

Indigenous knowledge of the other people: A humanitarian approach

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ABSTRACT:

India is a developing country and characterized by multiculturalism. A culture like a book holds certain politico-religious organizations and socio-economic institutions. The social systems beyond the western influence or having own features are traditional. Their Indigenous Knowledge system holistically is too useful for certain Public Service that could not ever be imagined. Here, in this paper, certain case studies are dealt with that are appearing to resolve, national and global problems. Could we imagine?

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEM (IKS) AND FOLK LIFE:

The term indigenous has become highly integrated with the concepts like Sustainable Development and Folk Life. Mostly undocumented, originated from the very reflection of the nature and natural happenings in day-to-day life upon the Folk Mind, shared by a huge bulk of population spread out from forest to village, and of course, the most functional in form for their continuous loss and gain, discovery and rediscovery with time, Indigenous Knowledge traits

could not remain kept apart from the known Modern knowledge traits and are quite able to formulate a new sub-system with some Universal attributes under the Global Knowledge System, mainly for two basic reasons. These are:

1. a lot to be learnt from the traditional societies, the folk communities and the holders of the Little Tradition to make up the side effects, hazards and damage caused by unidirectional and unjustified implementation of modern technologies and modern developmental works; reducing the folk agitations and ensuring share of profit to all;
2. need of mutual understanding between folk and modern societies for establishing a sustainable way of planned development to gain the highest degree of support from all associating parts of the society so as to
 - attain suitable economic growth and growth in both culture and civilization,
 - produce a good quality human resource,
 - and achieve properly organized way of living, avoiding the probabilities of conflicts like between majoritarians and minoritarians or of global-local nexus or even a clash in the frame of ethnicity or religious communalism.

There are many folk societies living on the community basis chiefly within or aside the forest, using the forest products for their daily use, with the sense of a common territory, common dialect, non-subsistent type of religion, traditional health and politico-economic systems of their own, homogeneity, simple way of living, and mechanical solidarity that make them fallen under the category of 'folk'. The main features that create the difference between the folk and the rest are their non-adaptive domains and their high level dependence on nature that plays a great role behind the formation of a system of indigenous knowledge traits in order to maintain their daily life. The closest to the folk society is the peasant society whose basic criterion is the fruitful application of peasantry type of economy where the agricultural produce is not all distributed among the group members or clan or tribe in a village on community basis through barter or reciprocity deeply associated with myth and customs of folk life making it unique in feature, but marketized by means of monetary economy and therefore a country-town nexus has eventually formed there. In past, the villages in India showed strong willpower to remain their solidarity or unity that provided it a specific nature of local-level self-sufficiency which could not be disturbed by any kind of political alteration at the regional or even in a broader perspective.

The folk in their traditional condition may lack the modern amenities simply considered as the various styles of a civilization, but in reality they should contain some kinds of civilizational level by means of cultural traditions and social relationships established with both outside and in inside. Still the folk communities have their own technological apparatus differing strikingly from the modern amenities. The simplicity in their technologies is the prime factor behind considering these societies primitive. These technologies might be so simple, but on the other hand, they are highly effective in protecting the feed back system built up within the relationship

of nature and the folk communities. These technologies thus have played great roles in proper maintenance of their daily life and therefore, very influential in the determination of their cultural identity.

The artifacts they produced with the very help of their traditional technologies from the natural products construct their material part of culture. Using these artifacts, they exploit the nature which creates certain types of division of labor, and in order to maintain the same, they create some rules in the names of folkways, norms, and customs according to their beliefs, values and morals that uniformly regulate their behavior and construct their social aspects (socio-facts). With this aid of traditional artifacts and primitive type of technologies used systematically according to the socio-facts, the members of a folk community would perhaps be able to regulate the nature and natural happenings. In due course of regulating the nature, they develop the magic and when the belief in super-nature comes into, the concept of sacrifice so as to appease a supreme entity in the form of religion, various related customs, cultural performances and specialists automatically appears. That has been the set of magico-religious activities associated with the traditional ways of disease remedy/supporting the mental strength/agricultural or post-agricultural performances or other kinds of traditional economy/ rites de passage and other social ceremonies actually responsible for the gradual development of folk dance, folk songs, folk lore, folk riddles, folk literature, folk rime, folk plays, folk cookery and folk recipes, folk craft, paintings, myths and other related issues like folk notion of time-day-week-season-year, folk architecture, folk play, folk dialect, and so forth. These symbols actually reveal out the World Views of the folk peoples, and open the closed chapters of their cognition.

These all including material culture of a folk community construct the folk culture; again this folk culture associated with the socio-facts plus folk economy, folk politics, folk religion, and folk way of disease treatment figure out the folk-life. Ultimately, parallel with the Global Knowledge System, another system by the knowledge traits of the indigenous communities, Folk Wisdom and non-reflective domains (specially related with socio- and psycho-facts) have been developed at the local level. That system has been found distributed asymmetrically (within the genders, age-groups, labor divisions and social strata). Moreover, this system could be worked out from the tactics used to maintain the daily life properly, and related with the non-subsistent parts, though being highly functional in nature: produced and reproduced, developed and lost with time. This is called as the Indigenous Knowledge System (IKS).

The set of indigenous knowledge traits builds up a system called indigenous knowledge system working as the regulator of folk life. The system would include everything present within a folk life (both functional and related non-functional). So, the system ranges from all the material and the non-material, tangible and intangible, verbal and non-verbal aspects of life among the members of a traditional or better to say, an indigenous community to the domains of folk song, folk proverb, folk etymology and chants, folk music, folk tales, folk literature, folk dance, folk painting, folk sculpture, folk recreation, folk play, folk art and craft, folk cookery, folk settlement patterns, folk architecture, the notion of time, weather forecasting, dialectology of folk speech, superstitions, myths, legends, riddles, folk religion, folk lore, sense of right and wrong (folk ways), norms (regarding kinship relations and rites-de-passage), folk customs (regarding

household affairs, agricultural operations and other social behavior), various types of organization (political, economic, religious, and social), ethno-medicinal practices, folk technology, folk agriculture and other production domains.

Pasayat in 1998 talked about Tribe-Caste Continuum and Folk Cultures by referring tribal and caste communities living in the villages of Sambalpur district of Orissa; he described what Folk Lore is and how it assures an importance position of its within the Folk Life of a Folk Community. The uniqueness and differences of Folk Life with the cultures developed in urban-industrial, rural, peasant, elite and tribal societies have been thoroughly discussed here. This ethnographic work is very importance for the study of IKS of a folk community. Pasayat again cotes the words of Dorson (1972): it is clear that verbal art constitutes only a part of folklore and likewise, folklore constitutes only one segment of folk culture or folk life studies.

