

## **CHAPTER – V**

### **UNDERSTANDING THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL LIFE OF THE TRIBAL BARGADARS ON THE BASIS OF FIELD INVESTIGATION**

In the preceding chapters attempts have been made to analyze the various impacts of Operation Barga on the lives of the SC and ST bargadars with a broader perspective. The main focus has been on the socio-economic and political changes that the tribals have undergone as a result of their new bargadari status. But delineation of such overall changes with macro approach does not always unfold the changes at the grassroots level of the bargadars' life in villages. Moreover, it does not always reflect the psychological and attitudinal changes that the tribal bargadars have undergone over the years. Therefore, field investigations have been undertaken to have a closer look at the life of the bargadars in villages.

#### **Methodology of Research**

The approach of study here is microscopic and aimed at making a qualitative analysis of the impact of Bargadars Act on the tribals. To procure authentic data direct participation method, observation including interviews and group interviews, have been adopted. Specific sectors have been duly selected to fix the line of investigation so that the findings from the mouzas/villages would match the basic focus of the study, i.e., the impact of Operation Barga on the lives of the tribals. However, references have been made in this section to physical environment, demographic pattern and other allied aspects of the mouzas. Discussion on the ethnographic processes of the tribals has been deliberately skipped. For the convenience of analysis here the mouzas of different

districts have been undertaken for study. A mouza may comprise of one big village or several villages within its area. Since the main focus of the study is to explore the impact of Operation Barga on the tribals sometimes it is found that the number of tribal people with barga record-of-rights living in villages is small. So mouzas have been selected as unit of study at the grassroots level so that the study can be conducted on a good number of tribal bargadars. A strategy of combined discussion of the mouzas under different heads is adopted for the convenience of analysis.

\*\*\*\* The tribes studied in the mouzas of different districts all belong to Santal community. Santals have been found to be aware of the rights of bargadars more than the members of other tribal communities. In some mouzas though Lodhas and Bhumijis have been found it appears to the present correspondent that neither do they bother much about fulfilling the obligations of being bargadars nor are they interested to take care of cultivation.

Investigations into the villages have been carried out under the following broad headings.

1. Economic impact of barga operation both on agricultural productivity as well as on the economic life of the tribal bargadars
2. Relationship with the original landowner
3. Security of tenure
4. Attitude towards education as well as health nourishment
5. Changes in Socio-religious life-style
6. Political involvement

## **Bankura district**

Bankura district is believed to have situated between  $22^{\circ} 38'$  and  $23^{\circ} 38'$  north latitude and between  $86^{\circ} 36'$  and  $87^{\circ} 46'$  east longitude. On the north and north-east the district is bounded by the district of Burdwan, on the south-east by Hooghly; on the south by Midnapore, and on the west by Manbhum. The district forms the shape of an isosceles triangle wedged between Manbhum and Burdwan, with its apex nearly opposite Ranigunj and with irregular base line resting on Midnapore and Hooghly.

The location of the district helps to bridge between the rice-producing alluvial plains of Bengal to the east and most undulating Chhota Nagpur plateau on the west. Some parts of the district like Simlapal, Taldangra, Gangajalghati and Barjora may be broadly described as a level country, not materially different from the flat plains in the adjoining districts of Burdwan and Hooghly. Towards the west the ground surface rises gradually giving way to undulations and steep elevations where the land is interspersed with hillocks and broken up into low ridges and valleys. The terrain touching the western boundaries of the district generally consists of laterite ridges covered with sparse forest growths and pleasant valleys. Towards the extreme northwest the undulations become more pronounced and in this area Susunia and Biharinath hills stand out prominently to distinguish the area from the rest of the country.

## **Survey of Mouza Chandabila**

The mouza Chandabila is situated in the Belsulia Gram Panchayat under Bishnupur sub-division of the district of Bankura. The Belsulia Gram Panchayat office is situated at Kharkata which is 3 km away from Chandabila. There are three villages surrounding the mouza Chandabila. In the northern side the village Chuasole is

situated; the village Bakdoba is in the east and in the south-west the village Kulupukur is located. The three villages are inhabited mainly by the tribals though people belonging to SC community, [like Tili, Goala (milk-man)] also live there. Most of the land owners now live at Bishnupur. In the northern side of the mouza Chandabila there are forests at Basudevpur and Pansuli. The villages have electric connections and the facility has been extended to all the bargadar families. The nearest health centre is located at Bishnupur and a small branch of it is being opened at Belsulia. The nearest Bank, namely the Canara Bank, is situated at Kharkata.

Bankura is one of the economically poor districts of West Bengal with very few industries and large tracts of undulated rocky soil dotting the rural landscape. The mouza Chandabila under survey is situated in Bishnupur police station in the district of Bankura. The sub-divisional headquarters of Bishnupur is connected to the mouza by a road about six kilometers long. Another metalled road passes through at a distance of three kilometers from the mouza. Buses ply through this road frequently. The nearest hospital is at Bishnupur. The nearest rail station is Bishnupur. There is a daily market at Bakdoba which is four km away from Chandabila. Villagers from Chandabila visit the market regularly.

## Survey of the Mouza Chandabila

### Gram Panchayat-Belsulia, Police Station- Bishnupur Block-Bishnupur, District-Bankura

1	Total Population of Mouza	490
2	Number of Tribals	380
3	Male (ST)	200
4	Female (ST)	180
5	Area of the Mouza in acre	320
6	Land owned by Tribals in acre	50.85
7	Barga land under Tribal Bargadars in acre	4.41
8	Number of Tribal Bargadars	19
9	Number of Tribal Recorded Bargadars	19
10	Number of Tribal Unrecorded Bargadars	Nil
11	Number of Landless Agricultural labourers	161
12	Source of Irrigation of the Mouza	Canal Water, Bundh water
13	Number of Tribal Raiyats	45
14	Crop Pattern	Aush/Aman
15	Number of Tribal Raiyats having land less than one acre	7
16	Number of Tribal Raiyats having land 1 to 2 acre	38
17	Number of Tribal Raiyats having land above 2 acres	Nil

### Demographic profile

The mouza is spread over 320 acres of land. Total population of the three villages at the time of the survey was 490. Out of 490, the number of tribal people residing in the area was 380. Out of 380, the ratio of ST male and female population was 200:180. There are 45 tribal raiyats and 19 tribal bargadars. Names of all tribal bargadars have been recorded in the Record-of-Rights of the Government in 1982 during the Operation Barga. The 19 Bargadar families in the mouza have a total population of 140. The average population of each household is about 7. Out of 140, males are 76

and females 64. There are 96 adult members in 19 bargadar families, average of each household is 5 approximately. Out of 5, males are 3 and females 2 approximately.

