

**TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA :  
A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS**

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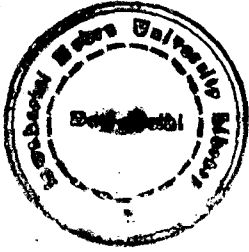
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DECLARATION

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled "Tribal Development in India : A Sociological Analysis", submitted by Mr. Debendra Kumar Panigrahi for the Degree of Master of Philosophy has not been submitted for any other degree of this or any other University. We recommend that this dissertation should be placed before the examiners for their consideration for the award of M.Phil. Degree.

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(D.K. PANIGRAHI)

# CONTENTS

	Page
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
	LIST OF TABLES
CHAPTER I ✓	INTRODUCTION : THEORIES AND CONCEPTS 1-28
CHAPTER II ✓	SOME ASPECTS OF TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT 29-67
CHAPTER III ✓	AGENCIES OF TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT 68-101
CHAPTER IV ✓	AN APPRAISAL 102-110
	BIBLIOGRAPHY 111-120

## Tables

		Page
Table 1	Percentage of S.T. population to total population by sex for India (1971 - 1981)	29
Table 2	S.T. Population Growth Rate (1971-1981)	30
Table 3	Ranking of States/Union Territories by S.T. Concentration	31-32
Table 4	Picture on S.T. Share Cropping	46
Table 5	Inter-Decennial Trends in Occupation	49
Table 6	Employment Profile of S.Cs & S.T.s in Central Govt.	50
Table 7	Literacy Rates of S.T.s and General Population	53
Table 8	Enrolment of S.T. Children	54
Table 9	Female Literacy Rates among S.Ts and the Rest of the Population	55
Table 10	The Statement of Investments in Tribal Areas from the First to the Sixth Plan	83

## CHAPTER - 1

### INTRODUCTION : THEORIES AND CONCEPTS

Introduction; definitions of Tribe; tribal administration; tribal development; approaches to tribal development-religious approach, voluntary agency approach, political approach, and anthropological approach; theory of isolation; theory of assimilation; theory of integration; sources of data collection; chapter scheme; scope and limitation.

#### INTRODUCTION :

This work is an attempt to study the processes of tribal development in India. Tribal response to the larger world has two dimensions; 1) Voluntary agencies bring about one kind of response among the tribals which is considered as social kind or reform type and 2) administrative agencies bring about another kind of response which is called socio-economic kind. Thus, tribal development and its administration should be viewed on the basis of reformist and administrative inducements.

Tribals are the most oppressed section of the mankind. The problem is not merely racial or religious. It is economic, social and cultural, and above all political.

Tribals' contributions to the stream of civilization and prospects of development in the present world can not be circumscribed within the parameters of any regional or state boundary. Rather, it should be the concern of the whole masses of the world. But the exclusive concern of any state and its various social arrangements must not be undermined so far as their problems within a nation are concerned.

(The motto of tribal welfare is rooted in the colonial anthropological perspective taking a romantic picture of the tribe as a homogenous and static unit of analysis. The massive literatures on tribals have mainly considered the anthropological problems and considerably neglected socio-political problems of the tribals.) This study is an attempt made to study both the above stated problems.

(The tribals, who are distributed in different parts of India, belong to different ethnic stocks and have different socio-political cultures and economic activities. Because of their interaction with the non-tribals and exposure to the national socio-political life, tribals are at different stages of development. Their diversities, associated with different ethnic and cultural traits, ecological setting and economic pursuits, indicate the

complexity of the problems that tribals face. The different approaches, concepts and theories have been evolved in this regard.) Before dealing with different theories and concepts towards tribal development, it would be better to look into the definition of tribe.

DEFINITIONS OF TRIBE :

✓A tribe is generally defined as 'a social group, usually with a definite area of living, dialect, cultural homogeneity and unifying social organisations. It may include several sub-groups as sibs or villages.'<sup>1</sup>

According to Imperial Gazetteer of India, a tribe is a collection of families bearing a common name, speaking a common dialect, occupying or professing to occupy a common territory and is not usually endogamous, though originally it might have been so.<sup>2</sup> Oxford Dictionary defines a tribe as a group of people in a primitive or barbarous stage of development acknowledging the authority of a chief and usually regarding themselves as having a common ancestor.<sup>3</sup>

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1. P.K.Bhowmick, 'Reports on Scheduled Tribes: An appraisal', in L.P.Vidyarthi (ed), Tribal Development and its Administration, Concept Pub.Company, New Delhi, 1981, p.47.
  2. Nadeem Hasnain, Tribal India Today, Harnam Publications, New Delhi, 1986, p.13.
  3. Ibid.



Majumdar has defined the tribe 'as a social group with territorial affiliation, endogamous, with no specialization of functions, ruled by tribal officers, hereditary or otherwise, united in language or dialect, recognizing social distance with other tribes or castes, without any obloquy attaching to them, as it does in the caste structure, following tribal traditions, beliefs and customs,'...., above all conscious of a homogeneity of ethnic and territorial integration.'<sup>4</sup> Andre Beteille says, 'the term tribe was taken over by the anthropologist from ordinary usage, and like all such terms it had a variety of meanings. In general, it was applied to people who were considered primitive, lived in backward areas, and did not know the use of writing. Sometimes, it was considered synonymous with the term race, which in scientific usage has an entirely different meaning.'<sup>5</sup> To include all human groups of a particular type, irrespective of the conditions of time and place, Beteille says, 'a tribe is in an ideal state, a self-contained unit. It constitutes a society in itself'.<sup>6</sup>

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4. D.N.Majumdar and T.N.Madan, An Introduction to Social Anthropology, National Publishing House, New Delhi, 1986, p.241.

5. Andre Beteille, 'The Definition of Tribe', in Romesh Thapar (ed), Tribe, Caste and Religion in India, Macmillan India Ltd., 1977, p.7.

6. Ibid., p.8.

The boundaries of the tribe as a society have been defined politically, linguistically and culturally. Politically, the tribe is a society, the members of which have a common government, and share a common territory. Linguistically, the possession of a common dialect is considered by many as a decisive test in demarcating the boundaries of tribal societies. Finally, we come to the definition of a tribe as a collection of individuals sharing a common culture.<sup>7</sup>

The statements made above present a good deal of the characteristics of a tribe. But they do not reveal the distinctive features of a tribe as a specific type of society. Further, the tribe as a society is notionally based upon kinship, where social stratification is absent. In general, however, Hinduized or Christianized tribes, have become a part of social stratification. Lack of specialisation, i.e., least functional interdependence, primitive technology, non-monetised economy, group cohesiveness or ethnocentrism and endogamy are certain basic criteria to differentiate a tribe from the rest of the people.

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7. Ibid, pp.9-10.

With a view to dealing with certain features of a tribe in Indian situation, T.B.Naik<sup>8</sup> gives the following ideal-typical criteria for a tribe. These are comparative geographical isolation, psychological conservatism (the least desire to change), politically organised (through community panchayat), customary laws, economically backwardness, the least functional interdependence and culturally adoption of a common dialect. He further elaborates that a Community to be a tribe must have all these attributes. It must be undergoing acculturation, but the degree of acculturation will have to be determined in the context of its customs, gods, languages, etc. A very high degree of acculturation will automatically debar it from being a tribe.

Thus, the definition of tribe has been attempted in a variety of meanings. In the literature of anthropology it is understood as a social group, speaking different language, possessing a distinct culture and leading more and less a secluded life. To some, it denotes a stage in political and social evolution. Max Weber tries to define them in terms of their territory,

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8. T.B.Naik, 'What is a Tribe : Conflicting Definitions', in L.P. Vidyarthi (ed), Applied Anthropology in India, Kitab Mahal, Allahabad, 1968, pp.85-86.

occupational specialization, social ranking and socio-political institutions. According to him, a tribe has a fixed tribal territory while a genuine caste never has. A caste will be found in many villages. A tribe is bound together by obligatory blood revenge, while a caste has never anything to do with this. A tribe comprises of the possible pursuits necessary for subsistence. Normally a tribe comprises people of every social rank, but a caste may well be divided into sub-castes with different social ranks. The caste is not necessarily an association forming part of only one political association. But the tribe is originally and normally a political association or the association is part of a tribal league.<sup>9</sup> Majumdar gives religious connotation. Ghurye calls them "backward Hindus". Robert Redfield refers them as "little communities."

These definitions do not serve the purpose of the Indian Constitution as no single definition is perfectly applicable to all tribal groups. Under Article 342 of the Constitution, 1) The President may with respect to any state or Union territory, and where it is a state after consultation with the Governor there-of, by Public notification, specify the tribes or tribal communities or

9. Max Weber, 'The Development of Caste', in R. Bendix and S.M. Lipset (ed), Class, Status and Power The Free Press, New York, 1966, p.28.

parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities, which shall for the purposes of this Constitution be deemed to be scheduled Tribes in relation to that State or Union Territory, as the case may be.<sup>10</sup>

TRIBAL ADMINISTRATION :

Having defined the term tribe, we now turn to the concept of Administration. Here, the term 'administration' constantly refers to Public Administration as opposed to variety of administrative activity run by private individual or a group of individuals. That is to say Public Administration or its brief use as administration here refers to that aspect of administration, which is 'co-extensive with the organized government', and therefore, it has to be treated as that branch of Political science which deals with 'the art and science of management applied to the affairs of the state.'<sup>11</sup> The term 'administration' here refers to those processes that lead to the fulfilment or enforcement of public policy. In simplest term Public Administration is 'co-

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10. Allahabad Law Agency, The Constitution of India, Law Publishers, Allahabad, 1977, p.111.

11. L.D.White, 'Public Administrators', in Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, Vol. 1, New York, 1954 p.440.

operative human action with a high degree of rationality.<sup>12</sup>

Tribal administration is not a new phenomenon. Even in the historical times during the imperial Maurya period special attention had been paid to tribals. There was a separate Minister in the Imperial Cabinet called 'Ant Mahamatya' to look after them. The Rock edicts of Ashoka the Great are witness to this.<sup>13</sup> The modern principles of administration were first brought by the British government. The British government dealt with the tribals as basically law and order-problem. The first British governmental attempts were made to control the turbulent Hill Paharia of the Rajmahal Hills, who had risen in revolt against the Hindu Zamindars.<sup>14</sup> Leaders of these tribes were granted Sanad and they were assigned the responsibility of reporting all outbreaks. Ex-servicemen were granted lands at the foot of hills around the Paharia habitation. In 1872, the Rajmahal Hills were withdrawn from normal administration. Paharia's held rent-free land direct from the government, which were

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12. Dwight Waldo, The Study of Public Administration, Random House, New York, 1961, p.11.

13. S.P.Sinha, "Tribal Development Administration: A historical overview", in L.P.Vidyarthi (ed). op.cit, 1981, p.65.

14. Majumdar and Madan, op.cit., p.274.

formed into government estate. A Hill Assembly was formed to administer internal justice and frame rules to conduct tribal affairs.<sup>15</sup>

The British policy also adopted a forward policy of commercial exploitation of forest resources which led to a series of violent upsurges and revolts. To meet the situation, two types of administrative arrangements were introduced. Areas predominantly inhabited by unreconciled tribal populations were mainly under military control. These were called non-regulated areas. In other areas civilians were exclusively employed to look after the administration. These were called ~~non~~ Regulation districts and were governed by laws made under the charter called Regulation Acts till 1834.<sup>16</sup>

Sinha has drawn attention to the fact that in the Regulation districts, the administration was considerably influenced by the emergence of new ideals such as liberalism, utilitarianism and humanism. A paternalistic ethos of the function of the Government came into existence, and this

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15. G.S.Ghurye, The Scheduled Tribes, Popular Prakasan, Bombay, 1963, pp.71-73.
16. Sinha, op.cit, pp.66-67.

paved the way for the combination of magisterial and revenue functions, in the form of the collector. But as the whole of the Nineteenth century was punctuated by one tribal rebellion or other. The British administrators were compelled to experiment with one measure or another - legislative or executive - till such time as these areas were turned into practically "ethnological parks" <sup>✓</sup> protected and safeguarded by different tenurial steps and executive actions.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> But the British policy towards tribals can also be understood in connection with the policy of British colonialism. The colonial administrators had realised the explosive potentiality of the tribal people in any national movement. They initiated the policy of segregation by which the tribal people were segregated and their places of habitation were maintained as prohibited area. The colonial administration allowed only its staff and christian missionaries to function in tribal areas.<sup>18</sup>

This policy of segregation was very much clear from the fact that in 1935, a new Act, the Government of India Act 1935, was passed. Under this Act, most of the tribal

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17. Ibid., p. 67-68.

18. K.S.Singh (ed), Tribal Movements in India.

V-II Manohar Publications, New Delhi, 1982,  
see Introduction.



areas were declared as 'Excluded' and 'partially Excluded' Areas. This exclusion served to a great extent the British purpose of keeping the tribal areas isolated, away from the national mainstream so that the contagion of the Freedom movement did not affect the tribal people. Therefore, extensive tribal tracts in the provinces of Bihar, Bengal, Orissa, U.P., Madhya Pradesh, Bombay and Madras were declared 'partially excluded' areas whereas frontier and border regions in Assam, Laccadive and Minicoy Islands and the Lahul and Spiti areas in Himachal Pradesh were declared as 'excluded areas.'<sup>19</sup>

'Excluded areas' show an enclave or a definite tract inhabited by a compact tribal population whereas 'partially excluded' areas show a less homogeneous tribal population, but still undeveloped and substantial in number. In the former, the administration was vested in the Governors, whereas in the latter that lay under the control of the Ministers, subject however to the Governor exercising his individual judgement. The above provision of excluded and partially excluded areas caused considerable misgivings in nationalist circles in India. Therefore, when the Constitution of India was framed, the

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19. S.P.Sinha, op.cit, pp.68-69.

above areas were dropped.<sup>20</sup>

TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT :

Development is a multi-pronged concept which includes various economic, social and cultural dimensions. Tribal development consists of deliberate efforts by the tribals along with the planners, anthropologists and the elite groups to orient them towards the new cultural and social ways of life and action. But mere adoption of new cultural and social ways of life and action by the tribals is no longer tribal development. When the tribals feel that the quality of life to which they aspire is in fact achieved, we may call it tribal development.<sup>21</sup>

For an allround development of any individual, group or community, it needs an organized activity. Sociologically speaking, development should be looked upon as an organised activity with the aim of satisfying certain basic needs and to psychologically orient

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20. B.K.Roy Burman, 'State and Tribals in India',  
Mainstream, Nov. 26, 1983, pp.16-17.

