

## **Tribal Communities and Their Age-Old Sacred Groves: A Fair Fieldwork in the Purulia District of West Bengal, India**

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**ABSTRACT** In the inchoate sustainability revolution, which has started its effective life since the enthusiastic celebration of the “First Earth Day” on 22 April 1970 throughout the globe, and whose sole objective is to bring about a “Third World War” against the emerging threat of global unsustainability syndrome, or in other words, to thwart the “Second Tragedy of the Titanic of Global Life”, this paper has been designed to explore the trinity indicated by the 3Cs such as “causes, consequences and cures” of the degradation of sacred groves in the hundred sample tribal communities, most of which are located on and around the Ajodhya Hills covered with forest layer, of Purulia district in West Bengal. This paper also attempts to explore the causes of unprecedented unsustainability of tribal communities. Here the problem of sustainability encompasses both the tribal people and the sacred groves preserved by them. The third objective of the paper is to expose how the social and ecological status of the minority groups of tribal people is correlated with that of their age-old “forests of goddess” in the emerging threat of unsustainability syndrome, and what policy package can be prescribed to reduce or rule out the tribal unsustainability in which the unsustainability of sacred groves is embedded. The study also seeks to awaken the appropriate authorities from the culture of connivance or silence for creating mass-awareness among the citizens of the non-tribal mainstream society so as to restore the sustainability of the diverse tribal communities. “Tribal culture” coupled with “cultural tribalism” may create tribal unsustainability.