

Report on Field Exposure in Kanthi Mahakuma
Khoti Matsyajibi Union

Duration: 28.11.17 to 16.12.17

**Submitted to: Kanthi Mahakuma Khoti Matsyajibi Union & Dakshinbanga
Matsyajibi Forum**

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Submitted on: 15.12.17

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Introduction: On the necessity of our subject 'Field Education' this time we came to do our practical work in Kanthi Mahakuma Khoti Matsyajibi Union in Contai Central in East Medinipure under Dakshinbanga Matsyajibi Forum. Here we stayed from 28.11.17 to 16.12.17 and explore many places for interviews, and also read papers and actively participated in many places.

In this report we will try to give histories of NFF, DMF, KMKMU, analytical report on RTI & human rights violation, interviews of fishermen, former fisherman, movement leaders and fish worker and our overall critical analysis in all these from socio-political and economic perspectives along with our learnings, active participation and observations.

HISTORY OF NATIONAL FISHERWORKER'S FORUM

India has long coast line of 8,129 Km. with 2.02 million Sq.km of EEZ. 7 million hector in India comes under the inland. 4.4% of Global fish production comes from India. Fisheries sector contributes 1.5% of GDP amounting to more than Rs. 30,000 Cr. Per annum. Largest group of India comes under fishermen community which lead 7,000 Cr. per annum income for this community. Around 2 Cr. people depend on this community and their work. Our country has shown a continuous increment in fish production since 1947. For them fishing is not just an occupation but a way of life. They mainly belong from poor, low caste community from medieval period but in past they had dignity and autonomy.

But due to illegal fishing, and pollution the natural resources are in threat and which is squeezing the lives of fish workers. In the world of capitalized and globalized context the NFF emerged to strengthen the small scale fishing community and to protect the lives of them and their resources. Thus the history of NFF is the struggling history of fishing community. NFF is registered under Trade Union Act of India.

Objectives:

- ❖ It was formed to foster the unity and solidarity in common ground with concern people.
- ❖ To achieve legitimate right and to provide legal support.
- ❖ To highlight regional struggle to Governments (Govt.).
- ❖ To represent Central Govt. and State Govt.'s scheme for these fishermen.
- ❖ To preach fish workers' problem, development in fishing industry and ecological problems.
- ❖ To protect their resources.
- ❖ To solve out the disputes among their community.
- ❖ To plan & implement progressive plan for them.

In 1970 first time India had seen the privatization and mechanization through mechanized boat and trawlers which lead to increase of coastal pollution. So small scale traditional fishing communities rose in resistance. Many clashes happened to keep their identity in West and South India. Many group had also joined in Chennai all together for the statutory regulations in fisheries for environment and livelihood reasons and thus also formed the National Forum of Catamaran & Country boat Fishermen's Rights & Marine Wealth in the chairmanship of Matanhy Saldanha (Goa). Later it changed the name to ***National Fish workers' Forum***.

Fisher people's struggle led the Govt. to form the Majumder Committee in 1976 to suggest regulation for marine fishing and it lead to by process to form the Marine Fishing Regulation Act of Coastal States & UTs came into being. By this inspiration fisher community started to make organizations, associations, and union in all over the India & its coastal lands which gave birth of many prominent unions.

In 1989, NFF organized two rallies towards Kanyakumari from West Bengal and Gujarat with unique slogan “Protect waters, Protect life” and which was named by them as ‘Coastal *yatra*’ to oppose oppression and corruption on water body and fishermen & that led to a revolt against nuclear plant in Kandankulam and there police shot many bullets and injured many people on 1st May of this year and thus it became the eminent revolt against the loot of coastal land, water and human rights.

Due to massive protest central Govt. had announced the Coastal Regulation zone notification (CRZ) in 1991 to stop destructive activities in coast. When these traditional fishermen were trying to give a threat to stop this mechanized boat then federal govt. of India had given license to 200 large ships from foreign nation in 1991. And often these ships came inside the state 100-mile limit from the coast and take heavy portion of the catch. Since that time NFF along with many state level trade unions had become a regular feature for protest.

On February 4th, 1995, there was an all India fisheries strike. NFF chairman Fr. Thomas Kochery embarked on an indefinite hunger strike which lasted for 8 days. It was a nationwide agitation where NFF agreed in fasting of Fr. Thomas Kochery until the Govt. promised to prompt review of the fishermen’s plight and eventually appointed the Murari Committee.

But in November it was again a strike in demand of the cancellation of the licenses for the deep sea vessels. And in January 18, 1996, there was another strike by NFF and all fish workers in the protest of the slow pace working of that committee. Due to this Committee issued the report with some major steps recommendation for the benefit of traditional fish workers. But Govt. started to delay it more, then Fr. Thomas Kochery took another hunger strike in Mumbai in September, 1996 which led the central cabinet to accept the Murari Committee recommendations.

After that there was 10 years if struggle it leads to many success and setbacks. NFF was continuously struggling to implement CRZ regulations, but the ill-fated notification became the violated rules of the country. CRZ notifications were amended 25 times over the years to help to open the coast for large and destructive investments. In 1997, in case joined by NFF, Supreme Court of India banned all the aquaculture farms within CRZ area. But the Govt. of India to subserve the interest of Prawn mafia brought Coastal Aquaculture Act in 2005. Then Govt of India stove to dump CRZ 1991 to introduce CMZ. And it led to a rage in traditional fishermen communities. And it led to a historic campaign “*Machimar Adhikar Rastriya Abhiyan*” led by Late Hare Krishna Debnath In 2008 with slogan “Save the coast-save the fishers” and it was from Gujarat, Kutch to Sundarban, WB via Kanyakumari with many speeches, burning of ill-conceived CMZ drafts etc. In a single word it can be expressed as that whole coast is on fire.

As a result Indian Govt. was compelled to withdraw CMZ notifications and initiated consultations with the fishing communities. Still these people are fighting where NFF is working as an instrument in the solidarity with them to seek their rights and for their benefits.¹

¹ <http://www.nffindia.org/about-us-2/history/> (Accessed on 6.12.17)

HISTORY OF DAKSHINBANGA MATSYAJIBI FORUM

Dakshinbanga Matsyajibi Forum was established by Fish workers' leaders like Hare Krishna Debnath, Nirmalendu Das, Gadadhar Das, Amulya Bar, Gopinath Das, Sukla Das & Shyamal Mondal in early 1990's and it was registered under Trade Union Act in 1992. In today, DMF is having 10000 members over the four districts: East Medinipure, South 24 Parganas, North 24 Parganas, Howrah & Hoogly.

In today's day the office bearers are: President: Pradip Chatterjee. Vice President: Gobinda Das, Debasis Shyamal, Ratna Maji, General Secretary: Milan Das, Assistant Secretary: Bidhan Ch. Dey. Ambia Hussain, Srikanto Das, Treasurer: Sujoy Krishna Jana.

DMF presently has seven branches organizations functioning in different areas and sectors of West Bengal namely:

1. Kanthi Mahokuma Khoti Matsyajibi Unnayan Samity. (East Midnapore District)
2. Medinipur Zila Upakuliya Matsya Vendor Union. (East Midnapore District)
3. Sundarban Matsyajibi Joutha Sangram Committee. (North & South 24 Parganas District)
4. Kakdwip Mahokuma Matsyajibi Forum (South 24 Parganas District)
5. Diamond Harbour Mahokuma Matsyajibi Forum. (South 24 Parganas District)
6. Kakdwip Mahokuma Matsyajibi Forum. (South 24 Parganas District)
7. Hooghly Zila Matsyajibi Forum. (Hooghly District)
8. Rupnarayan Nad Matsyajibi Union. (Howrah District)

HIGHLIGHTS OF STRUGGLE

1996 – Delhi March to protect the coast from encroachments and pollution, for banning foreign fishing vessels and for implementation of Murari Committee Recommendations.

1997 – Hunger Strike under Gandhi statue at Kanthi on 21 demands like Kerosene and diesel subsidy, implementation of Murari Committee recommendations and CRZ Notification.

1999-2000 – Movement against Sahara Mega Tourism project in Hooghly river estuary and in Sundarban. Sahara was forced to withdraw.

2000 – Hunger Strike at Kanthi demanding relief and savings scheme, Cycle and tray for fish vendors, gloves and shoes for fish sorter women. All the demands were realized.

