

Peasants Power and Politics in a Bangladesh Village

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Abstract

Bangladesh is a land of thousands of peasant farm families. The country is predominantly an agrarian society. A major portion of its population depending on agriculture, known as peasants. Bangladesh society comprises a large portion of peasants. Peasant society owns a traditional power structure and some specific social organization that influence the production system and livelihood activities of that class of people. Faction grouping and influence of state political change also influence farm household activities. Considering these context, a study was undertaken to focus on the peasant faction grouping and power structure at the village Heshakhhal under Nangolkot Upazila of Comilla district. The major focus of the study was to comprehend the change occurring in social organizations within the peasant society. The focus was also on faction grouping and changing power structure of the village. Anthropological method of data collection was taken to from the field. The data were qualitative type, mostly descriptive in analysis. Heshakhhal village was predominated by Hindu population before 1947. Hindu family leaders played vital role in faction grouping and power structure of the village. After the separation of India sub-continent a major portion of Hindu population migrated to India. Along with that a portion of Muslim population of Agartala of India settled in the village. They were known as Rewaji families. At present there are three subgroups of Muslim population that are known living in Heshakhhal. Those are : 1) Deshi 2) Swondupi and 3) Rewaji. At present 44.6% of the whole families are Deshi original settlers. 43.52% are Swondupi (migrated from South western part of Bangladesh) and 3.27% are Rewaji Muslim families. Along with them 8.6% Hindu families are now living in village. Heshakhhal village is in an agrarian setting. Locally the village is known as a paddy growing village. In last forty years a major change occurred in traditional power structure of the village. In last century the villages were divided in three Samaj. Linkage with formal administrative unit was flexible. Salish system was the major feature of conflict resolution specially in managing social conflict. At present the village is separated in several Samajs. The role of Samaj is decreasing day by day. Influence and role of national level political parties are also playing strong role in leadership in the village which was not seen thirty years ago. A major change was also seen in the social organization of the village. In the village peasant families once depended on agriculture are trying to diversify its manpower in non-farm activities. Marriage system has changed, due to intermarriage system among the Swandupi and deshi community.

Keywords: Peasants, Power Structure, Politics, Agrarian Society, Factionalism.

Introduction

1.1 Statement of the issue

Bangladesh is predominantly an agrarian society. A major portion of its people's livelihood is depended on agriculture. The households who are living under an agrarian settings are commonly known as *krishak* which in term of anthropology and development studies are named as *peasants*. The term 'peasant' was originated by the development academicians meaning a transitional pre-industrial class mostly depending on agriculture at the subsistence level. The term 'peasant' is to characterize entire society and others has dealt with peasantry as a part of the society within a large whole. According to the academic point of view the peasantry has constituted the most numerous social group in all organized state, from ancient to modern times, that they have rest on traditional form of agriculture. (Encyclopedia of Social Science, 1977). Raymond Firth defines peasants using essentially economic criteria.

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By peasant he means “A system of small producers, with a simple technology and equipment, often relying primarily for their subsistence on what they themselves produce. According to Eric Wolf “Peasants are farmers who grow crops and raise livestock in rural areas, but who unlike commercial”. The peasant communities are rather than a single individual or household. A characteristic which is often stressed is that peasant societies in some sense represent a transition, they ‘stands midway between the primitive tribe and industrial society’ (Wolf, 1966). One of the best known earlier definition of peasants describes them as ‘part of societies with apart culture’(Kroeber,1948). In comprehensive definition it can be noted that “Peasant society is composed of settled rural peoples, engaged for the most part in agricultural production, whose productive activities and culturally distinct characteristics are influenced, harped or determined to a significant extent by powerful outsiders”.

According to the definition pictured by the academicians, the society of Bangladesh comprises a large portion of peasants. In the peasant society of Bangladesh some major features can be identified. Those are: Transition, market and exchange, subordination and internal difference. Transition implies change and adaptation but it must stress that the speed of change and its outcome are neither known nor determined in advance. Markets provide both opportunities and pressure for peasants. The idea of subordination implies unequal social and cultural status. Peasants in Bangladesh by identifying the peasants as a distinctive social or economic group, and by stressing subordination to other social groups, there is a risk of overlooking differences of social and economic status within peasant society itself. According to the writing of Abu Abdullah , “Bangladesh is a country of family farms .Most of the tenant depend on share cropping system”(Abdullah,et.al.1976). The proportions of land own by the peasant families were never been much then the large farm household. The scenario is drawn in the last agricultural surveys conducted in past decades. In the last agricultural survey done in 1996 and 2005 it is found that in the decades of 60 and 70 of last century the area farm holding remain same, in an average farm holding was 3.5 acres. But in 1982 the average farm holding was decreased 2.4 acres. The growth of population was a major cause of that. Within the periods of 1996 and in 2006 the average holding decreased to 1.48 acres. The process of defragmentation of land is the major cause of that. It is also found in last survey that the rate of landless farm household have also increased. In 1960 among the whole portion of peasant ,33% were landless. The ratio increased to 37% in 1982,along with that the marginal farm families increased to 51.42%.

Table.1: Number and Area of Farm holdings and their Percentage

Size of Farms(in acres)	Number of Farms (in thousand)		% Of Farms	
	2005	1996	2005	1996
Total Farm holdings	15089	11798	100	100
Marginal farm holdings (00.050-00.49 acres)	5829	3356	38.62	28.45
Small farm holdings (00.50-2.49 acres)	7523	6067	49.86	51.42
Medium farm holdings (02.50-07.49 acres)	1561	2078	10.34	17.61
Large farm holdings 07.50+above	177	298	1.17	2.52

Source: Agriculture Sample Survey,2005

1.2 Review of the Relevant Literature

In the last century village study or study on peasant society became popular among the sociologist/ anthropologists of this part of the world. The study is also commonly known as community study. In Bengal, the pioneer personality worked on peasant society is *Ramchrisna Mukherjee* (The Dynamics of a rural Society, 1957). His work was done in six villages of Bogra district of Bangladesh analyzing the economic and social changes occurring in peasant society. In that study it was first identified that static village society is changing due to change in profession and development in communication. The period of his study was eight months

within the year of 1942-1944. He focused on the taxation, credit system of the *Mohajan*, The process of land losing of poor peasant due to credit overall the socio-economic situation of peasant life of East Bengal. He drew a process of polarization of landless process of poor peasant. The study focused on the process of reinvestment of the profit gain by the rich farmers. These profit came from the exploitation process over the peasants and the investment went by buying land from the same poor peasants class. The study is a pioneer milestone in the field of village study of Bengal. The study not only pointed out a way out for those who are interested in the field of village study but what more that needs to be mentioned none. This study was a turning point in social sciences research in Bengal.

Anthropologist Aminul Islam conducted a major in-depth micro study at the era of sixty (A Bangladesh Village: Conflict and Cohesion, An Anthropological Study of Politics, 1974). His work was focused on the political ethnology of peasant society of Bengal. The study was conducted at Badarpur village of Boidar bazar under Dhaka district. The study was done focusing on the conflict and cohesion, faction grouping of peasant society using anthropological method of data collection. The researcher follow the indicators of power and controlling capacity over people, He identified the action grouping in the peasant society. He also finds out the characteristics of the organizational and conflicting feature of peasant society on the changing context of rural society. The researcher also drew a connection between village's local politics with of central politics. To everyone a village seems calm and quite, but there is also conflict within faction group. Power and politics is also there. The politics is also related with kin relation, religious sub-group, and friendship.

American social scientist P.J Bertocci's work was on rural power structure, leadership as well as social stratification. (Elusive Village: Social Structure and Community Organization in Rural east Pakistan, 1970). To analyze the village community of East Bengal he formulated a new theory name "Cyclical Kulakism". The study was conducted through using the anthropological method in three villages of Comilla Sadar upazila. According to the finding of the study land is the major factor in social stratification of village society. To classified the peasant society Bertocci used two economic phenomenon, one is class other is status. According to him the Kuiakism is in cyclical form in the peasant society of East Pakistan.

Hafeez Zaidi (1970), west Pakistan social scientist worked on the basis of "General Survey" of the socio-psychological aspects. His study area was at two villages of Comilla district. The title of his study was "Village Culture in transition: He collected information's regarding the village life through survey using a schedule and through intensive field work. His studied villages were classified on the basis of landed property, education, age and power. In the study he highlighted on problems of human interaction. According to him faction follow the kinship line but not exclusively. He also discuss on rituals, superstitions and fatalistic beliefs of the peasants of east Bengal.

The case study of 'Nabinagar' by S.A. Rahim (1970) shows the interactions between the cooperative and the village power structure and the capacity of the cooperative to change that structure in favour of the more progressive faction of the village. The study also reveals how the innovations increase production in a short time without increasing inequalities in the villages.

In the period of seventy of last century a study was done by Jhon putnam Tgrop in a ward of Pabna district named "Power among the farmers of Daripalla". (1978). He observed how the villagers try to find meanings of their lives and regulate their action. It stresses on the belief that one day Allah Himself is going to balance each persons' sins against his good and meritorious action and assign each persons' heaven or hell on the basis of how the scale weight. With regard to the economic status of the families and author observed that only the large landholders can afford the direct expanse of sending a son through school to obtain higher degree and become government official.

In the study name "Class differentiation and Power in *Bondhok* gram: The Minifundist Case" (1976) done by *Geoffry* Wood focused on class fragmentation and characteristics of power structure of a peasant society of Bangladesh Woods basic hypothesis was to relate the status position with the ownership of land. He shows how land defrements due to the Muslim Law of inheritance.

The study name "*Jhagrapur*: Poor peasants and women in a village in Bangladesh" (1977); done by Dutch couple *Jeenek Areno* and *Jos Ven Beurden* focused on Marxist point of view of class struggle in a peasant society of Bangladesh. The study focused on mode of

production and production relation in a peasant society. Another major focus of the study was to identify the position of women in a Bangladesh village. In the study the kinship and the patron-client relation was not focused. The main focus was on conflicting role of village social life. Another focus of the study was the relationship between men and women. They observed that the women enjoyed an inferior status. The wife is treated as personal property of her husband and she does not get recognition of her works.

