

WWJMRD 2015; 1(6): 28-35
www.wwjmr.com
e-ISSN: 2454-6615

Santanu Panda
ICSSR Post-Doctoral Fellow
Dept. of Anthropology
Vidyasagar University
Midnapore, West Bengal, India

The development of primitive tribal groups: A case of Lodha and Birhor of West Bengal

Santanu Panda

Abstract

Particularly vulnerable tribal group (PVTG) earlier called as Primitive tribal group (PTG) is a Government of India classification created for the purpose of enabling improvement in the conditions of certain communities with particularly low development indices. In India, 75 communities are regarded as PVTG and in West Bengal only three communities are regarded as a PVTG viz. Bihor, Lodha and Toto. In this study, we have made an attempt to study the implementation of various types of developmental programmes of the Central and State Governments among the two communities (Birhor and Lodha) of Purulia and Paschim Medinipur District of West Bengal.

In the post-Independence period the main aim of the Government was to put off the stigma of criminal tribe designation of the Lodha-Sabar community. At the same time the Government also wanted to uplift the socio-economic condition of the Primitive Tribal Groups (PTG) like Lodha-Sabar and Birhor who mainly depended on forest produce and daily labour.

The study revealed that the major constraint of the implementation of the developmental programmes among the Lodhas and Bihors lie in their landlessness and poverty. The study also revealed that how the developmental state failed to implement its stated good policies for these communities. Finally, some recommendations have been made about how a better implementation could be made to bring confidence among the Birhor and Lodha community towards the improvement in their living condition. (232)

Keywords: Vulnerable tribe, Lodha, Birhor, Development inputs, Primitive Tribal Group (PTG)

Introduction

In this study an attempt has been made to identify the various development processes which are taking place under the initiative of the state for the improvement of a minority population known as Lodhas who were designated by the British colonialists as a "Criminal Tribe" and later this nomenclature underwent interesting evolution in the postcolonial period. This poor, marginalized community was later put under the category of "Denotified Community" and then reclassified as a "Primitive Tribal Group" (PTG). In 1973, the Debra Commission created Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) as a separate category, who are less developed among the tribal groups. The Birhor tribe was also classified as PTGs of West Bengal by the Government. But at present both of them have been again reclassified as a "Particularly Venerable Tribal Group" (PVTG). In 2006, the Government of India renamed the PTGs as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs). (<http://vikaspedia.in/social-welfare/scheduled-tribes-welfare/primitive-vulnerable-tribal-groups#section-8>). The Government has created the designation of these tribes to enable improvement in the conditions of certain communities with particularly low development indices. The features of such groups included (i) a pre-agricultural system of economy, (ii) practice of hunting and gathering, (iii) zero or negative population growth and (iv) extremely low level of literacy in comparison with other tribal groups. The socio-economic condition of these tribes has changed over time but not in the hopeful direction. After sixty years of Independence of the country their socio-economic condition has improved little. (Mandal, 2002)

Under this post-colonial scenario, various welfare measures have been undertaken by the Central Government to improve the living condition of the Lodhas. After the Independence of India from British colonialism many plans and projects of specific nature have been initiated by the Government to resettle the forest dependent and semi-nomadic Lodha minority community in an agriculture dependent sedentary life. Meanwhile, a good number of rehabilitation schemes have been formulated and implemented on the Lodhas and most of

Correspondence:
Santanu Panda
ICSSR Post-Doctoral Fellow
Dept. of Anthropology
Vidyasagar University
Midnapore, West Bengal, India

these schemes failed and no lasting impact of them could be made. (Bhowmick, 1985: 17)

A brief description of the Lodha and Birhor

Lodhas are primarily a hunting-gathering community whose main subsistence depends on collection of wild roots, tubers and edible leaves from jungles. They also hunt wild animals, birds and reptiles which are consumed as food while their skins and hides are sold. The Lodhas also collect minor forest produce (MFP) including Babui-grass () for rope-making, and 'Tossar' () silk cocoons which are sold to a specialized group of weavers making silk clothes. Gradually, they are becoming familiar with the modern techniques of agriculture. Some of them have owned agricultural land and a good number of Lodhas were also found to be engaged in agriculture as sharecroppers of Santals and some higher castes. They are also working as agricultural labourers. A considerable number of Lodhas of Paschim Medinipur and Purulia districts were also found to work as migrant labourers in the adjoining districts and states like Jharkhand, Bihar and Odisha..

