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QUESTIONNAIRE**A STUDY ON LAND ACCESS ISSUES AND LIVELIHOODS OF TRIBAL PEOPLE IN THE CONTEXT OF BODOLAND TERRITORIAL REGION OF ASSAM, INDIA****A. PART-I: SAMPLE HOUSEHOLD PROFILE OBTAINED FROM A FIELD SURVEY**

1. Information of the Respondent of Household Head:

- i. Name of Respondent: _____
- ii. Age: _____
- iii. Sex: _____
- iv. Address: _____
- v. Total family members: _____ Male: _____ Female: _____
- vi. Age group of family members:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____

vii. Educational qualification:

Educational Level (Code):	Mention total No.
Drop-out	
Illiterate	
Literate (below primary)	
Primary to High School	
Matriculation and under graduate	
Graduate	
Post-Graduate	
Other (specify)	

2. Basic amenities of tribal livelihood

Ans:

Category	Type of House	Use tick (√) only
House Structure	1. R. C. C.	
	2. Pucca house (brick house)	
	3. Kathca house (tin roof)	
	4. Thatched roof house	
	5. PMAY provided	
Toilet facility	1. Sanitary Latrine	
	2. Mud/Katcha Latrine	
	3. Open latrine	
Source of lighting	1. Electrified (Residential Consumer)	
	2. Not Electrified	
Sources of Drinking Water	1. Pipe water	
	2. Tube-well	
	3. Well	
	4. Pond	
	5. Rivers/Streams	

Availability of Drinking water source	1. Within premises
	2. Near Premises
	3. Far Away
	4. Yes, water purified
Fuel Use for Cooking	1. LPG
	2. Electricity
	3. Kerosene
	4. Firewood
	5. Firewood + LPG

3. Main occupations of household heads for livelihood

Ans:

Main occupation (Activity)	Use tick (✓) only
Cultivation/Agriculture/Horticulture	
Livestock/Animal Husbandry	
Service (Govt. /Semi Govt.)	
Private Service	
Trading & Business/Self Employed	
Forestry	
Carpentry	
Fishing/Fish business	
Weaving	
Handicraft work	
Daily wage labourer	
Other occupation	

4. Annual Income from different sources of livelihood

Ans:

Source of Income (Activity)	(Annually)
Land related activities	
Employment (Govt.)	
Employment (Private)	
Livestock/Animal Husbandry	
Daily wage labourer	
Trading & Business/Self Employed	
Forestry	
Carpentry	
Fishing/Fish business	
Weaving	
Handicraft work	
Other related	

5. Pattern of Expenditure annually

Ans:

Head	Mention amount items of Expenditure
Food	
Housing	
Clothing/Ornaments	
Education	
Health	
Rituals	
Social functions	
Litigation	
Entertainment	

Household durable
Other related

6. The landholdings size of sample household unit
 Ans:
 Landholding Size (in Hectare) Use tick (√) only

Large: >10.00 ha
Medium: >4.00 to <10.00 ha
Semi-Medium: >2.00 to <4.00 ha
Small: >1.00 to <2.00 ha
Marginal: >0.01 to <0.9 ha
Landless/No holding

7. The Below Poverty Line households of tribal
 Ans:

Community	BPL percentage in District				Total BPL	(% of BPL Households
	Kokrajhar	Chirang	Baksa	Udalguri		
Bodo						
Rabha						
Garos						

B. PART-II: THE EXPLORING MEANING OF LAND

1. What is your perception on the land?
 (E.g. - land is everything without land no hell and no heaven)

Ans:

1.1 What connection do you have with your land?

Ans:

1.2 How do you use to protect your land?

Ans:

1.3 How land represents for you?

- Ans:
- i. Significant
 - ii. Insignificant
 - iii. Don't know
 - iv. In confusion

2. How is land divided among the many communities in your village area?

- Ans:
- i. Tribal only
 - ii. Tribal & Non-tribal
 - iii. Tribal & Immigrants

3. What do you receive out from land?

Ans:

Received out from land	Use tick (√) only
Shelter	
Food	
Other	
Don't know	
No comment	
In confusion	

4. What are the different categories of land in your area?

Ans:

C. PART-III: TRIBAL LAND RIGHTS ISSUES AND LAND SECURITY

1. What do you know about the right to land?

Ans:

2. Do you know about Land Patta?

Ans:

- i. Yes
- ii. No
- iii. Don't know
- iv. In confusion
- v. No comment

3. How do you feel about not owning land certificate and land Patta?

Ans:

3.1 What do you believe the main reason for the unclear tribal land titles?

Ans:

Reasons for unclear titles	Use tick (√) only
Presumptive	
Registration not mandatory	
Cost of registering	
Land data	
Poor maintenance	
Records not reflect position	
Manipulation of land records	
Administrative entities	

4. Who owns the land where your family currently resides?

Ans:

Type of land owned	Use tick (√) only
Individual owned by men	
Individual owned by women	
Joint owned by couples	
Land owned by nomination	
Land registration under process	
Owned without <i>Patta</i> and <i>Daag</i>	

5. What is your current land-related issue, such issue connected to land rights and access?

Ans:

Land issue	Use tick (√) only
Fresh encroachment	
Forest land rights issues	
Land ownership	
Land registration	
Landlessness	
Land alienation	
Others	

5.1 Who are the most devastated communities when it comes to land issues?

Ans:

Community	Use tick (✓) only
Tribals	
Non-tribals	

6. What do you know about the Land Tenure Security?

Ans:

6.1 Do you know about what land laws are being implementing in the BTR?

Ans:

Land laws	Use tick (✓) only
Yes	
No	
In confusion	
No Idea	

6.2 What do you think which Bodo Accord is adequately recognised the safeguarding the land rights for the tribal and for all?

Ans:

Bodo Accord	Use tick (✓) only
1 st Accord, 1993 (BAC)	
2 nd Accord, 2003 (BTC)	
3 rd Accord, 2020 (BTR)	
In confusion	
No Idea	
All Accords are Satisfactory	

D. PART-IV: LAND ACCESS AND TRIBAL LAND TIES

1. What is your perspective on land access?

Ans:

2. How are tribals being deprived of the right of access to land of their own?

Ans:

Deprived of access to land	Use tick (✓) only
Use rights	
Control rights	
Transfer rights	
Displacement	
Same or better quality land	
Informal tenure	
Legalisation	
Social inclusion and exclusion	
Land grabbing	
Resistance and resilience	

3. How did you gain access to the whole of your parcel or plot of land?

Ans:

Gain access to land	Use tick (✓) only
Inherited from family	
Through the occupy	
Through purchasing	
Through donation	
Don't know	

4. How do you intend to hold your parcel or plot of land accessible?

Ans:

Intend to hold land	Use tick (√) only
Right to Access	
Control rights	
Use rights	
First occupancy rights	
Management rights	
Right of clearance	
Usufruct	
Waste & abuse	

5. Do you feel you are securing the ability to use and adequate land access?

Ans:

6. What current issues do you consider to be limiting in accessing your own land?

Ans:

Related land access issue	Use tick (√) only
Issue of land ownership	
Land registration issue	
Land boundary issue	
Human & wildlife issue	
Illegal immigration issue	
Forest land and rights issue	
Division of land in protected areas	
Because of ethnic conflict issue	
Land laws and policies issue	

7. Do you think you will be able to access your current land for the next 5 years?

Ans:

- i. Yes
- ii. No
- iii. Don't know

7.1 Reasons or why the present land will not be used over the next 5 years?

Ans:

- i. No land patta/certificate
- ii. Access only for a specified duration
- iii. Land is leasing
- iv. Land rights are not enforced
- v. The government may limit use
- vi. Competition among villagers
- vii. Competition with neighbouring villages
- viii. Infrastructure/road development

8. Is there any forest area near in your village?

Ans:

- i. Yes
- ii. No
- iii. Don't know
- iv. In confusion

9. Do you residing State/Local Govt. forest land area?

Ans:

- i. Yes
- ii. No
- iii. Don't know
- iv. In confusion

9.1 If yes, residing in a forest area, how do you access the forest?

Ans:

- I. Type of forest-
 - i. Private forest area
 - ii. State/Local Govt. forest
 - iii. Don't know
- II. Type of use-
 - i. With permission
 - ii. Without permission
 - iii. Only by the state

9.2 How do you see the forest?

Ans:

- i. As holy/sacred place
- ii. As an economic/livelihood resource
- iii. Both of the above

9.3 What are the main products that you are collect from the forest area?

Ans:

Forest Use for	Use tick (√) only
For sale	
For household consumption	
For other purpose	
Total	
<u>Non-timber forest products:</u>	
Orchids	
Honey	
Rattan	
Leaves for roofs	
Vegetables	
Medicinal plants	
Other	

E. PART-V: LAND, LANDLESS AND LIVELIHOODS OF TRIBAL HOUSEHOLDS

1. How is land essential to your household's livelihood?

Ans:

- i. Significant
- ii. Insignificant
- iii. Don't know
- iv. No Idea

2. For what purposes do you use the land for your livelihood?

Ans:

Essential for	Use tick (√) only
Agriculture purpose only	
Non- Agriculture purpose only	
Agriculture & Non- Agriculture purpose	
Other purposes (e.g., Indebtedness, etc.)	

2.1. Do you have cultivable land? (If yes specify)

Ans:

- 1. < 1 hectare
- 2. > 1 to < 1.9 hectares
- 3. > 2 to < 4.9 hectares
- 4. > 5 to < 10 hectares
- 5. > 10 hectares

* The land measurements in Assam (also apply for Bodoland region) is: 7 bighas, 2 kathas, and 6 lessas = 1 hectare; 1 bigha = 0.1337 hectare; 1 bigha = 5 kotha, and 1 kotha = 20 lessa

3. What are the most common types of items produced on your land?

Ans:

Category of land	Size of Land/Area (in bigha)	Location/Irrigated Area (in bigha)	Items grown
Forest land			
Water body land			
Grazing land			
Residential land			
Homestead land			
Kitchen garden land			
Croplands	Autumn Rice (Ahu/Ashu)		
	Traditional		
	Autumn Rice (HYV)		
	Winter Rice (Sali, etc.)		
	Winter Rice (HYV)		
	Bao paddy		
	Summer Rice (Boro paddy etc.)		
Traditional			
Summer Rice (HYV)			
Wheat			
Pulses (pea, black gram, etc.)			
Oil seed (mustard)			
Jute			
Vegetables			
Sugarcane			

4. What type of land do you use for agriculture or cultivation?

Ans:

Type of Land Use	Use tick (✓) only
Homestead land	
Dry field	
Garden land	
Fallow land	
Arable land	
Grazing land	
Plantation land	

5. What are the issues related to agricultural productions?"

Ans:

Problems/Issue	Use tick (✓) only
Insufficient quality land	
Floods issue	
No clear land status	
Lack of irrigation	
Increase of population	
Lack of capital	
Occasional drought	
Land erosion	
Lack of technology information	
Lack of government initiative	
Issues of wild animals	
Other Issues	

6 Do you know about the term "landless"?

Ans:

- i. Yes
- ii. No
- iii. In confusion
- iv. No idea

6.1 What are the main reasons behind becoming landlessness?

Ans:

Reason of landlessness	Use tick (✓) only
Failure to implement land laws	
No inheritance land	
Growth of population	
Illegal migration	
Floods & land erosion	
Non-implementation and policy gap	
Multiple evictions	
Ethnic conflicts	
Other reasons	

7. If landless, what activities do you consider to be your main sources of livelihood?

Ans:

Source of livelihood	Use tick (✓) only
Livestock	
Fishing (public areas)	
Trade & business	
Wage labour	
Forestry	

8. Diversification of tribal livelihood strategies.

Ans:

Classification of nature of occupational shift and Category

Identification of Occupational Category and Shift

Nature of Occupational Shift	Category of Occupation
No Shift	<i>Only Traditional:</i> cultivation/agriculture, weaving, livestock/animal husbandry, forestry; handicraft work;
Horizontal Shift	<i>Traditional and Non-Traditional:</i> agricultural wage work, daily wage labour, construction work, carpentry, fishing/fish business; livestock; government or semi-government and private service, self-employed, trade or business, power generation;
Vertical Shift	<i>Only Non-Traditional:</i> government or semi-government and private service, self-employed, trade or business, power generation;

8.1 What is your livelihood combination for living?

Ans:

Category of combination

Use tick (√) only

Only Traditional:

cultivation/agriculture, weaving, livestock/animal husbandry, forestry; handicraft;

Traditional + Non-Traditional:

agricultural wage work, daily wage labour, construction work, carpentry, fishing/fish business; livestock; government or semi-government and private service, self-employed, trade or business, power generation;

Only Non-Traditional:

government or semi-government and private service, self-employed, trade or business, power generation;

Signature of the Respondent(s)

Date: _____

Place: _____

**GLOSSARY OF LOCAL TERM
(ASSAMESE & BODO)**

BODO NAME	: ENGLISH MEANING
<i>Abad tili/Abad dubuli</i>	: Crop land
<i>Angni</i>	: My
<i>Bao mai fwatar/dubuli</i>	: Bao paddy field
<i>Bitha/Nobti</i>	: Residential land
<i>Bwiswmuthi</i>	: Motherland / Land
<i>Daag</i>	: The smallest land units of the village landscape are generally demarcated by the village surveyors using numbers
<i>Dufang bwthwr</i>	: Autumn season
<i>Dwi ni Ha</i>	: Water body land
<i>Duar</i>	: Door
<i>Gishi Ha</i>	: Wetland
<i>Gomad/ Fwtar/Gwlwiswnai Ha</i>	: Grazing land
<i>Gwjang bwthwr</i>	: Winter season
<i>Ha</i>	: Land
<i>Hador</i>	: Country
<i>Hagra ni Ha/Hagrabarini Ha</i>	: Forest land
<i>Jwngni</i>	: Ours
<i>Kwthia tili</i>	: Seed bedding
<i>Mai</i>	: Paddy
<i>Mwigong bari</i>	: Kitchen garden
<i>Mwnthai</i>	: Right
<i>Natai</i>	: But
<i>Nwngswrni</i>	: Yours
<i>Patta</i>	: Land title deed
<i>Tagra/Noluna tagra Ha</i>	: Homestead land

ASSAMESE NAME	: ENGLISH MEANING
<i>Adhikar</i>	: Right
<i>Ahu dhan</i>	: Autumn rice
<i>Ahutoli</i>	: Autumn paddy field
<i>Amar</i>	: Ours
<i>Bakari maati</i>	: Grazing land
<i>Basti maati</i>	: Homestead land
<i>Bao dhan</i>	: Bao rice
<i>Baotoli</i>	: Bao paddy field
<i>Charmaati</i>	: Sandbars
<i>Daag</i>	: The smallest land units of the village landscape are generally demarcated by the village surveyors using numbers
<i>Dekh</i>	: Country
<i>Gharvet</i>	: Residential land
<i>Janghal toli</i>	: Forest land
<i>Janghal maati</i>	: Forest land
<i>Jana</i>	: Man / People / One who is a kind human being
<i>Jalashay</i>	Water body land
<i>Jati</i>	: Caste
<i>Khas Land</i>	: Wasteland is either unowned or reserved for public use, such as roads or grazing without ownership or settlement rights
<i>Kathiatoli</i>	: Seed bedding
<i>Maati</i>	: Land
<i>Mur</i>	: My
<i>Patta</i>	: Land title deed
<i>Sakanibari</i>	: Kitchen garden
<i>Salitoli</i>	: Winter paddy field
<i>Shasyar maati</i>	: Crop land
<i>Tumar</i>	: Yours

ANNEXURE

List of Publication, Seminar Presentation, Edited Book & Book Chapter

Journal Publication

1. A Study on Land Access Issues and Livelihoods of Tribal Peoples in the Context of Bodoland Territorial Region of Assam, India. *Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry*, 12(7). e- ISSN- 1309-6591
2. The Land Access and Conflict Issues of Tribal Peoples in Bodoland Territorial Region of Assam, India. *Linguistics and Culture Review*, 6(S5), 80- 91. <https://doi.org/10.21744/lingcure.v6nS5.2075>
3. The struggle for land: Tribal land issues and debates. *International Journal of Critical Indigenous Studies*, 15(1), 41-57. <https://doi.org/10.5204/ijcis.2251>
4. Women's land access disparity affects livelihoods and children's education of the tribal people. *International Journal of Health Sciences*, 6(S2), 4648–4663. <https://doi.org/10.53730/ijhs.v6nS2.6092>

Seminar Presentation

1. A Study of the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) as a Sixth Schedule Apparatus in Assam in the Two-Day National Conference on Autonomy and Development in North East India date 27th & 28th January 2023.
2. Study of Livelihood of Meches of Nepal, in the 1st International Conference of Natives' Institute of Bodology (NIB) on "Oral Resources of Bodo Language, Literature, Culture and History Organised by Natives' Institute of Bodology (NIB) in Collaboration with Centre for Bodo Studies, Bodoland University and Centre for Linguistics and Cultural Studies, CIT Kokrajhar on 10th & 11th June, 2023
3. The Forest Village Struggle for Land and Forest Rights, in the Bodoland International Knowledge Festival, 2023, India under the theme Human Rights organised by the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR), Government and Bodoland University on 27th February to 2nd March 2023.
4. Tribal Land Access and Livelihoods in the Bodoland Territorial Region of Assam in the International Seminar on Rural Technology, Innovation and IPR: The way Ahead organised by Department of Rural Development of University of Science and Technology, Meghalaya on 14th & 15th March, 2022.

5. Land Access and Livelihoods of landless Tribal in the Bodoland Territorial Region of Assam, India, in the First Purno Agitok Sangma Memorial Lecture Cum International Seminar on Revisiting Diversity in North East India: Ethnicity, Culture, Religion and Beyond” on 13th & 14th May 2022 organised by Department of Political Science & History and U.N. Academy, Kokrajhar in Collaboration with Education Department of BTR Govt.
6. The Tribal Landless Households and Livelihood Strategies in the Asia Pacific Conference on Educational; Research, Social Science and Humanities (APCERSSH, 2022), Bangkok, Organised by the IFERP on 7th & 8th September, 2022.

