

**The Impact of Development Intervention on Oraon
Ethnic Community in Northern Bangladesh:
A Sociological Study.**

Md. Rafiqul Islam

M.S.S Exam Roll: 4344

Class Roll: 1376

Registration No.: Ha-2437

Session: 2007-2008

Department of Sociology

University of Dhaka

December 2010

**The Impact of Development Intervention on Oraon
Ethnic Community in Northern Bangladesh:
A Sociological Study.**

Md. Rafiqul Islam

M.S.S Exam Roll: 4344

Class Roll: 1376

Registration No.: Ha- 2437

Session: 2007-2008

A Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
M.S.S in Sociology.

Department of Sociology

University of Dhaka

December 2010

SUPERVISED BY
Dr. Khondokar Mokaddem Hossain
Professor
Department of Sociology
University of Dhaka

Abstract:

The Oraon is the 2nd largest ethnic communities of Natore district who live with own district traditional language and culture. This paper attempts to make an ethnographic study among Oraon with a particular emphasis on social organization and changing forces that molds the present life style of these people. In order to reveal the social organization and social changes that documents their historical background, Cultural profile, Demographic aspects, Economic condition of Oraon Community, Educational attainment of Oraon Children, Health care services,, Enriching the cultural heritage and tradition, Traditional political organization of Oraon community, Marriage system, Life cycle, Rituals and belief systems of Oraon community. All the information collects through field work from the village named Dobarpara under study area of Natore district.

The Oraon finds to live in Natore district of Barind migrates from Chotonagpur of India at different times during British period. From racial point of view the Oraon belongs to pre-Dravidian racial speaks Kuroki and Sadri. They live in Bangladesh since early 19th century. The past and present history and the culture of Oraon reveals in the thesis taking reference from available empirical papers on this ethnic community.

Traditionally, Oraon as well as other ethnic communities' socio-culturally self reliant. Now Oraon are socio-culturally isolated larger society and their traditional culture is now admixture of Hinduism. However, due to modernization and outside intervention on their way of life, food habit, treatment practices, agricultural systems, hunting gathering tradition, educational institutions, dress and ornament, social networks, social integration, tradition administrative systems as well as social norms and values have been changed now days.

Acknowledgement

This is the changing process on Oraon, an ethnic community living in Natore District. This Thesis deals with the traditional socio- religious culture, development intervention of economical condition, health care services, educational attainment and traditional heritage political organization change of the Oraon. Besides, empirical evidence, I tried to show the changes that the Oraon had undergone in recent times. Hence, this research work is basically an ethnographic work.

Research is a systematic search of knowledge. It is a sincere and devoted attempt of finding the truth through a research work; a hypothesis is tested for knowing the unknown. Advanced Research Monograph (thesis) is detailed written study of a single subject appearing as a short book. It makes one to different persons, groups and institutions. Sociology, our beloved discipline is the study of human being and its society. An MSS Final year student of Department of Sociology, University of Dhaka, is to write an Advanced Research Monograph of course no-599.

This thesis is the culmination of my one year, learning sociology. In submission of this paper, I would like to express gratitude to every individual who contributed in bringing me every more-closer to the "core" of sociologist a bit by bit. Researcher acknowledge with grate gratitude the patronage and contribution extended to him in the preparation of this thesis by many intellectuals, administrators, research scientists and my most favorite teachers and key informants and respondents etc. to whom researcher is not only grateful but researcher is indebted to them also.

In recapitulating the contributions researcher received, researcher show heartiest gratefulness to my honorable teacher, Professor Dr. Khondokar Mokaddem Hossain, Department of Sociology, University of Dhaka, for his kind help, sincere advice, proper guidance, cooperation and encouragement throughout the whole research

work. Spending his valuable time, he has read this paper thoroughly and solves the problems. He has provided the important and resourceful books and papers, which are essential for this study. He is too modest to be sympathetic for his students but too honest to deny. Researcher shows gratefulness to Professor Dr. A.I. Mahbub Uddin Ahmed, the Chairman, Department of Sociology, University of Dhaka, for his advice, sympathy and permission to conduct this study.

During for one year MSS. Post Graduation Professor Dr. A.I. Mahbub Uddin Ahmed, Chairman, Department of Sociology, has initiated to such kind of research work by preparing a thesis entitled '**The Impact of Development Intervention on Oraon Ethnic Community in Northern Bangladesh.**' Through his deliberations researcher have been introduced about research, how to conduct research by application of Sociological research approach collecting, editing and manipulating of research findings etc. For his wise introductory directions, his extended research Thesis has become easier and successful.

Researcher sincerely recalls all his teachers, who initiated heir 'rite to passage' into Sociology, Special thanks to my Co-Supervisor Professor Dr. Habibur Rah man and Masuda M. Rashid Chowdhury, Department of Sociology, University of Dhaka. Researcher also grates to Professor Dr. Sadeka Halim, Department of Sociology, and University of Dhaka. Researcher is grateful to all my teachers for their help, cooperation and kind consideration.

Researcher would like to acknowledge with gratitude Mr.Nasir, Seminar Librarian; and Mosharrof Hossen, Abdul Khalek, Ziadul Islam and Ershad who helped much in presentation of data in a decent way. Last but not the least, is the memory Sree Padda V. Nath Sing who introduced me and took me to my research area. Researcher recall with thanks of my respondents, informants especially, Abdul Khalek and Mosharrof, without their help and cooperation the data and information given by them, it would not be possible, to write down this Advanced Research Monograph Thesis.

To all of them researcher is grateful beyond words. There are many others, too numbers to be mentioned; Teachers, the peer groups and friends, benevolent, well-wishers who at different time and in very many ways, extended a hand of help and encouragement. Researcher is grateful to them all. Researcher is indebted to many for their insights and comments but the responsibility for his error is mine alone.

Md. Rafiqul Islam

M.S.S

Department of Sociology

University of Dhaka.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Background
- 1.2 Importance of the study
- 1.3 Objectives of the study

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- 2.1 The Oraon's ethnic identity
- 2.2 The Nature and Impact of Development Intervention on Oraon and its Consequences.
- 2.3 The Challenge of Oraon Community in mentality them and Distinct Identity.

CHAPTER THREE: THEORERICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

- 3.1 Systems Theory
- 3.2 A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights
The relevance and justification of related theories in analyzing the impact of development on Oraon Community.
- 3.3 Theories of Social Change
- 3.4 Technological Change and Sociological Theory
- 3.5 Conflict Theories

CHAPTER FOUR: SUITABILITY OF RELATED METHODS AND TOOLS AS AN ANALYSIS

- 4.1 Why qualitative and Quantitative method
- 4.2 The study site
- 4.3 Study population (including study)
- 4.4 Sampling procedure
- 4.5 Study instruments
- 4.6 Pre-testing of study tools

- 4.7 Survey research
- 4.8 Observation
- 4.9 Case Study
- 4.10 Interview
- 4.11 Focus group Discussion
- 4.12 Techniques of data collection
- 4.13 Data processing and analysis
- 4.14 Limitations of the study

CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS OF FINDING OF THE STUDY

- 5.1 The Oraon
- 5.2 Ethnic identity of the Oraon
- 5.3 Historical background
- 5.4 The Oraon culture
- 5.5 Social system and social structure
- 5.6 Economic condition of Oraon Community
- 5.7 Rituals and traditional culture
- 5.8 Educational attainment of Oraon Children
- 5.9 Social Organization
- 5.10 The impact of intervention on the clan system and its impacts & important
- 5.11 The impact of intervention on the family system and its impacts & important
- 5.12 Residence pattern
- 5.13 Recent changes of development intervention
- 5.14 Health care services of Oraon Community
- 5.15 Cultural heritage and traditions
- 5.16 Traditional political Organization and rights
- 5.17 The impact of intervention on the kinship system and its impacts & important
- 5.18 Beliefs and ritual among Oraon
- 5.19 Name giving ceremony of Oraon Community

- 5.20 The impact of intervention on the marriage system and its impacts & important
- 5.21 Death
- 5.22 Recent changes of development intervention
- 5.23 Socio-Religious change of Oraon
- 5.24 Animistic Hinduism
- 5.25 Recent changes of economic condition
- 5.26 Recent changes of education attainment
- 5.27 Recent changes of political right
- 5.28 Recent changes of health care concern
- 5.29 Recent changes of changing of Oraon religious life
- 5.30 Effect of modernization and impacts on Oraon community

CHAPTER SIX: CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS OF ORAON COMMUNITY

- 6.1 Multi cult arising Secularism through Constitutional Recognition of Adibashis (Oraon Community)
- 6.2 Bengalis need to change mindset about ethnic minorities

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

REFERENCES

APPENDIX (GLOSSARY)

APPENDIX (CHECKLIST)

CASE STUDY

QUESTIONNAIRE

SEMI STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INTERVIEW

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Bangladesh is a small country of only about 147570 square kilometers (BBS, 2010) but her social and cultural life is so varied here that, the land can be termed as a paradise for scientists. In particular the country belongs to a good number of ethnic groups with their age-old traditions and culture. These ethnic groups have distinct culture of them, which is very much different from that of the plain land society. But because of pressure of both internal and external forces, such as modernization, urbanization, industrialization and globalization their apparent peaceful life is being threatened. One of such major ethnic groups is Oraon in Bangladesh.

The various ethnic groups of the country belongs are like Oraon, Hajongs, Chakmas, Murangs, Khasis, Lusais, Tripuras, Bombs, Marmas, Santals, Ko Chs, Dalus, Mughhs, Paharias Mizas Pankhos, aks, Taungehanyas, Brongs, Shendus, Manipuri's and so on (Sattar ,1991,p-12).As an indigenous state, they have their nationality, same identity, called as a Bangladeshi people.

Among the numerous aboriginal tribes inhabiting different areas of the world, the Oraon as a parietal society has maintained it's distinctive and individuality even to this day.

Members of other societies have been greatly interested in the history of Oraon, their social organization, religious beliefs, marriage customs, inheritance system, laws etc. the number of Oraon in Bangladesh will be around 97041. (Survey report on Oraon, Kispotta, 2007). The Oraon is one of the major ethnic Oraon inhabiting in our country for hundreds of years. They live in North Bengal especially Natore. Rangpur, Dinajpur districts etc. this indigenous people have their distinctive identity, social structure customs and tradition, inheritance rules, laws and sanctions, religious

beliefs etc. With the contact of modernization and globalization their unique identity is on the way of transition and declination.

The problems of these ethnic groups are yet to be tackled or solved either through the government or voluntary organization. A thorough investigation is needed about these people their way of living and their social condition that reflect their actuality. The present research is an attempt to know their socio-religious condition. It is an in depth study in order to provide an image profile of the community. It is to observe the process of changes among them, a study of the process of social change from the sociological point of view of the ethnic groups living in Bangladesh. It is also an attempt at understanding the agents of social changes vis- a-vis interaction with the urbanization, modernization, and Christianity, Hinduism particularly the Oraon living in the cities and towns having a direct contact with the urban way of living, what influence and impacts they are going through in their social, economical. Cultural, religious life is primary focuses of this present study.

The exact figure of the Oraon population can not be mentioned clearly. This census also recorded some of the Uriya" community which has no existence, but they are actually Oraon However, a private survey of HRDF (Human Research Development Foundation) recorded 85,000 Oraon people inhabited in Bangladesh. CARITAS recorded at least 90,000 Oraon people lives in Bangladesh. In Rangpur district 11,665 Oraon people live in 2932 household. [HRDF, 1985]. At present near about 3097 Oraon people live in Natore and most of them are in Dobarpara under Nazirpur union of Gurudaspur Thaana. (Survey reports on the Oraon community of Bangladesh, 2007, Kispotta).

In Bangladesh most of the Oraon live in Barind tract especially Natore district. It is said that the Oraon are hailed from the hilly region of Orissa, Chotonagpore and Rajmohol hill of India. Some Sociologists hold that their ancient habitat was

"Horroppa civilization". Where, they came from Asia Minor. By the emergence of Arya they had fled away and took shelter of Mundas of Bihar.

Finally, they scattered in various part of this sub-continent. Some of them came to the Natore district for several of political and historical turmoil.

1.2 Importance of the study:

The study of socio-religious change of Oraon community is pragmatically significant from both academic and practical point of view. The Oraon community was not studied deeply earlier; there is no intensive study especially on socio-religious change of them. Some studies took place under local NGOs and other organizations. But these do not unravel socio-religious sides of them. As a result, the intention is to study on this aspect of Oraon. Besides, this research is significant to understand rural ethnic communities. The impact of development intervention of the principle objective of the study is access health care services, economic condition, education attainment, enriching the heritage and traditions and traditional political organization explore the socio-religious changes among Oraon communities for forging effective means of their development.

Prejudice and irrational attitude towards Oraon by other people is a national crisis in Bangladesh. This study may find out some root causes of such unexpected situations and practices which may be helpful to acquire the ability for making proper decision to overcoming these problems.

It is thought that due to their ignorance, the problems regarding their income. Property right is seriously threatened by village touts and greedy people. This research may be helpful in exploring some of vital causes and nature of oppression. Recently Bangladesh government is paying particular importance to understand the problems of ethnic people. The government and non-government agencies are trying to bring them to mainstream of development. At present situation, many ethnic communities

are losing not only their property but also their socio-religious, political norms and values of internal and external forces. As results their socio-religious conditions is gradually deteriorating. So it is proper time to protect their history, language, culture, values and life style. So information on many of their aspects is needed to be well documented for generations to come.

The Oraon of northern part of Bangladesh is 2nd largest tribal community. But there is a lack of relevant statistical data on them and basic information on their present socio-cultural condition. They have been introduced with various NGO's and government programs. Along with overall change and development; the gap between political situation and paradoxical concepts of tribal community like Oraon even become wider. Moreover, the concepts will remain useful not only understanding the way in which the tribal community have change and are changing in modern world; but also include the comprehensive study of social systems and institution. Finally, it is obviously felt that the proposed study may be useful from social perspective which would open scope for further research in the field.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The broad objective of the study is examining the impact of development intervention On Oraon Community. The Specific objectives are:

- i. To examine the impacts of development intervention on the economic conditions of Oraon community.
- ii. To assess the impacts of development intervention on the educational attainment of Oraon children.
- iii. To know the impacts of development intervention on assess to health care services of Oraon community.
- iv. To examine the impacts of development intervention on enriching the cultural heritage and tradition of Oraon community.
- v. To identify the impacts of development intervention on the traditional political organizations of Oraon community.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 The Oraon's ethnic identity

Ghosh has discussed 176 types of indigenous communities of India. He has also deals the origin and development of every communal group, and the development of them. He has highlighted a movement of chotonagpur named "TANA VAGHA". The Oraon conducted this movement. VAGHAT is a young Oraon who dreams a dream that they should not kill beasts and drink polluted water. Thousands of Oraon and other indigenous groups gather in the movement. But Indian Government does not endure this movement and stops the movement like other former indigenous movement. In his books he does not expound kinship, man other internal sector like domestic life.

He has discussed Oraon's ethnic identity, life style, population and settlement in the Northern part of Bangladesh. Particularly Great Rangpur, Dinajpur district. He also deals with their myth, rural; festival. He observed in his research that they cannot maintain their own tradition. Because they greatly affected by wider world. NGO, govt. does not help according to their promise. As a result their distinctiveness is gradually declining.

The Sylvan Shadows(1983) by Abdus Sattar is a unique piece, full of formation about major ethnic groups living in the different parts of Bangladesh (Bangla Academy, 1981).He makes a brief discussion on major ethnic groups like Oraon, hajon Khsis, Marma, Garo, santal, paharias etc and his concern is Oraon. While discussing Oraon people, he praises anthropological value of Barind region. He says Barind is a store of scenic beauty natural as well as anthropological cursoriness. Oraon and other indigenous people, Muslim, Hindu live side by side. He says that Oraon people riot only take their own food, but also take like larger community.

Actually, they divert from their own tradition gradually. They divert from their super natural worship to Hindu. He says that Oraon is not today so backward community. Oraon takes college and university education. His article gives an important dimension on Oraon community. In his book, he does not discuss on,, their origin and development, he discusses only how Oraon community merges into larger community gradual.

A statistical account of Bengal (1876) by W.W Hunter is an important pan of this gazette. He has discussed many indigenous groups such as Santal. Chakma, Garo, Khasia, Oraon etc most of the Oraon live in Rumpur hat Upazila. The Oraon of the city are called "Dhangiri", because they do the work of wood. They speak in Bengali, Hindi, and their own words. They diverted themselves from their own religion to other religion for gaining better economical and political advantages. Now they not only worship "Banbibi" (their own God) but also rasped: "Radha and Krishna" of Hindu. The book does not indicate every respect of Oraon people. It does not explain their domestic life.

2.2 The Nature and Impact of Development Intervention on Oraon and its Consequences

It is an important book on the indigenous people of North Bengal. He has discussed many types' indigenous groups in his book. Among theses Oraon is an important community. Anwarullah Chowdhury(The Ethnic Community of Barind Tract) has discussed culture, religion thoughts of Oraon in his books. He dealt with about every indigenous community of North Bengal in his book.

Qureshied Ahamed (Tribal Culture in Bangladesh, 1984) discusses about many indigenous people such as Santal, Chakma, Munda, Garo, Rajbangshi, Oraon etc, in the book. In his book, a article by Budla Oraon focuses on their life style, festivals and other influencing factors.Oraon thinks that Bengali exploits them. Bangladesh was colony of British, now indigenous people are colony of Bangladesh. Like other

indigenous people Oraon thinks that not only Bengali but also Bangladesh government exploits them extremely in the name of development. For these reason, indigenous people do not come to contact with them. Budla mainly focuses on Oraon neglecting by Bengali. Recently many Oraon come to city for their better future. In his article Budla focuses negative impact on them, but no achievement.

S.C Roy (Oraon Religion and Customs, 1972) depicted Oraon's origin and development in his book. Besides, he describes how Oraon divert from their religion to Hindu. One time Oraon would worship nature, recently follow Hindu rituals and culture. They bow their head to Tulchigas. Now they not only live in jungle but live in city. As a result, their own homogenous tradition gradually changes. City Oraon don't follow their own customs rather follow modern customs. Many Oraon come to city from jungle and don't feel inclination moving to their tradition.

They merge into larger society. In his book, he mainly discusses affect of modernity among them. But he does not discusses of Oraon who live in jungle, rather he consider Oraon people backward who live in jungle.

2.3 The Challenge of Oraon Community in mentality them and Distinct Identitys

Toppo (Italian Researcher, 1982-1984) has researched at Chotonagpur in India on Oraon community. He observed that most of the Oraon is diverting from their own religion to other religion especially Hindu for gaining better economic and political advantages. They are unable maintaining their own tradition. As result, their losing their own distinctiveness.

Qureshied Ahamed (Tribal Culture in Bangladesh, 1984) discusses many tribal groups of Bangladesh in his eminent book. The article on Oraon by Budla Oraon focuses on their origin, movement, life style, religious faith and other festivals of their community. He said that many tribal communities like Oraon cannot maintain

their own tradition. For this reason, they are diverting from their own religion to Hindu or Christian for achieving better economical and political advantages.

