrounded by a vast agricultural field on the north, Juktipara (a Christian inhabited Santal village) on the east, a Bangali inhabited village on the south and a massive area of cultivable land on the west. An earthen path runs through Juktipara which leads to the threshold of Joykrishnapur. There are forty-four households/family in Joykrishnapur. The village also has a Non-formal Primary School (Santali school) and a club. The village lacks water resources as there are no rivers or tributaries or even canals running through it. There are only six ponds and two tubewells which are the main sources of water for the villagers. Most of the villagers do not use proper latrines; only three families use ring- slab latrines.

The village has various kinds of trees and plants such as Margosa, Plum, Mango, Black-berry, Date, Banana, Bamboo, Tamarind, Banyan, Jujube, Jackfruit, Hogplum, Guava, Custard-apple, Lemon and Various flowers tress etc. are found. Snakes, foxes, wild-cat, weasels, frogs and many other wild animals are found in the village and its neighboring areas. The villagers rear domestic animals like buffaloes, cows, goats, swine etc. Rice, wheat, potatoes are predominantly grown in the village. Moreover, homestead vegetables are also produced.

III. Household and Population

In this section, I will discuss about the demographic aspect of Joykrishnapur with special attention to households, population and educational aspects of the village.

DENSITY OF POPULATION

SELECTED BASIC FACTS ABOUT BANGLADESH

LIFE: The country's broad masses who live in some 92,000 villages are at times described as simple & inarticulate, but at the same time they are polite, courteous & hospitable. Rice & fish curry constitute an important part of the Bangladeshi diet. The dress & a jersey are a common attire for men in the rural areas as opposed to Shirts, Trousers & Pyjamas in the Urban areas. Saree is women's universal dress. There are about a million Inhab people the majority of whom live in Chittagang Hill Tracts District. The various tribes are culturally different from one another. They earn their living from agriculture, cottage craft & making indigenous ceramics.

RELIGION: About 87% of the population are Muslims. Three other major religions are Hinduism, Buddhism & Christianity. The constitution of the country guarantees full freedom of religion.

FESTIVALS: The biggest festival of the country is Eid-ul-Fitre. Next comes the Eid-ul-Azha. Other widely celebrated Muslim festivals are Gole-Mihadannab & Shabe-Barat. Festivals of other religions like Durga puja of the Hindus, Christmas Day of the Christians, Buddha Purnima of the Buddhists are also celebrated. Among the non-religious festivals Bengali New Year's Day, Victory day & Independence Day are celebrated Nationwide. All of these festivals are marked as public holiday.

ART: The origin of the modern trend of Bangladeshi art can be traced to the foundation of the arts & crafts institute in the lace territories by Zairul Abedin, Anwarul Haque, Quamrul Hasan, Shahuddin Ahmed & others. Trained in Calcutta & conversant with the art Indian style they were gifted enough to initiate a unique style & legacy blending modern art forms with traditional folk traditions. In the later period Mohammad Kibria, Aminul Islam, Abdur Razzaq, Marjara Bashir & others with their modernist style enriched our art. Rashid Chowdhury's tapestries or S. M. Sultan's primitive articulations are internationally recognised. The exposition of Bangladesh art abroad & the holding of numerous international exhibitions have helped it gain easy recognition the world over.

DEFENCE: Armed forces: The armed forces of Bangladesh came into being during the War of Liberation in 1971 & comprises of the Army, the Navy & the Air Force. Within the constraints of limited national resources everything possible is being done to maintain an effective & integrated force to protect & safeguard national sovereignty & territorial integrity. The nation is proud of the gallant armed forces of its heroic role in the War of Liberation. Bangladesh Rifles (Border Security Forces), Bangladesh Police, Ansars, Village Defence Parties & the Bangladesh National Cadet Corps are organised Para-military & auxiliary forces.

FAUNA: About 200 species of mammals are found in Bangladesh. Among them the famous Royal Bengal Tiger of the Sundarbans is the pride of the country's fauna. About 750 species of birds, 150 species of reptiles, 200 species of marine & fresh water fishes are found in the country.

LEGEND

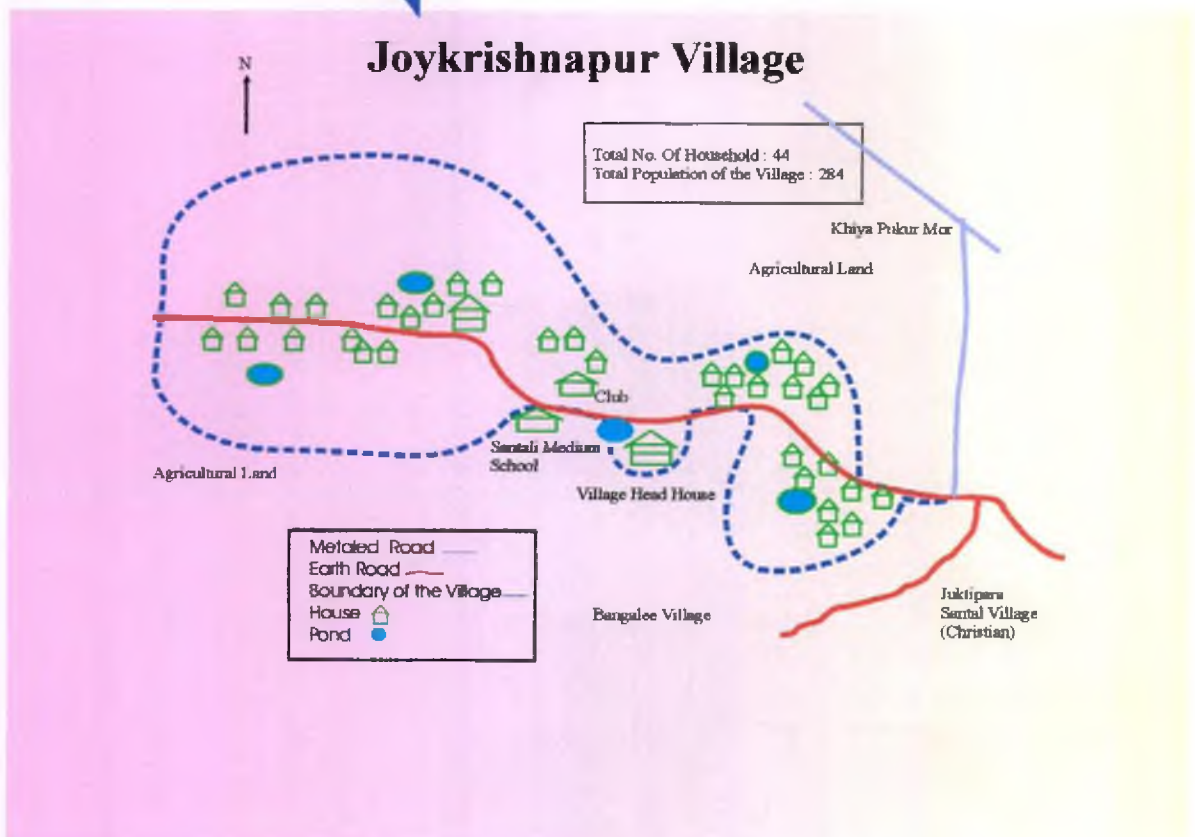
Colour key

Persons Per Square Kilometre

1 - 500		1001 - 1500	
501 - 750		1501 - 2000	
751 - 1000		2001 & Above	



Rajshahi District Map & Study Village



Household literally means the housing unit. It is the primary unit of production and consumption. Usually a household consists of a husband, a wife and their young children. In many cases, it includes the individuals of one to three generations. In fact a household includes the persons who earn together, share meals together and live under the same roof. There are forty-four households in Joykrishnapur village. The number of total population of this village is 284. Of whom 145 are female and 139 are male. It is surprising, as the table below shows that the average number of male is less than that of female, which is also dissimilar to the national rate of Bangladesh.

Table No 2.4 : Population of Joykrishnapur

Male	Female	Total	Percentage (Male)	Percentage (Female)
139	145	284	48.94	51.06

Source: Fieldwork in Joykrishnapur

In term of religion, among a total 44 households, only 8 families are Christians and rest of the families are animist.



Table No 2.5: Distribution of male and female population by age

Years	Male	Female	Total	Percentage (Male)	Percentage (Female)
0-9	38	39	77	27.53	26.89
10-19	24	28	52	17.26	19.31
20-29	14	18	32	10.07	12.41
30-39	18	20	38	12.94	13.79
40-49	15	16	31	10.79	11.03
50-59	11	8	19	7.91	5.51
60-69	9	10	19	6.47	6.89
70-79	9	5	14	6.47	3.44
80+	1	1	2	0.71	0.88
Total	139	145	284	100.00	100.00

The table shows that the age group below nine years is the biggest group (27%), while the 80+ is the lowest one (0.88%). Around 18% are between 10 to 19 and approximately 11 percent is between 20 and 24.

IV. Education and Exposure

Education

According to Bangladesh Population Census 1991, a person who is able to write a letter has been considered literate. In the following tables I tried to figure out the educational status of Joykrishnapur village: Santals of only the household heads has been shown in the table below.

Table No 2.6: Literacy of the Household Heads

Level	Number	Percentage
Illiterate	32	72.72
Below Primary	4	9.09
Below Secondary	4	9.09
Secondary	3	6.81
Above Secondary	1	2.27
Total	44	100.00

Source: Fieldwork in Joykrishnapur

It is fact that about 73% household heads of Joykrishnapur are illiterate. Out of the total population in the village, only 45.77 persons are literate. Among the literate villagers, 22.53 percent are below primary level, 20.42 percent are below secondary and 2.11 percent have received higher secondary education. Only two persons have graduated. The total literate male is 54.61 percent and 45.39 percent is female (Please See Table: 2.6, 2.7 & 2.8).

Table No 2.7: Pattern of Literacy of the Household Members by Sex.

Level of education	Number			Percentage	
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Illiterate	68	86	154	48.92	59.31
Below Primary	31	33	64	22.30	22.75
Below Secondary	33	25	58	23.74	17.24
Secondary	6	0	6	4.31	-
Above Secondary	1	1	2	0.71	0.71
Total	139	145	284	100.00	100.00

Source: Fieldwork in Joykrishnapur

Table No 2.8: Literacy of the Joykrishnapur village.

Number			In Percentage	
Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
71	59	130	54.61	45.39

Source: Fieldwork in Joykrishnapur

Reason for not sending children to school

The most significant reason for not sending their children to school as many as 34 (77.2 percent) heads of the household claimed that due to poverty they failed to send their children to school. Besides, the distance of educational institutions from home, unfriendly environment at the institution and ignorance of parents are the causes for poor literacy rate among the Santals of Joykrishnapur. Furthermore, almost of all students of Joykrishnapur village engage themselves in earning. As a result they cannot continue their education. In this reference we can mention the reference of Himel, Ukil and Michael. In 2002, three of them were higher secondary candidates but even 15 days ahead of their exams they had to go to distant places for earnings for survival.

Table No.2.9 :The most significant difficulty in educating children

Difficulties	Number	Percent
Financial difficulties	34	77.2
Social adjustment	6	13.7
Net specified	4	9.1
Total	44	100

Source: Fieldwork in Joykrishnapur

Out of 44, who aspire to educate their children, 77.2 percent reported that the main difficulty they faced in educating their children due to financial insolvency and 13.7 percent reported that it created problems of social adjustment in the family and community. They felt that due to impact of education and as well as Bengalee culture hindered their children's education, which flouted their traditional social system.

Most of the Santals of Joykrishnapur can realise the need and purpose of education. Especially the young parents want to educate their children. Due to financial crisis they cannot ensure environment for their children. Some of

them know about the government facilities and they told us that in reality it is very difficult to achieve those facilities. However, the Christian missionaries and some national and local NGOs working for increasing literacy rate among the Adivashis of Bangladesh. From the field observation we can see that, at first the Christian missions took initiative for promoting education among the Advashis. Lolit Baski is the only graduate in Joykrishnapur village. He is 38. He converted to Christianity when he was only 12. In answering to a question of the reason of his conversion to Christian he quoted “In order to avail the opportunity of studying in the church school and getting the other benefits provided by church, I converted to Christianity.”

Santali School of Joykrishnapur

The Santali school of Joykrishnapur was established in 1975. Since its inception, the Christian missionaries patronized this primary school. The missionaries provided the entire educational fees of the students, teaching materials and stationery goods. However, the villagers would also contributed to pay a half portion of the salary for the teachers. Thus this school ran till 1990. Later the school discontinued due to shortage of fund. In 2000, the Grameen Trust intervened in order to run it with a new approach.

Presently the school is a Non-formal primary School and the curriculum has been designed for three years (class I to III). Along with basic Bangla, English, Numeracy, Santali short story books are in the curriculum. The medium of instruction is Santali language. Since Santali has no alphabet of their own, they use Bangla alphabets for the storybook.

The objective of this school is to orient basic Bangla in such a manner that the children can understand both Bangla and Santali easily. In future, Santali children who will carry out their studies will be able to understand, speak, and write Bengali Language. Like the

other rural areas of Bangladesh, Bengali medium education is continuing everywhere. Since the Santal children might experience problems if they do not understand Bengali, therefore, the Grameen Trust and the *Jatiya Adivashi Parishad* are jointly piloting Santali medium of education for the primary level learners.

Lusia Shoren (22) is a teacher of Santali medium school of Joykrishnapur. About the school she expressed her in this following way:

The children are very interested learn in Santali language. The curriculum of Santali medium school consists of history and traditions of the Santals; as a result it is very helpful for the children to learn about our history and traditions.

Exposure

The most common communicating mass media in our present day society are television, radio, newspapers, films, books and magazines and so on. Mass media is quite effective in establishing relationship and cultural contact between individual, group and nation states. However, at Joykrishnapur, nine households have radio and they listen to the music, news and other programmes of Bangladesh and India. Their exposure to newspapers is quite low. None in the village keep newspaper but the educated Santals read and preserve 'ULGULAN', a fortnightly magazine, which deals with various problems and events of Adivashis. There is a club in Joykrishnapur. Different games like chess, football, cricket are being played by the Santals. The football team of Joykrishnapur became champion in Kakanhut area and they own a television as a prize. Now the villagers can enjoy TV. Recently they have got electric connection in the village and about eight households have electric connections. The Santal of Joykrishnapur village are in close contact with other villages, towns and cities. The main basis of interaction is occupation, political and religious gatherings and administrative needs.

In brief, it may be said that the Santals in Bangladesh are losing their traditional isolation. Education and exposure to mass media are not only

acting as the agent of changes but also pushing them into the general currents of change operating in the society at large.

V. Summary

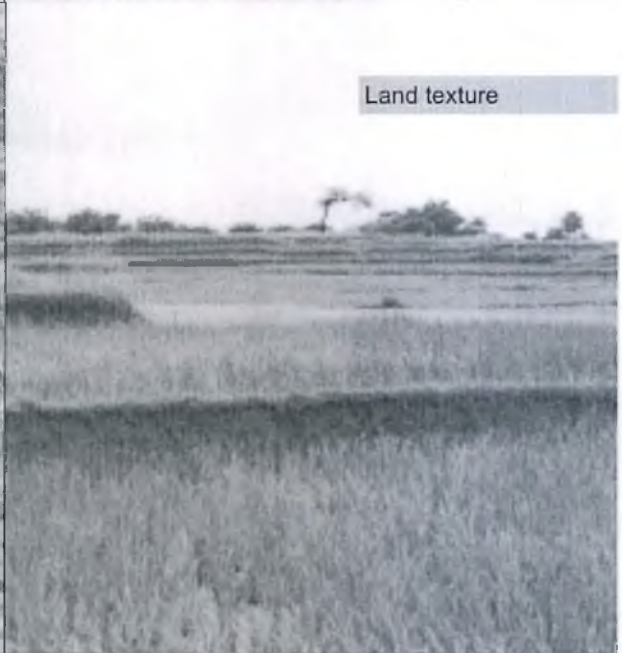
In the foregoing chapter we have discussed geology, topography, climate, socio-economic condition of the Barind tract. Besides we have attempted to discuss the origin of the Santals, causes of migration to Barind tract, their physical characteristics, language etc. Later, we have detailed the location and demographic aspect of the study village - Joykrishnapur. In this chapter we also elucidated the impact of education, media and various types of entertainment of the village.



Barind Tract of Bangladesh



Soil



Land texture



The Santals of the Barind Tract

Chapter 3

The Changing Social Life of the Santals

Social organizations are aspects of every social system, which denote the systematic ordering of social relations through acts of choice and decision. These acts are limited by the range of possible alternatives. Thus observable behavior including change and variation in a social system is accounted for its social organization. Some important factors are obviously liable to maintain the social relations among individuals and groups. With a view to maintaining sociality, these factors can by no means be ignored. Hence it is pertinent to focus on the existing forms of family, marriage, kinship, clan, inter-tribal relations etc. of the Santals. In the coming discussion, I attempt to focus on the above mentioned topics.

I. Family

Family is the smallest and core social and economic unit, which consists of parents and children. According to Encyclopedia of Anthropology, family is “ a married couple or other group of adult kinsfolk who cooperate economically and in the upbringing of children and all or most of whom share a common dwelling” (Hunter ed.: P:164). However, family is a social group characterized by common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction. The members of a family have a common hearth or kitchen, a common purse or food supply and usually live under a common roof.

Types and structures of family among the Santals

There are three main types of families in the village under study. They are absolute nuclear family, patrilineal joint family and fresh joint family. Our fieldwork data show that the Santals in the village under study prefer to live

within the joint family structure. On the other hand, the significant number of nuclear families are also found in Joykrishnapur. Philip Hembrom (28) recently got married and left his family. He told us that his father had died recently and thereafter their family property was distributed among themselves. After getting marriage he becomes separated from his elder brothers. His mother lives with his elder brother.

Table No 3.1: Distribution of Households by Family Types.

Types of Family	Description	Number	Percentage	Population
Absolute Nuclear	Parents and unmarried issues	16	36.36	60
Incomplete Nuclear	Mother and unmarried issues	1	2.27	8
Incomplete Nuclear	Father and unmarried issues	-	-	-
Patrilineal joint family	Grand parents with their issues and grand children	8	18.18	77
Fresh joint family	Parents and their married/ unmarried issues	14	31.81	94
Extended family	As referred earlier	3	6.81	28
Co-existing joint family	A household with several joint families.	1	2.27	17
Total		44	100.00	284

Source: Fieldwork in Joykrishnapur

It is observed that the majority Santal of Joykrishnapur village lived in joint family structure where, father, mother, sons, daughters, sons-in-law or daughters-in-law live in a single homestead and share their earnings. But they usually do not leave the homestead even if they have a single family; it shows their deep attachment to the family. However, the Santal villager identified few reason for breaking up joint family structure such as economic crisis of the family and bickering, quarrels and conflicts between the female members of the family.

It is also observed that in the Santal households the head of the family is a male. If the husband dies and there are no responsible male members in the

family then the female member is selected as the household head. Therefore, it is clear that the Santals follow the patrilineal descent system. The children trace their descent line through the father, not the mother. When we visited other Santal village such as Shurshunipara and Juktipara, we got the same kind of family type and traditions among the Santals.

II. Marriage

Marriage is a ubiquitous feature of human kinship and social organization and probably developed very early in the course of human social history. In rural Bangladesh as well as in Santal society marriage is one of the best sources of creating relations. Marriage may be defined as a publicly organized and culturally sanctioned union between a man and a woman which is intended to be enduring to give primary sexual rights to the couple, and to fulfill further social functions. In fact, marriage is a social and religious bond, which allows a man and a woman to live together and to produce offsprings. Marriage also permits to further reproduction in order to expand lineage.

The Santal name for all kinds of marriage is “*bapla*”. According to O’ Malley (1910), there are seven forms of *bapla* and these are described as follows⁽¹³³⁻¹³⁷⁾

a) *Kirin Bahu Bapla*

The most common form is that called *Kiring-babu*, i.e., a bought daughter-in-law. The marriage is negotiated through a marriage-broker (*raebar*), even if the parents on both sides arrange everything, as it is sometimes the case when they are friends and desire the match. Anyone may act as marriage broker, but generally speaking, an elderly man or woman is most often employed for the same. The parents of the bridegroom have to pay bride price to the parents of the bride. It is from this custom that it derives the name *kirin bapla*, which means ‘bought bride’. Traditionally, the bride –price had to be given in both cash and kind. The amount of each depends on the economic condition of the bride’s father and it varies from area to area. In addition to this

sum, three to four clothes with a napkin must be given as gift to the mother of the bride and to others of her nearest female relations. Besides this, tradition further prescribes that the bride's elder brother is entitled to receive a cow with or without a calf.

b) *Tunki Dipil Bapla*

There is another form of marriage called Dunki dipil bapla (literally "carrying a basket-on-the head-marriage"), which is the poor man's marriage. The girl is simply brought without any ceremony to the bridegroom's house, where *sindurdan* (offering vermilion) is performed.

c) *Sanga Bapla*

The form called sanga is used for the marriage of widows and divorced women. The bride is brought to the bridegroom's house attended by a small party of her friends, and the binding portion of the ritual consists in the bridegroom taking a *dimbu* flower, marking it with *sindur* with his left hand, and with the same hand sticking it in the bride's hair.

Widows are allowed to marry again, but the bride price is only half that given for an unmarried girl. The reason for this is that the Santals believe that after death a widow will rejoin her first husband, and her second husband will only enjoy her in this life. Bigamy is not uncommon, nor is it regarded as irregular, but few Santals can afford more than one wife.

d) *Ghardi-Jawae Bapla*

A person who has only a daughter and no male issues, arranges this type of marriage for his only daughter. In this form of marriage, the bridegroom comes to live with the family of the bride, thus reversing the normal practice. No bride price is charged in this case, and all the expenses of the marriage are borne by the parents of the bride.

e) *Kiring-Jawae Bapla*

Kiring-Jawa, meaning a bought husband is a recognized form of marriage when a girl becomes involved with or becomes pregnant by a man who cannot marry her since both of them belong to the same clan. In this situation the man cannot marry the girl but he is bound to buy her a husband. As a rule the name of the guilty man is kept secret, and the girl's father pays the bridegroom the money required, which he frequently gets from her lover.

f) *Itut Bapla*

It is a form of marriage by force. Marriage can be forced on an unmarried girl by merely smearing her forehead with *sindur* (vermilion) or even red ochre. This may be done either (a) when the parents of the girl refuse to give their consent to the match, or (b) when the young man has doubts about winning the favour of the girl he wants. In any case, a final settlement is reached only when the father of the culprit is forced to pay a fine to the father of the girl and also a sum to the headman of his village for settling the matter and thus saving the boy's life (who would otherwise have been beaten to death).

g) *Nir-Bolok Bapla*

Nir-bolok (literally meaning "run in") is a form of marriage used when a girl takes the initiative and is of two kinds. The first takes place when a young man and a girl living in the same village agree to marry but the former hesitates about the match. In this case, the girl goes to the *jog-manjhi* and reveals the secret to him, and he takes her to the house of the boy's parents. After two days the parents inform the *manjhi*, and they talk the matter over. They temporarily separate the young couple, and at the end have regular marriage ceremony. The other kind of *nir-bolok* is resorted to when a young man, after living with a girl, refuses to marry her; then the girl forcibly enters his house and sits in a corner, whilst the future mother-in-law tries to drive her out by burning tobacco leaves. If the young man agrees to keep the girl, a marriage is arranged in the

manner mentioned above; otherwise the villagers fine both, and he must give the girl compensation.

Out of seven type of traditional marriage system only five types of marriage are practiced in the Study village. These are *kirin bahu bapla*, *tunki dipil bapla*, *ghardi-jawae*, *chadwi (chandwa) bapla* and *randi /sanga bapla*. The common one, *kirin bahu bapla*. Ali (1998) finds, during his fieldwork, ^{five} four types of marriage system among the Santals and these are *kirin bapla*, *tunki dipil bapla*, *ghardi jawae*, ^{and kirin bapla} and *sanga bapla*. His findings is similar to our findings which is similar to our findings. Now we are going to state about few highlights of the Santals marriage ceremony :

Marriage Rituals

O'Malley (1910) described the marriage ceremonies among the Santals in the following manner:

“There are two essential features of the marriage ceremony. The first is *sindurdan*, i.e., the smearing of vermilion on the bride's forehead and the parting of her hair. The bride is seated in a basket held up by her relations and the bridegroom, who applies the *sindur* and rides on the shoulders of one of his relations. The second is a meal in which the husband and wife eat together, for by so doing she gets into her husband's family. When the girl is unmarried, the binding ceremony is in all cases the *sindurdan*; but there is a difference in the methods in which *sindurdan* is reached. The latter has been depicted in the kinds of marriages (O'Mally:1910:134).

According to Hunter:

“ With such freedom of intercourse, it follows that marriages are generally love matches, and, on the whole, happy ones; but it is considered more respectable if the arrangements are made by the parents or guardians, without any acknowledged reference to the young people. The price to be paid for the girl, averaging five rupees, with presents of cloths to her parents, having been determined one, a day is fixed for a preliminary feast, and afterwards for the marriage itself; and a knotted string, which shows the number of days that intervene, is kept as a memorandum. Each morning one of these knots is removed by the impatient lover, and, when the last is loosened, the bridegroom and his friends, with noisy music set out for the abode of the bride. As they approach they village the *Jag manjhi* comes out to meet them, attended

by women with water to wash the feet of the guest, who are then escorted to the house of the bride, and the two mingling together merrily sing, dance and feast in front of the bride's chamber. At the last quarter of the night the bridegroom makes his appearance, riding on the hips of one of his comrades, and soon after the bride is brought out by a brother or brother in law in a basket. Then comes the inevitable *sindra dan*. The groom daubs his lady love on the crown and brow very copiously with vermilion (*sindur*), and the assembled guests applaud with cries of *hori bol*. The bride and bridegroom, who having fasted all day, now eat together, and this is supposed to be the first time that the girl has sat with a man at her food (Hunter:1876:316)

O' Malley and Hunter found it to be a common that *sindur dan* is the main event of the Santal marriage ceremony and this age long tradition is still practicing among the animist Santals. I participated in a Santal marriage ceremony in May 2002. My findings regarding the marriage ceremonies of the Santal community are to some extent similar to the account of O'Malley and Hunter. In Joykrishnapur, marriage is settled by the *ghatak* (marriage broker). After settling this event, the bridegroom party provides three *maunds* five *seer* (120 kg) paddy for bride's brother (earlier a cow used to be given but now because of economic hardship this amount of paddy is given as bride price) and twenty five taka for her father. The money is given to the bride's brother for protecting her and the rest of the money to the father for bringing her up. There is a hearsay that explains the reason why the bride price is to be given to bride's elder brother. It goes as follows:

“Once upon a time a Santal girl went to fetch water from a pond surrounded by jungles. On her way to back, she was attacked by a tiger; but her brother rescued the girl by killing the tiger with arrow and bows.”

The Santals of Joykrishnapur believe that bride price was introduced for the brother in remembrance of this story. Besides, remembering this tale, they also perform *da bapla* (water-marriage) which is major event of their ceremony. For this event a small pond (about 1 feet X 1 feet length and width 1 feet in depth) is dug for this purpose. Three arrows fixed at three corners of the pond. After necessary worship by Jog Manjhi, the relatives of the bride and

bridegrooms start singing and dancing. *da bapla* perform by both parties separately. The following song is sung during *da bapla*:

In Santali:

Hai re hai yanch tinch
Hai re hai opunch tinch
Yanch ar opunch da
Turigar pukhririkim janam lincha

Free Translation:

My dear mother
Oh dear father
Dear mother and father

Source: Michael Soren of Joykrishnapur

It is observed that the Santal marriage ceremony huge quantity of *hariya* (rice beer) is served to the guests. But nowadays, the conscious Santals avoid drinking *hariya* instead they drink tea. However, O' Malley, Dalton and Ali mentions that bride price is given the bride's father but I noticed the bride price was offered for bride's brother. Besides, rituals like besmearing of turmeric and *da bapla* were not mentioned in their account. The following song is sung during the receiving the bride:

In Santali:

Batire gur nayu
therire shajao me
Dilabun chantaya bihu daram
Usharate ga bihu daramem
Da titanch ar daka regechtao lurao eno

Free Translation:

Place sweets on the bowl, dear sister
Let's go dear, accept the bride
Dear mother accept the bride
quickly
We are thirsty, we are hungry.

Source: Michael Soren of Joykrishnapur

In case of the Christian Santals, the church is the main place for marriage. The bride and groom exchange rings in front of the priest and their parents. The Father of they church plays the key role in this regard. However, some Christian Santals perform traditional ceremony like besmearing green turmeric and shindur dan programme. I found in Joykrishnapur village that the Christian women, particularly the young and middle age ladies use *shindur* on their forehead as a symbol of marriage. It means the Christian Santals followed both tradition.

We already mentioned that a marriage broker is essential for arranging a traditional Santal marriage ceremony. In the Joykrishnapur village, about 93% marriages are arranged but from the following data we can see that there are some instances of love marriages. In these cases the boys and girls chose each other had love affairs for some times and later they get married according to Santal marriage customs of *kirin bahu bapla*. However, the following tables no. 3.2 and 3.3 give us a picture of Joykrishnapur village regarding marriage.

Table No 3.2: Apportionment of Marriage based on Arrangement.

