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An Analytical Study On The Traditional “Jhum Cultivation” Of Tripura.

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Abstract:-

“Jhum Cultivation” has been identified as one of the main human impacts influencing “Bio-Diversity” in Tripura, North east India. It is the main form of agriculture in the hills of Tripura. In Tripura more than 20% of Tribal families are dependent on “Jhum Cultivation” for their livelihood. “Jhum Cultivation” practice have some positive and negative effect. In “Jhum Cultivation”, Burning and slashing method is followed to control of weeds, soil-borne pathogens and other diseases of crops in those areas.

Keywords:-

Jhum Cycle, Environment, Jhumia, Sustainability, Livelihood, Soil Health, Tribal People, Rehabilitation, Alternative Option, Shifting Cultivation, Tripura.

Introduction:-

Tripura is the Third Smallest state of India. “Jhum Cultivation” is deeply integrated into the social, cultural and economic lifestyle of the indigenous peoples of Tripura. It is an agricultural system that involves clearing a section of land and using it for farming activates for a relatively short time before abandoned it. In Tripura commonly practiced “Shifting cultivation” comes under is known by “Jhum cultivation” and those who practice it are called jhumias. It is an age old practice done by tribals of Tripura, it’s not just the source of income ;it is a survivable supplier of them. “Shifting cultivation” involves cleaning of forest and then slashing and burning the plant parts. There are three types of “Jhum cultivation” like tribals those have permanent land to do jhum they are called jhumias by choice, tribals those who have reclaimed some amount of land for “Jhum cultivation” they are initial ‘Jhumias’ and those who do not have any plain land for settle cultivation, fully depend on jhum for food they are knows as pure ‘Jhumias’. At the time of “Jhum cultivation” they use to enjoy the cool mountain breeze, singing and dancing.

Aims & Goals Of The Study:-

1. To understand the impact of “Jhum cultivation” On the ‘Jhumias’ and others.
2. To find the social and physical changes in the jhuming areas.
3. Estimate the soil loss due to “Jhum Cultivation”.
4. To make out the change in the physical setup of the study area.
5. Alternative portion to “Jhum Cultivation”.
6. To determine the status of transition from “Shifting Cultivation” to agroforestry practices.
7. To determine the socio-economic status of the resettled shifting cultivators(Jhumias).

Analysis:-

“Jhum Cultivation” is a time-tested system of agricultural practice, most often evolved indigenously and is strongly based on traditional knowledge.

“Jhum Cultivation” allows the tribal people of Tripura to preserve their rich cultural traditions and diversity. “Jhum cultivation” is interwoven into the cultural and tradition of nearly 19 tribes those lived basically in the hilly parts of Tripura especially in Dhalai and North Tripura district. In this process it cannot be possible to carry out modern agricultural package of practices and the crops are grown fully under organic system. Burning and slashing method used in the system helps in control of weeds, soil-borne pathogens and other diseases of crops in those areas.

“Jhum Cultivation” practices start with cutting and burning of trees and as a result degradation of forest land or deforestation in the hilly areas where they used to do jhum. Due to deforestation it creates direct negative impact on the environment which ultimately leads to climate change. Now a days it is a matter of global concern. Deforestation leads destruction of “Bio-Diversity” and losses of huge amount of soil and the ultimate result; soils become unfertile. Continuous deforestation leads to less average rainfall. “Shifting cultivation” also causes air pollution due to burning practices. Burning of slash reduces the soil acidity, organic matter and total nitrogen content, but increases the amount of phosphorus and caution into the soil. Crop productivity under “Shifting Cultivation” is very low compare to other system of crop cultivation due to reduction in crop yield, the families start moving from existing place to other virgin areas which again leads to forest degradation, loss of “Bio-Diversity” in the hilly parts of Tripura.

Improvement Of “Jhum Cultivation” Through Modern Technology in Tripura:-

Certain Technological guidelines and principles those have been successfully applied in different parts of the world for the rehabilitation of shifting cultivation are listed below-

1. Maximize both cropping and fallow period and provide good varieties of seeds.
2. Identify innovative technologies, institutions and policies that can address two fundamental challenges- poverty eradication of Tribal people (Jhumias) and protection of environment.
3. Adoption of wide spectrum of fallow management strategies.
4. Minimizing the slash and burning process of “Jhum Cultivation” and stop cutting the forest and start doing afforestation.
5. Accelerate fallows (fallow vegetation to be improved with nitrogen fixing trees to enrich the soil fertility).
6. Managed and enriched fodder fallows that it may use by tribal fallows to improve their socio-economic status.

Conclusion:-

“Jhum Cultivation” is not only the major source of livelihood, it the way of life to support the socio-economic status of the people who are engaged in “Shifting Cultivation” and living in the hilly areas to carry out their livelihood although the production comes from “Shifting Cultivation” is not sufficient. Gradually increasing population puts tremendous pressure on land on the marginal mountain and high intensity and frequency of shifting cultivation for increasing overall production also reduces the forest and grassland area and resultant of high soil and land degradation.

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