Edited Book

1. *Revisiting Diversity in North East India: Ethnicity, Culture, Religion and Beyond*, Published by Shree Publishers & Distributors, New Delhi, Year 2023, ISBN: 978-81-963475-2-9. Edited by: Dr. Jhanin Mushahary, Dr. Sudev Ch. Basumatary, Ashok Brahma & Swler Basumatary.

Book Chapter

1. Act East Starts with Bangladesh: Where Northeast India Identifying Economics, Connectivity, and Trade potential with Bangladesh *Rural Development in Asia-Pacific Region*, (Vol. II) Published by D.P.S. Publishing House, New Delhi, Year- 2023, ISBN: 978-93-91870-94-2.
2. Land Access and Livelihood of Tribals in the Bodoland Region, *RangThunlai* (Vol-I) Published by Onsumwi Library, Kokrajhar, Year: 2022, ISBN: 978-93-83576-73-9.
3. India’s Counter-Peril to Strategic Threats of China in the Indo-Pacific Region *Revisiting Diversity in North East India: Ethnicity, Culture, Religion and Beyond*, Published by Shree Publishers & Distributors, New Delhi, Year 2023, ISBN: 978-81-963475-2-9.

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The struggle for land: Tribal land issues and debates

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Abstract

This article investigates the problems facing Tribal peoples in India. It is about the issue of land and the debate over how it arose and persists; it exposes the problems in Tribal societies. The study focuses on the land and Tribal identity, and land issues and debates affecting various interests of Tribal peoples in the Bodoland Territorial Region of Assam. It is necessary to study the causes of land conflicts between Tribals and other groups, and the laws and government policies enacted over the years to protect them and prevent land expropriation. The region is discussed here to keep the issue on track. The findings show that Tribal people consider that the government process has not ensured the secure use of land in the region. The proper administration strategy should maintain Tribal land and the means for Tribal peoples' adjustment to changing conditions.

Keywords

Land; Tribal; issues; secure; debate; identity; Act; government

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Tribal peoples and their land are connected with their survival and identity. Tribal peoples are praised for being the original inhabitants and protectors of the land, but if someone loses their land, they lose their livelihood and identity. For most Tribal peoples, survival is a major challenge in a society that has consistently denied them the right to exist as such. Since they have been historically wedded to the land, they have long struggled to obtain and retain access to this important resource, which is also a fundamental part of their identity as a distinct community and culture (Brahma & Mushahary, 2022; Huggins, 2010; Stavenhagen, 2006). Tribal communities in modern India believe they have experienced a paradigm shift as a result of their increased exposure to the improvement process and its related transformations. They do not want to get embroiled in any land issues or identity crises. A concise perspective is also required, that realises the necessity for an empowering strategy that aids Tribals in their attempts to obtain equitable and adequate land access. The importance of land was translated from the German language by Aufschnaiter (2008):

We dream of our land. Everything we perceive, everywhere we tread, everything we feel with our whole body, belongs to our land. We need the land, in order to be able to imagine our existence, so that we know who we are. Without the land we are nothing and nobody. The government simply has to realise this. You can't negotiate this, the land can't be replaced. (p. 1)

The land is the soul of every Tribal people, including their legal ownership and ability to secure it, their access to land, and their livelihoods connected with rights to the land. The land is integral for their survival and identity (Brahma, 2019b). But Morris and Pandey (2007) found that almost no one does not have close relatives who have been tricked out of their land because of unlawful or forceful occupation. They have to struggle and fight and resist to protect their land.

Many of the Tribal riots that have wracked the north bank of the Brahmaputra may be traced back to land disputes that have displaced significant numbers of people. Local communities must fight tooth and nail to defend their land. There have been multiple accusations, notably from Tribals in riot-stricken regions, about outsiders forcibly occupying their land. Immigrants have also complained that they had leased land and cultivated the plots at their own expense for a half-share of the product, but that when it came time to harvest, the landlords denied them their right and grabbed the whole crop. In north-east India, there have been significant displacement incidents, and the area included in the current Bodoland region is remarkable, partly because of the violence that has accompanied relocation. Massive population displacements have arisen from conflicts between Tribals and immigrants, and Tribals and non-Tribals. There have been important forces acting as a result of violence in other aspects of the north-east region, such as revolts among ethnic Tribals and immigrant Bengalis in Tripura, Naga-Kuki and Kuki-Paite, clashes in Manipur, and confrontations between various ethnic groups and displacements in the Karbi-Anglong district of Assam (Banerjee, 2011).

To understand the causes of the frequent violence and ethnic cleansings in the north-east states, it is imperative to analyse the causes of land conflict between Tribals and other societies, as well as the effectiveness, or lack thereof, of the laws and government policies that have been attempted over the decades to safeguard Tribals and prevent land expropriation. In this context, the issue of the Bodoland region in Assam is discussed here.

In the riots and violence that occurred in the Bodoland region between 1993 and 1998, there was an alarming number of deaths and displacements. In the clashes between Tribals and Muslims in Bongaigaon in 1993, about 50 people were murdered and a total of 18,000 people were affected by the war, which displaced 3568 households (Deka, 2012). In July 1994, violence between Tribals and Muslims in the Barpeta district resulted in the deaths of an estimated 100 people. In

the severe conflicts between Bodos and Santhals in Kokrajhar and Bongaigaon districts in May 1996, at least 200 people were murdered, and over 200,000 were displaced, including Adivasis and Bodos. Many people have been displaced as a result of this violence. This dispute resulted in the displacement of over 42,214 households, totalling 262,682 people from both communities (Hussain & Phanjoubam, 2007; Murmu, 2009; Mushahary, 2019). Between May and September 1998, a series of new skirmishes between Bodos and Santhals claimed the lives of around 50 individuals; as a result, 48,556 households with 314,342 people were displaced. Attacks were also made against relief camps. According to one estimate, 80,000 people were displaced. In conflicts between Muslims and Bodo in Udalguri and Darrang between August and October 2008, 70 people were murdered. The two settlements resulted in the displacement of around 212,000 people due to the conflict, with people from 54 villages directly affected, and around 150 villages where people fled their homes for fear of being attacked (Phukan, 2013). Later, the dispute expanded to other Bodoland districts, including Baksa and Chirang. In Udalguri alone, where the violence began, 31 people were killed: 19 Muslim settlers, 9 Bodos, and 3 others. In Darrang, where the violence quickly spread, 21 people were killed: 17 Muslim settlers, 1 Bodo, and 3 others. Unidentified attackers also killed a pregnant immigrant Muslim woman in the German language Chirang area. In the Baksa district, another adult and a child from the same community were slain (Banerjee, 2011; Pathak, 2017; Talukdar, 2008).

Land challenges are serious and have been identified as one of India's primary sources of strife, instability, anarchy and disagreements. It was suggested that Tribal peoples' identity may be rooted in their relationship with the land. Tribal peoples cannot defend themselves unless they maintain control over their land and have access to it and other natural resources, as these factors determine Tribal peoples' lives and rights. In general, Aboriginal social customs share land ownership; however, certain sects practise personal clan ownership; despite this, modern land connections and legal regulations recognise only individual land rights. The process of changing land into assets began in India under British colonial power for their own benefit. Throughout the course of history, large swaths of land have been handed to non-Tribal settlers who have relinquished ownership of communal assets and property in favour of Tribal communities. As a result, in many locations, the number of Tribal peoples has diminished. Similarly to Assam, the Bodoland Territorial Region has suffered greatly as a result of these events. In most locations around the region, Tribals are becoming increasingly concerned about their rights to land.

The study reported here is to understand the relationship between land and Tribal identity; and land issues and debates affecting Tribal peoples by various interests in the Bodoland region's four districts, which seem appealing and determined. The actual paradox in land holdings and the emergence of an exciting pitch for a paradigm that allows Native rights will primarily contribute to harmonisation among diverse communities, as well as open long-term development stability in the region. The study concentrates on descriptive and analytical approaches for understanding issues related to Tribal land concerns and debates. The research implemented a mixed method of data collection. Regarding the sensitivity of the topic, structured and semistructured questionnaires were created to collect quantitative data. The qualitative information and data helped find the appropriate direction for reliable information.

Historical analysis of the struggle

Tribes in India were referred to as "a kind of people" before the colonial period, and *Jana* were outside of Verna hierarchy, as opposed to *Jati*. The Tribal groups were not seen as unequal or discriminated against socially. They were frequently a component of the land's political process, in which military power negotiated authority between local rulers and chiefs (Burman et al., 2004).

They had gathered enough strength at this time to form their own kingdoms of identity. They were also conceptually separated from the general public. The “rules of the land” have been relevant to them for a long time, or even customary laws that still function in domestic issues (Brahma, 2019a; Brahma & Mushahary, 2021). The Tribes are not a homogeneous collection of people; they exist in various ecological niches and environments.

The Tribes in the north-eastern region were opposing British colonisation as early as the 1770s. Beginning with Regulation X of 1822, Tribal peoples were gradually pushed to the outskirts of an emerging centre that became known as the normal lands of Assam (Das, 1998; Rhani & Ziipao, 2019;). The British Indian administration covered Assam Province, Assam Tribal Areas, Manipur State, Tripura State, and the Khasi States, which made up what is now known as North-East India. Many of the British policies in the North-East states had a significant detrimental impact on the Indian population’s lowest ranks. The turning of land into a commodity is the most visible. The “Bengal Decennial Settlement Regulation, 1793” allowed the British government to tax the local people’s land for income. Bengal Regulation 8 of 1793 mentions:

A regulation for re-enacting, with modifications and amendments, the rules for the Decennial Settlement of the public Revenue payable for the lands of the zamindars, independent talukdars, and other actual proprietors of land, in Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa, passed for those provinces on the 18th September, 1789; the 25th November, 1789; and the 10th February, 1790; and subsequent dates.¹

The state government and tax collectors made decisions on how individuals managed their land, with the exception of the balance of the land. In Bengal Regulation 8 of 1793:

21. The lands of disqualified proprietors, coming within the above descriptions, are to be managed for the benefit of the proprietors by persons appointed to the trust by (State Government).

22. A further exception has been made to proprietors in balance to Government, and unable to pay arrears due from them; in which instances no settlement is to be concluded with the defaulting proprietors, but their lands are to be let in farm, or held khas, for a period of three years, at the discretion of the Collectors.²

The king or local monarch was the nominal landlord prior to the colonial administration, and in the feudal system, taxes were collected on his behalf by the village chief or head. The land became the lawful property of the landlord or tax collector as a result of British policy. Under the new British colonial land revenue system, taxes were set so that peasants were required to pay the same amount regardless of productivity, and failure to pay resulted in their expulsion from the land.

It is important to note that the 1873 regulation was expanded, and British control issued another statute, “The Scheduled Districts Act, 1874”, which abolished and amended several rules. By notice under Section 5 of the Scheduled Districts Act, 1874 (XIV of 1874) it was extended to the following scheduled districts:

The Eastern Duars in the Goalpara district..., the Mokokchang subdivision of the Naga Hills district..., the Sadiya Frontier Tract, the Balipara Frontier Tract, the Lakhimpur Frontier Tract and the Lushai Hills districts.³

The Scheduled Districts Act of 1874 provided local governments the authority to designate which enactments were to be enforced and which were not, and to notify the applicant of any implementation in force in any area of British India with any required changes or limits.⁴ One goal in the scheduled tracts was to protect the Indigenous people’s interests but the main intention was

opaque. Almost all of the hill sections of the then province of Assam were categorised as “backward regions” under the requirements of the previous paragraph of the Government of India Act of 1919. Changes were prohibited in several areas, with both the Central and Provincial Legislatures forbidden from passing new legislation in these areas.

Section 52 A (2) the Governor-General-in-Council may declare any territory in British India to be a “Backward Tract” and may by notification, with such sanction as aforesaid, direct that this Act of shall apply to that territory subject to such exceptions or modifications as may be prescribed in the notification. (Sharma & Sharma, 2006, p. 29)

The Scheduled Districts Act of 1874 and the Government of India Act of 1919 divided Tribal regions into “wholly excluded areas” and “areas with mitigated exclusion”. Following that, the Government of India Act of 1935, based on the Simon Commission’s recommendations, repealed the term “Backward Tract” and renamed these areas “Excluded Areas” or “Partially Excluded Areas”. In its responsibility for the administration of the two provinces, the Governor of the Province was given enormous power. The Governor of the Province had sole authority over the administration of Partially Excluded Areas.

As history shows, the current land in the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) was also covered, governed or administered by several kings with many aliases. The BTR districts were part of Assam’s “Eastern Duars” and other significant Duars. The Eastern Duars, which included Bijni, also known as Bagh Duar, Sidli, Chirang, Ripu and Guma, was located between the river Manas on the east and the Sonkosh on the west (Bose, 1979). The word *Duar* means “door” in English, and is used to refer to the territories below the foothills. It is similar to the Bhutanese *las-sgo* (work-door), which refers to a border station at the foot of a pass and the territory around it (Aris, 1979). The Eastern Duars were crucial in shaping Bhutan’s connection with Assam and rose to prominence. The Ahom kings, on the other hand, fostered the trading connection with the Tribes by permitting unrestricted economic activity. Several duars (mountain passes) were built by the Ahom administration, and *Duarians* were hired who looked after the interest of traders. Tribes or other peoples from the hills might come to the plains and trade with the lowlands through the duars. The mutual benefits gained from this transaction helped foster a pleasant attitude among residents of the hills and plains and valleys.

The Koch Dynasty is primarily responsible for the Duars. However, it eventually took advantage of the Kingdom of Bhutan. When Biswa Singha (1515–1540) rose to power and the Koch attacked the Duar regions, the local kings who ruled the territory between the Sonkosh and the Barnadi were defeated. Biswa Singha had a considerable impact on Bhutan as well. To strengthen frequent economic ties with the plains through the duars or passes, the Bhutias had to pay tribute to the Koch administration. When the Koch Empire was split into two parts in 1581, the territory between the Sonkosh and the Bharali fell under the control of Koch Hajo under Raghudeb, son of Chilarai. The territory west of the Sonkosh River was under Naranarayan's command. As a result, the Bhutias were compelled to pay homage to both Koch monarchs. The Bhutias took advantage of the conflict between the two Koch kingdoms, driving the Koch across the hills and into the plains on their southern border (Das, 1998; Gait, 1896).

The southern part of the Duar area and the northern portion of this tract, which reaches the foot of the mountains, are excellent for agriculture. Eastern-northeastern India, south of the Himalayan outer foothills and north of the Brahmaputra river basin, has the most northern portion of the Duar, which immediately borders the hills above all the Duars. In history, the tract was previously inhabited by “Meches” and “Kacharis”, the only tribes reportedly able to live in these malarial zones owing to the Bhutias’ misdeeds (Eden & Pemberton, 1865; Hunter, 1885). On 12 November

1864, by order of the Governor-General-in-Council, H. M. Durand, the colonel secretary to the Government of India during the Indo-Bhutan (known as Bhootan), negotiated a settlement, and issued No. LVIII Proclamation:

All Chiefs, Zemindara, Munduls, Ryots, and other inhabitants of the tract in question are hereby required to submit to the authority of the British Government, to remain quietly in their homes, and to render assistance to the British troops and to the Commissioner who is charged with the administration of the tract. Protection of life and property and a guarantee of all private rights is offered to those who do not resist, and strict justice will be done to all. The lands will be moderately assessed, and all oppression and extortion will be absolutely prohibited.⁵

It was clearly mentioned in the proclamation that “the future boundary between the territories of the Queen of England and those of Bhootan will be surveyed and marked off, and the authority of the Government of Bhootan within this boundary will cease for ever”.⁶

The Bhutias ruled the Duars region of the northern Brahmaputra River valley until the British forced them to leave in 1865. Following this, several events contributed to the British invasion of Assam. The Eastern Duars district was administered by a Deputy Commissioner with headquarters in the Datma (now in Kokrajhar of Bodoland region). In December of 1866, however, the District of Eastern Duars was merged into Goalpara. The Eastern Duars were exempted from the general Regulation by Act XVI of 1869. The Assam Land and Revenue Regulation governed revenue administration. The Duars and the whole Goalpara area were also added to the Regulation (Assam Land Revenue Manual, 1886; Das, 1998; Eden & Pemberton, 1865; Hunter, 1885).

Those who did not oppose the British were guaranteed life and property protection, a guarantee of all private rights, and strict justice delivered to everyone. All forms of tyranny and extortion were prohibited, and lands were valued fairly. Regarding land reforms, the British administration restricted land access to the bare necessities, which hurt the Kocharis and Meches tribes who resided in the hills of the Kingdom of Bhutan.

Early Census Report of Tribals

It is important to understand how the category “Tribal” emerged. The state’s census was the primary instrument used in the creation of the tribe category in India. These communities were categorised as “others”, “religion not known” and “Hindus” in the 1871 Census. The terms were introduced into the first census in 1881. The Tribal group was regarded as a distinct religious category in 1881, as per the first British Census report of 1881, which was originally published in 1883 (Bhuria, 2002). It was a magnificent administrative and publishing feat of Assam that revealed the Tribals' population and locations of dispersion (Table 1).

Table 1. Tribes' population and locations of dispersion

Sl. no.	Tribe's name	Burma	Bengal	Assam	Total
1.	Cachari	–	–	263,186	263,186
2.	Garo	–	24,949	112,248	137,197
3.	Mech	–	11,101	57,890	68,991
4.	Rabha	–	–	56,499	56,499
5.	Lalung	–	–	46,920	46,920
6.	Tipperah	11	95	3984	4090
7.	Hajong	–	–	1246	1246
8.	Koch	–	5631	–	5631
Total population		11	41,776	541,973	583,760

Source: Report on the Census of Assam for 1881, Office of Superintendent of Government Printing, Calcutta, India, 1883.