Anwarullah Choudhury studied on social stratification pattern of a village in Dhaka district in 1978. This study shows that the village is stratified from three dimensions, namely class, status and power. The classes are based on the ownership of land. The Hindu Caste and Muslim status groups are arranged hierarchilly on the basis of high and low status. The village is again stratified on the basis of unequal distribution of power. In the study the researcher shows how few individuals controls politics and how the rest remain out of the domain of power and politics. The basis of power in the village has also been focused. Inequality in the distribution of power is ;to a large extent, related to the inequality of ownership and control of land to the inequality of status.

The reviewed study shows that from the beginning of last century so called calm and static village social structure started changing. Especially at middle of last century due to independence and rise of nationalism and abolishing the zamindari system the village people had a opportunity of having access to the national level political formation. Major development initiatives were also taken on that period of time that has a great influence in the social life of Bangladesh villages especially in the Comilla region. In the middle of seventy some pioneer study were conducted that also focused on the changing peasant society of Bangladesh. But within last twenty years their is a gap in understanding the changing scenario of peasant society. This study will try to fill up the gap.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The broad objective of the study was to find out the changes occurring in a peasant society. Along with that to comprehend the influence of political changes occurring in the peasant society.

In specific term , the objectives of the study were to:

- I) comprehend traditional institution and power structure of a peasant society;
- II) analyze the changing role of faction groups in wider context;
- III) identify the Changes in traditional power structure in the context of larger Bangladesh.

1.4 Importance of the Study

The society of Bangladesh is changing rapidly due to modernization, development of communication and globalization. In Bangladesh, thousands of peasants families are playing a vital role in the socio-economic structure. Increase of crop production, use of new technology in agriculture sector, development initiatives taken by the GOs and NGOs are occurring changes in the peasant societies. The political change in the capital can be vital for occurring change in the peasant society of Bangladesh. It was potteder by many writings and myths that Bangladesh villages were calm and quite. Very little change occurred in hundred years. But in the study of peasants we find that the peasant society is always in a transition. In the last three decades major political and cultural change were occurred leading to an independent state through a bloody independent war. After the independence, in last three decades Bangladesh adopted different types of govt. system. Especially in last two decades a large change has occurred from local level political unit to central level political structure. Decentralization of local govt. and introducing parliamentary form of govt. have influenced the political scenario of Bangladesh. These changes are influencing the traditional power structure and peasant way of life. Peasant faction groups are not only involving themselves in internal village politics, but also relating themselves with the local and national level politics. They are involving themselves with the activities of national level political parties. How much the peasant faction groups are involving themselves in local level politics to national level politics is need to be identify. Now a days the village life is not separate and so called self sufficient. The peasant livelihood is very much dependent on government policy and programme. As well as the parliamentary form of govt. system has influencing the local level politics. In local development initiatives political groupings and influence of national political parties plays a

vital role. Those who have good relation with the local and national political institution can easily get the development affords. The study would focus on the changing power structure and politics of the transitional peasant society.

The Academy is dealing with rural development initiatives, which is basically being implemented over the peasant society of Bangladesh. For development initiatives it is very much needed to know internal dynamics of a society. This study would help focus on the internal dynamics of power structure of a peasant society that will be helpful for implementing new development initiatives at grassroots level.

1.5 Scope of the Study

The study was focuses on two major issues: The first one is to identify traditional institution relating with power structure. The second one is to identify change occurring there and the influence of central political formation. For identifying those the following variables would be used:

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Variables</i>
1.Existing Institutions	Household, Family, Bari,Gosti, Samaj, Faction groups.
2.Power structure	Decision making issues, Leadership development, factin groupings, Conflict and cohesion, Role of women leadership, etc.
3.Changing power structure	Influence of modernization, Formation of new institution ,influence of political parties, new leadership, peoples mobility, gosti mobility, influence of local administrative units. etc.

Peasant society is very much covered. It is not a easy task to break out the cover and identify the problems. For that in-depth study and accurate methodological framework are needed to built up. The study would be a micro level study covering a single village peasant community. It was not the representation of the whole scenario of Bangladesh but a case as to how things in the peasant society are changing rapidly.

2 .Study Methods

The study is an anthropological type of study. Some PRA tools were used for collecting data from the field. The sources of information are basically primary. Along with that some quantative information were collected from the agriculture extension office, administrative units of the upazila headquarters and from some local NGOs. For collecting the land pattern, soil type, classification of peasants, type and characteristics of climate and soil, ownership of land secondary data were collected from the agriculture extension department of Nangolkot upazila.The study of a village with specific objective requires a theoretical framework/background. The duration of the study was one and half years. First three months of the study were spent on building a strong theoretical background as well as selection of the study area. The team needed to stay and travel the selected village for a period of time. The team visited several villagers for selecting the specific village for collecting data.

2.1. Selection of village

The study was mostly depended on some primary data collected from field. This study tried to follow the tradition of study onj “specific village for getting the in-depth scenario of a peasant society. Primarily the study area was within the Comilla region, some interior part of it. After visiting several village named *Heshakhal* under *Nongalkot* Upazila was selected. The special characteristics of the village were:

Firstly, the village is big in respect of population and territory. There are more then 800 families separated in different subgroups living in the village.

Secondly, the village is a complex one with a variety of people living there.

Thirdly the village is named by a Union. In the power structure of the village the interrelation with the Union is presence there.

fourthly, the village consists of a large number of peasant households.

Fifthly, the village contains more than five para (neighborhoods) that maintain their own political identities in some matters and last cause of selecting the village is that, the village still dominant by peasant activities.

Paddy is the mostly grown crop in locality. Their economic activities are in subsistence level. The following tools/methods were taken for collecting data:

i) Observation

Observation method is the key method to understand issues of a community indepthly. To get idea of faction grouping ,formation of groupings, power structure, role of various *Gosti* etc. this method was used.

ii) Focus group discussion(FGD)

The method was used to find out qualitative information on the key issues from the studied area. Formation of power structure, Transforming role of faction groups and related variables was identified from the study area.

iii) Using key informants

Key informant method was used for identifying some in-depth and touchy issues relating to the objectives. Elderly members, faction group members were used as key informants. The elder one gave change occurred in social and political structure of the village in last focus decades.

v) Informal Interview

Open ended checklist was used to collect some basic information through gossiping and exchange of views.

.2 Organization of fieldwork

The study was an anthropological/qualitative type of study. Observation was the major method that used in the fieldwork. Along with that some PRA tools were used in conducting fieldwork. Historical method was one of the major sources for collecting data. Key informants were used to understand the historical process of political formation of the village. For accumulating quantitative data secondary sources of data were used in the study. For making the quantitative information's it was tested in the field. The research team used to stay in the field during the day time, through visiting the village days by days. The team maintained diary, log book for accumulating data from the field.

2.3 Limitations of the Study

1) One of the limitations of the study was that the study was in a single village. The findings may not represent the whole scenario of peasant society of Bangladesh but can be a case of that.

2) Another limitation of the study was that the quantitative data were collected through recall method and from secondary data of agriculture department of *Nangolkot* upazila office. That might not be hundred percent accurate. Besides, from qualitative data some biasness might be there as the researchers built up specific theoretical framework before getting the data.

In spite of the limitation of the study the researcher tried to fulfill the objectives of its study and indicated the features of a peasant societies specially the characteristics of change in the power structure. That would indicate some important guidelines for future research of peasant society in Bangladesh.

3. Ecology and Social settings

3.1 Selecting of the Village

Bangladesh villages are changing rapidly. If we see the history of the villages we can find out that the village life was static. The mobility among the peasant families living in the village was static. But in the last 30 years especially in the last two decades village life has changed rapidly. These are causing due to development of communication system, taking diversified occupational pattern, in and out migration of the peasants families living in the village. Another major change has occurred due to transform in the power structure of the village. The change occurring in the national level political formations are influencing the rural power structure, because the rural power structure is now directly related to the central power structure of the Bangladesh nation state. In this changing context selecting a village focusing on the changing power structure of the village is a difficult task. For fulfilling the objective and goal of the study the research team visited many parts of the Comilla region to identify which village would be ideal for conducting the study. It is a responsibility for the research team for giving the explanation as to how and in which place the primary data were collected for conducting the study.

For collecting data from the field the village name *Heshakhhal* was selected. The village was selected after shorting out eight to ten villages of Comilla region. Most of villages the team traveled, have good communication with outside. Other major cause of having their livelihood transforming to diversified way. But the team was searching for an ideal village which is still depending on agriculture at the subsistence level specially in local word they are known as *Gerosto*. Mostly the *gerosto* people cultivate paddy. The researcher traveled around the labrotary area of BARD, especially Comilla *Sadar Dakkhin*, *Burichang* Upazila, *Barura* Upazilla, *Nangalkot* and *Laksam upazila* of Comilla district for the selection for an appropriate field site for collecting data. So the process of selection of village was bias as well as selective. In past village studies done in Bangladesh the researcher had to be same bias as the study would be. Thus the village *Heshakhhal* situated in *Nangalkot* Upazila of Comilla district was selected.

The village was selected for its distinct characteristics and presence of a large number of peasant households. The village is large in size and in number of population. Several Para and presence of several Samaj make the village attractive for the study. These variables gave the village are eight for mashing the study more diversified. The village is an ancient village where Hindu and Muslim communities are living from time immemorial. Along with that three subgroup of Muslims are living in the village. So selecting the village for studying the peasant culture and life style as well change in power structure and influence of modernization make the village attractive for study.

3.2 Introducing the Village

The village *Heshakhhal* is situated under *Nangalkot* upazila of Comilla district. The situation of the village is five k.m north west of the *Nangalkot* upazila headquarters and thirty three k.m southeast of district headquarters of Comilla and 123 southeast of Dhaka city. Any one can reach the village through road communication. *Laksam* thana is another closest thana headquarter of the locality which is also a major railway junction of the locality. People also use railway to go to Comilla, Dhaka or other areas. *Nangalkot* upazila was a part of *Laksam* upazila and *Choddagran* upazila of Comilla district. It became a separate upazila in 1984 when decentralization of local govt. was initiated by the then government.

