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Address: -North Asian International Research Journal Consortium (NAIRJC) 221 Gangoo, Pulwama, Jammu and Kashmir, India - 192301, Cell: 09086405302, 09906662570, Ph. No: 01933-212815, Email: nairjc5@gmail.com , nairjc@nairjc.com , info@nairjc.com Website: www.nairjc.com

TRIBAL IDENTITY AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR POLITICAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT: A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

DR. MUDUKAPPA KAREGOUDA¹ & DR. K.MALLIKARJUNA²

¹Guest Lecturer in Sociology, Chilakuri Nageshwar Rao Govt. First Grade College Sriramanagara, Gangavathi (tq) Koppal (Diristrict) Karnataka-Pin: 583126

²Assistant Professor in Political Science, Govt. First Grade College Kampli, (Tq) Hosapete (Dist)Ballari 583232.

ABSTRACT

The tribal's, who live in forest areas and other remote place, have got their own culture, customs, practices and religion. They have not remained uninfluenced through the sources of change. The changes have taken place even among the tribal groups that who lived separate from non-tribal. The tribal population in the State of Karnataka, and in the country as a whole, is the most deprived and vulnerable community that faces severe economic exclusion. Although certain constitutional safeguards are provided, no significant economic, social and political mobility has taken place across this community. Therefore it is important to find out the type of changes that have taken place and the factors in effecting these changes and finally the pace and direction of changes that have taken place among them Our paper on "Tribal Identity And The Implications For Political And Cultural Development: A Sociological Analysis" the situation of the Scheduled Tribes in the background of various policies of the state during the successive plan periods and its impact on their socio-economic mobility. Politically, this community is the most voiceless in the state. Their unsecured livelihood position in terms of lack of legal entitlements of the resources they use, both land and non-timber forest produce, push them into deep economic vulnerability.

Keywords: Tribes, Culture, Development. Mobility.

INTRODUCTION

The Indian Constitution has been committed to introduce socio-economic and political transformation. The initiatives of empowering tribal and the marginalized sections are the reflection of its democratic spirit that can be noticed from a number of amendments in these fields. Especially, the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts provide for an opportunity for tribal's entry into political spheres especially Tribal Women. These Amendment Acts provide for a 33 percent reservation of seats for Tribal women in the governance of local bodies

both rural and urban with target of good governance and fair representation in the development process at grassroots level. The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act is an important landmark in the history of Indian women's participation in the formation of democratic institutions at grassroots level. The Scheduled Tribes are tribes notified under Article 342 of the Constitution, which makes special provision for 'tribes, tribal communities, parts of, or groups within which the President may so notify'. There is no definition of a tribe in the Constitution but one may distinguish some characteristics that are generally accepted: self-identification, language, distinctive social and cultural organization, economic under development, geographic location and initially, isolation, which has been steadily, and in some cases, traumatically, eroded. Many tribes still live in hilly and/or forested areas, somewhat remote from settlements.

A number of studies on development of tribal communities have been carried out by researchers from various disciplines. The problems of tribal development have long baffled the policy makers, administrators and social scientists in India, and the debate on the meaning, character and direction of their socio-economic transformation continues. Earlier studies carried out by Anthropologists and other Social Scientists among various tribal communities have constantly pointed out various problems of tribal development and offered suggestions for bringing better results. Based on various committees' reports and studies on tribal development, efforts have been subsequently made to improve the tribal situation by providing various kinds of provisions and schemes. However, unfortunately, the tribal's have not been able to derive sufficient benefit from this process of planned development. It is true that tribal development problem in the country cannot be considered as stereotyped phenomenon. It varies from one region to another.

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 the achievement of that planned or predicted goal. The term "development" is also used for the process of allowing and encouraging people to meet their own aspirations. It, therefore, must relate to transforming the entire society enmeshing together its economic, social, political and administrative aspects on all-round balanced upward change (Basu A.R., 1985)

TRIBES

Article – 342:

Provides for specification of tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities which are deemed to be for the purposes of the Constitution the Scheduled Tribes in relation to that State or Union Territory:

- In pursuance of these provisions, the list of Scheduled Tribes are notified for each State or Union Territory and are valid only within the jurisdiction of that State or Union Territory and not outside.
- Scheduled Tribes are notified in 30 States/UTs
- Number of individual ethnic groups, etc. Notified as Scheduled Tribes is 705
- There has been some changes in the List of Scheduled Tribes in States/ UTs during the last decade are notified in 30 States/UTs
- Number of individual ethnic groups, etc. Notified as Scheduled Tribes.

