

## DEPRIVED TRIBES OF INDIA : REGIONAL ISSUES AND CONCERNS

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### Abstract

According to the 2011 census, the total tribal population is 104 million which is 8.6 per cent of the total population in India. If the total tribal population lives in one state in India, that state would have become the third largest populated state after Uttar Pradesh (199 million population) and Maharashtra (112 million population). The share of Indian tribal population among the world indigenous population is around 22 percent which is almost one fourth of the total world indigenous population. It is estimated that there are 476 million indigenous population worldwide in over 90 countries. The tribes in India, who constitute numerically one of the largest population, are still lagging much behind in socio-economic-political indicators when compared with other social groups including scheduled castes. This is the situation even after 73 years of India's independence. Out of many reasons for their deprivation and underdevelopment, the diversity among tribal regions and even among different tribal groups has been observed as one of the main reasons. In this context, the present paper discusses the status of their deprivation while highlighting various issues and concerns at regional level. The issues such as their language, culture, religion, poverty, violence, identity, ethnicity, impact of globalisation on tribal women especially on PVTGs etc. with reference to a particular tribal group and their regions are discussed in the paper. The policy suggestions in the first part of the paper would be helpful for tribal policy formulation and programme implementation to address their issues at a larger context.

**Key Words :** Tribes, Deprivation, Region, languages, culture, poverty, violence, identity, ethnicity & globalisation.

### Introduction

Why resourceful be restrained ? This question is perhaps logical and genuine with reference to tribes and their regions in India. Who is resourceful, and who is restraining them, the resourceful tribes ? Before answering these questions, let us recall India's fight for freedom from British masters. Being a colony to the British empire prior to 1947, the Indian leaders, irrespective of their identity, had initiated many non-cooperation movements and expressed their disinterest towards British

colonialism and demanded for freedom. The non-cooperation and fighting for freedom were on one of the premises that British drained most of our resources to their advantage leaving India vulnerable to the rest of the world. India, even though was resourceful, was restrained by the British for their economic interest. The only slogan that was loudly heard across the nation in our freedom movement was-let us use our own resources for the development of our own people-demanding the British empire to leave the country. It was justified, and finally, we were free from the British, on the midnight of 15<sup>th</sup> August 1947.

Now, coming back to the question that was raised in the beginning of this paper: 'How can resourceful be restrained?'. Let us also examine further, for example, a few resource-rich tribal regions, before we answer this question. Most of the tribal regions in India, particularly central India, are rich in terms of having natural resources. The resources such as iron ore, manganese, bauxite, coal, dolomite, limestone, quartzite, and tin are properties of tribal regions. Total 19 percent of India's iron ore comes from Chhattisgarh (Gopalan 2013), and nearly 18 percent of India's coal comes from Saraguja and Korba districts alone in Chhattisgarh (Saldanha 2018). The International Labour Organisation report states that minerals found in tribal regions contribute to more than half of the national mining production (Sebastian 2011). The report entitled *The Legal Regime and Political Economy of Land Rights of Scheduled Tribes in the Scheduled Areas of India* analysed that nearly 90 percent of mineral wealth in India that comes from schedule areas is not used for the development of the tribal regions. The report observed that the total estimated value of mineral production for the year 2015-16 was Rs.276,638 crores. The values of the mineral production clearly indicates that 70 percent of mines and 65 percent of minerals are from the fifth scheduled states, that is, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, and Rajasthan (The Wire 2018). A Memorandum of Understanding was signed in 2007 by the government of Andhra Pradesh to supply huge bauxite to private companies. It is estimated that more than 600 million tonnes of bauxite, which is 18 percent of the country's total reserves, is concentrated in the fifth scheduled areas of Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh (Banerjee 2015). The project, however, has been scrapped by the present Chief Minister, Sri Y. S. Jaganmohan Reddy, due to resistance from the tribal groups in the region. While announcing this decision in the collectors meeting in June 2019, he said "there is no point in bauxite mining when the local tribals are opposing it. The state government is not going to lose much by giving up on bauxite mining. Peace is more important

and we should see that locals don't turn Maoists" (Sukumar 2019). This is undoubtedly a great deal for the tribals living in the region.

Apart from mines and minerals, the tribal regions also have natural forest, lakes, water bodies, streams, mountains, and hills. It is estimated that the tribal states such as Uttaranchal, Chhattisgarh, and Jharkhand have a forest cover of 43 percent, 42 percent, and 25 percent, respectively, of their total state land (Down to Earth 2015). When we map the mineral reserves, forests, watersheds, and mining areas together in India, all these are the homes of tribals, the poorest and vulnerable people in India.