2000-2003 – Struggle against eviction of 10,000 fish workers from seasonal fish drying on Jambudwip Island. State Government agreed to provide 100 hectares of land on Jambudwip for fish workers. Case pending in Supreme Court.

2005 – Coastal Padayatra (march) from Khejuri to Digha under the leadership of Harekrishna Debnath with the slogan ‘Save Water, Save Coast, Save Coastal People’.

2006-2007 – Movement against proposed Haripur Nuclear Power Plant. The newly elected State Government in 1911 rejected the project.

2008 – Joining the historic Coastal Campaign organized by NFF under the leadership of Harekrishna Debnath. As a result the ill-conceived CMZ Notification was withdrawn.

2008-2013 – Struggle for implementation of Forest Rights Act in Sundarban demanding right to fish and right to protect fisheries resources. Eight days’ Boat Rally in the rivers and creeks of Sundarban.

December 2013. The continuous movement has brought in some partial reliefs for fishing communities.

2012 – Spread of DMF organization in Howrah and Hooghly Districts. Submission of memorandums.

2013 – District wise Campaign, Workshop, Conference and submission of memorandum by the Fish Vendors’ Union of East Midnapore.

Dakshinbanga Matsyajibi Forum / Medinipur Zila Upakuliya Matsya Vendor Union

❖ Matsya Vendor Adhikar Sammelan Fish Vendor Rights Conference:

11th May 2013, 500 vendors came together in Contai to decide the strategy to think about their demand. Many fish workers leaders from different sections of the society also joined with them. Nirmalendu Das & Sasanka Das led the whole conference.

After one minute of silence in the loving memory of Late Hare Krishna Debnath, the welcome address was opened by Mr. Achintya Pramanik. He expressed in his speech that union is becoming successful in its mission. But fish vendors still in non-progressive zone. So they need to strengthen their struggle to achieve their goal, to see their better future. Almost all the leaders from different respective sections of the society like: Sujay Jaja, Pradip Chatterjee, Debasis Shyamal, Purnima Meher etc. spoke in support of vendor’s demands and encouraged them to be united to be strengthen to achieve their demands.²

² <http://www.nffindia.org/states/west-bengal/> (Accessed on 6.12.17)

History of KMKMU

KMKMU was founded on 1995 in the name of Kanthi Mahakuma Khoti Matsyajibi Unnanyan Samity by Amulya Kr. Bar, Bhaku Charan Dhara, Santosh Kandar, Sudhir Jana etc. in this district. Harekrishna Debnath joined this along with NFF and this union started to fight for small scale fishermen and in their struggle. They used to fight for small scale fishermen in their solidarity. They used to fight for their livelihood, rights, identity, social security, 'savings cum relief' scheme, MFCS formation, registrations, movement in Haripur against Nuclear power plant etc.

In 2009, Lakhi Narayan Jana with the help of Socialist Party split the group by showing temptation of benefit to many fishermen. And both the group started to run in same name. From 2009 to 2012 it was running in same name and created many problem in NFF. In 2012 around 16 khoti came together in Dadanpatrabar and started the new journey. In 2012, although they were in same name but one group started to follow the trawlers but another one remain in same idea of Hare Krishna Debnath and NFF. But slowly there was a problem due to name so in 2014 they again met in Junput Matsya khoti and changed their name as Kanthi Mahakuma Khoti Matsyajibi Union through a general body meeting.

In present day, they are guided by Tamal Taru Das Mahapatra as President, Chanchal Roy as Gen. Secretary, Debabrata Khuntia, Ashish Kr. Panda and Madhab Mandal as secretaries and Janmenjay Dalai as Treasurer.

Their main motto is "*Jol bachao, Tat Bachao, Upakuler Lok Bachao*" (Save the water, coastal land and coastal people).

Success of KMKMU:

- a) From 2008 to 2014 after a long continuous fight we had brought out the corruption of "*AMAR BARP*" scheme which led many non-fishermen to give back the money and also they were forced to leave the group.
- b) From 2009 to 2012 after a continuous fight 'Savings cum Relief' scheme's money is now coming.
- c) Washilchak Amrit Bharati Vidya Bhavan in Khejuri has received 14 lakhs from Fisheries Department through their struggle
- d) KMKMU's struggle for community toilets and submersible pump has seen the light of success.

e) In CPIM time, Govt. allowed to give Behudi net to fishermen as free, but after change of Govt. to Trinamool, then Fisheries Department had closed that but through their fight this scheme again has been started.

f) There was a non-transparency in the process of giving loan from Benfish to MFCS, and that corruption was pointed out by them.

g) Department of Fisheries had decided to reduce the number of Khoti from 41 to 21, then this Union's struggle has stopped this matter for now.

Struggle of KMKMU:

1. Still we are fighting for land right
2. Against Trawlers
3. Against of Sea Pollution and intensive aquaculture

Critical Analysis on the RTI from DMF to BENFISH & NCDC

Dakshinbanga Matshayjibi Forum (DMF) lodged a RTI on 10th July 2012 & they asked the following questions:

- A) How many marine fishing co-operatives in Purba Midnapur? How many men and women co-operative are there?
- B) How many co-operatives are defaulter and cause of the default?
- C) If cause of default to repay advances then give information about how much amount is outstanding?

Benfish Reply:

- A) Not available to them
- B) & C) They gave all total 72 names of defaulters who are having outstanding money

Critic: They were unable to answer how many co-operatives and how many men and women co-operatives are there because they did not join in BENFISH. But they pointed out among 78 co-operatives under them there are 72 co-operatives are defaulters.

Although according to the law the RTI's answer should be given within one month but they delayed and sent the reply on 31.8.12.

DMF again lodged a RTI on March 1st, 2016 where the questions were same as RTI No. RTI/DS-01/2012 dt. 10th July, 2012.

Benfish Reply:

- A) They gave names of 108 MFCS
- B) They mentioned that they don't know
- C) They mentioned that they don't know

Critic: In the RTI No. RTI/DS-01/2012, Benfish said that they don't have information how many MFCS, but it came in picture with 108 names along with how many men and women co-operatives are there in BENFISH. Along in that RTI's answer, they replied that 72 defaulters along with their outstanding but in this current RTI made on 1st March, 2016, KMKMU/RTI/73/16, they became suddenly unable to answer. This also took 7 months for them to answer.

We have also observed that the Benfish General a Manager was changed and this new GM became suddenly unable to give information.

In September 19, 2016, **DMF** appealed to the Office of Managing Director, Benfish, WB, that Benfish has delayed to give the answer which is violation of law and they also provided wrong information what was asked in RTI No. KMKMU/RTI/73/16.

Benfish Reply:

They regretted for delay and gave the cause that it happened due to checking of old records to gather information.

They also stated that Benfish has provided only those MFCS who are under them not all MFCS in Purba Medinipure.

Critic: They regretted for their delay with a just cause but why that wrong information came they did not answer and stated “They are not liable to answer”.

On 19th December 2016, **DMF** made a RTI in the reference to the communication resting with the letter No. 972/IV-343/2014 dt. 28.10.16 to clarify the following questions:

- A) If the list of MFCS in Purba Medinipur, registered with Benfish is the same as the list of defaulters MFCS in Purba Medinipur, then please provide the cause of default of each of the MFCS.
- B) Please provide the list of MFCS that have received loans from Benfish in 16-17 with amount of loan provided to each of them.
- C) If all the MFCS of Purba Medinipur registered with Benfish are defaulters then how could they be provided with new loan in the year 2016-2017?

Benfish Reply:

In 21.4.17 Benfish in reference of RTI No. KMKU/RTI/108/16 dt. 19.12.16 replied that they had already replied the RTI No. RTI/73 & RTI/96 in respectively on 18.8.2016 in memo No. 756/IV/343 and on 28.10.16 in memo No. 972/IV/343/2014. And also stated that they are replying once again that cause of default they don't know and list of MFCS is enclosed who have not got assistance from Benfish on 2016-2017 and also said that no loan provided, applying process of One time settlement.

They also provided 11 names of MFCS

Critic: Cause of default is unknown to Benfish as usual. Although those MFCS are under Benfish but it is unknown for them about the cause of default. They also did not answer the amount of outstanding also. And as usual delayed reply after appellate from Benfish.