21. S.Narayan and B. Kumar, 'Obstacles to Tribal  
Development', Mainstream, vol. 22(1),  
1983, pp.18-22.

the tribals to adopt new skills, attitudes, and life styles, so that they build up the inner strength, and appropriate social and cultural infrastructure to stand the pressures of the new situation and accrue benefits from the new programmes and maintain higher levels.<sup>22</sup> From this point of view, development is a multidimensional process to progressively improve the social, cultural, economic and human conditions of the people -- all vital sectors necessary for a balanced growth of the society.<sup>23</sup>

#### APPROACHES TO TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT :

The tribals are relatively isolated and live at various stages of economic, technical and cultural development. The overall development of tribal communities depends largely upon the consideration of their problems and programmes carried accordingly. Considering the socio-economic conditions of the tribals, geographical location of tribal areas, and keeping in mind socio-political issues of the state, various approaches by the religious

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22. C.S.Belshaw, 'Development: The Contribution of Anthropology', International Social Science Journal, Vol. 24, 1972, pp.83-94.

23. S.N.Rath, 'Tribal Development Programme: An Appraisal', in L.P.Vidyarthi, op.cit., p.87.

missionaries, social reformers, academics and planners have been evolved to develop the tribal people in India.

(a) Religious Approach :

The basic thrust of this approach is to assimilate tribals into a religious culture which, in turn, helps breaking their isolation and passivity and joining them with the national mainstream. The missionaries of various denominations have been involved in the activities of conversion while undertaking certain reformatory measures for tribal people. The religious agencies like Arya Samaj, the Ramkrishna Mission, the Luther Mission, the Catholic Mission, are worth mentioning. These agencies have been carrying out massive conversion activities in central India and North Eastern India.<sup>24</sup> The missionaries have tried to understand tribal culture and language for the sake of its assimilation to the culture of Christian Church. The Hindu religious bodies have also attempted to assimilate tribals into a Hindu framework.

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24. S.M.Dubey, 'Inter-Ethnic Alliance, Tribal Movements and Integration in North-East India', in K.S.Singh (ed) Tribal Movements in India, Vol. 1, Manohar Publications, New Delhi, 1982, p. 1-25.

But the tribal religion is perceived as 'animism' in its various degrees <sup>of</sup> manifestation within the tribal community. Tribals live in their own religious world, practising some distinct and typical religious rituals and are considered as having a separate religious identity. The conversion of tribes by religious agencies generates a crisis of their identity and ethnicity, and it has often disrupted the tribal cultural fabric or social solidarity.

(b) Voluntary Agency Approach :

This approach aims at the promotion of standard of living and social awareness among the tribal people. The voluntary works in the tribal areas are undertaken by social workers, reformers and other social movement agencies. The notable voluntary social service organisations are : Indian Red Cross Society, All India Backward Classes Federation, Indian Council for Child Welfare, Bharatiya Adimjati Sevak Sangh, Bharatiya Depressed Classes League, Orissa Adivasi Congress, Bihar Adimjati Sewa Mandal, etc. These organisations claim that they have no vested interests in rendering social service or extending economic benefits to the tribal people. They function in both official and non-official

spheres.<sup>25</sup>

It was felt that the participation of non-official agencies would quicken and strengthen the process of socio-economic transition. Voluntary organisations continue to play a salient role in transforming the tribal societies from traditional to modernity. While recognising the pivotal role of voluntary organisations, the Planning Commission holds that they have an important role to play in the mobilization of support to various programmes and their effective implementation.<sup>26</sup>

(c) Political Approach :

This approach emphasizes the participatory role of tribals in various levels of politics, administration and nation-building. This was considered significant to improve the administrative situation in the country. The political approach has not only included policymaking and providing suitable constitutional safeguards for the tribal people, but also a vast administrative structure for tribal

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25. L.P.Vidyarthi and B.K.Rai, (ed), The Tribal Culture of India, Concept Pub.Co., New Delhi, 1977, pp.428-29.

26. Planning Commission : Sixth Five Year Plan, 1980-85, G.O.I.; New Delhi, pp.419.

welfare. This can be understood in the context of pre-Independence and and post-Independence period.

The British Administration dealt with the tribals as basically 'law and order' problem keeping them isolated from the mainstream of national life. After independence the Constitution of India visualised a policy of progressive assimilation of the tribal people in the national mainstream. To promote the integration of tribals with the rest of India, the Constitution provided special safeguards and facilities to this weaker section by way of protective discrimination for a period of ten years. This time-period has been extended subsequently.

(d) Anthropological Approach

The anthropologists have dealt with the problems of tribals in different ways and tried to find out possible solutions. They happened to be concerned about the problems of integration and isolation. Elwin's concept of 'park land,'<sup>27</sup> brought about a breakthrough and initiated a debate. His view was refuted by Ghurye and others who argued for the assimilation of tribals into the Hindu fold. Elwin changed

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27. See Elwin, Verrier -(1) The Baigas (1939), (2) Loss of Nerve (1941). In The Baigas he lamented that Baiga of Central Provinces were made victims of 'Over hasty and unregulated process of uplift and civilization'; for remedy, he suggested the creation of a sort of 'national park' in which Baigas and the like can be accommodated to preserve their cultural identity and no missionaries of any sort be allowed inside.

his earlier version of cultural segregation and emphasized a careful planning for tribal development.<sup>28</sup> Applied

anthropology in India seeks the co-operation of social welfare workers, applied anthropologists and administrative staff for the effective implementation of plans and programmes for the development of tribals. Anthropologists have laid emphasis on the proper understanding of tribal community, their social organisations and tribal culture. They hold view that no meaningful development projects may be formulated without a thorough knowledge of socio-cultural base and the physical environment of the people concerned. Above all, this approach looks for a composite culture and greater area of integration of the tribes.

Theory of Isolation :

This theory of isolationism is widely known as 'National Park theory' popularized by Elwin. He suggested that 'the first necessity of the establishment of National Park, in which not only the Baiga but thousands of simple Gonds in their neighbourhood might take refuge. A fairly

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28. Elwin, A. Philosophy for NEFA, Shillong, 1957. pp.7-38

In this he defended his position that he had advocated a policy of temporary isolation under British rule as outside contacts had led to economic exploitation and cultural destruction of the tribes.



large area was to be marked out for this purpose. The area should be under the direct control of a tribe's commissioner who should be an expert standing between them and legislature'. In short, the administration was to be 'so adjusted as to allow the tribesmen to live their lives with utmost possible happiness and freedom. No missionaries of any religion were to be allowed to break up tribal life.<sup>29</sup>

This approach has been attacked by nationalist leaders and social workers. According to them, tribals should not be kept isolated from the rest of the nation like domestic cattle or zoo exhibits. They are equal citizens of free India. They have contributed towards the country's advancement they are entitled to share the fruits of development.<sup>30</sup> While delivering R.R.Kale Memorial Lectures in 1941, A.V.Thakkar (a noted social worker) attacked anthropologists for trying to 'keep these people confined to and isolated in their inaccessible hills and jungles, something like keeping them in a glass case of a museum for the curiosity of purely academic persons.' To him, 'separatism' and 'isolationism' seemed to be dangerous theories as they struck at the root of

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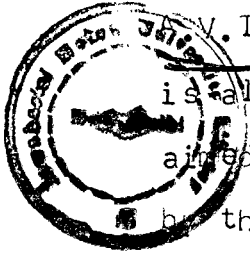
29. Elwin, cited in Hasnain, op.cit., p.76.

30. N.Hasnain, op.cit., p.76.

national solidarity.<sup>31</sup>

THEORY OF ASSIMILATION :

Nationalist politicians and social workers like V. Takkar advocated the theory of assimilation. Ghurye is also a protagonist of this theory. Isolationists aimed at keeping the aborigines in their areas untouched by the civilization of the plains, because they believed that the contact with the Hindus would break tribal solidarity, and social evils of untouchability, early marriage, and purdah would be introduced. They characterized indigenous social workers and nationalist politicians as 'interventionists'. Thakkar strongly objected it and pleaded for the policy of assimilation. He wrote : 'aborigines should form part of the civilized communities of our country not for the purpose of swelling the figures of the followers of this religion or that, but to share with the advance communities the privileges and duties on equal terms in the general social and political life of the country.'<sup>32</sup> The protagonists of this theory, advance the view



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31. Quoted in G.S.Ghurye, The Scheduled Tribes, Popular Prakashan, Bombay 1963, p.149-50.
32. G.S.Ghurye, op.cit, pp. 149-50.

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that tribes should be assimilated with their neighbouring non-tribal cultures.

The policy of assimilation was followed by various religious organisations in order to spread values of their respective religions. The missionaries tried to understand tribal culture and learnt their languages in order to raise their status in terms of a christian identity. A considerable effort has been undertaken to assimilate the tribal people under the guidelines of social culture of caste Hindus. Commercialisation of tribal economy, acculturation under the framework of Hinduism, imposition of Christian values and excessive politicisation of tribal people along the lines of regional chauvinism and separatism are factors which inhibit their assimilation into the mainstream.<sup>33</sup>

THEORY OF INTEGRATION :

The theory of integration is the outcome of the serious research activities undertaken by social anthropologists in India. Their main concern is to find out a national strategy of nation-building activities. They deal with the terms 'social integration' and 'cultural assimilation'. Cultural assimilation only highlights various trends of a

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33. L.P.Vidyarthi and B.K.Rai, op.cit, 428-29.

NEHRU's ~~concept~~ on 'tribe' :-

religiocity and traditions. It sets a pattern on the basis of priorities available to it. 'Social integration' means acceptance of common goals and symbols by different parts of a whole, while retaining a dimension of political relationship. It is presumed that people having diverse cultural traits may foster common goals and symbols.<sup>34</sup>

Assuming the position of tribes at various stages of development, the objective of tribal development policy is suggested to bring a progressive advancement of the tribals with an accent on their integration and putting them on an equal footing within a reasonable distance of time. L.P. Vidyarthi recommends the integration of the tribes in regional and national setting.<sup>35</sup> The notion of 'unity in diversity' is to be constituted as the base of the Indian culture for the purpose of national setting. There are varieties of tribal culture in terms of tribal customs, traditions and religion. Even the unity of tribal cultures may become more difficult than the unity of diversity. It logically follows that the integration of the tribals must be taken at regional

34. B.K. Roy Burman, 'Perspective for Administration and Development of the Scheduled Tribes', in Vidyarthi (ed), Tribal Development and Administration, NICD, Hyderabad, 1975, pp. 31-60.

35. Vidyarthi, L.P. and B.K. Rai, op.cit., pp. 419-20.

levels before the integration takes place at national setting.

Historically, tribals have received varying treatment -- total isolation or total assimilation -- during British period. After independence the policy of integration was found most suitable. The two extreme views :  
i) treating the tribals as anthropological specimens for the purpose of study and ii) allowing them to be engulfed by the masses of Indian community were rejected by Nehru. He keenly appreciated tribal culture. He was deeply motivated by its democratic ethos and sense of discipline. His approach was to develop an understanding between them and the rest of the nation, which would create a sense of devotion and loyalty among the tribal people towards India. Contrary to Elwin's perception Nehru strictly regulated the entry of outsiders. Nehru was looking for a gradual change to be worked out by tribal people. In this context, Nehru's Panchasheel for tribes deserves mentioning, in which he enunciated five fundamental principles for the policy of moderation.<sup>36</sup>

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36. Vidyarthi, L.P. 'Nehru's Approach to Tribal Culture' in Vidyarthi (ed). Applied Anthropology in India, op.cit, p.118-19. Also see Foreword to the second edition of Elwin's book Philosophy for Nefu, in which Nehru mentioned the fundamental principles for tribes (Nehru's Panchasheel for tribes) which he had evolved.

That, "i) the tribal people should develop along the lines of their own genius and we should avoid imposing anything on them. We should try to encourage in every way their own traditional arts and culture.

ii) tribal rights in land and forests should be protected.

iii) we should try to train and build up a team of their own people to do the work of administration and development. Some technical personnel from outside will, no doubt, be needed, especially in the beginning. But we should avoid too many outsiders into tribal territories.

iv) We should not over-administer these areas or overwhelm them with a multiplicity of schemes. We should rather work through, and not in rivalry to their own social and cultural institutions.

v) we should judge results, not by statistics or the amount of money spent, but by the quality of human character that is evolved."<sup>37</sup>

Thus, Nehru was appreciating the corporal and communal life among tribals. But he failed to augment the process of planning which would have expanded their

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37. Ibid.

community life. The activity of the welfare state destroys the value of community. The philosophy of individualism and the politics of competition weaken the vitality of progress and fellow-feeling. After all, culture can not maintain its isolated entity for all the time to come. It has to be moulded by the social and historical processes of life. How can Nehru's orientation succeed to protect communal life among tribal communities when the system of production is leading towards the individualistic and mechanical form of social life?