Types	Number	Percentage
Arranged Marriage	133	92.36
Love Marriage	11	7.36
Marriage by Capture	0	-
Total	144	100

Source: Fieldwork in Joykrishnapur

Table No 3.3: Household Members (both sexes) by Marital Status.

Status	Number	Percentage
Currently Married	144	50.7
Unmarried	138	48.5
Divorced	0	0
Widowed	2	0.7
Widower	0	0
Total	284	100

Source: Fieldwork in Joykrishnapur

Polygamy and Polyandry among the Santals

In Joykrishnapur village polygamy is permitted. Theoretically there are no restrictions on the number of wives a man may have. O'Malley observes that a man may marry two sisters, but he must follow the order of age, and if already married to a younger sister, may not take an elder sister to wife (O' Malley, 1910: 87). At present days a man cannot marry two sisters at a time. However, A widow may remarry. She is expected to marry her late husband's younger brother if there is one; but if he does not wish to marry her, any member of the caste not barred by the prohibited degrees may have her on paying a price to her late husband's relatives. O'Malley also stated that

"Fraternal polyandry is a recognized custom among the Santals. There is sexual intercourse between a husband's younger brothers and his wife (hili), provided they show a certain amount of decency and do not make too open a display of their relations." In description of O' Malley we found that both polygamy and polyandry existed in the Santal society. However, during our field visits we did not find any instance of polygamy or polyandry among the Santals of Joykrishnapur. Andrina of Shurshunipara told us that according to Christian rules polygamy is fully prohibited among them.

Divorce

The Santal style of marriage accommodates divorce. The most common cause for divorce is adultery, but this does not necessarily lead to a divorce. After certain compensatory payments are made by the adulterer the husband and wife may reconcile, and resume living together. Repeated offences of the same nature on the part of one party, however, generally cause the other to have recourse to such extreme action. Unwillingness of one party to cohabit with the other is also recognized as a ground for divorce.

According to O' Malley (1910), two causes brought about divorce, viz., unfaithfulness on the part of the wife and witchcraft. If the married couple do not live peaceably, divorce is soon resorted to, and a woman may even demand divorce if the man takes another wife. (139)

Like the present day, the animist Santal community allowed divorce in the past too. Through a village officials meeting and a rite called *sakam orec* (breaking off relations) the formalities of divorce were held. The village officials fixed the compensation for both parties based on the nature of the case.

III. Clan

A clan is a kinship group whose members trace their descent from a common ancestor. Most of the ethnic communities have clans and these are the sum-total of the families. The clans are known as different names, sects and genes etc. Many of these are associated with some objects animate or inanimate like plants and animals and sometimes heavenly bodies. The Santals have good number of clans and these have been recorded by many ethnographers.

Table No 3.4: Clan distribution

SL. No.	Dalton (1872)	Risley (1891)	Bodding (1925)	Ahsan Ali (1988)	Researcher (2001)
1	Hanasda	Hanasda	Hansdak	Hanasda	Hanasda
2	Murmu	Murmu	Murmu	Murmu	Murmu
3	---	--	Kisku	Kisku	Kisku
4	Hembrom	Hemrom	Hembrom	Hembrom	Hembrom
5	Marli	Mardi	Marndi	Mardi	Marandi
6	Saren	--	Soren	Soren	Soren
7	Tudi	--	Tudu	Tudu	Tudu
8	Baski	--	Baske	Baske	Baski
9	Besera	--	Besra	Besra	--
10	--	Pauria	Paunri	Pauria	Pauria
11	Chorai	Chore	Choren	Chore	--
12	Karwar	Bidia	Bedeia	Bedia	--

Source: Fieldwork in Joykrishnapur

In Joykrishnapur, I found these nine clans. However, Ali (1998) found three more clan, namely Bedia, Chore and Besra (Ali:1998:124). These clans are totem based. The Santals believe that each clan has its own totem and there exists a certain relationship between a clan and its totem. Totems are generally animals (such as ison, sheep), birds (such as goose, pigeon), plants (such as a grass) (Ali 1998: 125).

Table No 3.5: Clan distribution in Joykrishnapur.

SL. No.	Name	Number	Percentage
1.	Hanasda	43	15.14
2.	Murmu	33	11.61

3.	Kisku	19	6.69
4.	Hembrom	56	19.71
5.	Marandi	18	6.33
6.	Tudu	14	4.92
7.	Baski	6	2.11
8.	Soren	77	27.11
9.	Mardi	16	5.63
10.	Pouria	2	0.70
Total		284	100

Source: Fieldwork in Joykrishnapur

It is observed that the clan-based society of the Santals are exogamous. Marriage is prohibited within the same clan. Females after marriage adopt the husband's clan status and no longer remain in the father's clan. It may be noted that Christian Santals who are educated and well off, do not always strictly follow the rigid rule of exogamy. Instead, they prefer to choose spouse of the similar socio-economic status even if he/she is from the same clan. It is interesting to note that the Santals who are convert Christians, do retain their clan patronyms. Major functions of the clans are to regulate marriage, inheritance, succession and affiliation. One becomes a clan member by birth or by marriage (applicable for females only). It is believed that these clans are hierarchically ordered on the basis of occupation (e.g. Kiskus were kings, Murmus were priests, Sorens were warriors, Baskies were traders). This kind of occupation related clan patronyms are somewhat like the Hindu caste system which was also based on occupations. But today, as I observed in the study area, these occupational hierarchies of status do not seem to have any impact on the Santals.

IV. Kinship

Etymologically the term "Kinship" is derived from the term 'kin', synonymous to 'kindred', meaning one's family and relations. When the word is used in the plural, kinship refers to a relationship among family members who are connected with consanguinity. Ali (1998) states that the social recognition and expression of genealogical relationships both consanguineal

(blood relation) and affinal (marital relation) and kinship systems may include socially recognized relationships based on supposed as well as actual genealogical ties. The study of kinship systems is one of the oldest, and is still considered by many to be one of the most important elements in the study of social organization. Kinship terms can be studied linguistically, ethnographically, sociologically and psychologically (Winick ed. 1961:301). It has been suggested by Radcliffe Brown that there is a high correlation between social organization and kin terminology. Rivers has noted that particular terminological features reflect particular features of social organization. (Ali:1998: 146-147).

Kinship plays an important part in rural Bangladesh as well as in Barind Tract. Three kinds of kinship are observed in the village Joykrishnapur.

- 1) Consanguine kinship
- 2) Affinal kinship
- 3) Fictive kinship

Consanguine kinship refers to all kinds of relationship, which are set up by blood or biological ties. Affinal kins are those who are tied by marriage. Fictive kinship is on verbal relationship. Here two or more person get together to maintain a relationship, which has no base, comprises blood or marriage.

The overall kinship factor in Joykrishnapur observed strong. In affinity, after marriage the bride is first taken to her husband's house. She returns to her father's house three days later. In initial stage she communicates between her father and father-in-law's house frequently. But the span of her duration in her father-in-law's house increases gradually. Six months or one year after the marriage the newly-wed wife returns to her father's house once in every four to five months or in some cases once a year. It is mostly based on distance and sincerity. Usually the bride cannot move to her father's house every now and then owing to poverty. When she is her father's house he makes effort to entertain her with possible better food, which costs him excessive money. As a result, the bride comes to her father's house once every other year.

Children are fond of going to their maternal grand father's house especially on the occasion of festivals. Kinship ties are disrupted sometimes due to feud emerged from misunderstanding among relatives but these are resolved by arbitration.

However, the kinship terms of the people of Joykrishnapur are the indicators of the strong bond that exists among the family. The kinship terms, which are frequently used by the people of Joykrishnapur, are given below:

Table No 3.6: Kinship Terminology of Joykrishnapur.

Sl.No.	Terms of Reference	Kin term	Terms of Address
1.	Father	Fa	Baba
2.	Mother	Mo	Gog
3.	Grand Father	Fa Fa	Goramba/ Lituba
4.	Grand Father	Fa Mo	Budg/ Litug
5.	Aunt	Fa Si	Nana
6.	Brother	Br (el)	Dada/Da
7.	Son	So	Litu
8.	Daughter	Da	Mai
9.	Sister	Si (el)	Didi/ Di
10.	Father-in-law	Wi Fa	Baba
11.	Mother-in-law	Wi Mo	Gog
12.	Sister-in-law	Wi Si (el)	Didi/ Dai
13.	Husband	Hu	Eai
14.	Husbands father	Hu Fa	Baba
15.	Wife	Wi	Eai

Source: Fieldwork at Joykrishnapur

Relationship taboos

The Santals have some taboos regarding relations between whom not only marriage or sexual union must be eschewed, but even their close contact must also be considered a sin. A husband's elder brother is a taboo to a Santal woman; she cannot even touch him. Wife's elder sister also falls in the same category.

In spite of having much kinship ties, some relationships are, as far as possible strictly prohibited. Some persons are not addressed by their names. Names are tabooed in the cases of

- 1) A man and his younger brother's wife.
- 2) A man and his wife's younger brother's wife.
- 3) A woman and her younger sister's husband
- 4) A woman and her younger brother's wife.

Husband and wife are also prohibited from mentioning each other's names not only when they are speaking of or to each other but also if they are speaking of another person bearing the same name. This custom is strictly observed.

Joking Relationship

There are some persons among whom sarcastic or joking relationship prevail. They can take part in jokes and gossips.

- a) A grand father and his grand children.
- b) Between a woman and her elder sister's husband
- c) Among the brothers and sisters of a bride and bridegroom
- d) Between wife and her husband's younger brothers.

It has been noticed that the Santals are always very united in their kinship relations. Even now they are very close and softhearted to their relatives and instances of clashes, physical violence and conflicts seldom take place among them.

V. Summery

In chapter three we have discussed family, marriage, clan and kinship system of Joykrishnapur village. Joint and extended families are seen among the Santals. There are many nuclear families also found in the study village. However, Santals have twelve clans but in the study village we found nine clans. The Santals are exogamous. For instance it may be cited that a son of

Soren clan cannot marry a girl of the same clan. It is observed that the kin relation among the Santals is strong. They share happiness and misery with one another. In respect of marriage, Santals have seven forms of marriage but at present days *Kring Bahu Bapla* is practiced widely among the Santals. Regarding Christian Santal marriage, the local church regulates the marriage.



Family



Marriage



Da bapla, a ritual of Santal marriage

Chapter 4

The Changing Economy and the Mode of Livelihood of the Santals

The Santals were originally hunters and gatherers. But in recent days they are employed primarily as agricultural labourers. These people are very poor, they do not usually own any land for cultivation. As a result, they work as laborers in agriculture and agriculture related activities. They are generally employed by the Muslim landowners who represent the dominant culture of Bangladesh. The Santals of Joykrishnapur are no exception. Most of the people (men and women) are involved in agriculture as day labourers and very few of them are engaged in sharecropping.

In this chapter, attempts have been made to give an account of the economic life of the Santals with special stress on their food habit, housing pattern, dress pattern, occupational character, income and expenditure, land system, etc in order to understand their economic condition.

I. Housing, Dress and Food

Housing pattern

It is observed in Joykrishnapur that most of the Santal houses are two roomed structures with *verandahs*. A few Santal households of the village have two storied houses. There are two such types of houses in Joykrishnapur village. The houses are divided with beaten earthen partitions. Roofs of the houses are thatched with straw and palm leaf. The plinth is of beaten earth. Some houses have tiled roof. There are no brick houses in Joykrishnapur. The walls of the houses are made of red mud. The frame of the roof is done with bamboo and bamboo splits. The roofs of these cottages are generally sloped on both sides. Doors are normally made of wood; but doors made of bamboos are also seen in the houses of the poor.

There are seventy-one Santal cottages in Joykrishnapur village. All the cottages are made of mud and the roofs are made of tin, palm leaf or tile. Most of the cottages have more than one room. The following table guesses an account of the houses in Joykrishnapur.

Table No. 4.1: Materials used for House Construction.

Total Cottage	Wall		Roof		
	Mud	Brick/Thatched	Thatched	Tin shed	Tile
71	71	0	39	28	4
%	100		55	39	6

Source: Fieldwork in Joykrishnapur

Table No. 4.2: Number of Room Per House.

Total Cottage	Rooms		Kitchen (Separate)	Cowshed	Toilet
	One	Two+			
71	07	64	30	14	03

Source: Fieldwork in Joykrishnapur

Houses of the Santals are very clean and neat. Pictures of trees, flowers, aeroplane, radio, bird etc. are painted on the wall. Various colors are also used to draw these pictures. They also keep the cowsheds and kitchens clean. Kitchen are generally located at the corner of the courtyard.

Household Materials

The household equipment, utensils, and furniture of the Santals are limited the numbers. Most of the houses have *khatias* (couch made of wood, bamboo and ropes of jute). A few educated families have a chair and a table. They also use string beds called *parkom* and wooden seats known as *gando*, for occasional use.

The Santals of Joykrishnapur use earthen crockery i.e., *sanki* (clay plate used for eating), *handi* (water storing vessels), and *kalash* for storage of drinking water. Baskets of different sizes and shapes are made of bamboo for shopping and

carrying things to the field. They use one kind of winnowing fan called *hata* and *ganni* to measure paddy and other crops.

Among the agricultural implements, the Santals use those which are also used by the northern regional Bangalees like the plough, sickle, axe and weeding hook. Hunting accessories include bows arrows and *tota* (one kind of hunting hook). For fishing, the Santals of Joykrishnapur use fishing hook, net (locally called 'val') and *britti* (basket) which may be purchased from the market. Use of *kupi* (kerosene lamp) at night is not uncommon in a Santal family.

Food

The food habit, dress pattern and housing structure of Joykrishnapur village is almost similar to that of the Santals of greater Barind Tract. They wake up at sunrise. For breakfast, they prefer *panta bhat* (watery rice), which is eaten with salt and some times with vegetable curry. If they go for work to a distant place, they take rice for mid-day meal (lunch) at the work place and in case of working near their house they take lunch at home.

Ali (1991) observes that the Santals belonging to wage earning group generally take two meals a day if they can afford it. The composition of such meals and hours are as follows:

The Santals generally take watery rice with chilies and salt and stale curry as breakfast at around 7am. They take rice with pulses, fish curry or meat, if available as supper. The wells off people usually take rice beer with their meal. They may take even three meals a day i.e., a mid-day meal of boiled rice. Children are fit with puffed rice (Muri) by their parents before they go out for the day's work. (Ali: 1998: 106)

In the description of Jalil (1991) it is found that Santals take meals two times a day i.e. in the morning and in the evening. But in Joykrishnapur it is found

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that although they take meals three times a day, yet in summer, autumn and late autumn they starve, because they do not have any regular income. Besides, during this period hunting opportunity has also been very limited due to deforestation. About the food habits of Santals Charulal Mukherjee observes, “O, they will eat anything that flies except aeroplanes and anything that swims except boats”(Charulal Mukherjee:1971)”.

The following food chart has come from the Santals of Joykrishnapur when we had group discussions with them.

Table No. 4.3: Season Wise Food Chart of the Santals.

Season	Rainy	Autumn	Winter	Spring	Summer
Meal Time					
Breakfast	Watery rice with salt, green chilies and onions	Mainly bread and watery rice	Warm rice and vegetables	Hot rice and vegetables	Bread, watery rice, vegetables
Lunch	Rice, pumpkin etc.	Mainly bread and watery rice	Rice, winter vegetables, potatoes	Rice, watery rice, cabbages, radish pulse etc.	Watery rice, pulse, potatoes etc.
Dinner	Starvation	Starvation	Rats, Snail	Rice, watery rice, cabbages radish pulse etc.	Starvation

Source: Fieldwork in Joykhrisnapur

From the above table it is clear that rice is the main food of the Santals. Their other favourite foods are fishes, crabs, pigs, rats, roosters, squirrels, red ants etc.

Drinks or Intoxicant

Wine called *Haria* in their dialect, is their main drink. There is a Santal proverb that says “either give me wine or give me death”. Indeed, wine is a precondition of their life. Sattar (1971) quotes, “it is (*haria*) their essential component of each meal, like tea among the people of Singapore”}. Santal ceremonies are all essentially bacchanalian in nature. They brew their own wine from rotten rice or extracts of palm trees. Both Santal men and women are addicted to drinking *haria* and smoking *biri*. However, at present days, *haria* consumption has reduced due to expense and their consciousness about the bad effect of addiction. Therefore, in the marriage ceremonies and festival (Sohrae) they serve *muri* (puffed rice) etc. instead of *haria*. Nowadays, some educated girls abstain from taking *haria* and smoking *biri* (locally made cigarette).

Dresses and Ornaments

The Santal people wear very simple dresses. In the distant past, men used ‘lenguith’ (loin-cloth) or a piece of cloth worn round their loin. The women used ‘Kapa’ (two pices of cloth) around their lower and upper body. But now they have changed considerably and have gradually adopted the dress of the Bengalee.

At present a Santal man wears shirt and Lungi (traditional dress). During festival times men often wear Dhuti. The dress pattern among the younger generations is quite like that of the Bengalee. The children of a well-off Santal family wear T-shirts, trousers and shirts. The school going children usually use school uniforms.

The dress pattern of women has undergone great changes. The Santal women wear sarees and blouses which are very similar to Bengalee women dress. Similarly, a great change has also been noticed in the use of cosmetics. The Santal women of Barind region used to use oil, vermilion, lac-dye in feet, collyrium or

'Kajal'. The ornaments of the women are very few in number and these are of very poor quality and value. At present, women, who can afford it, have started to wear earrings made of silver in the ear lobes. They also use tawdry necklaces of cheap composite metals. Most women wear glass bangles round their wrists. Aluminum wrist bands are also worn by many married women. However, the Santal women take care to keep their hair clean and neatly combed. They also keep their dresses clean and wear in their own style.

II. Land Holding and Land Alienation

The land holding size among the Santals of Joykrishnapur is very small. However land holding in the Santal village under study is shown in the following table:

Table No. 4.4: Distribution of Households in terms of land owned.

Land (Acre)	Number	Percentage
No cultivable land	31	70.45
Upto 1 Acre	3	6.81
1 to 2 Acre	3	6.81
2 to 3 Acre	2	4.54
Above three acre	5	11.36
Total Household	44	

Source: *Fieldwork in Joykhrisnapur*

From the above table we can see that the majority of the Santals are either landless or marginal farmers. Around 70 percent of households of Joykrishnapur do not own any cultivable land. The rest householders who are comparatively well off having land ranging from 1 to 4 acres. In the study village out of 44 households only 13 families own land. In the following table the trend of land ownership of these families are given:

Table No. 4.5: Distribution of households in terms of land inheritance (figure in Decimal).

SL. No.	Total land Owned by a HH Head	Purchased	Inherited from father	Inherited from father-in-law
1	660	132	528	-
2	495	66	429	-
3	100	0	100	-
4	21.45	21.45	0	-
5	24.75	0	24.75	-
6	148.5	0	148.5	-
7	148.5	0	148.5	-
8	462	231	231	-
9	333	33	100	200
10	198	13	185	-
11	858	0	858	-
12	1100	292	808	-
13	332	0	332	-
Total	4881.2	788.45	3892.75	200

Source: Fieldwork in Joykhrisnapur; Note: 1 acre = 100 decimal

From the above we can see that out of 13 families, 12 families inherited land from their father. It is also very important to note that one household head (Ganen Hembrom) inherited land from his father-in-law. Ganen Hembrom is a Christian Santal. He informed us that after the death of his father-in-law, he received this two acres of land. In the Santal society, women do not inherit any paternal property. If a Santal family does not have any son and the daughter(s) are unmarried, only at that time they can get paternal wealth.

Alienation of Land

The land related disputes are very common in the Barind area. The ethnic communities of Barind tract are suffering highly from this problem. In Joykrishnapur out of 44 households, 8 households are the victims of land alienation. Each of the household had land but these

lands are now in the possession of the neighboring Muslims. However, some forms of land alienation observed in the Barind region are as follows:

- a) The first and foremost is the manipulation of land records. The unsatisfactory state of land records contributed a lot to the problem of land alienation. The ethnic people were never legally recognized as owners of the land, they cultivated.
- b) Another form of land alienation is related to the leasing or mortgaging of the land. To raise loans for various needs the ethnic people have to give their land as mortgage to the local moneylenders or to the rich farmers.

Ruplal Hasda of Joykrishnapur, a victim of land alienation shared his story in the following manner:

“I am a convert Christian. I had 8.58 acres of land. A Muslim influential neighbour occupied my land by preparing forged document. When I claimed my land he intimidated me”.

According to the firsthand information, most of the Santal households of Joykrishnapur lost their land during the Liberation War (1971) when they had to migrate like all other villagers and the dominant social groups took the occasion to grasp their land. Ishwar Hasda (65), one of the old Santals, who witnessed the incident, informed us that during that period they have lost almost 25% of their land that they inherited from their forefathers. The process is still going on in the Santali life and livelihood.

Table No. 4.6: Distribution of Households losing land due to land alienation.

Generation	Number
Self	8
Father	15
Grand father	5
Total	28

Source: Fieldwork in Joykhrisnapur

There is 38 acres land of the Santals of Joykrishnapur that were occupied by their Muslim neighbours. From the above table it is also clear that generation-by-generation the Santals are facing land alienation problem created by their Muslim neighbours. The process of alienation of land in the Barind region is not an accidental one, it has arisen because of the concerted efforts of the antagonistic class interests that are operating in the tribal areas. This is not just migration of the non-tribals into tribal areas, rather there is a history behind this migration and the State has supported the migrant non-tribals to settle down in the tribal lands.

III. Economy of the Village

The main economy of the Santal is agriculture. Earlier, the majority of them used to work as sharecroppers in the field of rich men or landlords. The partition of Bengal in 1947, the Nachole Santal Disturbance in 1949, the abolishing of *Zamindari* system in 1950, the communal riots like *Dharsha* and *Santahar* in 1962, liberation war in 1971 and other political situation influenced the economic life of the Santals of Barind Tract. Now a big portion of the Santals have become landless wage-earners and a few are engaged in their own land cultivation. For an overall understanding of the occupations of the Santals, the following table will be useful.

Table No. 4.7: Distribution of populations on occupation basis.

Occupations	Number
Cultivating only own land	10
Own land and share cropping	5
Own land and wage earning	9
Own land, share cropping and wage earning	2
Share cropping and wage earning	2
Only wage earning	58
Student	57
Women as only household worker	32
Women as both housewives and workers in the field	60
Service holder	1

No occupation (age 5+)	8
No occupation (below 5 years)	40
Total	284

Source: Fieldwork in Joykrishnapur

Table No. 4.8: Distribution of Household Heads based on Occupational status in Joykrishnapur Village.

Types	Number
Cultivating only own land	7
Owned land & wage earning	3
Own land & share cropping	3
Share cropping & wage earning (land less)	1
Only wage earning (land less)	30
Total	44

Source: Fieldwork in Joykrishnapur

It is clear from table above that the Santals of the Barind region under study (i.e., Joykrishnapur) are mainly wage earners and most of them are landless. Only 7 household heads cultivate their own land. Besides, the numbers of sharecroppers are very few (only three out of 44). It is observed that most of the wage earners or day labourers are engaged in agricultural work. Moreover, it is observed during the fieldwork that the students and women of the village also contributed part time labour in agriculture sector and even the Santal landowners and sharecroppers often work as wage earners when they have free time. But if we look at the past occupational history of the Santals, we shall find that the Santals traditional occupations based on their clans. The following table shows the Santals occupational diversity. When we look at village of Joykrishnapur we find that most of the household heads are engaged in agriculture as day labourer and only some families cultivate their own land and work as sharecroppers.

Table No. 4.9: Traditional Clan Occupation of Household Heads (HH) and Present Occupation of Joykrishnapur Village.

S. L. No	Clan Title	Clan Occupation	Prevailing Idea	Present Occupation of the Household heads
1	Soren	Warrior	Solder	- Four HH are farmer - Three HH are wage earners

2	Hembrom	Nobility	Trader	- Six HH are farmer - Three HH are wage earners
3	Murmu	Priest	Priest	- Four HH are day laborer
4	Mardi	Richman	(Jaminder)	- Two HH are day laborer
5	Hansda	-	Dewan	- Five HH are wage earners
6	Kishku	King	King	-

Source: Fieldwork in Joykhrisnapur

Working seasons

There are two seasons for working in Joykrishnapur. One is the peak season and the other is the lean season. The peak season runs from Joistha to Bhadra (June-September) and Agrahayan to Phalgun (November-March). In this season there remains a stress of work throughout the day. Except this period, the rest of the year is lean season. The lean season is also called the hungry season. Various crops are grown in different seasons. The following chart will help us to understand about the specific seasons for specific crops.

Table No. 4.10: Crop Calendar and working Season (Paddy).

SL No	Seed type	Seed Sowing		Sapling Sowing		Harvesting	
		Month	Days of Work	Month	Days of Work	Month	Days of Work
1	Amon Paddy	June –July 15	5 - 40	August - Sept 15	10-45	October – November 15	10-45
2	Aush Paddy	May	5 - 40	July – August 15	10-45	September – Oct 15	10-45
3	Boro Paddy	December - Jan 15	5 - 30	Feb – March 15	10-45	April - May 15	10-20

Source: Fieldwork in Joykhrisnapur

It is important to note here that most of the work of this region related to sowing and harvesting of paddy. Although there are some other crops such as potato, onion, pulses are also grown here but the work opportunity depends on cultivation of paddy. The above table and our field observations suggest that the

Santal wage earners get job around seven to eight months in the year. The rest of the time they remain idle. Especially in October and early November and from April to May they pass spare time idly and have no hard work in this period. As such, this period is called lean season. During this time they sometimes go for hunting to different places of Bangladesh.

Division of Labour

In the Barind village we observe that both male and female Santals work in the field. Ploughing, however, is an exclusive privilege of men, and women are barred from it as a social taboo. The Santals women of Joykrishnapur work with their male partners as construction labourers, brick fieldworkers, and earthwork labourers or as any other manual labourers. For better comprehension of the division of labour we will here present two different daily schedules of both male and female Santals of Joykrishnapur.

Daily routine of a male Santal

Morning: A man gets up very early before sunrise and move to work i.e. weeding out etc. Having breakfast at 8.00/8.30 am he again goes to work. If the place he work is nearby then his wife or children carry the lunch to him otherwise he himself carry the lunch when goes to work in the morning.

Noon: Takes lunch at 12.00/12.30 and then take rest for a while. He continues to work again till sunset.

Evening: He gossips with friends and relatives for 1.00/1.30 hours. Those have school going children, assist them in their children study.

Night: Takes supper at around 8.00P.M. Taking rest for some time after supper he goes to bed.

In the period of the year when the males have no work, they look after the cattle and the vegetable gardens and rest of the time is passed roaming around. In

the month of Aswin and Kartick (October) the males have no job and they occasionally go for hunting in this period.

A day in the life of a Santal Woman

A Santal female also gets up at dawn, washes her hands and face and cleans the house. Then she prepares breakfast and sends it to her husband. She eats breakfast after her husband has eaten. If she works as a day laborer, she goes out to the work and returns by 12.00. At noon she cooks food and distributes it to all family members and goes to work again at around 3.00 pm and returns home by the evening.

In the evening she again pays attention to the cleanliness of her house. At night she feeds her husband and children. She herself also takes supper. Some women help their children in learning their lessons and then go to bed. Women are also engaged in fetching water, collecting fuels and in washing the males' clothes. In the period of the year when women are out of employment, they pass spare time by weaving *pati* (mat made of aquatic plant), sewing *kantha* (a rug made of patched cotton cloth) and doing other household works.

A day passed by Santal Children

The Santals children are also hard working. In the olden days there was more play and less work for Santal children. Nowadays from the age of five or six, Santal boys and girls have to make themselves useful by helping their parents in the fields, taking cattle to graze and performing other odd jobs. But, whenever they are free, they often meet and play games. Besides, the rate of school attendance among the Santal children has increased. Therefore, children spend some times for study.

Discrimination in Labour Market

Most of the Santals are employed in the fields of Bengalee farmers. It has been observed that discrimination in the labour market is prevalent. Bengalee laborers have a fixed time to work whereas Adibashi (aboriginal) labourers work 2-4 hours more than the Bengalee. Though the type and the load of the work is same. They are paid fewer wages for their labor compared with the non-Adibashi laborers. Both male and female Santals work in the field. Besides, according to our observation the Santal women work more than their male partners, but a distinction is drawn by land-lords and contractors in regard to wages. The women get less than a male labourer. For instance a Bengalee labourer daily gets Tk. 60 to 70, a Santal male labourer gets Tk. 40 to 50 and a Santal woman labourer gets Tk. 30 to 35 for same kind of work.

Agricultural Production

The Santals are very skilful in agriculture. Paddy is the main item of production in the Barind region. Besides, wheat, pulses, potatoes, jute and other crops are also grown in the Barind. The working opportunity depends on production time of different crops. The following table will give us a fair idea about the working seasons.

Table No. 4.11: Crops Calendar of the Barind Region.

