

A Study On Kisan Tribes Of Sundargarh District (With Special Reference To Kutra And Rajgangpur Blocks)

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Abstract: Sundargarh is composite of forty types of tribals living in different corners of the district. The most common tribes are Bhuyan, Gond, Oraon, Munda, Kisan and Khadia. Among all tribes the Kisan are unique in their identity, language, culture and ethnicity. They are originated from the Kurukh (Oraon). During the Mukharjee Settlement the Kundha (Kurukh) are named as Kisan. They are unique in their cultural dance and marriage. The life style of Kisan population in Sundargarh district has been changed with the changing world. The role of globalization, westernization, modernization has great impact on Kisan life style as well as on other tribal of Sundargarh district. The impact of Christianization has brought about change in life style of some of the recognized tribal belong to Sundargarh district.

I. INTRODUCTION

Adivasi is term for a heterogeneous set of ethnic and tribal groups believed to be the aboriginal population of India. The term Adivasi is from the word of Hindi terminology, which means aboriginal tribes of the Indian society. The adivasi are popularly known as tribal. In India adivasi are recognized as Scheduled tribe included in V schedule of the Indian constitution which is eligible for certain affirmative action measures. In India majority of adivasi are living in the states of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Karnataka. The adivasi living in those states are well known as Scheduled tribes that account 83.2% of the total population as per the 2001 census. The scheduled tribe population in urban areas is meager 2.4%.

With regards to the types of tribal populations, there are 827 types of tribal living throughout the nation. Among them, the Kuki tribes are included in various categories in four different states such as Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura. In brief it is to be said there are 699 types of tribal living in the country. The Odisha state is having 62 types of tribes living in different corner of the state. However in Sundargarh district there are 40 types of tribal living and the Kisan tribe is one of them.

The Kisan (adivasi) tribes belong to the member of tribal group community, living in Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and in Odisha. They are known as different

names in different states. In the state of Uttar Pradesh Kisan are Hindu caste and known as Kisan Mahur and Mahato. The Kisan got their name from the Hindi term it means farmer. In Bihar the Kisan are reckoned by the name of Nagasia. Anthropologist viewed that the Kisan are originated from the lineage of Oraon tribal community.

The Kisan adivasi are found in Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and in Odisha. In Jharkhand numbers of Kisan tribes are concentrated in the districts of Ranchi, Gumla, Lohardaga, Latehar, Palamu, Singhbhum, Garhwa, Hazaribag, Dhanbad and in the Santal Paragana areas. Similarly in Odisha the Kisan tribes concentrated in the district of Sundargarh, Sambalpur and in Kuchinda sub-division areas, Deogarh, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj. They live in the forest depending on forest produces and cultivation. They are settled in forest and the cultivation is the primary occupation of Kisan tribe. They know types of forest produces available in the forest. Their language is kurukh and they called themselves Nagbansis, Nagesar and Nagasia.

KISAN TRIBES AND THEIR LOCATION IN SUNDARGARH DISTRICT

The geographical location of the study area is as such, it is situated east side of the Sundargarh district head quarter. It is about 50 kms distance from the Sundargarh Sadar. In the north side of the study area there is a Sankha river, and in east the same river is constructed as Mandira Dam supplying water to

Rourkela Steel Plant. In the south east there is Odisha Cement Limited situated in Rajgangpur. In the same way in south west Kutra Block is located which is connecting state highway. The Kisan tribes (adivasi) in Sundargarh district are primarily found in Rajgangpur, Kutra, Bargaon, Subdega, Birmitrapur and Lathikata Blocks. However to some extent all these blocks are covered by forest natural environment. The following study was conducted in five Kisan communities wherein 95% of tribal belongs to Kisan adivasi and 5% of populations belong to Oraon, Khadia and Munda. The study covered two Gram Panchayats name Gyanpali and Kukuda. The villages are Kukuda, Domposh, Laxmiposh, Bihabandh, and Dhawranda. The Kisan living in following communities are professing two different religions those are Christian, animism/Hindu. Since two religious practices Kisan tribes are living in the study areas there is found little difference in socio-cultural practice.

II. METHODOLOGY APPLIED

The study conducted in the forms of household visit with the filling of interview schedule. The sample size of the study was 100 selected on random sampling methods. Focus Group Discussion and general observation of communities' resources and infrastructure facilities are the next important methodology applied during the study. The target groups were the Kisan tribes and Kisan family.