Warren (1991) delivered typical definitions of indigenous knowledge. The words used to denote indigenous knowledge are very much overlapping and confusing; since whenever speaking off about the terms like indigenous knowledge (IK), folk knowledge, traditional knowledge, local knowledge, indigenous technical knowledge (ITK), traditional environmental/ ecological knowledge (TEK), People's science or ethnology, they said something of the various closely associated directions through which one could investigate the Symbols and the World View of an indigenous community in favor of protecting their rights, their national level provisions and even international designations [through the terms like Scheduled Categories (S.C. and S.T.) in India and universally accepted 'Indigenous Peoples']. Study of IKS is also important for creating in a

sustainable way of development and it actually helps in preserving the endangered species, ecosystem and bio-diversity of a region.

According to Warren (1991), typical definition of indigenous knowledge is as follows:

Indigenous knowledge (IK) is the local knowledge- knowledge that is unique to a given culture or society. IK contrasts with the international knowledge system generated by universities, research institutions and private farms. It is the basis for local level decision making in agriculture, health care, food preparation, education, natural-resource management and a host of other activities in rural communities (Warren, 1991).

IK refers to the unique, traditional, local knowledge existing within and developed around the specific conditions of women and men indigenous to a particular geographic area.

The words we use to denote indigenous knowledge are not still significant and confusing, since these terms are affected by high risk of inter-subjectivity and often used interchangeably. Whether we speak off the terms like indigenous knowledge (IK), indigenous technical knowledge (ITK), ethnology, local knowledge, folk knowledge, traditional knowledge, traditional environment/ ecological knowledge (TEK), People's science, there are always arguably enough overlap.

Indigenous knowledge is chiefly oral, local, tacit or set of generation wise intelligence reasoning, learnt through repetition, empirical that is experimental rather than theoretical, asymmetrical, part of unreflective many, shared by many and originated from practices in day-to-day life, and communication ways, rather than any particular individual, and hence constantly changing with time, produced and reproduced, discovered and lost (Allen and Harris). R. Ellen and H. Harris in 1996 again stressed on the importance of the Indigenous Environmental Knowledge in protecting the environment, natural resources, bio-diversity and ecological variations of a particular zone inhabited by a single or a number of folk communities connected with one another in various manners; they made a critical assessment of it in the Scientific And Developmental Studies Literature.

IK could be classified under various domains, such as, information, beliefs, practices and technologies, tools, materials, experimentation, biological resources, human resources, social system, education and communication.

DOMAINS OF INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE:

This Indigenous Knowledge System (IKS) not only includes the indigenous technological knowledge traits, but also the set of knowledge traits used to maintain a folk life and that is why, IKS is also termed as Peoples' Knowledge. The folk peoples are closely associated with the

nature and therefore, the Indigenous Knowledge System is also found to be closely attached with the nature; this close attachment gives IKS the name of Indigenous Ecological/Environmental Knowledge System. So, known by various names, IKS is found closely attached with social, cultural, natural and human capitals within the non-reflective population. It could also be classified into various systems of gender, and age-group. Though being functional in nature, IKS is closely associated with various non-functional symbols of human life.

Sengupta in 2003 wrote on perception of folk environment and folk taxonomy in land domain, plant domain, animal domain, color categories, hierarchical classification of folk food items and categories of food taste associated with natural environment. That perception was somewhat a direct interpretation of the folk cognition important for the study of ethno-science, but could not claim to be totally free from the external influence upon the language and some other contrasting modern-urban phenomena as could be found there. Three villages in the industrial enclave of the west Singhbhum district of Jharkhand comprising of two closely related folk communities, namely Santal and Kol were taken for the investigation.

S. Banarjee *et.al.* in 2006 have studied on Indigenous Knowledge Dissemination by means of Farmer-to-Farmer Communication. Dissemination according to them is the last of the six steps of exchange of Indigenous Knowledge through recognition and identification, validation, recording and documentation, storage in retrievable repositories, transfer and dissemination. But for what this literature seems to be the most relevant in this paper is that from here one could get the meaning, proper definitions, characteristics, and foremost the typologies of indigenous knowledge traits distributed into various domains as well as about the role of different types of communication patterns in the very exchange of Indigenous Knowledge traits altogether giving it a Systematic Figurine. The authors further goes into dividing the IKS into various types at the

community level each with some selected features like the area of knowledge, bearers of knowledge and manifestation of knowledge and also showing clear-cut gender based division of labor here.

On the basis of community study, IKS could be divided into various domains like Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Poultry, Ethno-Fishery, Artisan, Disease Treatment Ethno-Medicine and Folk Remedy, Post-Agricultural Practices, Traditional Economic and Political System and associated Technologies, Material Apparatus and related socio-facts, and psycho-facts expressed by means of various symbols.

INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY:

A community being closely associated with forestry and peasantry with a given set of indigenous knowledge traits is treated as an indigenous community. These indigenous communities are once considered as the ethnic minorities staying inside or close to the forest region, more exclusively the scheduled categories like the Scheduled Tribes in India. But now the label of indigenous community or indigenous population is considered in a broader perspective so as to include the whole sector of rural communities, close or remote to the modern access, maintaining the attributes of Folk Life, indigenous technological skills, traditional ways of Environmental Management System, Disaster Management, Weather Forecast, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Poultry, Ethno-Fishery, Disease Treatment and Ethno-Medicine, traditional economic and

political organizations and so on, at least to some extent. Such characteristics might be found beyond any forest-based tribal community and into the circumference of agriculturist tribal communities as well as caste societies and the complex type of agrarian rural society based on peasantry. They might be even connected with the urban-industrial sectors basically through the rural to urban migration, womenfolk and various types of communication by means of kinship, economic and religious ties. So, the IKS has actually a wider periphery but it gradually vanishes along with the increasing distance from the original habitat of the folk community associated with a specific type of ecosystem and bio-diversity.

Shift from one ecosystem to the other has the potentiality to put an impact upon the ways of living. The affected community thus may have to enter into a struggle for its acclimatization in that new environment and to accommodate with the earlier inhibitors, or to use other type of material apparatus than their traditional ones, and acculturate certain other kind of values and norms through the way of culture contact. They may have to select new words and terminologies into their own language which could alter the way of speech, methods for biodiversity management and develop the knowledge system, and technologies involved in production, food and food ways as well as transform their age-old beliefs and ideas, ideology of the life and way of justifying the truth, and even non-subsistent domains like traditional ways of healthcare, interaction of man nature super-nature, economy and polity. Ultimately the effect would be expressed up on both the subsistent and non-subsistent parts of the folk life.