On 6th March, 2017, **DMF** appealed to Honorable Chief Minister of West Bengal that how MFCS has been corrupted by some leaders and also asked four clarifications to Her, which are as follows:

- i) How many defaulters are in Purba Medinipure and what is the cause of defaulters to become unable to repay the money?
- ii) Which are the MFCS in Purba Medinipure has received the project of *Net-Boat*?
- iii) How much loan and subsidy has been given for this project?
- iv) Please inform the cheque No., date and amount.

West Bengal Government gave a receipt on 6.3.17 that they have already received their application to Chief Minister.

Then on 25th July, 2017 **Assistant Secretary of the Government of West Bengal**, passed the application to the **Managing Director of Benfish**.

Benfish Reply:

On October, 12, 2017, Chief Minister's reply came along with all the old documents which Benfish had already sent before.

Critic: As usual late reply came from Chief Minister through Benfish and they sent all the old documents which never cleared those above questions. It shows Benfish either wants to hide some information or they don't have the ready information regarding those questions which really violated the human rights of the applicant from DMF.

On 21.6.17 **DMF** made a RTI on the basis of Memo No. 396/IV-343/2014 dt. 21.4.17 to request to give information which are:

A) 1. Amount of assistance provided to MFCS under Benfish.

2. Clarification of scheme from Central and State Government for this assistance and asked copies of application they received from recipients.

B) As they mentioned in memo No. 396/IV-343/2014 that no loan has been provided applying process of 'One time settlement', so DMF asked the clarification on:

1. Details of the 'One time settlement' (OTS) process including its purport, beneficiaries and procedure.

2. Details of the govt.(s) scheme under the 'One time settlement'.

Benfish Reply:

The reply came on 21.8.17

A1. They have provided 11 names of MFCS along with their total Project Cost Sanctioned, Loan Amount Refunded & Adjusted and Amount of Assistance was provided.

A2. They mentioned the scheme came under 'Traditional Marine Fish Production (Behundi) Phase III'. (*Here after stated as TMFP*)

B1. They clarified the scheme OTS and stated that loan portion refunded by MFCS *Just after* sanction of the scheme, keeping only assistance disposal for construction of boats without involving themselves in long time repayment schedule and avoiding the scope for default. **Beneficiaries are selected by the MFCS and Benfish has no knowledge in this regard.**

B2. They opined that total project cost has been sanctioned & the MFCS *refunded the loan portion immediately after such sanction* to avoid long time repayment schedule and possibility of being defaulters, at their sweet will.

Critic: Although before they denied that they don't know about the provided amount but in this Benfish has cleared that. One critical observation is that there are many MFCS who paid OTS just after the sanction of the loan, so it raises the question that why these kind of MFCS had got the fund when they already had huge money to refund the OTS soon after the sanction. So they can use that amount for their own benefit without any loan.

They also said that they don't know who the beneficiaries are so it raises the question that on which basis Benfish is giving such loan because it can lead to many non-fishermen to be benefitted through the corruption of this loan.

Benfish also did not clear the State and Central govt.(s)'s scheme on this project.

On 14th September, 2017, DMF lodged a RTI (RTI No. KMKMU/RTI/140/17) with following questions in reference to the information resting with their office memo No. 835/IV-343/2014 dt 21.8.17.

1. Please provide the details of projects granted to each of the MFCS listed in their memo under reference mentioning

- a) Number of boats with loan and subsidy amounts to meet the cost of boats.
- b) Number of engines with loans and subsidy amount to meet the cost engines.
- c) Number of nets with loan and subsidy amounts to meet the cost nets.

2. Please provide the photocopies of all documents related to the granting of projects mentioned in their memo under reference.

3. Please provide the details of cheques/drafts under which the amounts of loans and subsidies were given to the MFCS and loan amount was refunded by the MFCS as mentioned in their memo under reference.

4. Please provide photocopy of the details of 'TMFP' scheme mentioned in their memo under reference.

DMF made an appellate due to delay on 18.10.17

Benfish Reply:

No reply still

Critic:

As usual delay from Benfish to answer. It shows that they want to avoid such questions and that certainly violates the right of human being.

Again on 18th October, 2017, DMF lodged a RTI by asking some following questions:

A) How many MFCS in Purba Medinipure has received loans with subsidies from Benfish in 2017-2018?

B) Please furnish the details of loans with subsidies given by Benfish to the MFCS in the district of Purba Medinipure in the year 2017-2018 (along with a particular table format)

C) Same as 3rd question of KMKMU/RTI/140/17 dt. 14.9.17.

D) Please furnish copies of all applications for loans with proposals.

Appellate has done on 15.12.17

Benfish Reply: No reply still

Critic: As usual delay. DMF has not got still two RTI's answer respectively from Benfish it shows the negligence of the Benfish towards this fishermen and women communities.

On 5th December, 2017 a RTI has been lodged to NCDC by **DMF** to know the following queries:

1. Status of grants provided to BENFISH during the financial years 2016-2017 & 2017-2018 (Please note that by the "status of grants" is meant total head wise receipt of grants from the NCDC and the expenditure of those grants.)

2. Status of grants provided under the scheme "Traditional Marine Fish Production (Behundi) Phase III" to Benfish by NCDC during the financial years of 2016-2017 & 2017-2018 (Meaning of "Status of grants" is as mentioned in 1 above).

3. In case either one or more information does not pertain to your office then kindly transfer it to the concerned responsible authority under section 6(3) of RTI Act 2005.

NCDC reply has not come yet till 11.12.17

Critic: As they were not getting any reply so they this time directly approached to NCDC from where all the money use to come to Benfish. If these answer they clearly answer then there will be a great light in the darkness of corruption of Govt.(s).

Report on the Violation of Human Rights

Human rights is a right for all human being in their own nation. So every Indian has the full right to ask their human right information from respective offices. But it's very true that human rights is very much violated in many stances of the society. One of the example is Benfish, the fishery department of West Bengal Government. In many ways they are corrupted and never gives the proper information to common people in their RTI and in many ways they also illegally trickle the confidential RTI information to the political leaders so that those people use to threat the RTI giver.

Like this there is an example here will be discussed. DMF (South Bengal Fishermen Forum) whenever they ask information from Benfish regarding any information they always delays to answer queries. According to law, RTI's answer should be done within one month and if it is not the within two months after appellate. But in this sense Benfish is very much not worthy and never gives answer in proper time that is not only violation of human rights it is as well as violation of Indian Constitution.

All the MFCS when they had formed, all the leaders and fishermen and women had a big dream of it but in today's context it is not worthy in practical life. All the MFCS was so good in theory but in practical life it is corrupted and dominating towards the oppressed poor fishermen community in their many rights. Their voice is always marginalized by this MFCS then Benfish. They are illegally connected with Benfish by some selfish political leaders who are trickling the confidential information from Benfish to MFCS to threat the RTI giver.

In many senses, many MFCS's loan is not properly distributed, and just for the sake of giving they are giving a very little amount although that beneficiary could get more than that because it is sanctioned for him her. Many internal source says that there are many people, in whose name is sanctioned for loan but they even don't know how much the loan is for them because they only get subsidy but that also they use to get less because of internal corruption in MFCS. But this poor oppressed class never get the information about their loan and subsidy sanctioned from Benfish. And even Benfish does not have any names about the beneficiaries so many MFCS corrupted leaders use to take the advantages to snatch the money from poor fishermen. Many political leaders, selfish corrupted leaders of MFCS and some politically supported

In many senses, through illegal practices Benfish, is passing some confidential RTI information to the corrupted MFCS leaders and they are threatening the RTI maker like Vice-President of DMF, Mr. Debasis Shyamal. And even if any common people is making any application to Benfish they are also neglected and threatened by political leaders and MFCS corrupted leaders. Although DMF is trying to uphold the fishermen community by RTI but as they are getting little money from MFCS so they are becoming silent and opposing the works of DMF. So we can see Government and MFCS is giving a little amount to these helpless poor fishermen to subjugate and to buy their voices so that no revolution can start in here.

In conclusion we can say that all the voiceless community in here is becoming more subjugated and even if anyone is raising voice for them they are also ill-treated by threatening and life risk.

