

The Munda's an Ethnic Community in the South-West Coastal Region of Bangladesh: Buno/Kuli/Sarna/Horoko, Indigenous People during the British Period Coming from Ranchi

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Abstract

The Munda's (Adibasi) are an aboriginal community of the Kingdom of Royal Bengal Tiger of the Sundarbans Mangrove ecological zone (the south-west coastal region). The Munda's are called 'Sarna/Buno/the forest Man/Kuli/Horoko/the deprived Man/the neglected Tribe. They live surrounding the Sundarban's Mangrove forest and depend on the ecology for their subsistence and livelihoods. During the British period, the Indigenous people travelled to Bangladesh about 220 years ago coming from Ranchi, the capital of Jharkhand (Bihar) and have been here ever since. The group is one of the Indian largest scheduled tribes. The Munda's practice indigenous religion, distinctive culture and play. They are excellent in singing, dancing, drinking, working, catching fish/crab and shrimp collecting wood honey etc. They also believe in ghosts (Bhut) and spirits-both good and bad and call on them to either help someone who is sick or to do damage to another person. They also dedicate Hen for the rituals celebration for their God (Sing Bonga-The Sun) and spirituals power. They believe that, after death the soul come back at their home and save them different types of dangers from some bad souls and bad Tantriks. They follow their ancient process or their forefather's direction. During the festivals, they serve rice wine 'Haria /Tari'. They are addicted Rat's meat, Snails, Crabs, Pigs, wild Cats, Civet and dead animals due to injuries. They speak in 'Mundari/Nagri/Sadri' which is mixture of Bengali, Hindi and Persian.

Keywords: Indigenous people • Buno • Kuli • Sarna • Horoko • Neglected tribe

Introduction

The Munda's (Adibashi) are aboriginal tribes; a social and national development depends on all class people. There are many tribes in Bangladesh; the Munda's are one of them. Bangladesh is developing day by day, but there is no development basic needs of tribe people (in the Munda's). They are also struggling in the natural disaster like cyclones (Sidar, Aila, Mohasen, Comen, Foni, Bulbul, Amphan, floods, salinity intrusion, famine, heat waves etc) and the COVID-19 (Corona) pandemic. The present practice then certificates resilience with a special focus on the human subsistence of the profane the Munda's habitation near the Bangladesh Sundarbans Forest [1]. They are most deprived and neglected community in the south west part in Bangladesh. The Munda's (Adibashi) are restricted to a tiny of crippled presence where introduced superstition and social discrimination have undermined their own strength, cultural values, language and traditions. The fact that groups of the Munda's (Adibashi) live also in the coastal areas of South West Bangladesh in

the district of Khulna and Satkhira is almost absolutely unfamiliar and denied by the greater Bangladeshi and the Bangladesh Government let alone the world [2].

Most of the Bangladeshi and world people know absolutely nothing about this tribal group of people who have been able to preserve their ethnic identity in spite of many obstacles. Those who have a little bit of knowledge about the Munda's call them Buno which means, 'people of the forest;' that is uncivilized and savage people and therefore considered unfit for human association. In the social ladder of Bangladeshi people the place of the Munda's is below the untouchables whose general conditions in every aspect are much better than the Munda's [3]. That famous definition given by Mahatma Gandhi about the Untouchables of India as the people of the 4Ls can be applied to this group of people as well. The Munda's of the South West coastal region of Bangladesh are really the last, the last, the lowest and the lost among the poor people living in this part of the country.

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The South West Coastal Region of Bangladesh consists of the Districts of Khulna, Satkhira and Bagherhat, together with the southern part of Jashore District. The region is influenced by the ocean tides coming up from the Bay of Bengal through the numerous estuaries and creeks which cut across the Sundarbans forest [4]. This region comprises the land, which was cleared for human settlements out of the Sundarbans mangrove forest.

The inhabitants used to cultivate rice on that low-lying land during the rainy season by building temporary dykes to prevent tidal incursion and by constructing temporary sluice gates to let out surplus of rainwater. After the harvest the dykes and sluices were dismantled and the tides were given free play again. Nowadays, in many parts of that vast area, rice cultivation has been replaced by shrimp cultivation, which has brought a real economic disaster, for so many poor people and great abundance to only a few very rich people. Along with this economic disaster, an ecological disaster is also happening in those areas [5].

Human settlements occurred at various times in history and for different reasons in this area. There were those who had been living here originally from pre-historic times. Later at various times different communities emigrated from their original homelands to escape either from conflict or famine or other calamities and sought refuge in the vastness of the Sundarbans forest or in the maze of rivers and creeks of the low-lying flat land [6]. Then, there are those people from over populated regions who were attracted by this region by its high productivity.