What all these statistics speak to a common man? The tribal regions are undoubtedly resourceful. Then, why the tribes in these regions are restrained without development. The statistical evidences that speak loudly on the poverty indicators of these tribes in the regions reveal the bare fact. The tribal regions that have rich minerals are estimated with higher level of poverty. The poverty decline among tribes in rich mineral states is very less compared to the poor mineral states during 1993-94 and 2011-12. It was analysed that the 'resource-rich states, especially Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Odisha (with the exception of Gujarat) are at low levels of per-capita GSDP, with low levels of monthly per-capita expenditure' (GoI 2017: 293-94). These statistics indicate the fact that the resourceful tribal regions are restrained without using their own resources for their own development. This process has been called by most of the scholars as internal-colonialism. Ghanshyam Shah, in a blurb on the book titled *Adivasi Rights and Exclusion in India*, has explained the process as;

"Indian Adivasis have been victims of imperial as well as internal colonialism in post-Independent India, with them losing their resources for livelihood and cultural moorings and experiencing exclusion even from welfare programmes" (Shah 2018).

The present paper entitled *Deprived Tribes of India: Regional Issues and Concerns* provides a critical insight to understand the regional concerns of various tribal issues in India while also suggesting some policy measures. The arguments in this paper have further divided into four sections. The first part deals with the issues in tribal policy formulation, the second part deals with the issues pertaining to tribal language, culture and indigeneity, the third part deals with the issues concerning exclusion and inclusion of tribal regions, and the fourth part deals with impact of globalisation on tribes. The arguments provided in all these four sections would further help the reader to understand the nexus between resourceful and restrained.

I

**Issues in Tribal Policy Formulation**

Talking about policy issues with reference to tribes in India is not a new episode altogether. Rather, it is a series of episodes since colonial period till the recent times. But still we, as research scholars, policymakers, and tribal activists, ponder upon by discussing and debating on tribal policy. However, in public policy context, policy formulation is a continues process and hence subject to revisiting the existing policies as per the requirement of the public and their needs and aspirations. This is not the major concern here. The only concern and question is, why the tribals in India are still lagging much beyond to meet some important socio, economic, and political indicators while when we compare with any other social group including the so-called and nearest community, that is, scheduled caste ? There may be two important points that strikes to my mind, in fact to any common mind, to answer this question. The first one is, the formulation of tribal policy may be wrong; the second one is the improper implementation of the policy/ programme. Every tribal policy, as per the records of the respective policy documents, aims at to improve upon the quality of life of tribal people, which has not been achieved so far. What needs to be considered in the policy making is very important aspect in public policy in general and tribal policy in particular.

The importance of micro-level data, need-based ethnographic studies, estimating the strength of local natural resource and investing them on the community residing at the same region are some of the important issues to be considered while formulating the tribal policy. Regional planning is an important aspect while the state formulates tribal policy. It is because huge diversity among various tribal groups and the regions that they reside. Availability of local resources also varies across these tribal regions. Therefore, instead of a uniform policy to address tribal deprivation, a regional policy specifically addressing the particular tribal regions would have a greater support. Policy formulation is an important aspect to address certain unresolved issues in a particular society. The issues are subjective based on the nature of society. The tribal society is very complex in terms of social development indicators and certainly requires special attention by the policymakers. How data is an important source for policymaking ? How the accuracy of data relates to good policy formulation?

**Importance of Micro Level Data in Policy**

Some of the issues such as the development scenario of tribal communities, especially from a gendered perspective, to argue for a comparative understanding of macro

and micro data to critically look at issues of inclusion of certain historically deprived segments of the population are very important aspects for policy formulation (Menon 2021). It is very important to assess both macro and micro level data for policy formulation. Combining macro statistics and micro disaggregated statistics is critical to identify if and how macro statistics is misleading and make invisible exclusions of certain categories of population. For example, disaggregated statistics and social realities in Kerala point out that women and the scheduled tribe communities do not participate in certain achievements. There are tribal concentrations in Idukki, Palakkad, and Wayanad districts, but there are no recognised scheduled areas. In Idukki district, Edamalakkudy became the first and the only tribal panchayat in Kerala in the year 2010, but due to the remoteness of its location, the panchayat functions from a neighbouring panchayat. This first elected panchayat in Edamalakkudy had a 45-year-old woman president who was illiterate and used her thumb impression to file her nomination. She is reported to have created her signature for the first time after she got elected to the office. Women have their specific healthcare problems including mental health issues. Suicides and mental illnesses among tribes in Kerala have not received the attention they deserve.

In an integrated approach to tribal development, these dimensions of tribal health and diversities found cannot be ignored. The micro-level data on certain social development indicators such as education, employment, property ownership, social support, or social capital of scheduled tribes would be important issues to find out to strategies for suitable development interventions. Any policy decisions arising by ignoring these micro-level data and realities cannot help the tribal policy framework. The policy makers should have an integrated policy vision towards tribal development. Macro statistics or the gap between macro and micro situations as reflected in macro and micro data will not suffice, but qualitative insights are required for this. Therefore, to address the issues of tribes at ground level through policy formulation or even for developing an appropriate and relevant programme design, micro level data is very important. Hence, micro level planning with community participation is more essential in tribal policy formulation especially to address the issues of deprivation among the tribal population.