The term *Indigenous peoples* refers to Aboriginal, Native, Adivasi, Tribe, or the First Inhabitants. The word “Indigenous” is used interchangeably with “Tribes” or “Tribal” throughout my research. The Indian Constitution, on the other hand, uses the term *tribe* as the “scheduled tribe” and it is commonly used in the Indian administrative framework to refer to a group of Adivasis. However, the term *Adivas* does not apply to Assam and the Bodoland region; it is still used to refer to Tea Tribes integrated into central India during the colonial era.

Materials and Methods

In the Bodoland region, the Tribal community makes up the majority of the population, consisting mostly of Bodos, Rabhas, and a small number of Garos. According to the 2011 Census Report, there were 215,672 households, including 4560 urban and 211,112 rural households; 98% of the Bodo, Rabha and Garo Tribal communities lived in rural households, while only 2.12% lived in urban households. The study area is shown in Figure 1.

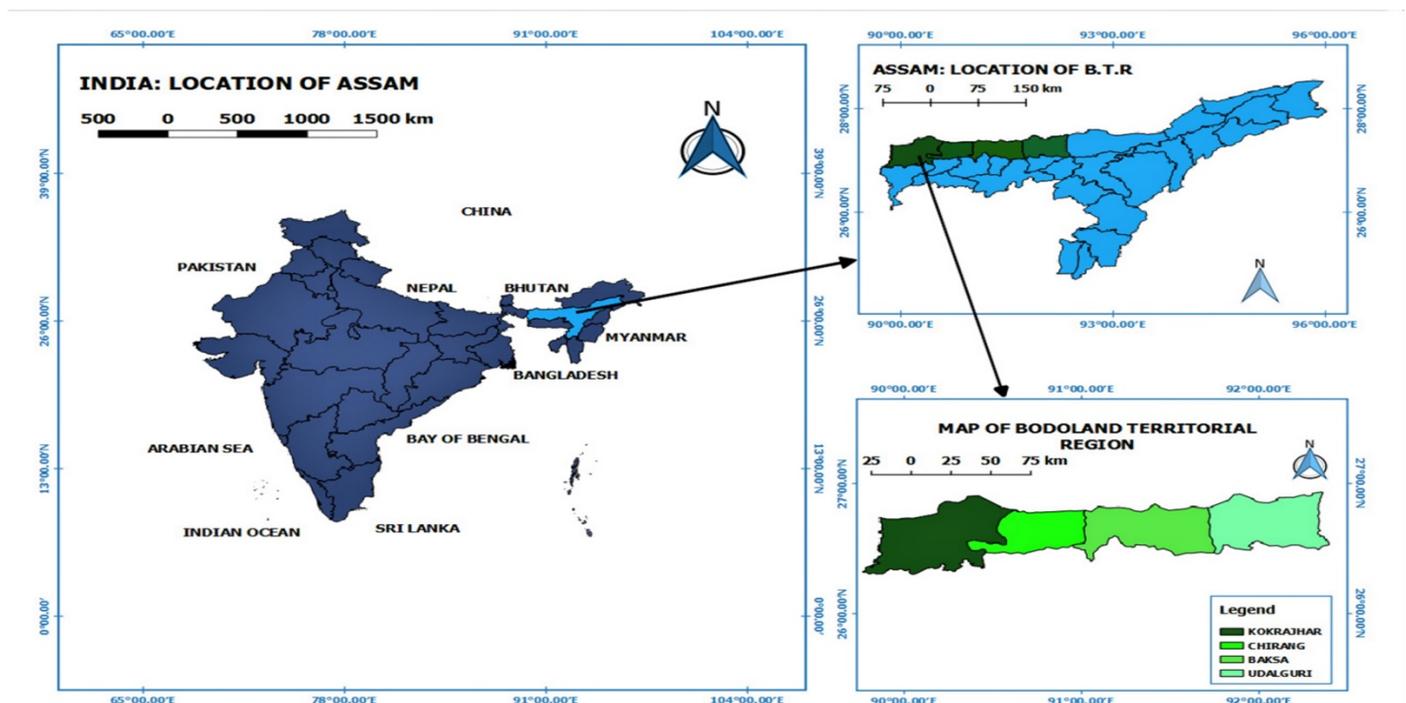


Figure 1. Map of Bodoland Territorial Region showing the study area.

Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources were the official documents and a field study that focused on the rural households of three resident communities of Bodo, Rabha and Garo rural Tribals. The number of rural Tribal households was used to determine the sample size. Random sampling was used to find respondents for this study. Data were gathered from 384 respondent households. The research focused on descriptive and analytical techniques to understand Tribal land concerns and debates. The study used a mixed method of quantitative and qualitative data collection. It aimed for a margin of sampling error of less than 5% and a 95% confidence level. From an ethical perspective, it obtained permission from the household head. Participants who had difficulty answering the questionnaire said a household member helped them. They had access to the relevant information sheet and were encouraged to ask questions. The study respondents were not all well informed on the topics included in the information-gathering questionnaire, and eventually it was decided to make the information available to the public. The study was confined to the Tribal peoples in the Bodoland region and was limited to four districts of remote settlements, focusing on Tribal land access concerns. In comparison to the Bodo Tribes in the vicinity, the sample size of the Rabha and Garo Tribes is quite small, which was also a primary constraint in the study.

The secondary data sources used were published and unpublished records, government reports, documents, official district records and other related national and state government publications, such as the *Annual Report* and *Year-End Review of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs*, the *Annual Report of the Department of Commerce and Economic Survey of India*, and the *Census Report of the Government of India*. Several Memorandums of Understanding, Accords and Agreements between the Government of India, North-East India and Assam were also employed for data collection and analysis. To achieve the study's objectives, all original data sources, such as colonial reports, secretariat files, private letters, official minutes, diaries, land and revenue files, and gazetteers, were thoroughly reviewed and analysed. Furthermore, a method was used in the historical research to integrate the study's processes. In the study, secondary sources allowed us to obtain basic information about previous researchers' work, from which we could identify research gaps in a specific area. Resources from the Assam State Archive, Bengal State Archive, National Archives, Delhi, Department of Historical, Antiquarian Studies, and other libraries were evaluated to complete the research work. Likewise, Shodhganga, a thesis depository website that has relevant theses, was used.

Findings and Discussion

The research field survey was conducted from January 2021 to January 2022 in all survey areas of four districts of the Bodoland region; a representative of the head of the household was questioned at each household.

Contextualising inequality was reflected in the structure and concentration of landholdings in the study area. The extent of Tribal peoples' holdings had been divided according to inheritance rights and socio-economic systems; the history of settlements and land ownership transfers regulate the size and availability of plot holdings in the Bodoland region. The rural land of Tribal peoples is the subject of a contentious debate. As per the field survey, the landholdings size in the area are 71.86% marginal (Bodo: 71.35%; Rabha: 71.42%, Garo: 73.75%), 9.65% small (Bodo: 11.45%; Rabha: 8.92%; Garo: 6.25%), 4.16% semi-medium (Bodo: 3.64%; Rabha: 4.46%; Garo: 5.00%), 2.61% medium (Bodo: 3.12%; Rabha: 1.76%; Garo: 2.5%), and 0.26% large (Bodo: 0.26%; Rabha: 0.00%; Garo: 0.00%). The remaining 11.46% of Tribals (Bodo: 9.89%; Rabha: 13.39%; Garo: 12.5%) live without a landholding (no land between Patta and Daag numbers)⁷ meaning their households fell into the landless category.

The respondents were asked who owned the land where their family currently resides and the majority of respondents described their land as owned by private individuals; ownership differed among spouses and wives, joint ownership, land owned by nomination, land registration in progress, and finally, Tribal people who did not have a Patta or Daag number. The study found that the 64.32% of the land was owned by men (Bodo: 65.10%; Rabha: 62.5%; Garo: 65.00%), while the individual land ownership of women was just 4.68% (Bodo: 4.68%, Rabha: 5.35%; Garo: 3.75%). The Tribal people without land in Patta and Daag, where they live on forest land, were reported at 11.45% (Bodo: 9.89%; Rabha: 13.39%; Garo: 12.5%). The land nominated as minimal was documented at 1.56% (Bodo: 1.04%; Rabha: 1.78%; Garo: 2.5%), and there was no evidence of any joint ownership of land registration. The study found that the Tribal peoples applying for land registration was significant at more than 17.96% (Bodo: 19.27%; Rabha: 16.96%; Garo: 16.25%). This was the most evenly scattered among the four districts. Regarding land ownership, most Tribals replied that the land was either managed or held by parents or other household relatives.

Concerning the land and laws of the Tribals, the question was asked: Do you know what land laws govern the Bodoland Region? However, Tribal peoples were unaware of the land laws that applied to them and were being implemented in their areas. According to the survey, 71.87% of respondents (Bodo: 67.18%; Rabha: 74.16%; Garo: 72.5%) did not know the laws. Only 18.75% of respondents (Bodo: 18.22%; Rabha: 19.16%; Garo: 18.75%) said they were aware of it; 6.51% of respondents said they had no idea, and the remaining 4.94% were still unsure about what land laws were in effect and what was going on in the region.

Tribal land in the Bodoland Region

It is important to have a thorough understanding and awareness of land policies and other challenges that are confronted daily. Regarding the policies and regulations of the land, the 71.87% of Tribals who are citizens in the Bodoland region had no clear concept of what rules applied to them and the laws they follow. So, to comprehend the aims of the land laws and regulations of the Bodoland region, the motives of governments regarding Tribals' land and specific other communities must be analysed.

Land and Tribals in the Act of Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC), 1993

The notion of constructing Tribal Belts and Blocks to safeguard Tribal lands as part of the Chapter-X amendment in 1947⁸ was noble. However, the state administration did not carry out the law in its entirety. As a result, throughout succeeding state and local governments, large-scale land alienation persisted. The Tribal Belts and Blocks have not yet reached all Tribal communities, areas and villages. Reality has been preserved in the procedures, but not through the application of law. In Assam, many Tribal organisations have spoken out against the failure to enact rules that protect the secure use of land, access to land and tenure security. As to the Tribals' organisation in the Bodoland region, they opine that non-Tribals have encroached and unlawfully occupied these areas and have also received land pattas in collusion with some of the government authorities.

Although the Government of Assam took the initiative to create Belts and Blocks to defend Tribal land at the recommendation of the Tribal League, it appears there was little outcry on the ground when the Belts and Blocks' protection was destroyed and land in Tribal reserves was transferred into non-Tribal hands. Lands were carved out of Tribal blocks to settle East Pakistani (now Bangladesh) immigrants. The Plains Tribal Council of Assam (PTCA) took up the problem. It

began to raise it in various places to defend Tribal aspirations and economic interests and bring about progress in their society, including land issues.

Consequently, Tribal interests were secured, and the Tribal unrest (Bodo movement) led to the signing of the “Bodo Accord” on 20 February 1993, created to develop the Bodo community in particular and in general. However, the BAC experiment suffered flaws from the beginning. The Act, enacted by the Assam government, only provided the General Council executive authority over land and land revenue. As included in Clause 7 of the BAC area:

The General Council shall be consulted and its views shall be given due regards before any law made on the subjects is implemented in the BAC area ... the ownership and transfer of land within the BAC area.

Section 51 of the BAC Act states that: “All rights and interests of the non-tribal Indian citizens on the date of constitution of the Bodoland Autonomous Council within the Council Area shall be protected in matters pertaining to land and their language.”

Clause 64 of the Act has a specific remark: “The General Council shall, within the laws of the land, take steps to protect the demographic complexion of the area falling within its jurisdiction.”⁹

As a result, the council was granted only an advising role in formulating land laws, with no legal authority. Even after the accord, the problem of the demarcation of the BAC Act never ended due to a lack of seriousness on the part of the government. The central government wreaked havoc by imposing unacceptably harsh conditions. First, it was announced that a strip of land ten kilometres from the international border would not be included in the BAC region due to border security concerns. Second, because the reserved forest is a central area, it was impossible to include it in the region. The third instance, the Srirampur border gate between Assam and Bengal, would exclude certain key settlements such as Darrang, Tangla and others from the Council. It is critical to note that the government’s grounds for excluding specific districts and places are without constitutional support. The people overwhelmingly opposed the agreement.

Land and Tribals in the Act of Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC), 2003

Even after the creation of the BAC Act in 1993, there was still a failure to keep the situation under control or to preserve Tribal land rights. A significant number of individuals infiltrated the Bodoland region and took up residence. Under section 51 of the BAC Act, the non-Tribal Indian citizen shall be safeguarded in areas of land and language. Due to the commencement of the Act, many people who had entered the region illegally continued to enjoy their right to land. It is clear that land rights and the preservation of Tribal land from non-Tribal people, particularly non-residents, was the region’s major issue. This failure resulted in a new Bodo Accord being signed in the Bodoland region in 2003. On 10 February 2003, a Memorandum of Settlement was agreed for a protracted solution centred on the tripartite negotiations.

The Act is known as the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution (Amendment) Act, 2003 (Act 44 of 2003) Brahma, 2018b).¹⁰ The Bodoland Territorial Council was given the right to make laws regarding “Land and Revenue” within its jurisdiction Amendment Act 44 of 2003, paragraph 3-B, section (1) clause (xv). The relevant capability is also included in subsection 3-B of clause (xl) “Welfare of plain tribes and backward classes”, to:

(a) extinguish or modify the existing rights and privileges of any citizen in respect of his land at the date of commencement of this Act.

(b) disallow any citizen from acquiring land either by way of inheritance, allotment, settlement or by any other way of transfer if such citizen is otherwise eligible for such acquisition of land within the Bodoland Territorial Areas District.¹¹

The considerable powers granted to the BTC over land came with one condition: that they were granted prospectively rather than retrospectively. Non-Tribals, as long as they were Indian nationals, would retain ownership of their land plots if they had had them since before the legislation was enacted (Banerjee, 2011). As subparagraph (1) of paragraph 3-B shall be submitted immediately to the Governor and shall have no effect until he assents to it, subsection (2) of paragraph 3-B mentions that:

(2) all laws made under paragraph 3 or under this paragraph shall insofar as they relate to matters specified in List-III of the Seventh Schedule, be submitted forthwith to the Governor who shall reserve the same for the consideration of the President.

(3) when a law is reserved for the consideration of the President, the President shall declare either that he assents to the said law or that he withholds assent therefrom: provided that President may direct the Governor to return the law to the Bodoland Territorial Council ... when the law is so returned, the said Council shall consider the law accordingly within a period of six months from the date of receipt of such message and if the law is again passed by the said Council with or without amendments it shall be presented again to the President for his consideration.¹²

The BTC aspires to bring fast improvement to one of the most backward regions of Assam (Brahma, 2018c), focusing on development, land rights protection and ethnic identity. Through the agreement of Council clauses, it is now able to protect new non-Tribal settlements of Tribal lands, but it cannot erase what has already occurred. Fresh transfers are also permitted, as long as they are legal. The regulations were not granted retroactive effect since many individuals were previously established on Tribal land. The attempt to reclaim these territories from non-Tribals may have ended in a human catastrophe. However, the amended clauses of the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, which paved the way for the formation of the BTC as a territorial council, specify the rights to the land of non-Tribal people residing in the region within the control of the Tribal autonomous council. The protections for “settlement rights, transfer, and inheritance of property, etc. of non-tribal people” are addressed in clause 4.3 of the Memorandum of Settlement of the Act.

Since the founding of the Council, the BTC has attempted to prevent further transfers of Tribal lands to non-Tribals (Brahma, 2018a). Under no circumstances is it permissible to transfer Tribal lands to non-Tribals. It also closes the range of possible sorts of land transfers: Tribals to Tribals, non-Tribals to non-Tribals, and non-Tribals to Tribals. The landholder must prove to the administration that he/she is a bonafide inhabitant of the region, with household land and a patta. If the receiver is a non-Tribal, the Council authorities take further actions to ensure that he is constitutionally allowed to acquire the land. The authorities use the criteria outlined in the Tribal Belts and Blocks Regulations to determine lawful eligibility. The individual must confirm that he or his descendant lived in the region prior to the announcement of the Belts and Blocks criteria and that he may be eligible to receive land as a member of one of the “Protected Classes” under the Belts and Blocks guidelines or regulations.

Land and Tribals in the Act of Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR), 2020

Pursuant to the BTR Act 2020, the Assam government issued the Land Policy 2019, which regarded the idea of protection of the land rights of the Indigenous people as repeated by the state. However, Tribal people in Assam, particularly in the Bodoland region, are again confused, as mentioned above. The Land Policy 2019 clauses use the conflated terms “Indigenous

Backward Classes” and “Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and Backward Communities” in the rights of the Indigenous landless eligible citizens, as in clause 16:

(16.1) Preference may be given to indigenous landless eligible persons of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and Backward Communities in the matter of allotment/settlement of land in rural and urban areas.

(16.2) The existing concession to persons of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe at 25% of the premium of settlement of land and conversion of annual patta land through periodic will continue as usual.¹³

It is important to note that the premium for settlement must be paid during the revenue year in which the decision for settlement is released, or within a period as determined by the government, failing which the directive for such settlement will be withdrawn. This will have an adverse impact on Tribal settlements in the Bodoland region.

The third Bodo Accord 2020, known as Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) Accord 2020, was signed on 27 January 2020 as a continuation of the 2003 Act. The core clauses of the former Accord, specifically the section on non-Tribal land claims, were left unchanged. In the new agreement, the non-Tribal majority settlements on the BTR boundary are excluded, while close Tribal-majority villages outside of it are included in the BTR. Regarding the alteration of the Bodoland Territorial Area District, under paragraph 14 of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution, a commission will be constituted through clause 3 of the Memorandum of Settlement (MoS) of 2020 to examine and provide recommendations on the ability to guide:

(i) Inclusion of villages contiguous to BTAD and having majority tribal population, as demanded by Bodo organisations.