According to anthropologist Probodh Bhowmick the Lodhas do not live exclusively in the forest covered areas, but have spread out in other deforested regions and are found to work there as agricultural and non-agricultural labourers. But their main economy is still based on collection of minor forest products, such as leaves for preparing leaf-plates for sale. According to Bhowmick, the Lodhas were found to collect edible roots and fruits for household consumption and sell the surplus in the local markets. They were also found to be engaged in the collection of tussore cocoons and sell them in the market for cash. Lodhas were also found to catch snakes and lizards and sell their hides and consumed the flesh of these animals. They also used to catch fish and tortoises from the water bodies for domestic consumption as well as for sale. (Bhowmick, 1981: 6).

Although, not an anthropologist, Mahasveta Devi a famous Bengali litterateur and a human rights activist has firsthand personal experiences of the failures of governmental schemes and shortcomings of the government policies directed towards the development of the Lodhas in erstwhile Midnapore, and the adjoining districts of West Bengal. Unlike academic anthropologists, she practiced activism through the publication of a literary magazine in which many literate tribal persons including Lodhas wrote about their living conditions, violence committed to them by the state and higher classes of the society and the demands of the different tribal communities. Mahasveta Devi herself also wrote a number of articles in Bengali and English in which she depicted the ground realities regarding the problems of the implementation of development inputs and schemes among the Lodhas. In one of her articles published in the *Economic and Political Weekly* in 1983, Mahasveta Devi cited examples of some Lodha villages in the present Paschim Medinipur district in which government schemes have failed to reach the beneficiaries, although they were badly in need of the development programmes. In the article Mahasveta Devi categorically pointed out

Usually the schemes are made by people not knowing or caring to know what the tribal really need. The plan is then, after the usual procedures, left to the contractor.... I have seen contractor- made construction works meant for the

Lodhas. It is better to make specious earthen huts. With a structure of cement, brick and sand, the inevitable contractor is bound to enter the scene. To whose benefit? Not the Lodhas'. Over three decades, huge sums have been spent in the name of the Lodhas and the community has gone much below the poverty lines. (Devi 1983:948).

Birhors are identified as a nomadic hunting-gathering community of West Bengal. The Birhor is a small community, with a poor literacy rate. They are economically backward and still use traditional technology in their crafts. They originally migrated from Ranchi, Hazaribagh and Dhanbad districts of Jharkhand State more than 150 years ago and finally settled in 3 blocks of Purulia like Baghmundi, Jhalda-I and Balarampur (<http://www.anagrasarkalyan.gov.in/htm/Birhor.html>). The first rehabilitated Birhor village is Bhupatipally of Purulia district in West Bengal where an exclusive concentration of Birhor families is found. At present they are found to be living in Bareriya, and Bhupatipalli village in Baghmundi Block, Mahultanred and Dakai village in Jhalda-I Block and Bersa village under Balarampur Block of Purulia district. Majority of Birhors are engaged in collection of minor forest produce including 'Chihor-lata' with which they prepare long ropes. These ropes are sold in the weekly local village markets or *haat*, either directly or as handicraft items. Some of them are still migrate to Bihar, Jharkhand and as well as to neighbouring districts of Burdwan, Bankura and North 24-Parganas to work as labourers at highways, brick-fields, etc.

Objectives

In this study the first objective was to collect empirical data on the demographic and some socio-economic features of the Lodha and Birhor in Paschim Medinipur and Purulia districts.

Secondly, to identify and record the various development inputs under the different developmental programmes of the Government and non-governmental agencies received by the beneficiaries in the selected study area.

Thirdly, to collect empirical data on the implementation of the Governmental schemes and programmes among the Lodha and Birhor and views of the Government official towards the development of PTG's

Finally, reason behind the non utilisation of the development schemes and some recommendation has been made for better implementation by the policymakers.

Study area and methods

The primary data for the research have been collected through intensive anthropological fieldwork conducted during 20th September, 2013 to November 2014. These data included qualitative and quantitative information collected through household census, structured and unstructured questionnaire scheduled and also with the help of genealogy, case study, participatory observation, focus group discussion, and panel interviews.

The fieldwork for this research was carried out from a micro-level perspective by using traditional anthropological methods like participant observation and collection of case studies. Data on the demographic, economic, political and socio-cultural dimensions of the selected Lodha-Sabar and Birhor settlements were collected in the respective study areas.

The secondary data for the research have been collected through discussions, interviews and case studies from Districts, Blocks and Gram Panchayat officers in the administrative departments of two districts. I have also collected secondary data through a reading of e-journals, journals and books for secondary data during the period. The primary data for the research have been collected from two districts of West Bengal. The data from three hundred seventy seven (377) Lodha-Sabar households (the total population is 1575) in the three blocks, viz., Narayangarh, Salboni and Medinipur Sadar in Paschim Medinipur District have been collected and eighty nine (89) Birhor households (the total population is 343) in the three blocks,

viz., Bagmundi, Jhalda-I and Balarampur in the Purulia district have also been collected.