MEANING OF TRIBE

The tribal's constitute nearly 7% of the population of India. The tribal's live in forest areas, hilly regions, mountainous places and deep valleys. They are known by various names for example primitives, animists jungle people, advises and aboriginals.

Bardhan A.B. (1973) defines the tribe as a “course of a Socio-cultural entity at a definite historical stage of development. It is a single endogamous community with a cultural and psycho-logical make-up going back into a distant historical past.” In this definition the emphasis is on the cultural and psychological make-up.

George Jose and Shreekumar S.S. (1994:2) State that:

“The tribe is a social group of a simple kind, the members of which speaks a common dialect, have a single government, act together for common purposes and have a common name a contiguous territory. Relatively of common descent. Here the tribe is considered as a social group with common dialect, purpose, name and culture.”

According to Gillian and Gillian:

“A tribe is a group of local community which lives in a common area, speaks a common dialect and follows a common culture.” “A tribe” according to Risely is a collection of families or groups of families bearing a common name which as a rule does not denote any specific occupation, generally claiming common descent from a mythical or a historical ancestor. Occasionally the name is derived from an animal only by the obligation of kinship, members speak the same language and occupy (or profess to occupy) a definite tract of country.”(Shashi Birathi 1992:2)

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF TRIBES

Tribals in India originate from five language families, i.e. Andaman's, Austro-Asiatic, Dravidian, and Tibeto-Burman. It is also important to point out that those tribal's who belong to different language families live in distinct geographic settings. For example, in South Orissa there are languages that originate from the Central Dravidian family, Austro-Asiatic (Munds) family and the Indo-Aryan. In the Jharkhand area, languages are from the Indo-Aryan, North Dravidian and Austro-Asiatic. Tribals in India live in the following five territories.

1. The Himalayan belt: (Assam, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, hills of Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh)
2. Central India: Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa, and Madhya Pradesh. 55% of the total tribal population of India lives in this belt.
3. Western India: Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Goa, Dadra and Nagar Haveli.
4. The Dravidian region: Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.
5. Andaman, Nicobar and Lakshadweep islands.

TRIBAL POPULATION IN KARNATAKA

The total population of Karnataka, as per 2001 Census is 52,850,562. Of this, 3,463,986 are Scheduled Tribes (STs). The ST population constitutes 6.6 per cent of the State population and 4.1 per cent of the country's ST population. Forty-nine STs have been notified in Karnataka by the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Act, 1976 and by the Act 39 of 1991. This is the second highest number, next to Orissa (64) if compared with the number of STs notified in any other states/UTs of the Country. Five STs namely, Kammara, Kaniyan, Kuruba, Maratha and Marati have been notified with area restriction. Kuruba and Maratha have been

notified only in Kodagu district, where as Marati in Dakshina Kannada, Kaniyan in Kollegal taluk of Chamarajanagar and Kammara in Dakshina Kannada and Kollegal taluk of Chamarajanagar districts of Karnataka.

Of the STs, two namely, Jenu Kuruba and Koraga are among the Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) of India having population of 29,828 and 16,071 respectively in 2001 Census. Jenu Kuruba are mainly distributed in Mysore, Kodagu and Bangalore districts, and Koraga in Dakshina Kannada and Dharward districts. In the present census, a low growth rate of 1.6 per cent and a negative growth rate of 1.5 per cent have been reported for the Jenu Kuruba and Koraga respectively.

