

Folk Traditions and Indiscriminate Animal Killings: A case Study of Arunachal Pradesh with Special Reference to Pasighat

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Abstract- The world's charismatic nature is gifted by plenty of bio resources for the use of human beings. It may be used for food resource or for some other living aspects of life. Unfortunately some Adi tribal groups of people still believe in some very illogical and superstitious beliefs which contribute to animal devastation by indiscriminate hunting of animals. It is very ridiculous when people started going to Moon still many societies of people are dwelling in a dark age of superstitious traditions. The present study thus emphasizes on the three very old traditional Adi tribal subgroups of people who live on traditional beliefs and play a crucial role in animal killings. The present paper tries to illustrate some of their rituals and traditional events where animals are hunted. The paper also investigates types and causes of animals killed for such different rituals. This paper thus provides new information on hunting practices in relation to their traditional events. These malpractices of animal killings are tried to focus through this article to inculcate the humanity among people and also to generate a concern and soft corner for the innocent God's created beautiful nature. This paper thus also tries to suggest some mitigative measures to protect these animal lives. The study finds that these people are forest lovers and they are strongly abated with their traditional folk tales, festivities and myths are strongly linked with nature and deeply influenced by the forest ecology and environment.

Index Terms- Bioresource, Adi Tribes, Hunting, Tradition

INTRODUCTION

Since the time of human evolution man has been undergone different adaptations to maintain the biological, physical needs. This adaptation also includes socio cultural aspects which are completely based on one's typical environmental influence.

Especially all the traditional and cultural rituals are totally interrelated to the existing environment which a community bears. The cultural aspects of human and its relation with nature should be taken into account in all the debates related to sustainable development (Morin-Labatut and Akhtar 1992; Sachs 1993; Agarwal 1995; Zwahlen 1996). Interestingly in the 21st century still there are people in different parts of the world are blindly depending on the natural resources as their source of living life irrespective of all modern technological advancements. Still people are existing the way in the primitive age people lived life just with the basic need of life, no luxury, no use of technology and no boundary. They live life as they have to with minimum requirements but of course they behave like carnivorous animals with the habit of eating meat only by different hunting methods. Tribal people form an important component of the natural ecosystem in which they are in a multiplex relationship among population of organisms for sustaining their livelihood within their habitat. The state of Arunachal Pradesh thus illustrates the vast diversity of different tribal communities. These tribal communities also represent different socio cultural behaviours and traditions. In Arunachal Pradesh the Adi tribes are a major collective tribe living in the Himalayan hills and they are found in the temperate and sub-tropical regions within the districts of West Siang, East Siang, Upper Siang, Upper Subansiri and Dibang Valley. The literary meaning of "Adi" is the Hill or mountain dwellers. The tribe consists of number of sub tribes viz. Padam, Minyong, Pasi, Bori, Bokar, Karko, Milang, Ramo, Pangi, Shimong, Ashing, Tangam, of the Abo-Tani.

It is witnessed that the tribal way of life is very much dictated by the nature right from the birth to death

since for them nature is not only their home but also they worship nature including river, mountain, hills, sun and wind. The nature is not only their home, but also they always like and live in harmony with nature. Most of the tribes living in forests, hills, and mountains are practicing simple mode of production and have socio-political structure and religious system of their own which revolves round the surrounding natural ecosystem. This concept somehow helps them generating love towards nature on the other hand posing threat to some bioresources specially the animal life. It has been observed most of the tribal rituals follow the worship of nature where they use to hunt different animals as a part of their tradition to serve the God. Their old traditional customs follow unnecessary killings of these bioresources to prove themselves as a strong man or the sign of power and pride for marriage purpose, the harvesting festivals also lead to hunting of animals. It is also observed some of the tribes used animals to donate in adult's funeral ceremony which is supposed to bring eternal peace to the soul. Thus huge controversies arises due to their superstitious believes resulting indiscriminate killings of animals and loss of biodiversity.

The climate of Arunachal Pradesh varies from hot and humid to heavy rainfall in the Shivalik range. It became progressively cold as one moves northward higher altitudes. Trees of great size, plentiful climbers and abundance of cane and bamboo make Arunachal evergreen. The richness of flora and fauna that occur in these forests presents a panorama of biological diversity with over 5000 plant species, about 85 terrestrial mammals, over 500 birds and a large number of butterflies, insects and reptiles. The pasighat town considered as the smart city a small growing area is considered as the case study for the research investigation. This town also provides some key features of having different tribal communities, celebration of different traditional and folk practices and multicultural events where the animal killings are interrelated. For this tribal people it may be fun or tradition but the indiscriminate molestation towards these animals cannot be excused. People are not given right to kill other lives for some fun or game or some tradition. The physical torture, the pain they suffer while killing is intolerable which an animal cannot describe by their words but of course they shout loudly even cries in pain and asks for help to

release. But we greedy human beings are not ready to forgive others for our own entertainment. The present study thus elaborates different customs and religious activities where animals are deeply associated.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research investigation process involved a questionnaire survey among some of the people of 3 nearest villages to the town Pasighat. These included Mebo, Mebong and Ruksin villages of Pasighat. The questionnaire includes both open and close ended questions. It was seen most of the people were illiterate and therefore schedule helped in collecting the data. Personal interview with the village elders was an important tool for the final analysis. The Adi sub community chosen were Padam, Pasi and Milang. The time period covered for the data collection was September and October month of 2017. Within this months the data were gathered. The total numbers of the questionnaires were 80 which was circulated among different groups of people.