The village *Hesahakhhal* is large in size. The union parisad is also named as *Hesakhhal* union in which a major part is the village *Heshakhhal*. Before 2002 the village was under 5 No. *Nangalkot* union. In 2002 part of the union include with past of Addra Union and named as *Heshakhhal*, UP.A canal flows at the south eastern corner of the village named as *Heshakhhal*. The name of the village and union is originated by the name of the canal. The village is in an agrarian setting surrounded by some other villages. In north corner of the village *Charbaria* village is situated, in South part village name *Chakrolodhi* and *Kurkuta* are situated. *Srihassha* village is situated at the east corner and *Urukchail* village at the west corner of the village. The village is situated under the agrarian setting which is under the old *Meghna* estuarine

floodplain agro-ecological zone. The zone is one of the largest agro ecological zone occupying 7,740 sq kms.

3.3 History of The Village

For collecting the history of the village information's were gathered from the elderly ones. According to the view or oral story from the most elders of the locality, *Heshakhal* village is one of the oldest settlements of the locality. The name of the village derived from the stream flowing at the southeastern part of the village. The canal is a very old water body that originated from the *Muhuri* river of *Feni* district. The canal is more then two hundred years old. The stream had created a large Jola (big swamp) in this part of *Nangalkot* region. The major settlement of that time was *Dyemchati* bazar. The market place is situated at the south east corner of the village. The place was a major water port of this region. Road communication at that time was not in a good form. People used waterway for transporting goods. The swamp was also famous for many varieties of local fish specially big cat fish (*Magur*). At that time fishermen communities were living on the bank of this place. The local people use to rear duck (*Hash*) ,as because of presence of a large water body. At the winter season many type of migratory birds used to migrate to the Canal area. Among the migrated birds most species were wild duck species. By the name of *Hash* the canal was named as *Hesakhal*. The village was also named as *Heshakhal*, by the name of the canal

The Hindu population dominated the village before the separation of Indian subcontinent. Most of the elite of the locality were Hindu family elders of the village. Along with them the Muslim population was minority. The Samaj leaders were mostly Hindu people (i.e *Basantakumar* Pal, *Ramchandra* Pal, *Lalmohan Sardar*). Relation between the Hindu and Muslim community was good. Muslim community used to participate in the Hindu religious programmes as guests. The Hindu also used to come to Muslim community. Specially the lower caste Hindu had a very good relation with the Muslim as they were in the same class. In course of time the proportion of Muslim community had increased due to Muslim population from southeast portion of Bangladesh started settling in the area of Comilla specially in greater *Laksam* region. This Muslim population is locally known as '*Swondupi*'. Almost all of the inhabitants were peasants. So a good working and social relation were seen among the Hindu and Muslim community at that time. Along with the peasant class their were also fisherman and businessman community.

After the separation of Indian subcontinent in 1947, the Hindu community especially the rich families started migrating to India. Most of them migrated without settling the ownership of their property. Some families migrated India through exchanging their property with Muslim families willing to live in *Heshakhal* village. Thus 27 Muslim families settled in *Heshakhal*. The families are locally known as *Rewaji*. There is a distinctness among the *Rewaji Deshi* and *Swondupi* Muslim community living in the village both socially and culturally. At present the Hindu community are living at the Hindu para situated at the middle of the village. This part is one of the original settlement of the locality.

3.4 Climate and Soil Type

The topography of Bangladesh is low-lying, flat alluvial land with an extensive network of rivers and Channels. Its typical monsoon climate is characterized by rain bearing winds, warm temperature and humidity, resulting in a lush green landscape all year round. Its geographical location renders heavy rains, floods, high intensity storms and tidal bores which cause immense loss of life and property year after year.

The study area *Heshakhal* is situated at the flood prone zone of Comilla district. *Hesakhal* is locally known as a paddy-growing village. According to the statement given the peasants living in the village that the soil type and its condition is favorable for growing paddy. This area is situated under the old *Meghna* estuarine flood plain. the zone is in large space covering more then 7,000 sq. kl. ms. But the part of *Laksam* region of the agro-ecological zone is poorly drained. The silt loam soils predominant on highlands and salty clay to clay in lowlands. Organic matters content in the village are moderate. Topsoils of this locality is acidic, but subsoil's neutral in reaction. General fertility level of the soil is high .

According to the Bangla calendar there are six seasons committing of twelve Bangla months. The dry and hot season is known as *Grismakal* (Summer) consisting Bangal month of *Baishak* and *Jaista*. The monsoon is known as *Barshakal*. Autumn is known as *Saratkal*, winter is known as *Seetkal* and spring is known as *Basantakal*. But to the peasant community of the studied area there are three seasons summer, Monsoon and winter are mostly important, temperature, humidity and rainfall is important for agriculture activities specially for paddy cultivation in the village *Heshakhal*.

Table 2: Temperature in Heshakhal

Types	Baisk	Jais	Ash	Sra	Vad	Ash	kart	Agn	pau	Mag	Fal	Chat
High	♦	♦			♦							♦
Med			♦	♦		♦	♦	♦			♦	
Low									♦	♦		

Source: Fieldwork in Heshakhal, 2007

Table 3: Rainfall in Heshakhal

Types	Baisk	Jais	Ash	Sra	Vad	Ash	kart	Agn	pau	Mag	Fal	Chat
High			✓	✓	✓							
Med	✓	✓				✓					✓	✓
Low							✓	✓	✓	✓		

Source: Fieldwork in Heshakhal, 2007

It was found that peasant community living in the village is very much depended on nature. Especially on rain, temperature and humidity. for the production of paddy along with other crops water and temperature are two major factors. During the fieldwork a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was done among the peasant of the village. It was found that the highest temperature of the year is the summer and autumn time. Most period of the year, temperature remains moderate. In winter time temperature remains low.

Rainfall is another major factor of life and livelihood of the peasants' farm families of *Heshakhal*. Less rainfall means drought, less production. water is the major component for producing paddy. A good harvest of paddy needs much rainfall during the seasons of Aush and Aman. But the less rainfall often occurs in this region. The problem is heavy rainfall. As the area is poor in drainage of water. That cause water logging. Water logging sometime cause crop damage, specially in the Aman season. According to the villagers in last ten years the peasants of the locality faced four times Aman crop losing situation due to water logging caused by heavy rainfall in the locality. Landscape of the locality is slight lower then to the northern part of *Nangalkot* region.

3.5 The Soil Condition

The study area is situated under the agro-ecological zone of old Meghna estuarine flood plain. These area which is known as Laksam region is poorly drained .The soil often affected by flood and in monsoon period most of its cultivable soil go under water due to heavy rainfall causing water logging. The soil that goes under water and liable to be burial by fresh and sandy deposits. Locally the sandy is known as *polimati* that forced from sediments washed down by flash floods. The level of P^H in the soil is 5.4. The condition of the soil is very much favorable for paddy production. During the fieldworker it was observed that farmers mainly grow paddy as well as other crops, but paddy is the most important crop of the village. According to the information collected from the agriculture department of the Upazila office at *Nanglkot* the cropping intensity of the locality is 290%. But in *Heshakhal* cropping intensity is not more than 200%. The land utilization of the *Heshakhal* mouza is about 34%. During the fieldwork it was found that peasant community of Heshakhal village categorized the land according to its use and height in four categories. Those are: Vitajomi. Bishnajomi. Pather & Zolajomi.

Table 4 Land Pattern and its Use in Heshakhhal

Types of land	Vitajomi	Bishnajomi	Pather	Zolajomi
Soil Type	Doash	PoliDoash	Poli	Poli/Atel
Use of Land	Housing, Vegetable, Cattle shed	Vegetable, Cattle faced	Paddy other secondary crops	Paddy
Crop	Potatoes, Chili, Vegetable,	Seedlings, potatoes vegetables	Paddy, wheat Mustereed, Small fish	Paddy
Fish	-	-	-	Small catfish
Domestic Animal	Cow, Goat chicks, Duck	-	Duck	Duck
Cropping Intensity	Moderate	Moderate	High	Moderate

Source: Field work in Heshakhhal.

3.6 Inhabitants of the village

The village *Heshakhhal* administratively situated in *Heshakal* Mouza of *Nangal kot* upazila. The village is large in size. Most of the area of *Heshakhhal* Mouza is covered by *Heshakhhal* village. The total land area of *Heshakhhal* village is about 686 acres (including homesteads, roads, ponds, bazaar) where about estimated 825 families are living. The village own two major religious groups. The Hindu and the Muslim. It was found that the settlement was originally a Hindu populated village. Muslim were minority in respect of population before the separation of India. After the separation in 1947, the Hindu families started migrating to India in a large number. During that period two-thirds of Hindu inhabitants migrated to India. Among the migrated portion of Hindu families most of them were in rich and influential. Among them some were “*Samaj leader*” of the then time. Some families exchange their property with Muslim families who migrated to *Heshakhhal* from *Agrotala* of India. These portion of Muslim families are locally known as *Rewaji*. In most cases the Hindu families migrated India without settling their property specially land. At present only 71 Hindu families are living in *Heshakhhal* village.

In field work it was found that the Muslim are major religious group in number. On the basis of settlement pattern in the village there are three types subgroups. Those are:

1. *Deshi* (Original settlers of the village)
2. *Swondupi* (Originated from south western Bengal)
3. *Rewaji* (Migrated muslim from India)

Table 5: Distribution of the Population by Religions Origin in Heshakhhal

Religion	Sub group	No and % of Households	No. of Population	Household size
Muslim	Deshi	368 (44.6)	1928	5.23
	Swondupi	359 (43.52)	1984	5.53
	Rewaji	27 (3.28)	158	5.88
Hindu		71 (8.6%)	423	5.95
Total		825	4494	5.45

Source: field work in the village.

It was found that still the villagers divide the inhabitants primarily on the basis of religion. (The Hindu and Muslim), secondly according to the settlement pattern. Among 825 households it was identified that 8.6% (71) of the total households belongs to Hindu

community. They consist a separate para. The rest Muslim Community are divided in three subgroups. Those are Deghi, Swandupi and the Rewaji. The portion of Deshio community are 44.6% (368) of the total households. These people claim themselves as the original settler started living with the Hindu community from the very beginning of the village incisory. Swondupi community started settling in these region of Comilla and NGO Kuali due some natural causes. They migrated from southern part of the region and started settling here. Among the total household 43.52% belong to Swondupi Community. Rewaji Muslim community has started settling in the village after the separation of India and Pakistan. In last five decade a large portion of hindu families migrated to India. Specially within the period of 1947-1970. Most of those families migrated selling the property to the Muslim Community. Some families exchanged their property with the Muslim furilies willing to settle here in Herhakhal. The newly settled Muslim families are known as rewaj. A small number of Rewaji families (3.28%) are now living in the village. They have good influence over the power structure of the villages.