Lastly, during the nineteenth century, the Zamindar (land lord), who received allotments of forest land from the British East India Company, imported aboriginal tribal people from India to clear the forest.

Objectives of the study

Bangladesh is one of the most populated countries in the world. There are many castes in our country. The Munda's is one of them. The COVID-19 (Corona) and natural disaster (such as: torrid cyclones, floods, salinity trespass, hunger and heat ripple) took away livelihoods. Bangladesh will not go to vision 2021 and 2041 without the Munda people [7]. Specific goals are to know about life style of Munda people to contribute the Digital Bangladesh for good governs middle income country by 2021 and development country by 2041.

The Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his vision and dream of creating a 'Sonar Bangla' nothing can be more befitting than taking Bangladesh to status of a developed nation by implementing vision 2041. Sonar Bangla will not be Sonar Bangla if the all people of Bangladesh develop to the all sectors [8]. The broad development goals aim is at raising the general standard of living of the people of Bangladesh to the level of a high income, developed country by the year 2041.

The daughter of Bangabandhu, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said that Bangladesh will soon become an upper middle-income country as the government has been implementing massive development works in light of the 2021 and vision 2041. The government of the people's republic of Bangladesh aims to bring together academics, business leaders and representatives of associations, policymakers and practitioners and explore practical

strategies and solutions for improving the living standard of Bangladeshi people [9].

Literature Review

Study area and duration

The Munda's of South-west Bangladesh are dispersed in 43 small villages situated in four different Upazilas in the two District of Khulna and Satkhira That have been chosen purposively. This study was completed for a period of about 2 years from 2019 to 2021.

Sampling framework

Before gathering ultimate data a preparative base line observation was driven a total number of 330 household leaders, about 1850 people were filed. In the practice, about 40% of the total (N=330) households as well as 1850 people were approved through namely Koyra Upazila in the District of Khulna, Tala, Debhata and Shyamnagor Upazila in the District of Satkhira.

These are the names of the villages where the Munda's of Tala Upazila live under 2 no Nagorghat Union Parishad, Asan Nagor, Arodangi, Bakkhali and Horinkhola. Under 9 no Kholishkhali Union Parishad Krishnonagor and Gacha Durgapur [10].

These are the names of the villages where the Munda's of Shyamnagor Upazila live under 12 no Gabura Union Parishad, Gabura, Jelekhali, Parsemari and Dumuria, under 10 no Atulia Union Parishad, Magurakuni, under 9 no Burigoalini Union Parishad, Datinakhali, Burigoalini and Abad Chandipur, under 8 no Ishwaripur Union Parishad, Khagra ghat, Sreefolkati old, Sreefolkati new and Dhumghat (The capital of Protap Paditto, Land Lord / Zamidar), under 7 no Munshigonj Union Parishad, Uttar Kadomtala and Jelekhali, under 6 no Ramjannagor Union Parishad, Taranipur, Vetkhali, East Kalinchi and West Kalinchi, under 5 no Koykhali Union Parishad, Keorotoli, Sapkhali and Shalkhali under 3 no Nakipur (Sadar) Union Parishad, Kashipur and Badoghata,

These are the names of the villages where the Munda's of Koyra Upazila live under Kayra Sadar Union Parishad, Tepakhali, Nolpara, Majherait, under North Betkhashi Union, Parishad, Sheik Sardarpara, Boro Bari, Pathakhali, Horihorpur, Gazipara, Kacharibari, Botul Bazar, under South Betkashi Union Parishad, Anktihara, Binapani, and Jorosingh [11].

This is the names of the villages where the Munda's of Debhata Upazila lives under Parulia Union Parishad Patakhali (Table 1).

District	Upazilas	Munda's villages	Sample size	Case studies	Data collection methods
Satkhira	Shyamnagor	23	150	1	Questionnaire
	Tala	06	42	1	Interviews, scheduled interview, informal meeting, group discussion, observation and literature review
	Debhata	01	8	1	
Khulna	Koyra	13	130	1	
2	4	43	330	4	

Table 1. Study area, sample size and the data collection methods.

Both person to person and household leaders were considered as the unit of analysis of the study. In achieving the objective, blending of several participatory Rural Appraisal and other methods such as scheduled interview, informal meeting, group discussion, observation and literature review were The Munda's.