The growth rate of ST population in the decade 1991-2001 at 80.8 per cent is considerably higher in comparison to the overall 17.5 per cent of state population. The steep growth of ST population is due to addition of Naik, Nayak, Beda, Bedar and Valmiki as sub-groups of Naikda. The sub groups have been enumerated for the first time at the 2001 Census. Naikda, the largest ST have registered a higher growth rate 113.0 per cent, compared to 8.8 per cent during the decade (1981-1991)

Table 1: Population of STs India: 2011

| Sex | 2001 | 2011 | Variation |
|---------|------|-------|-----------|
| Person | 84.3 | 104.3 | +23.7 |
| Male | 42.6 | 52.4 | +22.9 |
| Females | 41.7 | 51.9 | +24.4 |

Source: 2011 census Reports

Table 2: Scheduled Tribe population in 2001-2011

| Sex | 2001 | 2011 | difference | %Growth Rate 2001-2011 |
|---------|-----------|-----------|------------|---------------------------|
| Persons | 34,63,986 | 42,48,987 | 7,85,001 | 22.6 |
| Male | 17,56,238 | 21,34,754 | 3,78,516 | 21.55 |
| Female | 17,07,748 | 21,14,233 | 4,06,485 | 23.80 |

Source: 2011 census Reports

ST Groups in Karnataka In accordance with The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Act 1976 and as inserted by Act 39 of 1991. 2011. 1.

1. Adiyani
2. Barda
3. Bavacha, Bamcha
4. Bhil, Bhil Garasia, Dholi Bhil, Dungri Bhil, Dungri Garasia, Mewasi Bhil, Rawal Bhil, Tadvi Bhil, Bhagalua, Bhilala, Pawra, Vasava, Vasave
5. Chenchu, Chenchwar
6. Chodhara
7. Dubla, Talavia, Halpati
8. Gamit, Gamta, Gavit, Mavchi, Padvi, Valvi
9. Gond, Naikpod, Rajgond
10. Gowdalu
11. Hakkipikki
12. Hasalaru
13. Irular
14. Iruliga
15. Jenu Kuruba
16. Kadu Kuruba
17. Kammara (in Dakshina Kannada district and Kollegal taluk of Chamarajanagar district)
18. Kaniyan, Kanyan (in Kollegal taluk of Chamarajanagar district)
19. Kathodi, Katkari, Dhor Kathodi, Dhor Katkari, Son Kathodi, Son Katkari
20. Kattunayakan
21. Kokna, Kokni, Kukna
22. Koli Dhor, Tokre Koli, Kolcha, Kolgha
23. Konda Kapus
24. Koraga
25. Kota
26. Koya, Bhine Koya, Rajkoya
27. Kudiya, Melakudi

28. Kuruba (in Kodagu district)
29. Kurumans
30. Maha Malasar
31. Malaikudi
32. Malasar
33. Malayekandi
34. Maleru
35. Maratha (in Kodagu district)
36. Marati (in Dakshina Kannada district)
37. Meda
38. Naikda, Nayaka, Cholivala Nayaka, Kapadia Nayaka, Mota Nayaka, Nana Nayaka, Naik, Nayak, Beda, Bedar and Valmiki
39. Palliyan
40. Paniyan
41. Pardhi, Advichincher, Phanse Pardhi
42. Patelia
43. Rathawa
44. Sholaga
45. Soligaru
46. Toda
47. Varli
48. Vitolia, Kotwalia, Barodia
49. Yerava
50. Siddi

DEVELOPMENTAL PLANS FOR INDIAN SCHEDULED TRIBES

The word Scheduled Tribe is an administrative coinage, used for purposes of giving out constitutional privileges, security and benefits in independent India. The first prerequisite of Indian Scheduled Tribes in relation to a particular State or Union Territory is through a notified order of the President, after consultation with the concerned State Government. These orders can be modified consequently only through an Act of Parliament. According to Article 342 of the Constitution of India, the President, after consulting with the State Governments

concerned, has promulgated nine orders so far. This promulgation has clearly specified the Scheduled Tribes in relation to the concerned State and Union Territories. India can proudly be called the largest tribal population in the world. The scheduled tribes in India constituted 8.2 percent of India's population, according to 2001 census. In all, six hundred and ninety eight scheduled tribes exist at present in India.