3.7 The Peasants of Heshakhal

The village *Heskakhal* is within an agrarian setting where a major portion of its population is peasant. Accordingly the information given by the villagersthes area is favorable of paddy cultivation and for agrarian activities. Almost all of the total population directly or indirectly dependent on agriculture. Presence of a large portion of peasant families plays a vital role in the socio-economic structure of the village.

3.7.1. Origin of Peasantry

The elder people living in the village told that, the locality was a large swamp. Inhabitants living in that time mostly belonged to fisherman community. But Among them a small portion of peasant community were living. The Hindu population were depending on business and other occupasipral activities. The cultivable land were not in large in size, because of the presence of the swamp. Most part of the locality were low lying not favorable for agrarian activities. In course of time peasant families originate from south east part of *Noakhali* started settling in these part of *Noakhali*. They are locally known as *Swondupi*. About a hundred years ago the *Swondupi* peasant community started using the swamp land for cultivating paddy, specially local variety of paddy which can sustain in fresh flood water. In late thirty of last country the villagers started developing the low land. In late 70s, High yielding variety of rice started growing in the village. Agriculture technology started introducing, in the village at that period of time. The peasants of the village were aware of new HYV seeds irrigation, line sewing use of fertilizer and pesticides. Road communication was not in standard form on that period.

Migration of Hindu families and east Bengal state acquisition and Tenancy act in 1950 plays a dominant role in the peasant societies evaluation of the village. The Hindu community own most of the cultivable land before 1950. The Muslim population were mostly share croppers of the Hindu landowner. After the tenancy act of 1925 and land reform law in 1950, Muslim peasants become landowner by buying land from the migrated Hindu families in the village. Land is the major capital and assets of the peasant families. Increase of population and scarcity of land is making the asset more valuable. In present context the village own several dispute over the ownership of land among some families. It is also a major cause of faction grouping and conflict. In such context the peasant community are now facing several types of problems in land operation which would be discussed in the later chapters of the report.

3.8 Paddy Production : The major economic activity

The village *Heshakhal* is situated in an agrarian setting. Agriculture is the dominant element in the economy and socio-cultural activities of the village. Paddy is the major crop in the village. The fields locally known as *pather* are situated at the flood prone zone, the *pather* remain fertile, specially fertile enough for paddy production paddy grows three seasons of around the year in the *pather* of the village. Those are :The Aus ,he Amon and The Boro paddy

Aus paddy is grown on the *pather* of the village during summer. These seasonal paddy can be grown on the land which is not totally submerged by flood water. In the beginning of rainy season, the Aus paddy generally sown. The Aus was started cultivating in the months of Falgoon and chyatra. Peasants in the village cultivated IR50 rice variety. Along with that they also cultivate China, BR14 and BR22 variety of rice seeds. But IR50 variety is favorable for the soil condition of the village. The month of Ashar is generally the harvesting time of Aus paddy.

Aman paddy is commonly known as risk based paddy. Aman paddy is in two type on the basis of rowing. The types are: *Roa aman* and *Chita aman*. Roa Aman is favourable in such place where flood water wouldn't stand. Chita Aman is deep-water paddy. In the village of Heshakhhal peasants use to cultivate local variety of *chita Aman*.

Boro paddy is locally known as scheme. By transplantation, Boro paddy are generally grown. The seeds are sown on the Bijtala (*vitajomi*) on the month of *Kortik* and *Agrahayan*. After a month the young plants are transplanted and row on the soft maul left behind after the flood reeds,. Irrigation and fertilizer is a major necessity for *Boro* cultivation. Peasant's life and life cycle is very much related with paddy production. This crop does not need all time attention or nursing. In its three months of life cycle, some period it needs proper attention and nursing. This crop is more dependent on water then to other crops. So flood prone and those land where waters can stand paddy grows better. After harvesting paddy a process is needed to transform paddy to rice. These process is almost done by the female members of a peasant household. After harvesting of paddy female member working were increase along with other household activities due to processing of paddy.

3.9 Village Setting

The village *Heshakhhal* is situated at the west part of *Nangalkot* Upazila head quarters, under the union of *Heshakhhal*. The village is an ancient settlement, which is more then 200 years old. According to the oral history of the elder one of the village. "The settlement had started from the middle para of the village".

At present the settlement *Heshakhhal* is densely populated having eight paras. The settlement of rural Bangladesh dispersed among the agriculture land. Two major forms, namely clustered settlement and the scattered or dispersed settlement, characterize these settlements. In *Heshakhhal* village the pattern of settlement is clustered settlement. A cluster of settlement is locally known as para. In the village there are eight paras. Those are: *Kuni Heshakhhal*; *Khamar para*; *Koch para*; *Banik para*; *Diemchati Paduar para*; *Khi*, *Maddha para*.

The villages own two market places or town centers. Those are *Diemchati Bazar* and *Heshakhhal Bazar*. Though the village is situated within an agrarian setting but the village is famous in this part of Comilla having more then five-education institutions and a local NGO name SURID. Among the educational institutions three primary schools, one Hfezia Madrasa, Two High school and one technical college is situated in *Heshakhhal* village. The NGO SURID works on various social development activities has a good communication with foreign donors, especially JAICA. During the fieldwork the NGO provided some socio-economic data of the studied village to the research team.

The village *Heshakhhal* is separated from other settlement of the locality through the *Heshakhhal* canal and agrarian fields locally known as *pathar*. A pucca road runs over the village from South east to west of *Heshakhhal* village connecting *Nangalkot* upazila headquarter. The road runs over from east to west connecting *Doulotpur* village to *Khila bazar*. This road is only single road which one is pucca. Three mettle road starts from *Heshakhhal* bazar connects with the pucca road in three separate of parts of the village.

The settlements in the village are in cluster form separate each other by agrarian paddy field. Each cluster is known as *para*. The biggest settlement in the village is *Khamarpara* and *Paduar para*. *Khamarpara* is situated at the western part of the village. The name indicates with the agrarian activities of its inhabitants. In *Khamar para* there are six big baries and several small baries. The landscape is little higher than to other parts of the village

Paduar para is situated at the southern part of the village. In this para, four big bari having title and other few bari having no title are situated. Most of the deshi peasant families are living there. Among them most are share cropper or marginalized peasant families. The inhabitants of the para mostly depended on agriculture. Few families have secondary income in other professional activities like small business, carpentry etc. The main feature of *Paduar para* is that there are three mosques.

Maddhapara is situated at the middle part of the village. Among with Muslim community some Hindu families are living there. Originally *Maddhapara* and *Kochpara* of eastern part of the village was the original settlement of the village. Muslim started living in these two para before 1947. The number of Muslim families has creased due to increase of population and migration of Hindu families to India. In *Maddhapara* a *Eidgah* is situated. In the village there are two *Eidgahs*. The other is situated at the close to the *Heshakhal* bazaar of north corner of the village. A Hindu temple is situated at the *Maddhapara* of the village. The major festiual *Durga Puja* arrange in the temple.

Banikpara is situated at the eastern part of the village close to the *Diemchati* bazaar. The meaning of *Banik* is businessmen. According to the key informants once Hindu business men families were living in that *para*. At present there is no single Hindu bari in the *para*. Some Muslim families are living there in *Khilpara* which is situated close of *Baniapara* of eastern part of village. The major features of these para is most only a single Samaj dominator in the para with three bari having title and fifteen bari without having any title.

The village Housing is meaning in a cluster form. Bari are separate from other by pond or cultivable level. Most of the bari are situated along the road side.

3.10 Share Cropping:

Share cropping is an important livelihood among the peasants of *Heshakhal* village. Generally lang Farmers give their land to the share croppers. The system of share cropping in this part of *Nangalhot* is known as *Bhaga*, which also mean share. A share cropper in the village explains the system of share cropping.

Case : Share Cropping

Gani Mia is a share cropper. He used to cultivate other land as a *Bhaghachashi*. Last year he took 8 gonda of land from Ali Mia. He cultivates the Boro crop. The cost of Boro production on tht piece of land was two thousand and six hundred (2600.00) taka. These are the irrigation, fertilizer, pesticide and plough cost. From that place of land Ganimia produced 25 mounds of paddy. From that Gani got 15 mond of paddy and the owner Alimia got 10 mounds of paddy. Gani is not satisfied with that production because of the cost involving in Boro production. But he want to involve himself with Boro production due to his families food security and risk of growing.

Along with share cropping system these are other common system in the village live renting out. One of them is locally known as *poshani mortgage*).

The rich Farmers cultivate their land by using day labours. Share croppers in some cases use to work in rich farmers plot. These is because they need money in production period. Working in other land as day labour may bring some money, which he spent in his own plot.

Though paddy is not a very profitable crop but most of the preasants in the village like to cultivate paddy for food security. According to them growing rice is a very easy way of living.

In Bangladesh agriculture has traditionally formed the heart of rural livelihoods. However, this is changing fast. Nationally, agriculture was the slowest-growing sector during the 1990s and, overall, declined in importance from 29 percent to 25 percent of GDP (World Bank 2002). Despite its poor performance relative to other sectors, the agriculture sector did however still continue to grow, if somewhat erratically. However, the type of growth has been different from the rice-led growth of earlier times. Crop diversification, farm mechanisation (notably the expansion in the use of power tillers for land preparation) and the exploitation of new ecological, technical and economic niches (such as vegetable production and integrated fish-rice production) contributed most to economic growth in the crop sector. The livestock and fisheries sub-sectors have been particularly vibrant, despite the fact that there was a decline both in access to, and status of, common property resources, particularly aquatic and fisheries

resources. However, that the nature of agricultural growth has not always been labour-generating. This raises questions about who has benefited from agricultural growth.

The traditional image of the peasant farmer sitting at the centre of the rural economy has long disappeared from much of rural Bangladesh. The reality is that rural households are as likely to be involved in non-agricultural livelihoods as they are in farming and, increasingly, they derive incomes from multiple sources. The greatest expansion has been in the services sector. The number of small shops in villages has increased substantially, as have tailoring and other craft enterprises, rickshaw pulling and petty trading in villages and local bazaars.