Therefore, IKS could also be found beyond the folk community within which it originates, might be in a diluted form, through the very processes of migration, diffusion or culture contact between culture areas facilitating the process of acculturation of cultural traits. So, now basically the village peoples in a broader sense are collectively included under the category of indigenous community, and when the discussion is going on the issue of protection and violence of the rites of these indigenous communities and their folk life, it is all about the Indigenous Peoples. The terminology 'Indigenous Peoples' is synonymous with the terms like aborigines, aboriginal peoples, native peoples, first peoples, first nations, autochthons, and so on known differently in different parts of the World.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES:

Now the term 'Indigenous Peoples' is being used in a greater sense and that includes the scheduled, the non-scheduled and the excluded tribal communities and any non-tribal community with IKS and sharing the Folk Life; therefore giving an assurance of long-existed close attachment with the locality inhabited. Its periphery has now been expanded from the forest dwelling stalks up to the rural communities overlapped by both folk life and peasantry.

This concept of indigenous peoples is closely associated with the study of poverty, human rights, indigenous rights, land and forest rights, bio-piracy and illegal knowledge transfer, globalization and market system, human resource development and implementation of modernity, setting up of

urban-industrial sectors and economic growth, anti-globalization anti-capitalist movements and need of sustainable development to condemn these agitations and the risks of terrorism and national disintegration by forming a balance between the World Views of traditional and the concepts of modern societies, decision-making system for the Policy Makers in Governance about minority development-poverty eradication-economic growth-community development in terms of health, education and social welfare, and so on.

In the Journal of International Development, Babu, Rajsekaran and Warren, 1991, published an article on how the indigenous peoples possessed certain trends of Natural Resource Management within them, highly integrated with their culture and social processes, thus contributing into the protection of nature and the process of Sustainable Development In Agriculture through application of their effective but alternative technologies in terms of bio-fertilizers, indigenous and natural way to control the pests and so on; and again their negative attitudes for what they should be brought under certain level of control.

Chaudhuri, 2003, emphasized on the need of proper interaction between modern and traditional ways of disease treatment for overall betterment of the health system of the folk communities. The traditional way of disease cure was an important part of their knowledge system. That could be considered rather as a discipline highly involved in the mental construction of the folk peoples. Many of their rituals were again connected to this system and therefore, deterioration or replacement of this traditional treatment process could cause harm to the stability of the indigenous social life.

Md. Ayub Mallick, 2004, in a comparative study among Santal, Kora and Oraon on their socio-economic, political and religious perspectives in the rural West Bengal, emphasized more on the ways of applying development programs up on the tribal scenario; a proper study on their conception about life and life situation [in the context of the problems, the prospects, the ways of mobilization, their needs, poverty, resource and quality of information that they have got from the modern parameters] would be very helpful in understanding the proper way for their empowerment in order to make them agreed for participating in the development programs launched for them with a good quality of sustainability. Therefore, this approach could become effective in tracing out the relationship between Sustainable Development and World View of one or more tribal or folk communities living in rural societies as the indigenous peoples leading their traditional life in peasantry under the increasing impacts of modernity.

There is actually no internationally recognized definition regarding Indigenous Peoples; it is a contemporary terminology used by various internationally recognized institutions like United Nations, International Labor Organization and World Bank. It is highly related with Indigenous Communities, Indigenous Knowledge System as well as Indigenous Rights.

The term 'Indigenous Peoples' could therefore be defined in a very meaningful way and that follows like this:

Indigenous peoples are those cultural groups (and their descendants) having historical continuity (or association) to a region (parts of a region) or formerly or currently inhabit the region either

1. from a time before subsequent colonization
2. or, alongside other cultural groups (during the formation of a Nation-State)
3. or, independently or largely isolated from the influence of the claimed governance by a Nation-State.

Indigenous Peoples are supposed to be differentiated in some degrees from the surrounding populations and dominant culture of the Nation State.

Even if all these criteria are fulfilled, some peoples may either not considered themselves as indigenous or may not be considered as indigenous by governments, organizations or scholars.

INDIGENOUS RIGHTS:

Instead of being no universal scale for measuring indigenesness, the concern about Indigenous Knowledge System and Indigenous Peoples is day by day growing up in India since 1990s at various dimensions, for example, Peoples' Science, Traditional Knowledge System, Indigenous Technological Knowledge, Indigenous Agricultural Knowledge, Ethno-medicine, Folk life, Indigenous Environmental Knowledge and so forth (mainly for reducing the harmful effects caused by pollution, unidirectional and highly exploitative modern technological implementation for the sake of rapid technological development, economic growth, modernization, and market

economy in this era of Globalization. In the Tenth Five Year Planning, emphasis has been given on Sustainable Development.

Moreover, ILO has postulated some indigenous rights on the global basis and not specifically concentrating on a single indigenous community, included all of them under Indigenous Peoples- the broadest category for them. Indigenous Rights construct a wide domain of study and are intimately condensed with Actually, Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous Rights are very intimately related to each other. Indigenous Rights encompass the domains like general policy (1-12), land (13-19), recruitment and conditions of employment(20), vocational training (21-23), handicrafts and rural industries (21-23), social security and health (24-25), Education and means of communication (26-31), contracts and co-operations across borders (32), administration (33), general provisions (34-36)- applicable to all the indigenous communities brought under the common umbrella of Indigenous Peoples [as recommended in ILO International Conventions and Recommendations 1919-1991 Vol. II (1963-1991)International labor Office Geneva]. The indigenous communities or even a community with a IKS may be included within this largest domain of Indigenous Peoples: not for only sustainable development or community development, knowing each other properly or formation of a balance between traditional and modern, but also to stop their complete transformation and protect their potentiality to provide their environmental services (according to the IKS).

In a more formal side, legalistic and academic setting, these rights are also related with other aspects like prevention of bio-piracy, illegal knowledge and technology transfer, and in favor of

sustainable development, basic Human Rights, Women Rights, Rights for the tribal communities, Intellectual Property Rights as well as suitable management of the various capitals likewise, nature capital, social capital, culture capital, human capital, intellectual capital, instructional capital, and knowledge capital (in the forms of knowledge management, human resource management, natural resource management and so on).

So, the concept of Indigenous Peoples therefore includes the aspects like folk life, indigenous communities, IKS, human rights, collective rites of an indigenous community, indigenous rights, sustainable development, proper communication with uncontacted peoples, knowledge awareness, culture survival of the indigenous communities, existence of the ethnic minorities, their historical attachment with the specific geography they inhabit, as well as the processes like Colonialism, Neo-Colonialism and Globalization. Bartholomew Dean and Jerome Levi, 2003, put emphasis on cultural and linguistic preservation, land rights, ownership and exploitation of natural resources, political determination and autonomy, environmental degradation and incursion, as well as from the side of the humanists living in the modern society, poverty, health and discrimination or inequality. These same issues could be different from the view point of indigenous societies and the non-indigenous view-point. It has also to be worked out that why and how the situation of indigenous peoples is improving in some places of the world, while their human rights continue to be abused in others.