I am Srikanta Das, from Dadanpatrabar Khoti. Including me, we were in five family members, two of my daughters already got married. My younger, she is studying in college B.A. 3RD year. My main occupation is fishing. I started this business while I was in age of 17 with my father and brother. From before onward we don't have our personal boat now I work under boat owner (*laya*). When I started business along with my father we used to run *choto salti* and *paukia* boat those boats were in measurement respectively 41 ft. x 6 ft. x 4 ft. and 30ft. x 6ft. x 4ft. while we started to catch fish generally we used to get 25 net bag(*khayapa*) (1 *khayapa* = 30 kg). such as *tapra*, *sil*, *patia*, *ruli*, *bagda*, *ruti*, *chingri*, *pata mach*, *kakra*, *pomfret*. But now a days it is very less approx. 2-3 net bag (*khayapa*) some of the extinct fish like *pata mach*, *Shankar*, *babla* (bombate). When we started our business, we used to earn 20K per season although today we earn 60K but due to loan owner and high commodity people 60K nothing in front of 20K. I know that at first time number of boat had 350 but this number came down at 150 because of less fishes. I can say that, due to bottom trawling entering in 12 noticle. And also, they destroy our boat, net as well as kill fisher men's life. At first time we had 300 *laya*. And now we have all total 130 *laya* in between non-mechanical *laya* 50 and mechanical *laya* 80. Ten or twenty years back our income had satisfied but today this is very difficult to run our every day's life due to the increasing economic degradation.

According to me, now a days a huge change among small fisher men community causes of in- land aquaculture, polluted water mingle with sea water. Tourism, non-biodegradable elements in sea which causes that fishes are not able to come riparian side. I think first and foremost that central and state governments are responsible for this tremendous changes. Govt. knows bottom trawling is dangerous but they are giving 15 people work to each trawler so that they can earn more money. If bottoms trawling is closed then within 5 years fish will be renewed. Also, tourism and inland aquaculture need to be used in proper way. Because of tourism hotels are very close to costal land so that land and water are becoming affected, fish dry lands are decreasing. My observation that, tremendous changes has started since 10-15 years ago. Although I have small secondary occupation like vegetable cultivation from before onwards and I have 2-acre agricultural land. According to me that traditional fishermen will be abolished within 5 years they are moving to different work. In the year of 2000 Dadan Patrobar marine fishermen union was founded with the hands of Mr. Srikrishna das as president, Mr. Amulya bar as secretary, Mr. Achintya Bar as assist. Secretary, and Mr. Avimannu Bar as Treasurer but right now this cooperative society is running by Mr. srikrishna Das as president, Mr. Achintra Bar as secretary, and me as asst. secretary and Mr. Ananta Roy as treasure. In the year of 2000 when there was no MFCS in Dadanpatrobar that time our respected leader late Mr. Harekrishna Debnath, late Mr. Nirmalendu Das came from NFF to encourage us to from a MFCS so that all traditional fisher men can get the schemes from central and state govt. for the benefit of their lives. But in present situation money and boat go to non-fishermen due to some of the corrupted political leaders and few fisher men are involved with them and taking profit in their lives which was not happened at first time.

The leaders of ADF marine and Benfish are not giving the license of boat to fisher men and even we don't know that is there any license or not. It might be like Mr. Srikrishna is involved in this corruption. MFCS has provided loan to many people but even they don't know how much loan has been sanctioned for them but they receive the subsidy so like that way I have also received 2,35,000 for five people share. That also I have got out of many fight because MFCS is not giving the real sanctioned subsidy to everyone as their corrupting the money amount themselves. Out of OTS scheme MFCS has received 50 boats, and 50 boats will be received and the women cooperative society has received the money for fish processing unit. But still from 2008 to 2017 there is no 'Relief cum Savings' scheme although we applied many time to DM but no worthy reply has come up. In 2013 again under the BPL condition we applied but still it has not result. According to me as the MFCS going it's fully corrupted by politics so it's leading to a future of darkness.

I am Srikrishna Das from Dadan Patrobar Khuti. We are four in family members. My daughter got married, and son computer hardware engineer. I was working in post office. My father was fisherman, this business still running by my brothers. I am 32 years as president of *khoti*, also president of sub-division of Contai and executive member of NFF and DMF. From 1985 onwards, I am involving with small scale fishermen union. I came into this fishermen business with my father. That time we had 3 boats, and now also my brothers still have 3 boats. When we started business along with our father we used to run small *shalti* those boats were in measurement respectively 40ft. x 13ft. x 6ft. But in present this measurement stands in 35ft. X 10ft. x 4 ½ ft. On those time we used to get 200 net bags(*khayapa*) in various fishes. Such as *patia*, *ruli*, *tabra*, *sil*, *chuno prawn*, *kangra*, *tapse*, *chingri* and *pomfret*. In present time we are getting very less fishes. Such as *simul*, *tangra*, *tapse* this kind of fishes are going to extinct and we are getting maximum 20 net bags(*khayapa*) per day. We used to take loan from loan giver and after earning most of the money goes to repay and approx. 20,000 we used to have cash in hand and this much money we have sufficient for running our lives. Today we are earning 50K to 60K but it is very difficult to running our live properly. Now we are using *behudi* net this 30ft. lengths. According to season labour charge 8K to 10K per season, we use to earn 1 lakh to 2 lakhs. We had 150 *laya* but now 100 *laya*. Now a days sometimes good income and sometimes bad also but approx. 1.50 lakh. At first time we used to earn only 6 months and whatever we used to earn in that season that used to run next six months also. That was satisfied for every small-scale fisherman. Lend are becoming much more due to without asking rate of the fish while we selling to loan giver at first time. At last fisherman are suffering a lot and that is why they could not able to run their family in proper way. Most of the time due to lend they used to suffer. According to me, now a days a huge change among small fisherman community reason of intensive aquaculture, polluting water is mingling with sea water. Tourism, high cost labour, material cost high, non-biodegradable elements into the sea causing the fishes not able to come riparian side. I think not only political leader but some of the industrialist responsible for this tremendous changes. Govt. knows bottom trawling is dangerous but they are giving 15 people work in the temptation of earning more money. If Govt. stop the all trawler within 6-month fish will be regenerated. On 2007 -2008 we see this kind of changes. I have 1 ½ *bigha* land, from my father's time onwards we cultivate some kind agricultural crops. As a leader they are in hopeless situation, unless and until the trawlers are stopped. I believe invest money should be arranged from somewhere Govt. if it is not within 10 or 20 years fishermen will be washed away. MFCS has been found 2001 on that time president; Srikrishna Das, secretary; Amulya Bar, assist. Sec; Achintya Bar, treasure; Ananto Nayak. At present time President; Srikrishna Das, sec. Achintya Bar, assist. Sec.; Srikanto Das, treasure; Ananto Nayak. From that time onwards although Benfish has given us boat, net but they are giving without asking us the quality of the material so these are made by others in different places place, so, boat wood is not much better. Now a days Benfish has given us money with subsidy where around 50 people are beneficiaries. In 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 we have got 2lakh 35 thousand per beneficiary. I am aware of the central and state government all the scheme. Our MFCS was closed for a while and again opened in 2015-2016. Most of the *khuti* are not involved in MFCS so I believe that they need to be united. Benfish should have conversation with all the fishermen and protect them from a commission agent or broker.

I am Ratna Majhi, from Purba Rania. Including me, we are in five family members, my son already got married and I have two grandsons. My main occupation is fish separation. I started this business while I was in age of 30. I came this profession in my own wish. I used to separate fishes around 200 *khayapa* each day. In present it is very less around 10 *khapaya* in a day. I used to earn 5 rupees per day. I know in our khoti on that time 250 – 300 *laya*. In present time my earning is 150 per day. In past my earning was satisfying in our family. Fish separation are decreasing in number. And also, my earning is not sufficient in present day. According to me, now days a huge change among small fisher men community causes of trawling, in-land aquaculture, polluted water mingles with sea water, tourism, non-biodegradable elements in sea which causes that fishes are not able to come riparian side. I think first and foremost that Central and State governments are responsible for this tremendous change. From past 10 to 15 years this kind of changes we can see. From ancestor onwards, we used to have small agricultural business. Within few years this small-scale fishermen will be washed away. We have women society which known as Sarada fisher women co-operative society. Ltd. founded with the hands of Mrs. Ratna Majhi as president, Mrs. Basanti Das as secretary, Mrs. Basanti Bar as assist. Secretary and Mrs. Purnima Giri as treasurer but right now this cooperative society is running by Mrs. Ratna Majhi as president, Mrs. Arati Giri as secretary, Mrs. Basanti Das as asst. secretary and Mrs. Sadhana Jana as treasure. We have total 230 member. We used to work for drying of fish section and in present also we are doing same kind of work. From this MFCS we got loan and also 2017-2018 we are getting loan. According to me that, if fishes are not available in the sea no one will be remain in this work. Fish separators will be washed away in others work. I am not aware all those scheme of Central and State Govt.