#### **Making of Sixth Schedule: Policy Issues**

The trajectories of tribal policy making would also provide some important insights in the post-colonial India. In order to understand these trajectories in tribal policy, one has to understand the dialogue between the then policymakers while making the Six Schedule for administering in the North East India. Sajal Nag explains the

process of the making of Sixth Schedule as a part of independent India's tribal policy and reminds with evidence that neither Nehru nor Elwin were responsible for the making of the sixth schedule, which actually was colonial in origin (Nag 2021). The architect of the Sixth Schedule were indeed Rev. J. J. M. Nichols-Roy and Gopinath Bordoloi. Nichols Roy's participation in the political developments before and after 1947 was noteworthy, not only for the Khasi-Jaintia Hills alone, but left its indelible mark for the entire region of the North-East. As an elected member of the Constituent Assembly that framed the Constitution of Independent India, it was Roy's vision for the hill tribes of the Assam that led to the birth of the Sixth Schedule, aimed at safeguarding their identity and interests.

The policy of Sixth Schedule was the result of development disparities between hills tribes and the plainsmen, as Gopinath Bardoloi was of the opinion to safeguard the interest and identity of the hills tribes (Nag 2021). Bardoloi was in favour of granting autonomy to these areas and cooperation between the centre and the state of Assam in taking the process of autonomy forward. The Sixth Schedule aimed at providing the tribal people with a simple and an inexpensive administration of their own, by which they could safeguard their own customs, traditions and culture, etc., to allow 'maximum autonomy' in managing their own affairs. Even though there were certain divisions of opinion among the policymakers while framing Sixth Schedule, it was ultimately agreed and realised by the policymakers that the Sixth Schedule is an important policy initiative to intact the strength in north-east communities.

### **Santals in West Bengal**

It is understood that the tribal development in India, even after more than 70 years of its independence, is not properly measured in par with other social groups including scheduled castes. The existing literature on tribal research highlights various reasons on why these disadvantaged groups are more deprived than other social groups. For example, the Santals who accessed reservation facilities from the government, have hardly become able to develop because all of their capitals such as cultural, social, economic, symbolic have not changed at the same time (Amit Kumar Kisku 2021). Whenever the government thinks of development of tribals through intervening from outside, it needs to keep in mind that inputs must be given to change social environment of the tribes by narrowing down the social distance between tribes and non-tribes. The tribal policy must have a closer look at the intervention of the non-tribal communities into the tribal society. The policymakers and development agents have to understand that development is a slow and undercurrent process and cannot be changed overnight. Research studies and

findings are equally important to understand the micro-level statistics and data. Anthropologists need to conduct more ethnographies rather than survey based researches. Auto-ethnographic researches, especially from the tribals themselves need to be promoted and encouraged.

Tribes face a reverse situation while understanding their society vis-à-vis with the constitutional and policy provisions. They are in the stage of not being able to promote their own culture and language although constitution provides them the right to conserve its culture and language. According to the constitutional safeguards, tribals have a right to use their own language and culture and study their own heritage and tradition. The state does not have any right to impose other cultures and languages on them. The PESA Act enables tribal community in decision-making and planning process in Gram Sabha relating to their programmes and projects for their socio-economic development to ensure peace and good governance.

### **Tribal Integration**

Social economy studies the relationship between economy and social behaviour. Social economy deals with distribution of resources, human foundations, and relations. Moreover, it also deals with equal opportunities among all existing groups in the society and concerns about equal distribution of available resources. The tribal policy shall also look into the possibilities on how the tribal communities can be integrated to the mainstream society by using their natural resources. There is a diversity among the tribes in their occupational structures. For example, the same tribal community of people transformed from shifting agricultural practices to settled agricultural methods. Some are working as agricultural labourers, quarry and mine workers, stone crushers, and plantation or industrial workers. This has further changed due to many development indicators such as education, public employability, and state development initiatives. These occupational differences within the tribal society results in social stratification at some level. Further, these social stratifications need to be stronger by using the local resources, constitutional provisions, existing policy provisions, and other developmental programmes. Strengthening various socio-economic advantages in the tribal society will enhance the socio-economic conditions of the tribal people. The different occupational structures that exist in the tribal society shall be considered as one of the policy point.

## II

### **Issues Pertaining to Tribal Language, Culture, and Indigeneity**

Tribes in India are identified or distinguished themselves by their language, culture, and indigeneity. Most of the tribal groups use their home language to communicate among them. It is a method of understanding their relationship, culture, and ecology. Ecology, here, means a study of the relationship between organisms and their environment (Xaxa 2008: 101). Therefore, language and culture are so deeply connected in their ecology, and this correlation is what their indigeneity is. Culture and language always exist together, and hence, loss of culture is loss of language (Behera 2019: 3). Therefore, it is vital to explore the deep-rooted insights with reference to tribal language, culture, and indigeneity.

### **Yanadi Tribe in Andhra Pradesh**

Anthropology of literature or literary anthropology in Indian academic circles is a rare academic exploration, particularly in the field of social science research. The combination of both, social science subject, that is, anthropology, and literature, which is almost out of social science discipline, is a challenging task to any scholar to expedite. Anthropological reading of a literature would enable a scholar to understand many insights in a particular society. The two Telugu fictions, *Chivari Gudise* (1996) written by Kesava Reddy and *Ennela Navvu* (2011) by Ekula Venkateswarlu, are centred around Yanadi tribal society in Andhra Pradesh. While reviewing these two Telugu fictions, Rao (2020) raises very important anthropological observations in his attempt and examines the relevance of these novels from the social science point of view. While explaining the culture, marriage and family of Yanadi tribe, Rao observes that the Yanadi maintain flexible relations between man and woman, they keep the institution of marriage and family intact though it remains under the threat of instability at least in the beginning; the institution thrives without total breakdown. The Yanadi individuals enjoy great freedom either to abide by the norms of the village or norms of the society or break them at will.