The Fifth and Sixth Schedules under Article 244 of Indian Constitution in 1950 provided for self-governance in particular tribal majority areas. The then governmental administration issued a draft National Policy on Tribal's in 1999 to meet the developmental needs of tribal populations, including the scheduled tribes. Prominence was laid on education, forestry, health care, land rights, language policy and resettlement. Efforts were also made to differentiate tribal languages such as Bodolanguage, Gond language and Santhali language. The then Government had established a Ministry of Tribal Affairs. It designated out the states of Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand in acknowledgment of tribal sentiment. The subsequent governmental administration drafted the controversial Scheduled Tribes (Recognition of Forest Rights) Bill in 2005 to deal with their needs. Along with being geographically and socially isolated, the tribal groups have historically been politically under-represented. Their regions of residence also have been economically underdeveloped. Scheduled tribe status under the Indian Constitution has designated reserved seats for tribals in political forums, such as the parliament, along with job reservations in the civil service and educational institutions.

TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS INDEPENDENCE

Funding of tribal development programmes

The sources of funds made available are:

1. State Plan
2. Special Central Assistance
3. Sectoral Programmers of Central Ministries/Departments
4. Institutional Finance.

The State Governments are required to quantify the funds from State Plan for tribal area development in proportion to percentage of tribal population in the states.

Construction of the Hostels for Tribal students

Construction, Maintenance expense is to be borne by the State Governments/Union Territories. The rates for construction of the hostels are fixed which are different for the plains and the hills. It has been represented by various States that these rates are not workable any more in view of the escalation of prices of building materials and long distance involved particularly for the hilly areas. It is, therefore, proposed to revise the norms and to adopt the State PWD schedule of rates as in the case of construction of Ashram Schools. During 1990-91 to 1992-93, the amount of Rs. 8.64 crores has been released to the States/Union under various stages of completion. The scheme envisages setting up of vocational training institutes in inner tribal areas away from the district headquarters to impart training in various courses relevant to the areas. The tribal youth would be given training in three trades of his or her choice, the course in each trade having duration of four months. The trainee is to be attached at the end of one month training to master craftsman for a period of three months to learn his skills by practical experience. At the end of 15 months, the trainee will emerge as a multi-skilled person who can exploit existing employment potentials to his/her best advantage. This is a Central Sector Scheme where the construction and maintenance costs are fully borne by the Central Government. It is implemented through the State Governments. Proposals are obtained from them along with details of existing infrastructure as well as the employment potentials in the proximity of the.

Proposed location

Educational complex in low literacy pockets for women in Tribal areas This Scheme provides cent percent financial assistance to NGOs/ Organization established by government as autonomous bodies/educational and other institutions like Cooperative Societies, to establish educational complexes in 136 identified districts of erstwhile 11 states (now 13) where tribal female literacy is below 10% as per 1991 census. Educational complex is meant for girls studying from class I to V with strength of 30 students in each class. The grants are provided to meet non-recurring as well as recurring expenses on building (hiring or maintenance) teaching, boarding, lodging and to also for medical and health care of students

Grant-in-Aid to state Tribal development Cooperative Corporation and others

This is a Central Sector Scheme, with 100% grant, available to the State Tribal Development Cooperative Corporation (STDCCs) and other similar corporations of State engaged in collection and trading of minor forest produce (MFP) through tribal's Grants under the Scheme are provided to strengthen the Share Capital of

Corporations, construction of Warehouses, establishment of processing industries of MFPs etc. to ensure high profitability of the corporation so as to enable them to pay remunerative prices for MFPs to the tribal's.

Price Support to Trifed

The Ministry provides Grants-in-aid to its corporation, TRIFED to set off losses on account of fluctuations in prices of MFPs being marketed by it for ensuring remunerative prices to tribal engaged in collection of MFPs either directly or through STDCCs and other such Cooperative Societies. Investment in Share Capital of Trifed. The Ministry is the largest shareholder of TRIFED with over 99% contribution in its Share Capital. Under this Scheme, the Ministry provides funds to TRIFED as its contribution in the Share Capital.

Village Grain Banks

This Scheme provides Grants for establishment of Village Grain Banks to prevent deaths of STs specially children in remote and backward tribal villages facing or likely to face starvation and also to improve nutritional standards. The Scheme provides funds for building storage facility, procurement of Weights and Measures and for the purchase of initial stock of one quintal of food grain of local variety for each family. A Committee under Chairmanship of village Headman runs the Grain Bank thus established.