SL. No.	Seed type	Seed Name	Seed Sowing	Harvesting
			Month	Month
1	Amon Paddy	Shorna, 11, Magur Shol, 28, Jhinga Shol, Rarija	June – July 15	October – November 15
2	Aush Paddy	32, 28, Parija, Nayanmoni, Irri 20 & 29	May	September – Oct 15
3	Boro Paddy	Nayanmoni, 28, Parija, 32, Pancho Boti, Irri 20, Ayar 50	December- Jan 15	April - May 15

Source: Fieldwork in Joykhrisnapur

Table No. 4.12: Production of Crops except Paddy

SL. No.	Crops Name	Seed Sowing	Harvesting
		Month	Month
1	Wheat	November to December	15 February to April 15
2	Barley /Oat	November to December	15 February to March 15
3	Corn	November to December	March to April 15
4	Mustard	November to December	March to April 15
5	Linseed	November to December	March to April 15
6	Lentil (Mushuri)	September – October 15	March to April 15
7	Lentil (Mushuri)	November to December	March to April 15
8	Potato	November to December	March to April 15

Source: Fieldwork in Joykhrisnapur

The three types of paddy which are grown in the Barind region are 1) *amon* 2) *aus* & 3) *boro*. In Barind six types of Amon paddy is found, such as Shorma, Paddy 11, *Magur Shol*, Paddy 28, *Jhinga Shol*, *Prija*. Six months time is required for the total work of this kind of paddy. The sowing of seeds starts from June and continues till mid of July, altogether a 40 days' work. Within a month the saplings come out and they are transplanted, it again requires another 10 to 45 days, which is from the mid of August till mid of September. Then comes the time of harvesting which covers the months of October and November. It takes of 10 to 45 days.

Aush paddy in this region is of seven types such as Paddy 32, Paddy 28, *Parija*, *Nayanmoni*, *Irri 20* and *Irri 29*. And a specific time schedule is set for the cultivation of the crop. In the month of May the seeds are sown, which requires 5 to 30 days. Then from July till the mid of August the saplings are transplanted, and

that is a work of 10 to 45 days. Harvesting of this kind of paddy in Barind covers the months of September and October, which is again another work of 10 to 45 days.

There are seven types of Boro paddy in this region, they are Nayanmoni, Paddy 28, Parija, Paddy 32, Pancho Boti, Irri 20 and Ayar 50. This cycle starts from December. The seeds are sown in December and January. Then comes out the saplings which are transplanted from February till the mid of March. This task requires 10 to 45 days. Then from April till the mid of May the farmers remain busy with harvesting, the total process completes in 10 to 20 days.

During the period of crops cultivation and the specific time schedule the farmers of Barind region remain busy in the field but they are unemployed when the harvesting period is over. Then the whole of Barind region becomes a world of dismay.

The following two tables showing the production of crops in Joykrishnapur village. One is only for production of paddy and the other is for the production of other crops.

Table No. 4.13: Distribution of Households based on rice production (last year).

Production (Maund)	Number of Households
0-50	4
51-100	2
101-150	2
151-200	2
201-250	-
251-300	1
301-350	1
351+	-
Total	12

Source: Fieldwork in Joykrishnapur

Out of 44 Santal families in Joykrishnapur only 12 families are getting paddy for consumption and sale. It is worth mentioning here that per bigha production of paddy varies from 10-16 maund (1 maund =38 kg).

Table No. 4.14: Distribution of Households based on the production of other crops (last year).

Production (maund)	Number			
	Wheat	Pulse	Potatoes	Jute
0-5	2	2	1	1
05-10	3	-	1	-
10-15	2	-	1	-
15-20	1	-	-	-
20-25	-	-	-	-
25+	-	-	-	-
Total	8	2	3	1

Source: Fieldwork in Joykrishnapur

Form the above table it is clear that only a few families produced wheat, pulses and potatoes, and jute. From the above table it is clear that paddy is the main crop of the Barind region. Apart from paddy crop like potato, wheat, pules etc. are also grown for local consumption.

III. Income and Expenditure

Agriculture provides seasonal employment to the Santals. Generally, they are employed in the agricultural operations, like weeding, harvesting and threshing. Therefore, the Santal wage earners get 7 to 8 months' work in a year. As regards the wages of the agricultural labourers, it is not uniform. It is revised from time to time. In the planting and harvesting seasons, the rate of wages is generally high. The daily wages range from Tk 40 to 50 in cash, or in both cash and kind. In the agricultural off-season, practically no work is available in the village. This period is termed by the day-labourer group as a hard period. Under the circumstances, the Santal labourers of Barind agree to work for a day in exchange of a quantity of rice, that is equal to his mid-day meal. The Santal women

labourers work with their male partners as construction labourers, brick field labourer, earth-work labourer, or any other manual labourer. Moreover, the Santals, both male and female, migrate to nearby district or area in search of work.

Table No. 4. 15: Distribution of full time workers based on their monthly income.

Amount (Tk.)	Number of laborers
0 - 1000	12
1000 - 2000	8
2000 - 3000	-
3000 - 4000	-
4000 +	1 (Manjhi)
Total	21

Source: Fieldwork in Joykhrisnapur

From the above table we see that 20 persons have income below Taka 2000 in a month while only the village headman (the biggest landowner in the village) has an income above Taka 4000. As these 20 persons represent the majority landholders of the village then the condition of landless day laborers can easily be assumed.

Expenditure

The expenditure of the Santals includes household expenses, cost for growing crops, festivals and ceremonies and so on. The household expenditure pattern of the wage-earner groups is very simple and limited to their primary needs. For most of them the items of expenditure are food, clothing, liquor, smoking, washing and other simple consumer articles. Their maximum expenditure is on food followed by liquor. A family consisting of six to seven members need Tk 35 – 45 daily for food, Tk. 1200 to 1500 for clothing, Tk. 1200 – 1500 for the education of two children and Tk. 300- 400 for ceremonies, religious functions and festivals. Nowadays, the younger generation spends money on cinema shows in the nearby market.

They do not spend much on traveling, except for attending the weekly markets, at the court businesses or meeting relations, and the distance is covered on foot. They cure their diseases by herbal treatments as they have a thorough knowledge about the efficacy of the various medicinal values of herbs. Hospitalization or allopathic treatment is resorted to only in the case of a serious illness. The expenditure on medicine depends on the seriousness of the disease. Sometimes, they utilize the services of government institutions such as the Thana health complex or the hospital.

A good amount of money is spend by them on the construction of houses, especially for buying materials like bamboo, thatching straw and ropes. As such they spend on an average Tk 700 to 1000 for constructing a house.

Formal and Informal Banking

To meet the annual expenditure, the average Santal generally borrows money from the nearby moneylenders. Village moneylenders are the major sources of agricultural credit in rural of Bangladesh. Mainly, the Santal small holding farmers, sharecroppers, and sometimes the day labour groups are the major customers of the money-lenders. However, at present there are three types of sources found in the Barind area for local level financing. They are: (1) N.G.Os (2) Banks and (3) Local moneylenders. The moneylenders provide nearly 60 percent of loans on high interest rates ranging between 100 and 150 percent of the principal per annum to the Santal villages at Barind. I have learnt from the share croppers and wage earners that for taking 1000 (Tk.) as loan at the out set of planting season, they have to pay 8 maunds of paddy during harvesting time as interest. So the borrower has to pay 800 Tk. in addition to the original amount. Thus the payment he makes is double. In order to gain more experience we can have a glance to following table given by Ali (1998) in relation to all the Santals of the Barind Tract.

Table No. 4. 16: Sources of Loan (money/paddy) and rate of Interest.

Sources	Amount (Tk.)	Interest (Annually) (Tk.)	Term
Individuals belonging to Muslim money lender Outside the village	100 1 md. (39 kg of paddy)	60%-100% 100%	One year generally. Six months generally.
2. Govt. Bank	100	17%	One year.
3. NGOs	100	6% - 15%	One year

Source: Fieldwork in Joykrishnapur ALY (11-112)

Ali also mentions that a day laborer would repay his loan by rendering his compulsory service to the money lender's own farm in the plantation and during harvesting period on a low rate of daily wage.

Raksha Gola (Emergency Fund)

The Santals of Joykrishnapur has a cooperative society where every villager preserves one maund of paddy in harvesting season. They call this as *Raksha Gola*. The objective of this society is support the Santals of the village during their hardship. The society is formed as follows

1. President
2. Secretary
3. Assistant Secretary
4. Members

All the people of the village are members of *Roksha Gola* or the cooperative society. They can borrow paddy from this society during their critical time especially when they suffer economic hardship. However, for one mound of paddy borrowed form *Roksha Gola* one has to pay 6 K.g. more in return. The *Rakshaha Gola* lends credit in the following areas:

- For purchasing land
- For meeting economic hardship
- For treatment of diseases

But nowadays the Santals of Joykrishnapur are not regular in maintaining this cooperative society rather they borrow money from the NGOs.

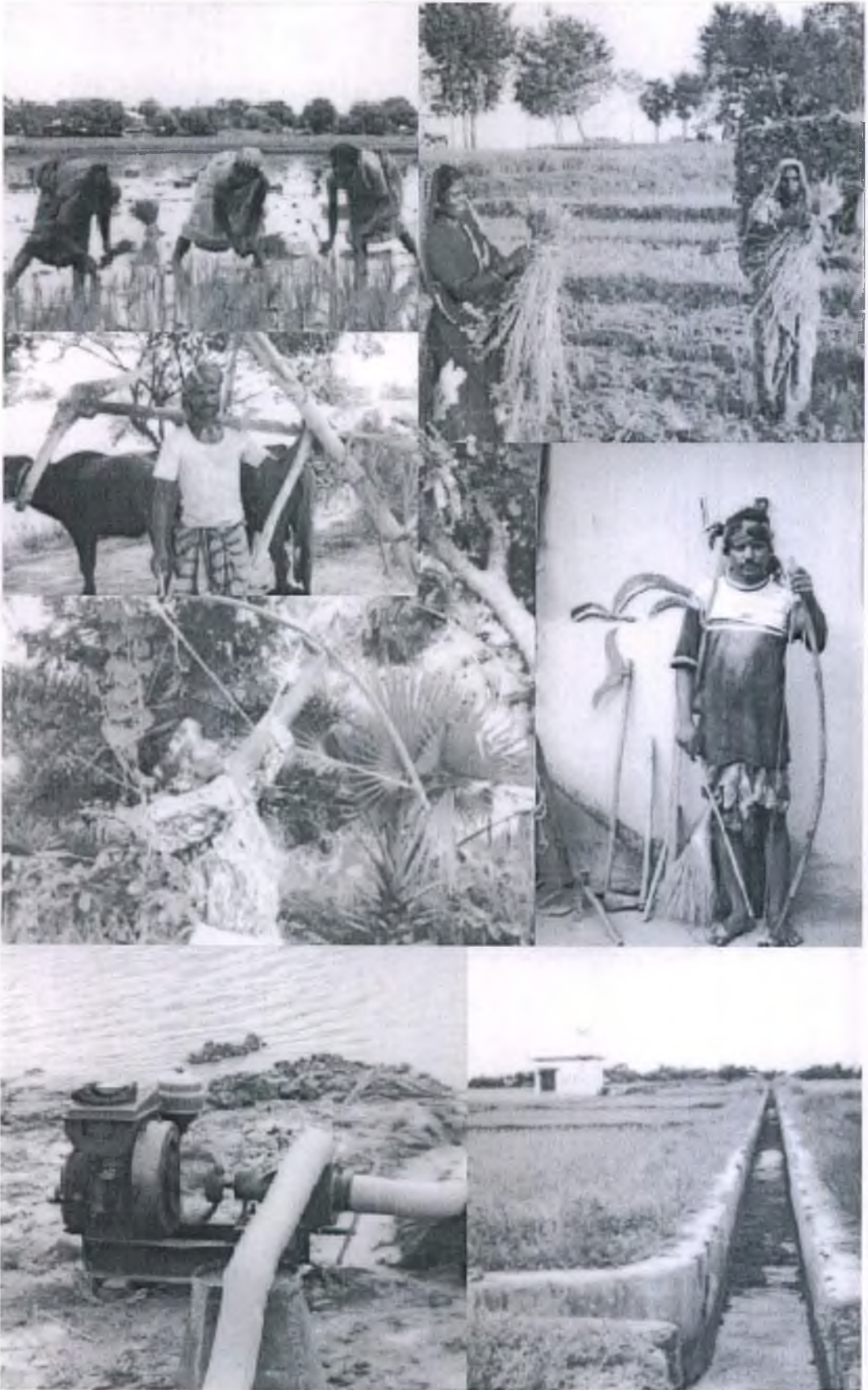
Amela Murma is a hardworking woman of 45. She lives with her husband along with her son and daughter-in-law in Joykrishnapur village. They work as part time day labourer. Among them male members earn Tk 30 daily and female members earn Tk 25 daily. They get working opportunity for seven to eight months of a year and the rest of the year they have to remain jobless. In order to meet their family cost particularly for those four months they had to borrow money from the local moneylender at a high interest rate of 60% to 100%. Due to the burden of interest and unavailability of work, day-by-day their condition was becoming worse. In this situation, Amela became a member of a group of Ashrai (a local non-government organization) where she got an idea of establishing small business like poultry. She got a loan of Tk 3000 from Ashrai at an interest rate of 15% and started poultry business and rest Tk 1000 to the Ajubar mahajan (a local money lender). However, with small scale of poultry business, her income has increased slightly. She earns around Tk 2000 yearly. She wants to take more loans from the Ashrai in order to extend her business and wants to support her family.

There are 25 local and national NGOs working in the Kakonhut area with different development programmes such micro-finance, education, water sanitation. However, during our fieldwork we have found a few NGOs interventions in Joykrishnapur and these are Ashrai, Grameen Trust, CARITAS and Adivashi Unnyan Shoghtha (AUS). Micro-finance, Education and supply of drinking water are the main programmes of these NGOs in the study village. But how far the NGOs would be successful to support in their livelihood is a matter of question. It can be mentioned here that participatory approach in terms of planning

and action might be effective tool for the sustainable development of the Adivashis in this region.

V. Summary

In chapter four we have focused on housing and dress pattern, food habit, land holding, income and occupation of the Santals. In this regard we have noticed changes in their occupation and land holding. Most of the Santals are now working as day labourer. Their working opportunity creates during the season of paddy sowing and harvesting. Thereby they do not get job all over the year. Therefore, most of the Santals have to remain starve for about four months. This tends them to borrow money from formal and informal sources such as moneylenders, NGOs etc for their survival. On the other hand our field observation shows most of the Santals are gradually losing possession to land due to alienation, which coupled their miseries further.



Chapter 5

Traditional Political Organisation and the Recent Changes

The Santals are sincere in abiding by the rules and regulations of their own society. In fact, it is one of the characteristics of their ethnic life style. Every Santal village or hamlet has an administrative setup, which is called Village officials. *Manjhi* is the head of this administrative unit. The Santals are keen to settle crimes and disputes by the decisions made by the social heads of the community. But in recent days, the traditional Santal political organization in terms of its structure, governance has also changed a lot from its original form due to the changing socio-economic and political conditions of the Barind. The traditional Santal institution has been weakened by the influence of the mainstream administrative setup and Christianity.

In this chapter we would like to examine the mechanism of the Santal system of tribal indigenous, governing authority and the customary laws that regulate the society in the villages under study. Here we propose to examine the changing pattern of the political organisation of the Santals in Barind in the form of:

- I. Types of Traditional Political Organization
- II. Role of Traditional Political Organization
- III. Pattern of New Leadership

I. Types of Traditional Political Organization

The basic unit of the Santals' communal system is the village. Previously, whenever they found a habitable place, they settled down there, and for the efficient running of the village administration, they elected a village headman (*manjhi*) and his assistants from among the leading members of the group. Ideally the *manjhi* organization of the Santals was formed for the performance of all

villages businesses, internal, external and spiritual or domestic, foreign and ecclesiastical officials.

Jalil (1991) classified the traditional Santal political organizations into following categories: Firstly, village *village officials* consisting of five officials: *manjhi haram*, *jog manjhi*, *jog paranik*, *godet* and *naeke*. *Naeke* is normally not considered as a member of *village officials* rather he is considered to be something like as a priest. Secondly, *pargana village officials* comprising of some village heads or *manjhi harams*. The head of *pargana village officials* is called *parganit*. *Pargana Village officials* committee is made of four or five members; but sometimes the number of the committee defers. Thirdly, five to six or more *parganas* and its *manjhi harams* constitute *desh pradhan village officials*.

The Fourth stage of Santal administration is called *lawbeer* (Supreme Court). This court convenes once a year. All the complicated cases are presented in this court for proper disposal (Jalil:1991:8-9).

During our field investigation, we found the existence of the village *village officials* and *pargana parishad*. We were also informed about the *desh pargana* but no information came about *lawbeer*. Now we would like to discuss the roles and responsibilities of the village officials.

The Santal village is a territorial unit, a collection of a few homesteads working as an administrative unit under a *manjhi* organization, where all its inhabitants are related by some sort of kinship or other ties. According to Risley (1892) the seven officials with the *manjhi* as their head form a village committee. [234-35] The village officials are as follows:

1. *manjhi*: The social authority in the Santal village is exercised originally by the headman, called *manjhi*, with a batch of village officials to assist him.

2. *paranik*: He is the assistant headman.
3. *jog-manjhi*: According to the custom, this office belongs to a Santal man who arranges tribal feasts and carousals of rice-beer (*haria*).
4. *naeke*: He is the village priest. According to the custom, the ecclesiastical functions of the tribe are exercised by the *naeke*, whose special function is to propitiate the hill spirits.
5. *jog-paranik*: A deputy of the *jog-manjhi*.
6. *kadam naeke*: A deputy of the village priest. Customs decree that his duty is to ward off evil spirits even by offering his own blood, scratched from his arm and mixed with rice.
7. *godet*: He act as the orderly of the village headman . He calls the villagers for a meeting.

II. Role of Traditional Political Organisation

During our fieldwork in Joykrishnapur we have found the existence of seven village officials as stated by Risley. Among them the role of *manjhi*, *naeke*, *jog-manjhi*, and *godet* are active even now. Roles and responsibilities of these village officials are described below:

a) *Manjhi*

The *manjhi* is the representative of the village. The *manjhi* lineage belongs to the founder of the village. His ancestors are marked by their shrine called '*manjhithan*'. *Manjhi*'s presence is necessary at all rituals, social gatherings, life-crises etc. All the village ceremonies connected with lineage like birth, marriage and death are conducted in his name. O' Malley wrote "No public sacrifice, no festival, no ceremony, such as marriage in short, nothing of a public character can be properly done without the *manjhi* participating or taking initiative (O' Malley:1910:107)". *Manjhi* discusses village problems and settles disputes. If necessary he may call for a meeting usually to solve big- problems and disputes.

When the disputes are of an inter-village type, he contacts the *parganait*, who is the head of a number of villages (*pargana parishad*). The *parganait*, with the help of the *village officials* consisting of elderly *manjhis* from different villages that are involved in the dispute, pronounces his judgment.

Dhonai Soren (45) is the *manjhi* of Joykrishnapur. He got this responsibility from his father. He has been heading the village Joykrishnapur for the last three years. During his time as head of the village, Dhonai Soren had to deal with the following matters such as feuds among the brothers or feuds among neighbors, inter-neighboring quarrels, and the crisis of drinking water in the village, outsiders infiltrating of the village, and land disputes. *Manjhi* played active roles to protect the interest of the villagers. Moreover, *manjhi* supports *naeke* in religious functions and other social ceremonies such as marriage, divorce etc taking place in the village.

b) *Naeke*

The second important position in the Santal community is held by the *naeke* who is responsible for all religious activities. Usually the *naeke* is selected by the *manjhi*. The *naeke* helps *manjhi* to bring the *bongas* to their abode or to the village-shrine or *jaherthan*. As a religious head of sacred matters he leads the sacred functions of the community as a whole. But in the Christian village Shurshunipara the position of *naeke* is absent. In this circumstances, the Father of the Church plays the role of *naeke*.

c) *Jog-Manjhi*

The third important functionary is the *jog manjhi*, the social headman who is in charge of the social festivities of the Santal community. His duties are enormous during the *sohrae* festival, which lasts for five days. During the name-giving ceremony, social initiation, marriage and other ceremonies, he presides

over the social activities and looks after all these so that the rituals and worship of the bongas and the village spirits take place in his presence.

The position of the jog-manjhi lies between the *naeke* and the manjhi. Since he is the master of the social ceremonies, he earns a different type of respect, i. e., he is almost like the maternal uncle or *mama* (in Bengali). This is also apparent in the intimacy and the funny relations between him and the youngsters who treat him as mother's brother. Many things, which the youngsters cannot possibly tell their parents or the manjhi, they tell him. Whereas the *manjhi* is treated by the youngsters on a different level, they treat him not merely as a 'father' but regard him like their real 'father'. When the *jog-manjhi* is away, sick or dead, the *jog-paranik* officiates in his place.

d) *Godet*

Among the minor functionaries of the Santal village *village officials* system the role of *godet* is important. His function is to assist the *manjhi* and he works as *manjhi's* orderly. He works as a messenger and calls the people to council meetings.

Paragana Parishad

The *pargana* is a local area, consisting of a cluster of villages in a single clearly demarcated area, whose inhabitants act and consider themselves as a unit. Disputes or problems that cannot be solved by village administration are referred to the *pargana parishad*. Cases such as quarrel between neighbors, land disputes, divorce etc. are referred to *pargana parishad* for justice. But nowadays, the Santal *pargana parishads* are more concerned about protecting their rights and interests and often arrange meetings on these issues. The Shundarpur *pargana parishad* (Joykrishnapur is a member of that parishad) consists of seven members. There is a president and a secretary and rest five members are general members.

Hunter (1872) also mentioned about the *pargana parishad*. He wrote, “In the Santal portion of Domin-i-koh, officer called *paraganait*s or *parganas* exercise a general supervision over small circles or groups of villages. These officials are appointed by government, and are paid by a commission of 2 percent on the collections of the village headmen (*manjhis*) sub-ordinate to them. (Hunter: 1872:329)”. From the description of Hunter it is clear that previously the *pargana parishad* had vital role in areas of revenue collection, administrative affairs and development works.

Maintenance of Law and Order and Social Customs

We have discussed earlier the nature of village organisations and referred to their officials with respect to their powers and functions. The village manjhi organisation is the repository of all Santal tribal laws, from the cradle to the grave, and is concerned about succession and inheritance as well.

Social authority in a Santal village is exercised by the manjhi, but it is always done in consultation with the village *village officials*. When question of settling disputes comes, the *manjhi* or, in his absence, the *paranik* receives the complaint. If the matter is simple enough, it is decided immediately by the manjhi with the help of the village *village officials* (*monrenhor* in Santali). If the case is complicated, a date is fixed for decision when the parties offer oral evidences, and after due consideration, the verdict is pronounced by the *manjhi*. The penalty may be both physical and economic. The Amount of fine ranges between Tk. 5 to Tk.1000 for different offences. The fine is payable immediately after the pronouncement of the verdict. Therefore, the village council or *village officials* actually settles the internal disputes of the villagers, settles their affairs of civil, criminal and communal nature (socio-religious) and imposes fine and punishment.

The sitting of the council takes place at the *manjhithan* (*holy place situated in front of headman house*). For any decision on issues of tradition, the members

of the *village officials* must agree. So, it is seen that the *manjhi* is not the sole repository of law in the eye of tribal jurisprudence to settle disputes; he must consult the village officials members in order to arrive at a decision. Furthermore, the *manjhi* with his entourage raises subscriptions for the public festivals like the *Sohrae*, and other religious feasts. The *manjhi* and other *village officials* members must attend in all marriage and funeral ceremonies. Besides, the *manjhi* deals with breaches of all social taboos.

Law of Inheritance

According to the Santal customary law, all the sons of a dead Santal have equal shares of inheritance in the movable and immovable properties left by their father. Immovable property denotes land and movable property includes livestock, cash, ornaments, paddy or rice, household objects, agricultural implements, domestic utensils, pots and pans, nets, weapons, musical instruments etc. The daughters do not have any right or claim to any portion of the movable and immovable properties. Land belongs to the patrilineal descendants. The widow, as such, has no right even for maintenance. But, if she has minor children, she can manage the property until the sons attain adulthood and are ready to receive their shares. A widow, who marries again, receives nothing, and the male agnates manage the property till the children come of age.

The customary laws of the Santals have greatly been influenced by the Hindu law as well as modern inheritance law of the Christians. According to the Christian rule, a Christian Santal girl can claim equal rights to her father's property just like the son. But the law is rarely adhered to. When a Santal father dies without leaving a male heir, the daughters succeed in preference to all agnates. On the other hand, if a Santal husband dies leaving behind his wife, children and estranged brothers of full blood, the widow inherits everything of her husband's property in favour of her minor children. Nowadays, a Santal father can give some

share of his property (movable or immovable) to his daughter through a registered deed.

III. Pattern of New Leadership

The new generation of the Santal people is politically conscious. They are becoming aware about their rights and interests. In order to establish their rights and interest they participate in various political activities as well as in different organizations meeting. The *Jatiya Adivashi Parishad (JAP)* (National Tribal Organization) is a big organization working for the *Adivashsi*. We saw the Santals of Joykrishnapur travelling to Rajshahi and Dhaka in order to participate in different programs of JAP. Lalon Hembrom is a local leader of the JAP. Ukil Hembron, Mikhail Saren, Himel Hasda and some others play the role of organizers in different processions and convention of *Jatiya Adivashi Parishad*. We observed during our field visit that girls and women like Senapati Hembrom, Kalapati Hembrom along with other 25 to 30 women of Joykrishnapur village took part in a convention of the JAP that was held on 15th May 2002 in Rajshahi. Lalon Heombrom was one of the key speakers in that meeting.

The demands, for which the *Adivashis* are organized under the banner of *Jatiya Adibashi Parisad*, are as follows:

1. *Adivashis* should be recognized as “*Adivashi*” in the constitution.
2. The *Adivashis* have to be given lawful ownership of *khas* land, Zamindari *khas* land and the vested property on which the *Adivashi* have been living for long time.
3. The Govt. has to take necessary measures to preserve the language and culture of the *Adivashis* and up to class five *Adivashi* languages should be used as a medium of instruction along with Bangla and English.
4. Legal aid with expenses must be given to the *Adivashis* in order to rescue their land and property from the trespassers.

5. The quota reserved for jobs and special facilities in all educational institutions should be enforced immediately.
6. Rootless Adivashis have to be rehabilitated.
7. Vested property act must be annulled.
8. *Adivashi* Cultural Academy should be established in all the districts inhabited by the *Adivashi*.
9. Above all, the torture and extortion on the Adivashi must be stopped.

Contact with Mainstream Administration

At present, most of the Barind villages are multi-ethnic in culture. The Bengalees and other ethnic groups are living side by side. As a result, conflict and confusions are very common between the *Bengalees* and the *Adivashis*. Besides, in the changing circumstances the Santals often reject the verdict of their village headman. The Bengalees and the *Adivashi* go to Union Council or to *Thana* administration to solve disputes. Our key informant Lalon Hemrom told us that nowadays they often keep contact with the Union *Parishad*. They go to the union parishad (UP) members and the chairman to settle their disputes and also seek their assistance on different administrative matters. It is important here to mention that Lalon managed to achieve some government khas land for 14 landless families of Joykrishnapur village by establishing network with the UP. He also told us that they want to establish more communication with the local government so that they can enjoy their rights and to protect their community from injustice.

It is very important to note here that the Santals are also taking part in different national elections. Ganen Hambrom of Joykrishnapur took part in 1998 Union Parishad election as a candidate of Member of Pakri Union Parishad. Anil Marandi of Panchgachiya village (a neighboring village of Joykrishnapur) took part in Parliament election of 2001. Although both of them did not win but their

participation in different elections shows that nowadays the Santal ethnic community actively take part in local and national politics.

Lalon (35) was our key informant. He is the inhabitant of Joykrishnapur who has ample knowledge of the Santal's history, ritual, traditions etc. Though his occupation is agriculture but he is much aware as to politics and other issues related to the rights of the Santals. He is one of the leaders of *Jatio Adibashi Porishad*. He attends in different programmes of *Jatio Adibashi Porishad*. Despite, *Manjhi* is the most respectable person of a Santal village but Lalon is considered the most important person of the village. At the time of arbitration, and in any meeting the suggestions from Lalon is considered very significantly.