Demographic contour of the study Population under the Survey

The following table shows that I have covered 391 household and 1591 population distributed in the six villages under two blocks of Paschim Medinipur district and five villages under three blocks of Purulia district. The interesting aspect about the demography of the Lodha-Sabar and Birhor in these samples is the overall female preponderance. The overall sex ratio is 1006.31.

Table 1: Lodha-Sabar and Birhor Populations of Paschim (west) Medinipur and Purulia Districts covered under the survey

Name of the district	Name of the block	Name of the Village	No. of Family	Male	Female	Total
Paschim Medinipur	Narayangarh	Bircanrd	197	394	422	816
		Jugdiha	26	49	39	88
	Salboni	Bamunbandh	12	26	22	48
		Baradiha	07	12	13	25
		Patharkumkumi	20	48	42	90
		Bagmari	40	92	89	181
Total			105	227	205	432
Purulia	Bagmundi	Bhupatipalli	49	89	95	184
		Bareria	19	40	34	74
	Jhalda 1	Mahultanrh	08	18	14	32
		Dakai	05	08	11	19
	Balarampur	Bersa	08	17	17	34
	Total			89	172	171
Overall			391	793	798	1591

Sex ratio: Female / Male X 1000; 798/793X1000=1006.31

Findings of the study

Demographic scenario

The age-sex composition of the sample population reveals higher number of younger persons including children belonging to 0-4, 5-9 and 10-14 age groups among the Lodha-Sabars and Birhor community. The interesting aspect about the demography of the Lodha-Sabar and Birhor in these samples is the overall female preponderance (the sex ratio being 1021.07). If sex-ratio is considered in the block level separately, then we find that the aggregate sex-ratios of the Lodha-Sabar in Narayangarh block is also in favour of the females, whereas, the Lodha-Sabar in the Salboni block and among the Birhors of Purulia district the overall sex-ratio is in favour of the males except in the age groups 20-24, 25-29, 30-34 but in the higher age groups the females predominate. (Tables 2, 3 & 4).

Table 2: Age-sex composition of Lodha-Sabars of Narayangarh Block

Age Group	Male	Female	Total
0-4	[4.78]39(9.90)	[5.02]41(9.72)	[9.80]80
5-9	[6.37]52(13.19)	[5.39]44(10.43)	[11.76]96
10-14	[5.02]41(10.40)	[5.15]42(9.95)	[10.17]83
15-19	[2.94]24(6.09)	[4.04]33(7.82)	[6.98]57
20-24	[2.57]21(5.33)	[2.94]24(5.69)	[5.51]45
25-29	[2.94]24(6.09)	[3.92]32(7.58)	[6.86]56
30-34	[2.45]20(5.07)	[4.17]34(8.05)	[6.62]54
35-39	[3.92]32(8.12)	[4.17]34(8.05)	[8.08]66
40-44	[3.92]32(8.12)	[2.82]23(5.45)	[6.74]55
45-49	[2.45]20(5.07)	[3.43]28(6.63)	[5.88]48
50-54	[2.69]22(5.85)	[1.10]09(2.13)	[3.80]31
55-59	[1.59]13(3.29)	[1.96]16(3.79)	[3.55]29
60-64	[1.47]12(3.09)	[2.45]20(4.74)	[3.92]32

65-69	[2.82]23(5.83)	[2.69]22(5.21)	[5.51]45
70-74	[0.98]08(2.03)	[1.25]10(2.37)	[2.20]18
75-79	[0.36]03(0.76)	[0.61]05(1.18)	[0.98]8
80+	[0.98]08(2.03)	[0.61]05(1.18)	[1.59]13
	[48.28]394	[51.72]422	816

() Represents the percentage out of column [] Represents the percentage out of grand total