There are 161 landless agricultural labourers in the mouza under survey. Out of 45 tribal raiyats, 7 raiyats possess land less than one acre and 38 raiyats hold land between 1 and 2 acres. There is one Primary School in the Chandabila mouza. The economy of the village depends mainly on agriculture. The tribal females also participate in the field work. There is no direct metal road leading to the mouza Chandabila from Bankura town.

### **Birbhum District**

Birbhum lies on the western part of the state of West Bengal and is the northern most district of the Burdwan subdivision. It is believed to have situated between 24° 9' and 23° 23' north latitudes and between 88° 6' and 87° 9' east longitudes. The principal town which is the administrative headquarters of the district is Suri situated about three miles south of the Mayurakhshi River. The district is bounded, on the north by the Santal Parganas and the district of Murshidabad, on the east by the district of Murshidabad and Burdwan, on the south by Burdwan, and on the west again by the Santal Parganas district.

### **Survey of Mouza Banagram**

The mouza Banagram under survey is situated in Sainthia police station in the district of Birbhum. The sub-divisional headquarters of Birbhum (Sadar) is at Suri which is connected to the mouza by a metal road about fourteen kilometers long. A metalled road passes through at a distance of three hundred metres from the mouza. Buses ply

through this road frequently. The nearest rural hospital is at Sainthia at a distance of six kilometres from this mouza. The nearest rail station is also Sainthia. There is a daily market at Sainthia, which is about 6 km away from Banagram. Villagers from Banagram visit the market regularly. The mouza Banagram is situated in the Deriapur Gram Panchayat. The Deriapur Gram Panchayat office is situated at Bagdola which is about 500 metres from Banagram. There are altogether five villages (tola) in mouza Banagram. In the northern side two villages namely Bagdola and Bagdouri are situated, the village Punur is located in the east and in the south village Deriapur is located. The village Gournagar is to the west of Mouza Bonogram. The three villages are inhabited mainly by the tribes though people belonging to S.C. community also reside in the village. The village Banagram is electrified and electric connections have been extended to all bargadar families. The Health Sub-centre is located at Deriapur which is 500 metres away from Mouza Banagram. Several banks namely, the State Bank Of India, United Commercial Bank, Union Bank of India and Paschim Banga Gramin Bank are situated at Sainthia at a distance of six kilometre from the Mouza. There is one Agricultural Credit Co-operative Society Ltd. at the village Deriapur.

## Survey of Mouza Banagram

**Gram Panchayat-Deriapur, Police Station Sainthia Block-Sainthia, , District-Birbhum**

1	Total Population of Mouza	741
2	Number of Tribals	726
3	Male ( S.T.)	402
4	Female ( S.T.)	324
5	Area of the Mouza in acre	341.29
6	Land owned by Tribals in acre	
7	Barga land under Tribal Bargadars in acre	
8	Number of Tribal Bargadars	21
9	Number of Tribal Recorded Bargadars	20
10	Number of Tribal Unrecorded Bargadars	1
11	Number of Landless Agricultural labourers	
12	Source of Irrigation of the Mouza	Canal Water
13	Number of Tribal Raiyats	185
14	Crop Pattern	Aush/Aman Paddy
15	Number of Raiyats having land less than one acre	7
16	Number of Raiyats having land 1 to 2 acre	38
17	Number of Raiyats having land above 2 acres	6

### Demographic profile

The mouza is spread over 341.29 acres of land. Total population of the village at the time of the survey was 741. Out of 741, the number of tribal people was 726. Out of 726, the number of male and female S.T.population was 402 and 324 respectively. There were altogether 21 tribal bargadars in the mouza. Names of 20

tribal bargadars have been recorded in the Record-of- Rights of the Government during the Operation Barga. Total population of 21 bargadar families was 136. The average population of each household was about 6.5. Out of 136, males numbered 71 and females 65. There were 94 adult members in 21 Bargadar families and the average of each household was 4.5 approximately. Out of 94 adult members, the numbers of male and female people were 49 and 45 respectively.

There is one Primary School named Banagram Adasibasi Primary School and there is one Higher Secondary School in the village Deriapur which is 500 metres from mouza Banagram. Almost all the boys and girls of the village go to the school. The economy of the village depends mainly on agriculture. There is a traditional village council in the village. The tribal females participate in the field work also.

### **Midnapore district**

Midnapore stands at the coastal area in the ecological zone of West Bengal plains and is the southern most district of the Burdwan division. It is the second largest and the second most populous district of the state. The district of Midnapore, the southern most district of the Burdwan division, is situated between 21° 36' and 22° 57' north latitude and between 86° 33' and 88° 11' east longitude. The main town as well as the administrative headquarters of the district is Midnapore, situated on the north bank of the Kasai River. The district is bounded on the north by the district of Bankura, and on the east the river Hooghly and its tributary the Rupnarayanpur separate it from the 24-parganas, Howrah and Hooghly. Its southern boundary is the coastline of the Bay of Bengal, while on the West the boundary stretches up to Balasore district in Orissa. The district may be physically divided into two parts – one, the western forest covered hilly

area linked up with that of Orissa and Chotonagpur plateau and the other a more or less plain alluvial land, spread up to the river Hooghly and stretching further down up to the coast of the Bay of Bengal. The physical feature of the two parts is strikingly different. The spur in the extreme north-west consists of a tangled mass of hillocks and narrow intervening valleys. The slopes are scattered, with cultivation in terraced patches of land where various crops and vegetables are grown. This portion of the soil has a gradual slope from north to south intersected by the rivers Rupnarayan, Haldi Rasulpur, Kasai Kaliaghai. The southern and the extreme eastern most borders are shallow plains in the coast of the Bay of Bengal, which are occasionally laid waste by floods.