(ii) Exclusion of villages currently under BTAD which are contiguous to non-Sixth Schedule areas and have majority non-tribal population.¹⁴

Anomalies surround the process of exclusion of several communities from the already notified Sixth Schedule region based on population ratios. The boundary was already established by constituting a panel under paragraph 14 of the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, whose report was agreed by both the state and central governments and included as the BTC area in Act 44 of 2003. The area enclosed by the recognised Tribal Belts and Blocks under the Assam land amendment in 1947, the notified Tribal area for special promotion and development under the Tribal Sub-Plan Programme, and the traditional historical tribal inhabited region have previously been identified. The Tribal area is decided based on the once-notified Tribal region in the land legislation and other administrative improvement initiatives, and the traditional Tribal occupied land. In terms of size, there is a considerable population of encroachers in tribal Belts and Blocks who are liable to eviction under the land regulations in Assam. In the Bodoland region itself, a significant area of around 3 lakh bighas is under threat of encroachment. As a result, these unlawful encroachers do not have the right to exclude villagers' settlements from Tribal regions in terms of population proportions. The sentence added in the MoS of the BTR Accord 2020, Clause (1) that the negotiations were held with Bodo organisations for a comprehensive and final solution to their demands while keeping intact the territorial integrity of the State of Assam, is not agreed upon by many Bodo Tribals, which destroys the separate statehood demand. It prioritises the Assam government's provision of legal safeguards for Tribals' land rights beyond Tribal Belts and Blocks. The issues relating to land rights are mentioned in clause 7 of the MoS of the 2020 accord:

(7.1) Government of Assam may consider enacting a special legislation to provide adequate safeguards to land rights of STs living outside tribal Belts and Blocks in areas outside BTAD.

(7.2) Government of Assam will take effective measures to protect khas land, grazing land and water bodies from illegal encroachment.¹⁵

This provides an opportunity to rectify a subject ignored as a non-issue earlier. The present agreement continues to place a premium on the Government of Assam's capacity to establish legal safeguards for Tribal land rights beyond Tribal Belts and Blocks. Notably, the authorities at the hand of the state government mention one of the objectives in the MoS 2020, "to provide legislative safeguards for land rights of tribals", which reduces the power of the Act to the Tribal aspect (Suan Hausing, 2020). The Bodoland autonomy approach is far less secure than that of the Nagaland structure, which enjoys broad sovereignty over land and resources within Article 371-A of the Constitution of India. Essentially, the Bodoland autonomous strategy is still based on development.

Conclusion

The study found that the Tribal peoples are related to the land, as is their legal land ownership and potential to acquire land, and access to land is linked to Tribal rights on the land. The government must realise that the land is essential to Tribals' life and identity. However, they must struggle and face resistance on their own to protect their land.

Many ethnic groups are struggling for land rights, protection and secure access in the Bodoland region; the land issue in Assam in general and the Bodoland region in particular is a long-running one that is unlikely to end any time soon. The fight for land in Assam began not just as a result of the federal polity inadequacy, but also as a result of the Indian state's incapacity to give political and constitutional resolutions to the land issues and debates. The effort to safeguard land, political, social and territorial spaces has contributed to an increase in community conflicts. Conflict and violence have become chronic and all-pervasive in Assam due to a lack of effective governmental policy and civil society interventions. As per the survey, the majority of tribals think that their land is something they want for. The land is all they see, walk on, and feel with the entire body. People cannot imagine life without their land, and they cannot comprehend who they are without it. They are nothing if they do not have the land. It is not negotiable, and land cannot be replaced. Tribal people's spirits, as well as their legal land ownership and capacity to purchase land, land access and livelihoods connected to Tribal rights on the land, are all linked to the land. The authorities must accept that the land is essential to Tribals' life and identity. It is suggested that exploitation be minimised by banning the transfer of Tribal rights to non-Tribals and illegal immigrants (excluding protected classes) from outside the four districts (Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baska and Udalguri) of the region and ensuring Tribal rights on Tribal lands.

The study found that the Tribals wanted to protect and preserve their land, but they needed proper government processes to help them secure the use of land that others cannot easily access. The present laws in the Bodoland region prohibiting the transfer of land from tribals to others are deemed to be both suitable and adequate. Land conflicts in the Bodoland region are caused by a variety of factors, including illegal immigration, both from inside India and from crossing the border. The inflow of immigrants into the areas of Bodoland is not surprising. The former Goalpara includes Kokrajhar, the heartland of Bodoland. Goalpara has long been recognised as the main entrance point for persons attempting to access Assam. Immigrants from Bangladesh, mainly from Mymensing, Pabna, Bogra and Rongpur, arrived in Goalpara as early as 1901, settling on burned land tracts, and the immigration is still occurring. In this respect, the land concerns and tensions that arise today in tribal regions between immigrant Muslims and Tribal inhabitants are not new in Kokrajhar and the other three districts of the region. Other reasons are the purchase of land for

government development, the effect of land division in protected areas, failure to respect a legal right to use the land, and unauthorised use of other lands.

Even though the Bodoland region is regulated under the provisions of the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, land has become a lasting and seemingly intractable issue. However, the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) Accord 2020 has pledged Indigenous groups' rights to land, a new land policy to protect the land rights of "protected classes" of non-Tribal groups, and equitable land rights for all Tribal communities. It will be interesting to see how development projects and democratic constituency delimitations increasing encroachment in Bodoland alter power dynamics and reshape not only the autonomy and power but also inter- and intra-ethnic interactions, as stated in the objective number (v) of the MoS of 2020, "to ensure accelerated development of tribal areas". But the absence of government equity, justice and reciprocity procedures on tribal land will destabilise the region. The state government should develop measures to involve all residents in the region and provide power to the local government to utilise the right way to bring about the land mortgage prohibition, redemption of equity, and provide land access and legal protection of Tribal land as well as giving due emphasis to protected classes. This will help develop solidarity, togetherness and integrity among all segments of the Indigenous people of the Bodoland region, allowing them to live in peace and security.

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¹ 1-3. Re-enactment of code of the rules passed on 23 November 1791; term settlement; to be perpetual with approbation of Court of Director. Rep. by the Repealing Act, 1874 (16 of 1874), p. 25.

² Bengal Regulation 8 of 1793, p. 27.

³ This regulation has been declared by notification under the Schedule Districts Act, 1874, (XIV of 1874), s.3, to be in force in the Districts of Goalpara (excluding the Eastern Duars) and Sylhet—see Notification Nos. 1152-J., date 3 September 1879 and 1242-J., dated 1 April 1897 in the Manual of Local Rules and Orders, Vol. I, together with Notification No. 713-L., dated 27 September 1937.

⁴ In Assam, the Deputy Commissioner, as to exercise of functions of Deputy Commissioners, see- the Assam Land Revenue Regulation, 1886 (I of 1886), Chapter VII.

⁵ See – by order of the Governor-General-in-Council, Fort William, 12 November 1864, (Sd.) H.M. Durand, *Colonel, Secy. to the Government of India, No. LVIII Proclamation*, pp. 156–157.

⁶ The British Government, ever sincerely desirous of maintaining friendly relations with neighbouring States, and especially mindful of the obligation imposed on it by the Treaty of 1774.

⁷ Assam landholding measurements are: 7 bighas, 2 kathas, and 6 lessas = 1 hectare; 1 bigha = 0.1337 hectare; 1 bigha = 5 katha and 1 katha = 20 lessa.

⁸ Just after the independence of India on 15 August 1947, the Congress Ministry in Assam headed by late Gopinath Bordoloi had taken steps for the creation of Belts and Blocks for tribals and backward classes by amending the Assam Land and Revenue Regulation Act 1886 by adding Chapter-X in 1947.

⁹ See the Memorandum of Settlement (MoS) of Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC) Accord Act, 1993 on 20 February 1993.

¹⁰ See the MoS of BTC Accord Act, 2003.

¹¹ See the Gazette of India No. 48 dated September 3, 2003 (Sixth Schedule), The Sixth Schedule to the Constitution (Amendment) Act, 2003 (Act 44 of 2003), (Part II-Sec 1).

¹² The Gazette of India No. 48, dated September 3, 2003 (Sixth Schedule), The Sixth Schedule to the Constitution (Amendment) Act, 2003 (Act 44 of 2003).

¹³ Land Policy-2019 of Assam, RDM-15023/7/2018-LS-REV/20, ECF No. 77629/2018/20, dated Guwahati, 13 November 2019. p. 16.

¹⁴ MoS of Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) Accord, 27 January 2020.

¹⁵ MoS of BTR Accord, 2020, pp. 4–5.

A Study on Land Access Issues and Livelihoods of Tribal Peoples in the Context of Bodoland Territorial Region of Assam, India

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Abstract

Land access is crucial to the well-being of the poorest. The land is a precious asset for the rural and urban poor; it is required for economic activity, poverty reduction, sustainable development, and household well-being. It is also associated with identity, particularly for tribal communities. Land access refers to the ability to utilise, administer, transfer, benefit from resources, and with people's ability to obtain a living in consideration. However, inaccessibility is an inequality limiting people's and households' capacity to connect a livelihood. It is uncertain if the land issue is still relevant and active today and whether it is a legitimate grievance in the Assam of India. Thus, the land is at the heart of many concerns in the Bodoland Territorial Region of Assam and an efficient means of communication among its residents, particularly tribal peoples. On the other hand, equal land access will help the least fortunate and is expected to relieve pressure from land area induced dearth. The research focused on the opportunities for tribal people to access and utilise land, discriminating persons who are completely landless or have limited, insufficient, and insecure access to land and for who land access is important for life or livelihood. It aims to identify land issues and linkages that cause tribes in the region to be concerned, as well as to discuss and offer recommendations on actions and land complexity. The study depicted the majority of the important processes that culminated in tribals' uneasiness and discontent over land. In contrast, it examines the impacts of policy and programmatic activities on the processes and incentives for tribal groups in the region to access land and land concerns that are inextricably linked to the contentious definition.

Keywords: Land Access, Livelihoods, Landless, Tribes, Ability to use secure land

1. Introduction

The land is a combination of harmonious and dynamic relationships, possessions and creations. Throughout tribal history, the link between land and its potential has been essential. The frantic uncertainty of land possession and land-related issues that ostensibly appear to be our everyday life becomes analogous to our inheritance's conundrum. In the absence of protected land equities, bizarre

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communities are continuously endangered. The terrain has a subtle intricacy as well. Though access to land is granted indefinitely for certain groups, unequal access has an impact on individuals. The primary causes continue to be insufficient land access or unfavourable conditions. There are unprecedented opportunities to rethink land access structure, legislation, and practice to enhance and preserve disadvantaged peoples' access to rural land. Thus, land access is usually defined as the processes that allow individuals or groups to occupy and utilise the land.

The relationship between land and its potential has been highly significant throughout tribal history. The related to land access has provided such groups with the opportunity to use secure land. However, inequitable access impacts people's lives, including shelter, food, water, and employment. Wickeri and Kalhan (2010) are access to land is critical for economic growth and poverty alleviation. Nonetheless, access to a wide variety is frequently necessary. The land is underutilised and exploited in less developed countries in terms of sustainability. Inefficient land access or unfair access terms continue to be a significant source of hunger, and unfulfilled land demands may be a source of political instability (De Janvry et al., 2001; Cotula et al., 2006). Thus, reflect land access is usually defined as the processes that allow individuals or organisations to occupy and utilise land (Quan, 2006).

Land availability and the ability to use it efficiently are critical to the well-being of the world's impoverished. The land is a crucial resource for the rural and urban poor and household well-being (Alden Wily, 2003). Similarly, the understanding idea of 'land access' relates to the capacity to access land and concerns a wide range of rights. Access to land is critical for long-term sustainability and poverty alleviation. Although it is not the sole way out of poverty, there is enough data to suggest that it successfully helps rural households to generate better incomes through grain sales and money saved. The family feeds itself near the land. Individuals in both urban and rural locations rely on suitable land regions for shelter and access to supplies. The land is also associated with identity, particularly for indigenous people. Raihan, Fatehin, and Haque (2009), land acquiescence refers to the capacity to utilise lands and other natural resources, manage the resources, transmit the rights to the land, and take advantage of other advantages. In their focus on livelihood, Geiser et al. (2011) influence people's ability to secure a livelihood. However, inaccessibility or lack of access is an inequality that limits people's and households' capacity to earn a livelihood.

Access to land is fundamental and has become a critical issue in providing secure and sustainable access to land for all those who need it, particularly the poor (Network, 2008). It is common for the rural poor to rely on custom. Customary land rights, for example, are frequently established in native societies through the means through which community leaders' award land rights to members of the group. Such access rights may have their origins in long-term land usage. Land redistribution programmes are included in the land reform policies to provide access to land to the rural poor while boosting agricultural efficiency and growth (FAO, 2002). The land rises in value to become one of the most precious possessions (Arua & Eka, 2002). Understandably, people be devoted to their own land and tribe. Land concerns differ from one location to another. It is, in fact, similar in every place where Francisco (1974) asserts that "land is still an issue." Land concerns cover many issues, including population pressures and migratory patterns, returns of refugees and displaced persons, land-use disputes, historic land claims, and challenges to local authorities. To what extent existing programmes engage land as a part of civil strife, there is a need to analyse land issues and examine how access to, use of, and management of land is a risk factor for future violence within each province or district (Huggins, 2010).

India has the greatest number of rural poor and landless families in the world. Although landlessness is the most important indicator of rural poverty, central authorities have mostly ignored redistributive land

policies until recently (Hanstad et al., 2008). The land is inherited in rural India. Many indigenous peoples in Bodoland have homes and own some land, but their assets are so restricted or unproductive that they cannot get a higher value from their land activities. Land difficulties in the region have been highlighted as a lengthy tragedy for tribal peoples and non-tribal cultures, with the majority experiencing uneven access to land. It also disregards a long-established entitlement to utilise the property. Doubting key members of indigenous communities' more equitable access to land and the benefit of gaining land rights has consequences.

Land concerns provide substantial obstacles and have been identified as one of India's primary sources of unrest, instability, anarchy, or controversies. It asserted that tribal identity might be rooted in a relationship with the land. The tribal groups of people cannot protect themselves unless they maintain control over the land. Throughout India's post-independence history, vast swaths of land have been handed to numerous non-tribal settlers, who have ceded control of community assets and land instead of tribal communities. As a result, the number of tribals has dropped in several places. As in the case of Assam, the Bodoland Territorial Region has played a significant role as a phenomenon. There is growing anxiety among tribals around the region, who now perceive an increased percentage of land rights problems in most areas.

2. Literature Review

Gilbert (2013) has garnered considerable attention as a land rights issue, Wickeri and Kalhan (2010) the land is a bridging problem. Access to land, Bandeira and Sumpsi (2009) collective action in rural land distribution, and Eagle (2014) usage control all impact the legal system about access to land for specific groups. It's appealing to utilise regulatory land to advance the public good. Bandeira and Sumpsi (2011), the lack of consensus on the social repercussions of land ownership rights has prompted a heated debate about 'rural poverty and access to land in developing nations.' De Janvry et al. (2001), one of the key causes of hunger and unfulfilled land needs is a lack of access to land or unfavourable access to land. Kelly et al. (2013) associate growing tribal ability and power with access to land rights, and Clarkson and Murphy (2016) believe tribes and individuals in exchange for a proposed tribal status.

Cotula et al. (2006), the land is a crucial asset that must be strengthened and safeguarded to ensure disadvantaged people's access to rural land; the Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030) also expertly emphasises rurality. Land access is quite frequent. Quan (2006) saw the possibility to occupy and utilise the land. Tribes, Geiser et al. (2011), are very interested in relying on land-based resources for a living. FAO (2002), land access is typically required for sustainable rural livelihoods. It emphasises the importance of policies that facilitate access to land for all sections, Network (2008) sustainable access to land for all, underprivileged, and Zarin & Bujang (1994) land for the benefit of landless people. Raihan et al. (2009) refer to the capacity to utilise lands as access to land, Rutten et al. (2010) valuable locations, and Melis et al. (2006), "Land is to govern." ANGO (2009) gained access to the property since it is Mannan's (2001) status symbol, wanting to provide seized land to the landless.

Rao (2017), land has always been the most important asset for tribals, with identification, existence, and survival intimately tied to it. Mearns (1999) presents an overarching foundation for feasible attempts to improve rural impoverished India's access to land to reduce inequality through rural development. Tribals face numerous challenges, Behera and Singh (2014). Pimple and Sethi (2005), agriculture employs 70 per cent of the population. The land is a source of subsistence and a way of life, but to Mearns and Sinha (1998), having access to land is essential for increasing poor rural access.

3. Brief Profile of the Study Area

The Bodoland Territorial Region has become an autonomous or self-governing region in Assam, India's northeast. Bodoland Territorial Region comprises four districts: Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa, and Udalguri (BTR). The territory under the authority of the Bodoland Territorial Region is known as the Bodoland Territorial Area Districts (BTAD) (Brahma, 2018). It is an administrative unit formed under the Indian Constitution's Sixth Schedule. Earlier to the Bodoland Territorial Region, it was known as the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC). The BTC was established under the terms of a peace treaty signed on February 10, 2003. As a result, its autonomy was further extended by signing a new peace treaty on January 27, 2020, including the Government of India and the Government of Assam on one side. On the one hand, the agreement includes all four factions of the National Democratic Front of Bodoland, the All Bodo Students' Union, and the United Bodo People's Organisation.

The Bodoland Territorial Region is mainly located on the north bank of the great Brahmaputra River, close below the Arunachal Pradesh foothills and the Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan. The boundary is shared in the south with parts of the Assam districts of Dhubri, Bongaigaon, Barpeta, Nalbari, Kamrup, Darrang, and Sonitpur. Assam's Sonitpur district's Panchnoi River to the east, while to the west is the Sankoch River and adjacent West Bengal.