IV. Summary

In chapter five, we have tried to spell out the social structure, role of traditional and political organisation and the new pattern of leadership among the Santals. The Santal village administration is called *Manjhi* organization where other officials like *Jog Manjhi*, *Godet*, *Naeke* assist *Manjhi* in settling disputes and conducting different festivals and rituals. But nowadays it is observed that sometimes the villagers do not obey the verdict of the village administration. In this case they go to Pargana Parishad and Union Parishad for justice. It also observed that the Santals are becoming politically conscious. They work with different political parties to establish their rights



Manjhi (Head of the village)



Meeting of village administration

আন্তর্জাতিক আদিবাসী দিবস সফল হোক

- ১. আদিবাসীদের সংগঠনের স্বীকৃতি দিয়ে হতে।
- ২. পানি, স্বাস্থ্য, কৃষক, কল্যাণকারী আদিবাসীদের অধিকার নিয়ে হতে।
- ৩. আদিবাসীদের উন্নয়ন করে হতে।

গণ বিহীন ও আলাস মজা
১০ আগস্ট, বুধসন্ধ্যার, সন্ধ্যা-১০টা

হুন ১ জেলা পঞ্চক বিধানসভার মনিয়ার, হুগলী
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আন্তর্জাতিক আদিবাসী দিবস সফল হোক



আদিবাসী ঐতিহ্য ও আধিকার সংরক্ষণ

আদিবাসী উন্নয়ন সমাবেশ

সংস্থ: হুগলী জেলা উচ্চ বিদ্যালয় মাঠ, গোগ্রাম, গোদাগাড়ী, রাজশাহী।
তারিখ ও সময়: ৩রা মে, ২০০২, বিকাল ৩ ঘটিকা।
অতিথি: জনাব আলহাজ্ব ব্যারিস্টার মোঃ জামিলুল হক, হুগলী জেলা পঞ্চক বিধানসভার
সভাপতি: রবীন্দ্রনাথ জাম্বি, সভাপতি: জাম্বি।
আয়োজনে: আদিবাসী উন্নয়ন সংস্থা (আউস), রাজশাহী।
সহযোগিতায়: হুগলী জেলা পঞ্চক বিধানসভার মনিয়ার, হুগলী



Chapter 6

Changing Belief System

Religion is an important element of culture for any group of people. Like many ethnic groups, the Santals believe in various natural spirits and forces, which control human life. The Santals worship the supernatural powers. They call their religion as Sonaton Dharma. The practices of rites and rituals, belief in a number of deities, etc., are quite similar to those of Hindus. Dancing, singing, and drinking alcohol are associated with their important religious rites and rituals. Enjoyment and pleasure are most important characteristics of their rituals and festivals. This distinct religious and cultural and ethnic heritages of the Santals are undergoing rapid changes, particularly through the unending process of Christianization. This animist tribal people are generally adopting Christianity under the influence of Christian Missionaries. However, in this chapter we propose to discuss about mythology, religious beliefs, deferent gods, festivals and impact of Christianity and Hinduism on the life styles of the Santals of the Barind Tract.

I. Religious Beliefs

Mythology

In the description of O' Malley (1910), we find a systematic description of the Santal traditional beliefs about the creation of the world and the origin of mankind. According to the description,

“ In the beginning there was only water, and below the water earth. Thakur Jiu created certain animals and fishes and then decided to create man. He made a pair of earth, but when he was going to give them souls the Day-horse came and kicked them to pieces. Thereupon Thakur decided first to make birds, and made the goose and the gander. He took them in his hands, and they looked most beautiful. So he breathed on them, and they became living beings and flew up into the air, but as they could nowhere find a resting place they came back and settled on Thakur's hand. Then the Day-horse came down along a gossamer thread to drink water; whilst he was

ding this, some froth fell down from his mouth. It became foam, and the goose and the gander went along, using it as a boat. Then they implored Thakur to give them food, and he called successively on several animals (the alligator, the prawn, the boar fish and the crab) to bring up earth; but none of them succeeded, for the earth melted. Finally he called for the earthworm, who promised to do what was wanted if only the tortoise would stand on the water. This having been agreed to, the worm placed one end of his body on the back of the tortoise, and putting his mouth down started eating earth, which came out at the other and settled on the back of the tortoise. Thakur harrowed this deposit, and from the earth thus coagulated mountains were formed. The foam above mentioned fastened itself to the earth, and in it Thakur sowed the seed of *sirom* (*Andropogon muricatus*) and other kinds of seeds.

The two birds made their nest in the *sirom*, and the goose laid two eggs, on which she sat whilst the gander brought her food. In the end a pair of human beings were hatched. Thakur now ordered the goose and gander to soak a piece of cotton, which he gave them, in their own food and press it out in the mouths of the children. In this way they were reared. When they grew big the birds did not know where to put them. Thakur ordered them to find a place; whereupon they found *Hihiri-pipiri* towards the west and took them there. There they grew up eating the seeds of the *sumtu bukuch* (*Eleusine aegyptica*, Pers.) and *sama* (*Panicum colonum*, L.). They were naked, but not ashamed and lived in great happiness. One day Lita came to them announced himself as their grandfather, and expressed his pleasure at finding them so happy. Still there was one great joy, which they had not experienced; so he taught them to ferment liquor and to brew rice-beer. When all was ready, Lita said they should make a libation to *Marang Buru* and then drink (God who residing on the hills, chief of supernatural beings). They did so, drank became intoxicated and had intercourse with one another. The following morning Lita came and called out to them; but now their eyes were opened, they saw that they were naked and would not come out. Later on they made shirts of fig (*Ficus indica*) leaves to cover their nakedness.

The conception of the Creator (Thakur Jiu) in the mind of the modern Santal appears to be that of a kind of bird. Thakur is undoubtedly the same word as *thakura* found in very late Sanskrit, and the Santals have probably borrowed the name from the Aryans. It is a custom of theirs to avoid, as much as possible, mentioning anybody's proper name, and they may have used this one to cover an older, now forgotten, name. A curious addition to the name of the Creator is *Jiu*, which means spirit. Lita is, according to the

traditions, the real name of *Marang buru*, and is preserved in the word *lita-ak*, meaning the rainbow.

The Santals account for the division of mankind into different communities by a story that all men were brothers until *Marang buru* created dissension among them. He arranged a race in which different representatives of mankind competed for the prizes he offered. The first prize was a large supply of cooked beef, the others were neither so large nor so good, and the last consisted of a little rice and milk. The strongest and swiftest runners carried off the beef and were the ancestors of the Santals; the hindmost, who got only the rice and milk, were Brahmans. This division of mankind into different races took place in Sasanbeda. The traditions if we are to judge from the expressions used, mix up the division of the human race into nations and of the ancestors of the Santals into septs. (O' Malley: 117-118).

During our field work we asked some Santals about the Santal mythology. A few old Santals still believe in some of basic idea of the mythology but the young Santals are hardly aware of it.

Different Gods of the Santals

According to O' Malley, the basis of the Santal religion is the belief that there are number of *bongas* or evil spirits to whom the ills of human life are due, and that they must be appeased by blood offerings. (O' Malley 1910:118.). Thakur, the supreme being and creator, however, is considered as God. He gives rain and crops, etc., and is usually supposed to be well pleased with the Santals as a general rule; it is only in times of famine that they are afraid that he is angry. The Santals all acknowledge that in the old days they had no *bongas* and worshipped Thakur alone, but they picked up their belief in *bongas* during their wanderings. They now frequently confuse the sun (*Chando*) with Thakur, but Thakur is different; he cannot be seen by mortal eye, but himself sees everything. He has created every being and everything; he sustains everything, and he feeds us all. It is he who brings us here, and he also takes us away. At the will of a *bonga* or man we are not born, neither do we depart. Thakur has given us certain span of life; so long as that lasts, nobody can take us away. According to our lives here,

either good or bad, such will be our lot at his command when we go to the other world”(O’ Malley 118-119).

Bongas

Besides the High God (sometime termed as Thakur or *Dharom*), there are numerous *bongas* or malevolent supernatural beings found everywhere. Each hill, forest, river, pond etc. is inhabited by *bongas*. They have great capacity for doing harm to mankind. On occasions, they may assume the forms of young men and women, and have sexual relations with human beings of the opposite sex. They can cause diseases. All *bongas* are feared and are given sacrifices to induce them not to do harm to the Santals.

The chief of the *bongas* are *maran buru*, *miroki turuiko*, *jahar era*, *gosae era*, *pargana bonga* and *manjhi bonga*. The first five *bongas* reside at the Jaherthan, the sacred grove found near every Santal village. Manjhi bonga is located at the *manjhithan* inside the village. The pargana bonga and *manjhi bonga* are supposed to have a supervisory function over other *bongas*. *Jaherthan*, the abode of the principal deities is a cluster of trees, usually a part of the village forest. Nowadays forestless Barind region, *jaherthan*, is a cluster of bamboo bush and is usually is a part of communal bamboo garden. Generally, it includes five trees of any kind like babla (accacia), tal (palmyra), khejur (date palm), sal (shorea robusta), neem (melia indica) trees. One stone for one deity is placed at the foot of each tree.

Places of Worship

The Sacred ecology or the bonga sanctuaries in the Barind villages can be divided into two parts:

The inner sacred ecological zones, includes all the village house-holds within the village, the shrines of the village, households and ancestors.

The outer sacred ecological zone including the territory, boundaries, and village outskirts.

In the inner sacred ecological zone, the sanctuaries of the Barind Santals are divided into two types:

- the village shrine.
- the headman's shrine.

The village shrine is called *jaherthan* or the place of the goddess *jaher era*. In our context, the shrine is a natural holy shelter for the objects of cult, where rituals and sacrifices are performed by the village priest. The *naeke jaherthan* is located a little way away from the village dwellings inside a bamboo forest.

The other village shrine or the ritual center is the *manjhithan* (the shrine of the village headman or the abode of the *manjhi*), who is supposed to be the first *manjhi* of the village. He reclaimed land and founded the present village with the cooperation of the villagers and sanctification by the *naeke*.

Other Beliefs

Belief in Witchcraft

The Santal has an inveterate dread of the evil eye and of witches who are supposed to have intercourse with the bongas, and one believed to possess the power to kill people by eating their entrails, to cause illness, blights, murrain, etc. Women are supposed to have a monopoly of this art of witchcraft, forming secret societies, which meet at midnight. Like bongas, the doers of witchcraft can cause much harm. They can also cause disease and death by consuming the liver of the victim. Hence, they are regarded as dangerous anti-social elements.

Belief in Evil Eye

A peculiar instance of this nature is that when a man's cow yields a very large quantity of milk, a jealous enemy may dry up the milk itself in the unholy

hope that the process will diminish the supply of milk. Similarly, if it is intended to bring harm to a man's harvest, rice is buried, and if a man's death is intended, a bone may be deposited in the earth (*Mujherjee:288-291*) (Ali, 1998: 222).

Belief in causes of diseases

The Santals believe that there are three principal causes for disease, viz, supernatural, human and physical. The action of bongas and witchcraft come under the first two categories, respectively. The physical causes may be said to include the six natural causes, or they recognize at least six natural causes of diseases. The most general of the natural causes is some disorder in *sir*. The word *sir* is used (in a broad sense) to mean muscle sinews, nerves, arteries, and veins. The human body is supposed to be made up of a great number of sirs. Spraining, dislocation, or twisting of any of the sirs leads to physical complaints. *Iskir*, a kind of massage, is the best remedy for such troubles. Some diseases, again, are caused by *tejo*, that is, larvae or worms. Rabies, epilepsy, cancer, scabies, ring worms, etc. are believed to be done *tejo*. A bad diet is held to be the cause of stomach trouble. Eating anything that is not clean also leads to disease. Coughs are caused by mist and fog, while ophthalmia is held to be the result of bathing in dirty water when the first rain falls. However, there is no hard and fast line of demarcation between the above-mentioned three categories of disease and their causation (Ali:228).

Belief in the therapy of *Ojha* (traditional healer)

The Santals do not depend entirely on spiritual methods for solving their problems of illness. The *Ojha* is not only a spiritual healer, but also a medicine man who recites incantations and performs sacrifices. These medicines are prepared from plants, herbs and roots.

Belief in the Next World

About the belief in the next world, O' Malley quotes, "The Santals have vague idea of life in a future world, called *Hanapuril*, in which they located both a heaven and a hell, the name meaning literally that world, as opposed to *Noapuri* or this world. Their ideas about their state in the future world are rather confused, but apparently they believe that in heaven the good Santal will live at his case for ever, enjoying the tillage of his land, hunting, eating and drinking. Their conceptions about hell, and the punishments inflicted there, are curious (O' Malley, 1910; 120). It is observed during our fieldwork that most of the Santals believe that for good and bad there in the next world.

II. Festivals and Rituals

In the Santal villages there is a succession of festivals throughout the year and most of the festivals are connected with agricultural operations. *Eroksim*, *shorae*, and *baha* are the main festivals of the Santals of Joykrishnapur while the Christian Santals celebrate Christmas day, Easter Sunday etc.

According to Sattar (1971) like the Hindus, the Santals too have frequent festivities. Their year begins with the month of Falgun and ends with Magh. Throughout the year they have many Hindu-style ceremonies. The notable ones are *Salsei* in Falgun, *Bonga* in Chaitra, Home in Baisakh, *Eroba Sardar* in Jaistha, *Hariao* in Asadh, *Chhata* in Bhadra, *Dibi* in Aswin, *Naoai* in Katrik, Agrahayan and *Sohrai* in Poush. It is important to note that from among the above festivals only the *Sohrae* festival is observed at present. However, Ali (1998) mentioned about twelve kinds of festivals, which are listed below:

Table No. 6.1: List of Festivals

SL. No.	Festival	Month of Celebration	Purpose	Remarks
1	Sohrae	Dec-Jan (before mid-Jan or Pous-Mah)	Harvest festival	Barind & Bahurupa (a Santal village of West Bengal)
2	Mokor or Sakrat	Dec-Jan (Least day of Push with Sohrae)	Associated with hunting & ancestral worship	Barind & Bahurupa
3	Maghsim	Jan-Feb (Magh)	End of the Santal year	Partially observed
4	Baha	Latter part of Feb. or Falgun	Sal-blossom festival.	Partially observed
5	Jomsim	Any time	Religious festival	Partially observed
6	Pata-Porob	Mid-April or Baishak	Religious festival	Partially observed
7	Eroksim	June (or Asar)	Sowing of paddy seeds.	Partially observed
8	Chata parob	According to Hindu Period (Kartrik)	Religious festival	Partially observed
9	Durga Puja	According to Hindu period	Religious festival	Bahurupa.
10	Kali Puja	According to Hindu period	Religious festival	Barind
11	Monosa Puja	According to Hindu period	Religious festival	Barind
12	Laxmi Puja	According to Hindu period	Religious festival	Bahurupa
13	X-mas day	According to Christian period (December)	Christian festival	Barind.

Source: Ali, 1998: 233

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From our key informant Lalon Hembrom we came to know that the animist Santals of Joykrishnapur celebrate Sohrae, Baha, Ero (Eroksim). Lalon also informed that they also previously participated in Hindu pujas such as Kali Puja, Durga Puja, Charak Puja. During field visit I observed that the animist Santals also participated in the festivals and programmes of the Christians. However, our other

informant Andriana of Surshunipara (a Christian village) told us that, the Christian Santals celebrate Christian festivals such as Christmas, Eastar Sunday. But at the same time when their native Santal village celebrates festivals like *Sohrae*, they also participate in the festival. Now we will give a description of the festivals of the Santals of Joykrishnapur.

Ero (Eroksim)

Eroksim is the sowing festival celebrated in Asarh (June-July). This festival is connected with sowing of paddy seeds in June after the first monsoon shower. It starts with each householder subscribing fowls which are sacrificed by the *Naeke* (village priest) at the *jaherthan* or holy grove in honour of *maran buru*, During this time the *naeke* utters the following incantation:

We salute you, creator (*Thakur*), *Jhahe era*, *Maran buru* and other. In the name of the sowing festival, we are offering sacrifice unto you so that we may sow in one quarter and in twelve quarters these may flourish in a bumper crop. Let the wind bring rains. Let rains shower in profusion....

Thereafter, a special dish is cooked with meat and rice boiled together. All the Santals then dine at *Jaherthan*. But the meat of the fowls can be eaten by the *naeke* alone. It becomes a one-day festival instead of three days. In this regard Ali states "Most of the Santals at Barind have been reduced to the position of day-labourers and such the sowing festival has become less important to them in their economic life" (Ali, 1998; 235). However, the Christian Santals of Surshunipara do not observe this festival. The following song is sung on the *Ero* festival:

In Santali:

Nio huru ho aforme
Mari huru ho avenme
Nio serma biyark
Huru ho atan daramme

Free Translation:

Sow new seeds
Discard old seeds
Welcome
Paddy of the new year.

Source: Michel Soren of Joykrishnapur

Sorhae (Harvesting Festival)

Sorhae is the biggest annual event of the Santals tribal life. This is a general day of thanksgiving to the gods of rain, sun and fair weather who contributed to the bumper crop. It begins on suitable dates for each village but the festival must begin before the last day of the Bengali month of Poush (mid-January) at least in the Barind region.

Day 1

The first day of the festival starts with an initial purification ceremony which is termed as *um*, when the members of the ethnic people cleanse themselves with a ceremonial fashion.

It begins with each householder subscribing fowls which are sacrificed at the *jaherthan* (Holy grove) where a delicious dish is cooked with meat and rice boiled together. All the Santals then dine at the *jaherthan*. After taking the meals, the Santals assemble at the *jaherthan*, where one of the most interesting sports is held. The village elders sit and the cowherds of the tribe (generally, the young members of the households having cows) are summoned before them and they are asked to make their cows walk on a particular line on which eggs are placed. The cowherds, who can make his cow break the eggs or even smell them, is called the 'Lucky Boy' by the applause of the audience. The feet of the successful cow are then ceremonially washed.

Day 2

The second day is termed as *daka*, i.e., 'to call'. It is devoted to the preparation of food for the different tribal gods, in whose honour animals like fowls, goats and pigs are sacrificed. The spirits of the ancestors are also worshipped and their memory honoured and offerings and libations made to them at home by heads of the families. The evening is spent on drinking rice-beer.

Day3

The climax of the ceremony reaches with the worship of cows (gowal worship), locally named as *khuntae* in Barind. Cattle are anointed with oil and doused with vermilion and a share of rice-beer is given to each of them.

An interesting feature of this day is the fixing of posts all over the village up to the headman's house in the morning. After midday meals cows and buffaloes are tied to these post with ropes. The feet of these animals are then washed and their horns decorated with garlands, rice cakes are made of molasses and given to the cattle to eat. The young sportsmen of the village now come in a body and begin poking these animals and dancing round them, all the while trying to snatch away the cakes. The following song is sung on the *Sohrae* occasion:

In Santali:

Gada dada laimeshe kunti dada bidame
Gai dada shabeme dagro dada shabeme
Pidoi dda hotre talaime
Dila dada debun rejeya o boyha

Free Translation:

Brother put your stick on the hole
Grab the cow grab the ox
And place cake round it neck
Let's snatch the cake dear big brother

Source: Michael Soren of Joykrishnapur

Day4

The fourth day's ceremony is called *hako kathom*, meaning the day for catching fish and crabs. It is the religious duty of all Santals to go out for hunting on this day and, if they cannot find anything else, they must at least catch fish or crabs.

Day 5

On the fifth day of the *Sohrae* festival, the *sakrat* ceremony is observed in the Barind region. Among the Hindus of the Barind region, Sakrat is known as Sankranti (i.e., the last day of the month of Paush or Dec.- Jan.). The ceremony is

observed by taking food and drinks (rice beer) by each male member of every household and with an en-masse tribal dance.

Day 6

Now, the ceremony comes to a close, and on a special day, called *jale*, the members of the tribe go from house to house and exchange greetings. A whole week of festivities come to a close with the game of *bejha* (to shoot at a target). Shooting at a mark or target with arrows and measuring the individual strength takes place. The successful candidates are cheered and taken to the headman's house on the shoulders of their friends.

There is some variation about *sohrae* festival from area to area, and even from village to village, due to the changing socio-economic condition of the Santals of Barind. One of our key informants told us that in her village (Shushunipara, a Christian village) the Christian Santals no longer celebrate this festival. The Santals of this village treat Christmas day as their major festival. But the older Santals often visit nearby villages during the *sohrae* festival.

Baha (Sal-blossom festival)

The Santals celebrate *baha* towards the latter part of February. The aim of the festival is to celebrate the advent of spring, which sees the efflorescence of their favourite *sal* (*shorea robusta*), *palash* (*butea frondosa*), *muhun* (*bassia latifolia*), *icok* (wood *fordia floribunda*, *salib*) flowers. Until the *baha* festival is not over, no Santal will suck the honey of these flowers or drink it, nor will their women wear them in their hair (Ali: 242). However, before the puja begins the youths of the village raises two cabins in the *Jahenthan* or the Holy Grove. The *naeke* (priest), beside offering hens and roosters to the god, also offers flowers to him.

This is a grand festival when rejoicings are made by sprinkling water on each other and special songs and dances are performed by the members of the community. The Santals of Joykrishnapur compare it with Hindu 'Holi' festival which is celebrated on the full moon day of Falgun (Feb-March). Sattar mentioned that *baha* festival was celebrated for seven days but the Santals of Joykrishnapur celebrate it in one day. The following song is sung on the *Baha* festival:

In Santali:

Free Translation:

Enech pe shiring pe

Let's song let's dance

Donpe rishke pe

Enjoy yourselves

Nao baha shutre rebet pe

Put new flowers on bun

Na gatikuri baha dud

Oh dear friends pour flower water on everyone

Jaku chitao jon pe

Hurray hurray hur hur

Hur re hur re hur hur

Source: Michael Soren of Joykrishnapur

Sintra Parab (Hunting Festival)

Hunting festival takes place during the religious festival (*Sohrae*), it shows the prevalence of the hunting phase of the past Santal life. However, Traditionally and culturally Santals are hunters and hence hunting is an integral part of their rituals and celebrations. The village folk of Joykrishnapur go for hunting once a year when they have nothing to do in the field (farming). The hunting festival takes place two to three weeks before *Sohrae* festival. They used to go for hunting on the sixth day of *Sohrae* festival in the past. The Santals of Joykrishnapur go for hunting to different parts of Bangladesh due to gradual deforestation and unavailability of prey. Before going on hunting they select a site for this purpose and prepare estimated budget for the expenses. A person having special skill in hunting is designated to head the hunting team. The hunting team gathers weapons for hunting e.g. bow, arrow, spear, axe etc as per the instruction of the leader and

they take necessary clothing and drinking water. The leader sets five ground rules for hunting, which includes

- a) Not to take more than two sets of clothing,
- b) Everyone has to take rice and spices individually,
- c) Weapons for hunting has to be kept in individual custody,
- d) No one would have inclination to return home during hunting and
- e) One has to obey the leader's commands.

Before leaving the house for hunting they bid farewell to their mothers and wives. Meanwhile they sing the following song:

In Santali:

*Disham Phodku Udukima
Maire daka ghaonch me
Maire den tinch tinder ahshar
Maire buru shindra duku bagionch kan
Nai go daya tinch de emainch may
Nai go sindaraku
Nigo among dayate nai gonch
uduk chalakan*

Free Translation:

Oh hunters of the land go out for hunting,
Oh my dear! pack rice, give bow and arrows along with
Jungle hunt drive me back
Mother pray for me
Oh my mother! jungle hunt drives me crazy
I want to go for hunting treasuring your blessings
Air, life, soil and body beckoning me for hunting
Or I surrender my life
Or I give back my life
Oh mother, I am the prey of the hunter

Source: Michael Soren of Joykrishnapur

The mother wished their safe journey by sprinkling the *Tulsi* water. Soon after they leave their home for their hunting venture by bus/train or on foot if it is nearby. They fix their tents near the bank of a river, a pond or a lake. Among the hunting team armoured persons (hunters with bow) go inside the jungle and the rest of the members surround the jungle whenever they get or identify a prey in the jungle. Archers start throwing arrows all around. They sacrifice the animal in the

name of *marang buru*. They shout and rejoice as soon as they hunt a pray. They return to their dens singing. Then they cook the meat and dry the remnant carcasses they dry for future meal. In February 2002 the Santals of Joykrishnapur went to Khulna region (in the south western part of Bangladesh) for such hunting and they got, wild cats, rabbits etc.

Festivals of Christian Santals

Among the Christian Santals Christmas day is the main festival. At first they go to the church for prayer. After prayer they eat sweet meats and cakes and take rich food for lunch and dinner. *Haria* (rice beer) is also served this day but in limited not so quantity. The villagers sing and dance on the road. Andrina of Surshunipara Christaian village told us that previously they used to celebrate Christmas for eight days and during this time some singers would go from village to village by singing *Kirtoon*. But nowadays, this practice is decreasing. However, Christian Santals consider Christmas as *Sohrae* festival. During this festival time, the neighboring animist Santals also participate in the celebration.

From the literature and our observation, the animist Santals' festival cycle is a product of agriculture and forest economy. Besides, the festival cycle of the Santals is an admixture of Hinduism and Animism. *Eroksim, sohrae, baha* were once the most important Santal ceremonies. But due to the massive deforestation in the region and their changing economic condition (from agriculture to day-labour) has changed their tribal festival cycle. Christianity also has great influenced the Santal life. After conversion to Christianity, the Santals term themselves as Christian or Christian Santal and follow the festivals of the Christians.

Birth and Funeral rites

a) *Janam chatiar*

This is the ceremony of ritual purification that follows the birth of a child. Literally *Janam chatiar* means purification of the birth. According to O' Melley, when a child is born the umbilical cord is cut with an arrow, and the placenta is buried under the floor of the house. The house and the village become religiously unclean. No sacrifice, and consequently no festival, can be held in the village, and no one can go and eat in the house where the birth has taken place until they are purified by the *janam chhatiar* ceremony.

Janam chatier may be said to have a three-fold function. It purifies the house and the village from the defilement caused by the birth of a child; It admits the child into the clan of its father, and thereby gives it the status of a hor i.e. a human being; and it individualises the child by giving it a name (Ali:1998: 159).

Nimda mandi is a ceremony for cleanliness of the mother and the newborn baby. Generally, after three days of the birth, the father of the newborn invites the villagers to attend the *nimda mandi*, the first shaving of the head of the child. The ceremony consists of ceremonial drinking of *nimda mandi* (qual of atap or sundried rice and nim leaves boiled in water). In the case of the birth of a boy, three pots and in the case of a girl only one pot of curry will be cooked and distributed among the villagers. Ali (1998) observed that after two/three months the Santals at the Barind perform a second shaving of head when rice beer or *haria* is served to the villagers. But most of the Santal villages have stopped performing the second shaving ceremony due to financial constraints. After the pacificator *nimda mandi* ceremony, the name is pronounced and the ceremony ends with drinking of rice beer.

Names are given to the newborn babies in accordance with the traditionally established rules. The eldest son is given the name of the paternal grandfather. The second son is named after the maternal grandfather, the third that of the paternal grandfather's brother, and the fourth that of the maternal grandfather's brother. The daughters are given the names of the equivalent female relatives, and in the same order. If the father is a ghar-jamai or a husband living in wife's house, the naming order is reversed, i.e., the names on the maternal side came first. It is important to note here that the first part of a Santal name is very close to Hindu names like Dhonai Soren, Issar Hasda etc. but there are also some names like Amin Soren, Himel Hasda, Michael Soren, Philip Hembrom which are usually Muslim and Christian names. It shows that a change has taken place, as names are no longer given in accordance with the traditions. However, the Christians Santals of Barind have almost forgotten the tribal method of *janam chatier* and are following the Christian method of name giving. The Christian names are now given according to the Christian custom. As has already been mentioned, the Santals of Barind are wage-earners by occupation. So, the ceremonies associated with the *Janam chatier*, which are economically burdensome, are bound to be curtailed. Therefore most of the Santals observed the *janam chatier* only through *nimda mandi* ceremony.

b) *Caco- chattier*

The second important rite is the *caco chatier*, meaning initiation and acceptance of the child into the community. Therefore, the second critical period in the life of the Santals is thought to be guarded by a pacificator ritual called *caco-chatier*. The rituals mark the puberty rites of the Santal boys and girls in the Barind when they mature. The Santals perform puberty rites in the form of *caco-chatier* and circatrization (*sika*) for the male children usually at the age of 11 or 12 year. According to O'Melley, "to enable anybody to take his place in Santal society and participate in its rights, rules, ceremonies, etc., they have another

ceremony called *chacho chhatiar*. Without having been through this no one can be married and no one can be cremated, but has to be buried” (O’Malley: 1910).^[132]

In the past the rite of *caco chatier* used to be as follows:- The father brews *haria* (rice beer) and provides oil and turmeric for the villagers. When the *haria* is ready he calls the *manjhi* and *paranik* in the morning and gives it to them. They ask him what *haria* it is, and after drinking, the headman bids the *godet* to call the villagers together. When they come, the village girls anoint the *naeke* and his wife who sit on a mat, with oil and turmeric; next the *kudam naeke* and his wife, then the *manjhi* and his wife and all the officials. Last of all, all the women are anointed. The *haria* is now served in leaf cups to the *manjhi* and *paranik* and then to the other people; after which all are ready for further proceedings. The festival is concluded by further drinking and singing of *chhatiar* and other songs. But at present days this ritual is not perform. The *caco- chatier* rite is not familiar among the new generation Santal of Joykrishnapur.

Funeral Rituals

In the description of O’Malley, Sattar, and Ali we find that the Santals burn their dead. When somebody dies the village elders immediately gather at the house of the deceased. The body is then treated with oil and turmeric. Later it is purified by sprinkling water and cow-dung on it. Then a small quantity of paddy is placed in the deceased’s hand and a handful of paddy is also flung all around him. Then the body is washed. After bathing the body, women must go back to their homes because they are barred from joining the funeral procession.

When the body is brought to the crematorium where a pyre must be kept ready, it is taken three times round the pyre and then placed on it. Then a hen is killed and hooked upon a post pitched nearby. Mahua leaves are placed on the chest, navel and different parts of the body after which the male next-of-kin of the deceased ignites the fire.

But there are some exceptions found in Joykrishnapur where the Santals bury the dead body. Our key informant Lalon informed us that for cremation they need huge wood but at present due to deforestation they have to buy it from the market and it is very expensive. Consequently, now the Santals of the Barind tract bury their deads instead of cremating them.