I am Dhananjay Pramanik from Raghusarbar Jalpai, we have 10 family members and we are joint family. My 3 daughters are studying in school. My principal occupation is as fisherman. Along with my father I started business while I was in the age of 15 or 16. We used to run one *poukia* and one *hatdar* boats which both were in same measurement and that respectively 30ft. 7ft. 5ft. In present I have 3 boats those are one small *shalti* (21ft. 4ft. 3ft.), 1 cylinder mechanize, 2 cylinders mechanize (30ft. 7ft. 5ft.). At first time we used to use *net jal & behudi jal*. In present time we are using four kinds of net such as *bidha*, *monofil*, *net* and *behudi jal*. On that time generally, we used to catch 20 *khayapa* fishes per day, such as *tabra*, *vola*, *babla*, prawn but in present time we use to get *tapse*, *tabra*, *khavra* maximum 10 to 15 kg per day. Although rate of the fish was very less but minimum 20 years back so we used to earn approx. 1 lakh/season. That time we had *laya* 20 – 25. Now a day's manual boat 70 and mechanized boat 15. In present time we used earned 50- 60K. At first time whatever I earned it was sufficient to run our family although we had small family. In today's time this is very difficult to run family and also huge changes of life of small fishermen due to trawler, bottom trawling, polluted water of fishery, because of that fishes are not able to come in coastal area. Those kinds of reason mainly amnestied government and trawling. This kind of changes has been started since 2009- 2010. I don't have any other occupation. According to me that, fishermen will be washed away. If it is going as usual our future will be hopeless. All small-scale fishermen life will be darkness. According to my less knowledge that, 20-25 boys of my locality gone abroad to earning money due to less work, less income and poverty over in my village. We have MFCS which was founded on 2003, with the hands of President Mr. Chandan Bar, Secretary Anil Shyamal, Asst. Secretary Mr. Dhananjay Pramanik & Treasure Mr. Amulaya Majhi. In present MFCS President Mr. Chandan Bar, Secretary Mr. Dhananjay, Asst. Secretary Mr. Joynarayan Majhi & Treasurer Mr. Anil Shyamal. Although we had got loan from Govt. once a time but this was not working in proper way. At present time also this MFCS running but not so strong enough manner. Subsidy we had received only once a time but this year we do not get any kind of loan or subsidy except me. According to by laws of MFCS the eligibility of the member of MFCS should have 2-3 years of fish working experience in marine. I don't know any scheme of Govt. and only 2 people has got tamper-proof among 70-80 fishermen. And also "Savings-cum Relief" scheme never has come yet.

I am Jonmenjoy Dalai, from soula 2. We have four in family members: my wife, my son who is studying in class 10 (Ten), and my daughter who is studying in class 7 (Seven). My main occupation is fishing. I started this business while I was in age of 13 to 14 with my father and uncle. Before we did not have our personal boat so I used to work under boat owner (*laya*) Which was in measurement respectively 22 ft. x 6 ft. x 5 ft. Now I have one Boat this is 2 cylinder this measurement respectively 35ft. 9ft. 7ft. At first time while started our business along with my father and uncle we used to use hand made net and 4 pcs. *behudi* net. In present time we have bought from market net jal, 3pcs. *Behudi* jal, and lend from others net jal. While we started to catch fishes generally we used to get 35-40 net bag (*khayapa*) (1 *khayapa* = 30 kg). Such as *tapra*, *sil*, *patia*, *ruli*, *bagda*, *ruti*, *chingri*, *pata mach*, *kakra*, *pomfret*. But now a days it is very less approx. 15-20 net bag (*khayapa*). Generally we used to get *gongea* in past but now we don't get. Some of the extinct fishes are like *pata mach*, *Shankar*, *babla* (bombate). When we started our business, we used to earn 80K per season although today we earn 2.5 lacks but due to loan owner and high commodity 2.5 lacks nothing in front of 80K. I know that at first time number of boat had 45 but this number came down at 34 because of less fishes. In those time whatever we used to earn it was satisfied for us. But in today's context, due to loan giver and high commodity, it is very difficult to run the family. All those things happening I can say because first and foremost trawling and also Sankarpur and Petuaghat port. We can see that their polluted water mingles with river which is too much harmful for Sea fish and also water. Mainly I think of Government and trawling are the causes for this. On 2013 onwards, this tremendous change we are observing. Due to that small-scale fishermen are going to suffer a lot and also our future in no more hope. Our life is in very difficult. I do not have any other occupation, I and my family totally depend on this fisherman occupation. According to me that, small-scale fishermen future totally in darkness and there will be no more hope to be sustained. In 1998 we found MFCS in the influence by DMF with the hands of Mr. Nikhil Chandra Giri as a president, Mr. Subash Chandra Grou as secretary, Mr. Harekrishna as assist. Secretary and Mr. Rabindra Khatua as treasurer. In present time as a President late Mr. Ajay Kumar Shasmal, Vice-President Mr. Haripado Jana, Secretary Mr. Jonmenjoy Dalai, Assist. Secretary Ms. Puspa Mal and Treasurer Mr. Jitrendra Jana. Previously this MFCS was not working in normal way. But 2005 onwards we continuously doing our audit report but not yet get any kind of loan from Govt. Even though 2016-17 and 2017-18 we do not get any subsidy and loan but our Audit is updated. I would like to mention that, ruling party is playing a big politics that they are not giving any help to their opponent party favored people. Other *khuties* are getting loan from Benfish but we are not getting anything. I am not much aware of State and Central Government all schemes. According to me that, our MFCS' future not a good until unless Govt. takes any kind of good step. We all are small scale fishermen collected money and has built a school for those who left their studies in school in unfinished manner and also, we have built a temple. We have a primary Govt. school but we do not have High-school. We do not have Hospital for treatment. If any serious sickness we usually go to Contai Central. According to by laws of MFCS the eligibility of the member of MFCS should have 2-3 years of fish working experience in marine but some people are having without any kind of experience of marine they are member of MFCS.

I am Shakti Shasmal, from Soula 2 Dhakshin Purosttampur. Including me, we are in six family members, three of my daughters all are studying in college level and my son, he is studying in class 5. My main occupation is fishing. I started this business while I was in age of 16 and 17 with my elder brother. From before onward we had our personal boat which is 2-cylinder mechanized boat. When I started business along with my elder brother we used to run boat which was in measurement respectively 40 ft. x 12 ft. x 6ft. Now I do not have my personal boat but I use to work along with my brothers in their boat. While we had started to catch fish generally we used to get 50 net bag(*khayapa*) (1 *khayapa* = 30 kg), such as *tapra*, *sil*, *patia*, *ruli*, *bagda*, *ruti*, *chingri*, *pata mach*, *kakra*, *pomfret*. But now a days it is very less approx. 10 net bag (*khayapa*) and moreover some of the extinct fishes are like *pata mach*, *Shankar*, *babla* (bombate). When we started our business, we used to earn 1.5 lacks per season although today we earn very less amount 60K which is very unsatisfactory for us to run the daily lives. I know that at first time number of boat was 40 but this number came down at 22 because of less fishes. I can say that all these things are going on because bottom trawling entering in 12 noticle, and also, they are destroying our boats, net and as well as kills fisher men's life. At first time we had 60 *laya*. And now we have all total 32 *laya*. Ten or twenty years back our income had satisfied but today this is very difficult to run our every day's life due to the increasing economic lives. According to me, now days a huge change among small fisher men community causes of inland aquaculture, polluted water mingles with sea water, non-biodegradable elements in sea which causes that fishes are not able to come riparian side. I think first and foremost that central and state governments are responsible for this tremendous change. Govt. knows bottom trawling is dangerous but they are giving 15 people work to each trawler so that they can earn more money. If bottoms trawling is closed then within 5 years fish will be renewed. Also, inland aquaculture need to be used in proper way. Because of tourism hotels are very close to costal land so that land and water are becoming affected, fish dry lands are decreasing. My observation this, tremendous changes has started since 2000. Although I have small secondary occupation like vegetable cultivation from before onwards and before onwards I have 1 ½ bigha for agricultural land. Generally, we use to cultivate Potato, Brinjal and Pointed gourd. According to me that traditional fishermen will be abolished within 10 to 15 years they are moving to different work. In the year of 2003-2004 MFCS was founded with the hands of late Mr. Nikhil Chandra Giri as president, Mr. Shakti Shasmal as secretary, Mr. Himangsu Maity as assist. Secretary, and Mr. Narayan Mondal as Treasurer but right now this cooperative society is running by Mr. Himangsu Maity as president, Mr. Shakti Shasmal as secretary, Mr. Rabindra Khatua as asst. secretary and Mr. Narayan Mondal as treasure. From the year of 2003- 2004 audit has been going on in continuous till now but we did not get any kind of loan or subsidy till now. But in present situation money and boat go to non-fishermen due to some of the corrupted political leaders and few fisher men are involved with them and taking profit in their lives which was not happened at past. I would like to say that, some of the small-scale fisher men did not get loan but they are defaulter now. They trying to lodge a case to police station but no case has been lodged still yet. Some others are getting loan and subsidy though by political influence. I'm not aware of all the Central and Govt. schemes. As without any reason we are defaulter so we will try to go through

proposal by ADF to Benfish if it is not working then we will go legal steps. According to by law of MFCS non-fishermen cannot be a member of MFCS. Also in our locality no ICDS school, Hospital and high-school.