The Yanadi are not afraid of animals living in the forest and even fight with wild animals, but never in the history can one find Yanadi fighting with a non-Yanadi. Instead of resisting the domination of a non-tribe, the Yanadi simply runs away, and avoids situation of confronting violence. Reading of such cultural insights from the literature by an anthropologist is very important in the social science research and literary observations. The trajectories of the Yanadi development is concerned with self-respect, dignity, and sense of equality rather than the routine and common

economic concerns. The impact of globalisation on these Yanadi community as of now is very negligible. The reading of 'self' in literature from the anthropological lens centred around Yanadi culture and their society. These are very critical to the policy observations to the Government to incorporate cultural perspective in the policy framework and programme implementation while dealing with the Yanadi tribe or of any other tribe in India.

### **Cultural Identity and Tribal Resistance**

Tribal cultural identity is as important as it has been reiterated in many of the research findings across different subject backgrounds within the social science discipline. The history of tribal resistance movements speak loudly how they had fought for their cultural existence in both pre- and post-independent India. It was because their entire social life, including their livelihood sources, centred around their culture. The tribals have been victims of oppression not simply because of the geographical isolation; but dispossession of their traditional habitation and rights to resources, erosion of autonomy (Pal 2021). Tribals in India, despite the implementation of distinct legislations to undo the historical injustice on access to their basic livelihood resources, promote self-governance, and protect rights and human dignity, continue to face exploitations, human rights violations, and social injustice. The resistance movements of tribals against exploitation and oppression in pre-independence era and its larger implications for freedom movements of the country and draws attention to the continued struggle for protecting cultural identities, often making them vulnerable to human rights violations of different kinds in post-independence period.

Even though the tribals were the first people who had resisted the British colonial rulers in India in their attempt to exploit forest resources with larger goal of contributing towards their national development, the same tribal communities were not shared these resources as they wish in the free India. The results of economic reforms in the early 1990s have deprived these silent communities, leading to large-scale land alienation and displacement, and they continue to suffer in economic and social spheres. The tribals who have contributed towards India's freedom struggle against exploitations and social injustice tend to remain vulnerable to denial of basic rights to livelihood and other human rights violations under the disguise of specific laws that address the specifics and the unique dimensions of the problems faced by them. The intersection and overlapping of laws and interference and distortions of the state development process make tribals 'suffer in silence'.

### **Tribal Knowledge System and Current Relevance**

Undoubtedly, and without any dispute, the knowledge shared and practiced by tribals in India is priceless. Every field of their social, cultural, economic, and political life is eco-friendly and based on social harmony. It may be cultivation, learning system, healing practices, process of livelihood exploration, religious rituals, and so on are environment friendly. We call their knowledge system as indigeneity and try to avoid it in the name of modernity. The exclusion of their indigenous practices, further, ran rampant in the globalisation process. Otherwise, the tribal knowledge system, especially shared by the Gond, Prardhan, Baiga, Chenchus, Kolam, Koya, Bhil, Santhals, and many others have 'originated from centuries of observation of nature, especially the behavior of birds and animals. Knowledge has been passed from one generation to the other solely by oral tradition, depending largely on observation by the younger generation' (Singh 2015). Therefore, their knowledge system is purely based on nature, and dependent on what nature offers to them, they build their culture. Hence, Adivasi knowledge system, having their roots much early to the prehistoric period, has its relevance in the present Indian context.

### **Tribal Language and Identity**

Community language is very important in order to sustain its identity. Language and identity are dependent on each other and influence the culture of tribal population in India. Though global attention is drawn on the topic during last decade of the concluding century with reference to endangerment of minor, especially tribal languages, the experience in India and its North-East region in particular presents an undisputable link between the two, politically and ethnically (Behera 2021). The contemporary language of a minor community in the process of its exposure to market, major speech communities, state policy and particularly global forces, display a trend of shift, shrink creolisation, etc. Language being a component of the culture, its loss is considered as the loss of culture, which is nothing but the identity of people. Though language is one of the elements of the culture or community identity, it is used as the designation of the community or culture. Loss of language means loss of identity, and hence language and identity of minor communities do not present a one-to-one correspondence. The topic of language and identity constitute an area of high research priority in the context of minor tribal communities vis-à-vis major communities.

The main premise for the formation of the modern states was even based on language. For example, the rise of Odia and Assamese nationalism was basically an assertion of language identity. After independence, language spoken by the major community

became the basis of creating states as per the provisions of States Reorganisation Act, 1956. Even before independence, Odisha was created in 1936 by consolidating Odia-speaking areas in response to language movement. Similarly, in independent India, Assam was created consolidating Assamese-speaking areas, Andhra Pradesh on the basis of Telugu-speaking areas, and so on. In the process of linguistic-based state formation, the minor speech communities such as tribes were cautious about the problem of their language alongside the major language of the state (Ibid). Therefore, the language preservation is an essential step and cautions that simple preservation for preservation sake, like documentation, would not present a cultural identity of a past time period until and unless the language is used by members of the speech community among themselves at least as a mode of communication.