### **Survey of Mouza Chakadoba**

The mouza Chakadoba under survey is situated in Binpur police station under Jhargram Sub-Division in the district of Midnapore. The sub-divisional headquarters is at Jhargram which is connected to the mouza by a metal road about fourteen kilometers long. A metalled road passes through at a distance of three hundred metres from the mouza. Buses ply through this road frequently. The nearest rural hospital is at Binpur at a distance of six kilometres from this mouza. The nearest rail headquarters is Jhargram. There is a daily market at Binpur which is about 6 km away from Chakadoba. Villagers from Chakadoba visit the market regularly.

The mouza Chakadoba is situated at Binpur Gram Panchayat. The Binpur Gram Panchayat office is situated at Binpur which is about 4 K.M. from Chakadoba. There are several 'tolas' or 'padas' in mouza Chakadoba, such as Santal pada, Lodha Pada Uperpada etc. They look like very small villages and are inhabited mainly by the tribal people. The mouza Chakadoba has electric connections and the families of the

bargadars also enjoy the facility. The Block Primary Health Centre is located at Binpur which are 6 K.M. away from mouza Chakadoba. The nearest Banks namely, State Bank Of India, United Commercial Bank and Paschim Banga Gramin Bank are situated at Jhargram. People of the Mouza go to the nearest market at Jhargram to meet their requirements.

### **Mouza Chakadoba**

#### **Jhargram Subdivision, Police Station- Binpur, District-Midnapore**

1	Total Population of Mouza	1096
2	Number of Tribals	217
3	Male ( S.T.)	102
4	Female ( S.T.)	115
5	Area of the Mouza in acre	270
6	Land owned by Tribal Bargadars in acre	8.01
7	Barga land under Tribal Bargadars in acre	11.00
8	Number of Tribal Bargadars	22
9	Number of Tribal Recorded Bargadars	22
10	Number of Tribal Unrecorded Bargadars	Nil
11	Number of Landless Agricultural labourers	35
12	Source of Irrigation of the Mouza	Tank Water
13	Number of Tribal Raiyats	37
14	Crop Pattern	Aush/Aman Paddy
15	Number of Raiyats having land less than one acre	30
16	Number of Raiyats having land 1 to 2 acre	07
17	Number of Raiyats having land above 2 acres	Nil

## **Demographic profile**

The mouza is spread over 270 acres of land. Total population of the mouza is above one thousand (1096 exactly at the time of the survey). Out of 1096, tribal population was 217. Among the tribal population the Santals, Bhumijis and the Lodhas constitute the majority in the mouza. However, the bargadars surveyed in the mouza are all Santals because the Lodhas and the Bhumijis hardly cultivate their lands and fulfil bargadari obligations. The number of S.T. male and female people out of 217, was 115 and 102 respectively. There are 37 tribal raiyats and 22 tribal bargadars. Names of all tribal bargadars have been recorded in the Revenue records of the Government in 1982 during the Operation Barga. There are 35 landless agricultural labourers in the mouza under survey. Out of 37 tribal raiyats, 30 raiyats possess land less than one acre and 07 raiyats hold land from 1 to 2 acres. There is one Primary School in the village Chakadoba. Almost all the boys and girls of the village go to the school. The nearest High/ Higher Secondary school is at Binpur. The economy of the village depends mainly on agriculture. There is a traditional village council in the village. The tribal females participate in the field work also.

The following response sheet of the Bargadars from the three Mouzas will show the economic condition of the Bargadars as well as their opinions regarding various aspects of their agrarian economy.

<b>Serial nos.</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Bankura</b>	<b>Birbhum</b>	<b>Midnapore</b>
1	Name of the Mouza	Mouza Chandabila	Mouza Banagram	Mouza Chakadoba
2	Mouza Area (in acre)	320	341.29	270
3	No. of tribal recorded /unrecorded Bargadars	Recorded- 19 Unrecorded-0	Recorded- 20 Unrecorded-1	Recorded- 22 Unrecorded-0
4	Average barga land of the bargadars	0.4-0.6 acre .24-0.27 acre 0.32-0.41 acre	0.19-0.28 acre 0.39- 0.95 acre 1.16-3 acre	0.09-0.19 acre 0.25-0.49 acre 0.53-0.63 acre 1.42-3.06 acre
5	Amount of Share bargadars give to landholders	75%	75%	75%
6	Agricultural inputs provided by landholders	No	No	No
7	Financial inputs govt organizations	Yes	Yes	Yes
8	Whether landholders give them the receipt for their produce	No	No	No
9	If Irrigation facility available mention the source	Yes, both canal water & bundh water	Only canal water	Only tank water
10	No. of Bargadars holding land less than 1acre barga land	19	07	19
11	No. of Bargadars holding land between 1 and 2 acres	00	05	2
12	No. of Bargadars holding land more than 2 acres	00	09	1
13	If production increased after barga recording	Yes	Yes	Yes
14	If income of the bargadars increased after recording	Yes	Yes	Yes
15	If tribal bargadars hire labour	No	Yes some of them hire labourers	No
16.	If tribal bargadars possess any knowledge about W.B.L.R.A.	Only 6 bargadars have knowledge	Only 9 bargadars have knowledge	Only 8 bargadars have knowledge
17	Financial aid from Govt.	4 bargadars	12 bargadars	3 bargadars
18	Any other source of income	12 work as wage labour	4 has some of buisness	14 work as wage labourers