Sex ratio: 422/394X1000=1071.06

Table 3: Age Sex composition of Lodha-Sabars Salboni block

Age group	Male	Female	Total
0-4	[4.62] 20 (8.81)	[3.00] 13 (6.34)	[7.63] 33
5-9	[6.01] 26 (11.45)	[3.93] 17 (8.29)	[9.95] 43
10-14	[6.01] 26 (11.45)	[5.78] 25 (12.19)	[11.80] 51
15-19	[5.09] 22 (9.69)	[3.47]15 (7.31)	[8.56] 37
20-24	[3.47] 15 (6.60)	[4.62] 20 (9.75)	[8.10] 35
25-29	[3.70] 16 (7.04)	[4.62] 20 (9.75)	[8.33] 36
30-34	[3.24] 14 (6.16)	[4.18] 18 (8.78)	[7.40] 32
35-39	[5.32] 23 (10.13)	[4.18] 18 (8.78)	[9.49] 41
40-44	[3.24] 14 (6.16)	[2.77] 12 (5.85)	[6.01] 26
45-49	[3.47] 15 (6.60)	[2.31] 10 (4.87)	[5.78] 25
50-54	[2.77] 12 (5.28)	[2.08] 09 (4.39)	[4.86] 21
55-59	[0.92] 04 (1.76)	[2.54] 11 (5.36)	[3.47] 15
60-64	[1.62] 07 (3.08)	[0.69] 03 (1.46)	[2.31] 10
65-69	[2.08] 09 (3.96)	[0.46] 02 (0.97)	[2.54] 11
70+	[0.92] 04 (1.76)	[2.77] 12 (5.85)	[3.70] 16
Total	[52.55]227	[47.45]205	432

() Represents the percentage out of column [] Represent the percentage out of grand total

Sex ratio: 205/227X1000=903/08

Table 4: Age Sex Distribution Birhor of Purulia District

Age Group	Male	Female	Total
0-4	[6.71] 23(13.37)	[6.71] 23 (13.45)	46[13.41]
5-9	[7.29] 25(14.53)	[8.16] 28 (16.37)	53[15.45]
10-14	[7.00] 24(13.95)	[5.24] 18 (10.52)	42[12.24]
15-19	[2.62] 09 (5.23)	[3.49] 12 (7.02)	21[6.12]
20-24	[4.37] 15 (8.72)	[6.41] 22 (12.86)	37[10.78]
25-29	[5.83] 20 (11.63)	[3.21]11 (6.43)	31[9.03]
30-34	[2.92] 10 (5.81)	[3.21]11 (6.43)	21[6.12]
35-39	[2.92] 10 (5.81)	[2.33]08 (4.67)	18[5.24]
40-44	[2.92] 10 (5.81)	[2.92]10 (5.85)	20[5.83]
45-49	[1.75] 06 (3.48)	[2.62]09 (5.26)	15[4.37]
50-54	[3.21] 11 (6.39)	[1.46]05 (2.92)	16[4.66]
55-59	[0.58] 02 (1.16)	[1.16]04 (2.33)	06[1.75]
60+	[2.04] 07 (4.07)	[2.92]10 (5.85)	17[4.96]
Total	172[50.14]	171[49.86]	343

() Represent the percentage out of column [] Represent the percentage out of grand total

Sex ratio: 171/172X1000=994.18

Table 5: Lodha-Sabar community in Narayangarh Block

Owner Cultivator	Agricultural day labourer	Non-Agricultural day labourer	Fishing	Begging	Widow & old age pension holder	Service	Mason	Total
52(11.52)	100(22.17)	200 (44.35)	30 (6.65)	10 (2.21)	45(9.97)	03 (0.66)	06(1.33)	451

Basket Making- 03 (0.66) and Forest produce collection-02 (0.44)

() Represents the percentage out of the total

Table 6: Lodha-Sabar community of Salboni blocks in Paschim Medinipur District

Owner Cultivation	Agricultural day labour	Non-Agricultural day labour	Forest Produce Collection	Fishing	Old age pension	Service	Total
35(16.12)	75(34.56)	18(8.29)	63(29.03)	10(4.60)	08(3068)	08(3.68)	217

() Represents the percentage out of the total

Table 7: Birhor community in the Purulia District

Owner Cultivation	Agricultural day labour	Non-Agricultural day labour	Forest Produce Collection	Rope making	Old age pension	Service	Total
12(7.27)	28(16.96)	39(23.63)	53(32.12)	25(15.15)	05(3.03)	03(1.81)	165

() Represents the percentage out of the total

It is observed that the Lodha-Sabars of Narayangarh block are mostly working as labourers in the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors and they were also found to be engaged in fishing (22.17 %, 44.35 % and 6.65 %). A small number of Lodha families were found to cultivate their own land (11.52%) and a much smaller number of them were engaged in the service sector. Most interestingly, after six decades of Independence; I have found among Lodhas ten people who survive by adopting begging in the Bircanrd village of Narayangar block of Paschim Medinipur district. (Table, 8)