#### **Intercultural Issues of North-East**

The changing dynamics of the socio-economic barrier in the last 20 years owing to globalisation had enabled seamless interaction of people across the globe. The possibility and likelihood of intercultural, intercommunity marriage has never been more probable in history than now. For example, the intercultural marriages between Mizo and Khasi tribes in North-East raise many legal and cultural issues.

The issues of intercultural marriages among the North-East tribes operate at different levels of narratives of race, community survival, inter-religious issues, and also at special administrative spheres within the scope of Constitution of India (Tombling 2021). The Mizo and Khasi tribes in the states of Mizoram and Meghalaya enjoy special administrative autonomy with regard to promulgation and enactment of special law for the protection and preservation of their social customs and also laws related to marriage and divorce in accordance with their customs. However, in recent past, these two communities separated by culture and language have infamously tried to pass law which apparently attempts to prohibit women from marrying outside the clan or community. It is seen as a wave of cultural exclusiveness that is slowly and gradually gripping their societies when the matter appertains to institution of marriage (Ibid). However, this restriction is mainly driven towards the female community.

The issue of march against intercultural marriage among these tribes becomes more complicated since the Mizo and Khasi as per constitutional schemes of things could enact and promulgate laws in accordance with their social customs. Among the matrilineal Khasi tribe, the promulgation of a bill to strip Khasi women of their tribal status if they marry a non-Khasi by the Khasi Hills District Autonomous Council in 2018 is poignant and intimidating for the very fact that the community is matrilineal

(Ibid). Among the Mizo community, the Mizo Marriage, Divorce and Inheritance of Property Act, 2014 restricts the applicability of the Act if a Mizo woman marries a non-Mizo. Also, the influential philanthropic organisation called the Young Mizo Association had proposed stripping of Mizo status to women who had married a non-Mizo. Any arbitrary proposal to strip a person of a certain status, in this case, attempt to strip Mizo and Khasi women of their tribal status in case of intercultural as well as inter- racial marriage, is against the spirit of the constitutional morality. It also amounts to violation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women provisions and other international documents on the rights of indigenous women to marry.

### III

#### **Issues Concerning Exclusion and Inclusion of Tribal Regions**

Regions play an important role to understand the diversity of tribes in India. The diversity in their culture, language, natural resources, identity etc. is significant to study their society. The cultural patterns of tribes in India are based on their geographical regions. The culture of tribes in North-East is different from the culture of tribes in central India. Their livelihood patterns are also influenced by the availability of resources in a particular region. The regions even influence their identity to be called as tribes or Adivasis. The tribes in North-East do not prefer to be called as Adivasis, because the term 'Adivasi' to them is an inferior connotation, whereas the tribes in central India feel superior to be identified themselves as 'Adivasis' which means, to them, native. Therefore, there is no dispute to say that the concept of 'region' makes so much influence on tribal life in Indian context. The tribal regions in modern politics are also used by external forces as modern religious labs for promotion of their political goals. In this context and backdrop, this section made an attempt to examine various processes of exclusion and inclusion practices vis-à-vis regional identities of tribes.

#### **Regional Quest of Karbi Tribe**

The Karbi community is one of the major ethnic communities in North-East India and especially hill areas of Assam state. It is said that the oral tradition of the Karbi community is itself a rich source in folklore and almost different from the normal spoken words. They depict their tradition and other socio-cultural practices by songs. These songs are an oral narration of ancestors' stories passed through generations. They carry their history forward through these narrative songs. The Karbi community has been fighting for the state autonomy since long period in

North-East. In the process of their fighting for the state autonomy, the role of folk songs and select memories played very important role (Teron 2021). Songs of traditional boundary of the once extensive Karbi territory survive in select folk memories. Episodes of confrontation with and forced dispersal at the behest of powerful tribal states of the Ahoms, Kacharis, and Jaintias have traumatised the Karbis for generations. When the Ahom state crumbled under its own weight, hastened by the entry of the colonial British in 1826, Karbi territories passed into the hands of the new ruler-to be mapped, redrawn, and dissected with catastrophic future implications. New power equation was instituted, and low-level tax collectors and state-appointed headmen replaced the traditional chiefs and their authorities (Ibid). The colonial economy and missionary education produced the first Karbi political leadership, which raised the demand of a homeland as India was shaking off the yoke of centuries of foreign domination.

The handling of the statehood issue by successive governments in Assam led to more unrest that subsequently bred armed insurgency in the hills. The successive governments in the state had always maligned the statehood demand organisations and impose stricter prohibitory regimes to suppress the legitimate aspirations of the people to a state. This has been the pattern of responses from the successive governments in the state. The Karbi youth, at this juncture, is confused, frustrated, angry and increasingly falling prey to anarchist tendencies and the challenge to bounce back on track will largely determine the future (Ibid).