The field survey investigations have showed that in all the mouzas the bargadars have been benefited materially as their income from land has increased owing to the increase in the share of the produce and also from an increase in productivity. The organized tenants, inspite of having an inferior socio-economic status, are able to exercise their crop sharing rights more effectively. Bargadars are getting 75% share of the crop as landowners are not supplying inputs for cultivation. The income level of the bargadars was directly proportional to their land size. Most of the landless agricultural labourers and a good number of marginal farmers are still below the poverty line. The bargadars cultivating land above one acre are lying in the higher income level. On the question of the likely impact of the Operation Barga (hereafter OB) programme on agricultural production the response of the recorded tenants was positive. The study was made in respect of 19, 21 and 22 sample bargadar households in Chandabila Mouza, Banagram Mouza and Chakadoba mouza respectively. In Chandabila mouza 15 households out of 19 have reported an increase in yield after recording their names. Similarly, in Banagram and Chakadoba mouzas 17 and 16 households respectively have reported increase in production after recording their names. On the question of financial stability, 15 reported an increase, 2 reported decrease and 2 reported no change in Chandabila mouza. In other two mouzas, Banagram and Chakadoba most of the bargadars reported about increase in income except that only 3 bargadars in Banagram and 5 bargadars in Chakadoba Mouza reported about no change in their income after recording. The study has revealed some other impacts also. Only six bargadar households were aware of the provision of law regarding bargadar's right on land out of 19 in Chandabila mouza whereas in Banagram and Chakadoba mouzas the number of bargadars having knowledge about bargadar's right on land are 9 and 8 respectively. It is true that a good number of

bargadars have been persuaded by the Panchayat members or government officials to record their names as bargadars as their own knowledge about the rights and obligations of bargadars were poor. The study also shows that as far as receiving financial help from government organizations was concerned the bargadars were yet to come forward in big numbers. For example in Chandabila mouza only 4 out of 19 bargadars have been able to receive financial help from government organizations. Their numbers in Banagram and Chakadoba mouzas for the same are 12 and 3 respectively. This shows that the sharecroppers, on the whole, were still hesitant to take financial help from government though evidences of their ability to mobilize resources of input (like bullocks, manure, high yielding seeds etc.) for cultivation are pretty high. Before 1980 the annual yield of paddy per katha was about 20 kg. But the production of paddy per katha rose to 100 kg. from 1985 including Boro paddy. So production of crop as well as income from cultivation has increased significantly. In most cases the tribal bargadars managed their farm works with the help of family members. Only when there was a shortage of manpower or when a job was to be accomplished within a certain period of time they appointed wage labourers. In Chandabila and Chakadoba mouzas while no bargadar reported hiring of wage labour for cultivation in Banagram two bargadars with more than two acres of barga land take occasional help of extra labour for cultivation. Further, in all the mouzas bargadars have been found to utilize water resources to irrigate their lands either from tanks, canals and bunds whatever is available in their areas. As the fields are sloping and undulating in character narrow dykes (aals) are constructed at the lower edge of the field so that water can be stored and at the same time its circulation to adjacent fields can be controlled. The female members of the Bargadar families have been found to play vital role during cultivation.

## **Some general observation on the tribals of the Mouzas surveyed**

### **a. Change in Agricultural Technologies**

The tribal bargadars of the surveyed mouzas have adopted certain improved agricultural technologies like hybrid high-yield seed varieties, synthetic fertilizers and insecticides. But little change has taken place in the use of agricultural implements. Only mention-worthy additions in the recent times are; a type of curved and twisted ploughshare, which can displace more soil than the conventional, elongated ones. The other item is an all-iron bullock cartwheel, which requires little maintenance. All these have taken place after the area has become irrigated. Another important change that has surfaced of late in the economic life of the bargadars in the mouzas surveyed is that earlier they had to migrate to some other place for jobs as the food stuff and vegetables that they produced were not sufficient to see them through the whole year. Now the requirement has ceased to exist as they can grow enough food stuff in their own land. However, few persons still indulge in migration somewhere else for earning cash.

Tribal bargadars, particularly in Bankura and Birbhum districts nowadays use high-productivity seeds (such as IR-8, Ratna etc.) instead of the traditional ones. Also the practice of cultivating vegetables in the fields during winter has become popular nowadays. In Chakadoba Mouza in Midnapore this practice of cultivating vegetables is pretty manifest. In tribal households vegetables are also grown at the backyard of houses often comprising one or two bighas of land. The kinds of crops cultivated have also changed. Though rice is still the staple, guhum or wheat, jao or barley, beans, and tobacco are being increasingly cultivated nowadays. The cultivation of traditional crops, such as the jungle millets called iri and gundli, has been abandoned. Vegetables like potatoes and tomatoes are also cultivated. The customary cow-dung manure is

being supplemented, in some cases, by chemical manure like urea and other fertilizers available in the market.

### **b. Condition of Agricultural Labourers**

Most of the tribal bargadars under-study act as agricultural labourers or casual labourers in the off season. Naturally there are hungry mouths to be fed during the lean season. For cultivation they have to depend on rain. Inadequate money for purchasing better seeds and fertilizers and inadequate knowledge to maintain a happy life are important factors for their low level of living. After recording the names of bargadars in the Record-Of-Rights of the Government, tenurial security has been ensured. Bargadars are getting 75% share of produce. So they develop the barga lands and prepare soil properly before cultivation. The tribal bargadars employ bullocks and buffalows for ploughing. They have developed an artificial system of irrigation through embankments constructed across the Bhutu Bundh (big tank) in the mouza. But they still depend on rainfall for some up-land cultivation. Female workforce is a crucial input in their agricultural operations.

### **c. Crops produced**

They raise maize, millet, pulses, and rice depending upon different kinds of land in different seasons of the year. Tribal bargadars also cultivate cash crops, such as potatoes, ginger, groundnut etc. and vegetables in major portion of the land. They earn their day to day expenditure by selling their cash crops and vegetables in the market. It has enabled them to supplement their expenditure round the year. With regard to cultivation, agricultural methods and implements of tribal bargadars are

similar to the non-tribals of the area. They use cow dung manure and compost for a long time. In addition, the tribal bargadars use chemical fertilizers now. Besides, they sow high yielding variety of seeds in their plain field and they are also using insecticide. Now the tribal bargadars are getting more products from this variety of seed. There is one irrigation canal which supplies water from the Kangsabati Irrigation Project for cultivation during the rainy season and the Rabi season. There is one big tank called 'Bhutu Bundh' in Chandabila. During the rainy season, Water is stored in Bhutu Bundh by constructing high embankment and water is utilised for irrigation purpose for cultivation of Rabi crop/Boro paddy.

After harvesting paddy, the tribal bargadars cultivate mustard and potatoes during Rabi season. During the summer season they also cultivate Boro paddy in some area where water is available for irrigation. These crops are for household consumption as well as for sale. The socio-economic conditions of the tribal bargadars have also undergone changes due to increase in crop production. Increase in income, spread of education, rapid development in transport and communications and other development activities going on in the mouzas have led to bring a great deal of improvement in the life of the bargadars.