Jagannath Pathy, who has studied tribal life, has noted that the dominant ideological trend of the policy of integration (covertly or overtly) is to absorb the smaller and undifferentiated nationalities, groups or communities into the broader social spectrum by forcing them to retain the lowest rank and position in the social system.<sup>38</sup> This is how the dominant classes of dominant nationalities and linguistic groups perpetuate their cultural hegemony. As a result, the advanced sections of smaller nationalities, groups and communities, either become a subordinate partner or pushed back to the fold of subject class.<sup>39</sup>

38. Jagannath Pathy, 'An outline of Modes of Production in Tribal India', in Budhadev Chaudhury (ed), Tribal Development in India, Inter India Pub., Delhi, 1982, pp. 28-29.

39. Ibid. ✓

## SOURCES OF DATA COLLECTION

This work is based on secondary sources of data collection from different books, journals, reports etc. For the purpose, the libraries of Jawaharlal Nehru University, National Council of Educational Research and Training, Indian Council of Social Science Research, Indian Institute of Public Administration, Nehru Memorial Library (Teen Murti House), Ratan Tata Library (Delhi School of Economics, Delhi University) have been consulted. And also the office of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and Tribal Development Division (Lok Nayak Bhavan) has been consulted.

## CHAPTER SCHEME :

In the present chapter, different concepts, approaches and theories regarding tribal development have already been dealt with. In the second chapter, some aspects of tribal development such as social demography, socio-economic conditions and socio-political aspects of the Advasis have been discussed. In the third chapter agencies of tribal development - governmental and voluntary have been studied. The last chapter entitled 'An Appraisal' bears an overview of this study.



#### SCOPE AND LIMITATION

Development is a multi-pronged concept which includes various economic, social and cultural dimensions. Due to limitation of time and space, all aspects of tribal development could not be covered up. Yet, it is hoped that this work will, no doubt, render some experience in carrying on further research in this area of tribal development.

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CHAPTER - II  
SOME ASPECTS OF TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

Demography; tribal zones; major tribal groups; religious aspects; linguistic aspects; socio-economic conditions, exploitation of agricultural tenants; occupational aspects; employment; education; communication; socio-political aspects of the adivasis - Jharkhand Movement, North-East Problem, Naga National movement.

✓ DEMOGRAPHY

The population trend of the scheduled tribes in 1971 and 1981 to that of the total population of India is pictured in the table given below.

Table 1

% of S.T. population to total population by Sex for India

India.	Persons male female	Total population	Total S.T. population	% of S.T. population
1971	Persons	533,534,500	36,408,514	6.82
	Males	276,335,036	18,361,797	6.64
	Females	276,335,036	18,046,717	7.02
1981	Persons	665,287,849	51,628,638	7.76
	Males	343,930,423	26,038,535	7.56
	Females	321,357,426	25,590,103	7.96

Note : i) Excludes Assam due to disturbed condition  
ii) No tribes were Scheduled by the President of India, for Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Chandigarh & Pondicherry.

Source : Census of 1981, Part-II-B(iii), p.xix.

According to 1981 census 51.63 million persons, comprising 7.76 per cent of the total population of the country, were enumerated as belonging to the communities notified as scheduled tribes, under the provisions of the constitution. In 1971, the corresponding figures were 36.40 and 6.82 percent respectively. For a clearer understanding of the growth rate (1971-81) of the Scheduled Tribes in terms of rural-urban pattern of distribution by sex, the following table is presented.

Table-2

S.T. Population growth rate (1971-81)

India	Total rural urban	persons	Males	Females
1981	Total	51628638	26038535	25590103
	Rural	48427604	24364350	24063254
	Urban	3201034	1674185	1526849
1971	Total	36408514	18361797	18046717
	Rural	35128288	17687622	17440666
	Urban	1280226	674175	606051
Growth rate (1971-81) Total		41.80	41.81	41.00
	Rural	37.86	36.05	37.95
	Urban	150.04	148.33	151.93

Note : See the note (i), & (ii) of the table No.1.

(iii) Excludes population of Assam in 1971.

Source : Tribal Development : A Statistical Profile,  
Govt. of India, Ministry of Home Affairs,  
New Delhi, March 85, p.7.

After looking into the occurrence of the tribal population in India as a whole in the forgoing tables, it is pertinent to know certain patterns of concentration in different states and union territories. That is placed in a tabular form as under :

Table No.3

Ranking of states/union territories by S.T.Concentration

Rank in State/U.T. 1981		% of S.T.population to state population		Rank in 1971
		1981	1971	
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
1.	Nagaland	83.99	88.61	1
2.	Meghalaya	80.58	80.48	2
3.	Tripura	28.44	28.95	4
4.	Manipur	27.30	31.18	3
5.	Sikkim	23.27	-	-
6.	Madhya Pradesh	22.97	20.14	6
7./	Orissa	22.43	23.11	5
8.	Gujarat	14.22	13.99	7
9.	Rajasthan	12.21	12.13	8
10.	Maharashtra	9.19	5.86	10
11.	Bihar	8.31	8.75	9
12.	Andhra Pradesh	5.93	3.81	13
13.	West Bengal	5.63	5.72	11
14.	Karnataka	4.91	0.79	15
15.	Himachal Pradesh	4.61	4.09	12
16.	Tamilnadu	1.07	0.76	16
17.	Kerala	1.03	0.22	17

Contd...

...Contd...Table no.3

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
UNION TERRITORY				
1.	Lakshadweep	93.82	92.82	2
2.	Mizoram (Now state)	93.55	94.26	1
3.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	78.82	88.89	3
4.	Arunachal Pradesh (now state)	69.82	79.02	4
5.	A & N. Islands	11.85	15.02	5
6.	Goa (Now state), Daman & Diu	0.99	0.89	6

Note : Excludes Assam.

Resource : Tribal Development A Statistical Profile,  
Govt. of India, Ministry of Home Affairs,  
New Delhi, March, 85, p.8.

The above table shows the following patterns of tribal concentration : that (i) there are two states, Meghalaya and Nagaland and four union territories, namely Arunachal Pradesh (now state), Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Lakshadweep and Mizoram (Now state), where more than 70 per cent of the population belong to Scheduled Tribes categories, (ii) There are also five states - Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Orissa, Sikkim and Tripura - where more than 20 per cent of the population belong to the scheduled Tribes. The rest refers to below 20 percent.

✓TRIBAL ZONES :

There are three important tribal concentrated zones in India where most of the tribals inhabit. These are as follows<sup>1</sup>:

(1) North and North-eastern zone consists of the sub-Himalayan mountains region. The tribals of Nagaland, Assam, Manipur, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Mizoram, come under the eastern part, while that of Himachal Pradesh and northern Uttar Pradesh fall under the northern part. Dominating tribes in this zone are : Jaga groups like Konyak, Bengama, Sengama, AO, Angama, Dhota, Phom, Chang, Kabui; Kuki group including Lushai Lakher, Chins; Khasi, Garo, Kachari, Lepcha, Bhutia, Rabha, Tharu, Khas, Cheri, etc.

(2) The Central and Middle Zone covers the states of West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Southern Uttar Pradesh, Northern Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Southern Rajasthan. The important tribal communities in these areas are Santhal, Munda, Oraon, Bhumji, Kora, Lodha, Saura, Juang, Khond, Korku, Gond, Bhil, Birhor, Kol, Maler, Asur, Baiga, Pradhan,

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1. Majumdar and Madan, op.cit, pp.253-54.

Birjhia, Agaria, Hill Maria, Bison-born Maria, etc.<sup>2</sup>

(3) The Southern zone consists of Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra States where the important tribal communities like Chenchu, Toda, Badaga, Kota, Panian, Irula and Kurumba inhabit. Tribal communities are also found in some other pockets like Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Laccadive, etc. The main tribes living in these areas are the Jarwa, Onge, North Sentinelese, Andamanese and Nicoberi.<sup>3</sup>

#### MAJOR TRIBAL GROUPS :

Some major tribal groups which represent numerically large tribe and their distribution in states are as follows:<sup>4</sup>

The Bhil, about 5.2 million, in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Gujarat;

The Gound, about 4.8 million, in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Orissa;

The Santhal, about 3.6 million, in Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal;

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2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Background Paper on Tribal Development No. 12, Tribal Development a Statistical Profile, Govt. of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi, March 1985, p. (viii).

Also see Bhupinder Singh, 'Tribal Development: Strategy and Approach', in L.P. Vidyarthi, op. cit, 1981, p. 112.

The Oraon, about 1.7 million, in Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh;

The Mina, about 1.5 million, in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh;

The Munda, about 1.2 million, in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and West Bengal.

#### RELIGIOUS ASPECTS :

As regards religious aspects of tribes, it is, on the basis of the census data of 1961 and 1971, found that 90 percent of tribals follow Hindu religion in one form or the other. Next to this Christianity is embraced by six per cent of the tribal population. Besides, Buddhism, Islam or Jainism are very negligibly followed. One important point is seen that converted tribals to the above mentioned major religions also practise their traditional faith. We also find the differential patterns of growth or development in tribal zones. That, most of the tribes in south and central India, are more or less Hindu in faith. Christianity has tremendously spread over north-eastern India. More than 90% of the population of Nagaland and Mizoram follow christianity. Notable Chotanagpur tribes - Oraon, Munda and Ho also follow Christianity.<sup>5</sup>

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5. N.Hasnain, op.cit, p.27-28.



The above classification shows that India has, no doubt, religious pluralism. The people of many religions inhabit here. Most of them are converts. T.K.Oommen has rightly observed that the bulk of Muslim and Christian conversions took place after conquest and colonisation. He also mentioned that converts are from local castes and tribes and so they are the natives of this country but their religion is foreign. So he suggests for the co-existence of different religious identities within the national mainstream for authentic nationhood.<sup>6</sup>

#### LINGUISTIC ASPECTS :

The geographical classification finds support in linguistic affinities of the tribal people living in the above discussed three zones. Language is a part of culture and it is a powerful mode of transmission of cultures from one area to another. Tribal India refers to three broad speech groups - (i) Dravidian, (ii) Austric, and (iii) Tibeto-Chinese. Dravidian - speech

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6. T.K.Oommen, "Insiders and outsiders in India : Primordial Collectivism and Cultural Pluralism in nation building", in International Sociology, Journal of the International Sociological Association, University College Cardiff Press, U.K., V.I, No.1, March 1986, pp.57-62.

family group inhabit in the middle and southern India. Another, important language of this group is Koi which is spoken by the Kondh of Orissa, Oraon of Chotanagpur and Malto of Rajmahal hills. The speeches of Toda, Paliyan, Chenchu, Irula and Kadar are also included in the Dravidian family.<sup>7</sup>

The Austric family of speeches is also known as Munda speech family. Speeches of this family are spoken mainly by the tribals of Chotanagpur area. It covers some parts of Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, West Bengal, Madras, and Terai region of Himalayas stretching from Bihar and Orissa; Mundari, HO, Khasia, Bhumji and some other speeches of Bihar are also included in this family.<sup>8</sup>

The Tibeto-Chinese speeches are spoken most by the tribals of Mongol racial stock. This family is divided into two parts (i) Tibeto-Burman, and (ii) Siamese-Chinese. The tribals of Assam, Meghalaya and other parts of north-east India speak one or other speeches of this family.<sup>9</sup>

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7. Majumdar & Madan, op.cit, p.254-56.

8. N.Hasnain, op.cit, p.22.

9. Ibid.

The above picture of language affinity does not lack interaction. In the central zone most of the tribes have become bilingual, speaking their own dialect as also some form of Hindustani, Oriya or Bengali. The Oraon and the Munda have knowledge of Hindustani, whereas the Santhal in Bengal can understand Bengali. The Baiga picked up the language of Chattisgarhi. In the North-Eastern region most tribals speak some form or other of Sino-Tibetan and Tibeto-Burman. In the Central zone, the Khond and Gond speak languages having a Dravidian affinity. Gondi is said to be intermediate between the Dravidian and the Aryan tongues. In the South the tribals speak some form or other of Dravidian language, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Canarase or Coorgi. The Kadar of Travancore-Cochin speak a Malayalam dialect. Along with the Aryanization of the Baiga and the Bhil, there is Dravidianization of the Chenchu and the Yenadi.<sup>10</sup>

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10. Majumdar and Madan, op.cit,  
pp. 255-56.

This reveals a consequence of cultural contact in tribal India. The Indo-Aryan languages like Hindi, Bengali, Oriya, Marathi, etc. have developed into distinctive identity. Developed dravidian and Indo-Aryan speech groups belong to distinct states. But tribal linguistic identity has not been taken into any measure consideration rather than academic purpose. In order to develop the tribal dialects, the state has a major role to play. The Cultural pluralism along with national mainstream can be established only when the different dialects and undeveloped languages (like tribal dialects) will be developed to facilitate cultural consolidation. As discussed earlier, many tribal groups are partly assimilated into Indo-Aryans and Dravidian languages. As a result some of them have lost their distinctiveness. It is also found that at present major regional languages have to some extent stifled the growth of tribal dialects.<sup>11</sup>

✓SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS :

Tribals were living in self-sufficient economic conditions. Forest wealth was at their disposal to sustain themselves. When they were exposed to modern way of economic development all around, they found themselves ill-

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11. T.K.ommen, op.cit, pp.62-70.

equipped to enjoy the fruits of development. Outsiders, the so-called civilized and modern people, exploited the tribals. The administration did not take concrete steps to prevent the outsiders from their predatory actions.