It is observed that the Lodha-Sabars of Salboni block of Paschim Medinipur are mostly working as agricultural labourer and forest produce collectors. The percentages being 34.56 % and 29.03% respectively. A good number of Lodha families (16.12%) were also found to cultivate their own land and a much smaller number of them were engaged in the service sector. Most of the Lodhas were also found to pursue fishing and sal leaf plate making as subsidiary occupation. (Table 9)

We have found that the Birhor community of three blocks of Purulia district mostly depended on minor forest produce collection and non agricultural day labourer which is 32.12 % and 23.63 % respectively. They were also found to be

The surveyed population revealed a predominance of small households ranging between 3-4 persons. The mean household sizes of the two blocks are same in the Lodha-Sabar settlements in Paschim Medinipur district, which are 4.1. The mean household size of the Birhors of Purulia district was found to be smaller than the Lodhas.

Subsistence Pattern

engaged in the rope making and agricultural day labourer which is 15.15 % and 16.96 %. They used to sell the forest produce collection (firewood, furniture wood, Chihar plant and leaf) to earn money. Few families owned small amount of agricultural land. They did not cultivate the land every year due to the lack irrigation and agricultural implements. (Table 10)

Development scenario of the study area

In the post-Independence period the main aim of the government was to put off the stigma of criminal tribe designation of the Lodha-Sabar community. At the same time the government also wanted to uplift the socio-economic condition of the Primitive Tribal Groups (PTG) like Lodha-Sabar and Birhor who mainly depended on forest produce and daily labour. Another important component of the governmental perspective centering round the development of the Lodhas and Birhors was to settle these tribes as an agriculturist populations. For this reason, every effort to improve the condition of the PTGs consisted of giving them land, permanent houses, pond, electricity, old age pension, cow shade, toilet, domestic animals (Piggery and Goatery) and poultry birds. There was virtually no effort on the part of the Government and

the Non- Government Organizations to improve the economy of the Lodha-Sabars and Birhor within the fold of the forests which the members of these tribes knew best. The traditional and intimate knowledge of these tribes about the forest and the animals on which the community sustained its livelihood were rarely studied and used by the governmental and non-governmental development agencies. Under this general background of the governmental perspective on the development to PTGs; it is revealed from the scenario of development inputs that

government's attention was mostly directed to provide house, job card distribution, installation of electricity and pond to the beneficiary families of Narayangarh block. Our findings revealed that at the time of our survey 370 (45.23%) Lodha-Sabar beneficiary families out of 816 have received various types of developmental inputs in different combination in the Narayangarh block (Table 11). Most of the beneficiaries have received job card as a development input by Govt. under MGNREGA scheme but they could not utilize the job card as a development inputs. (BOX 1).

Table 8: Development Inputs given to the Lodhas of Bircanrd village of Narayangarh Block, Paschim Medinipur

Sl. No	Name of Development inputs	Source	Number of Beneficiary	Utilised the Development inputs	Could not utilise the Development inputs
1	Patta land	BL & LRO	[1.96]16 (4.32)	[3.24]12(6.45)	[1.08]04(2.17)
2	House under IAY	BDO	[1.22]10(2.70)	[2.70]10(5.37)	00
3	House LDS	Backward welfare Office	[2.82]23(6.22)	[3.51]13(6.99)	[2.70]10(5.43)
4	Job Card	Panchayat (MGNREGA)	[17.65]144(38.92)	[5.40]20(10.75)	[33.51]124(67.39)
5	Electricity	Electricity Department of State Govt.	[10.54]86(23.24)	[18.91]70(37.63)	[4.32]16(8.69)
6	Widow /old age pension	BDO	[8.58]70(18.93)	[15.13]56(30.10)	[3.78]14(7.61)
7	Pond	Panchayat (MGNREGA)	[2.57]21(5.67)	[1.35]05(2.69)	[4.32]16(8.69)
	Total		[45.23]370(100)	[50.27]186(100)	[49.73]184(100)

() Represents percentage out of the column total [] Represents percentage out of the total beneficiaries

Table 9: Development Inputs given to the Lodhas of Salboni Block, Paschim Medinipur