The investigation work is quantitative in nature. The 43 villages of Shyamnagor, Tala, Debhata and Koyra Upazila is the belt of this practice. The arguments behind choosing these areas are many aboriginal communities living permanently. All the Munda's (aboriginal) of Shyamnagor, Tala, Debhata and Koyra who have lived about 220 years ago, have been here ever since. The four Upazilas of Bangladesh has selected purposively where most people live below the poverty line. They always face natural disaster (Harican-1988, Sidor-2007, Aila-2009, Comen-2015, Fony, Bulbul-2019, Ampan-2020 and Covid-19 (Corona) etc.) the four Upazilas are Shyamnagor, Tala, Debhata and Koyra [12].

For this investigation work, both primary and secondary data has been collected. Primary data collected from field investigation and secondary data was collected from different papers, books, Articles, NGO-Sundarban Adibasi Munda Sangastha (SAMS), media and other documents. For primary data, interview and observation techniques have been used.

Moreover interview schedule has observed in which both open-ended and close ended questions included for data collection through face to face interviews also executed [13]. The collected data has processed after essential checking, re-checking and editing data was analyzed using the MS Office Word-2007. Ethical standards were maintained in every stage of the practice

The munda’s of the sundarbans forest

As already stated, a little bit of anthropological and ethnographic research has been done on the Munda’s living in Northern Bangladesh but absolutely nothing has been written about the Munda’s living in the coastal region of South-Western Bangladesh.

The only ‘Literature’ available about them consist in a few articles appeared on newspapers and a few short reports written by NGO people.

ETV (Ekushe Television), The Daily Star (Newspapers), GaonConnection (newspapers) also broadcast a short report on the Munda’s living in this part of the country [2]. It may also be interesting to report a few short quotations from those few available sources:

A very interesting article appeared in “the GaonConnection” on September 11th, 2020. This is what he wrote: “Bangladesh’s indigenous Munda community in the Sundarbans faces hunger as livelihoods dry up” The Munda community, with its root in India, living in the Sundarbans of Bangladesh is out of work in the COVID-19, buried under debt and in extreme grief [14].

Another a very interesting article appeared in “the Daily Star” on December 01, 2015.This is what he wrote: “The Munda people of the Sundarbans” The Munda are an ethnic community of the Sundarbans mangrove ecological zone.

They are found in Khulna, Jeshore and mainly near the Sundarbans in the Shyamnagor Upazilla as well as

Joypurhat. They live surrounding the Sundarbans mangrove forest and depend on the ecology for their subsistence and livelihood.

The local Munda's said that they adoration include Sing Bonga, Buru Bonga and Ikir Bonga (Bonga means deity). The Munda's are who live in the south-western of Bangladesh (the Sundarbans areas), after saying the name of Ranchi district and the name of the village, the rituals and festival are performed by remembering the name of their forefathers [15]. Sing Bonga (the Sun) is the main God or creator. The religion of the Munda’s is the original religion. That is, trees, stone and animals are worshipped things.

Ranchi district is named after this Richie Buru hill, in the past, only tribal's used to come here and adoration. Their deities were worshiped here and there was no idols here at that time. Now there are various types fetishes including Shiva’s idol, Ram,s idol, kali ma,s idol, Mansa Ma,s idol and Hanuman’s idol and there is always a large crowd of tourists. The Munda,s still respect this mountain (Richie Buru hill) as the holiest place [16].

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18-40	20	6.06
41-60	180	54.55
61-100	130	39.39
Total	N-330	100

Table 2. Age of the household leaders and community leaders (Matbor/ Pahan (Priest)/ Sardar).

It describes age of the household leaders (Matbor/Sarder/ Pahan). It highlights that most of the respondent Munda’s are 41 to 60 years that is 54.55%. 61 to 100 years people are 39.39%. 18 to 40 years people are 6.06% (Table 2).

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Farmer	45	13.64
Day Labor	128	38.79
Seasonal Labor	108	32.73
Carpenter	18	5.45
other	31	9.39
Total	N-330	100

Table 3. Occupation of the household leaders and community leaders (Matbor/ Pahan (Priest)/ Sardar).

The nature of the respondent’s occupation. Data describes that a significant number of the respondent Munda’s are day labor (38.79%).

Another remarkable percentage of the respondent Munda’s (32.73) are seasonal labor. 13.64% of the total respondents Munda’s are farmer. 9.39% of the total respondents Munda’s are other occupation. 5.45% of the total respondents Munda’s are carpenter. The finding points out that most of the recipients are not so affluent or solvent (Table 3).

Serial No	Upazila	Village	Pahan/priest	Family	Male	Female	Total members
1	Shyam nagor	23	38	407	870	841	1711
2	Koyra	13	14	358	834	641	1475
3	Tala	06	10	120	279	261	540
4	Debhata	01	02	07	21	11	32
Total	04	43	72	892	2004	1754	3758

Source census made by SAMS (Sundarban Adibasi Munda Sangastha)-2020.