RAJBANSHI SOCIAL FOLD OF NORTH NENGAL:

Here the discussion is specially pointed towards the Rajbanshi Social Fold staying in the plains of North Bengal under the state West Bengal within the federal structure of India (Rajbanshis are also found in the adjoining territories of Bangladesh, Assam, Bihar and Nepal). This has to be seen that whether a complex social fold like the Rajbanshis here from their historical perspective could be termed as indigenous peoples!

Actually, the first work on Rajbanshis was done by Sanyal, 1965, who wrote on the Rajbanshi community of North Bengal, with its own cultural heritage and their origin and important position even at the Indian context. According to him, these peoples were basically indigenous in nature, but involved in peasantry and associated with various agriculture related rituals, often acted as permanent agriculturists, established marital relationships with other sub-ordinates, underwent through the processes like Vaishnavization and Kshatriyaization, highly affected by Nathism, modified their traditional folk rituals so as to incorporate them into the Hindu fold, created the category of Kamrupi Brahmans, and transformation of the pro-Paundra Kshattriyas Rajbanshis up to the level of pro-Indian Koch-Rajbanshi community against all the Bhutanese interference in this buffer region. These Koch-Rajbanshis soon became the most dominating caste group with their relations with both other tribal and non-tribal ethnic communities during the entire Mogul Regime in Bengal up to the end of the British rule. Still these peoples maintain their folk life and possess their own values, norms, customs, symbols, and exclusive way of exerting expressions. These things would surely be helpful in determining their attachment with

the land with a definite historicity. The author also provided handful of information on material culture, house type, folk songs, rite-de-passage, types of marriage as well as riddles found among the Rajbanshis. On the other hand, S.R. Mondal, 2006, discussed about the huge cultural diversity leading to a multicultural situation in North Bengal; this situation has been typically formed by the involvement of various ethnic communities consisting of tribal and non-tribal small and large indigenous and non-indigenous categories distributed throughout the diversified landscape; the diversity in the ecosystems of North Bengal varying from region to region never let them to adopt the same occupation and therefore they have to chose different lines in order to satisfy their energy requirements. They might be from the banner of the Nepali ethnic communities or the fold constructed by the multilingual Adivasi tribal groups or the caste groups belonging to the Bengalis allied with the Rajbanshi social fold connected with other small tribal sub-ordinates like Mech, Bodo, Rabha, Toto, Dhimal and so many. These communities living in villages and involved in peasantry or other non-subsistence type of economy in their traditional life have certainly become possessor of some kind of IKS. These IKS are the means of their livelihood and at the same time the important assets of the whole population of this North Bengal.

In case of the Rajbanshi, it could be said that this extra-caste and extra-tribe ethnic category should have once an enriched IKS, but now loosing very rapidly. These peoples on the track of modernization are more akin to form a huge social fold within the multicultural construction of North Bengal. Their IKS should therefore vary in different regions as being subjected to external influences mainly coming through material apparatus as well as to the various non-adaptive

domains like size of the population, religion, traditional politico-economic and educational organizations, health system, ecosystem and bio-diversity.

So, the Indigenous Knowledge System of the Rajbanshis could therefore be taken to quarry the extent to which their Social Fold remains indigenous, needs protection from the side of indigenous rights, is close to land-nature-natural happenings and could therefore be fallen under the category of Indigenous Peoples. It is a fact that Rajbanshis of North Bengal are continuously facing off various types of challenges against their sustenance, preservation of the cultural identity, the traditional way of living, and protection of their self-dignity. The pressure is creating upon both their traditional technologies and IKS as well as the non-adaptive part of the folk life again associated with IKS. So, there is a challenge of losing the IKS by new types of material apparatus (civilizational tool kits) and transformation of the non-adaptive domain that is the culture. The non-reflective domains involve traditional religious organization, health system, politico-economic system, educational system, values, norms, customs, socio-cultural performances that could only be replaced but not altered whereas the functional aspects includes traditional technologies, traditional way of disaster management, bio-diversity management, ethno-medicine plantation, agriculture, animal husbandry and poultry, ethno-fishery, ethno-toxicology, fuel collection, house construction, fodder preparation, water use, soil use, forest use, control and use of fire, storage, folk cookery, food preservation, folk craft, production and use of cloth and ornamentation, production and use of crop, fiber, alcohol and fruits; use of betel leaf and betel nut with lime and tobacco; lime production, application of lime in fishery, construction, remedy and food; honey collection, floriculture, fruit and vegetable production, sericulture,

smoking and drug addiction, pottery and utensil, production and use of color, production of garments, handlooms, carpentry, collection of raw materials, material culture and the dialect.

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEM OF THE RAJBANSHIS & RELATED NON-ADAPTIVE DOMAINS:

This IKS of the Rajbanshis (and other tribal communities of North Bengal and the entire Indian North East) have to be thoroughly studied

for conservation of bio-diversity and the natural resources;

to revive the way of utilization of natural resources in feed-back manner in agriculture, pre and post-agricultural works (from seed preparation to harvesting and storage, including various aspects like soil stratification, land categorization, weather forecasting and notion of time, day, week, month, season and year), ethno-fishery, poultry and animal husbandry, fuel collection, wood and bamboo collection, craft making, cloth production and dying, food production and food processing, ethno-medicine, ethno-toxicology, therapeutic measures, food-habit, nutrition;

in order to understand the way of use and management of natural resources and protection of the environment in nature's own way as done by the folk peoples;

for preservation and continuation of related non-adaptive domains at least the religious practices and other social performances and related folk culture, the craft-making heritage and traditional technological implementation associated with the traditional material culture;

for protection of folk wisdom associated with the traditional pattern of polity and economy (another non-adaptive domain);

for preservation of another non-adaptive domain of traditional health system and protection of mental strength (at least the effective parts) in the forms of traditional concepts about health and nutrition, food habit, and ethno-medicines;

and lastly, to form proper balance of these three non-adaptive domains with the modern impetus; their total replacement by the new be never possible, and if at least on the hypothetical ground so, that would be simply the development without any assurance of sustenance.

So, study of IKS tends to be so important.

The most influential non-functional domains associated with IKS are as follows:

the traditional ways of disease treatment

(concepts about reproductive health, pregnancy and child birth, related beliefs and performances in terms of rites-de-passage and religious festivals)

the magico-religious performances

(related with agriculture and other modes of production, post harvest measures and disease treatment),

the traditional economy with the following issues

- role of cash and kind, barter and reciprocity;
- division of labor on the basis of gender, age, kinship, lineage, and neighborhood;
- exchange of service;
- large scale patronage and concept of property, descent of property;
- role of myths, customs, values and norms in different stages of non-subsistent economy;

the traditional power system

(power sharing at the levels of family, lineage, caste, ethnicity, neighborhood, hamlet, village, gender, age, dominance, protective measures according to the constitution, caste association, minority association, religious institution, class, political party, lobbying),

and the traditional educational and health system.