K.Q. Haque (Tribal People of Bangladesh, 1988) has many mainly discussed one community named Santals .He held up every aspects of Santals such as their habit, religious faith, economical, political situation, costume, marriage, education, words etc .He also picked up many other community in his book such as Chakma & Khasias, Garo, Lusai, Tripura, Oraon etc. He discussed about all types culture of indigenous people. One time Bengali & indigenous people would live in same region Recently Bengali disdain them greatly and harass them by adopting many ways. As a result, they are going to deep jungle where they lead comfortable life.

M. Ahsan A.H (Social Change among the Santals of Bangladesh) conducted his field work at Barind region in Rajshahi Zilla during 1987-88.He researched on Santals of community. He compared the Santals of Rajshahi with the Santals of West Bengal in his research. He tried observed whether they are detached from wider world.

Indigenous people Oraon think that not only Bengali but also Bangladesh government exploits them extremely in the name of development.

A Brief Review of Literature

The earliest sources on the ethnic communities of Bangladesh consist of a few books written by some British Government officials during the period between the middle of 19th century and the first quarter of 20th century. These classical sources include: Dalton (1872), Gait (1895), Gurdon (1907), Hodson (1908), Hunter (1876), Hutchinson (1906), Lewin (1869; 1870; 1873), Playfair (1909), Riebeck (1885), Risley (1891), and Smart (1866). It may be noted that after the establishment of political and military control over the ethnic areas the British Government made attempts to find the best possible ways to deal with the ethnic communities. Information on the ethnic communities and their socio-cultural life were, therefore,

collected and the findings were documented in the above books as well as in other government publications. These books were intended more for administrative purposes than for academic research. Nevertheless, these are good ethnographic accounts of that time and so far remained the main sources of the ethnic communities of Bangladesh.

Except for the ethnographic accounts on the ethnic communities of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) area, all the other books relate mainly to the ethnic communities of the Indian part of the northern and north-eastern borders of Bangladesh. People belonging to the same ethnic group also live in the Bangladesh part of the border and have more or less the same basic social organization and culture as their Indian counterpart. As such, the books written on those who live in the Indian territory relate only to a certain extent to those who live in the present-day Bangladesh territory. However, the ethnic communities living in the Bangladesh part have always had some differences in certain aspects of their life. But these differences had not been documented in the above-mentioned books. It is important to note that a good number of studies were done on the ethnic communities living in the Indian part of the northern borders of Bangladesh (for an example of only one ethnic group, see the Bibliography in Khaleque 1982), but nearly nothing was done on those living in the Bangladesh part.

Census Reports and District Gazetteers compiled during the British rule contain valuable information about the ethnic communities and hence these documents may be regarded as good sources. Such official documents had been updated in the subsequent period. But except for a continuation of the old tradition of preparing these documents, no significant research had been done in the post-British period. The Government documents prepared during the Pakistani rule (1947-1971) contain very few new information. These were basically a reproduction of the older sources. The same is the case with the only book, *Pakistaner Upajati* (1963), published by the Pakistan Government.

Besides the above sources, we find a few books and articles published during the middle of 20th century. These sources contain the findings of a few foreign anthropologists who did field research or at least had visited the ethnic areas during this period. Thus mention may be made of the works of Bernot (1957; 1958; 1964), Bessaignet (1958; 1960), Brauns (1973), Kauffman (1962), Levi-Strauss (1952a; 1952b), Sopher (1963; 1964). Most of these studies were concerned with the ethnic communities of the CHT and a very few on the ethnic groups living in the northern borders of Bangladesh.

Among the recent sources, there are a few books written by a Bangladeshi amateur writer (see Sattar 1971; 1975; 1978). The facts presented in these books are based either on the classical sources, or on the hearsay, and/or the superficial knowledge gained by the author through his occasional visits to the ethnic areas. The author has neither any background in anthropology or sociology (cf. Maloney 1984:9), nor does he have any training in research methodology. As a result, the contents of these books suffer from many shortcomings.

To show the nature of shortcomings, let us consider a few examples from one of the books written by this author. He writes, "There are many other tribes in the Chittagong Hill Tracts which lack this culture dynamism. Consequently, they are lost in the wilderness of pre-civilized cult, belief and customs. They have not been able to evolve any kind of culture" (Sattar 1971:325). To an anthropologist or to a sociologist, a society without culture is an impossibility. Every society has a culture if the concept of culture is taken as it is defined in anthropology and sociology. Hence, the above expression made by this author is not acceptable in anthropology or sociology.

Maloney (1984:9) has criticized similar expressions in the same book of the above author. He remarked that Sattar refers to ethnic languages as "dialects," and to their

religions as "superstitious beliefs" and "irrational practices" (1971:13,17, 135, 225). Ethnic languages are not "dialect" of the Bengali language as Sattar thought. These are distinct languages that belong to different branches of the various language family (see below). Similarly, Mey (1984:333) has criticized Sattar (1971) for describing the ethnic groups as "wild and crude" (Sattar 1971:193). The use of such value-laden words to describe the ethnic communities or their religion is not acceptable in anthropology. Examples of similar views expressed by this author in the book mentioned above as well as in other books can be multiplied. Nevertheless, the books written by this author may be regarded as the pioneering efforts of a Bangladeshi writer to record certain information about the ethnic communities.

A recent book, *Tribal Cultures of Bangladesh* (Qureshi 1984) may be regarded as a good source. Some of the articles in this book had been contributed by professional anthropologists, some by students of anthropology or sociology who were engaged in research on ethnic communities at the time of writing their article, while some articles by persons well-informed in ethnic affairs. However, this book also contains a few articles written by amateur writers. The quality of information presented by those writers is the same as that of the information in the writings of the amateur writer mentioned earlier.

Recent data, and in some cases, an analysis of the nature and trends of social change among the ethnic communities of Bangladesh may be found in various articles published in different local and foreign journals. Among the most recent journal articles written by professional anthropologists and social scientists, we may include: Bertocci (1984), Islam (1981), Jahangir (1979), Khaleque (1983a, 1983b, 1984,1985,1988), Mey (1978), Montu (1980), and Zaman (1982). There are also some mimeographs (see for example, Chowdhury 1979), and theses and dissertations (Khaleque 1982,1992; Rahman 1985) which contain valuable recent data on some ethnic communities.

The most recently published ethnographic accounts on specific ethnic communities of Bangladesh that I came across are: *The Paharias* by Gomes (1988) and *Bangladesher Garo Sampradai* (in Bengali) by Jengcham (1994). The former is based on the author's research among the Paharia people, while the latter is based on the author's observation of his own society and culture.

CHAPTER THREE: THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

In order to conduct this piece of research the researcher is presenting several sociological theories which are more related to the topics.

3.1 Systems Theory

A variety of theories fall under the general heading of systems theory, but all share certain assumptions. As applied to marital Relationship, systems theory asserts that the intimate group must be analyzed as a whole the group has boundaries that distinguish it from other groups. Thus particular people from the system have particular rules and roles that Apply to their systems. Further more the group is composed of interrelated parts are not independent but influence each other and work together in such a way that the system tends to be maintained; outside influences generally cause minimal change. If the system is composed of three or more individuals, as in a family with children various subsystems may arise. Al though such subsystems may appear to be threatening they actually tend to maintain the system. For instance a woman may only remain in a marriage because she and her child support and protect each other when the alcoholic husband and father become abusive.

Murray Bowen (1978) built his theory on the premise that human respond primarily at the emotional rather than the cognitive level (Crosby, 1991). In this theory to tasks are important for healthy development. The first is to develop our cognitive functioning so that our behavior is not driven mainly by our emotions. The second is to develop our individuality so that we have separate identities from our family of origin even while remaining members of that family. Thus what appears to be an individual's problem may be a problem arising out of the family system.

Systems theory emphasizes the interdependence of family members (Broderick and Smith, 1979). Family members do not live in isolation. Rather what one does effects all the others? A person with deep-seated fears and amenities an emotional instability for example may upset everyone else of the family. People may be interdependent in terms of not only money, shelter and food but also love, affection, companionship, socialization and other non tangible needs.

In my research, I want to explain being a number of family and society what factors any one takes into account in the choice of actual religious partner. It is said in our country that marriage is happened not only between a male and a female but also within two different families. So according to systems theory religion and marriage are social systems. In this research the researcher tries to investigate how Oraon youth select their religious mates for marriage within a family system. One of the main objectives of the researcher is to analyze the arranged cultural socio-religious conditions, co-educational attainment, health care services, cultural heritage, traditional political organization and rights and marriage pattern and in this ground, system theory is applicable in emphasizing the major role of the family members in selecting a partner for marital relationship.

3.2 A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights:

Theories of nationalism from the 19th century to contemporary debate the origins of national life, the criteria for membership and the relationship between various nationalities. The vast majorities; however, agree that nationality is integrally linked with political citizenship. This tendency to conflate nation and state presents a formidable challenge for those interested in reconciling minority national identity and patriotic citizenship. Kaplan's protect of "defining anew" the meaning of nationality involved questioning the assumption that each people required sovereignty to fulfill its nations aspirations. There are two typologies of nationalism, Kaplan outlines: "nationalism which insists on one's nation being sovereign and recognizes no higher Taw than its own will and needs, and internationalism which,

admitting a high degree of autonomy to each nation, advocates the submission of each nation to a sovereignty higher than its own and representative of a group of nations but preferably of all nations. The latter formulation, espoused by ethnical nationhood, rejects political control and territorial possession as criteria for group affiliation. Instead, ethnical nationhood argues that the former will most likely lead to homogenizing demands and totalitarian means of enforcement. The flourishing of such communities would fragment the sovereign political power's ability to enforce membership in one privileged national culture. Details of this Utopian scheme of transnational nations remain vague and in the numerous places he provides details, often contradictory. At times, Kaplan idealized possibility of establishing certain self-governing rights including legal autonomy for national minorities.

Kaplan suggests that the minority national community primarily seeks recognition as a collective community with specific behaviors and practices that the state should not hinder. The principle of group equality must be translated into legal enactments prohibiting the propagation of racial religious and minorities. Under pressure rain his demands to the confines of liberal theory and citizenship, Kaplan posits that minority rights are fully contingent on the liberalization of those particular national culture religion. The exemplar of ethnical nationhood in Kaplan's thought, Jewish nationality, must therefore demonstrate its full adherence to the political objectives of liberal democracy. Kaplan's theory legitimates multiple national communities within the state; however, legal protections and recognition only apply to those sharing specific political and moral guidelines.

In my research, I want to analyze how to the rights in social structures between the family members. In the perspective of the contemporary society of Bangladesh, generally we find that till now most of Oraon people like socio-religious pattern and marriage function for their equal rights. In many where the young adults, who likes to marry and dominated their power and rights. The researcher wants to present the

forms of conflict and why those are created in social, religion and marriage systems among the Oraon family members.

The relevance and justification of related them in analyzing the impact of development on Oraon Community.

3.3 Theories of social change:

Social change refers to large-scale alteration in the organizations and institutions of a population. Changes in an individual's life style or the realignment of a family because of social, religion, marriage may be significant to the people involved but neither example is indicative of social change. Moreover, Changes meanings of a culture and religion patterns. For example, definitions within a language or in the material context of a culture are not social changes but cultural and social change. However, because changes in he culture and religion may affect changes in society and vice versa, theorists have not always differentiated between social, religion and cultural changes.

Theories of change have generally been concerned with the Oraon children of change and the manner in which changes occur.

3.4 Technological Change and Sociological Theory

3.5 Conflict Theories

CHAPTER FOUR: SUITABILITY OF RELATED IN TOOL AS AN ANALYSIS

4.1 Why qualitative and Quantitative method

Research methodology is one of the most crucial aspects for all kinds of study. It is although the same whether it is an action oriented or a pure academic research. Accordingly a concrete research methodology has been in the present study. The following sections illustrate the methods and techniques used here.

This paper is an ethnographic account of an ethnic group named Oraon micro-level with a focus on the changing among their social and religious life. A perspective of social changes has been followed the beginning to the end of the research. As a student of Sociology, the field work Sociological in nature. Considering the nature and type of the research problem flexible methodology combining several research methods and techniques have been used in the collection of data and their analysis and present significantly. This research has been done with a purpose of getting as information as possible during field work. As key concept of Sociological study, participant observation has been followed.

Broadly speaking the study had a two fold design for gathering qualitative and quantitative data based on and ethnographic foundation. The design includes:

- Statistical approaches and
- Qualitative approaches.

Statistical approaches

It is in fact is a technique; not a methodology of social research. What statistical approaches can do is to help us in the collection, classification, comparison and measurement of data. It is a means of numerical analysis of the qualitative phenomenon. This statistical technique has been regarded as is of great help in order disclose the relationship between different aspects of social phenomena. This has served useful, easy and a condensed information regarding migration, economic condition, standard of living etc. Statistical techniques like tabulation, classification, census etc, have been applied in the research. This is a quantitative presentation of the data.

Qualitative Approaches

Quantitative and idea that help explain the existence of patterns. Qualitative analysis starts even before going to the field and continues through the research offer in the form as developing ideas, testing against the observation modification; there are four kinds of empirical methods to study the human society and culture. It is mentionable that the empirical method is based on practical experimental knowledge. These are Sociological method, case study method, social survey method and statistical method etc .1 called the qualitative method and the last termed as quantitative method. For Sociological or case study method, the researcher has to be a participant-observer and to make a Check-list establish rapport, discuss focus group etc and by applying these techniques, the picture of the human society, culture, occupation etc, can come out clearly. So, these methods are called the qualitative method. Qualitative method especially the Sociological method has been conducted in this part of the world like Bangladesh in recent years. In this part, it was first introduced by American Sociologist, P.J Bertocci. It is now proved that we can get more relevant data even we study of Oraon community following the Sociological method.

To survey basing quantitative method, the researcher has to be aware of the things, such as, problem selection at the micro level, sampling, questionnaire, pretest,

interview, tabulation of data and report writing. These techniques belong to social survey method. Statistical method is used by open survey, In this respect, the scale must be formulated at first. Since the liberation of Bangladesh, many aid giving; voluntary and international organization, and Government and non-government organization have been conducting action-oriented researchers for different purpose. Research organization and institutions have also been carrying out social surveys for collection of data on different aspects of rural society. Hurried and rush reports have been widely produced by many such organizations on the basis of social surveys in the rural areas at micro-level.

However, a scientific investigation requires one or more research techniques. Which enable a researcher to conduct the study systematically? In a real sense, there is no set rule of techniques for Sociological research. There are some Sociological methods, which cannot be used theoretically, because method is used according to the real circumstances.

According to Petti J. Pelto (1970) the techniques of Sociological research are participant observation, collection of the history, structural interviews, questionnaire, rating and rankings, the semantic differential technique, project measures, other Psychological instrument, unobtrusive measures, technical equipment in fieldwork, multi instrument research, key-informant interviewing.

However, the present study has been conducted on the basis of the combination of qualitative and quantitative method. As the indigenous people are differentiated in terms of various levels, the social survey method has been used. For conducting the research, the researcher went directly to the households of people and after knowing intention the research, they promised to give the researcher for all kinds of possible and essential help.

In this study, the total time spent by the researcher in the field has been 30 days. The field work has been counted from the 10th June to the 30th June and 5th September to the 10th September 2010, then 14th November to the 21st November, 2010. The researcher every day went to the field at 10 am and stayed till 1.30 P.M. After taking lunch, the researcher again went to the field 4 P.M stayed there up to 7 or 8 P.M at night.

In this position it would be mentioned that in the observing the life the Oraon community in this study, both the diachronic and "Synchronic" perspectives have been used combined, as within Sociology it is useful to think in terms of both a set of competing theoretical levels. For example, evolutionism and diffusions can be taken collectively. Evolutionism is a Sociological perspective, which emphasizes the growing complexity of culture through time. Diffusion's is a perspective, which emphasizes the transmission of ideas from one place to another. They compete because they offer different explanations of the same thing, how cultures change. Yet both are really part of the same grand theory, the theory of social change. Sometimes the large perspective, which embraces both evolutionism and Diffusions are called the diachronic one (indicating the relation of things through time). Its opposite is the Synchronic perspective (including the relation of things together in the same time). The researcher looks a long time in the field to complete. The researcher went to some selected household and while completing the questionnaires, spent a lot of time in informal gossiping. The researcher mixed with them exclusively and instantly (biscuit and tea) whenever they offered the researcher, only to conceive their minute feelings in their own point of view.

Considering the nature and type of the research problem, a flexible methodology, combining several research techniques has been used in the collection of data. This has been done with a purpose of gathering as much information as possible. As there are different domains of this research, several methods have been employed in

different regions of the study. Depth observation, participation, rapport building and key informants issues have also been used in this study.

Informal discussions have been held on with the various persons representing the different classes of city dwellers. Few cases studies have been done for supplementing the information gathered through informal discussion. A well more check-list and a field diary have been used in this study. For collecting more living information and data relevant to indigenous culture, a camera (Photography) has also been used in this study such as observation, participation, informal interview, rapport building, census and survey, field note, diary, checklist, photographs and maps, IT technique, key informants, questionnaires and in depth interview, case study methods etc.

In this study, the emphasis has been given on the qualitative data, regarding behavioral and socio-cultural aspects of the urban dwellers. A finally, the collected data has been analyzed through technique of ethnographic research cycle (Wolcott, 1967, Quoted from Spradly, 1980:29) in this study.

4.2 The study site:

Natore district is the centre of Bangladesh. The researcher has been conducted in the study village named Debar Para of Nazirpur Union of Guruduspur Thana under Natore district. It has glorious history from the per-British era to the great liberation war of Bangladesh. The total area of district is 236 sq km and population is 2527060[4th census, 2001]. There are 6 Thana under Natore district and Gurudaspur Thana is of them. All pares of Nazirpur are densely populated. Specific Dobarpara is the village of Nazirpur Union under Gurudaspur Thaana. There are 93 households in different Para and total population is 579 at Dobarpara. (Source: Field Data, 2010)

The Village is situated at 20 south of Natore town, 5 km north of Gurudaspur town and 5 km south side Biswa Road (high way). The village has its distinctive character. Natore high school, primary school, markets and all of these surrounded by the

Oraon, Muslims and Hindus. The village is divided into 4 paras (hamlets) dominated by Hindu Oraon. North Moakhara and Birr Bazaar are at south both Bengali (Hindu, Muslims) and the Oraon live side by side.

4.3 Study Population (including study unit)

Nazirpur is densely populated. Specific Dobarpara is the village of Nazirpur Union under Gurudaspur Thana. There are 93 households in different Paras and total population is 579 at Dobarpara. Each of the men and women aged 15-40 in the village of Dobarpara is the study unit. (Source: Field Data, 2010)

4.4 Sampling procedures

After formulating the research problem and selecting the most appropriate type of study, every researcher must have to decide just which cases people are to be included as subjects of the study. Every case related to the study would be included ideally, and the cost and effort involved in so doing are usually prohibited. Therefore a subset of cases is usually chosen to represent the total group.