### **Frontier Nagaland and Regionalism**

The Naga quest for sovereignty and independence is identified as the longest struggle in Indian sub-continent. Despite significant efforts made by the government and political systems in the past for resolving this ongoing challenge, the conflict continues to remain elusive on the grounds of different fault lines. Naga insurgency has remained one of the longest issues that government of India has failed to resolve. This issue dates back to the first decade of Indian Independence. Eastern Nagaland, which was once considered as the land of 'free', 'un-administered', and 'wild' Naga people, has now become the land of a movement that demands a new federal state to be called as 'Frontier Nagaland'. Therefore, the issue of 'region' and 'identity' are so dependent particularly in the tribal society that cannot be ignored by the state.

The issues of 'region' and its identity to the people is so visible in many Indian contexts not only in the tribal society but also in non-tribal society too. While understanding the historical and political processes towards the quest for Frontier Nagaland, the social-historical and ethnographic view towards understanding the 'insurgency issue'

and how the state aggression, resistance of people, years of violence and bloodshed, and suffering have resulted in shaping the local norms, ignited the local struggle and agitation, and how it led to conflict between inter-personal and inter-tribal relationships in significantly unexpected ways are very important. In the process the state is being seen as the resource and as the source of 'development', because developmental deficiency that eastern Naga people have experienced resides at the heart of Frontier Nagaland movement (Babar 2021).

The Naga struggle has grown as response of the various political issues, response of the Indian government, and the ruins of British colonisation to demand political redemption. Although politics of statehood and their specific demands can be witnessed in every nooks and corners of India, the demand of independent state for eastern Nagas could be seen from the prism of various socio-historical reasons and colonial trajectories. The formation of the state of Nagaland has brought new power struggles, new axis of differentiation, and new fault lines (Ibid). Considering the state chief and foremost as a 'resource', the struggle for Frontier Nagaland has provoked. Six eastern Naga tribes are currently struggling, and for their experiences, they blame the western tribes for the exploitation and dominance over their resources (Ibid). The eastern Naga Tribes consider western tribes to be very advanced and also consider them as the most significant reason behind not getting their developmental aids. State of Nagaland being under insurgency and inter-ethnic conflicts had experienced significant violence and insecurity, which has also resulted in limiting the economic development of the state. Therefore, the Eastern Naga People's Organisation that include the eastern tribes (Konyak, Chang, Sangtam, Phom, Yimchunger, and Khiamniungan) demand the formation of separate state for them being called as 'Frontier Nagaland' (Ibid). Eastern Nagaland tribes have considered that they always remained outside the British Administration and that they had power over their own resources. However, after declaration of Nagaland as the state, western Naga tribes dominated and used natural/ state resources, for the benefit and progress of their own families, clans, and their own tribes, which deprived Eastern Naga people of required development and growth.

### **Poverty and Communal Violence in Odisha**

The relational aspects between poverty and communal violence in some parts the tribal regions has been witnessed. For example, in Kandhamal, a tribal dominated district in Odisha, the relational aspects between poverty and communal violence resulted a serious threat to the basic philosophy of constitutional democracy. How does the communal violence penetrate into the poverty-stricken tribal regions? The

issues of poverty, structural inequality, social injustice, and political rights involving claims over resources constitute factors that may explain outbreak of communal violence in tribal areas. It is the environment of political mobilisation that brings together a cluster of socio-economic forces to engage them in violence in the name of competing religious identities which is called as collaborative-communal violence (Roul 2021).

India's 104 million tribal people remain among the poorest, and nearly every second tribal family is food-insecure, with low caloric and protein consumption below the recommended dietary allowance. The emerging contours of Kandhamal violence (2007-08) adds new dimension to the ongoing debate on the structure of communal violence and the role of poverty in tribal areas (Ibid). Kandhamal is a classic case where caste, ethnicity, and religion got enmeshed into such a degree that it defies any stereotypical explanation. This district constitutes multiple layers of local political structures where tribe-caste-feudalism had a great social fusion and also feudalism-caste-colonialism-religion admixture. Therefore, the Kandhamal violence is more than the issues of religious conversion and the ethnic conflict between dalit Pana Christians and tribal Kandhas, and it is very important to address these multidimensional issues instead of only focussing on religious and cultural factors.

### **Cultural Identity in West Bengal**

Identity politics is one of the strong strategies of the marginalised groups in defence of marginalisation and disadvantage and serves as a source of liberation. The identity politics can best be explained with the help of three theories such as post-colonialism, orientalism, and imperialism (Subhamay Kisku 2021). For example, the process of identity politics among a migratory indigenous community of southern West Bengal are very important to understand the issue of identity politics. While understanding the issues of identity politics in this context, two issues are very critical to note. The one is the migration trajectories, which entails the migration history of the studied ethnic group, and the other is the survival strategies at present, which focus on the cope-up strategies of the studied ethnic group for their tribal identity (Ibid). A consequence of identity politics, the studied community is being moved through a lot of cultural changes to reclaim their cultural identity.