Tribals were not much handicapped when their places of habitation were isolated and devoid of middlemen and contractors. Elwin had advocated a policy of temporary isolation for certain small tribes when India was under British rule. This was not to keep them as they were. This isolation was necessary because at that time the only contacts they had with the outside world were debasing contacts, leading to their economic exploitation and cultural destruction. Nothing positive was being done for their welfare. National workers were not admitted into their hills, but merchants, moneylenders, landlords and liquor vendors were working havoc with their economy. Missionaries were destroying their art, their dances, their weaving and their whole culture.<sup>12</sup>

Venugopal has rightly discussed that "Ghurye and Elwin were debators on a controversial theme on tribes. Elwin advocated non-interference but not complete isolation for them. He held that any imposition of values by dominant

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12. Verrier Elwin, A Philosophy for NEFA, Shillong, Government of Assam, 1960.

or majority groups would stifle tribal zest for life, their sense of freedom and their creative urge.<sup>13</sup> By contrast, Ghurye argued that socio-economic isolation would also mean moral ruin. If left unattended, the tribals would fall prey to social evils such as drinking, commission of crimes and vagrancy. He did recognise the exploitation of tribals by outsiders - landowners, traders, contractors etc. But in a detailed comment on the situation he viewed the administrative and judicial machinery, initially established by the colonial rulers, as unduly favourable to non-tribals.<sup>14</sup>

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13. Verrier, Elwin, : A Philosophy for NEFA, Calcutta, Government of Assam, 1977, cited in C.N., Venugopal, "G.S.Ghurye's ideology of normative Hinduism : an appraisal", Contributions to Indian Sociology, (n.s.) 20, 2 (1986), p.310.

14. G.S.Ghurye op.cit., 1963, 175-210,  
Cited in ibid.

After being exposed to non-tribals' modern activity by way of British policy of law and revenue, property right, sale and purchase of property ownership, tribals could not cope with the situation and, therefore, fell in the major problem of indebtedness. Some of the important reasons of indebtedness common to all the affected groups are : (i) loss of tribal rights over land and forests; (ii) poor and primitive mode of agriculture resulting in a deficit supply of food grains; (iii) Ignorance; (iv) Expenditure beyond their means due to extravagant spending on marriages, deaths, fairs and festivals; (v) fatalistic attitude and locally-oriented world view; and (vi) adherence to Panchayat decisions regarding fines for fear of excommunication. Because of the above reasons, tribals always need money and then become victim of exploitation by moneylenders and middlemen.<sup>15</sup>

There are also certain roles played by moneylenders which are discussed in the following lines. At the time of need tribals reach the moneylender's house where he is always welcome day in and day out. The moneylender does

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15. PLANNING COMMISSION'S REPORT OF THE STUDY TEAM ON TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES, 1969.

Also see REPORT OF THE SCHEDULED AREAS AND SCHEDULED TRIBES COMMISSION, 1960-61, pp.195-205.

not need formal guarantees which are needed by various government and semi-government agencies. Formal knowledge of procedures is needed to get credit facilities from the cooperative banks. Tribals lack in this regard,<sup>16</sup> The co-operative credit societies established by various state governments are situated at far off places from tribals' habitat. A number of formalities, cumbersome procedures and documents are also required for loan clearance. Besides, the government sponsored credit societies advance loans for only productive purposes like improvement in cultivation, purchase of implements, soil conservation, etc. whereas the poor tribal often requires loans for consumption or conducting rituals or ceremonies.<sup>17</sup>

The moneylender speaks tribal's language and understands the debtor's need of money. He is part of traditional economy of the village and accepts the repayment of the loan in any form - in cash or in kind. But government agencies working for providing marketing and credit facility to the tribals do not really understand the poor tribals' small needs. Besides the functional aspect, the moneylender also exploits the situation leading tribals to bondedness

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16. N.Hasnain, op.cit, p.79.

17. Ibid, p.80.



and land alienation. The following consequences engulf different tribal peoples as a result of their indebtedness to the money lenders : (i) loss of freedom and the consequent utilization of their labour power by the creditor, (ii) alienation of land and its acquisition by the creditor, (iii) poverty of the tribals makes them sell their young women for prostitution. In term, this brings into the tribal community chronic venereal diseases.

The report of the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission and Planning Commission Report of the Study Team on Tribal Development Programmes reveal the following reasons for continuation of the tribal indebtedness, (i) The state governments have not made available the adequate use of protective provisions of the Fifth Schedule, (ii) The State governments could not implement the penal provisions in their existing legislation against evasion by moneylenders and (iii) Lack of will and commitment.<sup>18</sup>

The pernicious co-relation between money-lending and debt bondage is well-known and this problem has to be

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18. Ibid. pp. 80-81.

Also see Report of the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission, op.cit, pp.195-205.

countered effectively by a three-pronged approach of (i) covering uncovered tribal areas by co-operative and nationalised/commercial banking institutions (2) by making the laws on money-lending in the tribal areas more stringent with deterrent punishment where injustice to a tribal is involved and (3) by energising the administrative machinery at Block, Tehsil and other appropriate levels to bring to book culprits. It would be desirable to invest the project administrator of the ITDP with adequate administrative powers making them responsible for speedy and effective implementation of the laws enacted for the above purpose.<sup>19</sup>

#### EXPLOITATION OF AGRICULTURAL TENANTS

The Land Reforms Legislations in different States of the country have abolished tenancy under the occupancy raiyats. The recorded raiyats are not expected to sub-lease their land nor engage tenants/sub-tenants. Notwithstanding the provisions of the law, however, share cropping

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19. REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON DEVELOPMENT OF SCHEDULED TRIBES DURING SEVENTH FIVE-YEAR PLAN, Govt. of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi, Dec. 1984, pp.61-62.

is continuing in several tribal areas of the country. Universal bench-mark survey conducted in certain tribal areas provides the following picture on share-cropping,<sup>20</sup> which is presented in a tabular form. See table no. 4.

Table no.4  
Picture on S.T.Sharecropping

S. no.	Name of the State	Name of the Block	Total no. of S.T. Householder	no. of S.T. Householder being Share-croppers	%
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Bhadra-Chalam	4436	3518	79.30
		Ashwarpet	7471	5605	75.02
2.	Orissa	Tumudibandha	2800	1215	43.39
		Khairput	2802	123	3.23
		Kudmulguma	4660	46	0.98
3.	Rajasthan	Kotra	13605	877	6.44
		Talwara	13450	423	3.14

Source : Report of the working Group on Development of S.T.s During Seventh Five-Year Plan 1985-90, Govt. of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi, December 1984, p.67.

20. Ibid., p.67.

The above table shows that the percentage of tribal share-croppers in Bhadrachalam and Ashwarpet blocks of Andhra Pradesh as also Tumudibandha block of Orissa is alarming. When complete data collected are compiled, an entire picture is likely to emerge. There, however, appears to be no doubt that there is a justification for protecting the interest of the tribal share-croppers by way of conferring occupancy rights on them, if necessary by suitably amending the Land Reforms Legislation in the State. As the tribal people are not likely to come forward to apply for conferment of tenancy rights on their own, a social drive should be undertaken through the existing revenue and welfare field staff. That should be out of bureaucratic complication.

#### ~~✓~~ OCCUPATIONAL ASPECTS

A variety of occupations are followed by a tribe. The three fold classification of tribal zones is also strengthened by economic grading. In the north-east terrace agriculture of a more or less settled kind is the dominant mode of economic pursuit. In the middle zone shifting cultivation and in the south, food gathering are economic pursuits of the tribes. Shifting cultivation is also found to some extent in the north-eastern as well as the southern zones. There are also subsidiary occupations like hunting, fishing, basket-making and working as

agricultural and industrial labour in certain areas.<sup>21</sup>

Tribal economy is characterised by absence of any organised sector of labour. The tribal people are mostly engaged in agriculture, forestry and such other part-time labour. Very often they migrate to far off places in search of employment. Most of the times they suffer particularly from the mal-practices resorted by contractors in industrial areas.

According to N.K. Bose there has been a large measure of conversion to Christianity among some tribal people like the Khasis of Assam, or the Oraons and Mundas of Chota Nagpur. In consequence, they become free from the traditions of the caste system and have taken all kinds of occupations like teaching, medicine, nursing, etc. Their poorer compatriots have been more skilled in agriculture, carpentry, blacksmithy than their heathen relations. They often become detached from the rest of their own people, sometimes from the rest of the Indian people.<sup>22</sup>

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21. Majumdar & Madan, op.cit, p.196.

22. ✓ N.K. Bose, "Tribal Economy", in The Tribal People of India, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, New Delhi, 1973, pp.118-119.

Some tribes like Birhors or Makarakhiya Kulha of Chota Nagpur and Orissa are different from their Munda - speaking neighbours and they become specialized in the manufacture of ropes from certain jungle creepers. After coming into contact with their agricultural neighbours, they have become nomadic in their habits. The specialization of Birhore and their nomadism are an after-effect of contact with economically more advanced neighbours.<sup>23</sup>

Bihors and Kharias in Orissa and Chota Nagpur and also the Ho, the Munda, the Santal, the Bhumji and others have been converted into agriculturists, and they are like the Mahata or Kurmi or other agricultural castes living beside them. They have adopted a large number of Hindu beliefs and practices.<sup>24</sup>

Table 5.

Inter-Decennial Trends in Occupation

	percent					
	Share of total population		Share of S.C 's		share of S.T. s	
	1971	1981	1971	1981	1971	1981
Cultivators	43.4	41.5	27.87	28.17	57.60	54.43
Agricultural Labourers	28.7	25.2	51.75	48.22	33.00	32.67
Non-Agricultural Activities	27.9	33.3	20.38	23.61	9.40	12.90

Source: The Seventh Five Year Plan 1985-90, V. II, Govt. of India, Planning Commission, New Delhi, 1985, p.319.

23. Ibid, p.120.

24. Ibid., p.120.

The Table shows that for the Scheduled castes, there is a slight increase in the share of cultivators, while for the scheduled tribes there is a decline. Both the groups show a decline in the share of agricultural labourers. An increasing trend of non-agricultural activities is found among both. This indicates that the percentage of working population amongst Scheduled Tribes is more than the average for the country's total population.

EMPLOYMENT :

✓ Table 6

Employment Profile of S/Cs & S/Ts in Central Govt:

Group	Total number of employees	Scheduled castes	percent- age	Scheduled tribes	percent- age
1965					
Class I	19379	318	1.64	52	0.26
Class II	30621	864	2.82	103	0.34
Class III	1082278	96114	888	12390	1.14
Class IV (excluding sweepers)	1132517	201073	17.75	38,444	3.39
<u>Total</u>	<u>2264795</u>	<u>298369</u>	<u>13.17</u>	<u>50989</u>	<u>2.25</u>
Class I	52683	3536	6.71	741	1.41
Class II	62485	6351	10.16	915	1.46
Class III	2128650	310949	14.61	88,149	4.14
Class IV (excluding sweepers)	13,02,534	2,55,094	19.58	71,812	5.51
<u>Total</u>	<u>35,46,352</u> (57)	<u>5,75,930</u> (93)	<u>16.24</u>	<u>1,61,617</u> (217)	<u>4.56</u>

Figures in Parentheses are percentage increases over the period)

Source : Annual Report, 1984-85, Department of Personnel & Administrative Reforms, Government of India, New Delhi, p. 53.

The above table shows that over the period 1965-83, the employment of persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes went up by 93 percent and the employment of Scheduled Tribes increased by nearly 217 percent. The employment of Scheduled Castes in class I jobs went up by more than 7 times. The corresponding figures for increase for the Scheduled Tribe employees are by more than 14 times in class I jobs and by nearly nine times in the case of class II jobs. While these figures indicate that the progress has been made, it is an undeniable fact that the progress has not been fast enough and that neither of these two sections of the population are able to make full use of the reservation quotas.

Though there are intense industrial activity in the tribal belts, it is seen that tribal people have not been able to take much advantage of the emergent employment opportunities. The entire sociology of low absorption of tribals into different jobs needs to be carefully studied. One of the important reasons for the situation may be unpreparedness on their part to avail the new avenues and unpreparedness on the part of the administration to equip tribal people with necessary guidance, skills and training.



EDUCATION :

The economic development of the tribal people is closely related to their educational development. The programmes of economic development and the spread of education should go side by side if both are to succeed. With the adoption of the constitution, the promotion of education of Scheduled Tribes has become a special responsibility of the central as well as the state governments<sup>25</sup> (mentioned under Article 46). Really education is the key to development. It can broaden the world view of tribals, equipping them to meet the present day challenges. However, the spread of education is dependent upon several social and economic forces.

Ever since the plan era started, governmental efforts in the field of tribal education have been directed to remove educational disparities between the tribals and non-tribals. But the total picture of the spread of education among the tribals is not very encouraging. Before analysing the reasons, we may look into the growth of formal education among the tribals on the basis of Census data

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25/ S.N.Rath, "A Note on Tribal Education", in  
Vidyarthi, op.cit, 1981, p. 341.

given in the following table.

Table No. 7  
Literacy Rates of S.Ts and General Population

Census years	Total literacy percentage	S.T. Literacy percentage
1931	7.5	0.75
1961	28.29	8.54
1971	34.5	11.29
1981	36.2	16.35

Source : Census of 1931, 61, 71 and 81. on S.Ts

The above table reveals that between 1931-71, the disparity between the national literacy and ST literacy percentage continued to grow, while in the decade 1971-81 it has come down somewhat as compared to the gap in the decade 1961-71. Nevertheless, one can not fail to notice the painfully slow progress that tribal education has been making. This is also evident from the figures of enrolment of S.T. children.

Table no.8  
Enrolment of S.T. Children

	Classes (Number in Lakhs)		
	I - V	VI - VIII	IX - X
1955-56	10.45	1.24	0.54
1970-71	24.63	3.79	1.71
1980-81	46.60	7.42	2.66
1983-84 (Estimated)	54.00	10.00	3.86

Source : Report of the Working Group on Development of S.Ts during 7th Five-Year Plan, Govt. of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi, Dec. 84, p.145.

