

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.

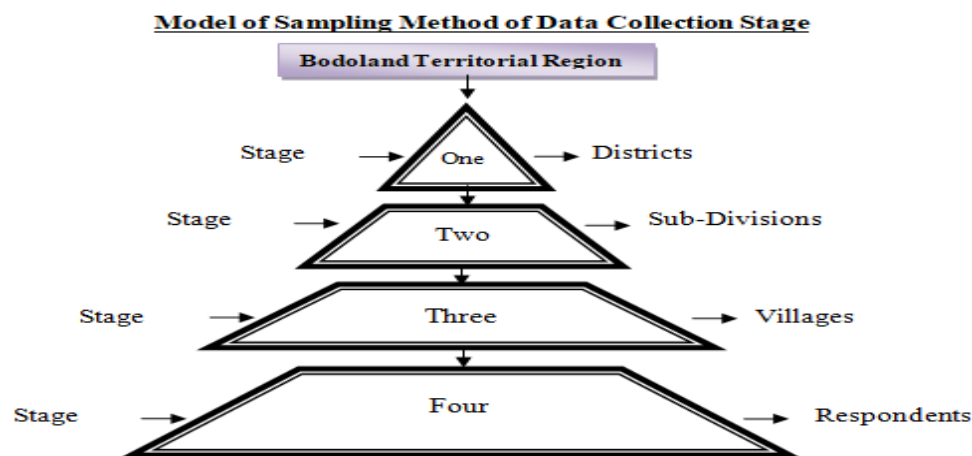
7. Research Approach and Methodology

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-Lasserve, 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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