

A STUDY ON DISPLACEMENTS ISSUES OF SCHEDULED TRIBES

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ABSTRACT

The Scheduled Tribes have been specified, as per Article 342 of the Constitution, in all States and Union Territories except Chandigarh, Delhi, Haryana, Pondicherry and Punjab. About 80 per cent of tribal population are to be found along the Central belt, starting from Gujarat – Maharashtra, running through Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Jharkhand and West Bengal. The Constitution of India contains exhaustive provisions for protecting and promoting the interests of the scheduled tribes. These mandatory safeguards are relevant in the context of implementation of Tribal Sub-Plan and the Provisions of Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act 1996 (PESA) provisions for streamlining the administrative apparatus, providing legal support and implementing developmental programmes. India is one of the emerging economies. A large number of development projects have been launched in India for the past six decades. It has gained momentum since the independence. Dam projects, Industrial projects, Mining Projects, Thermal Power Projects, and Urban Infrastructure Projects are some of the prime examples. India's development policies and strategies have often focused upon indispensability of irrigation as important input for agriculture.

Key Words : Displacement, Schedule Tribes, Issues and Challenges, Legal Solution

INTRODUCTION

Displacement of people from traditional habitations causes much disturbance to the affected people. Compulsory acquisition of land for construction of dams and roads, quarrying and mining operations, location of industries and reservation of forests for National Parks and environmental reasons forces tribal people to leave their traditional abodes and land – their chief means of livelihood. A growing number of environmentalists and social activists have misgivings about development projects such as dams, industries, mines, railways and roads which impact people's livelihood in different ways. Some of them are displaced away from their homes.

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WHO IS SCHEDULED TRIBES

Scheduled Tribes (the official government designation applied to indigenous peoples who fall outside the predominant Indian social hierarchy) and Scheduled Castes (formerly called “untouchables”; the official name for groups that occupy a low position within the caste system) together constitute some two-fifths of the population. The term 'Scheduled Tribes' first appeared in the Constitution of India. Article 366 (25) defined scheduled tribes as "such tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purposes of this constitution". Article 342, which is reproduced below, prescribes procedure to be followed in the matter of specification of scheduled tribes. The essential characteristics of these communities are:

- Primitive Traits
- Geographical isolation
- Distinct culture
- Shy of contact with community at large
- Economically backward

Tribal communities live, in various ecological and geo-climatic conditions ranging from plains and forests to hills and inaccessible areas. Tribal groups are at different stages of social, economic and educational development. While some tribal communities have adopted a mainstream way of life, at the other end of the spectrum, there are certain Scheduled Tribes, 75 in number known as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), who are characterised by

- pre-agriculture level of technology
- stagnant or declining population
- extremely low literacy
- subsistence level of economy

CONCEPT OF DISPLACEMENT

Displacement of people from traditional habitations causes much disturbance to the affected people. There are some reason for Displacement like displacement effected by natural disasters is the forms of draughts, floods, earthquakes and cyclone and Displacement due to developmental projects like dams, mines, thermal power plants, industries, rail-ways, roads, ports and others. Among these two, former is the one is not subject to human control but the latter is purely human made phenomena and this type of displacement is pre planned or forced displacement. In both the types of displacement, the victims are poor and weaker sections of the society who do not either have economic stability or educational accomplishments to migrate to safer areas. Today in India internal displacement concentrates a large share of people’s wealth in the hands of few. In the

process of 'development' there is 'disempowerment' of the subalterns. The rich become richer and poor become much poorer due to explorative and dehumanizing strategies of the powerful

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES OF DISPLACED SCHEDULE TRIBES

The displaced people of India come under grey areas because according to the UN's computation, there are approximately a 135million people who come under this area. The people who live in such areas face many difficulties as they don't even have proper electricity and water facilities to survive. Also, they don't have a reasonable source to cook the food they usually take up wood-based fuels for cooking. The people who live in such places come more about government plans to get more strength. Usually, they live in singled-out regions alongside those who are marginalized. We can observe that the people of gray areas face many difficult situations as current energy practices are often inadequate, contaminating, risky for the user, and fatal to the surrounding. If also displaced people go back to their native places their condition would not go for better they may face more of the worst situations. Not only in their survival but the displaced people also get discriminated from normal people in the field of education and service i.e, schools and offices. The position they get there is different or can effortlessly be lower than other people. For such problems, the displaced people do not get their rights which are made for every citizen. We have discussed certain policies which help to secure the rights of displaced people.

Impact of Displacement

Land is the center of tribal life. The effects of the displacement spill over generations in many ways such as loss of traditional means of employment (livelihood), change of environment, disrupted community life and relationship, marginalization, a profound psychological trauma. It destroys the existing modes of production affects kinship and impoverishment and threatens cultural identity of tribal and ethnic minorities. In addition forced resettlement tends to be associated with increased socio-cultural and psychological stresses and higher morbidity and mortality rates. Population displacement, therefore, disrupts economic and socio cultural structures. The development process pushes them from an informal to a formal economy that is new to them without any preparation. They had depended on agricultural land and forests, both of which they lose to the project. When they receive compensation it is monetary with which most communities living in the informal economy are not familiar. On the basis of various empirical studies conducted on the tribal displaced families of India, the following are some of the important impacts is discussed below:-

1. Decline in Joint Family System: The predisplacement level of 40 nuclear and 60 joint families was changed into 74 and 26 respectively with both tribal and non-tribal families showing the same trend of breaking down of joint family to nuclear families. This is a general feature noticed in most of the development projects like MCL.