An important point is to see from the above table that there have been heavy drop-out rates particularly in the elementary stage. Since the dropout rate is alarmingly high in the elementary stage, it calls for massive corrective steps. Besides, Roy Burman mentions that some of the tribes which had shown decline in literacy rates during 1961-71, had also registered a rapid spread of higher education. For instance, while in case of the Bhumij of Bihar, the literacy rate declined from 11.81 per cent in 1961 to 10.36 per cent in 1971, the percentage of matriculates and above among the literates went up from 1.3 to 4.06.<sup>26</sup>

26. B.K.Roy Burman, "Issues in Tribal Development", Mainstream, Jan.5, 1985, p.12.

In the Five Year Plans special provisions were made for educational development of scheduled tribes. Direct educational incentives like free scholarships, stipends, hostel facilities, material aids in the form of stationery, books, uniforms, etc.<sup>27</sup> have been made. Still then the change in their literacy rate has not been satisfactory. The S.T. female literacy is also very low which would be clear from the following table No.7.

Table No.9  
Female Literacy Rates among S.Ts and the Rest  
of the population

Year	Rest of the population	S.Tribes
1961	16.59	3.16
1971	17.11	4.85
1981	29.51	8.04

Source : Planning Commission. The Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90), Govt. of India, New Delhi, Nov. 1985, p.319.

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27. REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON S.Ts DURING  
7th FIVE YEAR PLAN 1985-90, op.cit. p. 144.

The alarming condition of education among tribals in India can be analysed on the basis of social and economic factors. Educational development has been given top priority in the programmes of tribal development as education is considered to be important not only for social and psychological changes but also in influencing productivity and economic development. But education also plays a dysfunctional (negative) role in socio-economic development if the larger society is inegalitarian. Indeed, it can be argued that education actually acts as a hindrance in tribal development.

The education imparted to the tribals is largely irrelevant to their development. In many states, tribal children are taught from the same books which form the curriculum of non-tribal children of the urban and rural areas of the rest of the state. Sharma has rightly pointed out that the educational system based on urban middle class values has been imposed on the entire nation. The content of such text books has rarely any appeal to the tribal children who come from a different cultural background.<sup>28</sup>

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28. B.D.Sharma, "Planning for Educational Development in Tribal Areas," Occasional Papers on Tribal Development, Govt.of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, 1977.

Further, the kind of education which is given to the students prepares them for earning an income only after a long period of time. And even then, they are eligible for a narrow range of jobs only. (Education also creates a wide gulf between the educated tribals and their traditional way of life. Our educational system is overloaded with middle class norms and values such as individual merit, self-interest and abstract interests which cause cultural disintegration or maladjustment among the educated tribals. It goes against their ethics which lays emphasis on community life.<sup>29</sup>

Some economic factors are also responsible for lack of interest among the tribals in getting education. When they struggle for survival under a subsistence economy, they are unable to send their children to schools. Elwin clearly points out that for a tribal family, to send its grown-up girl or boy to school, is essentially a matter of economics; and entails dislocation in the traditional pattern of division of labour. Hence, many parents cannot just afford to send their children to school.<sup>30</sup>

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29. K.Choudhary, "Education No Real Boon To Tribal Youth", in Times of India, June 13, 1987.

30. Verrier, Elwin (ed.), : A New Deal for Tribal India. Govt. of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, 1963, p.84.

The poor economic condition of the tribal societies is a great hindrance to successful education. Almost all the tribes lack enough food to maintain the family for the whole year. Education, therefore, is a luxury to them which they can hardly afford. Each school-going child in a tribal family is an economic unit and contributes to the family income. If the child is taken away from his normal economic work to attend school, the family is deprived of the little income which he brings, instead, the parents have to feed the child out of their earnings which further reduces the economic stability of the family.<sup>31</sup> (The present educational system rests upon a long range planning.) So the parents have no patience to wait for a long period. If, from the very beginning, the education for them can be made productive, they can be easily motivated to allow their children to get education.

The Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission's Report<sup>32</sup> has mentioned that lack of suitable teachers

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31. L.R.N. Srivastava, "Education for the Tribes", in Vidyarthi, op.cit, 1968, pp.91-92.

32. REPORT OF THE SCHEDULED AREAS AND SCHEDULED TRIBES COMMISSION, 1960-61, p.216-234.

is one of the major reasons for the slow growth of education in tribal areas. It says that a teacher in the tribal areas must have a thorough knowledge of tribal life and culture. He must speak the tribal language. Only then can he be in a position to act as a friend, philosopher and guide to the tribal people. For that sake teacher from the tribal community itself or a separate cadre of teachers for tribals should be created to serve the educational needs of the tribal society. The problem of medium of instruction has been a major question. Most of the states impart education to tribal and non-tribals through the medium of the regional language, thus making education uninteresting to many of the tribal people. It also hurts tribal sentiments for his own language. Therefore, tribal language should be provided with scripts. Nature of habitat also causes slow growth of education. Most of the tribal villages are scattered. This entails long travels to attend schools. So tribals lose interest in attending the schools. To create tribal interest in schooling, schools in their locality should be founded.

The real problem is to look into the above discussed issues carefully and to create such socio-economic conditions that would be conducive to the students developing sufficient interest in their studies.



## COMMUNICATION

Tribals have, for centuries past, been isolated from the national mainstream. The main reason for this is lack of communication. Its importance lies in developing the tribal areas and to improve their economic, political, social and also cultural interactions with the wider areas of the country. At the same time it may be seen that due to spread of communication the entry of prospective exploiters and other anti-social elements from non-tribal areas exploit tribals in many ways for their vested interests. Therefore, the state will have to protect them from such exploitation. Moreover, the urgent needs of defence, industrialization, mining and development demand the spread of communication in tribal areas.

According to the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission,<sup>33</sup> the problem of communications in the tribal areas may be considered from the five aspects: (i) roads and other communications indispensable for national needs and defence; (ii) roads and other communications

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33. REPORT OF THE SCHEDULED AREAS AND SCHEDULED TRIBES COMMISSION, 1960-61, p.260-269.

for industrial development; (iii) roads and other communications necessary for administration; (iv) roads and other communications needed from the points of view of trade and commercial interests; and (v) roads and communications needed in the interests of the tribals.

In so far as the tribal people of India are concerned, roads become the most important means of communication. They need connection of their habitation with the forest, or the weekly market, hospital or the school for their children's education. It will be an added advantage to the tribals' allround development. Proper use of locally available materials, like lime and stone will open more avenues for fast expansion. If the road construction work is taken up in the off season, the tribals can get employment and earn some money to fulfil their needs. With good network of roads, their production of some good varieties of rice, food grains and fruits will reach the market and they will be fetching handsome returns. Otherwise, they will be exploited by the non-tribal trader.

Besides the road networks in tribal areas, Post and Telegraph services, Telephones and Air Communications are other sectors which would be a boon to the tribal villages in distress. U.N.Dhebar commission rightly

observed that development of communications will provide greater opportunities for the tribal to develop his national consciousness.<sup>34</sup>

#### SOCIO-POLITICAL ASPECTS OF THE ADIVASIS :

##### Jharkhand Movement :

The tribes of the Chotanagpur region have differentially reacted to the situation to search for their identity and demand political autonomy. They have been exploited by Bengali land owning Community, Muslim trading interests and other moneylending outsiders since colonial administration. Also spread of Christianity was a strong force in the region. The educated christian tribals were the products of missionary institutions. They fought for their rights and against exploitation through an organisation of the Chotanagpur Improvement Society. This society demanded tribals security and their identity in the changing political context. It sought to secure employment, reservation in the services and legal bodies. After 1937 election under the Government of India Act, 1935 the Adivasi Mahasabha was formed. The christians as well as non-christians were persuaded to join the forces. Other organisations in the region were merged in this. Bengali-Behari controversy

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34. Ibid.

Also see REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON DEVELOPMENT OF SCHEDULED TRIBES DURING 7th PLAN, op.cit, p.158-162.

and Muslim League politics also influenced its formation to save their interests. This Mahasabha demanded complete separation from Bihar remaining outside national mainstream and freedom movement. But this plan could not succeed due to the changing political situation in which the national congress became the dominant ruling group.<sup>35</sup>

The framing of the Indian Constitution envisaged the larger political and secular stance that language will determine the formation of a province. The formation of the Jharkhand Party then became a transition from ethnicity to regionalism. A few non-Behari money-lending community members (the dikus, alien) and some elements of Congress socialist party joined this party. This movement envisaged an enlarged tribal state in which the tribal tracts of Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh were to be included. The means adopted by the party to achieve its goal were constitutional. The first two general elections saw the Jharkhand party as a major party in the region.<sup>36</sup>

The growing conflict between the leaders (town-based non-agrarian) and the tribal masses saw the party's decline in the late 50. The split between christian tribals

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35. K.S.Singh, 'Tribal Autonomy Movements in Chotanagpur', in K.S.Singh (ed), 'Tribal Movements in India, V.II, Manohar Publications, New Delhi, 1980, pp. 1-5.

36. Ibid. 5-6.

and non-christian tribals is also a major factor. The government's development programmes on the region also weakened the move for a separate state. The political character of the Jharkhand movement became weak when the agrarian aspects came into prominence. The emphasis was shifted to tribal's conditions, the nature and consequences of exploitation rather than political autonomy. But the educated tribal students are at present demanding jobs for tribal youths in administration and industrial undertakings. They work as urban pressure groups. They have formed the Birsa Seva Dal. This has become an essentially urban movement.<sup>37</sup>

#### NORTH-EAST PROBLEM :

North East Frontier of India is an isolated region. Historically and geographically the North East Frontier of India has a distinct identity. In colonial period, following deliberate efforts by British government, this region remained cut off from the national mainstream. This gave the people of the region a distinct identity. Since most of the North East is inhabited by the Sino-Tibetan and Sino-Burman tribals, a sense of socio-cultural distinctiveness also emerged. After independence, following the partition

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37. Ibid. 6-30.

of the country, the North-east is connected to the main land by a thin tip of land. Geographical isolation enhanced a sense of separatedness. Geo-politically this area is very strategic. It is surrounded by China, Burma and Bangladesh. The geopolitical situation has helped the growth of secessionism among many tribes of this region. Secessionism has created a security problem in this area. The perception of separatedness is heightened by certain factors. Chiefly, these factors are racial differences of many tribes of this region, socio-cultural differences of tribals, religious differences (most tribals are Christian converts). The combination of historical, geographical, socio-cultural and racial factors has given to the North-East, a sense of uniqueness.<sup>38</sup>

#### NAGA NATIONAL MOVEMENT :

The Naga National Movement was first brought into prominence in 1946 with the formation of Naga National Council (NNC). The NNC brought the different Naga tribes into a single political organization. The NNC wanted self-

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38. For details, See Roy Burman, "Integrated area approach to the problems of the Hill Tribes of North-East India", in K.S. Singh (ed), Tribal situation in India, IIAS, Simla, 1986, p (72-97).

determination for the Nagas and thus demanded a separate nation. The sense of Naga separatedness was the product of both history and culture. The departure of the British created an apprehension in the minds of the Nagas about their status. The immediate response was the demand of political autonomy. Naga Nationalism has always surfaced in response to external threats. The realization among the different tribes of common origin, background, history, culture has given the Nagas the distinct identity of being a separate national group. The geo-political situation also helped in this. By using the geographical position, the Nagas succeeded in starting a secessionist movement. The NNC wanted complete autonomy from India. The government of India reacted in two ways, it tried to counter the demand and secondly, influence by geo-political situation that it offered an autonomous state within India to the Nagas. Political exigency compelled the NNC to come to terms of an autonomous Nagaland in 1962.<sup>39</sup>

From the above analysis, we find that in North-East areas geo-political and socio-cultural factors are responsible for the growth of secessionism to demand for a separate political autonomy. In central belt socio-political and

39. For Details, See  
A. Yonuo, The Rising Nagas, Vivek Pub. House,  
Delhi, 1971.

socio-cultural factors are responsible for the same. One point is very important to see that in both the areas socio-political and socio-cultural factors are responsible for tribal's search for their identity. In North-East, the external forces cause the growth of extremist elements to demand separate state from India, while in central and middle India tribals fight for a separate tribal autonomy within the framework of the Indian nation. Therefore now the role of the Indian government is to see the situation and accordingly take the action. But the cultural consolidation of tribal identities within the national mainstream should not be overlooked.

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## CHAPTER - III

### AGENCIES OF TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

Governmental agencies-constitutional provisions, administrative framework; commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, government schemes, special Multipurpose Tribal Development Blocks (SMPT), Tribal Development Blocks (T.D.B.), Sub-plans and Integrated Tribal Development Projects (ITDP). Voluntary agencies-objective of voluntary organizations, role of voluntary agencies, Christian missionaries, Adimjati Seva Mandal, Bharatiya Adimjati Sevak Sangh, Nagaland Gandhi Ashram, Ramakrishna Mission.

Our purpose in this chapter is to study the instruments and agencies which are working for development of the tribes in India.

#### GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES :

The advent of independence marked a plethora of governmental agencies and institutional arrangements in the area of tribal development. The object of the Indian Government was to level up the underdeveloped tribal folks and to bring them at par with the non-tribals with the help of special safeguards provided by the Constitution

of India. After scheduling the tribal groups (under Article 342), the Government has made several arrangements for their overall development.

#### CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS :

The Constitution of India provides an ample scope for a special treatment to this downtrodden sections of Indian community. Article 46 under the Directive Principles of State Policies in Part IV of the Constitution declares that "The State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation."<sup>1</sup>

Along with special care for the promotion of educational and economic interests of the Scheduled Tribes, the Constitution provides certain protective measures and safeguards for them and the successive Five Year Plans (along with special sub-plans) providing funds for their development.

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1. Ajit K. Danda, "Statutory Provisions Safeguarding Interests of Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes", in L.P.Vidyarthi (ed), op.cit, 1981, p. 19.