In Heshakhal village some peasants families are trying to transform their manpower to other sector. Non farm sector like small business, rickshaw pulling, carpeting and working in urban centre is becoming common trend in peasant household. But still agriculture activities play dominant role in their livelihood.

4. Social Organisation of the Village

Understanding a society, behavior and characteristics of various institutions organizations any needed to study is t. By analyzing a society internal dynamics can be understand. Study on village social organization can be helpful in understanding the changes happening in society. According to the behavior scientists the basic human social organization is marriage and family and largest organization can be the state. In Bangladesh, a village consists of several institutions. In these chapter various social organizations and changes taken place were analyzed available in the study village.

4.1 Family, Household, and Kinship

Family and kinship were the core of social life in Bangladesh. A family group residing in a bari would function as the basic unit of economic endeavor, landholding, and social identity. In the eyes of rural people, the chula defined the effective household--an extended family exploiting jointly held property and being fed from a jointly operated kitchen. A bari might consist of one or more such functional households, depending on the circumstances of family relationship. Married sons generally lived in their parents' household during the father's lifetime. Although sons usually built separate houses for their nuclear families, they remained under their fathers' authority, and wives under their mothers-in-law's authority. The death of the father usually precipitated the separation of adult brothers into their own households. Such a split generally caused little change in the physical layout of the bari, however. Families at different stages of the cycle would display different configurations of household membership.

Patrilineal ties dominated the ideology of family life, but in practice matrilineal ties were almost as important. Married women provided especially important links between their husbands' brothers' families. Brothers and sisters often visited their brothers' households, which were in fact the households of their deceased fathers. By Islamic law, women inherited a share of their fathers' property and thus retained a claim on the often scanty fields worked by their brothers. By not exercising this claim, however, they did their brothers the important service of keeping the family lands in the patrilineal line and thus ensured themselves a warm welcome and permanent place in their brothers' homes.

Marriage is a civil contract rather than a religious sacrament in Islam, and the parties to the contract represent the interests of families rather than the direct personal interests of the prospective spouses (see Islam, this ch.). In Bangladesh, parents ordinarily select spouses for their children, although men frequently exercise some influence over the choice of their spouses. In middle-class urban families men negotiate their own marriages. Only in the most sophisticated elite class does a woman participate in her own marriage arrangements. Marriage generally is made between families of similar social standing, although a woman might properly marry a man of somewhat higher status. Financial standing came to outweigh family background in the late twentieth century in any case. Often a person with a good job in a Middle Eastern country was preferred over a person of highly regarded lineage.

Marriages are often preceded by extensive negotiations between the families of the prospective bride and groom. One of the functions of the marriage negotiations is to reduce any discrepancy in status through financial arrangements. The groom's family ordinarily pledges the traditional cash payment, or bride-price, part or all of which can be deferred to fall due in case of divorce initiated by the husband or in case the contract is otherwise broken. As in many Muslim countries, the cash payment system provides women some protection against the summary divorce permitted by Islam. Some families also adopt the Hindu custom of providing a dowry for the bride.

Typical spouses knew each other only slightly, if at all, before marriage. Although marriages between cousins and other more distant kin occurred frequently, segregation of the sexes generally kept young men and women of different households from knowing each other well. Marriage functioned to ensure the continuity of families rather than to provide companionship to individuals, and the new bride's relationship with her mother-in-law was probably more important to her well-being than her frequently impersonal relationship with her husband.

A woman began to gain respect and security in her husband's or father-in-law's household only after giving birth to a son. Mothers therefore cherished and indulged their sons, while daughters were frequently more strictly disciplined and were assigned heavy household chores from an early age. In many families the closest, most intimate, and most enduring emotional relationship was that between mother and son. The father was a more distant figure, worthy of formal respect, and the son's wife might remain a virtual stranger for a long time after marriage.

The practice of purdah (the traditional seclusion of women) varied widely according to social milieu, but even in relatively sophisticated urban circles the core of the institution, the segregation of the sexes, persisted. In traditional circles, full purdah required the complete seclusion of women from the onset of puberty. Within the home, women inhabited private quarters that only male relatives or servants could enter, and a woman properly avoided or treated with formal respect even her father-in-law or her husband's older brother. Outside the home, a woman in purdah wore a veil or an enveloping, concealing outer garment.

The trappings of full purdah required both a devotion to traditional practice and the means to dispense with the labor of women in the fields. For most rural families the importance of women's labor made full seclusion impossible, although the idea remained. In some areas, for example, women went unveiled within the confines of the para or village but donned the veil or the outer garment for trips farther from the community. In any case, contact with men outside the immediate family was avoided.

The segregation of the sexes extended into social groups that had rejected full purdah as a result of modern education. Although urban women could enjoy more physical freedom than was traditional and the opportunity to pursue a professional career, they moved in a different social world from their husbands and often worked at their professions in a specifically feminine milieu. 4.2 Family (Paribar) in Heshakhal

In peasant society family is the basic social organization. A family consists of father, mother, children, uncle, grandfather, grandmother living together with a hearth. That means hearth/Chula is the basic of a family. The meaning is, where the cooking happens and members living within. It is also an economic unit. But in broader aspect, definition of family is much more distinctive. In social science family means kin members related to affined and blood living together in a surrounding which is locally formed as 'Ghar'. Family is different in size and form.

In *Heshakhal* village most families are in extended form which means few nuclear families living within a bari may or may not cooking in some hearth. In such case land is the basic factor to unite the members of an extended family. Another form of family was found in the village is, nuclear form of family: where father, mother and children living within a hearth. These type of families are mostly seen in the village who own less cultivable land or having secondary professions.

Joint family system is the most traditional and formal family form in the peasant society of Bangladesh. Joint family means more than three generations of family members are living within the same hearth, having a family head (who generally is the grandfather). This type of family was more common in Heshakhali in the past. Decision making and resource utilization were the major features of the joint family. But this type of family system is in a transitional form. According to the key informant's view, individual issues, the process of land loss and land defragmentation, and the influence of modernization are causing major changes in the family value system and have fragmented the traditional joint families.

Among the 825 households of *Heshakhali*, most of the households are living within the extended family form. More than four hundred and fifty households are in extended form. The second largest number is nuclear families, with close to four hundred households in nuclear family form. There are few families living in joint family form.

A major research question in the field was what is the major course of changes occurring in the families. The key informant, mostly the elder ones, have given the answer. The changes are as follows:

- 1) Decay in family values;
- 2) Decrease of respectness to the elder one;
- 3) Out migration;
- 4) Degradation of family unity.

Another major finding was that the role of family is now changing. Three decades ago the members of families were mostly involved in their manpower in the agricultural sector. But at present families are trying to replace the number of family members in non-farm activities. Out migration is another major feature of families in Heshakhali. Though the number of out migration is not in large form, families are trying to send their members out of the village for non-farm activities. According to the peasants of the village, agriculture is not a profitable sector. But it is important for the family's food security. Some families own secondary homesteads at Nanagokot Upazila.

4.3 Bari/Homestead

Bari is considered as a pioneer social organization in Bangladesh villages. In common meaning, bari is a homestead. The name of homestead is synonymous with the family name or occupation. To which bari a villager belongs, is an important factor determining his status and social standing. Although the traditional extended family structure is disintegrating under the onslaught of poverty, with many members leaving often over crowded homesteads, they are still known as members of their original bari.

In *Heshakhali* village, bari is considered as an important unit of social organization. In common meaning to the villagers, bari is considered as an individual's identity. A person introduces himself by his name along with his bari. Generally, bari consists of general homesteads of affinal related kin groups, several generations live in such places with a surrounding. In *Heshakhali* village, some bari own titles. Title is an important factor for identifying bari. Some bari's title is used with its genealogical identity (*Hazibari, pal bari, Miaji bari*). Some bari's title is used along with its professional activities (*Dhopa bari, Mistri bari*); some bari's title is used by its special characteristic (such as *pagal bari, Fakir bari*). In the village, there are also many bari that have no title.

The role of bari in social formation in the village is very important. Status and position sometimes vary from bari to bari. Specially in economic activities and in the marriage system, bari is considered as a prime issue. Professional activities also relate with the position and status of bari. Generally, most of the people are directly related with agriculture, but few bari members do not directly relate with agriculture or work in the field.

Aminul Islam (1974), in his discussion of social organization of Badarpur village (the village where his study was done) identified four important compartments such as ghar, bari, paribar, and gusseting identification of different types of groupings seems confusing so far as kin groupings. He termed bari as an extended family consisting of the eldest member and his wife and unmarried children and wives of the married and the grandchildren. But in the studied

village in Heshakhal a number of households which differ topologically make up a bari that tends to occupy destitute area. The finding were found in the study done by Mashrque (1995) in Ratanpur village of Pabna district. It was found in Heshukhal village that a bari bearing a title or named after its funding future may have different types of ghar.

4.4 Gusti/ Bangsha

Gusti or Bansha (lineage) is another important social organization in peasant society of Bangladesh. The Gosti is the basic organization related with kin group. In general, Bansha is bloodly related kin members generally living in a cluster of homesteads, filling themselves in social and affinal activities. The term Bansha originated from the term bamboo bush. The process of Bansha of formation is very much similar with the growing of bamboo bush. In rural Bangladesh kinship plays a vital role in social and economic activities. Bangsha is the formal representation of kingroup.

In village *Heshakhal* the original or first Gusti was the Hindu Gosti. At present *Majumder*, *Bhuiyan*, *Vaisha* Gosti are the dominated Gusti. Gosti fillings and unity is related with status and power. Those Gusti whose members own position and status in the society considered as big and powerful. The member of those Gosti identify and unite themselves with Gosti fillings. Gosti fallings was much seen among the families which are well of. This is because for resource accumulation and keeping it safe.

4.5 Samaj

Samaj is another important social organization among the peasant society of Bangladesh. In general the meaning of Samaj is living together. "Samaj is founded upon reciprocal relationship, common identity, and strong neighborhood generated by the proximity of residence" (Mashreque, 107). To the villagers the meaning of 'Samaj' is a platform from where socio-economic activities are done as well as managing conflict within it. According to the writing of P.J. Bertocci "It is a council build up by the elder members living within it Samaj is the unique social organization in peasant society of Bangladesh. A question was thrown to the elder key informants of studied village, what is Samaj and what is the role of that the answer was as following:

1. Samaj is an informal social group;
2. The elders of families build up these;
3. They sit together when an issue for solving arise.
4. Commonly family related with each other affinally or socially consist of a Samaj.