The proposed geographic region of the BTR is 8,795 sq. km. The four districts of the BTR geographical boundaries are located within 26°7'12" N to 26°47'50" N latitude and 89°47'40" E to 92°18'30" E longitude north-western part, including its Assam. The district-wise location as The Kokrajhar district acts as a doorway to India's north-eastern region. Roads, rails, and the airway also get ready with little assistance (air transport started in 2021) to seven sister states that pass through this area on their route to other northeast states. The district is located between the longitudes of 89.46' E, and 90.38' E and the latitudes of 26.19' N and 26.54" N. Chirang district is located in the lower Brahmaputra valley. The district is situated between the longitudes of 26°28' N and 26°54' N, and latitudes of 89°42' E and 90°06' E. Baksa is at 23°11' N latitude and 88°55' E longitude, whereas Udalguri is between 26°462 and 26°77' N latitude and 92°082 and 95°15' E longitude.

BTAD has a population of 31,51,047 people, with 16,00,712 men and 15,50,335 females, according to the 2011 census. Meanwhile, 30,10,953 people live in rural regions, while 1,40,094 live in cities. Table 1.1 shows the details of the district-level population demographics in four separate BTAD districts.

Table 1.1: District-wise population in four distinct BTAD districts, 2011

Districts	Persons	Male	Female	Rural	Urban	All Total (%)
Kokrajhar	887142	452905	434237	832201	54750	28
Chirang	482162	244860	237302	446825	35337	15
Baksa	950075	481330	468745	937833	12242	30
Udalguri	831668	421617	410051	794094	37574	27
Total	3151047	1600712	1550335	3010953	140094	100

Source: Provisional Population Census of 2011, Bodoland.

The scheduled tribe community accounts for the vast bulk of the BTAD population. The tribal people of the region is mainly made up of Bodos, Rabhas and a small number of Garos, with the Bodos accounting for around 90% of the total. The Bodoland's Garo and Rabha people claim one of the region's three tribal tribes among the Bodos.

Rabha and Garo people live in nearly all four districts of BTR. The total ST population of the BTAD is 10,55,731 persons, according to the 2011 census, with 5,28,036 men and 5,27,699 females. Table 1.2 will display the total Scheduled Tribe population of four separate districts, percentages within each section, and the fraction of BTAD.

Table 1.2: Total Schedule Tribes Population of BTC in four Districts, 2011

Districts	ST Population			
	Total ST population	All Total (%)	Male	Female
Kokrajhar	278665	31.41	139579	139086
Chirang	178688	37.05	89273	89415
Baksa	33107	34.84	165634	165373
Udalguri	267372	32.14	133550	133822

Sources: Population Census 2011 (India), Assam

4. Objectives of the Study

The key objectives of the research study are as follows:

1. To study the relationship of land and tribal in the Assam and particularly Bodoland Territorial Region;
2. To study land access issues that affect the land tie of the varied interest of tribals;
3. To investigate how land have contributed to livelihoods of tribals in the Bodoland Territorial Region;
4. To review and makes reasonable recommendations associated with tribal land access and livelihoods;

5. Need and Importance of the Research

Several poor households refusing access to land can have severe implications for people, communities, and whole countries. Several of the difficulties viewed as collisions among various cultures are, in reality, land confrontation and associated resources. The study aims to reveal the intricacies of tribal land issues' causes to develop appropriate coping strategies for such conflicts. Keep in mind that no systematic research has been performed in this area thus far, making it all the more significant. In addition, the analysis allows for the creation of foresight regarding both land and tribe fundamental values.

6. Scope of the Research

Land access difficulties are a problem in tribal territories. These concerns have frequently masked the rising erosion of tribal land rights, leading to conflict between tribal and non-tribal populations. From all perspectives, the research analysis has a wide range to comprehend. It also ensures humans that land concerns are not limited to our immediate family members but are considerably more widespread than we realise.

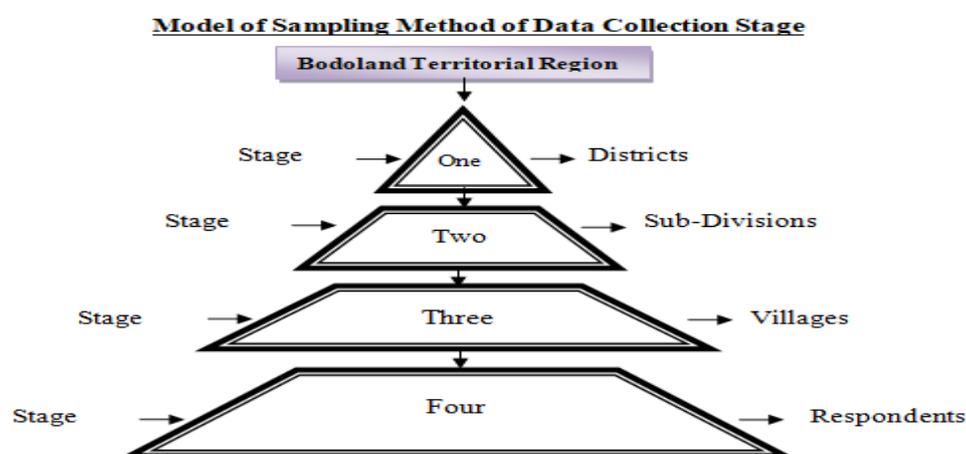
7. Research Approach and Methodology

The research approach is both exploratory and analytical. As a result, the study used primary and secondary sources. The core data for this study will be provided through an in-depth participant interview, questionnaire, and field analysis in the study region. During the inquiry process, the published works of notable thinkers will also be studied as secondary sources.

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The study employed a hybrid approach to data collecting. Given the complexity of the topic, a questionnaire, both structured and semi-structured, was created to collect quantitative data. Qualitative information and data were gathered through methodologies such as focus group talks, participant observation, interviews, and so on. It has assisted in getting in the proper direction for collecting reliable info facts.

As demonstrated, a sample is a subset of a greater whole. Sampling saves time, energy, and hence resources. It allows for a greater concentration on high-quality knowledge about a restricted number of points by decreasing the number of instances involved. The plain, the Bodoland Territorial Region, has a distinct geographical character that requires careful study. The current study employed a multi-stage random sample of respondents. Respondents were chosen from the villages' tribes peoples when gathering data sources for sampling in the fourth stage. The stage is depicted in Figure 1.1 of the following:



There are 3,066 villages in four districts: 1,068 in Kokrajhar, 508 in Chirang, 690 in Baksa, and 800 in Udalguri. The data would be collected from a sample of 20 villages chosen at random from the four districts to cover 400 respondent families, with 5 villages selected at random from each district. It would be gathered 20 respondent families from each randomly selected village, for a total of $5 \times 20 = 100$ (Villages \times Respondents families = Total) from one district. This research sample's randomly selected respondents will solely correlate to tribal peoples. As the study required participants from both tribes' homes, an intentional sample of villages was carried out to include the Bodo and Non-Bodo tribal communities.

8. The Questionnaire Design

It produced the following research questionnaire for the research study, which will guide research inquiry or investigation. The questionnaire was designed with the research study objectives in mind and divided into various components, which are divided into six sections as follows: Part-I: The personal background information of the respondents or participants; Part-II: The exploring meaning of land; Part-III: The tribal land rights issues; Part-IV: Land access issues impacting tribal land ties; Part-V: The tribal landless and livelihoods; Part-VI: The Compensation and Rehabilitation of tribal land.

9. Data Collection Techniques of Research Periods

The following diagram depicts knowledge of research methods for the primary approaches utilised in data collecting. Cover all of the planned research field study combinations of 10 (Ten) subdivisions of four districts of the Bodoland Territorial Region of Assam, India, while collecting primary data from respondents. To ensure data accuracy, data was obtained manually following the criteria.

Other data collection techniques have also been investigated, such as government reports, documents, district-official records, and other related national and state government publications- such as publications and reports of India such as the Annual Report and Year-End Review of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Annual Report of the Department of Commerce and Economic Survey of India, Census Report of the Government of India. Several Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs), Accords, and Agreements between the Government of India, Northeast India, and Assam are employed for data collection and analysis.

A survey of diverse data and information sources was conducted to investigate the research study or need from multiple sources. It analyses resources from books, published journals, international and national seminar papers, periodicals, newspapers, occasional papers and lectures, working papers, discussion papers, and internet sources.

10. Application of Theory of Research Study

This theoretical framework for the study is founded on two theories: The Theory of Land Tenure and the second is the Theory of Property Rights. Land tenure refers to the conditions under which persons maintain and use land, a "bundle of rights and responsibilities" that control how "land is held, used, transferred, and succeeded." "The relationship, whether legally or customarily defined, among people, as individuals or groups, with respect to land", also Apparently "Land tenure can be determine as the mode by which land is held or owned, or the set of relationships among people concerning the use of land and its product" (Schickele, 1952; La Croix, 2002; Network, 2008; Payne, 1997). As a result, land tenure assurance is now viewed as a multidimensional notion, with the conveyance of land indicating the highest level of safety (Brasselle et al., 2002).

In another sense, tenure reflects direct linkages between people and land and ties that include individuals and groups of people via transactions with land and other natural resources. The basic principles of land tenure govern how property rights are exercised – "use, control, and transfer" are to be assigned within communities and are frequently regulated by statute or customary law. Each can have a different impact on land tenure (Kasimbazi, 2017). Land tenure should be viewed first and foremost as a social relationship regulated by a complex set of rules that govern land usage and ownership (Payne & Durand-Lasserre, 2012). As shown by Fouries (2000), Land tenure focuses on the rights of people or organisations concerning the land. Krajisnik (2011) contends that tenure may be impacted in various ways, all of which are reliant on the legal and constitutional frameworks in existence. Doebele (1983), land tenure or the right to use land is connected to legal concepts. It is thought that guaranteeing the land rights of the impoverished masses in rural areas, who rely on land as their primary source of income, will assist (World Bank, 2003).

Property is a person's neediness. When Plato and Aristotle discussed the role of property in social organisation, nearly every political scientist focused on the social component of property by defining it (Kanatli, 2020). The idea of "property rights" describes how decision rights are given based on the worth of "intangible assets" (Mumdziev & Windsperger, 2011). Donnelly (2012), the land is sometimes referred to as "real property," and the individual right to a property generally enhances access to, use of, and control over land (UN-OHCHR, 2015).

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Aristotle (384 BC-322 BC) discusses property throughout the *Politics* and in other works, most notably the *Rhetoric* and *Nicomachean Ethics*. These problems were centred on land. Aristotle draws essential distinctions between land and other property (assets) (Newman, 1887; Miller, 1986). The Magna Carta (1215) was endorsed and confirmed, stating "no freeman shall be taken, imprisoned, or disseised of his Freehold...but by the lawful judgment of his peers, or by the Law of the Land." Furthermore, it is an unavoidable fact that "no person shall be... deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law" (Joseph, 2001). Pejovich (1982) stated of Karl Marx, "Marx was the first social scientist to have a theory of property rights," Marx's property philosophy developed the interpellation. Agrawal and Ostrom (2001) Property rights are continuously being contested. Right holders' capacity to exercise their rights efficiently is hampered by contestation.

Property stems from the "right to self-preservation," a crucial component of the world (Willinsky, 2007). The property was defined considerably more broadly in the eighteenth century than it is in current parlance. Individuals' lives and rights are covered in John Locke's definition (Laslett, 1965). Individuals can acquire and own land and other resources because Locke discovered property rights. The lack of formal property rights is a severe impediment to the poor (Feder et al., 1988), because legal property rights are endogenous (Galiani & Schargrodsy, 2010), a lack of property rights impedes transition and acquiring more extensive land rights (De Soto, 2000). In terms of land's significance, descriptions will aggressively clarify how property rights should be enforced.

The land is used for various purposes; land and property rights have a significant impact on people's lives and livelihoods. "These rights pertain to the rules that govern who can do what with what resources and assets, for how long, and under what conditions" (FAO, 2010). The question of what role tribals should have in ensuring that property rights and choices are properly formed is recurring. And what type of property rights must be established for indigenous groups to have secure and effective access to land?

11. Conceptual Study of Tribes, Land and Land Access

11.1 Tribes People: The tribes of India, their identities and names, have always piqued interest. Before the colonial period, tribes were referred to as "a kind of people," with 'Jana' instead of 'Jati' falling outside of Verna's hierarchy. The tribes were not seen as unequal or discriminatory. They were usually a component of the land's political process, in which authority was negotiated by armed forces between local rulers and leaders (Roy Burman et al., 2004). They had accumulated enough strength by this time to form their own kingdoms of identity. The Tribes are not a homogeneous collection of people; they exist in a variety of ecological niches and places. They are also conceptually separated from the general population. By retaining their particular laws and traditions and conservative campaigns, the "laws of the land" have remained relevant to them for a long time. Even customary laws still function entirely, but only in domestic affairs.

In general, the term "tribe" refers to a collectively united entity identified with an area that is not shuffled in a confusing mass with others, the members of which consider tribes as politically autonomous. Who lives per their own social, economic, and religious traditions and histories than those countries of that people now comprise a part. However, government officials continue to use the word "tribe" and refer to the most disadvantaged segments of society. As long as the government, non-government organisations, and people utilise the tribal nomenclature, marginalisation, discrimination, and social and economic abuse are likely to endure. The tribes were praised for being the land's original occupants and

guardians. Morris and Pandey (2007) but in practical that no one does not have close relatives, who have been deceived out of their property due to illegal annexation by the others.

11.2 Land: Since land is limited in quantity, immobile, and irreversible, it is required for all human activity. It is unquestionably a public benefit in and of itself (Doebele, 1987), and land is the most limited resource (Brewer, 1988). As a result, the land may be regarded as a tool for furthering human growth or development (Zarin & Bujang, 1994), a fundamental and essential item. However, the concept of land may be perceived from many perspectives, which might differ from civilization to society and from person to person. The concept of land is complex, including diverse characteristics in each place of the planet at any period in history. "When one loses their land, they lose not just their livelihood, but also their identity." The land is essential to most rural lives, but it is also intimately tied to issues of identification and authority. As a result, land ownership is a sustaining factor (Huggins, 2010). Even though the land is the most important socially valued item, its unequal distribution maintains the hierarchical structure. It enhances the favoured classes' dominance by maintaining inequality and deprivation in various socioeconomic sectors (Mohanty, 2001).

11.3 Land Access Acuity: Land access is often defined as the methods by which people or organizations gain the right and opportunity to hold and utilize the land on a conditional basis for agricultural, physical, and social reasons (Quan, 2006). Land access refers to the ability to get access to land. As an example of relevant and intuitive meaning:

Control Rights- the right to monitor the administration of a property is referred to as control rights. Individuals should have the right to decide how can use the Land; *Management Rights*-management rights include the right to control a land possession under the constraints set by the interest; *Right to Access* - individuals have the freedom to gather competence under the right of access, also known as material access rights; *Right of the first Occupancy* - historically, the right to the first occupation is derived from the entry and placement of individuals in an uninhabited region; *Right of Clearance*- the arrangement issued by the first occupant for cutting bush and consistently planting is known as the right of clearing or clearance; *Use Rights*- there are the privileges to use the land for farming, grazing, processing forestry resources, and so on. The right to utilize land is an inherent right of land ownership, but it can also refer to the right to use and benefit from the immovable property as the recipient has been the holder; *Usufruct*- right to reap all of the benefits derived from using something that belongs to someone else, as long as the material is not damaged or harmed; *Waste or Abuse*- theoretically, waste relates to the owner's right to alter the property's condition for the best or the worst, though the most popular meaning is land abuse.

11.4 Tribes and Land in India: The tribes themselves agree that they are the tribal people. However, the Indian state, which is predominantly non-tribal, instead of embracing a viewpoint that would equate them with the tribes' peoples (Brahma, 2019). As a result, the term tribe has persisted, representing the marginal and inferior position of most tribes. In all modernity and development projects/strategies, the paradigm of prosperity in a post-independence India is regrettably less for tribal peoples. That affects tribes' means of livelihood are regarded as unsustainable. The paradigm of prosperity in a post-independence India is sadly less for tribal peoples in modernization and development projects/strategies. This has an impact on tribes' ways of subsistence, which are deemed unsustainable. The tribes, on the other hand, have never been silent on the issues, and there have been many tribal uprisings that have symbolized the assertion of both tribal identity and tribal land rights in the face of various forms of oppression. If the dominant mainstream refuses to see tribes as equal, tribal land and livelihoods have been considered a threat to contemporary India's egalitarian process. Since the state has

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only had little success in bringing the tribes into line through affirmative action in India, the political implications of tribal land have been essential.

The Indian Constitution appears to be a pioneer in the defence of tribal groups, particularly property rights because the land was seen as vital for subsistence and prosperity and tribal identity. Despite this precaution, the Scheduled Tribes are among the most vulnerable and weakest tribes in Indian society (Wahi & Bhatia, 2018). The land is essential to tribal identity and fosters a sense of well-being. In many civilizations, it is also a social status symbol. Because land is so necessary for their life, each tribe has developed its own customs, or land management control systems, based on their common law (Nongkynrih, 2008). India is unique in that it possesses a highly evolved minority rights defence mechanism for its Scheduled Tribes, which is essentially antiquated owing to a lack of enforcement in practise. The most vulnerable and marginalized tribes continue to rely on land rights to ensure a protective legal and administrative system. The tribes and the land are important aspects of tribal identity and legacy. The constructive protection of tribal and land an interest has advanced from the local to the global level.

Obtaining Land in India without annexation is quite tricky (Morris & Pandey, 2007). The land is the most critical asset and form of property in a tribal society. However, if it is not distributed fairly among people of a given region or town, it might impact. In the same way, not everyone has access to land. In reality, the distribution of landholdings across families is very asymmetric in most locations. In India, the vast majority of tribal households own some land, generally in smallholdings. It implies that disparities impact the vast majority of tribals. In most places, the distribution of landholdings among families is very lopsided. The great majority of tribal households in India possess some land, usually on smallholdings. It suggests that inequalities affect the great majority of tribals.