The ethnic group members are being humiliated due to their ethnic identity and as a coping strategy they are changing their surname of some higher castes of the locality by affidavit. Many families have accepted inter-community marriages even outside their indigenous community members by the process of amalgamation. They have adopted a strategy of identity politics to encounter the marginalisation. However,

some non-indigenous ethnic groups are taking advantage of claiming for scheduled tribe certificate, which is a major threat to the original tribes. Therefore, the identity politics, as a strategy of reclaiming identity, develops cultural hybridity. Hence, it is named as a tribal method of Hindu culture adoption (Ibid).

#### **IV**

##### **Impact of Globalisation on Tribes**

Even though globalisation is viewed as integration of regions, cultures, and languages to the mainstream society, but tribals perceived it as a shadow. The globalisation, for tribes in India, has witnessed a major impediment to regain their cultures, to preserve their languages, to sustain their resources, to continue their panchayats, to pass on their learning practices to the next generations, and to stable their gender relations. The issue of middle men, which was a major threat to root out their resources, in tribal areas during pre-globalisation period was an individual, but in the post-globalisation it has been institutions, companies, states, foreign funding, and many. Therefore, the tribes perceived the globalisation as a shadow that cannot be eluded easily.

The beauty of any place can be measured by the originality it preserves, and the originality of tribals lies in those flora and fauna, surrounded by humungous forests, covered by ancient mountains, where the lashing sounds of waterfalls, songs of birds, and animals could be felt. For tribes, nature has always been their mother, and she nurtures them, guides them, and teaches them to survive by providing food, shelter, medicine, ornaments, and weapons. Tribes believe strongly that the nature creates their life, and hence, they love, protect, and worship her. Both, tribes and nature, co-exists in the most harmonious relationship, away from the 'harsh', 'materialistic', and 'unnatural' world to their 'peaceful', 'spiritual', and 'natural' world.

##### **Negative Shades of Globalisation on Tribes**

Dhanbadh, a region in Jharkhand, used to be the land which was rich in ores and minerals, there have been so many mining legal and illegal activities. Many tribes from those mining areas were forced to vacate their lands and migrated to metropolitan cities where they have been working as labourers in restaurants and washing utensils. This all happens as a part of globalisation process. Once beautiful landscapes, hills and mountains, now turned as business hubs. With the dynamics of time and the rapid demand for production and to fulfil those demands, schemes of modernisation, urbanisation, and globalisation came into existence. In order to be at par with the dynamics of time, the tribals were forced to submit, adapt, and

accept to these methodologies. The tribes were made to believe that whatever sources of livelihood they were holding was 'backward', 'inferior', and 'outdated' to their comparatively 'superior', 'upward', and 'updated' version of progressivism. The injustice that has been happening to the young tribal girls who are being trafficked from Jharkhand to the major cities is another issue. With these ill effects of globalisation on tribal regions, the tribals need to understand, acknowledge, and stand for where they belong and question by self Who are We if not Tribes? (Tirkey 2021).

### **PVTGs in West Bengal**

India is a country where 705 ethnic indigenous groups live. Out of 705 ethnic indigenous groups, a total of 75 tribal groups are declared as PVTGs. The impact of globalisation on these PVTGs has been analysed. For example, it is found that in West Bengal alone the income gaps are increasing among the families of these indigenous communities due to globalisation initiatives (Biswas 2021). There are total 40 ethnic groups in West Bengal, out of them three are declared as particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTGs). The Toto tribe, which is smallest in number in the state with only 1385 population, is worst sufferer with low levels of income due to globalisation. The primitive tribe of West Bengal is the most vulnerable tribe for their distinct culture, lifestyle, food habits, customs, and socio-economic culture (Ibid). Due to the current developmental model, these tribal group has been facing new identity challenges although their socio-economic development is noticeable. Because of the impact of development processes, the Toto tribe has been moving away from a subsistence economy to the market economy. Hunting practice has disappeared from their present livelihood activities, and the community now has multi-dimensional economic activities for their livelihood. Due to the changing nature of the landholding pattern, they are now settled agriculturists and cultivating rice, maize, zinger, potato, etc.

### **Tribal Women and Globalisation in Andhra Pradesh**

Globalisation is a process that each level of an incidence in one segment of the state influences the community in another part of the region. The impact of globalisation on tribal women is another important aspect to understand the socio-economic and cultural lives of tribal societies. The tribal women are struggling with the existing challenges which are necessary to overcome in a sequence to develop their position in the family as well as in the community. The worse load at family level and farming workload among tribal women is higher than the other scheduled castes and general population of the society, because their livelihood options are neither permanent

nor fixed. In the financial monarchy, it may lead to more bordering of women in the casual downtrodden daily labourer segment or poverty through injury of cultural bases of revenue. The tribal women are gradually empowered and powerful than before. This variation is not common and does not happen in any specific form. While majority tribal women in Andhra Pradesh work hard and donate to the economic growth, however, majority of their work is not recognised or accountable for in authorised calculations. The tribal women in Andhra Pradesh have not even one part to show in the societal and party-political provinces (Raghuveer 2021). The tribal women are not participating in the village-level meetings, and they are not able to play a leadership in the local bodies and panchayats.