In Heshakhal village the villagers use the concept of samaj in varied way. Sometime it represents territorial unit, sometime it represents religious activities and sometime this is a platform related to Gusthi activities. According to the villagers they are in a vague about the origin of samaj. One major linkage of forming samaj is Growth relationship. It is very often found that two rival Gusti solve their problem with an affinal relationship and transformed into a single samaj.

4.5.1 The Roles of Samaj :

1. Conflict Resolution among the members of it;
2. Arranging social gathering;
3. Arranging social/cultural programmes.

In *Heshakhal* village several Samaj were found. In writings of P.J. Bertocci, he identified two Samaj in a village of Comilla Sadar . In the studied village more than ten Samaj presence was found. The name of the Samaj are as below:

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Miaji Samaj | 7. Nowabari Samaj |
| 2. Majumder Samaj | 8. Zamadar Samaj |
| 3. Vaisha Samaj | 9. Sattar Member's Samaj |
| 4. Hindu Samaj | 10. Fakir bari Samaj |
| 5. Horagazi Samaj | 11. Koch para Samaj |
| 6. Diem Samaj | 12. Bhuyan bari Samaj |

It was observed that the number of Samaj increased. But the role of Samaj has decreased. The Samaj mentioned above is nothing but defragmentation of older Samaj. Originally in the village there were two major Samaj. The Hindu Samaj and the Muslim Samaj. The role of Samaj were much more effective then to the present context. In course of time belief and dependency among the Samaj members have decreased. That causes the separation process. At present the major and only role of the Samaj is conflict resolution.

The role of Samaj has changed. In some context the presence of Samaj is not visible. Mobility of familiar role of union chairman, members and presence of formal institution like upazila office especially court making people less dependable on Samaj particularly especially on conflict resolution issues. Samaj role was to arrange Mel (Traditional salish system) among the conflicting Gosti/families. In mel (salish sometime the members of Samaj invites intelligent memkber from other village (Samaj for solving the problem). At present the conflicting groups do not try to get help of Samaj leader. Another point of view that most of the leaders who were able to solve crisis, died due to ageing. So young Sarders are not efficient to solve or gain belief of the groups. So the role of Samaj is decreasing day by day.

4.6 Affinal Relationship: Alliance between faction Group

Marriage system plays a vital role for establishing alliance among the conflicting Gosti. According to the fieldwork in Heshakhal village, Gusti marriage and inter Gosti both were found. Even Intra village marriage was found. But in conflicting situation among the Gusti, marriage may play a vital role for establishing alliance among the Gusti. Generally dominant Gusti want to raise its support by establishing affinal relation with Small Gusti.

In *Heshakhal* village Miaji Gusti is one of the powerful Gusti. *Majumder* and *Vaisha* are other two influential Gusti. These three Samaj is originated from Deshi Samaj. Miaji Samaj established affinal relation with *Vaisha* Samaj and *Majumder*, which is not only marriage, but also established a alliance among three Deshi Samaj in the village.

The political significance of marriage, therefore, leads us to say that marriage alliance creates new groups of relatives and regulates recruitment in factions and as such affects the power structure (Mashreque; p-105).

4.7 Changes in Social Organisation in the Village

According to key informants and informal talking with the respondents in the village it was found that, changes occurring in the social organisations. A focused group discussion (FGD) was applied among the respondeds of the villagers of Heshakhal. The response was as follow;

4.7.1 Changes in Family:

- 1) Joint family are breaking down;
- 2) Family value is decreasing;
- 3) Joint families are transforming to extended family and nuclear family;
- 4) Out migration is happening among the family members;
- 5) Family profession is transforming to non agriculture activities;
- 6) Family mobility is increasing.

4.7.2 Changes in Gusti:

- 1) Gusti feelings is decreasing;
- 2) Gusti title is not always used among the Gusti members;
- 3) Role of Gusti leader is not visible now;
- 4) Affinal relation among the Gusti members are decreasing.

Change in structure and role of samaj is very much visible in the village. According to the villagers point of view the major change has occurred in Samaj system is its defragmentation. Due to increase of household and the process of settlement of home holds in different para of the village the Samaj is becoming smaller and more then it was forty years ago. Strange presence of union parishad, Upazila administration and court system people now not fully depending on samaj for conflict resolution. For these reason the role of samaj leaders are decreasing. At present many young people in the village especially the educated one has some

relation with out side power yielder. Some of them are member of political party. So they show less respect and obedience to the samaj leaders.

4.7.3 Changes in Samaj

- 1) Single Samaj defragmented to several Samaj;
- 2) The role of Samaj is decreasing;
- 3) Samaj fillings is decreasing;
- 4) Role of Samaj leader is decreasing;
- 5) Young members in the village show less obedience to the elder Samaj leader.

Change in structure and role of Samaj is very much visible in the village. According to the villagers point of view the major change has occurred in Samaj system is its defragmentation. Due to increase of households and the process of settlement of households in different parts of the village the Samaj is becoming smaller and more than it was forty years ago. Stronger presence of Union Parishad, Upazila administration and court system people now not fully depending on Samaj for conflict resolution. For these reasons the role of Samaj leaders are decreasing. At present many young people in the village especially the educated one has connection with out side power yielder. So the young ones show less respect and obedience to the Samaj leaders. Another changing role of Samaj is in its social activities. In social and religious gathering such as wedding ceremony, rituals after death, Khatna programme of the members of Samaj. The leaders used to play strong role. Even in religious activities the leaders had strong role and control over its members. But it has become more flexible. Members of Samaj dependent on each other in crisis resolution. Distrust among the members within a Samaj is a major cause of these type of change.

5. Factionalism and Power Structure

5.1 Factionalism : Context of Heshakhal

Factionalism is a major factor in the peasant society of Bangladesh. It is the basic feature of social structure of peasant society. The term "factionalism" derived from the basic word "Faction" which means grouping. In the study of community specially study on peasant societies the academicians have found this as an important feature. Giving the definition of that Ralph Nicholash identified faction as a special type of political organization. According to his writings, "Factions are non corporate conflict group which have political functions. Those have leaders who recruit followers on the basis of diverse principle such as kinship, economic dependence and religious or ethic affiliation". In the peasant society Bangladesh faction grouping can be seen. In the decade of 70 of the last century American Anthropologist P.J. Bertocci identified faction grouping as an non corporate group in the villages of Comilla (P.J. Bertocci, 1970).

In late sixty of last century anthropologist Aminul Islam studied on power and faction grouping a peasant society of Bangladesh (1974). He tried to identify the characteristics of politics in a peasant village. According to his findings, individual's power is controlling ability over kingroups and religious sects. In some cases such power transform to control over the voting system among his group members. Islam also identified the process how faction groups form, how it defragmented and how subjects create conflicting situation. These process change the social structure. Islam's another important findings was the relationship between the village politics and state politics. Faction group created brokers play the role of connecting village politics with state. Islam subdivided the village in five hierarchy. Those are household, Bari, Faribar (Family), Gesti and the village.

A major question arise how the faction groups form and how they works. The research team identify various types and features of faction grouping in Heshakhal village. In this chapter the historical context of faction grouping in Heshakhal village would be present. As well the current faction grouping and its major features would analyze.

5.2 Power Structure of the Village

The word power closely related with the word authority: In every society of mankind power and authority are distributed inequality. In traditional societies power and authority are related with the factors of age and gender. According to the view of Max Weber's writing, Power is the possibility of imposing ones will upon the behaviour of other persons^(Hamza,1974) So the

basic meaning of power is to impose ones willing upon other. So in power the relationship of subordination is very much related.

The peasant society of Bangladesh formed a traditional type of power structure. In such society Individual and Gosti are synonymous depended on one another. According to the view of Hamza Alvi, the famous social scientists. The power structure of peasant society does not stands separately like tribal societies, it is very much related with the urban society even with the state politics^(Anthony,1973). According to the social scientists the major features of power structure of a peasant society are:patron client relation; encapsulation and factionalism.

Patron-client relationship in peasant society is noting but the substance of founded relationship. In peasant society a significant number of members are elient who are depended on patron in various socio-economic factors. Among the factors land is the most vital factor. Along with that decision making depends on patron in social activities. Patron is a person of power status, authority and influence (Max Weber,1962)

In peasant society the politics among the peasants are controlled in two center one is the village another is the state. State indirectly play its role by imposing law and control over land. In Bangladesh the role of state have been playing by the Upazila administration in the local level. Along with that Union Parisad also play a vital role in peasant politics of Bangladesh. Along with that in national polities the influence of localism is very much clear. The parliamentary form of govt. is such type of system where localism is playing a vital role. The concept of power structure has to be understand in a broad sense. Baily (1960:10) defined power as “control over men and command over resources”. Lowell and Kaplan defined power in the following way (1965: 73). The concept of power is perhaps the most fundamental in the whole political science: the political process is the shaping distribution and exercise of power..... politics as the theoretical subject concerned with the relation of men in association, and competition, sub mission and control in so far as they seek ...what men seek in their political negotiation is power”.

In determination of power in Heshakhal where three subgroups of Muslim communities are living. The political relation among the subgroups are shaped by informal political consideration.

The power of dominant quested depending on the unity of that as well as on the past background of their ancestors. Education and linkage with formal institution specially linkage with national political party play dominate role in power practice of the village. In other part of Bangladesh it is seen that power is strictly related with quits structure. But in Heshakhal it was found that relation with formal govt. institution and political parties plays dominate role in power structure of the village.