11.5 Land and Tribal in North-East India: Many of the British reforms had a significant detrimental impact on the lowest levels of the Indian population in the Northeast states. The most visible of them is the conversion of land into a commodity. Before the colonial administration and the feudal system, the nominal proprietor was the king or local monarch, and taxes were collected on his behalf by the village chief or head. The land became the lawful property of the landlord or tax collector during British policy. In that sense, he had the authority to evict or remove people and acquire and sell land. There was no right to eviction previously, and the tribute was proportional to the quantity produced.

Furthermore, a person may have purposefully migrated to another location if he believed the system was oppressive in one region. Unfortunately, under the new British colonial land revenue system, taxes were set so that peasants had to pay that amount regardless of productivity. Failure to pay resulted in eviction from the property. The opportunity to transfer out was similarly restricted due to individual ownership structures. As a result, individuals lost their land and were forced to work as indentured servants. Tribals were the most vulnerable since their lands were progressively taken by dishonest merchants who lent money to tribes at high-interest rates. When tribals were unable to pay, they took their lands. Through land tax policy and convoluted exploitative bureaucratic methods, the British Colonial administration, Mohanty (2001), made land alienable, particularly in tribal communities.

Even after the Indian states gained independence, their attitudes about tribes remained constant. Many were taught the assimilation vs isolation doctrine, which argued that indigenous peoples should be integrated into mainstream populations or preserved as "museum pieces." Indeed, there are many sorts of tribal information available nowadays. To begin with, the information is only needed for administrative purposes and the implementation of government-run programmes. However, it could only play a minor role (Roy Burman et al., 2004; Brahma, 2019).

The January 2020 Bodoland Territorial Region agreement prioritizes the Assam government's provision of legislative safeguards for tribal land rights outside tribal belts and blocks. As little more than a result, the Bodoland autonomy model is considerably less secure than the Nagaland arrangement, which has extensive authority over "land and resources" under Article 371A of the Indian Constitution. Essentially, the Bodoland independent policy has remained the same (Suan Hausing, 2020).

12. Conclusion

What responsibilities tribals play in assuring that secure land and decisions are genuinely developed is a reoccurring concern. And what kind of processes must be created for tribal communities to enable access to land to be secure and effective? It made on how to execute the best land policy and legislation to ensure the long-term prosperity and stability of the Bodoland area. Legislation and actions must take into account the many aspects of land rights and utilisation. To guarantee that tribal interests and rights are meet and safeguard, tribal people (body) must participate in policy formation. The research recognises the outcomes of laws and policies to strengthen tribal groups' occupancy stability and potential policy adjustments needed to enhance tribal relations to the land and lessen land-based issues and sustainable livelihoods.

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Statements of Ethics and Conflict Interest

the Corresponding Authors, declare and undertake that scientific, ethical, and citation criteria were followed in the work titled "A Study on Land Access Issues and Livelihoods of Tribal People in the Context of Bodoland Territorial Region of Assam, India," the Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry journal editorial board accepts no responsibility for any ethical breaches that may occur, that all responsibility rests with the author/s, and that this work has not been submitted to any other academic publication platform for review. This study has no conflicts of interest.

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The Land Access and Conflict Issues of Tribal Peoples in Bodoland Territorial Region of Assam, India

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Abstract---Inequitable land access and land disputes are commonly mentioned as major causes of instability in the Bodoland region. Land problems are frequently invoked as a more potent debating tactic in conflict. For tribal in the region, land reform, ownership, registry, legal pluralism, boundary difficulties, landlessness, insecure land usage, and other associated issues are all major concerns. Major land legislation has failed to significantly reduce the number of major land disputes in the region. The British Colonial rule in India created substantial disruptions to land practices and possessions, which are still felt today in various regions of the country and in Northeast India, notably Assam. It's clear that the land issue is still relevant and active.

Keywords---conflict, land access, rights and control, secure land use, tribal peoples.

Introduction

The land conflicts mostly have far-reaching negative consequences on economic, social, geographical, and ecological growth. Several poor families refuse access to the land. Land disputes can have devastating impacts on people, such as on communities and whole countries. Several of the conflicts that are view as collisions within different societies are, in fact, land conflicts and associated resources. Provided seeks to expand the awareness of the complexities of land disputes' causes to allow effective coping methods with those tensions (Wehrmann, 2008). India's tribal groups face many issues. In the tribal area, the land is a contested question (Behera & Singh, 2009). Fernandes (2017), assert that perhaps the form of modernisation of tribal societies in North East India underpins the new rural growth model that results in land and conflicts. Though

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Northeast India is experiencing the same rural distress as the rest of India, there have been no farmer massacres. Land and disputes that arise from it are unique to the area (Brown & Raymond, 2014; Zhou et al., 2017).

Land is the principal source of income for nearly half of the worldwide people. However, land and land-based services are more important, especially for tribal people's subsistence needs (Patnaik, 2009). Fernandes et al. (2019), attempt to understand land has been at the heart of tribal heritage. It widely regarded as the root cause of many of these ethnic disputes in Northeastern India. That requires a glance at the land issues and conflicts of tribal. Magsi et al. (2017) seek land-use conflicts in developing nations to describe the fundamental factors and effects of land-use disputes. Also, entail providing any protective strategies for coping with such conflicts (Deininger & Feder, 2001; Geoghegan, 2002).

Land conflicts occur throughout many aspects. The most common form of land conflict in India is frequent boundary conflicts. Other prevailing land disputes arise in India due to restricted land access caused by prejudice by statute, tradition, or practise regarding conflicting utilises on collective and communal land, unlawful or inappropriate use of the common property and competitive usage on government land. The rising prevalence of land conflicts in Assam and Bodoland is a well-known fact. It indicated that often minor land tensions would escalate into massive civil unrest and violence. Rao (2017), has always been the essential assets for tribal groups and their identification. Tribal existence or survival inextricably linked to the land (Du et al., 2002; Galiani & Schargrotsky, 2010).

It expected silently the common that 'Assam Land Policy of 2019' (2019), possible to dispose of many grievances pending seeking land settlements in the State and control the prolonged possession of government land with landless peoples efficiently and satisfactorily. It addresses the immediate need to secure the State's indigenous peoples' land rights. There is a need to review the existing land policy and the State's land laws and make necessary amendments to bring them into line with current realities (Lambin et al., 2014; Haines-Young, 2009).

Literature review

Scholar benefit from literature systematic reviews since the reader is given with a concise and professionally structured account of research in a certain area (Banister & Van Wee, 2015). Wickeri & Kalhan (2010), it is true that addressing a land issue is a bridge issue. Access to land is not only necessary for economic growth and poverty reduction, but it is also frequently required for the exercise of a wide range of rights. Land access has an impact on a variety of rights. Human development is hampered by land conflicts. Singh & Nair (2015) The major conclusion of the study shows that land administration is the most common source of land conflicts in India, with political and socio-cultural factors gaining traction. Land conflicts are most common in Assam, followed by Maharashtra, Odisha, and Nagaland (Jha et al., 2017; Anderson et al., 2016).

Land disputes usually have far-reaching negative repercussions. This is especially true in developing nations and other transitional economies, where land and

labour structures are unstable and illegal activity offers shared economic benefits (Wehrmann, 2008). Bijoy et al. (2010), The government rejects the use of the phrase "indigenous people," claiming that all Indians are indigenous, and it is vehemently opposed to any claim to indigenous sovereignty, self-governance, or self-determination. It appears to be despite the fact that India's existing laws allow for varying degrees of certain safeguards—some of which are far-reaching for specific groups. Shah (2007), emphasises the 'dark side of indigeneity,' which may demonstrate how local appropriation and a literature-focused worldview would sustain a class system that further marginalises the poor (Hniloskurenko et al., 2021; Kokorina et al., 2021).

That identification to Adivasis/Indigenous Inhabitants was designed as a compilation of research on important topics relating to the existence of Adivasis/Indigenous Communities. Ekka (2011), aims to strengthen links and collaborations between campaigns, scholars, and activists who have been taught about the threats of political confrontation. Sigamany (2017) analyses the conflicts between indigenous peoples and their territory. The government's increasing violation of protected land rights based on development highlights how politically marginalised populations overlook the ability to manage the benefits of laws. Fernandes & Barbora (2008) discussed based on studies on land alienation in various Northeastern states. Fernandes et al. (2019) efforts to comprehend land have always been at the core of tribal history, and are often considered as the underlying cause of many of Northeastern India's ethnic conflicts. This necessitates a look into tribal land disputes and wars.

Rao (2017), for tribal communities and their identification, land has always been and continues to be the most important possession. The land is closely tied to tribal life and survival. Behera & Singh (2009) in the tribal area, land alienation is a contested question. The report "This is our land: Ethnic violence and internal displacement in north-east India" focused on the plight of displaced people in significant scenarios of widespread war, which resulted in the displacement of millions of people inside the region. A growing number of relocation characteristics suggest that the Sixth Schedule may not help significantly to the successful and secure defence of many northeastern cities, but rather promotes potentially destructive rivalry for political control and territory (Wesnawa & Sudirta, 2017; Sankar et al., 2019).

"Assam Land Policy of 2019" emphasises the pressing need to protect the land rights of the state's indigenous peoples. It need to evaluate existing land policy and state land laws and make necessary changes to bring them up to date. Daimary (2012), the Assam's indigenous peoples have been exposed to significant abuses of ancestral land and other resource rights. Banerjee (2011), the violence connected with relocation was notably highlighted by the developing concerns of fragmentation throughout the North East, as well as the region protected by the planned Bodoland Territorial Area District. It is critical to investigate the causes of land conflicts between tribals and other groups, as well as the efficacy of certain laws and government programmes. This has previously been undertaken throughout the years to preserve indigenous peoples and avert land alienation. Bordoloi (1986), the expropriation of Tribal Land and Indebtedness was proposed in the proceedings. Land alienation and debt have become two major concerns for

many of India's Scheduled Tribe communities. One of the key concerns cited as one of the leading causes of tribal unrest in India is alienation for tribal land (Bordoloi, 2020). Nongkynrih (2014), the major rationale for the concentrated preservation is indigenous culture and heritage conservation. Based on their study, Fernandes & Pereira (2005) hypothesised that changes prompted by new legislation in tribal history, as well as shortages caused by settlers' encroachment, have a detrimental impact on land relations, which are one of the primary causes of conflict.

Fernandes (2017), claims that the tribal communities' type of modernization in North East India, which underlies the new rural development model, resulting in land dispossession and violence. Despite the fact that Northeast India is facing the same agricultural misery as the rest of India, no farmer massacres have occurred. The area is unusual in terms of land alienation and the conflicts that result from it. Magsi et al. (2017) investigate land use disputes in underdeveloped countries. Is it possible to prove how land and human rights offenders planted the seeds of conflict using the findings? Patnaik (2009), In order to investigate the vagueness of legislation governing land alienation and regeneration in some states, administrative hurdles must be overcome. The author argues that efforts should be taken to combine the many elements of state land legislation into a single comprehensive act that would simplify the procedures for dealing with all land-related matters, including tribal lands (Hovers & Vynkovicz-Mytel, 2020; Rinaritha et al., 2018).

Shimray (2006), is an important part of its land follow-up. Its goal is to aid the region's indigenous (tribal) peoples in increasing awareness about the issue and helping those who are working to prevent land alienation on tribal grounds. Another objective is to create and implement measures to defend their property. Sharma (2001), the work concentrates on tribal land alienation in Assam, and the assumptions are all of Indian origin. To until far, neither the federal nor state governments have shown any care for the problems confronting the country's indigenous populations. Tribals have always been compelled to bear the brunt of human relocations carried out in the name of development projects. Wouters (2019), investigates the root reasons. Land conflicts have risen in recent decades, owing to a huge inflow of immigrants from both within India and from across the frontier (sometimes illegally). The purchase of land for government development is another factor. Throughout the inquiry and instructive, even if some appear to be too "limited" or "single-minded," provide a useful resource for policymakers, administrators, and researchers to comprehend the complicated relationship between land and conflict in Northeast.

Tribes from global corner

The word "tribe" first appeared during Greek city-states and even the initial days of the Roman Empire. The Latin word "tribus" has since come to refer to a group of people who form a society and claim descent from a shared ancestor. Still, the number of communities referred to as tribal is genuinely staggering. However, not everyone should be considered a member of a tribe. More recently, those who refused to accept broader nation-state institutions were labelled as tribes by the nation-states themselves (Thaikho, 2018). The tribe refers to a socially cohesive

entity synonymous with a region; each member considers them an avoidant personality. Also, a tribe has its dialect as well as cultural characteristics. Tribes often exhibit passive ignorance, which may manifest as isolation from opportunities for education, social involvement, and access to land.

Those people are referred to as tribes for whom the word indigenous people have identified in India. It is thought that they were the first inhabitants of what is now known as India, or at the very least people who lived in the area before the arrival of the more powerful sections of Indian society. The groups of today's inhabitants, known as tribals by anthropologists, are the ancestral, autochthonous (Adivasis, Adimjuti) people of the land, having long been settled in various parts the world. [Shah \(2007\)](#) studied and discussion throughout the sense of indigenous historiography and anthropology in India. From the development of 'tribes of mind' to measures that have enabled people to classify together as 'Scheduled Tribes,' or 'adivasis,' the highlights of framework that has given rise to contradictions amongst demands preservation and acculturation of indigenous populations in India. It calls for an erudite severe review of the adverse consequences of well-meaning aboriginal security and growth initiatives. [Bijoy et al. \(2010\)](#) consider that India is home to the highest number of indigenous peoples of any nation in the world. The book explains the political and social circumstances of indigenous groups in India and discusses the policy and legal system for particular indigenous communities' interests. While no group is formally considered tribals, the central and the state governments' policies give legal and political concessions to some tribal groups in the North-East, acknowledging their assertions of indigeneity ([Srikanth, 2014](#); [Brahma, 2018](#)).

Land access and tribal

Land access is often defined as the methods by which people or organizations gain the right and opportunity to hold and utilize the land on a conditional basis for agricultural, physical, and social reasons ([Quan, 2006](#)). Land access refers to the ability to get access to land. As an example of relevant and intuitive meaning in figure 1:

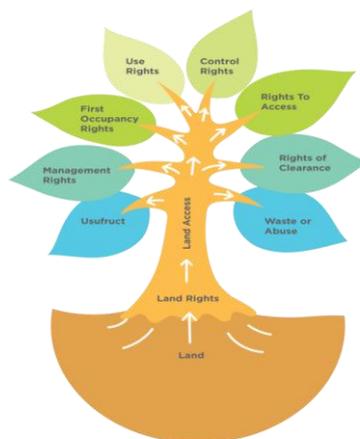


Figure 1. Land access

Table 1
Description of land access

Land Access Acuity	Description
Control Rights	: The right to monitor the administration of a property is referred to as control rights. Individuals should have the right to decide how can use the land
Management Rights	: Management rights include the right to control a land possession under the constraints set by the interest
Right to Access	: Individuals have the freedom to gather competence under the right of access, also known as material access rights
First Occupancy Right	: Historically, the right to the first occupation is derived from the entry and placement of individuals in an uninhabited region
Right of Clearance	: The arrangement issued by the first occupant for cutting bush and consistently planting is known as the right of clearing or clearance
Use Rights	: There are the privileges to use the land for farming, grazing, processing forestry resources, and so on. The right to utilize land is an inherent right of land ownership, but it can also refer to the right to use and benefit from the immovable property as the recipient has been the holder
Usufruct	: Right to reap all of the benefits derived from using something that belongs to someone else, as long as the material is not damaged or harmed
Waste or Abuse	: Theoretically, waste relates to the owner's right to alter the property's condition for the best or the worst, though the most popular meaning is land abuse (Mushahary, 2021).

Land access is significant for the poorest people's well-being. For the rural and urban poor, land is a valuable asset; it is necessary for economic activity, poverty reduction, sustainable development, and household well-being. It's also linked to identity, especially in tribal groups. Land access relates to people's capacity to use, administrate, transfer, and benefit from resources, as well as their ability to make a living. Inaccessibility, on the other hand, is a disparity that limits people's and families' ability to connect to a source of livelihood. It is unclear if the land problem is still relevant and active today, and whether it is a valid grievance in India's state of Assam. As a result, the land is at the centre of many issues in Assam's Bodoland Territorial Region, as well as a reliable method of communication among its population, especially indigenous peoples. Equal land access, on the other hand, will benefit the poorest people and is projected to ease pressure from land scarcity.

Land and tribal issues

[Shimray \(2006\)](#), appearance is an essential component of its land follow-up. It aims to assist the region's indigenous (tribals) peoples in raising awareness about the problem and assisting others who are trying to discourage land problems in tribal lands and to sketch and establish plans to protect their land. [Bordoloi \(1986\)](#), the severity of land alienation and debt problem within tribal societies varies from state to state, area to area, even tribe to tribe. [Bordoloi \(2020\)](#), the

tribal land problem in India is among the main issues described as one of the leading causes of tribal instability.

Land disputes hamper human progress. Understanding the causes and forms of land conflicts is critical for sustainable dispute resolution and improving organisations and agencies' efficacy in coping with such problems. Intend to establish and introduce a framework for monitoring and characterising drivers and land conflict forms in India (Singh & Nair, 2015). While the discourse here focuses on tribal land issues in Assam, the assumptions are all Indian in nature. Neither the federal nor state governments have shown much concern for the issues afflicting the country's tribal communities up to this stage. On either side, India's past of post-independence is littered with instances of tribal exploitation, neglect, and marginalisation. Wherever human relocation has occurred in the name of construction programmes, tribals have invariably been forced to take the burden of it (Sharma, 2001).

Hunt grave land issues and conflicts in Bodoland region

Land disputes have become a main cause of tribal conflict. In certain tribal groups and cultures and communities land becomes the individuals' greatest custody. Other things may be given up, but not land. And that's why land becomes ones most valuable asset, more valuable than relatives, clans, or perhaps even tribe (Arua & Eka, 2002). It comprehensible people's loyalty is with their own land and tribe. Land and conflict are inextricably intertwined, as land is a highly sought-after resource by both communities and individuals. A "land dispute" refers to competing claims to land rights by two or more parties, focused on a specific piece of land that can resolve within the current legal system. Land conflicts are essentially disagreements about the land; they may or may not indicate a larger conflict. Disputes usually revolve around the delineation, ownership, and inheritance of land; they also stem from the erosion of pastoralists' traditional rights. Unsuitable land legislation, mainly when there is no overall land policy or where unclear laws do not handle overlapping rights and claims to land; dysfunctional and inaccessible land administration; land grabs; land invasions; and the strain of an expanding population are all causes of land conflicts (Kasimbazi, 2017; Brahma, 2018).