According to Goode and Halt (1952:230) said, it is likely that more respondents have been selected by quota or purposive sampling than by any other type. Since this has been the sampling procedure used in most public opinion polls. Pollsters have put more restrictions. This may mean taking a group into a particular neighborhood and locating the necessary quota of respondents with the required characteristics. Later the group will cover a different type of neighborhood. Here again, the aim is to secure the proper quota of individuals within each cell. Quota or purposive sampling can be utilized, because it is cheaper for a given study developing a good sampling design for a particular area or city is expensive, even though it may not be costly for the degree of accuracy achieved thereby. In spite of the fact that quota or purposive sampling yields rough results, these may be satisfactory for the purpose desired. Purposive sampling may therefore be successful for practical goals when quick, crude results will satisfy.

For example, a sample of cities or areas is chosen "Purposively" because they have certain characteristics believed to be "Typical" for the purpose of the study; it has been decided to select every 10* of the households from each class. So, the sample size is 30 and these numbers of questionnaire have been filled-up by the researcher. The information collected from them is quite reliable.

4.5 Study instruments

Instrument of the data collection is very important in any research. Data need to be consciously identified, carefully selected and methodically collected. Validity and objectivity of the research to great extent depend on as to how the data have been gathered. In actual practice, there are different modes of data collection. The method of interview survey is adopted here. This is because interview survey is most commonly used in the social science research. A *well-structured* interview is much more than an oral questionnaire. Many types of information and even data can be procured by face contacts with people, especially data related to personal history, opinions and attitudes. It is a verbal technique for obtaining data direct from the primary sources. Interview is a very systematic method by which a person enters deeply in the life of even a stranger and can bring out needed information and data for the research purpose. Thus in this study, the structured, predetermined set of questionnaire is used to follow the interview technique.

4.6 Pre-testing of the study tools

This is very significant to conduct some form of testing of the research design prior to the major research effort. The procedure of pre-testing is useful researcher may fail to achieve the research objectives due to some unforeseen error. Pretest refers to initial testing of one or more aspects of the study design, such as questionnaire, the sampling design, a computer program for analysis and so forth.

The pre-test of structured questionnaire of the present study have been occurred to gain prior idea about how the instrument works and how the respondents responses in terms of the research objectives. Pretest was necessary to conduct computer program for data analysis and data processing, partially or hypothetically to be sure whether the program is compatible or convenient with the actual fieldwork. Self-administered questionnaire was protested in the appropriate manner. It has especially worthwhile to pretest an early draft to develop a self-administered questionnaire for interviewing. This procedure permitted a better determination of problems to detect confusion and probe into the nature of that confusion on the spot. Through pre-testing researcher was able to detect the errors, planning the actions and encounter with the design of the research. Above all, pre-testing of the questionnaire of his interview helped the research to ensure the creation of useful data.

4.7 Techniques of data collection

Various kinds of data collection techniques have applied at the different level of field work. All the sources of data can be identified into two main sources:

Primary Sources:

The research has been collected necessary primary data mainly through direct participation technique from 30 households which are comprised of 60 individuals. The data collected through household census, interview, questionnaires, Survey method, case study and observation. In addition life history, oral history, key informant techniques also have been used. The data has been collected from the respondents directly considering individuals and households as unit of the study.

Secondary Sources:

For the secondary sources of the information, the present research has largely relied on different relevant books; Journals, Periodicals, thesis and other documents have been consulted. Some facts have collected from Encyclopedias, Encyclopedia of

Social Science. Moreover, some important information has been downloaded from the internet.

4.8 Data processing and analysis

After gathering the data, the research has to face another demanding task, such as, organizing the raw data in a form in which they can be analyzed and to find out the most suitable techniques to analyze these data. Data analysis is often equated with statistical, analysis, which is quite unfortunate, because the process of data analysis is much more complicated than performing statistical operations on the data. The data received from the respondents usually need considerable organization before MW meaningful analysis can be carried out on them. Then need to be properly coded transferred to a form in a machine, usually computer, can be understood and turns from before taking place the statistical analysis.

The task of coding transferring and transforming, in many cases, takes more time and effort on part of the researcher than doing statistical analysis. All these steps have been done by the researcher in this study. In this study the collected information is descriptive and for this reason, the researcher has relied upon a single variable analysis for the analysis of data. The levels of measurement of most of the variable are nominal and interval scale. The statistical analysis of the study is also confined with frequency distribution and percentage for the better understanding of the specific phenomenon.

It has to be mentioned that the data of this study have been collected from the primary source and the secondary sources have also been used by the researcher for the collection of data. However, after the analysis of data, the researcher has interpreted the results.

4.9 Survey method

4.10 Interview

In-depth interviews and informal discussions were for data collection. In fact, most of the information came through this technique. And in the time of interview both the structured and unstructured questionnaires were followed.

4.10 Observation

4.11 Case study

4.12 Focus group discussion

Four focus group discussions were arranged. These were necessary for detailed data collection and crosschecking of the available data.

4.13 Limitations of the study

It is so obvious that study in an unknown area creates some problems definitely. The researcher can not avoid those practical processes which creates certain difficulties. Sociological study requires long time participation and observation for which the study is more valid than others. Though it was a Sociological study, but for some reasonable causes sufficient time could not be spent with the people and so satisfies rapport could not be built up with them. Sociological study (Session, 2007-08) and has gone through various research books, articles, papers, theses etc. Sometimes I faced difficulties for allocating enough money needed for buying necessary books and articles, making photographs and such other research related expenditures. Again for burden of my M.S.S final study, spending full time in research was a problem.

One more important thing is mentionable here and that is there are some precious studies about the Oraon which have been done by some Sociologists, but there is no work on the Oraon fruitfully. However as an outsider and a man of different community and background, I have not been free from limitation when was in the field work at Dobarpara of Natore District. The limitations of the study are given below:

1. The research was conducted only in a village named Dobarpara which may not be enough to understand the whole social organization of Oraon community.
2. The researcher suffered from lack of financial support.
3. The researcher was bound to carry out his research field work in a short time my summer vacation and others.

CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

5.1 The Oraon

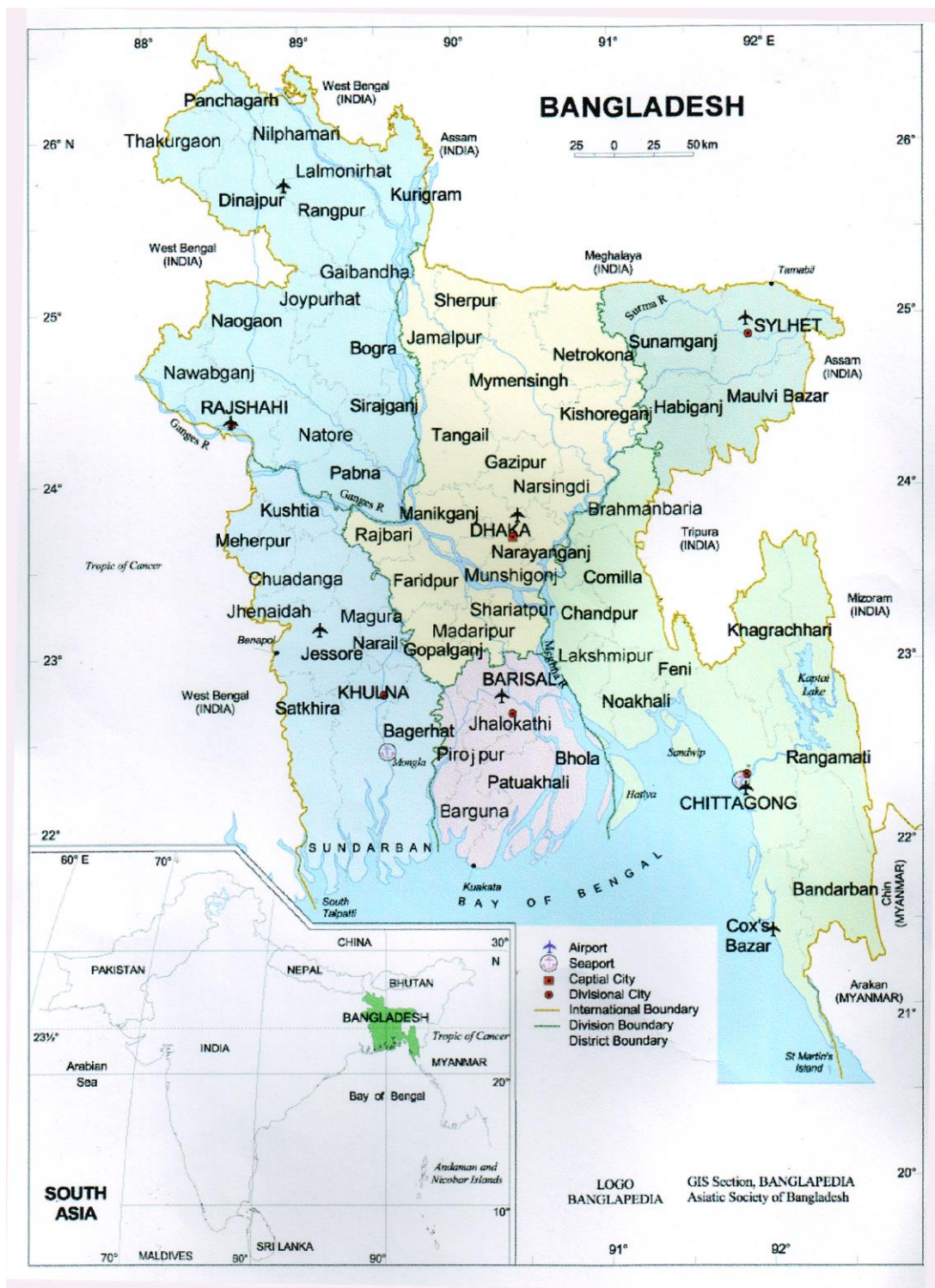
The identity of the Bangladeshi inhabitants is mainly "Bengali". But there are some other races which have separate identity, language, politics and social life. They are known as indigenous people, ethnic group or tribal. A significant number of indigenous people live in Bangladesh. As the earliest people inhabiting in this land they have also experienced and shared the joys and happiness as well sorrows and sufferings of the country.

These indigenous people are the most neglected, poorest and discriminated section of our society. Usually they reside far away from the civilized area or near the forest. Agriculture is the main subsistence of such group of people. Agro oriented labors caused seasonal unemployment; moreover, most of them are land less. It can be noted that they have a per capita land of 0.23 acre which is very negligible comparing to the national level (Summery Report, Base line survey, 2005, Human Resource Development Foundation). Besides agriculture, their involvement in other profession is very insignificant. They also have a low per capita income due to lower rate of wage in agriculture, dearth of arable land, low productivity of land and scarcity of alternative sources of income. This resulted in their ultimate poverty and hunger.

Outbreak of diseases is high in the backward indigenous society. The recent developed medical facilities are not extended to them. They depend on and believe in indigenous methods of treatment. The quacks, exorcists and fakirs treat them. Recently in certain places NGOs and missionary hospitals provide modern medical facilities to them. They have a very little knowledge and some times are ignorant about reproductive health and child nutrition. During pregnancy and after delivery

women depend on elderly women, locally known as "Dai". Birth rate and death rate is higher than the level. Couples here do not show positive attitude towards the modern contraceptive practices.

Literacy rate which is a standard determinant for measuring the socio-economic condition of a nation is very low among indigenous people. The light of education is far beyond to their reach. As a result their socio-economic condition for their overall process of development is lagging behind. In Bangladesh indigenous people seemed to be culturally isolate by the Muslim majority and lived with Hindus and Christians. Indigenous people are living in different socio- political and economic conditions, which led them partly disintegrated with wider Muslim society. Both have different socio cultural life and mental aptitude. This disintegration leads to the transformation of indigenous culture. Actually, indigenous or tribal culture now is in transition. (Ahsan, 1994).



The present research is an attempt to know their changing cultural socio-religious conditions, education attainment, health care services; cultural heritage and traditional political organization and rights of Oraon Community. It is an in-depth

study in order to provide an image profile of the group. This research attempts to make a study of the Oraon, emphasis on the changing situation and way of life in Northern region in Bangladesh. This micro level study has been accomplished by collecting data from the Oraon of Natore district. So, this study does not represent the whole socio-religious condition of other indigenous community of the country. But it can be used as reference for those indigenous people who have the similar socio-religious and geo-physical structure. The Oraon or Kurukh tribe also spelled Oraon, Oran or Oram inhabits various states across central and eastern India as well as Bangladesh. Traditionally, Oraon depended on the forest for their ritual and economic livelihood but in recent times they have become mainly settled agriculturalists. Small numbers of Oraon have immigrated to the northeastern part of India where they are mainly employed in tea estates. A number of educated Oraon have settled down in metros like Kolkata, Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and many other cities of India including Patna, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Hyderabad, Allahabad and Lucknow. Some have even settled abroad in the US and Europe. In this scattering system they come to Natore district of Bangladesh.

The beginning sentence of the earlier version of this paper was: "People belonging to more than two dozens ethnic communities , live in Bangladesh." An American anthropologist (Burling 1988), a critic of that version, remarked: "why not you tell us exactly how many ethnic groups are there in Bangladesh." Let me begin this section with my response to the above remarks.

The number of ethnic communities has been variously mentioned in the written sources. In the different articles published in *Tribal Cultures of Bangladesh* (Qureshi 1984), for example, the number of ethnic communities has been mentioned as 12 (Bertocci 1984:346 and 358 Footnote 4; based on 1951 Census data as summarized by Bessaignet 1958:1), 15 (Samad 1984:54; based on 1974 Census Report), 28 and 31 (Urao 1984:129 and Qureshi 1984:XV, respectively; no source has been mentioned — both are perhaps based on personal estimates), and 46 (Maloney

1984:8-22, based on his own distribution of the ethnic communities by language category).

Being puzzled by such a wide variation in the number of ethnic groups, i.e. from 12 to 46 groups, I decided to keep the number vague in the earlier version of this paper by saying "more than two dozens." I left the responsibility of finding the exact number with the readers who would pursue their interest further.

According to the most recent government official statistics (Census Report, 1991), the number of ethnic communities is 29. But if the two cases where the same tribe has been listed as two separate ethnic communities are taken into consideration, the number of ethnic communities would be 27. The information found in the available literature and the spatial distribution given in the 1991 Census Report suggests that such mistakes were committed in the following cases:

The Tipra and Tripura have been listed as two separate groups, but they are, in fact, the same people. These groups are most commonly mentioned in the literature under the name Tipra but they are variously regarded as Tipra and Tripura by their Bengali neighbours in different areas. Similarly, the Bongshi and Rajbongshi, who are really the same people, have been listed in the Census Report as two separate ethnic communities. In this case, the people prefer to identify themselves as Rajbongshi but their Bengali neighbors call them Bongshi. In the literature, the name of this ethnic group is most commonly spelt as Rajbansi.

Listing the different names of the same tribe in different areas as separate ethnic communities, as found in the Census Report, has contributed to the already-existing confusion about the number of ethnic communities. Clearly, the census enumerators were not aware of the facts that the same ethnic group is known by different names. The reasons for such variations in name are different in different situations. Two

examples are already given above. Let us consider other cases to show the nature of distortion in the names of ethnic groups in different situations.

The people who call themselves Marma are called Mog or Mogh by the Bengali. The name Mogh is often used by the Bengali people in a derogatory sense, so the people who are called Mogh prefer to identify themselves as Marma. Again, the same people are known as Rakhaine in Patuakhali area. In this case, the people who live in that area also prefer not to identify themselves by the name Mogh for the same reason described above. But they use a different name perhaps to distinguish themselves from those in Chittagong area (cf. Khan 1984).

The variation in the English spelling of the name of certain ethnic groups is another source of confusion. It is sometimes hard to decide whether the different spellings of the name of any ethnic community constitute the same people or they are different ethnic communities. For example the name of the ethnic community most commonly spelt Oraon has been spelt "Urang" in the 1991 Census Report. Looking at the geographical areas given in the Census Report against the name "Urang," I figured out that "Urang" must be "Oraon," but one may easily think that these two are different groups. The same is perhaps true in the case of the "Khyang" and "khyen." These two groups were mentioned by Maloney (1984:12) as two separate ethnic communities, but as one ethnic group in other sources, including the Government Census Reports.

It is interesting to note that the name of the ethnic community most commonly spelt as "Koch" has been spelt as such on one page of Table 11.17 in the 1991 Census Report, and "Coach" on the following page, which is a continuation of the same Table. Although two different forms of spelling have been used, they were not treated as two separate ethnic communities. They were mentioned on the same column, although on two different pages, and one population figure has been given for this ethnic group. It might have been a typing error, but the spelling of the name

of this ethnic community with two different letters "C" and "K" and an extra letter "a" in the case of spelling "Coach" indicates something else. During my field research among the Garo of Tangail and Mymensingh Districts, I learnt that "Koch" (who live in the same area) is variously pronounced by the local people as Koch, Koach, and Kuch. In other areas, the pronunciation may be a little different. I think the variations in the spelling is a reflection of variations in the pronunciation of the name of this ethnic community.

The divisions or branches of certain ethnic communities have been listed as separate ethnic groups by Maloney (1984) in his list of ethnic communities by their language category. He also mentioned the ex-tribal groups as tribes. Which groups constitute the branches of other larger ethnic communities and which groups are the ex-tribal people have been mentioned by Maloney (1984). But there is no such notes in the Census Report.

Treating the branches of a major ethnic group as separate ethnic groups is perhaps the result of an exact report of what people said. When the people belonging to any ethnic communities are asked about their group affiliation, they perhaps gave the main ethnic group's branch name which they belong to. Such divisions or subdivisions of large ethnic communities often result from population increase and other social, economic, and political changes.

There is no point to give a separate name of a group based on the name of the division of a main ethnic group when the people in both the branch and main ethnic group speak the same language and share the same culture and traditions. Even if the branch group live in a different geographical area, they might be still identified with the main group and could be listed under the same name. Nevertheless, if the people in branch groups wish to identify themselves by the name they chose for their branch, then they should perhaps be recorded accordingly. None of the available sources says anything about how these branches came to be known as separate ethnic

communities: was it the people's wishes to have them recorded under the branch names or was it the decision of the census enumerators or ethnographers to use the branch names as separate ethnic groups?

The inclusion of the ex-tribal groups in the list of tribes also creates confusion. If these groups are included in the discussion of a paper, then there should be a clear note stating that they are "ex-tribal," as it has been done here. Otherwise, the confusion about the number of ethnic communities will remain as it is.

To keep consistency with the most recent population data, I have listed the different ethnic communities in Table 1 according to the list given in the 1991 Census Report. However, I have altered the English spelling of the names of certain ethnic communities given in the 1991 Census Report to maintain a uniformity with the English spelling most commonly found in the existing literature. The different forms of the English spelling found in the Census Report and in some of the other sources have been mentioned in parentheses against the name of the ethnic communities.

In a few cases, the names of certain ethnic groups were found only in the 1991 Census Report. No such name, nor even a similar sounding name with a different spelling, was found in any other literature. These cases have been indicated by a note—"found only in the 1991 Census Rep ort"—in parenthesis at the end of names of those ethnic communities.