#### **d. Market**

Communication plays a vital role in the process of development and modernization. Agriculture and other allied activities are the main source of income of the tribal bargadars under study. Chandabila Mouza is connected with neighbouring town/market centres. They are totally depending on market centres at Bankadaha, Chanchal and Bishnupur for selling their products and obtaining household consumption items. They

carry to the market whatever little they can produce or find in the forest. These commodities are either sold or exchanged against certain other essential commodities such as, salt, tobacco etc. Those who can afford more money buy some luxury items for their houses. They go to market very frequently to sell their product and to purchase their domestic requirements. In the marketing centre, these people come into contact with traders and customers from different places of this region and thereby coming into contact with non-tribal people. The market centre provides them meeting point for economic and cultural exchange with other people. Younger people generally spend their time by watching movies etc. through a television set in the village club at Bakdoba, which was not possible in the past. They were also found to be in possession of modern electronic gadgets like radio, TV, mobile phone etc.

#### **e. Occupational Diversification**

The economy of the tribal bargadars has been undergoing rapid transformation. The relative importance of the traditional occupations like food gathering and hunting has been changed and new ways of obtaining a livelihood has been introduced. As collecting and hunting have decreased in importance, agriculture has gained a place of economic significance. Fishing has not only retained its earlier place in tribal economy, but may even be said to be playing a slightly more important role because of the gradual acceptance by some of the Hindu practice of rearing fish in ponds.

Generally, tribal people spend most of their income on food. Due to increase in income and awareness the tribal bargadars are now diversifying their expenditure pattern into several spheres. They are now spending money for other durable consumer goods and also on education, health care etc. It is also seen that a tendency of savings

has also developed. Some of the bargadars invest a remarkable amount for agricultural purposes to achieve better yield. They are now disinterested to spend their income lavishly for drinking liquor or other non-productive purposes. A tendency to purchase land is seen among the rich bargadars. They also take interest towards rearing of cattle like pigs, goats, hens, etc., as they sometimes fetch them extra income.

Pressure from other forces is also responsible for bringing changes in the economic attitude of the tribal bargadars. Some families of the tribal bargadars are generally large while the income from the household lands is not correspondingly high as total land held by each family of bargadars is not sufficient to maintain the family properly. With the growing up of sons and daughters in the families their needs correspondingly multiply and thus family expenditure shoots up. This situation places the family into some sort of economic crisis and put its members under pressure to seek alternative income. So it is sometimes for the sake of the family that the members indulge in changing their approach of economic activities. They are found to engage themselves as rickshaw puller, business man, service holders, shaw- mill worker, rice mill worker, mason, mason helper, labour in brick field and so on. But seasonal migration in bargadar families for employment purposes is not seen now-a-days.

#### **f. Forest an important source of income**

Forest plays an important role in the economic life of the tribals. Apart from wood tribals also collect other necessary commodities of life from forests. Of all the woods, Sal is widely used by them. Sal logs are used for building houses, and its leaves for making cups and plates. Bamboos and other type of wood are collected for making furniture and other articles, including agricultural implements and weapons. While wood cutting is

essentially a business of males the women participate in gathering and collecting different plants, fruits, roots, leaves of trees, flowers etc. for various purposes. Tribal people are generally in the habit of eating various types of leaves, shoots and roots.

Tribal bargadars along with other S.T. people collect many products from the surrounding forests. Foodstuffs of some sorts are obtained, such as roots, seeds, nuts, fruits, honey, edible leaves, squashes, egg plant, mushrooms, bamboo and palm shoots. Red ants are obtained from their nests high in trees and used to make a tangy relish along with hot red peppers. Large grubs are also eaten. Tamarinds are used to flavour food. They are gathered in large quantities and are sometimes ground into a powder, and used to make *jawa* a sort of soupy preparation made from any grain or starch food. Roots are a particularly substantial source of starch food.

The leaves of a certain vine (*Bauhinia vahlii*) are gathered in very large quantities for use as plates and cups. Wood is chopped and carried to the village for fires, and for making houses, gates, fences, plows, stools, dams, and tool handles. Various creepers are used to make rope; a variety of tall grass furnishes the material for brooms; the sap of sago and sind palms makes an agreeable alcoholic drink; mahua (*Bassia latifolia*) blossoms are gathered to be used as a sweetener and also for the distillation of darango, the principal alcoholic beverage. Cooperation among families is also frequent in relation to these tasks.

## Socio-Political Profile

Serial nos.	Items	Bankura	Birbhum	Midnapore
1	Name of the Mouza	Mouza Chandabila	Mouza Banagram	Mouza Chowpahari Jungle
2	Area of the Mouza in acre	320	341.29	270
2	No. of tribal recorded /unrecorded Bargadars	Recorded- 19 Unrecorded-0	Recorded- 20 Unrecorded-1	Recorded- 22 Unrecorded-0
3	Dispute with landholders	17-said no dispute 2-said some dispute	19-said no dispute 1- said some dispute	22-said no dispute
4	Security of tenure	Yes	Yes	Yes
5	Educational progress	Primary level	Primary level	Primary level
6	Knowledge about WBLR	No	No	No
7	Access to modern electronic gadgets	Very little	Very little	Very little
8	Political participation	Gram Panchayat election	Gram Panchayat election	Gram Panchayat election

## **Bargadars relationship with the Landowners**

In all the surveyed mouzas the relationship between the bargadars and the landowners is reported to have been cordial. When the bargadars were asked if they had to face any ill behaviour from the landowners or if there was any dispute or disagreement with the landowners most of them replied in negative. However the landowners do not give receipt after receiving the share of the crop from bargadars. It has also been learnt from them that they did not receive any inputs for cultivation from them neither in the form of cash as loans for purchasing seeds manure etc., nor in kind like bullocks or buffalows as means for cultivation. However a bargadar in the Chandabila Mouza had admitted that last year there took place a disagreement with his landowner over fixing the place of storing and threshing the crops. While the landowners wanted the harvest to be stored and threshed in their farmyards, the bargadars wanted it otherwise. Since they had to bear the entire cost of production from sowing seeds to harvesting crops they wanted to retain the control of crops as soon as they were harvested. So they remained unrelenting to the demand of the landowners. The issue however was finally settled in favour of the bargadars with the mediation of the head of the Panchayat on the ground that landowners nowadays are no longer staying in the villages. It is important to take note of the fact that selection of place of storage and threshing of the crop of the barga land had been the bone of contention between the land owner and the bargadar. Previously, the land owner used to exercise his domineering power to get the crop stored and threshed in his khamar (farm house). The position has changed after the Operation Barga. The bargadars under study select the place of storage and threshing of the crop of the bargaland at their convenience.