So, study of the non-functional domains also appears to be so important in this context.

And therefore holistically, IKS and the related non-functional domains directly indicate to the different dimensions of the folk life of a community (Rajbanshi here) and ensure whether that community is culturally indigenous, require any kind of protective measures in the name of indigenous rights so as to preserve its own dignity, cultural identity, traditional way of living,

folk wisdom and traditional rights to the nature and hence could be included within the category of indigenous peoples or not!

Further, IKS and the related non-functional domains could collectively play important role in controlling pollution and other kinds of hazards due to one-sided implementation of modernity, and disaster, both natural and man-made, at a region with a particular ecology affected by a set of inputs from the outside modern society; the material apparatus of the mainstream society could here control the movement of the vehicle of folk culture causing personality divergence and even lead up to class formation.

Here within the Rajbanshi social fold, IKS is found functional but highly related to the relatively non-functional domains like religion (creating a culture lag due to formation of a disequilibrium between rapidly modifying material aspects and the traditional values) and caste system (provided with status mobility, structural changes, constitutional and legal provisions, human rights, caste-class nexus, caste-class-power nexus, public-private nexus). Other less-important non-functional domains are intrinsically related with the traditional politico-economic aspects and health cure system (now in the process of replacement by modern machinery).

The caste system has indigenously developed across the Indian sub-continent and becomes associated with the religious beliefs and the social practices among the Hindus sufficient to give it a hierarchical structure, practically or ideologically, as well as among the non-Hindus in the form of more or less ascribed economic categories related with agriculture without any religious provisions. The caste system itself is related with Indigenous Knowledge System providing a

patterned division of labor needed for the societies with only agriculture and no trade at large scale, until it has been misused and become exploitative in nature. The caste system becomes either absent or quite invalid when the peoples in a rural society shed off their traditional values and knowledge system, change their traditional close-ended economy, become extremely urban, heterogeneous, individualistic, atomistic, dependent highly up on technological progress and do not bother much about the religious system. This type of social process on hypothetical ground would lead to an absolute social transformation and complete loss of traditional values, culture, norms, customs, identity and cause crisis to the culture survival, sustainability and civilization and at the real basis, could result into high level conflict and complete destruction that have not yet happened in case of the Rajbanshis.

Implementation of modern technologies in peasantry has reasoned into Green Revolution, the formation of big farmlands and entrepreneurship; proposed in favor of introduction of equity in agriculture sector and also inside the systems of storage, processing, and marketization; developed landlord-leader nexus on a semi-feudalistic background supported by bureaucracy, caste politics, caste dominance and caste association in democratic India; again declined the caste dominance by forming dominant class there; and ultimately, new ways of extended patronage. But these things are not relevant in case of present day Rajbanshis of North Bengal as compared to the rest part of India. Here, some reverse approaches have also been frequently noticed, such as,

- Opposition against feudalistic measures, capitalistic developments, big-scale farming and mono-dimensional developmental programs adversely affecting nature and nature-oriented folk life;
- Protest by the peasants, peasant agitation, large-scale peasant movement on the ground of class struggle, caste and ethnicity, religious identity, historicity, status mobility, language, protected area, autonomy, and separate statehood;
- Improvement in transportation and communication plus power sector and electrification; emergence of self-help group; formation of referral health system and educational system (including basic, adult, skill-oriented and non-conventional);
- Increasing impact of modernity, demand for better livelihood, increase in educational level and population growth, demand for job against unemployment, out-migration, emergence of a privileged middle class, liberalization, demand for alternative job opportunities and income source;
- For the sake of forming a world wide market of the agro-based products of North Bengal like flowers, vegetables, honey, silk, spices, fruits, liquor, medicinal plants, cash crops, food grains, rubber, tobacco, tea, bamboo, jute, aromatic substances, fish, meat, milk and other things produced by the common peoples; approach has been taken in favor of Globalization. This could also set job opportunities in new plantations, storage-systems, export companies, processing factories [small scale to multinational, public to private, self-help group and co-operatives to large-scale], transportation, construction, real estate, special economic zone, infrastructure development, and technical skills. But the disparity in the profit level of the capitalist owner and the income level of the producer of the raw

material; and secondly, the unorganized condition of the labors, their temporary recruitments at low price and violation of labor laws are the place where the government has made the compromise. But, formation of a fixed market, improvement in the standard of living of the producer as compared with the former condition when there was no fixed price, no proper marketization system, and no proper system within the state machinery more depending upon subsidy and less upon the profit acquisition are the positive sides here.

This feature of subsequent gain and loss at the same occasion and the risk of transformation and hence loosing the cultural and ethnic identities have promoted some side effects within the agriculturist communities and village peoples of West Bengal and Rajbanshi Social Fold could not remain detached from this. Therefore there always retains a scope for ethnic movement in the name of identity crisis, for caste politics, for class movement. A caste group or several caste groups are said to be discriminated within a close ended hierarchical system and encompassing major section of the poor could unite to form a vote bank so as to acquire their hold in the power sector. Demanding for a protected land, tribal area, scheduled area, separate statehood, autonomy, self-determination in the name of ethno-linguistic and cultural historical particularities could be the excuse for supply of terrorism, anti-state activities, any political gain or destabilizing the region against national security and national integrity; and also within the battle of globalization and localization between the lobbies. These things could promote the platform for the very emergence of religious sentiments in a secular country or even a kind of ultra-left activity. In a democratic country like India where development is a timely approach and still most of the people residing in the countryside could not fully cope up with this and living

with their traditional way of living. These people would be extremely marginalized, and a kind of demand for sustainability in development program might emerge there.

That is their non-reflective domain that still sustained their culture identity. There has thus formed a cultural lag and now the non-reflective domains of their traditional economy, polity, education and health system have got the treatment of replacement through social transformation. The cultural identity and ethnicity have been seriously challenged therefore. But, increasing response to the protection of IKS world wide has also aware the Rajbanshis of their applicability in development, assured them of using them in fulfilling their demand or at least bargain with the authority and even caused the Global Machinery to take care off them at least to some extent before making their profit.

TRADITIONAL AGRICULTURAL KNOWLEDGE SYSTEM OF THE RAJBANSHIS:

There has been brought a lot of changes among the Rajbanshi Social fold of North Bengal in the recent years. They generally criticize the increased population pressure for this altered situation. On one hand the improved health condition, vaccination programs, modern ways of disease treatment are highly responsible for this cause; and on the other side, innovation of Bengalis from the side of Bangladesh during partition of India in 1947 A.D. when the Sub-Continent got its independence from the British rule and again in 1971 A.D. during the independence of

Bangladesh from Pakistan. These Bengalis were basically agriculturists and associated with peasantry. The increased culture contacts and acculturation, population pressure from both inside and outside, rapid change in the usual balance of the resource and demand, long going peasant movement all over West Bengal, land distribution program and abolition of traditional jotdati system (one type of feudatory agrarian system headed by patrilineal agriculturist joint families under which all other peoples basically worked as laborers), policy of decentralizing the political power through modernized democratic elective village governing system, necessity to grow more amount of crop are actually responsible to diffraction from the traditional agricultural knowledge system of the folk based Rajbanshi social fold.