**Table 1. Distribution of the Ethnic Communities of Bangladesh by
Population Size and Geographical Areas**

Ethnic Community	Population
Bawm (also spelt as Bum, Baum, Bam)	13471
Buna (found only in the 1991 Census Report)	7421
Chakma	252858
Garó (people prefer the name Mandi)	64280

Hajong 11540 Harizon (found only in the 1991 Census Report)	1132
Khami (also spelt as Khumi, Kami)	1241
Khasi (generally known as Khasia)	12280
Khyang (also spelt as Khyen)	2343
Koch (also spelt as Kots, Kuch, Coach)	16567
Lushai (also known as Kuki, Mizo)	662
Mahat (also known as Mahatu)	3534
Manipuri (also known as Meithei)	24882
Marma (also known as Mag, Mogh, Mug)	157301
Mro (also spelt as Mroo)	126
Mrong (also spelt as Murang, Mrung)	22178
Mirruia (also known as Mundari)	2132
Oraon (also spelt as Urang, Urao)	8216
PaKaria (also known as Pahary)	1853
Pankho (also spelt as Pangkhu, Pangkhua)	3227
Rajbansi (also spelt as Rajbongshi)	7555
Rakhaine (a branch of Marma)	16932
Sak (also spelt as Chak, Tsak, Thak)	2127
Santal (also spelt as Saontal)	202162
Tanchangya (a branch of Chakma)	21639
Tipra (also known as Tripuri, Tripura)	81014
Urua (found only in the 1991 Census Report)	5561
Other (see text, for comments)	261743
Total	1205978

Source: Census Report 1991

The ethnic groups that constitute the branch or division of other major ethnic communities have been indicated in Table 1 by providing the name of the major ethnic group in parentheses at the end of the names of those ethnic communities.

Information about the possible splitting of major ethnic communities into branches and divisions was found in some of the available literature (see for example, Maloney 1984; Khan 1984).

For reasons given earlier, the population data given in the 1991 Census Report for the ethnic groups Tipra and Tripura were added together and the sum was given as the population size of the Tipra in Table 1. Likewise, the data for the Bongshi and Rajbongshi were added together and their sum was given as the population size of Rajbansi.

The population data given in the 1991 Census Report under "other" perhaps include the smaller sections or sub-divisions of some of the ethnic communities listed in Table 1, as well as the ex-tribal groups mentioned in other sources. The name of ethnic groups found in other sources in addition to those listed in Table 1 are perhaps lumped together under "other" in the Census Report. These additional groups (cf. Maloney 1984) are: Banjogi (similar to Pankho and Kuki), Dalu or Dulai or Dalui (a section of Garo), Hadi (a Hinduized group), Ho (a section of Munda), Kachari or Kacari (a Hinduized group), Mahili (a sub-division of Santal), Mikir (a Hinduized group), Paliya (a branch of Rajbansi), Pathor (a Hinduized group), Pnar (a sub-division of Khasi), Riang (a section of Tipra), and Shendu (a branch of Khami).

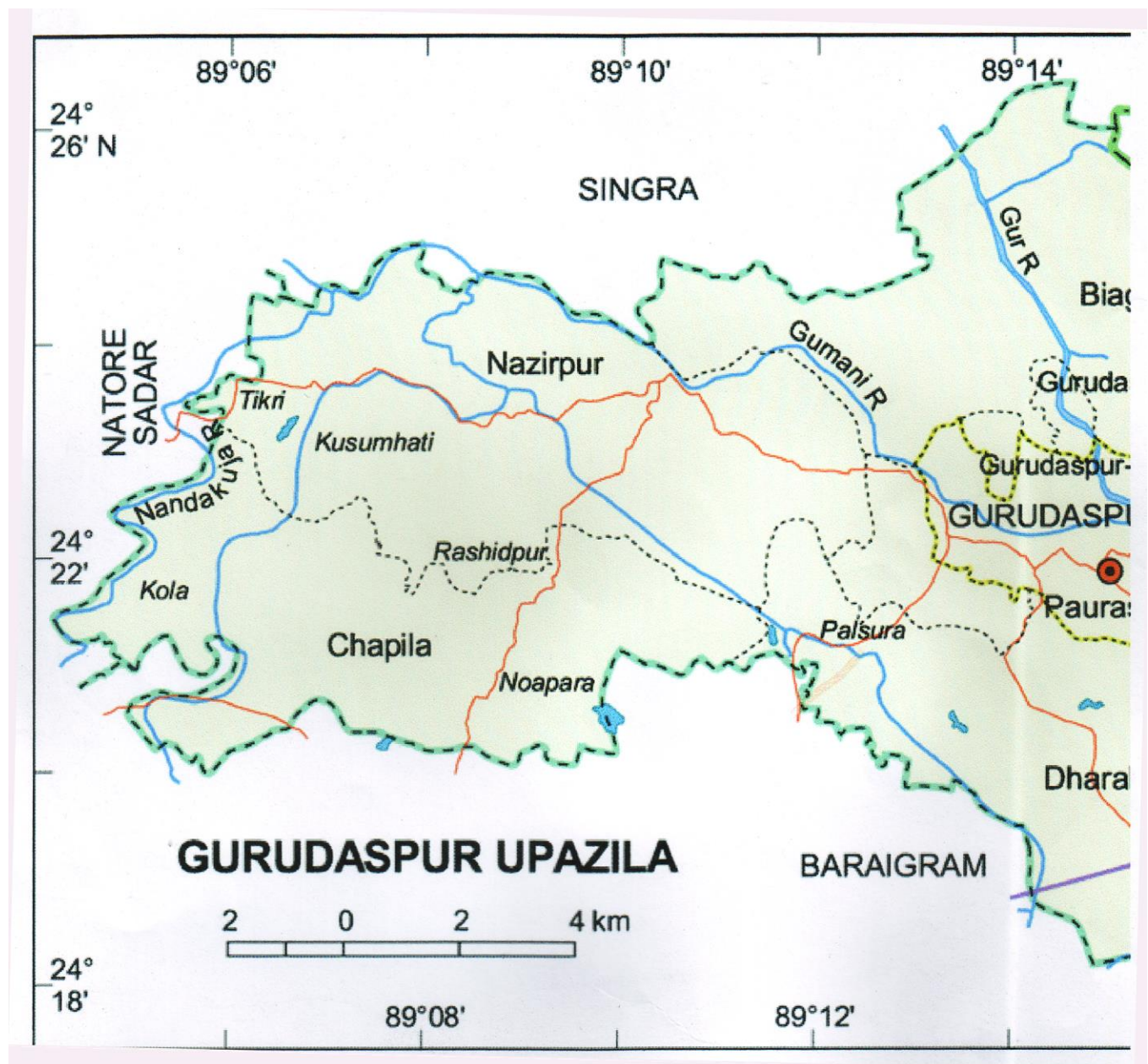
The list of ethnic communities given by Maloney (1984) includes another 10 groups: Bede, Bhuimali, Bhuiya, Ganghu, Jaliya (Kaibartta), Kukamar, Kurmi, Mahto, Malla (Mallo), Namasudra. These groups are, in fact, ex-tribal groups. Maloney is aware of this fact, but he has included them in the list of tribes to identify the Indo-Aryan speaking small ethnic groups.

Number of Oraon and their district bases distribution:

Table-

Serial No.	Districts	No. of Families	Male	Female	Total No. of People
1.	Panchagrah	41	102	100	202
2.	Thankurgaon	326	663	582	1245
3.	Dinajpur	1576	3239	3020	6259
4.	Rangpur	2932	5930	4735	11665
5.	Sirajganj	1312	2450	2364	4814
6.	Bogra	101	186	185	371
7.	Natore	825	1616	1475	3091
8.	Joypurhat	1347	2814	2704	5518
9.	Nawbganj	1348	2773	2631	5404
10.	Rajshahi	2647	5995	6223	11218
11.	Naogaon	8289	16199	15635	31834
12.	Gaibanda	14	27	29	56
13.	Gazipu	29	64	39	103
14.	Habiganj	415	943	888	1831
15.	Moulvibazar	305	764	666	1430
	Total	21507	43796	41276	85041

Source: Survey reports on the Oraon community of Bangladesh, (Kispotta, 2007)



5.2 Ethnic Identity of the Oraon:

The ambiguity regarding the universal definition of "Indigenous People" or tribe is not a new problem in the domain of Anthropology and Sociology. Anthropologists and Sociologists like Roy (1992), Majumdar (1944), Bailey (1961), Vidyarathi(1977), Bhowmick(1980) and others have tried to give an appropriate definition. But these attempts proved insufficient for great diversities of cultures and socio-economic spheres. In Bangladesh these small ethnic community are treated as minority community therefore the Oraon of Bangladesh are no different from this.

In Sociological classification the Oraon are to be placed under Dravidian races. The pointers are their black complexion, flat nose, curly hair, round skull and medium height. Risley (1891) said, "No signs of Mongolian affinities" in the physical features of the Oraon. G.A. Griersop (1906) holds that the Oraon have some strong resemblance with 'The Male Paharias' not only in physical features but also in dialects.

According to the Oraon, the 'Dharamr or 'Dharmesh' is the creator of the universe. He is the Supreme Being, omnipotent and omniscient, resides in the sun. Apart from 'Sun' worship, they revere a number of Gods, such as God of the village, God of the crop preservation, God of the household etc. Besides these, they pay homage to Hindus and Santals deities. Now most of them are being converted to Hinduism. They have their own rites, rituals, beliefs and practices. Having faith to various Gods they celebrate many festivals, such as Sarhool, Karam, Khariyani etc. They have strong belief in magical power. The notion of purity and pollution exists among their view and they perform some ritual activities. Dalton mentioned, after the birth of a child both father and mother is considered unclear, sent out from the house for eight days.

A feast arranges after eight days and child is ceremonially named [Dalton, 1872; 192].Now a days this practice can not be seen. They have their own system of

marriage and divorce. Clan exogamy, marry outside the clan is the basic factor. They are divided to the numbers of clan, derived from totem.

According to the Census of 1991, the ethnic population of Bangladesh is 1.2 million, which constitutes 1.13% of the country's total population. In fact, the ethnic population might be more than the figure given in the Census Report. There are reasons for supposing so. It has been observed that the ethnic people who were converted to Christianity are often listed in the Government official documents under the category "Christian" while those who use Bengali names similar to the typical Hindu names are often grouped under the category "Hindu." In both cases, ethnic people are excluded from the groups where they belong to. One can easily make such mistakes if one does not have adequate knowledge about the ethnic people and their ethnic/ religious, and linguistic background. Even if some of the census enumerators possess such knowledge, all of them cannot be expected to have it.

Examples of a wide gap between Government official statistics and unofficial private censuses are not hard to find in literature. Maloney (1984:8) has mentioned that according to *the Monthly Statistical Bulletin of Bangladesh* (March 1981), the ethnic population of the five Districts in Rajshahi Division the number of ethnic people foundry the various Christian missions in private censuses was double as much as the population given in official statistics. A similar example has been given by Anwar (1984:370), who has stated that the ethnic population in Dinajpur was 11,000 in the official documents, while it was 55,000 according to the unofficial statistics (no period was mentioned).

To compare the data given in the 1991 Census Report with a research-based estimate, an example may be cited from a recent study on the Garo community of Madhupur Garhforest. According to Khaleque (1992), who did his Ph.D. Dissertation research on- the Garo of Madhupur Garh of Tangail District, the Garo population of this area is 25,000, whereas the Garo population of the whole Tangail

District is 2112 according to the 1991 Census Report. Khaleque's (1992) estimate is based on a sample survey of 10 villages out of 30 Garo villages within and around Madhupur National Park area.

When I wrote the previous version of this paper, it was impossible for me to present any distribution of the ethnic communities according to their population size. In the past Census Reports, no population size for individual ethnic group was given separately. All the small ethnic groups of a district used to be lumped together under the heading "tribal." However, the 1991 Census Report contains a spatial distribution of the "tribal" groups by the districts where they live and also a distribution by their population size (see Table 1 given above).

The spatial distribution of the ethnic groups given in Table 11.17 of the 1991 Census Report shows that there are some ethnic people in all the 64 Districts of Bangladesh. The tribal people living in different Districts belong to different groups. A closer look at the District-wise distribution would reveal that people of certain ethnic groups are concentrated in certain areas. Traditionally, the ethnic groups have been concentrated in the north and north-eastern borders, the forest areas of the north-central region, and the entire area of the CHT (bordering Assam and upper Burma to the East, Arakan to the South and Chittagong District to the West).

The ethnic communities like the Koch, Munda, Oraon, Paharia, Rajbansi, and Santal have been traditionally inhabiting certain parts of Bogra, Dinajpur, Kusthia, Pabna, Rajshahi, and Rangpur Districts in the northern border. The greater Sylhet District in the north-eastern border is the traditional area of Khasi, Manipuri, Jaintia, and Tipra community. The Garo, Koch, Hajong people have been living in Mymensingh and Jamalpur District in the northern borders and in Tangail District in the north-central region. The Chittagong Hill Tracts are the traditional homeland of the ethnic communities other than those mentioned above.

5.3 Historical Background

There is no concrete evidence on how and since when Oraon have settled in the Bangladesh territory. At present, they live in Rangpur, Dinajpur, Bogra and Natore districts. The census report of 1881 recorded that some Oraon lived in Mymensingh, Chittagong and Noakhli districts. Population census conducted later did not treat the Oraon as a separate tribe and therefore, it was difficult to ascertain their number. The 1991 census however, recorded their number in Bangladesh.

Except for the Santal, Munda and Oraon, who resemble the Dravidians, people of almost all other ethnic communities have certain Mongoloid features in their physical appearance.

All the ethnic groups of the CHT, the Garo in Mymensingh, Tangail, and Jamalpur districts, the Kha-si in Sylhet district display Mongoloid characteristics. The admixture with other races is less evident in these cases. But a mixture of Dravidian and Mongoloid races is clearly evident in the physical characteristics of such groups as the Koch, Hajong, Rajbansi, Manipuri (Meithei), and Pathor. Some of these groups (e.g. the Koch) look more Mongoloid than Dravidian, while some others (e.g. the Hajong) look more Dravidian than Mongoloid.

It is assumed that the original home of most of these ethnic groups was somewhere else other than the area now constitute the territory of Bangladesh. Almost all the ethnic communities of the CHT are believed to have had their original homeland in Arakan and they migrated to their present habitat at different times in the past centuries. The Tipras had migrated from the Tipperah hills (India). The Garo, Khasi, Manipuri, Rajbansi, and Koch were basically Tibetan ethnic communities which drifted down to Assam (India) and then to their present settlements in the different areas of India and Bangladesh. The Munda, Oraon, and Santals are the ethnic people of Chhota Nagpur and Santal Parganas of India and they came to the area now known as Bangladesh during the British period.

Language

Except for a few people living in the interior part of the CHT, almost all the ethnic communities of Bangladesh are bi-lingual. They have learnt the Bengali language for communicating with the Bengali neighbours and retained their own language to use it among themselves. In addition to the Bengali language, some of the converted Christians among the ethnic people have learnt the English language.

The Chakma and Tanchangya people speak a language, which is a dialect variant of Bengali and do not use their original language anymore. The Rajbansi, Paharia, Koch, and Pathors have long lost their original language. They now use the Bengali language even for communicating with their own people.

Table 2, Distribution of Ethnic Communities by Linguistic Affiliation

Language Family	Branch	Ethnic Communities
Tibeto-Burmese	Kuki-Chin	Bawm, Chakma, Khami, Khyang, Lushai, Manipuri, Marma, Mro, Pankho, Sak, Tanchangya (other groups: Banjogi, Shendu)
	Bara (Bodo)	Garos, Hajongs, Kochs, Mrongs, Rajbansis, Tipras (other groups: Dalus, Hadis, Kacharis (Kacharis), Mikirs, Paliyas, Pathors, Riangs)
Austro-Asiatic (Mon-Khmer)	Khasi	Khasis (other group: Jaintias)
	Munda	Mundas, Santals (other groups: Mahlis, Hos)
Dravidian		Oraons, Paharias
Indo-Aryan		Bedes, Bhuiyans, Bhuiyas, Ganghus,

Note: "Other groups" mentioned in parentheses, as well as the groups listed under the Indo-Aryan language family were found in some sources, but not in the 1991 Census Report (see text, for more information).

The original language of the different ethnic groups belong to the various branches of different language families, distribution of the ethnic communities by language categories (cf. Maloney 1984; Grierson 1903) is given in Table 2. It may be noted that original written script was absent in all the case-ethnic languages. However, many of these peoples have adopted other's script to write their own language. The Burmese script was adopted by the Chakma and Marma Bengali script by the Tipra and Manipuri, and Roman script the Garo, Lushai, Santal, and some others.

Religion

The Marma, Chakma, and Tanchangya are Buddhists and there are a few Buddhists among the other small ethnic groups of the CHT. Most people in the smaller ethnic communities of the interior parts of the CHT were animists. Some of these animists have been converted to Christianity by the Christian missionaries working in this area. Thus many of the Bawms, Lushai, and Pankho are now converted Christians. A process of Christianization is presently going on among these as well as other ethnic communities like the Mrongs and Mros.

The Garos have had their traditional religion, which is a form of animism. But the majority of them have been converted to Christianity. The Koch, Hajong, Pathor, and Manipuri are Hinduized ethnic communities. The Santals retained their traditional religion, which is based on belief in spirit (animism). However, they have been influenced by Hinduism and some of them are converted to Christianity.

A process of Christianization has been going in the ethnic areas since the British period. Before Christianization, however, most of the ethnic groups of the northern and north-eastern borders had been influenced by Hinduism, while those in the CHT by Buddhism. The rate of Islamization is very insignificant compared to that of Christianization. There are a few converted Muslims among the Rajbansis and also among the Garo, but their number is very insignificant in both cases.

5.4 The Oraon Culture

The Oraon language, Kurukh, belongs to the Dravidian family and is most closely related to Brachium and Mailto (Paharia). Kuroki language is being taught in Ranchi University in Jharkhand. A Kuroki literary society has been formed after the first Kuroki conference held in Ranchi in October, 2006. Many Kuroki language magazines are being published from various parts of India and Bangladesh.

The Oraon people have a rich and vast range of folk songs, dances and tales, as well as traditional musical instrument. Both men and women participate in dances, which are performed at social events and festivals. Maunder, Negara and Cartel are the main instruments. The majority of Oraon write their got along with their name.

Oraon is tribe of the Proto-Australian origin. The Oraon people are short and black in complexion. Their noses are fiat and their hair black curled. According to Anthropologists, Oraon, Mundas, Maipaharis and Santals belong to the same group of aborigine people. Rome the point of view of language too, they belong to the same Austria family. Many specialists consider that the word Oraon is a distorted from a totem in the ancient Kuroki language at about six thousand.

5.5 Social Systems and Social Structure

Oraon men and women wear simple dresses. Women wear soarse sari and men wear the dhuti and the lungi Poor men wear the gamchha. Oraon women like to wear ornaments and use flowers in their make up. A recognized social custom is to have

tattoos on the body of both men women. The better off and educated Oraon wear shirts and Punjabis. Rice is the stable food of Oraon. They take vegetables, fish or meat with rice. They drink a homemade wine called pachai which is generally made from rice. Mahua, another indigenous variety of homemade wine in Bangladesh, is rare in the Oraon habitats. Farming is the main occupation of Oraon. Men plough the land and women take part in other types of work. Women work harder than men. They sell fish and vegetables or fruits.