I am Debabrata Khuntia from Baguranjalpai. We are four in family member and my son is already married. My main occupation is agriculture. I used to work as fisherman in past. While I was in 7 years old that time I had started business as a fisherman along with my brothers. I had only one boat (*hat dar*) in measurement respectively 45ft, 13ft and 5ft. In present my three brothers are working as fishermen. When I left this fishermen business on that time I had only one *hatdar* boat, as usual mention in earlier respectively measurement. At first time while started our business along with my brothers on that time we used to use net which is made by cord thread and *behudi* net. Even while I left this business I used to use same kind of net. My brothers and many fishermen are using mosquito net, although Govt. has banned this kind of net but they are using it for their livelihood. While we started to catch fish generally we used to get 30 net bag(*khayapa*) (*1 khayapa* = 30 kg), such as hilsa, *vetki*, *tangra*, *tapra*, *sil*, *patia*, *ruli*, *bagda*, *ruti*, *chingri*, *pata mach*, *kakra*, *pomfret*. But while I had left it is very less approx. 3 net bag (*khayapa*) generally we used to get *gongea*. Some of the extinct fishes are like sea hilsa, pomfret, *pata mach*, *Shankar*, *babla* (bombate). When we started our business, we used to earn 30-35K per season but when I had left this fishing we used to earn only 20-30K. Fishes are less because of trawling and negligence of Govt. and due to this I had left fishing business. From agriculture whatever we use to earn this satisfies our family. While I was working as fisherman on that time we had 45 *laya*. In present time only 7-8. We sold our property due to less income but now we running our family in satisfactory. Now a days I cultivate some kind of vegetable such as eggplant, tomato, spinach, paddy, radish etc. we have our own land 2 bigha but I do not get any kind of help from Govt for agriculture. While I had left fishing business and joined to agriculture from that time to 5-6 years we suffered too much and sometimes we spent our times in poverty. From beginning on words, I led many movements of sub-division level. We had MFCS around in the year 2000. That time MFCS ran very strongly and loan used come. But, now we do not have MFCS and personally I did not get any-kind of loan. In mentally I am satisfied now to work as farmer. I could say, this changes because of Central and State Govt. According to me that, within 10 or 12 years fishermen will be washed away. Also, I can say that, if minimum 4 or 5 members of family cultivate approx. 3 bigha land then their family will be ran smoothly. At last I would like to say that, still my soul is longing for fishing but if trawler is stopped for minimum 5 years and mosquito net if it is totally banned then I really want come back in sea to catch fish because I believe still Ganga goddess calls me to go back for that business.

Hi! I am Birendranath Shyamal and I am from Baguranjalpai. I came in fishing movement on 1998. My first movement was from Digha to Someshwar nagar and our slogan was "*jal banchao tath banchao upkuler lok banchao*" on 14th Feb. 1998. In my own will I came this kind of fisher movement. I involved this movement with fisher man land controversial against frost department. I had done so many movement, some of the prominent movement such as rally, on 1999-2000 saving cum-relief scheme, fisher man identity card, fisher men land, right of the water on 2000, fishermen kerosene and diesel movement, 12 days strike in front of SDO, fishermen medical attendance on 2002, Haripur nuclear power point on 2006. I have visited some parts of India such as, Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Gujrat and Nandi Gram. I was assist. secretary of KMKU, after that chairman of KMKU and chairman of fish landing. We had very good relationship with late Mr. Hare Krishna Debnath and his death touched my into sorrow. On 1997 at writer's building I met with Hare Krishna Debnath along with Nirmelundu Das first time. We work for the marginalized people and we achieved their right, I would like to mention that, Diesel and Kerosene subsidy we worked for the small-scale fisher men but in present trawlers are benefited. I did not have good relationship with Benfish but I had good relation with ADF. And also, I would like to commit one secrete that, I fall into tempt but I cleared that in resolution book, that they gave 50K. I was not willing due to family and poverty I took this tempt. On that time mean on 1998 there was no good relationship with Benfish and small-scale fishermen. Due to some of the corrupted and dis-honest people of the society few achieved were not came in proper way. While Hare Krishna Debnath from the NFF held the meeting over here and they demanded one energetic young man (honest) and after they proposed name of Debasis Shyamal. I think it will be not easy platform for my son to achieve those unfinished work until and unless our society will be honest. As Debasis is working in the International level, so some of the Government leaders blocked his passport and also, they recognized him as anti-social worker. I feel very proud of my son that, he has good quality to work for society. Small scale fisher men have divided into two groups due to political reason. Until and unless all the small-scale fishermen have good unity, they will be finished. According to me that, fishermen will be washed away due to costal regulation zone of tourism. MFCS has been found here on 1999 hands with Mr. Kironmay Nanda Minister of State Government. On that time Sudhir Jana as president, Birendronath Shyamal as vice-president and Bhaku Dhara as secretary of MFCS. At first time it was running very well even they used to get loan but after that MFCS was became totally corrupted. According to me that, KMKMU's future will be good because those are in different post among them all are honest and also, they have good chain system to each-others up to WFFP, I can say that, this is a good sign of future. If we want to renew the good future of small-scale fishermen we need to increase mangrove forest, stop aqua-culture fishing, bottom trawling, polluted water should be blocked and mosquito net should be closed. Govt. can do everything and also Govt. should be honest and strong step through their active process. At last financial condition should be strengthened, people need to understand their condition, and that leaders can help them in a progressive manner.

Hello! I am Chanchal Roy and I am from Panchuria. We are six in family members where my two sons are jobless mainly but sometimes they use to work in some companies in contract. My main profession is fishing from my age 30 along with my father and from that time we do not have own boat. So I use to work in other's boat still which is from beginning *hatdar* boat (32ftX9ftX3.5ft). But now I use to run 2 cylinder mechanized boat which is also in same size. From before onwards we use to use *behudi* net. In past we used to get 6-7 net bag (*khyapa*) of *lohora*, *patta*, *ruli*, *tapra*, prawn, *ruti* etc. but now a days I use to get only 2-3 net bag of *lohora*, *gangua*, *ruli*, *tapra*. When we started our profession, we used to earn 16-17K per season but that has decreased to 8-10K per season now a days. When we came to this khoti there was 35 laya but now only 8-9 laya. Before our earning was satisfied for us but now it's very impossible. As per my understanding Trawler is the main responsible for it and at the same time Central Govt. as well. I can say that this change has started since 2007. I have a secondary profession which is agriculture in 1.5 bigha. I believe as the way the life is going very soon sea will be completely barren and fishermen's lives will be in darkness. Here is no MFCS. I am moreover aware of all the Central and State Govt. But they are not giving the diesel subsidy to us. BJP govt has announced that only BPL people will get 'Savings cum Relief' Scheme so many of us are not getting as we don't have BPL card. I did protest in *jantar mantar*, parliament to lodge our demand to UP govt and after listeing they also had promised but when BJP came then everything had been started to change. In present days I am the General Secretary of Union. Although this state Govt has started to give us cycle and net but they never fight or movement for us. So whatever we are receiving it is due to our movement. Debasis Shyam, Birendra Shaymal, Hare Krishna Debnath had influenced us to come in Union to help them in their need. I know there are some non-fishermen in other MFCS through political influence. We are also demanding that very soon Govt should give the "Right of the Land' to us.