Anyway, after the cremation or burial, all the members of the family (to which the deceased belonged) observe *Telnehan* or *Choto-Karam* ceremony which means purification. For a certain period of time (not exceeding seven days) they consider themselves impure and this requires purification. On the expiry of the period they arrange a festival called *Giritora* and thus purify themselves. Otherwise, they cannot proceed with household works (Sattar: 110). Nowadays, only the well off Santals of Joykrishnapur arrange programme in respect of the deceased and which is narrated as follows:

The *Vadang Parab* and *Karam Shirinch*

The *Vadang* festival is held in the name of deceased person. It is the Santal's staunch belief that the deceased remains hungry even after death if food and entertainment are not given after cremation. They further believe that the soul of the deceased will roam around the village in the form of animals and birds and will scream for food. On the first day of the *vadang* festival the predecessors (eldest son) of the deceased goes to villagers and invite them to attend the ritual. While dancing, *Manjhi* and *Jog manjhi* along with the *Karam* dancing and singing team make an altar in the courtyard with the branches of *Mohe* and *Koram* tree. Later the altar is made with clay and on the top of it rice is kept on a leaf. Soon worshipping begins with the consecration of a hen and a goat at the altar. Then relatives of the deceased, mass people and invited guests consecrate animals and birds including hen, goat etc. depending on their ability. They dance with a few bones of goat. *Jog manjhi*, *Manjhi*, *Paranik* and the *Karam* dancing team sing and

rejoice together. During the period the audience throw *biri* (cigarette), chocolate, biscuit, money to the cultural troupes. Bones of five ribs and a leg of the goat are called 'Faree'. The Meat of Faree is divided into three parts. One part goes to the persons who processed the meat and the other two parts would go to the family of the deceased. With Faree they prepare Khichuri (meat, rice and pulse) and have it that night. The next day, they arrange another feast with the meat of hen, mutton, duck and pork that they received the first day. Now *Jog manjhi* invites villagers to partake the food.

The *Karam* troupe would sing and dance throughout the day and night until the life story of the deceased ends. The *Manjhi*, *Jog manjhi*, *paranik* and *naeke* and other associates wipe out the branches of *Karam* and *Mohe* trees from the altar and drown in the water (e.g. pond, lake, river etc.). The following song is sung on the *Karam* festival:

In Santali:

Karan bibud
Kihulikay tehekana
Tihing Karan bibud
Shank likabun shafakidiya
Taha rita re nana nana re
Taha rita re nana nana re

Free Translation:

Karan Babu was dirty/uncouth like crow
Now we cleaned *Karan Babu* like duck
Hey, hey let it be,
Hey, hey let it be
Blood full of ears and full of ashes over head,
dear
Stick over the shoulder
Where can it be kept, oh dear?

Source: Michael Soren of Joykrishnapur

The traditional rituals of the Santals of Barind are changing, such as the birth and death rites due to the changing of their socio-economic condition. We have observed that most of the Santals are not in a condition to invest time and money to show respect for the traditional rituals. These rites are changing according to their socio-economic condition.

As per our observations, in case of the *janam chatier*, only *nimdamandi* ritual is followed; in some village *caco chatier* is observed by serving a very small quantity of rice beer to the selected male villagers only. The death rites have also changed a lot. In Barind, according to our field survey, most of the Santals bury their dead bodies in the graveyard instead of cremating them, because of their economic difficulties for procuring the price of faggots. Some may think that it is due to the influence of the prevailing Muslim culture. But our observation holds it that the cause is definitely economic and as the fire wood is becoming scarce due to the withering away of the surrounding jungles in this area, it is difficult to go for cremation of the dead. Therefore, even if they can lay their hand on some money, they cannot possibly buy firewood for cremating the dead body. Although most of the Santals prefer to cremate the dead body, their strained economic condition does not permit them to do it. So, they are obliged to bury they dead body. It has now become the normal practice that we have observed in three villages of Barind. The Christian Santals of Surshunipara as well as of Barind bury the dead bodies according to Christian customs.

III. Impact of Hinduism, Christianity and Islam

According to Chowdhury, A and Ali (2000) the logic of history proves that a tribe must interact with other tribes as well as with non-tribal groups, because of geographical, economic and political compulsions. Moreover, the tribes were never isolated completely from the non-tribals in Indian history. This interaction obviously leads to conflict, competition and compromise. The principal impinging forces on the life of the tribe, since the nineteenth century have, however, been Hinduism, Hindu Zamindars, and money lenders, the British Government, and Christianity. In the recent period, industrialization and rapid urbanization have made a great impact upon the life of the Santals of the Barind region. In Bangladesh, Muslim culture and Bengali language (as a medium of education) have also considerably influenced the tribal culture. However, in the following

section we will discuss the impact of Hinduism and Christianity on the ethnic people of Barind tract, especially on the Santals.

Impact of Hinduism

Hinduism has a considerably influence on tribal culture, in recent times as well as in the distant past. The influence of Hinduism before partition of Bengal on the tribes may be accounted for by the following factors: a) the duration of the contact for a prolonged period; b) the fact that Hinduism was the culture of the dominant group; and c) the fact that Hinduism was characterized by the theme of 'unity in diversity' which made it possible to bring together diverse schools of philosophy, sects, and social castes within a single socio religious framework. The spirit of toleration resulting from this central theme and the absence of a single rigid cult enabled the tribes to adopt many Hindu customs without losing their own identity as a people.

In fact, the influence of Hinduism is very much discernable in the actions and behavior of the tribes of Barind. The ethnic people living nearby with the Hindus adopt their idioms of thought and phrases of expression. In their rural settlements, one can find the tribals joining in the worship of Hindu gods and goddesses, like *Durga*, *Kali* and *Mahadeva* and salute these deities. The entire tribe dance and amuse themselves during these ceremonies, but they do not build images of the deities. It is also interesting to note that the period of the tribal's socio-religious festival are fixed in consonance with the Hindu festival periods. We observed that there are similarities between the Santal and Hindu ways of worship. The Hindus and animist Santals worship their gods and goddesses in the same manner. Besides, we also observed similarities in their dress pattern in some of their rituals such as old Santal men preferring to wear *Dhuti*, or the use of vermilion on the fore head of married Santal women. Our key informant told us that they considered themselves very near to the Hindu people.

Impact of Christianity

The impact of the organized Christian Missionary activities on the tribals of Santal Parganas may be dated from 1860 when the Church Missionary Society of England began to work among the tribals of Damin-i-koh. Other Missions soon followed. A Scandinavian Mission initiated work under the name of 'Indian Home Mission' in 1867. The Scotch Free Church began to work in 1870. Despite the fact that the contact with Christianity took place during a period of rebellion when the Santals were economically destitute and were faced with starvation and overwhelmed with the hopelessness of their situation. The impact of Christian Missionaries has not been felt to a great extent by the majority of the tribal, but this was the most potent of the outside influences and an organized activities to influence the life style of the tribals. It influenced the life of the Christian tribal in various non-religious aspects too. Some major causes of their conversion into Christianity can be identified as follows:

1. Spreading of education through Christian Missions is an important cause. In the Christian Missionary schools, Santals get free education and sometimes other fringe benefits such as, books, hostel accommodation etc. It is reported that the behavior and attitude of the Missionaries toward the Santal children in these schools are very loving and convincing. In other words, it is an indirect way towards conversion.
2. It has already been noted that the Santals are usually very poor. If they come across some kind of economic crisis (such as house repair, money needed for treatment) Missionaries often help them in kind or with cash. These humanitarian activities often influence the Santals to get motivated for conversion.
3. It is reported that the Christian Missionaries make routine visits to different Santal villages and inquire about their problems and advise them accordingly. The

missionaries in such routine visits often profess the social and economic benefits they would get after being converted.

4. The Christian Missions in collaboration with voluntary Christian organizations such as CARITAS sometimes provide them (Adivashis) with jobs in their organization, help them with cash in times of need, and also in kind such as, materials for pairing houses, giving shelter to those who have migrated from other areas in search of employment.

5. Communal tension (often riots) between Hindus and Muslims, particularly during 1940s, was also a cause for some of the Santals to become Christians then in Bengal. The religion and rituals of the Santals are close to those of the Hindus. As a result, before and after the Partition of India in 1947 whenever communal tension and riot took place, they (Adivashis) felt insecure and were vulnerable for being considered by the Muslims as a part of the Hindu community. In order to get rid of this insecurity, some of them preferred to get converted into Christianity and become safe and secured.

6. It is interesting to note that the Santals are not converting to Islam although they are surrounded by the Muslim. One of the important reasons for this is that, there is no initiative or programmes from the mosques to make the Adivashis convertes. Reports by the informants as well as our own observations confirm that the Muslim landlords often exploited the Santals. This tends to have developed a negative attitude of the Santals towards the Muslims.

Impact of Islam

Bangladesh is an overwhelmingly Muslim majority country. Any student of anthropology may have thought that in adopting a new identity for themselves the tribals would choose to be Muslims. But Islam as a religion of the majority community of the country has so far failed to influence the socio-cultural life of

the tribals of Barind. We did not find any instance that the local Mosques and Muslim religious leaders took initiative to invite the tribal people of Barind to embrace Islam. Besides, the muslim religious leader avoid them as worshippers of nature and other Gods. This attitudes made the tribal people culturally isolated from the wider society of Bangladesh.

From the above discussion we can see that as an alternative strategy the tribals in the Barind region are now coming into the fold of Christianity for prosperity and socio-economic security. So, Christianity is acting upon them more vigorously now. The number of Christian tribals in the Barind region increased in large numbers and Missions extended their activities covering more areas of the region. The tribals of the region for the most part regard themselves as Christian maintaining close socio-cultural relation with the Hindus rather than Muslim.

IV. Summary

In the preceding chapter, it is clearly seen that among the Santals there are two groups of followers. One is animist and the other is Christian. In the Barind region most of the Santals as well as other Adivashis have been converted to Christianity. Andrina, one of our key informants informed us that out of 33 Hamlet/village of Rishikul and Pakri union of Godagari thana 58.56% families have already converted to Christianity. The reason of this conversion among the Adivashis in order to get education, health, and financial support from Christian missionaries and from Christian based NGOs. But these days it is also observed that the conversion to Christianity is not higher compared to 1970s and 1980s. The animist Santals maintain some of their rituals and festivals whereas the Christian Santals do not. They only maintain Christmas, other Christian festivals and attend regular prayer. It is also seen that a small group of Santals do occasionally participate both festivals. In Joykhrisnapur we have seen the *Sohrae*, *Ero* and *Baha* festivals are being celebrated by them. Birth and funeral rites are performed

with new customisation. But it all depends on the financial solvency of the family. We have heard from our key informants that in the past the Santals of Joykrishnapur often participated in Hindu religious festival like Durga Puja, Kali Puja, Manosha Puja etc. But nowadays it is seen that the young animist Santals enjoy participating in Christian festivals.

Manjhithan, sacred place for Santals



Dance during Christian festival



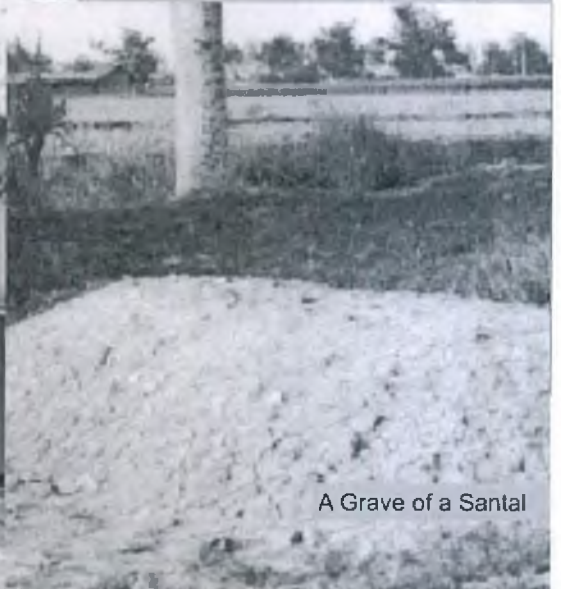
Dance of Sohrae Festival



Jahertandi (Place for conducting festival)



Local Church



A Grave of a Santal

Chapter 7

Major Findings and Conclusion

This study is an ethnographic account of the changing life styles of the Santal ethnic community of a village named Joykrishnapur under Rajshahi district of Bangladesh. This is not only an ethnographic monograph; but also a comparative statement of the Santals living in the village of Joykrishnapur and in the Barind Tract.

Anthropologists and Sociologists assume that the ethnic people or the ethnic communities of the east and central India came to ancient Bengal in search of work, land and food. These ethnic communities included Santal, Oraon, Munda, Mahali *etc.* However, the Santals are mainly found in the Barind region of Bangladesh and widely spread over in the eastern parts of India. From the racial point of view, they belong to Proto-Austroloid racial stock and they speak Santali which belongs to Austric -Mundari language.

The Barind Tract, locally known as *Barindra Bhumi*, is shared by both Bangladesh (70%) and India (30%). In Bangladesh, the tract covers 2.1 million acres of land, spread over five old districts of Rajshahi, Dinajpur, Rangpur, Bogra and Pabna, under Rajshahi Division. The Santals of Bangladesh are mostly concentrated in this elevated tract of quasi-laterite soil, called Barind Region, where presently around 90% people are Muslim.

The Santals occupy a very important place among the ethnic groups of Bangladesh. They are the second largest ethnic group in our country. The ancestors of present Santal community living in Bangladesh began to settle here from the mid of nineteenth century. The rich landlords utilized the hard-working

Santals to make their un-accessible weedy land cultivable. They used to lease out pieces of land to the Santals for a period of 2-3 years, and as soon as the lands were prepared for cultivation, they took them back.

The Santals live in centralized village, based on self-governed social system called *Manjhi* organisation. They prefer to build their houses on a bit higher ground. The village is quite tied and houses with pillared veranda are nicely Swabbed. Walls and pillars of the houses are charmingly decorated with coloured chalk and mud. During our fieldwork, we observed that some of the Christian Santal's house were decorated with cross sign but the animist Santal paint flowers on the wall of their house.

In terms of education, we can see that the primary school enrollment rate among the Santals of Joykrishnapur is quite good. The Santal parents are getting aware to educate their children. But due to financial crisis, most of the Santal parents cannot retain their children in schooling. Besides, Santal children parents told us that their children do not get proper care from the education institution. On the other hand, the locations of education institutions (especially secondary) found quite far from the village. As result, higher education rate among the Santals particularly among the girls found very low. However, in 2002, three students of Joykrishnapur appeared higher secondary examination. Unfortunately none of them succeeded. It shows that the higher education rate among the Santals of Joykrishnapur is increasing. It is also noticed that the Santals of Joykrishnapur often go to nearby urban places. The young Santal boys were seen to play with football, cricket, chess etc. Although they do to keep daily news paper, but when ever the educated Santals get chance, they go through the news papers. There are nine radios and one television found in the village and it is observed that the villagers enjoyed it with enthusiasm.

The influence of education, media and transport communication have impacted the lifestyles of the Santals of Barind tract significantly in two ways. Their awareness have risen further and which resulted into occupational diversity, though in small number. In contrast, their lifestyle is jeopardizing due to cultural assimilation, more precisely the domination of Bangalee culture infused in their lifestyle.

In Joykrishnapur, some noticeable changes in social organizations are found. The Santal society is divided into twelve patrilineal and exogamous clans. The main function of the clan is to regulate marriages. An individual can marry in any other clan, except his/her own. Clan membership is patrilineal. However, Hossain (2000) noticed that Santal Christians who are educated and well off, do not always strictly follow the rigid rule of exogamy. Instead, they prefer to choose spouse of the similar socio-economic status even if he/she is from the same clan. This is a deviation from their traditional marriage custom. It is interesting that Santals who are converted Christians; do retain their clan patronyms. However, every clan is divided into a number of sub-clans called *khut* but we found that in recent times the Santals (young) of Joykrishnapur could not remember the name of their sub-clans.

In the description of O' Malley it is found that the Santals had a tendency to build joint families. But nowadays the pattern has been changed and they have opted for nuclear families. The major reasons behind this shift from joint to nuclear are as follows:

- a) After the death of the father, the family ties between the married sons become loose. In this case mother remains with any unmarried sons or with the eldest son. Other sons are separated.

- b) The hope of inheriting wealth sometimes keeps the married sons together. In some cases, it has been noticed that though the father is alive, the married sons see no chance of inheriting wealth from the family.
- c) In a joint family when any married son adopts another religion, he leaves the paternal house and constitute a nuclear family.

Impact of modernization is also responsible for creation of nuclear families among the Santals. Young Santals are more literate and are influenced by the modern non- traditional culture. As a result, some of them are willing to come out of the paternal surroundings and build nuclear families. The seven tribal ways of getting a wife among the Santal tribes are: 'kirin bahu', 'tunki dipil', 'sanga', 'ghardi jawae', 'kirin jawae', 'itut' and 'nir bolok' *hapla* (marriage). Out of these, 'kirin bahu hapla' is the most common and respected form of marriage among the Santals of Barind. Besides this, 'ghardi-jawae' is also found in Barind. In the Santals form of traditional marriage the role of match maker is vital because the match maker initiates and coordinates the marriage among the two families. But nowadays the trend of love marriage has increased where the role of match maker is silent. Another change is in the serving *haria* (rice beer). Earlier as a part of ritual *haria* was widely served in the marriage ceremonies but nowadays it is served in small quantity. Instead of *haria*, tea and *muri* (puffed rice) are served. This change has taken place for the following reasons:

- a) financial insolvency,
- b) increasing awareness among them against the negative impact of *haria* addiction.

O' Malley indicates that one kind of fraternal polyandry was practiced among the Santals of British India but during our field work no longer in Joykrishnapur.

In chapter four we discussed about the economic life of the Santals. The main economy of the Santals is based on agriculture. Previously, most of them used to work as sharecroppers. The Santals used to work as sharecroppers in the land of the *Zamindar* and rich farmers in the Barind region. Regarding the daily life of Santal Dalton (1872) stated:

A Santal in prosperous seasons leads a pleasant life. He is either busy with his cultivation or playing his flute, or dancing with the girls, or engaged in the chase. He throws himself with ardour into the latter pursuit, and in hunting down beasts of prey he evinces great skill and powers of endurance and indomitable pluck (Dalton: 1872: 216)

At present time, most of them are landless, and even their livelihood as wage earners. Although they are willing to accept any kind of labour-intensive job, yet they prefer to engage themselves as agricultural day-labourers. The use of modern technology and equipment enhanced agricultural production in one hand and the other they become handicapped due to lack of job employment.

Various political turmoils have greatly affected the Santals economy. Surprisingly, most of the old Santals expressed that pre-independence period was better than present times. In their words, they used to get proper justice and law and order situation of the country was better compared to present time. At the time of liberation war of 1971, the Santals of Joykrishnapur had over eighty acres of land but now it has significantly narrowed down to forty acres. The reasons for gradual losing of land are as follows:

- a) Tyranny and extortion by *jotedars* (musclemen)
- b) Their ignorance about the legal papers/documents of lands.

The pattern of land ownership in the Santal village under study is very small in size. Almost all the Santals agricultural land is cultivated by the family members. They can survive through their agricultural production for three to four months only. According to our informants (at Joykrishnapur) they do not get any job when the harvesting is over. Our interviews with the day labourer group in Barind also reveal that the Santals work full days for about only 150 days in a year and the rest of the period, i.e., about 215 days they practically remain jobless. To meet the annual expenditure, the average Santals generally borrow money from the moneylenders with high interest rate. In recent days the Santals are inclined to NGOs. They borrow money from NGOs under savings and credit scheme. However, this could not lessen their gap between income and expenditure and furthermore they are over burdened with huge debt.

The role Traditional Political Organization of the Santals and its functions is discussed in chapter five. During our fieldwork we observed that the traditional social structure and political organization is present in most of the Santal villages /hamlet. A traditional Santal village administration is comprised of *Manjhi*, *Jog Manjhi*, *Paranik*, *Jog Paranik*, *Naeke*, *Kudam Naeke* and *Godet*. At the time of different social programmes such as, marriage ceremony and different festivals, the presence of *Manjhi* is a must. *Manjhi* also mediates in the disputes of the villagers through discussion with other village officials and villagers. The main role of *Jog manjhi* is to conduct different program of wedding. *Naeke* conducts different programme of worship, festival and religious programmes.

In the Christian Santal village Shurshunipara, we found the presence of *Manjhi*, *Jog manjhi*, and *Godet* but there was no position of *Naeke* at Shurshunipara. The Father or the priest of the Church plays the role of *Naeke* in conducting different religious programmes. Besides, the role of *Manjhi* has little importance in Shurshunipara. He deals with small arbitration. Here the village dwellers go to the Father/priest at the time of serious dispute. They obey the

verdict that is given by the Father. Though traditionally the *Jog Manjhi's* main duty is to conduct the wedding ceremony, in Shurshunipara, however, his activities are limited to some social programmes because the wedding of a Christian Santal is held in the local church.

In the village under study we also observed that some times the villagers do not obey the verdict of the Manjhi and they go to *Pargana Parishad* to settle their disputes. When the dispute takes place between the Bangalee and the Santals family, then they go to *Union Parishad* (Chairman/Member) to settle their disputes. Even in some cases if they are not satisfied with the verdict of *Union Parishad*, they go to the court of the Magistrate. But the *Manjhi* of Joykrishnapur, Dhonai Soren, informed us that the *Union Parishad* members and chairman favour the Bangalee people as they are majority.

It is also observed that the young Santals associated them with the major political organization of the country especially with the leftist political organization. They arrange different meetings, gatherings in order to protect their rights and to protest the oppression upon them.

The animist Santals believe in Supernatural Being. They believe in witchcrafts and they consider the effect of witchcraft as the reason of different diseases suffered by them. The convert Christians follow the religious customs of the Christians. The festival cycles of the animist Santals have also change due to the change in their economy. The Santals of Barind found it necessary to make the festivals very simple and brief. For example, the tribal festival of *sohrae* (harvesting festival) is now observed in a changed and simple manner. The Christian Santals of Shurshunipara have abandoned these traditional festival cycles and follow the Christian path. At present days the Santals of Joykrishnapur and other adjacent Barind village do not follow the detail process of the rite like

Janam chatiar, *Caco-chattier*, and other rites related to birth and death. They make it short and only the well off Santal families perform the above rituals.

It is observed during the fieldwork in the research area that Muslim community treats the Santals as minority and as isolated community; and the Santals also have fear about the Muslims. But the Santals consider Hindu as their dearest one in terms of religious and cultural matter. On the other hand, the tendency to be converted into Christianity is much more among Santal communities as they get health, education etc support from the local Church. Moreover, the local Church creates employment opportunities for the Santal. Consequently, a lot of Santal converted into Christian in 1970s and 1980s.

The Santals settled to Barind tract in quest of employment and livelihood. Nevertheless, conversion to Christianity brought tremendous change in the Santals traditions and beliefs. Their traditional religion is at stake today. The information and discussion provided in the present thesis tend to indicate that the social solidarity and homogeneity of the ethnic minority of Santals are weakening and disintegrating. As a result they are in a transitional state in terms of culture and heritage. If this process of cultural disintegration and transformation continues under the intervention of external forces, it may so happen that they would have a new social and cultural formation losing their traditional traits and lifestyles. Under this dire situation, people from all walks of life, especially the civil society, the political leaders and Government and Non- Government institutions can play an important role to keep their culture alive by taking proper measures. It is worth mentioning here that there is a scope for further study of the culture and heritage of the Santal community by using modern audio-visual technology.

Appendix: One

Concerning Santali Medium Book

Some pages of Non formal Education book Santali Medium School will appear in this appendix. Objectives and explanation are given in Chapter two.

-Please turn over

গিদরীকোয়াঃ

গীহিল গুথি

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আ ঞ



প্রকাশক
জাতীয় আদিবাসী পরিষদ
কেন্দ্রীয় কমিটি
রাজশাহী

প্রথম প্রকাশ
২০ মার্চ, ১৯৯৯

সহযোগিতা
দারিদ্র্য বিমোচন গবেষণা কর্মসূচী
গ্রামীন ট্রাস্ট

কম্পোজ
দি ইন্ফরমেটিভ
৩৫/৩৭ ষ্টেটার রোড, গোরহাঙ্গা, রাজশাহী-৬১০০
টেলিফোন : ৭৭৫৭৯১

মুদ্রণ
মহানগর প্রিন্টিং এন্ড প্যাকেজিং লিঃ
কুমারপাড়া, রাজশাহী-৬১০০
টেলিফোন : ৭৭৬২৯৪

প্রকাশনা স্বত্ব : জাতীয় আদিবাসী পরিষদ

আমাদের কথা

জাতীয় আদিবাসী পরিষদের ৯-দফা দাবীর অন্যতম দাবী হচ্ছে আদিবাসীদের নিজ মাতৃভাষায় প্রাথমিক শিক্ষাদান। সেই দাবীর আলোকে সাঁওতাল শিশুদের জন্যে রচিত হ'ল এই পুস্তক।

'শাদরী' ভাষায় প্রাথমিক শিক্ষাদানের জন্যে গ্রন্থ প্রকাশের কাজও আমরা হাতে নিয়েছি।

এই পুস্তক রচনা ও প্রকাশনা কাজে যারা সহায়তা করেছেন তাদের প্রতি রইলো অসীম শ্রদ্ধা।

জাতীয় আদিবাসী পরিষদ
কেন্দ্রীয় কমিটি
রাজশাহী

অ



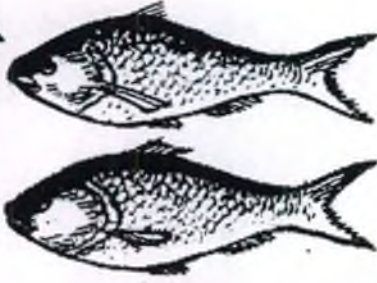
অলঃ পাড়হাঃ চেদ মাবোন
লেখাপড়া শিখব মোরা

আ



আঃ সার মেনাঃ তিএগা
তীর ধনুক আছে আমার

ই



ইলিশ হাকো জোমরে সেবেল
ইলিশ মাছ খেতে মজা

ঈ



ঈপিল ঞেঃলকোম সেরমারে
তারা দেখ আকাশে

উ



উটে চালাঃকান বুরু দিশীম
উট চলেছে মরুর দেশে

উ



উসুল উসুল তালে দারে
লম্বা লম্বা তাল গাছ

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জোমাএও

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আমার

গগো ।

মা

জোএও

ফল

জোমা ।

খাব

গগো

মা

জোএও

ফল

জোমা ।

খাব

লেখা আর অল চেদমে

গুণতে ও লিখতে শেখ

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মিঃং

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বার

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মঁড়ে

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তুরুই

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আরে

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গেলমিঃং

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গেলবার

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গেলপে

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গেলপোন

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গেলমঁড়ে

১৬

গেলতুরুই

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গেলএয়ায়

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গেলইরীল

১৯

গেলআরে

২০

বারগেল

সেবেল সড়ম কিসীবোন আঞ্জম



জাতীয় আদিবাসী পরিষদ, রাজশাহী

সেবেল সড়ম কিসীবোন আঞ্জম

কর্মশালার মাধ্যমে রচিত গল্পের বই

অংশগ্রহণে

অধ্যাপক গনেশ সরেন, পরী টুডু, জুলিয়ান মুর্শু, সিলভেস্টার মার্ভি,
সীতারাম সরেন, শান্তসিনী মুর্শু এবং শ্যামলী টুডু

সহযোগিতায়

সোহানা খন্দকার
কুমার প্রীতীশ বল
রবীন্দ্রনাথ সরেন

সম্পাদনায়

আ.ন.স হাবীবুর রহমান

শিল্প নির্দেশক

রেজাউন নবী

জাতীয় আদিবাসী পরিষদ, রাজশাহী
পৃষ্ঠপোষকতায়: দারিদ্র বিমোচন গবেষণা কর্মসূচি, গ্রামীণ ট্রাস্ট

ভূমিকা

মাতৃভাষা প্রতিটি মানুষের অমূল্য সম্পদ। মাতৃভাষা বাদ দিয়ে শিশুর জন্য শিক্ষার সূচনা করা হলে তা শিওকে আতঙ্কিত করে। বাংলাদেশের শতকরা পঁচানকই ভাগ মানুষের মাতৃভাষা বাংলা হলেও বিভিন্ন ক্ষুদ্র জাতিসত্তার নিজস্ব ভাষা রয়েছে। এসব জাতিসত্তার শিশুদের শিক্ষা প্রদানের জন্য তাদের নিজ নিজ মাতৃভাষা গুরুত্ব পাওয়া উচিত। জাতীয় আদিবাসী পরিষদ এই গুরুত্বপূর্ণ বিষয়টিকে সামনে নিয়ে একটি গবেষণা প্রকল্প বাস্তবায়ন করছে। পরিষদের কাজ শুরু হয়েছে রাজশাহী জেলার সাঁওতাল জনগোষ্ঠী অধ্যুষিত কয়েকটি গ্রামে প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয় স্থাপনের মাধ্যমে। এসব প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়ে সাঁওতালি ভাষায় শিশুদের শিক্ষা শুরুর ব্যবস্থা করা হয়েছে।