Oraon reside in dormitory type of houses that provide the young boys and girls an opportunity to mix with one another and to choose their partners in life. Marriage rituals in the Oraon community are similar to those of Santal and Mundas. Marriage is arranged by the guardians in the family, but the opinions of the brides and bridegrooms are also respected. Child marriage is not recognized. Divorce is allowed. Divorces as well as widows can remarry. Both men and women can marry more than once but men are not allowed a second marriage unless they are widowed or are divorces.

Oraon practice the age-old panchayet system in local administration. They did not get much modern education. Poverty is the main cause of their illiteracy. Added to this is their strong adherence to conservative norms and values. Christian missionaries tried to spread education among them. Many Oraon are now adopting Hinduism. At present, some non-government organizations work among them and implement programmers for their socio-economic development. (Ahmed Rafique, 1991)

The Oraon are one of the largest tribes in South Asia, numbering 1,702,664 persons at the 1971 census. A Dravidian language is known to Kuroki. Oraon are closely related to the neighboring Munda tribe and the headman of an Oraon village is called Mumda.

Although there are no sub castes among the Oraon, the Kudas (Navvies) and Kisans (Cultivators) having their distinct occupation, tend to marry among themselves. Beyond this, Oraon observe village and clan exogamy. The matrilineal extended family is the ideal residential unit but Nuclear families are nearly as common. On the average a family contains five to seven co resident members. Boys and girls marry after puberty, boys usually at 16-20 years. This follows a period in which both sexes sleep in a youth dormitory (dhumkuria).

Boys are branded on the arm before being admitted to this institution. The dormitory provides a pool of agricultural labor that can be hired when necessary. Most Oraon are fanners and in the past they practiced shifting cultivation. Hunting, formerly of major importance has been reduced during the present century to the status of a ceremonial event; there is even a women's hunting ceremony held every twelve years.

A remarkable feature of Oraon society is that it is one of the very few on earths (along with the neighboring Mundas) that practices human sacrifice(called otanga or orka by Oraon).Although extremely rare evidence suggests the phenomenon is most prevalent in Ranchi District, Bihar. During the nineteenth century, British officials reported a much broader incidence, occurring among the Oraon, Gond, Kond and Santals tribes.

Police records show that even as late as the 1980s there were a couple of sacrifices a year among the Munda, Maria and Oraon tribes and perhaps slightly more if one assumes that not all cases reached police attention. These sacrifices are of course illegal and treated as homicide under section 302 of the India Penal Code, Detection of culprits is made very difficult by the fact that some villagers believe the sacrifices are essential for the fertility of their fields and hence they are not forthcoming with any information. The human sacrifices usually occur in remote places around the beginning of the sowing season and the associated festival of Sarhul.

The reasons police can distinguish these sacrifices from other forms of murder are:

- 1) the timing, to coincide with the sowing ceremony
- 2) The victim is often an orphan or a homeless person, someone who will not be missed
- 3) Usually no personal animosities account for the killing
- 4) The victim's throat is cut with a knife.
- 5) Sings vfpuja (worship) are normally found near the corpse
- 6) Part of one little finger has been cut off and is missing.

The last item is presumably a part of the human offering that the sacrificed (otanga) will bury in his field. Sometimes blood of the sacrificial victim is mixed with seed grain before it is sown. In earlier centuries the entire body was probably cut up and parceled out to the various fields around a village. The danger of detection now makes this too difficult. The sacrifice is normally offered to a vindictive Goddess thought to control the fertility of the soil. If a human victim can not be caught in time for the sowing ceremony, it is said that hair, sputum or some other human bodily leavings are mixed with hen's blood as a taken offering to this Goddess.

5.6 Economic conditions of Oraon community

Both in rural and urban areas, almost all the Oraon women respondents have to learn weaving as part of their cultural tradition. Besides, they have different kinds of occupation which are listed in table one. Among them one is a U.P member of Nazir union, five are teachers, seven works as sales girls, ten are service holders, three earn by agriculture and four depend on weaving for their livelihood.

Occupational Category	Number	Monthly Income (average)
Member of the U.P	1	4 hundred taka (2 [from government]+2 [from union parishad's own income])
Teaching	5	From 3 to 5 thousand taka
Sales Girl	7	From 2 to 3 thousand taka

Service (banking, health assistant etc.)	10	In the banking profession gets 5 thousand taka
Agriculture	3	There in no fixed income (from 1 to 6/7 thousand taka)
Weaving	4	There in no fixed income (from 1 to 4/5 thousand taka)

Table-1: Occupational Status of Oraon Female Respondents

Age Distribution of Oraon Male Respondents

Out of thirty respondents since the eight women were separated and widowed a twenty two men (husbands) were interviewed. It was done to evaluate the security of the Oraon women through gender relations. Within different age-groups the majority ten was from thirty to forty years while eight between twenty one to twenty nine years, two ranged from forty one to forty five and the rest two were from forty six to fifty five years old.

Age	Number
20 years	0
21 years to 29 years	8
30 to 40 years	10
41 to 45 years	2
46 to 55 years	2

Table-2: Age of the Oraon Husbands/Fathers

Landholding (Household Basis)

Table

Land own (Bigha)	No. of Household	Total land (Bigha)
Landless	20	0.00
1.00-4.00	14	0.35
4.00-8.00	12	1.04

8.00-12.00	8	1.20
12.00-16.00	2	2.28
16.00-20.00	2	2.22
20.00-Above	3	10.90
Total	61	-

Source : Field data.

Table-5.12 shows that among the Oraon of study village 14 household have only 10.00-4.00 bigha (.33 decibels) land and a significant number of families have only five or six bighas of land. In the study area only three household have been found who have 25 bigha land and more than 100 bigha land. Among the landless group a few families have own homesteads but no cultivable land.

Occupational Pattern

Occupational Pattern in the study village is given below-

Table-5.13

Occupational Pattern	No. of household	Percentage
Daily labors	30	49.18
Agriculturist	23	37.70
Job employee	4	6.56
N.G.O worker	2	3.28
Shopkeeper	2	3.28
Total	61	100

The table-5.13 shows that 49.18% respondents fully depends on daily wages and 37.70% are agriculturist. A few people of the study area work in N.G.O or Govt. organization. The total service holder families are 9.84% and rest 3.28% earn their livelihood form various jobs such as small business, vanpooling, rickshaw pooling etc.

5.7 Rituals and traditional culture

Like many other ethnic groups. Oraon worship nature. They however, believe that there is a creator of the universe, Dharmesh, who exists in the sun. Most of their religious ceremonies centre on the sun. Oraon believe in different Gods having symbolic representation in villages, agricultural assets, forests, epidemics etc. They satisfy these Gods through religious festivals of Hindus and the Karam of Oraon is almost identical. This is a worship of trees performed symbolical!} With the Kadam tree or its branches. In fact, Bhadu and Karam are the name of the same Kadam tree in different languages. Religious festivals like the Hariari and Sarhul are associated with praying for the fertility of land a good paddy harvest.

Oraon worship trees, flowers and fruits for increased crop production and protection of the tribe. Fertility of land and women is the same in their religious prayers. Their vows are closely associated with their lifestyle, the struggle for existence and the pleasures of life. Religious ceremonies and seasonal festivals reflect their way of living and their social needs. They also believe in the power of magic. All religious ceremonies and festivals of Oraon such as the Basundhara in the month of Baishakh, Bhadra in Bhadra, Jejuti in Agrahayan, Itu in Falgun and Sarhul in Chaitra reflect the tribe's link to agriculture.

Oraon burn the bodies of the dead. As a mark of respect to the deceased they offer flowers and leaves of sacred trees to the dead on the pyres. The Oraon people also express formal condolence.

5.8 Educational attainment of Oraon children

It was seen that educational level of Oraon women was up to the mark and higher than before which meant the rate of literacy is increasing significantly day by day. Table-three shows that five informants did not receive any formal education, five of them could read and write only, three read up to primary level, three had secondary education, six passed H.S.C and eight were graduate.

Educational Status	Number
--------------------	--------

Illiterate	5
Can read and write only	5
Studied up to class V	3
Class VI to x	3
H.S.C passed	6
Bachelor degree obtained	8

Table-3: Educational Status of Oraon Women Interviewees

Educational Status:

Among the selected informants there was no illiterate man. Each of received institutional education both in urban and rural areas. Within different status majority of them had obtained Bachelor degree, while six obtained M.A degrees, two passed H.S.C and the last two belonged -to the group of class VI to X.

Educational Status	Number
Illiterate	0
Can read and write	22
Studied up to class v	0
Class VI to X	2
H.S.C passed	2
Obtained Bachelor degree	12
Obtained MA degree	6

Table-4: Educational Status of Oraon Male Informants

5.9 Social Organization

There are several scholars in India worked on the Oraon from time to time during British period and also many Indian Anthropologists and Sociologists conducted studies on Oraon. They gave an account of the Oraon on the basis of oral tradition. These studies reflect their changing presses of social organization of the Oraon's of India and it is reflected in their socio-cultural life. On the other hand, the Oraon's of Barind as a small community is now living in an insulated situation with their wider Muslim society and more or less they have disliked situation with their counterparts

in India. Now we find different cultural influences acting upon the lips of the Oraon's of Barind. The Oraon's of Barind are mainly influenced by Hindu culture and few are by Christianity at the present moment, which will be reflected in their social organization under discussion.

The social organization of a small group is the organization of inter-related roles at a particular time within as expressive of certain permanent or semi permanent structural principles. The Social Organization of a great association is the pattern of inter group relation within it. The tribal social organization is not much interred tribal contact and communication. The Oraon of Barind affords an excellent example. When we refer to tribal social organization we imply those generalizations which we may make about social structure after a comparative study of the intra-tribal group relationship patterns. An Oraon village built on high ground, in the midst of an undulating surface in Barind region. The village itself is split into two or more tola or Para, each tola being separate from other by clear open spaces.

The Oraon as a tribe are entogamous. The tribe is divided into exogamous clans which are often associated with tokenism. Among the Oraon's of Barind region several totemic group are found. The Oraon social organization in Barind region reveal endogamous tribe with exogamous clans sub-divided into exogamous families.

Therefore, social organization is the network of relations existing among individuals and groups in a society. It is important to give an elaborate explanation for realizing the socio-cultural situation of a community. In order to fulfill the above purpose the researcher has presented a brief account of major social institutions of Oraon community of the village, such as clan, family, marriage, kinship, ritual and various types of ceremonies.

Rituals for pregnancy and birth:

Pregnancy is the first stage of reproduction stages. Stoppage of periodic menstruation is taken as the first sign of pregnancy of all child caring women and an Oraon woman is no exception to this. The Oraon begin ritual to protect the fetus and mother, when some minor signs of indication of pregnancy are found. The pregnant mother has been taken care of about certain things, such as-

- 1) She must not be present cremation or even touch a dead body.
 - 2) She must not remain outside the hut at the time of lightning flashes thundered bolt.
 - 3) She is also asked to cover herself completely with her Shan-eknlu, least enemies or person with the evil eye came to know of her delicate condition.
- During the pregnancy period Oraon women are restricted to serve food and drink with people other than the family member. Some Oraon particularly the rich family scarifies a pig or goat to the woman's father in case of first pregnancy.

5.10 The impacts of interventions an the Clan system and its impacts & important

Most of the tribes have clans and these are the some total of the families. The clans are known as different names, sects, genes etc. Many of these are associated with some objects of animate or inanimate like plants and animals and sometimes heavenly bodies. People have established association or mythological relationships with the members and such bodies are known as 'Totem'. Belief in totem and formalities relating to reverence, propitiation and restriction constitute a belief system as referred to an earliest form of religion. Thus relationship between the totem and the totemic, members belonging to a particular clan (totem) group are very significant. However, there is a series of beliefs and formalities concerning the clan organization. The Oraon have a good number of clans. The Oraon clan's wise sects are as follows

Table-1

Name of Clan	Name of Totem
Lakra	Tiger
Tigga	One Kind of Monkeys
Binhu	Young mice
Baro	Wild mice
Khakha	Wild dog
Karadeta	Crow
Toppo	one kind of sparrow bird
Ekkha	One kind of bird with long tails
	Tortoise

Klialko	One kind of bird
Linda	One kind of Ketcho
Minji	Eel fish
Bakla	One kind of grass
Bara	One kind of trees
Kcsh	Paddy
Panna	Iron
Bek	Salt
Kispotta	Pig's entrals
Gede	Duck (Jalil, 2001, 45)

Source: Field data, 2008 (Found in the village under study)

However, in my study village of Barind region researcher observe the above clans? It plays a significant role of their marriage, inheritance succession and affiliation. It also important clan membership for the fact that is reflects their social is acquired either by birth or marriage identity.

Among the Oraon, marriage in the totemic class is prohibited & regarded as sin productive of dire calamity & it is permitted is no account (Roy, 1972). For example a member of toppo group is not allowed to marry a member of same totemic group.

According to informants under my study village all the clans are considered as equals & no hierarchical is made by them Oraon. There is no preference-while giving their daughters in marriage to anybody belonging to different clans. Therefore, tribute division on the basis of clan pertaining to social status is less important to the Oraon because of changing pattern of their socio religious condition & their smallness in number.

5.11 The impacts of interventions on the family system and its impacts & important

Family is the smallest but most important unit of a society. The types, size & authority system of a family are the most important aspect of the institution. These aspects are also very significant on the life & society of particular group of people. Family system among the tribes & non tribes may differ from several aspects. The family system of the study village as well the family pattern of the Oraon community has some special features, which denote their socio- cultural condition situation & other position of their everyday life.

Generally the system of family formation is very simple, consisting of wife, husband & their unmarried children. As regard the role of post marital residence they practice patrilocal & residence. In some cases, it is rarely noticed that bridegroom sometimes lives on the house of the pattern of his wife. In some cases of male childless family, the pattern of the bride are very much interested to bring one of their bridegrooms to the house for their security in old age. Thus patriuxorilocal type of residence is also found in the study area as well as rest of the Oraon community in Bangladesh. The authority in the Oraon family lies in the hand of the senior most capable male

member but too many old and unable male members are considered less important member in the family though they are taken care very sincerely, irrespective of their socio-economic status (Das et.al, 1998)

Monogamy is a common practice in their study village. However, polygamy is allowed among the Oraon but polyandry is strictly prohibited. As an economic unit, family members are the main bread earners who work in their own land or other areas. The adult female members primarily do the household work and secondarily assist the male members in their respective fields of earning. The grown up boys and girls also held their parents according to their ability.

Marriage is also be broken for some defects of the husband, through weakness is always considered a little bit less seriously in comparison to the wife fault because the Oraon society is patriarchal.

1. If the husband is impotent.
2. If he is a lunatic.
3. He is unable to maintain family expenditure

Besides these, there are some causes which are more responsible for breaking marriage remain between die wife and husband. For example, if they are always quarreling with each other, the marriage may be dissolved. It is noted that divorce among die Oraon for dowry is rare which is much more common among their Muslim neighbors of the same economic land and in some cases among die Hindu's also at present (Sharker,1997). Through dowry system among them is increasing.

Types of Family

Table

Types of Family	Number of household	Percent
Nuclear	40	65.57%
Joint/Extent	18	29.51%
Others	3	4.92%

Total	61	100%
-------	----	------

Source : Field data.

With regard to the types of family, it can be broadly grouped into

1. Nuclear Family
2. Joint Family and
3. Others Family
 - a) A nuclear family includes wife and husband with or without unmarried children.
 - b) Joint or extended family consist of a nuclear family consisting of wife and husband, parents and married son with without children or close relatives.
 - c) ‘Others’ family means a single man or woman family having one man or woman due to particular cases.

For the purpose of better understanding of the Oraon families, we have shown here the size of the family:

Family Size

Table-5.8

Village	Small	Medium	large	Very large	Total household
	0-3	4-6	7-9	10-up	
Shamra	05	30	23	3	61
	8.20%	49.18%	37.70%	4.92%	100%

Source : Field data.

The table-5.8 indicates that only 8.20% families have less than 3 members, but 49.18% families have 4 to 6 members. On the other hand, about 37.70% families contains 7 to 9 members. The rest 4.92% families have more that 10 members. So medium size families are common among the Oraon of my study village.

5.12 Residence Pattern

There is no single residence pattern are found among the Oraon society. Both paralegal and matrilocal even neuronal residence pattern are found among the Oraon tribal people though paralegal pattern is dominant. It may also be mentioned that irrespective of whether a residence is patrilocal or matrilocal a newly married family within about 2/3 years time after the marriage make their own establishment and move out from their respective parent's house. Many married educated young men told me that they feel lack of privacy while living in common house. This is mainly because Oraon houses are small and there are not many rooms available. Oraon families in general are not very rich. So it is very difficult for the parents to maintain a large family for long time. That is why. Newly married couple moves to their own house after certain time. Some poor male goes to his wife's father house to live as resident so-in-law.

5.13 Recent Change of Oraon community

Every Oraon can speak in Bengali; some children can not speak in their own language properly but older Oraon. They use their kinship term in their home but outside their relatives or home they call Bengali people according to Bengali term. Oraon people use common word named Dada in home and outside their home. Now they are not homogenous, they engaged in outside activity. They diverts from Hindu but they do not wear dhoti rather lungi of Bengali. Some Oraon work as bar barer and day laborer. In fact, Oraon is in mixed situation. Oraon can be Hindu but follow Muslims culture. Oraon gradually get losses their social tradition and culture.

5.14 Health care services of Oraon community

5.15 Cultural heritage and tradition

Like other tribes, Oraon like to dance, sing and play musical instruments. Their dances and songs are deeply rooted in their social and cultural life. Jhumur songs of Oraon reflect their lifestyle and their religious philosophy. Dhumkuria is as important an aspect of their social life as the Dekachang is to Garo, Akhra to Santal and Ghatul to Maria.

A process of acculturation has long been going on among the ethnic communities of Bangladesh due to their symbiotic economic relationship with the mainstream Bengali society and also due to their integration into the wider political system. Except for the ethnic groups living in the interior part of the CHT, all the others have adopted many of the Bengali culture traits. The Hinduized ethnic communities have long lost their traditional way of life. Many of the small ethnic groups have been so much amalgamated that they even lost their ethnic identity. This is particularly true in the case of the ex-tribal groups. However, the larger groups like the Chakma, Marma, Garo, and some others have still maintained their distinct identity, although they have also adopted many traits of Bengali culture.

Although the ethnic communities have been maintaining political and economic relations with the mainstream Bengali people, some of them do not appreciate the Government policy towards the ethnic communities. They consider such policy to be the means for economic and political suppression by the Government authorities. According to them, the Government policy has an inherent element of discriminations against the ethnic communities and is aimed at the disintegration of their socio-cultural life. It is not hard to find cases of conflict and tension in the ethnic areas and ethnic people's reaction against certain Government policy (see Khaleque 1982; and the various articles on the CHT area in Qureshi 1984).

5.16 Traditional political organization and rights

Centralized political authority and territorial form of organization were absent in most ethnic communities. The ethnic group as a whole, in nearly every case, was a kind of loose political unit having no significant organizational function, although ethnic affiliation had always played certain role in their life. Every tribal village with a traditional headman was a kind of independent political unit. In most cases, the village founder or his descendants used to be the village headman, who usually had no formal authority over other villagers. The role of such a headman was to maintain peace and order in his society, organize economic activities of the villagers, and in some cases, to perform certain rituals.