Sl. No	Name of Development inputs	Source	Number of Beneficiary (%)	Utilised the Development inputs	Could not utilise the Development inputs
1	Patta land	Block Land & Land Reforms Department	[7.41]32(20.25)	[3.79]06 (9.84)	[16.45]26(27.65)
2	House under IAY	BDO	[5.32]23(14.55)	[12.66]20(32.79)	[1.89]03(3.19)
3	House LDC	Backward class welfare Office	[6.71]29(18.35)	[4.43]07(11.47)	[13.29]21(22.34)
4	Job Card	Panchayat (MGNREGA)	[5.78]25(15.82)	[12.66]20(32.79)	[3.16]05(5.31)
5	Electricity	Electricity Department of State Govt.	[0.93]04(2.53)	[1.89]03(4.91)	[0.06]01(1.06)
6	Widow /old age pension	BDO	[1.16]05(3.17)	[1.89]03(4.91)	[0.32]02(2.12)
7	Van Rickshaw	BDO	[1.39]06(3.79)	[0.32]02(3.27)	[2.53]04(4.25)
8	Goatery loan	BDO	[1.16]05(3.17)	00	[3.16]05(5.31)
9	Latrine	Backward class welfare Office	[6.71]29(18.35)	[0.32]02(3.27)	[17.08]27(28.72)
	Total		[36.57]158(99.98)	[38.61]61(100)	[59.49]94(100)

() Represents percentage out of the column total [] Represents percentage out of total beneficiaries

I have found nine types of development inputs which were given by the Government and non government agencies to the Lodha families in terms of their source and percentage of the beneficiary families and the utilization of development inputs in the Salboni block of Paschim Medinipur district. It is notable that out of 432 families only 158 (36.57%) Lodha families in the studied villages of the Salboni block received some kind of development inputs from the Government which means that despite the launching of various kinds of schemes, more than half of the Lodha families were not being covered by any kind of development programme. About 32 beneficiary families (20.25%) have received *patta* land for cultivation as development input by the Government but most of the beneficiaries could not utilize the *patta* land as a development inputs. The number of beneficiaries whose houses have been constructed under the 'Backward Class

Welfare under Integrated Action Plan of Bharat Sarkar' scheme executed by the Lodha development cell is 29,(18.35%) which is given to the Lodhas as development inputs from Lodha Development Cell of Paschim Medinipur district administration. About 5 percent of the families have fully utilized the house building scheme fund while 13 percent of the households could not use the fund and assistance properly. The major reason behind the non-utilization of funds towards house building lay in poor and non-participatory nature of planning towards the construction of the houses by the concerned department of the Government. It is also found that Government constructed latrine with the houses; interestingly most of the beneficiaries were found to use the latrine as store room for keeping various types of implements and firewood. Only two families were found to use the latrine for its specific purpose. (BOX 1).

Table 10: Development Inputs given to the Birhor of Purulia District

Sl. No	Name of Development inputs	Source	Number of Beneficiary	Utilised the Development inputs	Could not utilise the Development inputs
1	House	Backward class welfare Office	[17.78]61(36.31)	[26.79]45 (51.72)	[9.52]16(19.75)
2	Patta	BL&LRO	[5.53]19(11.31)	[4.17]07(8.05)	[7.14]12(14.81)
3	Goatery	BDO	[9.19]34(20.23)	00	[20.24]34 (41.98)
4	Cow shade	Backward class welfare Office	[5.25]18(10.72)	[10.17]18(20.69)	00
5	Latrine	Backward class welfare Office	[5.83]20(11.90)	[3.57]06(6.90)	[8.33]14(17.28)
6	Old age pension	BDO	[2.91]10(5.95)	[5.36]09(10.34)	[0.59]01(1.23)
7	Electricity	Electricity Department of State Govt	[1.75]06(3.58)	[1.19]02(2.30)	[2.38]04(4.94)
Total			[48.98]168(100)	[51.79]87(100)	[48.21]81(100)

() Represents percentage out of the column total [] Represents percentage out of grand total

I have found seven types of development inputs which were given by the Government and non-government agencies to the Birhor families in terms of their source and percentage of the beneficiary families and the utilization of development inputs in the three blocks of Purulia district. In the study villages I have found 168 (48.98%) beneficiaries received the development inputs out of the total population. The overall scenario of the utilization of development inputs is about 52 percent utilized the development inputs and about 48 percent beneficiaries could not utilize the development inputs. The Government has given goat under goatery scheme to all the Birhor

families in Purulia district to improve their socio-economic condition but after 10 to 15 days the entire goat population died after suffering from diseases. The beneficiaries have no knowledge of rearing the goat. Only nineteen Birhor families have received the *patta* land from Block Land and Land Reforms Department for cultivation but more than half of the beneficiaries could not utilize the *patta* land as development inputs. The major reason behind the non-utilization of *patta* land was the Government gave them *patta* record but the Birhor beneficiaries have not seen the actual plot let alone right to cultivation in his/her plot. (BOX 2).