### **Impact of Globalisation on Lambada Tribe in Telangana**

Most of the existing research studies on tribes to review the impact of globalisation are mostly sided towards a negative perspective by concluding the globalisation process has damaged or has been damaging the tribal culture, their livelihoods, among other things. The tribes have taken a faster edge where the livelihood sources of these tribes in Telangana state suddenly increased (Sunitha 2021). A sudden change is the process which affects the transition of social and psychological life of the population. The change is observed as a fast and quick process; one can predict the difference of the end and beginning. In the case of transition, no one can predict the edges of life. Promotion from a lower stage to upper stage should take place step by step, but in case of globalisation, direct upliftment of society exists from nowhere to somewhere. That is why globalisation processes need to be studied among the simple societies. Sudden change in economic life leads to a transition of social and psychological life of a simple society, such as tribes.

Impact of globalisation on culture and lifestyle of Lambdas has been observed using the case study method. The globalisation has suddenly helped some tribal households to increase their assets. However, it has a very negative impact on their education and health. Due to sudden increase of the cost of their land in the market, most of the tribal youth started a petty business by giving up their education. Therefore, the impact of globalisation on tribal livelihood is temporarily positive whereas on education it is permanently negative. The change after globalisation brought a positive response in livelihood status, but the basic institutions of tribes have been disturbed and manipulated with the effect of economic development of tanda. These findings are very interesting in the context of the youth and children who are psychologically getting affected by sudden increase in the economic status of the family. The livelihood pattern was changed in a positive manner, however, was

insecure because of the unorganised sector, and the reasons for this are alcoholism and lack of realisation about the importance of education.

### **Deori Ethnic Women and Globalisation**

India is a gigantic land and is the homeland of different ethnic groups. These groups are spread in vast areas of the country like plains, desert, snowy mountains, and hills. Basically, the people who are living in the hilly regions of north-eastern region belong to different ethnic groups. For example, the impact of globalisation on Deori ethnic women in north-East region of India is important in this context. This community lives in Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, and Meghalaya of North-East India. The process of globalisation has played a crucial role in this region, and globalisation has impacted the life of women here on a large scale. The Deori tribe has some unique and special identities. The Deori community women have been playing a major role in trade, commerce, agriculture, weaving, and other services in this area after the emergence of globalisation.

Although globalisation brings the traditional knowledge and skill into the global market, but it poses threat to ethnic community as it tries to merge their ethnic identity into global identity (Sharma and Abheshek 2021). As a result, the uniqueness of the specific community skill and knowledge get hampered. Globalisation supports free market economy, and this development is uneven. Therefore, the local communities do not get the actual reward for this. Their knowledge and skill are very much important, and it should be tried to preserve for a long time by keeping it on first priority by the government. It is certainly globalisation that affected the folk-culture of the Deori tribal women in the region.

### **Globalisation on Indigenous Tribes in Odisha**

In the context of globalisation, what indigenous tribes find in health and environment is a much debated area in the context of tribal policy formulation and programme implementation. This debate is more important in the context of tribals living in rural Odisha. The indigenous tribes are always haunted by the impact of globalisation in their everyday aspects such as education, health, livelihood, and standard of living (Barla 2021). Hence, the tribal health is always linked with different aspects of life such as economic growth, access to healthcare facilities, social justice, human rights, constitutional provisions, and legal rights. When the process of globalisation started, indigenous tribes slowly lost their stable livelihood, land, forest, identity, culture, traditional belief systems, and their very essence of medicinal practices that they were collecting from the forest and natural and green dense places. The other

processes in which the indigenous tribes are affected mostly on their health are air, water, and land pollution due to industrialisation, urbanisation, and modernisation (Ibid). It is very important to understand global health policies in line with health practices of tribal communities in India. In the process of globalisation, the issues such as education, health awareness, health hazards, sex education, and other health-related issues are very important and the government should provide amenities to better healthcare with free of cost to every indigenous tribe. The target groups to these kinds of health care awareness must be children, teenagers, women, and old age people within the indigenous tribes. The scholars must understand the health aspects of indigenous tribes in rural Odisha and put forth perspectives which would benefit the indigenous tribes in reducing the absolute and relative health issues and challenges.

It has been established from the arguments in the paper that there exists serious gaps in the policy formulation. The constitutional guarantees to the tribal people are not safeguarded as it has been understood. The policy suggestions in the first part of this paper, would be of great value to government and non-government functionaries to review the existing policies. The papers centred around interdisciplinary nature of tribal issues, that discussed in the second part of this paper, would be a great assert to the academic scholars who wish to understand and further continue their research on tribal issues. The regional and religious aspects of tribal population in the context of their exclusion and inclusion are helpful to the scholars who focus their research on cultural studies. The arguments around the impact of globalisation on tribal people discussed in the final part of this paper would be major concerns not only to the activists, but also to policymakers and academic community. The arguments made in this paper with reference to tribal issues focussing on the issues of deprivation of tribal communities in India in the context of region and policy concern are important to understand the question raised in the beginning of the paper - Why resourceful be restrained? The paper has also suggests how the restrained think and focus on the inclusive measures to address the deprivation of the tribal situation in India.

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