However, a centralized political authority and ahierarchical administrative organization was superimposed among the ethnic people in order to integrate them into the wider administration of the country. After establishing political and military control over the ethnic areas the British rulers appointed revenue collectors for collecting revenue from the ethnic communities. These revenue collectors used to retain a part of the collected revenue for themselves and passed the remainder to the Government. Sub-collectors were employed in turn by the collectors and the function of collecting revenues from the village communities was usually delegated to the village headmen.

The village headmen were appointed from, the village leaders who seemed to be efficient for revenue collection, not necessarily from the traditional headmen. In some cases, however, the traditional headmen were also included. The village headmen who were given the responsibility of revenue collection had acquired a dominant position in their society. In most cases, they became the real administrators of their respective ethnic group. This is particularly true in the CHT areas.

Generally, the revenue collectors in the ethnic areas were the Bengali (mainly Hindu) zamindars, but in the CHT, they were appointed from among the ethnic people themselves. The whole area of the CHT was divided into three revenue "circles" and a "Raja" or "Chief" was appointed in each of them. The "circle" was in its turn, subdivided into "mouza," each of which consisted of several villages. One headman at both "mouza" and village level was appointed for revenue collection. Thus the ethnic communities of the CHT who were previously organized along kinship lines were subjected to a territorial system of administration.

The system of administration introduced in the British period had been continued during the Pakistani rule. The ethnic communities were incorporated into the broader framework of the national political system in 1960 when the institution of Basic Democracies was introduced in the then Pakistan. After the liberation of Bangladesh, the institution of Basic Democracies was replaced with a system of Union Parishad, which represent the local level civil administration in the ethnic areas. The revenue administration is no longer performed by village headmen, except in the case of the CHT, where the chiefs of ethnic group and their subordinate headmen still perform this function.

Political Organization:

In social Anthropology the political life of the tribal reflects a paradoxical situation between the democracy system of state and tribal self system of government and

customary laws. A tribal rule either democratically elected or through hereditary rule, governs the community and their political activities. The political characteristics of tribal may broadly be looked at through their social organization. They are:

1. Political association based on their lineage.
2. Political association on the village.
3. Political association of a group of village or territory (Makliajaha; 113).

In this chapter we shall look into the changing pattern of political organization of the Oraon in Barind in the form of -

1. The village arbitrary system.
2. Village officials
3. Function of village panchayat and
4. Maintains of law and order.

The village administrative system:

The largest Oraon administrative unit is Para panchayat; The smallest unit of the tribe is the family base organization which belongs to a particular totemic clan popularly known as gotra. However there is no evidence that clan/gotra plays only role in the village administration. But the "we feeling" among the clan people is clear, his village organization and administration of the mouja, where the headman and the pahan were selected hereditary.

The pahan or religious leader and the headman (moral) of panchayat got some land on the basis of privilege from generation to generation. As I. K. Bhowmic described "The Oraon are administered by the authority of the regional council, Para Panchayet. A Pahra or region is defined as a territorial unit consisting of a number of villages (Bhowmic, 1971). Therefore it may consist of seven, nine, thirty or even twenty villages such of these regional groups called Digori.

This regional group has a particular territory where it owns and defends its rights in agricultural land, village sites, forest tract, grazing land, water supplies fishing pools.

The Moral (Head of the Administrative body) in village administrative:

As the Oraon backward section of people, they are habituated in traditional way of life in rural area. The recent role of Oraon leader is very wide and multifaceted. The moral is secular head of the village, performing different religious rituals, socio-cultural functions etc.

Selection of Moral:

In this respect, the researcher interviewed some of the older and conscious people in the study village about their traditional leader appointing system. The informants told that selecting system of moral was hereditary and handed down from father to son of the same family and thus found generation to generation. It is found in my study village, where the position of moral is hereditary. However the moral should have the following criteria:

1. A person must be economically solvent.
2. He must be a sensible representative for the people.
3. He should be intelligent and well versed.
4. He must possess of such good character that he commands respect from others. ;
5. He should be physically able and a mentally balanced person.
6. He should have skill in making appropriate judgment for settlement of disputes.
7. He should be known to other communities as well besides his own settlement.

It is noted that educational qualification is still less important in selecting a moral under my study village but economical condition, lineage and reputation are still strong considerable factors along with the above personal qualities of a leader. Besides this kinship network is also significant from various aspects.

Role of Moral in Oraon Village:

The moral is considered as the protector and controller of his own community people. He is the first man to be informed about anything, which has been happened in the village. A village moral is an administrator as well as a justice of the village. However the functions and responsibilities of a moral may be summarized as follows

1. Settlement of all disputes in the community.
2. Maintaining peace and discipline in the community.
3. Maintaining law and order in community.
4. Management of all social and religious activities such as marriage ceremony, religious festivals and funeral rites.
5. Arrange the Bicher and punishment violating the establish rule.
6. His important duty is to maintain friendly relationship with no-Oraon neighbor or people of his own village and neighboring villages.
7. A moral is bound to take the responsibilities of the welfare activities of the locality".
8. A moral of the Oraon also assists the victim of the village in case of cheating at the land selling.
9. He also organizes the inter village and some inter village organization for protecting themselves from the greedy people and helping each other in terrible some situation or at the adversity.
10. The most significant role of a moral is to protect the traditional value of the Oraon community through co-communication and elopement of the offenders.
11. Sometimes he protect the right of the orphans and widows properties. According to motish (Toppo) - "Taralal Sardar (moral) generally conducts all the affairs related to government official, police, thana and political problem and court. In one word, he is the representative of the village"

It is noted that the moral has not any economic or rural authority over the villagers. Naturally, he has no right to tax, tribute or service. In addition, he has no power of enforcing his decisions in settling disputes without the consent of village Panchayet.

The village Panchayet (administrative body) is composed of the elders member of the Oraon society.

5.17 Descent System and Kinship Organization of Oraon

According to Marvin Harris(1971), all persons whose relationship to each other can be described in terms of a combination of affinity or descent or a combination of both one is considered kin each other. The domains idea constituted the beliefs and expectations that kin shares with each other are called kinship. Kinship is the paramount ideology of domestic life. The people of Oraon tribal society like any other human society in the world are grouped together by various kinds of bonds the most universal and the basic one is based on reproduction and inherent human drive and is called kinship. The study of kinship systems are one of the oldest and are still considered by many to be one of the most important elements in the in die study of social organizations. Kinship term can be studied linguistically, ethnographically, sociologically and psychologically (Winicked: 1961, 301) It has been suggested by Radcliff Brown that there is high correlation between social organization and kin terminology. As the Oraon have lost many of their own traditional terms and have borrowed different terms from their neighboring Muslims and Hindus. Because, they had been surrounded by Muslim and Hindu community for long ago. Some terms of relationship are given below:

Kinship Terms Community used by the Oraon Villagers, in the study area:

Types of Kin relation	Addressing local Oraon term	Terms in Other
Mother	Mai	Maa/Amma
Father	Bap	Abba/Eaba
Mother's Brother	Mama Barn Bap	Mama Barn Bap
Father's Brother(elder)	Baro Bap	Baro Bap
Father's Brother (younger)	Kakn	Kakn
Father's eldr brother's wife	Bam Mat	Bam Mat

Father's younger brother	Kaki	Kaki
Mother's Father	Nana	Nana
Mother's Mother	Nani	Nani
Father's Father	Dado	Dado
Father's Mother	Dadi	Dadi
Mother's Brother's wife	Mami	Mami
Mother's Sister	Muashi	Muashi
Mother's Sister's Husband	Mitsba	Mitsba
Father's Sister	Fufa	Fufa
Father's Sister's Husband	Fafa	Fafa
Ego's elder Brother	Dada	Dada
Ego's younger Brother	By name	By name
Brother-in-law(younger)	Bj name	Bj name
Brother-in-law(elder)	Bahani	Bahani
Brother's wife(elder)	Bboigi	Bboigi
Brother's wife(younger)	Bbabu	Bbabu
Father-in-law	Bap	Bap
Mother-in-law	Mai	Mai

(Source: Field data, 2010)

The pattern of behavior between and among the family members of the Oraon is highly depended on kin relation. Suppose that the Oraon behave complete differently towards his younger brother's wife and elder brother's wife or to his father and father's father is not same or equal from any single aspect. For this reason it is essential to analyze the kin relationship among the Oraon. These relationships help to understand their kinship organization.

Except for the Garo and Khasi, all the ethnic communities of Bangladesh are patrilineal, i.e. they reckon descent from father's side. Property is transmitted in most cases from father to son (patrilineal inheritance), although in some cases the daughters also inherit their parents' property. The pattern of marital residence is patrilocal (wife comes at marriage to live in her husband's group) in all these patrilineal ethnic communities. The Garo and Khasi are matrilineal, i.e they reckon descent from mother's side. The system of property inheritance in these two ethnic communities is also matrilineal (daughters inherit their mother's property). Unlike the patrilineal ethnic communities, the pattern of marital residence among the Garo and Khasi is matrilocal (husband comes at marriage to live in his wife's group). There are certain indications which suggest matrilineal and matrilocal trends among the Marma. Remnants of matrilocal residence pattern may be discovered among the Marmas living in Arakan, but not in the case of those living in the CHT (see Levi-Strauss 1952a:51). A moiety structure is found among the Garo, and to some extent, among the Bawm, while all the other ethnic communities have a clan system. A clan exogamy is practised by nearly all the ethnic communities.

5.18 Beliefs ritual among Oraon

Rituals refer to orderly progression through different stages in life from birth to death. People in the culture go through the series of life which includes birth, childhood, Puberty, teenage adulthood, old age and death. There are various ceremonies associated with this different phases of an Oraon's life, beginning at the time of pregnancy, birth, puberty, marriage and death. Through these rituals an individual can overcome social stress and tension and stability himself with his surroundings. So, it is said that life cycle studies provide basic material for understanding the nature and characteristic of any culture.

5.19 Name giving ceremony of the Oraon community

Among them socio-cultural ceremonies name giving ceremony of the Oraon is very interesting. The general custom of Oraon's is that the name giving ceremony is

observed on the day of the first hair cut occasion. Sometime this celebration been delayed after one month even six month. Until the ceremonial name is given, the baby is ordinarily called according to the day of the week on which the baby was born and their parents call them either by babu(in case of male child or mia) For example, if a male child is born on Sunday(Bengali Rabibar) he is called Roba or Robiudra.

The ceremony name of given on an appointed day. This day the older relatives and neighbor are invited as per financial abilities of the Oraon's family. On this day a unmarried boy on the village cut the hair of the child and the hair is thrown in a stream tank. However, the people of the study village do not believe in the ancestral supernatural reviving through the child. In some cases of our study village do not follow the above rituals.

Childhood:

In case of childcare mother plays an important role. Daily care including feeding, cleaning etc. are done by mother only. Father is not much concern in daily health care. Taking of the children there exist a very affectionate child father relationship. The father often buys things from the market for the young children. Frequent breast feeding is a common practice. When the mother goes to field work some old man or woman (Grand parents) or young brother sister (Siblings) of the family looks after the child. As soon as the babies are five or six years of the age they play among themselves. Children start helping their parents at the age of seven or eight years. Normally the daughter work with the mother such as brings water, cleaning the house, poultry rearing, washing the pot and pans etc.

Puberty:

The Oraon do not perform any ceremony or ritual for the first menstruation of a girl because they maintain secrecy about the menstruation. But there are some

prohibitions for menstruation. They maintain their following taboos during their period.

1. They do not touch cow dung in this period.
2. They do not go inside the cow shed because cow is sacred for them.
3. They do not perform any puja. If they go to see any religious ceremony was that from a distance place.
4. They do not participate in death ritual or touch dead body.
5. To see or touch new born baby is strictly prohibited.
6. Sexual inter course is also prohibited in this time.

However, woman maintains secrecy about their menstruation. They think menstruation as profanes according to their religion.

5.20 The impact of intervention on the marriage system and its impacts & important

After all these pre-marriage ceremonies, the main ceremony begins. In this stage two or more men of the bridegroom take up the bridegroom on their arms and carry him inside the home. In some cases one or two relatives of bridegroom is also allowed in the ceremonial place. The bride & bridegrooms feet have been washed & then made to stand on a curry stone. The bride groom stands behind the bride with the great toe & second toe & bride with the; great toe & second toe of his left foot enclosing the bride has left heel & fork. During this ceremony, the couples are screened round & all sides with clock screens. A few female relatives of the bride and bridegroom also remain inside two screens. The rest remain stand around the screen. Some of them hold sword in order to protect evil spirit. In this way, they finished the first part of the formalities with their traditional singing, dancing sand drinking. Then the bride and bridegroom stand up face to face on a curry-stone. At the same time, the bridegrooms' puts a mark of vermilion diluted in oil on forehead of the bride with the ring finger of his left hand and the bride similarly marks the bridegroom with the vermilion. In this way, the main function of marriage ceremony is over.

Marital Status:

Table two shows that out of thirty respondents, twenty two were married, five widowed and three were separated. As there is no black and white provision in Oraon marriage, usually they do not practice divorces rather they become separated if they feel like.

Marital Status	Number
Married	22
Widowed	5
Separated	3

Table-3: Marital Status of Oraon Women Informants

Marital Status:

Besides the interview of twenty two married male respondents this study has tried to collect information from the separated three husbands. It has been found that two of them now live in India and the rest one lives in Sylhet. So he was interviewed.

Marital Status	Number
Married	22
Separated	1

Table-7: Marital Status of Oraon Male Respondents

Recent Changes of marriage system

Oraon rituals and beliefs gradually changes. Recently Oraon watch on television and male Oraon smoke regularly. Oraon of Dobarpara lives with Muslim, Hindu and affects by their culture and customs. They do not perform their rituals according to

their own tradition. They follow other religion especially Hindu and somewhat the tradition of Bengali. Some Oraon male take dowry from woman. Now Oraon do not follow their rituals and beliefs or Muslim or Hindu. An Oraon life is in hybridization situation.

5.21 Death:

The final 'rite de passage' has to do something with the rituals of death which center round the cremation of the dead body. The orphans have their own funeral custom. Motilal (Toppo) (55) of Dobarpara told me that on the Oraon view, death is the end of person's physical presence on earth, but the soul remains on earth until it is finally sent to heaven by a ritual celebration of a feast commonly known as 'Sradha'. But many of the Oraon people have no clear idea about the hell and heaven in my study village. However, among the Oraon community, death is taken as a great misfortune and a sad demise. After the death of a person, the deceased is good bathed and the dead body is covered with fresh white cloth. Then the deceased is taken to the graveyard. At reaching the graveyard, the dead body is ignited only in mouth by a straw of jute. It is noted that the Oraon's only ignite mouth at a touch but does not follow the total rite of the Hindu community.

5.22 Recent Changes:

Oraon rituals and beliefs gradually change. Recently Oraon watch on television and male Oraon smoke regularly. Oraon of Dobarpara lives with Muslim, Hindu and is affected by their culture and customs. They do not perform their rituals according to their own tradition. They follow other religion especially Hindu and somewhat the tradition of Bengali. Some Oraon male take dowry from woman. Now Oraon do not follow their rituals and beliefs or Muslim or Hindu. An Oraon life is in tribal hybridization situation.

5.23 Socio-Religion of Oraon:

Like many other tribal groups, the Oraon also believe in various impersonal supernatural forces which control the destiny of human life. Certain rituals and formalities are performed by them either to placate or to please these unnatural forces to gain their favor or to overcome the impending disasters. These supernatural powers have been classified on the basis of certain degree. Originally Oraon are animist. They are closely related with some spiritual power and supernatural beings. As a Dravidian tribe of south India, they worship a supernatural supreme deity known as hahems. The rites of Oraon religion are employed to establish harmonious relations with the spirits and deities. Prayers, offerings, sacrificing birds and animals, ceremonial shaving, preparing and offering ceremonial food, observing certain taboos are the main features of Oraon religion (Dalton, 1972). Deferent deities, spirits and supernatural power. The deities and supernatural spirits of Oraon religion may be broadly divided into the two main classes of supernatural spirits and human spirits and each of these classes might again be sub-divided into superior and Gods and inferior gods and spirits. The Oraon have own classification of supernatural powers. The Oraon appears to recognize as many as ten deferent classes.

The highest divinity recognized by the Oraon is Dharmes or the supreme Being the creator of the universe who is placed in a class ssapart. Similarly the Oraon places the spirits of dead ancestors known as pacbba-lar in a separate class by themselves. In a third class are placed the tutelary deities and spirits of an Oraon village. Some of these regarded as Deofas or gods and the others as B/j/tfs or ghosts. To former section belong pat of pat Raja, Chaia pachcho or sarma hurhia and Deve Alai. To the later section belong Darha and Desalt and in some villages dtaria or Duanini and Mabadania. Besides these genera! Villages' deities and spirits there are special spirits which are sacrificed to as village spirits on some tree in particular villages. To a fourth class belong certain class spirits. These are Chandi the spirits of hunting and war who specially propitiated by young men and Acbrael Mid jmla which are the special spirits worshipped by women. Next in importance to the village spirits are the khunt blwts or tutelary spirits of each different branch or klmnt of the original

founders of a village. These are often spirits of dead persons. A sixth of spirits is composed of the household spirits. Pos Rai llankar and Kitro Bainst said to be the minor spirits of their class.

In a seventh class are grouped the spirits or rather mysterious powers residing in or connected with certain objects or symbols and totem symbols certain musical instruments such as a sword actually used in killing a human being and some wearied natural objects such as an abnormally granted bamboo shoot or tree root or a very old holed tree in the hollow of which rain water collects some suspicious looking wide spreading shady tree where according to tradition some notable hero came by his death and to which every passer-by must throw the tribute of a pebble or a tree leaf or a clod of earth.

An eight class consists of the tramp or spirits such as Mua Malech and churel who are spirits of persons dying unnatural deaths and sat Babini spirits who are spirits of water falls. These spirits are not objects of worship nor receive sacrifices but are mischievous spirits who have to be scared away or exorcised by the spirits doctor.

5.24 Animistic Hinduism:

Many of population are Sarna(following Sarna Dharma, in which Dharmesh is the supreme almighty). Sarna perform religious rituals under the shade of a sacred grove. Oraon Hinduism no longer performs most of the traditional rituals; however, Karma, a festival performed during the rainy season, is still performed in church in a modified form. Sarna worship the sun as Biri and the Moon as Chando Chando Biri are the words which been used in the Sarna Puja.They called the earth as Dharti Aayo. Oraon worship nature and believe that the great consciousness or the God is nature itself. The Oraon believe in equality and respect individual rights to worship anything or everything or nothing as per individual own perceptions.They also call the spirits of ancestors at their home for living with them,as they believe that they posses kind heart and divine power and do well for their family.

They do not believe in hording wealth and believe in simple life to live on. The Pahans and Pujaris who perform Puja and other rituals in the community or village get a piece of land for livelihoods until they shoulder the responsibilities. Once they shed the responsibilities, they forfeit the right to cultivate on the Pahnai Khet the Oraon like the freedom and liberty in social activities. They never consider any community superior to them or inferior to them. They believe in equality and believe all the community, race or castes or religions are equal and no community or group or caste or religion is superior or inferior to them.