Table 4. Munda people living in the sundarbans areas.

Types of problem	Frequency	Percentage
Education	210	63.64
Water	330	100.00
Housing	305	92.42
Health care	310	93.94
Social Discrimination	320	96.97
Writing own Method	330	100.00
Entertainment/Cultural Practice	325	98.48
Religious Institution	330	100.00
Digital Bangladesh	315	95.45

Table 5. Problems faced by the munda's.

It shows that most of the respondents Munda's face many problems daily life. 100% of the total respondents face water, writing own writing method and religious institution problems. 98.48% of total respondents face entertainment/ cultural practice problem. 96.97% of total respondents face social discrimination problems. 95.45% of total respondents did not know about Digital Bangladesh. 93.94% of total respondents never aware of health care. 92.42% of total respondents face housing problems. 63.64% of total respondents face education problem (Table 5).

Upazila	Frequency	Percentage
Shyam nagor	150	45.50
Koyra	130	39.40
Tala	42	12.70
Debhata	08	2.40
Total-330		100.00

Table 6. Social water problem.

It shows about the water problem of Shyam nagor, Koyra, Tala and Debhata. It highlights that the water problem of Shyam nagor is 45.50%. The water problem of Koyra is 39.40%. The water problem of Tala is 12.70%. The water problem of Debhata is 2.40%. Drinking water is one of the greatest problems of nearly all the Munda's villages in those places full of salinity. Very often Munda women have to bring drinking water from very far away. In 5 or 6 villages, attempts to bring in modern drinking water facilities have been made but outcomes were not appeasement at all. In the Munda villages or

neighbor the Munda villages, there is a little brick built construction which was inferred to filter water from a nearby pond and make it drinkable. That filter has not worked because the water from that pond is salty without rainy season (Table 6).

Range of education	Frequency	Percentage (N=330)
Higher Education	09	2.73
Secondary Education	41	12.42
Primary Education	81	24.55
Signature Knowledge	91	27.57
Illiterate/ Tip	108	32.73
Total	N-330	100

Table 7. Education problem.

Reveals the education problem. It highlights that the higher education of the Munda's is 2.73%. The secondary education of the Munda's is 12.42%. The primary education of the Munda's is 24.5%. The signature knowledge of the Munda's is 27.57%. The illiterate/tip of the Munda's is 32.73%. Above all, the Munda's of South-West Bangladesh are almost completely uneducated. One of the reasons behind this general educational backwardness is the fact that the Munda's have a language on their own call "Munday/ Nagri/ Sadri". This language seems to be a mixture of Bengali, Urdu, Hindi and Persian. Most of the adult Munda people also can speak in Bengali even though their pronunciation is not very clear and grammar rules are completely forgotten.

The Munda's talk to their children by using their 'Munday/ Nagri/ Sadri' language. The result of this is that the Munda children neither can speak Bengali nor understand it. Therefore attending Government schools must be some kind of an adventure, which requires a lot of courage. Also even now, social discrimination against these people still nowadays called 'Buno' (giving the designation of bearish), is another big barrier which obstructs the Munda's from tasting education facilities offered by the Government. Female education is practically nothing (Table 7).

House	Frequency	Percentage
Mud House	202	61.21
The hut/Slum	103	31.21
Made of Brick house	25	7.58
Total	N-330	100

Table 8. Housing problem.

It describes about the housing problem of the Munda's. It highlights that Mud house is 61.21%. The hut/slum is 31.21%. Made of brick house is 7.58%. The Munda's of South-West Bangladesh nowadays only very poor people live in soil wall houses with a roof made of rice straw. A rice straw roof only requires labor cost. However, such a roof does not last more than a rainy season and beside that is very unhygienic because it grants a blissful nest to small snake and other kinds of insects and worms. This is the only roof which the majority of the Munda people can afford for their houses (Table 8).

Treatment system	Frequency	Percentage
Kabiraj (Scrub)	255	77.27
Quack	55	16.67
Health Institution	20	6.06
Total	N-330	100

Table 9. Health care.

It displays about the treatment system of the Munda's. It highlights that the Kabiraj (scrub) treatment is 77.27%. The quack treatment is 16.67%. The health institution treatment is 6.06%. The Munda's believe Kabiraj (Scrub) treatment. Traditional medicine is made from the leaves and roots of the plant, water and oil scrub. They spend a few money per year on medicine and treatment. The Munda's appear that ill Munda people are either too bashful or shrunken or poor or lack of knowledge or community rules to take refuge in local doctors or modern health institutions. Rarely, one or two people come to the Upazila Health Center but when the health workers see the Munda's appearance, realizing Munda or Buno, they are not very well treated by the health workers. Many times the patient has to be taken back from the health institution. This seems to be one of the main reasons behind the high mortality rate among Munda women at time of delivery. Nowhere there are sanitary latrines. Most the Munda's have never been given information about sanitary latrines let alone how to use them (Table 9).