Grant-In-Aid to Voluntary Organizations

As many as 27 types of projects with focus on tribal education, literacy, medical and health care, vocational training in agriculture, horticulture, craftsmanship etc., are being supported by the Ministry under this Scheme through registered Non-Governmental Organizations.

Research and Training

Under the Scheme "Research and Training" the Ministry provides financial assistance under Grants to Tribal Research Institutes on 50:50 sharing basis; for conducting Research and Evaluation Studies, Seminars, and Workshops etc. Award of Research Fellowship to Tribal Students on 100% basis registered in Indian Universities. Supporting projects of All-India or Inter-State nature on 100% basis to NGOs/ Universities etc. for conducting research on tribal matters, Travel Grants and for Publication of Books on tribal's.

Development of Primitive Tribal Groups

Under this Scheme cent per-cent assistance is provided to NGOs and other institutions for under-taking projects on development of PTGs on activities mainly focusing on their food security literacy, agriculture technology up gradation, etc.

Post Metric Scholarships, Overseas Scholarships and Book Banks

The post-metric scholarship Scheme provides financial assistance to all ST students for pursuance of post-metric studies in recognized institutions within India. The Scheme provides for 100% assistance from the Ministry to State Governments and UT Administrations implementing the Scheme, over and above their respective committed liabilities. The Ministry also gives financial assistance for setting up Book-Banks in institutions running professional courses like Medicine, Engineering, Law, Agriculture, Veterinary, Chartered Accountancy, Business Management, and Bio-Sciences. Annually, Ministry provides financial assistance to 9 meritorious ST students for Post-graduate, Doctoral and Post-Doctoral studies in foreign universities/institutions of repute

Up gradation of Merit and Coaching

These Schemes provide 100% central assistance to State/UT Administrations. The up gradation of merit Scheme is for arranging coaching classes in reputed colleges for developing competence among ST students for their better performance in competitive examinations conducted by various universities institutes for admission to Medical and Engineering courses while the Scheme for coaching is for conducting Pre-Examination Coaching for tribal students for various examinations conducted by UPSC, SSC, Banking Services Recruitment Boards etc.

Tribal Advisory Council (TAC)

Eight states having scheduled areas, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar (now Bihar and Chhattisgarh), Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh (now Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh), Orissa and Rajasthan and two non-scheduled area states, namely, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal have constituted tacs. The TAC consists of not more than twenty-five members of whom as many as three-fourth members are scheduled tribe representatives of the state legislative assembly. The governor of the state may refer matters concerning to administration of welfare of tribals to the TAC for recommendations. The ministry issues guidelines for TAC. As per latest guidelines the TAC should meet at least twice a year and discuss the issues concerning tribal interests and making appropriate recommendation for protection of tribal interests.

Point 11(b) of 20-point Programmers

The point 11 (b) of 20-point programmers is to provide economic assistance to the scheduled tribe families to enable them to rise above poverty line. The ST families are assisted through various schemes implemented by departments of agriculture, rural development, horticulture, animal husbandry, sericulture forestry, small and cottage industries, etc. The ministry fixes the targets for 22-states/ut s and also monitors the progress of achievements on monthly basis. The officers of the ministry inspected more than 75 projects in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Orissa, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh.

Constitutional Guarantee to the Tribals in India

Despite the protection given to the tribal population by the Constitution of India (1950), it remains the most backward ethnic group in India, on the three most important indicators of development: health, education and income.

The tribals are more backward not only compared with the General Population, but also compared to the Scheduled Caste, the other acknowledged backward social group with constitutional protection. D'Souza (1990) has examined the effects of planned developmental intervention in the tribals from 1961 to 1981.

He has concluded that twenty years of intervention has not made any significant impact in improving the conditions of the tribals.