Hinduism:

The Oraon have established several Hindu sects. Some belong to the 'Bishnu Bhagats' and 'Bacchidan Bhagats' of Lord Vishnu while the 'Kamru Bhagats' and Tana Bhagats' are devotees of Lord Shiva and Goddess Durga. The Bishnu Bhagats sect was founded by Bhikku Bhagat in the modern era in Bihar. The Bacchidan Bhagats (also known as 'Vaishnava Bhagats' were founded by Balram Bhagat who opposed using the cow or bull to plow the fields as they are holy creatures. Kamru Bhagat (Oraon or Munda devotee) originate when Oarins acquire special powers after making a pilgrimage to Kamakhya in Asom to pay respect to the rga. Tana Bhagats were formed by Oaints Jatra Bhagat and Turia Bhagat.

5.24 Recent Change and Changing of Oraon Religious Life:

The Hinduism and Muslim society influence on the Oraon as well as other aboriginal people of Barind area especially Nature district. In my study village namely Dobarpara Hinduism is the most dominating religious factor on the Oraon many NGO's like Action Aid, Aso Nize Kore, Aso Kaz Kore started there program in 1797 at Natore district in Rajshahi (Sultana, 2002). At present a good number of NGO's are working for diverting into Hinduism indirectly. These programs located at the following location. Sayedpur (1887), Bemdpur, Naogaon (1902), Andharhata, Rajshahi (1940), Sadamhal, Dinajpur (1905), Dincjury, Dinajpur (1909), Rohanpur, Nawabgong (1917), Lialdipukur, Rangpur (1920) etc. (Sultana, 2002).

In my study village as well as Barind, these plans are working for the welfare of the grass root people especially for the aboriginal people. Almost all the tribes of this region have been more or less influenced by the Hinduism religious philosophy. On the other hand there are some specific causes behind the conversion into Christianity. It is mentioned earlier at present, most of the Oraon is landless and they have lost their alternative sources of income due to over population and deforestation. So they have no alternative way of income available in both rural and urban areas for the illiterate, unskilled aboriginal. Under the circumstance, NGO's provide them financial assistance and some of earning along with 12021 material assistance like training and advice as well as new religious way of life. Christian missionaries' education program is also an important factor in converting the Oraon into Hinduism.

The Oraon are given free educational and sometimes other material benefit such as books, residential accommodation, job, financial assistance through the Hindu many cultural activities instruction. Through these instructions they motivated the students and their parents in converting into Hinduism.

According to Motilal Oraon (employee of NGO) many poor aboriginals thanks to Hinduism, as NGO's assist them for recovering the economic degradation. NGO's make regular visit them and enquire about their problems. It is a great relief and remedy in reducing their social tension and psychological dissatisfaction. So, there are some specific causes behind the conversion into Hinduism.

The Oraon are living among the majority Muslim community in Barind especially in Natore district. But they have practically a very limited effect on the Oraon religion. Most of the Muslim does not show any type sympathy on the Oraon. On the other hand few greedy Muslim oppress this community. For this reason, Muslim

community is a dodged to tribal people like Oraon. There interested in embrace Hindu or Christian rather than Islam.

5.25 Recent Change of Economic Condition

Almost all the ethnic communities are mainly agriculturists. The ethnic people in the north-western districts have longbeen engaged in settled wet rice cultivation, although most of them have other secondary occupations like trading, crafts, weaving, and so on. Among the ethnic groups of Sylhet district, the Khasis have traditionally been involved in trading across the border. Such trading is their main occupation, and agriculture is their secondary occupation. The Manipuri are basically craftsmen (carpenter and jeweller). Gathering and selling fuels is the primary occupation of the Pathors.

In the CHT, all the ridge-top living ethnic communities have traditionally been engaged in shifting cultivation, known as *jum*. The valley-inhabiting groups of this area (mainly the Marma and Chakma) were also shifting cultivators in the past. But due to the Government prohibition on shifting cultivation, most of these people had to give it up and adopt settled plough . cultivation for growing wet rice.

Although the Marma and Chakma had adopted settled plough cultivation, some of them are now compelled to practise shifting cultivation mainly due to the shortage of land in the valley. Such a shortage of suitable land for plough cultivation had resulted largely from the construction of Kaptai dam for the Karnaphuli Hydroelectric Project. The creation of a lake (reservoir) by constructing a dam caused the submergence of 50,000 acres of settled, cultivated land. This area constitute about 40 per cent of the district's total arable land. The people who were affected *by* the creation of this reservoir have not been adequately rehabilitated. So they have to find land in the hill-top for shifting cultivation.

But as the Government *Jhum* Control Board keeps checks on migration from one hill to another, it is now becoming increasingly difficult for these people to support themselves. Some of the valley-inhabiting groups and a few ridge-top living ethnic communities have recently established fruit gardens (pineapple and orange), which now serve as an alternative means for their subsistence (for details of economic changes in the CHT, see the articles written by Bertocci, Jahangir, Mey, and Zaman in Qureshi 1984).

Like the ethnic communities of the CHT, the Garo of Tangail, Mymensingh and Jamalpur Districts were also shifting cultivators, but Government prohibition made it imperative for them to adopt wet rice cultivation. The Garo people also found other new means of subsistence. Some of them have converted their previous *jum* fields to pineapple gardens, and pineapple eventually became the main source of their livelihood.

Most of the ethnic groups lived in the past in a subsistence economy, but a market economy emerged in the process of their integration into the mainstream society. Both external and internal factors had been responsible for such a shift in economy. The external factors are: the imposition of external political control (see below), settlement of non-tribal outsiders in the ethnic areas, external market forces, and so on. And the internal factors are: the adoption of wet rice cultivation, knowledge of the outside world, changes in property relations, introduction of modern education, changes in the attitude towards life, ideas of value, exploitation for money, importance of financial investment, return, and profit, and so on (see Khaleque 1982; 1983 for an analysis of the economic changes in the case of Garo society).

Occupational Status:

Table eight shows different types of occupational status of Oraon men. The majority of them, seven were in the agricultural sector. Of the others one was in business and

one in banking, six in teaching, two in diagnostic centers (Receptionist), three in carpentry and two were goldsmiths.

Occupational Category	Number	Monthly Income (average)
Banking	1	From 4 to 7 thousand taka
Teaching	6	From 3 to 5 thousand taka
Business	1	There is no fixed income rate (from 10 above, within this income they need to pay their employees)
Diagnostic Centers	2	From 4 to 7 thousand taka
Agriculture	7	There is no fixed income (from 1 to 6/7 thousand taka)
Carpenter	3	From 2 to 4 thousand taka
Goldsmith	2	From 2 to 5 thousand taka

Table-9: Occupational Status of Oraon Male Respondents

5.26 Recent Change of Education Attainment

At the prior time they were not conscious about their health, superstitions played invariant role in their life. But now days, situation has been changed. They are conscious about health, sanitation use and necessity of birth control. Christian mission help them providing various medicals facilities, knowledge of natural family planning etc. In former time village had fundamental role in delivery. But now NGO and Christian mission help them providing the knowledge of maternal natal health and so on. Christian Oraon are interested to community clinic, hospital for delivery as missions or NGOs help them to get such facilities.

The rate of education is high among younger level than adult level. About all the Christian adult Oraon can write their name only. Now a days the children among the community are not away from primary education. But their percentage decrease gradually high school level, college level-, very few of them can get higher education. Elder male/female do not have any formal education. Some of them become literate participating in non-formal education program of NGO and Christian mission.

Table-1: Education level

Education level	Number of person		
	Male	Female	Total
Can write /read	20	16	36
Primary	45	37	82
High school	30	23	53
College	22+5/27	14	36
Degree	00	00	08
Illiterate	27+6/33	36	63
Total	147	131	278

Source : Field work , 2010

Education Status

However, the literacy rate is increasing now-a-days in my study village. Because, at present there are three primary school in my study village but twenty years ago there was no school here. However, table-5.6 shows that higher educational rate is very low among the Oraon under my study village. They cannot complete their higher education due to their poverty.

Education level	No. of student	
	Male	Female
Only sign	100	65
Primary level (i-v)	60	64
Secondary level (vi-x)	45	25
College level (xi-xii)	03	01
Degree level (xii-up)	02	00
Total	210	155

5.27 Recent changes of political right

5.28 Recent changes of health care concern

2.29 Effect of Modernization on Oraon:

The Oraon are completely influenced by Hinduism though remain some exceptions. Instant of their traditional belief and practice, they adopt Hinduism, yet to some extent they practice their time immemorial rites, rituals and cultural heritage. Modernization has affected their social life. During wedding ceremonies and other festivals they play with film songs in loud speaker microphone or tape recorder. At the same time they sing their rational songs dancing in their traditional form also. Women use commercial products of multinational company, various kinds of imitation ornaments, perfume, and nail polish lipstick to decorate themselves. Oraon boys and girls feel amuse, in cinema, bio-scope, world cup cricket and football spontaneous to go school.

Modernization brought changes in their housing pattern, dress and language. As they live closer to larger Bengali community some Bengali matters, events entered among them. Though traditional, they never practice 'Dowry' system but very low 'Bride price'. Now a day some Oraon are seen to deliver some expensive gifts, cash to the 'groom'. In the occupational system they are largely influenced by the large Bengali community, the Oraon regular contact and functional links with the wider society have been brought significant changes in their society. Some development agencies local and national level NGO's are playing vital role to make the Oraon conscious. These organizations provide them with medical facilities and economical advancement of the Oraon by deliver credits or loan on the basis of monthly or weekly installment. Therefore, in the present study a modest attempt has been made

to understand the changes among the Oraon that is indicative of their desire for upward social mobility and merge into the larger society.

CHAPTER SIX: CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS OF ORAON COMMUNITY

6.1 Multiculturalising Secularism through Constitutional Recognition Of Adibashis (Oraon Community)

"My people are going to learn the principles of democracy, the dictates of truth and the teachings of science. Superstition must go. Let them worship as they will, every man can follow his own conscience provided it does not interfere with sane reason or bid him act against the liberty of his fellow men." –Mustafa Kemal Atatürk

The idyllic non-communalism

Thanks to the Supreme Court's judgment in the fifth amendment case, we are on board the ship of state, about to journey back to a secular Bangladesh. Anyone who believes in non-discrimination — which is a peremptory norm of international human rights law — cannot but be happy with this. We would, however, be living in a fool's paradise if we thought that we could return to that idyllic land that the framers of our Constitution dreamed of in 1972: a society free of "communalism (*p-shamprodayikota*) in all its forms" and one in which there is no "abuse of religion for political purposes" (original Article 12, Constitution of Bangladesh). Freedom from the various forms of 'communalism' (read racism) can only come if our Constitution not only gets back its stolen pillar of secularism, but is also supplemented with provisions that expressly, accurately and respectfully acknowledge the identities of the different peoples that have lived in Bangladesh since time immemorial.

Our secular heritage

No doubt, communalism — or religion-based discrimination, or racism (especially where perpetrated through state power) — was the greatest threat to social progress and democratic practices from 1947 to 1971, when we found ourselves huddled into the state of Pakistan, which had religious identity as its *raison d'être*. Our tryst with 'Pakistanihood' was necessarily uncomfortable at best and stifling and oppressive at

worst, because the legacy bequeathed to us by the forbears of our ancient heritage impelled us, as a society, to remain tolerant and multicultural. We could, and still do, recall the proud heritage of the multicultural and secular Bangladeshi rulers of the past: of the Buddhist Pala civilisation, the Hindu Sena rajas, the Muslim sultans and nawabs and Adibashi rajas and chiefs. Blood was spilt over land, wealth and people, but never over religion. The torch of secularism was carried, equally vigorously by so many of our poets and philosophers: from Lalon Fakir to Hasan Raja, Nazrul Islam to Shamsur Rahman.

From 1972 to 2010

However, the circumstances of 2010 are so very different to those of 1972, at least in some very fundamental respects. In 1972, we were trying to rid ourselves of the hangover of a religion-based identity that purported to subsume the cultural identities of the different peoples of Bangladesh. The medicine given was secularism. It did make sense in many contexts. Or so some would say. But where it concerned the identity of those peoples who now choose to call themselves Adibashi, it was regarded as assimilative. We may recall Manobendra Narayan Lama's one-man walkout from the Constituent Assembly in 1972, when his demands of multiculturalism fell upon deaf ears. Lama rejected the Constitution because the national identity that was espoused in 1972 was monocultural; oriented around an identity based upon Bangaleeness, which again minoritised the indigenous peoples; this time on account of ethnicity and language, rather than religion (while in 1947, it was religion). But let me come to that later.

The challenge that we face in 2010 is that, while we still need to combat religious intolerance that stifles cultural expression, democratic practices and women's rights, our greatest nemesis is not a colonial state ruled by foreigners. Our nemesis now is the proverbial "*shorshete bhoot*" (the ghost in the mustard), of a homegrown variety, albeit with occasional foreign links and loyalties. However, if we pursue our non-communal ideals based upon a national identity that blindly espouses a monocultural

Bangalee identity, we not only continue to do a great disservice to those citizens who are not ethnically, linguistically and culturally Bangalee (the Adibashis, primarily, and the far smaller number of Urdu-speakers)), we also risk incurring the wrath of those who feel insecure in a national identity that draws its values from a heritage that to them is insufficiently distinguishable from the identity of the similar cultural and ethnic groups that live across the international borders to our west and east. How then — some would say — do we assert our distinctiveness from the Bangalees of West Bengal and Tripura, and justify the partition of the then East Bengal from a united;

Bengal in 1905? What we therefore need to espouse is a national identity that asserts its uniqueness in positive terms, based upon the multicultural heritage of the peoples and communities of Bangladesh, and not an identity that focuses upon the non-Muslimness or non-Bangaleeness. This way we get out of the quagmire of the false dichotomy of Bangalee versus Muslim. In other words, what many in Bangladesh — including Adibashis — espouse is a multicultural state that discards the ideals of the Westphalian nation state as much as it rejects the medieval theocratic model of statehood.

The Adibashi vision

The indigenous peoples of Bangladesh, including the *Paharis* of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) and the Adibashis of the plains regions, dream of a Bangladesh in which their distinctive identities are constitutionally recognised and protected. They wish to reshape the country so that they are a part of the structure and process of state-led governance' and development instead of being mere spectators, or worse, victims. Apart from their cultural identities based upon strong collectivist traditions, their traditional dependence upon, and stewardship roles in managing, natural resources and eco systems, and self-governance and internal dispute resolution based upon customary law, indigenous peoples the world over share one historical experience: they are one segment of humanity that has had little or no role in design-

ing the modern states' administrative architecture and resource ownership regimes. In other words, indigenous peoples did not frame the 'rules of the game' in the modern state (unlike in pre-modern indigenous civilisations like that of the Mayas, Aztecs, Kiratas, Sakyas, Boroks), and not unsurprisingly, remain among the most marginalised groups with regard to access to education, healthcare, drinking water (now a globally recognised human right), sanitation, electricity, communications, capital and market access. Therefore, in order to make the 'playing field' somewhat more 'level', indigenous peoples are demanding a say in state-led governance and development, in order to rid themselves of their subaltern status. Thereby, they are not seeking to hegemonise state power (a tall order, you might say, especially in states like Bangladesh, wherein they are not only microscopic minorities but are also socio-politically and economically disadvantaged) but are merely seeking a right to exist with their identities, and to be able to speak, and to be heard.

Constitutional recognition of Adibashis and safeguard provisions

Ever since 1972, Adibashis have been seeking constitutional recognition, something they lost in the constitutional reform processes, of 1956, 1962 and 1972, wherein they were not consulted.

This is not to say that their status is not recognised by the Bangladeshi state today. In fact, their status as 'indigenous', 'aboriginal' and 'adibashi' is already recognised in several legal instruments, including the Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation of 1900, the State Acquisition and Tenancy Act of 1950, the Finance Acts of 1995 and 2010, and in the Small Ethnic Groups Cultural Institutes Act of 2010 ("Khudro Nrigoshthhi Sanshkritik Protishthhan Ain", 2010). These laws are however deemed insufficient to protect their identity and rights because they are ordinary laws that often remain unimplemented or under-implemented and subordinated on the basis of the political exigencies of succeeding governing coalitions or on account of discrimination by state functionaries (whether based upon intolerance, bias or ignorance). At other times, legal provisions that contain safeguard measures are subject to constitutional

challenges under threat of being declared ultra vires of the Constitution or otherwise illegal (as happened to the Regional Council Act of 1998, parts of the CHT Hill District Councils Acts of 1998 and parts of the CHT Regulation of 1900, on the ground that they violated the Equal Rights and Non-Discrimination clauses of the concerned constitutions). Thus Adibashis demand the recognition of their status as Adibashis, constitutional protection of safeguard measures like the aforesaid CHT laws of 1900 and 1998, and re-interpretation of the Equal Rights clauses to protect affirmative action measures that might otherwise be deemed unconstitutional. A mere reference to non-discrimination on the basis of 'religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth' (Articles 28 and 29, Constitution of Bangladesh) was recently deemed, by a Division Bench of the High Court, to be insufficiently objective to accommodate affirmative action provisions for quotas for tribals in class III and class IV jobs in the hill district councils of the CHT! We thus need to spell out in unequivocal terms that procedural equality is not substantive equality and, that differing administrative measures to accommodate disadvantaged groups like Adibashis do not offend the spirit of non-discrimination.

Constitutional reforms for Adibashis would also help ensure that the protection of the identity and rights of Adibashis is part of the regular policy of the Bangladeshi state, as opposed to the fickle policies of successive governments with wavering levels of interest or apathy towards indigenous issues. Thus, after the hitherto repealed article on *National Culture* (article 9) is re-introduced, it is perhaps cogent to consider replacing the term "Bangalee Nationalism" with suitable alternative language.

Recent initiatives for constitutional reform

The present Awami¹ League-led government has been showing interest in incorporating measures to protect Adibashi interests. Leading members of parliament from the ruling Awami League, including Suranjit Sengupta (also the Co-Convenor of the Constitution Reforms Committee), Dipankar Talukdar (State Minister, Ministry of CHT Affairs) and Promode Mani (State Minister for Culture), have

openly announced their support for constitutional reforms on Adibashi issues, and have even referred to positive signals from none other than the prime minister herself! It is to be hoped that such expressions find fruition. Other Awami League and left-leaning party MPs who recently formed the Adibashi Parliamentary Caucus, including such respected political leaders as Rashed Khan Menon and Hasanul Haque Inu, have also added their voices for the Adibashi causes. Equally vociferous prominent civil society figures include Justice Golam Rabbani (retired), Advocate Sultana Kamal, Selina Hossain, Ajoy Roy and Abul Maksud, to name a few. Such dedicated individuals would surely not have supported the Adibashis' demands if there were any risks of compromising the interest of the people of Bangladesh.

Constitutional recognition as 'Adibashi'

Despite the spate of positive interest mentioned above, the issue of 'adibashi' or 'indigenous' identity has also on occasion sparked controversy and sensitivity and given rise to misconceptions. This is perhaps grounded in the misplaced belief that constitutional recognition of adibashis as 'adibashi' would somehow compromise national unity and adversely affect the rights of citizens who are not Adibashi. Such fears are baseless and misconceived. Similar recognition of indigenous peoples has been provided in national constitutions in several countries of the world, including in Asia (Nepal, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines, for example). In all of the aforesaid countries, such recognition has helped reduce discrimination and conflict, integrated indigenous peoples into the national 'mainstream' without artificially assimilating their identities and cultures, and promoted overall development and stability. Bangladesh would not be an exception to this trend.