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

- ✓ To study the socio-economic condition of Kisan tribes.
- ✓ To know the socio-cultural change of Kisan tribes in contemporary situation.
- ✓ To know the marriage system among Kisan tribes of Sundargarh district.
- ✓ To know the festivals observed by Kisan tribes traditionally.

ARRIVAL OF KISAN TRIBES IN GANGPUR PARAGANA (AN OPINION BY PEOPLE)

It is said that the kurukh language is originated from the Dravidian family. According to Dr. Grieson the Oraon kurukh may be connected with Dravidian, karugu, and eagle. In the beginning the kurukh people were living in south of Caspian Ocean. They lived there for long period. During their living period they came across with varieties of obstacles and difficulties may be natural calamities etc which made them force to leave their natives and started migration from one place to another places. The kurukh people divided into two groups and left their inhabitation. One of the groups moved towards east through Afghanistan, Khaibar Ghat and finally entered into the Punjab regions. They lived there for a long generation. The second group entered into Sindhu region through Kabul, Mehergarh of Baluchistan and crossed Balan Ghat. During the period 2500-3500 B.C there was arrival of Aryan into the Indian nation who named Oraon to kurukh people. For a long period the Oraon lived in Sahabad, Bhagalpur and Champaran district of Bihar. Gradually they

started ruling and dominated over Ruidasgad. At the end of Gupta emperor the Cher caste started to capture Ruidasgad forcefully which made compelled to Oraon leave this place. Finally the Oraon entered into the Chutia Nagpur region which is popularly known as Chhota Nagpur. The Chhota Nagpur was ruled and dominated by the out caste (Diku). The Diku also named them Oraon. They lived there for a long generation and gradually they divided themselves into another two groups and moved towards different directions for their survival. One of the groups moved for Baster region started living in Dantewada, Dogli, Bandebijapur and in Chintagarh areas. Similarly another group moved for Gangpur region started living in Jamsara, Joba Ghat, Gaudkogda, Urtum and Barkani areas. After living there for a long period they became from kururkh to Kundha. In the mean time there was a Mukharjee Settlement, this settlement named from Kundha to Kisan particularly living in Gangpur Paragana, Palhora, Rairakhol and Bamunda areas. The same Kisan name is continued till today in Gangpur paragana and in other districts of Odisha.

III. INFRASTRUCTURES AND RESOURCES AVAILABLE

However the study villages are advanced in social, education, economic and political sectors. All villages have been fulfilled basic physical requirements of village communities. The most important facilities of village communities are there is a good mobile communication network. All village communities' people possessed good amount of land resources and community grazing land. The villages have its concrete road facilities, schools, Anganwadi centre, electricity; safe drinking water facilities (tube well). In Bihabandh village there is a college name Gangpur College of Social Work. They visit weekly market nearby the village which is zero to three kms distance from their village communities. There is a river named Sankha few people depend on river by catching fish. The village community centre and religious institute are also available in the study areas. For health check up and treatment they use to go Kutra CHC and to Rajgangpur govt. and private hospital. All village communities are connected with main road. There is also a good transport facility and easy communication.

IV. KISAN ECONOMY

The Kisan tribes prefer to be settled in forest wherein they fulfill their day to day livelihood. The agriculture is a primary occupation of Kisan tribes of Sundargarh district. Availability of irrigation facilities helps them for double crop cultivation. Generally the Kisan tribe in study areas depends on monsoon for Kharip cultivation. Besides agriculture occupation few Kisan population are engaged in government and company job that supplement their standard of life. In agriculture paddy is chief crops cultivated in rainy season. The Kisan population in the study areas still applied the traditional methodology of cultivation. Wooden plough and bullock are the primary agricultural implements. They use kodali, khurpi and sickles for vegetable cultivation. Among the cereals, paddy, rahar,

black gram, red gram, horse gram, oil seeds (til) etc are commonly cultivated by the Kisan tribe. The land is a hereditary right of Kisan. They keep domestic animals cow, goat, pigs, sheep, bullock, buffaloes etc from which they collect dung for agriculture purpose. They eat meat of goat, pig, sheep and hen. They sacrifice goat, hen, and cock etc offer worship during community feast. In the study areas majority of Kisan populations occupied good quality of cultivable land by their ancestors. There is no forest environment in the study areas therefore, the Kisan tribes are lacking of availing forest produces also do not get chance to have hunting wild animals and birds. Kisan also prepare basket, broom, mates and ropes and other handicrafts but due to lack of availability of raw materials unable to make above all things. With regards to their agriculture the land harvest is gradually decreasing due to irregularity of monsoon and depleting of soil fertilities.