The protective safeguards constituted reservations for them in services, reservations in election to the Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha, removal of social disabilities and prohibition of exploitation. The developmental safeguards included administrative arrangements, administration and control of Scheduled Areas and Tribal Areas, control of the Union over the administration of Scheduled Areas and the welfare of Scheduled Tribes, ensuring smooth functioning in accordance with the constitutional provisions.<sup>2</sup>

Other articles empower the President to make arrangements for the implementation of the high ideals of Article 46 of the Constitution. Part X, Article 244 empowers him to declare any area, where there is a substantial population of tribal people, as a Scheduled Area under the Fifth Schedule or in Assam as a Tribal Area under the Sixth Schedule. Article 275 of the Constitution deals with grants from the union to certain states, and provides for promoting the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes and providing them with a better administration.<sup>3</sup> In accordance with

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2. REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES, 27th Report, Part 1, Government of India, 1979-81, pp.52-60.
  3. Allahabad Law Agency, The Constitution of India, Allahabad, 1977, p.87.

the provisions of the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution, the President issued order to notify Scheduled Areas in various States. The Amendment of 1976 gave additional powers to the President to increase the area of any scheduled area in a state after consultation with the Governor of that state; rescind in relation to any state and in consultation with the Governor of the state concerned make fresh orders redefining the areas which are to be Scheduled Areas. The Fifth Schedule also makes provision for establishment of Tribes Advisory Council, three-fourths of whose members belong to the tribal communities. The duty of the Council is to advise on matters pertaining to the welfare and advancement of the Scheduled Tribes in the State.<sup>4</sup>

In general practice, the Chief Minister of the State Concerned becomes the chairman of the council. The Dhebar Commission has supported this practice recommending that the chairman of a Tribes Advisory Council should be a person having influence beyond the immediate department concerned.

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4. Allahabad Law Agency, The Constitution of India,  
op.cit, p. 153.

Because it is expected to deal with problems that concern all departments.<sup>5</sup> The Sixth Schedule deals with the Administration of Tribal Areas in Assam, Meghalaya and Mizoram. This schedule provides for the administration of tribal areas concerned through the creation of the autonomous districts and autonomous regions with District Councils and Regional Councils, respectively. These Councils are primarily representative bodies and they have got the power of law-making in certain specified fields such as land allotment; use of forests and canal water; regulation of shifting cultivation; establishment of village or town committees and their powers; appointment or succession of chiefs; inheritance of property; marriage and other social customs. They can establish primary schools and raise funds by assessing and collecting land revenue and imposing taxes. They may issue licences on leases for the purpose of prospecting for, or extracting minerals. The District Councils can regulate money-lending and other trading activities by non-tribals. They can prohibit or restrict the application of Parliamentary or State laws to their areas.<sup>6</sup>

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5. U.N. DHEBAR COMMISSION REPORT, Part-11, 1960-61, Government of India, p. 9-11.

6. Majumdar and Madan, op.cit , p.279. Also see The Constitution of India, op.cit., pp.155-70.  
Danda, op.cit. p.23.

From the above provisions of the Sixth Schedule, a considerable degree of social, cultural and political autonomy is envisaged for the tribal areas mentioned. In accordance with this schedule, the Constitution requires the Council to maintain a regular account of revenue and expenditure. The Governor may at any time appoint a commission to report on the functioning of these councils. He is also empowered to annul or suspend the councils when their activities are likely to endanger the safety of India.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE FRAME WORK

There are mainly three levels of administrative arrangement for the tribal development. At the centre, the Ministry of Home Affairs was incharge of tribal welfare upto the creation of Department of Social Security in 1964. It was placed under the charge of the Minister of Law. But Home Ministry had control of service matters and the administration of Scheduled and Tribal Areas. Social Security Department was formed into Department of Social Welfare in 1966. Other Ministries, apart from the Ministry of Social Welfare and the Ministry of Home Affairs, are also concerned with the welfare of scheduled tribes in one way or the other. The Ministry of education, food, agriculture, community development, health and family welfare etc. have their separate schemes for the tribal areas and tribal community. The planning commission is

also associated with tribal affairs.<sup>7</sup>

At the state level, according to the Article 164 of the Constitution, there are full-fledged tribal welfare ministries headed by the ministers in the States of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa. This provision was made to ensure adequate attention towards the tribal people in areas where their population was large. The administrative patterns vary from state to state. Thus, there are separate Tribal and Harijan Welfare departments in Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal, Tribal Areas and Welfare of Backward classes Department in Assam, Tribal and Rural Welfare Department in Orissa and Welfare Department in Bihar. Besides, the Departments/Directorates of Social Welfare in most of the other States look after the administration of the tribal welfare programmes.<sup>8</sup>

Effective implementation of tribal welfare programmes is at the district level. The District Collector is the Chairman of ITDP level project formulation/implementation committee. Both officials and non-officials become its members. The District Magistrate, his subordinate staff and officers of various departments working in the district

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7. For details, See Report of the Commissioner for S/Cs & S/Ts. See 27th REPORT (1979-81), 25th (77-78), 24th (75-76), Government of India, New Delhi.

8. U. N. DHEBAR COMMISSION REPORT, 1960-61, Government of India

work towards the speedy and effective implementation of tribal welfare and development programmes.<sup>9</sup>

COMMISSIONER FOR S/Cs & S/Ts

For the proper evaluation of the functioning of constitutional provisions under Article 338 of the Constitution, the President can appoint a special officer with duties to investigate all matters relating to it and to report it to the President, which is to be laid before Parliament. It visualized a suitable machinery to enable the special officer to discharge his constitutional obligation. This resulted in the creation of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in November 1950. The office of the commissioner has a special significance in the scheme of tribal welfare. It is also a link between the Constitution on the one hand and the union Government and the State Government on the other. It is the medium through which the Union Government and Parliament are kept informed of the progress in the implementation of the safeguards for the Scheduled Tribes and of schemes for their welfare.<sup>10</sup>

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9. REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON DEVELOPMENT OF S.T. During 7th Plan, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi, Dec. 1984, p.77, Also see N.Hasnain, op.cit, p.186.
10. As pointed out by Dhebar Commission, cited in Hasnain Nadeem. op.cit.. p.185.



## GOVERNMENT SCHEMES

The Government of India initiated the National Extension Schemes (NES ) Blocks in 1951 with the intention of intensifying block level development activities to raise the general standard of living of the weaker sections. In this scheme greater emphasis was laid on rapid improvement in the economic and social standards of the tribal people. Later it was found that advantage of the community development programme was acquired by the non-tribals living in the tribal areas who had more contact with concerned officials.<sup>11</sup>

### SPECIAL MULTI-PURPOSE TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT BLOCKS

A systematic effort for the development of tribal areas was initiated in 1955 by the introduction of Special Multi-purpose Tribal Development Blocks (SMPT). These blocks were jointly sponsored by the Ministries of Home Affairs and Community Development. The State governments were given charge of implementation of this programme. These blocks differed basically from the normal blocks as follows:<sup>12</sup>

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11. B.K.Roy Burman, 'Issues in Tribal Development - 1', Mainstream, Jan. 5, 1985, p.14.
  12. L.M.Prasad, "A Survey of Administration in Tribal Areas", in L.P. Vidyarthi, op.cit., 1981, p.225.

- (i) Development programmes to be implemented were more intensive in character.
- (ii) The population and area coverage was to be much less than normal blocks.
- (iii) People's contribution had to be kept to the minimum and limited only to supply of the unskilled labour at a lower rate.
- (iv) Loan funds were to be diverted as subsidies.
- (v) Personnel appointed for these had to be suitably trained.<sup>13</sup>

Various centrally-sponsored as well as state-sponsored schemes were undertaken under these SMPT Blocks. In case of centrally-sponsored schemes states get cent per cent central assistance and for those in the state plan, central assistance is available as block grants and loans.<sup>14</sup> The special Multi-purpose Tribal Block was converted into Tribal Development Block as to relate the programme and the way of doing things to the tribal background. Agriculture and allied subjects, like irrigation and soil conservation had to <sup>be</sup> given top priority.

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13. Ibid.

14. N.Hasnain, op.cit, p.171.

TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT BLOCKS :

During the third Five Year Plan (1961-66), Tribal Development Blocks were originated on the general pattern of Community Development Blocks, but more intensive in character, aiming at rapid improvement in socio-economic standard of the tribals.<sup>15</sup>

The priorities were made for economic uplift, education and health, housing and communication. The guidelines prescribed that 60% of funds should be earmarked for economic development, 25% for communications and 15% for social services. High priority, assigned to communications programme, was considered for the difficult terrain and inaccessibility of tribal areas. An assessment of the programme made by the Vidyarthi Task Force indicated that it had fallen short of expectation though it brought in a change in outlook of tribals, particularly in the fields of education and agriculture. The main reason of the shortcoming of the programme was the relatively small size of the tribal Blocks which cannot accommodate schemes like soil conservation, major and medium irrigation, secondary and technical education.<sup>16</sup>

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15. L.M.Prasad, op.cit., p.226.

16. Bhupinder Singh, "Tribal Development : Strategy and Approach", in Vidyarthi, op.cit., p.129.

Shilu Ao Study Team also observed the main drawbacks of T.D.B. are : (i) The Tribal Development Blocks failed to get any significant support from the general Development programmes including the C.D. programmes. (ii) The schemes formulated for these Blocks were not adopted to the felt needs of the specific areas. (iii) The benefits had mostly accrued to the more advanced among the tribals.<sup>17</sup>

#### SUB-PLANS AND INTEGRATED TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS:

The entire issue of Tribal Development was critically reviewed on the eve of the 5th Five Year Plan and then the sub-plan approach was evolved. The sub-plan is not a scheme, it represents a new approach.<sup>18</sup> The basic approach was to identify areas of tribal concentration including Scheduled Areas, contiguous T.D. Blocks and other blocks/areas having 50 per cent of tribal concentration. All such blocks/areas were to be prepared under a separate sub-plan under the overall State Plan. However, States and Union Territories having predominant tribal population like Nagaland, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Lakshadweep were not prepared under a separate sub-plans. Because the entire State plan in these cases was basically for the tribal welfare.<sup>19</sup>

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17. K.K.Srivastava, 'Planning for Tribal Development' in L.P. Vidyarthi, op.cit, p.149.

18. L.M.Prasad, op.cit., p.229.

19. K.K.Srivastava, op.cit., pp. 150-51.

Planning Commission issued the following guidelines to the States for preparation of the Tribal sub-plans. The long-term objectives are : (a) narrowing the gap between the levels of development of tribals and other areas; (b) improving their quality of life. The immediate objectives were : (a) elimination of exploitation in all forms; (b) speeding up the processes for social and economic development; (c) building up inner strength of the people, and (d) improving their organisational capabilities.<sup>20</sup> In relation to the developmental programmes, the tribal sub-plans represent the totality of public sector efforts in that area. The resources comprise the following sources : (a) State Plan outlays; (b) Sectoral outlay in the central ministries; (c) Special central Assistance; and Institutional Finance.<sup>21</sup> The programmes undertaken under the Sub-plan include agriculture and allied sectors, irrigation, marketing, co-operation, education, health and other related programmes . The Unit for planning and implementation in the tribal sub-plan has been taken as an ITDP. One of the distinguished features of the sub-plan is that the programmes have to be prepared with reference to the specific needs of each area. A flexible

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20. Ibid.

21. L.M. Prasad, op.cit., p.230.

framework was, therefore, adopted. The entire sub-plan was divided into 180 ITDPs during the Fifth Plan.<sup>22</sup>

Under this new approach, Planning in the tribal areas is envisaged at three levels. The State tribal sub-plan is expected to provide a broad policy frame at the macrolevel covering the total administrative efforts in these areas. The block, working as smaller unit is taken as the building blocks for a meso-level structure which, in turn, serves as the primary unit for planning and implementation.<sup>23</sup>

Hence, it was envisaged that an ITDP should comprise a group of blocks taking due note of the natural resources, physical features, level of development of tribal communities living in the area and other socio-economic conditions having relevance for planning functions at the meso-level.<sup>24</sup> Some of the projects are co-terminus with the district in case of small districts. In most cases, the projects are co-terminus with sub-divisions or tehsils.<sup>25</sup> In some cases, the

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22. REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES, 25th REPORT, 1977-78, op.cit, p.525.

23. B.D.Sharma, Planning for Tribal Development(New Delhi Prachi Prakashan,1984), p.217.

24. Ibid.

25. B.D.Sharma, "Administration for Tribal Development," IJPA, vol. 23, no. 3, 1977, p.534.

project covers only one block or an area smaller than a block. Further, an ITDP with more than one block is described as a meso project and those having only one block and some portions of different blocks are treated as micro projects. In brief, ITDPs have been established with due consideration of geography and the existing administrative units with suitable adjustment, wherever necessary and deemed feasible. Thus, during the Fifth Plan, Integrated Area Development Approach was adopted after delineating areas of tribal concentration at the levels of Blocks and Districts particularly in the States and UTs having substantial tribal population. In case of the States and UTs having dispersed tribal population, Modified Area Development Approach (MADA) was adopted for pockets of tribal concentration below the Block level. Besides there were special programmes in respect of the primitive tribes.<sup>26</sup>

In order to ensure effective implementation of the Tribal sub-plan till the recent time, 184 ITDPs, 277 MADA pockets, 73 micro Projects for Primitive tribal groups and 32 clusters have been established or identified in the country.<sup>27</sup> The project authority, namely Integrated

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26. Roy Burman, B.K., "Issues in Tribal Development", Mainstream, 5 January 1985, p.14.

27. Times of India "Tribal Development", 2 October, 1987.

Tribal Development Agency has been constituted for each ITDP with the District Collector as its chairman, the district heads of departments as members and the project Administrator as the Member-Secretary. This authority brings in an element of Collective leadership. The agency becomes responsible for allround development of the area.<sup>28</sup> Thus various efforts have been made during the plan periods for tribal development by the government. The statement below will show investments in the Tribal areas from First to the Sixth plan.