2. Landlessness: India being a farm dominated society with agriculture as the main occupation, displacement from land, removes the main foundation on which people's productive systems, commercial activities and livelihood are based. Unless this foundation is reconstructed elsewhere or replaced by steady income-generating employment, landlessness sets in and the affected families are impoverished. In most of the cases/ projects, land for land, norm could not be followed. But cash compensation is inadequate to make up for the loss of land. This impact has serious implication in the current project under study and therefore needs special consideration by the project implementing agencies in general and the policy makers formulating strategies for the impacted people of development projects at government level.

3. Joblessness and increase in the proportion of workers: When people were displaced from their habitat, they lose their means of livelihood. Creation of new jobs or alternative sources of income for them becomes very difficult since the oustees do not possess any skill to learn new methods of earning their livelihood. Hence those who were owners of the means of production before displacement have now become daily wage earners. In the Ib Valley Project, taken up for the study, though the MCL authorities followed the policy of providing a job to each displaced family, the other members of the displaced families remained jobless. The policy also discriminated against the landless labourers, artisans, share croppers and petty businessmen among others.

4. Homelessness: Loss of house and shelter may be only temporary during the transition period for most of the displaced. But for some, homelessness remains a permanent feature. The project authorities in Ib Valley only provided homestead plots while the displaced persons have themselves built their houses. Again when a split occurs in the family, those who leave the family become homeless.

5. Food insecurity: The tribal communities from whom this land is alienated are thus deprived of all their livelihood because most of them live in a natural resource based informal economy that depends on the one hand on agriculture, both settled and jhum and on the other on the non-timber forest (NTFP) such as medicinal herbs, edible flowers, leaves and fruits. They also get their small timber and firewood from the forest. Hence development is bound to affect their agricultural and forest land which is the primary source of their livelihood. Forced displacement increases the risk of chronic food insecurity.

CHALLENGES OF DISPLACED TRIBES

- The general socio-economic condition of the removals has deteriorated significantly.
- Socio-economic inequalities have widened.
- The cropping pattern has changed drastically.
- Dependence on trees and livestock has reduced substantially.
- Increase in the proportion of agricultural labourers
- Increasing trend towards nuclear family.
- Poor dwelling conditions of the ousters.
- Improper use of compensation money.
- Rise in the incidence of indebtedness.
- Drastic reduction in the socio-economic condition of women in the PAFs.
- Lack of basic amenities: - Most of the development projects failed to provide basic amenities to the displaced people, which is a critical area of concern.
- Non-availability of wage work: Avenues of wage work are severely restricted in the resettlement colonies, forcing many oustees to migrate to places outside the district and even the State.
- Decline in the Role of Women and Relationship in the Family: Women play a vital role in the family, community and society. But after displacement, their income has either dwindled or has come to a halt altogether. They have become totally dependent on their husbands or sons for household expenditure. This made their role and status very limited.
- The cordial and intimate relationship of the pre-displacement period is now disrupted. Decrease in family income have created conflicts and bitterness among them.
- Problems arising out of cash compensation: Most of the project authorities pay cash compensation to the PAFs, which is often misutilised by the male members on consumer durable items or liquor. Increased alcoholism has led to a rise in crimes in these area
- Increasing difficulties in arranging marriage for Daughters: Women ousters now face great difficulty in getting married because of the demand for more dowry. Use of cash compensation on the marriages leave the family pauperized.

DISPLACEMENT AND REHABILITATION

Here Are Some Of The Ways Which Help To Secure Rights Of Displaced People And Help Them To Develop Themselves:

1. Conventional education:

- Tribals are involved in the national program of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan run by the Ministry of Human Resource Development.
- Schools and hostels should be opened in areas where no such discriminations exist.
- At least one model residential school is fixed in each tribal concentration area.
- Special grounds like financial aid, pocket subsidy, free distribution of textbooks, and school uniforms are furnished.
- Teaching is imparted in tribals' mother tongue at least up to the basic level.
- Educated tribal youth are given employment as teachers, wherever possible this helps tribal people to get employment.

2. Traditional wisdom:

- Protect and improve such traditional proficiency and learning and ascertain it.
- Ascertain a center to educate tribal youth in areas of formal wisdom.
- Convey such through models and exhibits at relevant places.
- Alter such knowledge to non-tribal areas.

3. Health:

- Enhance the allopathy system of medication in tribal areas with the expansion of the three-tier system of village health workers, secondary nurse midwives, and central health centers.
- Broaden the number of hospitals in tune with the tribal population.
- Assess specified tribal remedies (folk claims) used in different tribal areas.
- Promote cultivation of therapeutic plants related value addition techniques through imparting regime to teenagers and Encourage authorized specialists from tribal societies to serve tribal areas.
- Emphasize the form of a strong force of tribal village health guides through regular training-cum-orientation lessons.
- Compose area-specific techniques to enhance access to and utilization of health services.