BOX 1: Utilization of development inputs by a Lodha-Sabar Families of Salboni Block

Name of informant: Khokon Kotal	Age: 48	Sex: Male
Village: Gaighata Jugdiha	JL. No: 245	Block: Salboni.
<p>According to the informant there are four members in his family. They are dependent on forest resource collection and daily labour. He has received 0.80 acre patta land with record of right from the Block Land and Land Reforms Department in 2002. The family has also received financial assistance two times for house building in 2001-2002 from BDO office through Lodha Development cell and in 2011-2012 from backward class welfare office under 'Integrated Action Plan Bharat Sarkar'. He received patta land but could not cultivate the land properly because the Land is sandy highland (<i>dangajami</i>) and there is no any irrigation system for cultivation. The land is situated in the bank of Kansabati River. After getting the land they cultivated the land for few years. In 2010, he gave the Land to original land owner in lease for ten years in exchange of Rs. 1600/-only. The land owner belonged to higher caste community. He received financial assistance for two houses from government and he has also a traditional earthen house. According to him, the earlier houses condition is very poor because there is no window and no ventilation system. This room has been used for cow shade. The second house is little bit better than earlier house. The outer side of the house is very nice but in rainy season the rainwater seeps inside the room. I observed during my visit that the rain water was stored in the middle of the room and the informant and his family members were clearing the water from the room in a bucket.</p>		

BOX 2: Utilization of development inputs by the Birhor families of Purulia district

Name of the Informant: Santan Sikari	Age: 43	Sex: Male	Occupation: Day Labour
Village: Bersa	GP: Gerua	Block: Balrampur	Dist: Purulia

I have found during field visit, the family members of Sanatan Sikari were five. He has no agricultural land. His family depends on forest produce collection and rope making. They used to sell the forest produce collection (firewood, furniture wood, skin of Chihor tree and leaf) to earn money. His family member also earns money through rope making. He told me, 'We collected skin of *tihar* and *hingle* tree from jangle to prepare rope and after that we sold it to the neighbour and also in the haat (local market). He further added, 'We also bought plastic bags from market for preparing rope. At first we open the body of the bag and collect the plastic yarn. After that we prepare the rope by the plastic yarn and sold it in the market. This rope is used for tying domestic animals and for lifting water with buckets from the well. The informant told me, 'My father received 0.20 acres patta land with record from Block Land and Land Reform department in 1998. The Government gave him patta land but has not given the actual right of possession. A Santal inhabitant cultivates the land since 1995 till today. In 2000, Matru Majhi called my father and took the original patta record which was given by the Government. After a few days he has returned the patta but it was a Xerox copy. Till now we have not cultivated the land.' He also received goat in 2001 and house in 2010. He also added, 'We have received goat but the health condition of goat was very poor so after few days the goats died because we have no knowledge of rearing goats. The house is made by a Government designated contractor. It is a fully *pacca* house and its condition is suitable for living. When it was made we were not taken as labours. The contractor brought the labour from outside our village. It was very odd to us.'

Conclusion

The findings revealed that the reasons behind of the non utilisation of the development inputs are following points.

1. The beneficiaries have no knowledge to rearing the goat.
2. The major reason behind the non-utilization of funds towards house building lay in poor and non-participatory nature of planning towards the construction of the houses by the concerned department of the Government.
3. The Lodha beneficiaries could not cultivate the *patta* land properly because the Land is sandy highland (*dangajami*) and there is no any irrigation system for cultivation. Most of the lands are situated in bank of the river or inside jungle.
4. The major reason behind the non-utilization of *patta* land was the Government gave them *patta* record but the Birhor beneficiaries have not seen the actual plot let alone right to cultivation in his/her plot.

This empirical study revealed that the developments of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in West Bengal are in poor condition. In this study, I have found most of them were surviving their livelihood depended on forest produce collection and agriculture and non agricultural day labourer. The Government has tried to bring them to the mainstream as settled agriculturist population. For this reason, every effort to improve the condition of the Lodhas and Birhors consisted of giving them land, permanent houses, cow shades, domestic animals, poultry birds, old age pension, job card, electricity and toilet. Only 45% Lodha beneficiaries of Narayangarh block, 36% Lodha beneficiaries of Salboni block in the Paschim Medinipur district and about 49 % Birhor beneficiaries of Purulia district have received the aforementioned development inputs from the Government

and 50%, 59% and 48% beneficiaries could not use the development inputs in the respective study areas. The Government officials of Paschim Medinipur district have not given any proper information regarding the development of PTGs. They also refused to give their views on the development scenario among the particularly venerable tribal group except making some frustrating comments on the behaviour of the Lodhas. There was virtually no effort on the part of the Government and the NGOs to improve the economy of the Lodhas and Birhors within the fold of the forests which the members of these tribes knew best. The traditional and intimate knowledge of these tribes about the forest and the animals on which the community sustained its livelihood were rarely studied and used by the governmental and non-governmental development agencies.