V. KISAN HOUSE AND FAMILY

In the study it is found that, the houses of Kisan tribes are made of by stone and clay. 90 % of the Kisan houses are made of by the stone. The stone raw material is available in the localities. Many of them made home by bricks. The husband is the head of family but the decision is taken by both husband and wife in the family. The common family size is five to six members living in same home. The guest hospitality is appreciable. Often Kisan adopt nuclear family having good cooperation among them. All of them extend their hand in agricultural occupation. During agricultural work usually they sing seasonal song and enjoying cultivation work. They have good relation between parent and children. Small children are left at home with care taker or with aged persons while the parents go for agriculture work. They are very good in preparing Handia (rice liquor) and Pokhal (water rice).

VI. LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL DANCE

The Kisan tribes of Sundargarh district speak their own dialect. Their language is originated from the Dravidian family. They speak clearly western Odisha Odia or Sambalpuri and Sundargari language. They are fluency in Hindi dialect. The kisan cultural songs are meaningful related to day to day life of we people. Hence it is enjoyable and interesting. The cultural songs are mixture of Odia language. Like other tribal they have their own style of dance that provides ample pleasure to the audience.

VII. RELIGION AND FESTIVALS

Religion in some form or other has been with man since the times unknown. It is one of those few characteristics and activities of man which are dependent of his animal nature. According to Ogburn it is attitude towards super human powers. Arnold W. Green define religion is a system of belief and symbolic practices and objects governed by faith rather than by knowledge, which relates man to an unseen

supernatural realm beyond the known and beyond the controllable. Believe system of Kisan tribe is very unique. They believe their ancestor and super natural power. They also believe all living and non-living things posses super human power. The Kisan tribes profess two kinds of religion in this locality. They are animism and Hindu and some have converted into Christian religion. Among the animism and Hindu religion they worship gaon khunt (gram devata), sarna puja (plant worship) for good rain and village and crop protection. Among the devata they believe in singbonga, dharti mata, kali mai, brahma devata etc. They offer flower, sun fried rice, turmeric, duba grass, fire, incense stick, etc. They sacrifices goat and cock while they do their sarna puja (plant worship). All villagers contribute something for sarna puja. The same believe is gradually disappeared from the Kisan Christian communities. Some of the belief system has been changed due to impact of Christianity and western education as well as post scientific era.

There are some festivals which are commonly observed by both Hindu and Christian Kisan, they are Phagun puja in which they decorate cattle shed with flower, sacrifice red color cock and invite all daughter in-law to observe festival. All of them eat meat of sacrificed cock. Gumha Puni is another important festival of Kisan tribe where they wash the feet of cattle with sun-fried rice liquor. Pus Puni, it is a festival of thanks giving to God soon after of Pus Puni the marriage process start in Kisan society. Besides these nuakhai, karma, Jethia, sahorai, diwali festival are all observed by the Kisan in this locality.

VIII. MARRIAGE

In India there are two kinds of marriages are generally in vogue. Those are village exogamy and the Gotra exogamy. In the tribal society the boy and the girl marrying must not be from single clan but belong to different clans. At the same time inter-tribe marriage in tribal village is insignificant and negligible. Other hand marriages between cousins are taboo in tribal society preferably in the study areas. According to Hoebel each tribe possesses some distinct culture that makes it off from the other tribes. Henceforth the Kisan tribes arrange marriage within their own tribes' culture and tradition. The marriage system in Kisan tribe goes through different steps such as searching suitable mate (girls) by the boy's parent and guardian, getting consent or agreement from the girl's parent, engagement, barat (limited numbers of member minimum eight to ten members) towards girls house, marriage at boy's house and reception.