Table No.10

The Statement of investments in Tribal Areas from the First to the Sixth Plan.

Plan	Total plan outlay	(Rupees in Crores)	
		Tribal Development programme	percentage
First Plan*	1960	19.93	1.0
Second Plan	4672	42.92	0.9
Third Plan *	8577	50.53	0.6
Annual Plans*(1966-67)	6756	32.32	0.6
Fourth Plan	15902	75.00	0.5
Fifth plan(1974-79)	39322	1102.00	3.01
Sixth plan (198 -84)	97500**	5535.00£	over 5%

\* Expenditure

£ Includes institutional finance

\*\* Actual sixth plan outlay is likely to be more.

Source: REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON DEVELOPMENT OF S.T. & DURING 7th FIVE YEAR PLAN (1985-90), Govt. of India, New Delhi, Dec.1984. p.2.

28. REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON DEVELOPMENT OF S.T. DURING 7th Five year plan, 1985-90, Dec.1984, p.28-35.



## VOLUNTARY AGENCIES :

The Scheduled Tribes are at the lowest strata of the Indian society. For generations, most of these communities were neglected by the rest of the nation. Since independence, development of tribes has occupied the attention of the central and state governments in India. Even prior to independence, the miserable plight of the tribal communities could draw the attention of many individuals and organizations to render valuable services to their cause. The non-governmental organisations represent a force beyond the government and business. They represent an independent, autonomous and not profit-seeking organisations which work on social and developmental problems of the country. They also acquire a sense of commitment and concern that the profit-seeking business sector does not much care for.

## OBJECTIVES OF VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

What the nature of voluntary agencies may be, they play a key role in the upliftment of the weaker sections of the society. The objectives of voluntary organizations may be set as follows : (i) to create an awareness about participating in socio-economic development, (ii) to create an able and efficient local

leadership, (iii) to assist the planned efforts to create socio-economic infrastructural facilities, (iv) to facilitate the process of expanding employment opportunities, (v) to induce appropriate persons to set up small scale productions, and (vi) to induce the tribals to give up the pre-agricultural technology and to seek more and more education.<sup>29</sup>

#### ROLE OF VOLUNTARY AGENCIES :

Democracy allows scope for individual groups to undertake action in a national society, independent of the state. It leads to voluntary action. "Private action, that is to say, action not under the direction of any authority wielding power of the state, therefore, is called voluntary action."<sup>30</sup> Lord Beveridge says, "A voluntary organisation properly speaking, is an organisation which, whether its workers are paid or unpaid, is initiated and governed by its own members without external control."<sup>31</sup> Marry Morris says : "To lead a full life, most people need more than they can find in their work or home. They need to live as members

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29. O.D.Heggade, "Role of VSOs in Tribal Development", Kurukshetra, vol. xxx, no.13, 1 April 1982, pp.12-15.

30. V.M.Kulkarni, Voluntary Action in a Developing Society (New Delhi: IIPA, 1969), p.4.

31. Ibid.

of groups doing things for themselves and their fellow members or for the benefit of others outside the group.

The urge to act in groups is fundamental to man."<sup>32</sup>

Thus, voluntary action is a form of organising activities supporting, strengthening and helping to develop work to meet all types of legitimate needs of individuals and groups in a society. The voluntary agencies have the potential of being more effective agents of development than government agencies, at least among the poor in three respects :

- (i) their workers can be more sincerely devoted to the task of reducing the sufferings of the poor than government staff;
- (ii) they can have a better rapport with the rural poor than government employees; and
- (iii) since they are not bound by rigid bureaucratic rules and procedures, they can operate with greater flexibility, they can readjust their activities quickly and continuously as they learn from experience.<sup>33</sup>

In this context, L.M.Prasad adds two more points :

- (i) voluntary agencies' efforts are more economical than

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32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

the government departments, and (ii) they can motivate more public participation in development efforts than the government departments.<sup>34</sup> Voluntarism is the fundamental impulse of change in Indian society. It has brought about the change from imperial rule to political independence. Both the statist and voluntarist populist programmes for development and nation-building emerged during the freedom movement.<sup>35</sup> However, even before the freedom struggle a few voluntary organisations were active in the sphere of tribal welfare. Voluntary organisations continued to play a significant role in the field of rural development and nation-building. Most of the efforts for rural development were initiated by great individuals and organisations including missionaries and other religious bodies. These organisations are at present performing a key role in the field of development. Until the time that a genuinely democratic machinery of governance comes into being, there will remain a need for organisations to perform the mediating role between the state and the people.<sup>36</sup>

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34. L.M.Prasad "Voluntary Agencies for Development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes - Their Role and Function", IJPA, July-September 1987, vol. xxxiii, no. 3, pp. 588-612.

35. K. Saint, "The State, Voluntary Bodies and People's Institutions in Rural Development", Voluntary Action, Avard, vol. xxi, no. 3, March 1979, pp. 22-26.

36. Ibid.

As early as 1871 Bhil Seva Mandal was formed in Gujarat. At that time, A.V.Thakkar was the moving spirit behind voluntary organisations committed for tribal development. By the time India got independence he could establish more than 20 voluntary institutions in different parts of the country. Some other leaders in the Congress were also involved in tribal development activities. Dr. Rajendra Prasad's Bharatiya Adjjati Seva Sangh helped a lot in shaping the tribal policy at the stage of preparation of the constitution.<sup>37</sup> At present we find different voluntary organisations. Most of these agencies are working in various fields - education, public health and cultural activities. The government provides them financial assistance to enable and expand their activities. The importance of enlisting the support of non-official agencies in promoting welfare of the tribal communities has been recognised and the individuals involved, are often consulted in the formulation and implementation of tribal development programmes. There are also some shortfalls in the working of voluntary agencies. There are, on the one hand, large voluntary agencies having large establishments with their own

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37. Nadeem Hasnain, op.cit., p.206.

headquarters, branches and bureaucracy. Many schemes which are managed by these voluntary agencies do not really benefit the poor. ✓ Mismanagement and bureaucratic delays are mostly responsible for this failure to reach people.<sup>38</sup> With a mission to serve the weaker sections of the society, some other organisations were established by some individuals mostly in late 60s and 70s. Such organisations irrespective of their size are found working satisfactorily. Of course, these organisations often fail to play the expected role and usually their competence is doubted by the official agencies. The emergence of fake and corrupt voluntary organisations has aggravated the situation.

Regarding the role and nature of voluntary organisations, two different views appear. Some are happy with the existence of such organisations and plead for their increasing role. According to them, these organisations should be given ample scope to serve the people, as the government agencies, crippled with bureaucratic complication and official rigidity, have failed to work satisfactorily. On the other hand, voluntary organisations which came out of the zest of some individuals to serve the people can do well with all flexibility and dedication.

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38. R.Kothari, "Role of Voluntary Organizations" in Jose Kannaikel, ed., Seventh Plan and Development of Weaker Sections (New Delhi : ISI, 1985), p.146.

Others hold that it is undesirable to give so much importance and authority to voluntary agencies as there is possibility of institutionalization of this opportunity.

In this context, the suggestion may be that the voluntary organisations should be given ample opportunity along with work in collaboration and co-operation with the government agencies and should be subject to strict government scrutiny and monitoring. According to Dhebar Commission,<sup>39</sup> it is necessary in any democratic framework that a measure of constructive activities of the nation should be done under non-official auspices.

Kothari<sup>40</sup> says that with the decline of the state as a liberating force, the decay in the party system, the corrupts and commercialization of the public and the police, the whole world looks like crumbling. It is the voluntary section of the struggle oriented groups of the weaker section that shows some sight of hope.

He strongly supports the idea of politicization of voluntary organisations. Other scholars opine that these agencies should be non-sectarian in principle and actions and social workers should be above party politics.<sup>41</sup>

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39. REPORT OF THE SCHEDULED AREAS AND SCHEDULED TRIBES COMMISSION (New Delhi: Govt. of India Press, 1961), p.307.

40. Rajni Kothari, op.cit., p.148.

41. Gunada Majumdar, "National Development and Voluntary Agencies", Voluntary Action, AVARD, vol. xviii., no. 384, March-April, 1976, p.53.

## CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES

The Christian missionaries of various denominations would claim to be the oldest among the various agencies responsible for the development of tribals. They have been active in almost all parts of tribal India. The old Christian of Malabar Coast trace their conversion to Apostle-Thomas as early as first century A.D. Its real expansion began in South India with the arrival of St. Francis Xavier in 1541. In Chotanagpur, Lutheran Mission started its activities as early as 1845 under the guidance of Father Gossner. They were exclusively interested in preaching of the Gospel and at least their early history in Chotanagpur comprises primarily of evangelistic campaign.<sup>42</sup>

The Catholic Mission of Chotanagpur began about 1885-86 by Rev. C. Lievens who is said to have been pained to discover that the poor aboriginal was being exploited by Rajas and Zamindars, while they were not in a position to seek justice owing to their all round backwardness.

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42. C.H. Swavelly, "The History of Lutheran Mission in India" ed., The Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Church in India, 1952, p.50, cited in L.P. Vidyarthi, op.cit., 1968, p.125.



Pinto<sup>43</sup> comments that a ray of hope was shown in the lives of those aboriginals only when Dr. Lievens took up their cause being filled with the charity of Christ and a true love of justice. Since then, the missionaries have been active in Tribal India. They have also been primarily keen in evangelisation. Still, the welfare works - educational, economic, hygienic and social - called work of mercy invariably followed. The missionaries also realised the importance of understanding tribal culture and their language in order to communicate with them effectively in carrying out both the types of work - spiritual and material. That led them to write several original books on tribal language and culture.

Elwin comments that the missionaries are anxious to see the primitive civilized, their inferior social customs and ideas eliminated, and their identity assimilated into the Christian Church.<sup>44</sup> The above analysis reveals their feelings of cultural and religious superiority. By way of conversion and assimilation, they are responsible for

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43. C.B.Pinto, The Church and Social Welfare in Truth Shall Prevail (Bombay : Catholic Association of Bombay) cited in Vidyarthi, 1968, p.125.

44. V.Elwin, "Do We Really want to Keep them in ZOO" in The Adivasi (Delhi : Director, Publications Division) in Vidyarthi, 1968, ibid.

disturbing their cultural integration and inculcating feelings of inferiority among the aboriginals. But, it is true that after the entry of the missionaries into the isolated and inaccessible tribal areas in the remote hills, a cultural contact between the primitive people and the plainsmen could be established and the government started paying some attention to these tribals. Missionaries, after coming to this country, started evangelize the people specially that of the lower range, but their work in the field of conversion remained localized.<sup>45</sup> They faced stiff opposition from a formidable section of society. Even their welfare activities were looked with fear and suspicion by the Hindus. Soon, the missionaries realized that the untouchables and aboriginals could provide a better field for their philanthropic activities. They anticipated less or no opposition from the caste Hindus who were not in a position to accept anything from outside and who regarded the tribals as outside the pale of Hinduism, Panikar<sup>46</sup> holds that when their failure with

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45. Sahay, K.N., "Christianity as an Agency of Tribal Welfare in India", in Vidyarthi, ed., Applied Anthropology in India (Allahabad : Kitab Mahal, 1984) pp.289-319.

46. Panikar, cited in K.N.Sahay, op.cit., p.291.

the higher classes of the people became more and more evident, they diverted their activities to the conversion of these low communities of the Indian population.

Whatever may be the motive behind proselytization of the Indian tribals, the welfare activities of the missionaries have gone a long way in advancing and educating the mountain and forest dwellers or one-time forgotten people. The intensity of their voluntary services can be traced out in the tribal belts of Assam, Orissa, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. Various welfare schemes such as opening of schools, dispensaries, hospitals, orphanages, vocational centres and other material comforts to the people are being undertaken by the Christian missionaries for improving their social and economic conditions. Sahay holds that such welfare activities, popularly known as work of mercy are considered as inseparable part of the evangelization and they must be carried together even if this approach has attracted criticism from different sections of the non-Christians.<sup>47</sup>

Missionaries' activities have been a subject of

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47. K.N. Sahay, op.cit., p.315.

both criticism and admiration. It has created a strong sense of dissatisfaction among some sections of non-Christians. That is why Niyogi Committee was set up by the Madhya Pradesh Government in 1954 to investigate the allegation that Christian missionaries convert the tribals either forcibly or through fraud and temptations of monetary and other gain. Srinivas<sup>48</sup> has also stated that the opening of schools, hospitals and other welfare agencies by the missionaries in the areas where Harijans and other tribals live, appear to the Hindus as only baits in the trap of conversion. The linking up of humanitarianism with proselytization has made the former suspect. Looking into the above analysis on missionaries' activities, it may be suggested that in order to make their developmental activities effective in both spiritual and material spheres, they should carry on their welfare services and religious propagation separately. There is nothing wrong in conversion if it happens out of strong will of the tribals to embrace a new faith. Besides christian missionaries, there are many other voluntary organisations working for tribals cause.

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48. M.N.Srinivas, Caste in Modern India and Other Essays (Bombay Asia Publishing House, 1962), p.107.