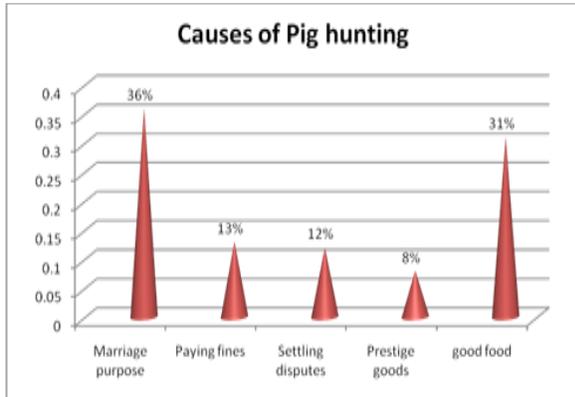
Research Aim and Objectives: The present paper deals with the present scenario of the traditional killing of animals in the Pasighat area. The study tries to investigate the different traditional practices where animals are associated. It also tries to identify different species which are hunted or killed during the process. The study also tries to suggest some mitigative measures for the benefit of these bioresources. Different views from the selected groups of people were collected. It was found they remarkably follows different numbers of traditional occasions and where animals were correlated for worshipping or hunting or killing.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

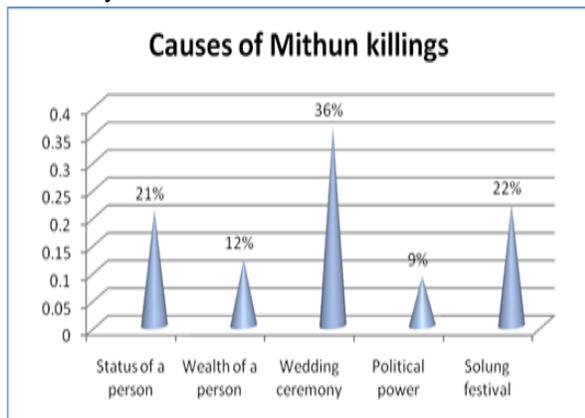
The research investigation process firstly collected the data regarding the different animal killings. My research results shows the following informations on the same.

1. Pig hunting: The data collection on the causes of pig hunting shows difference in opinions. 36% of the people are agreed about the customs as marriage ceremony gift which was followed by 31% of the people who said it is consumed as very good food source. 13% of the sample mentioned pig is used as a fine for any illegal issue which was again followed

by 12% people who said its use in settling disputes which is also really surprising. Only 8% of the people agreed that it is regarded as a good of prestige to offer in any festival.

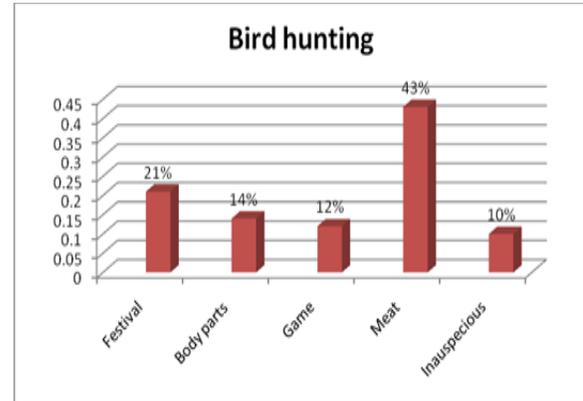


2. Mithun Hunting: In local mythology, is the first born of the union of earth and sky. Mithun is considered highly important by them for its value and its usefulness. Hunting of Mithun in Adi tribes is another very crucial part. 36% of the people said Mithuns are used primarily as means of exchange in bride-wealth and other reciprocal transactions. In Arunachal Pradesh Solung festival is very common where killing of Mithun is a important part .22% of the people replied about solung festival and Mithun hunting. 21% replied that Mithun hunting represents the status and wealth of the person. Again 9% of the people said Mithun also represents the political power of that family. They also mentioned that are major big rituals where the sacrifice of mithun is mandatory and without which the ritual is a failure.