I am Kiritibas Patra from Thanaberia Matshya Khuti, we have 6 family members and my elder son is working in a company as Engineer and other 2 sons are studying in school level respectively class Ten and Five. My principal occupation is fishing. Along with my father I started business while I was in the age of 12. We used to run one *hatdar* which was not our personal boat which was in measurement that respectively 35ft. 8ft. 3 ½ ft. In present also I have same *hatdar* boat. At first time we used to use *net jal & behudi jal*. In present time we are using two kinds of net such as *bidha, and behudi jal*. On that time generally, we used to catch 40 *khayapa* fishes per day, such as *tabra, vola, babla, vola, small prawn*, but in present time we use to get *gongua, tabra, topse, khabra* and fishmeal maximum 2-4 *khayapa* per day. Although rate of the fish was very less but minimum 20 years back so we used to earn approx. 1 ½ lakh/season. That time we had *laya* 50. In present time we used earned 50- 60K. Now we have only 35 *laya*. At first time whatever I used to earn it was sufficient to run our family although we had small family. In today's time this is very difficult to run family and also huge changes of life of small fishermen due to trawler, bottom trawling, polluted water of fishery, because of that fishes are not able to come in coastal area. I believe Govt. and Trawling is the reason for this changes. This kind of changes has been started since 1995. I have other small business-like agriculture that was my ancestral land measurement (6 *kata*). According to me by the by laws of MFCS the eligibility of the member of MFCS should have 15 to 20 years of fish working experience in marine. I am aware of any scheme of Central and State Govt. and here is no MFCS still yet.

Hai, I am Tamal Taru Das Mahapatra and basically I am from Moitana but now a days stay in Contai. From college life onwards I was in college politics in Congress and I passed graduation on 1999. When Mamata Banerjee had formed the Trinamool Congress then I joined in that. From 1998, two times I stood in election but I lost. But in 2008, I won first time and became Sub-Chief and still I am in this post. Before 17 years, with the help of Mr. Pradip Chatterjee, DISHA was opposing against sea pollution then I also joined with them as my locality comes under fishermen mainly. And from that time I have a connection with him. As I used to work for many movements in village so I met with Mahasweta Devi. Then I met with Debasis Shymal, and after few years I became the President of KMKMU since its 2 years. But I was attached with this union around 10-12 years. My main profession is that I am a consultant of a NGO and as well as I have a joint business along with my friend since 1995. As per my knowledge when DISHA was working there was no KMKMU but it was started with Late Harekrishna Debnath. From college life onwards, I have led many movement like Haripur, Nandigram etc as I am from beginning a social worker. As under my panchayat there are 31 villages so not from union every time but I was and still working as a political leader to help them in their daily problems. But there is a big drawback due to corruption in the time of CPIM, many leaders have corrupted the money and looted. And moreover, low education and disunity in this fishermen community is becoming barrier to achieve success in all movements. In CPIM time, many political leaders used to buy the fishermen for their own selfish benefit so there was no progress in that time but in today although State Govt. is developing many things but they are not focusing anything for these small community and as tourism is developing their lives is squeezing. I also know that many fishermen are misusing their money in fair through alcohol, prostitution, and gambling.

I joined in DMF with the help of Mr. Pradip Chatterjee and from DMF I know many RTI we have done for the sake of this community but many times confidentiality is leaking from Benfish as they are still corrupted and Fishery Minister is not cautious. Although I'm in Trinamool but it's very true that no good result comes unless and until it is informed to Hon'ble Chief Minister of our WB.

Very soon a new port is going to be happened in Tajpur and it will bring consequence that many small fishes will be vanished so small scale traditional fishermen will suffer a lot as their lives are already in darkness. For all these I can't blame anyone except taking it as drawbacks of development. I believe Union needs to think about their lifestyle as well not only focusing in their occupation. Fishermen are coming under temptations and getting small money and becoming happy but they are neglected from the main schemes. I think to bring back their lives we need to at first educate them.

I joined in small scale fishermen union as leader from last 2 years in my own wish. So as a leader we need to think about this oppressed class' future because they are fully subjugated by mechanized boat. To renew their lives we need to educate them and need to think about their space in society and at the same time we need pointed out the khoti's place to give them right.

I know fishermen are getting the loan but just getting the subsidy so as it is subsidy so I believe they can use it for whatever they wish because it's not loan that they are responsible to make boat or net from that. Although many people are saying now a days that many fishermen misusing loan by not making boat but I believe it's a rumor or I don't have any information regarding this. I believe all the MFCS were formed not in good intention but to use the govt's money only. So, to revive it we need to choose the right peoples in different positions of MFCS to rectify the past. According to me, MFCS is a place where one will help other to grow in holistic manner. But in toady Benfish is destroying the MFCS. I know many leaders are in post from a long time and that because of their good work and they are trying hard to renew it but we need to increase the awareness. I believe that most of the MFCS are defaulters because in CPIM time they all looted the govt.'s money and never thought to back the loan and still in all the MFCS there is lack of transparency which is creating all the corruptions.

I believe we are not fighting only to revive their occupation but at the same time we are fighting for their existence as well. As today's condition is not sound so we need to think about their existential lives to help them to grow in holistic manner and at the same time we need to rectify ourselves from past to be more active in this solidarity progress.

Reflection on Interviews

After critically analyzing all those interaction with fishermen and authority of the DMF we come to know in this way, that fishing was started in much earlier than any others occupation of Indian diverse culture. In past these fishermen could able to sustain their lives only depend of fishing. Till 20th century this occupation looked much more magnitude. But beginning of 21st century that fishing occupation is going into last in margin position. The negligence of Central and State Govt. and few dis-honest people they are suffering and becoming subjugated in every day. Due that reason this occupation is going to washed away from Indian fishing culture tradition. We would like to say that, most of the fishermen have lack of educational knowledge, they may not aware about the eco-system of the world. Global warming is increasing in every day. Changing the environmental system one of the most prominent issue of the todays world. Which is very much related with this occupation. Most of the small-scale fishermen locality they do not have proper treatment place such Hospital and Nursing home. They not have govt. high school in their locality. Because of that they are not much aware and in understanding level also very low in today's context. Among them, they do not have good unity. Economically also, small scale fishermen are suffering in tremendous way. Now a days, economic system among small scale fishermen is decreasing in a very bad way because of bottom trawling. Inland aquaculture, tourism and corrupted politics. They do not have proper house, land, cloth and necessary daily needs, due to less income they washed away their major traditional occupation and working in abroad for earn more money to sustain in day to day life. We could say that one of the major reason among the fishermen that is political barrier. Political leaders are misusing them in various ways and profits him/her self by utilise small scale fishermen. Government just gives them hope to work for them but ultimately Govt. does not work for their lives as well as their necessary needs. So, overall all the small-scale fisher men life under darkness until unless Govt. take any kind of initiative for them and they come out from fear zone to be the voice in the midst of oppressed voice to grow in holistic manner.

Final Report on Field Exposure

1. Introduction: We like to thank God at first and then our respected Dean of Practical for assigning us (John Biswarup Chatterjee & John Peter Makhal) in Kanthi Mahakuma Kuthi Matsyajibi Union (KMKMU) under Dakshinbanga Matsyajibi Forum (DMF). So in that assignment of our field education we came here in Contai Central on 28.11.17 and worked here upto 15.12.17 to work among fishermen and fish workers to observe and analyze their lives and sufferings from socio-political and economical perspectives and to theologize this in due time.

2. Brief History of Organization: Actually we were assigned under Dakshinbanga Matsyajibi Forum from college then DMF has called us in KMKMU in Contai Central to work in here (as KMKMU is under DMF).

So Dakshinbanga Matsyajibi Forum was established by Fish workers' leaders like Hare Krishna Debnath, Nirmalendu Das, Gadadhar Das, Amulya Bar, Gopinath Das, Sukla Das & Shyamal Mondal in early 1990's and it was registered under Trade Union Act in 1992. In today, DMF is having 10000 members over the four districts: East Medinipur, South 24 Parganas, North 24 Parganas, Howrah & Hoogly along with seven branches organizations in West Bengal.

In today's day the office bearers are: President: Pradip Chatterjee. Vice President: Gobinda Das, Debasis Shyamal, Ratna Maji, General Secretary: Milan Das, Assistant Secretary: Bidhan Ch. Dey. Ambia Hussain, Srikanto Das, Treasurer: Sujoy Krishna Jana.