জাতীয় আদিবাসী পরিষদের পক্ষ থেকে সাঁওতালি ভাষায় শিশুদের জন্য পাঠ্যপুস্তক এবং সহপাঠ উপকরণ প্রণয়ন করা হচ্ছে। এখানে উল্লেখযোগ্য যে, সাঁওতালি ভাষা একটি সমৃদ্ধ ভাষা হলেও এর নিজস্ব কোনো বর্ণমালা নেই। বাংলা বর্ণমালার সঙ্গে প্রয়োজন বোধে কিছু চিহ্নের সংযুক্তি ঘটিয়ে সাঁওতালি ভাষার পাঠ্যপুস্তক প্রণয়নের দুরূহ কার্যক্রমটি পরিচালিত হচ্ছে। এজন্য বাংলাদেশ এবং ভারতে বসবাসকারী সাঁওতাল জাতিসত্তার মতামতও বিবেচনায় আনা হচ্ছে।

পর্যালোচনা থেকে দেখা গিয়েছে যে, নিজ পরিবার থেকে স্কুলে ভর্তি হওয়ার পরই একজন সাঁওতাল শিশু প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়ে বাংলায় লেখাপড়া করতে সক্ষম হয় না। ফলে, দরিদ্র এই জাতিগোষ্ঠীর বেশির ভাগ ছেলেমেয়ে কিছু শেখার আগেই বিদ্যালয় থেকে ঝরে পড়ে। জাতীয় আদিবাসী পরিষদের বর্তমান উদ্যোগটি এই অবস্থার অবসানে সহায়ক হবে। সাঁওতাল ভাষায় শিশু-শিক্ষার সফলতা অন্যান্য ক্ষুদ্র জাতিসত্তাগুলোকেও একইভাবে এগিয়ে চলার প্রেরণা যোগাবে। জাতীয় আদিবাসী পরিষদ পরিচালিত এই গবেষণা প্রকল্পকে সার্থক করার জন্য দেশের কিছু ব্যক্তিত্ব এগিয়ে এসেছেন। উপমহাদেশের প্রখ্যাত সাহিত্যিক হাসান আজিজুল হক এ প্রচেষ্টার শুরু থেকেই নিজেকে একাত্ম রেখেছেন। ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের বাংলা বিভাগের শিক্ষক অধ্যাপক আনিসুজ্জামান এ ব্যাপারে সহযোগিতার হাত বাড়িয়ে দিয়েছেন। রাজশাহীর স্বনামধন্য রাজনৈতিক ব্যক্তিত্ব ফজলে হোসেন বাদশা এটিকে তাঁর নিজের অন্যতম অঙ্গীকার হিসেবেই গ্রহণ করেছেন। জাতীয় আদিবাসী পরিষদের সভাপতি অনিল মারাতী, সাধারণ সম্পাদক রবীন্দ্রনাথ সরেন, পৃষ্ঠপোষক রফিকুল ইসলাম পিয়ারুল এবং বাসন্তীরানীসহ অনেকেই সাঁওতালি ভাষায় শিক্ষার প্রকল্প বাস্তবায়নের জন্য কাজ করছেন। ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের আধুনিক ভাষা 'ইনস্টিটিউটের শিক্ষক অধ্যাপক মনসুর মুসা এবং প্রশিকার উপকরণ উন্নয়নবিদ আ.ন.স. হাবীবুর রহমানসহ অনেকেই শিক্ষা বিষয়ক কারিগরী দিকে সহায়তা করছেন। দারিদ্র বিমোচন গবেষণা কর্মসূচির প্রাক্তন পরিচালক প্রফেসর সৈয়দ এম. হাশেমী এবং বর্তমান পরিচালক ড. শামসুল বারী এই প্রকল্পের উন্নয়ন ও অগ্রগতিতে আমাদের প্রেরণা জুগিয়ে চলেছেন। এরকম একটি মহান কাজে সম্পৃক্ত হওয়ার সুযোগ পেয়ে প্রতিষ্ঠান হিসেবে গ্রামীণ ট্রাস্ট নিজেকে সৌভাগ্যবান মনে করছে।

'সেবেল সড়ম কিসৌবোন আজম'- বইটি দ্বিতীয় শ্রেণীর শিক্ষার্থীদের একটি সহপাঠ উপকরণ। এতে যে সব গল্প রয়েছে শিক্ষার্থীরা তা তাদের শিক্ষকের নিকট থেকে শুনবে এবং পরবর্তীতে নিজেরা পড়তে পারবে। আশা করি, এসব গল্প আনন্দময় শিক্ষার পরিবেশ সৃষ্টিতে সহায়ক হবে। বইটি চূড়ান্তকরণে সহায়তা করেছেন পশ্চিমবঙ্গের সাঁওতাল ভাষার প্রখ্যাত সাহিত্যিক ও শিক্ষাবিদ মি. ধীরেন্দ্রনাথ বাক্কে। সংশ্লিষ্ট সবাইকে কৃতজ্ঞতা জানাচ্ছি। ধন্যবাদ।

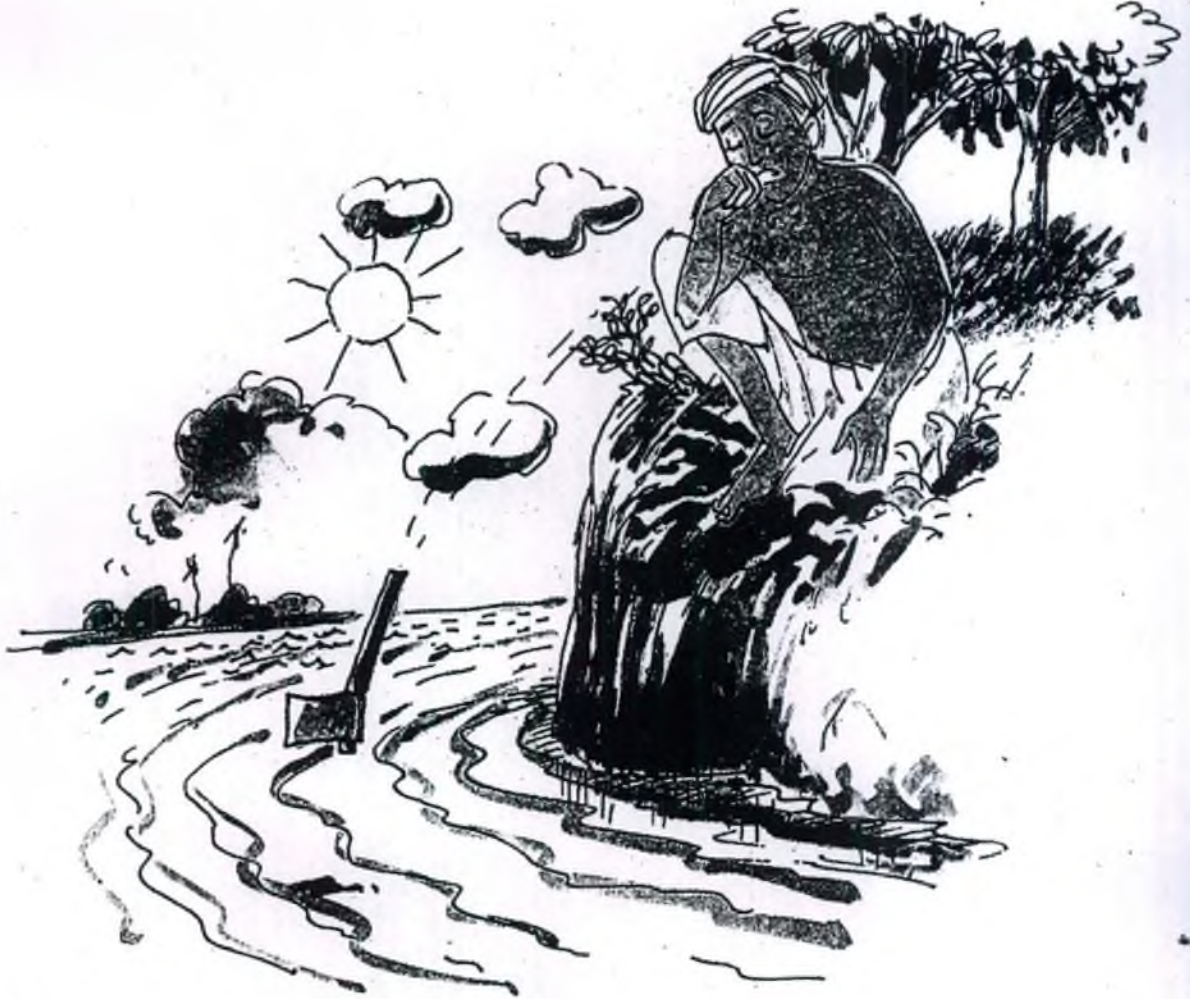
তারিখ: ১২ জুন, ২০০০

জামিল হোসেইন চৌধুরী
মহাব্যবস্থাপক
দারিদ্র বিমোচন গবেষণা কর্মসূচি, গ্রামীণ ট্রাস্ট

মিসরেতাঃ জিউয়ি বাধাও

মিৎ দারে মাঃ হড় গাডা আড়েরে মিৎটেন দারেয়ে মামাঃকান তাঁহঁকানা, আচ্কাগি তি খনাঃ
টেংগঃচ্চায়দ গাডা দাঃরে ঞুরেন তায়। মন দুকতে উনি হড় দ গাডা আড়েরে দুডুঃপকাতে
রারাঃএ এহঃপএনা।

উন জখেঃচ্ দাঃ বংগা গাডা খনাঃ এ রাকাঃপ হেঃচ্ এনা আর উনি হড়ে কুলি কেদেয়া, চেদাঃ
উনীঃ দম রারাঃকানা? হড়ে মেনকেদা-টেংগঃচ্ মা গাডাদাঃরে ঞুরেনতিএগা, অনাতেএঃ
রারাঃকানা।



দাঃ বংগায়ে মেনকেদা আমাঃ টেংগঃচ্ ইঞ আণ্ডকাতামা, মেনখান মিৎটেন কাথা পুরীও
হোয়োঃতামা । ইঞ জাঁহানাঃগিঞ খঃজ অনাগি এমঃ হোয়ঃ তামা ।

দারে মাঃ হড়দয় রীজিয়েনা । দাঃ বংগা গাডাখনাঃ টেংগঃচ্এ আণ্ডকেঃং তায়। বংগা নিয়ীবারে
মেনকেদা আমরেন কুড়ি গিদরী এমঃ হোয়ঃ তামা । হড়দয় হাহাড়ায়েনা । আঃচ্চরেন মিৎটেনগিয়ায়
কুড়ি গিদরী বংগা তিরে চালায় আঁডি দুকে বুঝহাউকেদা ।

বংগায়ে মেতাদেয়া-এটাঃআঃ খজমে । মেনখান দাঃবংগা কাথাদ বায় আঞ্জমলেং তায়। দারে মাঃ
হড়ে মেনকেদা-ইঞরেন কুড়ি গিদরী দ আমাঃ তিরে বীঞ চাল দাড়েকেমা । তিনরে গাডা ঘাটরে
দাঃ ইদিয়ে চালাঃআ, উনরে সাঃপ কাতেয়েম ইদিয়েয়া ।





দারে মাঃ রেন কড়া গিদরৌ দ বংগা আর আপাতাঃ গালমারাও কাথায় আজম কেদা । উনি দ
উসৌরা দৌড় ইদিকাতে মিসেরা অনা কাথায় লৌইআদেয়া । মেতাদেয়ায় -আম দ গাডাসেঃচ্ দাঃ
আঁগুদ আলম চালাঃআ । মেনখান তিনৌঃ দিন বাম চালাও দাড়েঃয়াআ? ডীবরৌঃ হয়োঃআ, ঞুদাঃ
আঁগুয় হয়োঃআ । মিৎদিন সৌরিগি উনি দ কাভাআনতে গাডা ঘাটসেঃচ্-এ মন্ডহায়েনা ।

দাঃ বংগায়ে ঞেঃঞেলকানা দারে মাঃরেন কুড়ি দ ঘাটসেঃচ্-এ হিজুঃকানা । উনি দ তৌবুঃপ ছিনতে
বির খনাঃ এ ওডোকেনা ।



দারে মাঃ বেন কড়া দ বির আড়েসেঃ্ রেয় তাহেকানা । বয়হা কুড়ি গাভাসেঃ্ হিজুঃ এ
এলকেদে খানগি আঁপীড়িয়ানতেয়ে তাঁড়াঃএনা । তিনরে তাঁবুঃপ কুড়িয়ে সাবেকান তাঁহেকানা,
উনরিগি বয়হা কড়াদয় তুএকেদেয়া । তাঁবুঃপএ গঃ্ কেদেয়া । উনি দ আঃ্চরেন মিসেরায়
বাধাও কেদেয়া ।

আতুরেন সানাম হড়কো মিৎকাতে মিৎটেন ডাংরাকো কিরিএ কেদেয়া আর ডাংরা দ উনি দারে
মাঃবেন কড়াকো এমাদেয়া । মিসেরা বাধাও-এ লীগিৎ অনা দ উনিয়াঃ শিরপী

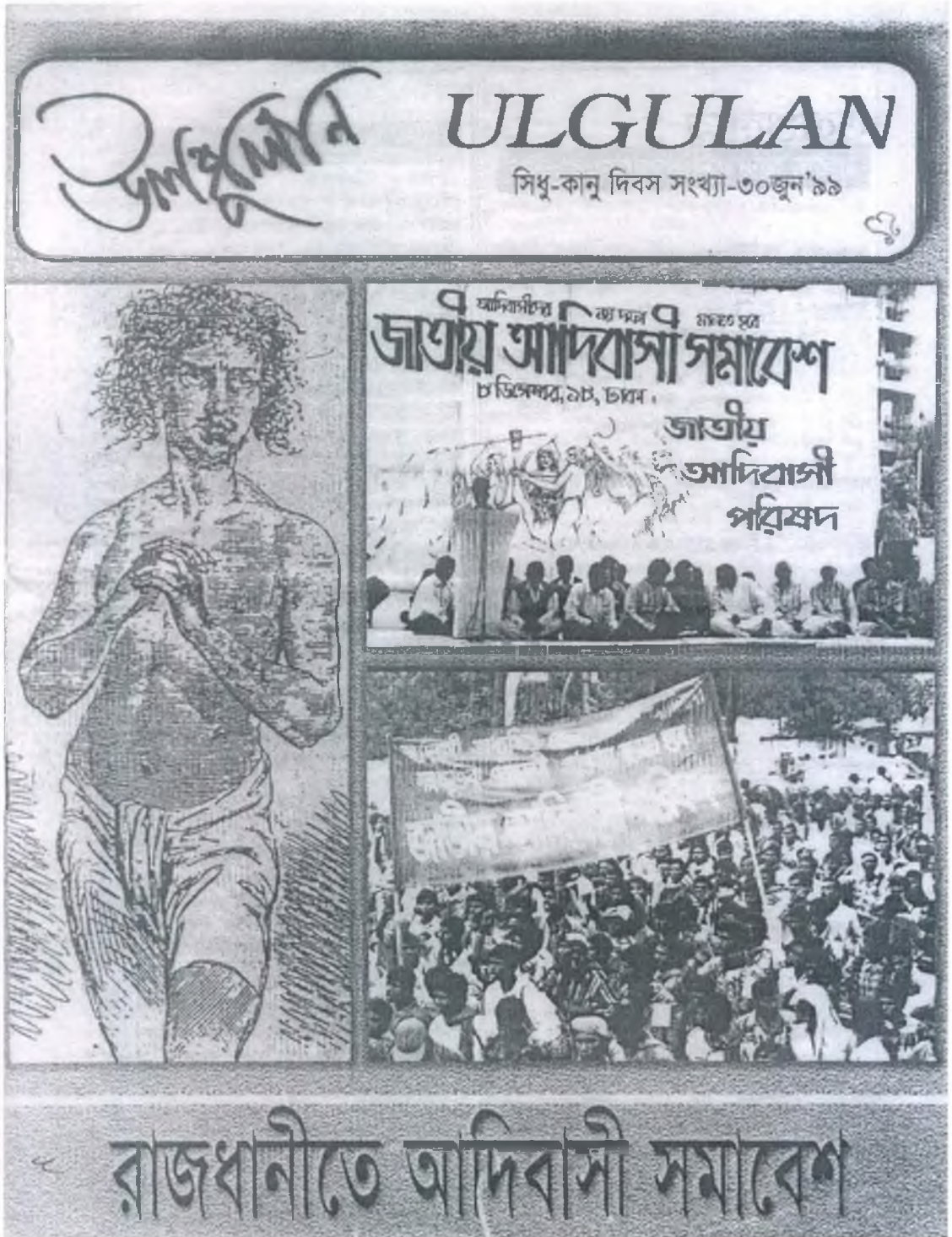
আর উনখনগে সাঁওতাল সমাজরে মিসেরাতায়ঃ বাপলারে দ বয়হা ডাংরায় এগামেয়া । জাঁওয়ায়
গংকে সেঃ্ খন ডাংরা দকো এমাকোয়া ।

Appendix: Two

Concerning ULGULAN- a Magazine of Jatiya Adivashi Parishad

Some pages of ULGULAN will appear in this appendix. Objectives and explanation are given in Chapter two.

-Please turn over



উল্লেখ্য

জাতীয় আদিবাসী পরিষদের বুলেটিন

সম্পাদক রবীন্দ্রনাথ সরেন

সম্পাদক মন্তলী অনীল মারাডী, ডাঃ মনন কুমার
বারমার, নরেশ চন্দ্র উরাও, আমিন
কুজার, মঞ্জল কিঙ্কু, প্রভাষক সরেন
মুরমু, জবিন চন্দ্র পাহান, রমানাথ
মাহাত, সবিচ চন্দ্র সরকার, সুফল
হেমরম, লবীন সরেন।

সহকারী সম্পাদক গনেশ মাঝি

প্রতিবেদক বিমন চন্দ্র সরকার, মুকুল আবদীন

কম্পোজ

দি ইন্ডারমেন্ট

৩৫/৩৭ হেটার রোড, গোরহাঙ্গা, রাজশাহী-৬১০০
টেলিফোন : ৭৭৫৭৯১

মুদ্রণ

মহানগর প্রিন্টিং এন্ড প্যাকেজিং লিঃ
কুমারপাড়া, রাজশাহী-৬১০০
টেলিফোন : ৭৭৬২৯৪

যোগাযোগের ঠিকানাঃ

রবীন্দ্রনাথ সরেন

সম্পাদক

উল্লেখ্য

সরকার কটেজ (নীচতলা)

বোসপাড়া, ডাকঘর- ঘোড়ামারা

রাজশাহী-৬১০০

অভ্যন্তরীণ মূল্য পাঁচ টাকা

সম্পাদকীয়

প্রতিদিন মানুষের জীবন নানা ধরনের ঝটিল সমস্যায় নিপতিত হচ্ছে। ঘটে যাচ্ছে অনেক অশুভপ্রেরিত দুর্ভাগ্যজনক ঘটনা। মানুষ যেন এক পর্বত সমান বোঝা মাথায় নিয়ে জীবন সংগ্রামে লিপ্ত। প্রাকৃতিক মুহুর্তে হোকাবেলা করতে হচ্ছে তাদের উপর চেপে বসে পাক্ষা মজান ও টাউটসের। এ থেকে আদিবাসীরা কোন ভাবেই বাধ পড়ে নাই। যুগ যুগ ধরে আদিবাসীদের উপর নির্ধাতনের যে ধারা চলে আসছে আজও সেই একই ধারা অব্যাহত রয়েছে। এ থেকে রেহাই পাবার জন্য জাতীয় আদিবাসী পরিষদের নেতৃত্বে আদিবাসীরা ১৯৯৩ সাল থেকে ৯ দফা দাবী নিয়ে আন্দোলন সন্ধ্যায় করে আসছে। আদিবাসীরা জাল দলিলের মাধ্যমে তাদের হাতছাড়া হয়ে যাওয়া জবর দখলকৃত জমি, বহুকাল থেকে বসবাসরত ঝাস জমি ও আর্পিত সম্পত্তি ফিরে পাবার আশায় সরকারের নিকট বার বার দাবী জানিয়েও কোন সুফল পায়নি সরকার কোন পদক্ষেপও গ্রহণ করে নাই। উল্টা অন্যদিকে টাউট, মহালন কিছু অসং কর্মচারীর যোগসাজসে আদিবাসীদের সহায় সম্পাদ লুট করার যড়যন্ত্রে লিপ্ত থাকে। সংবাদদায় আদিবাসীরা সরকারের কোন সহযোগিতা না পাওয়ায় সন্ত্রাসীরা নির্ভীকভাবে তাদের সম্পদ লুণ্ঠন, ধর্ষণ, হত্যা, লুট, মিথ্যা-মামলা, উচ্ছেদ করার মতো নিতনৈমিত্তিক ঘটনা ঘটানো চলেছে। এর প্রতিকার না হওয়ায় আদিবাসী সমাজ আজ হতাশ। শিকার সুযোগ নাই এমন কি চাকুরীর সুযোগও নাই। আদিবাসীদের যেন এদেশের কোন কিছুতেই অধিকার নাই। ঠিক যেমন ব্রিটিশ যুগে আদিবাসীদের উপর নির্ধাতনের ফলশ্রুতিতে ঘটেছিল ১৮৫৫ সালের ৩০ জুন 'ফল' বিদ্রোহের সূচনা। যা আজও সমগ্র আদিবাসী সমাজ গর্বের সঙ্গে স্মরণ করে থাকে। এই বিদ্রোহ শুধু আদিবাসীদের রক্ষার জন্যই যে হয়েছিল তা কিন্তু মোটেই নয়। নিপীড়িত, শোষিত, বঞ্চিত সকল শ্রেণীর মানুষের মুক্তির লক্ষ্যই ছিল সেনিনের এক ষাড়া উদ্দেশ্য। হল বিদ্রোহের মহানায়ক সিধু কানু ভায়ায় তাই ফাঁসির অক্ষে যাবার পূর্ব মুহুর্ত পর্যন্ত দৃঢ় কন্ঠে বলতে পেরেছিলেন, "আমি সিধু-এ আমার দেশ আমি কানু-এ আমার দেশ" তারা বলেছিলেন জীবন দিবে তবুও এই শরতানদের কাছে মাথা নোয়াব না। হল বিদ্রোহের নায়কেরা শত অভ্যাচারেও পিছপা হন নাই।

আদিবাসীরা আজও সেই পৌরবোদ্ধল ইতিহাস ধারণ করে বলতে চায় আদিবাসীদের মানুষের মতো বাচার অধিকার দিতে হবে। আদিবাসীদের স্বাধীন ও সাংবিধানিক অধিকার সংরক্ষণের জন্য সরকারকে সক্রিয়ভাবে নীতি গ্রহণ করতে হবে। এ দাবী বাংলাদেশের সকল আদিবাসীর।

ঢাকা মহাসমাবেশে আদিবাসীদের

দাবী উত্থাপন

৮ই ডিসেম্বর ১৯৯৮ ঢাকায় আদিবাসীদের মহাসমাবেশে গৃহীত যে, ঘোষণাপত্র স্মারকলিপি আকারে প্রধানমন্ত্রীর কাছে পাঠানো হয় তার পূর্ণ বিবরণ নিচে দেয়া হল:

মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী
গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
প্রধানমন্ত্রীর সচিবালয়,
ঢাকা।

বিষয় : আদিবাসীদের অস্তিত্ব রক্ষার দাবী।

মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী,
আমরা বাংলাদেশের উত্তরাঞ্চলের বৃহত্তর রাজশাহী বিভাগে প্রায় ১৫ লক্ষ আদিবাসী প্রাচীনকাল থেকে বসবাস করে আসছি। আমরা এদেশের ভূমিজ সন্তান। এদেশের পতিত জমিকে আমরা চাষ করে আবাদযোগ্য হিসেবে তৈরী করেছি। বনাঞ্চলকে সংরক্ষণ করেছি। আজকের যে উন্নত সমাজ গড়ে উঠেছে তা আমাদেরই সৃষ্টি। কিন্তু আমাদের দেশেই আমরা পরবাসী। পাকিস্তান আমল থেকে আজ পর্যন্ত চরম নির্যাতনের শিকার। মহান মুক্তিযুদ্ধে অংশগ্রহণ করার জন্য পাকবাহিনী আমাদের গ্রামকে গ্রাম পুড়িয়ে দিয়েছে। আমাদের মেয়ে-পুরুষদের দেশত্যাগ করতে হয়েছে। শহীদ হয়েছেন আদিবাসীরা। কিন্তু বাংলাদেশের স্বাধীনতার পরে আমাদের স্বতন্ত্র অস্তিত্বের, কৃষ্টি ও ঐতিহ্য, ধর্মীয় অধিকার রক্ষার কোন সাংবিধানিক অধিকার প্রদান করা হয় নাই। বৈষম্যমূলক আইন ও প্রশাসনের বৈষম্যমূলক আচরণ, অর্পিত সম্পত্তি আইনের অত্যাচারে এবং বনায়নের নামে আমাদের ঘরবাড়ী বসতভিটা ও জমি থেকে উচ্ছেদ করা হচ্ছে প্রতিদিন। গ্রামের দুর্নীতিবাজ মাতঙ্গররা সাম্প্রদায়িক চক্র বিভিন্নভাবে জমি-জমা দখল করে নিচ্ছে। আমাদের ছেলেমেয়েদের লেখাপড়ার কোন ব্যবস্থা নাই। চাকুরির বিশেষ সুযোগ থেকে আমরা বঞ্চিত। এমনকি জাতিসংঘ কর্তৃক ঘোষিত ১৯৯৩ সালে আদিবাসী বর্ষ পালন করতে সরকার অস্বীকৃতি জানিয়েছে। সংবিধানে স্বতন্ত্র স্বীকৃতি না থাকলেও অন্তত অনগ্রসর জনগোষ্ঠীকে বিশেষ সুবিধা দেয়ার যে কথা বলা আছে তাও আমাদের দেয়া হচ্ছে না।

সরকার পার্বত্য চট্টগ্রাম শান্তি প্রতিষ্ঠার লক্ষ্যে পার্বত্য চট্টগ্রাম বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয় গঠন করেছেন, সরকারের এ পদক্ষেপকে আমরা স্বাগত জানাচ্ছি। কিন্তু আদিবাসীদের জন্য কোন মন্ত্রণালয় নাই। আদিবাসীদের উন্নয়ন, ধর্ম ও সাংস্কৃতিক ঐতিহ্য রক্ষার নামে সরকারী যে অর্থ ব্যয় করা হচ্ছে তা আদিবাসীদের কোন কাজে আসছে না। বিভিন্ন জায়গায় নৃতাত্ত্বিক জনগোষ্ঠীর উন্নয়নের জন্য সাংস্কৃতিক একাডেমী করা হচ্ছে। সে সকল একাডেমীতে আদিবাসী নিয়োগ ও প্রয়োজনীয় লোকবলও দেয়া হচ্ছে না।

এই অবস্থায় সমগ্র আদিবাসী জনগণের মধ্যে তীব্র হতাশা ও স্কোভের সৃষ্টি হয়েছে। বাংলাদেশের নাগরিক হিসেবে আমাদের অস্তিত্ব রক্ষার জন্য আমরা তাই বিভিন্ন সময় ৯দফা দাবী উত্থাপন করেছি। কিন্তু এ পর্যন্ত কোন সরকারই আমাদের এই দাবী মেনে নেয় নাই। আমরা তাই আজ জাতীয় পর্যায়ে ঢাকায় সমবেত হয়ে আপনার বরাবরে আমাদের বাঁচার দাবীসমূহ আপনার সদয় বিবেচনা ও সংশ্লিষ্ট কর্তৃপক্ষকে কার্যকর ব্যবস্থা নেয়ার প্রয়োজনীয় নির্দেশ প্রদানের জন্য পেশ করছি।

দাবীসমূহ

- ১। আদিবাসীদের 'আদিবাসী' হিসেবে সাংবিধানিক স্বীকৃতি দিতে হবে।
 - ২। সরকারী খাস, জমিদারী খাস, অর্পিত সম্পত্তি ও দীর্ঘদিন বসবাসরত ভিটা দখলী শর্তে আদিবাসীদের চিরস্থায়ী বন্দোবস্ত অর্থাৎ আইনগত মালিকানা দিতে হবে।
 - ৩। ভাষা ও সংস্কৃতি রক্ষার সরকারী উদ্যোগ গ্রহণ করতে হবে এবং বাংলা ইংরেজীর পাশাপাশি আদিবাসীদের নিজ ভাষায় পঞ্চম শ্রেণী পর্যন্ত শিক্ষা দানের ব্যবস্থা চালু করতে হবে।
 - ৪। অবৈধ জাল ও বেদখল সম্পত্তি পুনরুদ্ধারের জন্য সরকারী খরচে আইনের সাহায্য দিতে হবে।
 - ৫। সকল শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানের বিশেষ সুযোগ ও চাকুরি ক্ষেত্রে কোটা কার্যকরী করতে হবে।
 - ৬। ছিন্মুল আদিবাসীদের পুনর্বাসনের ব্যবস্থা করতে হবে।
 - ৭। অর্পিত সম্পত্তি আইন বাতিল করতে হবে।
 - ৮। উত্তরবঙ্গসহ বাংলাদেশের সকল আদিবাসী এলাকায় আদিবাসী সাংস্কৃতিক একাডেমী প্রতিষ্ঠা করতে হবে।
 - ৯। আদিবাসীদের উপর সকল প্রকার অন্যায় অত্যাচার বন্ধ করতে হবে।
- (ক) আদিবাসী বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয় গঠন করতে হবে ও
(খ) আদিবাসীদের ভূমির উপর অধিকার রক্ষার জন্য বিশেষ ভূমি কমিশন গঠন করতে হবে।

তীর ধনুক ধরতেই হবে

মারশাল হেমরম

চিৎকার করে বলছ
এই তৈরী করা

জমি, পুকুর, খামারবাড়ী
এগুলো নাকি আমার নয়?

