

# A Comparative Study of Indigenous People between India and Bangladesh

<sup>1</sup>Chandan Kumar Sarkar, <sup>2</sup>Swapan Kumar Saha, <sup>3</sup>Suman Chowdhury, <sup>4</sup>Mustafizur Rahman, <sup>5</sup>Mohammad Mahbubur Rahman

**ABSTRACT**-Bangladesh is well acknowledged to the world for its widespread poverty, extensive inequality, and slow economic growth. The recent human development index revealed that Bangladesh having better position rationally to Indian's HDI index e.g. GNP per capita, life expectancy rate, infant mortality, child death rate, adult literacy rate, higher education ratio. The study focuses on Santal, a tribal community in Bangladesh those have no existence in measuring HDI. The study attempts to include the tribes like Santal, Bede (Water Gispay) and few others nagging communities data into the considerable evaluation process of HDI. The findings of the study revealed that in case of due consideration of those deprive communities into the HDI index, the index will decline.

**Keywords:** Human Development Index, Economic Growth, Tribes, indigenous poor woman's voice, Economic Features India, Bangladesh.



## 1 INTRODUCTION

**H**UMAN Development is a development paradigm that is about much more than the rise or fall of national incomes. It is about creating an environment in which people can develop their full potential and lead productive, creative lives in accord with their needs and interests. People are the real wealth of nations. Development is thus about expanding the choices people have to lead lives that they value. And it is thus about much more than economic growth, which is only a means - if a very important one - of enlarging people's choices.

Fundamental to enlarging these choices is building human capabilities - the range of things that people can do or be in life. The most basic capabilities for human development are to lead long and healthy lives, to be knowledgeable, to have access to the resources needed for a decent standard of living and to be able to participate in the life of the community. Without these, many choices are simply not available, and

many opportunities in life remain inaccessible.

The basic purpose of development is to enlarge people's choices. In principle, these choices can be infinite and can change over time. People often value achievements that do not show up at all, or not immediately, in income or growth figures: greater access to knowledge, better nutrition and health services, more secure livelihoods, security against crime and physical violence, satisfying leisure hours, political and cultural freedoms and sense of participation in community activities. The objective of development is to create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives."(Mahbubul Haq- Founder of the Human Development Report)

### 1.1 Background

The development landscape is very different today from when the first Human Development Report was launched 23 years ago, thanks notably to the wisdom of the great Pakistani intellectual Dr. Mahbub Ul Haq, who pioneered, along with Amartya Sen, the concept of "human development". We have now seen an impressive number of developing countries transform themselves into dynamic emerging economies with geopolitical influence. In turn, these countries now have a significant positive impact on human development progress in other developing countries around the world.

Development is a process of expanding, the real freedoms that people enjoy. Development requires the removal of major sources of unfreedom: poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as a systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well as intolerance or over activity of repressive states (Amartya Sen -1999).

There are five distinct types of freedom: political freedoms, economic facilities, social opportunities, transparency guarantees and protective security ( Amartya Sen -1999).The inequali-

<sup>1</sup>Chandan Kumar Sarkar Associate Prof., Department of Economics, International University of Business Agriculture and Technology, Dhaka-1230, Bangladesh, Email: [csarkar@iubat.edu](mailto:csarkar@iubat.edu)

<sup>2</sup>Swapan Kumar Saha, Senior Lecturer, Department of Business Administration, International University of Business Agriculture and Technology, Dhaka-1230, Bangladesh, Email: [swapanau@yahoo.com.au](mailto:swapanau@yahoo.com.au)

<sup>3</sup>Suman Chowdhury, Lecturer, Department of Electrical and Electronics Engineering, International University of Business Agriculture and Technology, Dhaka-1230, Bangladesh, Email: [suman.kuet@gmail.com](mailto:suman.kuet@gmail.com)

<sup>4</sup>Mustafizur Rahman, Senior Lecturer, Department of Business Administration, International University of Business Agriculture and Technology, Dhaka-1230, Bangladesh, Email: [mustafizur@iubat.edu](mailto:mustafizur@iubat.edu),