The Kisan tribes marry with their own tribe or jati. They do not marry blood relatives and inter-clan marriage is strictly prohibited. In Kisan society the marriage is arrange by the parent. In the beginning father or guardians of boy approach to the father or guardian of girl. The guardians of boys go to the girls' house with a Lathi (bamboo stick) and handia (well prepared rice liquor). On the way if any incident happens or any wild animals such as fox or cat cross the path then they believe that, it is not a good symbol and the purpose will be rejected. The marriage process starts soon after the Pus Puni festival. Before marriage the village guardian with the family

member use to go two to three time the girls house and leave two or three rupees at girls house. In the Kisan tribe they have the system of giving bride price. The bride price is Rs.7.50 only. There is no tradition of going barat, they usually go eight to ten numbers of villagers. They come back with uneven number and become even number while they arrived at bride-groom house. They do not forget to take buffalo horn, because without it marriage and bride cannot be given. The reason behind is in the past bride groom was killed by the wild beast and marriage conducted with the horn as a representative of bride-groom. Henceforth, this tradition is still continuing in the Kisan tribes. During the marriage ceremony a branch of mahua plant is put in the middle as a bride representative and a branch of Bija plant put as a bride-groom representative. Around four corner Sal branches are put as witness of bride and bride-groom. The next day morning the women go to pond and bring water in pot, the same water is poured on bride and bride-groom and marriage start herewith. There is a culture of acceptance of inter-tribe marriage with proper purification. The family members are purified by their raja (local Kisan President) or village Kalo (Kisan pujari). Inter-tribe marriage is a kind of defiling Kisan culture, henceforth there is need of purification. During purification they use white color cock, turmeric, Harida fruits, sun-fried rice, Sal leaf, Bell metal water pot and incense stick. Once purification is over means they becomes the members of Kisan family and they can take part in every social activities of kisan society.

IX. KISAN TRIBES AND CULTURE OF PURIFICATION

Among four tribes (Oraon, Munda, Kisan and Khadia) of Sundargarh district the Kisan tribes has its culture of purification in case of defiling their culture by inter-tribe marriage or marriage with other caste population. The Kisan tribes are endogamous group; arrange marriage within their own tribe. They belief inter-tribe marriage or marriage with other caste population is a kind of defiling culture that is given by their ancestors. Henceforth there is need of purification and preservation of Kisan culture. The purification job is done by the Kisan Kalo (priest) elected or selected unanimously by all Kisan tribes. In case of inter-tribe marriage or marriage with other caste population following are the basic requirements of purification. The requirements are as such: seven pieces of Harida (plant) fruit, sun-fried rice, Sal leaves seven pieces, turmeric powder, Bell metal water pot (Lota) with plain water, seven pieces of leaf plate, one white cock, Gamveri (plant) skin, seven different clans of representative or witness etc.

Following are the procedures of purification

STEP-1 In the beginning seven Sal leaves are kept one after another with coins and it is turned seven times by the Kalo (priest). In every turn, the Kalo asks to seven witnesses whether victim family would be purified or not? The seven witnesses will have the response of yes.

STEP- 2 Secondly the Kalo mixes Gamvari (plant) skin and turmeric powder into the water and spray it at house and on all family members.

STEP-3 the third step is the Kalo keeps seven Sal leaf plate in a line. The Kalo put Harida fruits and sun-fried rice in

all leaf plates and ask to the family members to walk on leaf plate and enter into the house.

STEP-4 the meat of white cock is given only to the seven witnesses and family members including Kalo. The other fellow members present at the purification work are not given meat.

X. BIRTH RITUAL

Doing birth ritual or Chhati means to purify the baby child and accept baby as a Kisan tribe. In the beginning the water kept into the Bell metal water pot or plate. The sun-fried rice is made in the moment in front of all people present there and drops it into the plate water in the name of baby's ancestors. The rice will be dropped in the name of baby and another will be in the name of ancestors. The purpose of doing this is whether they follow to one another or not. If the sun-fried rice follows one another or becomes closure then it is understood that, the relation is true and fact. The birth ritual work is generally conducted by any senior citizen or elderly person belong to same community. In the second stage the white thread is folded seven time and mixed with wet turmeric powder and ties it to baby's waist. Thirdly a few hair of baby is cut and dropped into the plate water. This is the procedures of conducting birth ritual in Kisan tribes. The important thing is the Kisan tribe expect feast at least once only in case of first issue. Generally they do not expect any more feasts in second or third issues.

XI. KISAN POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

Every tribe has its own panchayat or Jait sabha to resolve the community dispute or jait dispute. This has been traditionally continuing in tribal society. The Kisan tribes have their traditional village panchayat who solve the case of extra-marital relation, violation of marriage rule, husband wife dispute, property distribution, theft, adultery etc. The Kisan tribe has its own Kisan sabha or jait sabha. They have their executive body who look after of their tribes within a particular boundary. Especially violation of marriage rules, extra-marital relation, adultery cases are solved by the Kisan jait rajas or president and its committee. All the customary laws of Kisan are obliged by their own tribe populations.

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