At a time, the Rajbanshi women wore only a cloth rolling round their body very similar to the Dokna of the Mech females indigenous tribe of North Bengal. The males used to wear a piece of cloth with no garments on the upper body portion. At that time, their food habit was also quite different from today's context. They did not invest any excess energy to the system of agriculture. The low population rate and single dependence up on traditional way of disease treatment allowed that type of traditional agriculture highly based on the bio-diversity and the local eco-systems rather than on the application of chemical fertilizers, irrigation and pesticides. Their traditional pattern of agriculture was thus very health conscious and nature-friendly and therefore they did not allow any type of non-bio-degradable substances or toxic elements to enter into their food web and hamper the eco-system and bio-geo cycles. That is strange to imagine that how these peoples without any single trace of knowledge regarding Western Tradition became so much wise of bio-diversity, ecology and environment management on their own oral indigenous roadway with the usual tendency of discovery and rediscovery of the knowledge

traits as well as dependence over the non-subsistent aspects like religion and other sacred ceremonies that these Rajbanshis still preferred to maintain with full concentration and confidence.

Rajbanshis used to cultivate paddy and jute. The paddy strain they preferred the most was Kukra or Kukurjali, besides black Nunia, Tulaipanji, etc. They usually cultivated it in the season of monsoon and cut it in the season of Hemanta- a typical season between spring and winter when the dews started falling on earth. The Kukurjali was very sacred to them and they generally served meal with the rice from this paddy on ceremonial occasions like rite-de-passage, religious festivals and agricultural ceremonies. Usually they ate boiled Kamon or Kaon grown reluctantly in the natural environment. Both Kaon and traditional varieties of rice were replaced by the high yielding hybrid rice varieties and other types of vegetables. Rice was consumed in various ways, such as, boiled rice with salt, rice with pulses, vegetables and other non-vegetable items. They stored the rice in dry preserved condition. They first wet the rice, then fried it hot, and pressed in Chham (husking machine) manually so that the rice portion came out from the seed coat; the seed coat was used both as manure and fodder and the pressed and processed rice, chura, was served with card which was the most auspicious item for any kind of ceremony. They were not usual with the use of milk, but fond of card, dahi, and unsaturated fat called ghee. So, dahi-chura was one of the most delicious items to them. Later on, they learnt the preparation procedure of puffed rice, muri, on oven from the immigrant Bengali and the other Rajbanshi fellows from Bangladesh well overlapped with one another. They also prepared vapa, another exclusive rice item with some specific economic attribute to the Rajbanshi society. Here, they took some dust rice and prepared a soft watery lye of it, then prepared some disk like cakes of it that they cooked

on steam one by one until they become hard, and dried them. For steaming, they took a handi on fire and the steam of the boiling water inside coming out of the single pore over the sieved plate used to close the open neck of the handi actually transformed the rice cakes into delicious vapa prepared on vap or 'the steam'. They took fried uncooked (non-boiled) rice with tea in the early morning in their breakfast before getting involved in their daily work. Sometimes, they cooked the boiled water of the rice, fen or telani, with garlic. They prepared this especially with the new rice attached with the cotyledon as being husked manually in home. Fen was considered to be full of nutrients and it could be fermented to prepare alcoholic substances. Rajbanshi females usually prepared dahi, ghee, chura, muri, salted muri, husked rice, vapa within homestead while the males used to go into the field and participate into high laborious works in the field. Males often shared their work on mutual understanding among the close relatives or neighbors that they also did in case of child care under the aged fellows in the villages when no body was in the house. Males were also involved in preparation of wooden plough from highly non-degradable teak grown up reluctantly in the forest areas of North Bengal. Females often prepared vapa at night and then early in the morning went to the outside for selling them each against two bowls of rice. Teak plough was also an important item for collection of rice in the weakly markets. From the dried straw of the paddy crop, the Rajbanshis prepared sitting blocks, shade their roves and cautions. Rajbanshis were well aware of the distribution of the lower and upper landscapes- they called the latter danga. In winter, after harvesting the paddy crop, they cultivated vegetables in the danga region, whereas the lowland areas were used for production of pulses such as maskalai, thakurkalai and also the rapeseeds like tisi (mustered, spices, makoi or corn and wheat have introduced later). They produced oil from the rapeseeds in their own traditional way. Among the vegetables of winter, they liked Lafa the most. That vegetable, according to their

IKS, had the potentiality to fall down their body temperature. Pelka, the food preparation of Lafa, caused them easily caught by the cold and therefore the dust of the dried winter entered into their nose during thrashing the paddy on floor came out. Sop sop is another one that they eat with pork. They at a time grew aurum in huge quantity in the ditches here and there and often the good varieties like the Mukhi type in their kitchen garden. Bringal, potato, bitter gourd, pumpkin, ginger, turmeric, hemp, chili, cucumber were also grown reluctantly. Jack-fruit, custar apple, guava, lime, banana, papaya, pindali, peach/ black berry, carambola and mango were the two most important fruit items for the Rajbanshis. Actually they never eat the soft, pulpy, juicy and sweet mango, because they considered ripened mango rotten in nature. They were actually fond of the sour taste of lime, tamarind, carambola and green mango with salts. They first rubbed the mango at its tip on the rough bark of the tree to remove the bitterness, halved to remove the seed, and consume it with salt. They also pieced these green mangos and dried them in sunlight of the summer with salt and edible oil in order to preserve them as prickles. They also liked the sticky taste of jack fruit, custar apple, guava, banana, peach/ black berry and betel-nut very well. Banana as a fruit was important in religious ceremonies, but interestingly the banana local variety with seeds, namely daya kela or bichia kela (bichia= seed; kela=banana) was preferred more as the folk peoples believed in their medicinal importance. The use of betel leaves with tobacco items, lime and this nut they have actually learn from the Bangladeshi immigrants; that was also well practiced in the southern districts of North Bengal with more overlapping. They first dried the betel fruits and then collect the dried nut from inside, pieced it into small hard segments and chewed them to suck the sticky taste coming in contact with saliva. The thorn of young Mandar tree emerged on the stout trunk was an alternative of the betel-nut; it had some medicinal values also and therefore when being taken with basal leaves and honey, the face