In the context of Heshakhal village the power structure is not so different. A major question was thrown to the respondent indicating the major factors those makes a person powerful. The answer were as below:

1. Having control over resource;
2. Personal relation with administration;
3. Having influence over people;
4. Having Education;
5. Having good capacity in conflict management;
6. Good relation with local M.P.
7. Control over Gusti activities

According to the view of villagers the factors of having power does not dependent on a single indicator. Sometime time power holds by an individual but in most cases position of family and its role in Gusti polities indicates the power yielding capacity of an individual. Control over people or having influence over the villagers is dependent on some other factors such as personality having good relation with local government bodies, having linkage with political party and capacity of managing conflict are the major factor having control over people. Patron client relationship is visiblse in the village. In most cases the individual work as faction workers in the village are controlled by few elder owners. They are not always visible. They

practice their power through these young workers. Practice of power in the village is visible when any meal or selfish is arrange various groups sit together try to solve any proble,m the faction group try to thorn the solutions. Problem is in their own interest. Their are some common interest control over school committee, mosque committee or bazaar committee the group try to involve their own faction members and try to influence the decisions to their own inters.

5.3 Evaluation of Power Structure in the Village

Before 1947 the major power structure was based on the Hindu traditional power elite of the village. A major changed occurred during the era of 1950-70. the migration of Hindu families o India was one of the major incident of the village. Along with that political formation in state level influence the traditional power structure of the village.

In the decade of 1950 the Muslim middle/rich farm families became power elite of the village. The villages Muslim community were divided in two major fragments. The Deshi population became the dominated group in the village. But the settlement of the Deshi community were scattered on the village. Instead of that, the *Swondupi* community though were less in number tried to entry in vacuumed power structure of the village. They developed Samaj name *Swondupi* Samaj they were united both culturally and affinally. In these period of time few Rewaji Muslim families started living in the village.

After the election of 1954 Jukta front became the most influential party of East Pakistan instead of Muslim leauge. Muslim league were supported by the rural urban rich class. In Jukta front the leadership were from middle class Muslim, the rural peasant rich to support the party. The era of Ayub khan changed a lot in the local and national level politics. General Ayub khan introduce a special type of democracy which was known as basic democracy. In this system of democracy people cannot vote directly to nominate their reprehentative in the parliament or president. Instead of that they vote to select the local representative. These local representative were known as basic democrats. The basic democrats would select the president. The system of basic democracies consisted of four tiers. The first was the organization for villages. In rural areas, a number of village grouped together constituted a union .A union and a union council was set up for it. The second tier is thana council. Third one is district council, fourth one is divisional council.

The basic democrat system first time directly involve the rural power class with the state level political process. Before 1950 the peasant farm families of east Bangal were indirect tenant of the Government, they were direct tenant of Zamindars of East Pakistan. The Land reform law in 1950, established the process of becoming direct tenant of the Government. The basic democracy system influenced the power structure of Heshakhhal village. Union Board was another important plat form for exercising power in the village. The chairman were nominated by the people. Along with that traditional Samaj structure was much strong to reform its activities.

5.4 Historical Context of Factionalism in Heshakhhal Village

Before 1947 Heshakhhal village was dominated by the Hindu population. The Hindu social leaders used to play dominant role in socio-cultural activities in the village. The Union Board of Nengalkot was dominated by Hindu leaders. No political party was active that time. When any dispute arose within the village the Samaj leaders used to solve it. Before 1947 there was a distinct different in two groups of Muslim population. The Deshi inhabitants did not socially or a finally related then with the Swandupi population. Economically the Swondupi people were less advanced thus to the deshi. Another factor was most of their language, and way of life was not adjustable with the deshi population. Very few Swondupi family could established marital relation with the deshi inhabitants of Heshakhhal village.

After the separation of Inidian subcontinent a major change occurred in the village Heshakhhal. Most of the rich and influential Hindu families migrated to India. Some families exchange their assets with the Muslim families of Agartala those willing to settle in Heshakhhal village. These new Muslim families in the village is known as Rewaji family. In 1950 Govt. abolished the zemidari system. The tenant became direct tenant of government.

In earlier 60 the basic issue of factionalism in the village was ownership control over land. Like other peasant society land is the most important asset of farm familiar. In Heshakhhal

village the same scenario was seen. Along with that most of the landowner Hindu families migrated to India without settling their asset specially land. They left east Pakistan in some case out of fear or security reason threat. Few families able to sold their land but did not provide full document/papers to its Muslim owner. Few Muslim families from Agartala also exchange their property with few Hindu families of Heskakhal. In late sixty faction grouping arose on the basis of control over the land left by the Hindu families. Thje then Muslim community segmented to three subgroups.

Deshi, Swondupi and Rewaji

As the *Deshi* were the original settler of the village they claim ownership over the assets . But the settled Swondupi were more unite built up their faction politics better then to the *Deshi* community. They maintained good relation with the local adminstration, and Tahsil office. Land not only the issue of broader aspects of faction grouping, it was the source of inter family conflict. The Muslim law of inheritance defragments ancestors plot and sometime cause of quarrel even within brothers.

The major issue of faction grouping among the segmented groups was also control over own group members, especially in election process of local govt/UP election. A member in the UP can provide a group enough support solving conflict in local level. The members also work in salish process in the village. They maintain good relation with the government officials. That's why each segmented subgroup try to support their own member in voting. Even in M.P. election if a subgroup support one candidate other support another.

In Salish system leader of subgroups try to play their role. But if the conflict rises in same Samaj the elder member try to solve it without help of their elder members of other Samaj. Faction grouping plays its role in various committee of formal institution within the village. It is deeply seen in the Bazar committee, school committee even in various social programmes. In school comittes all three groups try to dominant recuting their group members in the committee.

5.5 Major Events in Political change and faction grouping in Heshakhal

1947-60:

Influential and landowner of Hindu families migrated to India. The Rewaji families started settling in the village. Land reform act was passed and the inhabitants of the village became the direct tenant of government. Union board is transformed as Union council. The village was under the 5 no. Nangolkot union of Laksam thana.

1960-70:

Basic democracy were introduced in the state level, that influence the power structure of the village. Ruling of Ayub Khan played a dimensional change among the muslim faction group in Union council election and selection of basic democrates.

1971-1975

The war of independence influence the inhabitants of the village. Some young members took part as freedom fighters. They were in support of Bangladesh,. Some opportunists traditional leaders were in favour of Pakistan.

After independence of Bangladesh a new and young power group rise in the village. Part of these power elite were Swondupi community. But the *Deshi* community leader took advantage as they had good relation with the local govt. In 1973 Union Parsad replaced union council.

1976-1990:

Many development initiatives were took in these period of time . Communication facility developed. In political arena of the village the Rewaji families started involved in with the *deshi* community. They became advanced in education sector and in out migration.

In 1978-80 President Ziar Rahman introduced Gram Sarkar system .In this system the village power got their with the state level political formation.

Four national level elections were held in this period of time. The most significant changed were happened was decentralization of local govt. Nangolkot became a separate *upazila* in 1984. Upazila election were held in 1985 which directly relate the local power group with the upazila level. The power elite started relate themselves with upazila adminstration specially the

court. According to the elder members in the village the role of Samaj Decrease due to the presence of upazila headquarter five k.ms close to the village. Inhabitants started dependent on court instead of traditional *Salish* system.

According to the key informants the traditional Samaj started to defragmenter in several due to the dependency on other formal institution. The role of Samaj decreased in these period of time.

The peasant community was dependent on BADC for seeds and other agricultural support. At the end of 80 the dependency had transferred to nongovernmental sector specially to the dealers. In these period of time farmers started producing HYV crops specially HYV paddy.

1990- Present:

In state level a formation was happened. Parliamentary form of government system was introduced. The system involved the traditional power structure with the national level political parties. Because the members of parliament now become more influential than other time. Though their main role is to make new laws and ordinances but in practice they have become the central of the power structure of his constituency. In such way the local power holder becoming more closer to the central political system. The same scenario was found in the studied village. A portion of power elite supported Awami League. Most of the supporters of Awami League were Deshi inhabitants of village. In contrary the Swandupi inhabitants supported B.N.P. But not all were directly involved with politics. Most of the inhabitants supported as they had to support someone in the M.P election. But among the power elite the support of national party was distinctive, had some objective of supporting and work for the party. If one faction group supported one party the another group supported another the other. In 2002 the village along with some areas of Addra union became a new union which named as the Heshakhal Union. The Gram Sarkar system reintroduced by the B.N.P govt.

After the election of 2001 influence of local M.P became very much dominant even in the local faction grouping in the village. Young members in the village started supporting and became leader of local colleague student front. In these period of time Jamatey Islami Bangladesh became one of the dominant party in Nangolkot region.

For the vast majority of Bangladeshis, politics revolves around the institutions of the village or the union of neighboring villages. Traditionally, the main base for political influence in rural areas has been landownership. During the British colonial period, zamindars controlled huge estates as if they were their personal kingdoms. With the abolition of zamindar tenure in 1950, a new local elite of rich Muslim peasants developed. The members of the new elite owned far less land than the zamindars had once possessed, but they were able to feed their families well, sell surplus produce, send their children to school, and form new links with the bureaucracy of East Pakistan and later Bangladesh. Amid the large majority of poor and generally illiterate peasants, well-to-do farmers formed a new rural leadership that dominated local affairs.

Village society is often divided into a number of factions that follow the lines of kinship. At the center of each faction is a family that owns more land than most of the other villagers. In the colonial and Pakistani periods, local leaders were old men, but the trend since independence is for younger men to head factions as well. The heart of the local elder's authority is his control over land and the ability to provide land or employment to poorer villagers, who are often his kin. Land control may be an ancient prerogative, stretching back to the zamindars, or it may be the result of gradual purchases since independence. A village may have only one faction, but typically there will be several factions within the village, each competing for influence over villagers and struggling for resources from local administrative and development offices.

The leaders of local factions exercise their influence in village courts and as managers of village affairs with other administrative units. The traditional means for resolving local disputes is through the village court, which comprises leaders of village factions and other members of union councils. Throughout Bangladesh, village courts address the vast majority of disputes, but it is rare for the courts to decide in favor of a poor peasant over a rich peasant, or for the weaker faction over the stronger. The relative security of village leaders makes it possible for some of their children to attend secondary schools, or even colleges or universities; some factions also base much of their authority on their knowledge of sharia. Education is

much esteemed in Bangladesh, and degrees are tickets to highly prized government positions or to urban jobs that give the involved families a cosmopolitan outlook. These contacts outside the village include necessary links with bureaucratic institutions that ultimately bring economic aid and patronage jobs to the village. In these ways, the factional leadership of the village provides vital links to the development process, while retaining its traditional position at the top of village society.