Under the above scenario, I have made an attempt to enumerate a list of recommendations which may be considered by the concerned departments of the Government and the policymakers for the better implementation of the development inputs according to the specific needs of the Lodha community.

- The Lodha families to whom *patta* land have been issued on paper should immediately be given the actual right of possession with full protection against all kinds of disturbance by the district administration and the panchayat. The Government land departments should take initiative in the context of the ground reality of the vest land before their distribution as *pattas*. The Government should be given the agricultural implements and irrigation facilities.
- The financial assistance for house construction plans should also have been made in consultation with the

beneficiaries to give honour and importance to their specific needs.

- The death of goats given to the Birhor families should be properly investigated. In my observation those goats might not have been vaccinated and most of the Birhor were rearing the goats in an unhygienic manner. If goats are to be given then separate shelters for goats should be made for their proper upkeep.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to the organizer of INCAA Congress-2015 was held at Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha during 21.02.2015 to 23.02.2015 for giving me the opportunity to present my paper. I owe my debts to the members of the Lodha and Birhor community of the selected blocks for their help and cooperation during my fieldwork and I also express my gratitude to the government officials of Paschim Medinipur district. Last but not the least, I express my deep sense of gratitude to my teacher Dr. Abhijit Guha Professor, Department of Anthropology, Vidyasagar University for providing academic and intellectual inputs generously towards the completion of the article.

References

1. Bhowmick, Probodh Kumar. 1994. *The Lodhas of West Bengal*. Kolkata: Institute of Social Research and Applied Anthropology (ISRAA).
2. Bhowmick P.K. 1981. Rehabilitation of a 'Denotified Community' The Ex-Criminal Lodhas of West Bengal. *Royal Anthropological Institute Newsletter*. 44: 6-8.
3. Bhowmick P.K. 1966. 'Proceedings of the summer school in Anthropology' Ed. by N.C. Choudhury. Darjeeling: Anthropological Survey of India.
4. Bhowmick P.K. 1985. Tribal Situation West Bengal, *The Anthropologist*, vol. 15, No.1, pp: 1-19.
5. Chanda, A. 2005. "Tribal Women", in *the Changing Status of Women in West Bengal, 1970-2000 the Challenge Ahead*. Edited by J. Bagchi, pp.130-141. Sage Publications: New Delhi.
6. Devi Mahasveta. 1983. Lodhas of West Bengal-1. *Economic and Political Weekly*. Vol. 18. NO. 22: 947-949.
7. Devi Mahasveta. 1992. The story of Chuni Kotal. *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XVII, NO. 35, P-1836-1837.
8. Mandal, H. et.al. 2002. West Bengal, in *India: An Illustrated Atlas of Tribal World*. Anthropological Survey of India: Kolkata.
9. Panda, S. and Guha, A. 2013. "Macro-categories of Development and Micro-level Realities: A Case Study of Lodhas in Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal" *Journal of Indian Anthropological Society*, Vol-48, pp: 245-255
10. Panda, S. 2014 "Educational Scenario among the Lodhas of Paschim Medinipur District: A Comparative Account" *International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Invention* Vol.1 No.9 pp-875-890, 2014 [ISSN: 2349-2031]
11. Panda, S. and Guha, A. 2015. "'Criminal Tribe' to 'Primitive Tribal Group' and the Role of Welfare State: The Case of Lodhas in West Bengal, India" NOVA Science Publishers Inc. New York, USA. (Forthcoming).

12. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Criminal_Tribes_Act Accessed on 11.07.2014
13. Verma. R.C.1990. *Indian Tribes through the ages*. Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Govt. of India
14. Starvation Death? A report from *Economic and Political Weekly*, 2004:2541.
15. Singh, Kumar, Suresh. 1994 *People of India: The Scheduled Tribes*. Oxford University Press: Anthropological Survey of India.

Webliography

1. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Criminal_Tribes_Act accessed on 11.10.2014.
2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lodha_people accessed through Google on 21.10.2014
3. <http://www.countercurrents.org/george081209.htm> (accessed on 09.02.2015)
4. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Particularly_vulnerable_tribal_group
5. <https://www.indianfolklore.org/journals/index.php/Mukt/.../134> accessed on 12.12.2012