And under this come KMKMU. So this KMKMU was founded on 1995 in the name of Kanthi Mahakuma Khoti Matsyajibi Unnanyan Samity by Amulya Kr. Bar, Bhaku Charan Dhara, Santosh Kandar, Sudhir Jana etc. in this district. Harekrishna Debnath joined this along with NFF and this union started to fight for small scale fishermen and in their struggle. They used to fight for small scale fishermen in their solidarity. They used to fight for their livelihood, rights, identity, social security, 'savings cum relief' scheme, MFCS formation, registrations, movement in Haripur against Nuclear power plant etc.

In 2009, Lakhi Narayan Jana with the help of Socialist Party split the group by showing temptation of benefit to many fishermen. And both the group started to run in same name. From 2009 to 2012 it was running in same name and created many problem in NFF. In 2012 around 16 khoti came together in Dadanpatrabar and started the new journey. In 2012, although they were in same name but one group started to follow the trawlers but another one remain in same idea of Hare Krishna Debnath and NFF. But slowly there was a problem due to name so in 2014 they again met in Junput Matsya khoti and changed their name as Kanthi Mahakuma Khoti Matsyajibi Union through a general body meeting.

In present day, they are guided by Tamal Taru Das Mahapatra as President, Chanchal Roy as Gen. Secretary, Debabrata Khuntia, Ashish Kr. Panda and Madhab Mandal as secretaries and Janmenjay Dalai as Treasurer

3. Demands of KMKMU:

- ❖ Banning of corruption in the Benfish loan money.
- ❖ Pointing out those leaders who are in corruption.
- ❖ All the loan money along with the subsidy should be given to personal bank account of the beneficiaries.
- ❖ All the fishermen should be allowed to get this loan
- ❖ There should have transparency in that process.
- ❖ 'Savings cum Relief' scheme's money should be started again and the condition of BPL should be removed.
- ❖ All the marine fishermen should be under this scheme.
- ❖ Money of 'Savings cum Relief' scheme should be increased from 2700 to 5000 rupees.
- ❖ CRZ rules should be followed
- ❖ Fishermen should have rights in their Khoti, and all kinds of polluting activities should be banned.
- ❖ All the fishermen should have all kinds of social securities.
- ❖ Women fish workers should also have development, schemes to helps them in grow in holistic manner.
- ❖ Give right to the khoti committee to use the Khoti's land.

4. Active Participations: We have participated in many works: we used to make RTI to NCDC, appellate to Benfish etc. at the same time we used to help the office stuffs in different works like making application letter, e-mail, setting up Wi Fi, sending letters by Post office etc. we have taken many interviews actively to know the context in much clear picture. We also attended in a rally to ADF to give deputation along with Vendor Union. We did several meetings with Vice-President, secretary, Fish workers, Fishermen etc. to know about the context. We read critically their many RTI, other papers and old reports to analyze their papers to form reports on RTI, human rights violations etc. at the same time we also looked into their histories and made three paper on it: history of NFF, DMF, KMKMU.

5. Learnings: It was such a good field to know the life and suffering of fishermen community. We came to know about Trawler and its dangerous consequences in sea as it is making our sea completely barren. We also understood that Tourism although it is development but actually it is destroying the coastal lives because they are throwing non-biodegradable elements in sea, violating the rule of CRZ and due to this coastal small scale fishermen are suffering because of lack of fish in coastal area and along with this we also came to know that inland aquaculture is leaving the chemicals and poisonous water to the sea so fishes are not coming in riparian side. We also came to know about the process of fishing for different fishes, process of making fish meal. We learnt the process of making appellate, RTI, and deputation and moreover we also understood the

division in water body. We understood about the MFCS, OTS scheme and process of getting loan for this fishermen.

6. Observations: We have observed many issues from social-political and economic perspectives. We have seen that Benfish is neglecting to give proper reply to all the RTI and even when they approached to CM then also answer came in same manner. Many times we came to know that Benfish is leaking some confidential RTI reports to opponent party of this union and they are opposing their activity. Fishermen's life is in very much darkness. They don't get sufficient fishes due to inland aquaculture pollution, bottom trawling, and development of tourism and that creates a huge problem in their livelihood: they are becoming defaulter to loan giver, moving to other occupations, etc. as the way is going in very near future sea will be barren and this community i.e. small scale traditional fishermen will be abolished from here. Tourism is good but we observed that all the lodges are very near to beach which is polluting the coastal lives and in that way they are violating CRZ rule but Govt. is completely silent in this matter and even sometimes they are taking the khoti's land to form the lodge or hotels. Although Govt. knows that Bottom trawling is dangerous for sea but to earn more money, they are giving licenses to many trawlers. We have also observed that this Union is mainly focusing in their occupation but they are not so much focused in their life styles. So many fishermen without education they are misusing their money in gambling, prostitution, drink, smoke etc. we have also observed that although this Union is trying so much to bring 'Savings cum Relief' Scheme but central Govt. is making hindrances by making BPL conditions.

At the same time we have observed that there is a serious political corruption and many supporters of non-ruling party are not getting any help from Govt. unless and until they are joining with them. All the MFCS were formed to help the fishermen to grow in holistic manner but in today's context due to some selfish corrupted leaders in MFCS, these are all in the path of danger and corruption and where those leaders are distributing the Govt. subsidy among themselves but the real poor beneficiaries are getting only a small portion to keep their mouth shut up. There is no transparency in this MFCS and OTS scheme in MFCS and even in Benfish.

We have critically observed that social life of khotis' are not hygienic: no proper education, medication, toilets etc. and moreover 95% people of this community are really now in below poverty line.

7. Reflection: This small scale traditional fishermen are oppressed and extinct community in today's world from social-political and economic perspectives. Govt. every time is giving license to the trawlers and they are doing bottom trawling everyday which is causing the harm in sea that sea is becoming barren. Tourism is also part of this reason. Govt. is giving permission to these tourist lodge and hotel to make their hotels and lodges very near to coastal land and which is breaking the CRZ rule. Every day these lodges and hotels throw a huge amount of non-biodegradable elements in sea which is polluting it's water and along with them there are many inland aquaculture which is leaving the poisonous water and chemicals and which is causing the

hindrances for fishes to come to riparian sides to give eggs. Although Govt. has banned the use of mosquito net to catch fishes but many fishermen still are doing this for their daily livelihood. Govt. has already announced to make a port in Tajpur which will be also have a deep consequences and small fishes will not come near. Trawlers are killing many fishes and throwing into the water and it two results: water is becoming polluted and small scale fishermen are not getting these fishes to sell.

From this Union many times they have lodged complain to Benfish but there is no proper reply still yet. They always neglect their queries and give some different answers. Many MFCS are defaulter now because in CPIM time they had taken money and many of them never thought to pay it back and has become the defaulter to the new Govt. due to many selfish, corrupted leaders in politics and MFCS they are also in critical condition now. They are giving the real sanctioned amount to the beneficiaries but giving a little amount to keep their mouth close but rest of the money they are distributing among themselves. Govt. is still not giving the autonomous rights to the Khoti committee so Govt. is taking their lands in the name of development of tourism and port.

Politically these people are also divided in ruling and non-ruling party. Although they say they are all together but actually they are not. Many supporters of non-ruling parties are subjugated under the hand of ruling party because they are not getting any help as they are not their supporters. Many selfish political leader use to buy the fishermen by some money and they do all opposition of just activities.

Education, hygiene, and medication is very poor among these community. Govt. should take some steps to develop these community to see the holistic development in India. Due to lack of education many fishermen are trapped in many unjust system. These community mainly comes under poor background they do not have sufficient money now to run the family but among them also some fishermen's some family members are highly educated and professionally also high in world in abroad at many sectors of the society. So it shows that today's generation is now growing but some of them are not highly educated as well and that is creating the hindrances for their holistic growth.

8. Conclusion: We are very much thankful to DMF and KMKMU for giving us such an awesome experience to not only merely observe these things but at the same time they have allowed us to participate actively. We believe this Union if they focus not only in occupation but at the same time if they can focus these communities life style also then these communities can grow more holistic manner. This union's solidarity with these marginalized communities is highly appreciable and we believe that their continuous struggles with them to be the voice with these voiceless will bring the justice and equality in the society so that when we all will be able to say that our country is growing in harmonic and holistic way.