লাল চোখে হুকুম করছ
এগুলো ছেড়ে

চলে যেতে হবে
যেখানে খুশি ঠিকানাহীন-
কিন্তু

এই জায়গাকে ঘিরেছিল
গল্পের রাজত্ব।

গাছ পাল্লা গহণ অরণ্য
বসতিহীন-।

কায়িক শ্রমে জঞ্জাল সরিয়ে
পরিস্কার করে-

বানিয়েছি বাসযোগ্য সংসার
সুখের সংসার।

এখন যদি দাবি কর
জমি, পুকুর, খামার বাড়ী
এগুলো আমার নয়

তবে তো

আমাকে তীর ধনুক হাতে তুলে নিতেই হবে।

আদিবাসী সমাবেশে

সরকারের নিকট মারমী গ্রামের আদিবাসীদের দাবী

ভূমিগ্রাসী ও অত্যাচারী চক্রের হোতা সৈয়দ জমশেদ চৌধুরী গং কর্তৃক মিথ্যা ও বড়বক্তৃত্বমূলক মামলা অবিলম্বে প্রত্যাহারের দাবী জানিয়েছে পাবনা জেলার ঈশ্বরদী থানার দাতাড়িয়া ইউনিয়নের মারমী গ্রামের বাসিন্দারা অবশিষ্ট ৪২টি আদিবাসী পরিবার সৈয়দ জমশেদ চৌধুরীর অত্যাচারে আজ দিশেহারা। ভূমিগ্রাসী সৈয়দ জমশেদ চৌধুরী মারমী আদিবাসীদের দিঘী যা কালী মন্দিরের নামে দানপত্র আছে সেই কালী মন্দিরের নামীয় দিঘীটি আত্মসাৎ করার অপচেষ্টায় লিপ্ত রয়েছে। দিঘীর দখলকে কেন্দ্র করে জমশেদ চৌধুরীর পোষা লাঠিয়াল বাহিনী বার বার মারমী গ্রামের আদিবাসীদের ফসল জোর করে কেটে নিয়েছে, বাড়ী ঘর আগনে পুড়িয়ে দিয়েছে। জমি জাল করা, নারীদের উপর পাশবিক নির্যাতন এবং দশ মাস ব্যবধানে ২জন আদিবাসীকে হত্যা করেছে। আদিবাসীদের বিরুদ্ধে দায়ের করা যড়বক্তৃত্বমূলক ৭টি মিথ্যা মামলার হাত থেকে রক্ষা পাওয়াসহ ভূমিগ্রাসী জমশেদ চৌধুরী ও তার সাঙ্গ-পাঙ্গদের দৃষ্টান্তমূলক শাস্তি এবং ন্যায় বিচার চেয়ে সরকারের নিকট ৮ দফা দাবী পেশ করেছে।

দাবী সমূহ :

- ১। রাষ্ট্রীয়ভাবে, সরকারের কাছে আমাদের দাবী আত্মসাৎকৃত আদিবাসীদের সকল জমি উদ্ধারের জন্য আইনগত ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করতে হবে।
- ২। ২৩শে জুন/৯৫ আদিবাসী কুল ছাত্র শ্যামল হত্যার সি, আই, ডি দ্বারা পুনঃ তদন্তের ব্যবস্থা চাই।
- ৩। আমাদের জায়গা জমি যারা অন্যায় ও জোরপূর্বক দখল করেছে সেই সকল জমি উদ্ধারের জন্য পাবনা অতিরিক্ত জেলা প্রশাসক (রাজস্ব) কে অধিক ক্ষমতা প্রদান করে জমি উদ্ধারের আইনগত ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করতে হবে।
- ৪। জালিয়াত-বাজ সস্ত্রাসী খুনি জমশেদ চৌধুরীর হাত থেকে আমাদের ৩৩ বিঘার দেবতোর দীঘি উদ্ধারের প্রয়োজনীয় ব্যবস্থা করতে হবে ও তার ভাড়াটে সস্ত্রাসীদের যেক্ষতার ও বিচার চাই।
- ৫। জমশেদ চৌধুরী কর্তৃক আমাদের বিরুদ্ধে দায়ের করা ৭টি মিথ্যা মামলা অতিসত্তর প্রত্যাহার করতে হবে।
- ৬। আমরা সর্ব বিঘয়ে সরেজমিনে উচ্চ পর্যায়ের তদন্ত কমিটি গঠনপূর্বক বিচার দাবী করছি।
- ৭। কাজ, জমি, শিক্ষা চাই বীচার মত মজুরী চাই।
- ৮। ঈশ্বরদীর টি, এন, টি কর্মকর্তা জমশেদ চৌধুরীর দোষের আনিসুর রহমানকে অতিসত্তর বদলী করতে হবে।

দৈনিক

সোনালী সংবাদ

আমি নিউজ, আমি কথা বলবই- দেশের কথা, স্বাধীনতার কথা, জনতার কথা

'সোনালী সংবাদ'- সত্যের মুখোমুখি প্রতিদিন
কার্যালয়ঃ গৌরহাঙ্গা, গ্রেটার রোড, রাজশাহী।
ফোন : ৭৭৫৪৮৪, ৭৭২১০০

তোমার অধিকার

বিষ্ণুপদ কিসকু

নিবিড় বনভূমি আর উঁচু নীচু জায়গাকে সমতল করে বানালে তুমি শস্যক্ষেত্র। কিন্তু তাতে কি তোমার অধিকার আছে?

তোমার বাস ছিল সমতল ক্ষেত্রে সেখানে সুখ ও শান্তি ছিল বিরাজিত। কিন্তু মানুষের দ্বারাই অত্যাচারিত হয়ে সব পেছনে ফেলে এসেছ। আজ তোমার পাশে দাঁড়াবার কেউ নেই।

যদিও সমস্ত কাজেই তুমি নিপুণ তবুও তোমার কোনো অধিকার নেই। ভোর থেকে সন্ধ্যা পর্যন্ত মুখ বন্ধ করে কেবল খেতে যাও শুধু বীচার তাগিদে।

সত্যতার মূলে তোমারই প্রধান ভূমিকা কিন্তু সত্যতার সব কিছু তোমার উপভোগের বাইরে এমনি পরিবেশে আর কি বোকা হয়ে থাকবে?

এখন তোমাকে ধরতে হবে হাতিয়ার। রাড়াং রাড়াং করে তুলতে হবে জয়ের ধ্বনি। দ্রুতগতিতে চরু কর বিপ্লব ছিনিয়ে নাও তোমার অধিকার।

ঐক্য

বিপিন মুরমু

টলা পতীর থেকেই আমরা করব যাত্রা গুল
দেশের মানুষ সবে।
বাক্যে শক্তি ঐক্যবন্ধ তত্ত সুন্দর কাজে
ঐক্যতানের রবে
দেশের মধ্যে সবার মনে জাগবে প্রাণের জোয়ার
তুলব ধ্বনি সাড়া।
যেওনা পড়ে হেঁচট না খাও সমুখ পথে যারে
খারাং তিপি দাড়াং।

ঐক্য সূত্র ছিন্ন হলে আলোর পথটি হায়
হারিয়ে কোথায় যাবে।
পরস্পরের থেকে যদি ছড়িয়ে সবাই পড়ি
শক্তি কোথা পাবে।
হিংসা ও ঘেঁষ বাড়াবোনা শান্তি আসুক নেমে
খেয়োরাল জন দাড়া
ছিন্ন ভিন্ন জাতির মধ্যে ঐক্যতানের গান
খারাং তিপি দাড়াং।



Appendix: Three

Concerning Adivashi Unnayan Shamabesh, 03 May 2002

The declaration of Adivashi Unnayan Shamabesh, organized by *Adivashi Unnayan Shonstha* (AUS) will appear in this appendix. Objectives and explanation are given in Chapter five.

- Please turn over

আদিবাসী উন্নয়ন সংস্থা (আউস)

আয়োজিত

আদিবাসী উন্নয়ন সমাবেশের

ঘোষণা পত্র

৩রা মে ২০০২

বাংলাদেশের মূল জনগোষ্ঠীর পাশাপাশি আদিবাসী জনগোষ্ঠী এক বিরাট অংশ হিসাবে বসবাস করে আসছে। দেশের বিভিন্ন এলাকায় বিভিন্ন আদিবাসী জনগোষ্ঠী বসবাস করে। বৃহত্তর রাজশাহী জেলাসহ উত্তর বঙ্গের বিভিন্ন জেলায় সাঁওতাল জনগোষ্ঠী একটি সংখ্যাগরিষ্ঠ আদিবাসী জনগোষ্ঠী। এদের পাশাপাশি উরাও, মুন্ডা, পাহাড়ী, মাহালীসহ অন্যান্য আদিবাসী জনগোষ্ঠী এলাকায় বসবাস করে। কৃষি হচ্ছে তাদের প্রধান পেশা। প্রাচীন কাল থেকে আজ পর্যন্ত কৃষির উপর নির্ভর করে বেঁচে আছে। দেশের সামগ্রিক আর্থ-সামাজিক অবস্থায় বর্তমানে এই অঞ্চলের আদিবাসী জনগোষ্ঠী বিভিন্ন সমস্যার মধ্য দিয়ে জীবন যাপন করছে। কৃষি তাদের প্রধান পেশা হলেও কৃষি জমির উপর তাদের নালিকা বর্তমানে বহুলাংশে হ্রাস পেয়েছে। বাংলাদেশের ৯৫% আদিবাসী আজ ভূমিহীন। দিনমুহুরী বিহবা কৃষি শ্রমিক হিসাবে তারা উৎপাদনের সঙ্গে যুক্ত। মুজুরী শোষণ একটি গিত্য বিষয়ে পরিশ্রমিত হয়েছে। এছাড়া প্রতিদিনই তাদের হাতছাড়া হচ্ছে আবাদযোগ্য জমি, কোথাও বা কসত ভিটা। সারা কসর পরিশ্রম করে যে ফসল উৎপাদন করেছে তা তুলে দিয়ে আসতে হচ্ছে জোতদার, ধনী কৃষকের গোলায়।

হাজার সমস্যার মধ্য দিয়ে এই অঞ্চলের আদিবাসী জনগোষ্ঠী দিনাতিপাত করছে। এই মাটির সন্তান হয়েও তারা পরবাসী। অধৈনিক তানে তারা আজ বিপর্যস্থ। বিভিন্ন কারণে তাদের অর্থনীতি আজ পল্ল। শিক্ষার ক্ষেত্রে তারা পিছিয়ে আছে। রোগ ব্যাধির কোন সৃষ্টি চিকিৎসা নাই। অব্যাহতকর বাসস্থান, ক্ষুধা আর অভাবের সঙ্গে লড়াই করে তাদের বেঁচে থাকতে হচ্ছে। ফলে জাতীয় উন্নয়নের মূল ধারা থেকে তারা সব সময় থাকছে বিছিন্ন। এই অঞ্চলের আদিবাসী জনগোষ্ঠীর মৌলিক সমস্যা সমূহ নিয়ে তুলে ধরা হলো :

ভূমি সমস্যা :-

বাংলাদেশের আদিবাসীরাও পৃথিবীর অন্যান্য আদিবাসীদের মতই মানবিক অধিকার হতে বঞ্চিত ও নিপীড়িত সম্প্রদায়। বর্তমানে আদিবাসীদের

মধ্যে ভূমিহীনদের সংখ্যা শতকরা হিসেবে বরেন্দ্র প্রায় ৯৫ জন। কিন্তু এক সময় তাদের এ দশা ছিলনা। তাদের সহায়, সম্পদ ছিল, জমি ছিল, মহিষ ছিল, ছিল গরু বাছুর আর ছাগল-ডেড়ার পাল। স্থানীয় সুদখোর এবং মহাজনরা পরিকল্পিত ভাবে আদিবাসীদেরকে ঋণ প্রদান করে থাকে।

উদ্দেশ্যমূলক ভাবে প্রদত্ত ঋণ চক্রবৃদ্ধিহারা অথবা শুভংকরের ফাঁকিতে বহুগুণে বর্ধিত হয়ে অতি সহজেই আদিবাসীদেরকে ভিটেমাটি থেকে উচ্ছেদ করে দেয়। তারা সহজ-সরল, কুটকৌশল বোঝেনা। তাই এভাবে হাজার হাজার আদিবাসীদেরকে পথে বসতে হয়েছে।

এক পুরুষ আগে যাদের ছিল ঘর ভর্তি ধান, গরু মহিষের পাল, তাদের সন্তানদের আজ হালের বলদ মাই। এর ফলে বহু আদিবাসী দেশ ত্যাগ করে প্রতিবেশী দেশে চলে গেছে। আদিবাসীদের বহু জমি বিনা রেজিস্ট্রিতে বা জাল দলিলে এক শ্রেণীর দখলদার মানুষ জবর দখল করে ভোগ করছে। এই শ্রেণীর জবর দখলকারীদের দ্বারা তারা প্রায় সর্বনাশ হয়ে গেছে। দেশের আইন কাশ্মুস সম্পর্কে তারা অজ্ঞান নয়। কোর্ট-কাচারী কোন দিন তাদের উপকারে আসেনি। এসব ক্ষেত্রে সব সময়ই তারা প্রতারিত হয়েছে। তারা সহজ সরল প্রান বিধায় সমাজের জটিলতা, প্যাচ গোছ বোঝে না। তাদের এই সরলতার সুযোগে হীনমনা জবর দখলদার বাহিনী তাদের উসকানি দিয়েই চলেছে।

জমি লোভী ক্ষুদ্রে শোষণ, স্থানীয় জোতদার এবং ধাম্য টাউটরা আদিবাসীদের জমি জাল দলিলের মাধ্যমে কখনো অন্য লোককে ডুয়া জমির মালিক সাজিয়ে জমি রেজিস্ট্রি করে নিচ্ছে।

বাসস্থান সমস্যা :-

আদিবাসীরা শুধু তাদের আবাদযোগ্য জমি দ্বারাই সমস্যা কবলিত নয়। যে জায়গায় তারা বসবাস করে সেসব জায়গাও তাদের সমস্যার শেষ নাই। আদিবাসীরা যেমন আইন বোঝে না, তেমনি কোন জায়গার বসবাস করতে হলে তার কাগজ পত্রের প্রয়োজনও বুঝতো না। তাই নিজেদের বাসস্থানের কাগজ পত্রও করতো না। ফলে বাসস্থান জায়গাগুলো খাস হয়ে পড়ে থাকতো। এ অবস্থায় দীর্ঘ সময় ধরে থেকেও জরিপের মাধ্যমে কখনও তাদের নামে বাসস্থান হয় নাই। ফলে পরবর্তীকালে সুবিদ্যাত্মক জবর দখলদারেরা নিজেদের নামে খাস বন্দোবস্ত করে নিতো।

শিক্ষা সমস্যা :-

দেশের উত্তর পশ্চিমাত্মনের সুদূর দূরিত জনগোষ্ঠী আদিবাসীরা শিক্ষার দিক দিয়ে সমস্যায় বেশী পিচ্ছিল হয়ে আছে। তখন কলে দেখা যাবে এই অঞ্চলের বাসালী মহিলাদের চেয়েও আদিবাসী পুরুষ এক নারীর শিক্ষার হার অনেক অনেক নিচে।

১৯৭৯, ৮০, ৮৬ খ্রীষ্টাব্দের বৃহত্তর দিনাজপুর রংপুর রাজশাহী জেলা সমূহের পরিচালিত জরিপে দেখা যায় আদিবাসীদের শিক্ষার হার ২%। বর্তমানে আদিবাসীদের শিক্ষার হার কিছুটা বেড়ে তা ৬%-৮% এর মধ্যে রয়েছে। প্রকৃত পক্ষে, সমাধের বয়স্ক নারী পুরুষের অশিক্ষা ও নিরক্ষরতার ফলে সামাজিকভাবেই শিক্ষা সম্পর্কে এদের প্রণাঢ় অসচেতনতা রয়েছে। তাছাড়াও সহায় সম্পদ হারিয়ে জন্মবর্ধমান গ্রুপে সম্পর্কিত জাতীয়সঙ্কট হিসাবে জীবন সীমিকার অধেষণে তাদেরকে এত বেশী নিমগ্ন থাকতে হয় যে, উত্তর পুরুষের শিক্ষা সম্পর্কে তারা অতটা চিন্তা করার অবকাশ পায়না। এছাড়াও বিভিন্ন রাজনৈতিক সংকট, সামাজিক পশ্চাদপদতা, বৃহৎকারাচ্ছন্নতা, নেশা, ইত্যাদি মৌলিক কারণেও তাদের মধ্যে শিক্ষা গ্রহণ করার প্রকৃততা পূর্বে (বিশেষ করে ১৯৭৯ পর্যন্ত) কম পরিলক্ষিত হয়।

বর্তমানে বিভিন্ন উন্নয়ন প্রকল্পের কার্যক্রম গ্রহণের ফলে তাদের মধ্যে এক্ষেত্রে পরিবর্তন লক্ষণীয়। তবে তা খুবই অপ্রতুল। বউদেয়োগ এক অন্যান্য ভাষার পাশাপাশি স্বয়ং ভাষায় একটি পর্যায় পর্যন্ত (প্রাথমিক) শিক্ষা গ্রহণ ছাড়া এই সমস্যার সমাধান প্রায়ই অসম্ভব। যদিও এ ধরনের কর্মসূচী এখনও ব্যাপকতা লাভ করেনি। তথাপি এর কিছু কিছু সূত্রপাত লক্ষণীয়। আর বর্তমানে আদিবাসীদের যে দুর্বৃত্তা অশিক্ষা অন্যতম কারণগুলোর একটি মূল কারণ। এই অশিক্ষার জন্যই তারা তাদের সহায় সম্পদ হারিয়েছে এক হারাচ্ছে।

সংস্কৃতি সমস্যাঃ-

Dhaka University Institutional Repository দেশ বাংলাদেশ। এই দেশে ব্যাপকভাবে বসবাস করে সাংস্কৃতিক বিচিত্রে তরপুর বিভিন্ন ক্ষুদ্র জাতিসত্তা, যারা আদিবাসী বা উপজাতি নামে পরিচিত। এই জাতি স্বভাব নিজস্ব সংস্কৃতি রয়েছে। সংস্কৃতি জাতির পরিচয় বহন করে। তাই নিজ জাতিসত্তাকে টিকিয়ে রাখার জন্য প্রত্যেক সম্প্রদায়ের নিজে নিজ সংস্কৃতি লালন- পালন করা উচিত। অথচ দুঃখ হলেও সত্য যে, বর্তমানে আদিবাসীদের সংস্কৃতি দিন দিন বিলুপ্ত হয়ে যাচ্ছে। বিভিন্ন ঘটনা গ্রন্থে আদিবাসী সমাজ নিগূত ও বিখ্যাত হয়

ব্যাপকভাবে। বিপুল সংখ্যক আদিবাসী আগল সংস্কৃতি থেকে বিচ্যুত হয়। ফলে ক্রমশঃ ক্রমশঃ ঐতিহ্যবাহী আদিবাসী সমাজে নেমে আসে সামাজিক ও সাংস্কৃতিক অবক্ষয়। প্রাচীন ঐতিহ্য থেকে দিন দিন দূরে সরে যাচ্ছে তাদের জীবন ও সংস্কৃতি। তাদের সংস্কৃতি রক্ষা করার এখনও সুযোগ আছে আর তা না হলে অচিরেই তা বিলীন হয়ে যাবে।

কবরস্থান ও মন্দির সমস্যা :-

এক্ষেত্রে বাসস্থানের মতই ঘটনা ঘটেছে। আদিবাসীরা যে সব জায়গায় মৃত দেহের সংকার এবং সৃষ্টিকর্তার বা তাদের দেবদেবীদের উপাসনা করতেন সেসব জায়গায়ও প্রয়োজনীয় প্রশাসন থেকে কাগজ পত্র নেওয়ার প্রয়োজন মনে করেনি। সেগুলো খাস অবস্থায় গড়ে থাকতো। বর্তমানে আদিবাসীদের কবরস্থান ও মন্দিরের হারগাগুলো বেদখল হয়ে যাচ্ছে। আউস তথ্য নিয়ে জানতে পেরেছে যে, তার কর্ম এলাকায় যতগুলো আদিবাসী গ্রাম আছে, তাদের প্রায় প্রত্যেকটাতেই কবরস্থান ও গুলো বেদখল হয়ে গেছে।

এটা বড় দুঃখের কথা যে, আদিবাসীরা অজ্ঞতাভেদে নিজেরা তে। এগুলোর রক্ষা করার প্রয়োজন মনে করেনি, কিন্তু জরিপ সময় জরিপকারীরাও বাসস্থান, কবরস্থান ও মন্দির বলে তাদের নামে জরিপে উঠায়নি।

পারশমিক/মজুরী সমস্যা :-

অধিকাংশ আদিবাসীরা যোগেছে তাদের ধন-সম্পদ সব হারিয়েছে, বর্তমানে তাদেরকে জীবিকা অর্জনের জন্য দিন মজুরী করে জীবন যাপন করতে হয়। কিন্তু দুঃখের হলেও সত্য যে, শ্রমের ন্যায্য মজুরীও তারা পায়না। সরকার ঘোষিত সাড়ে তিন কেজি চাউল মজুরী হিসেবে কখনোও পায়নি। প্রকৃতবদ হয়ে প্রতিবাদী হওয়ার যোগ্যতা তারা আজও অর্জন করতে পারেনি। আদিবাসীরা তাদের দাবীদাওয়ার সামনে তুলে ধরতে পারে এমন নেতা বা সংগঠন আজও গড়ে তুলতে পারেনি। তাদের সরলতার সুযোগ নিয়ে সবাই ঠকাতে চেষ্টা করে। বাঙ্গালী মজুরদের সাথে এক সংগে কাজ করার সময় বাঙ্গালী মজুররা কখনো কখনো চালাকি করে আদিবাসী মজুরকে বেশী খাটিয়ে নিজেরা বিশ্রাম নেয়। দোকানীরাও আদিবাসীদের বিভিন্ন ভাবে ঠকিয়ে থাকে। কখনো ওজনে কম দেয়। আবার কখনো টাকার হিসাব ইচ্ছা পূর্বক ভুল করে বেশী টাকা আদায় করে নেয়। সারা দিন কাজ করাবার পর মহাজন চুক্তিমত মজুরী না দিয়ে বাকী রেখে দেয় এবং পরে প্রদান করার কথা বলে মজুরী আর কোন দিন দেয় না সম্পূর্ণ মজুরী আতুসাং করে নেয়।

আদিবাসী মজুরেরা আবার সারা বছর কাজ পায় না। যে সময়গুলোতে কাজ থাকে, ঐ সময়গুলোতে তাদের কাজকর্মের ব্যবহার পড়ে থাকতে হয়। আর কাজ না পাওয়ার কারণে আয় না থাকায় তাদের কোন কোন সময় অনাহারে থাকতে হয়। আদিবাসীরা ভূমিহীন দরিদ্র এক সহায় সমলহীন হলেও কখনো তাদেরকে শিক্ষা করতে দেখা যায় না। বরং শিক্ষা বন্ধকে তারা ঘৃণা করে ও অপমানজনক পেশা হিসাবে মনে করে।

বিশ্বের দরিদ্রতম দেশগুলোর মধ্যে বাংলাদেশও দরিদ্র দেশ। বিভিন্ন সময় ক্ষুদার জ্বালায় অনাহারে কাত আদিবাসী প্রাণ ত্যাগ করেছে কিন্তু শিক্ষার জন্য কখনো তারা কারো কাছে হাত পাতেনি।

নারী সমস্যাঃ-

আদিবাসী সমাজে মেয়েরা গৃহকোণে বন্দি নয়। পারিবারিক জীবনে মেয়েরা বোকা হয়ে নাই। সংসারের অর্থনৈতিক ভূমিকায় মেয়েরা পুরুষের সমান অংশগ্রহণ করে। বরং মেয়েরাই পুরুষের চেয়ে বেশী পরিশ্রম করে থাকে। আদিবাসীরা নারী-পুরুষ উভয়ই মাসে দিন মজুরের কাজ করে থাকে। আর এই দিন মজুরের কাজ করতে গিয়ে নারীরা কিছু কৃষক জোতদারদের দ্বারা বিজ্ঞিন্ডাবে নির্যাতিত হচ্ছে, হচ্ছে ধর্ষিত। শারী নির্যাতনের এরকম বহু ঘটনা ঘটে চলেছে। এর বিচার কেউ কোন দিন করেনি। স্ব সম্প্রদায়ের পুরুষ ও সমাজ দ্বারাও আদিবাসী নারীরা কম নির্যাতিত হয়না। আদিবাসী পুরুষরাও নেশামত্ত হয়ে তাদের স্ত্রীদের উপর অত্যাচার করে থাকে। তাছাড়াও কুসংস্কারাচ্ছন্ন আদিবাসী সমাজে ডাইনী একটি অত্যন্ত বৃথথা, যা শারী নির্যাতনের পর্যায়ে পড়ে। সমাজ আর দেশের আইন আদিবাসী নারীদের মান সম্মান রক্ষা করতে ব্যর্থ হচ্ছে।

উপরোক্ত সমস্যা সমূহসহ এমনি নাগাল প্রত্যাহা আর আত্মসাত্তের ঘটনা একটা নয়, শত শত হাজার হাজার। কে এই অনুদ্বাচিত প্রত্যাহার কাহিনী নিয়ে আসবে জনসমাজে? কে জামে ? কবে ম্যায় বিচার পাবে এই অবহেলিত আদিবাসী সমাজ?

রাজশাহী অঞ্চলের আদিবাসী জনগোষ্ঠীকে উন্নয়নের মূল ধারায় সম্পৃক্ত করা তথা তাদের আর্থ-সামাজিক রাজনৈতিক উন্নয়নের লক্ষ্যে আদিবাসী উন্নয়ন সংস্থা কাজ করে আসছে। আদিবাসী সমাজে বিরাজমান বিভিন্ন সমস্যা চিহ্নিত করতঃ বিভিন্ন কর্মসূচী বাস্তবায়ন করেছে এই সংগঠনটি। সংগঠিত করতে সক্ষম হয়েছে বিরাট সংখ্যক নারী-পুরুষকে তাদের অধিকার আদায়ের তথা উন্নয়নের জন্য।

আদিবাসী উন্নয়ন সংস্থার কার্যক্রমের বর্তমান অবস্থা এই অঞ্চলের আদিবাসী জনগোষ্ঠীর বিভিন্ন সমস্যা ও তার সমাধানে সচেতন সুশীল সমাজের সমর্থন এবং হতিবাচক দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি আছে তবে আরও বৃদ্ধি-বৃদ্ধি দরকার, বৃদ্ধি হওয়া দরকার সামাজিক ঐক্য ও সম্প্রীতির বাধন। আদিবাসী জনগোষ্ঠীর বিভিন্ন সমস্যা তুলে ধরা শক্তিশালী সাংগঠনিক নেটওয়ার্ক সৃষ্টি, জনমত তৈরি ইত্যাদিকে সামনে রেখে এই অঞ্চলের আদিবাসী জনগোষ্ঠীর একটি সমাবেশের আয়োজন আদিবাসী উন্নয়ন সংস্থার একটি অন্যতম কার্যক্রম।

এই সমাবেশের মূল লক্ষ্য হচ্ছে আদিবাসী জনগোষ্ঠীর আর্থ-সামাজিক উন্নয়ন তথা সার্বিক ক্ষমতায়ন। নিম্নে এই সমাবেশের উদ্দেশ্যগুলো বর্ণনা করা হলো :-

- উন্নয়ন প্রক্রিয়ায় আদিবাসী জনগণের অংশগ্রহণ নিশ্চিত করার জন্য উপযুক্ত পরিবেশ সৃষ্টি করা।
- আদিবাসী জনগণকে উন্নয়ন কর্মকাণ্ডে ঐক্যবদ্ধ করা।
- আদিবাসীদের সচেতন করা।
- পারস্পরিক সহযোগিতার মনোভাব সৃষ্টি করা।
- অর্থনৈতিক কর্মকাণ্ডে অংশগ্রহণের সক্ষম সংগঠিত করা।
- নিজেদের রাজনৈতিক, সামাজিক, সাংস্কৃতিক ও অর্থনৈতিক অবস্থান বিশ্লেষণ করা।
- বঞ্চিত অসহায় আদিবাসীদের আত্ম-প্রত্যয়ী করে তোলা।
- সন্নিহিত ও দলীয় উদ্যোগ ও প্রচেষ্টায় মাধ্যমে নিজেদের হতিবাচক অবস্থার পরিবর্তন আনয়ন।
- নিজেদের জীবন গড়ায় উদ্যোগী করে গড়ে তোলা।
- সৃষ্ট প্রতিভা জ্ঞাতি করা।
- সামাজিক ও অর্থনৈতিক উন্নয়নের পরিবেশ সৃষ্টি করা।
- মানবাধিকার নিশ্চিত করা।
- সকল সম্প্রদায়ের সাথে ঐক্যবদ্ধ সম্পর্ক ও সম্প্রীতি গড়ে তোলা।

সমাবেশের আহ্বান:-

দেশের সকল সমাজের সর্বস্তরের মানুষ, নাগরিক সমাজ, দরকার সকলের প্রতি এই সমাবেশের আহ্বান:-

- ১। অবহেলিত পশ্চাৎপদ আদিবাসী জনগোষ্ঠীর মৌলিক মানবিক চাহিদা নিশ্চিত করতে হবে।
- ২। আদিবাসী জনগোষ্ঠীর সাংবিধানিক স্বীকৃতি চাই।

- ৩। আদিবাসী জনগোষ্ঠী বিশেষ করে নারী এবং শিশুদের নিরাপত্তা নিশ্চিত করতে হবে।
- ৪। উন্নয়ন প্রক্রিয়ায় সকল পর্যায়ে আদিবাসী নারী-পুরুষের অংশগ্রহণের সুযোগ দিতে হবে।
- ৫। সরকারী নীতিমালা অনুযায়ী খাস জমি ভূমিহীন আদিবাসীদের অনুকূলে অগ্রাধিকার ভিত্তিতে বন্দোবস্ত দিতে হবে।
- ৬। আদিবাসী জনগোষ্ঠীর কৃষ্টি, ঐতিহ্য, সংস্কৃতি সংরক্ষণের প্রয়োজনীয় উদ্যোগ গ্রহণ করতে হবে এবং রেডিও ও টেলিভিশনে আদিবাসী শিল্পীদের অংশগ্রহণের সুযোগ সৃষ্টি করতে হবে।
- ৭। ভূমিহীনদের হাত থেকে আদিবাসীদের জমি রক্ষা করতে হবে।
- ৮। আদিবাসীদের শিক্ষার অধিকার নিশ্চিত করতে হবে এবং প্রাইমারী পর্যন্ত নিজ ভাষায় শিক্ষার সুযোগ দিতে হবে।
- ৯। আদিবাসী অধ্যুষিত গ্রাম সমূহে রাস্তা, বিদ্যুৎ সরবরাহ, বিত্তীয় পানীয় জল ও কৃষি সেচ ব্যবস্থা নিশ্চিত করতে হবে।
- ১০। আদিবাসী নারীদের উপর সহিংসতা রোধ করতে হবে।
- ১১। দেশের প্রচলিত আইন অনুসারে আদিবাসী কৃষি শ্রমিকদের ন্যায্য মজুরী দিতে হবে।
- ১২। আদিবাসী নারী পুরুষদের সমান কাজের সমান মজুরী নিশ্চিত করতে হবে।
- ১৩। আদিবাসীদের বাসস্থান, কবরস্থান ও মন্দিরের স্থায়ী সমাধান নিশ্চিত করতে হবে।
- ১৪। আদিবাসীদের উন্নয়নের জন্য সরকারী উদ্যোগে প্রয়োজনীয় কর্মসূচী গ্রহণ করা।
- ১৫। সরকারী চাকুরীর ক্ষেত্রে আদিবাসীদের সুযোগ নিশ্চিত করা।

আদিবাসী উন্নয়ন সংস্থা (আউস)

ভাটাপাড়া, রাজশাহী - ৬০০০।

Appendix: Four

Concerning Letter of Pargana Parishad

A invitation letter of 'Pargana Parishad', will appear in this appendix. Objectives and explanation are given in Chapter five.