However, the Bargaars Act though was successful in asserting the rights of the bargadars it has failed to break the shackles of the landowners' control and dominance

in rural Bengal. The patron-client dependency often compelled the sharecroppers to perform the tasks or to accept transaction which were formally outside his contract with the landlord. At the village Kamardihi under Chakadoba Mouza in Midnapore, one such obligation was to offer free labour services (beggar) to the landlord 3-4 days in a year, especially during ploughing or harvesting. Another was an unwritten obligation on their part to help with the work in the household of the landlord during marriages, religious and social ceremonies. Furthermore, apart from beggar service, he could be asked to contribute labour at lower wage and gave priority in the allocation of his time to the landlord if the sharecropper was also a part-time agricultural labourer.

Assessment of the programme of Operation Barga will also have to be seen in respect of the change in attitude of the bargadars themselves. Previously, the bargadars were afraid to come forward and get their names recorded, flouting the wishes of their land owners whom they deemed to be their saviour. Instances have come to our notice that many of the bargadars feared that if they got their names recorded, it would be 'Adharma' or un-religious, considering the bond between the bargadar and the 'malik' existing through several generations. A new trend is now discernible that the bargadars are showing preference for formal approach in their contract with raiyats. The bargadars now prefer to come in groups. They are now somehow conscious about their rights, but a bulk of them is still unaware of the legal rights available to them.

## **Security of Tenure**

To provide security of tenure is one of the main objectives of Operation Barga. In 1982 the Panchayat and Govt. Officials took initiative to record the names of the bargadars under study in the Revenue Records of the Government. The study reveals that almost all the bargadars under study feels secure of tenure after recording the names of the bargadars in the Record-Of-Rights of the Government in 1982 during the period of Operation Barga. Before recording, these people used to cultivate lands of landowners and were subjected to eviction by the landowners. They had no security of tenure on the piece of land that they cultivated. Even after cultivating land for 5 to 18 years at a stretch they could not claim to record their names as bargadars in the Revenue Records of the Government. They were always haunted by a sense of insecurity and fell victim to dependency relationship. The land owner used to take advantage of the sense of insecurity of tenure of the bargadar and exercise his social and economic power over them. The land owners used to exploit the unrecorded bargadars both economically and socially. The security of tenure has helped these bargadars to shed their fear psychosis. Tenurial security through recording the name of the bargadar in the Revenue Record and the resultant sense of security that followed has freed the bargadars from the tyrannical clutches of the landowners. The exploitation of bargadars by the landowners has been stopped to a large extent.

## **Attitude towards education and health nourishment**

Generally tribal people are backward in education. The Government has introduced several facilities from the initial stage to the highest level for the educational improvement of the tribal students. It is seen that the tribal bargadars are showing

interest to take the advantages of these facilities. Nowadays, tribals, particularly the Santals, are aware about the utility and relevance of education for their children. In all the mouzas surveyed the bargadars have been found to take interest in imparting education to their children by sending them to school at the age of six years. They hardly make any discrimination between male and female children in this regard. They seem to be also aware of the reservation facility of the Government. They think that if their children are educated they may get the opportunity of employment in Government offices/institutions.

At Chandabila mouza in Bankura district out of 140 people in 19 tribal households, 85 persons are literate. In terms of percentage it comes to 60.71%. The percentage of male literate persons is 66 approximately and that of females is 55 approximately. There are 34 school-going children in 19 Bargadar families, out of 44 minor boys and girls. In 19 bargadar families, there are 10 children below 6 years of age, who do not go to school. Each couple has 2 children on an average. One member of the family of bargadar, Ganesh Mandi is a Government employee. A son of Charan Soren, bargadar has been admitted into a Degree College. One woman member of the family of Durga Soren, bargadar has read upto class-X.

At Chakadoba Mouza in Midnapore district there are in total 165 tribal people in 22 Bargadar families. The number of males and females among them are 68 and 97 respectively. So the number of females is higher than males by 45%. Out of 165 people in 22 households, 127 persons are literate; so the percentage of literate persons is 77 approximately. The percentage of male literate persons is 78 approximately and that of females is 76.3 approximately. There are 46 school-going children in 22 Bargadar families, out of 64 minor boys and girls. In 22 bargadar families, there are 18 children

below 6 years of age, who do not go to school. Each couple has 2.5 children on an average. The average age of marriage of males is 23 and that of females is 19.

At Banagram in Birbhum district out of 136 people in 21 households in Mouza Banagram, 89 persons are literate; so the percentage of literate persons is 65.4% approximately. The percentage of male literate persons is 71.8% approximately and that of females is 58.4% approximately. There are 29 school-going children in 21 Bargadar families, out of 42 minor boys and girls. In 21 bargadar families, there are 13 children below 6 years of age, who do not go to school. Each couple has 2.5 children on an average. The average age of marriage of males is 21 and that of females is 18.

During the survey the present correspondent had noticed significant changes in the Bargadar-families in all the mouzas in respect of literacy, alleviation of poverty, health and hygiene, housing pattern, dress, food-habit etc. It is a good sign that these people have developed consciousness regarding the necessity of clean drinking water and most of them use tube wells for this purpose. In few cases they use wells for drinking water. The general health condition of young generation and their sense of hygiene make an impression that they are far better than the people in the past. The income of the bargadars has increased. They are taking better food. They have overcome the very old problem of malnutrition to a great extent.