Social layer	Frequency	Percentage
Low	330	100
Middle	0	0
High	0	0
Total	N-330	100

Table 10. Social situation.

It shows about the social situation. It compares that the social layer of the Munda,s is fully (100%) low caste. There is no the layer of middle or high caste. The Munda's have a own culture and have dietetics and drinking manners which are considered abominable for the Bengali people and therefore are one of the main reasons behind the social discrimination which is still going one against the Munda's. Rat (Mete horin), Snails (Ghonga), Crabs, Pigs, wild Cats, Civet and dead animals due to injuries (like Hen) etc and rice wine (Haria/Tari) seem to be a delicacy for the Munda's. There is no social gathering among them without abundant drinking of their homemade rice beer: stuff, which is rejected by both official Islam and Hinduism. Therefore, Bengali people consider the Munda's more or less like out caste and untouchable and interred with them is strictly forbidden let alone intermarriage (Table 10).

Digital Bangladesh	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	15	4.55
No	122	36.97
No Comment	193	58.48
Total	N-330	100

Table 11. No knowledge about digital Bangladesh.

Reveals that the most of the respondents say or keep quiet. 58.48% of the total respondents could not say or write (No Comment) about digital Bangladesh. 36.97% of the total respondents did not say about digital Bangladesh. 4.55% of the total respondents said about digital Bangladesh. Digital Bangladesh is one of the nation's dreams. By 2021, after 50 years of independence, our goal is to be a middle-income country with peace, prosperity and dignity. The Government of Bangladesh performed a large number of projects relating to digital technologies and a number of these are already ongoing and so special landmark is given on the application of digital technologies to realize Vision 2021. Bangladesh National Information communication technology (ICT) policy will develop with a view to achieving developed status of the nation by 2041 (Table 11).

Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
To Increase basic needs	45	13.60
To Supply Drinking water	55	16.70
To Increase Government help	18	5.50
No Comment	200	60.60
Other	12	3.60
Total	N-330	100

Table 12. Opinion for improving the munda's problems.

It describes about the opinion for improving the Munda's problems. It highlights that 13.60% of the Munda's recommend increasing basic needs. 16.70% of the Munda's recommend supplying drinking water. 5.5% of the Munda's recommend increasing government help. 60.60% of the Munda's could not recommend about the opinion for improving the Munda's problems. 3.60% of the Munda's recommend increasing other needs (Table 12).

Tragically, the deprived lives of the Munda' in the South-West have not changed for centuries. While globalization and the speed at which current changes are transpiring, capture the attention of leading thinkers worldwide, the Munda's sit and wonder why nothing changes for the better in their community. When a few of the elders were questioned about what changes should have they seen for the better in their villages, sadly, they could not tell of an improvement? Their wants for the future are very basic.

Discussion

The Munda's, a small ethnic group (Aboriginal/Adibasi) living in different parts of Bangladesh. According to some estimates based on information gathered by SAMS, (Sundarban Adibasi Munda Sangastha-2020), there are 892 Munda families in the area [17]. As counted locally, 3758 Mundas live in scattered village of Koyra upazila of Khulna district and Tala, Debhata and Shyamnagar upazila of Satkhira district, all falling within the Sundarbans. The ecosystem of Sundarbans seems to suit the Home-bred ways of living and cultural traits features of the Mundas. The Munda's are one of the most vulnerable and marginalized communities in the country. The Munda's communities (43 Villages) of 892 families, male 2004 and female 1754, Pahan/Priest 72 which traces its roots back to Ranchi, India [18].

The Munda people (lower class people) travelled to Bangladesh about 220 years ago from Ranchi, the capital of Jharkhand (Bihar) and have been here ever since. They are found in Khulna, Jashore, Koyra, Dumuriya, Debhata, Tala, greater Rajshahi, Sylhet and Maymenshing and mainly near the Sundarbans in the Shyamnagor Upazila (one of the biggest Upazilas of Bangladesh). They Munda,s are originating in the states of Jharkhand, Odisha, West Bengal, Chhattisgar and Arunacal Prodesh of India. (Ranchi, the capital of Bihar which is called 'Chotonagpur'), live in Koyra, Tala, Debhata, and Shyamnagor Upazila district of Khulna and Satkhira [19]. It lies around 350 kilometers away from Dhaka (The Capita of Bangladesh). Ranchi is more or less the epicenter of this area called 'Chatanagpur' (See maps No 1and 2). It includes part of Odissa, Madhya Pradesh and west Bengal. To Muslim Historians, Chotanagpur was known as "Jharkhand." The Munda's (Adibashi) are one of the strongest groups among tribal people.