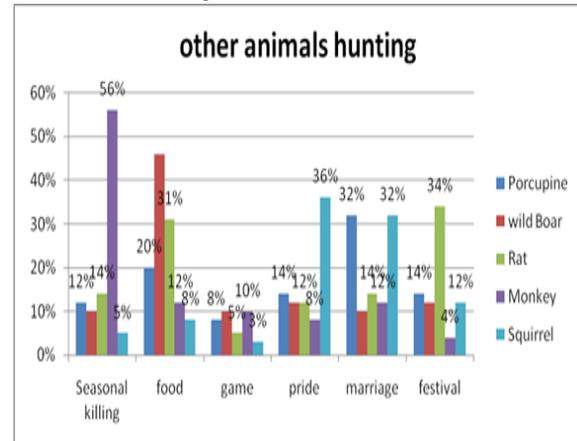


3. Bird Hunting: Hunting of birds is another important event among the tribes here though it gets less importance than other animals. 43% of the people mentioned about food source followed by 21% people who mentioned about some festivals where

some birds are gifted alive. 14% of the people agreed some birds are killed for body parts like beaks, wings etc which are very costly. 12% people use this as game purpose. Interestingly 10% of the people believes some birds sounds are inauspicious due to which also they are hunted.



4. Hunting of Monkeys, Squirrels, wild boar and porcupine Besides the above high rating animals some other animals are killed as part of their living. Monkeys are observed to be killed as seasonal meat by 56% which was followed by marriage purpose. Among the squirrel hunting causes 36% of the people told about killing of squirrel as a matter of pride which is gifted to the loved ones followed by 32% people replied it is used for marriage purpose to be given by the groom to show his power. The squirrels must be hunted without damaging their body part and gifted to the fianchse and proposes the girl in front their relatives. Rats are killed seasonally to rescue their agricultural activities. 32% of the people replied rat killings as a purpose to gift the bride followed by 20% as a food. Similarly porcupine and wild boar are also killed for their different rituals as shown in the fig below.



5. Fish Hunting: The importance of fish is next to meat in their society. Fish is not only important as a source of protein but also an important food item in any feast or ritual to entertain the guests. Sharing of fish is important socially and communally. Catches are shared among the relatives and extended family. Regarding fish hunting 34% of the people agreed about the community fishing as their culture and traditional practice .36% of the people interestingly replied about marriage interest as a part of their custom to gift and share fish.



DISCUSSION

It is observed that among these Adi people meat is universally highly valued and far above other types of foods. The people in this state uses fresh meat to distributed throughout the community as a gift in all festivals. They believe it promotes co-operation and solidarity. It is also observed that sharing is embodied in their culture. For them Plant food is basic only meat is real food and full of prestige. Infact they believe that certain body parts of the animals are not for children and women which could be consumed by male adults only. The personal interview with 5 local people also informed for them seasonal hunting is a game like and they give best effort to win the game. They don't go towards menstruate women, or people who attended recent death or some other inauspicious activities. For them hunting animals is the most crucial task traditionally which brings to them pride and status in the community. The graphical representation above thus provides the clue how deeply animals are associated in their cultural rituals. The Killings of Mithun and pig seems to be

highest during some festivals as a part of their wedding ceremony. Similarly the birds killings for body parts or for festive purpose is also ridiculous. The monkeys, rats, squirrels are also killed either as a part of their rituals or for some needs but such inhuman activities must be addressed. Fish killings by different hunting method is another major affect to the fish diversity. Ofcourse some tradition and customs cannot be denied but unnecessary killings of such innocent animals will create a great loss of biodiversity in the coming days. The Great Indian Hornbill (*Buceros bicornis*) is not seen now in many parts of Tirap district in Arunachal Pradesh (Datta 1998, 2001, 2002, 2004). Killing animals cannot be matter of pride or prestige as groups of people dressed with arms attacks the innocent lonely animals for entertainment. These blind notion must be erased totally from these community. Besides these the use of electricity in the water to trap the fishes, use of some medicinal plants to paralyse the fishes and use of chemicals in the water also posses threat to the existing community.

Hunting animals for marriage is really ridiculous which must be stopped to save the precious nature's gift unless very soon Mithun population will be in threat. In the technological era such malpractices must be stopped and new areas of entertainment and adventures could be developed without harming to the animal diversity. Arunachal itself is a great place of mesmerizing scenic beauty and adventures. People can get ample of options once if such areas are come into focus and government should take the strict action against it to protect the nature.

SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

Though these small investigation cannot deal with animal sustainability still such type of rituals associated with animals killings is seriously posing threat to the wildlife diversity. The investigator feels a urgent research and indepth study on the status of the wildlife population which will contribute for the sustainability. The paper presents basically the illpractices of animal killings which must be stopped by finding some alternative methods. It is observed that some efforts in this direction have been initiated by the Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) with the help of the NGO -Arunachal Wildlife and Nature Foundation (A WNF). They have tried to ban such hunting

practices in some villages and also have introduced new artificial fiberglass made beak and wings to get the traditional get up in their festivals. Such kind of initiatives will definitely bring a positive effect in future. The development of ecotourism is another biggest aspect in this biodiversity hotspot area. This will also contribute for revenue generation and entertainment together. The investigator also feels a major role of the State Government in bringing new policies and actions to rescue these animals. The wildlife acts and implementation of laws for banning all these meaningless customs will help to improve the hunting scenario of the state. Here the local NGOs can play a key role by making community awareness programmes. Thus the study emphasizes on the utmost need of the hour which is to make the community educated enough to choose the right direction for the benefit of the society.

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