The family members of the bargadars are taking care of their hygiene with regard to health and clothes. They do take bath everyday with soaps and clothes are washed on regular basis. They use shampoos and glycerine soaps to protect from dandruff and dry skin ailments especially in winter. They also take care for the health nourishment of their children. It is clear from their participation in Polio eradication programme as well as in other vaccination programme that are available free of cost. Nowadays

tribals depend on modern medicine to cure ailments like fever, cough, headache, etc. They are also going to the hospital and adopting modern medical facilities.

### **Changes in Life Style**

One of the fundamental changes that came about in the families of the tribal bargadars is the gradual elimination of the old life style. Introduction of western way of life has created a demand for consumer goods which were never known to them in the past. The expenditure has increased through creation of such artificial and superficial needs. It also leads to the increase in their family expenditure with regard to their food, dress, ornaments other material possessions.

### **Food-Habit**

Santals of the mouzas surveyed generally have meal thrice a day and the usual menu are plain rice, dal and curry. But during festivals and marriage ceremonies oily/non-vegetarian food is consumed. Nowadays they have undergone a change in their food habit. Tribal bargadars are having meal twice a day. Instead of early morning meal which is left over of night dinner, they are taking breakfast of different varieties, such as tea and snacks, puree, bread, khichri etc. Taking tea is noticed among the tribal bargadars of all the mouzas except some very poor tribal households of Chakadoba mouza in Midnapore district. Even at day time they indulge in taking tea during intervals. Thus, their way of life is undergoing a change. Among non-vegetarian food they prefer to have egg, meat, fish in their dishes.

### **Dress code**

The tribal youths in bargadars' family are today conscious of their appearance. They are spending more money on clothes, jewellery, and cosmetics than their parents. Dress pattern of the family members of the tribal bargadars especially of present generation has changed completely. Only women who belong to old generation are still wearing their traditional dress. The present generation is displaying inclination for colourful clothes which are expensive. A change in hairstyle is also observed among most of the younger generation. They are changing their hairstyle or dress according to current fashion. Among articles of use commonly discernible among the members of the families of the tribal bargadars soap, powder, cosmetics, shoes, chappals are important.

### **House types**

The tribal villagers build their houses mainly of wood, bamboo, and thatch. There is no garden or enclosure around the house. The traditional house is not divided into different rooms. There are two doors to the house, one at the front another at the backside. Rarely one or two windows are found in the traditional house. The present tribal bargadars are going for modern type of houses. The improved economic condition and spread of education is the main reasons for the construction of modern type of houses. Due to lack of windows, the traditional houses are unhygienic and unhealthy and the attitude of them is changing towards new pattern of house.

## **Changes in Material Equipment**

The fast changes are those in their material equipment like lamps, lanterns, matches, battery, torches, shoes, umbrellas, modern aluminium and other utensils, which replaced the earthen and wooden ones. These tribal bargadars today tend to be increasingly sophisticated. These are also one of the reasons for increase in their family expenditure. Some Bargadar families have luxury goods such as radios, music systems, double cots etc. It is also noticed that there are some Bargadar households in Chandabilla using fire-wood, kerosene for cooking purpose. Chair and table are very common in the houses of Chandabilla. In Chandabilla, every household is having bicycles.

## **Religion**

The tribal bargadars of the mouzas under survey have been found to follow the same religious beliefs and practices as practiced by other members in their society. The religious universe of the tribals in the past and to some extent even today has been inhabited by several supernatural powers and beings. The Bongas, Spirits, and different deities occupied an important place in the Santal society and they governed both the material and ethical life of the Santals. These Bongas were believed to have control over the various natural phenomena and calamities. So the tribals always tried to appease them through magical and religious practices. These bongas were often worshipped and propitiated with the sacrifice of animals, offerings of rice beer and the blood of the sacrificed animals. All these were done during different festivals, crisis of life and important economic operation in order to appease the malevolent spirits. The village tutelary spirits of the Santals consisted of Marang Buru, Morenko Turiko, Jaher Era, Gosai Era, Parganas Bonga, and Majhi Haram Bonga.

The pantheon of gods and goddesses of the Santals in particular consists of numerous gods, deities and spirits. Rituals and ceremonies are abundant. Their presiding deity is known as Thakur, the creator of the universe. They are staunch believers in magic, sorcery and witchcraft. Sorcery occupies an important place in their cultural life and they believe in curing many diseases through sorcery. Females are regarded experts in this craft. The Santal religion has undergone considerable changes as a result of persistent cultural contacts with the neighbouring Hindu peasantry. The Santals cremate their dead like the Hindus. As a result of the impact of Hinduism and culture contact with the Hindus the tribes adopted Hindu customs, traditions, beliefs, gods and goddesses, festivals and rituals and new taboos. In the sphere of religion the Hindu goddess Kali has found a place in the Santal pantheon of 'Bongas'

Different Types of Festivals: The Santals are the agricultural tribe. Throughout the year they are engaged in different types of agricultural works for the production of crops. Different festivals associated with agricultural production make their life joyful, romantic and full of energy.

The main community festivals of the Santals are :

- i) Sohrae Sim or harvest festival (December-January)
- ii) Sakrat (January)
- iii) Magsim (January-February)
- iv) Baha (February-March)
- v) Erok – Sim (June-July)
- vi) Mak More (Between January to June, every third or fifth year)
- vii) Iri-Gundli Nawai
- viii) Karam
- iX) Jom Sim

The agricultural economy of the Santals had intimate relationship with their magico-religious beliefs and practices. Every festival has two aspects one magico-religious, which covers the sacrifice and offerings to the deity or the spirit for its appeasement and the other, the recreational part, which provides entertainment and enjoyment including drinking, dancing and singing etc. The greatest influence on the social life of the Santals is exercised by the Bongas which must be propitiated regularly by sacrifice. The sacrifice held to be essential in keeping the Bongas in good humour is a blood offering. The animals usually sacrificed are fowls, pigs, and goats. Fowls are the most common offerings.

The intimate relationship between the Santals and their Bongas is manifested in their ceremonial observances. Ceremonial observances are linked up with different stages of cultivation. Shorae-Sim, the harvest festival, is the largest and merriest festival of the Santals. Sakrat is celebrated by hunting and offering rice –cakes to the ancestral spirits. The Sohrae festival is also known as Bandna Parab. It is celebrated in the month of Pous (December-January) after the winter paddy is harvested but it must be completed before the last day of the month of Pous. Pata festival is like the Chadak festival of the Hindus in which the Hindus worship Mahadeo. But the Santals, according to their tradition, observe this festival .in the month of Baisakh (April-May) when they pay homage to Pata Bongas, i.e. Mahadeo and Parvati.