<sup>5</sup>Mohammad Mahbubur Rahman, Assistant Prof., Department of Physics, International University of Business Agriculture and Technology, Dhaka-1230, Bangladesh, Email: [dinar\\_eic@yahoo.com](mailto:dinar_eic@yahoo.com)

ty acted as a denial of all five types of freedom. While humanity shares one planet, it is a planet on which there are two worlds, the world of the rich and the world of the poor. - *Raanan Weits, 1986*

The people throughout the world awake each morning to face a new day; they do so under very different circumstances. Some live in comfortable homes with many rooms. They have more than enough to eat, are well clothed and healthy, and have a reasonable degree of financial security. Others, and these constitute more than three-fourths of the earth's 6 billion people, are much less fortunate. They may have little or no shelter and an inadequate food supply. Their health is poor, they often cannot read or write, they are often unemployed, and their prospects for a better life are uncertain at best. An examination of these global differences in living standards is revealing. More than three-fourths of the world's people live in developing countries, but they enjoy only 16% of the world's income - while the richest 20% have 85% of global income. (HDI Report-1995)

## 1.2 Inequality

Don't ask me what poverty is because you have met it outside my house. Look at the house and count the number of holes. Look at the utensils and the cloths I am wearing. Look at everything and write what you see. What you see is poverty. - **An indigenous poor woman's voice.**

Inequality in health, education and income - key components of human development - matter deeply to social well-being. Yet the best known measures of well being either ignore distributional inequalities altogether or at best account for only some of their effects. Per capita income the most common measure is simple average. The practice of identifying averages with national well being ignores potential trade offs between increasing average and decreasing in differences in distribution. For example: rich get richer but income inequality simultaneously may increase so sharply that the incomes of the poor decline, resulting in a decrease in well-being. HDI (Human Development Index) is derived from three component indices; health, education and life expectancy rate.

Health and education have substantial public goods, distributed entirely according to income. Publicly provided goods and services may be unequally distributed as well, because access to them is politically driven and affected by discrimination on the basis of race, ethnically, religion or gender because inequalities in the distribution of health and education have negative effects on human well-being, and are not simply a function of income inequality they should enter into measures of social welfare.

## 1.3 Demographic and Economic Features

### 1.3.1. Bangladesh

For many years Bangladesh was perceived as hopelessly impoverished nation always on the brink of massive famine. Food production barely met the minimum nutritional needs of a rapidly expanding and mostly destitute population. Yet the country now seems to have turned the situation around, and development experts are beginning to talk about a more vibrant Bangladesh, one that is no longer viewed as the "basket

case" of Asia. Bangladesh is located on the tropic corner in south Asia. It has the world's highest annual rainfall, which affects the topography of the territory and the location of economic activities. Much of the territory is partly submerged or subject to flooding during the rainy season, and the cultivation of rice and jute employs a very large portion of the workforce. Bangladesh is the most densely populated agricultural nation in the world, with 130 million in people in 2000. It is also one of the poorest and least developed in Asia, with a 2000 per capita GNP only of \$380, a life expectancy of 61 years and a literacy rate for woman of fewer than 30%. Its labour force is expanding rapidly as a result of high population growth rates and unemployment currently exceeds 20%.

Bangladesh is a country rich in many cultures and peoples of different nations. The indigenous people of Bangladesh are strikingly diverse in their culture, language, religion, traditions and patterns of social and economic life. Within Bangladesh, there are more than 45 district communities who lived in the country for centuries. They comprise more than 1% of the present population and their numbers are 2 millions. They are the most disadvantaged neglected and vulnerable people in the country. Bangladesh government does not have any policy for the development of indigenous people. Although many times indigenous people faced eviction from their homeland in the name of population transfer, development projects, building dams, Eco parks, projected areas, reserve forest and even establishing military base on their ancestral and community land. Many indigenous people migrated to India for safety and security. The Indigenous people in Bangladesh they have to live in the various regions in the country. These are: 1) Chittagong hill tracts, 2) Greater Mymensingh districts, 3) North-Bengal 4) greater Sylhet 5) South-Western region 6) Gazipur district and 7) Cox's Bazar.