ADIMJATI SEVA MANDAL :

A Seva Kendra was started in the isolated tribal sub-divisional town of Gumla of Ranchi district as early as in 1940. Mahatma Gandhi was inspiring leader of the Kendra. Initially, the running of the night school and the production of Khadi were met by the Kendra. The colonial government imprisoned the freedom fighters who were Kendra's workers till 1945. Then again Rajendra Babu and Narayanjee established a new centre in the shape of an ashram at village Phori about 13 miles away from Gumla. Besides Khadi production, the distribution of medicines to the patients, village cleanliness and training programmes were expanded activities of the ashram. With the expansion of the programme, the Seva Kendra was renamed as Adimjati Seva Mandal in 1946. The Mandal spread its programmes of tribal welfare in the different parts of tribal belts of Chotanagpur. The Mandal formulated two categories of programmes : first to implement plan on tribal education and second to encourage the scheme of khadi production, cottage industries, distribution of Ayurvedic medicines and to form the Gram Panchayat and Co-operative Societies. The tribal boys and girls hailing from the pre-literate families needed additional incentive for their education. Residential schools and hostels for them were established

by the Mandal. Under the influence of Gandhian economy, the Mandal established Khadi centres, centres for paddy-husking and oil pressing, bee-keeping, distribution of Ayurvedic medicines and carried on crusade against alcoholism. Thus, the Mandal has functioned not only as a servicing agency for ameliorating social and economic conditions of the tribals but has also improved the general quality of life.<sup>49</sup>

#### BHARATIYA ADIMJATI SEVAK SANGH :

A federation of non-official agencies for doing tribal welfare work in different parts of the country was called Bharatiya Adim Jati Sevak Sangh. It was started in 1948 under the presidency of Dr. Rajendra Prasad. Their organisations began to publish news-letters, magazines, pamphlets and books dealing with the tribal people, their problems and the welfare activities among them. In the administrative committees and conferences on tribal problems the social welfare workers acted as experts. They also represented government on national and international conferences on tribal problems.<sup>50</sup> The Bharatiya Adimjati Sevak Sangh undertakes works for the welfare of Scheduled Tribes

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49. L.P.Vidyarthi, "A Voluntary Organization in the Service of the Tribal Weak : A Case Study", in S.K.Sharma, ed., Dynamics of Development : An International Perspective, vol.2, 1978, pp.651-60.

50. Vidyarthi, op.cit., 1968, pp.124-5.

through its Central Office in New Delhi as well as through its affiliated branches, in various states.<sup>51</sup> During 1980-81, the Sangh continued their schemes of Training Centre at Rupa, Arunachal Pradesh. To cultivate the sentiments of national and emotional integration amongst the local tribals through various welfare schemes, concentrated efforts were made. At Jhalod (Gujarat) the Sangh is running Gujarat Tribal Women's Training Centre to train women workers to undertake and implement child welfare programmes and to do extensive work among rural and tribal women. At Srikakulam (Andhra Pradesh), the Sangh is maintaining a Tribal Kanya Ashram School. The girls from Srikakulam district and its interior areas come there for studies up to college stage.<sup>52</sup>

#### NAGALAND GANDHI ASHRAM

This Ashram is situated in Chuchugimlong (Nagaland) and established in 1955. Its first activity provided a small medical aid centre and in 1977, a multi-purpose medical relief camp was organized. In October 1979, it started a Health Centre. Sri Watwar Thakkar, the secretary of the Ashram and his team of dedicated workers have done

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51. L.M.Prasad, op.cit, p.602-603.

52. REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER OF S/Cs and S/Ts, 26th Report, Part-1, 1978-79, pp.199-200.

excellent work for the upliftment of rural inhabitants of Nagaland and Chuginlong in particular.<sup>53</sup>

#### RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

Taking the cue from Sri Ramakrishna's message "To serve Jiva is to serve Shiva", Swami Vivekananda, after his return from the West, formed an association - Ramakrishna Mission - which is engaged in worship of God in man through various activities - relief and rehabilitation, medical services, educational work, work in rural and tribal areas, etc. Ramakrishna Mission Ashram, Puri, is conducting a students' Home for the students belonging to Scheduled Castes/Tribes. It provides type-writing training under the guidance of a part-time instructor. Special coaching is also given to the students regularly with the help of the teachers appointed for the purpose. In addition, two other projects of Diary and Bakery were also taken up. The diary farm maintained by the Ashram provided practical demonstration in cattle rearing to the students and also provided milk to inmates. The Bakery imparted students training in making biscuits etc.<sup>54</sup>

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53. Ibid. p.199.

54. Ibid.



The Ramakrishna Mission Ashram, Ranchi is running Divyayan (meaning the Divine way) which was started in 1969 with three-fold objectives: economic, social and spiritual. Divyayan concept is one of total approach for the rehabilitation of man and the endeavour is to work at the grass roots level. With a humble beginning, it has now grown into a fullfledged training institute with a Poultry, a dairy, a 3-storeyed hostel, a workshop with modern equipment and machinery with a separate carpentry section, a mobile audio-visual unit with film projects, slide projectors, films, slides, VCR, TV etc. and demonstration farms at the centre; seed multiplication, research, social forestry, etc. Most of beneficiaries belong to backward communities of Chotanagpur. Impressed with the success of achieved by Divyayan in imparting skill oriented training to the grass roots level farmers, Indian Council of Agricultural Research has recognized it as a Krishi Vigyan Kendra since 1977.<sup>55</sup>

Ramakrishna Mission Ashram, Cherrapunji, was assisted by the Government of India for maintenance of technical, middle, primary and J.B. schools for uplift of the tribals living in the remote areas of Meghalaya. Under the Dairy and Poultry Farming Scheme, the Ashram is imparting training in modern dairy and poultry farming to the tribal youth.

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55. Ibid. p.200.

It also enables inmates of Cherra and Shohbar Students' Hostels to get fresh milk and eggs which are very difficult to get from the local market.<sup>56</sup>

Thus, these institutions have been directing their energies towards the economic progress and educational development of the tribes. The development of the tribal communities in India socially, economically, culturally and educationally is the main concern of the different voluntary agencies working for their cause. Whereas the administrative system in a highly responsible and responsive democratic government is impersonal in character by its very nature, the voluntary agencies provide the personal touch with the people in need and through this personal touch these utilize the latent energies of the masses into fruitful channels of their development.

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56. Ibid. In this section, data have been collected from different sections of 26th and 27th REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER OF THE SCs and STs.

## CHAPTER IV

### AN APPRAISAL

Tribals constitute around 7% of India's total population. Majority of them live in North-Eastern states and central parts of India. About 80 per cent of them live in remote forest and hill tracts. Some of them are scattered in the South. Tribal communities in India, generally, are simple in their socio-cultural life. They also enjoy a more or less self-sufficient economy. They have been geographically and economically located on the vast agricultural, rural communities of India. The tribal people of India are an integral part of Indian society enjoying complete autonomy in socio-economic spheres.

With the advent of British rule, they found themselves exposed to a plethora of adverse situations. With the introduction of outside forces such as money-lenders, traders, forest contractors and petty government officials, the tribals experienced acute problems of exploitation and helplessness. These factors ultimately led to turbulence and turmoil resulting in a series of disturbances and unrest among tribal groups. The British government followed two extreme policies - total isolation or total assimilation. Both policies have their short comings and after independence

the policy of integration was found most suitable.

While dealing with some aspects of tribal development we found multi-fold tribal problems such as indebtedness, unorganised nature of labour (See table 5) low employment profile (see table 6), low rate of literacy (see table 7), heavy drop-out rates particularly in the elementary stage (see table 8) and communication. Along with discussing tribal problems socio-economic factors responsible for the same have been analysed. But it is very much pertinent to highlight the main issues in this context. [With the introduction of British policy of law and revenue, ownership right, the tribals lost their communal ownership over land and forests. As a result outsiders - money-lenders and contractors settled in tribal areas and exploited them for their own benefits. Christian Missionaries of various denominations were destroying their traditional ways of life. In order to save tribals from economic exploitation and cultural destruction, Elwin had advocated a policy of temporary isolation for tribals in the North-east.

Assimilationists like Gaurye and Thakkar pleaded for the policy of assimilation that aborigines should form part of the civilized communities of our country to share with the advance communities the equal benefits of country's social and political life. Other scholars like Nehru

apprehended that assimilation of tribals with their neighbouring non-tribal cultures would cause the loss of their cultural identity and the aborigines of this country would develop inferior complex. That would stand in the way of authentic nationhood. That's why after independence, these two policies - isolation and assimilation have been dropped and the policy of integration has been adopted. The objective of integration of the tribes with the rest of the society was related to the equalisation of opportunities for development.

The national effort for the development of the Scheduled Tribes and the Tribal Areas has two prominent components, namely, protection and development. The constitution of India has provided different protective and developmental safeguards. For tribal administration there is a vast administrative arrangements that the Union Ministry of Home Affairs is responsible for policy formulation and coordination of all tribal development programmes. Besides, other central Ministries such as Rural development, Education, social welfare, Health and Family Welfare are also participating in tribal development and administration. Various efforts have been made during the plan periods for tribal development. Increase in allocation of funds for tribal developmental programmes has been made in successive Five Year Plans (see table no.10). The main thrust of the programmes was

in agriculture, irrigation, animal husbandry, co-operatives, health and education. Besides general developmental programmes, special funds are made available for tribals. Different schemes like S.M.P.T. Block, T.D.B. and now I.T.D.P. have been introduced to develop tribal people in India.

Apart from all these governmental efforts, we still face the problem of under-development of our tribals as acute if not worse form than ever. The reason can be attributed to several causes. But we should see wherein lies remedy. Before giving any suggestions it would be better to see the conditions of tribals from this study analysis. According to the table no.4, we find that 79.3% of S.T.s are Sharecroppers as compared to total no. of S.T. Householders in Bhadrachalam Block of A.P. and also 75.02% in Ashwarpeet Block. In Orissa we find 43.39% of S.T. population in Tumudibindha Block are Sharecroppers. For this alarming condition the immediate concern of the government to confer occupancy rights on the tribals without any bureaucratic complication is well suggested. For this purpose, government official such as revenue staff should accelerate the process. Voluntary agencies should educate such victims to demand for their rights of ownership.

In area of education (see table no.7) we find slow rate of literacy such as 0.75% in 1931, 8.54 in 1961, 11.29 in 1971 and 16.35 in 1981, while general literacy rate

follows 7.5 in 1931, 28.29 in 1961, 34.5 in 1971 and 36.2 in 1981. This shows the painful slow progress of tribal education. From the table no.8 and 9 we find that there has been heavy drop outs in elementary stage and also S.T. female literacy is very low as compared to the rest of the population, although free scholarships, stipends, hostel facilities and also some material aids are given by the government. The reasons for the above conditions have been analysed. That, are mainly imposition of middle class values on tribal education, lack of interest due to poor economic condition, individualistic merit system hindering tribal communal way of life, text book (for tribals) based on non-tribal languages and also long range planning of educational system or not immediate service-orientation etc.

For remedy, it is suggested that text book for tribals should be made according to their language and customs to create their interest in getting education. Teachers from tribals should be appointed in the schools of tribal area. Schools should be founded in their locality, not far-off places. The government should bear the actual private cost of education along with giving free tuition and other material aids such as stationery, books, uniforms etc. Besides, vocational education should be introduced from the very beginning so that tribals would not apprehend for future employment.

When we come to the role of voluntary agencies towards tribal development, we find that even prior to independence, the miserable plight of the tribal communities could draw the attention of many selfless individuals and organisations. Bhil Seva Mandal (in Gujarat) led by A.V. Thakkar, Bharatiya Adimjati Seva Sangh led by Rajendra Prasad, Christian Missionaries of various denominations such as Lutheran Mission (in 1845), the Catholic Mission of Chotanagpur (1885-86), Seva Kendra in Gumla town of Ranchi (1940), Adimjati Seva Mandal (at Phori), Nagaland Gandhi Ashram (estd. in 1955) and Ramakrishna Mission, all these have been working socially, economically, culturally, and educationally to develop the tribal people in India.

There is also difference between the Christian Missionaries and the other voluntary organisations. That, the former link the welfare activities such as opening of schools, dispensaries, hospitals, orphanages, vocational centres and other material aids with proselytization. But the latter have no such motive. Still, the role of Christian missionaries can not be undermined. Because the welfare activities of missionaries have first advanced and educated the mountain and forest dwellers who were one-time forgotten people. But it may be suggested that they should separately carry on welfare activities and religious propagation.



There is no harm for tribals of being converted to Christianity or any religious faith, if they do with their strong will and faith.

When we come to discuss socio-political aspects of the Adivasis, we find that the both governmental and voluntary agencies have caused tribal response to the existing socio-political life of the country. We have discussed that British government had dealt with tribals as basically law and order problem. It isolated them from the rest of the society by creating excluded and partially excluded area. After independence they were allowed to share country's socio-economic and political life guaranteed by the Constitutional provisions, mainly by way of protective discrimination and developmental safeguards. Even prior to this missionaries have created educated christian tribals in the North-East and some parts of central zone, who organised movements to demand separate political autonomy.

Discussing socio-political aspects of Jharkhand movement in the Chotanagpur region, North-East security problem with special reference to Naga National movement, we draw the following similarity and dissimilarity between the North-East and central tribal zones. That, in both

the zones, there is a sense of socio-cultural and socio-political identity among the tribals. But in the North East geo-political factor creates external threats and so security problem for the country. Therefore, the role of the state is to control secessionist forces by giving them socio-cultural and socio-political identity within the framework of the Indian Constitution. The tribals should be integrated to the national mainstream.

The objective of integration of the tribes is that the tribals having diverse cultural traits may foster common goal and symbols. That means they should maintain their cultural identity, by way of their customs, beliefs, practices and at the same time abide by the goals of Indian nation to make her a Sovereign, Socialist, Secular and Democratic Republic. In order to achieve the above mentioned goals of the country, the process of tribal development has to generate the feeling of self-help in the minds of tribal people. The process of development should ensure the self-employment of the toiling tribal masses. It warrants the rigorous study of evolution of tribal political economy in relation with the political economy of India. An alternative policy is to be found out for the elimination of various processes of domination and cultural hegemony of ruling social classes.

Otherwise, it is impossible to trace out the multiple structures of exploitation in the tribal areas. The policy has to wipe out the structures of exploitation, which block the progress and freedom. Our commitment must be directed against any sort of activities which would destroy the aspirations of tribal masses for the attainment of a society based on an egalitarian social order. They have a role to play for the construction of a society based on equality, justice and freedom.

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