PREFACE

Livelihoods and diversification have wider connotation in contemporary rural development programmes because of its ‘actor oriented’ looking at the poor people and for better formulation of poverty reduction policies. The present research work is a comprehensive attempt to analyse, discuss and assess how do the poor people survive and manage their poverty condition in selected parts of Birbhum district, West Bengal. To achieve these goals, the present research has systematically presented the fundamental details, discussions, analysis and conclusion in seven chapters.

First chapter has framed the work in the form the conceptual background, objectives, main research questions and review of existing literatures. Here, the reason behind the selection of the study area has also been mentioned. This chapter also explains the methodology, database and the entire frame of present research.

Second chapter examines the factors responsible for the incidence of poverty and backwardness and the status of development in the Birbhum district especially in the Mohammad Bazar block, one of the most poverty stricken blocks of Birbhum. It also explains the spatial pattern of poverty, backwardness and status of Human development in Birbhum district.

Third chapter deals with livelihoods strategies of the poor, their nature of diversification and crisis management policy in few selected villages of Mohammad Bazar Block of Birbhum District. The chapter also focuses on the vulnerability component of livelihoods framework.

Chapter four examines seasonal /circular migration as a livelihoods strategy of the rural poor to cope with lean season unemployment. The chapter also assesses major determinates, risk factors as well as the question of sustainability among the seasonal migrants.

Chapter five evaluates the impact of Self- Help group based microcredit programme in livelihood generation and household’s poverty management among the
rural poor of Mohammad Bazar Block. The chapter argues that microfinance could not make much difference in poor people’s livelihoods management, household resource generation, financial well-being and income earning capacity among the poor.

Chapter six highlights the livelihoods issues of the tribal poor in stone quarry areas of Birbhum district. It also analyses how illegal stone quarries and stone crushers are exploiting the indigenous communities and are deteriorating the overall environmental quality. The chapter also focuses on some sustainable livelihoods options where the tribal lives are at stake in the quarrying environment.

Chapter seven is the last one which summarizes the overall research trend with conclusion and recommendation.

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