### 1.3.2. India

With one of the highest absolute poverty rates in the world (44.2% in 1999) and by far the greatest number of people living on less than \$1 a day. India epitomizes the problem of absolute poverty. Partly this is because India is geographically the largest country in south Asia and the seventh largest in the world. It has the world's second largest population, with over one billion people in 2000 and a rate of population growth that averaged 1.8% during the past decade. Its 2000 per capita income of \$450 is still one of the lowest in the world outside of Africa. Its rapidly expanding population has not only retarded economic progress but also put increasing pressure on national resources, contributed to environment deterioration, and produced a labour force whose growth and size continue to exceed the economy's absorptive capacity. Absolute poverty remains widespread; illiteracy exceeds 50% for woman and the under-5 mortality rate remains close to 90 of 1000. Almost half of the world's poor reside in India.

In India, 68 million people belonging to 227 ethnic groups and comprising of 573 indigenous communities derived from six racial stocks namely - Negroid, Proto-Australoid, Mongoloid, Mediterranean, West Breachy and Nordic exists in different part of the country (Pushpgandhan). These indigenous people mostly live close in the vicinity of forests and have managed and conserved the biodiversity of their localities since long time. These indigenous people take shelter from forest and

utilize wild edible plants both raw and cooked. The flower and fruits are generally eaten raw where as tubers, leaves and seeds are cooked. These people utilize forest produce, forest timber and fuel wood, living in forest since ages and have developed a kind of affinity with forests.

#### 1.4 Comparisons between Bangladesh and India

Given the limitations of reliable data, it is not easy to make extensive comparisons of the achievements of different capabilities and enhancing functioning. One reason why the data tend to be relatively scarce in this area compared with, say, data underlying GNP and GDP estimates, is the lack of demand for such data. There is no reasons why it should not be possible to get more comparative data on, say, morbidity or under nutrition, in different countries. The weakness in the theory of well-being and living standards has been partly re-

TABLE 1

COMPARATIVE DATA ON SPECIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF TWO COUNTRIES

	GNP per capita	Life expectancy rate	Infant mortality rate	Child death rate	Adult literacy rate
Bangladesh	\$ 530	61	110/1000	27	46%
India	\$ 750	63	90/1000	11	45%

Source: *World Development Report -2007*

sponsible for the underdevelopment of the data base.

In, addition, I have to mention text topic the indigenous people's ranking cannot exist in the HDI and their standards of living worst than the poor in both the countries.

### 2.0 General Objectives

The objectives is to raise the quality of life for all people and specially indigenous people through appropriate population and development policies and programmers aimed at achieving reduce inequality, poverty eradication, better health, economic growth into the context of development and sustainable patterns of consumption and production, human resource development and the guarantee of all human rights, including the right to development as a universal and inalienable right and an integral part of fundamental human rights. Particular attention is to be given to the socio- economic improvement of the poor men and women in indigenous people. As women and indigenous people are generally the poorest of the poor and at the same time key actors in the development process, eliminating social, cultural, political and economic discrimination against women and indigenous people are prerequisite of eradicating of poverty, promoting sustained economic growth in the text of development, ensuring quality family planning and reproductive health services, and achieving balance between population (general and indigenous) and available resources and patterns of consumption and production.

#### 2.1 The Special Objectives

i) Development strategies, planning, decision-making and resource allocation at all levels and in all regions, with the goal of meeting the needs, and improving the quality of life of pre-

sent and future generations.

ii) All aspects of development planning in order to promote social justice and to eradicate poverty through sustained economic growth in the context of sustainable development.

iii) To incorporate the perspectives and needs of indigenous communities into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the population, development and environment programmes that affect them.

iv) To ensure that indigenous people receive population- and development – related services that they deem socially, culturally and ecologically appropriate

v) To address social and economic factors that act to disadvantages indigenous people which increase economic security (wage, employment status, net income, consumption, savings)and control over resources, skill development, access to institutions and information.

### 3.0 Methodology

Both primary and secondary sources of information will used in the base-studies. The studies involved review of all relevant available literature, assessment based on the information obtained from the relevant Institutions, questionnaire sample survey, in-depth case studies and discussion with various knowledgeable persons.