The Munda's are also called 'Sarna' people. Sarna refers to a grove of 'Sal' trees where the Munda's used to venerate their God and their spirit. The word 'Sarna' is used to designate the ancestral religion of the Munda's. By extension the term 'Sarna tribe' is applied to the Munda's of Ranchi in Bangladesh (the Sundarbans Area) which they have migrated. The word Munda is thought to have come from a Sanskrit word, meaning the chief of the village. The word 'Munda' basically means the head of the community. The Munda's also believe that they were born from the head of Mahadev (God) and that is why they are known as Munda or Muriyari [20].

The Munda's call themselves Horoko, which means 'men.' They are also proud to call themselves 'hero-co' which means people. But they are also proud to be addressed as Munda's. Ironically, the word "Munda" means a man of prestige and wealth. It is nagging that their Hindu neighbors gave the name to them. Every Munda's village has a traditional leader (montri or minister), the Mattbar or Sardar, the person that goes to community if some problems appear in the Munda's community. He resolves conflicts among the community.

The munda's have not available historical record about the arrival of these people to south-west (The Sundarbans) Bangladesh. According to oral tradition the arrival of the Munda's to these Southern regions can be divided into four situations.

1. They were employed as 'Lathials' or 'guards' in the Royall household in British period.
2. When Indigo plantation was started in this part of the country the planters brought them for working in their fields.
3. When at the closing of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century the Jamidari system was introduced and landlords got leases of large lots of land in the Sundarbans forest the Munda's were brought to clear the jungle and establish agriculture in those cleared lands.
4. Due to 'Poverty.'

The Munda's were agricultural labor but brave, stronger and clearing jungle specialist in throwing obeisance. The physical ability and diverse experience pay attention to the British Government. And so, they displaced the Sundarbans. The Munda's (Adibasi) living near the Sundarban forest are the descendants of those the Munda's who arrive to clean the jungle and obtain cultivable land out of it. There are still a few old people among this group of Munda's who can tell

stories about those days when these laborers had to fight against snakes and tigers and crocodiles [21].

At present, the Munda's living as they do on the western coast of Sundarbans, the world's largest mangrove forest, their survival depends on wages. They earn working to collect fish, honey and crab in the Sundarbans forest surrounding rivers and channels, cutting wood and nypa fruticans (goal pata), in shrimp and crab farms, in paddy fields, share cropping or in brick kilns. Sometimes local businessmen use the Munda people as labor in collecting of natural resources from the Sundarbans. Working they must, without working, they will have no money and no food. Today, the COVID-19 had not hit the Munda community in 43 villages of Koyra, Tala, Debhata and Shyamnagor upazilas of Khulna and Satkhira district. While the lockdown in Bangladeh begun around mid-March in 2020, the prohibition on fishing in the sea (two months every year). Very little public and private aid reaches the Munda's. In order to survive, they have taken a loan. They neither have worked, nor much food. The Munda's are also socially late. Barely anyone is literate, and not more than 40-50 can read or write.

The Munda's have their own distinct language, history, social structure and religion. The Munda's speak in 'Munday/Nagri/Sadri' language among them. They teach this language to their children. The 'Munday/Nagri/Sadri' language similarities with the Hindi language, through Bangle and Persian words are in the Munda's language. The Munda's feel cheerfulness to talk Munday/Nagri/Sadri among themselves. Ethnically they belong to the broad group of Proto-Australoid and speak the Munday dialect of the Austro-Asiatic family. Mentionable those, the Munda's use bangle language with the neighboring people but it is totally unapproved in their ritual and celebration but there is no written method [22].

The Munda's call themselves "Horoko", which means 'Men'. They are also proud to be addressed as the Munda's. Ironically, the word 'Munda' means a man of prestige and wealth. It is puzzling that their Hindu neighbors gave the name of them.

There are three large groups of the

1. Munda's: The Compact
2. The Kharia and
3. The Mankin

The groups living in the Sundarbans region of Bangladesh belong to the Compact tribe and are grouped in various chains. The dominion to a claim is dispatched through a patrilinear system/patrilineal system. The Munda people inherited bloc names from their forefathers from India as they narrated us and these are dispatched from generation to generation like water flows in a river. Members of the same clan cannot marry each other because they are considered relatives. But the Munda's can marry people belonging to any other claims without any variety or hierarchy. People of different clans live together in the same village. No marriage is agreed among people belonging to several tribes.