International human rights standards and Adibashi rights

Constitutional recognition of Adibashis would also be in accordance with Bangladesh's international obligations under such global human rights instruments as the ILO's Indigenous and Tribal Populations Convention (No. 107) of 1957, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights all of which have been ratified by Bangladesh. It would also be in tune with the spirit of the UN Declaration on the Rights Indigenous Peoples, which has been garnering growing support internationally, with even the few governments that opposed it in the UN General Assembly (USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand) are now demonstrating a willingness to accommodate this document. This is the only international human rights instrument that was adopted with substantive indigenous participation, and with the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples from all the continents.

Constitutional recognition: A just cause in the national interest

Constitutional recognition as Adibashi is a just and reasonable cause grounded in a desire to achieve appropriate status with which Adibashis may access their rights, without discrimination. The Adibashis are among the earliest inhabitants of the country. When they started their settlements in the areas that they now live, they did not displace the Bangalee people. No wonder they are called "adibashi" in Bengali, implying 'original inhabitant'. The Chakmas, Oraons, Lushais, Santals and several other adibashi peoples resisted British colonisation by fighting against the colonisers with their meagre arsenals in the 18th and 19th centuries, as did Bangalees. The Adibashis supplied the much-needed cotton to their Bangalee brethren from their jum (swidden) fields, when cotton imports from foreign countries were unheard of. They fought alongside Bangalees in the war of liberation. They protected, and still protect, much of the forest resources of the country. They sacrificed their lands to give electricity to the nation through the Kaptai Dam. They work in factories in Chittagong and Dhaka and have proved their contribution to the national economy. They have produced soldiers, policemen, diplomats and bureaucrats to protect the national interest. It is time that the historical wrongs are righted, at least in part, through constitutional amendments. This would help protect adibashi identity and rights, which are additionally threatened by globalised market capitalism. It would

also promote national unity, integrity and stability, and enhance Bangladesh's international image in the comity of nations.

6.2 Bengalis need to change mindset about ethnic minorities

THE decision of the Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, a common platform for the minority ethnic communities, living in the hilly terrains as well as on the plains, to submit specific proposals to the special parliamentary committee formed recently for review and subsequently amendment of the constitution, demanding recognition of the existence, identities, culture and rights, could lead to the beginning of a long overdue process to address and redress the many grievances of the indigenous people, if the ruling class, which spreads over different political camps, considers these proposals with due seriousness. According to a report front-paged in New Age on Monday, Jyotirindra, Bodhipriya Larma, popularly known as Santu Larma, who heads the forum, said the indigenous communities 'expect that this time the[ir] existence, identities, cultures and rights... will be recognised by the constitution.' It is indeed a crying shame that the indigenous communities have to raise demands for recognition by the constitution and constitutional guarantees for their rights almost four decades since Bangladesh won her independence. However, as the saying goes, it is better late than never.

The twin concepts of inclusion and pluralism, the cornerstones of a democratic polity, seem to have thus far been interpreted by the dominant political class, irrespective of their partisan affiliation and ideological inclination, from a largely majoritarian perspective. Their parameters for an inclusive state and pluralism in society have by and large been defined in terms of the interests of the ethnic majority community 'in Bangladesh - the Bengalis, that is. They tend to ignore the truth that Bangladesh, a people's republic that emerged through years of political movement, which culminated in nine months of bloody armed struggle with the Pakistani occupation forces, is also home to many other ethnic communities. The framers of

the 1972 constitution also, seemingly ignored the fact that it ought to be a social contract of the people at large, and not only the majority Bengalis alone.

The monolithic definition of Bangladesh as a state of the Bengalis alone, perceived and propagated by the ruling class, naturally stirred resentment among the people of the minority ethnic communities, which, in the case of the people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, resulted in an armed struggle waged by Shanti Bahini that lasted for more than two decades. The CHT war not only threatened the territorial integrity of the state but also relegated the issues related to, and the interests of, the ethnic minority communities outside the hill tracts, who were, and still are, at risk of losing their ancestral land and property as well as culture and heritage, to relative insignificance. While the CHT war ended in 1997, with the government entering into an agreement with the Parbatya Chattagram Jan a Sanghati Samiti, the political umbrella of the now-defunct Shanti Bahini, neither has the treaty been implemented effectively nor has the lot of the minority ethnic communities in the hills or on the plain changed significantly. The reason could very well be traced to, again, the nationalistic chauvinism of the majority Bengalis, who dominate the dominant political class.

It is heartening that the Awami League-led government, according to a report published in New Age on Sunday, is envisaging formation of a separate commission for settlement of disputes over land of eth-nic minority people living on the plains. However, such a commission must not meet the same fate as the CHT land commission, which the government itself says is 'not working properly'. Ultimately, it boils down not to formation of one commission or the other, or signing of one treaty or the other but to an intrinsic change in the way the state and its manager, i.e. the government, regards the minority ethnic communities. Hopefully, the recent assertions of the government indicate the beginning of changes in the mindset of the ruling class.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The cultural life of the indigenous people is very colorful. The Oraon community celebrates enormous cultural and socio-religious programmes all through their life. Their socio-religious and cultural programmes are very simple and based on age old myth, which proved their simplicity and their devotion to some supernatural power. The Oraon belief that this ceremony relieves them from different miseries and poverty. However, now days the rites and festivals are not celebrated in original form rather there are clear Hindu domination in their rites and festivals. So cultural diversification among the Oraon is very clear and change and development in their way of life is obvious which has taken place in different stages of their unstable socio-religious and socio-cultural life.

However, at the present moment they follow old aged tradition leading to an unexpected distinguished life, minimizing old aged relationship with wider society which leads to stagnation and facing socio-cultural and socio-religious isolation. From overall assessment of social organization, it is clear that loses their traditional way of life as the contact with Hindu, Christian majority Muslim of Bangladesh. At the same time they may gain new ideas and knowledge from modern education, family planning methods, agricultural, religion pattern and some other facilities of modern life. The present paper on the Oraon community, presented all the changes to provide a complete ethnographical picture of Oraon community at Dobarpara in Gurudaspur Thaana under Natore district.

The information presented in this paper is too general and hence not enough for a real understanding of the ethnic situation in Bangladesh. More research is needed for a comprehensive ethnology of all the ethnic communities of Bangladesh. Instead of depending on the information collected long time ago or on the existing unreliable information gathered by amateur writers, systematic research programmes should be undertaken. Since very little research, or in some cases none at all, has been done on

some of the ethnic groups of Bangladesh, they could offer a good prospect for the professional anthropologists. The ethnic communities dealt with, to a considerable extent, in the earlier books are also worth studying now in order to discern the changes that have taken place since the time they were last studied. Most of the ethnic groups are changing very rapidly and many of their culture traits are likely to disappear in the near future. In order to understand the nature of changes in the ethnic communities of Bangladesh, systematic research should be conducted without further delay.

Studies relating to the origin of the various ethnic groups, their linguistic affinities, kinship and social organization, inter-cultural symbiosis, religious syncretism, nature and trends of political, economic and other changes, and so on, could be of much value from both an academic as well as from a pragmatic point of view. These information along with an exact location and population size in each of the ethnic communities would be of great help for administrative purposes and policy formulations. Systematic empirical research should be the basis for formulating sound policy towards the ethnic communities. Policies formulated on the basis of anthropological research and their proper implementation might help reduce the tension that is going on in some ethnic areas of Bangladesh.

References:

- AH, Ahsan (1994), *Santals of Bangladesh, West Bengal*, Institute of Social Research and Applied Anthropology.
- Ahsan, Selina (1995), *the Marmas of Bangladesh*, Dhaka, Ahsan Publishers.
- Bryman, Alan (2001) *Ethnography*, London, Sage Publishing.
- Dalton ET, *the Oraon's, Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*, 1872. Section 1, Page 215.
- Ghosh, Abhik (2003), *History and Culture of the Oraon Tribe: Some Aspects of Their Social Life*. Mohit, 237.
- Gomes, G.S (1988), *the Paharias, Dhaka*, CARITAS Bangladesh.
- Hunter, W.W (1876), *A Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vole-VI, Delhi, O.K. Publishing House.
- Jail, Abdul (1999), *Uttarabanger Adibasi Lokijibon O Loksahityo Omon, (Bangla)* Dhaka, Bishwa Sahitya Bhavan.
- Jones. Charisse (1999), *Minority Farmers say they've been cheated*. USA Today, August 8 P-50.
- Kaplan, Esther, (1990), *A queer Manifesto*, *Village Voice*, August 14, p-36.
- Roy, S.C (1922), *Oraon Religion and Customs*. Calcutta: Editions Indian.
- Spradly, James, H. And David, W. McCord (1980), *Anthropology, The Cultural Perspective*, 2nd edition, New York, Wiley p-29.
- Wood. Daniel (2000). *Minorities Hope, TV-Deals, Don't just lead to Tokenism*, *Christian Science Monitor*, January 19.
- Ara, Chaman, 2004: *Bangladseher Gam Upojati*, Hrididi Prokashoni, Dhaka,
- Ball, Ellen, 2000: *Social Boundaries, Ethnic Categorization and the Garo People of Bangladesh*, Ullgeverij Eburon.
- Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics: *Population Census-2001*, National Ministry of Planning Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.
- Barkataki, S., 1969 *Tribes of Assam*, National Book Trust New Delhi.
- Bose, J.K., 1936: *The Nokrom System of the Garos of Assam*, Man, vol-36.
- Burling, Robbins, 1999: *Garo*, University of Michigan.
- Burling, Robinson, 1955: *Hill Man and Paddy field*, Prentice Kail Dey,

- Soma, 2007: *The Commercialization of Hie Indigenous Economy an Its Impact on the Environment of Modhupur Garh, Bangladesh*, International Journal of Green Economic (IJGE), Vol-1, No-3/4.
- Drong, Sonjeeb, 2000: *Bangladehser Biponno Adivasi*, Naoroz Kitabistan, Dhaka.
- Faruque, Omar, 2006: *Poverty and Environmental Degradation in Rural Bangladesh*, Social Science Review, Dhaka University Studies, Part-D, Vol-23, No. 2. –V.
- Gain, Phlip, 2007: *Stolen Forests*, SEHA.
- Huda, Zeenat, 2004: *Problem of National Identity of the Middle Class in Bangladesh and State*, Satellite Television, Unpublished Thesis to the University of Warwick, United Kingdom.
- Islam, Jahidul, 2000: *Changing Pattern of Garo Family Structure in Bangladesh*, Journal of Social Science Review, The Dhaka University Studies, Part-D, Vol-17.
- Islam, Jahidul, 1991: *The Garos of Bangladesh: An Overview*, Journal of Social Science Review, University of Dhaka, Part-D, Vol-viii.
- Jengcham, Suvash, 1994: *Bangladesher Garo Somprodai*, Bangla Academy, Dhaka.
- Jengcham, Suvash (ed), 2005: *Garo Ain*, Lima Printing Press, Mymensingh.
- Khaleque, Kibriaul, 1985: *My Fieldwork Experience in a Garo Village of Bangladesh* in Anwarullah Chowdhury (ed), *Pains and pleasures of Fieldwork*, National Institute of Local Government, Dhaka.
- Marak, J.L.R., 2000: *Garo Customary Laws of Inheritance and Its Importance in Present Day Global Context*, Essays on Garo Society.
- Parvin, Sitara, 2002: *Garo Community in Bangladesh*, Essays on Garo Society.
- Fatten, M.A, 1990: *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Method*, New Bury Park, Canada, Sage Publications.
- Punch, Keith F., 1998: *Introduction to Social Research*, London, Sage Publications.
- Richil, C, 2002: *Culture, Identity and Development: Exception for the Next Millennium*, Essays on Garo Society.

Appendix (Glossary)

Adimjati, Adibashi: Original community or ancient dwellers:

Bon-Katti	:	Medieval landlord of Natore District who deforested many Woods and buses for making the force and cultivable.
Curriculum	:	Text for formal educational institutions especially in school And college.
Danda-Katta	:	Twig-crossing sacrifice meant for Dharmes alone (alone Known as Palkasna. Bhakah-Khandna, Danda-Rengna, Bhelwa Phari etc). Deonra: Spiritual Physical.
Dhangar-Dhangrin:		The Oraon youth going to work in the rich men's family for a Fixed wage and for a fixed period. Dharmes: God of the Oraon.
Dhumkuria	:	Oraon dormitory, where to the youth Oraon is, instructed the Moral discipline.
Garh	:	Fort.
Gotra	:	Clan, a totemic group among the Oraon.
Kasra Vanda	:	Things, which are used to decorate and earthen pot for Celebrating the marriage. Kurukh-Desh: Land of Oraon.
Marua	:	A stage for celebrating the marriage ceremony. Mondal: A Tribal drum.
Mundane	:	Head saving for the death of the Oraon.
Sarhul	:	A festival Sal flowers (Sorea Robgusta), a big feast among the Oraon in Chotanagpur.
Parha	:	A confederation of several villages.
Sradha	:	A religious rite of the Oraon for the death that is celebrated by The deceased relatives.
Thakur Baba	:	Greatest God of the Oraon physically they denotes to the sun.
Ulgulam	:	Revolution for restoring the writes of the aboriginal Community of North Bengal.
Vaidic	:	Ancient Indian religious code and a religious philosophy.
Zaomder	:	Originally revenue a collector, the British regarded as the Landlord.

Appendix (Checklist):

Serial No:

Name of household head:

Age:	Sex:	Clan:	Literacy:
Numbers of Family member:	Male:		Female:
Name of Children:	Male:		Female:
Earning members:	Male:		Female:
Main occupation:	Other occupation:		
Use Sanitary Latrine:	Yes	No	
Source of drinking water:	Tube well	Ponds	others
Amount of land lost:			
Others harassments:			
Comments:			

Case Study

Case-1

Sree Fawas Lakra is a 38 years old man, literate from non-formal program, settled at Dobarpara in Nazirpur. His family consists of 5 members, his wife and three daughters. He is a carpenter in the village. His wife works as a laborer in other's field. His daughters after school work in the household, cook for themselves and clean their dresses. Fawas and his wife Puspa earn 3000TL per month and have no savings. A Sanitary latrine and a tube well have been setup in his house by ASO NIZE KORE. He gets facilities from NGO. Being oppressed in South Natore he compels to settle in Dobarpara. His 10 decimals land of parental habitual has been occupied by Bengali matbar. Till today he did not get back his property.

Case-2

Sree Cecilia Kerketa is a 45 years old widow can write and read. Her husband had died 15 years ago. Now she lives with her unmarried son Sree Choitano at Dobarpara. A sanitary latrine and tube well have been set up in her house by ASO NIZE KORE herself work at ASO KAZ KORE as cocker. Her son works as sales man in a shop at Natore town. Cecilia f\has lost the land of her deceased husband at North Natore and now settled at Dobarpara. She had to protect herself from sexual abuse of an influential at Natore. Now she enjoy her life, NGO arrange her all medicine provide her with medicine. She earns 1000Tk. per month and her son earns 1500 Tk. So, poverty is not severe to her.

Case-3

Sree Kispotta, a 42 years old man, studied till class VI, live in a extended family. His family consists of 12 members, his 4 sons, 2 daughters in laws and 5 grand children. He with his family members work in own fields. He has 35 decimals of land. Besides, his son also works in other's fields. His 10 decimals of land had been occupied by a Matbar. His family is well to do in Dobarpara. Monthly income of the

family is up to 5000Tk. At Dobarpara, he is one of the Mahato or Chiefs. The members of his family are literate. His grand children Dominic Kispoto passed H.S.C with A grade point now studying at Rajshahi University; Stephen shows his gratitude to Action Aid ASO NIZE KO for his better life.

Case-4

Sree Ramesh Tigya, 30, S.S.C. is a literate person, but did not get any government or NGO's job. He has to earn money to maintain a family of 5 members. He provides labor on the fields of influential; his wife also engages in agriculture, his wife also engages in agriculture labor. Yet he has very little income to support the family. ASO NIZE KORE provided him sanitary latrine and a tube well. But for low income he lives under poverty line. His, inherited lands has been occupied by a UP member. He is completely unable to efforts the medical expenses of hospitals. Many NGO's provide him, medical facilities with family planning materials. He lives in very hardship at Dobarpara.

Case-5

Sree Dipali minijee, a 25 years old woman, studied till S.S.C. level. She lives in a nuclear family with her husband one daughter and two sons. Her husband is an employee of a NGO in Natore town. Dipali works I the fields of her own. Sometimes her children help her in the fields. A sanitary latrine and a tube well have been setup by Action Aid. Five decimals of land s of Dipaii have been grabbed by an influential of South Natore by making false deed. While Dipali works alone in the fields some Bengali teases her. Yet she is happy in her family life. Her husband earns 4000 Tk. Per month and she herself work hard in own field. She monthly expends 3000Tk.All children are school going. She desires to make her children higher educated.

Case-6

Sree Harichandra(Bara), aged about 50 years from Dobarpara told us that he was a share cropper under village moral. Accounting to him as share coppers our days were passing very smoothly. Price of all the commodities was very low. Local forests were supplying our supplementary predicts as fire woods, hunting gathering etc. So, the passed days were more or less happy. Generally, we used to eat thrice in day and panchani drinking was our normal affair. But now days, it is very difficult to eat thrice in a day for our poverty.

Case-7

Sree Nath Sing (40) told researcher that he has 6.00 bighas land another village. For this researcher has given these lands to my acquaintance Muslim agriculturist for cultivation. Suddenly, my acquaintance was dead. Hen he has decided to get back his land. But one day, (Kalam, son of my acquaintance) told him that this land and he showed him a registered Dalil He told him that with a rough voice that if you tried to create any trouble then he would kill him. For this circumstance his son and he sent a prayer to the village. Mural, UP chairman and member are powerful men. Then chairman and Mural arrange the village trial (Bichar).But these bodies did no give any effective solution. Then he made a prayer to the district commissioner of Natore district but he has received no result yet. However, land dispute is a common hazard of the Oraon in the study area.

Open- ended Questionnaire for interview

- 1) What kind of economic problems do you face to survive in your social life?
- 2) What are the dynamics of Oraon culture?
- 3) How do you take authoritative power of your community?
- 4) What path do you follow to survive your family?
- 5) What do you think about distribution system of property in your Oraon community?
- 6) What is the marriage system provide in your community you think?
- 7) How can the Govt. take necessary steps to build up their basic rights? as political rights?
- 8) Do you think that indigenous Oraon Women get their social rights?
- 9) Is, in your view, Gender discrimination play an important role in Garo community?
- 10) What types of marriage and divorce system provide in your community?
- 11) What do you think about education right of Oraon community? especially Oraon women?
- 12) At present we recognize that Govt. is taking proper steps for their improvement. Do you think that it is crucial for society?
- 13) Do you presume that Oraon community is exceptional among the minorities?
- 14) Do our conjecture that prejudice is also present in Oraon community?
- 15) Which path do you follow fulfill the of your family?
- 16) What is your view to mitigate your hassle and survive in the Oraon community?