Land conflicts in the Bodoland region are often related to ownership, legal pluralism, land boundaries, land registry, state and common land usages, unauthorised land acquisitions, tensions over violent or illegal land acquisitions, conflicts over payment for using or buying land, and evictions of illegal settlers' conflicts. Factually the unjustified termination of tenancy or lease contract by the property owner, violent land attacks, disputes over the charge for using or purchasing land conflicts, evictions of immigration settlers, refutes between human or cultural and natural uses, aggressive land threats are the effect more in the Bodoland. It may take the form of government or judicial intervention concerning the eviction of landowners without providing them with appropriate land or proper access to it, conflicts caused by land reforms, contradictory claims in post-conflict situations, discriminatory title allocation, legalisation of illegal settlements, discrepancies in distribution or redistribution, registration of state land in their names, division of land in protected areas, failure to respect an

established right to use the land and use of other people's lands. The following figure 2 shows the result:

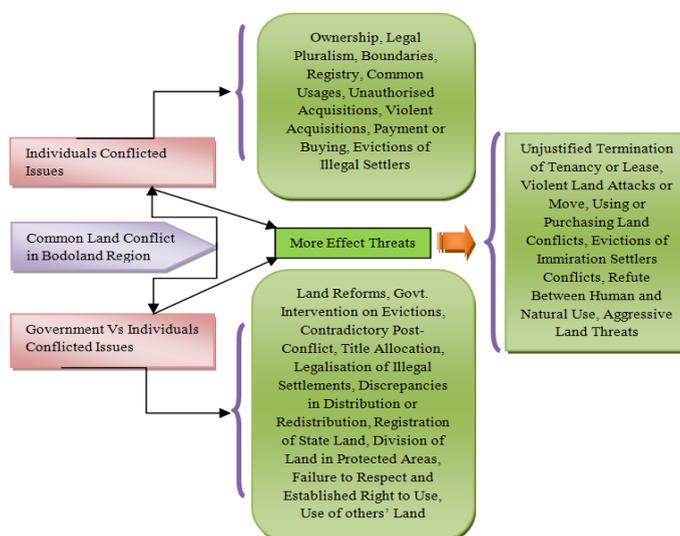


Figure 2. The result of division of land in protected areas, failure to respect an established right to use the land and use of other people's lands

Banerjee (2011), addressed the arising issues of fragmentation throughout the North East, as well as the area protected by the proposed Bodoland region, was especially marked by the bloodshed associated with displacement and disputes regarding land between tribals and other groups and analyse the effectiveness of specific laws and government policies. Wouters (2019) delves into the underlying causes. And identified conflicts are created and perpetuated by struggles for land, its resources, and constantly evolving trends of landownership, according to several contributors. Land tensions have raised in recent decades, owing primarily to the massive influx of immigrants, both from inside India and from crossing (often unlawfully) the Indo-Bangladesh borderline. Another reason is the purchase of land for government development. Fernandes & Pereira (2005) started with the idea, based on research, that reforms initiated by new legislation in tribal history and shortages induced by encroachment by settlers have a negative effect on land relations, which are one of the main reasons for conflicts. In addition to concentrated on the condition of displaced persons in major scenarios of widespread conflict, which culminated in the displacement of more millions of people inside the area. The growing lack of communal land open to aboriginal peoples has driven others to orchestrate abuse targeting people they perceive to be outsiders to alter ethnic trends in their regard. Inter-ethnic conflict within tribal communities has also resulted in internally displaced persons (Francisco, 1974; Gogoi, 2016).

Conclusion

A recurring question is what role tribals have in ensuring that secure land and decisions are truly established. What type of procedures must be established for

tribal groups in order to provide secure and effective access to land? It focused on how to implement the best land policy and laws to ensure the Bodoland region's long-term development and stability (Mushahary, 2021; Brahma, 2019). The paper recognises the outcomes of laws and policies to strengthen tribal groups' tenure stability and potential policy adjustments needed to enhance tribal relations to the land and lessen land-based brawls. Just a few per cent of the total land in dispute has had its ownership legally returned to the original tribal landowners. However, considering the socio-economic realities confronting tribals and their dominant non-tribal rivals, it is impossible tribals will have the local administrative and political muscle to ensure that they retained ownership even after securing formal legal possession limited portion of their former territories. Ambiguous and feeble regulations would hinder the successful enforcement of progressive legal reforms aimed at preventing land issues. No tribal protection legislation will be effective unless accompanied by steps to satisfy their legitimate credit requirements, including those for consumption, and to shield them from usury.

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Statements of ethics and conflict interest

The corresponding authors, declare and undertake that scientific, ethical, and citation criteria. This study has no conflicts of interest.

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Women's land access disparity affects livelihoods and children's education of the tribal people

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Abstract--The ability of women to enhance their well-being is determined by their access to land. The study analysis focuses on the findings of a pilot survey on how women's land access disparities affect livelihoods and children's education of tribal people in the Bodoland Territorial Region of Assam, India. It targeted 384 households from three tribal groups: Bodo, Rabha, and Garo. The landholdings in the area are 71.86 percent marginal and 11.46 percent of the tribal people are landless. Women are rarely able to own land. Men possessed 64.32 percent of the land, compared to women's 4.68 percent. Women are typically *de facto* heads of households in the Bodoland region. The denial of equal land access to women obstructs the benefit of society as a whole in livelihoods, children are particularly suffered. Agriculture is the main source of earnings in rural areas, provides a livelihood of the tribal population. Enhancing women's access to land can considerably impact poverty reduction, not least by contributing to enhanced household food security.

Keywords---land access, livelihood, women, tribal, household, education.

Introduction

The belief that we do not own the land but rather that the land owns us is vital to tribal people. Tribal people's spirit and identity are inextricably linked to the land. They feel a sense of belonging and a connection to their land. As a result, the land has to regenerate important capabilities for tribe survival and well-being. Tribal people rely on the land to provide them with food, fibre, firewood, and energy

necessary for their livelihood. It provides a livelihood for the tribal people who live there and an economic process for remote settlements, which improves the residents' quality of life (Sivaji, 2009; Singh & Quli, 2011; Sarmah & Arunachalam, 2011; Islam et al., 2014). The land is a major source of livelihood. Almost all rural livelihoods are dependent on access to land. Effective land access and protection is required for the livelihood process (Pyakuryal, 2011; Hall, 2011; Batterbury et al., 2015; Brahma & Mushahary, 2021, 2022). Land access benefits households directly dependent on the land for their livelihood in any capacity (Tumushabe & Tatwangire, 2017). Survival is a major issue for tribals that have continually denied them the right to exist. They have worked hard for a long time to get and keep access to this essential resource, which is an integral part of their identity as separate cultures and communities. They have traditionally relied on agriculture as their main source of revenue (Stavenhagen, 2006).

Land access refers to the many methods people can acquire access to or utilise land. The capacity to do so successfully is crucial to the well-being of marginalised people. The ability to get access to and use land is referred to as "land access." It reflects the commonly held idea that land access refers to the process through which individuals or groups get the right to inhabit and use land (Raihan et al., 2009; Liswanti et al., 2012; Alden Wily, 2003; Quan, 2006; Mearns, 1999). Specifically, land-related issues are mentioned in five of the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals, and UN-Habitat's Global Land Tools Network considers that everyone should have access to land (Home, 2021). So, ensuring access to land for the poor is necessary (Deininger, 2009). Land access is a fundamental component of poor (Cotula et al., 2006) people's (especially tribal) ability to provide for their households.

Rahman and Westley (2001) state that the majority of the poor must have access to and acquire essential assets, including land. Randrianarisoa and Minten (2001) it means or makes sense that land access can significantly contribute to society's poor well-being and Hichaambwa and Jayne (2014) increase in small and marginal access to land can potentially reduce the poverty of rural households. Enhancing land access for the most land deprived rural families appears to be a promising strategy to reduce inequality (Jayne et al., 2008).

Women's capacity to improve their well-being is affected by their ability to obtain land (Lyimo-Macha & Mdoe, 2002). Gender equality in land access is essential for decreasing poverty and enhancing rural livelihoods. Despite progress toward identifying women as landowners in their own right or as joint spousal land holdings, women continue to face substantial obstacles due to their primary role as food insurers and overall responsibility for family upkeep and society's reproductive capability. Gender remains a very effective but mainly untapped and overlooked cross-cutting issue in analysing livelihood diversification or natural resource access (Ellis & Allison, 2004; Quan, 2006). In this approach, land access is necessary for food production and income generation, and women are the basis for socio-economic advancement (Odini, 2014). Focusing on rural poverty reduction will obscure the full extent of women's social exclusion from land ownership, whether via inheritance and state land transfer or through the markets (Agarwal, 1995).

Women confront prejudice on a regular basis in formal, informal, and traditional land systems. For example, they usually obtain land through males and have only subordinate prerogative. Gender disparities in land access and secure land rights are unjust and impact fundamental human needs. Having stable land rights is both an incentive and a need for women's livelihoods. Women-headed households, who make up a substantial portion of the rural population, can benefit significantly from the security, dignity, and income-earning opportunities that secure ownership of even a small plot of land can provide (Netwok, 2008, Finan et al., 2005). While women as heads of households might engage in promising activities, land availability limits their activities in rural areas (Aka, 2007).

In rural areas of the Bodoland region, as they do in many other parts of India, women have fewer landholdings than men in rural households. As a result, it is necessary to concentrate on gender issues in rural livelihoods as a beginning point for prioritising gender inequities in society's development opportunities. There are a variety of forms of discrimination in land access for marginalised people in the region who face societal barriers. In tribal communities, for example, women and men work together to raise grain to sustain their families, maintain the environment, and strengthen their communities' adaptability. On the other hand, women are usually refused land titles and are forced to rely on men. Women's rural land ownership and livelihoods face several obstacles. These risks are significantly greater for tribal poor people than for wealthy people, and there are far more male-headed households than female-headed ones. In terms of efficacy, women are frequently the sole or *de facto* heads of households in the region. Women may have the option of cultivating a parcel of land for household requirements. However, they are frequently denied even basic access to this resource, which the family head keeps to the greatest degree feasible. Allowing them to own their land is projected to boost agricultural production and improve their children's livelihoods and educational possibilities.

The tribals face the most challenging livelihood. The tribals are impoverished and rely only on land to sustain them. Rural tribal households must also be given special consideration. Because land is the tribals' major source of income and their only tangible possession, they are effectively tied to it. Land access offers fulfilment, dignity, identity, and the capacity to secure land usage and promote educational opportunities for their children. The survey focus to analyse how the women's land access disparities have affected the livelihoods and children's education of tribal people in the Bodoland Territorial Region of Assam, India.

Literature Review

Studies on land access and livelihoods have been undertaken in several nations in relevant areas. Land use and affordability and how society's services are to be applied are at the heart of pointed land claims. It is possible to organise the landless and homeless through legislative and other legal means, impose essential duties on the state, provide safeguards for the landless, and open up and make the decision-making process more accessible. It looked at land access, agricultural output, and collective action to see when and how the government could distribute rural land. The study focuses on lessons learned from current policy, law, and practice to enhance and protect disadvantaged people's access to

rural land (Almeida & Wassel, 2016; Bandeira & Sumpsi, 2011; Budlender, 1992; De Janvry et al., 2001; Cotula et al., 2006; Geiser et al., 2011; Melis et al., 2006; Mearns, 1999; Brahma & Mushahary, 2022).

It focuses on those who are more intensely engaged in relying on land-based resources for a livelihood. It reflects the rising recognition that disadvantaged people need land access for a sustainable rural livelihood. It emphasises the need for policies that make land more accessible to individuals from different walks of society (Chambers & Conway, 1992; FAO, 2002; Bernstein et al., 1992; Network, 2008; Raihan et al., 2009; Rutten et al., 2010; Rao, 2017; Patnaik, 2009; Kumar et al., 2005; Reddy et al., 2020; Simon, 2016; Ellis, 1998, 1999). Then there is the issue of looking at the tribals' contentious land rights and land-use policies. Nonetheless, they have frequently harmed them by taking their lands and other resources on which their livelihoods were dependent until the causes that led to their soldering process were uncovered. To avert it, remedial action is taken. Furthermore, like in the past, new projects will continue to ignore their culture and lives (Wahi & Bhatia, 2018; Purushothaman, 2005; Aufschnaiter, 2008; Fernandes et al., 2009; 2012; Bordoloi, 1986, 1999; Banerjee, 2011; Vandekerckhove, 2011; Hanstad et al., 2008; Marchang, 2018; Padhi & Panigrahi, 2011).

It must work to reduce inequality against women regarding land, housing, and land ownership Deininger (2009). In the developing world, women in rural regions experience pervasive discrimination in laws, attitudes, and practices, resulting in severe disparities in their ability to access, control, own, and use land, as well as restricted participation in land administration decision-making at all levels (Daley et al., 2013). Despite having legal ownership rights to property, women may lack practical control over it. For example, they cannot select how to utilise the land or lease, mortgage, or sell the land or the goods produced on it (Mearns, 1999). In rural areas, even though most land and natural resource laws are gender-neutral or exclude sex or gender discrimination in the land, they are rarely implemented (Cotula et al., 2006). While emphasising the lack of effective individual property rights held by women, no thorough examination of the barriers to land access for India's socially disadvantaged people exists. Women's land access compared to men is the focus of the equal and empowering viewpoints, rather than their unrestricted access to land. Increased relative access to land for women will aid them in gaining negotiating leverage and the ability to challenge male dominance both at home and in society (Agarwal, 1994, 1995).

Application of Approach

Is it conceivable to integrate or capture the capability approach to well-being and changes in the value of natural resources that is land, tribal livelihoods, and education in the Bodoland region? The viewpoint is much different from one that promotes a sense of nature. For tribal people who appreciate natural resources such as land, "real or effective opportunity," as Amartya Sen defines it, and "skills and personality traits or dignity," as Martha Nussbaum defines it, are all aspects of capabilities. However, whether or not these could be applied to livelihood strategies and education in the capability approach remains determined.

The capability approach's central premise is that, rather than focusing on resources or people's mental states, assessments of a person's well-being or quality of life, as well as judgments about equality or justice, or the level of development of a community or country, should concentrate on the effective opportunities that people have to live the lives they have reason to value (Sen, 1980, 1985, 1987, 1992, 1999; Nussbaum, 2000, 2003, 2006).

The capability approach encompasses a broad framework for monitoring and evaluating individual well-being, social structures, policy formation, and social change activities. It may be used to examine a variety of characteristics of people's well-being, including inequality, poverty, individual well-being, and group average well-being. It may also be used as a framework for creating and assessing policies, ranging from welfare state design in rich nations to government and non-governmental organisation development initiatives in developing countries, as an alternative assessment instrument for social cost-benefit analysis (Fukuda-Parr, 2003; Fukuda-Parr & Kumar, 2003; Robeyns, 2003, 2005, 2006).

Material and Methods

The Bodoland Territorial Region of Assam (Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa, and Udalguri) was the survey area. The geographical boundaries are between 26°7'12"N and 26°47'50"N latitude and 89°47'40"E and 92°18'30"E longitude of the northwestern region of India. According to the 2011 Census Report of India, there were 215,672 households, including 4,560 (2.12 percent) urban and 211,112 (97.88 percent) rural households.

The pilot study focused on the rural households of three different resident communities of Bodo, Rabha, and Garo rural tribals. Random sampling was used to find respondents for this study. The data was gathered from 384 (three hundred and eighty-four) respondent households throughout the four areas investigated. The survey was collected from 48 households for Bodos, 28 households for Rabhas, and 20 households for Garo respondents, from each randomly selected tribal community, for a total of $48+28+20 = 96$ (Selected Tribal Communities Respondent Households = Total) from one district. For the whole four districts, that is, $4 \times 96 = 384$ (Districts x Respondent Households = Total). The survey is based on quantitative and qualitative data. It aimed for a margin of sampling error of less than 5 percent and a 95 percent confidence level.

Results and Discussion

The survey was conducted from August 2020 to December 2021. During data collection, the same questionnaires were applied to all. A representative of the head of the household was questioned at each household.

The Landholding and landless Size

According to 2011 Socio-Economic and Caste Census, Assam has total 1,817,129 landless households, accounting for 32 percent of all landless households in India. According to the Assam landless report, Kokrajhar district has 27 percent of landless households, Chirang district has 28 percent, Baksa district has 29

percent, and Udalguri district has 32 percent. People who do not have any land entitlements or ownership but can nevertheless maintain themselves and their households are referred to as landless households. As a result, the landless are among society's poorest members. There is a fierce and evidence-based debate on tribals' rural land access and livelihoods in the Bodoland region. Inheritance rights, socio-economic systems, and the history of settlements and land ownership transfers all impact the size and availability of plot holdings in the Bodoland region, all of which influence the size and availability of tribal peoples' holdings.

In the area, marginal landholdings represent 71.86 percent of the total respondents, small landholdings account for 9.65 percent, semi-medium holdings for 4.16 percent, medium holdings for 2.61 percent, and large holdings for 0.26 percent. The study's landless category includes the remaining 11.46 percent of tribals who do not possess land (no land "Patta" or "Daag"). If tribals do not own land, they are deprived of the most basic requirement of rural livelihoods. Landless individuals experience social hardship, poor health, illiteracy, and a high child mortality rate, which affects education because they have little or no access to finance, marketing outlets, or other services. The harsh reality of their lives is insecurity. Local governments must transfer land to the landless, including communal grazing land or forest land, to reduce rural tribal landlessness. According to the findings of the study, the proportion of small and marginal landholdings has been increasing due to increased population and immigration. Because of the rise in smallholders, which has resulted in a significant increase in marginal holdings of less than one hectare of land, most tribal and rural households are urged to explore social reproduction mechanisms other than farming their lands. Landless individuals have no actual access to land. Rural regions in Bodoland are home to nearly all of the rural poor. Low-income households are almost always landless or near-landless, relying on agricultural land for their livelihood.