The Munda's are an endogamy tribe. They usually do not marry outside the tribal community because to them the tribe is sacred. Their most of the family systems are nuclear type consisting of father, mother and unmarried children. Usually, after marriage the couple set up their independent family. But in the observing areas, the Munda's

live mainly extended families. Women go to their husband's house after the wedding and live with his parents and brothers. The wedding is arranged by the parents consulting horoscope. However, the family ties are very highly valued in the Munda's.

1. The Munda's have an own flag and there are three
2. colors: White (the symbol of Shing Bonga/the Sun)
3. Red (the symbol of Buru Bonga/the Hill)
4. Green (the symbol of Ikir Bonga/the Ganga)

Where you see this flag, everyone can recognize that is the flag of the Munda's [23]. The Munda's love community celebrations. They are very community oriented. Their life is punctuated with social, agrarian and religious, which bring them together for communal celebrations where drinking of rice beer and singing and dancing, have a very important place. It is said of the Munda's that a child learns to dance as soon as he can walk and learns to sing as soon as he can talk.

Economic system of the Munda's both men and women are involved in various activities, The Munda's have a reputation as stronger, hard worker, brave and loyal. Usually, they are exploited a fair wage. The careers of the Munda's male members household are day and seasonal labor. The Munda's women, a part from housework. They are also engaged as day labors in agriculture or shrimp farming, and generally do not have the opportunity to work as maids in houses of Bengali people because they are considered as low-caste and unholy.

The religious exercise of the Munda's is separate from other ethnic group. Sing Bonga is the God of the Munda. Sing Bonga tonal translation is the Sun-Spirit, The moon and the stars which are considered living witness of their cult and special piety is devoted to the Karam tree (which protected their progenitors hiding them while they were fleeing from the opposition). They also worship some Hindu deities and as the entire Sundarbans roomer, they also believe in and pray to Bon Bibi the deity of the forest. The Munda's prayer the souls of their progenitors. They pray to and call them especially during the lifecycle rituals and they have specially celebrations dedicated to the progenitors. In every stage of rituals of passage (child birth, adolescence, marriage and death) of the Munda's have different them from normal life of the community [24]. They traditionally practice many other rituals (Puja) such as Mage Puja, Karam Puja, Shoshi Puja, Sharul Puja, Gohil Puja, Pahari Puja, Valua Puja, Kali Puja (they arrange used by the conventional Hindu Kali Puja), Hari Puja, Durga Puja, Murgi Puja, Natun Khay Puja, Marriage Puja (the month of Falgun and Baishak). Shama Puja, Shaol Puja. Purahit (religious leader/ Pahan) of own community leads the Puja (ritual). Besides, the Munda's remember Gazi Peer, Banbibibi, Gazi Kalu, Champaboti and Dhakhina Ray. In the many rituals and festivals, they only practice a few number of rituals and festivals such as Sarul Puja, Pahari/Dangri Kharam Puja, Karam Puja, Sohrai Puja, Gram Sara Puja/Gram, Natun Khaoa Puja and Valua/Velva Puja.

The cultural exercise of the Munda's is also separate from other ethnic group. The Munda's also believe in ghosts (Bhut) and spirits-both good and bad and call on them to either help someone who is sick or to do damage to another person. The Munda community also dedicate some Hens for the rituals celebration like as White hen, Red hen, Black Hen, Brown Hen and Mixed Hen for their God (Sing

Bonga-The Sun) and spirituals power. They believe that, after death the soul come back at their home and save them from different types of dangers.

The Munda's show a varied universe of festivals and cult, Pujas, which dispose of specific, sang and dances. The place of buries here is called 'Masna' in Sadri language. This 'Masna' is steel used by the Munda's. The cycle of ritual traditions traditionally repeats the yearly recited social-economic actions and is concerned the moon calendar. Cult is accomplished by the single families, the tribe or the whole community in order to get benefit, welfare, enrichment and protection from disasters. The cult are an important occasion of social connection among the Munda's, restarting the communitarian ties among the people living in the same village and fastening the link between the current generation and the progenitors of the tribe before starting the ritual of the pujas held at the village level all the adults (man and women) have a meeting with the village leader in order to discuss the ultimate social and related problems existing among the families and solve it before courtesy the ritual. Once the entire possible disputes have been solved the celebration can begin. If anyone refused the community rules, he will be ostracized from the own society.