বরাবর,
মাঝহি/পারগানা

তারিখ: ১৯/০৪/০২ খ্রীঃ

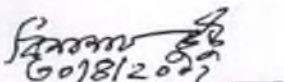
সুধী,

খুজেছা নিবেন। এতদ্ সংগে জ্ঞাত করছি যে, আমাদের সান্তাল পর্নাজের অবহেলিত, শোষিত, বঞ্চিত ও লাঞ্চিত সমস্যার সামাজিক উন্নয়ন তথা আর্থ-সামাজিক উন্নয়নের লক্ষ্যে আগামী- ১১/০৪/০২খ্রী রোজ শনিবার সকাল ১০:০০ ঘটিকায় সুন্দরপুর যুক্তিপাড়া আদিবাসী পারগানা পরিষদ অফিসে এক সভার আয়োজন করা হয়েছে।

উক্ত সভায় আপনার উপস্থিতি একান্ত কাম্য।

অনুদান বাবদ- ৫/- (পাঁচ টাকা মাত্র) সঙ্গে আপনার জন্য অনুরোধ করা গিয়াছে।

আহ্বায়ক -



মিঃ বিশ্বনাথ চৌধুরী

সভাপতি

সুন্দরপুর যুক্তিপাড়া আদিবাসী পারগানা পরিষদ

গোদাগাড়ী, রাজশাহী।

Appendix: Five

Some Santali Words and Sentences

A list of some Santali words and Sentences is presented in this appendix. Both Bangla and English translations are also provided:

Conversation:

Bangla	Santali	English
Salam	Johar	Hello
Shuprovat	Shitak Johar	Good Morning
Shuvoratri	Nidio Johar	Good Night
Kemon Asen?	Chet Leka Menama	How Are You
Valo Nei	Moch Da Bang	Not Well
Valo Asi	Mogchi Miniya	I Am Well
Vat Kheacho	Daka Em Jomkeda	Have You Taken Your Meal
Na Khaini	Banh Baing Jomaya Kada	No, I Have Not
Ami Kheachi	Ha Jomkedao	Yes, I Have Taken My Meal
Ki Torkari	Chet Utu	What Curry
Amio Kheachi	Eync Hymc Jomkheda	I Have Taken Also
Ekhane Bosho	Nedegi Duru-Pome	Please Seat Down
Khotay Jao	Okateyem Chalak Kana	Where Are You Going
Ai Dike	Netegi	This Way
Donnobad	Angma Sharhow	Thank You
Amake Khoma Koro	Eymcd Ekio Kaneme	Excuse Me
Tomar Nam Kijante Pari	Amak Nytum Chet Barai Darik Oyng	May I Know Your Name
Tomar Nam Ki	Amak Nytum Chet	What Is Your Name
Hai Hai Ki Lozza	Haire Haire Chet Lazaoyi	What A Shame
Br Dekha Hobe	Arhon Napam Whoya	See You Later
Khono Shomosha Hobe	Jahan Mushkil Da Bang	No Problem

Na	Whoya	
Na Na Wo Kisho Na	Bang Bang Chet Ho Bang Kana	Does Not Matter

Common Words:

Bangla	Santali	English
Gram	Atu	Village
Khet	Khet	Field
Paka Rasta	Road Dahar	Metaled Road
Khacha Rasta	Dahar	Muddy Road
Pukur	Pukhore	Pond
Ghor	Orak	House
Alpona	Kat	Painting
School	Eshkul	School
Club	Kilab	Club
Tube Well	Dochoch Kol	Tube Well
Baranda	Pindi	Veranda
Shover Ghor	Gitik Orak	Bedroom
Dorja	Duyor	Door
Janala	Jarna	Window
Hat	Hatiyoi	Local Market
Surjo	Sinch Chando	Sun
Chondro	Nindi Chando	Moon
Megh	Rimil	Cloud
Bristi	Bimil Doi	Rain

Crops and Food

Bangla	Santali	English
Dhan	Huru	Paddy
Gom	Gahom	Wheat
Job	Jao	Barley

Alu	Aeolu	Potato
Shorisha	Turi	Mustard
But	Vuth	Chick-Pea
Tometo	Tamatol	Tomato
Bagun	Brinjal	Eggplant
Morich	Merich	Chili
Roshun	Resun	Garlic
Shurja-mukhi	Shurjumukhi	Sunflower
Vath	Daka	Rice
Ruti	Pithoi	Bread
Dal	Doil	Pulse
Shobji	Anaj	Vegetable
Mach	Haku	Fish
Maongsha	Jil	Meat
Edur	Gudu	Rat
Shamuk	Gongha/Rokoch	Snail
Jhinuk	Jhinuk	Mollusc, Cockle

Animal and Bird:

Bangla	Santali	English
Shap	Binch	Snake
Shiyal	Tumu	Fox
Khek Shiyal	Khekri	Fox
Bon Biral	Rundi	Wild Cat
Khatash	Sogot	Pole-Cat
Beji	Biji	Mongoose
Bang	Rote	Frog
Mohish	Kada	Buffalo
Goru	Danra	Cow
Chagol	Marom	Goat
Shukor	Shukori	Pork

Shkor Chana	Shukori Hopon	Pig
Hansh	Shank	Duck
Murgi	Shim	Hen
Kobutar	Paora	Pigeon
Kukur	Shita	Dog
Biral	Pushi	Cat
Doyel Pakhi	Hutiurut	Robin bird
Mach Ranga	Kikir	King Fisher
Kak	Kihu	Crow

Tools and Household equipment:

Bangla	Santali	English
Langol	Nahangl	Plough
Kachi	Kopchi	Scythe
Moi	Argom	Ladder
Teer	A-Piri	Arrow
Dhanuk	Aa	Bow
Dao	Kidoy	Chopper
Kural	Tengoc	Axe
Dhan Marai Kol	Horu Dal Kol	Paddy Husking Machine
Thala	Thiri	Plate
Hari	Tkuch	Clay Pot
Kolshi	Tanda	Pitcher
Bodna	Lota	Water Pot
Chamuch	Korchu/Chimuch	Spoon
Glash	Giloish	Glass
Jharu	Jano	Broom

Appendix: Six

Glossary

The glossary contains the English translations of the non-English term used in this work. However, in almost all cases, the English meaning or translation is provided in the thesis where these occurred.

Adivahsi	: A Bengali term for the aborigines.
Anh	: Bow
Bapla	: Marriage
Ato	: A Santal village
Baha	: A flower, the spring feast
Binti	: Oral tradition
Bonga, Bomga	: A Santal deity, spirit and ancestor
Buru	: Mountain
Caco	: Todler
Chtiyara	: Ceremonial cleansing
Ghatak	: A Santal marriage broker
Godet, godeta	: Village messenger
Guru	: Teacher
Hanapuri	: The Santal's other world, i.e, heaven and hell
Bangalee	: Inhabitants of Bangladesh who speak in Bangla
Hor	: The men denoting the Santal
Jaherthan	: The sacred grove of the Santal
Jaher era	: Mother goddess
Jangru	: A shaman or a medicine man
Jog Manjhi	: Guardian of morals, the social head

Jog Paranik	: The assistant to the jog manjhi
Johar	: Salutation
Jotedar	: Musclemen
Kharif	: The winter crop
Khunt	: Linage or the sub-clan
Kudum Naeke	: Assistant Priest
Lita AK	: Rainbow
Mahua	: A tree, Basia Latifolia.
Manjhi	: The Santal village headman
Manjhithan	: The village headman's shrine (Ancestral)
Naeke	: The priest sacral head of the village
Nim dk mandi	: A purificatory rite conducted during the birth ritual
Ojha	: Traditional Heller
Pargana	: An administrative unit, made of 40 to 50 Santal village/hamlet
Parganait	: The Santal territorial chief
Puja	: Worship
Sindur, Sindura	: Vermilion
Shirinch	: Song
Thana	: Administrative Unit (few Thana makes a District)
Union	: Smallest Administrative Unit (a few Village makes a Union)
Zamindar	: Landlord

Appendix: Seven

Concerning Household Census and Interview Checklist

Household Census Schedule

1. Name
2. Sex
3. Age
4. Education
5. Occupation
6. Tribe and Clan
7. Lineage (family tree)

Land and Agriculture

Land:

1. How much land do you / your family own?
2. How much land is inherited and how much is purchased?
 Inherited purchased
- 3 If inherited, from whom?
- 4 For how many generations your family has owed land?
- 5 In whose name does your family land stand at present?
- 6 Do you own land separately from your family? Yes/No
- 7 If yes, how much?

Agriculture:

Name of the farm product	Per acre yield	Total yield last year	Quantity consumed last year	Quantity sold last year
Paddy				
Wheat				

Pulses				
Sugar cane				
Jute				
Wood				
Vegetables				
Fruits				
Others				

Particulars about family members:

Sl. No.	Family members (Name)	Age	Sex	Relation with H. H.	Marital Status	Age of Marriage	Place and distance of Marriage	Tribe / clan / group in which	Nature of marriage

OCCUPATION

1. What is the main traditional occupation of your tribe / clan / family

Tribe

Clan :

Family

2. For how many generations is it being followed in your family?

3. Please give the main occupation of your father and father, father

Father

Father, Father

4. Give the following information about the full time or part time occupation about the male and female members of your family except those who are engaged in agriculture

Sl No.	Name	Relation	Male/ Female	Occupation	Full/ Part time	Place	Income

EDUCATION

1. Please give the following information regarding the education of the members of your family.

SL. No.	Name	Relation with H. H.	Nature of Education		
			Formal	Informal	Standard

2. Why is it that your children do not go in for education?

Cause a: _____ b: _____ c: _____

3. Do you want to educate your children

Yes _____ No _____

4. If yes how far do you want to educated and what type of education you want for them?

Standard: _____ Type _____

5. What difficulties do you face in educating your children

6. Do you konw that the government is providing facilities for the education of tribes

Yes _____ No _____

7. If, yes, what type of facilities you are aware of

8. Is any person in your family availing these facilities

9. What difficulties do you face in getting the facilities

How do you think education is useful for boys and girls for following purposes.

Purpose	Boys		Girls	
	Very Useful,	Not Useful	Very Useful ,	Not Useful , 1

What draw backs do you find in educating boys and girls

Drawbacks	Boys	Girls
a. Maladjustment		
b. Family Problem		
c. Modernity		

4. Do you have any informal education institutions (dormitory etc.)

Yes / No.

5. If yes, Name of institution

For Boys

For Girls

Interview Checklist

1.0 Residential status in the Village

1.1 Did your forefather belong to this region or migrated from some other santal region?

1.2 If migrated, from where they did migrated?

1.3 Approximately when did they migrate?

1.4 What were the reasons for their migration?

1.5 Are you permanent settler of this village from the beginning? Yes/No

1.6 If yes, for how many generations?

1.7 If no, from where did you or your family migrated and when?

Place.....

When.....

1.8 What was the cause and nature of migration?

a) Cause: Marriage/Relation/War/Economic/Social

maladjustment/Crime/Climate/Topography/Operation.

b) Nature: Alone/through marriage/With family/Whole clan/Group

alliance/Labor force

2.0 Housing

2.1 What type of house do you have? Hut/Katcha/ Katcha paucca/ paucca

2.2 Who owns the house in which you live? Yourself/Mother/Wife/ Father/ Grand
Father/ Others

2.3 Who built it?

2.4 How did the present owner get it?

2.5 How did you get it?

2.6 Please give the following information about the house you live in?

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| a) No. of bed room | b) Kitchen |
| c) Toilet | d) Inside open space |
| e) Outside open space | |

2.7 Do you have separate space for

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------|
| a) Marriage couple | b) Children |
| c) Children | d) Guests |
| e) Sick people | f) Animals |
| g) Store | |

Agriculture:

3.7 Does your family engage in agriculture? Yes/No

3.8 What is the cultivable land with your family?

Own Lease

3.9 What is the actual size on which you cultivate?

Own Lease

3.10 What is the amount of revenue you pay and whom?

Pay Whom

3.11 What agricultural implement do you have?

3.12 What are the sources of irrigation?

3.13 Who looks after agriculture?

Full Time Part Time

3.14 Are women engage in agriculture? Yes/No

3.15 If yes, in which type of activities?

3.16 Give the following information regarding your agriculture production:

3.17 Besides your own production, what are the agricultural product you have to buy from the market?

Items How much

3.18 In your agriculture:

- A) Do you use any fertilizer? If yes, what are those?
- B) Do you use insecticide? If yes, what are those?
- C) Which agricultural implements do you use?

Particulars about family members:

1. Do you have any preference for selecting a spouse?

For Brothers	For Sisters
For Sons	For Daughters
2. What type of marriage would you prefer for you?

Sons:	Daughters
-------	-----------
3. What is the age at which the boys and girls in your family are generally married?

Boys :	Girls
--------	-------
4. What is the age at which you would like to marry your sons and daughters?

Sons:	Daughters
-------	-----------

Marriage

5. Who arrange the marriage of boys and girls in your family?

Boys :	Girls:
--------	--------
6. Whose decision the supreme in marriage of boys and girls?

Boys :	Girls :
--------	---------
7. Do you give dowry and bride price in the marriage of your sons and daughters

Sons: Yes / No	Daughters Yes / No
----------------	--------------------
8. If yes, what is the around or items given in dowry or bride price.

Nature of Dowry	Amount of Bride price
Cash money	
Cloth	
Ornaments	
Animals	
Land	
Others Kind	

9. Do your sons and daughters live in your family after marriage?

- Sons: No / Yes For time being/ Permanently
Daughter ? No / Yes For time being/ Permanently
10. If no, where do they live? Separate home / mother in land / Father in land / any other
11. Is widow marriage permitted in your family?
No/ Without Children / With Children
12. Do you favor widow remarriage
No/ Without Children / With Children / If both parties agree
13. Is divorce or separation favored in your family
Sons: No/ Allowed but no liked/ allowed
Daughters: No / Allowed but liked / allowed
14. What are circumstances in which the divorce or separation takes place?
For Boys: Sickness/ childlessness/ quarrel/ property / dowry/ inheritance/ others
For Daughters: Sickness/ Childless/ Childlessness / quarrel/ property/ dowry/
inheritance/ others.
15. Has there been any case of divorce of separation in your family
Yes No
16. If yes, give the following details
who
Why

ECONOMIC CONDITION

1. What is your average or yearly expenditure of the following items
- | Nature of items | Yearly Nature of items | Yearly |
|-----------------|-------------------------|--------|
| a. Food | f. Community activities | |
| b. Clothing | g. Religious activities | |
| c. Housing | h. Education | |
| e. Sickneses | i. Recreation | |
| e. Intoxicant | j. Others | |
2. Is your family income sufficient for livelihood in your family?

Quite sufficient / sufficient/ so so / in sufficient / very insufficient.

3. If your family income is insufficient for running your family. how do you manage ?

4. Do you require loan for managing your family

Yes

No

5. If yes, for what purposes and how much

Purpose

How much

6. From where and how do you get this loan

7. Do you require long term loan for following purposes

Marriage / sickness/ land purchase / Animal purchase/ Agriculture / Death / Others.

8. Approximately how such loan do you generally require shove purposes?

9. From where and how do you got this loans

10. Do you have a long term loan

Yes

No

11. If yes, from where did you get and for how long it is due?

What do you use for fuel in your house

leaf / Dung/ Wood/ Charcoal / Coal / Carousing/ Others

12. Please give the following information regarding the bovine and cattie in your household.

Milky Animals

Playing animals

Poultry

Buffalo

Horse

Duck

Cow

Donkey

Cock

Sheep

Bullock

Pigeon

Goat

Dear / Parrot

Dog/ Hare

Pig

Cat

13. Which of the following items do you have in your house

a. Lighting arrangement : Rupi / Rurican/ Rajek / Glectricity / Others

b. Furnigute : Chatal / Khat/ Chair/ Table/ Almirah/ Alna Others

- c. Utensil : Kasha/ Aluminium / Plastic/ Glass Steel / Ceramic
- d. Modern Emanates : Whatch / Radio / Torchlight / Cemere/ Tape recorder / others.
- e. Clothing : Saree / Lungi/ Dhoti / Pant / Dhopats/ Shirt/ Trauser/ Shoes/ Tribal Dress.
- f. Water Resources : Tubewell/ Tank/ River/ Lake/ Others.
- g. Medical Treatment : Alopathic / Homeopathic / Ayurved/ Montra Tantra/ Traditional (Tribal).

RELIGION

1. Which Religion Do You Follow At Present?
Muslim / Hindu/ Christian / Buddhiam / Others.
2. When did your family adopt this religion?
3. Which did your family adopt this religion do you follow?
4. What was your earlier religion
5. Which religion practices
6. What are your major festival of the year
7. Which religion practices do you follow them
8. Which religion practices do you follow in the following matters

Following Matters

-
- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| a. Birth | f. Harvesting |
| b. Childhood ceremonies | g. Housing |
| c. Marriage | h. Community festival |
| d. Death | |
| e. Social Occasion | |

9. Which are the deities are place of worship and why
10. I do you have some religion preference and restrictions
Preference Rustication

3. Fatalism Do you agree with the following

Agree/ disagree

-
- a. Everything depends upon luck not on hand work
b. All problems and sickness and disease are the result of man's luck
c. Nan cannot be harmed if protected by god
d. For the success of men faith in god is more important than hard work
e. Richness and private is determined by god not men.

8.3 Superstition: Do you agree with the following

Agree / Disagree

- a. Ghost and evil spirits and important role in life.
b. Occult treatment process miraculous where everything fails
c. While doing anything one should take care of ill women
d. One should care for superstitions element such as smelling etc.
e. Anything started with prayer or in good moharath prove successful.

Achievement Orientation: Do you agree with the following

Agree /Disagree

- a. Money is the basis of all happiness
b. Cane should earn by any means he can
c. The enjoyments of life is in expending honey not its hoarding
d. One should try to obtain everything in life he can
e. Status and presetting lie in wealth not in religion

10. Mass media and Urban Contacts

11. Which are the language you can (a) Speak b) Write c) Read

12. For different purposes how far have you traveled outside your village

Near by village / Near by towns / Other districts / Other country

13. Do you listen radio ? Always / Sometimes / Never

14. Do you read newspapers? Always / Sometimes/ Never

a. Which newspapers do you read

b. Which news do you generally read

15. Do you go to cinema? Always / Sometimes/ Never.

9.6 For the following purposes how far do you go to urban places

Items	Quite often	Sometimes	Never
a. Purchase of goods			
b. Agriculture			
c. Religion			
d. Political			
e. Occupational			
f. Relative			
g. Others			

6. Do you have any relations living in the city

Yea

No

16. If yes, how for do they visit your place ? Quite often/ sometimes / Never.

Appendix: Eight

Plates

In this appendix I provided a number of (92) selected plates. Brief notes on the plates are given both in the list of plates (see table of Contents) and in each of the pages follow:

-Please turn over



1. Plate Above: A portrait of a Santal woman
2. Plate Bellow: A Santal man of Joykrishnapur with physical characteristics of Austro-Asiatic



1. Plate Above: A Santal old woman having influence of Mongoloid race
2. Plate Bellow: A Santal old man



1. Plate Above: Soil of Barind tract
2. Plate Bellow: The road communication and means of common transportation (3 Wheeler Rickshaw Van)



1. Plate Above: Bullock Cart is another means of transportation for caring crops
2. Plate Bellow: A traditional Santal house



1. Plate Above: Arts and paintings on the Santal's house
2. Plate Bellow: A view of poor Santals housing pattern



1. Plate Above: A tin shed Santal house
2. Plate Bellow: A Santal house in Christian dominant village of Juktipara



1. Plate Above: A Santal girl with a common dress
2. Plate Bellow: A Santal woman with modern amenities



1. Plate Above: A Santal boy with traditional festival dress
2. Plate Bellow: A Santal boy with modern dress



1. Plate Above: Dresses during rites
2. Plate Bellow: A Santal girl fetching water from tube-well



1. Plate Above: A Santal woman on her way to fetching water from the pond
2. Plate Bellow: *Drinking Haria*, one sort of strong beverage made of rice is common during any kind of occasion.



1. Plate Above: Fermentation of *Haria*

2. Plate Bellow: A typical dining of the Santals



1. Plate Above: Santali medium Non Formal Primary school of Joykrishnapur

2. Plate Bellow: Santal children attending in the class



1. Plate Above: Santal girls with school dress
2. Plate Bellow: Santal girls on their way to home



1. Plate Above: A study room of a Santal boy
2. Plate Bellow: Members of Joykrishnapur club with modern sports gears



1. Plate Above: Santal boys are playing cricket
2. Plate Bellow: Santal boys are playing chess at the club premises



1. Plate Above: Santals are listening to radio program
2. Plate Bellow: An old Santal couple



1. Plate Above: A Santal nuclear family

2. Plate Bellow: A Santal extended family



1. Plate Above: Children with their grand parents.

2. Plate Bellow: A new Santal couple



1. Plate Above: *Shindur Dan* (marking the forehead of the bride with vermilion) is the main event of animist Santals marriage
2. Plate Bellow: *Da Bapla* (Water marriage) is a major ritual of Santal traditional marriage



1. Plate Above: Bridegroom having bath before starting journey towards bride's house

2. Plate Bellow: Feast during marriage



1. Plate Above: Performing dance under *Mandoa* (Shed made of palm lives) with vermillion before *Sindur Dan*
2. Plate Bellow: Dance during marriage



1. Plate Above: *Jog Manjhi* (who conduct marriage ceremony) making fun with the villagers in a tipsy mood
2. Plate Bellow: Paddy is the main crop of Barind Tract as well as Joykrishnapur



1. Plate Above: Santal women sowing paddy sapling
2. Plate Bellow: Harvesting of paddy make employment opportunity for the Santal



1. Plate Above: Santal women and men are working together
2. Plate Bellow: Santal women, going to the market for selling paddy



1. Plate Above: A local paddy market in *Kakonhat*

2. Plate Bellow: A Santal farmer with a plough



1. Plate Above: Modern agricultural equipment

2. Plate Bellow: Modern irrigation tool



1. Plate Above: A Santal hunter with arrow and bow
2. Plate Bellow: Hunting and agricultural tools



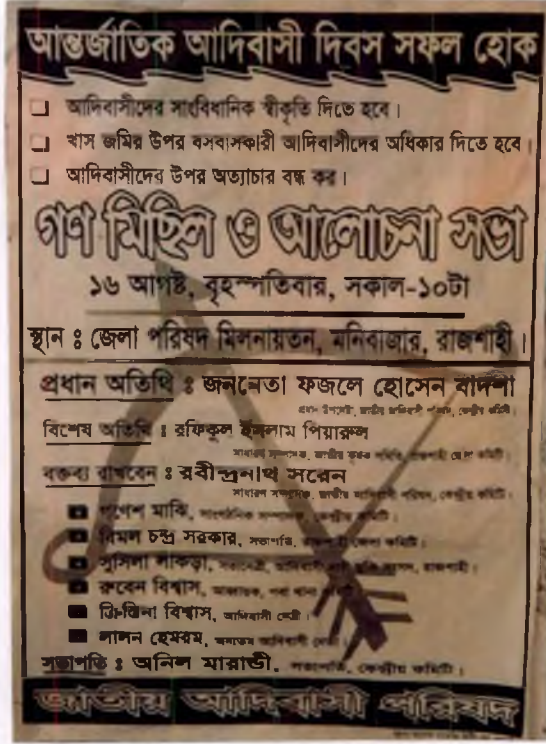
1. Plate Above: A girl child caring food for her father
2. Plate Bellow: A girl weaving straw mat



1. Plate Above: A Santal woman holding a passbook of a savings and credit programme
2. Plate Bellow: The *Manjhi* (headman) of the village



1. Plate Above: Present *Manjhi* (seating at right) with his predecessor
2. Plate Bellow: A village *Panchayet* meeting



1. Plate Above: A poster of Jatio Adivashi Porishad on International Aborigines Day

2. Plate Bellow: A procession of Jatio Krishok Shomity



1. Plate Above: Santal's boys of Joykrishnapur in the procession of *Jatio Krishok Shomity*
2. Plate Bellow: A Santal leader deliberating his speech on a meeting



1. Plate Above: Honorable Minister (Barrister Aminul Haque) taking part in the meeting of *Jatio Adivashi Unnon Shonshta*
2. Plate Bellow: A Santal bridegroom paying respect to *Majithan* (The village headman's Shrine)



1. Plate Above: *Jaherthan* (The sacred grove of the Santal)
2. Plate Bellow: *Jahertandi* (A holy gathering place for conducting festival)



1. Plate Above: Santals performing worship during *Sohrae* festival
2. Plate Bellow: Marking lucky cow and lucky villagers with vermilion is a rite of *Sohrae* festival



1. Plate Above: Boys and girls dancing during *Sohrae* festival
2. Plate Bellow: Singing and drinking *Haria* is a part of *Sohrae* festival



1. Plate Above: A sick old man

2. Plate Bellow: A sick child under the treatment of *Ojha* (traditional healer)



1. Plate Above: A grave of a Santal
2. Plate Bellow: A gathering of Christian Adivashi (great jubilee 2000)



1. Plate Above: Shurshunipara Church
2. Plate Bellow: Inside view of the Shurshunipara Church, where Christian Santal of Joykrishnapur go for prayer



1. Plate Above: Statue of Ganesha (Hindu god) which was seen in a house of Joykrishnapur

2. Plate Bellow: Santal traditional dance during Jubilee festival 2000



1. Plate Above: Bangalee form of dancing by the Christian Adivashi
2. Plate Bellow: Traditional Santal male dance



1. Plate Above: Traditional dance
2. Plate Bellow: Researcher interviewing an old Santal



1. Plate Above: Researcher participating in a village Panchayet meeting
2. Plate Bellow: Researcher invited to work with Santal ladies



1. Plate Above: Researcher (Forth from the left) taking bath with the Santal friends

2. Plate Bellow: Researcher attending in the jubilee programme



1. Plate Above: Researcher during *Sohrae* festival
2. Plate Bellow: Researcher equipped like a Santal hunter



1. Plate Above: Researcher with an extended family of Joykrishnapur
2. Plate Bellow: Researcher showing the new couple their movie picture

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