

# Tribal Development in India : An Overview

## Abstract

Tribal development is one of the intensively discussed subjects. There is no denying of the fact that, the tribal population is living below the poverty line and hence the problems of shelter, food, health, education and communication are crying for solution. In terms of basic amenities such as, housing conditions, availability of drinking water, sanitation facility, type of fuel used, electricity, communication facilities, the Scheduled tribes are lagging behind the general population. Therefore affecting their ability to reach their potential. In spite of the actions taken by the Government to eradicate these problems through the Five Year Plans, still it requires more efforts to overcome these completely.

**Keywords:** Scheduled Tribes, Welfare, Culture, Constitutional Provisions, Planning.

## Nemmaniwar Vijayalakshmi Ganganna

Research Scholar,  
Deptt.of School of Commerce &  
Management Sciences,  
Swami Ramanand Teerth,  
Marathwada University,  
Nanded, Maharashtra.

## Introduction

In India ever since planning was first initiated, tribal development has been attracting the attention of planners, and various administrative measures have been adopted for the tribal development with a high concentrations of finances on tribal areas.

The largest concentration of tribal communities in the world next to Africa, is in India. (Verrier Elwin, 1963) Tribal development is one of the intensively discussed subjects. There is a need of rigorous evaluation of tribal policies and programmes as they are proves working for tribal peoples need and aspiration. A need was therefore for a separate development approach to the problems of the tribal people in the country as a whole.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru the first Prime Minister of India, who was directly concerned with the tribal policy, emphasized on the integration of the tribal brethren into the mainstream. He laid down a Panch Sheel for Tribal development.

These are the following:

1. 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.
2. Tribal rights in land and forest should be respected.
3. We should try to train and build up a team of their own people to do the work of administration and development. Some technical personal from outside will, no doubt be needed especially in the beginning, but we should avoid introducing too many outsiders into tribal territory.
4. 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
5. We should judge results not by the statistics of the amount of money spent by the quality of human character that is evolved. Pandit Nehru elaborated these points on a number of occasions, and also spoke on the caution needed in developing in tribal areas.

**Table -1: Tribal Population in India**

Year	Tribal Population	Percentage to Total Population	Decadal Growth Rate
1951	19,111,498	5.29	41.19
1961	30,130,184	6.86	33.84
1971	38,015,162	6.94	24.80
1981	51,628,638	7.83	24.69
1991	67,658,638	8.08	23.79
2001	84,326,240	8.20	22.70
2011	10,43,000,00	8.61	23.70

(Source : Census of India from 1951 to 2011, Government of India)

## Vani. N. Laturkar

Dean,  
Deptt.of School of Commerce &  
Management Sciences,  
Swami Ramanand Teerth,  
Marathwada , University,  
Nanded, Maharashtra

According to the above table the population of Scheduled Tribes, has been increased day by day and the increase of problems of tribal community is evident. In spite of the actions taken by the Government to eradicate these problems through the Five Year Plans, still it requires more efforts to overcome these completely. (Planning Commission, 2001)

### Conceptual Framework : Scheduled Tribes

Before discussing the demographic composition of scheduled tribes, need and compulsions for their development briefly, what a tribe is and what precisely the term tribe connects.

The English term 'Tribe' is derived from the Latin word "Tribus". In India the term 'tribe' has a legal and administrative connotations. The Indian constitution has explained the terminology using the word 'Scheduled Tribes' for the tribes. (G. C. Biswal, 1985) Indigenous people live in geographical isolation and far away from the mainstream society. They are quite happy with their lifestyle.

(T. K. Naik, 1968), proposed seven criteria by which a 'tribe' can be recognized. They are,

1. Functional interdependence within the community.
2. Economic backwardness.
3. Geographical isolation
4. Common dialect
5. Politically a unit under a common tribal authority
6. Own traditional laws
7. Members are averse to change

'Tribe' as defined by Belleille is a "collection of individuals sharing a common culture."

The tribal communities are found in different parts of the country in varying concentration. The states like Mizoram, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh and two Union Territories namely, Dadra and Nagar Haveli comprise the tribal predominant zones in which the concentration of tribal communities varies from 70% to 95%. (Suresh Chandra Rajora,)

### Objectives of the Study

1. To study the concept of tribal development.
2. To identify the problems of Scheduled tribes in India.
3. To study the tribal development initiatives in India

### Research Methodology

Present study is descriptive and based on secondary data, which is sourced from various books related to tribal development, journals, scholarly articles, government publications, reference papers in print and on from websites related to the topic.