PROBLEMS OF TRIBAL COMMUNITIES

Land Alienation

The history of land alienation among the tribes began during British colonialism in India when the British interfered in the tribal region for the purpose of exploiting the tribal natural resources. Coupled with this tribal lands were occupied by moneylenders, zamindars and traders by advancing them loans etc. Opening of mines in the heart of tribal habitat and even a few factories provided wage labor as well as opportunities for factory employment. But this brought increasing destitution and displacement. After the British came to power, the Forest policy of the British Government was more inclined towards commercial considerations rather than human. Some forests were declared as reserved ones where only authorized contractors were allowed to cut the timber and the

forest -dwellers were kept isolated deliberately within their habitat without any effort to ameliorate their economic and educational standards. The expansion of railway in India heavily devastated the forest resources in India'. The Government started reserving teak, Sal and deodar forests for the manufacture of railway sleepers. Forest land and its resources provide the best means of livelihood for the tribal people and many tribes including the women engage in agriculture, food gathering and hunting they are heavily dependent on the products of the forest. Therefore when outsiders exploit the tribe's land and its resources the natural life cycle of tribal ecology and tribal life is greatly disturbed.

Poverty and Indebtedness

Majority tribes live under poverty line. The tribes follow many simple occupations based on simple technology. Most of the occupation falls into the primary occupations such as hunting, gathering, and agriculture. The technology they use for these purposes belong to the most primitive kind. There is no profit and surplus making in such economy. Hence there per capita income is very meager much lesser than the Indian average. Most of them live under abject poverty and are in debt in the hands of local moneylenders and Zamindars. In order to repay the debt they often mortgage or sell their land to the moneylenders. Indebtedness is almost inevitable since heavy interest is to be paid to these moneylenders.

Health and Nutrition

In many parts of India tribal population suffers from chronic infections and diseases out of which water borne diseases are life threatening. They also suffer from deficiency diseases. The Himalayan tribes suffer from goiter due to lack of iodine. Leprosy and tuberculosis are also common among them. Infant mortality was found to be very high among some of the tribes. Malnutrition is common and has affected the general health of the tribal children as it lowers the ability to resist infection, leads to chronic illness and sometimes leads to brain impairment. The ecological imbalance like cutting of trees have increased the distances between villages and the forest areas thus forcing tribal women to walk longer distances in search of forest produce and firewood.

Education

Educationally the tribal population is at different levels of development but overall the formal education has made very little impact on tribal groups. Earlier Government had no direct programme for their education. But in the subsequent years the reservation policy has made some changes. There are many reasons for low level of education among the tribal people: Formal education is not considered necessary to discharge their social

obligations. Superstitions and myths play an important role in rejecting education. Most tribes live in abject poverty. It is not easy for them to send their children to schools, as they are considered extra helping hands. The formal schools do not hold any special interest for the children. Most of the tribes are located in interior and remote areas where teachers would not like to go from outside.

CONCLUSION

Tribal s actually is a kind of problem, which has existed within the Indian society since the very beginning. Throughout the history, despite of the harshly imposed social reforms of Soviet era, the traditional institutions in Indian society could not be destroyed, and the traditional tribal or regional rivalries could not be overcome. Therefore, inter tribal relations keep themselves strained, and clan and tribal loyalties still play an important part in power structures of. Even, today it is observed that the political process is dominated by a hidden power struggle between major clans that represented traditional rivalries between various tribes, clans or communities.

During Pre-British period, the tribal communities in India remained either fully or partially isolated from the country, and they remained backward. The British policy of isolation increased the misery of the tribal communities. The founders of Indian Constitution seriously considered the miserable conditions of the tribals who were segregated from the national mainstream and provided for special measures.

Since independence, the government has initiated several Five Year Plans, programmes, policies and laws and has made efforts for gradual socio-economic development of Scheduled Tribes, but they still remain the weakest sections of the society. During these various Five Year Plans, there has been a considerable increase in the fund allocation for the tribal areas. But most of the tribals were not able to draw benefits from the facilities provided by government because of large-scale corruption among officials and improper implementation of tribal development schemes. Therefore, the majority of the hill tribes in Andhra Pradesh suffer from the absence of proper infrastructure and communication facilities. Improper management of schemes and inefficient implementation of suitable programmes in the tribal region create a major problem. The majority of the tribal people are not even aware of the development schemes implemented by government agencies. Without creating awareness among the tribal people, it is difficult to achieve better results.

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