The Adverse Impact of Climate Change on The Santal Community of Bangladesh: A Case Study from Naogaon District

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Abstract

Bangladesh is considered one of the most climate change-vulnerable countries on Earth. The adverse impact of climate change is not a myth now. This South Asian nation has already been suffering from the adversity of climate change. According to the Global Climate Risk Index (CRI) report published by the environmental think tank Germanwatch in 2021, Bangladesh ranks as the 7th most climate change-vulnerable country on Earth. Hence, it can easily be predicted that the people of Bangladesh are also more prone to climate change-induced challenges. Amongst the people, it is evident that the poor people are in a riskier situation compared to the other segments of the population. And indigenous people are known as the poorer amongst the poor, and hence, they are the very first community that faces the catastrophic events of climate change because of their socio-economically backward position in society and their closeness to the environment along with their dependency on natural resources. Considering the vulnerability of the indigenous people, this paper aims to study the Santal indigenous community in the northwestern part of Bangladesh. Employing qualitative research methods, the paper tends to delve into the causes behind the climate change vulnerability of the Santal community. The paper aims to establish climate change as a causality that amplifies the prevalent socio-economic vulnerability of the Santal community. Finally, the report calls for local and international policy formulation in alignment with the indigenous knowledge of mitigating climate change and environmental sustainability. The paper also urges indigenous people to act as agents of change rather than just be the victims of climate change.

Keywords: Bangladesh, Climate Change Vulnerability, Indigenous People, Santal Community