#### 3.1 Study Design

By design, this study is of exploratory types, exploring certain variables and describing the finding. Further, this study adopted qualitative and quantitative techniques in exploring facts, establish interrelation among the rich, poor and indigenous people and further scope for in depth study on the issue. Data will be collected through document review, key informant interview and different participatory techniques. Key informant interviews will be held on between India and Bangladesh with some relevant academics, political and NGO leader, representatives from beneficiary and different professional groups.

A series of group discussion involving different actors will be conducted to discuss about the various dimensions of the cases, formulate possible solutions and identify possible roles of each stakeholder at various stages in resolving the problem. Separate group discussions will also organized to exchange views of different actors and obtain their opinions pertaining to the expectation that the outcome of these activities will lead to a feasible solution matrix based on broad consensus of opinion of all relevant quarters of the society. More than 200 individual interviews with different actors will be carried out and content analysis. My Advisor, may oversee the whole exercise undertake several field trips and also engage into interviews and discussions. The sample spots for the survey and case studies would be selected both Bangladesh and India in the selected areas

#### 3. 2 Variables and Indicators:

The following indicators will need to be investigated in the study to address the study objectives and information coverage;

**3.3 Data Collection Technique:**

In line with the objective and purpose of the survey and in compliance with the study and sample design, data will generate by means of one to one interview, group discussion and review of secondary sources. For this purpose, different sets of data collection instruments will develop. The following data collection instruments will be administered for data

- i) Guideline for key informant interview
- ii) Guidelines for group discussion.

**4.0 Output**

i) Governments and other important institutions in society should recognize the distinct perspective of indigenous people on aspects of population and development and in consultation with indigenous people and in collaboration with concerned nongovernmental and intergovernmental organizations, should address their specific needs, including needs for primary health care and reproductive health services. All human rights violations and discrimination, especially all forms of coercion, must be eliminated.

ii) Within the context of the activities of the international decade of the World Indigenous people, the United Nations should, in full cooperation and collaboration with indigenous people and their relevant organizations, develop an enhanced unstinting of indigenous people and compile data on their demographic characteristics, both current and historical, as a means of improving the understanding of the population status of indigenous people. Special efforts are necessary to integrate statistics pertaining to indigenous populations into the national data collection system.

iii) Government and every person should respect the cultures of indigenous people and enable them to have tenure and manage their lands, protect and restore the natural resources and ecosystems on which indigenous communities depend for their survival and well-being and in consultation with indigenous people, take this into account in the formulation of national population and development.

**5.0 Conclusion**

We may conclude that human development is both a physical reality and a state of mind in which society has, through some combination of social, economic, and institutional processes, secured the means for obtaining a better life for every people. Whatever the specific components of this better life, development in all societies must have at least the following three observations

- i) To increase the availability and widen the distribution of basic life sustaining goods such as food, shelter, health and protection for the indigenous people.
- ii) To raise levels of living, including, in addition to higher incomes, the provision of more jobs, better education, and greater attention to cultural and human values, all of which will serve not only to enhance material well-being but also to generate greater individual and national self-esteem.
- iii) To expand by freeing of economic and social choice available to individuals and nations by freeing them servitude and dependence not only in relation to other people and nation-states but also to the forces of ignorance and human misery.

TABLE 2

MAJOR VARIABLES AND INDICATORS BY SOURCE OF INFORMATION

Major Variables and Indicators	Sources of Information
a) Basic equality, social security, health care and education.	a) State policy makers
b) Social inequality and economic reform	b) Relevant government authorities
c) Identifies and reach of inequalities	c) Academics
d) Local governance and social reform	d) Political leaders
e) Female deprivation and missing women	e) NGO leaders
f) Ratio of female to male child mortality among general and indigenous people in different states.	f) Representatives of different professions (farmers, marginal farmer, labour, students etc)
g) Implications of government's losing control on policy formulation for social services, health and education etc	g) Dhaka university library & Central library
h) Joblessness and decreasing of purchase capacity	h) Calcutta University library
i) Deprivation due to increase budget for armament	i) Calcutta central library
j) Crime, violence and drug abuse	

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