turned red in all. And when the Mandar tree grew up, its seeds produced the silk cotton. The Mandar or Shimul tree at a time was grown reluctantly along with the teak forest of foot hills of North Bengal. The silk cotton is very good for preparation of cushions and pillow. The Rajbanshis had a least case of diabetes, because they knew the importance of the juice of bitter gourd as well as application of the water with extract of gulancha, a kind of herbaceous plant. They also grew gourd and roof-gourd that they used in preparation of goat meat. The Rajbanshis often owned large-scale poultries of duck; probably that was the effect of Vaishnavism that prevent them from eating hen. In some jungle adjacent areas, they often ate the meat of gray hen. Pork, sheep, and pigeon were also highly favored by them. These items were actually associated with the blood sacrifice in their religious ceremonies, other social festivals and various types of magico-religious performances of the Rajbanshi social fold. They usually did not harm the tortoise varieties, but at a time they used to eat snails and frog. They considered frog as a delicious item, but opined that this food item was not their own and they learnt this from the Bangladeshi immigrants. Snails they cooked with pulses boiled alive and then suck the juicy portion from inside the shell directly to the throat. They believed in its high protein value without any the scientific evidence and strange! They were all correct. They were the Bengalis who at a time avoided the Rajbanshis for this type of food practice and as a result of this; they gradually shed off this food item from their meal list. In pulses, they used to add ghee. They did not use the ghee in cooking the pulse, but added this unsaturated milk product atop the pulse when it was served with their dish. Rajbanshis used to fish from the local rivers and the small streams; they also collected small crabs and prawn with the help of their traditional fishing implements. Important fish varieties were therefore kajari, puti, chala, dhara, gughia, bain (electric eel), chanda, taki, bacha, bata, mourala, nadiali, singi, magur, koi, shol, boal; they let the small fishes

and fishes with egg to free to conserve the species. They did not do any harm to the non edible fish varieties of which many were used to control the mosquito larvae under water. Agriculture in the marshy low land was also helpful in paddy-cum-fishery and many insect larvae present there were highly helpful in pest controlling. Later on, with increased amount of requirement, they have accepted various improved fishing technologies introduced by the immigrants and thereafter started the production in large economic scale in a trained manner at the ponds or for spending their leisure time. Meanwhile, they knew well to preserve the fishes in dried condition and this technique of drying could be used to trace out their connectivity with the East Bengal (Bangladesh), Sunderban and the coastal Bengal as probably once had been established through the ways of river trade. They stored these dried fishes under dry soil; probably they got the knowledge of preservative capacity of the dry soil from the nature as the mouse in the season of Hemanta stored the grains left on the field after the process of harvesting inside their dwelling holes under the dry soil. Vegetable-meat, pulse-ghee, steamed potato, chili, salt and card with rice or kaon are their ideal meal. They did not know about the use of wheat, they prepared bread from Marua, a kind of traditional cereal (millet). Earthen pots were once the usual utensils where food was served. Again, jute is another important cash crop yielded in the lowlands; the jute-fibers were used to prepare mattresses, carpets, rug, seat (dhokra) and so on. The dried sticks were used in preparation of house, boundary, and terrace along with broad leaves, bamboo fencing and wooden beams. Leaves of the jute plants were eaten as curry for their medicinal importance. Long dried grasses were basically used in preparation of brushes to plaster the floor with cow dung. Rice dust lye was used in painting and the rice seed coats mixed with cow dung gave the earthen walls extra strength. From khalisha grass and sital grass Rajbanshis also prepare

mattress. Fibers of jute, flex and tasar silk are important. Jute sticks and paddy straw are served as cattle feed, house construction, sitting blocks and manure.

Cane was an important production to the place with varieties like gour and pundra after which name of indigenous statehoods were given. Basically, houses were made up of bamboo, cane, straw, broad leaves, wood, teak and jute sticks. For protection from the heavy damage due to lashing rains, seldom peoples stayed in the wooden houses constructed on the wooden poles; still now this kind of construction has come to see in various parts of North Bengal. Brick made houses were only possessed by the rich; that kind of people had either huge amount of land or regulate the markets. Such type of peoples had their own army, horses, elephants, and weapons and participated in the battles against the foreign innovators in order to protect their indigenous state. The rich peoples got the money, gold, granary, social status, priorities, labor force, and even the attachment with both Great Traditions of India as well as the very impacts of Westernization. Peoples often buried the gold and other ornaments under the soil due to the fear of dacoits. Still now, from the ponds here and there many idols of cult figure are being recovered. These are clear evidence of once prevailing very good economic condition and prosperity of the local peoples dependent on nature for their livelihood along their enriched IKS. The prosperity actually came from trans-national going through these regions. Even an illiterate Rajbanshi till now could be found good in accountancy.

ON-GOING CHANGES IN THE AGRICULRURE DOMAIN AND ROLE OF IKS:

Application of new varieties and genetically modified items could often exert a negative impact upon protection of the old varieties useful in sustenance of a biodiversity, an ecosystem, human life and the culture. And again, safe, good quality, local, hygienic, resistant, disease free and easily acclimatizing variety may also grab attention of many especially when as a domesticated crop it has been growing naturally, in a complete organic manner and applying no toxic or non bio-degradable substance in the form of manure or pesticide; therefore often involving the IKS of the local indigenous community. This type of process has found in Bidhan Nagar region of Siliguri Sub-division, Darjeeling District of North Bengal; where the multinational food processing company Calipso India Private Limited provides a permanent market for the pineapple and other vegetables to the local peasants- these producers have now a permanent market where they could sell their products at a fixed price, obviously higher than before. But here the level of profit made by this multinational company remains concealed. The factory provides the cultivators organic manure produced from the waste rubbish of pineapple and vegetables. Many peoples get jobs in the factory at various positions and more other in transportation system. No doubt the standard of life has been increased in Bidhan Nagar region, application of harmful chemicals has been reduced in the field, not even any genetically modified variety has been introduced nor the cost of irrigation and electricity needed in the cultivation of dry season paddy have come to be seen there. But replacement of food crops by pineapple and pineapple economy must cause some sort of socio-cultural changes among the Bidhan Nagar peasants most of which are Rajbanshis followed by Bengali castes and caste like Muslims speaking mixture of local Rajbanshi, Maithili and Bengali dialects. Here, the concept of Indigenous Peoples is necessary for the safeguard of the IKS as well as the overall protection of the Indigenous Community that cultivates the pine apples in their land.

In this same Bidhan Nagar region, establishment of small tea gardens growing parallel with the Tea Estates at the end of 1990s was highly opposed by the local peasants. They were afraid of land alienation. That ultimately led to the initiation of ethnic movement in the name of Kamtapur (an indigenous state formed by the Khens throughout North Bengal and not by the Rajbanshis) and with the demand for announcing the spoken dialects of the Rajbanshis together a separate language (language is the basic criterion for state formation in India). Eventually, a new branch of separatist movements for the very formation of a new state was emerged out. That even got a passive support from the other frustrated peasants of Bidhan Nagar (falling under the Phansidewa Legislative Area secured for a reserved MLA). The region is mostly populated by Scheduled Caste Categories including the Rajbanshis and low caste Bengalis (basically falling under the same Kashyap clan and therefore being descendants of Paundra Kshattriyas).

