



PUBLIC POLICY AND TRIBAL WELFARE: A STUDY OF ITDA PROGRAMMES IN KOMURAMBHEEM ASIFABAD DISTRICT

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Abstract

This paper explores the programmes and policies designed for the development of tribal communities in India. The three main pillars of Indian public policy regarding tribes are land rights, cultural identity preservation, and socioeconomic empowerment. One important law that acknowledges tribal land rights is the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006. It provides an in-depth analysis of historical contexts, current policies, challenges, and their effectiveness. The study provides an insight at important areas like cultural preservation, economic development, healthcare, and education. Tribal development is one of the important factor to the government of India government form the independence government has been introducing various schemes for educational and socio-economic development of tribals in India at the same time state governments also providing economical and literature improving programmes in the Telangana state. The ITDA of Asifabad, Eturunagaram and Bhadrachalam has been creating rapid growth of tribal problems and to solve the problems arising thereon. The authority's main objective is to ensure an orderly development and growth of the tribal areas development which is witnessing bewildering changers on socio-economic and political fronts. During the bifurcations of the state, the government established various programmes and schemes for tribal education development and other socio economical schemes are succesccfully running and providing funds to tribal's development. Highlighting successful practices and identifying gaps. As shown in the 2011 Indian census, there are 10,42,81,034 Indian scheduled tribes overall, making up 8.6% of the nation's total population. There are approximately 744. Speaking 105 languages and 225 subsidiary languages, Scheduled Tribes are officially recognized by the Indian government as Scheduled Tribes under the Vth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. According to the 2011 census, there are 32,86,928 lakh scheduled tribe members in Telangana State.

Keywords: Public Policy, Welfare, ITDA, Programmes, Telangana, Asifabad.

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 and tried with heavy financial inputs in the tribal areas. The keen interest taken by Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, coupled with the studies and social work pursued untiringly by great personalities like Thakkar Bappa, Verrier Elwin and C. Von Furer-Haimendorf have been instrumental in giving a much needed fillip to the tribal development work in various parts of India. The pace of development and the success achieved vary depending upon the peculiar problems of the areas concerned. The elaborate administrative machinery right from the Special Multipurpose Blocks (SMBs) and The Tribal Development Blocks (TDBs) to the latest treatment meted out under the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) has been based on problems identified in particular tribal areas.

Keeping in mind the special problems faced by the tribal people, the framers of our Constitution have made explicit provisions enjoining upon the State to take special measures for the welfare and



development of the Scheduled Tribes. The adoption of the philosophy of a welfare state has cast a responsibility on the Government with regard to protection and advancement of the interests of the backward and weaker sections of the society. Besides the rights enjoyed by the ordinary citizens, the Scheduled Tribes also enjoy special safeguards under various provisions of the Constitution including those in the Fifth and Sixth Schedules. These in effect, place matters pertaining to the welfare and advancement of the Scheduled Tribes on a special footing at the Union and State levels. Local bodies created under this constitutional provision, in which the representatives of the tribal people have a major say in advising the executive in matters relating to their development. They also reflect recognition of the diversity in the tribal situation and of the need for different approaches.

Development is an aspect of social transformation, in all its dimensions there is an all-pervading activity discovering the potentials, which mobilize them to achieve the desired societal goals. It is generally defined as a process of change that involves the whole society - its economic, socio-cultural, political and physical structures, as well as the value system and way of life of the people. Thus, the concept of the development can be viewed as a process of realizing certain goals or values, such as improved health and housing, better nutrition, improved means of transport and communications, increased command over resources, etc.

Development is usually conceived as an aspect of change that is desirable, broadly predicted or planned and administered or at least influenced by governmental action. Thus, the concept of development consists of: a) an aspect of change; b) a plan or prediction; and c) involvement of the government for achieving, the planned or predicted goal. The term 'development' is also used for the process of allowing and encouraging people to meet their own aspirations.^{3 4}The main aim of development is to increase national as well as per capita income and to raise the standard of living of the people and secure justice, freedom, and equality in the society. The focus of development is now increasingly on: a) equitable distribution of wealth and income; b) full utilization of manpower; c) better utilization of natural resources; and d) protection of human environment, etc.

Scheduled Tribes in India

Tribal population in India is around 8.2 per cent of the total population living in the country. Majority of the tribal population live in the states of Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal. These states account for about 80 per cent of the total tribal population in the country. Madhya Pradesh has the highest number of tribal population with 14.7 per cent of the total tribal population in India. Similarly Maharashtra and Odisha stand in second and third position in contributing to the total tribal population. Lakshadweep has a highest number of tribal populations with 94.8 per cent to the total population of the union territory followed by the state of Mizoram and Nagaland with 94.4 and 86.5 percent respectively.