Local leaders who control land, people, and education also tend to control the disbursement of rural credit and development funds through their positions in union and subdistrict government. Studies of the leadership of union council members have demonstrated this dominance of local elites over rural political and economic life.

5.6 Samaj and power structure in the Village

These part is designed through a focus group discussion arranged among the peasant inhabitants of the village.

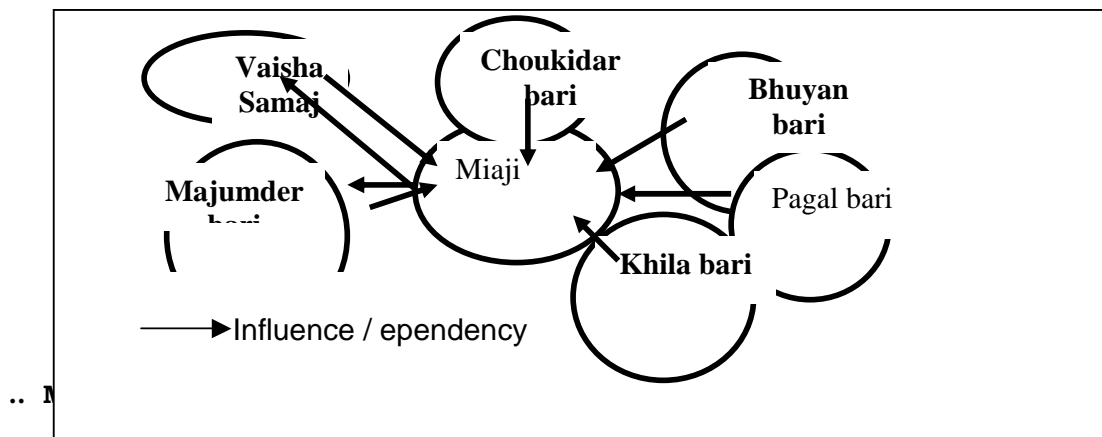
5.6.1. Kunihsakhal Samaj

The smallest settlement in the village is Kunihsakhal. There are four bari situated in the village. They belong to a single Samaj. That is named as Kunihsakhal *Samaj*. The elder members of Kadir member bari play role in Samaj grouping in the settlement. Among the inhabitants living in kunihsakhal almost all belong to Swondupi in context of their origin and settlement procedure. At present the kunihsakhal Samaj play important role specially in Heshakhal bazaar management and school management committee.

5.6.2. The Miaji Samaj:

The situation of the miaji Samaj in Heshakhal village is in Khamar Para. The Samaj is the oldest power group in the village. The members of miaji bari are the leader of Miaji Samaj. But they affinally related with other deshi settlement in Khamarpara. In khamar para Bhyuan are the Rewaji muslim family has good influence over the Heshakhal Bazar shool committee as their elder member was a teacher and gave land for the Heshakhal Highshool. The school managing committee is one of the field of playing power ibn the village. The miaji Samaj keep good relation with the majumdar as they own much land then to other inhabitants of Khamarpara.

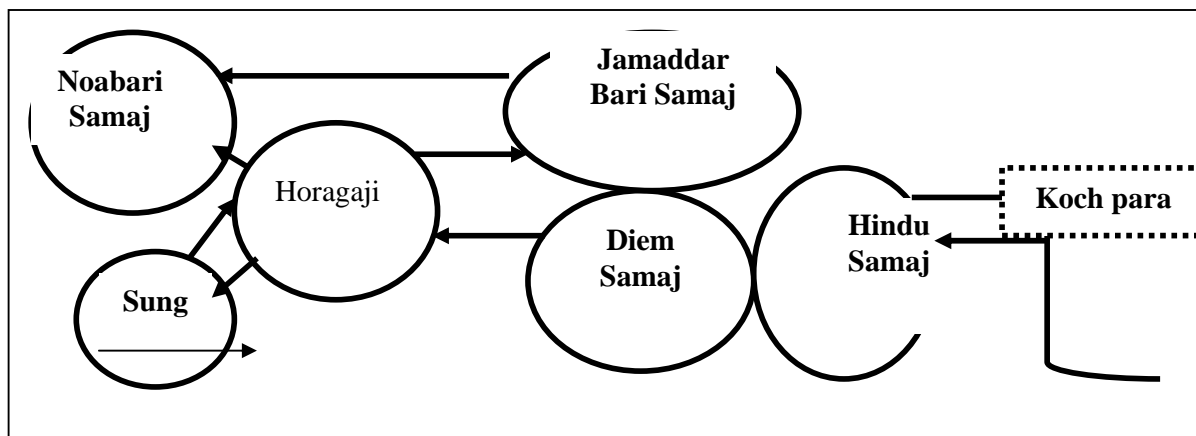
Figure: Samaj relation



Maddhapara is the original settlement of the village. These part of the village is most densely populated. According to the religious division. There are two type of malicious groups are living. The Hindu and the Muslim. Hindu population form separate Hindu Samaj. The Hindu families at present living in the para own some land but play a little role in power structure. They play separate religious practices; specially the purga puja and Kalipaja. They maintain a good socio-cultural relation with Hindu community of koch para and the Rewaji Muslim families.

Along with the Hindu Samaj: there are five separate Samaj that exist in Maddhapara. Those are: *Horagaji Samaj, Diem Samaj, Noabari Samaj, Jamades Bari Samaj, Sattar member bari Samaj*. Among the Samaj Horagaji, Diem Samaj and Jomeddar bari samaj are Swandupi originated Samaj. They keep good relation with each other but keep distance in Samaj activities. Originally all three were a single samaj. But due to degradation and dependency on Samaj decreases. The sunis separated in three separate Samaj.

Figure: Samaj relation



Among the bari of the Samaj of Maddhapra members of Master Delwarbari. Diembari, Noabari, Fakir bari related with political portico. They also play role in faction grouping in the village. Except Fakir bari the members are also educated then to other members of the other bari in the village. At present context education play a vital role in connection with political grouping of Nangolhot Upazila and national level political parties.

5.6.4 Kochpara and its Samaj

The Koch para is devided in to two Samaj. Those are 1) Fakir bari Samaj and 2) Koch para Samaj. The Fahir are Swandupt having good relation with other Swanalupi Samaj in the village. The Samj consists of Fakir bari, Sainik bari and Sariaf bari. The members of Fakir bari are more educated among the members in the Samaj. The other members involved in service is specially in army and BDR. Koch para Samaj is another Hindu Samaj having good relation with the Hindu Samaj of Maddhapra. The members of thakurbari play stall role in religious festibles in the village.

Koch para Samaj is another Hindu Samaj having good relation with the Hindu Samaj of Maddhapra. The members of thakurbari play stall role in religious festibles in the vil

6 .Conclusion and Remarks

This study has sought to enquire into the nature of village social organization, faction grouping and power structure relate to peasant way of life. The major focus of the study was to identify the changes occurring in the social organization of peasant way of life as well as the influence of modern formal institution over the traditional institution of the village. It was found in the study that the so called static village life is changing rapidly. Due to influence of modernization, education, influence of modern technology, state policy as well as influence of external formal institution the peasant social structure is changing rapidly. Market is another force which plays a dominant role in peasant livelihood.

The social organizations remaining in the village are in transitional form. In traditional peasant society joint family was ideal for land operation and handling the natural resources. It was found in the village that the Joint families are transformed into extended family to nuclear family. The families own less land transform in nuclear family system. Those families who own

much land transform to extended family system. Non farm activities among the family members are increasing day to day.

There is a major change shown in the *Gusti* structure and in Samaj system. *Gusti* is still playing vital role in faction grouping but there are enough families who were found not depending on *Gusti*. Many families in the village does not use *Gusti* title. Their relation with their kin group is flexible. The role of Samaj has changed in last 30 years. Before that major role of Samaj was arranging *salish* and social activities. At present Samaj has defragmented to several *Samaj*. The relationship within the *Samaj* structure is just like patron client basis. The role of union parisad members have been increasing. They are playing role in conflict management and in connection with government institutions. In the study the characteristics feature of Faction grouping was comprehend. The village is divided into three major group on the basis of their origin and the bonds of *Gusti* ties polarize the people in political group. Another Major scenario was seen in the village that the division in *Samaj* and decay role of *Samaj*. Thirty years ago the number of Samaj are less than to the present context. The village has its own history and origin of faction grouping.

The leaders of local factions exercise their influence in village courts and as managers of village affairs with other administrative units. The traditional means for resolving local disputes is through the village court, which comprises leaders of village factions and other members of union councils. Throughout Bangladesh, village courts address the vast majority of disputes, but it is rare for the courts to decide in favor of a poor peasant over a rich peasant, or for the weaker faction over the stronger. The relative security of village leaders makes it possible for some of their children to attend secondary schools, or even colleges or universities; some factions also base much of their authority on their knowledge of sharia. Education is much esteemed in Bangladesh, and degrees are tickets to highly prized government positions or to urban jobs that give the involved families a cosmopolitan outlook. These contacts outside the village include necessary links with bureaucratic institutions that ultimately bring economic aid and patronage jobs to the village. In these ways, the factional leadership of the village provides vital links to the development process, while retaining its traditional position at the top of village society.

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Local area measures:

Decimal	Area measure, 100 decimal =1 acre, 247 decimal= 1 kaeter
Gonda	Six decimals of land constitute a Gonda (0.06 acres)
Kani	Twenty Gonda constitute a Kani (1.2 acres)

Bengali month

Baishak	Mid April to mid May
Jaistha	Mid May to mid June
Ashar	Mid June to mid July
Sraban	Mid July to mid August
Vadra	Mid August to mid September
Aswin	Mid September to mid October
Katric	Mid October to mid November
Aghrahayana	Mid November to mid December
Poush	Mid December to mid January
Magh	Mid January to mid February
Falgun	Mid February to mid March
Chatre	Mid March to mid April

Other Local Term

Aman Paddy	The seasonal rice crop grown in the late summer and fall.
Aus Paddy	The seasonal rice crop grown in the spring and early summer
Krishak	Peasant
Mohajan	Traditional money lender
Bebsha	Business
Bari	Lineage where descendants live together
Bhagha	Sharecropping
Chakri	Service
Chula	Cooking Hearth
Gusti	Lineage group
Masjid	Mosque