4. Intellectual Property Rights:

Scheduled Tribes are recognized for their mastery and understanding of racial heritage. There is no legal and institutional rack to defend their intellectual property rights. The National Policy aims at making formal and institutional configurations to ensure their intellectual property rights and lessening the rights of corporate and other factors to access and capitalize their reserve base.

KARNATAKA GOVERNMENTAL POLICIES TO PROTECTION OF DISPLACED SCHEDULE TRIBES

The Department of Tribal Welfare was formed specifically to address the needs of STs in Karnataka. The concept of the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) and its counterpart the Special Component Plan (SCP) emerged in the National Fifth Five-Year Plan—The objectives of the TSP are poverty alleviation, protection of tribal culture, education, health care and providing basic minimum infrastructure. Poverty alleviation includes programmes in agriculture, animal husbandry, sericulture, horticulture, village and small industries as well as all employment-generating schemes such as *Swarna Jayanthi Swarozgar Yojana* (SJSY). Tribal education is given importance by the State Government. Social Welfare Department of the State is looking after the educational needs of these communities. Various programmes are implemented to provide educational facilities to students belonging to the scheduled tribes. The State Government is opening nursery and women welfare centres, *Asharm* schools (free residential schools) pre-metric hostels, for boys and girls, *etc.* From 1995-1996 onwards Karnataka Government has started scholarship scheme for the ST children. The students from 1st to 10th standard can avail this privilege. Financial assistance is provided by the Social Welfare Department

Apart from the efforts made by the State Government some of the non-governmental agencies and associations, trusts and individuals have taken interest in tribal educational welfare programmes in Karnataka. Institutions such as Vivekananda Girijana Kalyan Kendra (VGKK) in Mysore district is a well-known center working for the upliftment of the *Soliga* tribes. The centre has residential tribal school, vocational training and market facilities for tribal products.

The role of NGOs in tribal welfare activities, though small, has been significant for introducing qualitative changes in the lives of the people. Vivekananda Girijana Kalyana Kendra, Swami Vivekananda Youth Movement, Development Through Education (DEED), Foundation for Educational Innovations in Asia (FEDINA), Coorg Organisation of Rural Development (CORD), Samagra Grameena Ashrama, Janashikshana Trust, Chintana Foundation, Samvridi/Krupa, Vanavasi Kalyana Ashrama are some of the well-known NGOs involved in the tribal development in Karnataka. It is possible to make development work more effective and sustainable through engagement with the local community, which has a better understanding of its own socio-economic needs, traditions and culture than non-tribals. Their participation in programmes, funded by the

Government and voluntary organizations helped build confidence in the people to utilize the services thus offered and has provided feedback for modification and re-orientation of programmes¹¹. Under the India Population Project (IPP-9) project, the Health Department and NGOs trained tribal girls as ANMs and they were posted to sub-centres in remote tribal areas. These ANMs are now providing good healthcare services to tribal women and children-Government-owned PHCs at Gumballi and Thithimathi were handed over to Karuna Trust and Vivekananda Foundation respectively and are being run as model PHCs

In B.R. Hills, Mysore, Vivekanada Girijana Kalyan Kendra (VGKK), an NGO, is promoting the traditional knowledge systems of tribals and has integrated traditional healthcare system with modern medicine. Tribal knowledge of herbal medicines is also being promoted by them¹¹. However, the degree of effectiveness of various schemes in terms of programme implementation in these sectors is not evident in the three critical areas of health, education and poverty reduction. The magnitude of the problem is so great that a large percentage of tribal families are poor and lack access to resources that would improve their education and health status. The human development status of the tribes of Karnataka is more than a decade behind the rest of the population of the State and thus they remain poorest and most deprived of all sub-populations in the State-

The present review attempts to highlight the limited research carried out on the health of the ethnic tribes of Karnataka. It identifies the gaps that need to be filled up to understand the health issues for better health care management of these tribes. It also underscores the potential of integration of the rich traditional practices of the ethnic tribes with present day knowledge and healthcare. Concerted inter-sectorial efforts are needed from policy makers, researchers, care providers, non-profit and social organization to improve the health status of the tribes of Karnataka.

SUGGESTIONS

In spite of all these studies and reports, there exists a large gap in complete documentation of the ethno medicinal knowledge and practice of tribes of Karnataka. The valuable knowledge of the vast ethnic population on the healing herbs of the region is fast eroding and is in immediate need of systematic, scientific, exhaustive and uniform documentation which can be subsequently validated through research and clinical evaluation or through reverse pharmacology approach serving the larger purpose of translating traditional knowledge into practice of health care.

CONCLUSION

Scheduled tribes people confronted certain complications in their habitation time. It was conceivably due to this purpose that this portion of the Indian population which was simply having the profile of obstacles and further indicated the major invasion of displacement compelling them of their most precious land and ecology that the censuses were planned to study their working and living condition in the new environment of industrial life along with their coping mechanism.