Similarly Uttar Pradesh has a least number of scheduled tribes with 0.56 percent of its total population followed by Tamilnadu and Bihar with 1.1 and 1.28 per cent respectively (GoI2011). The ministry of tribal affairs states that there are 705 tribal groups notified by the government of India. Odisha is a state where there is maximum number of tribal communities with 62 than any other state of the country. Within 705 tribal groups 75 groups has been kept under the category of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) living in various parts of the country.

Constitutional Provisions

The constitution makers were aware of the fact that the tribal community in India needs special provision in the constitution to establish social justice and empowerment. Keeping this in view several



special provision were made in the constitution for overall development and to connect the tribal community to the mainstream society. The term Scheduled Tribes first appeared in the constitution of India and define Scheduled Tribes under Art. 366 (25) 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”. The President of India has the constitutional power to specify or declare tribal communities or groups to be scheduled in relation to any state or union territory after consulting the governor of the concern region under Article 342. Further Article 244 and 244 (a) provide for Fifth and Sixth Schedule respectively for the special administration of the tribals. The Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA) in the Fifth Schedule Areas was introduced to secure local self governance by the tribal people. The constitution also provides for no prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth (Art. 15), Equality of opportunity in matters of public employment(Art. 16), Protection of certain rights regarding freedom of speech, etc. (Art. 19), Promotion of Educational and Economic interests of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections (Art. 46), Claims of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to services and posts (Art. 335). Moreover Article 330 and 332 provides for Reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the House of the People and in the Legislative Assemblies of the States respectively. Reservation in the seats of Panchayat is also provided under Article 243 D. The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) was set up under article 338 A to look after the affairs related to Scheduled Tribes.

The objectives of Telangana's tribal area development policies are to safeguard the rights and land of Scheduled Tribes while simultaneously enhancing their livelihoods, healthcare, and educational opportunities. Hostels, financial aid programs, and scholarships are important initiatives. These initiatives seek to advance inclusive development and close the divide between Scheduled Tribes and other communities.

The economic status of the tribals have been increased after utilizing the schemes t After the formation of the new State of Telangana on the 2nd June, 2014, the State Government has attached top-most priority for the development of Scheduled Tribe population in the State, which accounts for 9.34 per cent of the total population (as per 2011 census), which is significantly higher compared to the percentage of 6.99 STs in the combined State of AP. Many innovative schemes like Kalyana Lakshmi for financial assistance to ST girls of marriageable age have been planned by the Tribal Welfare Department. As per the provisions of the Scheduled Castes Sub Plan and Tribal Sub Plan Act, 2013 while preparing the Annual Plan for 2015-16, necessary care has been taken to ensure earmarking of required funds for Scheduled Tribes Sub-Plan, the details of which are given in this volume, department-wise.

ITDA Programmes in Komurambheem Asifabad District

The ITDA (Integrated Tribal Development Agency) in Asifabad is a government agency dedicated to the welfare and development of tribal communities in the Kumuram Bheem Asifabad district of Telangana, India. Its primary mission is to implement programs and policies aimed at improving the socio-economic conditions of Scheduled Tribes in the region.

The Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) Asifabad in the former Adilabad district of Telangana State is the tribally dominant area where the current study will be conducted. Following Telangana State's district reorganization, ITDA, Asifabad was dispersed throughout four districts: Adilabad, Asifabad, Nirmal, and Mancherial. As of the 2011 Census, the district has a population of



515,812. Komaram Bheem district has a sex ratio of 998 females for every 1000 males and a literacy rate of 56.72%. 66,206 (12.84%) were under 6 years of age. 428,828 (83.14%) lived in rural areas. 86,984 (16.86%) lived in urban areas. Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes make up 81,596 (15.82%) and 133,627 (25.91%) of the population respectively.

Every effort made by the Telangana ITDA is praiseworthy and deserves recognition and compensation. However, when considering the population explosion, the goal of the ITDA's establishment is not only to address the current issues of the expanding tribal problems, but also to envision the needs that will emerge in ten more years. The authority's combined efforts are insufficient to address the current demands. The primary administrative activities that rely on the allocated funds are income and expenditure. The fund that oversees the authority for carrying out developmental activities within the ITDA Jurisdiction must be given careful consideration. Only grants from the federal and state governments serve as ITDA's primary funding source. The most crucial factor in the improvement of ITDA is the expansion or improvement of financial aid, which the government can provide by allocating funds to carry out different tribal development initiatives.

Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) and Integrated Tribal Development Projects (ITDP)

The TSP was introduced in the Fifth Five-Year Plan (1974-1979) to ensure the flow of targeted financial resources for tribal development.

ITDPs aimed at holistic development of tribal areas through infrastructure development, education, healthcare, economic opportunities.