### Problems

1. There is no denying of the fact that, the tribal population is living below the poverty line and hence the problems of shelter, food, health, education and communication are crying for solution.
2. The first and most important thing is to make these areas accessible unless we can bring the tribal people into real touch with India as a whole, they are likely to remain suspicious of our intentions and unwilling to co-operate. We may give them

hospitals, schools, co-operative societies and veterinary centers but they will obviously be useless if the tribal people do not come to them. (N.K.Panda, 2006)

3. Census 2011, illustrates that in terms of basic amenities such as housing conditions, availability of drinking water, sanitation facility, type of fuel used, electricity, communication facilities, the Scheduled tribes are lagging behind the general population. Therefore affecting their ability to reach their potential. (Govt. of India, 2013)
4. As poverty anywhere is a hindrance to the prosperity elsewhere, the abject poverty in which tribals live, may ultimately drag the economic advancement of a country down. Moreover, India cannot afford to develop at the cost of the poverty and ignorance of 67 millions of its tribal brethren. Further continuous neglect of a particular segment (tribal) of society, may result either in stagnation in economic process or violent reversal of the existing social order. (Avinash Shamal, 2010).
5. There is a urgent need to critically review the approach and the strategy of tribal protection and development followed so far, to re-orient/change it wherever it needed, to ensure the flow of the development benefits within a definite time frame and restore their faith in the capability of the Government to deliver. (Devath Suresh, 2014)
6. The problems relating to the infrastructure of the area besides water supply and communication and means, namely, of education facilities, banking or credit facilities, marketing facilities, medical facilities and administrative facilities depend largely on the improvement of communication system. (Kulkarni, M. G., 1974).

### Tribal Development Initiatives

The provisions in the Indian Constitution about the scheduled tribes can be mainly divided into three categories viz, protective provisions, developmental provisions and reservational provisions. (L. P. Vidyarthi, 1959)

The Nehru Era laid the foundation of tribal policy in independent India, based on humanism and protection of the culture and traditions. India is prominent among the developing countries where six decades of planned development have made a significant efforts of removing poverty and unemployment as well as tribal development. The Five Year Plans formulated the implementation of a series of investment-backed schemes and projects for the upliftment of the tribal living in rural and urban.

The planning commission advocated the area development approach, and the concept of a Tribal Sub-plan for the areas with high concentration of tribal people was adopted. The identified tribal areas in state were constituted into various Integrated Tribal Development Projects (ITDP) and detailed sectoral schemes were prepared for each project. This whole new treatment started functioning late i.e. in 1976-77. To execute the new provisions a National Commission for schedule castes and scheduled Tribes was constituted with effect from March 12, 1992 According to the broad guidelines and the provisions of the Constitution, a number of special schemes and programmes, including the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) and Integrated Tribal Development Programme (ITDP) were launched. The main aim of these programmes,

was to develop the tribal regions of the country. Nevertheless, it may be emphasized that the implementation strategies and policies adopted many a time have been such as were conducive to find a solution to a particular problem. And in the process of solving the problem, a new policy emerged. (P. K. Vaid, 2011)

During the formulation of fifth five year plan it was realized that, the progress of tribal communities was unsatisfactory, may be because of the rigid, schematic pattern of the programmes and the inadequacy of funds.

The nodal Ministry of Tribal Affairs laid greater emphasis in the Ninth Five Year Plan on the educational and economic development of Scheduled Tribes. The scheme of 'Post-Metric Scholarships' (PMS) continued to be an important centrally sponsored scheme to promote higher education among STs. Under this, scholarships are extended to all the eligible ST student who pursue post-matriculation courses in recognized institutions within the country. (Planning Commission of India)

According to the Report on 10<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan by Planning Commission of India, a majority of tribal live in abject poverty, the Ministry of Rural Development, plays a vital role in raising their status above poverty line through implementation of various poverty alleviation programmes. Through these schemes Government provides them financial and other support for taking up self employment and other activities. This Ministry also provides basic amenities like housing, drinking water etc. In addition to the poverty alleviation programmes. (Planning Commission of India)

Poverty alleviation has been one of the guiding principles of planning process in India. the various dimensions of poverty relating to health, education and other basic services are included in the planning and policies. So many anti-poverty programmes have been launched to reduce the poverty in the country. In addition to special programmes have been taken up for the upliftment of the, scheduled Tribes (STs) and Scheduled Castes (SCs) and other vulnerable groups (Ministry of Tribal Affaires, Govt. of India. 2013)

#### Conclusion

The first and most important thing is to make these areas accessible unless we can bring the tribal people into real touch with India as a whole, they are likely to remain suspicious of our intentions and unwilling to co-operate

The process of planning has to be built up from below, funneling upwards. Exploitative relation of tribal people with moneylenders, contractors, middleman who engage them in work are to be revealed. Projects, programmes, and elements are to be dissected and evaluated Implementation process need to be scrutinized.

Science and technology must be adopted and used in the tribal areas, for their overall development such as modern techniques of cultivation in agriculture, high yielding varieties of seeds, improved fertilizers and having seasonal

crops, depending on the climate conditions and soil. There is a need of proper irrigation in the areas. The tribal youth may be trained to develop a scientific outlook and scientific spirit through education.

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