In their economic relations with non-Santal peoples, the Santal bargadars have adopted the prevalent Bengali years in the measure of time. But in the intra-village socio-political and ceremonial life, they have retained the traditional Santal year based on lunar months, the end of which is marked by Magh Sim. The spring festival of Baha, held in the month of Phalgun (February-March), celebrates the beginning of the Santal new year. On this occasion, young men and women drench each other with water.

### **Changes in Observance of Festivals**

The Santal bargadars in the mouzas surveyed observe these festivals as a mark of respect to nature with whom they share a very deep relationship. Agriculture which sustains their life and culture is considered as a gift of nature and therefore they worship nature before the beginning of every new phase of activities related to agriculture. But with the change in the agricultural life of the Santals there seems to appear corresponding changes in the observations of these festivals as well. Except three main festivals such as Sohrai, Baha and Karam, the rest of the festivals of the Santals nowadays have ceased to exist. Moreover, the ritualistic part of these festivals has nowadays become insignificant. These are observed more as convention rather than paying respect to tradition. Actually to the present generation of Santals these festivals mean license for heavy drinking, merry-making and feasting. They hardly bother for the ritualistic part of the festivals as they consider it a job of the senior members of the village.

### **Sense of Independence in the Individual**

Within the family, the individual is gradually acquiring a sense of independence. This sense of independence in the individual may be related to the growth of the individual ownership of land, and the opening up of new avenues of employment. The custom of members of a household to salute each other every morning when leaving the house is no longer seen. The manner of salutation is also undergoing change. It is regarded as sufficient if a person bends before his father or other superior, instead of kneeling. In marriage, young man and the girl are now given an opportunity of seeing each other

before final decision as to the match is taken by the parents. This change is a further index of the growing importance of the individual.

The tribal bargadars are in the sphere of modern democratic experiments. Regular interactions with administrators, bankers, and other personalities regarding the acceptance of Government loans and periodical elections have made them aware of their political rights, power, alignments and functional roles of the leaders. A change is noticed in their universe of thought and discourse. Political ambition and a sense of self reliance have surfaced in them. As a result, they are taking active role in the statutory Gram Panchayat Elections.

### **Participation in Electoral Politics**

Before independence Santals did not have any taste of electoral politics. After independence ever since India has developed into a stable democracy, election at various levels seem to gather importance. Bidhan Sabha, Lok Sabha, and Panchayat are the three levels of Indian political system based on people's election. Tribals constituting an important section of Indian population have shown their increased level of political consciousness by participating in these elections.

In our study on the nature of political participation of the Santal bargadars in the mouzas surveyed we have seen that the nature of participation of the Santal bargadars in Bidhan Sabha, Lok Sabha, and Panchayat elections was not uniform. Political consciousness and interest usually differ among the members of the Santal society based on the differentiation in their educational level as well as economic status. Political participation depends on several variables like education, occupation, income, sex, age, and religion. Particularly education and income are considered to be the most important ingredient for determining the degree of political participation.

It has been found that in the Lok Sabha and Bidhan Sabha polls higher the level of education of the Santal bargadars the better the level of their participation in political activities including casting of votes. But the situation seems to be different in Panchayat poll. In the Panchayat poll Santal bargadars with moderate level of education exhibit more interest in politics including the use of the ballot box. Further, occupational differentiation among Santal bargadars also affects their political participation. In the surveyed mouzas we have seen Santal bargadars and their family members who were most advanced in education were also the most active participants in politics.

Santal bargadars seem to take more interest in panchayat election rather than the other two levels as they are familiar with the issues with which election at the panchayat level is contested including the candidates who contest in such elections. Since Panchayat elections are held at village level and the contesting candidates normally belong to their communities and stay more or less in the same locality where they live, Santal bargadars are found to take part in these elections more actively than in other levels of elections. Moreover, participation in the politics at the panchayat level give them extra advantages as they can gather both knowledge and experience about various central and state government schemes meant for tribal development. It thus, ensures on the one hand their development as a community and on the other facilitates their assimilation with the neighbouring non-tribal communities. Modern Panchayat, thus, acts, apart from developing a power structure at the grassroots level, as a means to involve greater number of people from below for both setting and executing plans for rural development in the society.

Among tribal bargadars we generally find four categories of voters like apathetics, peripherals/ spectators, auxiliaries and politicians. Apathetics are literally unaware of the political situation around them. They do not even vote or show any interest in

voting. Spectators or peripheral voters may have some interest in politics and some knowledge about it but their participation does not go beyond voting. Auxiliaries, embrace those who vote and engage in one or two activities with medium level interest and information. Their activities include attending political meetings, campaigning in favour of a particular party and also to vote. The final category i.e. politically conscious bargadars are very few in numbers. They either stand themselves as candidates or remain busy in holding public meetings or doing other acts for mobilizing people in favour of a candidate of his party.

“Operating as a catalyst for change is definitely my role,” says Jan Siegmund, CFO of ADP, the US payroll and HR services company. “I think there are two elements: the role I have within this organization is to operationalize ideas and to create accountability so our executives can make progress on what we say we want to do.” Moreover, the pace of change is now so rapid that companies must constantly be rethinking their operating and business models and adapting them to suit an evolving external environment. This means accepting large-scale change as a normal part of doing business, rather than the exception. “Constant reorganization has become our tool to deal with the rapid pace of change,” says Mr. de Tersant. If you are bored from Catalyst: Agents of Change comic, you can try surprise me link at top of page or select another comic like Catalyst: Agents of Change 1 from our huge comic list. Catalyst: Agents of Change 1 released in Viewcomics.me fastest, recommend your friends to read Catalyst: Agents of Change #1 now! Best regards; Viewcomics.me: #1 resource for Catalyst: Agents of Change Scans Online. Catalyst: Agents of Change #1 Comic Relations No related comics available to display. Catalyst: Agents of Change Issue #7 Catalyst: Agents of Change Issue #6 Catalyst: Agents of Change Issue #5 Cataly...