Forest Rights Act (2006)

The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, known the rights of forest-dwelling tribal communities to land and resources, directing to correct historical injustices.

Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA) 1996

PESA extended the provisions of Part IX of the Constitution relating to Panchayats to Scheduled Areas, authorizing Gram Sabhas (village assemblies) to manage local resources and governance.

Education Initiatives

Post-independence, various educational schemes like the establishment of Eklavya Model Residential Schools and Ashram Schools were launched to improve educational outcomes among tribal children.

Healthcare Policies

Government initiatives such as the National Health Mission included targeted health interventions in tribal areas to address issues like malnutrition, motherly and child health, and contagious diseases.

Economic Development

Programmes like the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) provided employment opportunities, although various skill development initiatives intended to enhance employability among tribal youth.

Government Policies and Programmes

The Indian government has implemented various policies and programmes aimed at improving the socio-economic conditions of tribal communities. These initiatives span multiple sectors, including education, healthcare, economic development, and cultural preservation.



Education

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)

- To achieve universal elementary education for children aged 6-14 years.
- Free and compulsory education for all children.
- Focus on reducing gender and social category gaps in education.
- Special provisions for tribal children, including residential schools and hostels.

Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)

- To deliver quality education to tribal children from Class VI to XII.
- Residential schools with modern facilities.
- Emphasis on academic excellence, sports, and cultural activities.
- Located in tribal-dominated areas to ensure accessibility.

Post-Matric Scholarships

- To support tribal students in pursuing higher education.
- Financial assistance for tuition fees, maintenance, and other educational expenses.
- Applicable to students from Class XI onwards.
- Covers various streams, including technical and professional courses.

Healthcare

National Health Mission (NHM)

- To improve healthcare delivery across rural and urban India, with a special focus on tribal areas.
- Strengthening of primary healthcare infrastructure.
- Special health programmes for maternal and child health, nutrition, and communicable diseases.
- Mobile medical units and health camps in remote tribal areas.

Tribal Health Action Plan

- To address specific health challenges faced by tribal communities.
- Focus on reducing malnutrition, anemia, and maternal and child mortality.
- Training of healthcare workers in tribal areas.
- Community-based interventions and health education.

Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP)

- To confirm the allocation of targeted financial resources for the socio-economic development of tribal areas.
- Allocation of funds in proportion to the tribal population in each state.
- Integrated approach to development, covering infrastructure, education, health, and livelihood.

Forest Rights Act (2006)

- To recognize the rights of forest-dwelling tribal communities to land and resources.
- Individual and community rights over forest land and resources.
- Protection against eviction and displacement.
- Community rights to manage and protect forests.



Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA) 1996

- To encompass the provisions of Part IX of the Constitution relating to Panchayats to Scheduled Areas.
- Empowerment of Gram Sabhas (village assemblies) in tribal areas.
- Control over local resources, including land, water, and forests.
- Decision-making authority on social and economic development matters.

Telangana Tribal Mining Company (TRIMCO)

Tribal Mining Company was established in 2001 under the companies' act 1956 as a joint venture TRICOR (74 per cent) and APMDC (26 per cent) to take up mining activity with active participation of Tribal Mining Cooperative Societies. Activity commenced in mining of semi-precious stones at 7 locations and project surveys are being taken up for assessing the potential and mining of other major important mineral resources. To harness the mining potential in tribal areas for improving the living conditions of tribal communities by distributing the mineral wealth generated, by exploiting the various mineral resources lying in the tribal regions of the state.

Conclusion

Tribal development is a complex and multilayered challenge requiring a holistic and inclusive approach. While substantial progress has been made, determined issues demand continued attention and innovation. By adopting more participatory and culturally aware strategies, policymakers can better address the unique needs of tribal communities, fostering sustainable and equitable development. The socio - economic and cultural fabric of these communities has been greatly improved by the Indian government's efforts to empower tribal people. By means of these initiatives, the Indian government hopes to guarantee that tribal communities get the assistance they need to close the development gap and enhance their socioeconomic circumstances. The government's dedication to empowering tribal populations and guaranteeing their inclusion in India's growth narrative is reflected in the PM Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan and other programs like EMRS and PM-JANMAN. Government is committed to the Welfare of Scheduled Tribes and in particular, ensuring full equality of opportunity in education and economic policies. The state's tribal development has received more attention from the government. To address the demands of tribal educational development, the government allocated additional programs. In order to give tribal communities more attention and hasten their socioeconomic development, the Telangana government introduced policies, programs, and executive initiatives at an operational level comparable to that of the state's general populace. Tribal communities are receiving more support from educational policies, and the government is concentrating on their socioeconomic and educational needs while attempting to shift their way of life from hilly stations to maidan areas. The government gives tribal communities a lot of money each year to help them develop.

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