Owns the plot or parcel of land

The notion of 'ownership' can be challenging to grasp, especially in the Bodoland region, where it is frequently misunderstood. The respondents were asked to regard whom they regarded as landowners to assess actual landholdings. Whereas the plurality of the respondents describes their land as owned by private individuals, ownership differs amongst spouses and wives, joint ownership, land owned by nomination, land registration in progress, and finally, tribal people who do not have a 'patta' or 'daag' number (table 1.1).

Table 1.1: Who owns the land where your family currently resides?

Type of land owned	Bodo (%)	Rabha (%)	Garó (%)	Total (%)
Individual owned by men	125 (65.104**)	70 (62.5)	52 (65.00)	247 (64.322**)
Individual owned by women	9 (4.687*)	6 (5.357**)	3 (3.75)	18 (4.687*)
Joint owned by couples	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)

Land owned by nomination	2 (1.041**)	2 (1.785**)	2 (2.5)	2 (1.562*)
Land registration under process	37 (19.270**)	19 (16.964**)	13 (16.25)	69 (17.968**)
Owned without patta and daag number	19 (9.895**)	15 (13.392**)	10 (12.5)	44 (11.458**)
Total	192 (100)	112 (100)	80 (100)	384 (100)

Source: Pilot survey

The purpose of the study was to investigate women excluded from owning land. Men owned 64.32 percent of the land, compared to women's 4.68 percent. The tribe respondents agreed that land holdings in the women were not unanimous in their opinion. Allowing them to own land is expected to increase agricultural productivity and improve their children's economic and educational opportunities. The tribal people living without holding land 'Patta and Daag numbers' in which they also have to live on forest land were reported at 11.45 percent, and land owned by nomination was reported at 1.56 percent. More than 17.96 percent of the land in the registration process was reported to be significant. Among the four districts, it had the most evenly distributed population. Most tribal members say that the land was handled or held by their parents or other household relatives when it comes to land ownership. Women are frequently the sole or de facto heads of households in the region in terms of effectiveness. Allowing them to utilise land is expected to increase agricultural productivity and improve their children's economic and educational opportunities.

Category of Land and Livelihoods Items

The open fields or village lands almost surround the tribal villages of the Bodoland Territorial Region. Locals in the study region (Bodoland region) have traditionally categorised their lands by land category to understand them better. These categories of land are mainly called - forest area/patch land, water body land, grazing land, residential land, homestead land, kitchen garden land, and croplands- such as seeding bed land, autumn paddy field, winter paddy field, and bao paddy field, which are all examples of different types of land.

A family's needs in maintaining day-to-day existence, such as food, shelter, clothes, education, and health care, are determined mainly by the degree of income and resources available within the family. Household resources reflect the status of society well. This is especially true concerning rural women's employment because women have always been involved in productive activities. When women engage in market-based activities, it is mainly due to economic need rather than occupational choice. From the standpoint of occupation, it is not suitable for the women of the four districts of the Bodoland Territorial Region. Women's wages are often lower than men's wages for the same employment. Because it is classified as domestic labour, much of a woman's work is unpaid, even for market use. Also, women have a significant role in the economy. Tribal women have always been active in various economic occupations and contributed to their household lives (table 1.2).

Table 1.2: Category of land and items grown on land

Category of land		Items grown
Forest area/patch land		forest land, national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, social forestry, firewoods, construction materials, medicinal plants, fruits, habitat (wild animals and birds), others
Water body land		man-made ponds, natural water wetlands, natural ponds, streams, rivers, waste channels, providing fishing, edible plant, baths, cleaning cloths, utensils or tools, seeds and wood soaking, Irrigating, natural drinking for the cattles
Grazing land		mostly used for the domesticated livestock, arid with limited water retention capabilities
Residential land		specific plants- coconut, neem, banana, bamboo, betel nut, betel leaf, and fruit trees, others
Homestead land		multi-purpose utility- firewood, medicinal plants, ornamental spices, betel nut, betel leaf, coconut, mango, orange, jackfruit, guava, papaya, citrus fruits, blackberry, permanent forest trees, others
Kitchen garden land		covers vegetables- potatoes, tomato plants, chilies, cabbages, pumpkins, gourds, squash, brinjal, cauliflowers, vegetable leaves, onions, ginger, turmeric, coriander leaves, other vegetables and edible crops- maize
Croplands	Seeding bed	prepared year-round during April and May, unused during off-season, some grow vegetables for household use in the 'Rabi' season
	Autumn paddy field	cropping 'Ahu' rice March, April, and May, using both beaming and grafting processes, cropinpg again 'Ranjit', 'Sadhu', 'Aijong', others in June, July, and August, hybrid rice, during the winter utilised to grow mustard and pulses
	Winter paddy field	indigenous rice- 'Ranjit', 'Sadhu', 'Baradur', 'Aijong', 'Sali', others in May, June, July, and August year-round, grow hybrid rice
	Bao paddy field	bao rice- cropping in April through the first of December, these land fields are cultivated

Source: Pilot survey

For their daily needs and use, as well as for economic gain, the majority of tribal women support agricultural activities with their husbands or family members in the cultivation of mustard seeds, tobacco, jute, vegetables such as cabbage, potato, cucumber, cauliflower, gourd, green leaves, spices, chilly, onion, ginger, garlic, ladyfinger, and others. Castor plants are grown for the production of Endi (local language) cocoons, which are used in home industries such as spinning and weaving, particularly by women. The Bodo women have used their handlooms to weave several sorts of cotton cloth, both for personal use and trade. However, it is only recently that these Bodo women's handloom handicrafts have attracted the attention of outside markets, providing them with a new source of income. However, in the Bodoland region, these women's actions are insufficient, and their families and society are ignorant of them. In an earlier study by Brahma

(2018), the majority of women, 86.83 percent, consider that their families and society do not appreciate their non-economic domestic labour. On the other hand, 12 percent of women participants agree that their family and society acknowledge their domestic labour. In comparison, 01.16 percent of respondents claim they have no comment or no idea. They are not getting any major land access in the region.

Correlation of women livelihoods and children's Education

To realise one's full human potential, society must grow fairly and justly while also supporting national advancement and offering high-quality educational opportunities to all students. Education is merely one of the most effective means of attaining inclusion, economic and social mobility, and equality. There are a number of strategies that may be used to improve the interaction between the family and the school, both directly and indirectly. The major decision-making role of parents improves their children's safety and future interests. True, no parent can be left behind to pursue a child's greater educational accomplishment (Brahma, 2020). However, increasing the self-reliance and livelihoods of parents is crucial for children's participation in education. Parents who provide effective guidance discover the capacity to pursue their children's interests, aptitudes, desires, and objectives. True success is transformed by the correct timing and a strong direction. The success story of women's involvement in children's higher education persuasion is still standing. As a result, women in the Bodoland region should have equal access to land, just as men do, to increase their livelihood capability, particularly in tribal groups.

Snoop with Empath: If the children face difficulties or frustration, women should be there for them in their needy time and always show a positive posture to care for the child in a critical situation as a better friend. To strengthen their attitude, they should find alternative paths of disappointment in life, which could be the right guidance for the next preparation.

Active support: Eager excitement does not last every day. It applies to children who show disinterest in learning processes. In this situation, women should play an active, supportive role to remind them of the value of students' lives and schooling, which is why it's necessary.

Sustain of Student Performance: Although it is merely a fun fact, we frequently suggest "Do as I say, not as I Do" for various purposes. Encouragement always brings a positive influence on a broader sense of participation experience. We cannot be perfect all the time in learning to make improvements, trying to understand how, trying better next time, showing how to identify the error, and impressing the real world.

Fortification through Facilitation: The students' capacity can be explicitly enhanced through facilitation and encouragement. Unlearning is also part of learning, so facilitation is the alternative option of inspiration within proper use.

When parents face challenging economic circumstances, they may feel overwhelmed by the amount of responsibility they have for their children's care and the time it takes to assist them. As a result, people frequently fall behind on

their commitments and lack the financial resources to meet their basic demands. In general, economic status refers to the difference in income or wealth between parents and children, considering the family's size and location. Children who grow up in a more challenging environment perform poorly in school. It implies that children are less likely to have positive social interactions with their parents. The vast majority of tribal people is unemployed and uneducated and relies on daily income in the study area. In comparison to other places in the community, parental economic status is a consideration that is comparatively low in the village regions of Assam. Children's performances can be excellent in certain circumstances, but they cannot give enough assistance due to a lack of financial resources. However, economic variables are not the only ones that influence children's educational performance; other factors also play a role.

Conclusion

To deal with land challenges in diverse ways, consider how land access and livelihoods are crucial in numerous sectors. Land ownership revolves around land usage, cost, and how society's services will be implemented. Through legislative and other legal measures, it is possible to organise the landless and homeless, impose fundamental obligations on the state, offer protection for the landless, and open up and make the decision-making process more accessible. It looked at how and when the government might allocate rural land by looking at land access, agricultural productivity, and collective action.

Landless individuals live or work on land where they are not legally protected. In rural communities, landless individuals are frequently impoverished, belonging to the poorer sections of society and receiving modest earnings. They are vulnerable to seasonal unemployment because they are required to undertake various duties or responsibilities for low compensation. Landless individuals have no genuine access to land. The rural Bodoland region is home to nearly all of the worlds impoverished. Low-income households are largely landless or near-landless. While being landless is one of the most important characteristics of rural poverty, it is not a one-size-fits-all solution. Tribes have been struggling for existence by giving away everyone's labourers to the others, whether outside or on farms, in a move tied to the uncertain future of life. Poverty among rural tribals in the Bodoland region is not decreasing, although rural poverty has multiple fundamental reasons, all of which are intertwined with the land.

As a result, the poorest tribal individuals in society are those who do not own land. There is a considerable, evidence-based discussion in the Bodoland region about tribals' access to agricultural land and livelihoods. Landless people in rural areas are frequently unable to participate in farming and agriculture. Individuals would have to overcome tremendous obstacles to improve their economic circumstances. Because of the surge in smallholders in the Bodoland region, which has resulted in a considerable increase in marginal holdings of less than one hectare of land, most tribal and rural households are being urged to look for social reproduction options other than cultivating their lands. Tribal people prefer a multitude of sources of income to supplement their livelihoods. The land is very important to the tribal people of the Bodoland region. Households with larger landholdings are less likely to diversify their sources of income than those with

smaller and marginal landholdings. Households with less land diversify their income more, as depending just on small plots of land for survival is inadequate. The pattern of livelihood diversification is influenced by household size, family type, education, and land ownership. The tribal community's life in rural Bodoland is not entirely reliant on a single source of revenue. These individuals are more likely to use a variety of earnings to deal with uncertainty and risks.

Land access can be based on the principles of an adapted sustainable livelihoods framework that has the significant prospect of enhancing livelihood sustainability for vulnerable sections of tribal societies. But in the areas where marginal landholding and landlessness are at their highest, their livelihood circumstances are impacted. However, adopting alternative initiatives in tribal communities to diversify livelihoods is challenging. It requires a comprehensive search of stakeholders' interests, requirements, and the relevant objectives of the situation. On the other hand, landholding inequality is a component of the tribal people's socio-economic, psychological, communicative, and social factors attached to us. In the Bodoland region, the local government can develop policies to make the most efficient use of the workforce by creating alternate employment prospects for a sustainable livelihood while considering the area's unique circumstances. It expresses a requirement; living necessitates many assets, and obtaining them necessitates several actions. It focuses on those who rely on land-based resources to live in greater numbers. It represents a growing understanding that tribal people require access to land to live a sustainable rural life. It emphasises the importance of measures that increase access to land for individuals from all walks of life. It is also connected to investigating the tribes' complicated land-use and land-rights concerns. Nonetheless, people seize their lands and other resources essential to their livelihoods until the causes of their oppression are discovered. Remedial action is necessary to avoid it. New initiatives will also need to maintain their traditions and sources of livelihood.

Enhancing women's access to land can considerably impact poverty reduction, not least by contributing to enhanced household food security. Access to land can assist the poor achieve home security and improving earnings in societies where agriculture is the major source of income or livelihood. By enhancing and improving access to land and adequate research and training facilities, working to improve access to local, regional, and international markets, growth, and positive irrigation initiatives, enabling the process of manufacturing crops, incentivizing the production of livestock, and reducing the lack of land ability to use, the strategies can be used to reduce rural poverty and increase tribal peoples' livelihood opportunities. When women are denied equal access and ownership of land, as the same measure of protection as men, it obstructs the social benefit of the entire, children in particular suffer. When women have equal rights to access, issues are decreased, environments are better, and household living arrangements are improved. As a result, women's land access, rights to use, control, and own land must be protected.

There are not enough substantial land access options or strong grass-roots feelings to get people involved in solving tribal women's land access challenges. As a natural result, a number of perplexing pragmatic concerns have arisen, such as how to develop fair and successful interactions with the state without being

pressured into implementing policies that do not meet women's standards and risk exacerbating land access imbalances.

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CERTIFICATE — OF PRESENTATION —



ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH, SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES (APCERSSH-2022)

07TH & 08TH SEPTEMBER 2022 | HYBRID CONFERENCE

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This is to Certify that **Ashok Brahma**of
..... **Bodoland University**presented his/her worthy
Virtual Presentation titled *The Tribal Landless Household and Livelihood Strategies*

in the “Asia Pacific Conference on Educational Research, Social Science and Humanities (APCERSSH)” Organized by Institute For Engineering Research and Publication (IFERP) Thailand Chapter, held on 07th & 08th September 2022 at Bangkok.

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This is to certify that

Mr. Ashok Brahma

Research Scholar, Bodoland University, Department of Political Science
has participated in the International Seminar on "Rural Technology, Innovation and IPR: The way Ahead"
held on 14th & 15th March, 2022 as Participant. He has presented a paper titled
"Tribal Land Access and Livelihoods in the Bodoland Territorial Region of Assam "

We wish him all success in life.

Dr. Papiya Dutta
Associate Professor and HOD
Department of Rural Development, USTM
(Convenor)

Unveiling Excellence

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Assistant Professor,
Department of Rural Development, USTM
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Issue No.ECO/KGC/2022/.....⁶⁴.....



NATIONAL SEMINAR ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC ISSUES AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Certificate

This is to certify that

Mr./Ms./Dr./Prof.....^{Ashak Brahma}.....

of.....^{Bodoland university}.....

delivered a lecture/presented a paper

on.....^{"Land Access and livelihood of Tribals in the}.....

.....^{Bodoland Region"}...../participated

in the National Seminar on "Socio-Economic Issues and Regional Development"

held on 12th Feb,2022.

(Dr. Banabina Brahma)
Principal
Kokrajhar Govt.College

(Dr. Kamal Bodosa)
Co-ordinator
Associate Prof. & Head,Economics
Kokrajhar Govt.College

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First Purno Agitok Sangma Memorial Lecture Cum International Seminar

on

Revisiting Diversity in North East India: Ethnicity, Culture, Religion and Beyond

Organised By

Department of Political Science & History, Bodoland University & U.N. Academy, Kokrajhar

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Participated as Plenary Speaker/Invited Speaker/Chair Person/Coordinator/Convenor/Paper Presenter in the First Purno Agitok Sangma Memorial Lecture cum International Seminar on "Revisiting Diversity in North East India: Ethnicity, Culture, Religion and Beyond" held on 13th & 14th May 2022 at Bodoland University, Kokrajhar, BTR, Assam.

He/She has presented a paper titled...
Land Access and Livelihoods of Landless Tribal in the Bodoland Territorial Region of Assam, India.

Ladu Singh

(Prof. Laishram Ladu Singh)
Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor
Bodoland University
Kokrajhar, BTR, Assam

P. Boro

(Sjt. Pramod Boro)
Hon'ble, CEM
Bodoland Territorial Region
Govt. of BTR, Assam

K.G. Basumatary

(Mr. K.G. Basumatary)
Director
U.N. Academy, Kokrajhar



Two-Day National Conference

on

Autonomy and Development in North East India



Date: 27-28 January, 2023

Venue: Bodoland University, BTR, Kokrajhar, Assam

Certificate of Participation

Prof./Dr./Mr./Ms. *Ashok Brahma*

has presented a paper titled *A Study of the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) as a Sixth Schedule Apparatus in Assam*

in the Two-Day National Conference on "Autonomy and Development in North East India" jointly organized by the Centre for North East Studies and Policy Research (CNESPR), Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi and the Department of Political Science, Bodoland University, held on 27-28 January 2023, at Bodoland University, BTR, Kokrajhar, Assam.

Ladu Singh
Prof. Laishram Ladu Singh
Hon'ble Vice - Chancellor
Bodoland University
Kokrajhar, BTR, Assam

M. Amarjeet Singh
Prof. M. Amarjeet Singh
Honorary Director
CNESPR
Jamia Millia Islamia
New Delhi

S. Choudhury
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Mr. Kokho
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BODOLAND INTERNATIONAL KNOWLEDGE FESTIVAL, 2023, INDIA

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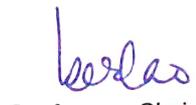
Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR), Government
&
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CERTIFICATE

Certified that Prof./Dr./Sri/Smt./Km. **Ashok Brahma** of **Bodoland University** attended the Bodoland International Knowledge Festival, 2023 held under the auspices of Bodoland University, Kokrajhar. He/ She presented Research Paper(s) in the technical session, under the theme **Human Rights**

Title of the paper: **The Forest Village Struggle for Land and Forest Rights**
Mode of Presentation: **Oral**


Theme Coordinator
BIKF, 2023


Conference Chair
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