The foods of the Munda's are all eater. Different types of fish were on their diet. As a separate tribe, the Munda's are fond of Rat meat (they call mete horin), Snails (they call ghonga), Crabs, Pigs, wild Cats and Civet and dead animals due to injuries (like Hen) etc. At one time they did not know how to cook and eat these things well. The Munda's do not eat beef because of their religious tradition. But it has economic significance for their family subsistence [25]. Tari /Haria (local wine made by the community)' for the drinking adult members together is necessary for any festivals. The Munda's are not satisfied if they do not drink Haria in entertaining guests and worshipping. They remain unhappy. So, they want to beat them in all the work. There is no substitute for Haria Wine. The Munda's suffer from social discrimination due to this food intake. The Munda's boys and girls at school cannot mix with their classmates.

Recommendation

The novel corona virus disease (COVID-19) pandemic along with the Cyclone Foni in 2019 and Cyclone Amphan in 2020 that hit the Sundarbans have broken the back of the Munda's community which has been forced to take loans from private parties at hefty interest rates to feed their hungry stomach. Tragically, the deprived lives of the Munda's in South Western Bangladesh have not changed for centuries. While globalization and the speed at which current changes are transpiring capture the attention of leading thinkers worldwide, the Munda's sit and wonder why nothing changes for the better in their community. At least, this is a beginning for them! At least, they are beginning to question why changes for the better have not happened within their groups. When a few of the elders were questioned about what changes have they seen for the better in their villages, sadly, they could not think of one improvement? Their wants for the future are very basic. They only desire what others consider to be basic necessities.

The Munda's could be greatly helped through the following these areas:

Education: In order to be able to integrate into the larger Bangladeshi society, it is imperative the Munda children attend school. Those who have been denied the children's right to education need to be given literacy classes so they may achieve a minimum proficiency in written Bangla and life skills. As more and more students progress through an educational system, the older ones need to be given technical training or some kind of skills to prepare them to enter the workforce without being exploited or cheated.

Health care: As the current situation is appalling in regard to latrines and health care, program need to be started to train both the adults and children in the Munda villages' about how to start take care of them. Starting at the very basic level of hygiene, nutrition and prenatal and postnatal child care would be necessary as the Munda's live in ignorance.

Human rights: The Munda's are just now beginning to understand that they actually have rights in this country. They want to live in own culture, tradition and their ancient land rights by the British Land Settlement Act. Further explanation and education of these rights need should be implemented along with assisting them in demanding their rights.

Financial development: To date, most the Munda's have worked as laborers with little or no knowledge of economics. They have been exploited by employees, cheated by society members, lost their land, and have resorted to using credit unions charging high interest. Ways and means of earning a minimum salary to survive on is essential in order for the Munda's to pull themselves out of their pit. Along with a subsistence salary, they need training on sound money management.

Preservation of cultural identity: (Matbor/Pahan (Priest)/Sardar): The Munda community practices their traditional systems which were in the ancient era and their forefather followed. Sun, Moon, Trees, Animals, Rivers, Mountains, forefather soil and soil are the spiritual powers of the Munda community. There are many cultural programs but they practice a few number of rituals or festivals. The Munda's feel a very strong tie to their identity of being a Munda's. In the process of change for the better, this identity must not be obliterated programs to help the Munda's retain their culture should be developed such as in the areas of singing, dancing, language and all ritual and cultural functions.

Housing: In rural Bangladesh nowadays only very poor people live in houses with a roof made of rice straw. A rich straw roof only requires labor cost, rough material is available everywhere. However, such a roof does not last more than a rainy season or does not last natural disaster (like Sidor, Aila, Foni and Amphan etc.) and besides, that is very unhealthy because it offers a comfortable nest to small snakes and other kinds of insects and worms. This is the only roof, which the majority of the Munda people can afford for their houses. This house is very very risky/unsafe for the Munda's when the natural disaster starts like storm, flood and tsunamis or tidal wave.

Voice in the government: Eventually, the Munda's should be given position of leadership at least at the local Government level. Until the Munda's are able to develop leaders from within their own groups, non Munda leaders need to become more aware of the Munda's plight and what services the Munda's are entitled.

Conclusion

The Covid-19 (Corona) pandemics with natural disaster like Sidor, Aila, Foni and Amphan have left the Munda's staring at hunger and starvation. Improvement of the Munda situation is dual: change must come from within and change must come from outside. The Munda's themselves need to start to decide what changes they wish to bring about in their villages and how they are going to assist in the process of improving their lives. The greater Bengali society, the government and the world must take some responsibility for no maintaining these painful conditions to continue and help work as cooperative partners with the Munda's to help uplift the situation. Any governmental and nongovernmental intervention should come forward to helping this indigenous people in a sustainable way.

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