Some religious minorities plus tea garden Adivasi laborers and other Scheduled Tribe categories are also living there along with a fragment of Nepali and Hindi speaking North Indians (chiefly from Bihar). Here, concept of the Indigenous Peoples is needed for protection of the land rights exclusive provisioned for an indigenous tribal community having long time attachment to the land or the region. Here Indigenous Peoples would be applied to overcome the fear of loss of cultural identity, ethnicity, income source, Folk Life and traditional knowledge-belief-faith of livelihood; in order to check any kind of disharmony; establish proper communication with an effective mode of awareness; understand the Folk Mind and make a bridge between contrasting endowments like traditional and modern as well as local and global. As that were successful; many of the Rajbanshis on their own responsibility have initiated tea-plantation on their soil.

Unlike the tea plantation process, in pine-apple cultivation, the risk of land alienation is absent and therefore its impact remains more or less positive among the folk peoples in Bidhan Nagar area. Rajbanshis of Bidhan Nagar have now become quite detached from their traditional life pattern and IKS involved in agriculture and other cultivations and productions associated with non-subsistent domains. They have become habituated with hybrid cultivation with so many side effects causing within the nature and to the consumers. Unidirectional exploitation in the peasantry and implementation of modern technological affiliations have now led to the settlement of cement factories, ply wood factories, saw mill, satellite township, markets, roads, railway tracks, sub-urban areas and markets, dams and canals, truck terminus, storage and petrol pumps, check posts, government departments, health centers, cancer treatment center, Medical College and University, colleges, institutes and schools, religious institutions, nursing homes, housings as well as SEZ (Special Economic Zone) and Real estates throughout the Siliguri Sub-division. The greater Siliguri City has been surrounded by air port, army cantonment, MES and defense. These things are actually promoted here to bring in a drastic transformation in favor of the economic growth and generation of employment and employment chain. But the real thing is that this growth would not be possible without associating the local people, community development, sustainable way of development, proper awareness and communication. Here both the cognition and non-functional domains have to be thoroughly studied. Protection and fruitful application of IKS in a fashion of Global Public Services is highly required. Here, the aspects of indigenous rights and Indigenous Peoples are highly needed in favor of the local peoples, even when they are approaching very fast in the track of modernization, in order to check their

complete transformation and for continuous supply of the benefits of their IKS to the Global Public and environment.

IKS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:

So, the IKS of the Rajbanshi Social Fold (progressing on the track of modernity) is very essential to work out and in this process the non-functional domains could play an important role and ultimately the basic pattern of the folk life would therefore reveal out in front of us. And the most important thing is that only after getting this IKS, we could properly apply the modern knowledge upon the folk life and the nature in which it resides. From proper adjustment between traditional and modern technologies as well as between IKS and advanced knowledge system we could achieve actual way of conserving the bio-diversity, because from this biodiversity the indigenous community maintains its folk life and therefore protects it in its own indigenous feedback management system. To do it appropriately, the community needs a banner like Indigenous Peoples and aid from indigenous rights. Correct adjustment among folk life, proper management programs and indigenous rights could postulate a sustainable development. And this adjustment could only be achieved when there is a definite balance between traditional and modern knowledge systems through proper association of all the capitals from various domains like Knowledge, Nature and Human Resource, culture and society with their non-adaptive part, as well as intellect and instruction. Impetus is also needed from the domain of intellectual property rights and patent laws especially to check bio-piracy and illegal technology and knowledge

capital transfer. Disequilibrium between these capitals, rights and systems could then produce catastrophic results from the very clash between Globalization and anti-Globalization.

CONCLUSION:

The cognate of indigenous knowledge (on trial and error, informal experiment and intimate understanding of nature) is the indigenous knowledge system that includes mode of production, resource management, social system and belief system (religious and magico-religious aspects, believed facts or hypotheses, intangible cultural aspects like values and customs). And an input would rather affect on politico-economic sector more than cultural or religious part acting like a value barrier. The impact would also be fallen on educational and health sectors as well as social system like formation of nuclear family against joint-extended systems, migration from rural to urban and peri-urban areas, formation of rururban sectors, exposer to global media, etc.

From the above discussion, it could be said that Rajbanshis of North Bengal have an enriched IKS, but now rapidly loosing much of their indigenous knowledge traits, especially related to agriculture. They could be acknowledged for their importance towards the world humanity as being the only provider of the damage control mechanism against pollution, loss of bio-diversity, loss of hygiene, uncontrolled utilization and large scale exploitation of natural products, unidirectional process instead of feed-back, damage to the recycling process, increase in the amount of artificial products and genetically modified substances, accumulation of non-degradable substances, hamper to the ecosystem and environment, increasing disparity and inequality, and introduction of the concepts regarding currency, profit and poverty.

There might be handful of modern impetus very essential for a primitive society and at the same time, some sorts of IKS applicable in the mainstream; but for the rest part, a better understanding between traditional and modern is always required through proper way of communication and knowledge awareness program. So, the benefit (if any) Rajbanshis are getting from the process of Globalization or other external inputs is appreciable, but it is also to be taken care of that this interaction would not affect their IKS.

The long on-going attachment to land and the knowledge regarding nature therefore go in favor of the subsequent protection, sustenance as well as improvement of the Rajbanshi Social Fold, but not to their transformation. Rajbanshis are the providers of IKS and could play crucial role in protecting the planet. IKS actually remains no longer less-important than other knowledge systems. Sustainable Development (taking care the concern of all) is always needed, but not at the cost of cultural identity, non-functional heritage, global service of the functional IKS, social disharmony, political disintegration, ethnic violence, or a total transformation for the sake of localization or globalization. In this case, Indigenous rights and the concept of Indigenous Peoples using to bargain with the mainstream or political achievements and conspiracies are highly relevant for the on-going debate between development and sustainable development. The three way approach thereby reveals the close attachment of the Rajbanshis to the land as it has been continuing since long ago. They have actually a complex type of social fold and a rich historicity which are enough to prove their indigenesness. But at the cultural ground, specifically in case of IKS, they have lost much of their traits. So, the concept of Indigenous Peoples becomes again relevant here in order to facilitate their development but not in a way where traditional heritage is going to be collapsed due to total transformation or a chaos could be

emerged out produced in the very process of localization. They should be protected, promoted and developed, but in a way where their Folk Life, Cultural Heritage and IKS should be kept intact, of their own, under their property, but in the very service of the Global Public in a suitable circumference. Most of all the IKS is still very much essential in the present context.

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